

EYB Guidelines for Returning to Play Ball

This material was created by reviewing Illinois rules and regulations for the resumption of youth sports, along with procedures established by Little League International. These guidelines do not include every single situation that can arise during return to play. Please use common sense whenever a concern arises about possible contact or transmission of COVID-19. **Note: These guidelines are subject to change depending on federal, state or local government mandates**

General Rules:

Anyone with symptoms of fever, cough, or worsening respiratory systems, or know exposure to a person with COVID-19 should not attend any EYB activity until cleared by a medical professional. Players and coaches should take measures to prevent all but the essential contact between players and coaches. These measures include:

- Refrain from handshakes, high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, and group celebrations
- No sharing of equipment, particularly catcher's equipment, batting helmets, and gloves
- No team snacks or sharing of food
- Each player should bring their own drink
- Maintain 6ft physical distancing while not playing
- Maintain 6ft physical distancing from fans other than player's own immediate family
- **Any player or coach who has close contact with someone who is COVID-19 positive should quarantine for 14 days**

Game and Practice Rules

- Coaches should ask players before each game or practice if they are exhibiting COVID symptoms (fever, cough, etc.)
- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer before playing
- Please have player have their own sanitizer
- Players are not required to wear a face covering while on the field during game, but should wear a face covering where their designated bench area is
- **Coaches are REQUIRED to wear face coverings**
- On-field warm-up should be limited as much as is reasonably possible and no more than 30 minutes.
- Keep personal belongings 6ft from others' personal belongings
- All players and coaches will refrain from spitting at all times. No sunflower seeds, gum, etc.
- Coaches should have no physical contact with an opposing player
- Little League International suggests lining up outside the dugout and tipping caps to the opposing team as a sign of good sportsmanship after a game

- Players and families should safely vacate the field/facility as soon as is reasonably possible after the conclusion of a game (or practice) to minimize unnecessary contact with players, coaches, and spectators from the next group using the field

Sidelines:

- **T-Ball/Farm/Rookie Softball:**
 - **Players should sit with their family instead of the bench with the exception of players on deck and in-the-hole (who should maintain 6ft distancing while in the dugout)**
- **Comp/Minor/Major/Pony/Colt/Softball:**
 - **These players will use the dugout and bleachers with 6ft spacing. Everyone should use their spot in the dugout/bleachers the whole game. No fans allowed in bleachers.**

Umpires:

- **Will be required to wear a face covering**
- Shall hold pre-game meetings with no handshakes while maintaining physical distancing
- Shall be placed behind the pitcher's mound or behind the plate to call balls and strikes
- Should keep a safe distance from players and coaches as much as possible
- Should limit their contact with the ball
 - Catchers and field players should retrieve all foul and passed balls
 - If needed, balls will be thrown in from the dugout, not the umpire

Families and Spectators

- Players/families/spectators are instructed not to show up to fields more than 30 minutes before game time.
- If there is a game or practice prior to your event, families and spectators are encouraged to stay in their vehicles or at recommended physical distances until the start of their game or practice
- **Spectators should follow best physical distancing practices**
 - **Stay six feet away from individuals outside their household; wear a face covering at all times; avoid direct hand or other contact with players/managers/coaches during play.**
 - **Bring their own seating or portable chairs – If a field has bleachers, please refrain from using this space, as it will be reserved for players**
 - **Do NOT sit behind home plate between the dugouts. Please sit down the foul lines to avoid congestion in-and-around the dugout areas.**
- Foul balls landing outside the field of play should be retrieved by participating players, coaches, and umpires. No spectators should retrieve the ball

League and Park District:

- Fields should be prepped prior to teams and spectators arriving at the complex and/or after they depart.
 - Any shared field preparation equipment be sprayed or wiped with cleaner and disinfectant after each use.
- League administrators should schedule sufficient time between practices and games to facilitate the complete evacuation of individuals from a previous practice or game from the premises before the next group enters.