

Updated - Westchester County Department of Health
Recreational and Club Sports Guidance - Spring 2021
February 11, 2021

Following the New York State Department of Health “Master Guidance for Sports and Recreation” updated January 22, 2021 [NYS Master Guidance on Sports and Athletics](#), the Westchester County Department of Health has approved the resumption of higher risk recreational and club sports activities participating in competitions and tournaments in the county, effective February 1, 2021. In doing so, Westchester County acknowledges that these activities come with safety concerns and potential risks, and this document is intended to provide additional guidance and assistance in avoiding the risks and potential dangers for players, families, coaches and program staff.

The following guidance, as well as the included Code of Conduct, set the minimum standards that are required for Higher Risk Recreational and Club Sports to hold games and tournaments.

- Participation in sports is voluntary. Players and/or partial or entire programs may opt out of any or all sports as they choose; particularly if they believe the guidance from NYS, the region and/or the Westchester County Health Departments cannot be fully met.
- Parents/guardians, athletes, coaches and staff must be especially diligent in their awareness of social distancing requirements as practicable, potential safety concerns, and adverse health symptoms and COVID-19 protocols for everyone participating, and all those who attend athletic activities, if spectator participation is allowable.
- In order to ensure the health and safety of athletes, team members, staff and team family members, parents/guardians must be required to sign the Westchester County COVID-19 “Recreational Athlete Code of Conduct,” which acknowledges that they will properly social distance as practicable, wear masks as appropriate and required, and will comply with social gathering requirements, not just while participating in athletics, but in their everyday activities.
- In Addition to [NYS Master Guidance on Sports and Athletics](#) the following guidelines are to be adhered to, in a collective effort to reduce the potential for transmission of COVID-19, and to ensure these athletic activities are kept as safe and COVID-19 free as possible.
- **Any athlete who has had COVID-19 must have an in-person medical evaluation and clearance by a doctor prior to participation in recreational or club athletics.**

Guidelines:

1. Athletes and coaches must be offered, and adhere closely to a daily attestation regarding COVID-19 symptoms and potential exposure, including the exposure/symptom questionnaire and temperature check prior to any practice, game or tournament day. The symptom and temperature check must occur with all coaches, staff and players before each practice and/or athletic contest. Anyone who is sick, or has been exposed, or who is pending COVID-19 diagnostic test results (not part of routine surveillance) must be excluded from activities and contests.
2. Attendance logs for all practices and contests, including visiting team players and coaches and any spectators, **must** be kept. Such log, at a minimum, must include name, address, and phone number. This will allow proper contact tracing and notification if a COVID-19 exposure occurs.

3. Social distancing and reduced contact is important. Locker rooms can only be used with strict social distancing practices in place. Players must have dedicated water bottles. Players must refrain from unnecessary physical contact, sharing equipment and other routine behaviors that could potentially transmit the virus. This includes mask wearing when not actually participating in the game or sporting event.
4. Spectators are permitted for the home team only and must be kept to a maximum of two per athlete. Social distancing and mask protocols remain in place.
5. Participation in tournaments outside of the Section 1 scholastic catchment area is not recommended at this time.
6. **In the event of a positive exposure, Recreational and Club athletic programs are responsible for:**
 - A) Immediately providing notice of quarantine to all athletes, coaches and staff who participated in the event from their organization and notifying the administrative contact for any/all other teams/programs who participated and were exposed.
 - B) **Immediately -- same day -- reporting the known positive case, with a copy of the attendance log, in EXCEL spreadsheet format, to the Westchester County Department of Health, by email to: DOH-COVIDReporting@westchestergov.com**
 - C) Programs/Coaches must be aware and have contact information, including off-hours, for the school and/or school district's designated COVID-19 coordinator for athletes in their programs. They must immediately inform the school officials if there is an exposure.
7. Beyond the mandatory assessment protocols, recreational and club athletic programs may wish to develop their own protocols for COVID-19 testing. Currently, Westchester County is unable to provide testing services in this fashion.
8. Pursuant to the "Master Guidance" and the "New York Forward" reopening guidance, leagues must comply with the requirements of producing a "New York Forward Plan." The plan must be maintained and followed, and made available for review any time a question, concern or complaint arises in reference to a potential COVID-19 exposure.
9. **Historically, athletic league teams have traveled out-of-state for games and tournaments. Nothing in this guidance supersedes the various NYS travel guidance, and any and all team travel out of state must comply with the [NY FORWARD travel guidance](#). As per the "Master Guidance on Sports and Athletics," practice or play is prohibited outside of the region or contiguous counties/regions. Interstate travel for practice or play is strongly discouraged and, if undertaken, must strictly adhere to the requirements of the State's travel advisory.**
10. Recreational/Club athletic programs must have their athletes and parents read and sign the COVID-19 "Athletics Code of Conduct", or a similar document with the same guidance and requirements.

Please note that Westchester County is bound by the Executive Orders of Governor Cuomo, and all guidance and directives emanating therefrom. Therefore, it is possible that this guidance will change over time as we all work together to defeat COVID-19. **Further, higher risk sports in Westchester County may be suspended, in whole or in part, if public health concerns so require.**