



Gainesville Haymarket Baseball League

## COVID-19 Return to Play Plan

To promote the health and safety of everyone involved with Gainesville Haymarket Baseball League (“GHBL”) activities, and consistent with the latest authoritative guidance from the [Virginia Department of Health](#), the federal [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (“CDC”), and others, GHBL’s Return to Play (“RTP”) Committee has adopted this Plan for supplemental protocols, which will apply until amended or rescinded.

### SECTION 1 – PROTOCOLS

#### 1.1 – Player Participation

Only players who have registered for the 2020 Fall season and parent/guardian completes the COVID Waiver are eligible to participate in GHBL organized team activities(OTAs).



## 1.2 – Physical Distancing

At all times during the workout, participants (including coaches, players, and any spectators) must maintain at least 10 feet of physical distance from anyone else who is not a member of their household, with the exception of closer contact that is incidental.

Cloth face coverings are recommended but not required for workout participants.

## 1.3 – Volunteer and Parent/Guardian Pre-Screening

Immediately prior to conducting a workout, any involved Manager/Coach or other adult volunteer must complete a personal self-screening of COVID-19 symptoms/risks (using a CDC- approved [online assessment](#) or [app](#)) to verify that his or her participation in the event is appropriate.

Parents/guardians must complete an approved symptom/risk assessment for any player in advance of workout participation.

All participants should adhere to the recommended action provided by the CDC-approved screening tool. For example, if the site or app advises self-quarantine for a period of time, the participant should not attend any workouts during that time period.

## 1.4 – Facilities

Dugouts and Bleachers are to be used for players only to maintain 10 feet social distancing. Parents/Guardians are recommended to bring their own chair and social distance. Each team should designate a COVID COACH to disinfect the dugouts and bleachers before and after each use.



## 1.5 – Equipment

Participants who are not members of the same household may not share any playing equipment during the course of a workout.

To encourage physical distancing of players, equipment not in use should be placed at least 10 feet away from equipment belonging to another participant.

A catcher in gear will not be utilized for Tee Ball, Coach Pitch, Rookies divisions. Minors and Majors divisions may not be used by multiple players on the same day and must be thoroughly cleaned between uses by different players on different days.

## 1.6 – Other Conduct

Participants should avoid unnecessary physical contact with anyone who is not a member of their household.

Sharing of drinks is strictly forbidden, and no food (including seeds and gum) should be present at a OTAs unless required for a medical reason and, where there is such a medical necessity, any food should be kept by the parent/guardian of the player with the need.

Spitting is not allowed under any circumstances.

Participants should thoroughly wash their hands with soap and water before and after workouts or utilize an alcohol-based hand-sanitizing solution that is self-supplied.

## SECTION 2 – PROTOCOLS FOR 2020 FALL SEASON:

The Return to Play Committee has approved the following supplemental COVID-19 safety protocols. They will be adjusted as appropriate and necessary if circumstances or government guidance change.

### 2.1 – Team Formation Principles

Team sizes will be kept at the *minimum practical size*, accounting for such considerations as:

- the level of play (and corresponding number of essential fielding positions);
- cohorting factors (as described below); and
- the number of registrants and adult volunteers.

Roster sizes may vary within playing levels as needed to accomplish the objectives of this Plan (*i.e.*, teams do not all have to have the same number of rostered players), provided that any such variation does not materially affect competitiveness.



## 2.2 – Scheduling

To avoid excessive crowding on/around playing fields, all games and practices will be scheduled with firm start and end times. For games, start times will include time for player warmups. Participants should arrive as close to the event start time as possible and depart immediately upon the conclusion of the event.

All games will have a Drop Dead Time.

## 2.3 – Designation of Team “COVID Coach”

Each Manager will appoint one adult (who must be a member of the household of a player) to serve as the “COVID Coach” for each team event – meaning a game or a practice. The COVID Coach should not be involved in *game* instruction under any circumstances and should only participate in a practice if s/he has completed the League’s Volunteer Application.

The COVID Coach is responsible for facilitating and monitoring the team’s adherence to the protocols in this Plan.

The COVID Coach is also expected to provide participants and spectators with reminders and assistance concerning the protocols in this Plan (e.g., physical spacing requirements).

To the extent possible, the COVID Coach role on a team should be performed consistently throughout the season by one person or a small number of persons.

## 2.4 – Playing Equipment, Gear and Supplies

Player-worn equipment

Sharing of player-worn equipment during the course of any event is strictly prohibited unless the players are members of the same household. This includes:

- Batting helmets
- Hats or other clothing or uniform items
- Fielding/batting gloves
- Catcher’s gear or other protective equipment

The use of shared bats between teammates is strongly discouraged but not prohibited.

To reduce the need to share equipment, GHBL has suspended the use of catchers for Tee Ball, Coach Pitch and Rookies divisions. For Rookies levels, the use of a sock net behind home plate, in lieu of a catcher, is encouraged.



For Minors and Majors Managers will be issued one or more sets of catcher's gear (e.g., a helmet/mask, chest protector, leg guards, and mitt) from GHBL to accommodate players who do not have their own gear. This equipment, however, may not be used by multiple players on the same day and must be thoroughly cleaned between uses by different players on different days. At a minimum, GHBL will supply each Minors/Majors team multiple sets of catchers gear.

#### Baseballs

The protocols for game balls is set forth in Section 9 (Games).

#### Hand Sanitizer

All participants are encouraged to have their own supply of alcohol-based hand-sanitizing solution to utilize during practices and games after handling baseballs.

#### Protective Face Coverings

Players are permitted, but not required, to wear cloth face coverings at any time. Such masks should be solid-colored and may not be attached to any other playing equipment, such as a hat or helmet.

## 2.5 – GHBL Facilities

GHBL will post signage near the entrance to Long Park and Catharpin Park advising that:

- no one with a fever or symptoms of COVID-19, or known exposure to a COVID-19 case in the prior 14 days, is permitted to enter; and
- entrants must observe appropriate physical distancing requirements at all times while on the premises,

The concession stand will remain closed for the duration of the Fall season.

## 2.6 – Pre-Event Screening Procedures

Immediately prior to conducting any game or practice, any involved Manager/Coach or other adult volunteer, including the COVID Coach and any Umpire, must complete a personal self-screening of COVID-19 symptoms/risks (using a CDC-approved [online assessment](#) or [app](#)) to verify that his or her participation in the event is appropriate.

Volunteers must adhere to the recommended action provided by the CDC-approved screening tool. For example, if the site or app advises self-quarantine for a period of time, the participant should not attend any GHBL events during that time period.



## 2.7. – General Event Conduct

All attendees at GHBL events are encouraged to first complete a personal self-screening of COVID-19 symptoms/risks (using a CDC-approved [online assessment](#) or [app](#)) to determine whether their attendance at the event is appropriate. Regardless, no player, adult volunteer, or spectator should attend any GHBL event if they:

- are feeling ill (e.g., have a fever, cough, or respiratory condition); or
- have traveled within 14 days to a country listed that the [CDC identifies](#) as having widespread ongoing transmission of COVID-19 with restrictions upon entry to the U.S. Participation or attendance at GHBL events is allowed, but discouraged, for anyone who has a compromised immune system or is in another group that may be at an increased risk of serious COVID-19 complications, per [CDC guidance](#).

All attendees at GHBL events are encouraged to:

- wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer);
- avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands; and
- limit any prolonged close, physical contact (less than 6 feet) with persons outside their household unless they are wearing a face mask.

## 2.8 – Practices (In-Season)

Location

All practices must be held outdoors.

Physical-distancing requirements

At all times during practice, participants (including coaches, players, and any spectators) must maintain at least 10 feet of physical distance from anyone else who is not a member of their household, with the exception of closer contact that is incidental.

To encourage physical distancing of players, equipment not in use should be placed at least 10 feet away from equipment belonging to another participant.

Face coverings

Cloth face coverings are permitted but not required for practice participants.

Food and drink

Sharing of drinks is strictly forbidden. No food (including seeds and gum) should be present at a practice unless required for a medical reason and, where there is such a medical necessity, any food should be kept by an adult.

Spitting is not allowed under any circumstances.



## 2.9 – Games

### Game balls

At Minors and Majors, each team must supply 2 new game balls for each game, to be used only while its players are in the field.

At coach-pitch levels, the coach must pitch to players with balls supplied by the *other* team (*i.e.*, the team in the field). Coaches should use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after each inning of pitching.

Umpires (where applicable) and base coaches should limit their contact with the ball.

Foul balls landing outside the field of play should be retrieved by a player or coach for the team in the field, where possible. No spectators should retrieve a foul ball.

### Umpires

Pre-game home plate conferences with Managers must observe the 10-foot physical distancing requirement. Managers should exchange lineups electronically.

### Coaches

Managers and Coaches are recommended to wear a cloth face covering at all times while on the field of play or within 10 feet of another game participant.

During games, only Managers and Coaches may occupy the dugout. Players may use the dugouts and bleachers to the extent necessary to enter or exit the ballfield while maintaining 10 feet physical distance.

### Physical-distancing requirements

At all times during a game, participants (including coaches, players, and any spectators) must maintain at least 10 feet of physical distance from anyone else who is not a member of their household, with the exception of closer contact that is incidental.

Teams should establish an extended “dugout” area in a location that provides safety from foul balls while maintaining physical distancing of players. Players are encouraged to bring a portable/folding chair to sit on in lieu of a team bench.

To encourage physical distancing of players, equipment not in use should be placed at least 10 feet away from equipment belonging to another participant.

Teams will not engage in post-game handshakes or “hands in” huddles; players and coaches should instead consider non-contact displays of sportsmanship and camaraderie.

## Face coverings

Cloth face coverings are permitted but not required for players.

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## Food and Drink

Sharing of drinks is strictly forbidden. No food (including seeds and gum) should be present at a game unless required for a medical reason and, where there is such a medical necessity, any food should be kept by an adult.

Spitting is not allowed under any circumstances.

## Spectators

Only members of a participating player's household should attend games as a spectator.

Spectators should bring their own chairs. Bleachers may not be available with proper physical distancing.

Teams at the level of AA and above are encouraged to use the IScore app for scorekeeping to allow fans to follow games remotely.

## 2.10 – Contact Reporting and Infection Response

In the event any participant in GHBL activities, or a member of their household, is diagnosed with COVID-19 within 14 days of the participant's attendance at a GHBL event, please provide this information confidentially to the GHBL (ghbl.president@gmail.com).

The GHBL will consult with the Prince William County Health Department concerning any necessary response by the League, which may include the suspension of some activities or the temporary exclusion of some participants.

For purposes of this Plan, always use one of these tools for COVID-19 symptom/risk screening:

- Google: <https://landing.google.com/screener/covid19>
- Apple: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/apple-covid-19/id1504132184>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>
- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/covid-19-self-assessment-tool>