



Dear SAFA Members,

12/30/20

COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for Stillwater Area Fastpitch Association

SAFA is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all our members. To ensure that, we have developed the following Preparedness Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Coaches, parents, spectators, umpires, and players (Participants) are all responsible for implementing this plan. Our goal is to provide protective measures to limit risks for the potential transmission of COVID-19 on and around the field of play, and that requires 100% adherence to the policy by all members of the association. Only through the joint effort of adhering to this procedure under the guidance of MDH will we be able to start up the season.

Our Preparedness Plan follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines related to COVID-19 and addresses:

- Infection Prevention Measures
- Prompt Identification and isolation of sick persons
- Social Distancing Controls
- Cleaning, Disinfecting and decontamination controls
- Communication for coaches and Managers on procedures
- Logistics Controls

The MDH and SAFA understand all of the benefits of youth athletics including but not limited to, social and physical wellbeing, individual and team building skills.

SAFA believes that the safety and welfare of our participants is the most important aspect of our association and with that in mind we will follow all recommendations from State and Local governments.

****This plan is a working document and subject to change while monitoring the guidance form State and Local Governments.***

COVID-19 screening and policies for participants

Participants/Parents are responsible to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 before leaving home. Stay home if you have a temperature exceeding 100.4 or have respiratory symptoms (i.e. cough, sore throat, or shortness of breath). Participants who are sick should notify their Coach and Level Coordinator and follow [CDC-recommended steps](#). Participants should not return to play until the criteria to [discontinue home isolation are met](#), in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments. Participants who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should follow CDC recommended precautions including self-quarantine. Team personnel will screen players for symptoms upon arrival.

- Team personnel will ask the parent/guardian to confirm that the child does not have fever, shortness of breath or cough.
- Team personnel will make a visual inspection of the child for signs of illness which could include flushed cheeks, rapid breathing or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness.

Participants who appear to have [symptoms](#) or who become sick during an activity should be immediately separated from other participants and sent home.

Participants with underlying medical conditions or who have household members with underlying health conditions should take additional precautions to minimize face-to-face contact, maintain a distance of six feet from other participants, and/or use CDC approved Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) if possible.

If a participant is confirmed to have a COVID-19 infection, SAFA will inform fellow participants of their possible exposure to COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality and instruct fellow participants to proceed based on the [Public Health Recommendations for Community-Related Exposure](#).

Hygiene and respiratory etiquette

Basic infection prevention measures are always encouraged including hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette. Participants should wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water frequently, but especially before and after activity, prior to eating and after using the toilet. Participants should use hand sanitizer (of greater than 60% ethyl or 70% isopropanol alcohol) before and after participating in activities. Please review the [CDC's guidelines for proper handwashing](#). Participants are prohibited from handshakes or high fives.

Participants should cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing and avoid touching their face, their mouth, nose and eyes, with their hands. They should dispose of tissues in the trash and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward. If participants are suffering from seasonal allergies, make sure to employ exceptional hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, as they are likely to touch their face more frequently which may increase risk of exposure. [CDC approved](#)

[cloth face masks must be worn.](#) No spitting, chewing gum, or eating sunflower seeds as this may cause respiratory droplets while around others. No sharing of food or drinks is permitted.

Guidance for social distancing

SAFA has adopted the following policy for Social Distancing under the Guidance of MDH in effort to minimize any potential exposure to COVID-19

- **Attendance** – Coaches will create a record sheet and document the attendance of players, staff and volunteers. Coaches will also track which groups that the individuals participate in. The record sheet must be made available for review upon request.
- We will adapt social distancing of 6 feet whenever possible
- Plastic cones/spheres will be utilized to guide players and keep them at safe distances during drills, while waiting for drills, during the transition between drills, during huddles, while getting equipment, and for bathroom and hygiene breaks.
- Practices will be focused on individual skill development as much as possible
- Practices will be constructed into groups of no more than 25 participants/including coaches.
- Groups/Pods will be set and will be consistent and not intermixed through the season
- Coaches will implement plans that don't require intermixing of pods, when practice requires intermixing, make note of the date of the practice.
- Drop off: Parents can drop off the players off 10 minutes prior to the start of practice but cannot leave the car.
- Players will place their bags at the identified cones for proper distancing.
- Players and coaches have 10 minutes to clear the area and exit the grounds to eliminate any extra contact.
- Avoid congregating before and after practice
- Avoid ride sharing as much as possible
- In the event of severe weather, social distancing will be implemented when possible while taking shelter.

This guidance is based on the [MDH Guidance for Social Distancing in Youth and Student Programs.](#)

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Regular housekeeping practices should be followed including routine cleaning and disinfecting of player equipment, softballs, bats, etc. before, during and after practice.

Parents should supply their own hand sanitizer, disinfectant spray and wipes for cleaning hands and equipment.

SAFA will also be attempting to acquire hand sanitizer for each team as well.

Players should refrain from sharing equipment in general. This includes but is not limited to bats, helmets, and catcher's equipment.

- Coaches are asked to sanitize surfaces in the dugout upon arrival (i.e. benches, bat rack, etc).
- Teams should clear their dugout/practice area of all trash and other items after each practice or game.
- Players should use their own personal cooler. Team coolers are prohibited.
- Participants should hand sanitize following contact with other players, coaches, or shared equipment.
- Players should wear their batting gloves as much as possible, especially when handling a bat.
- Masks are required. <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-interim-guidance-return-to-sports/>

Communications and Training

This Preparedness Plan will be communicated to all participants on or before the first day of organized activity. Additional communication and training will be provided to all participants on an ongoing basis. This Preparedness Plan will be updated, as necessary, to implement a phased approach to a safe return to play.

Compliance

Coaches, parents and volunteers must sign a waiver stating that they understand and agree to adhere to all of the above policies stated in the preparedness plan. Failure to do so could result in removal from the program.

Steps to implementing a safe return to play

SAFA will follow the return to play guidelines in a phased approach according to the Governor's and MDH guidance along with any local resources. This section will be updated with each phase to provide a clear outline of how practice and play should be implemented. The guidelines below are a supplement (in addition) to the COVID-19 Preparedness Plans outlined above.

APPROVED [COVID-19 Sports Practice Guidance for Youth and Adults](#) as of **Jan 4, 2021**.

- Email sent to players, parents, coaches, and team managers detailing practice guidelines.
- Practices will be scheduled for each team
- Coaches Trained on the Policy
- Within the practice, create consistent pods of the same staff, volunteers, and participants with a maximum number of 25 people in each pod.
- Parents or caregivers should not attend practices. If necessary, to be at practices, ensure that proper social distancing is maintained between parents or caregivers.
- Focus on skill development.

- Keep any “play” or interaction between players contactless. When there is a play at a base, the runner and fielder should resume physical distance immediately upon completion of the play.
- Discourage sharing of equipment as much as possible. If sharing has to occur, consider the equipment and type of use and consider cleaning equipment in between each use.
- Follow the outlined ratios for participants per field: o Softball/Baseball field (40,000+ sq. ft.) – 25 people per gym. Do not have intermixing between groups.
- Players should space out their equipment along the fence and/or wall, maintaining a minimum of six feet apart.

Sincerely,

SAFA Board