



# COVID-19 INTERIM GUIDANCE: Youth Sports

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*All guidance should be implemented only with local health officer approval following their review of local epidemiological data including cases per 100,000 population rate*



Consistent with the July 20, 2020 [announcement](#) of the California Interscholastic Federation, this document provides guidance for all youth sports programs—including school-based, club, and recreational programs—to support a safe environment for players, coaches and trainers, families, spectators, event/program/facility managers, workers, and volunteers. For further guidance related to school settings, please see this [updated guidance for schools and school-based programs](#).

**NOTE:** The risk of transmitting the COVID-19 virus depends on several factors germane to sports, including:

- Number of people in a location
- Type of location (indoor versus outdoor)
- Distance between people
- Length of time at a location
- Physical contact between people
- Touching of shared objects
- Use of face coverings
- Mixing of people from locations with different levels of community transmission

As general guidance, smaller groups are safer than larger; outdoor locations are safer than indoor; sports that can ensure distance of six feet or more are safer than close contact; and shorter duration is safer than longer. Leagues, coaches, parents, and athletes need to consider all these factors as they plan to return to play.

- Outdoor and indoor sporting events, assemblies, and other activities that require close contact or that would promote congregating are not permitted at this time. For example, tournaments, events, or competitions, regardless of whether teams are from the same school or from different schools, counties, or states are not permitted at this time.
- Youth sports and physical education are permitted only when the following can be maintained: (1) physical distancing of at least six feet; and (2) a stable cohort, such as a class, that limits the risks of transmission (see [CDC Guidance on Schools and Cohorting](#)). Activities should take place outside to the maximum extent practicable.
- For sports that cannot be conducted with sufficient distancing or cohorting, only physical conditioning and training is permitted and ONLY where physical distancing can be maintained. Conditioning and training should focus on individual skill-building (e.g., running drills and body weight resistance training) and should take place outside, where practicable. Indoor physical conditioning and training is allowed only in counties where gyms and fitness centers are allowed to operate indoors.

- Avoid equipment sharing, and if unavoidable, clean and disinfect shared equipment between use by different people to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread.
- Consistent with guidance for gyms and fitness facilities, cloth face coverings must be worn during indoor physical conditioning and training or physical education classes (except when showering). Activities that require heavy exertion should be conducted outside in a physically distanced manner without face coverings. Activities conducted inside should be those that do not require heavy exertion and can be done with a face covering. Players should take a break from exercise if any difficulty in breathing is noted and should change their mask or face covering if it becomes wet and sticks to the player's face and obstructs breathing. Masks that restrict airflow under heavy exertion (such as N-95 masks) are not advised for exercise.
- Youth sports programs and schools should provide information to parents or guardians regarding this and related guidance, along with the safety measures that will be in place in these settings with which parents or guardians must comply.

