



AYSO Section 8 Area C Return to Play Guidelines

This document is intended to provide the AYSO membership and local municipalities with information on how AYSO Section 8 Area C Regions plan to host soccer programs while following the guidelines set forth by the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, US Soccer, US Youth Soccer Council, and AYSO National Office. The document will describe the Return to Train Guidelines and Match Play Guidelines.

General Guidance

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) offers recommendations on how members of the public can limit the spread of the coronavirus. They currently include:

- [Clean and disinfect](#) frequently touched surfaces and exercise equipment (including balls).
- Thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Wear a cloth face covering that covers your nose and mouth in public settings.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from non-household members. Note: [research](#) is ongoing on appropriate physical distance for bodies in motion.
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Stay at home if you are sick.

Overall - Standard Practices

- **Healthy Participants Only:** Any players, coaches, spectators who are sick will not be allowed at any training or match.
- Spectators will abide by physical distancing regulations and are strongly encouraged to remain inside their vehicles during training and will be spaced appropriately on their team's touchline during matches. Spectators are encouraged but not required to wear face masks/PPE.

Contact Tracing and Exposure Tracking

- Registered Coach or Team Parent volunteer will maintain a list of players and volunteers present at each training or match. It is also recommended to record the names of spectators and non-participants.
 - Include the items below in your contact tracing list. For minors, use a parent's contact information:
 - Date
 - Venue
 - Name
 - Phone or Email Address of participants

- It is recommended that lists should be available for a minimum of 21 days to account for the period of time of COVID-19 presentation of symptoms and illness.
- Lists will be kept in a secure place to ensure privacy but also available to each region's Regional Commissioner or Safety Director upon request
- If a player or volunteer does test positive for COVID-19, the Regional Commissioner, Safety Director and Area Director should be notified immediately.
 - Complete and submit AYSO's Incident Report Form to the Region's Safety Director immediately, including team roster.
 - Contact tracing lists should be available for any and all matches that the player or volunteer was present for the previous 21 days. The Area Director and Regional Commissioners of each region involved will take appropriate action.

Contact or Exposure Protocol Actions

In the event a player or volunteer is COVID-19 positive, the following protocols will be executed:

- Return To Train: Player or volunteer who is COVID-19 positive will self-quarantine for 14 days. Team is notified of a COVID-19 positive situation and team may continue training.
- Match Play: Player or volunteer who is COVID-19 positive will self-quarantine for 14 days. Teams participating in the same age division matches will be notified of a COVID-19 positive situation, the match schedule for that age division will be suspended for 14 days, but the teams may continue training.

Return to Train Guidelines

AYSO Section 8 Area C Regions will

- Educate our membership, which includes volunteers, parents, and players on the Return To Train Guidelines.
- Utilize technique in isolation exercises, grid work, fitness and spatial awareness to limit physical contact between players. Recommended Age appropriate AYSO Return To Play Activities are located at <https://www.aysovolunteers.org/coaching-activities/>
 - Scrimmaging and other activities that interfere with physical distancing requirements should be avoided until Phase 5.
- Keep players together in small groups with one coach and make sure that each group of players and coach avoid mixing with other groups as much as possible.
- Adhere to AYSO Safe Haven guidelines, i.e., 1:8 adult to child ratio; minimum of 2 adults present; no adult alone with children other than their own. Whenever possible, adult of same gender as players should be present.
- Once regulations permit, consider staging inner-squad scrimmages instead of matches with other teams to minimize exposure among players and teams.

Players are not required to have an individual designated ball for training.

- The use of shared balls between players is allowed in foot drills with avoidance of the use of hands.
- Field players should not handle soccer balls with their hands unless wearing gloves.
- A notable exception to this is for goalkeepers. For goalkeeper training, soccer balls should not be shared. Plan for one soccer ball per goalkeeper.
- If the goalkeeper is involved in an activity with field players and using his or her hands, use the goalkeeper's designated ball(s).

In addition, the AYSO Section 8 Area C Regions membership will have guidelines based on their role:

Coach

- Wearing face masks are encouraged for coaches for the duration of any training session. Face masks are **required** for the Coach who is unable to maintain appropriate physical distancing requirements.
- Maintain social distancing requirements from players and family members.
- Training sessions should only be scheduled at **outdoor** locations with ample space for player distancing.
- Create “personal prep stations” – individual areas for players and coaches.
 - Set up a line of cones 6-feet apart in an area to the side of the field of play.
 - Arrange one cone per participant (player, coach).
 - When a participant arrives, designate a cone as their “personal prep station” for the duration of their pre-match activities. The individual should place their bags, water bottles, towels, etc. at this cone.
- Handle coaching equipment (e.g.: cones, disks, etc.)
 - Do not let parents or attendees assist with setting up or breaking down training equipment.
 - Coaches should clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and equipment (including cones, disks, and balls) after each training.
 - Coaches will not share their pinnies or bibs with players.
- Limit nonessential visitors, spectators, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations as much as possible.

Team Parent:

- Wearing face masks are encouraged for Team Parent for the duration of any training session. Face masks are **required** for the Team Parent who is unable to maintain appropriate physical distancing requirements.
- Maintain social distancing requirements from players and family members.
- Assist Coach, as requested, with communications to families (including safeguard reminders, i.e., only healthy participants attend activities).
- Serve as focal point for notification from team families if a family member becomes ill with COVID-19, tests positive for COVID-19, or comes in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. Notify the Coach immediately.
- Maintain social distancing requirements from coach, players and family members.
- Assist with hand sanitizer or other safety precautions like handwashing on arrival / mid-way and end of training session in support of the coach.
- Help team/teams adhere to AYSO Safe Haven supervision guidelines.

Parents:

- Ensure their child is healthy. Test child's temperature before departing for soccer practice (if above 100.4, do not attend). Notify your coach or team parent immediately if your child or family member becomes ill for any reason.
- One parent is to be present for training (especially for younger age groups) and are encouraged to wear face masks and observe all physical distancing requirements (at least 6 feet apart). Parents should always remain off the training field.
- Limit the use of carpools or van pools, and limit passengers to household members.
- Wash your child's clothing after every training/activity (recommendation).
- Sanitize all equipment (ball, cleats, shin guards, etc.) before and after every practice.
- Clearly label your child's water bottle and personal items.
- Ensure your child has hand sanitizing products with them at every session.
- Do not assist coach with equipment before or after training.

Players

- Inform parent if feeling unwell.
- Wash hands before and after training.
- No physical greetings with teammates before or after matches.
 - Verbal acknowledgement is expected, we are physical distancing not social.
- Pack and bring to personal sanitizing supplies to training and matches, including hand sanitizers. Sanitizing materials should be clearly marked and not shared.
- No sharing drinks or water bottles. Players should mark their own water bottles.
- Responsible for cleaning all required equipment after each training sessions (ball, cleats, shin guards, etc.).
- Hand sanitizing or handwashing should be done before training, during any hydration breaks, and after training.
- Do not touch or share anyone else's equipment.
- Practice social distancing, place bags and equipment at least 6 feet apart.

Match Play

AYSO Section 8 Area C Regions will

- Educate our membership, which includes volunteers, parents, and players on the Match Play Guidelines.
- Adhere to AYSO Safe Haven guidelines, i.e., 1:8 adult to child ratio; minimum of 2 adults present; no adult alone with children other than their own. Whenever possible, adult of same gender as players should be present.
- Avoid communal snacks or drinks at halftime and the end of the match should be avoided.

Coaches are not allowed to share equipment (e.g., pinnies or bibs). Therefore, it will be the responsibility of the player to furnish an alternate color t-shirt for the goalkeeper position. In addition, each player is responsible for bring an alternate color t-shirt in the event competing teams have similar color uniforms. The Coach will advise the team on the alternate color t-shirt.

Coaches

- Wearing face masks are encouraged for coaches for the duration of any match. Face masks are **required** for the Coach who is unable to maintain appropriate physical distancing requirements.
- Coaches should maintain physical distancing requirements from players and spectators.
- Coaches should clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and equipment (including balls) after each use.
- Coaches should create “personal prep stations” – individual areas for players and coaches.
 - Set up a line of cones 6-feet apart in an area to the side of the field of play.
 - Arrange one cone per participant (player, coach, referee)
 - When a participant arrives, designate a cone as their “personal prep station” for the duration of their pre-match activities. The individual should place their bags, water bottles, towels, etc. at this cone.

Referees

- Referees are recommended to wear face masks for arrival, field inspection, and pre-match duties.
- Masks are not required for referees during active play, ARs are recommended to wear masks.
- After the match, applaud the players but handshakes are not permitted, fist bumps and elbow bumps should be avoided.
- If shared, wipe down the handles of flags with an alcohol-based rub or wash with soap and water.

Parents:

- Ensure their child is healthy. Test child's temperature before departing for the match (if above 100.4, do not attend). Notify your coach or team parent immediately if your child or family member becomes ill for any reason.
- One parent is to be present for match (especially for younger age groups) and is encouraged to wear face masks and observe all physical distancing requirements (at least 6 feet apart). Parents should always remain off the field.
- Limit the use of carpools or van pools, and limit passengers to household members.
- Wash your child's clothing after every training/activity (recommendation).
- Sanitize all equipment (ball, cleats, shin guards, etc.) before and after every match.
- Clearly label your child's water bottle and personal items.
- Ensure your child has hand sanitizing products with them at every session.
- Do not assist coach with equipment before or after match.

Players

- Inform parent if feeling unwell.
- No physical greetings with teammates before or after matches.
 - Verbal acknowledgement is expected, we are physical distancing not social.
- Pack and bring to personal sanitizing supplies to training and matches, including hand sanitizers. Sanitizing materials should be clearly marked and not shared.
- No sharing drinks or water bottles. Players should mark their own water bottles.
- Responsible for cleaning all required equipment after each match (ball, cleats, shin guards, etc.).
- Hand sanitizing or handwashing should be done during each substitution (quarter) break and during any hydration breaks.
- Face masks are recommended for substitute players while not in active play. Face masks are **required** for any player who is unable to maintain appropriate physical distancing requirements.

Match Play

- Coin toss will be modified to be one player from each team and physical distancing should be observed. NO HANDSHAKES.
- Parents and spectators should always remain 3-4 yards (9-12 feet) behind the touchline and should never approach the bench area during a match.
- Goalkeepers should always wear gloves.
- Referees should be lenient with ball placement on free kicks/goal kicks/corner kicks allowing players to place the ball with their feet rather than picking it up with their hands.
- Players should have hand sanitizer available, when possible, after taking throw-ins or when touching the ball cannot be avoided.
- Encourage all participants and spectators to return to their own vehicles in the event of inclement weather.
 - When possible, individuals in the car should be limited to members of the immediate family. If non-family members must be present in the vehicle, everyone in the vehicle should wear PPE.