



2020-2021

MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

Girls Softball

Girls Softball COVID-19 Fall Training

Girls Softball Fall Training Seasons:

- Start Date—October 5
 - End Date—October 24th
 - Maximum Number of daily sessions per sport — 12
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- All aspects of athletics including meetings, practices, competitions, 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 student-athletes and coaches.
 - Athletic programs must follow the identified protocols for student-athletes 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.
- Interscholastic scrimmages will not be allowed.
 - No captain's practices should be held.
 - Competition is not allowed.



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 student-athletes 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 student-athletes 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 player.
6. Avoid grouping of athletes at start and end of practice or during transitions. Staggered start times for practices and team meetings are recommended, when possible and when field/court 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 student-athletes 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 or congratulations should be no-touch and should be done with appropriate social distancing.

MSHSL Softball Guidance and Information

Practice	
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. • Leave the field as soon as reasonably possible upon the conclusion of practice. • No social activity or congregation of students should take place. • Team huddles may not take place unless student-athletes are wearing masks.
Recommendations and Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of locker room or changing areas is a local school decision. • No seeds or spitting. • Have hand sanitizer and wipes available after coming off the field. • All activities take place outside. • Showers should not be utilized after practice.
Masks/Face Coverings	
Required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaches must wear a mask when talking with student athletes and when social distancing is not possible. • Student-athletes must wear a mask when social distancing is not possible.
Recommendations and Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masks are strongly recommended for student-athletes and coaches before and after practice.

Equipment	
Required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Softballs must be sanitized before and/or after each practice, whether self-provided or provided by the coach. https://members-nfhs-org.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/document/attachment/5205/Wilson_Ball_Cleaning_Recommendations.pdf • All student-athletes must bring their own, clearly labeled water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared. Drinking fountains/hydration stations may not be utilized. • Student-athletes must wear their own workout clothing (do not share clothing). Individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout. • Student-athletes should not share equipment. • Clean equipment after each practice.
Recommendations and Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean frequently touched objects and areas. • Student-athletes' bags shall be placed 6 feet apart.
Site Set Up	
Required:	
Recommendations and Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training sessions should occur utilizing outdoor facilities.