

Safe Play: Back to the Diamond

Youth Baseball/Softball COVID-19 Safety Guidelines



Mandatory

ARRIVING AND LEAVING THE VENUE

- **All participants must maintain six feet distance from any other person.**
- Practice and game start times must be staggered, so a team has left the field before the next team arrives.
- Whenever possible, everyone should enter and exit through designated areas that are different from each other.
- Prohibit gathering and congregating on and around fields.

PRACTICES JUNE 1

- **All athletes must maintain six feet distance, whenever possible, from any other person.**
- No more than one team per field for a practice.
- Players and coaches must be separated into pods of 25.
- Practice groups must maintain distance from each other and not mix during the entire duration.
- Practice balls must be sanitized before, during, and after each practice.

GAMES JUNE 24

- **All athletes must maintain six feet distance, whenever possible, from any other person.**
- Batting team must not take the field until the entire fielding team is off the field.
- Each team must provide their own balls for when they are the fielding team, and they must be sanitized each inning.
- During a game, participants must maintain six feet of separation in the dugout. Participants not able to be in the dugout will be lined up down their respective foul lines or behind the backstop with six feet of separation.

COACHES

- **Must maintain six feet distance from any other person.**
- **Repeatedly remind players not to touch their faces.**
- Up to four coaches, including one COVID-19 safety manager, permitted for a practice or game.
- Must conduct a daily symptom assessment and stay home if experiencing symptoms.
- No spitting, chewing gum or eating sunflower seeds.
- No sharing of food or drinks.
- No touch rule – coaches must refrain from high fives, handshake line, and any other physical contact with fellow coaches, opposing coaches, players, umpires, and spectators. A “tip of the cap” will be used as a salute to the opposing team to promote sportsmanship following the game.

Recommended Best Practices

- Participants should enter and leave the field in a timely fashion and not congregate.
- Team meetings should occur virtually or over the phone, rather than a team huddle.
- Hand washing or hand sanitizing, when soap and water is not available, is strongly recommended when arriving to and leaving the venue.
- Ridesharing should be kept at a minimum.

- Each team is responsible for bringing hand sanitizing products to practices.
- Each team should sanitize the dugout bench before, during, and after each practice.
- Hand sanitizing is strongly recommended during practices.
- When there is a play at a base, the runner and fielder should resume physical distance immediately upon completion of the play.

- Each team is responsible for bringing hand sanitizing products to games.
- Each team should sanitize the dugout bench before, during, and after each game.
- Hand sanitizing is strongly recommended during practices and games.
- When there is contact of any kind in the field of play, players should resume physical distance immediately upon completion of the play.
- If your concession stand is open, the people in line must maintain six feet of spacing.

- Each team is responsible for bringing hand sanitizing products to practices and games and use of sanitizer between innings is recommended.
- Coaches should ensure the players are adhering to social distancing in dugouts and other seating areas and wearing face coverings while not actively participating on the field of play.

Respect the game, respect the guidelines.

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Recommended Best Practices

ATHLETES

- **Must maintain six feet distance, whenever possible, from any other person.**
- No spitting, chewing gum or eating sunflower seeds.
- No sharing of food or drinks.
- No touch rule – players must refrain from high fives, handshake line, and any other physical contact with teammates, opposing players, coaches, umpires, and spectators. A “tip of the cap” will be used as a salute to the opposing team to promote sportsmanship following the game.

- Whenever possible, equipment and personal items should have proper sanitation and should not be shared. If equipment must be shared, proper sanitation should be administered between users.
- Batting gloves should be worn whenever possible, especially when handling a bat.
- Hand sanitizing is strongly recommended during practices and games.
- Wearing a face covering, when not actively participating in the field of play, is recommended.

FANS AND SPECTATORS

- **Must maintain six feet distance from any other person and stay in the designated spectator area outlined by the venue.**
- No fans or spectators allowed at practices.
- Must conduct a daily symptom assessment and stay home if experiencing symptoms.
- No sunflower seeds allowed.

- Face coverings are strongly recommended for all parents and spectators.
- Only one spectator per player is recommended at games. **(Subject to Change)**
- Hand washing or hand sanitizing, in the absence of soap and water, is strongly recommended during the games.

UMPIRES

- **Must maintain six feet distance from any other person.**
- Must conduct a daily symptom assessment and stay home if experiencing symptoms.
- Must avoid exchanging documents or equipment with any other person.
- Must officiate the game from behind the pitcher’s mound.
- No touch rule – umpires must refrain from physical contact with coaches, players, and spectators. A “tip of the cap” will be used as a salute to the teams to promote sportsmanship following the game.

- Face coverings are strongly recommended.

COMMUNICATION AND CONFIRMED CASES

- Each team must keep an accurate book of both teams including contact information. In the case of someone getting infected this document will be necessary for Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to perform contact tracing.
- Organizers must post these guidelines at their facilities, where applicable, and disseminate them to all coaches, umpires, players, and parents.
- Organizers must contact the MDH about any suspected case of COVID-19 or known exposure.

- These guidelines should be communicated to all organizers for dissemination to coaches, umpires, and parents and posted at facilities.
- Venue operators should post signage promoting physical distancing including directing foot traffic and outline spectator areas.
- Organizers should regularly communicate to their coaches, umpires, players, and parents that they should stay home should they be experiencing any symptoms.

Respect the game, respect the guidelines.