NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Interim Guidance for Administrators and Participants of Youth and Amateur Sports Programs (September 14, 2020)

Guidelines for Conducting Business: Any scenario in which many people gather together poses a risk for COVID-19 transmission. All organizations and programs that gather groups of people should create and implement a plan to minimize the opportunity for COVID-19 transmission. The guidance below will help administrators and participants of youth and amateur sports programs reduce the spread of COVID-19 in their communities.

The current executive order does not place restrictions on the types of sports that are allowed to be played. However, **DHHS strongly recommends only playing sports in which participants can maintain social distancing.** Examples of recommended and not recommended sports are provided below.

DHHS Recommends Limiting Sports Activities to Those in Which Participants Can Maintain Social Distancing, or Close Contact is Limited and Brief:

Golf	Swimming
Cycling	Diving
Disc Golf	Dance
Track and Field	Tennis Singles Match
Curling	Horseback Riding
Pickleball	Figure Skating
Badminton	Running

For Certain Sports for Which Close Contact May Occur but Not Prolonged, DHHS recommends limiting tournaments in which multiple teams convene. If played, DHHS strongly recommends playing outside and if face coverings can be tolerated, they should be worn:

Soccer	Volleyball
Baseball	Softball

DHHS Does Not Recommend Sports Activities for Which Participants Cannot Maintain Social Distancing and Close Contact is Frequent and/or Prolonged.

Organized sports in which participants cannot maintain social distancing are not recommended. These sports typically require coaches and athletes who are not from the same household or living unit to be in close proximity, which increases their potential for exposure to COVID-19. For these sports, it is recommended that activities are limited to athletic conditioning, drills, and practices in which dummy players, sleds, punching bags and similar equipment are used but athletes are not playing the actual sport, itself. These activities can allow athletes to condition and prepare for sports if and when they are played in the future.

Football	Competitive Cheer
Contact Lacrosse	Basketball
Rugby	Wrestling
Group Dance	Hockey
Swimming Relays/Group Swimming	Pairs Figure Skating
Tennis Doubles Match	Crew

Number of Participants and Spectators

Regardless of the type of sport being played, all administrators of sports programs are required to:

- ❑ In outdoor parks, fields or courts:
  - ❑ Limit the number of participants- including players, coaches, and support staff- to 50 individuals per outdoor park, field or court.
  - ❑ Limit the number of spectators to 50 individuals per park, field, or court.
  - ❑ If an outdoor sports complex has multiple parks, fields, or courts, limit the number of spectators so that each park, field or court has no more than 50 spectators.
- ❑ In indoor courts or rooms that are part of buildings that have a fire capacity of at least 500 and at least two entrances and exits:
  - ❑ Either you or the building operator must control the flow of people through lobbies and other common spaces to allow social distancing and avoid the spread of COVID-19.
  - ❑ Spectators are limited to 25 per room. They must stay six feet or more from athletes and from each other, unless coming from the same household.
  - ❑ Athletes, coaches, and staff in the room are not subject to the Mass Gathering Limit.
  - ❑ The facility as a whole must not exceed 30% of its stated fire capacity (or 7 individuals per 1000 square feet if there is no stated fire capacity), as outlined in the DHHS Interim Guidance Fitness Centers and Gym Settings, counting athletes and spectators together.
- ❑ In indoor courts or rooms within small buildings (with a fire capacity of less than 500, or only one entrance and exit):
  - ❑ Spectators and participants -including players, coaches and support staff - counted together, must not exceed 25 people in the room.
  - ❑ The facility as a whole must not exceed 30% of its stated fire capacity (or 7 individuals per 1000 square feet if there is no stated fire capacity), as outlined in the DHHS Interim Guidance Fitness Centers and Gym Settings, counting athletes and spectators together.

Other Recommended Actions

It is recommended that administrators of sports programs:

- ❑ Have all participants and spectators wear face coverings when they are or may be within six (6) feet of another person. Cloth face coverings must be worn at gyms, exercises facilities and fitness facilities, at all times except when strenuously exercising.
- ❑ Designate and arrange specific equipment for use that is properly spaced at 6 feet apart. Group classes or activities should be spaced out six feet apart.
- ❑ Consider workouts in groups/pods of individuals with the same group always working out together, including weight training, to limit exposure should someone become sick.
- ❑ Remind individuals not to shake hands, give high fives, or fist pumps before, during, or after the game or practice.
- ❑ Coaches, officials, and others should modify communication and avoid up close face to face communication.
- ❑ Schedule games to include adequate buffer times between games to allow athletes, coaches and staff to enter and exit the facility with limited interaction.
- ❑ Personal training services and fitness coaching should practice social distancing to the extent possible. When these services require physical contact between coach and athlete, wash hands immediately prior to and following the contact and face to face contact should be minimal.
- ❑ Limit sharing of equipment and assign individual equipment (e.g., batting gloves, catcher's equipment, discs, racquets, balls) to avoid sharing between participants.
- ❑ Disinfect all shared fitness and sports equipment (if provided) between users, with EPA approved disinfectant for SARS-CoV-2 with adequate contact time allowed for disinfectant as stated by manufacturer. If equipment is to be cleaned by the individual, instructions on how to properly disinfect and appropriate contact time for disinfectant must be provided.
- ❑ Remind individuals to bring their own water bottles, and that those water bottles are not shared.
- ❑ Limit use of hydration stations (water cows, water troughs, water fountains) and provide disposable cups or labeled water bottles for individuals when using any water fountains.
- ❑ If water or food is offered at any event, have pre-packaged boxes or bags for each attendee and provide labeled water bottles or disposable cups, instead of a buffet or family-style meal and shared water coolers/fountains.

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Protect your family and neighbors.

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