



2020-2021

MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

Gymnastics

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: December 7, 2020
- First competition date: December 24, 2020
- Last date of regular season competition: February 27, 2021
- End date: March 13, 2021
- Total weeks including postseason: 14
- 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 triangular meets only
- Opponents: Conference, Section, local teams only

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 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.
- 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

COVID Related Guidance:

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 players 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 practice space does not allow players 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, players 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.

MSHSL Gymnastics Guidance and Information

Practice	
Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student-athletes should wear masks/face coverings when entering and leaving the gym, and during any team/small-group meetings. • Coaches should wear masks/face coverings at all times. • Pods must be no larger than 25. Pods include players, coaches, and managers.□ • The size of the practice facility determines the number of pods that can be in the practice facility at the same time. To determine how many pods can practice at the same time, consideration should be given to not exceed 25% capacity of the facility. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Example: If 25% capacity is 40 individuals, a team could create one pod of 25 athletes and an additional pod of 15 athletes, and those two pods could occupy the gym at the same time while remaining distanced from one another. Or to

minimize exposure, it may be safer to create two pods of 20, or three pods of 13. Additional athletes above the 25% capacity number would need to practice at a different time.

- Smaller pods of gymnasts who always rotate together should be created.
- Physical distancing of at least 6 feet should be maintained at all times, except when a coach is spotting a gymnast.
 - If community chalk bins/bowls are provided, only one gymnast using bin at all times.
 - Warm-up tumbling lines should be spaced out; lines can alternate perpendicularly instead of all going the same direction.
 - Gymnasts must remain physically distanced when waiting for equipment.
 - No hugging, handshakes, fist bumps.
 - If floor exercise area does not allow enough space for physical distancing, include other areas for general stretch (vault runway, beam/bar mats, etc.)
- Coaches are not restricted from spotting a gymnast for safety.
- Hand sanitizer should be available and used when entering the gym.
- Coaches should use sanitizer between rotations, even if staying on the same equipment for the next rotation.
- Eliminate conditioning/stretching activities that require student-athletes to touch partners.
- Use water to moisten grips (no spitting on grips).
- Student-athletes must wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing). Individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout.
- Practice flow throughout the gym shall minimize group interaction during transition times.
- No social activity or congregation of students should take place.

Recommendations and Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gymnasts are not recommended to wear masks/face coverings during any equipment practice, aside from dance or non-tumbling training. If the mask comes loose while upside down, it could interfere with vision and affect safety. • Masks/face coverings are strongly recommended for student-athletes during periods of no tumbling/rotating – stretching, dance, light conditioning, etc. • Student-athletes are encouraged to use hand sanitizer between rotations. • Disinfectant wipes for personal use on feet should be considered. • Gymnasts are strongly recommended to carry their own personal supplies in a bag: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strongly consider personal chalk options to minimize congregating. Gallon-size Ziploc bag or small plastic container with personal supply of chalk • Travel-sized spray bottle for spraying grips • Commonly shared/used first aid kit items, such as pre-wrap, athletic tape, fingernail clippers • To limit spotting, coaches should consider alternative teaching and training methods when it does not put gymnast safety at risk. • When feasible, create smaller pods within the team, so the same gymnasts rotate with one another daily to limit exposure. • Leave the facility as soon as reasonably possible upon the conclusion of practice. • As feasible, cross-train staff on spotting techniques or other specialties to be prepared for a possible quarantine or illness of a coach.
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Equipment/Gym Set Up	
Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand sanitizer needs to be placed in easy-to-access areas, including at the entrance/exit. • Contact equipment manufacturers for specific instructions on proper cleaning protocol for their equipment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment needs to be cleaned often, in accordance with equipment manufacturer recommendations. This may be as frequent as before or after each practice. • Spieth Equipment • AAI Equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ AAI Cleaning Tips ○ AAI Vinyl Mats and Shapes ○ AAI Suede Beams and Vaults • Sanitize frequently touched areas/items at least daily, including music equipment, first aid/supply kit, drawer/cabinet pulls, stopwatches, etc.

<p>Recommendations and Considerations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When feasible, equipment should be cleaned between rotations. • When feasible, a limited number of people should handle often-touched equipment/items. For example, have a couple coaches and student-athletes handle spotting blocks, springboards, etc., instead of everyone handling their own. • Create and post a map of your gym showing how each activity in the space can maintain physical distancing, and share with team. • Rearrange or remove extra equipment if needed to create additional space. • Remove or repair mats or shapes that are torn to the foam, as exposed foam cannot be sanitized.
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Locker Room Use

- Whenever possible it is recommended that locker rooms not be used.
- If locker rooms are to be used:
 - Student-athletes must maintain social distancing of 6 feet
 - Student-athletes must wear an appropriate mask/face covering
 - If the locker room is not large enough to provide appropriate social distancing of 6 feet for the entire pod, then the pod must be divided into smaller groups that allow proper social distancing.
 - The locker room must be sanitized after the complete pod has exited
- If students are in distance learning they should arrive at school for practice dressed for practice
- If students are in distance learning they should arrive at school dressed in uniform ready for competition.
- It is recommended student-athletes do not shower at school after practice or competition and instead shower at home. However, if showers are to be used;
 - Student athletes must maintain social distancing of 6 feet
 - If the locker room is not large enough to provide appropriate social distancing of 6 feet for the entire pod then the pod must be divided into smaller groups that allow proper social distancing.
 - The locker room must be sanitized after the complete pod has exited

Competition	
Competition Planning	
Recommendations and Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varsity/JV meets may be run concurrently if maximum capacity is not exceeded. Some competition spaces may be large enough to accommodate both schools' full squads simultaneously. Space restrictions at other competition spaces may require the meet to divide Varsity and JV into separate sessions, or each school into its own session. • Multiple Triangulars or Duals may occur during a single day at a single site. All teams competing on that day can be scored against each other with the same judges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No more than 2-3 schools and their spectators in a building during a time slot, with measurable cleaning breaks between sessions. • If teams are arriving for the second portion of a competition, they should not enter the venue until the previous teams have left and appropriate spaces have been sanitized. • If travel is not possible or desired, teams could host two-site meets – having the same judges come to one site and judge one team, and then travel to the other site and judge the other team. This could be done on the same day, or separate days. The same judges should be used, due to the subjective nature of judging.

Masks/Face Coverings	
Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masks/face coverings must be worn by coaches, staff and other team personnel at all times. • Masks/face coverings must be worn by student-athletes who are not actively participating in an event. If not competing on an event during that rotation, gymnasts must be masked. • Judges are required to wear masks/face coverings at all times. <p>The following are considered appropriate mask/face coverings— paper or disposable masks, cloth masks, or neck gaiters. Face coverings at contests are limited to neutral or school colors. These may include only the school names and/or mascot. The manufacturer's logo, if present, may not be larger than 2 inches by 2 inches.</p>
Equipment	
Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment should be cleaned before and after meet.
Recommendations and Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When feasible, equipment should be cleaned between rotations.

Site Set Up

<p>Required</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See MSHSL Facilities and Event Management • Hand sanitizer needs to be placed in easy-to-access areas, including at the entrance/exit. • Team seating areas should be planned in advance to allow adequate space for social distancing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine if there is room for non-competitors to rotate to each event with the competitors, or if they need to stay in a general team seating area. • Communicate team seating expectations with visiting teams before their arrival. • Plan for a physically distanced area for judges when they arrive. • Communicate chalk expectations with visiting team ahead of time – whether or not there are common chalk containers. • If webcasting/filming, plan where camera personnel will be positioned and communicate ahead of time. They should be physically distanced away from teams and judges. • Use signage to facilitate meet management. See Signage for Facilities and Events. • If spectators are allowed, the number of spectators must be based on State guidelines for facility capacity, physical distancing, and mask requirements. There must be a restricted area to keep spectators away from competitors, officials, and meet personnel. See MSHSL Facilities and Event Management.
<p>Recommendations and Considerations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the needs of meet personnel and reduce the number whenever possible. • May need to add additional table space at scoring/management table to allow for social distancing. • For schools with small gyms, coaches should brainstorm with administrators about alternative options for meet hosting: moving a couple events into an auxiliary gym, renting another local gym for one or two home meets in order to have fans, running varsity and JV as separate sessions, etc. • Communicate policies/procedures with visiting team ahead of time including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrance information • Information about where to store items that are not needed during practice/competition (coats, bookbags, etc).

Warm-Ups/March-In	
Required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If march-in/team introductions are held, student-athletes must be in masks/face coverings and remain physically distanced. Teams will remain distanced for the playing of the National Anthem.
Recommendations and Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider warming up in competition leotard to reduce the number of student-athletes who need changing facilities simultaneously. • Depending on size of teams, each team may need their own time for general stretching, instead of both teams sharing the floor exercise mat. Consider expanding stretching areas to other areas of the gym when feasible (on panel mats, dismount mats, vault runway). • Instead of traditional march-in, teams are encouraged to report directly to first event for the playing of the National Anthem. • Teams are encouraged to introduce student-athletes prior to each competitive rotation, instead of during a traditional march-in.
Competition	
Required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No handshakes, hugging, fist bumps. • Wipe down frequently touched areas/items between rotations, including score flashers, music equipment, stopwatches, etc. • Judges shall bring their own supplies, including pencils, calculator, water bottle, etc. • Individuals to flash scores should be selected from those who are already part of the competition teams or managers. (Do not add additional individuals to the space just to flash scores.) Judges can also opt to flash their own scores. • Event timer should be selected from those who are already part of the competition teams or managers. (Do not add additional individuals to the space just to flash scores.) Judges can also opt to time routines while judging, if feasible.
Recommendations and Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit passing of paper whenever possible. • If judges use same table/chair as another judge previously, it should be cleaned between rotations. • Judges should limit post-routine conferences as much as possible. Judges may opt to conference at the end of each rotation to minimize interaction amongst judges. Scores will be changed as necessary on the official score card. • Student-athletes can opt to wear tight-fitting leg coverings or arm coverings without an official MSHSL letter. • Gymnasts can wear gloves, but consideration should be given to safety; gymnasts should only wear gloves for meets if they also practice and warm-up with gloves.

Post Competition	
Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspend post-competition handshakes/hugs. • Teams need to clean team areas completely so they are free of all trash and belongings. • At the completion of the meet, judges will remain at their desks. The score table personal will deliver the meet results to each official for verification. The judges will sign the documents and the documents will become the final official copy for the meet.
Recommendations and Consideration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any individual award ceremonies should be eliminated or abbreviated. Teams can recognize individual performances at their next practice. • Teams' post-competition meetings should be brief (leave venue asap). • Judges' post-competition meetings should be brief (leave venue asap).

NFHS Official Rules Considerations:

Rule 3-3 Modification: Gymnasts can opt to wear tight-fitting leg coverings or arm coverings without an MSHSL letter. Gymnasts can wear gloves, but consideration should be given to safety; gymnasts should only wear gloves for meets if they also practice and warm up with gloves.