



March 24, 2021

To: Presidents, Ex. Directors/CEOs, Recreation Liaisons, Challenge Liaisons, Classic Liaisons, Risk Mgmt Coordinators, Head Registrars, Directors of Coaching,

RE: Mask Mandate Continues

Governor Cooper continued the mask mandate in his Tuesday update, via **Executive Order No. 204, which starts Friday and expires April 30, 2021.** No changes were made to the requirement for face coverings or the exception list. The capacity for sideline spectators was increased - our math suggests we can move from 2-3 spectators per player to 3-4 per player based on typical field size (and fields are not all typical). Read the order (link below) if you have unusual sideline spaces. Social distancing is still required and is the primary safeguard for spectators along with masks.

Thank you for your continued support in improving compliance with all our pre- and post-game guidelines. Referees and coaches are trying to encourage proper mask wearing during play without affecting the game. Stay vigilant a while longer. The COVID numbers have improved, and vaccines plus community vigilance should quicken next steps toward normal.

A few reminders to share:

- Please urge parents and coaches to identify only true mask exceptions to keep our season safe and fair, and to minimize canceled matches. Exceptions are a safety measure, and they should never be used for competitive advantage. A referee may stop or end a match if they are concerned about safety from the number of exceptions.
- Referees have been encouraged to allow players to step out of the action momentarily to "catch their breath", at a safe social distance, by briefly pulling down their masks. Catching their breath will not stop play (but remind them to stay outside).
- Encourage players/parents to bring extra masks. Players are adapting to wet and warm weather by having a few additional clean masks during training or matches.
- As always, parents have the ultimate say in allowing their kids to play.

The Governor's Executive Order 204 and the current NCDHHS Interim Guidance can be found on our <https://www.ncsoccer.org/> website in the COVID section:

<https://files.nc.gov/governor/documents/files/EO204-Further-Easing-Restrictions.pdf>

Be safe,

NCYSA Executive Board