The Minnesota State High School League is focused on providing safe and healthy opportunities and experiences for the students and adults who participate in our activities. Keeping all participants (students, coaches, officials and others) healthy is critical and important. As the governing organization for interscholastic high school programs and competitions, the Minnesota State High School League provides the following requirements and recommendations for MSHSL member schools as they implement COVID-19 plans at the local level.

Please Note: MSHSL Member Schools or venues in which contests are held may have additional requirements for health and safety. All students, coaches, officials, spectators and other personnel must comply with these requirements.

**Summary of Requirements:**

- Masks must be worn on any public transportation including school transportation.
- Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 cannot participate in interscholastic in-person competition until all three of these things are true:
  - They have had no fever for at least 24 hours, without using medicine that lowers fever, and,
  - It has been at least 10 days since they first experienced symptoms or tested positive, and,
  - The symptoms of cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms are better.
  
  (Day 1 is the earlier of the first day of symptoms or the day of the test. Student is eligible for competition on Day 11 if all three conditions have been met.)

**Recommendations and Requirements:**

Use layered prevention strategies--multiple preventative strategies--to minimize the risk of viral transmission.

- **Vaccines**
  - Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), the Center for Disease Control (CDC) the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) and the MSHSL, in alignment, strongly recommend vaccination for all students, staff and others that are eligible for vaccination.

- **Masks**
  - Universal indoor masking for all students, staff, teachers, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status is strongly recommended.
  - Masks/face coverings are strongly recommended and encouraged in activities when individuals are not active in participation or competition.
  - The wearing of masks indoors is also of great benefit in limiting the spread of other respiratory infections.

- **Physical Distancing**

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• Maintain at least six feet of distance between people whenever possible and limit the amount of time of possible exposure to another individual. This includes participants, coaches, and spectators in both indoor and outdoor settings.

• Cohorts/Pods
  • Keeping participants in smaller pods that practice and compete together is recommended.

• Return to Participation
  • It is highly recommended that any student-athlete who has tested positive for COVID-19 follow the “Graduated Return to Sport Protocol” that is provided by the Minnesota State High School League and the MSHSL Sports Medicine Advisory Committee.

• Notification and Exposures
  • Notifying all other individuals within a team or a pod of positive cases is strongly recommended.
  • Any individual who has exposure to an individual who tests positive for COVID-19 is strongly recommended to follow these protocols:
    ▪ If fully vaccinated, test for COVID-19 5 – 7 days after the exposure and monitor symptoms.
    ▪ If not fully vaccinated, quarantine or isolate themselves, test for COVID-19 immediately, monitor symptoms closely and test again at least 3 -5 days after the last exposure. Continue to monitor for at least 14 days after most recent exposure.

• Screening
  • Student-athletes, coaches, and team personnel should confirm that they are symptom free. These confirmations should be aligned with the CDC’s “Coronavirus Self-Checker” or current recommendations.
  • A record should be kept of all student-athletes and team personnel at each practice session to allow for contact tracing and notification purposes.

• Testing
  • Students and staff who are not vaccinated should get tested regularly; particularly if involved in group activities, such as athletics or clubs. (CDC) It is recommended to test at least once per week.
  • Testing teams regularly will provide the greatest opportunity to address positive cases and keep COVID-19 from spreading.

• General Hygiene Practices
  • Promote regular handwashing and/or use of hand sanitizer.
  • Participants should use individual water bottles.
  • Clean equipment and uniforms consistently and frequently.
  • High touch areas should be cleaned and disinfected frequently.
  • When showers are not available for post-practice or post-competition, the use of soap and water wipes is strongly recommended as an alternative. This is especially important when physical contact has been part of practice or competition.
  • Equipment should not be shared to the extent that it is possible. When equipment is shared it should be cleaned and disinfected frequently.
  • No-touch distribution and collection methods of equipment and other items are strongly encouraged.
Staying home when sick, getting tested, and returning to school and participation:

- Staying home when sick with symptoms of COVID-19 is essential. Testing for those with symptoms is highly recommended.
- See information under Notification and Exposures (above) regarding close contacts and recommended testing.

Use of indoor spaces:

- When indoor spaces are used, keep participants in small groups using cohorts/pods.
- Increasing and maintaining air circulation is strongly recommended.
- The size of the indoor space should accommodate the size of the cohort/pod and allow for physical distancing.
- The use of showers is acceptable if physical distancing can be observed.
- The amount of time in small, enclosed spaces should be kept to an absolute minimum.

Practice:

- Develop cohorts or practice pods which are smaller in size and consistent in members.
- Avoid large grouping of student-athletes at all practices and games to the extent possible.
- Stagger start times for practices and team meetings.
- Non-essential personnel or spectators are not recommended at practices.

Interscholastic scrimmages/competitions:

- Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 cannot participate in interscholastic in-person competition until all three of these things are true:
  - They have had no fever for at least 24 hours, without using medicine that lowers fever, and,
  - It has been at least 10 days since they first experienced symptoms or tested positive, and,
  - The symptoms of cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms are better.

(Day 1 is the earlier of the first day of symptoms or the day of the test. Student is eligible for competition on Day 11 if all three conditions have been met.)

- Spectators should be separated from the playing surface. The recommended distance is 12 feet.
  - Spectators should not be on the playing surface until the officials have left the visual confines of and the teams have had the opportunity to exit the playing surface.
- Pre- and post-game practices should not include physical contact. This includes eliminating handshakes at either time and any other physical contact between opposing teams. No-touch methods for practicing good sportsmanship should be employed.
- Facilities/Venues/Schools should share site-specific requirements for competitions with contest participants and guests. This includes opposing teams and officials.
- Competition with out-of-state schools is not recommended and the distance between two schools in different states should be limited to 50 miles between the competing schools.
- Team introductions may take place using methods that maintain physical distancing.
- Physical distancing should be used when addressing contest officials with questions or seeking interpretations.
- Minimize game personnel to essential staff only.
- Non-contest exhibitions or performances are not recommended.
Off-court and off-field activities:

• Off-court and off-field activities such as team meals, team bonding activities, etc. are not recommended. If held, they should be limited in size, duration and employ transmission mitigation strategies including holding them outdoors or in large venues and employing masking and physical distancing.

Transportation:

• Masks must be worn on any public transportation including school transportation.
• Physical distancing while transporting is recommended.

Resources:

Best Practice Recommendations for COVID-19 Prevention in Schools for the 2021-22 School Year MDH (9/2/21)
Requirement for Face Masks on Public Transportation Conveyances and at Transportation Hubs CDC (6/10/21)
Reportable Disease Rule (Communicable Disease Reporting Rule) Minnesota Administrative Rules CHAPTER 4605, COMMUNICABLE DISEASES
Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools CDC (11/5/21)