



2020-2021

MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

Girls Volleyball

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.

- Start date: September 28
- First competition date: October 8 (including lower levels)
- Last date of regular season competition: November 28
- First date of Post-Season Play: November 30
- Season end date: Saturday, December 12
- Total weeks including postseason: 11
- Duals only. No Invitationals or tournaments
- Opponents: Conference, Section, local teams only
- Maximum number of contests: 14 (regular season)
- Maximum number of matches per week: 2*

*Board Policy allows schools to schedule 3 matches, per week, during the last two weeks of the regular season due to COVID-19 or weather-related postponements. The last week of the volleyball regular season falls during a shortened week due to the Thanksgiving Holiday. Therefore, schools may schedule 3 matches, per week, **during the last two full weeks of the volleyball regular season: the weeks of November 9th and November 16th.**

- 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 students and coaches.
- Athletic 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.
- Interscholastic scrimmages will not be allowed.
- No captain's practices should be held.
- 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 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 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-athlete 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 court space does not allow student-athlete 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-athlete 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. 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 students regarding social distancing and other safety protocols.
10. Team celebrations or congratulations should be no-touch and should be done with appropriate social distancing.
11. Spectators are not allowed at volleyball matches.

MSHSL Volleyball 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. • Team huddles may not take place prior to play unless student-athletes and coaches are wearing masks. • Leave the court as soon as reasonably possible upon the conclusion of practice. • Wash your hands thoroughly or use a hand sanitizer after coming off the court. • No social activity or congregation of students should take place. • Showers should not be utilized after practice.
Equipment	
Required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volleyballs 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 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.
Recommendations and Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean frequently touched objects and areas. • Student-athletes' bags shall be placed 6 feet apart.
Competition	
Masks/Face Coverings	
Required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masks must be worn by coaches at all times. • Masks must be worn by student-athletes who are not actively participating in practice or in a match. • Use of the locker rooms must take place in pods (Varsity, JV, Sophomore, B-Squad, C-Squad) that do not exceed 25.
Official's Uniform	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloth face coverings are required. • Officials must enter the school wearing face coverings. • In addition to the gray polo shirts, short or long-sleeved, all-white collared polo shirt/sweater are permissible. (Rule 5-3-1 NOTES 2) • Electronic whistles are permissible. (Rule 5-3-2a, b) Electronic whistles are recommended but not required. • Whistle must be utilized under the mask if an electronic whistle is not used. • Whistle coverings are permissible and recommended. • Gloves are permissible.

Site Set Up	
Required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bench personnel should observe social distancing of 6 feet. Recommend to place tape or other marks 6 feet apart on the floor • Benches and chairs may be utilized if social distancing is possible. • Teams will remain on their side of the court and will not switch sides between sets. Home team will select the side for their match. • The scorer's table is limited to essential personnel. Social distancing must be adhered to by all personnel and masks must be worn at all times. • Essential personnel are defined by the host school. More information is included in the MDE Guidelines. • Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential personnel and may not sit at the official scorer's table. An alternative location should be provided by the home team.
Pre-competition	
Required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit attendees at pre-match conference to one coach from each team, first referee and second referee. • Move the location of the pre-match conference to center court with one coach and one referee positioned on each side of the net. • Handshakes may not occur prior to and following the pre-match conference. • All four individuals will maintain a social distance of 3 to 6 feet. • The coin toss will be conducted by the official who is the owner of the coin. This individual will handle the coin. • Roster submission will not take place at the pre-match conference. Rosters will be submitted directly to the officials' table before the 10-minute mark. • Teams will remain socially distanced on their sideline for the playing of the National Anthem. • Starting student-athletes will take their place on the court immediately following the national anthem. • Team introductions may take place and should look different, i.e.; starting line-ups only. Social distancing must be maintained. • Game balls should be sanitized between games. It is the home team's responsibility.
Competition	
Required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officials work together to limit the use of the whistle when recognizing a request for a substitution. Use when necessary. • Maintain social distancing of 3 to 6 feet between the second referee, the student-athlete and the substitute by encouraging substitutions to occur within the substitution zone closer to the attack line. Student-athletes should not come in contact with one-another during the substitution process. • Face coverings are permissible on the court during play. (Rule 4-1-4) • Gloves are permissible. (Rule 4-1-1) • Teams should not huddle between points during the set.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social distancing must be maintained during time-outs. • Line judges may be utilized at all levels and are considered essential staff and do not count toward the maximum number of occupants if they remain separate from the spectator community. • Masks must be worn by line judges and social distancing must be maintained. It is recommended that the same adult line judges work both the varsity and JV matches on a given day. • Competitive pods (Varsity, JV, B-Squad, C-Squad teams) may remain in the gym for other competitive pod matches as long as masks are worn and they are separated from spectators by a minimum of 12 feet.
Post-Match	
Required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-game handshakes may not occur. • Teams should remove trash and belongings from their bench area. • Team post-game meetings should be brief and should observe social distancing. • Masks must be worn during post-match conversations by all. • Referees' post-game meetings should be brief.
Recommendations and Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaches and student-athletes should consider other ways to show post-game appreciation for opponents and officials.