



2020-2021 MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

Nordic Skiing, Girls and Boys

Note that the resumption of all activities and athletics are subject to change based on the most current information, directives from state government and health department officials, and member school feedback.

Nordic Skiing, Boys and Girls:

- Start date: November 30, 2020
- First competition date: December 3, 2020
- Last date of regular season competition: February 13, 2021
- End date: February 27, 2021
- Total weeks including postseason: 13, 2021
- Maximum number of contests: 11
- Maximum number of contests per week: 2
 - Increase to 3 contests per week during the final two regular season weeks to make-up contests due to COVID-19 or weather-related postponements.
- Dual or Tri meets only, No Invitationals or tournaments. No scrimmages. No jamborees.
- Conference, Section, Regional or local teams as defined by the school.

General Guidance

- 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 (including Jamborees) will not be allowed.
- Competitions with opponents from bordering states are allowed when less than 50 miles one way and when determined as local. Competitions of greater distances may be approved by the MSHSL with supporting rationale. Any out of state competition must follow MSHSL guidelines for competition types.
- 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 student-athlete violate the required physical distance with an official. Any coach or student-athlete 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 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 State/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 20seconds;
- 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-athletes 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. The MSHSL Graduated Return to Sport protocol is recommended following a diagnosis.
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

COVID Related Guidance:

- Educate student-athletes about physical distancing, handwashing and sanitizer use, and other immune system protocols.
- 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.
- 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 recommendations.
- A record should be kept of all individuals present at practices and competitions (contact tracing).
- 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-athlete have a specific place for their own bag, water bottle, etc. One cone or marker should be assigned per student-athlete.
- 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 space does not allow student-athlete to come and go from separate areas.
- Workouts should be conducted in "pods" – following current State 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.
- 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.
- Officials are not expected to monitor physical distancing: each person is responsible to provide space between themselves and others. Coaches should provide direction to their student-athletes regarding social distancing and other safety protocols.
- Team celebrations or congratulations should be no-touch and should be done with appropriate social distancing.

MSHSL Nordic Skiing Guidance and Information

Practice	
Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skiers must maintain the recommended six feet of distancing between individuals and must not be in contact with each other. • No social activity or congregation of students should take place.
Recommendations and Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masks/face coverings are strongly recommended for student-athletes and coaches before and after practice. Masks must be worn indoors. • Masks/face coverings may be worn by participants during practice if desired. • Recommended that all activities occur outdoors. • Clean frequently touched areas and provide ample hand sanitizer.
Equipment	
Recommendations and Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual student-athlete's equipment / personal items should be kept separate from those of other student-athletes.

Competition	
Masks/Face Coverings	
Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All participants, including student-athletes, coaches, officials, and meet personnel, must wear masks/face coverings if they cannot socially distance at 6 feet from others, unless actively participating in the meet. This includes coming and going from the venue. <p>The following are considered appropriate mask/face coverings—paper or disposable masks, cloth masks, or neck gaiters.</p>
Recommendations and Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Masks/face coverings may be worn by competitors during a race if desired.
Equipment	
Recommendations And Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No touch distribution and collection methods are strongly encouraged.
Site Set Up	
Required	<p>See MSHSL Facilities and Event Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When spectators are allowed, they must NOT have access to athletes and must be restricted to areas outside of the course width. If unable to accommodate in a straight line, consider use of a staggered/wave or interval start. Team camps areas, if permitted, should be isolated from spectators or other non-essential personnel. Team camps must be only available to members of that specific team, and not a shared/common space. Social distancing requirements of 6 feet must be maintained in these areas. Host schools/meet management must work with timing company to set up timing system that works for the type of meet. There must be a restricted area at the finish that keeps spectators away, so they do not interfere with the "quick exit" of each athlete. This area should maintain distance between spectators, athletes, and officials.
Recommendations and Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host schools/meet management may add course monitors / marshals to the course in multiple key spots to monitor social distancing. Additional flagging or signage may be necessary to identify restricted spectator areas. Clean frequently touched areas and provide ample hand sanitizer. Areas for video, web-streaming or televising should be designated prior to the contest and sanitized. See MSHSL Media Guidance Additional signage may be necessary to identify restricted spectator areas. See Signage for Facilities and Events.
Pre-competition	

Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No more than 25 participants may be in the start area at a time. • A maximum of three teams within pods of 25 is allowed. • The maximum number on the course at one time is 100. • Skiers must maintain social distancing during warmup periods. • No pre-race handshakes or fist bumps.
Recommendations and Considerations	
Competition	
Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A race is a specific gender and specific level event that is timed. • A meet is multiple teams with multiple levels of races. A race is a single event within the meet. • One loop course only if more than one pod of 25 student athletes on the course at one time. • Multiple loop course option for one pod of 25 student athletes on the course at one time. • Varsity and JV races may be held on the same course. Meet management must allow time for competitors (teams) in the first race to clear the course before the next group of teams enter the start area. • Varsity and JV Races: staggered/wave starts are required if there are more than 25 skiers competing in a Varsity and JV race. This can be done multiple ways as determined by meet management (i.e. starting each teams' skiers together based upon ability, times, position on team, etc.). Wave start groupings must be coordinated with the finish timer to ensure: 1) appropriate timing between each wave start; 2) proper timing of skiers in each wave; and 3) minimizing the mixing of multiple waves. Varsity and JV skiers may be placed in waves of 25. Meet Management shall determine the number of waves for each race. Social distancing required of all attendees including participants, coaches, officials, and spectators. • No collection of warmups at the start area. Skiers will return to the start area to retrieve their own warmups. • If chips are used, then the coach of each school must collect and turn in following the meet.
Recommendations and Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of an open finish corral is recommended to allow skiers to immediately exit the finish area. • It is strongly recommended that each team is asked to provide a representative in the finish corral to assist each of their team's athletes to quickly exit the corral. Each representative must be wearing a mask/face covering, gloves, and social distancing from individuals not of their team. • Inclement weather: PRE-RACE: The Games Committee and/or Meet Management would decide if it was safe to start a race based on weather information that can be gathered (i.e. cold temperature limits) and following the MSHSL severe weather protocol. If a delay occurred causing

	<p>the race start time to be altered, the newly established start time should also include a warm-up period for all competitors. If there is a need to suspend the meet, then all in attendance at the site should seek shelter in their own car and/or bus. The race will be contested when conditions are safe and warranted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean frequently touched areas and provide ample hand sanitizer.
Post-Competition	
Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No post-race handshakes or fist bumps. • No award ceremonies following meet.
Recommendations and Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recommended that athletes, coaches, and team personnel leave the site of competition as soon as possible.

MSHSL Official Rules Considerations

Consider widening the course to at least 6' of width at its most narrow point.

Finish Zone/Corral: The finish area for all meets must establish a "Corral" of over 100' in length and 12' in width to accommodate finishers.

Individual finishes are ranked by time after races finish and team results are merged.