

Dear Parents and members of the community,

September 4, 2020

We took a major step forward this week! On Thursday, Governor Whitmer issued an [executive order](#) related to organized sports (check out section 7) granting us the ability to move ahead with soccer games under certain conditions. The Michigan Department of Health & Human Services (MDHHS) also released their [public guidance on contact sports](#). We anticipate some follow-up interpretations from MHSAA, but here's what we took from Thursday's announcements and how it will make this Fall soccer season different than any other:

- Both the Governor's office and the MDHHS have affirmed that soccer is a contact sport, and as such there is an **elevated risk of COVID-19 transmission**. The MDHHS even went so far as to recommend against playing contact sports at this time, but acknowledged that teams can mitigate that risk by following CDC and MHSAA safety guidelines.
- As such, the Governor's executive order allows for soccer games to be played but requires that **all players must wear a face covering while on the field of play** (section 7(b)). This is new guidance from what we've heard before and we are looking for clarification on this. We will pass any new info along as we get it, but for now, assume that your player will be required to play with a face covering.
- Face coverings will not be required when a player can **maintain social distance of at least six feet** from other players, coaches and spectators (other than members of their own household). This means that most of our time at practice can be mask-free, except for a scrimmage.
- The executive order limits outside sporting events to **100 people or less** and also places a limit of **two guests per player** at the event (section 7(d)). We are looking at how both of these restrictions impacts our use of fields and scheduling of games.
- **School districts are free to make their own decision** on Fall soccer. Knowing that our schools are a focal point for community, we will be monitoring how they react and we will also be looking for guidance from local public health officials as we plan out our season.

The safety of our players, coaches and parents is, and always has been, our top priority, so we are proceeding with caution. We will update our 'Return to Play' guidelines and share them with you within the next week.

Thank you again for your patience and support,

The Volunteers of Your Local West Michigan AYSO Region

