



## Interim Guidance for Administrators and Participants of Youth and Amateur Sports Programs February 26, 2021

**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.

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

## NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

**For Certain Sports for Which Close Contact May Occur but Not Prolonged, DHHS recommends playing outside if possible, wearing face coverings if they can be tolerated, and limiting tournaments in which multiple teams convene.**

Soccer	Volleyball
Baseball	Softball
Crew	Swimming Relays/Group Swimming
Tennis Doubles Match	Field Hockey
Non-Contact 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
Contact Lacrosse	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:**

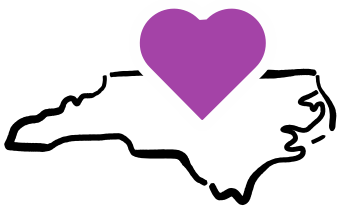
- For indoor and outdoor venues with a capacity under 5,000 seats, follow the occupancy requirements in the Interim Guidance for [Indoor and Outdoor Small & Medium Size Venues for Live Performances](#).
- For indoor venues with more than 5,000 seating capacity or outdoor venues with more than 10,000 seating capacity, follow the occupancy requirements in the [Interim Guidance for Large and Very Large Indoor and Outdoor Venues](#).
- Players, coaches, and support staff are not subject to the occupancy requirements listed above.
- Have all coaches, athletes, spectators and other participants wear a face covering indoors, unless they state that an exception applies.

- Have all coaches, athletes, spectators and other participants wear a face covering outdoors, 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:

- 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.



**#StayStrongNC**

**Staying apart brings us together.  
Protect your family and neighbors.**

**Learn more at [nc.gov/covid19](https://nc.gov/covid19).**



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**