



Spring Season COVID Guidelines **UPDATED MARCH 1, 2021**

Illinois Youth Soccer Association (IYSA) is dedicated to protecting the health and safety of our soccer community. The purpose of this document is to provide IYSA member soccer organizations and their athletes, parents, and coaches with information that they can use to assist them with developing their return-to-activity programming specific to their situation in context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Guidelines for sports are fluid and subject to change at any point based on governmental requirements. Should the state loosen or tighten any restrictions during the season, IYSA will follow those changes and update these protocols. Info in the Illinois Youth Soccer guidelines are secondary to all state-issued guidelines and members should reference the state guideline documents below to ensure they are up to date on all current state requirement

- [Illinois All Sports Policy](#)
- [DCEO All Sport FAQ](#)

This Protocol is based on the info from the Illinois Department of Public Health and mirrors the guidelines being used by the IHSA for their upcoming soccer seasons.

In addition, it is each soccer organization, club or team's responsibility to know the guidelines specific to their area. The information in this document is NOT intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. The knowledge and circumstances around COVID-19 are changing constantly and, as such, Illinois Youth Soccer Association makes no representation and assumes no responsibility for the completeness of this information. Further, your organization is expected to strictly comply with the Center for Disease Control (CDC), state and local guidelines for the resumption of play and seek advice from medical professionals and/or public health officials in your area if you have specific questions. Additional guidelines may, or may not, follow as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve.

Although the young and healthy may be subject to less severe cases of COVID-19, every case of this disease is potentially life-altering or deadly, particularly in those with risk factors that may occur within our communities. Health consequences may be long-standing and only apparent weeks after initial infection and recovery. Until COVID-19 is either eradicated, a vaccine is developed, or a cure is found, there is no way of eliminating the risk of infection. This should always be at the forefront when designing and considering return-to-activity.

AGAIN THESE GUIDELINES ARE IN ADDITION TO THOSE RESPONSIBILITIES LISTED IN THE [ILLINOIS ALL SPORTS POLICY](#) AND THESE FOCUS ONLY ON SOCCER-SPECIFIC AREAS

FACE COVERINGS

Per the current [Illinois All Sports Policy](#) “All participants must wear a face covering that fully covers their nose and mouth and fits snugly against the sides of the face with no gaps, whether indoors or outdoors”

Face coverings are always required for players, coaches, referees and spectators. Those that fail to do so will be removed from play.

Players should have multiple masks with them to change masks throughout the game should they become sweat soaked.

SPECTATORS

When located in a region not facing specific mitigation efforts outlined in the Restore Illinois guidelines, Gatherings of up to 50 spectators, indoors or outdoors, are allowed. Due to additional state requirements in place and the logistics required to ensure the 50 spectator maximum the following guidelines are in place.

At this time, to ensure that players get the most opportunity to participate IYSA recommends no spectators at this time. Should your organization decide to allow spectators in addition to requiring face coverings, 30-feet between spectator area and the field of play and maintaining 6-foot social distance between spectators not from the same household at all time, the following guidelines must be in place.

For IYSA Sanctioned Tournaments

Tournaments that allow spectators must abide by all requirements listed in the [All Sports Policy Staffing and Attendance](#) in addition to any local guidelines in place.

For Recreational League Play

Recreational leagues that allow spectators must abide by all requirements listed in the [All Sports Policy Staffing and Attendance](#) in addition to any local guidelines in place.

For Competitive League Play

Teams should contact their local competitive league about their spectator requirements.

For Illinois Youth Soccer Tournaments (State Cup, Presidents Cup, etc.)

Illinois Youth Soccer will directly communicate with participants the spectator policy for these events.

GAME PLAY

Pre-Game

- Teams should have 6 feet of space between players on the sidelines. When possible players should bring their own chairs to sit in while not playing or sit on the grass instead of using benches. If benches are used, multiple benches should be placed to allow for 6-feet of space or greater between players.
- During player check-in 6 feet of distance should be kept at all time between players, coaches and referees
- The Pre-game meeting and coin toss must be limited to one (1) captain per team or one (1) coach per team. Each team representative shall stand on each side of the mid field line with a distance of 6 feet or greater maintained at all time.
- No Pre-Game handshakes
- Any ball to be used during gameplay should be sanitized prior to the match and not used for any warm-ups

During Game

- Players not playing should be sat at least 6-feet apart from one another and must properly wear a mask
- Each player should have their own designated area for them to sit when they come off the field
- No sharing of water bottles, pinnies or other equipment.
- Group goal celebration including hugs, high fives, etc. should be suspended at this time

Post-Game

- Post game handshakes are suspended. Teams can show good sportsmanship by sharing a round of applause at the conclusion of the match.
- Team should promptly leave the field following the conclusion of the match. NO post game team meetings.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Organizations must collect from each participant the signed “IYSA Communicable Disease Release of Liability and Assumption of Risk Agreement” PRIOR to every athlete’s participation. Keep the executed Agreement for a minimum of seven (7) years and make it available to the IYSA upon request.
 - Competitive clubs collect these from all players, coaches team manager, board members and any other active participant in club activities
 - Recreational leagues collect these from all players, coaches, board members, referees, volunteers and any other active participant in club activities
 - Referee assignors collect these from all referees

- o Sanctioned tournaments collect these from all teams, employees, volunteers and tournament workers.
- Complete and submit to IYSA prior to the start of activities the “IYSA Organization Communicable Disease Agreement”.
 - o Competitive teams submit this info to their competitive league(s)
 - o Recreational leagues submit this to mk@illinoisyouthsoccer.org
- Each organization should have their own protocols in place in line with current state guidelines.
- Have an action plan in place in line with your local health guidelines, in case of notification of a positive test result.
- Anyone who tests positive for Covid-19 must quarantine and follow all state-issued requirements before returning to activity.
- Provide hand sanitizing stations and waste receptacles at fields for individual participant use.

INSURANCE

To be covered by Illinois Youth Soccer (IYSA) insurance, in addition to following all guidelines in the [Illinois All Sport Policy](#), the IYSA guidelines listed above and any local requirements, the IYSA Member club/league must abide by the following requirements:

1. The practice/training/game must be a formal organized activity by an IYSA Member club/league for IYSA Member League players only.
2. The participants including players and coaches must be registered with and have a current, valid pass from the IYSA Member League and must be on file with the IYSA.
3. The Member club/league must have a signed “IYSA Communicable Disease Release of Liability and Assumption of Risk Agreement” on file for each participant including but not limited to the players, coaches, staff, volunteers prior to the start of the first practice/training/game.
4. The IYSA does not provide any insurance coverage for Covid-19 related claims.
5. The practice/training must abide by all the requirements listed in the IYSA Return to Activity Protocol.
6. The IYSA Member club/league must complete and submit to the IYSA prior to its first practice/training/game the “IYSA Organization Communicable Disease Agreement”.
7. Failure to follow the state and local government public health orders, Centers for Disease Control guidelines and IYSA protocol involving COVID-19 or any other communicable disease may void medical and liability coverage for your organization under the IYSA insurance placements.