REVISED MAY 18, 2020

MINIMUM STANDARD HEALTH PROTOCOLS

☑ CHECKLIST FOR YOUTH SPORTS OPERATORS

A note about children and COVID-19:

The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages. While the risk of serious illness or loss of life is greatest in those 65 years of age or older with pre-existing health conditions, persons in every age group can become infected with COVID-19 and some may become seriously ill or even die.

We should all be thankful that, with rare exceptions, COVID-19 is not claiming the lives of our children. However, we can never forget that a child with a mild or even asymptomatic case of COVID-19 can spread that infection to others who may be far more vulnerable.

COVID-19 is spread from person to person through contact that is close enough to share droplets generated by coughing, sneezing, speaking, and even just breathing. COVID-19 can also be spread by touching objects where contaminated droplets have landed. Because of this easy manner of transmission, an infant, child or young person who is infected with COVID-19 can spread the infection to others they come in close contact with, such as members of their household, teachers, or other caregivers. We have learned that infected persons with mild or even no symptoms can spread COVID-19.

These facts are vitally important when considering engaging in youth sporting activities.

One thing is for certain: We must find reasonably safe ways to restore these services so that our children can be cared for, and for their parents and guardians to be able to return to work.

For adults in the workplace or other public spaces, we are confident that if certain measures such as cloth face coverings or non-medical grade masks, respiratory etiquette, frequent hand washing / hand sanitation and environmental cleaning and sanitizing are widely observed, we can then proceed with reopening Texas in a safe and measured way.

However, such protective measures that we can expect from adults are, for a variety of reasons, simply not possible for children and youth to practice in sporting activities.

All of these factors mean that while certain precautions against the spread of COVID-19 can and will be applied to youth sports, the infection control measures that can be put in place in these settings will differ from those that are suitable for other social, business and commercial settings.

Every adult who is responsible for providing care for youth in these settings must be aware of these facts and be willing to comply with the infection control measures that will be in place in these settings. Parents should monitor the health of their children and not send them to participate in sporting activities if they exhibit any symptom of COVID-19. They should seek COVID-19 testing promptly and report results to the program given the implications for other children, families, and staff. Individuals aged 65 or older are at a higher risk of COVID-19. Parents should protect any vulnerable persons who are members of the same household or come into frequent, close contact with individuals who participate in youth sports.

About minimum health protocols:

Effective May 31, 2020, youth sports may begin holding practices without spectators other than one parent or guardian per participant, as needed. Those sports may begin holding games or similar competitions, with or without spectators, on or after June 15, 2020. Spectators should maintain at least 6 feet social distancing from individuals not within the spectator's group.

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The following are the minimum recommended health protocols for all youth sporting activities in Texas. Youth sports organizers may adopt additional protocols consistent with their specific needs and circumstances to help protect the health and safety of all employees, contractors, volunteers and participants.

The virus that causes COVID-19 can be spread to others by infected persons who have few or no symptoms. Even if an infected person is only mildly ill, the people they spread it to may become seriously ill or even die, especially if that person is 65 or older with pre-existing health conditions that place them at higher risk. Because of the hidden nature of this threat, everyone should rigorously follow the practices specified in these protocols, all of which facilitate a safe and measured reopening of Texas. The virus that causes COVID-19 is still circulating in our communities. We should continue to observe practices that protect everyone, including those who are most vulnerable.

Please note, public health guidance cannot anticipate every unique situation. Youth sports organizers should stay informed and take actions based on common sense and wise judgment that will protect health and support economic revitalization. Youth sports organizers should also be mindful of federal and state employment and disability laws, workplace safety standards, and accessibility standards to address the needs of both workers and customers.

Health protocols for employees, contractors, and volunteers ("staff"):

- ☐ **Provide notice to all parents and guardians of the enhanced risks of participants being in direct contact with anyone age 65 or older for 14 days after participating in a sport event or practice.**
- ☐ Train all staff on appropriate cleaning and disinfection, hand hygiene, and respiratory etiquette.
- ☐ Screen all staff each day for any of the following new or worsening signs or symptoms of possible COVID-19:
  - ☐ Cough
  - ☐ Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - ☐ Chills
  - ☐ Repeated shaking with chills
  - ☐ Muscle pain
  - ☐ Headache
  - ☐ Sore throat
  - ☐ Loss of taste or smell
  - ☐ Diarrhea
  - ☐ Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit
  - ☐ Known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19
- ☐ Limit staff with underlying conditions from attending or staffing the youth sporting event.
- ☐ Consistent with the actions taken by many employers across the state, consider having all staff wear cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth). If available, staff should consider wearing non-medical grade face masks.
- ☐ Staff should mitigate environmental exposures by additional cleaning and disinfecting of symptomatic staff's work area, common areas, and bathrooms. Staff should follow and supervise the Program Activity Plan and, if applicable, the Transportation Plan.

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Health protocols regarding sick participants and staff members:

- ☐ Isolate staff and participants exhibiting new or worsening signs or symptoms of possible COVID-19 and contact the local health department.
  - ☐ Do not allow staff with the new or worsening signs or symptoms of COVID-19 to return to work until:
    - In the case of a staffer who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to work when all three of the following criteria are met: at least 3 days (72 hours) have passed *since recovery* (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications); and the individual has *improvement* in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and at least 10 days have passed *since symptoms first appeared*; or
    - In the case of a staffer who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and does not get evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, the individual is assumed to have COVID-19, and the individual may not return to work until the individual has completed the same three-step criteria listed above; or
    - If the staffer has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to work before completing the above self-isolation period, the individual must obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on a negative nucleic acid COVID-19 test and an alternative diagnosis.
- ☐ Staff should help the operator in identifying exposure risks (a.k.a. contact tracing).
- ☐ Each sporting team is considered a cohort. Outside of the sporting event, discourage mixing between cohorts.
  - ☐ Immediately isolate any participant or staff member who tests positive for COVID-19.
  - ☐ If a staff member tests positive for COVID-19, the youth sports organizer should notify parents or guardians of possible exposure to a lab-confirmed case of COVID-19.
  - ☐ If 3 or more cohorts in a sports league have individuals test positive for COVID-19, work with state and local public health authorities about continued operations of the youth sports league.
  - ☐ Using the groups or cohort strategy, contact tracing can be initiated promptly, and isolation and surveillance can be implemented in short order.

Health protocols for spectators:

- ☐ Individuals should avoid being in a group larger than 10 individuals. Within these groups, individuals should, to the extent possible, minimize in-person contact with others not in the individual's household. Minimizing in-person contact includes maintaining 6 feet of separation from individuals. When maintaining 6 feet of separation is not feasible, other methods should be utilized to slow the spread of COVID-19, such as wearing a face covering or mask, washing or sanitizing hand frequently, and avoiding sharing utensils or other common objects.

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- ☐ Consistent with the actions taken by many individuals across the state, all spectators should consider wearing cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth). If available, spectators should consider wearing non-medical grade face masks.

Health protocols for grounds and facilities:

- ☐ Develop, train, and implement increased daily sanitization protocols for common surfaces, restrooms, recreational equipment, and facilities.
- ☐ Make hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, soap and water, or similar disinfectant readily available throughout the facility.
- ☐ **Consider having an individual wholly or partially dedicated to ensuring the health protocols adopted by the youth sports league are being successfully implemented and followed.**
- ☐ Health policies and protocols should include communicating and coordinating with the local health department, local emergency services, and local health care providers.
- ☐ Consistent with the actions taken by many employers across the state, consider having all staff and participants wear cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth). If available, staff and participants should consider wearing non-medical grade face masks.

Health protocols for youth sports facilities:

- ☐ Develop and implement a Program Activity Hygiene Plan to include:
  - ☐ Sanitization of all program areas
  - ☐ Sanitization of equipment before and after use
  - ☐ Hand washing or hand sanitizing before and after activities
- ☐ **Group excursions related to youth sports are strongly discouraged, and should be limited or eliminated where feasible. To the extent those excursions continue, develop and implement Transportation Protocols to include:**
  - ☐ One individual per seat and every other row in a vehicle
  - ☐ Staggered seating for maximum distancing
  - ☐ Asking participants and staff to wear face coverings or masks while in vehicle
  - ☐ All individuals should sanitize hands upon boarding the vehicle
- ☐ Remind participants, parents, and guardians of the enhanced risks of participants being in direct contact with anyone age 65 or older for 14 days after participating in the youth sporting event or practice.