



Play Protocols for 2020-2021



The following protocols are recommended guidelines for each club and coach to adhere to. It is important that we all work together to limit the exposure to COVID-19 within our communities and provide avenues for our players to enjoy the great game of soccer.

Our recommendations are meant to supplement – not replace – any federal, state or local laws, rules, and regulations. We hope to empower your program to make informed choices about training and competition during the 2020-2021 seasonal year as safely as possible.

Oklahoma Soccer's mission is to assist our members to apply the best practices within today's environment for the safety and welfare of participants, coaches, referees, volunteers and spectators.

The following applies to games and practices:

1. No one should attend practice or a game if **NOT feeling well**, has a fever or is currently under a quarantine. Health and safety are the responsibility of all players, volunteers, spectators, and parents.
 - a. Do not play or attend games or practice:
 - i. If exhibiting any symptoms of the coronavirus: mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough and difficulty breathing, or other symptoms identified by the CDC.
 - ii. Have been in contact with someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
2. Players are encouraged **not engage** in the standard celebrations and comradery of the game.
 - a. Avoid unnecessary touching such as high fives and hugs in goal celebrations.
 - b. The customary handshakes before and after the game with opponents, coaches, and referees.
 - c. Coaches refrain from high fives and hugs with players during substitutions, after an outstanding achievement or after the game.
3. **Players, uniforms, and equipment.**
 - a. Players, when off the field, should maintain social distancing of 6'.
 - i. This includes seating areas for players and personal gear.
 - b. Players should not share water bottles and drink containers.
 - c. It is recommended that players have their own hand sanitizer for personal use.
 - d. Uniforms should be washed as soon as possible after the game.
 - e. Benches should be wiped down with disinfectant prior to and after the game (or not used).
 - f. Soccer balls after the game or practice also sprayed with a disinfectant.
 - g. Equipment - Shin guards and scrimmage vests should not be shared.
 - i. It is recommended that each player have their own shin guards and scrimmage vest for the season.

4. Coaches.

- a. Ask each player on arrival to practice or game if they are feeling well and/or exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19.
- b. Complete the standard check list concerning players participation.
 - i. The check list form is available at:
http://www.oksoccer.com/covid_resources/
 - ii. Take attendance and retain records for 30 days.
- c. Avoid having large group team and/or parent meetings before or after the game.
- d. Pregame, halftime, and post-game instructions should be kept to a minimum and have players practice social distancing rather than sitting next to each other on a bench, bleachers, or group.
- e. Only coaches should handle team equipment or move practice equipment.
- f. Practice plans and game warmups should be structured so players can avoid lines and/or close group activities.
- g. Have sanitizer available for player and coaches use.
- h. Recommended use of an approved face mask if social distancing cannot be practiced.
- i. Lead by example in demonstrating best practices.

5. Parents and spectators.

- a. Avoid car pooling with other players/spectators when possible.
- b. To decrease spectator size and encourage social distancing, it is recommended that only one parent/guardian attend practice or games.
- c. From the field boundaries, please provide a minimum distance of 6' on the sidelines and 15 yards from the endline. Between spectators, practice 6' social distancing.
- d. If sitting in bleachers, practice social distancing and sanitize the sitting area.
- e. Vehicles are excellent and comfortable sitting areas to watch practice or games.
- f. The most vulnerable group are people over 65 years of age or those with underlying medical conditions. It is recommended not to attend games or practices or remain in your vehicle as a safe avenue to watch soccer.
- g. Leave the field area as soon as possible to be respectful of incoming teams' use of the field.

6. Game check in/completion

- a. Check-in
 - i. Each team will line up with social distancing with the coach identifying each player with player pass.
 - ii. Passes will remain with coach
 - iii. Game card remains with coach
- b. Captains and coin toss
 - i. One captain per team with social distancing
 - ii. The referee will flip coin and retrieve.
- c. After game
 - i. Coach/manager will verify score and any misconducts with referee.
 - ii. Social distancing will be maintained
 1. Failure to social distance with the referee will be considered referee abuse.

7. Fields and Facility cleaning.

- a. Scheduling of games and practices:
 - i. When possible, adjust operations and facilities schedule to prevent side by side field usage and arrival times to reduce traffic flow.
 - ii. Consider using other days of the week, such as weeknights to space out field usage.
 - iii. In-house and intra club schedules, start and end dates, and roster sizes can be adjusted to best fit each club, players, and parent's needs.
 - 1. The goal is to get youth/adults playing soccer in a safe and enjoyable environment.
- b. Strategically place signage on social distancing and general hygiene practices through the facility, fields, and restrooms.
 - i. State and county health departments have printable signage available on their web sites.
- c. Restrooms –
 - i. Cleaned and disinfected regularly, particularly high-touch surfaces such as faucets, toilets, doorknobs, and light switches. Clean and disinfect restrooms daily or more often if possible. Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants and keep products away from children.
 - ii. More information can be found here:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/parks-rec/park-administrators.html>
- d. Concessions-
 - i. Should follow standard Health Department and CDC requirements on concession operations with more frequent cleaning.
 - ii. Concession workers will wear masks and gloves.
 - iii. Ordering and sitting areas should maintain 6' social distancing.
- e. Bleachers –
 - i. If used, they should be disinfected after each practice or game.
- f. Club house-
 - i. Central on-field facility structures will be cleaned and disinfected daily, as well as any railings attached to nearby/attached stairs. To limit traffic these areas we ask that players/parents/coaches enter these facilities only for official business with coaches or staff.

8. What to do if someone test positive.

All soccer clubs and adult leagues should consider implementing several strategies to prepare for when and if someone gets sick. This protocol should be included in a club COVID-19 Action Plan and communicated to all members. The Oklahoma Soccer Reporting Protocols also should be followed immediately.

CDC Guidelines:

Watch for symptoms

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure to the virus**. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever (100+ temp) or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19.

The CDC recommends the following actions if someone on your team, club, or at your facility gets sick.

- a. Communicate criteria to begin home isolation
 - i. Sick coaches, staff, officials, or players should not return until they have met CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation.
 - ii. Individuals who are sick should go home or to a healthcare facility, depending on the severity of their symptoms.
 - iii. Individuals who have had close contact with a person who has a suspected or confirmed case should also be separated and sent home.
 - iv. Isolate and transport anyone who is sick.
 - v. Establish procedures for safely transporting anyone who is sick to their home or to a healthcare facility.
- b. Clean and Disinfect
 - i. Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting them (for outdoor areas, this includes surfaces or shared objects in the area, if applicable).
- c. Notify Health Officials and Close Contacts
 - i. In accordance with state and local privacy and confidentiality laws and regulations, youth sports organizations should notify local health officials and follow the Oklahoma Soccer Reporting protocols immediately while maintaining confidentiality.

9. Oklahoma Soccer Reporting Protocols

- a. Any individual with a suspected case of COVID-19 should notify their respective team coach immediately.

- b. Any team with a suspected case of COVID-19 should notify their club president immediately.
- c. Any club notified of a suspected case of COVID-19 in a player, staff member, coach, or referee should follow their COVID-19 Action Plan and contact anyone within the club who may have had contact with that individual in the 14 days prior to the diagnosis of COVID-19. Please follow confidentiality requirements.
- d. Any referee with a suspected case of COVID-19 should notify the league director and referee assignor involved in competitions worked by that individual within the last 14 days.
- e. Any club notified of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in a player, staff member, coach, or referee should notify any other organization/teams involved in competitions with that individual in the 14 days prior to the diagnosis of COVID
- f. Any club notified of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in a player, staff member, coach or referee should notify the league director and the Oklahoma State Office immediately. Depending on the exposure, we may recommend:
 - i. Player self-quarantines
 - ii. Limited teammates self-quarantine.
 - iii. Team self-quarantine.
 - iv. Multiple teams self-quarantine.
- g. Any team with more than 3 confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 is considered to have an outbreak within their team and should pause team activity until all participants have completed a self-quarantine according to CDC guidelines.
- h. All reporting should maintain confidentiality in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable laws and regulations.

10. When to return to play following a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection

Programs should include policies for return-to-play after COVID-19 illness in their COVID-19 Action Plan. The CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation and quarantine can form these policies.

These recommendations are intended to guide decision-making regarding participants with a suspected or documented COVID-19 infection in order to reduce the risk of disease transmission and can change. Checking with health care providers is always recommended before returning to any activity.

Symptomatic or asymptomatic player, coach, official or staff member with suspected or laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection cannot attend training, games, or events until:

- a. At least ten (10) days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
- b. At least three (3) days (72 hours) after all symptoms have passed.
- OR
- c. Negative results of an authorized SARS-CoV-2 test from at least two consecutive samples collected at least 24 hours apart.
- d. At least fourteen (14) days since the date of known exposure with no symptoms.

The viral incubation period can last anywhere from 2-14 days after exposure.

11. General “Best Practices”

- a. The following practices should be reinforced within your soccer organization to mitigate the transmission of any infectious disease.
- Avoid touching your face
 - Frequently wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
 - Cover mouth and nose (with arm or elbow, not hands) when coughing or sneezing and wash hands afterward.
 - Wear a clean or new face mask or covering when outside
 - Understand how to wear a face mask properly
 - Frequently disinfect commonly used surfaces and equipment
 - Avoid contact with other individuals (shaking hands or high fives)
 - Maintain social distancing of 6 feet between you and others
 - Outdoor spaces pose less risk than indoor spaces
 - Individuals with a higher risk (including players, coaches, officials, and spectators) should assess their risk level and limit exposure.

Many of these recommended protocols are common sense. If we work together to minimize exposure to the COVID-19 virus, then we can all stay safe and healthy and continue to enjoy sport activities this through the summer. These protocols may be adjusted as the need arises.

Protocols may be updated periodically and/or in response to directives of the Federal, State and Local authorities.

Additional Resources:

US Soccer – Play On Guide - <https://www.ussoccer.com/playon/guides/phase-3-grassroots>

US Youth Soccer – Return to Play Video - <https://www.usyouthsoccer.org/video/return-to-play/>
Return to Play Activity Guide -

[Project Play from the Aspen Institute - https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/2020/07/Return-to-Organized-Sports-8-Questions_Final.pdf](https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/2020/07/Return-to-Organized-Sports-8-Questions_Final.pdf)

United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee - [file:///C:/Users/Sid/Downloads/USOPC Return to Training Considerations - V1.pdf](file:///C:/Users/Sid/Downloads/USOPC_Return_to_Training_Considerations_-_V1.pdf)

CDC – COVID-19 Symptoms - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

WHO - <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

Oklahoma Health Department - <https://coronavirus.health.ok.gov/>

Score Club logo face masks - <https://scoresports.com/score-masks-homage>

City of Tulsa Mayor's July 16 Ordinance - <https://www.cityoftulsa.org/media/13782/ordinance-no-24408-face-covering-and-social-distancing-during-pandemic-ordinance.pdf>

Tutorial on making homemade hand sanitizer - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eeY-FVia1Vg>

Phased Guidelines for the General Public and Business -

[OKC mask ordinance - https://www.okc.gov/home/showdocument?id=19000](https://www.okc.gov/home/showdocument?id=19000)

Tulsa mask ordinance - <https://www.cityoftulsa.org/media/13782/ordinance-no-24408-face-covering-and-social-distancing-during-pandemic-ordinance.pdf>

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