

# COVID-19 Protocols



2020 Season

# Background



- On Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, Governor Tom Wolf issued “[Guidance for All Sports to Operate During the COVID-19 Disaster Emergency....](#)”
- Intent
  - The virus that causes the Coronavirus 2019 Disease (“COVID-19”) is easily transmitted, especially in group settings, and it is essential that the spread of the virus be slowed to safeguard public health and safety.
  - COVID-19 can be transmitted from infected individuals even if they are asymptomatic or their symptoms are mild, such as a cough. It can also be spread by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching your mouth, nose or eyes. This guidance document addresses the procedures sports organizations and teams must follow to limit the spread of COVID-19 to the extent they are permitted to conduct in-person operations.
  - This guidance is preliminary and will be updated as more public health data and other information is available.

# Background



- Organizations Subject to This Guidance
  - The Commonwealth is employing a regional and industry-specific approach to reopening non-life sustaining businesses. For more information, and up to date county designations, please refer to the Commonwealth's Phased Reopening website.
  - All sports in Pennsylvania, including professional, collegiate, Pre-K to 12 school athletics, and amateur and recreational sports, are covered by this guidance.
  - Sports organizations and teams may only conduct in-person operations if they are able to do so in accordance with all applicable guidance. They are not required to reopen per this guidance.
- Significance of Red-Yellow-Green Phases for Sports in Pennsylvania
  - No sports (professional, collegiate, Pre-K to 12, recreational or amateur) are allowed in counties designated as being in the Red phase.

# Background



- Recreational and Amateur Sports
  - Recreational and amateur sports organizations and teams (not affiliated with a public or private PK-12 school), including, but not limited to, basketball, hockey, field hockey, football, soccer, swimming, baseball, **softball**, lacrosse, gymnastics, and kickball, *are permitted to conduct in-person activities, including games and practices, in counties designated as being in the Green phase only if they strictly adhere to the requirements of this guidance*, including the limits on total occupancy outlined below. For youth sports, refer to the CDC guidance on youth sports as well.
- Lackawanna County is expected to turn Green on Friday, June 26<sup>th</sup>
- If Lackawanna County moves back to Yellow, the season will be canceled

# Resources



- Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
  - <https://www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/sports-guidance/>
- Center for Disease Control (CDC)
  - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html>
- USA Softball
  - <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Softball/COVID-Resources>

# AAGSL Protocols



- All protocols contained in this document are subject to change; AAGSL will follow guidance from State and Local authorities and update Protocols as necessary
- The AAGSL COVID Safety Officer is Tori Yankow (570) 687-2872
- AAGSL will conduct an in-house league that is expected to run from mid-July through September; games with teams outside the local Abington community will be minimized
- In order to have enough teams to successfully implement an in-house league, AAGSL will offer the traditional 8U, 10U and 12U divisions for the season (similar to Fall Ball; there will be no 10U Developmental and those kids will be placed in age appropriate divisions)
- There will be no 5U division this summer due to the close contact typically required by coaches and the inability of the younger kids to follow social distancing instructions

# AAGSL Protocols



- AAGSL will develop an educational email to be distributed to parents and coaches about the symptoms of COVID-19 and when to stay at home; it will also include information on proper hand washing and sanitizing for athletes; reminder emails will be sent periodically throughout the season to reinforce the need to stay home if exhibiting any symptoms
- Coaches/Parents/Athletes and other spectators should measure their body temperature prior to attending or participating in any AAGSL activity
- Parents and coaches will sign a new waiver that includes language regarding COVID-19 and that they will take temperatures and adhere to the protocol prior to attending any AAGSL event
- The AAGSL will develop and make publicly available an action plan that outlines what happens when an athlete, coach or official falls ill
- Game times will be staggered to minimize the amount of people coming and going at the same time
- Parents are not permitted to watch practice from the sidelines and must remain in their vehicles
- Suggested parent to athlete ratio of 2:1 in order to remain under the 250-person gathering limit

# AAGSL Protocols



- Concession stand (if open) will be limited to drinks and pre-packaged foods; there will be a limit of two people in the stand at one time; workers must wear face coverings and gloves; social distancing signs will be placed in the lines
- Teams will not be allowed to arrive more than 45 minutes before their scheduled game time; pre-game warmups should be limited to 30 minutes or less
- Teams cannot enter the dugout or bleacher areas until they have been sanitized
- Bleachers will be off-limit to spectators and will be used as an extension of the dugouts for players
- Spectators should sit on the hill, in their vehicles or in the outfield (outside of the fence) and maintain proper social distancing
- Parents should wear face coverings while at AAGSL facilities when in common areas such as the snack stand, the restroom, or around players or other spectators; masks are not required when sitting and watching the game **IF** social distancing is in place; parents are encouraged to follow CDC guidelines
- Spectators should not retrieve foul balls; only players, coaches or umpires are permitted to touch softballs
- Umpires may call balls and strikes from behind the pitcher's circle

# Coach Protocols



- Coaches **required** to attend a pre-season meeting to review rules and Protocols
- Coaching staff and other adult personnel should wear face coverings (masks or face shields) when practical and unable to maintain social distancing (coaches required to wear masks when in dugout with players or meeting with umpires)
- Coaches and athletes must maintain appropriate social distancing at all times possible, including in the field of play, dugouts, batting cages and benches; during down time, athletes and coaches should not congregate
- Coaches and athletic staff must monitor athletes for symptoms prior to and during games and practices
- Maximum of 3 coaches per team (one each for 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> base and one for the book); one team parent may help organize and control kids on bleachers
- One team volunteer or coach should be designated as sanitation manager to provide hand sanitizer to players, watch for sneezing or face touching, alert coaches of witnessed teaching moments in regards to personal hygiene, etc. (if not assigned the Head Coach assumes this responsibility)
- Coaches to assign player spots in the dugouts and bleachers to ensure social distancing

# Coach Protocols



- There will be no pre-game managers' meeting
- If a manager/umpire meeting needs to take place during the game, distances of 6' need to be maintained and masks need to be in place
- Coaches need to be 6' from players when addressing the team
- Utilize the scoreboard to confirm the score each inning instead of meeting with the opposing coaches
- Coaches must clean out all garbage from the dugout (place into the trash receptacle) after each game and wipe down the benches; bat racks will be removed from the dugouts
- Each defensive team will have their own game balls; the balls will be wiped down between each inning

# Player Protocols



- All players must have their own equipment (helmets, bats, gloves & masks); the AAGSL can provide equipment on a limited basis for the season
- Catchers equipment must be thoroughly disinfected between players; the goal would be to have two sets of equipment per team
- No sunflower seeds, gum or any food in the dugout or on the field; NO spitting
- All players must have their own water bottle; no team water coolers
- No high-fives or handshakes between teammates or teams; teams will line up on the base lines and applaud each other at the end of the game
- No player meetings at the pitcher's circle at any time
- Players are permitted to wear masks on the field (if they don't interfere with safety)
- Players are **required** to wear masks in the dugout or on the bleachers
- No player equipment bags allowed in the dugouts
- Parents should disinfect all player equipment and bags after each use

# Parent Communication



- PLEASE STAY HOME if.....
  - You have a fever of 100.4 degrees F or higher (parents, coaches, athletes and spectators need to take their temperatures PRIOR to attending an AAGSL practice or game)
  - You experience any of the following symptoms as identified by the CDC
    - Fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea
  - You have been directly exposed to anyone who has tested positive for COVID or is a presumptive-positive
- Please make sure you frequently wash your hands for 20 seconds or longer; if soap is not available use hand sanitizer with greater than 60% alcohol
- Please maintain social distancing of 6' and wear face coverings when in public settings and social distancing is not possible
- Always cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue (or with your elbow), then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands

# Action Plan



- In the event an athlete, official or coach is determined to be positive or a presumptive-positive with COVID-19, the following steps will be taken:
  - The individual will be encouraged to work directly through their healthcare provider to ensure all appropriate medical steps are taken and that the PA Dept of Health is notified to conduct Contact Tracing
  - The individual must notify the AAGSL COVID Safety Officer so that appropriate notifications may be made to the League
  - All potentially impacted individuals will be notified of the positive or presumptive-positive and encouraged to watch for symptoms and consult with their healthcare provider as necessary
  - All facilities that the individual may have come in contact with will be disinfected
  - The individuals may not return to any AAGSL sponsored activity without following the AAGSL Return to Play Guidelines which includes written clearance from the individual's health care provider
  - Specific names will not be used to protect an individual's identity

# Return to Play



- Any sick player, coach, or volunteer must, at minimum, quarantine as required by CDC/PADoH.
  - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>
- A sick player, coach, or volunteer can only return with a doctor's approval, which is to be provided to the AAGSL COVID-19 Safety Officer in written form
- Individuals must be cleared to play by the AAGSL prior to resuming activity