



Baseball, Softball, Soccer & Flag Football “Return to Play” Plan

Updated: April 5, 2021

Purpose:

The following parameters are set forth by Lakota Sports Organization (LSO) to resume outdoor sport activities for the Spring 2021 season. The following “Return to Play” plan is intended to, at minimum, incorporate all current mandatory State guidance, as well as guidance from OHSAA, Little League, and SAY Soccer. Referenced materials include:

- State of Ohio Director's Order for Social Distancing, Facial Coverings, and Non-Congregating – Issued 04/05/21
- SAY SOCCER RETURN-TO-PLAY RECOMMENDATIONS AND BEST PRACTICES
- OHIO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (ohsaa.org) Covid-19 Correspondence and Baseball & Softball Modification Requirements Documents (dated 3/11/21)
- Lakota Schools Covid-19 Safety Protocols and Guidelines – 2020-2021 School Year
- Discussions with Butler County Health Department

If additional or overriding information becomes available from the State, OHSAA, or local authorities this document will be revised accordingly at that time to remain compliant.

Failure to follow these requirements will be considered a violation of the LSO Code of Conduct and will be referred to the appropriate LSO body for review.

Participation Requirements (all events):

- Coaches, players, game officials (umpires, referees, etc.), organization representatives, and spectators must perform daily COVID symptom assessments prior to arriving at the facility. (Per the CDC, symptoms include cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headaches, sore throat, and new loss of taste or smell.) Anyone experiencing symptoms MUST stay home. In addition, anyone who has been in close contact (per CDC definition) with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 in the last 10 days must not participate in LSO activities and must stay home. See **Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Cases** section at the end of this document for return-to-play requirements.
- All coaches, players, game officials, organization representatives, and spectators are required to maintain six-foot physical distancing while at the facility and not on the playing field. This includes travel to/from cars and while in parking lots.
- Only players, coaches, and game officials are permitted access onto the playing field.
- Only players, coaches, and assigned team assistants are permitted in the team sideline or dugout areas.
- All spectators must remain in the designated spectator areas:
 - Be at least 10 feet from the sideline or out-of-play line.
 - For soccer and flag football – Sit on the opposite side of the field from players and coaches
 - For baseball and softball – Sit in the area beyond the fence past the dugouts/bench area towards the outfield. Some fields will also have a spectator area marked in the outfield grass. Spectators are not allowed in the area behind home plate and between the dugouts/bench areas as this space will be used to provide extra dugout/bench area space for the players and coaches.
 - On WJL baseball/softball fields, only players, coaches, umpires, and LSO officials may use the narrow walkways between the fields. Spectators must go around the outfield areas.
- Coaches, trainers, or anyone attending to an injured player must wear a face covering.

- Anyone not in the same family must maintain at least 6ft. of distance from others.
- Coaches and organization representatives must wear face coverings at all times while on the field or in the team sideline or dugout areas, and at any other time where unable to maintain 6 feet of distancing from other individuals. The only exceptions are:
 - A coach on the field of play who needs to use a whistle for a particular activity.
 - A coach actively participating in a practice on the field of play and able to maintain 6 feet of distance from all individuals.
 - A coach may temporarily remove his/her mask to provide verbal instructions to players during a practice or game.
 - Base coaches in baseball and softball do not have to wear masks if they can maintain at least 6 feet or more distancing from players, umpires, and other coaches.
 - While actively eating or drinking.
- Athletes must either wear face coverings or always ensure at least 6 feet of distance from other individuals when not actively participating on the field of play. Masks may also be removed while actively eating or drinking. Players under the age of 10 are not required to wear a mask per Ohio requirements, but masks are strongly recommended for players under the age of 10.
- Spectators at outdoor events are not required to wear masks unless they are unable to maintain 6 feet of distancing from other individuals who are not part of their family/household.
- Coaches, players, referees, organization representatives, and spectators must provide his/her own face covering to wear as required.
- All coaches and players must supply their own water bottles. No team water coolers or shared drinking stations.
- Players should not share personal equipment. Each player should have their own pinnie (scrimmage vest), goalie gear, or other individual equipment for which they are responsible to keep with their gear and use for the season.
- Players are to sanitize his/her hands upon exit from the field of play. LSO will supply coaches with hand sanitizer to utilize as needed. Each player is encouraged to have a personal container of hand sanitizer for his/her use.

Practice Requirements:

- Coaches, players, referees, organization representatives, and spectators must abide by “Participation Requirements (all events)” section of this document.
- Coaches and players maintain six-foot physical distancing except when the ball is in play.
- Players should refrain from touching others. Activities to avoid include: high fives, handshake lines, and any other physical contact with players, coaches, or umpires.
- Players and spectators must remain in their vehicles until any preceding events are complete and the field is cleared.
- Players and spectators must exit the facility immediately after completing practice.
- Coach must take attendance and be able to supply an attendance roster for each practice upon request.

Game Requirements:

- Coaches, players, game officials, organization representatives, and spectators must abide by “Participation Requirements (all events)” section of this document.
- Soccer and Flag Football Officials are not required to wear facial coverings on the field of play during games in order to be able to use a whistle or to be heard while officiating. Officials must wear masks while not actively officiating and are unable to maintain 6 feet of distancing from other individuals.
- Umpires are to maintain as much distance as possible from catcher, batter, and other players (allowing six-feet if possible). Umpires will have discretion to call balls and strikes from six-feet behind the pitcher instead of behind home plate, if he/she prefers. Umpires must wear masks while not actively officiating and are unable to maintain 6 feet of distancing from other individuals.
- Base coaches must stay six feet from all runners, umpires, and other coaches at all times.

- Game officials are to maintain at least 6 feet of distance from all players, coaches and spectators. Exceptions are:
 - The home plate umpire if he/she calls the game from behind the plate.
 - Tending to an injured player.
- Players should refrain from touching others. Activities to avoid include: high fives, handshake lines, and any other physical contact with players, coaches, or referees.
- The game ball shall be sanitized before the start of the game and at the end of each inning or quarter.
 - For Flag Football - Each team shall provide a game ball that will be used during their offensive series. Game balls will be wiped down by the coach after each offensive series. This would also include when a ball is intercepted by the opposing team.
- Avoid exchanging physical documents, including line-up cards. Sharing of line-ups and other information electronically is permitted.
- Players, coaches, game officials, and spectators must remain in their vehicles until any preceding events are complete and the field is cleared.
- Warm-up activities will not begin more than 30 minutes prior to scheduled game time.
- Players, coaches, game officials, and spectators must exit the facility within 15 minutes of game completion.
- No sharing of team snacks or drinks before, during, or after games.
- Each coach must take attendance of his/her team and be able to supply an attendance roster for each game upon request. The Home coach is also required to capture the name of the game official(s) on the roster for his/her team.

Facility Guidelines:

- Players and coaches shall be in their designated team area when on the sideline.
- Dugouts/bench areas may be used to store equipment and provide access to the field. The number of individuals in the dugout/bench area is dependent on the size of dugout. Players may use the space behind the dugout and/or past the end of the dugout towards the outfield to extend the dugout/bench area to provide adequate space for all players and coaches. **Players and coaches must maintain at least 3 feet of social distancing and wear a mask while in the dugout/bench area.** Masks are required as there is not enough space in the dugout/bench areas to ensure 6 feet of distancing at all times.
- Coaches are to have access to a “sanitation kit” at each field. Kit to include:
 - Hard surface sanitizer, for balls, flags and any other equipment that needs to be sanitized.
 - Hand sanitizer to be used as needed.
- Portable restrooms are to be sanitized before activities for the day.
- Game start times to be staggered at facilities with multiple fields.
- Time between games to be extended to prevent games from overlapping with warm-up activities for the following game.

Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Cases:

- People with a NEW ONSET of cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell, or at least two (2) of the symptoms listed below may have COVID-19:
 - Fever of 100.0 F or above or chills
 - Fatigue
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Cough
 - Sore throat
 - Congestion or runny nose
 - Headache
 - Shortness of breath
 - Muscle or body aches

- Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea
- **Anyone showing a NEW ONSET of at least two symptoms** must stay home for at least 10 days OR provide a negative test from a physician OR provide a note from your healthcare provider stating an alternate diagnosis before returning to activities.
- Immediately isolate and seek medical care for any individual who develops COVID-19 symptoms.
- Any coach, player, or league official with a **suspected or confirmed case of Covid-19** must immediately notify the local board of health. In addition, they must also immediately notify their coach (who must immediately notify the LSO Compliance Officer) or directly notify the LSO Compliance Officer.
- If your child or family member in the same household has been tested for COVID-19, **ALL FAMILY MEMBERS MUST REMAIN HOME UNTIL YOU RECEIVE THE RESULTS.**
- Players, coaches, officials, or other individuals who had close contact (within six feet of an infected individual for at least 15 minutes) with a person confirmed positive for Covid-19, or who had direct physical contact with the person (e.g., who were coughed on or sneezed on by the infected person) must self-quarantine per the requirements below:
 - CDC continues to endorse quarantine for 14 days and recognizes that any quarantine shorter than 14 days balances [the] reduced burden [of quarantine] against a small possibility of spreading the virus [beyond 10 days]. CDC recognizes that reducing the length of quarantine may make it easier for people to quarantine by reducing the time they cannot play sports. Close contacts who remain asymptomatic may consider the following to consider stopping quarantine:
 - After day 10 without testing.
 - After day 7 after receiving a negative test result (test must occur on day 5 or later).
 - After stopping quarantine, close contacts should:
 - Watch for symptoms until day 14 after exposure.
 - If you have symptoms, immediately self-isolate and contact your local public health authority or healthcare provider.
 - Youth who are not required to quarantine due to exposure occurring in a classroom setting under school-based exposure guidance are permitted to participate in outdoor sports activities as long as they remain symptom-free and follow applicable sports guidance.
 - Per CDC guidelines, fully vaccinated individuals can refrain from quarantine and testing following a known exposure if asymptomatic. (People are considered fully vaccinated for COVID-19 ≥ 2 weeks after they have received the second dose in a 2-dose series (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), or ≥ 2 weeks after they have received a single-dose vaccine (Johnson and Johnson (J&J)/Janssen) Note: Fully vaccinated people must continue to wear masks, maintain physical distance, and practice other prevention measures.
- When a player, coach, or athletic trainer tests positive for COVID-19, team members who are not close contacts requiring self-quarantine as determined by the local health department should conduct (1) daily symptoms assessments and stay home if sick, and (2) complete an in-person temperature check before the start of each practice and game for 14 days as a precaution.
- Any coach, player, official, organization representative, or spectator **suspected of contracting COVID-19 or having tested positive for COVID-19** MUST follow the guidelines below for returning to work/activity prior to participating in any event. (The process below is taken from the Lakota Schools protocols, so substitute “Call school attendance line” with “Contact your coach or the LSO Compliance Officer.”)

What MUST I do if | an individual

1

Has COVID-19 Symptoms, But Has NOT Had a Test or Has Not Received Test Results

1. Stay home;
2. Call school attendance line and leave a message detailing your child's symptoms;
3. Contact your doctor for possible test;
4. Isolate for at least 10 days or as directed by the Butler County Health Department; and
5. If symptoms last longer than 10 days, stay isolated until fever is gone without medicine and other symptoms have improved for at least 24 hours.

2

Tests Positive

1. Stay at home;
2. Call school attendance line and leave a message about the positive result;
3. Isolate for at least 10 days or as directed by the Butler County Health Department; and
4. If symptoms last longer than 10 days, stay isolated until fever is gone without medicine and other symptoms have improved for at least 24 hours.

3

Comes in Contact with a Family Member or Person Positive for COVID-19

1. Stay home;
2. Call school attendance line and leave a message explaining the need for quarantine and if your child has any symptoms;
3. Quarantine for 10 days from the last date of contact with the person or as directed by the Butler County Health Department;
4. Monitor your child for symptoms for 14 days; and
5. If your child develops symptoms, follow directions in column 1.

4

Comes in Contact with a Suspected Case or a Person with Symptoms

1. Self-monitor for symptoms by taking your child's temperature morning and night;
2. Perform daily wellness check before leaving home;
3. If your child develops symptoms, follow directions in column 1; and
4. If the suspected person receives a positive result, follow directions in column 3.

- An athlete who tests positive for COVID-19, whether symptomatic or asymptomatic, shall not return to Sports activities until a documented medical exam is performed clearing the individual prior to the individual returning to participation in practice or games. The documented medical exam must specifically include an assessment of the cardiac/heart risk of high-intensity exercise due to the potential of myocarditis occurring in COVID-19 patients.