

MASSACHUSETTS YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION



Reopening Massachusetts Return to Soccer Activities

Coaches Toolkit

Updated July 29, 2020





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Guidelines and Responsibilities

Massachusetts Youth Soccer is dedicated to protecting the health of all people in and outside of our community. In an effort to assist our players, coaches and parents with their efforts to return to play after the recent suspension of activities, due to COVID-19, Massachusetts Youth Soccer has put together the following guidelines for our affiliate members to use. Given the nature of this pandemic, this framework may change at any time based on the most recent CDC and or Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) guidelines. Please keep in mind that local municipalities may have additional guidelines in place that will need to be adhered to. Once this order has been relaxed, please be aware that individual counties and jurisdictions may have additional restrictions in place that affect your decisions.

The information contained in this document is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. All content, including text, graphics, images, and information, are provided for general informational purposes only.

Prior to Soccer Activities

- ☐ **REQUIRED:** Read, understand and become familiar with the **Massachusetts Youth Soccer Association COVID-19 Return to Soccer Activities Guidelines** ([Located on the Return to Soccer Activities Webpage](#))
- ☐ Make sure you are fully registered, affiliated and compliance approved. Your organization's Risk Manager or Registrar should have this information.
- ☐ Confirm you have permission to use the fields (facility, complex, park, school, etc.) prior to scheduling any practices.



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Coaching a Training Session:

Step 1: Player Contact - Every Practice:

- ☐ Send an email regarding the date time and location of the practice session.
- ☐ Understand that there may be parents/guardians who may not be ready to have their child return to activities at this time.
- ☐ Request that each player bring a dark and light shirt to eliminate the need of shared scrimmage vests.
- ☐ Create a list of expected attendees to keep track of attendance. (Use of Apps such as TeamSnap or TeamApp is encouraged to assist with Contact Tracing if required)

Step 2: Prior to arrival at the practice location:

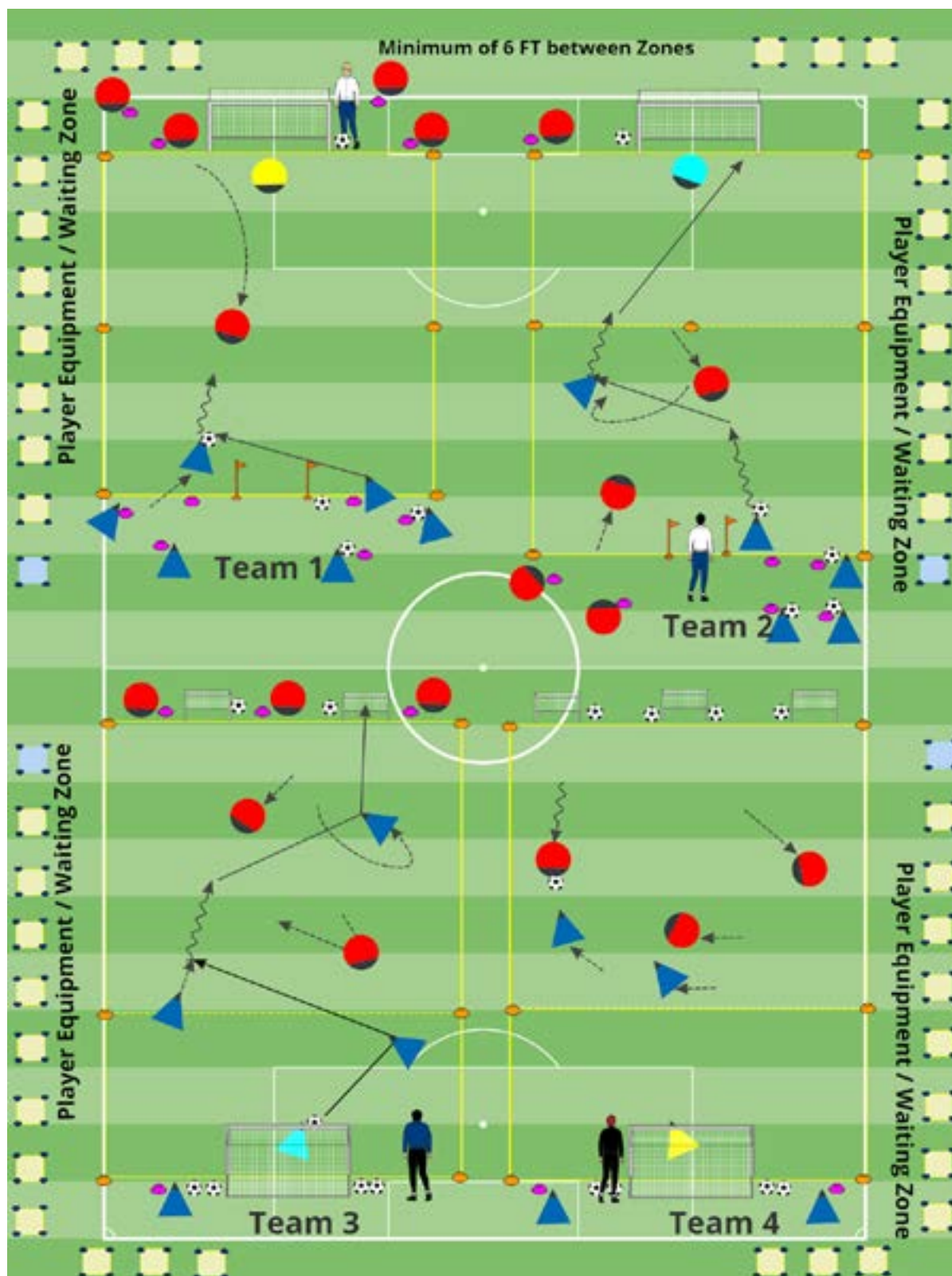
- ☐ Obtain necessary cleaning, disinfecting and personal protective equipment supplies.
- ☐ Understand some parents/guardians may require their child to wear a face covering. If so, it should be a face covering which attaches around the ears so as not to cause any injury if accidentally tugged or pulled on. No around the head or neck face coverings permitted during play.
- ☐ Select, read and understand the age appropriate Training Session Plan that you are going to use. For Massachusetts Youth Soccer Training Session Plans: [Click Here](#).
- ☐ Take inventory, clean and disinfect all coaching equipment to be used.

Step 3: Upon arrival at the practice location:

- ☐ If possible set up the field to deliver the practice session. (Start with the end in mind.)
- ☐ As Players arrive, inquire how athletes are feeling, send them home if you believe they are acting or look ill.
- ☐ Assign each player to a designated “waiting area”.
- ☐ Create a designated “Player Equipment Area”.
- ☐ Remind the players regarding - No handshakes, fist or elbow bumps or any other physical contact.



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Step 4: During the practice activity:

- ☐ Throughout the practice, during breaks for water encourage proper hygiene, washing hands frequently with soap and water or hand sanitizer, for at least 20 seconds at a time. Use alcohol based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol). Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or sleeves, do not use your hands. Do not touch your face (eyes, nose, mouth with unwashed hands). Follow all state and local health protocols.
- ☐ Ensure the health and safety of all athletes. Coach is to be the only one to handle cones, discs, goals etc.
- ☐ Ensure all athletes have their individual equipment. (Ball, water bottle, GK Glove etc.)
- ☐ Ensure player's personal belongings (bags, coats, sweatshirts) remain in their personal space and are kept physically distanced from the belongings of others. Do not allow sharing of personal items.
- ☐ Do not allow shared team snacks.
- ☐ Coaches wear a face covering, at all times and abide by the physical/social distance requirements from players and parents.
- ☐ **STAY POSITIVE** – Players and parents will be looking to you to remain calm and supportive during this transition time.

☐ Step 5: At the conclusion of the practice session:

- ☐ Monitor Players as they exit the playing area.
- ☐ Ensure Social Distancing is adhered to and that PPE is being worn.
- ☐ Ensure that each player is picked up by their parents or guardian.
- ☐ Ensure that all social distancing is maintained for players waiting for their ride to arrive.
- ☐ Remind the players to clean and disinfect their individual equipment when they arrive home.

Step 6: Post Practice Session:

- ☐ Clean and disinfect all equipment.
- ☐ Launder any and all clothing worn during the practice session.
- ☐ Communicate with Parents and request that you are alerted if any players may have been in contact with COVID-19
- ☐ Reflect on the Players Performance
- ☐ Reflect on your Performance.
- ☐ Plan for the next practice session.



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Coaching Games: Phase III - Step 1 - Soccer Classification - Moderate Risk:

Moderate Risk - Sports or activities that involve intermittent contact, but with protective equipment or mitigating measures in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants (e.g., wearing masks, modifying play).

Examples: Baseball, softball, crew, sailing, track and field, running clubs, team swimming, volleyball, dance class, fencing, field hockey, no-contact lacrosse, soccer

Sports and activities included in the **Moderate Risk** category can participate in Level 1, 2 and 3 types of play.

Levels of Play:

- ☐ The following types of play are defined by level from least to greatest risk.
- ☐ Level 1: Individual or socially distanced group activities (no-contact workouts, aerobic conditioning, individual skill work, and drills)
- ☐ Level 2: Competitive Practices (Intra-team/group games, contact drills and scrimmages)
- ☐ Level 3: Competitions (Inter-team games, meets, matches, races, etc.)
- ☐ Level 4: Tournaments (Outdoor only) - **Not Permitted in Phase 3 Step 1 for Moderate Risk Sports.**

The Playing Surface:

- ☐ For team and group sports, **no more than 25 players or participants can be on a single playing surface/ area/court at any one time.** The number of coaches and staff should be limited. Larger playing areas and surfaces, such as athletic fields, tracks, facilities that have **multiple courts or playing areas, may be used by more than one group at one time, provided that adequate social distance and group separation can be maintained.**
- ☐ Competitions (Games): No more than **100 people including participants, players, coaches, volunteers, and spectators, in aggregate, in, on, or surrounding any surface/playing area at one time.** This is provided there is adequate space for all participants to maintain 6 feet of social distance at all times, recognizing that for some moderate risk sports intermittent contact may occur for players.
- ☐ For the purposes of competitions (games), the surface/ playing area is a full sized 11 v 11 soccer field.
- ☐ No more than 100 people, as described, may be on and surround a full sized 11 v 11 soccer field.
- ☐ If a full sized 11 v 11 field is parsed into two 9v9 fields or into four 7v7 configurations, the max is 100 around this entire area.
- ☐ If there are multiple small sized fields in a common area (no actual full sized 11 v 11 field marked), use the 100 people max per common area guideline.



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Involvement of Non Playing Participants:

- ☐ Coaches have always been responsible for the actions of their players, parents and spectators. This does not change
- ☐ Assign a team COVID Coordinator to help
- ☐ Coaches, staff, referees and other officials are required to wear facial coverings and maintain social distance of 6 feet at all times.
- ☐ Attendance must be kept for all activities including games
- ☐ Spectators must wear facial coverings and maintain six feet of social distance at all times.
- ☐ For the purposes of Competitions (Games), we suggest:
- ☐ Limit your spectators to one parent/guardian/chaperone per player
- ☐ Ask that grandparents not attend unless they are the player's guardian/chaperone
- ☐ If necessary, to accommodate spectators, use areas around the field other than just the spectator side. (See diagram below for spectator viewing areas)
- ☐ Make sure this is communicated to coaches, parents and referees.

The Players:

- ☐ If a parent prefers that their child wear a mask during games or practices permitting contact, make sure the mask is not considered "dangerous equipment" under the laws of the game. A mask or face covering that wraps around the head or head and neck (i.e. gaiter) will be considered dangerous equipment. A mask that fits over the ears only will be considered safe to wear.
- ☐ Upon arrival at the field players will be assigned to a designated waiting and equipment area that ensures physical distancing is maintained when not playing.
- ☐ Players who start the game as substitutes will remain in their designated waiting area and wear a face covering until they enter the field of play.
- ☐ Starting Players who are substituted will put on their face covering as soon as they enter their designated waiting area after leaving the field of play.



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During the Game:

- ☐ Throughout the Game, during breaks for water encourage proper hygiene, washing hands frequently with soap and water or hand sanitizer, for at least 20 seconds at a time. Use alcohol based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol). Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or sleeves, do not use your hands. Do not touch your face (eyes, nose, mouth with unwashed hands). Follow all state and local health protocols.
- ☐ Ensure the health and safety of all athletes.
- ☐ Coach is to be the only one to handle cones, discs, etc.
- ☐ Ensure all athletes have their individual equipment. (Ball, water bottle, GK Glove etc.)
- ☐ Ensure player's personal belongings (bags, coats, sweatshirts) remain in their personal space and are kept physically distanced from the belongings of others. Do not allow sharing of personal items.
- ☐ Do not allow shared team snacks.
- ☐ Coaches wear a face covering, at all times and abide by the physical/social distance requirements from players and parents.
- ☐ STAY POSITIVE – Players and parents will be looking to you to remain calm and supportive during this transition time.

At the conclusion of the Game:

- ☐ Monitor Players as they exit the playing area.
- ☐ Ensure Social Distancing is adhered to and that PPE is being worn.
- ☐ Ensure that each player is picked up by their parents or guardian.
- ☐ Ensure that all social distancing is maintained for players waiting for their ride to arrive.
- ☐ Remind the players to clean and disinfect their individual equipment when they arrive home.

Post Game:

- ☐ Clean and disinfect all equipment.
- ☐ Launder any and all clothing worn during the game.
- ☐ Communicate with Parents and request that you are alerted if any players may have been in contact with COVID-19
- ☐ Reflect on the Players Performance
- ☐ Reflect on your Performance.
- ☐ Plan for the next practice session based on your team's performance.

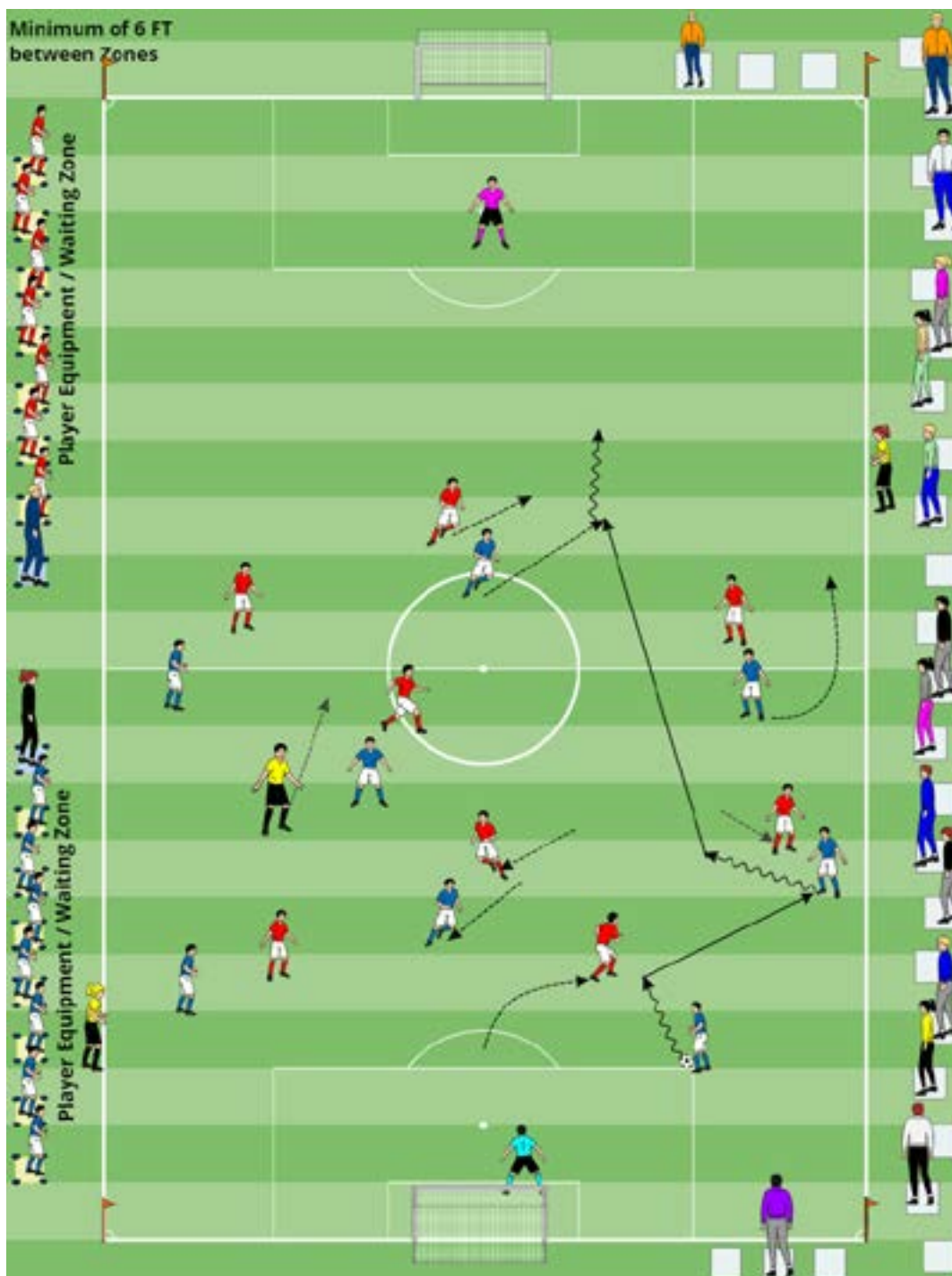


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Game Field Set up

Please note not all player waiting spots are depicted in the drawing below. Please allow one spot per player on your roster.





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Scheduling of Games:

- ☐ Schedule groups/teams with a minimum of 20 minutes in between the time one team concludes and the other arrives. Players must leave immediately after their session. Players should not arrive at their field earlier than 5 minutes prior to their scheduled start time.
- ☐ As much as possible keep groups to 4 teams for a 6 game schedule or to 6 teams max for an 8 game schedule.
- ☐ Utilizing a Home/Away format
- ☐ As much as possible limit travel distances for each group, for the purpose of limiting spread and to facilitate tracing if needed.

Resources

- [Reopening Massachusetts](#)
- [Center for Disease Control - Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)
- [CDC Considerations for Youth Sports](#)
- [CDC Guide to Mass Gatherings](#)
- [EPA Recommended Disinfectants](#)
- [WHO Handwashing Video](#)
- [FIFA COVID-19 Resources](#)
- [US Soccer Play On](#)
- [US Soccer Recognize to Recover - COVID 19 and Mental Health](#)
- [US Youth Soccer Return to Activity Notice](#)
- [Aspen Institute - Coronavirus and Youth Sports](#)
- [CDC Coping with Stress](#)