

ORGANIZED SPORTS

Organized Sports, Group Physical Activities

Applies to sports leagues, associations, and other organized groups engaged in hosting, facilitating, organizing, or promoting organized sporting events and activities. These mandatory safety measures apply to indoor and outdoor organized sports activities differently, so please read carefully.

MANDATORY SAFETY MEASURES

GENERAL

- All aspects of the existing Emergency Orders currently in effect, including masks, physical distancing, and gathering sizes, must be adhered to except as noted below to allow for specific organized sports activities.
- Spectators are not allowed unless the total number of people present – including players, coaches, trainers, medical professionals, any other participants, and spectators – does not exceed the gathering limitations: fifteen (15) people inside or fifty (50) people outside.
- Maintaining practice groups in consistent pods of small sizes that do not mix athletes may help limit team-wide outbreaks of COVID-19 infection.

MASKS OR FACE COVERINGS REQUIRED AT ALL TIMES

- Masks or face coverings are required at all times for all athletes, players, coaches, and anyone else engaged in organized sports activities both indoors and outdoors.
 - All individuals shall wear a mask or face covering continuously when arriving to or departing from an athletic facility, court, rink, or field.
 - All individuals shall wear a mask or face covering continuously during any time spent at an athletic facility, court, rink, or field both during exercise and during non-exercise periods such as when being given instruction, providing coaching, or during breaks.
 - The mask or face covering requirement should be applied in a manner consistent with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act and other applicable laws, which may require making an accommodation to the mask requirement for individuals with physical or mental disabilities that impair their ability to wear a mask while participating in sports.
 - Exception: masks and face coverings should not be worn in water activities (e.g., swimming, diving).
 - Exception: masks and face coverings during high intensity outdoor organized sports activities are encouraged, but not required, if athletes generally can maintain ten (10) feet physical distancing at all times.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING REQUIRED

- Players, coaches, trainers, medical professionals, and any other participants must adhere to six feet (6 ft.) physical distancing protocols during indoor or outdoor organized sports activities that do not include exercise such as coaching sessions, meetings to cover logistics, or any other communication session.

ACTIVITIES: INDOORS

- Organized sports teams are allowed to compete against other teams indoors provided all participants follow the physical distancing requirements (6 ft.) when not on the field of play.
 - Indoor competition for ice-based sports that involve players from different teams in close proximity (e.g., hockey, curling, or speed skating) is allowed provided all participants complete *Pre-Competition COVID Testing*, as described below. All participants must maintain six foot (6 ft.) physical distancing when not on the ice, e.g., on the bench or sidelines.
 - Indoor competition for wrestling is allowed provided all participants complete *Pre-Competition COVID Testing*, as described below. Masks may be removed during active matches but must be worn at all other times. All participants must maintain six foot (6 ft.) physical distancing when not on the mat.
- Organized sports may host meets, competitions, or tournaments only with teams from within the Municipality of Anchorage. Teams located from outside the Municipality of Anchorage are not allowed.
 - Mitigation plans are required for all tournaments and/or venues that, at a minimum, allow for 30 minutes between competitions held on the same court, field, mat, or rink.
 - Organized sports teams from the Municipality of Anchorage that cannot play or practice in the Municipality should not travel outside the Municipality for practice or competition.
- Organized sports may conduct indoor practices, drills, and scrimmages against themselves (e.g., competitions against members of the same team) that allow players to be within ten feet (10 ft.) of each other.
- Indoor organized sports activities shall be staggered to allow all participants from one event to leave before participants for the next event arrive.
- Indoor organized sports activities such as practices or drills in shared spaces (for example at the Dome or Fox Hollow) shall maintain twenty (20) feet physical separation between groups/events with no mixing of participants.
 - Each event must be assigned sufficient space to allow for physical distancing at all times, both during exercise and while not engaged in active drills.
 - Spaces for each team should be visibly marked with cones or tape or similar markings.

ACTIVITIES: OUTDOORS

- Outdoor organized sports teams, including ice hockey, may conduct practices, drills, and scrimmages against themselves (i.e., competitions against members of the same team) that allows players to be within ten feet (10 ft.) of each other.

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- Outdoor organized sports may also conduct individual games against other teams from within the Municipality of Anchorage, provided both teams have COVID-19 mitigation plans and there are no spectators. Masks are required for all organized outdoor sports activities if ten (10) feet of distancing cannot generally be maintained between participants.
- Outdoor games, competitions, or tournaments that bring together teams from outside the Municipality of Anchorage but allow athletes to generally maintain ten feet of physical distancing while competing are allowed provided all participants complete Pre-Competition COVID Testing, as described below.
 - All participants must maintain six foot (6 ft.) physical distancing when not actively competing, e.g., on the sidelines.
 - Other outdoor sports that bring together teams from outside the municipality remain prohibited at this time.

PRE-COMPETITION COVID TESTING

- Unless exempted below, all participants in ice-based sports and wrestling (including athletes, coaches, referees, and any other participant) must obtain pre-competition testing. Participants need a negative test result to be cleared to attend competition.
 - Figure skating competitions do not require pre-competition testing because participants do not come into close proximity with participants from other teams.
- The testing requirement may be satisfied by taking a PCR test for COVID-19 within 72 hours prior to competition. Participants need to receive a negative test prior to competing. If a participant is participating in multiple games within a 48-hour period, a PCR test result within the proper window for the first game satisfies the testing requirement for the rest of the 48-hour period.
 - It is recommended that a PCR test for COVID-19 be taken approximately 48 hours prior to competition in order to best identify infectious cases while still allowing time to receive results.
 - If PCR test results have not come in by the day of competition, a same day negative antigen test result may be used instead.
- Alternatively, the testing requirement may be satisfied through routine twice-weekly antigen or PCR testing prior to competition. Antigen tests are less accurate than PCR tests, but increased testing frequency can substitute for the decrease in accuracy. To satisfy the “twice-weekly” requirement, tests must be taken on two non-consecutive days within each week, ideally separated by at least 72 hours. A minimum of two tests on this schedule are required prior to first competition.
 - As long as participants have obtained negative results from all routine testing over the preceding two weeks, participants are cleared for competition.
 - If a participant misses an antigen test, a PCR test within 72 hours prior to competition may substitute.
 - Positive antigen test results should be confirmed with PCR tests due to lower reliability of antigen tests. If a positive antigen test is followed by a negative PCR test and the participant has no symptoms or known close contacts, the participant is permitted to compete.

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- The testing requirement may alternatively be satisfied by routine once-weekly antigen IF the antigen testing is conducted not more than 24 hours prior to each competition and with a minimum of two weekly antigen tests required prior to first competition. If a participant is participating in multiple games within a 24-hour period, an antigen test result within the proper window for the first game satisfies the testing requirement for the rest of the 24-hour period.
- Participants can use a number of different testing locations, including the free drive-thru PCR testing locations throughout the Municipality of Anchorage.
- If a person has had a diagnosed case of COVID-19 within the last 90 days, they are exempt from pre-competition testing provided:
 - The athlete provides proof of a previously positive result of a molecular based test for SARS-CoV2 within 90 days of playing.
 - The athlete is currently asymptomatic.
 - The athlete has completed the isolation period as specified in [the CDC guidelines](#).
- Vaccinated athletes are not exempt from pre-competition testing.
 - Current science shows the vaccine protects against symptomatic disease but is inconclusive about preventing asymptomatic infection and spreading.
- While pre-competition COVID testing is only required for ice-based sports and wrestling, it is encouraged for other organized sports as well.

OPERATIONS

- Facilities and/or event organizers must maintain a log of everyone who is present.
 - This information may be maintained electronically.
 - Organizers are required to maintain these records for 30 days.
 - Log must contain first and last name, phone number, and email at a minimum.
 - The information in the log will not be shared unless needed for contact tracing.
- [Clean and disinfect](#) frequently touched surfaces including shared equipment, locker rooms, and restrooms. Use of shared equipment should be minimized.
 - Use products that meet [EPA disinfection criteria](#) and are appropriate for the surface.
 - When possible, athletic areas with poor ventilation or small spaces where physical distancing cannot be maintained should be avoided.
- Encourage athletes and players to change clothes prior to arrival and show up dressed for practice or drills.
- Facilities may allow access to indoor bathroom and locker facilities for the purposes of engaging in hand hygiene, changing, and utilizing the rest rooms.
 - Organized sports teams should stagger visits to the locker room or rest rooms to allow for physical distancing while indoors.
 - Shower use not allowed, except that swimmers must follow appropriate pre-swim shower protocols before entering the pool.
- Players, coaches, and officials should not share food or drink. Participants should be encouraged to bring their own water bottles. Consumption of food and drink inside should be minimized to avoid multiple participants being unmasked at the same time.

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- Organizers should ensure players, coaches, and officials have access to hand washing capability or hand sanitizer and should encourage frequent hand hygiene.
- Players and coaches should minimize equipment sharing, and clean and disinfect shared equipment between different people to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL EMPLOYEES AND STAFF

- Provide training for volunteers, coaches, and trainers on COVID-19 and the COVID-19 Mitigation Plan.
- Designate an individual to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. All players, coaches, volunteers, and trainers should know who this person is and how to contact them.
 - This individual will be responsible for maintaining a copy the COVID-19 Mitigation Plan and keeping all records of any pre-competition testing.
 - Pre-competition testing records must be maintained for 30 days.
 - Log must contain first and last name, phone number, and email at a minimum.
 - The information in the log will not be shared unless needed for contact tracing.
- Symptomatic or ill players, coaches, and officials may not participate in organized sports activities. Anyone experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 should get tested, isolate at home, and follow public health recommendations.
 - For young athletes, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends the following regarding return to sports:
 1. All patients who have been infected with COVID-19 or with exposure to COVID-19, regardless of symptoms, require a minimum 14-day resting period and must be completely asymptomatic for greater than 14 days before returning to exercise and/or competition. They also should be cleared for participation by their primary care physician.
 2. Any COVID-19-positive individual who has a history of or current cardiac symptoms or has any cardiac findings on examination is recommended to seek cardiac clearance by the primary care physician, who is encouraged to collaborate with a pediatric cardiologist as necessary prior to participation.
- Close contacts of individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 are required to quarantine for 14 days after their last contact and may not participate in sporting events (including games, practices, and competitions) during quarantine.

COVID MITIGATION PLAN REQUIRED

- Each team/club/institution must develop and maintain a COVID-19 Mitigation Plan that contains, at a minimum, the Operating Requirements in this document and other protocols to minimize close contact among players, coaches, and trainers; and to protect staff and the public.
 - The COVID-19 Mitigation Plan must be available to coaches and teams, and/or be kept on the premises.

IN THE EVENT OF OCCURRENCE

- Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 may not attend until cleared by public health according to CDC guidelines. No one allowed at organized sports activities with symptoms.
- Venues must not allow players or teams that are subject to quarantine to enter or remain at the venue.

QUESTIONS?

- Email us with questions at: COVID-19-business@anchorageak.gov