



2020-2021

MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

Sideline Cheerleading

Sideline Cheer COVID-19 Training and Cheer Events

- All aspects of cheer including meetings, practices, events, transportation and facility usage must align with the requirements of the Minnesota Department of Education plan for return to learning, must follow the requirements from the Minnesota Department of Health's Guidance on Youth Sports, and must include the required actions identified in the Governor's Executive Orders.
- The first week of practice should focus on implementing effective protocols and routines for pre-participation screenings, effective social distancing, compliance with all health recommendations, establishment of pod limits of 25 or less, and additional actions that mitigate the spread of disease and enhance safety of students and coaches.
- Cheer programs must follow the identified protocols for students or coaches who have tested positive, are experiencing symptoms consistent with a COVID-19 diagnosis or have had exposure to an individual who has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- For schools that are required by localized metrics to be in a distance learning mode, practices are limited to virtual contact only.
- No captain's practices should be held.
- Sportsmanship should have a constant presence in all school-based athletics.
 - Teams are encouraged to find appropriate methods of demonstrating good sportsmanship and respect towards others within the physical distance guidance.
 - Additional care should be taken when addressing contest officials with questions or seeking interpretations. At no time, other than in the natural course of competition, should a coach or player violate the required physical distance with an official. Any coach or player verbally interacts with an official must do so with a mask on and at a safe distance.



**COVID-19 NOTICE
PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

In accordance with governmental directives, the MSHSL will offer certain activities subject to compliance with local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and guidelines. The Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Department of Education and the MSHSL have developed guidance and requirements related to youth sports, use of school facilities and modifications of MSHSL activities designed to keep participants safe and reduce the spread of COVID-19. Even with these measures, the MSHSL cannot guarantee that students or other individuals participating in organized athletic activities (“Participants”) will not be exposed to COVID-19. Participants and their parents/legal guardians should consider the risks before participating in any MSHSL activities. It is a shared responsibility to protect everyone from COVID-19 and Participants should follow MDH/CDC guidelines to reduce the risk of exposure, including but not limited to the following:

- Stay home as much as possible;
- Stay at least 6 feet from other people if you are in public places;
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- Wash your hands often, with soap and water. Wash for at least 20 seconds;
- Always wash your hands after being in a public place;
- Always wash your hands after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing;
- If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol;
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze. Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue. Throw used tissues in the trash;
- Wear face coverings/masks that cover your nose and mouth and fit snugly against the sides of your face.

In recognizing the serious nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and the positive impact that participation in MSHSL fine arts activities and athletics has on student participants, it is imperative that students and families know and understand the following:

1. Participating in MSHSL activities is **voluntary**.
2. While participating in MSHSL activities, all laws as well as MSHSL and school rules, guidelines, and protocols related to COVID-19 must be followed.
3. Participant acknowledges the contagious nature of COVID-19, and the Participant understands that there is risk of injury and/or illness from participating in MSHSL activities, including the risk to have direct or indirect contact with individuals who have been exposed to and/or diagnosed with COVID-19.
4. Participant agrees that if he/she is exposed to, or infected by, COVID-19 during the period of participation, they will immediately cease participation and follow Minnesota Department of Health protocols for schools and activities and MSHSL guidelines for notification and return to participation.
5. Participant has signed a separate Eligibility Statement connected to general participation in MSHSL athletics/activities and agrees that the terms of that statement are wholly incorporated into this document and that the terms of this document are incorporated into the Eligibility Statement.

Additional information regarding Activity Participation and COVID can be found at:

- health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/sportsguide.pdf,
- health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/k12planguide.pdf
- www.mshsl.org
- www.nfhs.org

General COVID Safety:

1. Educate student-athletes about physical distancing, handwashing and sanitizer use, and other immune system protocols.
2. Any person who has had a fever or cold symptoms in the previous 24 hours should not be allowed to take part in workouts and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate healthcare professional.
3. Individually or as a team, participants should confirm that they are symptom free. These confirmations can be aligned with the CDC's "Coronavirus Self-Checker" or current MDH recommendations.
4. A record should be kept of all individuals present at practices and competitions (contact tracing).
5. It is recommended that personal prep areas are to be set up prior to practice - Cones or other markers should be set up at least 6 feet apart so student-athletes have a specific place for their own bag, water bottle, etc. One cone or marker should be assigned per student.
6. Avoid grouping of student-athletes at start and end of practice or during transitions. Staggered start times for practices and team meetings are recommended, when possible and when space does not allow student-athletes to come and go from separate areas.
7. Workouts should be conducted in "pods" – following current MDH Return-to-Play guidelines. Pods are small groups of students always working out together. This will ensure limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
8. Whenever possible, student-athletes should maintain the recommended six feet of distancing between individuals and should not be in contact with each other. In addition, there is to be no sharing of equipment to the extent that it is possible.
9. Team celebrations should be no-touch and should be done with appropriate social distancing.

MSHSL Sideline Cheer Guidance and Information

Practice/Events	
Required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand sanitizer must be used by participants and coaches as they enter and leave practice. • Pods may not exceed 25. • Team huddles may not take place unless students and coaches are wearing masks. • Student-athletes must wash hands/use hand sanitizer during breaks or as reasonably necessary, with particular attention after participating in stunts. • Cheer teams should maintain 6' of social distancing whenever possible during practice and at events. • Leave practice as soon as reasonably possible upon the conclusion of practice. • Shower may not take place in the school facility. • No social activity should take place. No congregation after practice or events. • At indoor practices, masks should be worn by student-athletes at all times until exiting the school building. • Cheer Teams are considered a separate competitive pod and do not count toward the total allowable number of spectators if the following is adhered to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They are in their own designated space that maintains a 12' distance from spectator groups. - They maintain a 12' distance from the competitive area. • If the above mentioned cannot be adhered to, cheer teams do count as a part of the total number of allowable spectators and must remain 12' from the competitive area.
Recommendations and Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of locker room or changing areas is a local school decision. • At outdoor practices, masks are strongly recommended for student-athletes before, during and after practice, especially while stunting.

Equipment	
Required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mats must be cleaned at least each day of activity or as needed according to current guidelines. If different groups are meeting in the same space at different times, mats should be cleaned between groups • All student-athletes must bring their own, clearly labeled water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared. Drinking fountains may not be utilized. • Student-athletes must wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing) individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout. • Student-athletes should maintain their equipment themselves and may not share equipment (i.e.; poms, signs, etc.)
Recommendations and Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean frequently touched objects and areas. • Student-athletes' bags shall be placed 6 feet apart.
Face Masks/Coverings in Cheerleading	
Required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the high contact nature of stunting, cheerleaders <u>are required</u> to wear masks indoors. • At indoor practices, coaches <u>are required</u> to wear masks at all times. • It is recommended that cheerleaders wear masks at outdoors practices, especially while stunting and when social distancing is not possible. • At outdoor practices, coaches must wear a mask when interacting with student-athletes and when social distancing is not possible. <p>Face masks/coverings worn by cheerleaders <u>must</u> meet the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face masks/coverings that are held in place with over-the-head straps must use a velcro or other breakaway type connection. • Face masks that tie behind the head and/or neck are not allowed. • Face masks/coverings must be snug-fitting. • Face masks/coverings may not impede vision or movement. • Face masks/coverings must be soft and pliable with no exposed metal. • Modifications to stunting skills should be considered while wearing face masks/coverings, such as limiting inversions, twisting, and tosses. • Facemasks/coverings that minimize the chance of having fingers caught in them or shifting to impede any visual sight should be utilized.

