

# MASSACHUSETTS YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION



COVID-19

Best Practices - Spring 2022



March 11, 2022





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Massachusetts Youth Soccer remains dedicated to protecting the health of all people in and outside of our community. In an effort to assist players, coaches, parents, officials and administrators participating in soccer activities taking place during the “new normal”, Massachusetts Youth Soccer has put together recommended procedures for our members and affiliates to use.

## GENERAL SAFETY STANDARDS AND BEST PRACTICES

Facility operators, activity organizers, coaches, players, and parents should continue to implement and follow safety standards to minimize the risk of transmitting COVID-19 among all members of the soccer community. Some of the mitigation strategies that are recommended include:

- Follow guidance from the facility, local board of health and all CDC guidelines when attending soccer activities.
- In lieu of any requirements, face coverings may be worn at the discretion of the adult (18 years and older) player or the minor (17 years old and younger) player’s parent/guardian.
- Follow CDC recommendations regarding vaccinations and protection for all activities.
- Players should have all of their personal equipment (ball, water bottle, GK gloves, etc.), sharing is not recommended.
- Pinnies should not be shared and should be properly washed/sanitized after every use.
- While traditional whistles are allowed, electronic whistles are preferred and recommended.
- Participants and spectators should only drink from their own container.
- Do not allow shared team snacks (i.e. no common bowls of food).
- Encourage alternate methods for group celebrations, discourage hugs, handshakes, fist bumps etc.
- All waste should be placed by the respective player, coach, or spectator in a trash receptacle. Nothing should be picked up by anybody other than the originator of the waste.
- Following proper hygiene during soccer activities. Use of alcohol based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol is recommended). Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or sleeves, do not use hands. Do not touch your face (eyes, nose, mouth) with unwashed hands.



# MASSACHUSETTS YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION



## FACILITY OPERATORS AND ACTIVITY ORGANIZERS

Facility operators and activity organizers should:

- Regularly clean and disinfect high touch surfaces regularly, such as doorknobs, light switches, handrails, sinks, faucets, toilet handles, and drinking fountains.
- Clean and disinfect restroom facilities in accordance with CDC/ public health guidance and best practices linked [here](#).
- Clean and disinfect any equipment provided at the end of each match or session
- Require staff to wear gloves and other appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when cleaning. PPE should be properly disposed of when cleaning is complete.
- Provide alcohol based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol in common areas for proper hand sanitization at outdoor facilities. For indoor facilities, provide access to handwashing facilities on site, including soap and running water. If soap and water is not available, hand sanitizer as described above should be provided.
- Post visible signage throughout the site to remind employees and visitors of hygiene and safety protocols.

## SAFETY OFFICER

All facilities owners, activity organizers and member organizations are required to have a COVID-19 Safety Officer. The COVID-19 Safety Officer will communicate policies organization-wide and to those who may be renting their facilities, to coaching staff, administrators, parents and players. Updates should be provided as necessary.

Safety officers:

- Should ensure all coaches and team administrators have adequate PPE and sanitizing products.
- Should develop a relationship and dialog with local health department officials (identify risk tolerance).
- Develop a plan to communicate with the local health department in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case.

If a player or coach tests positive for COVID-19, refer to the local BOH and the CDC for guidance. Reporting procedures may be found on the [Notification section of the Massachusetts Youth Soccer Website should be followed](#).



# MASSACHUSETTS YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION



If a player, coach, administrator or referee is identified as a close contact in a setting other than a soccer related event, this should be reported to the COVID-19 Safety Officer by the coach or the player's parent/guardian. The player/coach is to follow the quarantine process provided to them by the DPH and/or by the school nurse/or the CDC. A player can return to soccer activities on the return date issued by DPH or their school and under the same guidelines provided by the school, DPH and the CDC.

If at any time during their quarantine period, any member of the team (including coach or staff) tests positive for COVID-19, the Safety officer should be notified. Timelines will be reported and discussed by the Safety Officer with the DPH at that time. Notification of the team and any opposing team will be based on recommendations by the DPH in accordance with current [CDC recommendations](#). If the team is asked to quarantine, reporting procedures as outlined in the Notification section of the Massachusetts Youth Soccer Website should be followed. Massachusetts Youth Soccer should be notified of the positive case.

**With all close contact protocols if a person is vaccinated they should follow the guidelines set by the CDC and local health officials.**

Member organizations should be prepared to shut down and stop operations if instructed to do so by the local Board of Health. Develop plans for temporary closure of facilities (indoor, outdoor) to properly disinfect and ensure other adult leaders are not infected.

## HEALTH ASSESSMENT

- All participants (players, coaches, spectators, staff) should ensure that they complete an independent health assessment prior to participating in any soccer activities. This health assessment should consist of the following:
- Ensure the participants health. Take one's temperature daily. The average normal body temperature is 98.6°F (37°C). Some studies have shown that the "normal" body temperature can have a wider range, from 97°F (36.1°C) to 99°F (37.2°C). A temperature over 100.4°F (38°C) most often means you have a fever caused by an infection or illness.
- If there are any symptoms, even mild ones, do not attend practice or a game. Public health urges you to stay home and isolate until:
- You have had no fever for at least 72 hours (without the use of medicine), AND
- Other symptoms (cough, shortness of breath) have improved, AND
- At least 7 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.



# MASSACHUSETTS YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION



If you are unvaccinated and anyone in your household or that you have had close contact with (within six feet for approximately 15 minutes over a 24 hour period) displays symptoms, you should self-quarantine based on current [CDC guidelines](#), and direction from your local Board of Health.

## OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL

All Massachusetts Youth Soccer member organizations should be aware of, and understand all travel advisories that are in place for the [Commonwealth of Massachusetts](#) or any state to which they travel as a team.

## TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS/EVENT STAFF

Tournament directors should:

- Follow the guidelines set forth by Massachusetts Youth Soccer Association, CDC, Federal, State, and local governments.
- Ensure that participants are following the specific local and state restrictions from their home location counties or associations before allowing teams from other associations/areas into the tournament.
- Predetermine appropriate emergency contacts should anything arise during your event and provide the information to all tournament staff and participants.
- Include, in all communications leading up to the tournament information on COVID-19 preventive measures, and all procedures that the host has established as requirements for participants and spectators. Develop procedures for any possible COVID-19 cases at the event. This should include a designated area for those who present with symptoms and those they came in contact with to be isolated until an ambulance is called
- Supply masks, gloves, and hand sanitizer for their tournament staff. The tournament host is the organization running the tournament and not the facility at which the event is held.
- When possible, coordinate team registration and roster check-in electronically prior to the event. If needed, paper materials may be exchanged on the day of the event



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## DISCLAIMER

Participants, parents, family, and spectators taking part in soccer and soccer related activities do so with the knowledge of risk and potential exposure involved. In doing so they agree to accept any and all inherent risks to their personal health.

These guidelines are subject to change from time to time based on updates to the CDC and Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) guidelines. If applicable, local municipalities and the Indoor facilities may have additional guidelines in place that will need to be followed.

The information contained in this document is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. All content, including text, graphics images and information are provided for general informational purposes.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[CDC Covid-19 Information Hub](https://www.cdc.gov/covid-19)