



HIGHLANDER SOCCER CLUB

P.O. Box 594, Claysville, Pennsylvania 15323

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Highlander Soccer Club COVID – 19 Protocols

Revised August 26, 2020 per PA West and PA Department of Health

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to compile and summarize pertinent information to support safe and appropriate play practices for executive board members, coaches and players during the expected transition period back to regular soccer activity. The information included is to be applied in accordance with facility mandated rules and recommendations as well as the latest local, state, and federal guidelines related to the containment and prevention of COVID-19. This document includes both COVID-19 prevention guidelines and resources for players upon returning to partial or full activity.

Overview

One of the primary methods of lowering the risk of exposure to COVID-19 is maintaining physical distance from others. Soccer, like all contact sports, requires players to be in close physical proximity during some aspects of training and during play.

In conjunction with steps outlined in our primary Return to Play Guidelines (RTP), we're taking a phased approach to return to play. This approach involves a gradual movement from individual activities to full team activities involving travel beyond your own community.

Pre-Phase (currently): Individual and virtual training. This phase includes individual fitness and technical work for players at home and with family members or with teammates via virtual solutions.

Phase One (1st 14 days of Green Phase): Intra-club activity...training and small-sided in-house activities. This phase includes small-group training within teams and small-sided games (SSG) within teams.

Phase Two (15 days of Green Phase): Intra-club activity...small-sided games between teams within the club may be introduced in addition to training and SSG within teams.

Phase Three: Inter-club and Intra-club activity...training, small-sided in-house games, and small-sided inter-club games (within same county)

Phase Four: Activity opens to include full size matches and travel beyond county limits.

Movement from each phase to the next is dependent on a HSC/ team to remain COVID-free. Should a case of COVID occur within a team/club then movement to the prior phase should be made.



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As outlined in the primary PA West RTP Guide, HSC will take all necessary steps to mitigate possible exposure. HSC will continue to monitor the safety levels of all activities for exposure risk with special attention paid to the following:

1. Attendance tracking
2. Unnecessary player closeness
3. Length of time of player closeness
4. Unnecessary touching of “shared” equipment
5. Players’ ability to understand physical distancing concepts
6. Players’ risk to contracting an infectious disease
7. Unnecessary visitors

Personal Safety Standards To Be Followed At All Times

1. When suffering from any illness, stay at home
2. Wash hands with soap and water; when soap and water not available use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
3. Avoid touching face.
4. Wear a mask when out in public, except when playing a game or training.

Detailed Specific Sections

Players

This section outlines the mandates for players participating in club activities.

- Take temperature daily.
- Wash hands thoroughly before and after training and any contact outside your home.
- Bring and use hand sanitizer with you at every training session. Especially at the beginning and end of sessions.
- Limited or no carpooling.
- Wear mask before and after all training sessions. This protects others in the event that you are unknowingly carrying the virus.
- Do not touch or share anyone else’s equipment.
- Bring your own ball to training, label it as your own.
- Practice social distancing and place bags and other equipment at least 6 feet apart from your teammates’ equipment during sessions.
- Wash and sanitize all equipment before and after every training session.
- No group celebrations with players closer than six feet, no high fives, hugs, cheers, etc.

Parents

This section outlines the mandates for the parents with children participating in club activities.

- Sign the Participation Waiver for HSC and PA West for each player in a family.
- RSVP utilizing the Game Changer ~ Team Manager App to effectively track attendance.



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- Ensure athletes are healthy, check their temperature daily.
- Limited or no carpooling.
- Dropping players off for practices will be frowned upon. Should the need arise, then parents must check in with coaches should a Coach reserve the right to send a player off the field for exhibiting Covid-19 symptoms (listed below).
- Stay in car or social distance when at training, wear mask at all times if outside your car.
- Ensure child's clothing is washed after every training session.
- Label your child's equipment to guard against cross-contamination.
- Ensure all equipment, cleats, ball, shin guards etc. are sanitized after every training.
- Notify club immediately if your child becomes ill for any reason and do not bring them into contact with coaches or other players.
- Do not assist coaches with equipment before or after training.
- Be sure your child has necessary sanitizer and cleaning supplies with them at every training.
- When traveling, take responsibility to sanitize hotel rooms.

Coaches

This section outlines the mandates for coaches participating in club activities.

- Utilize the RSVP feature in the Game Changer ~ Team Manager App to effectively track attendance. Coaches may recruit a parent to help as a Team Manager in a volunteer role to aid with tracking attendance.
- Ensure the health and safety of your players. Inquire how the athletes are feeling, send them home if they act or discuss feeling ill.
- Reserve the right to send a player off the field should the player be exhibiting Covid-19 symptoms (listed below).
- Follow all established federal, state, and local protocols.
- Ensure all athletes have their individual equipment (ball, water bottles, bag, etc.) and prohibit them from sharing anything. Equipment placement should be spaced at least 6 feet apart.
- The coach is the only person to handle cones, disks, etc.
- All training must be outdoors and coaches must strictly enforce social distancing per the current phase guidelines.
- Coaches must always wear a face mask per current phase protocol and social distance from players when required.
- Wash and sanitize your own equipment after every session.
- The use of scrimmage training vests is not recommended. Rather provide or lend training vests to players as part of their equipment.
- Increase your communication with parents, they need to know what you are doing as a coach and club to maintain their safety.
- Have fun, stay positive – players and parents are looking to you to stay calm, supportive, and caring during this time.



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Admins

This section outlines the mandates for club admins participating in club activities.

- Distribute these protocols to our members.
- Reserve the right to send a players/family members off the field should the player be exhibiting Covid-19 symptoms (listed below).
- Reserve the right to modify the rules of play to aid in mitigating risk of exposure as permitted.
- Have an effective communication plan in place, identify strategies for working with public health to notify adult leaders, youth, and their families if the organization learns a participant or adult leader has developed COVID-19 and may have been infectious to others while at a youth activity, while maintaining confidentiality.
- Small group sessions need to maintain the same group of players. This helps with contact tracing and limits exposure.
- Have a written action plan in place, in case of a positive test. If a person is diagnosed with COVID-19, the entire group must return to self-isolation until symptom-free for 14 days.
- Distribute your written action plan to administrators, coaches, managers, and parents, electronically or otherwise.
- In your action plan include both a communication chain for team personnel, including volunteers and managers, as well as triggers for executing the action plan.
- Be prepared to shut down and stop operations. Develop plans for temporary closure of indoor facilities and cancel outdoor activities or camps to properly disinfect and ensure other adult leaders or youth are not infected.
- Provide adequate field space for at least six feet of social distancing per player.
- Develop a relationship and a dialogue with health local officials. (Identify Risk Tolerance)
- Modify rules of matches as deemed necessary to mitigate risk.

Facilities

This section outlines how the club will utilize facilities and act before, during and after the utilization.

A handwashing station will be provided at the pavilion.

Hand sanitizer will be provided at player benches.

Player benches will be marked to allow for 6 feet between players/coaches and players will be encouraged to utilize their own chairs as needed.

Spectators will remain 6 ft from the playing field.

Porta-johns will be wiped down at the end of the training session or game.

COVID Positive Response

This section outlines how the club will respond to a player, coach, or admin in regular contact with others is identified as COVID Positive.



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- If a player, parent, coach or admin is confirmed to have COVID-19, HSC will inform the team(s) of their possible exposure to COVID-19, but must adhere to HIPAA confidentiality guidelines. The entire group must return to self-isolation until symptom free for 14 days.
- Contact the County Health Department at 814-765-0542 or 1-877-724-3258. The number answers 24 hours, however the best time to contact them to speak with a nurse would be between 8:00am and 4:30pm. www.health.pa.gov is the PA Department of Health website.
- Players with symptoms should stay home to limit the spread.
- Players and coaches should continue to practice social distancing when they can, and wash their hands/use hand sanitizer if they come in contact with another person.

COVID Symptoms

This section outlines the symptoms:

- Fever (100.4 or higher)
- Cough
- Shortness of Breath
- Difficulty Breathing
- Sore Throat
- Runny Nose/Congestion
- Chills
- New Lack of Smell or Taste
- Muscle Pain
- Nausea or Vomiting
- Headache
- Diarrhea

Additional Resources

This section lists sources members of the club can consult for COVID related information.

[CDC Personal Hygiene Information](#)

[US Soccer Play On Guidelines](#)