



Alaska State Youth Soccer Association

RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOLS

UPDATED

2020





RETURN TO PLAY



Alaska Youth Soccer Association sanctioned youth soccer activities Return-To-Play operational guidelines are in place to mitigate the risk of spreading COVID-19. The FIVE phased approach will provide clear direction and understanding for coaches, players, and families to engage in within EACH DISTRICT including guidance from the State of Alaska and as recommended by the CDC. Sanctioned Affiliate Clubs approved for Return to Play may start programming when the appropriate Return-To-Play phase has been reached in their District.



Phase I

SHELTER IN PLACE – NO GROUP TRAINING



Phase II

RETURN TO ACTIVITY SMALL GROUP TRAININGS



Phase III

INTRODUCTION OF PRACTICES AND SCRIMMAGES



Phase IV

FULL TEAM COMPETITION “NEW NORMAL”



Phase V

NO RESTRICTIONS

Alaska Youth Soccer Affiliate Districts

Anchorage	Kenai Peninsula	Southeast
Interior	Mat-Su	

PLAYERS

- **Players to use own soccer ball, also to set apart bag/ equipment from others**
- **Arrive to and leave field fully dressed (uniform, shoes, guards, etc.)**
- **Limit carpooling to only members of the same family. Parents stay in car/ parking lot while adherence to social distancing.**
- **Hand sanitizer to use before, during and after training; face mask if desired**
- **Players gear and equipment to be washed/ sanitized before/ after training**
- **Wearing a mask to/from the field and when not physically active during the trainings/ games**
- **Avoid sharing equipment, practice vest, snacks, and water bottles -energy drinks/supplements**
- **Players must bring their own water. No sharing. Communal water coolers should not be utilized**
- **Recommended social distancing maintained before/ after activities; always on the sidelines**
- **Players should not pick up field equipment, move goals, or handle training equipment**
- **Equipment and soccer balls should sanitize before and after trainings/ games**
- **Players and teams should “Avoid Group Celebrations” as part of activity and consider socially distanced celebrations**
- **If you are sick or feel sick, or an at-risk individual STAY HOME**

PARENTS/ SPECTATORS

- **Parents and guardians are not encouraged to attend. Should parents and guardians attend, they should carefully follow spectator policies and watch from areas specifically designated for viewing**
- **All participants attending should take temperature prior to and stay home if 100 degrees or higher; includes players**
- **If you are able, wearing the mask to/from the field and when not able to social distance**
- **Follow ALL Federal and Municipality Mandates, and Division of Public Health Guidelines for the appropriate number of people in one group, distancing six feet apart, and face covering guidelines**
- **You should not congregate together and must follow social distancing guidelines**
- **Create socially distance “FamilyZones” for same household members, leave at least six feet from for the next family’s zone**
- **Do not bring a team snack that is shared among the team members**
- **Parents and guardians should support the coach and organization in adhering to all safety recommendations.**



AFILIATE CLUBS/ LEAGUES/ COACHES



**US YOUTH
SOCCER**

- Clubs will ensure all players and coaches have access to hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes during club sessions
- Ask each player if they are experiencing signs/symptoms of COVID-19, if are, they must go home
- Ensure Health Status Agreements have been signed and collected for each athlete
- Comply with local and regional guidelines for the appropriate number of people in one group and the size of the group
- Minimize Social Distancing- entrances/ parking lots/ fields/ spectator areas
- Assign specific arrival times for all club-specific participants to limit congestion during warm up and accessing the field.
- Create “Team Pods” to limit CROSSOVER EXPOSURE (limit same coaches/ staff to only one team for trainings and games)
- Physical Contact only permitted within the rules of soccer during time of active play
- Continue to be vigilant in cleaning personal equipment and apparel before and after each training and game
- Implement protocol to track the number of participants and spectators in your space at a given time. Restrict additional people entering the facility or space after reaching “Maximum Capacity”
- Teams should leave the field as soon as reasonably possible after play
- Limited travel in-state to events that would require overnight stay
- Clubs, teams, and players will continue to follow COVID-19 prevention protocols and health and safety guidelines while maintaining vigilant regarding the promotion of safety of all those involved in the program
- Tactical discussions to be provided in digital format, if possible. Team meetings in closed environments should be avoided. Follow the AYSA Code of Conduct - Social Media Guidelines (Section 111)
- Clubs and Leagues should communicate their updated health & safety guidelines to all member participants

REFEREES

- Masks required during pregame check and when leaving the field for Referees, AR’s and optional to wear during a match
- 4th official required to wear mask during a match
- Only use own equipment (flags, etc.); if must share yours, sanitize before/after use by another
- Use sanitizer before/after each game, have a supply of sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, latex gloves and tissues, face mask if desired
- Should allow when possible to remain Ten (10) feet for social distancing prior, during and after the game
- No pre-game coin toss; Home team chooses direction and No pre or post game handshakes
- Role is not to enforce the protocols; role is to note and report instances of non-compliance to Alaska Youth Soccer

Effective Date 8/28/2020

Anchorage District

Modified Version II

Phase III

INTRODUCTION OF CONTROLLED PRACTICES AND SCRIMMAGES

Modified Version II- Updates



Alaska Youth Soccer Association

Review the AYSA Return-To-Play Phases Overview.



Trainings should comply with local and regional guidelines for the appropriate number of people in one group and the size of the group.

All participants (coaches, players, administrators) are to wear new or clean PPE upon arrival, departure and when not physically active during activities.

No contact e.g. hugs, high-fives and handshakes.

Adhere to all Training Session Management Guidelines.



Day camps allowed within guidelines.

No travel to activities outside of your district or that would require overnight lodging.

Avoid sharing equipment, snacks, and water bottles.



Field players should not handle soccer balls with their hands unless wearing gloves.

Players should not pick up field equipment, move goals, or handle training equipment.

Upon arrival coaches ask athletes if they are experiencing signs/symptoms of COVID-19.



Team meetings and tactical discussions to be provided in digital format, if possible. Follow AYSA Code of Conduct-Social Media Guidelines.

*** Clubs, teams, and players will continue to follow COVID-19 prevention protocols and health and safety guidelines while maintaining vigilant regarding the promotion of safety of all those involved in the program.**

CLUB TRAINING SESSION MANAGEMENT

- Team training allowed with increased activities and exposure risks
- Trainings should maintain the same intra club groupings/ teams for activities to limit unnecessary exposure. limit mixing separate teams or age groups.
- Controlled scrimmages intra-squad within the club is allowed (inter-squad outside the club is not allowed)
- Small-sided games and set-play activities may be slowly and carefully incorporated to increase intensity and sharpen game-play skills. Excepting these select training activities, social distancing should be observed, and participants should be vigilant about following the general hygiene code of conduct to promote the safety of all involved in the activity.
- Social distancing should be maintained, with limited exceptions as part of training activities.
- Field set-up should aim to use minimal equipment to limit exposure and transmission of COVID19.

Effective Date 5/29/2020

Kenai Peninsula, Southeast, Interior,
Mat-Su Districts



Phase IV

FULL TEAM COMPETITION

“NEW NORMAL”

Restrictions/ Recommendations

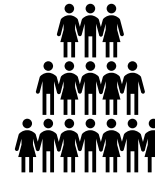
PARENTS/ PLAYERS

- Players practice social distancing set apart bag/ equipment from others
- Limit carpooling to only members of the same family. Parents stay in car.
- Hand sanitizer to use before, during and after training; face mask if desired
- Players gear and equipment to be washed/sanitized before/after training
- If you are sick or feel sick, or an at-risk individual STAY HOME

AFFILIATE CLUBS/ LEAGUES/ COACHES

- **Sanitizing options onsite.** including; hand sanitizer and disinfectant
- **Minimize Social Distancing-** entrances/parking lots/fields/spectator areas
- **Physical Contact** only permitted within the rules of soccer during time of active play (Teams not to play more than one league game per day)
- Teams should leave the field as soon as reasonably possible after play.
- **Limited travel in-state** to events that would require overnight stay.
- **Follow Return to Play (RTP) Protocols for Sanctioned Events.**

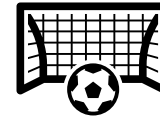
Alaska Youth Soccer Association



Recommended social distancing maintained before/ after activities; always on the sidelines.

Events should comply with local and regional guidelines for the appropriate number of people in one group and the size of the group.

Limited e.g. hugs, high-fives and handshakes.



Full team training and competition allowed while continuing all COVID-19 prevention and response protocols in place and followed.

Participation in games and tournaments allowed within AYSA sanctioning and (RTP) Protocols for Sanctioned Events.



Avoid sharing equipment, practice vest, snacks, and water bottles.

Players should not pick up field equipment, move goals, or handle training equipment.



Upon arrival coaches ask athletes if they are experiencing signs/symptoms of COVID-19.

Team meetings and tactical discussions to be provided in digital format, if possible. Follow AYSA Code of Conduct-Social Media Guidelines.

* Clubs, teams, and players will continue to follow COVID-19 prevention protocols and health and safety guidelines while maintaining vigilant regarding the promotion of safety of all those involved in the program.

ALASKA YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION

COVID-19 REPORTING PROCEDURES

For COVID-19 reporting and tracing purposes, all teams including but not limited to players, coaches, managers, trainers, and team personnel must remain diligent. Each club must follow AYSA COVID-19 Protocols and reporting process that conform to the State of Alaska DHSS and CDC guidelines.

The procedures are in accordance with the current COVID-19 Protocols to take place for a positive test result or exposure to someone who tested positive within the club program. A priority will be given to ensure that the COVID-19 positive person remains confidential according to federal/state guidelines. Clubs will ensure reporting information shared within their membership is accurate not rumor in the effort to eliminate fear or confusion as each situation (s) arises.

The appropriate guidelines are to take place when a **Club Administrator and/ or Club President** has been notified by a parent or guardian of a possible or confirmed positive for COVID-19. The chain of command outlined below ensures all federal and state guidelines along with maintaining the confidentiality of the individual (s). The club will designate **“One Point Of Contact”** to work directly with the family, State of Alaska DHSS, and Alaska Youth Soccer.

Club COVID-19 Protocols

- 1) Club point of contact will be immediately made aware of the situation from parent, guardian, or coaching staff.
- 2) Club point of contact will communicate with the **Alaska Youth Soccer Office** directly. The point of contact will submit the report within **a 24-hour period** of awareness of the possible or confirmed positive for COVID-19.
- 3) Club point of contact will communicate with club board; without using individual name (s).
- 4) Club point of contact will email their team (s) with next steps/ clear direction excluding using individual name (s).
- 5) AYSA will communicate directly with the Club point of contact, the individual (s) family, DHSS, league administrator, and the State Referee Association.
*NOTE: The club point of contact and the club staff **will not duplicate communication** with the league, referee assigner, or other clubs and teams.
- 6) AYSA will **directly follow up** with the club and leagues regarding suspension of team activities including league games until DHSS is able to give **clear direction** regarding the next course of action, including additional contact tracing notifications, suspension of team activities, practices and/ or games. AYSA will continue to be updated on notifications to ensure the guidelines are followed by all parties.
- 7) All parties directly involved will be informed of the pertinent information in adherence with confidentiality laws as needed to protect our membership. If the contact tracing investigation shows that past club activities including league games are not at risk, those parties will not be contacted with additional information or public notices.
- 8) A copy of the **Covid-19 Health Screening Result Certificate** along with confirmation that **DHSS Finalized the Notification Procedure** for the current case must be sent to the registered Club point of contact and the Alaska Youth Soccer Office **prior to the individual approval for return to club activity.**



Alaska Youth Soccer remains steadfast in our commitment to the safety of our players, coaches, referees, families, and communities. It is imperative that everyone understands their role and demonstrate a commitment adhering to the AYSA Return-to-Play Protocols which have been created based on federal, state, and local directives and guidance with the intent of providing a safe environment to get back on the field. For the benefit of all AYSA clubs, leagues and players, we ask you strictly adhere to the regulations within your local municipality. Alaska Youth Soccer reserves the right to amend its decisions on sanctioned activities and timelines to best adapt to and reflect all new federal, state, and local directives and guidelines.

Reverting to Earlier Phases

Regardless of which phase you are in you should be prepared to step back and revert to an earlier phase if any of the following occur. Always follow local public health official guidelines.

- Cluster of infections occur
- Inability to maintain COVID-19 prevention and response protocols
- Inability to track and/or isolate players or staff
- External factor exposes a COVID-19 risk to your team or club or league
- Changes to local public health official guidelines regarding group gatherings
- Alaska Youth Soccer places the affiliate as not a “Member in Good Standing”



**Alaska Youth Soccer
Return to Play Protocols**



Club/ League Guidelines

Continue to Follow Protocols- Updated requirements for safe participation in programs, publish protocols on website, social media and communication platforms with players, parents, coaches and staff.

- Have teams designate a “Field Marshal” for games, to ensure that social distancing behaviors occur during games.
- Establish a COVID-19 Safety Officer who will ensure that guidelines are communicated club-wide to coaching staff, parents, and players regularly.

Maintain Protocols- Establish a schedule and protocol for disinfection and cleaning of equipment (before, during, and after training). Protocol should ensure appropriate infection prevention supplies present in multiple targeted areas.

- Continue to train and educate staff and volunteers concurrent protocols and requirements, including state and local regulations, CDC recommendations and other necessary information.
- Provide masks for coaches/ volunteers who are in contact with players/ parents.
- Coaches should be the only person to handle equipment.
- Porta Potty Rentals must include sinks and/or you provide sanitation stations.
- Develop plans for temporary closure of programs due to changing environment.

Establish Training Protocols- Group training sessions should take place outside only in an area where social distancing can be maintained.

- Planned transition of time between trainings/ games should be followed.
- Continued social distancing practices maintained before and after trainings, and always on the sidelines.

Acknowledge and Agree to Guidelines- Ensure adult, youth and their families are aware and agree that they **MAY NOT** attend sanctioned program activity if either they or a household member has had onset of illness with symptoms compatible with suspected or lab-confirmed COVID-19 in the prior 14 days or are within 72 hours of exhibiting significant symptoms or a fever and/ or recovering from a case of COVID-19, are less than 14 days from onset or less than 72 hours since the end of significant symptoms or fever.

- Health Status Agreement (Release of Liability and Assumption of Risk Agreement) signed by the Parent/ Guardian.
- Coaches should continue to ask athletes prior to the start of activity if they are experiencing any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 they should be sent home and instructed to contact their healthcare provider as soon as possible.
- Symptoms of COVID-19 can include fever or feverishness, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills or shaking chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, and new loss of taste or smell.
- Athletes should live in training location/ community for 14 days prior to beginning group training.
- Establish a plan for all athletes/ staff/ volunteers who maybe symptomatic, test positive or ill; follow the Alaska Youth Soccer COVID-19 REPORTING PROCEDURES. Maintain confidentiality of the individual.
- Clubs, teams, and players will continue to follow COVID-19 prevention protocols and health and safety guidelines while maintaining vigilant regarding the promotion of safety of all those involved in the program.



Alaska Youth Soccer Return to Play Protocols





While trainings and the addition of competitions may continue to make things look more like a normal soccer season, we need to continue to remain steadfast in our adaptability in consideration of how COVID-19 is transmitted, it is vitally important that everyone involved in the process of return-to-play does so with extreme diligence and attention to the widely-agreed-upon standards and guidelines.. It is important to remain vigilant as we prepare for every eventuality. By prioritizing the safety of our statewide soccer programs to ensure we can provide a safe playing environment for our athletes, coaches, referees, families, and communities.

Athletes and Coaching Staff General Hygiene

- 1. Avoid touching your eyes/mouth/nose as much as possible.**
- 2. Wash or sanitize your hands often and after close contacts.**
 - a. Use soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds.
 - b. When soap and water is not available, use hand sanitizer.
- 3. Cover your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze.**
 - a. Follow with washing or sanitizing your hands.
 - b. Dispose of tissues in a sealed trash can.
- 4. Avoid spitting and coughing.**
 - a. Goalkeepers should not spit into their gloves.
- 5. Continue social distance measures between coaching staff and athletes during trainings and games.**



General Hygiene Return to Play Protocols





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Hydration and Heat Considerations

1. Athletes should clearly label their water bottles with their own name.

- a. Single-use bottles should be discarded of immediately onsite. Athletes should not touch anyone else's bottle.
- b. It is recommended that each athletes brings at least two drink bottles to training (e.g. 2 x 32oz bottles).

2. Ensure appropriate hydration policies are in place with all participants having unlimited access to water.

- a. Educate staff on the signs and symptoms of heat-related illness and early management.

3. **During Training Sessions-** Fluid breaks are recommended at least once every 15 minutes but will largely be dictated by the duration and intensity of the session. Breaks should be planned and communicated to the athletes.

4. **Water Breaks-** Trainings and games should adhere to social distancing guidelines. When there is a water break, athletes should make their way to their personal station, and drink only from their own bottle. Coaches should move safely 10 feet away from other participants.

5. **Heat-Related Illnesses-** Heat exhaustion and exertional heat stroke (EHS), can be serious and potentially life-threatening conditions which can be brought on or intensified by physical activity.

- a. Recognizing the signs/ symptoms as early as possible allows for treatment and rapid recovery with hydration and onsite immediate cooling down the individual.
- b. Follow heat acclimatization guidelines during practices and conditioning. Acclimatization is the body's natural adaptation to exercising in the heat. Avoid the hottest part of the day for training sessions (11am-4pm) and matches when possible.



Hydration and Heat Considerations Return to Play Protocols



07/14/2020



While trainings and the addition of competitions may continue to make things look more like a normal soccer season, we need to continue to remain steadfast in our adaptability in consideration of how COVID-19 is transmitted, it is vitally important that everyone involved in the process of return-to-play does so with extreme diligence and attention to the widely-agreed-upon standards and guidelines.. It is important to remain vigilant as we prepare for every eventuality. By prioritizing the safety of our statewide soccer programs to ensure we can provide a safe playing environment for our athletes, coaches, referees, families, and communities.

Nutrition Strategies to Support Activities & Immune Function

1. Consume enough calories to meet training and daily life needs.

- a. Show up for training and matches adequately fueled.
- b. If an Athlete brings a snack, he or she are not recommended to share.
 - i. If you must share, any food should be packaged individually.
 - ii. **Protein:** maintain adequate intake throughout the day (main meals and snacks).
 - iii. **Carbohydrate:** adjust intake to training duration/intensity and prevent low carbohydrate situations.

2. **After Strenuous Exercise-** Athletes enter a brief period in which they experience weakened immune resistance and may be more susceptible to viral and bacterial infections.

3. **Vitamin D-** One of the most important markers in immune health and Vitamin C has been found to support immune health during intense training periods. Daily consumption of food sources that are high in Vitamin C / D are encouraged to support immune health.

- a. Foods high in **Vitamin C** include kiwi fruit, bell peppers, strawberries, oranges, broccoli, tomatoes, kale.
- b. Foods high in **Vitamin D** include salmon, mackerel, eggs, mushrooms, cow's milk, yoghurt, fortified cereals and orange juice.



Nutrition Strategies Return to Play Protocols





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Athletes Mental Wellness

1. **During this Unprecedented Time-** Our lives have been disrupted. Training, playing and even watching sports is different in our current landscape. It is important to be aware of the impact this can have on our health so we can help ourselves. Self-care and knowledge of resources that are available are helpful in times of crisis. You may be experiencing a range of emotions, including:

- a. Anxiety or Stress
- b. Sadness or Loneliness
- c. Worry or Fear
- d. Or other uncomfortable emotions

2. **Social Distancing-** Can feel like you must be socially isolated, but it's important to remember that this is not the case.

- a. You can still safely talk and interact with teammates and colleagues while following simple safety guidelines:
 - i. Staying 6ft apart where possible
 - ii. Maintaining good hygiene and/ also stay home when you are sick
 - iii. Avoid physical contact (ex: use Air-high fives as opposed to regular contact high fives)



Mental Wellness

Return to Play Protocols





While trainings and the addition of competitions may continue to make things look more like a normal soccer season, we need to continue to remain steadfast in our adaptability in consideration of how COVID-19 is transmitted, it is vitally important that everyone involved in the process of return-to-play does so with extreme diligence and attention to the widely-agreed-upon standards and guidelines.. It is important to remain vigilant as we prepare for every eventuality. By prioritizing the safety of our statewide soccer programs to ensure we can provide a safe playing environment for our athletes, coaches, referees, families, and communities.

Gym and Strength Workouts

The use of gyms and confined indoor training spaces should be limited or should be excluded at this time.

- a. Strength and conditioning work that may normally be carried out in a gym could be adapted and conducted on the outside field.
- b. To limit equipment use, body weight/ plyometric exercises are encouraged. Minimal equipment to be used whenever possible.

2. Equipment should be sanitized after every use.

- a. A 10 to 15-minute break between indoor gym work-out sessions is recommended to allow time for cleaning equipment/ room.

If indoor gym workouts must take place, all participants should follow social distancing guidelines.

- a. Participants should wear PPE throughout indoor training, except in moments of significant exertion whereby a face covering might increase respiratory challenges, obscure vision or increase other injury risk.
- b. If utilizing a public facility, maintain social distancing with other patrons and disinfecting guidelines.

4. Evaluate the available space to determine maximum number of participants capable of utilizing facility at one time in advance.

- a. Maintain consistency of partners or members of small group during facility use including spotting.

5. Accessible hand sanitizer should be available in the gym for use.

**Gym and Strength Workouts
Return to Play Protocols**



Club Guidelines



TOPSOCCER
ALASKA
YOUTH SOCCER

BEST PRACTICES FOR TOPSOCCER

Players and Volunteers (including TOPSoccer Buddies)

- Greet players/parents at the beginning and administer screening questions about player/ household members illnesses.
- Make masks and gloves available to those who want to wear them.
- Every person should be required to clean his or her hands with readily accessible hand sanitizer.
- Utilize hand sanitizer prior to, during, and after participation.
- Use own water bottle, towel, and personal hygiene products.
- Pre-printed name tags via electronic registration are encouraged.

Equipment (Prior to each Session)

- Equipment that is touched during play should be disinfected with spray/ wipes.
- Only coach/ volunteers should touch equipment, if possible.
- All pennies (vests) should be washed prior to each session.

Exercises

- Emphasis should be place on exercises that allow players and buddies to practice skills with 10 feet of distance from each other, if possible.
- Exercises should avoid transitions that involve “physically tagging a teammate”; such as relay races or tag. Use alternative visual cues.

Small-Sided Games- Reduce the amount of time and amount of players.

Closing Rituals- No handshakes, high-5s or group celebrations. Consider alternatives that avoid contact – e.g. New Zealand Haka Dance, hand waves.

After the Session

- Have a wastebasket available for masks and gloves.
- Require everyone to use hand sanitizer before leaving sessions.

Alaska Youth Soccer Association Return to Play (RTP) Phase II, Club Protocols and COVID-19 Acknowledge Guidelines must be followed.



TOPSoccer

Return to Play Protocols



Referee Guidelines

Alaska Youth Soccer's highest priority is to ensure we provide a safe environment within our soccer programs and leagues. Alaska Youth Soccer has taken several precautions as we continue to implement guidelines for a safe environment for our participants, coaches, and referee officials. As we start the process of Return to Play (RTP) Protocols we will as a state association adhere to all Federal, State and Local guidelines and requirements. Given the changing pandemic environment, these guidelines may change at any time and referees will need to ensure that they are prepared to adjust as required to mitigate the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Note: U.S. Soccer programming that is suspended through June 30 does not by itself impact the applicability of U.S. Soccer's general liability policy. If the games are U.S. Soccer, Alaska Youth Soccer sanctioned and the referee is certified, then the general liability policy would apply. However, please note that the policy would not cover illness due to COVID-19. Please note that coverage is determined on a case-by case-basis by the insurer, and U.S. Soccer cannot guarantee coverage in any specific circumstance.



Referees Alaska Youth Soccer



BEST PRACTICES FOR REFEREES

- **Should be educated on protocols and requirements, including state and local regulations, CDC and US Soccer recommendations.**
- **Health Status Agreement signed by the Referee and Parent.**
- **Should evaluate if experiencing any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 if you are, notify the assignor immediately, and voluntarily remove yourself from all assignments. Contact a healthcare provider and do not accept assignments until properly cleared.**
- **Continued COVID-19 prevention and response protocols to be followed.**
- **Should use hand sanitizer before/ after each game, have a personal supply of sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, latex gloves and tissues, face mask if desired.**
- **Should wash/ sanitize (jersey/equipment) regularly; set bag apart from others**
- **Should allow when possible to remain Ten (10) feet for social distancing prior, during and after the game.**
- **Rosters should be paperless and provided by team manager electronically.**
- **Discouraged to blow the whistle, within Ten (10) feet of participants.**
- **Should discourage group celebrations, high 5's, hugs, and handshakes.**
- **Should leave the field as soon as reasonably possible after play.**

Return to Play (RTP) Protocols and Compliance for Sanctioned Leagues

LEAGUE

- 1) **Guidelines-** Follow the Municipality Division of Public Health Guidelines for the appropriate number of people in one group and the size of the group.
- 2) **Permits-** Have active facility permits to hold league games. Review **Emergency Operations** for facility locations.
- 3) **Certificates of Insurance (COI)-** Secure proper COI in place prior to starting any sanctioned league activity.
- 4) **Policies-** Ensure all AYSA policies, guidelines, and COVID-19 Return to Play Protocols are being followed.
- 5) **Transition-** Ensure time between the end of one game/ the beginning of the second game. Times should be staggered to minimize large group gathering.
- 6) **Game Rosters-** Establish rosters for teams will be paperless and be available to team managers electronically.

FACILITY

- 1) **Spectators-** Limit spectator attendance and establish guidelines; limiting attendance based on current recommendations from local and state officials.
- 2) **Face Covering-** All non-playing participants should wear “Face Covering” if they cannot socially distance six feet apart at trainings and games.
- 3) **Congregating-** Establish designated entry and exit for facility, parking lots, fields, drop off zones, spectator sidelines, and high traffic areas. Spectators should create “**FamilyZones**” for same household members to watch trainings/ games. Leave at least **six feet** for the next family’s zone

CLUB

- 1) **Guidelines-** Ensure teams are current on state/ city mandates, protocols including league and AYSA guidelines.
- 2) **Field Marshal-** Teams should designate a “Field Marshal” for each game, to ensure that social distancing behaviors occur during games.
- 3) **Sanitation-** Ensure all teams have supplies including hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes on hand for each game.
- 4) **Hydration-** Players must bring their own water. No sharing. Communal water coolers should not be utilized.
- 5) **Game Ball-** Teams will use disinfectant on the game ball between each game if the same ball is used.
- 6) **Warmups-** Minimal equipment to limit transmission of virus. Players should not pick up field equipment, move goals, or handle training equipment.
- 7) **Technical Area-** Social distance between coaching staff / athletes; ensuring each team has only 4 or less technical area staff on the sideline at any time.
- 8) **Athletic Trainers-** Team/ Club Trainers: Establish a protocol for safeguard measures between trainers and athletes.
- 9) **Health Status -** Ensure participants (adult, youth, and their families) are aware that they MAY NOT attend if either are ill or lab-confirmed COVID-19.

FIELD

- 1) **Sideline-** Establish designated and visual indicators for side-line space for teams and referees. Teams “**Should Not Use a Bench**” coaches will use appropriate spacing between coaching staff and athletes.
- 2) **Referees-** Establish social distance for teams from referees spacing in appropriate areas, including at check-in and along sidelines.
- 3) **Clear Area-** Team and coaches should leave the field as soon as reasonably possible after play.

Return to Play (RTP) Protocols and Compliance for Sanctioned Tournaments

TOURNAMENT

- 1) **Guidelines-** Follow the Municipality Division of Public Health Guidelines for the appropriate number of people in in hosting a large gathering event.
- 2) **Permits-** Have active facility permits to hold league tournament. Review **Emergency Operations** for facility locations.
- 3) **Certificates of Insurance (COI)-** Secure proper COI in place prior to starting any sanctioned league activity.
- 4) **Polices-** Ensure all AYSA policies, guidelines, and COVID-19 Return to Play Protocols are being followed.
- 5) **Transition-** Ensure time between the end of one game/ the beginning of the second game. Times should be staggered to minimize large group gathering.
- 6) **Team Check -in-** Establish opportunities to allow for social distancing.
- 7) **Game Rosters-** Establish rosters for teams will be paperless and be available to team managers electronically.
- 8) **Athletic Trainers-** Team/ Club Trainers: Establish protocol for safeguard measures between trainers and athletes.
- 9) **Game Officials-** Establish a designated area for referee headquarters, allow adequate space to set bags apart from others. Have snacks/meals boxed and/or bagged individually, no communal food platters. Have available only bottled water or juice, communal water coolers should not be utilized.
- 10) **Award Ceremony-** Establish protocol to create distance between spectators and teams; to take place on the field directly after championship game.

FACILITY

- 1) **Safety-** Establish protocols to create distance between spectators. For example, barriers or markings indicating where occupants should keep a six-foot distance between non-family members. Include one-way entrances, limited attendance, decreased/ eliminate vendors, nonessential visitors, and volunteers. Ensure sanitizing options onsite including hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, additional handwashing/sink options. Maintain regular cleaning, extra attention to high touch surfaces bleachers, staff, and referee headquarters. Encourage universal face covering/masks for non-athletes.
- 2) **Congregating-** Establish designated entry and exit for facility, parking lots, fields, drop off zones, spectator sidelines, and high traffic areas.
- 3) **Signage-** Post signage to remind all players, coaches, referees, and spectators to maintain social distancing. promote health and safety practices.
- 4) **Spectators-** Limit spectator attendance and establish guidelines; limiting attendance based on current recommendations from local and state officials.

CLUB

Same guidelines outlined in the Return to Play (RTP) Protocols and Compliance for Sanctioned Leagues.

FIELD

Same guidelines outlined in the Return to Play (RTP) Protocols and Compliance for Sanctioned Leagues.

NOTE: AYSA Sanctioning always adheres to Federal, State, Local and Public Health Authority recommendations, guidelines, and requirements.

Return to Play

At a bare minimum, the state association and its member organizations, need to adhere to their state/local guidelines on resumption of sporting activities. Follow their guidelines & directives closely and you will be operating in a reasonable and prudent manner from a risk management standpoint. The state association can decide to be more restrictive than their state/local mandates as respects to return to play, just not any less restrictive. Documentation will be very important. By documenting positive actions taken by the association/club, you will be able to demonstrate that reasonable and prudent steps were undertaken and completed to keep players, staff, and spectators as safe from infection as possible.

Health Status Agreement (Release of Liability and Assumption of Risk Agreement)

State associations should consider implementing a communicable disease waiver (release of liability) because it does document you advised the persons there is a risk of acquiring a communicable disease in a group sport setting. As part of your duty of care to persons, the state association has a duty to warn persons of potential hazards. Failure to warn of a hazard can be used against you in a civil suit.

Facemasks (Players)

Players should be allowed to wear a cloth, surgical, or similar face covering while playing soccer but do not mandate players wear one (leave it to the parent's discretion) unless your state mandates face coverings need to be worn while playing athletic activities.

- **Dan Pullen** | **K&K Insurance Group, Inc.**

[US Youth Soccer Return to Activity Notice
Version 1.0, 5/13/20](#)

[U.S. Soccer PLAY ON initiative](#)

[Soccer Recommendation Guide 05/27/20](#)

[Phase III Grassroots Recommendations Guide](#)

[Reopen Alaska Responsibly Plan](#)

[CDC Recreational Guidance](#)

[CSC Resources for Large Community Events](#)

[EPA list of COVID-19 Effective Disinfectants](#)

[Move United](#)

[Special Olympics](#)

[Special Olympics Infographic](#)

[Federation for Children with Special Needs](#)

[Autism; Wearing a Mask Social Story](#)

[CDC Mass Gatherings](#)

[CDC Parks and Recreational Facilities](#)

[CDC Considerations for Youth Sports](#)



Alaska Youth Soccer RESOURCES





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Member of the United States
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