



**Department of Recreation & Cultural Affairs**  
705 Kinderkamack Rd. River Edge, NJ 07661

**RETURN TO PLAY POLICY**

**Updated 6/11/2021**

**EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 244** ended the Public Health Emergency, thus rescinding all Executive Orders pertaining to youth sports. Below are the changes and guidelines for youth sports as per the NJ Department of Health and CDC.

Individuals are not required to wear masks at indoor or outdoor events, unless the operator imposes its own requirements. Unvaccinated individuals are encouraged to wear masks.

There is no longer a numerical limit for indoor and outdoor settings. Social distancing is encouraged for all athletes (when not actively participating in activity), coaches, referees, trainers, and spectators, in both indoor and outdoor settings, regardless of vaccination status.

All interstate outdoor and indoor tournaments for youth sports, up to and including high school are permitted. Interstate youth sports competition includes any sports game, scrimmage, tournament, or similar competition with opposing teams or individuals from different states competing against each other and which would require an opposing team or individual to travel from a state outside of New Jersey.

While New Jersey's Travel Advisory is no longer in effect, individuals are encouraged to review CDC guidance regarding travel before participating in interstate activities, available, [here](#).

Quarantine guidelines remain in effect. *The Department of Recreation and Cultural Affairs will follow in line with River Edge School's quarantine procedures, which corresponds with [Quarantine Timeframes via Regional Transmission Risk Level](#).*

For Regional Risk Level Refer to <https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/statistics/covid/>

Leagues should continue to follow the below guidance as recommended by the NJ Department of Health and CDC.

**I. UNDERSTANDING POLICIES & EXECUTIVE ORDERS**

- A. All players, coaches, staff, spectators and other attendees must adhere to:
  - a. The required guidelines outlined in the New Jersey Department of Health [Guidance For Sports Activities](#)
  - b. Recent [New Jersey Executive Orders](#)
  - c. Guidelines from the CDC on [Considerations for Youth Sports Administrators](#) and [Playing Sports](#)
  - d. Any additional mandates set forth by the Governing Body of River Edge
  - e. All Policies outlined in this document
- B. Parents or guardians of players must sign the Borough's [Hold Harmless Agreement](#) as well as any other documents deemed necessary by the particular league.

**II. LEAGUE PREPARATION**

- A. Each sports program should create a plan ("program preparation plan") to ensure the following:
  - 1. Identify adult staff members or volunteers to help remind coaches, players and staff of social distancing. Use of signs, tapes or physical barriers can be used to assist with guiding social distancing requirements.
  - 2. Within the program, consider creating consistent groups of the same staff, volunteers, and athletes, and avoid mixing between groups.

3. Individuals shall remain 6 feet apart from one another whenever possible. This applies to athletes, coaching staff, and referees, as well as parents/guardians and other spectators to the extent they are permitted.
4. Unvaccinated individuals are strongly encouraged to wear face masks, subject to the conditions outlined above, particularly where social distancing cannot be maintained. Face masks should not be worn when engaged in activities that may cause the cloth face covering to become wet, like when swimming, or when doing so may endanger the individual's health. When face masks are not worn, efforts should be made to maintain at least 6 feet from others
5. Create staggered schedules to limit contact between groups and/or players.
6. Limit the use of carpools or van pools. When riding in an automobile to a sports event, encourage players to ride to the sports event with persons living in their same household.
7. All staff should be educated on COVID-19 health and safety protocols prior to the resumption of athletic activities, including:
  1. Revised practice rules and regulations in place during COVID-19;
  2. The importance of staying home when experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or residing with someone experiencing symptoms of COVID-19;
  3. Social distancing and face coverings;
  4. Proper hand hygiene;
  5. How to address a situation in which an athlete presents with symptoms of COVID-19; and
  6. How to address situations in which social distancing or other necessary requirements are challenged by athletes or parents/guardians/visitors.

### III. EDUCATION

- A. All volunteers, parents and athletes should be educated on [Covid-19](#) health & safety protocols
- B. All volunteers, parents and athletes should be educated on the [symptoms of COVID-19](#) and should stay home if they or anyone in their household displays any of the following symptoms: Fever/chills, Cough, Shortness/difficulty breathing, Fatigue, Muscle/ body aches, Headache, loss of taste/ smell, Sore throat, Congestion, runny nose, nausea/vomiting, diarrhea
- C. All volunteers, parents and athletes should be educated on how [COVID-19 is spread](#):
- D. All volunteers, parents and athletes should be educated [when to quarantine](#)
- E. All volunteers, parents and athletes should follow any quarantine guidelines that has been directed towards them from the state, school or work
- F. All volunteers, parents and athletes should be consistently monitoring themselves and those in their household for symptoms of Covid-19
- G. All volunteers, parents and athletes should take every precaution and take the time to disinfect all player equipment prior to and after each activity.
- H. All volunteers, parents and athletes must come prepared with their own labeled water bottle, hand sanitizer or wipes.

### IV. ACTIVITY SCREENING AND ADMITTANCE

- A. All parents/guardians must sign the Borough's [Athletic Waiver and Release of Liability](#) for each child prior to participating
- B. Screening and Admittance will be overseen by designated volunteers of the program. Volunteers will keep a [log](#) of the information collected each day.
  - a. Before the start of a practice or game, temperature checks and/or health questionnaire will be overseen by designated volunteers of all players, coaches/volunteers, and team personnel upon arrival.
  - b. All participants must be screened on the following questions (if yes to any, will be sent home)
    - o Has fever reducing medication been administered in the last 24hours?

- Do you or anyone in your household have any of the following symptoms: Fever/chills, Cough, Shortness/difficulty breathing, Fatigue, Muscle/ body aches, Headache, loss of taste/smell, Sore throat, Congestion, runny nose, nausea/vomiting, diarrhea
- Have you come in close contact\* with anyone diagnosed with COVID19 in the Past 14 Days?
- Are you currently isolating or quarantining because you may have been exposed to a person with Covid-19 or are worried that you may be sick with COVID-19?
- Are you currently waiting on the results of a COVID-19 Test?
- c. Persons that have a fever of 100.4° or answer yes to any of the above questions will not be admitted to the program
- C. During activities, if any participants, volunteers, or spectators show symptoms related to COVID-19 they will be immediately sent home to isolate and reported to the Department of Recreation and Cultural Affairs.

## V. FACE MASKS, INFECTION CONTROL AND SOCIAL DISTANCING

- A. All outdoor activities must adhere to any outdoor gathering limitations via [Executive Orders](#) in effect at the time of the activity.
- B. Unvaccinated individuals are strongly encouraged to wear masks, particularly where social distancing cannot be maintained.
- C. Players, coaches, and spectators should remain 6-feet apart whenever possible.
- D. Programs should plan to stagger group practices and competitions to limit interaction between groups.
- E. Players and coaches should avoid all but the essential contact necessary during practice or games.
- F. Nonessential contact is prohibited (no touching, high fives, fist pumps, chest bumps, etc.)
- G. Spitting is restricted
- H. Equipment should not be shared whenever possible. When shared, all equipment should be sanitized before and after its use.
- I. Sharing of equipment between teams and other groups is highly discouraged during practices. Whenever possible, teams should have their own practice equipment.
- J. All athletes, coaches, and staff should bring their own water and drinks to activities (no shared water coolers) Food and Beverages are not permitted to be shared.
- K. Leagues are encouraged to mark off spectator/chaperone viewing sites to allow for social distancing.
- L. Visitors showing symptoms of COVID-19 should not be permitted to attend
- M. All state requirements and CDC guidelines should be followed even when participating at a non-Borough

## VI. FACILITY

- A. Signage should be visible during each activity with reminders regarding social distancing protocols, face covering requirements (if applicable), and good hygiene practices (e.g., hand hygiene, covering coughs)
- B. If restrooms are available at each facility, and they should be used frequently to wash hands whenever possible
  - 1. All Borough restrooms are cleaned daily, with the exception of the winter months when the restrooms are closed for the season.
- C. Reduce crowding around entrances, exits, and other high-traffic areas of the facility;
- D. Ensure routine and frequent cleaning and disinfecting, particularly of high touch surfaces in accordance with CDC recommendations;
- E. Limit occupancy in restrooms that remain open to avoid overcrowding, maintain social distancing through signage and, where practicable, utilize attendants to monitor capacity
- F. Have hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, soap and water, or other sanitizing materials readily available at entrances, exits, benches, dugouts, and any other area prone to gathering or high traffic.
- G. On any given field or space, provide for sufficient space between designated groups to prevent interaction.

- H. Indoor facilities should ensure appropriate indoor air/ventilation by:
1. Keeping doors and windows open where possible and utilize fans to improve ventilation.
  2. Inspect and evaluate the heating, ventilation, and conditioning (HVAC) unit to ensure that the system is operating within its design specifications and according to existing building code standards.
  3. Conducting routine maintenance as recommended by the manufacturer or HVAC professional.
  4. Within the design specification of the HVAC unit:
    - a. Increasing the volume of outdoor air to the maximum capacity while the gym is occupied.
    - b. Reducing the volume of recirculated air being returned to the indoor spaces Increasing the volume of air being delivered to the indoor spaces to the maximum capacity
    - c. Selecting maximum filtration levels for the HVAC unit
    - d. Ensuring that the HVAC unit runs continuously while the facility is occupied.
    - e. Ensuring that the HVAC unit runs for at least two hours before and two hours after the facility is occupied.
    - f. Considering installing portable air cleaners equipped with a high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter to increase the amount of clean air within the facility.
    - g. Reviewing and following the latest CDC guidance for ventilation requirements

## VII. REPORTING OF COVID -19 CASE

- A. Any person who has tested positive for COVID-19 must report it to their coach or league administrator immediately.
- B. Should a person be noticeably sick during a program, or have a fever of 100.4 or greater must immediately be separated and send home and should be tested for Covid-19.
- C. If league is notified of a positive case, report to the Department of Recreation & Cultural Affairs immediately by completing the [COVID-19 REPORT FORM](#).
- D. Leagues should **ensure proper privacy/HIPAA related laws** and should not share individual names with the community.
- E. Individuals who had contact with a sick person should be immediately separated and sent home to [quarantine](#) from last known exposure with Covid-19 positive individual.
- F. Close off area sick person used for 24 hours.
- G. Clean and disinfect surfaces & shared objects in area sick person has touched after area has been closed off for 24 hour period.
- H. Notify staff, families, or other teams immediately of suspected COVID case, if contact was made within 2 days of the positive test. **Ensuring proper privacy/HIPAA related laws.**
- I. **The state will notify and advise any close contacts of COVID positive person** (i.e. for period starting 2 days before person became sick/showed symptoms)
- J. COVID-19 diagnosed persons must remain in isolation for at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared AND At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication AND other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving.

## VIII. [QUARANTINE](#)

- A. When a Covid-19 positive test is reported, all close contacts of the individual within 2-days of positive test must [quarantine](#)
- B. **CLOSE CONTACTS** are individuals who has been within [6 feet of an infected person](#) for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period, 2 days before they have any symptoms or 2 days before the positive specimen collection date.
- C. **POSTIVE COVID-19 TEST:** Any team that has a report of a positive COVID-19 test from a player, coach, or visiting team and has been in close contact with the individual 2 days before they have any symptoms or 2 days before the positive specimen collection date, must [quarantine](#)
- D. **PLAYER/COACH CLOSE CONTACT:** If an athlete or coach has had close contact with a positive COVID-19 individual outside the athletic environment (e.g. notified by school, same household, party, or

any other event outside of team activity.) Individual should [quarantine](#) immediately. Parent should contact their doctor and notify the coach and league administrator immediately.

- E. **FAMILY MEMBER IN QUARANTINE:** If a family member is placed under quarantine for having contact with a COVID-19 positive individual (e.g., A sibling had direct contact in class at school with a positive case and the school has instructed to quarantine; A parent at work had direct contact with a case.) Family should review if sick family member is unable to physically quarantine (i.e. shares room with sibling or based on living situation cannot remain away from others in household.) then the athlete should also quarantine to assure no risk to team.
- F. Refer to the [Quarantine Timeframes via Regional Transmission Risk Level](#) for quarantine timeframes.
- G. For Regional Risk Level Refer to <https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/statistics/covid/>
- H. Other Resources:
  - 1. [CDC: COVID-19 When to Quarantine](#)
  - 2. [NJDOH Quarantine Options](#)

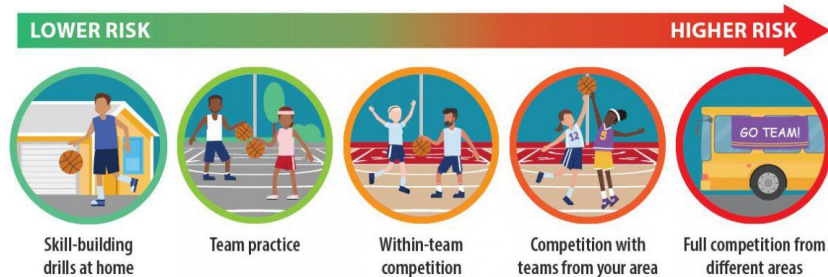
*\*Close contacts are individuals who has been within [6 feet of an infected person](#) (laboratory-confirmed or a [clinically compatible illness](#)) for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (for example, three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes in one day). An infected person can spread SARS-CoV-2 starting from 2 days before they have any symptoms (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days before the positive specimen collection date), until they meet criteria for [discontinuing home isolation](#).*

## IX. UNDERSTANDING & ASSESSING THE RISK:

- A. [Community levels of COVID-19](#): High or increasing levels of COVID-19 cases in the local community increase the risk of infection and spread among youth athletes, coaches, and families.
- B. **Physical closeness of players:** Sports that require contact or close proximity (within 6 feet) between players may make it more difficult to maintain physical distancing, compared to sports where players are not close to each other. For close-contact sports (e.g., wrestling, basketball), play may be modified to safely increase distance between players. For example:
  - o Players and coaches can focus on individual skill building versus competition.
  - o Coaches may also put players into small groups (cohorts) that remain together and work through stations, rather than switching groups or mixing groups.
- C. **Level of intensity of activity:** Activities that are high intensity or require a high level of exertion (such as full competition) present a higher level of risk of getting and spreading COVID-19 than lower intensity activities, particularly when indoors. Higher intensity activities are safer when done outdoors.
- D. **Length of time that players are close to each other or to staff:** Activities that last longer pose more risk than shorter activities. Being within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more in a 24-hour period greatly increases the risk of becoming sick and requires [quarantine](#). Limit the time players spend in [close contact](#) to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread. For example, players and coaches can:
  - o play full contact only in game-time situations;
  - o decrease the number of competitions during a season.
- E. **Setting of the sporting event or activity:** Indoor activities pose more risk than outdoor activities. Minimize the amount of time spent indoors.
- F. **Amount of necessary touching of shared equipment and gear (e.g., protective gear, balls, bats, racquets, mats, or water bottles).**
- G. **Ability to engage in physical distancing while not actively engaged in play (e.g., during practice, on the sideline, or in the dugout):** During times when players are not actively participating in practice or competition, attention should be given to maintaining [physical distancing](#) by increasing space between players on the sideline, dugout, or bench. Additionally, coaches can encourage athletes to use downtime for individual skill-building work or cardiovascular conditioning, rather than staying clustered together.
- H. **Age of the player:** Older youth might be better able to follow directions for physical distancing and take other protective actions like not sharing water bottles.



- I. **Players at higher risk of developing severe illness:** Parents and coaches should assess level of risk based on individual players on the team who may be at [higher risk for severe illness](#), such as children who may have asthma, diabetes, or other health problems.
- J. **Size of the team:** Sports with a large number of players on a team may increase the likelihood of spread, compared to sports with fewer team members. Consider decreasing team sizes, as feasible.
- K. **Nonessential visitors, spectators, volunteers:** Limit any nonessential visitors, spectators, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations.
- L. **Travel outside of the local community.** [Traveling](#) outside of the local community may increase the chances of exposing players, coaches, and fans to COVID-19, or unknowingly spreading it to others.
- M. **Behavior of the athletes off the field:** Athletes who do not consistently adhere to [social distancing](#) (staying at least 6 feet apart), [mask wearing](#), [handwashing](#), and other prevention behaviors pose more risk to the team than those who consistently practiced these safety measures.



N. Below is the sport risk levels as indicated by the New Jersey Department of Health

Risk Level	Examples
<p><b>High Risk</b> Sports that involve close, sustained contact between participants</p>	<p>Rugby, boxing, judo, karate, taekwondo, wrestling, pair figure skating, football, group dance, group cheer.</p>
<p><b>Medium Risk</b> Sports that involve some close, sustained contact, but with protective equipment in place between participants OR intermittent close contact OR group sports OR sports that use equipment that cannot be cleaned between participants.</p>	<p>Lacrosse, hockey, multi-person rowing, multi-person kayaking, multi-person canoeing, water polo, swimming relays, fencing, cycling in a group, running in a close group, group sailing, volleyball, soccer, basketball, baseball/softball, short track.</p>
<p><b>Low Risk</b> Sports that can be done individually, do not involve person-to-person contact and do not routinely entail individuals interacting within six feet of one another</p>	<p>Archery, shooting/clay target, individual running events, individual cycling events, individual swimming, individual rowing, individual diving, equestrian jumping or dressage, golf, individual sailing, weightlifting, skiing, snowboarding, tennis, individual dance, pole vault, high jump, long jump, marathon, triathlon, cross country, track and field, disc golf, badminton.</p>

*Disclaimer: This document is subject to change, pending any new state Executive Orders or direction from the governing body of the Borough of River Edge.*