

Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA)



Return to Play: Individual Sport Considerations

ORGANIZED 1946

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NATIONAL FEDERATION OF
STATE HIGH SCHOOL
ASSOCIATIONS



TELEPHONE: (410) 767-0376
FAX: (410) 333-3111

R. ANDREW WARNER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

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GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS: APPLY TO ALL SPORTS:

- All individuals shall adhere to the face covering requirement and operating requirements, including six feet social distancing between individuals and/or groups when possible, pursuant to the Order of the Governor No. 20-09-18-01 (as it may be amended from time to time) (the “Executive Order”).
 - Participants on the sideline are recommended to use face coverings at all times.
 - The Medical Advisory Committee (MAC) recommends any participants wearing a face mask cover during exercise should:
 - Be aware of the face mask will increase CO₂ retention;
 - Be aware of increased concerns of heat illness;
 - Be washed daily by the user;
 - Take additional water and rest breaks;
 - Find social distancing areas of six or more feet from other participants during recovery; and,
 - Designate a set area for intermittent removal and storage.
- Social distancing of at least 6 feet should be maintained at all times, where feasible.
 - Social distancing shall be maintained during the National Anthem and on sidelines.
 - Outdoor sports may need to extend bench areas to permit social distancing. Indoor sports may need to use bleachers or multiple levels of seating to ensure social distancing.
- Hand hygiene is essential. Regularly and thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer (>60% ethanol or >70% isopropanol).
- Schools are recommended to ensure that facilities have been properly sanitized and have hand sanitizer dispensers (>60% ethanol or >70% isopropanol) and disposable masks readily available for practices and contests.
- Any equipment used during activities should be disinfected with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) certified products as able. (This includes balls)
- Coolers, which should be limited in use, should be properly sanitized after each use, and a new cooler should be used for each team or group.
- Hydration stations (water cows, water trough, water fountains, etc.) are not recommended. If used, they should be utilized only for the refilling of personal water bottles and must be cleaned after every practice/contest.
- Have a cold water immersion tub on-site or within 5 minutes of the field for sport seasons affected by excessive heat.

- On field, having ice towels ready in addition to the cold tub is recommended for cooling during breaks and for covering the head in the event that an athlete has an exertional heatstroke and needs to be immersed. Ice towels should be marked for individual use only, then discarded or washed properly.
- There shall not be any sharing of water bottles. An individual athlete should use their own clearly marked bottle.
- Student-Athletes are not to share towels, clothing, or pennies. Clothing/towels/pennies shall be washed and cleaned after every workout.
- There should not be any sharing of equipment as best as possible.
- Any jerseys used during workouts, practices, and competitions should be washed daily and not switched to different players.
- No high fives, shaking hands, hugging, or fist bumps for support or sportsmanship.
- No spitting or sunflower seeds.
- Student-Athletes are recommended to keep their mouth guards in their mouth throughout the competition. If the mouth guard is taken out proper disinfection of the mouth guard should be performed prior to reinsertion. Hands should also be washed or disinfected before and after doing so.
- All sports-related activities must adhere to the gathering limitations set forth by the latest orders of the Maryland Department of Health.
- Seating areas, including bleachers, must adhere to social distancing requirements of at least 6 feet of spacing for anyone not in the same household.
- Practice or game times should be spaced out to decrease the number of individuals coming and going at the same time and facilitate social distancing.
- Limit spectators allowed at any workouts or practices. Parents/caregivers can remain in their cars during this time. No congregating should be allowed in the parking lot or fields. A drop-off line for practices is recommended to avoid unnecessary exposure.
- Carpooling should not be allowed unless only members of immediate family.

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GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR CONTEST OFFICIALS:

Uniform:

- **LEGAL UNIFORM**
 - Long sleeves are permissible
 - Long pants are permissible
 - Undergarments are permissible but must be of a similar length for the individual and a solid like color for team.

- **OFFICIALS UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT**
 - Air horns are permissible
 - Electronic whistles are permissible and encouraged
 - Choose a whistle whose tone will carry outside
 - Fox 40 Mini
 - Fox 40 Unisex Electronic - 3 tone
 - Ergo-Guard - (3 tone) - orange
 - Windsor - (3 tone) grey
 - Check the market for other choices
 - Medical Grade or Cloth Facing coverings are acceptable.
 - Gloves are permissible
 - Any equipment needed by student assistant officials (e.g. soccer and volleyball flags, pens, pencils, etc) shall be supplied by the home school

Officials are not responsible for monitoring activities on the sidelines, such as social distancing, hand washing, symptoms of illnesses and other such issues. This monitoring remains with the coaching staff and school personnel.

RULES CONSIDERATIONS:

- **PREGAME CONFERENCE**
 - Limit attendees to one official, the head coach from each team, and a single captain from each team; or speak with the team representatives in a separate meeting.
 - Use of headsets with other crew members (if applicable)
 - Script the conference to ensure consistency with both teams
 - Coin Toss – Head Referee and 2 captains

- Move the location of the pregame conference to the center of the court/field. All individuals maintain a social distance of 6 feet.
- Suspend handshakes prior to and following the pregame conference
- Maintain social distancing while performing all pregame responsibilities
- Encourage bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet.
- Maintain social distancing of 6 feet between the substitute, officials and/or teammate(s) by encouraging substitutions to occur closer to the area designated for substituting.
- **OFFICIALS TABLE**
 - Limit to essential personnel which includes home team scorer and timer with a recommended distance of 6 feet between individuals. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential and may need to find an alternative location. Space available at the table is a variable in determining the number allowed at the officials table. Combine responsibilities for table personnel as appropriate.

PREGAME AND POSTGAME CEREMONY:

- Suspend pregame protocol of shaking during introductions
- Suspend postgame protocol of shaking hands

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

- **TRAINING**
 - Attend online meetings to review the rules for the coming year.
 - Start physical training using online video or complete skills alone. If you have been diagnosed with COVID-19, you should be cleared by your medical provider prior to initiating an exercise program.
- **COMPETITION**
 - If you do not feel well and COVID-19 symptoms are present, notify the contracted school, your crew members, your assigner and stay at home.
 - “Vulnerable individuals” are defined by CDC as people 65 years and older and others with serious underlying health conditions. Officials fitting this description may wish to seek medical advice prior to returning to officiating.
 - Communicate with school athletic administrator about school/corporation contest expectations.
 - Upon arrival at site and throughout the contest, wash and sanitize your hands frequently.
 - Travel – considerations should be given to travel policies.
 - Do not share uniforms, towels, apparel and equipment.
 - Maintain social distancing of 6 feet while in the locker room and/or on the court/field.
 - Bring your own beverages.

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Return to Play: General Considerations for Cross Country

All schools should utilize the MPSSAA *Roadmap for Return of Athletics* for the preparation of facilities in consultation with their Local School System Return to Play Committee. The following additional information provides additional clarification specific to the sport of Cross Country.

CROSS COUNTRY RULE CONSIDERATIONS:

- Schools are encouraged to comply with NFHS Rule 8-5, that events contested with 4 or fewer teams be limited to a maximum of 12 participants from each team.
- Cross country meets should consider using staggered, wave or interval starts.
- Possible Rule Modifications:
 - Consider widening the course to at least 6 feet at its narrowest point.
 - Finish:
 - Consider using finish corrals and FAT timing for larger meets as easier to distance at finish.
 - If no FAT timing system is available, consider alternative means of finish place and time to reduce congestion at finish line. If sticks are used for determining place, disposable sticks are recommended by race.
 - Consider using image-based equipment at the finish line to assist with picking places and reducing congestion.

PRE AND POST RACE CEREMONY:

- Pre and Post Race Ceremony: Establish cross country specific social distancing meet protocols including the elimination of handshakes before and after the race.
- The use of team tents on site is discouraged.
- Teams are expected to provide individual water for their athletes and discourage the use of water stations and open cups.

CONSIDERATION FOR CROSS COUNTRY OFFICIALS:

- Please review the General Considerations for Officials.
- Follow social distancing guidelines:
 - Pre and Post Meet conferences.
 - Clerking at the start line.
 - Tabulations and posting of results.
- Consider using electronic whistle.

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Return to Play: General Rules Considerations for Field Hockey

All schools should utilize the MPSSAA *Roadmap for Return of Athletics* for the preparation of facilities in consultation with their Local School System Return to Play Committee. The following additional information provides additional clarification specific to the sport of Field Hockey.

FIELD HOCKEY RULES CONSIDERATIONS:

- **PREGAME CONFERENCE:**
 - Limit attendees to one official, the head coach from each team, and a single captain from each team.
 - Move the location of the pregame conference to center of the field. All individuals should maintain a social distance of 6 feet during the conference.
 - Suspend handshakes prior to and following the Pregame Conference.
- **TEAM BENCHES:**
 - Team areas may be expanded to promote social distancing.
 - Encourage bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet.
 - All sideline personnel and players shall wear face coverings. Medical Grade or Cloth Facing coverings are acceptable.
- **BALL INDIVIDUALS:**
 - Encourage social distancing of 6 feet. When possible, additional game balls may be placed around the outside of the field to limit contact with the ball.
 - Ball holders are encouraged to use their feet or wear gloves to return balls to designated areas or field players.
- **SUBSTITUTION PROCEDURES:**
 - Maintain social distancing of 6 feet between the substitute, officials and/or teammate(s) by encouraging substitutions to occur closer to the center line.
- **OFFICIALS' TABLE:**
 - Limited to essential personnel which includes home team scorer and timer with a recommended distance of 6 feet between individuals. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential personnel and will need to find an alternative location.

- If a team member is carded, it is recommended to mark a location of where the individual is to stand that is socially distant from the officials' table.
- **OTHER:**
 - Players choosing to use a penalty corner mask should not share their mask with other individuals.
- **PREGAME, QUARTER, HALF-TIME AND POST GAME CEREMONY:**
 - No pregame introduction line. Send players to their field positions for introductions.
 - Water bottles should not be allowed on the field of play and should be used off the playing surface.
 - Coaches are encouraged to hold pre-game, quarter, half-time and post-game meetings socially distant and off the playing surface, where possible.
 - No post game shaking hands.

FIELD HOCKEY RULES INTERPRETATIONS:

- **EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES:**
 - Medical Grade or Cloth Facing coverings are acceptable.
 - Gloves are permitted.
 - Players' goggles are optional equipment.
- **LEGAL UNIFORM:**
 - Long sleeves are permitted.
 - Long pants are permitted.
 - Undergarments are permitted but must be of a similar length for the individual and a solid like color for team.
- **OFFICIALS UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT:**
 - Long-sleeved shirt/jackets are permitted.
 - Electronic whistles are permitted.
 - Medical Grade or Cloth Facing coverings are acceptable.
 - Gloves are permitted.

CONSIDERATION FOR FIELD HOCKEY OFFICIALS:

- Please review the General Considerations for Officials.
- Officials may use electronic whistles during contests but must be aware of the increased risk of inadvertent whistles.
- Social distancing guidelines should be employed during the contest for officials when interacting with coaches and student-athletes (ex. penalties or carding).



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Return to Play: General Rules Considerations for Football

All schools should utilize the MPSSAA *Roadmap for Return of Athletics* for the preparation of facilities in consultation with their Local School System Return to Play Committee. The following additional information provides additional clarification specific to the sport of Football.

FOOTBALL RULES CONSIDERATIONS:

- **TEAM BOX:**
 - The team box may be extended on both sides of the field to the 10-yard lines (for players only) in order for more social-distancing space for the teams.
 - Teams should reduce game rosters to allow for more social distancing on sidelines.
 - Where feasible, extend the 2-yard sideline belt to 5 yards.
 - Maintain social distancing of 6 feet at all times while in the team box.
 - Do not share uniforms, towels and other apparel and equipment.
 - All sideline personnel and players shall wear face coverings. Medical Grade or Cloth Facing coverings are acceptable.

- **BALL:**
 - The ball should be cleaned and sanitized throughout the contest as recommended by the ball manufacturer.
 - The ball holders should maintain social distancing of 6 feet at all times during the contest.
 - Clean the ball on a ball rotation to the sidelines. Have ball individuals wear gloves and be supervised and directed by an adult staff member or member of coaching staff.

- **FACE MASKS:**
 - Medical Grade or Cloth Facing coverings are acceptable.

- Plastic shields covering the entire face (unless integrated into the face mask and attached to the helmet and clear without the presence of any tint) are not allowed during the contest.
- Face shields – It is recommended that teams promote their use by players. Face shields may be worn for play as well as on the sidelines. Helmet manufacturer Shutt has developed a face shield and another is manufacturer by Oakley that is being used by the NFL. It will fit the Riddell helmet.
- **TOOTH AND MOUTH PROTECTORS:**
 - Student-Athletes are recommended to keep their mouth guards in their mouth throughout the competition. If the mouth guard is taken out proper disinfection of the mouth guard should be performed prior to reinsertion. Hands should also be washed or disinfected before and after doing so.
 - Schools are recommended to eliminate practices of cutting off the stem of mouth guards. Students who need to remove a mouth should utilize the stem to limit direct hand to mouth contact.
- **GLOVES:**
 - Gloves are permitted but still must comply with Rule 1-5-2b by meeting either the NOCSAE Standard or the SFIA Specification.
- **CHARGED TIME-OUTS AND AUTHORIZED CONFERENCES:**
 - A single charged time-out may be extended to a maximum of two minutes in length specifically to allow more time for re-hydration.
 - For social-distancing purposes the authorized conference for the charged time-out should take place between the 9-yard marks and not at the sideline. (It would be permissible for more than one coach to be involved in this conference and for technology to be used.
 - Each game official and player should have their own beverage container.
 - Encourage the minimization of offensive and defensive huddles and encourage coaching staff to utilize other methods of communication with players (such as signals, cards, signs) to minimize grouping.
- **INTERMISSION BETWEEN PERIODS AND AFTER SCORING:**
 - The intermission may be extended to a maximum of two minutes between the first and second and the third and fourth periods and following a try, successful field goal or safety, and prior to the succeeding free kick.

FOOTBALL GAME OFFICIALS MANUAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- **GAME OFFICIALS UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT**
 - Electronic whistles are permitted (supplies are limited)
 - Choose a whistle whose tone will carry outside.
 - Cloth face coverings or medical masks are required.
 - Gloves are permitted.
 - Do not share uniforms, towels and other apparel and equipment.

- **PREGAME CONFERENCE, COIN TOSS AND OVERTIME PROCEDURES:**

- For the coin toss, limit attendees to the referee, and one designated representative from each team.
- Coin toss should take place in the center of the field with designated individuals maintaining social distancing of 6 feet.
- No handshakes prior to and following the coin toss.
- Maintain social distancing of 6 feet while performing all pregame responsibilities with all officiating crew members, game administration staff, line-to-gain crew, clock operators, and individuals handling the balls during the game and team personnel.
- Line-to-gain crew must wear face coverings.
- For the overtime procedure, please use the same procedure as used at the start of the contest for the coin toss.

PREGAME, QUARTER, HALF-TIME AND POST GAME CEREMONY:

- Water bottles are discouraged on the field of play and should be used off the playing surface.
- Coaches are encouraged to hold pre-game, quarter, half-time and post-game meetings socially distant and off the playing surface, where possible.
- No post game of shaking hands.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR FOOTBALL:

- Before, during and after the contest, players, coaches, game officials, team personnel and game administration officials should wash and sanitize their hands as often as possible.
- Maintain social distancing of 6 feet at all times while on the sidelines and on the field of play when possible.
- Everyone should have their own beverage container that is not shared.
- Cloth face coverings are required for all coaches and team staff and for all game administration officials.
- Gloves are permitted for all coaches and team staff and for all game administration officials.
- Try and limit the number of non-essential personnel who are on the field level throughout the contest.
- If available, dressing facilities for game officials and teams should be large enough for them to use social-distancing protocols and should be properly cleaned and sanitized prior to their arrival.

CONSIDERATION FOR FOOTBALL OFFICIALS:

- Please review the General Considerations for Officials.
- Officials may use electronic whistles during contests but must be aware of increased risk of inadvertent whistles.

- Social distancing guidelines should be employed during the contest for officials when interacting with coaches and student-athletes.
- The football should be changed or sterilized by sidelined personnel frequently.
- Officials will have to limit the handling of other officials' equipment (ex. assist in picking up flags or bean bags).

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Return to Play: General Rules Considerations for Golf

All schools should utilize the MPSSAA *Roadmap for Return of Athletics* for the preparation of facilities in consultation with their Local School System Return to Play Committee. The following additional information provides additional clarification specific to the sport of Golf.

GOLF RULE CONSIDERATIONS:

- Consider small dual, tri, or quad golf outings as compared to large scale events, unless schools will be grouped together.
- All personnel and players shall wear face coverings. Medical Grade or Cloth Facing coverings are acceptable.
- Masks are permitted and encouraged and should be used in between strokes.
- Schools may adhere to local course competition rules in relation to COVID-19 accommodations.
- Social distancing of at least 6 feet should be maintained at all times. No hugging, shaking hands, or fist bumps for support/encouragement.
- Normal golf groups are permitted. Consider grouping students by school for competition.
- Limit use of golf shop and retail operations to maintain social distancing guidelines. If social distancing cannot be maintained, golf shop access should be prohibited prior to the competition.
- To limit congestion, limiting field size and starting from one tee only is recommended. Also, consider the expanded spacing of starting times (12 minutes apart for groups of 3 and 15 minutes apart for groups of 4)
- Tees, pencils and ball-markers and sharpies will not be available. Players must bring their own equipment and food/beverage as needed.
- Electronic scoring is permitted for regular season competition. The exchange of scorecards by players is discouraged and verbal confirmation of scores may be accepted.
- To limit congestion, it is recommended that a window of time be established for players to access practice facilities before their round based on their starting times.
- It is recommended that practice facilities not be used after the round and that all players be encouraged to depart immediately when finished.

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Return to Play: General Rules Considerations for Soccer

All schools should utilize the MPSSAA *Roadmap for Return of Athletics* for the preparation of facilities in consultation with their Local School System Return to Play Committee. The following additional information provides additional clarification specific to the sport of Soccer.

SOCCER RULE CONSIDERATIONS:

- **PREGAME CONFERENCE**
 - Limit attendees to head referee or center referee, the head coach from each team, and a single captain from each team.
 - Move the location of the pregame conference to the center of the field. All individuals should maintain a social distance of 6 feet.
 - No handshakes prior to and following the Pregame Conference.
- **BALL INDIVIDUALS:**
 - Encourage social distancing of 6 feet. When possible, additional game balls may be placed around the outside of the field to limit contact with the ball. Ball holders are encouraged to use their feet or wear gloves to return balls to designated areas or field players.
- **TEAM BENCHES:**
 - Encourage bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet.
 - All sideline personnel and players shall wear face coverings. Medical Grade or Cloth Facing coverings are acceptable.
 - Team areas may be expanded to promote social distancing.
- **SUBSTITUTION PROCEDURES:**
 - Maintain social distancing of 6 feet between the substitute, officials and/or teammate(s) by encouraging substitutions to occur closer to the center line.
- **OFFICIALS TABLE:**
 - Limit to essential personnel who includes home team scorer and timer with a recommended distance of 6 feet between individuals. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential personnel and will need to find an alternative location.

PREGAME, HALF-TIME AND POST MATCH CEREMONY:

- No pregame world cup introduction line pre-half team huddles on the field. Send players to their field positions with bench personnel lined up on the touch line (6 feet apart) for introductions.
- Water bottles are discouraged on the field of play and should be used off the playing surface. Goalkeepers are encouraged to keep a water bottle behind the net for the purpose of wetting their gloves rather than spitting.
- Coaches are encouraged to hold pre-game, half-time and post-game meetings socially distant and off the playing surface, where possible.
- No post game shaking hands.

SOCCER RULES INTERPRETATIONS:

- **EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES:**
 - Medical Grade or Cloth Facing coverings are acceptable.
 - Gloves are permitted.
- **LEGAL UNIFORM**
 - Long sleeves are permitted
 - Long pants are permitted.
 - Under garments are permitted but must be of a similar length for the individual and a solid like color for the team.
- **OFFICIALS UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT:**
 - Long-sleeved shirt/jackets are permitted.
 - Electronic whistles are permitted.
 - Face coverings are permitted.
 - Gloves are permitted.

CONSIDERATION FOR SOCCER OFFICIALS:

- Please review the General Considerations for Officials.
- Officials may use electronic whistles during contests but must be aware of increased risk of inadvertent whistles.
- Social distancing guidelines should be employed during the contest for officials when interacting with coaches and student-athletes (ex. penalties or carding).

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Return to Play: General Rules Considerations for Volleyball

All schools should utilize the MPSSAA *Roadmap for Return of Athletics* for the preparation of facilities in consultation with their Local School System Return to Play Committee. The following additional information provides additional clarification specific to the sport of Volleyball.

VOLLEYBALL RULES CONSIDERATIONS:

- **PRE-MATCH CONFERENCE:**
 - Limit attendees to the first referee, head coach, and one captain from each team.
 - Move the location of the pre-match conference to center court with one coach and one referee positioned on each side of the net. All four individuals should maintain a social distance of 6 feet. Direct players warming up to stay clear, remaining outside the attack line if possible.
 - Suspend roster submission at the pre-match conference. Rosters should be submitted directly to the officials' table before the 10-minute mark.
- **TEAM BENCHES:**
 - Suspend the protocol of teams switching sides/benches between sets.
 - Home team will select their bench prior to the match and remain on the same side for the duration of the match.
 - Team areas may be expanded to promote social distancing outside of playable areas. To facilitate social distancing, it is permissible for substitutes to stand at the end of the bench during play. When standing, players shall remain no closer to the court than the front of the bench extended.
 - All sideline personnel and players shall wear face coverings. Medical Grade or Cloth Facing coverings are acceptable.
- **DECIDING SET PROCEDURES:**
 - Move the location of the deciding set coin toss to center court with team captains and the second referee maintaining the appropriate social distance of 6 feet. A coin toss, called by the home team, will decide serve/receive.
 - Suspend the protocol of teams switching sides/benches before a deciding set.

- **SUBSTITUTION PROCEDURES:**
 - Maintain social distancing of 6 feet between the second referee and the player and substitute by encouraging substitutions to occur within the substitution zone closer to the attack line.

- **OFFICIALS' TABLE:**
 - Limit to essential personnel (which includes home team scorer, libero tracker and timer), with a recommended distance of 6 feet between individuals. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential personnel and will need to find an alternative location.

VOLLEYBALL OFFICIALS MANUAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- **PRE AND POST MATCH CEREMONY**
 - Establish volleyball specific social distancing match protocols including the elimination of handshakes before and after the match.

VOLLEYBALL RULES INTERPRETATIONS:

- **EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES:**
 - Medical Grade or Cloth Facing coverings are acceptable.
 - Gloves are permitted.

- **LEGAL UNIFORM:**
 - Long sleeves are permitted.
 - Long pants are permitted.
 - Under garments are permitted, but must be unadorned and of a single, solid color similar in color to the predominant color of the uniform top or bottom.

- **OFFICIALS UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT:**
 - By state association adoption, long-sleeved, all-white collared polo shirt/sweater is permitted. (Electronic whistles are permitted.)
 - Medical Grade or Cloth Facing coverings are acceptable.
 - Gloves are permitted.

CONSIDERATION FOR VOLLEYBALL OFFICIALS:

- Please review the General Considerations for Officials.
- Officials are permitted to use electronic whistles but must be aware of signaling difficulties when using both hands and the increased chance of inadvertent whistles.
- Use of a three ball rotation system should be considered for matches. This would allow for periodic sanitation of the balls.



Sport Ball cleaning recommendations follow CDC, state, and local guidelines for health and safety. The following link provides common definitions for Sterilization, Disinfection, and Cleaning in Healthcare Facilities, but may be useful for one attempting to clean a **ball (including; basketball, softball, football, soccer ball, volleyball, and baseball)** with cover material made of leather, composite, or PU leather:

<https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/disinfection/introduction.html>

To ensure applicable health and safety protocols, the user is responsible for determining the best method based on ball covering material, playing environment, and cleaning intervals.

**Soap and
Water
Method**

- Dirt and debris can be removed by using a damp cloth with soap and water, using moderate pressure.
- Be careful not to oversaturate the ball.
- Allow to air dry.

**Disinfecting
Wipe Method**

- Limited disinfecting may be achieved by using a disinfecting wipe and moderate pressure to wipe the entire surface of the ball.
- Be careful not to oversaturate the ball.
- Allow to air dry.

We do not recommend using bleach and alcohol-based cleaning products, or excessively frequent cleanings, as those may degrade ball covering material and ball markings, and impact overall ball performance.

We will continue to review all available information and will update our recommendations as new developments occur.



What chemicals can clean our game balls without altering performance?

Our primary recommendation is to follow CDC, state and local guidelines for health and safety. The following widely accepted definitions are relevant to composite leather, PU leather, and leather game ball care ([CDC reference](#)):

Definitions	Reduces # viruses	Eliminates 99% viruses	Eliminates 100% viruses	Notes
Antibacterial	X			bacteria ≠ virus
Antiviral	✓	not always		
Antimicrobial	✓			virus is a microbe
Clean	✓			removes visible dirt/prepares surface
Disinfect	✓	✓		
Sanitize	✓	not always		
Sterilize	✓	✓	✓	appropriate for hospital settings

There are several different methods for sanitizing and disinfecting composite leather, PU leather, and leather game product. Each customer should utilize the method that fits their health and safety protocols and the playing environment and timing needs.

Simple Game Ball Cleaning Method

To clean the ball, players may wish to use dish soap and water. While this practice may be likened to hand washing, note that all soap residue must be rinsed away and that drying time on each ball product may vary. An example cleaning regimen with soap and water includes:

1. Add 1 tablespoon of mild dish soap into a 1-gallon container.
2. Fill bucket with warm water, until a soapy mixture is formed.
3. Wet a first towel with the solution, wring out excess water, and gently wipe down entire product surface for at least 30 seconds.
4. Re-wet towel with plain warm water, wring out excess water, and wipe off excess soap from ball surface.
5. Rub a second, dry towel on the surface to wipe and dry off.
6. Let product air out overnight.

Quick Turn Leather Game Ball Cleaning Method

To clean the ball with faster turnaround times, we reference the following recommendations. The CDC released a [list](#) (referred to as 'List N') of effective disinfectants for disabling SARS-CoV-2 (i.e., the virus that causes Covid-19 disease) on hard, nonporous surfaces.

Since our game balls are neither hard nor nonporous, we *cannot assume that 99% of virus particles will be eradicated*, but we believe the CDC's list is a good starting point for greatly reducing virus particles.

It is critical to follow manufacturer and CDC recommendations for the correct application and contact time for each cleaning product to maximize efficacy against SARS-CoV-2. Please note that some products require a wetting time up to 10 minutes to be effective.



Further, we do not recommend using high concentrations of bleach or alcohol to disinfect our products because it can degrade the performance of the product. We also do not recommend using hand sanitizer, which can degrade product performance and is not on the CDC's list N.

Another consideration in cleaning our game ball products is maintaining performance (e.g., grip, pebble, color) over multiple applications. We tested several List N cleaners (up to 5 applications in a 24-hour period) and found they had minimal or no effect on performance:

Cover Material	Game Balls	CDC List N Disinfectants	EPA registration #
Composite Leather	Evo NXT Basketball Solution Basketball Evolution Basketball FIBA 3x3 Basketball OPTX Volleyball K1 Silver Volleyball	Lysol Clean & Fresh Multipurpose cleaner Lonza Disinfectant Wipes Plus BTC 2125 M 10% Solution Clorox Disinfecting Wipes	777-89 6836-336 1839-86 5813-79
Leather	NFL Duke Football K1 Gold Volleyball	BTC 2125 M 10% Solution	1839-86
PU Leather	Forte II Soccer ball Vanquish Soccer ball	Clorox Disinfecting Wipes BTC 2125 M 10% Solution	5813-79 1839-86

While most of the products above can be easily found online for purchase by end consumers, we have identified two possible sources for BTC 2125 M 10% solution (EPA # 1839-86):

- For Individual Orders:
 - Key Supply Company – Warsaw Xtra, [link for online purchase](#), promo code **Wilson** for discount
- For Larger orders:
 - UNX Industries – Ally cleaning solution, contact terry.hammond@unxinc.com

Please note that the solvent based cleaners above may leave a residue on the ball or logos depending on method of application and amount used. The cleaning regimen with soap and water specified above may be used intermittently to prevent or reduce buildup of cleaner residue over time.

Special Note on Leather Game Balls

For leather game balls, recommendations are limited. Many CDC list N disinfectants we trialed dried out the leather and decreased performance. We are working on alternative solutions for leather goods, but a potential interim solution may be to disinfect the ball and then apply leather conditioner as a secondary step.

Next Steps

As coronavirus is an ever-changing situation, we are working to deepen our understanding of various disinfectants and procedures for disinfecting our products without affecting performance. We will share relevant updates with our customers as they become available.