



Restore Illinois Phase 4 - Return to Play Protocol

Illinois Youth Soccer Association (IYSA) is dedicated to protecting the health and safety of our soccer community. We understand that our member organizations want to get back on the field, but this must be done with strict focus on the safety of the players, coaches, referees and families and follow state and local guidelines for resumption of activities. The purpose of this document is to provide IYSA member soccer organizations and their athletes, parents, and coaches with information that they can use to assist them with developing their return-to-activity programming specific to their situation in context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Once Phase 4 is approved in Illinois by Governor Pritzker and the Public Health authorities, it may be possible to hold full team trainings and games can be held. In Phase 4, gatherings of fifty (50) or fewer participants are allowed as long as capacity and safety precautions are maintained. Face coverings and social distancing are the norm.

However, social distancing should NOT be taken lightly, and all aspects of the training environment must be assessed and modified to identify and reduce the risk of spreading the virus.

This Protocol is based on the [Illinois Department of Public Health Youth Sports Guidelines](#), US Soccer and US Youth Soccer guidelines for soccer organizations, clubs and teams that have reached the [Restore Illinois Phase 4 Restore](#), the Public Health Approach to Safely Reopen the State. The information in this document is NOT intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. The knowledge and circumstances around COVID-19 are changing constantly and, as such, Illinois Youth Soccer Association makes no representation and assumes no responsibility for the completeness of this information. Further, your organization is expected to strictly comply with the Center for Disease Control (CDC), state and local guidelines for the resumption of play and seek advice from medical professionals and/or public health officials in your area if you have specific questions. Additional guidelines may, or may not, follow as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve.

Although the young and healthy may be subject to less severe cases of COVID-19, every case of this disease is potentially life-altering or deadly, particularly in those with risk factors that may occur within our communities. Health consequences may be long-standing and only apparent weeks after initial infection and recovery. Until COVID-19 is either eradicated, a vaccine is developed, or a cure is found, there is no way of eliminating the risk of infection. This should always be at the forefront when designing and considering return-to-activity.

Training Criteria for participation in for athletes, coaches and staff:

- Full team training is allowed in compliance with all IDPH guidelines
- Social distancing should be maintained before and after practice and when allowable during training.
- Training sessions should take place outside.
- Because of increased activities and exposure risks, any individual with a pre-existing medical conditions is required to provide UPDATED written clearance from a physician for return to full participation.
- Participants must not exhibit any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days and have no known exposure to someone that has been ill in 14 days.
- Participants must not have above normal temperature readings. Anyone with a temperature of 100.4°F or above shall not be permitted to remain on site. If practical before participating in the activity, sport organizer should take participants temperature via a touchless thermometer.
- Upon arrival to training, coaches or staff should ask each athlete if they are experiencing any signs or symptoms of COVID-19. If an athlete has any signs or symptoms of COVID19, the athlete should be sent home and instructed to contact his/her healthcare provider as soon as possible.
- Appropriate infection prevention supplies should be present in multiple targeted areas (e.g., hand sanitizer, facial tissues, facial coverings, hand wash stations, etc.).
- Participants should use their own equipment when possible and properly sanitize the equipment after every training session.
- Participants should use their own water bottle, towel and any other personal hygiene products.
- Establish a cleaning schedule/protocol for equipment with the proper use of disinfectant before, during, and after training.
- Ensure participants are abiding by the State of Illinois' ordinance regarding appropriate personal protective equipment, (gloves, face mask, etc.) Masks are permitted but not required to be worn by the players during training.
- Coaches must maintain social distancing from all participants.
- Teams / groups should be static, with no mixing of coaches or participants between groups for the duration of the season. This is applicable for any players coming to tryout as well.
- Minimum 30 feet of distancing space must be maintained between groups. Area for each group must be clearly marked.
- Maintain an attendance log for every session. Club should keep the attendance log on file for duration of each season for tracing purposes.
- For indoor facilities, maximum occupancy is 50% of facility capacity.
- Organization must follow all of the [Restore Illinois Phase 4 Youth Sports Guidelines](#).

Game criteria for participation in for athletes, coaches and staff:

It is recommended that teams only participate in local games or matches that do not require overnight stays.

- Games are allowed in compliance with all [IDPH guidelines](#)
- Social distancing should be maintained before and after games and when allowable during training.
- Players on bench should be spaced out at least 6-feet apart as allowable.
- No pre or post game handshakes, instead for sportsmanship teams should engage in a round of applause following the conclusion of the match.
- No pre-game team walkouts
- Host club must create “Family areas” for spectators from the same residence at least 6 feet apart from one another and 6 feet off the sideline. Fans in attendance must remain in their designated area and attendance of families attending should be kept by club. The host club should have a coach or employee monitoring social distancing by spectators.
- Spectators should not exceed 20% of seating capacity. [Please review the Physical Workspace portion of the IDPH Youth Sports Guidelines for requirements for seating](#)
- Because of increased activities and exposure risks, any individual with a pre-existing medical conditions is required to provide UPDATED written clearance from a physician for return to full participation.
- Participants must not exhibit any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days and have no known exposure to someone that has been ill in 14 days.
- Participants must not have above normal temperature readings. Anyone with a temperature of 100.4°F or above shall not be permitted to remain on site. If practical before participating in the activity, sport organizer should take participants temperature via a touchless thermometer.
- Upon arrival, coaches or staff should ask each athlete if they are experiencing any signs or symptoms of COVID-19. If an athlete has any signs or symptoms of COVID19, the athlete should be sent home and instructed to contact his/her healthcare provider as soon as possible.
- Appropriate infection prevention supplies should be present in on both team’s bench areas
- Participants should use their own water bottle, towel, hand sanitizer and any other personal hygiene products.
- Coaches must maintain social distancing from all participants.
- Maintain an attendance log for every match. Club should keep the attendance log on file for duration of each season for tracing purposes.
- On-site benches and bleachers should be sanitized at the conclusion of the match after teams have left game. It is recommended to remove benches and bleachers from sidelines and have players and spectators bring their own chairs that can properly be spaced at least 6-feet apart.
- Organization must follow all of the [Restore Illinois Phase 4 Youth Sports Guidelines](#).
- Players and spectators should leave the field immediately following the conclusion of the match and proper cool down.

- Game times should be spread out with a recommended minimal 60 minutes between matches at a field to allow teams to properly clear before players arrive for next match. Players for any preceding matches should wait in car until all players have left the field and area has been sanitized.

Introduction of Principles and Responsibilities

Club Responsibilities:

- Collect from each participant the signed “IYSA Communicable Disease Release of Liability and Assumption of Risk Agreement” PRIOR to every athlete’s participation. Keep the executed Agreement for a minimum of seven (7) years and make it available to the IYSA upon request.
- Complete and submit to IYSA prior to the start of activities the “IYSA Organization Communicable Disease Agreement”.
- Do not mandate participation - be sensitive and accommodating to parents who may be uncomfortable about returning to activity at this time.
- Anyone who has an underlying health condition should consult with his/her doctor before participating in the activity.
- Create and distribute updated Phase 4 protocols to members prior to the start of activities.
- Communicate insurance information, protocol and responsibilities to the parents prior to initial participation. IYSA does not provide any insurance coverage for Covid-19 related claims.
- Have an effective communication plan in place.
- Identify strategies for working with public health officials to notify adult leaders, youth and their families if the organization becomes aware of a participant or adult leader has developed COVID-19 and may have been infectious to others while at a youth activity.
- Maintain participant confidentiality regarding health status.
- Be sensitive and accommodating to parents who may be uncomfortable with returning to play at this time.
- Have an action plan in place, in case of notification of a positive test result.
- Anyone who tests positive for Covid-19 must quarantine for at least 14 days and not show any signs or symptoms of Covid-19, have no fever for at least 72 hours without fever-reducing medication or have 2 negative COVID-19 tests in a row with testing being done at least 24 hours apart and submit to the Organization prior to returning to activity a signed written clearance from a medical doctor showing that the person has been cleared to participate.
- 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 for proper disinfection.
- Provide adequate field space for social distancing.
- Provide hand sanitizing stations and waste receptacles at fields for individual participant use.
- Develop a relationship and a dialogue with local health officials.

- If allowing spectators to watch, create an adequate number of “Family areas”. These should be marked boxes for spectators from each family that should be at least 6 feet apart from one another and at least 6 feet off of the sideline

Coach Responsibilities:

- Ensure the health and safety of the participants.
- Masks are permitted but not required to be worn by the players during training.
- Inquire how the athletes are feeling. Send home anyone you believe acts or looks ill.
- Follow all state and local health protocols and guidelines.
- Ensure all athletes have their own individual equipment (ball, water, bag etc.)
- Ensure coach is the only person to handle equipment (e.g. cones, disk etc.); do not enlist parental or attendee assistance.
- Training should be conducted outdoors when possible and compliant with social distancing per state or local health guidelines.
- Coaches are responsible for keeping players safe.
- Coaches should maintain at least 6 feet social distance requirements from players based on state and local health requirements.
- Do not use scrimmage vest or pinnies – Plan ahead for players to wear specific colors or players should be given their own pinnies for the duration of the season
- Have fun, stay positive – players and parents are looking to you for leadership.

Parent Responsibilities:

- Ensure your child is healthy and check your child’s temperature before activities with others.
- Consider not carpooling or very limited carpooling.
- Stay in car or adhere to minimum 6 feet social distance requirement.
- Follow the state orders for wearing a mask.
- Ensure child’s clothing and any club issues pinnies are washed after every training.
- Ensure all equipment (cleats, ball, shin guards etc.) are sanitized before and after every training.
- Notify your club immediately if your child becomes ill for any reason.
- Do not assist your coach with equipment before or after training.
- Be sure your child has necessary sanitizing products with them at every training.
- If the club has set-up a “family area” for you to watch, stay within your designated area.
- When on the sidelines as a spectator, wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth.

Players Responsibilities:

- Take your temperature daily and especially before activities with others.
- Wash hands thoroughly before and after training.
- Bring and use hand sanitizer with you at every training.
- Masks are permitted but not required to be worn by the players during training.
- Do not touch or share anyone else’s equipment, water, food or bags.
- Practice social distancing, place bags and equipment at least 6 feet apart.
- Wash and sanitize all equipment before and after every training.
- No group celebrations, high-5s, hugs, handshakes, fist-bumps, etc.

- Follow all CDC and IDPH guidelines as well those of your local health authorities.

Insurance:

To be covered by Illinois Youth Soccer (IYSA) insurance during Illinois Restore Phase 4, the IYSA Member club/league must abide by the following requirements:

1. The practice/training/game must be a formal organized activity by an IYSA Member club/league for IYSA Member League players only.
2. The participants including players and coaches must be registered with and have a current, valid pass from the IYSA Member League and must be on file with the IYSA.
3. The Member club/league must have a signed “IYSA Communicable Disease Release of Liability and Assumption of Risk Agreement” on file for each participant including but not limited to the players, coaches, staff, volunteers prior to the start of the first practice/training/game.
4. The IYSA does not provide any insurance coverage for Covid-19 related claims.
5. The practice/training/game must abide by all the requirements listed in the IYSA Return to Activity Protocol.
6. The IYSA Member club/league must complete and submit to the IYSA prior to its first practice/training/game the “IYSA Organization Communicable Disease Agreement”.
7. Failure to follow the state and local government public health orders, Centers for Disease Control guidelines and IYSA protocol involving COVID-19 or any other communicable disease may void medical and liability coverage for your organization under the IYSA insurance placements.

Resources:

[Restore Illinois Phase 4 Youth Sports Guidelines](#)

[Restore Illinois](#)

[Centers for Disease Control](#)

IYSA Return to Play 6-22-2020