



MCPS ATHLETICS

RETURN to R.A.I.S.E.

Fall Season Competition Guidelines

Following are the competition and performance guidelines for the fall season across the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) athletics program. General guidelines are followed by sport-specific guidelines, which include game day operating procedures. These guidelines are a supplement to the Return to R.A.I.S.E. Strategic Plan.

Note: The following guidelines for cheerleading and pompons are for performances. Football competition and additional cheerleading/pompons guidelines are contingent on future county guidelines; more information and updates will be provided as appropriate.

General Guidelines

- All sports administered by the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA) will comply with the [Fall Sports Bulletins](#).
- All other sports will comply with MCPS guidelines that have been established through the COVID-19 Task Force for MCPS Athletics, as noted below.
- Rostered student-athletes are students who have been approved in Synergy.
- Approved coaches are coaches included in the MCPS Coaches Database.
- Scorekeepers, announcers, ball runners, and chain gangs shall consist of MCPS staff members only or student-athletes or managers on the approved roster.
- School staff members, including certified athletic trainers, will be in communication with parents/guardians in the event of an injury or emergency.
- All teams are expected to conduct a walk-through of safety protocol and procedures in advance of their first contest.

Entrance & Exit Strategies

- All individuals at the contest must check-in via their school's QR code. All event staff and security personnel must check-in as well through the host school's QR code, so an accurate list of individuals at the contest may be secured. It is the responsibility of the coach to ensure that all student-athletes have checked in prior to entering the stadium.
- Teams shall coordinate the arrival time with the host athletics specialist. Arrival times may be determined by bus transportation. In instances where two games are being played at one site, teams arriving for the second game shall warm-up and wait in a designated area. Teams may not come early or stay and spectate. Teams shall enter the facility together with the coach.
- Upon conclusion of the contest, teams shall leave the facility in a timely manner, ensuring social distancing during both entering and exiting the facility.
- Individual school logistics and operation plans may be provided in advance, if additional accommodations are necessary.

Spectators

- Spectators are not permitted at this time. This includes the surrounding areas of the stadium, meaning that spectators are not permitted to gather and view through the exterior fence. No spectators are allowed inside the building for volleyball.

Media

- Media members must confirm their attendance with the MCPS Public Information Office and host school athletics specialist prior to the contest. Approval from the school principal must be secured during this process. A 24 hour notice is requested.
- School media (newspaper/yearbook) may attend contests on and following April 6, 2021, per the approved procedures of the MCPS extracurricular activities program, along with the approval of the sponsor and athletics specialist.
- Schools shall designate a viewing location for media that ensures appropriate social distance at all times and does not interfere with the operations of the contest.
- Media members must wear masks at all times and maintain social distance expectations.
- Media members must check-in via the QR code process and attest to all statements. The host school's QR code is used for media personnel.
- Post game interviews will occur in a designated location and with the approval of the athletics specialist or game administrator onsite. A minimum of 6 feet of social distance must be maintained at all times, with masks being worn.

Bocce

- Refer to the [MCPS bocce guidelines](#) for operating procedures.
- Personnel - only members of the coaching staff and official team roster, along with one official and one scorekeeper will be permitted onsite.
- Benches will consist of towels or chairs that are spaced at least 6 feet apart. Student-athletes and coaches who are not participating in the match are expected to maintain a minimum of 6 feet of social distance at all times.
- Students are encouraged to bring their own folding chair or towel, in order to serve as a station for their belongings. Chairs will be available as well; however, chairs will be assigned to individual student-athletes. Following the contest, chairs will be cleaned per MCPS protocols.

Cross Country

- Refer to the [Fall Sports Bulletin](#) for overall operations.
- Per gathering limit interpretations, a maximum of 50 runners are allowed in any one race.
- Course marshals and volunteers must be MCPS staff members or managers on the roster and approved through the host school athletics specialist.
- Masks do not need to be worn during competition if social distancing can be maintained; however, student-athletes shall have masks in their possession to use if necessary during the race and upon the conclusion of the race. Extra masks should be available at the finish line for student-athletes and participants.

Field Hockey & Soccer

- Refer to the [Fall Sports Bulletin](#) for overall operations
- Personnel - only members of the coaching staff and official team roster, along with no more than three officials and two scorekeepers/announcers will be permitted.
- In addition to halftime, mask breaks will occur at the midway points of each half of competition. Student-athletes may remove masks while keeping a minimum of 6 feet of social distancing to break and drink water.

- Benches will consist of cones/dots that are spaced at least 6 feet apart. Benches will be located on opposite sides of the field; the home team shall be on the press box side, while the visiting team will occupy the sideline opposite the press box. Student-athletes and coaches who are not participating in the match are expected to maintain a minimum of 6 feet of social distance at all times.
- Cones will be used to mark spaces on the sideline for each student-athlete. Students are encouraged to bring their own folding chair or towel, in order to serve as a station for their belongings. If team benches need to be used, they must be designated for specific students and be cleaned per MCPS protocols following the contest.
- The scorekeeper and announcer may use the press box; however, they must maintain a minimum of 6 feet of social distance. Countertops and equipment must be cleaned after each contest.

Volleyball

- In addition to the [Fall Sports Bulletin](#), operations will comply with the [MCPS operating procedures](#) for volleyball.
- Personnel - only members of the coaching staff and official team roster, along with two officials and two scorekeepers/announcers will be permitted in the gymnasium.
- Officials will call the lines; therefore, no line judges will be used.
- Benches will consist of chairs that are spaced at least 6 feet apart. Student-athletes and coaches who are not participating in the match are expected to maintain a minimum of 6 feet of social distance at all times.

Cheerleading & Pompons Performances

- Both activities will comply with the [MCPS guidelines](#) for cheerleading and pompons.
- Personnel - only members of the coaching staff and official team roster are permitted to attend contests.
- Teams may only perform at home games.
- During the game, the team will perform from the bleachers, with team members being socially distanced to the extent possible at all times.
- Teams may warm-up in a designated area in the stadium, in order to prevent any interaction with other participating teams.
- Teams may perform a routine at halftime.

NFHS Network

Contests in stadiums and main gymnasiums will be broadcast live on the [NFHS Network](#). Parents and fans can [subscribe](#) to the network and have access to all games for a monthly subscription of \$10.99/month (or yearly pass for \$69.99/year). All games are free after 72 hours. Information regarding programming will be provided by local schools.

Other sports may be broadcast on the NFHS Network, using a camera, laptop, and appropriate Wi-Fi access/device (during the initial stages this may be challenging to implement but is an option per the NFHS Network).