



2020-21 Basketball Requirements and Recommendations

In support of the Guidance for 'Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities,' the NFHS Basketball Rules Committee in conjunction with Ohio High School Athletic Association offers this document for member schools to consider whether any possible rules could be altered for the 2020-21 season. The considerations outlined in this document are meant to decrease potential exposure to respiratory droplets by encouraging social distancing, limiting participation in administrative tasks to essential personnel and allowing for appropriate protective equipment.

Note: This is not an exhaustive list and there might be additional steps in each school, city, and state to help prevent the spread of virus. Ohio schools are required to follow state COVID-19 general guidance for "Youth, Collegiate, Amateur and Professional Sports"

<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/Youth-Collegiate-Amateur-Club-Pro-Sports.pdf> and guidance on Sports Venues"

<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/Sports-Venues.pdf>

Even when taking all precautions, there will still be risk of transmitting illnesses. Everyone should stay vigilant about the health of members of their teams. Lastly, the situation with COVID-19 is rapidly changing. These considerations may quickly become outdated. Please keep up with the latest from the CDC and other health officials in your area.

Visit the COVID-19 General Guidance Document for further requirements and recommendations that apply to all sports, including basketball. Please know that some of the requirements and recommendations in this sport-specific document duplicate state guidance.

A **requirement** must be adhered to and followed. A **recommendation** is a consideration to the sport and allows for optional guidelines. Recommendations are not required, are permitted and are highly encouraged.

Winter 2020-21: Return to Competition

People (players, coaches, officials, spectators, etc.) feeling sick or that have been exposed to someone sick, should not attend or participate in competitions or practices. The OHSAA requires all participants and spectators to practice social distancing and wear face coverings whenever possible. Host facilities shall communicate with spectators "know before you go" before each event.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- Anyone attending a practice or game – players, coaches, officials, trainers, cheerleaders, volunteers, staff, spectators, etc.: Must conduct a symptom assessment before each practice or contest, and anyone experiencing symptoms must stay home (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>).
 - Individuals with COVID-19 symptoms should isolate themselves per CDC’s guidance and contact their healthcare provider (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/isolation.html>).
 - Individuals with confirmed COVID-19 or who have symptoms should follow CDC’s guidance for when they can be around others again (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html>).
 - An athlete who tests positive for COVID-19, whether symptomatic or asymptomatic, must not return to sport activities until a documented medical exam is performed clearing the individual to return to play. The documented medical exam must specifically include an assessment of the cardiac/heart risk of high-intensity exercise due to the potential of myocarditis occurring in COVID-19 patients.
- Consistent with state guidance, schools/teams regarding “Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19 Cases”:
 - Immediately isolate, and seek medical care for, any individual who becomes ill or develops symptoms.
 - Contact the local health department about suspected COVID-19 cases or exposure.
 - The affected person should seek COVID-19 testing as soon as possible. Teams, schools, and clubs should work with parents to ensure they have access to testing through their healthcare providers or direct them to testing options.
 - Coaches/administrators must work with the local health department to identify individuals who were potentially exposed to help facilitate contact tracing. This includes, but is not limited to, athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, parents and other support personnel.
 - A team, school, or club must notify all athletes and parents/ guardians associated with the affected team regarding a positive test. Athletes and families must be reminded of proper daily health screening protocols.
 - If the affected individual participated in competitive play, the team is responsible for notifying any opponents played between the date of the positive test and 2 days prior to the onset of symptoms. If the teams, schools, or clubs reside in different counties, the health departments in each county should be notified to help facilitate effective contact tracing.
 - An individual who tests positive for COVID-19, whether symptomatic or asymptomatic, must not return to sport activities until a documented medical exam is performed clearing the individual to return to play. The documented medical exam must specifically include an assessment of the cardiac/heart risk of high-intensity exercise due to the potential of myocarditis occurring in COVID-19 patients. More information on this issue can be found at <https://www.acc.org/latest-in-cardiology/articles/2020/07/13/13/37/returning-to-play-after-coronavirus-infection>.
 - Follow protocol for cleaning and disinfecting if a COVID-19 case is identified at the venue.

- Players, coaches, officials or other individuals who had close contact (within six feet of an infected individual for at least 15 minutes), or who had direct physical contact with the person (e.g., who were coughed on or sneezed on by the infected person), must self-quarantine for 14 days following exposure based on CDC guidance (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>). Individuals may return to play afterward if they have not had any COVID-19 symptoms.
- Facial coverings are required under the Sports Order: At minimum facial coverings should be cloth/fabric and cover an individual's nose, mouth, and chin.
 - CDC does not recommend the use of gaiters or face shields. Evaluation of these face covers is on-going but effectiveness is unknown at this time.

Requirements for Coaches:

- Conduct daily symptom assessments before each practice or contest. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>
- No congregating before or after practices or games is permitted.
- Coaches must wear face coverings at all times, including arriving and departing the facility and during active play.
- Limit day-of roster to 15 dressed players.
- Sanitize equipment as often as time permits.
- Do not share clipboards, whiteboards, dry erase boards or any other equipment used for coaching purposes.
- Individuals traveling together by bus, etc. must wear a facial covering and social distance where possible while in the vehicle.
- Conduct a pre-travel symptom and temperature check immediately prior to team travel.
- For out-of-state travel, follow the COVID-19 guidance of the state and local public health jurisdiction to which the team is traveling. For additional information, please visit Ohio's Travel Advisories (<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/families-and-individuals/COVID-19-Travel-Advisory/COVID-19-Travel-Advisory>).

Requirements for Players:

- Conduct daily symptom assessments before each practice or contest.
- No congregating before or after practices or games is permitted.
- Do not share equipment, towels, facial coverings, water bottles, other drinks or food. If equipment must be shared, proper sanitation must be performed between users. All players must sanitize their hands before and after warm-ups, at all timeouts, at quarter and halftime breaks and anytime they leave the playing court.
- All those on the bench shall observe social distancing of 6 feet.
- Players who are not one of the five (5) players on the court and all bench personnel shall wear facial coverings.

Requirements for Team Bench Areas:

- Fifteen (15) players may be in uniform for each game.
- The players in uniform must be entered into the Official Scorebook per NFHS Rules and also submitted on the Official Line-Up Sheet.
- The players submitted will be the only players permitted on the floor for warm-up and on the bench during the game.
- The fifteen (15) may be changed from game to game throughout the season. The names and

numbers of the fifteen players must be given to the official scorer thirty (30) minutes prior to each game and the five (5) starting players designated ten (10) minutes prior to the starting time of each contest.

- Eighteen (18) total seats will be available on the bench area for all personnel and players.
- The eighteen (18) are to include all players, coaches, managers, trainers, and other support personnel.
- Since five (5) players will be on the court, this provides twenty-three (23) total individuals to be in the bench area.

Requirements for Facility Hosts:

- Inform the local health district when events are scheduled and establish a plan to handle those persons who fail a symptom assessment or temperature check or exhibit signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Any person with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should be advised to return home or taken to a dedicated isolation area and contact their healthcare provider.
- Have a written plan for safe reopening and enforcing compliance with all mandates and guidelines.
- Designate a Compliance Officer who is responsible for compliance with the Ohio Health Director's Sports Order.
- Develop a spectator pathway that allows for physical distancing as spectators move from parking lots through the ticket scanning and/or purchasing lines to their seats.
- Install signage concerning hygiene, social distancing and facial coverings.
- Communicate social distancing, facial coverings and health symptoms reminders with public address announcements throughout the contest.
- Develop one-way ingress and egress plans and one-way aisles that also allows for social distancing.
- Assign seats in groups of no more than four from a single household and use staggered rows and sections to allow for at least 6 feet of social distancing, and prevent contact between groups.
- Limit sideline personnel to participants, coaches, medical staff and game-day staff.
- Employees, staff and volunteers must wear facial coverings at all times.
- High touch areas (railings, restrooms, athletic training rooms, locker rooms, etc.) must be cleaned and disinfected frequently.
- Hand sanitizer must be readily available throughout the venue.
- Follow Responsible RestartOhio Guidance for Restaurants for concession stands (<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/Restaurants-and-Bars.pdf>).
- Provide the visiting team with separate ball cart for warm-up balls, if possible.
- Clearly review prior to the contest mandates, best practices and school/host facility policies with visiting team administrators and/or coaches and officials as they relate to, but are not limited to, parking; entrances and exits; medical care; spectators; ticketing; locker rooms/showers; athletic training rooms and restrooms; water; towels, and equipment.

Requirements for Spectators

- Conduct daily symptom assessments before each contest.
- No congregating before or after practices or games is permitted.
- Six-foot social distancing must be maintained between individuals/family groups.
- Facial coverings are required unless exceptions can be met as listed in Ohio Health Director's Sports Order.

Requirements for Officials

- Conduct daily symptom assessments before each contest.
- Take your temperature prior to attending your competition. If temperature is above 100.4 or you do not feel well, notify your contracted school immediately.
- No congregating before or after games is permitted.
- Six-foot social distancing required during pre- and post-game conferences and during stoppage of play during contests.
- Facial coverings must be worn at all times with the exception of active officiating, and warm-up.
- Do not shake hands or fist bump other officials, players or coaches.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for Pregame Protocol:

- Limit attendees to the referee and the head coach from each team with each coach standing on the center circle on each side of the division line.
- Suspend the pregame introduction shaking hands or fist bump.
- All individuals maintain a social distance of six feet or greater at the center circle.

Recommendations for Post-Game Ceremony:

- Suspend post-game protocol of shaking hands, fist bumps, or any ceremony that involves physical contact.

Recommendations for Team Benches:

- Place team benches opposite the spectator seating.
- Additional chairs or rows may be added to allow bench personnel to observe social distancing of six feet or greater (example: first row of spectator seating behind team benches).
- Create at least 6 feet of separation between the team bench and spectator seating behind the bench (recommendation would be the first two rows of seating on team bench side whenever possible).
- Limit contact between players when substituting.

Recommendations for Officials/Scorers Table:

- The host should sanitize the officials/scorers table before the game and at halftime.
- Place officials/scorers table sufficiently away from the sideline to allow for additional space for substitutes.
- Limit seats at the officials/scorers table to essential personnel which includes home team scorer and timer with a recommend distance of six feet or greater between individuals. Other personnel (visiting scorer, statisticians, media, etc.) may not be deemed essential personnel and consider an alternate location for them.

Recommendations for Equipment and Accessories:

- Host team is responsible for sanitizing the game ball as recommended by the ball manufacturer (do not use game balls for warmups). Game ball (s) shall be placed at the officials/scorers table for the officials.
- The host school should provide warm-up balls and properly sanitize them prior to being used before each game – recommendation would be to have a separate rack of balls for the home and visiting team.
- The host school should ensure that the game ball is sanitized during time-outs and between quarters.

- Sanitizer should be provided by the host team at the officials/scorers table.

Recommendations for Officials Uniform and Equipment:

- Long-sleeved shirts are permissible.
- Officials should not be required to wear jackets during pre-game court/player observation.
- Electronic whistles are permissible (supplies are limited).
 - Choose a whistle whose tone will carry inside.
 - Check the market for choices
 - Cloth face coverings are permissible
 - Gloves are permissible

Other Recommendations for Officials — Game Procedures:

Throw-in

- Official may stand six feet or greater away from player making the throw-in and bounce the ball to that player on a front court throw-in.

Free Throw Administration

- The lead official shall stand on the end line and bounce the ball to the free thrower.

Other Recommendations for Officials — General:

- Bring personal hand sanitizer. Wash/sanitize hands upon arrival and frequently throughout your time working the contest(s).
- Do not share equipment.
- Officials are NOT responsible for monitoring activities on the sidelines, such as social distancing, hand sanitizing, symptoms of illness and other such issues. This monitoring remains with the coaching staff and school personnel.

Recommendations for Coaches:

- Communicate your guidelines in a clear manner to students and parents.
- Consider conducting workouts in “pods” of same students always training together in practice to ensure more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- Keep accurate records of those athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.
- Consider limiting contests against only teams in your local area or, if out-of-state, against teams located in counties that are contiguous to Ohio.

Recommendations for Participants:

- Athletes should tell coaches immediately when they are not feeling well.
- Consider making each student responsible for their own supplies (water bottle, hand sanitizer, face covering, towel, etc.).
- Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing), and individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout immediately upon returning home.
- Hand sanitizers should be plentiful at all games and practices.
- Cloth face coverings are permissible.
- Bring your own water bottle.

Recommendations for Parents:

- Make sure your child and immediate household members are free from illness before attending practice or competition (if there is doubt stay home).

- Educate yourself on the risks and benefits of athletic participation in the time of COVID and ensure you and your athlete are aware of the guidance surrounding athletic events.
- Provide personal items for your child and clearly label them.

Recommendations for Facility Hosts:

- If applicable, stagger the entry of all participants, coaches, officials, student game-day auxiliary groups and spectators to adhere to six-foot social distancing.
- Consider multiple points of entry to help ensure there is six-foot social distancing.
- Use contact-less payments where possible.
- Consider use of assigned arrival times.
- Consider blocking off unused seats; the front rows of the venue to avoid contact between participants and spectators, and the last row of each section and aisle seats to prevent contact with people walking to and from seats.
- Consideration should be given to which facilities are going to need sanitization, how often will sanitization be needed and who will be doing the sanitizing.
- Locker rooms may be utilized. However, you must adhere to the Ohio Department of Health mandates.
- Bench water may be provided by the facility host, but the visiting team/participants should supply their own coolers unless agreed upon by the facility host. If used, water coolers shall be sanitized prior to use and frequently during the contest and disposable one-time-use cups shall be utilized.
- Limit officials/scorers table to essential personnel only and demonstrate social distancing as much as possible.
- If possible, provide designated space (locker room, classroom, etc.) for officials' pregame and post-game activities. If the designated space cannot accommodate six-foot social distancing of all officials, then a separate space should be provided where officials can observe six-foot social distancing and be removed from spectator/team interaction.
- Appoint an individual(s) who is responsible for assisting the host facility manager(s) in logging all incidents and action plans when mandates have not been followed and/or incidents occur; logging recommendations for improving the host facilities' game-day strategies, and creating reports on said items that were logged.
- Consider increasing the time between events to allow for more time to clean and disinfect high-contact areas.

OHSAA Postseason Note:

- Potential options may be considered regarding the Sectional, District, Regional, and State Tournament games/format depending upon the status of COVID-19.

A Note on Public Health Issues

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Ohio Governor, Ohio General Assembly, Ohio Department of Health and/or the local health district will offer guidance as to whether to close a school or university due to a public health issue. Local decisions can also be made by the local health authority or each board of education/governing board.

Help Links *These resources are provided to guide operations during this Covid-19 pandemic.*

- Ohio Department of Health – Coronavirus (COVID-19): <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/responsible-restart-ohio/>
- Centers for Disease Control – Coronavirus (COVID-19): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- National Athletic Trainers Association – Coronavirus (COVID-19): <https://www.nata.org/practice-patient-care/health-issues/covid-19-coronavirus>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Emergency Preparedness and Response: <http://emergency.cdc.gov/planning/>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Preparedness for All Hazards: https://www.cdc.gov/phpr/documents/ahpg_fi-nal_march_2013.pdf
- Ohio Department of Health Guidelines and Publications: <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/home/>