



# CLUB CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

**RETURN TO PLAY**

**BEST PRACTICES  
&  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

2020-2021  
Version 1.0

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# CLUB CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Virginia, Maryland,  
West Virginia, Washington, D.C.



## CCL COVID-19 Return to Play Best Practices Guide

The Club Champions League (CCL) is excited to conduct league play and events for the 2020-2021 seasonal year using our COVID-19 Return to Play best practices and recommendations which have been developed using the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and U.S. Soccer's Phase III "Play On" Full Team Competitions guidance.

In concert with our member clubs and event participants, the CCL's number one priority is to establish a matchday and event environment that is safe for all players, parents/guardians, coaches, referees, and spectators. The CCL's COVID-19 Return to Play best practices and recommendations are provided to assist youth soccer clubs in safely and gradually resuming CCL matchday competitions and events while attempting to reduce infection risk in the setting of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. These best practices and recommendations do not supersede or replace any applicable local, state, regional or federal health guidelines or requirements, which should be adhered to by all clubs and club members. Equally, these recommendations do not replace any club's protocols and should aid in a club having a successful matchday experience.

Please see below the CCL's COVID-19 Return to Play best practices and recommendations for all member clubs and event participants:

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## **Matchday – Scheduling**

- **Clubs:** to limit large gatherings that may occur on a matchday, it is strongly recommended that clubs increase the length of time blocks by a minimum of 15 minutes (minutes between matches) and stagger start times of matches so that players, coaches, referees, and spectators can safely arrive and depart.

**Note:** those clubs that secure fields through permits may be limited in increasing time blocks and are encouraged to do their best in maximizing time blocks.

- **Directors:** A key pillar of the CCL is our Directors ability to communicate regularly. Director-to-Director communication regarding a club's COVID-19 protocols will be critical to a successful matchday. We ask all Directors respect the hosting club's protocols.

## **Matchday - Before Your Departure**

- **Parents/Guardians:** take each player's temperature before coming to the match. Any player who has a temperature of 100.4 degrees F or more, or feels sick, must NOT attend matches. Any person to be on the field during the match (i.e., referees, coaches, etc.) and/or will attend the match as a spectator are expected to do the same.
- **Parents/Guardians:** please have your child go to the bathroom before arriving to the match. There is no guarantee that restrooms will be available for players.
- **Parents/Guardians:** make sure your child is properly fed and hydrated prior to the match.
- **Parents/Guardians:** if hot and humid, have your child apply their own sunscreen.
- **Coaches:** please sanitize all your equipment prior to the match. If using bibs/pinnies, they must be washed/sanitized prior to the match. There will be no sharing of bib/pinnies between players and each player should be provided their own. Otherwise, do not use bib/pinnies.

## **Matchday - What to Bring**

- **Players:** if bringing a soccer ball, sanitize your ball at home.
- **Players:** bring your own water bottle/water jug (clearly marked with first and last name) with sufficient supply for the duration of the match.
- **Players:** bring hand sanitizer for use before, during, and after matches.
- **Players:** bring your own bag to carry all items.
- **Players:** we strongly recommend wearing a mask upon arrival and departure but is not recommended during matches. We will require masks to be worn on sidelines if not playing.



- Coaches will be required to wear masks and will be allowed to remove the mask briefly when providing coaching instruction.
- Referee Assignors will provide guidance to clubs regarding Center Referees and Assistant Referees as it relates to masks.

### **Matchday - Arrival and Drop-off Instructions**

- **Parents/Guardians & Players:** please arrive on time; as the CCL is unique in its club-to-club scheduling, we want to make sure we keep matches flowing throughout the day.
- **Referees, Coaches & Players:** we are requiring a maximum of 30 minutes of warmup and no more than 30 minutes. Referees, Coaches & Players are not permitted on the field area until that time. This will allow for the previous match to conclude and its players, coaches, referees, and spectators to leave the field and any sanitization to take place.
- **Parents/Guardians & Spectators:** we recommend that Parents/Guardians & Spectators do not arrive to the field until 10 minutes before the start of the match time. Note: if necessary, we understand if a child needs to be safely escorted to the field by an adult. We ask that all wear face masks out of courtesy of others.

### **Matchday - During the Match**

- **Parents/Guardians & Spectators** can attend matches. We ask that clubs adhere to the recommended guidelines of 250 people per field. We ask that siblings stay close to their Parents/Guardians to create a "family bubble".
- Please maintain required social distancing throughout your visit to a match; we are requiring 10 feet of distance for safety. Reminder: masks must be worn.
- **Players and coaches** will be required to social distance on the sideline during the match; we are requiring 10 feet of distance for safety (for example, drop cones 10 feet apart for each player). Reminder: if on sideline, masks must be worn.
- As agreed upon by the coaches and referees, the players may be given rest and water breaks. There will be no sharing of water and social distancing must take place during any rest and water breaks.

- **Players may share soccer balls but can only pick them up with their hands during a throw-in; otherwise, feet must be used. Goalkeepers are required to wear goalkeeper gloves (of which they must be sanitized before any match). It is encouraged to sanitize all match balls when possible.**
- **If for any reason there are surfaces (i.e., metal benches) located at a field, we are requiring that those surfaces be disinfected before and after each match or not allow use of those surfaces.**
- **Coin toss will take place with proper social distancing with all captains and Center Referee wearing masks. Only the Center Referee will handle the coin.**
- **Substitutions will take place in front of team benches instead of the halfway line.**
- **In case of injury within the match, if available a Certified Athletic Trainer wearing a mask may provide first aid management. If unavailable, team staff may assess injured players and provide first aid management while wearing a mask. All other must maintain social distance during the injury assessment and until play resumes.**
- **No post game “high-fives” are allowed. There will be a mutual respect that the match was played competitively, under the IFAB Laws of the Game, and with sportsmanship. No post game handshakes between coaches.**

**Reminder: Referee Assignors will provide guidance to clubs regarding Center Referees and Assistant Referees as it relates to masks.**

### **Matchday – Pick-up Instructions**

- **The match will start and end promptly on schedule; unless an injury or delay has occurred. We recommend member clubs and event participants set up communications in case of a delay.**
- **Please be present to pick up your child immediately after the match has ended.**
- **We ask all parents/guardians and siblings refrain from entering the field area. Coaches will dismiss players at the end of the match and players are expected to find their parents/guardians/family at a pre-determined location off the field of play, in the parking lot, or other agreed upon pre-determined location.**

## **Neutral Sites and Event Sites**

- **Additional guidance will be provided by the league to member clubs and event participants regarding any neutral site locations or event sites used.**

## **Reporting**

- **The CCL requires a club to inform clubs of a positive COVID-19 test within a team so that a club may make an appropriate decision regarding an upcoming match. This applies when a match has been played and there has been a positive test, as well as a match to be played and there was a positive test in a prior match.**
- **If anyone has tested positive for COVID-19 and has just completed a 10-day quarantine period and have no fever or symptoms they may return to play with a required negative test and the approval of their club. We are following these CDC guidelines: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html>**
- **Clubs must notify the league of a positive COVID-19 test so that the club(s) may discuss with the league the appropriate and safest next steps. We ask all clubs take the necessary precautions if a player, coach, team official (anyone within the team on a regular basis), as well as family members, if testing positive for COVID-19.**

## **Postponements / Rescheduling**

- **The CCL will offer maximum flexibility in postponing and rescheduling matches due to COVID-19. There are no forfeits for taking precautions and postponing and rescheduling a match. We ask that the match be rescheduled immediately and at a future date that works for both teams and/or clubs.**
- **All member clubs and its members understand that more neutral site matches may be used for the 2020-2021 seasonal year to minimize travel or to make-up matches.**

**THANK YOU FOR ADHERING TO THESE CCL RETURN TO PLAY GUIDELINES!**

*These Best Practices & Recommendations are subject to change and will be updated and disseminated to all member clubs.*