



HGRA Soccer COVID-19 Preparedness Plan

This document represents the Highland Groveland Recreation Association (HGRA) Soccer Program COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for athletes, volunteers, staff, and parents/spectators (referred to collectively as “participants”). It is our intent to abide by all guidelines and recommendations from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) regarding organized sports.

These Guidelines apply without regard to whether or not any particular individual has been vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus.

For purposes of these guideline, an “HGRA Soccer event” is any scheduled game, practice, training session, clinic, or other activity conducted or sponsored by HGRA Soccer.

Before Play

- Any participant should refrain from participating in or attending an HGRA Soccer event if they:
 - Are experiencing any of the established COVID-19 symptoms, including but not limited to: mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough and difficulty breathing.
 - Have been in contact with someone with COVID-19 in the last 10 days.
 - Are a vulnerable individual and Minnesota is in Phase One or Phase Two of reopening guidelines. A vulnerable individual is an elderly individual and/or an individual with serious underlying health conditions, including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma and those whose immune system is compromised such as by chemotherapy for cancer and other conditions requiring such therapy.
 - Prior to attending an HGRA event, participants are required to review a screening survey that checks for COVID-19 symptoms, close contacts with confirmed cases and quarantined cases, and out-of-state travel. A suitable survey will be posted on HGRA’s web site at www.hgra.org.
- HGRA Soccer will post adequate signage for all relevant protocols and guidelines within any areas necessary to ensure all persons attending an HGRA Soccer event are aware of HGRA Soccer’s COVID-19 return to play guidelines.
- All social distancing guidelines issued by the MDH and CDC are expected to be followed and will be communicated to all registrants and monitored.

- HGRA Soccer staff and volunteers will be asked to monitor and remind participants of distancing rules, especially during peak hours of activity and entry to/exit from an HGRA Soccer field.
- HGRA Soccer will limit traffic in areas typically used for play for participants through physical field markings (cones) and a staggered practice and/or game schedule
- Participants will be directed not to enter an HGRA Soccer field until (1) the time for their event; and (2) participants from a preceding event, other than staff, have departed from the field.
- HGRA Soccer staff and volunteers will adhere to a plan for cleaning and disinfecting any structures, facilities, equipment, etc. that participants may come in contact with

During Play

- HGRA Soccer will emphasize minimized physical contact between athletes and volunteers:
 - Avoiding 'high fives' or end of game lines and other types of skin-to-skin contact on and off the field.
 - Avoid touching your face, especially before or after handling a ball or other equipment that others may come in contact.
 - HGRA Soccer will use any opportunity to disinfect balls and other equipment after games and practices.
 - Avoid sharing food, drinks, towels, etc.
- HGRA Soccer will observe distancing rules during games and trainings:
 - HGRA Soccer will instruct athletes to leave space between their personal gear on the sidelines.
 - Remind athletes to stand apart during breaks when training, during team huddles on game day, and when waiting to be substituted in a match.
 - Coaches will try to avoid drills that involve athletes standing in lines. When lines or grouping of athletes is necessary for a particular drill, Coaches will ensure that the activity is designed to allow appropriate space between athletes.
- HGRA Soccer will ensure there is access to hand sanitizer in as many locations as possible, especially in high-traffic areas such as entrances, the field house and team benches.
- HGRA Soccer will encourage athletes and coaches to bring and use their own hand sanitizer.

- HGRA Soccer will avoid shared equipment by:
 - Providing each player their own ‘pinnies’ (scrimmage vests) to take home and wash before each practice and game. Pinnies will be returned at the end of the season to the team Coach.
- Minimize athletes touching team-training equipment directly.
- HGRA Soccer will require coaches or another designated individual to set up and collect team training equipment like balls and cones.
- HGRA Soccer will follow MDH and CDC guidelines and recommendations for masks and other face coverings for participants.
- If an athlete feels ill during an HGRA Soccer event, the participant should immediately inform a coach or official who shall inform the participant’s guardian, or arrange for appropriate isolation of the participant at the event until the guardian arrives.

After Play

- HGRA Soccer will eliminate traditional post-game handshakes and encourage teams to come up with creative ways to show sportsmanship to their opponents after a match has finished.
- Athletes will continue to observe distancing rules when gathering personal gear.
- Participants will be asked to leave the field as soon as reasonably possible, avoiding congregating and minimizing extra-curricular or other social activity not pertaining to the training session or match.
- Coaches or other designated individuals should clean and disinfect balls and other equipment as soon as feasible.
- Athletes should clean and disinfect their own gear, especially anything touched by another individual.
- All participants should wash their hands thoroughly or use a hand sanitizer as soon as possible after coming off the field.

Guests/Spectators

- All guests must remain outside the HGRA field until the designated starting time of their event and all persons from a preceding event have departed.
- Guests/spectators will enter at the field house main entrance and depart immediately after the game through the two-side fence exits next to fields #4 and #5 on the Carondelet fields (see map on website).
- Guests may only observe an HGRA Soccer event from areas designated for spectators by HGRA Soccer.

- In compliance with capacity restrictions imposed by MDH and CDC, HGRA Soccer may need to limit the number of guests that can observe an HGRA Soccer event. HGRA Soccer will communicate the number of guests per participant that will be permitted to observe an HGRA Soccer event. This number may vary depending upon the number of participants expected at the event on any particular day.
- Guests must refrain from touching or handling any HGRA Soccer equipment during an HGRA event unless asked to do so by HGRA Soccer staff or volunteers.

Face Masks/Face Coverings

Effective June 12, 2021:

- HGRA does not require spectators to wear masks or face coverings at any outdoor HGRA event. However, spectators still need to observe proper social distancing.
- HGRA does not require athletes, coaches or officials to wear masks or face coverings in the adult soccer league or the 18U soccer league.
- Masks or face coverings are optional for athletes in 14U and younger when they are actively competing on the field during games, and for referees while officiating at games.
- Masks or face coverings are optional for athletes in 14U and younger during practices when they are actively engaged in scrimmages or drills where social distancing is not possible.
- Masks or face coverings are required for athletes in 14U and younger at all other times, including those times when the athlete is on the bench or sideline, or otherwise not actively engaged in their game or practice.
- Masks or other face coverings are required for coaches and team volunteers at all times during games and practices.
- In accordance with MDH guidelines, athletes competing without masks or face coverings should be tested once a week for COVID. We strongly encourage the families of these athletes to secure such testing if you believe that doing so is appropriate.

HGRA will review this policy on an ongoing basis and will announce modifications of it if doing so is considered appropriate.

HGRA Soccer understands the very nature of the game of soccer makes it impossible for athletes to avoid all physical contact and adhere to specific distancing rules during a

match or training session. Our goal is by implementing our HGRA Soccer Covid-19 Preparedness Plan is to provide families information they will need to be able to make informed decisions as to when and how play can resume play. These guidelines will not have a specific duration or expiration date and they are expected to be followed until rescinded. HGRA Soccer on its own or as a result of further guidance from authorities and professionals may revise any or all of the HGRA Soccer COVID-19 return to play guidelines contained in this document.

HGRA Soccer appreciates the continued support of our athletes and families as we prepare to resume our HGRA summer soccer season for the 2021 spring/summer. The safety and welfare of our athletes and families is our highest priority and the HGRA Soccer COVID-19 Preparedness Plan will help us return to play as a community in an informed and structured way.

Certified:

Dennis Merley
HGRA President

George Mastrogiorgis
HGRA Soccer Commissioner

June 12, 2021