

Woodland Hills Youth Soccer

Return to Play Guidelines

Effective 5 June 2020

Introduction

The impact of COVID-19 has resulted in the suspension of all soccer activities since mid-March. Since this time, the priority of Woodland Hills Youth Soccer (WHYSA) has been to safeguard the health and wellbeing of players, coaches, families, and the community at-large; and to undertake its social responsibility to do everything it can to slow down the spread of COVID-19.

Since we have moved to the “Green Phase” this does open the door for youth sports activities.

The easing of restrictions relating to sport and recreation include:

- Outdoor gatherings of up to 25 250 people
- There must be no sharing of equipment
- 6 -feet social distancing must remain in place for spectators and fans.

The Commonwealth of PA is responsible for decisions on the resumption of sport and recreation activities at both the community and professional level, with ultimate determination on the relaxing of restrictions to be made by a consortium of designated government and public health leaders. This document outlines a framework for re-starting our club wide, on-field training activities; understanding that this remains a fluid and ever-changing dynamic. We have incorporated the guidance of local public health experts, clinicians and a host of other best-practices from soccer and other sports organizing entities globally, to produce what we feel is an appropriate process for returning-to-play.

Our prime directive remains to create the safest training and spectator environment for our players, coaches, families of WHYSA.

What activities can our Teams/Coaches/players undertake?

As of June 5, 2020, soccer activities can be undertaken only in accordance with the guidance and directives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. d

What are practical guidelines that our players/parents/coaches/club can put in place?

It is important that we all take practical steps to ensuring the physical health and mental wellbeing is maintained in the current environment. We recognise that often there may be individual circumstances for individual players and coaches when considering how to apply the important regulations, guidelines and frameworks.

WHYSA strongly recommends that the soccer community download to the COVIDSafe app before taking part in any soccer activities. This geo-mapping app may also make it easier for contact tracing should a player or coach become ill or infected. WHYSA has no proprietary link to this app.

All soccer participants, including people playing, organising or attending should not present to participate in any soccer activity if they:

a) have any flu-like symptoms, specifically:

- fever
- cough
- shortness or difficulty breathing
- sore throat
- muscle aches
- headache
- sudden loss of taste or smell
- have been in direct contact with a known case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days
- have travelled internationally or have been in direct contact with a known case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days
- are at a high risk from a health perspective, including the elderly and those with pre-existing medical health conditions

- If the soccer activities are being undertaken on a soccer field, it is suggested that they be divided into four spaces whereby no more than 10 people can gather to ensure the density requirement is adhered to. Please see example images below only in the circumstances where the space aligns with the density requirements and social distancing
- Players will be assigned a group prior to practice and given a staggered start time for that group. Only enter the field/gym at your designated start time.
- Only essential people are to attend activities (i.e. players, coaches and one parents/carer of participants). All non-participants should also wear an appropriate face covering (mask). Any other individuals traveling with the player and the parent driver should remain in the vehicle and will not be permitted to enter the field or training area.
- At this time and until further notice, there will be no guest training opportunities granted.
- Only attend at your designated start time. No social activity is to occur at this time
- Where possible, warm-ups and pre-activity preparation such as taping should be completed at home prior to arriving for any soccer activity
- At venues where possible, parents are encouraged to stay in their car during training or otherwise ensure social distancing is observed
- Toilets should be made available for use. Restriction on the number of people using the toilets at any one time will apply depending upon the size of the amenities. Soap and sanitiser to be made available in the toilets at all times always made available in the toilets
- There will be no concessions, snack bar or similar activities at this time; this includes any scheduled club on-site fundraising that encourages social gathering in groups..

- Shared equipment, except for soccer balls, is not permitted. The responsibility lies with the teams and individuals to ensure that there is sufficient equipment to ensure there is no sharing. If training bibs are being utilised, all players must have their own bib that must be washed after every session
- Each player must have their own drink bottle, bottles are not to be shared.

You are encouraged to keep up to date with the latest information about COVID-19, including future lifting of restrictions, through the following channels:

- Official information regarding COVID-19 in PA— <https://www.governor.pa.gov/process-to-reopen-pennsylvania/>
- CDC— <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>
- USYS and/or USSF— <https://www.usclubsoccer.org/coronavirus>

Introduction of principles and Responsibilities

Club Responsibilities:

- Create and distribute protocols to its members.
- Contact insurers to ensure all coverages.
- 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.
- Be sensitive and accommodating to parents that many be uncomfortable with returning to play too quickly.
- Have an action plan in place, in case of a positive test.
- Train and educate all staff to protocols and requirements, including state and local regulations, CDC recommendations and other necessary information.
- 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 social distance
- Provide hand sanitizing stations and waste receptacles at field
- Develop a relationship and a dialog with health local officials. (Identify Risk Tolerance)

Coach Responsibilities:

- Ensure the health and safety of the Athletes.
- Inquire how the athletes are feeling, send them home should you believe they act or look ill.
- Follow all state and local health protocols.
- Ensure all athletes have their individual equipment (ball, water, bag etc.)
- Coach is the only person to handle cones, discs etc.
- All training outdoors and ensure social distancing per state or local health guidelines.
- Always wear a face mask, when not actively coaching, maintain social distance requirements from players based on state and local health requirements.
- Provide frequent breaks for hand hygiene.
- Have fun, stay positive – players and parents are looking to you to stay calm, supportive and caring during this time.

Parent Responsibilities:

- Ensure the child is healthy, check your child's temperature daily.
- Limited or no carpooling.
- Stay in the car, or social distance, based on state and local health requirements, while at training wear a mask outside your car.
- Bring a clean top to change into after practice
- Ensure child's clothing is washed after every training session.
- Ensure all equipment, cleats, ball, shin guards etc. are sanitized before and after every training.
- Notify the club immediately if your child becomes ill for any reason.
- Do not assist the coach with equipment before or after training.
- Be sure your child has necessary sanitizer with them at every training.

Introduction of principles and Responsibilities (cont.)

Players Responsibilities:

- Take temperature daily.
- Wash OR sanitize hands thoroughly before and after training.
- Bring and use, hand sanitizer with you to every training.
- Wear a mask before and immediately after all training.
- Do not touch or share anyone else's equipment, water, snack or bag.
- Practice social distancing, place bags and equipment at least 6 feet apart.
- Wash OR sanitize all equipment before and after every training.
- No group celebrations, no high 5's, Hugs, handshakes.

Resources

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Move United: <https://www.moveunitedsport.org/>

Special Olympics: <https://resources.specialolympics.org/resources-to-help-during-the-crisis>

Special Olympics Infographic:

https://media.specialolympics.org/resources/covid-19/SO_CoVid19-Infographic-English.jpg?_ga=2.93243544.460203483.1588346705-2032247575.1588346705

Federation for Children with Special Needs: <https://fcsn.org/>

Autism; Wearing a Mask Social Story: <https://paautism.org/resource/wearing-mask-social-story/>

How soccer fields may be divided. These are based on full-size fields.

Example 1



Example 2



CDC GUIDANCE #2

Create a Healthy Environment



The CDC recognizes the importance environment plays in the spread of disease. They offer a number of important steps toward creating a healthy environment. The goal is to provide players the safest training and playing environment possible.



No sharing of water bottles, snacks, or equipment.



Per public health guidance, masks should be worn when at all possible.



Physical distancing should be observed by players when possible and by all others at all times.

Mandatory Precautions:

	Coach	Club	Player	Parent
Handwashing facilities should be available when possible.		✓		
Hand sanitizer station on every bench.		✓		
Strict adherence to schedule. Prompt start; finish as scheduled. Prompt arrival and departure.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Restrooms should be cleaned regularly (minimum hourly) using disinfecting cleaners; use should be as directed by the manufacturer.		✓		
Team "huddles" should observe social distancing; no handshakes, high-fives, fist bumps, etc.	✓		✓	
Parents should remain in their cars during training.		✓		✓
Organize "stations" for each player at or around the bench area that are at least 6 feet apart in which players must keep all of their belongings. They shall be required to return to their "station" only during breaks.	✓	✓		
There will be no post-game handshake or team huddles. Players should clean up their gear and join their parents in their cars promptly.	✓		✓	
Pre-game and half-time huddles should observe social distancing; no handshakes, high-fives, fist bumps, hugs, etc.	✓		✓	
No post-game snacks.	✓	✓	✓	✓

Mandatory Precautions:

	Coach	Club	Player	Parent
Clubs must provide hand sanitizer at each bench area for all activities.		✓		
All state and local health guidelines and protocols should be followed.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Before any and all activity (e.g. practice, tryout session, etc...) coach and player health assessment must be made incorporating the following elements. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must ask- have you been in contact with a person with COVID-19?• Must ask- have you had a cough, fever, or loss of taste or smell?		✓		
Stated club policy on all club personnel and coaches wearing protective gear (masks, gloves).		✓		

Recommended Precautions:

	Coach	Club	Player	Parent
Record all attendees (participants and spectators) at practices/games by club designee (coach, asst. coach, team manager at practice/team manager, field marshal, club COVID coordinator at games). This practice will aid in tracking if needed by public health authorities.		✓		
Plan for all player areas to be disinfected following every match and training session. Training for those disinfecting the player areas should follow the directions on the disinfectant label.		✓		
Provide adequate outdoor space for training.		✓		
Coaches alone shall be permitted to touch equipment, including training discs and cones; do not enlist help from players or parents.	✓	✓		

CDC GUIDANCE #4

Prepare for Illness



CDC guidelines require having a plan in place when illness returns. The plan will help control and mitigate the effects of COVID-19.

Mandatory Precautions:

	Coach	Club	Player	Parent
Have a communication plan in place. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Prepare to notify coaches and families if the organization becomes aware of a participant or a coach/admin has developed COVID-19 and may have been infectious to others while at a youth or adult activity.Maintain participant confidentiality regarding health status.		✓		
Have an action plan in place, in case of notification of a positive test result.		✓		
Train and educate all staff on protocols and requirements, including state and local regulations, CDC recommendations and other necessary safety information.		✓		
Be prepared to shut down and stop operations.		✓		
Develop plans for temporary closure of indoor facilities and cancellation of outdoor activities or camps for proper disinfection.		✓		