



Interim Guidance for Administrators and Participants of Youth and Amateur Sports Programs April 30, 2021

Guidelines for Conducting Business:

Any scenario in which 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 youth and amateur sports administrators and participants to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Additionally, we strongly encourage all employers to direct employees and customers to information [Find Your Spot, Take Your Shot](#) and encourage them to get vaccinated. For guidance on vaccinations, please refer to our [Interim Guidance for Individuals Who Have Been Vaccinated Against COVID-19](#).

In addition to the requirements below, certain businesses **must follow** Closure Periods or Stay at Home Orders, when they are in effect. For more information on any requirements that are currently in effect and how this applies to your business, please visit [Business Closure Periods and Stay at Home Restrictions](#).

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
Individual Gymnastics	Weightlifting
Individual Sailing/Kayaking	Outdoor/Sand/Beach Volleyball

For Certain Sports for Which Close Contact May Occur but Not Prolonged, DHHS recommends playing outside if possible and limiting tournaments in which multiple teams convene.

Soccer	Volleyball
Baseball	Softball
Crew	Swimming Relays/Group Swimming
Tennis Doubles Match	Field Hockey
Lacrosse	Flag Football
Ultimate	

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
	Basketball
Rugby	Wrestling
Group Dance	Hockey
Pairs Figure Skating	Boxing

Number of Participants and Spectators

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

- For indoor and outdoor venues , follow the occupancy requirements in the [NCDHHS Interim Guidance for Indoor and Outdoor Venues for Live Performances](#).
- Players, coaches, and support staff are not subject to the occupancy requirements listed above.

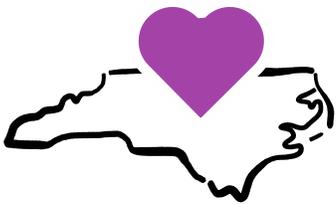
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- Have all coaches, athletes, spectators and other participants wear a face covering indoors, unless they state that an exception applies, or they are more than 6ft away from anyone outside of their household at all times.

Other Recommended Actions

It is recommended that administrators of sports programs:

- Have all coaches, athletes, spectators and other participants wear a face covering outdoors, unless they state that an exception applies.
- 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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Learn more at nc.gov/covid19.



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