

NEAAU Baseball League Game Safety Recommendations

It is imperative that all coaches are responsible and ensure the enforcement of the safety guidelines before, during and after the game.

LOCAL/PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

After having reviewed state reopening requirements, as well as reviewing game day safety recommendations from countless facilities and sport organizations, NEAAU Baseball is making the following recommendations during your league games this summer. There will be hundreds of league games throughout New England and permits acquired from many different towns, cities and facilities. Teams/coaches need to be fully aware and follow the guidelines required by those field permits. The below game day safety guidelines recommended by NEAAU Baseball do not supersede those required by the town, city or facility from which you are acquiring field time. Protocols will also vary between umpiring crews from state to state.

PRE-GAME

- Host team should communicate the field safety rules with players, parents and opposing coaching staff by email, phone or online meeting prior to the arrival.
- All attendees (coaches, players, family members, etc.) should self-screen for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 before arriving to the field.
- Any person with positive symptoms reported should not be allowed to participate and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate health-care professional.

Some symptoms include: Cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, change in taste or smell, fever. Be sure to visit www.cdc.gov for more information.

- Teams should refrain from arriving to the field in a team vehicle with multiple players
- All individual should arrive wearing face masks
- Players should handle their own bags, equipment, etc.
- Teams should ensure they have a sufficient amount of sanitizing product
- Teams should check to learn if their umpire assigner has a safety screening process in place prior to assigning umpires to officiate their league games.
- Home plate meetings are limited to both umpires and one coach from each team. Social distancing must be practiced.

DURING the GAME

TEAMS

- MASKS (COACHES): Coaches are required to wear facemasks at all times. If proper social distancing can be kept, coaches can remove their mask such as while coaching 1st and 3rd base.
- MASKS (PLAYERS): Players are required to wear face masks when in or around the dugout, but not while on the field. Players should have face masks with them at all times.
- EQUIPMENT – There should be no shared athletic equipment (gloves, bats, helmets, towels, water bottles, clothing, shoes, or sports specific equipment) between players.

- DUGOUTS: Social distancing must be enforced while in and around the dugout. Coaches must require some players to remain out of the dugout if social distancing cannot not be properly practiced within the dugout.
- BASEBALLS – Each team should consider the use of their own baseballs when on defense. Umpires should not handle baseballs unless they are able to sanitize the baseballs before returning them into play. All foul balls should be retrieved by defensive team members only.
- CELEBRATIONS – Coaches and Players should refrain from team celebrations such as high fives.
- FOOD – No food such as seeds, gum, etc. should be allowed while on the field at league games
- HYDRATION – There should no team coolers or shared drink stations

UMPIRES

We know many have questions about the umpire guidelines such as their positioning and the use of face masks. We have spoken to several assigners and facilities in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut. Due to varying protocols below is what NEAAU Baseball believes are realistic recommendations. NEAAU Baseball will continue to monitor the latest news from each state as they soon enter phase 3 of reopening and make adjustments if needed.

- The host team should confirm with their assigner the field positioning that will be used by the umpire(s) and relay this to the opposing team prior to game.
- When positioned behind home plate, the umpire must wear a face mask.
- Umpires must wear a mask at all times if their positioning cannot ensure proper social distancing from players, coaches, spectators
- If the umpires handle or come in contact with the baseball then the baseball should be sanitized
- Umpires should not handle the bats unless it is to remove the bat from the field during play to avoid potential injury

SPECTATORS

- The amount of spectators at the field should be monitored to ensure the local/state restrictions are not violated. Limiting the amount of spectators to 1-2 per player/team should be considered by each team. Surely additional spectators could watch from their vehicles or further away from the field if necessary.
- Spectators should avoid team dugouts
- Spectators must follow proper social distancing guidelines at all times
- Spectators should bring their own seating or portable chairs when possible
- When using pop up tents please restrict to family members only

AFTER the GAME

- No handshakes between teams. Teams line up on the baselines after the game for a tip of the cap instead of handshakes. No mass celebrations
- Teams required to clean their dugout after their game(s)