

Natick Little League: Baseball and Softball

Return to Play Guidelines

Updated July 6th:

All teams in the league will follow the guidelines put forth by Governor Baker in each of the appropriate phases, and all participants, coaches, and guardians will need to sign a waiver.

Families will also be required to sign a form that indicates all return to play guidelines and documents have been read. All families are asked to follow signage posted on all fields. If spectators are in constant violation of the rules and policies, Natick Little League reserves the right to ban them from the facilities.

Natick Little League will follow all state/local guidelines. If and when deemed appropriate, our local rules (at the discretion of the board of directors, can/will be stronger). Please refer to Natick Little Guidelines (A) document for more "on/at the field" procedures.

Fields can only be used by sanctioned teams. There is no use of the fields outside of the times your team is assigned. These times and dates will be published to coaches. Teams **must** adhere to the schedule they are given. All non-essential use of the field, outside of the teams using them (i.e. pick up games, added practices without approval, get togethers) are strictly prohibited.

Massachusetts Phase 3 Step 1 Moderate Risk Sport Level 3

***PHASE 3 - Moderate Risk (Games only - no tournaments and continuing practices):
Natick Little League Baseball and Softball can hold practices and games in this phase with limitations. All information provided below is a summary. Otherwise please refer to additional documents provided and or defer to Massachusetts guidelines where information is not applicable/provided.***

[Document: YOUTH and ADULT AMATEUR SPORTS ACTIVITIES – Phase III, Step 1](#)

Sports and activities included in the Lower Risk category can participate in Level 1, 2, 3, 4 type of play. Sports and activities included in the Moderate Risk category can participate in Level 1, 2 and 3 types of play. Sports and activities included in the Higher Risk category can participate in Level 1 type of play.

Moderate Risk sports and recreation activities are characterized by: Sports or activities that involve intermittent contact, but with protective equipment or mitigating measures in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants (e.g., wearing masks, modifying play) Examples: **Baseball**, softball, crew/sailing (2-3 people in a boat), track and field, cross country, running clubs, team swimming, volleyball, dance class, fencing, field hockey, no-contact lacrosse.

Baseball/Softball must follow moderate risk procedures which allows game to occur, with attendance and on the field guidelines that have limitations. They are a level 3 category (competitions)

Outdoor Competitions: No more than 25 players on any surface/playing areas for team/group sports. No more than 100 people including participants, players, coaches, volunteers, spectators in the aggregate in, on, or surrounding any surface/playing area or start/finish lines at any one time, provided that there is adequate space for all participants, players, coaches, volunteers and spectators to maintain at least six feet social distancing, recognizing that for some moderate risk sports intermittent contact may occur for players. Spectators must wear facial coverings and maintain six feet of social distance at all times.

Face coverings and social distancing of six feet is required when participants are not actively engaged in an activity (e.g., on bench, huddles, breaks, locker rooms, pre/post practice).

Dugouts, benches & bleachers are allowed to open only if they can be thoroughly cleaned before and after every use and six feet of distance can be maintained.

The following serves as a summary - otherwise please refer to all other Documents (A,B, Waiver) that the league has already presented.

1) Practices: No player should arrive onto a field earlier than 15 minutes prior to their scheduled practices. Teams are to enter & exit the field nearest their dugout. They are to remain off the field and social distance until the previous teams leave the field and the benches have been sanitized. No more than 25 players in this instance are allowed, but it is recommended that these numbers remain smaller for practice situations to mitigate contact. Teams are prohibited from practicing outside of their assigned practice time, including cage use, unless otherwise granted permission by the league's executive director. In the event a multi field complex (i.e Hunnewell) is in use, field times would be spread out to allow only two teams per time frame at a field at one given time.

Games: will be scheduled to allow for transition time. There should be enough of a break that both teams and spectators have left the baseball/ softball field before the next teams and spectators arrive. In the event a multi field complex (i.e Hunnewell) is in

use, field times would be spread out to allow only two teams per time frame at a field at one given time.

Additionally:

- a) Coaches must be on the field prior to the players being there and *all players and coaches* must enter the facility with a mask on. If players do not have a mask/face covering with them they cannot be allowed access onto the field and must return with one in order to participate in a practice or game. There are no exceptions.
- b) The coach or safety officer must make sure the players follow protocols. For practices, coaches should have the players spread their equipment across the entire field. For games, they must dictate a space on their side of the field and use social distance mandates for this.
- c) All coaches should wear a mask/face covering at all times during practices unless when separated from the team, and ensure safety measures are met for their players. Coaches are there to set the example for their teams.
- d) Players must leave the facility when practice and or games are over within 15 minutes of the conclusion of their practice (as long as their ride/transportation is present). Natick Little League suggests all players have their own mode of transportation (i.e. no car pooling).

2) **Equipment**: players are required to have their own helmet, glove, hat etc, as these items can't be shared. Baseballs/Softballs should sit for 48 hours after use if at all possible. Coaches should have a practice bucket and have baseballs/softballs separated from game and practice usage. Coaches should bring their baseballs/softballs home and clean them after each use.

- a) The coaching staff must ensure that all shared equipment, and / or field tools are properly cleaned before leaving the facility.

3) **Food/Drink**: There is no sharing of food or drinks, and everything must be clearly marked with a player's name. There are no communal meals after games, cookouts, get-togethers etc.

- a) Gum, sunflower seeds, spitting, are strictly prohibited.

4) **Spectators**: must go beyond 1st and 3rd bases with social distancing. Spectators should wear face coverings per Massachusetts COVID-19 Order #31. If fields have signage, spectators must follow what the signs say and adhere to field to field rules and procedures. If spectators that are not feeling well or exhibiting symptoms of possible exposure to COVID-19, such as fever should not attend the game until such time as

they have been tested and/or cleared. A designated representative of the league will be responsible to ensure teams enter and exit the field properly, that spectators & players sit or stand in their proper areas with social distancing and assist in other social distancing enforcement where needed (safety officer).

- a) No more than 100 people, including participants, coaches, volunteers & spectators in, on or surrounding a field. There can be no more than 25 players on a field at any one time (excluding those outside the playing area)

If any players, coach etc. is not feeling well, or exhibits any symptoms of COVID-19 or any other sickness, are required to stay home. Please refer to the additional guidelines for more in depth information regarding this. If a player or family member is diagnosed with COVID-19 they must alert Natick Little League and Executive Director, Matt Lodi at lodi.matt@gmail.com

Additional Information on Covid-19 Return to Play

High Risk Population: Players, coaches, volunteers, parents/guardians in high risk categories should not participate or attend organized sports activities. List of high-risk categories available here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higherrisk.html>

Stay Home When Appropriate: Players, staff, parents/guardians, and spectators should stay home when they are showing signs of COVID-19, have a temperature, or have had close contact with a person with COVID-19.

If COVID Symptoms Exhibited: If a staff member, player, parent/guardian, or spectator exhibits symptoms during a practice, they should immediately be separated and sent home or to a healthcare facility depending on the severity of the symptoms. They should not be allowed to return to activity until they have met the CDC criteria for discontinuing home isolation.

Diagnosis: If someone in the players family is diagnosed with Covid-19 they must alert league officials, immediately and follow the 14 day isolation/quarantine protocols.

Anything not listed in this document, or covered in the waiver, refers to the Massachusetts guidelines (as outlined above)