

All Sports Guidance

Updated February 5, 2021

This guidance issued by the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) pertains to all youth and adult recreational sports, including, but not limited to, school-based sports (high school and elementary school), travel clubs, private leagues and clubs, recreational leagues and centers, and park district sports programs. This guidance does NOT pertain to professional sports leagues or college division level sports. This guidance supersedes all previously issued All Sports Guidance issued by DCEO, IDPH and /or ISBE.

These guidelines do not apply to adult sport activities subject to existing DCEO guidance identified below:

- For recreational golf, refer to existing guidance on the [DCEO website](#).
- For recreational bowling, refer to existing guidance on the [DCEO website](#).

Wearing face coverings or masks with coverage of nose and mouth, including during competition, reduces the transmission of disease and, in accordance with the communicable disease code, all participants who can medically tolerate a face covering must wear a face covering when unable to maintain at least a 6-foot social distance.

This guidance will be regularly updated as public health conditions change and new information becomes available.

HIGHER RISK	MODERATE RISK	LOWER RISK
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basketball • Boxing • Football • Hockey • Lacrosse • Martial Arts • Rugby • Ultimate Frisbee • Wrestling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flag Football or 7v7 Football • Futsal • Paintball • Racquetball • Soccer • Volleyball • Water Polo • Wheelchair Basketball 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archery • Badminton • Baseball • Bass Fishing • Bowling • Competitive Cheer • Competitive Dance • Climbing • Crew • Cross Country • Cycling • Fencing • Disc Golf • Scholastic Golf • Gymnastics • Horseback Riding • Ice Skating • Ropes Courses • Sailing, Canoeing, Kayaking • Sideline Spirit • Skateboarding • Softball • Skiing • Swimming/Diving • Tennis • Track and Field • Trap Shooting • Weight Lifting

Additional detailed guidance on sport-specific mitigation efforts, including appropriate distance, cleaning of equipment, and use of masks by participants, are included below.

The level of play allowed is dictated by current public health conditions.

Below are the **Type of Play Levels:**

Level 1	No-contact practices, and trainings only
Level 2	Intra-team scrimmages allowed, with parental consent for minors; no competitive play
Level 3	Intra-conference or intra-EMS-region ¹ or intra-league play/meets only; state- or league-championship game/meet allowed for low-risk sports only
Level 4	Tournaments, out-of-conference/league play, out-of-state play allowed; championship games allowed

¹ EMS Regions are the 11 regions IDPH uses for the Restore Illinois boundaries

The following Play Levels are allowed according to sport risk and current mitigation Tier:

Sports Risk	Phase 4	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Lower-Risk	Level 4	Level 4	Level 3	Pause all indoor sporting activities, including youth and adult recreational sports. Outdoor sporting activities may continue at Level 1.
Medium-Risk	Level 4 for sport played outdoors Level 3 for sport played indoors	Level 3	Level 2	
Higher-Risk	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1	

Teams at Play Level 3 may play against non-conference opponents, including opponents from other EMS regions, if the opponent is located within a 30-mile radius and also plays at Level 3 or 4.

Teams at Play Level 4 may play against in-state non-conference opponents, including opponents from other EMS regions, if the opponent also plays at Level 4. If playing outside of Illinois, teams at Play Level 4 should avoid travel to areas of higher risk as recommended in the [IDPH Travel Guidance](#). For more information and guidance, please review the HR and Travel Policies below.

In addition to wearing a mask covering nose and mouth throughout the activity, the following mitigation efforts can lower the risk of COVID-19 transmission while engaged in the following sports:

Baseball	Maintain at least 6-feet apart in dugout areas or if players are seated in bleachers behind dugout
Bass Fishing	Limit number of individuals on boat to allow for social distancing

Bowling	Clean and sanitize equipment, including bowling balls, before and after each game; do not share equipment between players; limit bowlers per lane to maintain at least 6 feet social distance throughout play
Competitive Cheer	Minimize contact between participants by maintaining at least 6 feet of distancing on the floor during routines, including when changing formations, and by prohibiting lifts, stunts, pyramids, and tosses as well as shared equipment (e.g., signs, flags, poms). Avoid shouting, singing, and chanting. Teams located in EMS Regions in Phase 4 may resume lifts, stunts, pyramids, and tosses.
Competitive Dance	Minimize contact between dancers by maintaining at least 6 feet of distance (i.e., spacing) on the floor during routines, including when changing formations, and by prohibiting lifts and tosses and shared equipment (e.g., poms); Avoid shouting, singing, and chanting. Teams located in EMS Regions in Phase 4 may resume lifts and tosses.
Cross County	Limit the number of teams and follow physical workspace guidelines
Cycling	Play individually or use only every other track in velodrome
Gymnastics	Clean equipment between participants and limit sharing of personal equipment or materials (e.g., chalk); all non-participant personnel (e.g., spotters) should wear masks at all times.
Ice Skating	Play individually or have one exclusive skating partner
Ropes Courses	Maintain at least 6 feet of socially distance and clean equipment between each individual
Sailing	Limit number on boat to socially distance
Sideline spirit	Maintain at least 6 feet of social distance on the floor during routines, including when changing formations, and by prohibiting lifts, stunts, pyramids, and tosses as well as shared equipment (e.g., signs, flags, poms); avoid shouting, singing, and chanting
Softball	Maintain at least 6-feet apart in dugout areas or when players are seated in bleachers behind dugout
Swimming/Diving	Restrict play to a single lane; no synchronized swimming. Teams located in EMS Regions in Phase 4 may resume relays.
Tennis	Minimize touching of shared objects
Track and Field	Apply delayed starts, use every other track, and clean equipment between usage; modify relays and team races to minimize contact between players, including by not sharing equipment (e.g., batons). Teams located in EMS Regions in Phase 4 may resume using shared equipment within their team.
Volleyball	Maintain distance of at least 6 feet between players on each side of net and on the bench
Weight Lifting	Clean between each individual

Uniform guidelines across businesses, industries, and nonprofits within the State of Illinois; the following two categories (General Health, HR and Travel Policies) do not apply to school-based activities.

General Health

Minimum guidelines

1. All employees who can work from home should continue to do so
2. Employees should wear face coverings over their nose and mouth when within 6-ft. of others (at least two-ply cloth masks preferred). Exceptions may be made where accommodations are appropriate – see IDHR’s guidance
3. Social distance of at least 6-ft. should be maintained between non-household individuals
4. Frequent hand washing by employees, and an adequate supply of soap/ paper towels and/or disinfectant/ hand sanitizer should be available

HR and Travel Policies

Minimum guidelines

1. All employees and workers who perform work at the worksite (such as temporary or contract workers) should complete health and safety training related to COVID-19 when initially returning to work. Resources to design a training are posted on the DCEO Restore Illinois guidelines website
2. When travel is necessary, employees should follow CDC travel guidance to protect themselves and others.
3. Employees should follow IDPH travel guidance to protect themselves and others by not traveling to states at higher risk for transmission of COVID-19.
 - a. When traveling domestically or international, avoid travel to areas of higher risk. Wear a face covering while in the airport, during the flight, and during any shared transit. If your essential travel requires you to be in areas of higher risk, attempt to travel during less crowded or lower-demand travel times in order to reduce exposure. Upon returning home, stay home if possible, and monitor your health for 14 days.
4. Employees should not report to, or be allowed to remain at, work if sick or symptomatic (with cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever of 100.4 degrees or above, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, or other CDC-identified symptoms), and sick or symptomatic employees should be encouraged to seek a COVID-19 test at a state or local government testing center, healthcare center or other testing locations, and follow CDC guidelines for self-isolation.
5. Employees who come into close contact with an infected employee– i.e., employees who were within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period – should follow CDC guidelines for self-quarantine.
6. Employers should clearly explain all paid leave policies and make workers aware that they may be eligible for benefits if they are sick or symptomatic
7. Employers should be aware that the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 and provisions of state law prohibit employers from retaliating against workers for raising safety or health concerns

Encouraged best practices

1. Sports organizers should limit the number of participants and other individuals traveling together for sports activities. Organizers should avoid mixing team cohorts or pods or participant households. If group

travel is absolutely necessary, follow CDC recommendations to prevent spread of COVID-19 when carpooling:

- a. Wear appropriate face coverings in shared vehicles.
 - b. Use fresh air through vents and windows.
 - c. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces often.
 - d. Use proper hand hygiene.
 - e. Cover coughs and sneezes.
 - f. Ride with the same people (e.g., team cohort).
2. Provide reasonable accommodation for COVID-19-vulnerable employees, including but not limited to work from home (if feasible), reduced contact with others, use of barriers to ensure minimum distance between others whenever feasible or other accommodations that reduce chances of exposure
 3. When possible, limit travel to within each of the 11 regions IDPH uses for the Restore Illinois guidelines.
 4. Encourage employees to cooperate with contact tracing efforts to identify and inform their close contacts of their potential exposure to SARS-CoV-2.

Health Monitoring

Minimum guidelines

1. Sports organizations should encourage the practice of temperature and symptom checks by employees. Organizers should post information about the symptoms of COVID-19 in order to allow employees, participants, and spectators to self-assess whether they have any symptoms
2. All employers should have a wellness screening program. Resources outlining screening program best practices are posted on the DCEO Restore Illinois guidelines website
3. Before allowing participation in sporting activities, sport organizers or coaches should ask whether participant is currently exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms. If participant does have symptoms, they should wait to enter premises or participate in any sporting activity for a minimum of 10 days after symptom onset OR until feverless and feeling well (without fever-reducing medication) for at least 24 hours
4. Sport organizers or coaches should maintain attendance log of participants for contact tracing purposes. Sports organizers should maintain attendance logs of all facility rentals, spectators, and employees for contact tracing purposes
5. If employee, coach, participant, or spectator reports having any COVID-19 related symptoms, sports organizer should encourage individual to contact their health care provider; if multiple individuals report having any COVID-19 related symptoms, sports organizer or coach should notify their local health department within three days of being informed of the presence of COVID-19 symptoms; if multiple individuals test positive for COVID-19, sports organizer or coach should notify their local health department within one day of positive test results
6. If an employee, athlete, coach, or spectator is identified as being COVID-19 positive by testing, cleaning and disinfecting should be performed according to CDC guidelines
7. Where appropriate, notify individuals who have been exposed. Individuals who tested positive should not be identified by name.
8. Any individual who has had close contact (15 min or more) with any other person who is diagnosed with COVID-19 should quarantine for 14 days after the last/ most recent contact with the infected individual and should seek a COVID-19 test at a state or local government testing center, healthcare center or other testing locations. All other individuals should be on alert for symptoms of fever, cough, or shortness of breath and taking temperature if symptoms develop

Physical Workspace

Minimum guidelines

1. Sports organizers should display signage at entry with face covering requirements, social distancing guidelines, cleaning protocols, behavioral guidance, and any reduced capacity limit, in multiple languages as needed.
2. Non-competitive activities (activities in Level 1) should be set up to allow for at least 6 feet social distance between participants whenever possible, both during active gameplay and for other participants not actively exercising or involved in the activity.
3. Sports organizers should allow for at least 6 feet social distance for all participants not actively exercising or involved in the sporting activity (e.g., on the bench or sidelines, in the stands). If a sporting facility has stations for individual recreation activities, sport organizers should ensure at least 6 feet between stations. If stations cannot be moved, sport organizers should limit the number of open stations to ensure participants can maintain at least 6 feet social distance whenever possible.
4. Sports organizers should prohibit access to locker rooms whenever possible. Participants should arrive to the venue dressed for play. If locker rooms and showers are a necessity, sports organizers should require all entrants to wear a face covering at all times and the space should be configured with signage, tape, and other markings to ensure participants can maintain 6 feet social distance at all times.
5. Sport organizers should designate an area for spectators with existing seating (e.g., bleachers) or in space around area of play. Organizers should ensure there is space available such that spectators can maintain at least 6 feet social distance between themselves and spectators that are not members of the same household or party.
 - a. Display visual markers (e.g., tape, cones) at least 6 feet apart for seating.
 - b. Remove any furniture and restrict spectators' access to any areas not conducive to maintaining at least 6 feet social distance.
 - c. If seats cannot be moved, venue operators should limit the number of open seats to ensure spectators can maintain at least 6 feet social distance (e.g., zip tie unused seats, remove seat bottoms, cover unused seats).
6. Sports organizers or venues should configure space to ensure there is at least 30 feet social distance between spectators and participants or, in the case 30 feet is not practicable for the venue, spectators are seated on the opposite side of the playing space (e.g., field, court) from participants not actively engaged in play and at a distance of least 12 feet from participants.
7. Sports organizers and venues that provide concessions should follow Restaurant and Bar guidelines for all food and beverage operations in line with the regional Tier mitigation levels as outlined in the Restore Illinois guidelines.

Encouraged best practices

1. Whenever possible, configure the area of play to allow for at least 6 feet social distance between participants, including for sports at Play Levels 2-4. Refer to the guidance above regarding mitigation efforts to lower transmission risk for particular sports.
2. Display visual markers at least 6 feet apart at any queue points (e.g. check-in, along sidelines, concessions).
3. Designate an area separate from others for anyone who exhibits COVID-like symptoms during the activity session to isolate from others before being picked up to leave.

4. If practical, expand seating beyond current capacity (e.g., bleachers, stands) by utilizing any available field or court space to encourage social distancing between spectators.
 - a. Use portable seating from other activity areas.
 - b. Encourage spectators to bring their own additional seating (e.g., chairs) from home.
5. Stream practices and games online, if possible, to promote virtual spectating.
6. Provide “grab-and-go” concessions that are pre-packaged and individually wrapped with markers spaced at least 6 feet apart to represent appropriate social distance between queued spectators and participants.

Procedures for Cleaning and Disinfecting

Minimum guidelines

1. Cleaning and disinfecting of premises should be conducted on a weekly basis in compliance with protocols from the CDC and EPA.
2. Clean and disinfect common areas (e.g., restrooms) and surfaces which are touched by multiple people (e.g., entry/exit doorknobs, stair railings) frequently
3. Sports organizers should make hand sanitizer or hand washing stations available to participants.
4. Minimize sharing of high-touch equipment between non-household individuals. If equipment is to be shared, sports organizers should sanitize equipment before and after use (see EPA approved list of disinfectants).
 - a. Athletic equipment such as bats and batting helmets should be cleaned between each use. Other equipment, such as catchers gear, hockey helmets/ pads, wrestling ear guards, football helmets/other pads, lacrosse helmets/ pads/gloves/eyewear should be worn by only one individual and not shared
5. Sanitization of locker rooms and showers should be completed at the beginning and end of practice/games at minimum.
6. Sport organizers should sanitize any individual recreation stations before and after participant use.
7. All required disinfecting, cleaning, or sanitizing activities to be conducted by employees should be within their normal workday or during otherwise compensated time.

Encouraged best practices

1. If practical, sanitize shared equipment during use (e.g., between drills) and encourage frequent hand sanitizing or hand washing, including during gameplay (e.g., between quarters, at time outs, when returning to the bench)
2. Athletes should be encouraged to shower and wash their workout clothing immediately upon returning home.

Staffing and Attendance

Minimum guidelines

1. For contact tracing purposes, sports organizers or venues should maintain a log of all spectators and non-participant visitors in attendance and schools or coaches should maintain a log of all participants in attendance.
2. Sports organizers should limit spectator attendance as follows, in accordance with regional Tier mitigation levels as outlined in the Restore Illinois guidelines:

- a. When located in a region not facing specific mitigation efforts outlined in the Restore Illinois guidelines:
 - i. Gatherings of up to 50 spectators, indoors or outdoors, are allowed.
 - b. When located in a region under Tier 1 mitigation efforts per the Restore Illinois guidelines:
 - i. Gatherings of up to 25 spectators, indoors or outdoors, are allowed.
 - c. When located in a region under Tier 2 or more restrictive mitigation efforts per the Restore Illinois guidelines:
 - i. No spectators are allowed, whether indoors or outdoors.
3. Sports organizers should limit spectators to immediate household members or guardians of participants. Others should be considered only if space allows.
 4. Sports organizers or venues may host multiple groups of participants engaged in active exercise or gameplay (e.g., multiple games happening in the same location), both indoors and outdoors, as long as:
 - a. The venue allows for all attendees to maintain at least 6 feet social distance throughout gameplay and during any ancillary contacts (e.g., spectator areas, entry, exit, concessions, etc.).
 - b. The venue allows for separation of at least 30 feet between contests, with areas for each contest marked to discourage interaction and limit contacts between groups when not actively exercising or engaged in competitive play.
 - c. Sports organizers require all participants and attendees to wear appropriate face coverings over their noses and mouths.
 - d. If the region in which the practice or game is taking place is facing specific mitigation efforts, at Tier 1 or higher, as outlined in the Restore Illinois Guidelines, then each group must be separated by an impermeable barrier or, if no such impermeable barriers exist, at least 50 feet of distance or every other playing space (e.g., field, court).
 5. Sport organizers should design a plan to allow all attendees to maintain at least 6 feet social distance within the venue and, if needed, designate employee(s) or coaches to monitor capacity limits and social distancing.
 6. Sports organizers should ensure that any participants not actively exercising or participating in gameplay should sit on the sidelines at least 6 feet apart from one another.
 7. Sports organizers should direct all individuals to refrain from shouting, singing, or chanting.
 8. Sports organizers should designate employee(s) or coaches to remind spectators, participants, and others to follow state guidance regarding face coverings, social distance, hygiene, behavior (e.g., no shouting, singing, or chanting), and other rules.
 9. Sport organizers should limit the occupancy of common areas and break rooms to allow for at least 6 feet social distance by removing or decommissioning furniture or staggering break times; this guideline is not intended to diminish employees break time requirements.

Encouraged best practices

1. Limit the number of individuals from separate organizations who attend games or contests to keep sports gatherings as small as possible. Individual organizations should consider higher priority attendance for athletes, coaches, officials, medical staff, event staff, and security, and lower priority for others, such as spectators, media, and vendors.
2. Stagger game and practice times to minimize congregation of groups.
3. Teams/ groups should be static, with no mixing of employees or participants between groups for the duration of the season, if practical.

4. If practical, assign participants from the same household to the same team or group.
5. When possible, spectators from the same household should sit together.

External Interactions

Minimum guidelines

1. Before allowing external supplier or non-participant visitor to enter, or while requiring them to wait in a designated area, sport organizers should ask whether an external supplier or nonparticipant visitor is currently exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms.
 - a. If practical, sport organizers should take external supplier or non-participant visitor temperature using thermometer (infrared/ thermal cameras preferred, touchless thermometers permitted).
2. Sport organizers should keep log of all external suppliers, visitors, spectators who enter premises.
3. Suppliers and other visitors should wear face coverings over their nose and mouth when entering premises (exceptions can be made for people with medical conditions or disabilities that prevent them from safely wearing a face covering).

Encouraged best practices

1. Limit contact between external suppliers/ non-participant visitors and employees.
2. For youth sports, suspend post-activity group snacks.
3. As practical, adults dropping off or picking up participants should wait at designated drop-off/ pick-up areas and should arrive during a designated time window that limits congregation of persons at any one location.
4. Volunteers should abide by static team/ group guidelines applied to employees with no mixing between groups for the duration of the season/ volunteer period, if practical.
5. When possible, sports organizers should make lower-cost personal protective equipment available to spectators and other non-participant visitors to ensure they comply with stated guidance regarding face coverings, social distance, and hygiene.

Customer Behaviors

Minimum guidelines

1. Spectators and non-participant visitors must wear a face covering at all times that fully covers their nose and mouth and fits snugly against the sides of the face with no gaps, whether indoors or outdoors, except for:
 - a. when actively eating or drinking,
 - b. people with medical conditions or disabilities that prevent them from safely wearing a face covering,
 - c. Individuals younger than 2 years of age, and
 - d. Individuals who have trouble breathing or are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the cover without assistance.
2. All participants must wear a face covering that fully covers their nose and mouth and fits snugly against the sides of the face with no gaps, whether indoors or outdoors, unless a medical condition prohibits the participant from wearing a face covering.
3. All participants, attendees, and other individuals involved with sports activities should refrain from shouting, singing, or chanting.
4. Participants should wash hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer before participating and, when practical, during gameplay (e.g., between quarters, at time outs, when returning to the bench).

5. Participants should bring their own source of water and refrain from using any communal sources of hydration (e.g., team water or sports drink jug).
6. Participants should not share athletic towels, clothing, or shoes.
7. All attendees should refrain from handshakes, high fives, fist bumps, hugs, "go-team" hand raises, etc.
8. All attendees should refrain from spitting or blowing of the nose without the use of a tissue.

Encouraged best practices

1. All participants should wear a face covering that fully covers their nose and mouth, including during practices and competitions, and when maintaining at least 6 feet social distance is not possible.
2. When possible, sports organizers should separate larger teams into smaller cohorts or "pods" to facilitate appropriate distancing during sports activities and minimize within-team contacts. Avoid mixing between pods as much as possible.
3. Whenever possible, sports organizers should avoid ancillary and non-sports-related contacts between participants (e.g., team meetings, study sessions, carpooling, dinners, etc.) to limit opportunities for exposure and transmission.
4. Require physicians notes for individuals who have a medical contraindication to wearing a face covering.
5. If practical, sport organizers should take participants' temperature using thermometer (infrared/ thermal cameras preferred, touchless thermometers permitted) prior to participation in the activity.
6. When possible, sports organizers should make lower-cost personal protective equipment available to spectators and others to ensure they comply with stated guidance regarding face coverings, social distance, and hygiene.
7. Activity sessions should be held by appointment only (e.g., limit walk-ins, limit pick-up games).
8. Participants should sanitize hands regularly.
9. Participants should avoid touching facility accessories (e.g., goal posts, flags).
10. Participants should use their own equipment (e.g., helmet, bat, gloves) as much as practical.
11. Participants should place personal belongings at least 6 feet away from others' personal belongings.

Follow the latest regional metrics at: <https://dph.illinois.gov/regionmetrics>

For more information on guidance for businesses, please visit the [FAQ on DCEO's website](#).