

STAGE 1: PROTOCOLS FOR YOUTH SOCCER IN TENNESSEE

MAY 16-31**



Tennessee State Soccer Association is dedicated to protecting the health and safety of all people. The purpose of this document is to provide athletes, parents, coaches, and member soccer organizations with information they can use to assist them in developing their return to training programs within the context of COVID-19. As guidelines meant to be used by athletes and member organizations with vastly different resources, this document cannot be prescriptive; rather, it should spark thoughtful deliberation among athletes, coaches, and staff, who will use the information to create their own unique return to training plan that is specific to their situation. Many of the recommendations rely upon rules and regulations set forth by public health authorities, which will be different across the state. In addition, there will be other logistical challenges of returning to training following COVID-19.

The information in this document is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. All content, including any text, graphics, images, and information, are provided for general informational purposes only. The knowledge and circumstances around COVID-19 are changing constantly and, as such, Tennessee State Soccer makes no representation and assumes no responsibility for the completeness of this information. Further, you should seek advice from medical professionals and/or public health officials if you have specific questions about your return to training and competition.

Youth soccer organizations considering resuming training on May 16th should have an operational plan in place to mitigate the risk of spreading COVID-19. The Governor's Executive Order No. 30 is still in place and would limit sessions to one (1) coach for every eight (8) players until May 29th. Given the changing pandemic environment, these guidelines are subject to change at any time. Most if not all cities and counties have a phased approach to reopening businesses and the easing of social distancing requirements which will vary across the state. Youth sports may not be a high priority for some local officials, and this may pose significant challenges for some member organizations. Member organizations must be aware of and adhere to all Federal, State, and Local guidelines and requirements.

Finally, although the young and healthy may be subject to less severe cases of COVID-19, every case of this disease is potentially life-altering or deadly, particularly in those with risk factors that may occur within our communities. Until COVID-19 is either eradicated, a vaccine is developed, or a cure is found, there is no way of eliminating the risk of infection. This should always be in the forefront when designing and considering your return to training program. The risks of participation must be clearly communicated with parents and participants in our respective programs. No one should ever be required to participate.

Youth soccer organizations should NOT engage in large events like tournaments, game competitions or tryouts. Participation in the program and travel should be limited to within the youths' own community and in keeping with CDC and Tennessee's guidance on limiting non-essential travel. Out-of-state travel for organized youth activities is currently not allowed. Our teams are not allowed to travel outside of the state. Player participants who reside in other bordering states should follow their own local and state guidelines regarding participation.

Youth organizations are encouraged to make plans available to staff, parents, and the youth they serve. Requirements for safe participation in the activities should also be posted on the organization's website and at the facility if possible. **Plans should include the following elements based on guidance from the State of Tennessee and as recommended by CDC.**

Resources:

- CDC recreational guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/parks-rec/index.html>
- EPA list of COVID-19 effective disinfectants: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>
- Caring for Our Children(CFOC) standards for cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting educational facilities for children: <https://nrckids.org/CFOC/Database/3.3>

****Dates are estimated targets with consideration to the Governor's Executive Orders. If there are changes to the orders, then updates will be made to this document.**

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YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD USE THE FOLLOWING PROTOCOLS AS THEY PREPARE TO OFFER ACTIVITIES ON MAY 16

Club Responsibilities:

- Create and distribute protocols to its members.
- Have an effective communication plan in place; identify strategies for working with public health to notify adult leaders, youth, and their families if the organization learns a participant or adult leader has developed COVID-19 and may have been infectious to others while at a youth activity, while maintaining confidentiality.
- Be sensitive and accommodating to parents that many be uncomfortable with returning to play too quickly.
- Have an action plan in place, in case of a positive test.
- Train and educate all staff on protocols and requirements, including state and local regulations, CDC recommendations, and other necessary information.
- Be prepared to shut down and stop operations. Develop plans for temporary closure of indoor facilities and cancel outdoor activities or camps to properly disinfect and ensure other adult leaders or youth are not infected.
- Provide adequate field space for social distancing.
- Provide hand sanitizing stations and waste receptacles at fields.
- Develop a relationship and a dialog with health local officials (identify Risk Tolerance).

Player Responsibilities:

- Wash hands thoroughly before and after training.
- Bring and use hand sanitizer at every training.
- Encouraged to wear mask before and immediately after all training.
- Do not touch or share anyone else's equipment, water, snack, or bag.
- Practice social distancing, place bags and equipment at least 6 feet apart.
- Wash and sanitize all equipment before and after every training.
- No group celebrations, no high 5's, hugs, handshakes, etc.

Coach Responsibilities:

- Ensure the health and safety of the athletes.
- Inquire how the athletes are feeling, send them home should you believe they act or look ill.
- Follow all state and local health protocols.
- Ensure all athletes have their individual equipment (ball, water, bag, etc.)
- Coach is the only person to handle cones, disk, etc.
- Encourage all training outdoors and ensure social distancing per state or local health guidelines.
- Encouraged to wear a face mask, when not actively coaching and maintain social distance requirements from players based on state and local health requirements.
- Have fun, stay positive – players and parents are looking to you to stay calm, supportive, and caring during this time.
- The use of scrimmage vest or bibs is not recommended at this time.

Parent Responsibilities:

- Ensure child is healthy, check your child's temperature prior to any training session.
- Limited or no carpooling.
- Stay in car or adhere to social distance requirements, based on state and local health requirements, when at training wear mask if outside your car.
- Ensure child's clothing is washed after every training session.
- Ensure all equipment, cleats, ball, shin guards, etc. are sanitized before and after every training.
- Notify club immediately if your child becomes ill for any reason.
- Do not assist coach with equipment before or after training.
- Be sure your child has necessary sanitizer with them at every training.

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