



Tulpehocken Area School District Athletic Department Re-socialization of Sports Recommendations

This guidance is preliminary; as more public health information is available, the administration may work with impacted entities to release further guidance, which could impact fall, winter, or spring seasons.

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented athletics across the world with a myriad of challenges. The COVID-19 virus is a highly contagious illness that primarily attacks the upper respiratory system. The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages. Research from the Centers for Disease Control, among others, has found that while children do get infected by COVID-19, relatively few children with COVID-19 are hospitalized. However, some severe outcomes have been reported in children, and a child with a mild or even asymptomatic case of COVID-19 can spread the infection to others who may be far more vulnerable. While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests there are many steps schools can take to reduce the risks to students, coaches, and their families.

TASD will take the necessary precautions and recommendations from the federal, state, and local governments, CDC, PA Department of Health, as well as the NFHS and PIAA. TASD realizes the knowledge regarding COVID-19 is constantly changing as new information and treatments become available. These recommendations may be adjusted as needed as new information becomes available in order to decrease the risk of exposure for our staff, students, and spectators.

The goal of this document is to provide recommendations for the re-socialization of sport with regard to training, practice and competition, keeping in mind the health and safety of our secondary school athletes, coaches/personnel, parents/caregivers and spectators.

- **Benefits of Sport:** The participation in sport has known health benefits, including promoting physical fitness and mental wellness. Sports provide a social construct and interaction, which is necessary in a time of uncertainty for our athletes. It is widely recognized that physical activity, performed for the right amount of time and intensity can provide benefits to the immune system. In addition, sports can provide a template for young athletes to learn concepts of teamwork, leadership, work ethic and integrity.
- **Inherent Risk of Sport:** Participation in athletics involves unavoidable exposure to an inherent risk of injury. It is important to recognize that rule books, safety guidelines and equipment standards, while helpful means of promoting safe athletics participation, are themselves insufficient to accomplish this goal. To effectively minimize the risks of injury from athletics participation, everyone involved in athletics must understand and respect the intent and objectives of applicable rules, guidelines, and standards.

- Return to Activity Following Inactivity: A thoughtful approach to exercise gives athletes a chance to acclimatize to the temperature and the intensity/duration of practices. This slow ramp up of exercise can decrease the risk of injury and heat illness. Since practices and competitions have been halted, many athletes are deconditioned, putting the athlete at much higher risk for injury if pushed too quickly with high volumes and high intensity. The reopening of sports will allow athletes to slowly return to play.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for **ALL LEVELS** for Junior and Senior High Athletics

1. Athletes, Coaches, and Staff will undergo a COVID- 19 health screening prior to any practice, event, or team meeting. The type of screening will be dependent upon the available resources and the Phase level. The purpose is to check for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. The screenings could range from a verbal/written questionnaire to a temperature check. Temperatures at 100.4 or higher will be sent home.
 - a. For outdoor activities, temp checks will be performed while in your vehicle, at the main entrance to the stadium.
 - b. For indoor activities, temp checks will be performed in the gym entrance lobby upon entering the building.
2. Promote healthy hygiene practices such as hand washing (20 seconds with warm water and soap) and employees wearing a cloth face covering as feasible. (Face coverings are recommended to help decrease potential exposure to COVID-19 respiratory droplets by an infected individual. Face Coverings will not be used for athletes while competing.) Hand Sanitizer will be available for team use as resources allow.
3. Intensify cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation in all facilities
4. Encourage social distancing through increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups, if feasible
 - a. Recommend that no more than 10 individuals be permitted in the fitness room at one time due to its size and spacing
 - b. Recommend that when entering the stadium facility, the gates to the right of the ticket booth are used, and when exiting the facility the gates to the left are used
5. Educate Athletes, Coaches, and Staff on health and safety protocols
6. Anyone who is sick must stay home
7. Plan in place if a student or employee gets sick
 - a. Sick individual will be sent to a designated area, which may include a shaded area outside or an air conditioned room inside (if applicable), at least 10 feet away from others, until they can safely leave the school.
 - b. Create a notification procedure to communicate to appropriate administrators when there is a positive screen.
8. Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures
9. Athletes and Coaches **MUST** provide their own water bottle for hydration. Water bottles must not be shared.
 - a. Shared water station or fountains will not be used, for drinking, but can be used to fill up a personal bottle
10. PPE (gloves, masks, eye protection) will be used as needed and situations warrant, or determined by local/state governments.
 - a. All adult staff (coaches, athletic trainers, etc.) must wear masks or face coverings at all times unless doing so jeopardizes their health.

- b. Athletes must wear masks or face coverings when they arrive onsite for health screening and when not actively participating in activity and social distancing is challenging (sidelines, dugouts, athletic training room, etc.).
 - c. Athletes must wear masks or face coverings during activity if contact is closer than 6 ft for a period of time longer than 15 minutes. If athletes are separated by more than 6ft, then no mask is required.
 - d. Allow athletes to wear PPE items at all times if they choose, as long as the items do not compromise the safety of the athlete or others participating in activity.
11. Identify Staff and students who may be at a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 due to underlying medical conditions.(See - CDC “People Who are at a Higher Risk for Severe Illness”)
 - a. These individuals should take extra precautions (gloves, masks, eye protection and increase distancing) or delay their participation in and activities
 12. School outdoor facilities (Stadium Turf & Track, Tennis courts, Fields) will only be available to the public during the following times (12:30pm - 4:30pm), to reduce the number of individuals on campus at once and to separate public use from sports
 13. Concession stands or other food must adhere to the Guidance for Businesses in the Restaurant Industry (when approved to return).

CLASSIFICATION OF SPORTS (TASD specific)

High Risk: Sports that involve close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, and high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants. Examples: wrestling, cheerleading (stunts),

Moderate Risk: Sports that involve close, sustained contact, but with protective equipment in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants OR intermittent close contact OR group sports that use equipment that can't be cleaned between participants. Examples: basketball, baseball, softball, soccer, tennis, pole vault, high jump, long jump,

Low Risk: Sports that can be done with social distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between uses by competitors. Examples: running events, cross country, throwing events, swimming, golf, weightlifting, sideline cheer

** High/Moderate Risk Sports may move to a Low risk category with non-contact modifications. Team Activities should be limited to individual skill development drills that maintain social distancing.

LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION

Level 1 (PA State Red)

Team Activities: No In-person gatherings allowed, Athletes and Coaches may communicate via online meetings (zoom, google meet, etc.), Athletes may participate in individual home workouts including strength and conditioning.

- All school facilities remain closed as per PA State Guidelines.

- Athletes and Coaches should abide by guidelines set forth by the local and state governments.

Level 2 (PA State Yellow) - TASD 1st stage of reopening

Team Activities may include: team meetings, “open gym”, kick around, weight training/conditioning, running events, cross country, throwing events, golf, and sideline cheer, etc.

Pre-workout Screening:

- All coaches and students should be screened for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to a workout. The screenings could range from a verbal/written questionnaire to a temperature check.(See Appendix for COVID-19 Screening Form)
 - TASD coaches may be responsible for screening their athletes, if a trainer is not available
- Responses to screening questions for each person should be recorded and stored so that there is a record of everyone present in case a student develops COVID-19
- Any person with positive symptoms reported should not be allowed to take part in workouts and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate health-care professional. A clearance may be required to return to play.

Limitations on Gatherings:

- No gathering of more than (25) individuals per group including coaches per practice area.
- Controlled non-contact practices, modified game rules
- Social Distancing should be applied during practices and gathering areas
 - Athletes should come dressed to participate, locker rooms will not be used
 - Student Athletes should remain with their assigned groups during each workout and during daily workouts to limit the number of people they come in contact with.
 - No students allowed in training areas without the presence of an athletic trainer (recommend limit of 2 athletes at a time)

Facilities Cleaning:

- Adequate cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable disease
- Athletic Facilities should be cleaned prior to arrival and post workouts and team gatherings, high touch areas should be cleaned more often
- Weight Room Equipment should be wiped down after an individual’s use
- Appropriate clothing/shoes should be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment surfaces

Physical Activity:

- Lower risk sports practices may begin
- Modified practices may begin for Moderate and High risk sports (practices must remain non-contact and include social distancing where applicable, activity should focus on individual skill development, fitness, agility, etc.)
 - TASD will begin with HS Fall sports only upon reopening
- Students should refrain from sharing clothing/towels and should be washed after each practice, including pinnies

- If applicable, coaches should designate pinnies to each individual athlete, and the athlete will be responsible for washing after each occurrence.
- Athletic equipment that may be used by multiple individuals (balls, shot put, discus, pole vault, etc.) should be cleaned intermittently during practice and events as deemed necessary
- Hand Sanitizer should be used periodically as resources allow
- Spotters for maximum weight lifts should be stationed at each end of the bar

Hydration:

- Students MUST bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
- Hydration stations (water coolers, water fountains, water cows, water troughs, etc.) should not be utilized

Level 3 (PA State Green) after 14 days of Level 2 with no confirmed cases during TASD activities

Team activities may include: : basketball, baseball, field hockey, softball, soccer, tennis, pole vault, high jump, long jump, and all others listed under Level 2

Pre-workout/Contest Screening:

- Any person who has COVID-19 symptoms should not be allowed to participate in practice/games, and should contact their primary care physician or another appropriate health-care provider. A clearance may be required to return to play.
- COVID-19 Screenings (Questionnaire and Temperature Checks may continue as per State and Local government recommendations)
- Team attendance should be recorded

Limitations on Gatherings:

- As per State and Local Guidelines, no more than (250) people in the same area
- When not directly participating in practices, social distancing should be considered and applied when able
 - Athletes should come dressed to participate, locker rooms will not be used
 - Student Athletes should remain with their assigned groups during each workout and during daily workouts to limit the number of people they come in contact with.
 - No students allowed in training areas without the presence of an athletic trainer

Facilities Cleaning:

- Adequate cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable disease
- Athletic Facilities should be cleaned prior to arrival and post workouts and team gatherings, high touch areas should be cleaned more often
- Weight Room Equipment should be wiped down after and individual's use
- Appropriate clothing/shoes should be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment surfaces

Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment:

- Low, Moderate, and High Risk practices and Low and Moderate Risk inter-squad scrimmaging may begin (As per State, Local, and PIAA Guidelines)
 - HS winter sports and JH Fall sports may begin practicing at TASD

- Students should refrain from sharing clothing/towels and should be washed after each practice, including pinnies.
- Athletic equipment that may be used by multiple individuals (balls, shot put, discus, pole vault, etc.) should be cleaned intermittently during practice and events as deemed necessary
- Hand Sanitizer should be used periodically as resources allow
- Spotters for maximum weight lifts should be stationed at each end of the bar

Hydration:

- Students MUST bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
 - Water coolers may be used to fill up personal bottles, but MUST be cleaned after every practice/event.

Level 4 (PA State Green) after 14 days of Level 3 with no confirmed cases during TASD activities

Team Activities include: Low/Moderate Sports may resume full play (when cleared by PIAA). High Risk Sports (Wrestling, and Cheerleading Stunting) may begin full person to person contact and competition.

Pre-workout/Contest Screening:

- Any person who has COVID-19 symptoms should not be allowed to participate in practice/games, and should contact their primary care physician or another appropriate health-care provider.
- COVID-19 Screenings (Questionnaire and Temperature Checks may continue as per State and Local government recommendations)
- Team attendance should be recorded

Limitations on Gatherings:

- As per State and Local Guidelines
- When not directly participating in practices or contests, social distancing should be considered and applied when able

Facilities Cleaning:

- Adequate cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable disease
- Athletic Facilities should be cleaned prior to arrival and post workouts and team gatherings, high touch areas should be cleaned more often
- Weight Room Equipment should be wiped down after and individual's use
- Appropriate clothing/shoes should be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment surfaces

Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment:

- All sports may resume normal practice and competition
- Students should refrain from sharing clothing/towels and should be washed after each practice, including pinnies.
- Athletic equipment that may be used by multiple individuals (balls, shields, tackling dummies, shot put, discus, pole vault, etc.) should be cleaned intermittently during practice and events as deemed necessary
- Hand Sanitizer should be used periodically as resources allow
- Spotters for maximum weight lifts should be stationed at each end of the bar

Hydration:

- Students **MUST** bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
- Hydration stations (water coolers, water fountains, water cows, water troughs, etc.) may be used, but **MUST** be cleaned after every practice/event.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS (To be considered at the start of Fall season or sooner)**Transportation:**

Modifications for student/coach transportation to and from athletic events may be necessary.

This may include:

- Reducing the number of students/coaches on a bus/van
- Using hand sanitizer upon boarding a bus/van
- Social distancing on a bus

These potential modifications will be determined by the school district, bus companies, Department of Education, State and Local governments.

Social Distancing during Contests/Events/Activities

- Sidelines/Bench – appropriate social distancing will need to be maintained on sidelines/bench during contests and events, as deemed necessary by the school, PIAA, state and local governments. Consider using tape or paint as a guide for students and coaches.

Who should be allowed at events?

Group people into tiers from essential to non-essential and decide which will be allowed at an event:

1. Tier 1 (Essential) – Athletes, coaches, officials, event staff, medical staff
 2. Tier 2 (Preferred) – Media
 3. Tier 3 (Non-essential) – Spectators, concessions staff
- Only Tier 1 and 2 personnel will be allowed to attend events until state/local governments lift restrictions on mass gatherings.
 - Special consideration should be given to immediate family members (parents/guardians) if limited spectators are permitted
 - Changes to seating capacity and social distancing may be necessary for each venue facility and will be determined as more recommendations are released by the local/state governments.

Overnight/Out of State Events/ Events in COVID-19 Hot Spots

- The TASD will evaluate each event and follow all local/state government guidelines on a case by case basis. Every consideration will be taken as to not expose students to unnecessary or potential high risk exposure.

POSITIVE CASES AND COACHES, STAFF, OR ATHLETES SHOWING COVID-19 SYMPTOMS**What are the signs and symptoms of COVID-19?**

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. The symptoms may range from mild to severe. (See CDC Fact Sheet in Appendix). Symptoms may include:

- Fever or chills (100.4 or High)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore Throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

What to do if you are sick?

- If you are sick with COVID-19 or think you are infected with the virus, STAY AT HOME. It is essential that you take steps to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home or community. If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, call your healthcare provider for medical advice.
- Notify the school immediately (principal, athletic director, athletic trainer, coach)
- In the event a positive case is identified, parents/guardians will be notified by the school district of the positive case without disclosing any identifying information.

What to do if a student or staff become ill with COVID-19 symptoms during practice, event, or during transportation to or from an event?

- Every effort will be made to isolate the ill individual from others, until the student or staff member can leave the school or event
- If student, parent/guardian will be contacted immediately, and arrangements will be made for the student to be picked up
- Ill individual will be asked to contact their physician or appropriate healthcare professional for direction

Return of student or staff to athletics following a COVID-19 diagnosis?

- An individual who was diagnosed with COVID-19 may return when all four of the following criteria are met:
 - At least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
 - Individual has improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)
 - At least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared
 - Written documentation of clearance from a health care provider (MD, DO, NP, PA)

EDUCATION

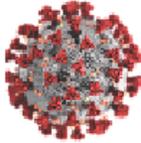
Staff, Coaches, Parents and Athletes will be educated on the following, and may be done through the following means (posters, flyers, meetings, emails, phone calls, website):

- COVID-19 signs and symptoms

- Proper ways to limit exposure to COVID-19 (hand washing, cough in your elbow, disinfecting touched surfaces, social distancing, avoid touching eyes, nose, face and mouth, no spitting, gum chewing, no handshaking etc.)
- The content of this Return to Sport Guidelines Document
- Any pertinent COVID-19 information released by state/local governments, NFHS, and PIAA.

APPENDIX

What you should know about COVID-19 to protect yourself and others



Know about COVID-19

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person.
- The virus that causes COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has spread throughout the world.
- COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness.



Know how COVID-19 is spread

- You can become infected by coming into close contact (about 6 feet or two arm lengths) with a person who has COVID-19. COVID-19 is primarily spread from person to person.
- You can become infected from respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.
- You may also be able to get it by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, and then by touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.



Protect yourself and others from COVID-19

- There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to protect yourself is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Stay home as much as possible and avoid close contact with others.
- Wear a cloth face covering that covers your nose and mouth in public settings.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



Practice social distancing

- Buy groceries and medicine, go to the doctor, and complete banking activities online when possible.
- If you must go in person, stay at least 6 feet away from others and disinfect items you must touch.
- Get deliveries and takeout, and limit in-person contact as much as possible.



Prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick

- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Avoid public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.
- Separate yourself from other people and pets in your home.
- There is no specific treatment for COVID-19, but you can seek medical care to help relieve your symptoms.
- If you need medical attention, call ahead.



Know your risk for severe illness

- Everyone is at risk of getting COVID-19.
- Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more severe illness.



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[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

RESOURCES:

NFHS: Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities (per update on May 2020)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Website: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)

“What You Should Know About COVID-19 to Protect Yourself and Others”,
“Schools Decision Tree”

PA Department of Health

Website: [health.pa.gov](https://www.health.pa.gov)

“Coronavirus Symptoms”

“Phased Reopening Plan by Governor Wolf”

A Guide to Re-Entry to Athletics in Texas Secondary Schools

By Jamie Woodall, MPH, LAT, ATC, CPH and Josh Woodall Med, LAT, ATC

**Guidance for All Sports Permitted to Operate During the COVID-19 Disaster
Emergency to Ensure the Safety and Health of Employees, Athletes and the Public**

<https://www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/sports-guidance/>

Concession stands or other food must adhere to the Guidance for Businesses in the Restaurant Industry.

<https://www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/restaurant-industry-guidance/>

St. Lukes University Health Network: Resocialization of sports from SLUHN perspective

Holidaysburg Area School District Re-socialization of Sports Recommendation