**Introduction**

The following AGSA guidelines are meant to be in addition to AGSA’s “Return to Play Guidelines for Games” (ratified July 10, 2020) and apply to all Arlington travel teams (Impact, Sage and Spirit) during indoor training and practice sessions amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Our AGSA House Leagues and Clinics are also bound by these guidelines.

AGSA expects our teams to follow these guidelines as closely as possible and note any exceptions by bringing them to the attention of the AGSA President. AGSA also expects visiting teams from outside the County to follow our guidelines (or stricter) when playing on Arlington fields or inside indoor facilities where AGSA teams train and practice.

AGSA also understands that our jurisdiction ends at the County line, but for AGSA teams that enter into contracts with indoor facilities outside of Arlington for training and practice, AGSA’s position is that our teams will follow our guidelines, even if they are more strict than the facility’s. AGSA teams should refuse to participate when the guidelines external venues have put in place are deemed either inadequate, unsafe or poorly enforced to the point at which safety of our players is at risk. This determination will be made by a consensus of the team coaches.

For the purposes of winter training from November 2020 to March 2021, all Sage and Impact teams will host team-sponsored indoor practices only at The Fieldhouse in Chantilly, Va., or at officially approved Arlington County facilities, including the Barcroft 6 Covered Cages. The AGSA Board must vet and approve any and all other indoor facilities and their COVID-19 mitigation plans before team-sponsored use will be allowed. AGSA cannot limit individual players from doing indoor training on their own, but AGSA highly recommends extreme caution in such circumstances.

These AGSA indoor guidelines were developed after careful review and in accordance with all stipulations provided in the Arlington County, Dept. of Parks and Recreation document; “Return to Play Youth Sports Guidelines”, June 2020. They also are intended to comply with Virginia Gov. Northam’s Executive Order 67, as amended on Nov. 13, 2020: “Phase Three Tightening of Certain Temporary Restrictions Due to Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), especially as it pertains to Recreational Sports and Fitness and Exercise Facilities.

The AGSA guidelines go further than the County and Commonwealth recommendations in a conscious effort to provide a more conservative approach.

In addition to Arlington County and Virginia guidelines, this document was developed using, in part, USSSA Return to Play guidelines, best practices from Arlington youth baseball leagues , AGSA rules, CDC guidelines , input from players, coaches, parents and AGSA board members. They were developed solely to protect players, coaches and families during the COVID-19 health emergency and can in no way guarantee anyone’s complete safety; they can only help to minimize risk and will only be effective with the compliance of coaches, players, parents and volunteers. Every player and their guardian must read, understand, agree to comply and sign a copy of these guidelines. They must agree to follow these guidelines always, including during travel to, participation in, and travel from any and all travel games and indoor practices, regardless of location as outlined above. Failure to adhere to these guidelines can result in removal from the practice venue.

**General Guidelines**

* No carpooling will be allowed except with the prior approval of a head coach and guardian for each child.
* No team meals or off-site team gatherings allowed prior to or after events or practices unless social distancing can be maintained.
* No indoor team gatherings at the homes of players or coaches; outdoor gatherings are allowed if social distancing can be maintained.
* While Phase 3 tightened regulations allow up to 25 spectators for indoor recreational sports, AGSA is limiting adult participants in indoor practices to a maximum of eight adults per team -- including team coaches, professional staff, and parent volunteers who are specifically designated as assistants for the purposes of indoor training – so long as the venue allows such participation and attendance.
* Teams must abide by attendance limits and occupancy loads at all indoor facilities.
* Parents are expected to drop players off at practice and not enter the facilities, unless in an emergency.
* Every player will be required to bring their own water and hand sanitizer, each clearly labeled with the player’s name and stored in their equipment bag.
* All players, coaches, assistants and trainers **must wear a protective face mask at all times** while indoors, following the latest CDC guidance, [which as of Dec. 4 includes a recommendation for nationwide](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6949e2.htm?s_cid=mm6949e2_w) “universal mask use” outside of people’s homes whenever indoors. Masks must be worn outside when social distance of six feet or more cannot be maintained, and masks are encouraged even when social distancing is possible. As air circulation is the biggest concern indoors, a protective face mask is the best defense. Players or coaches without a face mask will not be allowed to participate and must exit the facility immediately.
* All players are encouraged to wear a high-quality mask that provides protection from COVID-19. Parents will choose the type and style of the protective masks their child wears. If a head coach or the AGSA President deems a particular mask to be ineffective or unsafe, they will work with the parent and player to obtain an appropriate mask.

**At Indoor Venues**

* Every player, guardian and coach must always abide by all local regulations or AGSA guidelines, whichever is more strict. If a guideline in this document conflicts with a local regulation, the local regulation prevails unless a head coach deems the local guideline to be unsafe for any reason. Coaches may impose their own guidelines for the team that are more strict than local guidelines.
* The indoor venue must abide by all local, state and national regulations regarding occupancy and activity, and it must comply with [Virginia’s regulations for Fitness and Exercise Facilities](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-67-SIXTH-AMENDED-and-Order-of-Public-Health-Emergency-Seven---Phase-Three-Further-Adjusting-of-Certain-Temporary-Restrictions-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-%28COVID-19%29.pdf), which allow for indoor group exercise and indoor practices and games. The 25-person limit per team applies – with the limit of eight adult coaches, trainers and assistants participating, all AGSA teams should always fall under that limit.
* The Team Manager or their designee must keep a daily attendance log at practices and games to record eligibility for participation of coaches, parents and volunteers in the activity by answering COVID-19 screening questions.
* No sunflower seeds, chewing gum or spitting allowed.
* No physical contact with any other players or with coaches, managers, umpires or opposing team members, except during game play (see below). No high-fives, no fist bumps, no hugging, no horseplay.
* Players, coaches and anyone associated with the team must have facemasks on their face, covering their nose and mouth, at all times.
* No sharing of any player equipment. Each travel player should have their own glove, protective mask, batting gloves, bat, and helmet. If a player does not have their own equipment because of financial concerns, please notify the head coach and equipment will be provided by the team. Catchers should have their own equipment, whether personally owned or on loan from the team. All efforts should be made to plan for any shared team catching equipment to be used by only one player per outing – it must be disinfected after the practices before it is shared with another player at the next outing.
* Players will place their equipment in a designated area that is at least six feet from other players’ belongings and they will keep all of their equipment in that area and will keep water bottles secured in their bags so as to prevent any water bottle mix-ups.
* Players will do their best to maintain at least six feet of distance from other players at all times during all drills, including when waiting in lines and when gathering as a team.
* No food is allowed in the practice or conditioning areas of any facility. Players may eat only in designated dining areas. No common sources of food or water (including shared bags of chips, pizza in open boxes, etc.). Every player must bring their own food, unless the team is providing individually wrapped servings of food as approved by head coaches and managers. When eating, players, coaches and families must maintain social distancing. No sharing of food.
* No use of water fountains or common sources of drink. All drinks must be in containers that players bring themselves or that are in factory-sealed bottles (bottles of water, Gatorade, etc.).
* Players and coaches should avoid touching.
* Frequent use of hand sanitizer is highly encouraged.
* Coaches should institute regular break rotations with smaller groups of players – or limit the number of players headed to the bathroom at any one time -- to avoid large crowds in bathrooms, which are more hazardous than large open spaces. Teams must abide by any posted limits on bathroom occupancy.
* If any player coughs on, sneezes on or otherwise gets bodily fluids on a ball that is use, that ball will be removed immediately and sanitized. Players must notify coaches if such an occasion arises.
* Any player who is uncomfortable at any time should notify a head coach. All reasonable concerns will be addressed immediately. Any parent/guardian has the prerogative to opt out of any team activity if they believe it to be unsafe and absolutely no penalty of any kind will ever be considered.

**Barcroft 6 Covered Cages**

* The covered cages are, for the purposes of safety regulations, an indoor facility. The cages are not temperature controlled, do not have regular air circulation, and often are cold, which presents additional known risks. All rules and regulations must be carefully followed to mitigate those risks.
* Facemasks that cover nose and mouth must be worn at all times.
* Arlington County is limiting the number of people inside the covered cages to **a maximum of eight people at any one time**, including players and coaches. If using the cages exclusively, splitting the team into two sessions is the best practice. Players, coaches and parents above the number allowed inside must use the turf field or wait outside.
* The covered cages are equipped with an electronically controlled exhaust system, which includes ceiling-level exhaust fans and a system of louvered vents along the sides of the facility. The switch to control the system is along the front wall, to the right of the front main door. The exhaust system must be turned on and must run for **no less than two minutes** **before a team enters the facility, and then for at least two minutes after every half hour of use to allow fresh air to flow through the facility**. Coaches also must run the exhaust system between sessions to clear the air. This will cause the temperature in the facility to match the outdoor temperature and will cause it to be cold in winter, but clean air is by far the most important thing.

**The Fieldhouse**

The Fieldhouse is a private practice/training facility at 14810 Murdock Street, in Chantilly, Va. The Sage and Impact programs have entered into a contract with The Fieldhouse for exclusive use of the large indoor turf field and adjacent hitting space on Sundays from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. from January to March 2021. The Fieldhouse is owned and managed by the Chantilly Youth Association (CYA) and has been operating during the COVID-19 emergency by following all federal, state and local guidelines regarding safe indoor activities.

* All Sage and Impact teams must abide by all rules as set by The Fieldhouse.
* Patrons will have their temperature taken using contactless thermometers when checking in at the Fieldhouse desk.
* Patrons and staff will wash hands before and after training and workouts.
* Patrons will remain six feet apart during training and workouts.
* Fieldhouse staff will sanitize equipment, including facility sinks, soap dispensers and paper towel holders.
* The Fieldhouse requests that parents not come inside the facility to encourage social distancing. Please drop-off and pick-up in the parking lot. (Note team-designated exceptions above).
* The Fieldhouse’s COVID-19 page: <https://cyafieldhouse.org/covid19/>
* AGSA will ensure that The Fieldhouse is abiding by all Commonwealth of Virginia and Fairfax County COVID-19 regulations and restrictions, and coaches will immediately report any unsafe conditions to the AGSA President.
* Players and parents should report any concerns about safety immediately to a head coach.

**COVID-19 Practice/Game Scratches**

To maintain safety for everyone, AGSA asks for transparency on all matters related to COVID -19.

Players should opt out of practice, games or team activities if the player or any member of their household has been in contact with someone who is suspected of being positive for COVID-19. There will be no penalty of any kind for missing practice due to COVID-19 concerns. Once a player has opted out of a practice or game due to COVID-19 concerns, the return to practice/play is governed by the guidelines stated in the “COVID-19 Return to Play” section below.

If you answer yes to any of the following questions, please speak to a head coach immediately and keep your child out of practice:

1. Have you recorded a temperature of 100.4 or higher today?

2. Do you or your child (player) have a cough, shortness of breath or difficulty in breathing that cannot be attributed to another health condition?

3. Do you or your child (player) have chills, sore throat, headache or muscle aches that cannot be attributed to another health condition or specific physical exercise?

4. Do you or your child (player) have a “new” loss of taste or smell?

5. Have you or your child (player) attended any gathering of more than 25 people in the past 14 days?

6. Have you or your child (player) traveled internationally in the past 14 days?

7. Have you, your child (player) or anyone in your household (including a nanny, housekeeper or babysitter) been exposed in the past 14 days to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19?

8. Have you, the player or anyone in your household (including a nanny, housekeeper or babysitter) tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days?

If you, the player or any household member has had “close contact” with someone who is suspected of having COVID-19 or if a household member has had close contact with someone who is suspected to have COVID-19, please do not participate in practices until it is known that the person is not infected. The CDC defines close contact as “someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic clients, 2 days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.” The World Health Organization additionally includes people with direct physical contact with a probable or confirmed case or direct care for a patient with a probable or confirmed case without using proper personal protective equipment. As a general rule for AGSA events: If the player or a household member of a player was around a person suspected of having COVID-19 for any longer than a few minutes and was not appropriately socially distanced or was not wearing a mask, that should be considered close contact.

**COVID-19 Team Notifications**

In the event a player is a COVID-19 scratch from a practice or game, the head coach will evaluate whether that player potentially exposed others on the team – players, coaches, trainers – and will decide, in conjunction with the AGSA President, whether the scratch will affect team activities.

* If the scratched player followed all rules, regulations and guidelines at team practices and games, there should be little to no risk of exposure to others on the team.
* Parents of all players on the team will be notified of the scratch immediately, will be informed of the nature of the contact, and will be given the option of holding their children out of practice/games without penalty.
* Head coaches and the AGSA President will determine if an AGSA team must withdraw from a game or tournament based on the nature of the COVID-19 contact and potential risk of spread. Parents deciding not to have their children participate is a legitimate reason for withdrawal.
* If the scratched player is symptomatic or tests positive for COVID-19 and was in at-risk close contact with other members of the team, the team should consider that to have been close contact, as defined above, and will suspend all activities for at least 14 days.
* If the scratched player was involved in any practice, scrimmage, game or event involving another team or teams (whether within AGSA or outside of AGSA), a head coach will notify the other head coach about the scratch and the nature of the contact immediately.

**COVID-19 Return to Play**

To protect the team and the community, AGSA requires a safe passage of time before players or coaches can return to team activities when they are suspected to have had exposure to COVID-19. The AGSA President and a head coach must approve the return to team activities.

* If the player has symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or has tested positive for COVID-19, the player must sit out of team activities for at least 14 days from the onset of symptoms or from receiving the results of a positive test. They may return after 14 days of exhibiting no symptoms or when a doctor (with a signed note), determines it is safe for the player to return, whichever comes first.
* If a member of the player’s household has symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or has tested positive for COVID-19, the player must sit out of team activities for at least 14 days from their last exposure to the household member (including a nanny, housekeeper or babysitter). If the player exhibits no symptoms, they may return after 14 days of exposure or when a doctor (with a signed note), determines it is safe for the player to return, whichever comes first.
* If the player or a member of the player’s household has had close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, the player must sit out until the player or member of the player’s household has isolated for 14 days without symptoms.
* If the player or a member of the player’s household has had close contact with a person who is suspected of having COVID-19, the player must sit out until that person gets a negative test result for COVID-19 or at least 14 days without symptoms, whichever comes first.
* If the player has traveled internationally, the player must wait 14 days without symptoms before returning to practice.
* If the Commonwealth of Virginia sets restrictions on travel to certain states or regions where outbreaks are severe – or restricts out-of-state travel entirely – all such travel must be reported to a head coach immediately. The player must abide by any required Virginia quarantine as a result of that travel and must remain out of practices until the quarantine period is over.

The AGSA President and head coaches must err on the side of caution in all cases, and they will evaluate each situation individually as they arise.

I have read, understand, and agree to comply with the guidelines presented by this document:

Parent/Guardian:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Player Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_