

HGSA COVID Program Participation Plan

"Common sense above all else"

The information in this document is not intended or implied to be a substitute for guidelines published by the New Jersey Department of Health but rather in addition to those guidelines. All content, including text, link and information, are provided for general informational purposes only. The knowledge and circumstances around COVID-19 are changing constantly and, as such, Hamilton Girls Softball Association Inc. (HGSA) makes no representation and assumes no responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of this information. Further, you should seek advice from medical professionals and/or public health officials if you have specific questions about your return to practice and competition.

HGSA Practice and Competition: All players, coaches, staff, spectators and other attendees must adhere to specifically required guidelines from the New Jersey Department of Health ([NJ DOH Guidance for Sports Activities](#)). Furthermore, because HGSA teams utilize both public and private fields for practice and competition, additional requirements may be in place based on guidelines set forth by the hosting township, county or private facility. Any additional guidelines should be provided to the visiting team by the hosting team prior to their arrival with adequate notice.

HGSA Guidelines Prior to Practice or Competition:

- Screen athletes, coaches, staff and any other participants with a temperature check and health questionnaire when they arrive at the field. Anybody showing symptoms of COVID-19 shall not be permitted to participate ([CDC symptom checklist](#)).
- Do not come to practice or competition if you or any member of your household are not feeling well or are showing symptoms of COVID-19.
- Do not come to practice or competition if you or any member of your household have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 within the past 14 days.
- Do not come to practice or competition if you are not comfortable with the guidelines set forth by the NJ DOH, HGSA or the facility at which you are practicing/competing.
- Adults 65 years and older or people of any age with serious underlying medical conditions are strongly encouraged not to attend practice or competition at this time.

HGSA Guidelines during Practice or Competition:

- **Healthy Practices:** All players, coaches, umpires and spectators should practice "good hygiene" by regularly washing their hands with soap and water or using hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Players and coaches should avoid all but the essential contact necessary during practice or competition. Post-game handshakes should be replaced by a "tipping caps" as a sign of good sportsmanship.
- **Social-distancing:** Players, coaches, umpires and spectators should maintain 6-feet of distance whenever possible.
- **Bathrooms during practice:** Bathroom facilities will remain closed during practice time. If Bathroom facilities need to be used, it is the manager's responsibility to clean facility. Bathroom use shall be limited to 1 person per bathroom at a time. Follow social distancing guidelines while waiting.

- **Bathrooms during events or during season:** Bathroom facilities shall undergo routine and frequent sanitization and disinfecting, particularly of high-touch surfaces in accordance with CDC recommendations.
- **Concession Stand:** Concession stand shall meet the requirements for outdoor dining outlined in the of Health Executive Directive No. 20-014. Concession stand personnel should wear face coverings when social distancing is not possible. Food service should be done in a manner to eliminate a bottle neck of people outside of the stand. Cell phone ordering and pickup is encouraged. Concession stand facilities shall be cleaned nightly by league personnel, and professionally cleaned weekly and before and after an event.
- **Face-coverings:**
 - **Coaches/Staff:** Coaching staff should wear cloth face coverings. Face coverings should not be worn by staff or athletes when engaging in high intensity aerobic or anaerobic workouts or where doing so would inhibit the individual's health. Staff should wear face-coverings at all times when 6-feet of distancing is not possible.
 - **Players:** Athletes are also encouraged to wear cloth or disposable face coverings when not engaging in vigorous activity, such as when sitting on the bench, in dugouts, when interacting with an athletic trainer, etc. Face coverings should not be worn by athletes when engaging in high intensity aerobic or anaerobic workouts, or where doing so would inhibit the individual's health. Players are permitted to wear a face-covering any time if the player or their parent/guardian/caretaker deem it necessary.
 - **Umpires:** Encouraged to wear face-covering whenever applicable and possible. "Plate" umpires calling pitches will be encouraged to wear surgical masks over the lower half of their standard protective facemask.
 - **General/All:** Fans/Parents or visitors should wear cloth face coverings. Face coverings should not be worn by anyone where doing so would inhibit the individual's health, or the individual is under the age of two.
- **Drinks & Snacks:** All players, coaches, spectators and umpires should bring their own food or beverages that are clearly labeled with their name. There should not be any shared food or beverages.
 - Sunflower seeds, gum, chewing tobacco etc., are not be allowed in dugouts or on the field. All players and coaches are to refrain from spitting at all times.
- **Player Equipment:** Players should use their own equipment whenever possible. If equipment must be shared, it should be cleaned and then disinfected with an EPA-approved disinfectant against COVID-19 and allowed sufficient time to dry before being used by a new player.
- **Softballs:** Each team should use their own balls while in the field during competition.
- **Dugouts:** Dugout use will be limited to space available following social distancing guidelines. Additional space outside the dugout will be made available for players and coaches only.
- **Umpire Placement:** Umpires should call balls/strikes from behind the plate.
- **Fans/Spectators:** Fans in attendance will answer a Self Assessment before arriving at HGSA. Fan areas will be marked along the sidelines in the outfield where possible, and along the outfield fence. Social Distancing guidelines should always be followed, unless you are with immediate family, or all persons close are wearing face coverings.
- **Tournaments:**
 - Tournament teams shall be required to follow these guidelines.
 - Teams will perform self-assessments prior to arriving to HGSA or other host facility for competitions.
 - Schedules will be arranged to encourage less traffic at the facility.
 - Teams will be asked not to linger at the facility after they are finished.