

FC 814

Amended Return to Play Protocol

SUBMITTED TO/ACCEPTED BY PA WEST SOCCER JUNE 6, 2020

AMENDED AND ACCEPTED BY FC 814 BOARD SEPTEMBER 10, 2020

Introduction:

FC 814 is committed to protecting the health and safety of our players. This document will provide our coaches, players, and parents and soccer families guidance to help us all return to the game in a safe, thoughtful, and responsible manner.

Overview:

This document provides mandatory return to play guidelines that the club, coaches, players, and parents must follow. These guidelines incorporate recommendations and precautions from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), US Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC), US Youth Soccer, US Soccer, and PA West. These guidelines are only applicable when our area has been designated "Green" by the Commonwealth of PA. The club, coaches, players, and parents must also follow specific guidelines from state and local health departments in addition to the precautions provided in this document.

To safely return to play, the club will:

- Provide an adequate supply of hand sanitizer to teams
- Provide handwashing facilities when possible
- Provide hand sanitizer on every bench
- Regularly clean and sanitize restrooms
- Enforce strict adherence to start and finish times with prompt arrival and departure
- Mandate parents remain in cars during practice and recommend parents and players avoid carpooling when possible.
- Organize stations for each player at or around the bench area that are at least 6 feet apart where players can keep their belongings. Players will return to their stations during breaks
- Mandate no sharing of water bottles or post-game/practice snacks
- Schedule and stagger start times when multiple teams are using the same training site on the same night and stagger start times for game days **to ensure that the players and relatives from the departing/arriving teams do not mingle.**
- **Prohibit early arrival and warm up in areas outside of the playing field prior to games.**
- Clean the technical area with a disinfecting cleaner prior to the next team arriving
- Provide "Participation Waiver" to all coaches and parents/players. The parents/players will sign this notice and coaches will maintain the notice on file
- Communicate the "Return to Play Protocol" document to all coaches, parents, and players. All return to play activities are considered voluntary and the club will accommodate any player who is uncomfortable with the club's return to play start date
- Direct the coaches, players, and parents to report if they have been in contact with a person with COVID-19 or if they have had a cough, fever, or loss of taste or smell before any and all activities including practices and tryout sessions.
- ~~• Request coaches, parents, and officials wear self-supplied protective gear (masks) when they are unable to socially distance six feet from players, officials, parents, or coaches.~~
- **Designate home and away sides at each game field. The technical area shall be placed straddling midfield on each respective side, and the fans will be placed at minimum social-**

distance spots along each sideline between the technical area and sideline. A minimum 6' distance will be placed between the sideline and spectators.

- Mandate match-day face coverings: EVERYONE AT THE EVENT IS REQUIRED to wear a face covering ("masks" moving forward in this document) upon arrival. The club will mandate that coaches and spectators are to wear face coverings at all times from arrival to departure. Players must wear masks during arrival, departure, and when sitting on the sidelines; masks are not required of players during warmups and when they are on the field for play. Referees and assistant referees must wear masks during arrival and departure, and when in common areas where social distancing is not possible. However, they are not required to wear masks during actual game play.
- Instruct all referees to check their temperature prior to leaving for their first scheduled game each day.
- Ensure that all referees communicate with players and/or coaches while remaining at least 6 feet away.
- Prohibit physical contact such as handshakes, "high fives", etc.
- Ban the pre-game coin toss; the away team is deemed to have won the toss.
- Prohibit spitting on the event premise.
- Provide and enforce the club's "COVID-19 Positive Response" approach to notify applicable individuals if the club becomes aware of a player or a coach developing COVID-19 and therefore may be infectious to others while at a club activity while maintaining strict confidentiality regarding the health status of individuals
- Provide an action plan in case of notification of a positive COVID-19 test result.
- Train and educate all coaches on protocols and requirements, including state and local regulations, CDC recommendations and other necessary safety information
- Be prepared to shut down and stop operations
- Be prepared to cancel outdoor activities and/or camps for proper disinfection
- Follow all state and local health guidelines and protocols.
- Limit teams to one practice per week during Phases One and Two, below.
- In case of a positive COVID-19 test, inform Child Protection Advocate/Assistant Registrar Jen Taylor, who will initiate action plan. Email pandjtaylor4@gmail.com or call 814-932-9801.

To safely return to play, the responsibilities of coaches will include:

- Avoid attending any event if they have symptoms of COVID-19
- Wash with soap and water or use hand sanitizer during breaks and after training and games
- Adhere to start and finish times with prompt arrival and departure
- Follow and enforce social distancing guidelines including no team huddles, handshakes, high-fives, fist bumps, hugs, etc. at all times including pre-game, half-time, and post-game
- Observe the club organized stations for each player at or around the bench area that are at least 6 feet apart where players can keep their belongings. Players will return to their stations during breaks.
- Remain in their vehicles until the designated time to enter the facility.
- Avoid early arrival and warm up in areas outside of the playing field prior to their designated time.
- Limit use of tents and tarps such that they are only used in technical areas to shield players from sun and heat – bring enough tents so that all players may be in the shade while maintaining social distancing.

- Coaches are responsible for ensuring that the spectators maintain proper social distancing and do not encroach on the space of others, and that spectators keep their masks on at all times. Failure to enforce this can result in the referee terminating the match for lack of a safe playing environment.
- Maintain possession of player passes during the game. Documents should not be exchanged with the referees. Provide any documentation or information if requested by the referees.
- Follow and enforce no post-game handshake or team huddles. Instruct players to promptly gather up their personal gear and join their parents in their cars promptly after trainings and games
- Enforce no sharing of water bottles or post-game/practice snacks mandate
- Distribute and collect "Participation Waiver" to all players/parents and maintain the notice on file
- Disinfect soccer balls and equipment prior to and after each game.
- Follow all state and local health guidelines and protocols.
- Suggest taking attendance at practices and games to maintain a base list for potential contact tracing.

To safely return to play, the responsibilities of the players will include:

- Avoid attending any event if they have symptoms of COVID-19
- Wash with soap and water or use hand sanitizer during breaks and after training and games
- Adhere to start and finish times with prompt arrival and departure
- Follow social distancing guidelines including no team huddles, handshakes, high-fives, fist bumps, hugs, etc. at all times including pre-game, half-time, and post-game
- Follow no post-game handshake or team huddles. Players should promptly gather up their personal gear and join their parents in their cars after trainings and games
- Avoid carpooling
- Remain in their vehicles until the designated time to enter the facility. Maintain social distancing when not playing. Stay in the specific areas marked in the sideline/technical area.
- Wear a mask at all times on match days unless warming up or playing on the field of play.
- Follow no sharing of water bottles or post-game/practice snacks mandate
- Sign and return "Participation Waiver" to coaches prior to first training session
- Follow all state and local health guidelines and protocols.

To safely return to play, the responsibilities of referees will include:

- Avoid attending any event if they have symptoms of COVID-19
- Referees and assistant referees must wear masks during arrival and departure, and when in common areas where social distancing is not possible. However, they are not required to wear masks during actual game play.
- Instruct all referees to check their temperature prior to leaving for their first scheduled game each day.
- Pre-game meeting with the teams will be to check equipment only.
- Ensure that all referees communicate with players and/or coaches while remaining at least 6 feet away.
- Ban the pre-game coin toss; the away team is deemed to have won the toss.

To safely return to play, the responsibilities of parents and spectators will include:

- **Avoid attending any event if they have symptoms of COVID-19.**
- Instruct players to wash with soap and water or use hand sanitizer during breaks and after training and games
- Adhere to start and finish times with prompt arrival and departure
- **Follow all game-day protocols as outlined in the “club” section, particularly that they will wear masks when in the facility including parking lots, common areas, and sidelines.**
- **Spectators will be located on the same side of the field as the team they support to reduce interaction between teams and supporters.**
- **Maintain social distancing: do not congregate in groups of 5+ (families only) and a minimum of 6’ apart from each other.**
- **Follow all directional signs at every facility to ensure proper social distancing.**
- **Leave the facility immediately and go home or seek a healthcare facility if feeling sick.**
- **Do not bring tents or tarps. They are permitted in the technical area for players and coaches only.**
- Remain in their cars during training and avoid car pooling
- **Launder uniforms upon return home from games**
- No sharing of water bottles or post-game/practice snacks
- Sign and return “Participation Waiver” to coaches prior to first training session
- Follow all state and local health guidelines and protocols.

COVID-19 Positive Response Approach

In the event that the club is notified of a coach or player COVID-19 confirmed case, the club will:

- Remind the exposed or ill player/parent or coach of the CDC self-isolation instructions and the need to contact their physician
- Contact the county health department of the exposure or illness and confirm necessary next steps
- Follow county health department direction on notification of all individuals with possible exposure
- Redouble disinfecting measures at all affected facilities and equipment
- Institute adjustments to training schedules
- Respect individual's confidentiality.

Return to Play – Phased Approach

FC 814 will also follow PA West's recommended "Phased Approach" to return to play. This includes for lowering the risk of exposure to COVID-19 by maintaining physical distance from others. Soccer, like all contact sports, requires players to be in close physical proximity during some aspects of training and during play.

In conjunction with steps outlined in the club's "Return to Play" Protocol, we are also implementing PA West's phased approach to return to play. This approach involves a gradual movement from individual activities to full team activities involving travel beyond our own community.

Pre-Phase – (Before Green Phase): Individual and virtual training. This phase includes individual fitness and technical work for players at home and with family members or with teammates via virtual solutions.

Phase One (1st 14 days of Green Phase): Intra-club activity including training and small-sided in-house activities. This phase includes small-group training within teams and small-sided games within teams.

Phase Two (15 days of Green Phase): Intra-club activity including small sided games between teams within the club may be introduced in addition to training and small sided games within teams.

Phase Three: Inter-club and intra-club activity including training, small-sided in-house games and small-sided inter-club games within the same county.

Phase Four: Activity opens to include full size matches and travel beyond county limits.

Movement from each phase to the next is dependent on a team and club remaining COVID-19 free. Should a case of COVID-19 occur within a team or club then movement to the prior phase should be made.

As previously outlined in this “Return to Play” Protocol, the club will take all necessary steps to mitigate possible exposure. The club will monitor the safety levels of all activities for exposure risk with special attention paid to the following:

1. Unnecessary player closeness
2. Length of time of player closeness
3. Unnecessary touching of “shared” equipment
4. Players’ ability to understand physical distancing concepts
5. Players’ risk to contracting an infectious disease
6. Unnecessary visitors.

Also, the following personal safety standards should be followed at all times:

1. When suffering from any illness, stay at home
2. Wash hands with soap and water; when soap and water are not available use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
3. Avoid touching your face
4. Wear a mask in public, except when playing a game or training.
5. **Cover mouth when coughing or sneezing, recommended into the nape of the elbow.**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I/we, the undersigned, acknowledge that I/we have received, read, and thoroughly reviewed the contents of the FC 814 **Updated** Return to Play protocol on the preceding pages.

[PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

_____ As **players** and **parents/guardians** of players, we will execute the safety procedures as outlined under the respective Player and Parent sections. We will notify the designated FC 814 representative immediately in the event of one or more of us testing positive for COVID-19.

Player name(s) [PLEASE PRINT]:

Player signature (if over 18 years old)

Date

Player signature (if over 18 years old)

Date

Parent/Guardian signature, on behalf of self/any minor children

Date

Parent/Guardian signature, on behalf of self/any minor children

Date

_____ As a **coach** for FC 814, I will execute the safety procedures as outlined under the Coaches' section. I will notify the designated FC 814 representative immediately in the event of any member of my team testing positive for COVID-19. I further acknowledge that I will limit all team activities to those permitted in the current phase in which our club currently stands on the Phased Return to Play guidelines in this document.

Coach's signature

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I/we, the undersigned, acknowledge that I/we have received, read, and thoroughly reviewed the contents of the FC 814 Updated Return to Play protocol on the preceding pages.

[PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

_____ As a **referee** for FC 814, I will execute the safety procedures as outlined under the Referee's section. I will notify the designated FC 814 representative immediately in the event of that I positive for COVID-19.

Referee's signature

Date