



# COVID-19 PROTOCOLS SPRING 2021

UPDATED 4.30.21

# PURPOSE

This plan is designed to keep our players participating in soccer while reducing infection risk in the setting of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

This plan has been developed based on the guidelines set forth by the Bucks County Department of Health and the guidelines set forth by Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer, which was created in consultation with US Soccer, US Youth Soccer, the US Olympic Committee, the CDC, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Plans from other agencies were also reviewed.

As a community, we must be flexible and this plan will be updated as necessary.

# THINGS TO REMEMBER FOR PARTICIPANTS

- THERE WILL BE A ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY FOR ANY PARTICIPANT NOT FOLLOWING THE GUIDELINES IN THIS DOCUMENT.
  - By choosing to participate in YMS programming, all participants, players, trainers, employees, volunteers and families are subject to the guidelines set forth in this document.
- Players who are not feeling well should stay home.
  - In particular, The player should not play if they have a fever, which is a temperature >100.3 degrees F
- YMS PLAYERS AND COACHES SHOULD COMPLETE THE TEAMSNAP HEALTH CHECK PRIOR TO ATTENDING GAMES/TRAINING.
  - Players will not be allowed to take the field until health check is completed.
- Any players participating in a tryout or evaluation are subject to these protocols. Players must register with YMS prior to participating in a try-out.
- It is the parents' responsibility to review these guidelines with their player.

It is critical ALL PARTICIPANTS are open and honest about their or their player's health in order for all kids to remain safe and continuing to play.

# FACE MASK GUIDELINES

- Face masks are not required for players on the field of play at YMS outdoor facilities due to guidance provided from the Bucks County Health Department. The Bucks County Health Department determined that wearing a mask in high exertion sports may create an unsafe environment for an athlete. Thus, athletes are not required to wear a mask if the exertion level may reasonably create a safety issue as determined by the athlete him/herself or the organization sponsoring the athletics in Bucks County
- - Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer has acknowledged that YMS is following their local health department's guidelines (Bucks County Health Department).
  - It is the individual family's decision for their player to wear a face mask.
  - Families can make this decision due to the exception stated in Section 3 of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Order Requiring Universal Face Coverings.
  - Families should make this decision prior to training/gameplay. YMS will support all families and their decision.
  - Players must still wear face coverings outside the field of play which includes entering the facility, exiting the facility, not in gameplay while on the sideline, and during halftime.
- Face masks are still required by all coaches and spectators when not on the field of play at an outdoor YMS facility.
- At this time, face masks will still be required at the YMS indoor facility.
- YMS teams are subject to the required face covering and COVID protocols set forth by those entities outside of YMS jurisdiction. This includes non-YMS tournaments and away games.
- Gaiters, neck warmers, plastic shields or other personal protective equipment could be considered dangerous and should not be worn by players.
- YMS will reserve the right to modify our policy during the season if there is a change in guidance or new information becomes available.

# FACE MASKS-BUCKS COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



## COUNTY OF BUCKS

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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2/26/21

### UPDATED LOCAL CLARIFICATION OF THE ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE PADOH REQUIRING FACEMASKS DURING SPRING ATHLETICS IN BUCKS COUNTY

Under Section 3, A., the order states that exceptions apply to individuals for whom wearing a mask while executing a task would create an unsafe condition as determined by local regulators. Section 3, B., also indicates that if wearing a face covering would either cause a medical condition, or exacerbate an existing one, including respiratory issues that impede breathing, that individual is also exempted from the order. Additionally, the "frequently asked questions" section further indicates that "if the sport, equipment, or exertion level does not allow for face covering to be worn safely then the athlete should not wear a face covering."

The Bucks County Health Department has determined that it may create an unsafe condition for a person to wear a mask while actively engaged in athletics. Thus, no athlete in Bucks County shall be required to wear a mask if exertion levels may reasonably create a safety issue as determined by the athlete him/herself or the organization sponsoring the athletics.

There has been no evidence to this point of on-court/on-field transmission of COVID in Bucks County throughout the pandemic. Additionally, no team to the Health Department's knowledge, at any level of play anywhere in the United States, has reported an infection from a positive athlete on an opposing team stemming from on-court/on-field competition.

At this time, the State of New Jersey does not require a mask "when persons are engaged in high intensity aerobic or anaerobic activities." The State of Ohio does not require masks "on the field of play." The State of New York does not require a mask if "players are unable to tolerate a face covering for the physical activity (e.g. practicing, playing.)" The State of Maryland does not require a mask while "engaging in other physical activities where the use of a face covering is likely to pose a bona fide safety risk."

COVID infections related to athletics have mostly resulted from athletes socializing and attending team functions prior to, and after, practices and games. It is extremely important to remember that masks must be worn while not actively engaged in the athletics at all times - masking must continue on the sidelines, on buses, during breaks, or at any other time when social distancing cannot be maintained.

David C. Damsker, MD, MPH  
Director  
Bucks County Health Department

# START OF SESSIONS

- Players should be dropped off and enter at their designated training area.
- Players should not intermingle with any other team in session. Teams should stand clear of other teams with trainings in progress and stand clear of gear areas of teams in progress.
- Players must wear face coverings while entering the field/training area.
- Players should bring an extra mask and hand sanitizer
- Players should maintain social distancing guidelines during arrival.
- Coaches must have on face coverings at all times.

# START OF SESSIONS

- Any player reporting of demonstrating symptoms of illness at any point should be removed from training (or prohibited from training) and should seek guidance from his or her physician.
- Players will be given a designated gear area 6 ft away from other players.
  - Players must avoid close contact defined as 6 ft for a total of 15 minutes or more.
- Players should enter their training area and head immediately to their assigned gear area.
- Players should have their own water and not share with any other player.

# DURING SESSIONS

- Players are not required to wear masks while training and game play at a YMS facility.
  - In consultation with Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer and the Bucks County Department of Health, face masks are not required at YMS facilities during onfield play.
  - Parents/Guardians should make the decision prior to training if the player will wear a mask.
  - Teams are still subject to the guidelines set forth by tournaments in which they are participating and non YMS facilities.
- On breaks, players will return to their own designated gear area, 6 ft from other players. Players must avoid close contact when on breaks.
- If players need to use the facilities, players must use hand sanitizer prior to returning to training/gameplay.



# DURING SESSIONS

- Players should avoid all non soccer physical contact with each other, including celebrations, handshakes, high fives, etc.
- All coaches and players must maintain a social distance of at least 6 feet to reduce the risk of disease transmission.
- More than one group may train simultaneously (within local restrictions regarding group or gatherings), but each group should train in a designated area at least 6 ft from other groups, and even further if possible.
- In the event of injury, staff may assist in the management of proper first aid. Family members may participate in injury management if necessary. Players should maintain a social distance.

# DURING SESSIONS-EQUIPMENT/ACTIVITY

- Players should bring their own equipment.
  - Ball
  - Hand sanitizer
  - Water bottle
  - Rain gear if weather forecast dictates
  - Towels
- Players and coaches may contact another individual's ball with their feet but should not contact with their hands unless during throw-ins, goaltending or heading drills.
- Equipment should only be handled by staff (cones, for example) and should not be handled by players and be disinfected after use.
- Benches are not allowed.

# PINNIE/TRAINING VEST GUIDANCE

Teams may wear pinnies during training/scrimmages if they are team pinnies provided by the trainer or the team manager.

- Pinnies must be team pinnies. Pinnies cannot be used by another team until laundered by the team manager or trainer.
- If trainer is training multiple times in a day/evening, a set of pinnies can only be used at a single session.
- Pinnies cannot be exchanged by players in a training session. If you wish to switch a player to a different team, they will require a fresh pinnie.

# POST SESSION



- Players will exit through the same area that they entered their playing area.
- Players should wear masks while exiting the training area.
- Parents should pick up players in the parking areas where they dropped off their player.
- Players should go directly home and shower/bathe prior to other activities.
- Surfaces that may be contacted by players (benches, balls, etc), should be disinfected before and after use.

# SPECTATORS/NON-PLAYERS

- Spectators/Non-Players must wear face coverings at all times.
- Spectators/Non-Players should avoid viewing above player gear areas.
- Spectators/Non-Players should remain socially distanced from other spectators and not intermingle with spectators from another team.
- During game play, both teams should be on one side of the field, all spectators on the opposite side. Spectators should be on the opposite side of the field across from their team. Spectators should not interact with those of the opposing team

# COVID-19 NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

- By choosing to participate in YMS programming, all participants, players, trainers, employees, volunteers and families are subject to the YMS COVID-19 procedures.
- Any changes to these guidelines will be communicated, and to continue participation in YMS programming, participants are subject to the guidelines set forth.
- Club Safety Officer (CSO) will be the point person for all communications in the event of a player exposure. The Club Vice President (VP) will take the lead if CSO is not available.
- If a player/trainer/volunteer coach has been exposed to or has tested positive for COVID-19 while actively participating in YMS activities, they must immediately notify the CSO and team coaches via phone call and email.
- CSO must notify via email all impacted YMS participants when there was an exposure or positive test.
  - This may include members of a team, training group, or guest players.
  - All player information will be kept confidential by the CSO and the team coaches.

# COVID-19 RETURN TO PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

- COVID-19 Exposures

- If a participant has been exposed to COVID-19, but has not tested positive for COVID-19, they may return to training and game play 14 days post their exposure, with no documentation.
- Participants may return sooner than 14 days provided:
  - They are symptom free and
  - They have received documentation with a specific return date from a medical professional and provide to the club safety officer. A negative COVID test is not considered documentation from a medical professional.

- Positive- COVID 19 Tests

- If a participant has tested positive for COVID-19, they may return to game play provided they meet all of the following:
  - They have received documentation of a specific return date from a medical professional and provide to the Club Safety Officer.
  - They are symptom free.
  - They are able to pass the Team Snap Health Screening upon their return.

# TEAM ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

- A team with a player that has been exposed to COVID-19 will continue training and game play. Other team members can continue training provided they are following YMS COVID protocols.
- In the event of a positive test to a player on any team, teams may no longer be subject to quarantine and may be subject to review by the Pennsylvania Department of Health. If a team is not subject to quarantine, other team members can continue train provided they are following YMS COVID protocols.
  - The YMS Board reserves the right suspend training and game play for a team at any time if multiple members test positive for COVID-19 for a period of 10 days retroactive to the team's last exposure to the players.
  - If a team is suspended from training and game play, the players on that team may not participate in any YMS activities or programming.
- Coaches and Trainers can continue participation provided they have remained socially distant and have worn face coverings during training and game play.
- Siblings of players that have been exposed may continue full participation provided no members of the family become symptomatic or test positive for COVID-19.
- If a player on a team tests positive for COVID-19 and their initial exposure was prior to game play with a team from another club or participation in a tournament, coaches are required to notify the team or tournament committee immediately.



# INCLEMENT WEATHER ACTION PLAN

- In the event of inclement weather, YMS will cancel or suspend training.
- All players should bring gear in the event of rain and camp has to be suspended.
- Parents will be notified of cancellations or suspensions via Teamsnap, and will need to pick up their child immediately.
- All precautions will be taken to adhere to personal protection and social distancing requirements, however those requirements will not supersede protection of the children from the immediate threat of severe weather.

# CONTACTS

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