

CCFA Return to Play Guidelines

Tackle Football

In accordance to our **Preparedness plan**, the CCFA has worked to develop these additional guidelines to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and to implement steps to safely return to the field. The success of our plan requires the compliance and cooperation of all participants.

Phasing: The phased approach to Return-to-Play are provided here for context.

Phase 1: Practice guidelines within CCFA, with specific protocols in place to reduce the spread of Covid-19.

Phase 2: This phase allows for the return of league games between associations. SWML Return to Competition document can be referenced at www.swmlfootball.org for gameday guidance.

This Return to Play document specifically addresses Phase 1.

Jeremy Morton, Player Safety Coach, will be responsible for matters relating to Covid-19, in terms of reporting (see Appendix D), dissemination of information, practice protocols, etc. Any individual with a confirmed case of Covid-19 should notify Jeremy Morton immediately. All cases will be reported to Minnesota Department of Health at health.sports.covid19@state.mn.us.

Prior to arriving

- All participants should use the Minnesota Symptom Screener at home before arriving and acknowledge they adhere to the CCFA waiver and MDH guidelines by dropping their child off at practice. <https://mn.gov/covid19/forminnesotans/if-sick/is-it-covid/>
- As a reminder, anyone experiencing symptoms, has a temperature of 100.4 or above, or has been exposed to someone who is sick must stay home.
- Players should disinfect their equipment, especially football helmets, prior to practice
- It is recommended that players from different households do not drive/ carpool together.
- Each player, coach, and volunteer should check his/her temperature at home, and refrain from participation if he or she has a fever (≥ 100.4 degrees F).
- All coaches, players, volunteers and others (i.e. spectators) should be monitoring their symptoms at home to ensure that:
 - He/she is not currently demonstrating or suffering from any ill symptoms (see Appendix A);
 - He/she has not had a suspected or documented case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days (see Appendix B);
 - He/she has not had any close contact with a sick individual or anyone with a confirmed case of COVID-19 (see Appendix C);
 - Any individual who is unable to confirm the above criteria should not participate and contact both their Association and healthcare provider

Standard Procedures to follow at all times:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water or hand sanitizer.
- Players bring your own water bottles and do not share.

General Daily Routines at practice:

- All participants should use the Minnesota Symptom Screener: <https://mn.gov/covid19/forminnesotans/if-sick/is-it-covid/>
- Coaches will sanitize equipment at the beginning, during and at the end of practice.
- Players should disinfect/ sanitize their equipment, especially helmets, prior to practice and games.
- Each player, coach and volunteer should check his/her temperature at home and refrain from participation if he or she has a fever of 100.4 degrees or greater.
- Use Hand sanitizer on the way in and out of practice
- Be mindful and considerate of others. Keep players 6 ft apart as much as possible when in line and explaining drills and teaching.
- Design drills where players are not face to face as much as possible
- Have coaches hold bags/pads during drills as much as possible, not players
- Keep huddles spread out until the play is called
- Minimize sharing equipment (footballs, bags, pads)
- Keep team sessions to 12 minutes (15+ minutes is too long).

Pre-Practice:

- Practice Plan- design practice plans to accommodate pods of 6-10 players.
- Identify Covid-19 Coach – seek out asst. coach or volunteer that will be willing to monitor the teams and ensure compliance with policies.
- Players, Coaches and Volunteers use Hand Sanitizer Upon Arrival
- Coaches and Volunteers Mask Up- masks are to be worn at all times.
- Equipment Cleaning and Sanitizing- prior to the start of practice all shared equipment must be sanitized.
- Field Set Up- Design station layouts for optimum spacing between stations.
- Assign Players to Pods of 6 to 10 (max #25 in a group)
 - Preseason pods remain the same until teams chosen.
 - Regular Season - Once teams have been divided document if pods change.
- Identify pods by # and be able to reference pod#/roster for traceability purposes.
- Designate a location on the field where each pod is to meet.
- For Grades with a large group, divide into two teams with 25 max per team.
- No full contact or scrimmages are allowed until notified by your commissioner.

In Practice/ Game Day:

- Players report to assigned pod and pod location- Social distance and keep water bottles and other personal items in this location throughout practice.
- Players wear a mask on the way to practice and when leaving practice
 - Players are strongly encouraged to wear a mask on the sideline when not wearing a helmet.
- Announcements are made after players have reported to pods.
- Discourage unnecessary physical contact, such as high fives, handshakes.
- Coaches are the only ones to hold tackling dummies.
- Limit duration of stations during shared practice times.
- Limit stations, drills and all planned activities to 12 minutes during individual team practices.
- All shared equipment, tackling dummies and footballs, to be sanitized after drills.
- During breaks players return to individual pods and locations.

Post Practice/ Game:

- All players and coaches to use hand sanitizer as they leave field.
- All shared equipment must be sanitized at end of practice/ game.
- All players to leave field area immediately after practice or game.

Additional Protocols:

- Horseplay will not be tolerated. First offense will result in team discipline. Second offense will result in notification of parents and the possibility of being removed from practice and or next competition.
 - Parents are to drop players off in parking lot no earlier than 10 minutes prior to report time.
 - Parents and fans are expected to adhere to social distancing as well as the MDH recommendation to wear a cloth mask at all times in public settings.
 - Tents, tarps or large group structures will not be permitted in the spectator areas of the sidelines.
 - Parents and fans are asked to be respectful of CCFA Coaches, Monitors, Staff and volunteers. They are required to wear masks and ensure that mitigation practices are followed.
1. All participants must sign off on CCFA Covid-19 Release Waiver.
 2. All participants; players, parents and coaches are required to monitor their health as well as that of their team. No participant should attend practice, scrimmages or games while sick. Should a team member become ill during an event they shall be isolated immediately, parents will be called and sent home as soon as possible. Coach will notify Safety Director, Jeremy Morton, of incident.
 3. Specified drills will not last longer than 12 minutes (15 minutes is too long). All participants must adhere to social distancing guidelines. 6 feet of separation as well as limited number of participants on the field.
 - a. For youth and adult organized sports, pod sizes for non-game activities (training, practicing) cannot exceed 25 people per pod, either inside or outside. Pod count is composed of players and coaches.
 - b. Games can have the total number of players, coaches, referees, umpires, etc. as needed to hold the game just as long as the total number of people is not exceeding the total number allowed by the venue or facility (check capacity limits).
 4. Use of face coverings by staff and coaches is REQUIRED.
<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facecover.html>
 5. Players will wear masks entering and exiting practice and games.
 6. All CCFA player engagement events will be conducted outside.
 7. Shared equipment (practice pads and bags) will be cleaned/ sanitized at the beginning, during and end of each practice and used exclusively by the team/pod that it is assigned to. Coaches will have sanitizer available during games and practices.
 8. Players are NOT to share water bottles, or any other personal items.
 9. Drop-off, pick-up procedures All players are to be dropped off in parking lot. Players and families are encouraged to remain in their vehicles until the start of practice or warmups (no sooner than 10 minutes) and not to congregate in a group on the field. No parents or bystanders are allowed at practice or games as of 8-4-20.

Throughout the season we will reevaluate our plan based on updated information and guidance we receive from MN Dept. of Health, CDC, ISD 112, MSHSL, and USA Football.

Below is a link from Minnesota Department of Health: Guidance for Social Distancing in Youth Sports

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/sportsguide.pdf>

APPENDIX A - SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19 INFECTION:

Individuals with COVID-19 can exhibit symptoms ranging from the following:

The most common symptoms associated with infection include:

- Fever (≥ 100.4 degrees F)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Less common symptoms that may still be evidence of COVID-19 infection include:

- Sore throat
- Congestion
- Nausea and vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Headache
- Muscle / joint pain
- Sudden loss of taste or smell
- Chills

Note: Some people do not have symptoms, or have very mild symptoms. Persons with COVID-19 may be infectious two days prior to symptom onset.

What to do if you are waiting for COVID-19 test results

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/waiting.pdf>

Appendix B - Return to Play Following Confirmed COVID-19 Infection

These recommendations are intended to provide an outline for decision-making as it relates to protocols for navigating a confirmed case of COVID-19.

Persons with a lab-confirmed case of COVID-19 should quarantine immediately, and can leave isolation and return to normal activities 10 days after symptom onset so as long as:

- The individual has not had a fever in the past 24 hours.
- Symptoms are resolving.

Athletes may want to contact their health care provider prior to a return to football.

Appendix C - Exposure to a Suspected or Diagnosed Case of COVID-19:

Exposure to a Suspected or Diagnosed Case of COVID-19:

These recommendations are intended to provide an outline for decision-making as it relates to protocols for navigating a possible exposure to a suspected or diagnosed case of COVID-19.

Any player or staff who has been exposed to a COVID-19 case shall self-quarantine for 14 days from the last contact with the case.

In this case, exposure means any one of the following:

- Caring for a sick person with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection.

OR

- Living in the same household as an individual with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection.

OR

- Individual who has had close contact (> 6 feet) for greater than or equal to 15 minutes with known or suspected COVID-19 or possible COVID-19 infection.*

In the cases of the first two bullets above, Associations should consider these quarantine criteria “automatic”. In the case of the third bullet above, this determination of close contact can either be made by the association/organization or by contact tracers at MDH.

*If you are absolutely sure an individual had 15+ minutes of close (< 6 feet) contact with a lab-confirmed case of COVID-19, please ensure that individual self isolates for 14 days from last contact with the aforementioned case.

If you have questions about whether an individual needs to self-isolate, follow the below steps:

1. Have that individual self-isolate (No on-site/in-person team activities)
2. Email health.Sports.Covid19@state.mn.us and explain your exposure story. It's ok to reach out to your local health officials instead, if you prefer.
3. Don't allow that individual return to team activities until you've received a recommendation from a state or local health official.
4. Follow their recommendation.

CDC Public Health Guidance for Community-Related Exposure (Definition Above):

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/public-health-recommendations.html>

- Stay home until 14 days after last exposure and maintain social distance (at least 6 feet) from others at all times
- Self-monitor for symptoms
- Check temperature twice a day
- Watch for fever*, cough, or shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19
- Avoid contact with people at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19
- Follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop

Appendix D: Plans for Players, Parents and Coaches

Use exclusion guidance and isolate symptomatic players, coaches and all program participants.

Follow exclusions guidance and ensure all participants stay home when sick:
Decision Tree for People with COVID-19 Symptoms in Youth, Student, and Child Care Programs (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/exguide.pdf)

If you have a participant or staff who is diagnosed with COVID-19 reach out to MDH or your local public health agency for further direction.

For all instances below, hygiene supplies will be available, including a mask, facial tissues, and alcohol-based hand rub.

Overall Reporting Plan

- Parents report incidences to coaches
- Coaches report all incidences to Player Safety Coordinator
- Team parents / players are notified
- Other teams and association notified as needed

Plan for Parents Prior to practice, game or any CCFA event:

Player Test Positive for Covid or Diagnosed without lab test or show Covid Symptoms

- Contact your coach and report
 - The situation (generally sick, Covid-19 symptoms, possible exposure, etc)
 - Date symptoms started
 - Date player was tested or had medical evaluation
- Keep child home and isolate for at least 10 days:
 - Since symptoms first appeared
and
 - No fever for at least 24 hours without medication
and
 - Improvement of other symptoms

Player was Exposed to Covid-19 person either confirmed or suspected

- Contact your coach and report:
 - Date of exposure
 - If player is symptomatic
 - If a medical evaluation is scheduled
- Keep child home and isolate for at least 14 days:
 - Of exposure date
and
 - No fever for at least 24 hours without medication
and
 - Improvement of any symptoms

Plan if Player becomes sick during practice/game or is showing Covid-19 Symptoms

- Coaches isolates the player
- Contact parents
- Assign monitor to stay with the player until parents arrive while social distancing
- Give parent this document to review
- Parent reports back to coach status and agree on the appropriate plan

Plan if Coach/Volunteer is showing Covid-19 Symptoms during practice/game

- Individual Isolates immediately
- Inform other coach or monitor while social distancing
- Discuss plan and return date based on symptoms, tests, etc.

Traceability Process:

- Name
- Pod# or Coach
- Date of possible exposure
- Review practice plan – Determine if the player/coach was with anyone for 15+ minutes
- ID possible exposed individuals if any – follow exposure protocols
- Report to Player Safety Coordinator
- Message Team the details
- Message CCFA, other Teams/associations as needed

Sources

[COVID-19 Prevention Guidance for Youth and Student Programs](#)

[USA Football Return to Youth Football 2020](#)

[Decision Tree](#)

SWML Return to Competition