

COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for Minnesota Youth Rugby

MYR is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all our participants. To ensure we have a safe and healthy workplace, MYR has developed the following COVID-19 Preparedness Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. **Managers and workers Coaches and team administrators** are all responsible for implementing this plan. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 **on and off the rugby field,** and that requires full cooperation among our participants. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of all participants.

The COVID-19 Preparedness Plan is administered by MYR Board, who maintains the overall authority and responsibility for the plan. However, participants are equally responsible for supporting, implementing, complying with, and providing recommendations to further improve all aspects of this COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. MYR has our full support in enforcing the provisions of this plan.

Our participants are our most important assets. MYR is serious about safety and health and protecting our participants. Participant involvement is essential in developing and implementing a successful COVID-19 Preparedness Plan.

MYR's COVID-19 Preparedness Plan follows the industry guidance developed by the state of Minnesota, available at the Stay Safe Minnesota website (<https://staysafe.mn.gov>), which is based upon Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines for COVID-19, Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MNOSHA) statutes, rules and standards, and Minnesota's relevant and current executive orders.

MYR has reviewed and incorporated the industry guidance applicable provided by the state of Minnesota for the development of this plan, including the following USA rugby and World Rugby guidance Other conditions and circumstances included in the industry guidance and addressed in the plan that are specific include:

- additional protections and protocols for participants, referees, spectators, etc.
- additional protections and protocols for face coverings and personal protective equipment (PPE)
- additional protections and protocol for sanitation and hygiene
- additional protections and protocols for work clothes and handwashing
- additional protections and protocol for distancing and barriers
- additional protections and protocols for managing occupancy
- additional protocols to limit face-to-face interaction

Participant hygiene and source controls

Basic infection prevention measures are to be implemented for participants at all times. Participants are instructed to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water frequently throughout the day, but especially at the beginning and end practices, games, etc. Hand-sanitizer (that use sanitizers of greater than 60% alcohol) are to be used for hand hygiene in place of soap and water, as long as hands are not visibly soiled.

Participants and spectators are to be instructed to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing, and to avoid touching their face, particularly their mouth, nose and eyes, with their hands. Participants are expected to dispose of tissues in provided trash receptacles and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward.

Communications and training practices and protocol

This COVID-19 Preparedness Plan is communicated below to all participants on, and necessary training was provided. Additional communication and training will be ongoing by MYR.

Coaches and Administrators are expected to monitor these have been implemented. All coaches and administrators are to take an active role and collaborate in carrying out the various aspects of this plan.

Certified by:

MYR

02/09/2021

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 student-athletes and coaches.
- Athletic programs must follow the identified protocols for student-athletes 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.
- 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 MYR with supporting rationale. Any out of state competition must follow all 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 student-athlete violate the required physical distance with an official. Any coach or student athlete 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, MYR 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 USA Rugby have developed guidance and requirements related to youth sports, use of school facilities and modifications of activities designed to keep participants safe and reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Even with these measures, MYR cannot guarantee that student-athletes 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 MYR activities. It is a shared responsibility to protect everyone from COVID-19 and Participants should follow State/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 masks/face coverings 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 MYR activities and athletics has on student-athlete participants, it is imperative that student-athletes and families know and understand the following:

1. Participating in MYR activities is voluntary.
2. While participating in MYR activities, all laws as well as MYR 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 MYR 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.
5. Participant has signed a separate Eligibility Statement connected to general participation in MYR 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:

- MN Department of Health:
 - <https://health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/sportsguide.pdf>
 - <https://health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/k12planguide.pdf>
- Minnesota's Stay Safe Plan:
 - Stay Safe Plan: <https://mn.gov/covid19/stay-safe/stay-safe-plan/index.jsp>

- Guidance for Sports: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/sportsguide.pdf>
- USA Rugby Return to Play Guidelines:
 - <http://assets.usarugby.org/docs/medical/USAR-R2P.pdf?v=1603310619259>
- Administrator Preparation Checklist:
 - <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1c0rHbOycG6M-6Fk286tLIHjvp0iZi0eU/view>

COVID Related Guidance

1. Educate student-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 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 student-athlete have a specific place for their own bag, water bottle, etc.
 - One cone or marker should be assigned per student-athlete.
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 space does not allow student-athlete to come and go from separate areas.
7. Workouts should be conducted in "pods" –following current State Return-to-Play guidelines.
 - Pods are small groups of student-athletes always working out together. This will ensure limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
8. Whenever possible, student-athletes 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. Referees are not expected to monitor physical distancing: each person is responsible to provide space between themselves and others.
 - Coaches should provide direction to their student-athletes regarding social distancing and other safety protocols.

10. After match socials will not be allowed at this time.

PRACTICE	
Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance, Temperature checks & symptom checks on all participants upon arrival. All information should be documented & saved. • Hand sanitizer must be used by participants and coaches as they enter and leave practice. • Pods must be no larger than 25. Pods include players, coaches, and managers. • Masks/face coverings must be worn by coaches, staff, and other team personnel at all times. • Student-athletes must wear a mask/face covering when they are not actively participating in practice on the mat. • Avoid switching of training partners per day to limit transmission. • If multiple practice sessions are held daily the practice area must be sanitized between sessions. • Team huddles may not take place. • At the conclusion of practice leave the pitch as soon as reasonably possible. • Wash your hands thoroughly or use a hand sanitizer after. • No social activity or congregation of any participants should take place.
EQUIPMENT	
Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All equipment must be sanitized before/after each practice • All student-athletes must bring their own clearly labeled water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared. Drinking fountains may not be utilized. • Student-athletes must wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing) individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every practice.
Recommendations and Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean frequently touched objects and areas. • Student-athlete bags shall be placed 6 feet apart. • Provide hand sanitizer at all training facilities
COMPETITION	

Masks/Face Coverings	
Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masks/face coverings must be worn by all participants. We are currently requesting mask exemption for games. • Masks/face coverings must be worn by participants who are not actively participating in a contest. • Face shields are not allowed during competition. • The following are considered appropriate mask/face coverings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Paper or disposable masks, cloth masks, or neck gaiters.
Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bench personnel should observe social distancing of 6 feet. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recommend to place tape or other marks 6 feet apart on the floor. • Benches and chairs may be utilized if social distancing is possible. • Social distancing must be adhered to by all personnel and masks/face coverings must always be worn.
Pre-Competition	
Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance, Temperature checks & symptom checks on all participants upon arrival. All information should be documented & saved. • Visiting teams may not arrive more than one hour prior to match • Warmups shall be limited to 30 minutes for both teams. • Proper social distancing must be maintained during warmups. • Limit attendees at pre-match conference to one coach and one captain from each team, head referee and assistant referee (if applicable). • The pre-match conference will remain at the center of the field with one captain from each team positioned on each side of the referees(s). • Handshakes may not occur prior to and following the pre-match conference. • Coin toss will be conducted by the official who is the owner of the coin. • Participants must use hand sanitizer prior to competition. • Sanitization: Game Ball must be sanitized as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Before match ○ Half Time ○ End of Game
Recommended	Additional signage may be necessary to identify restricted spectator areas on both sides of the field.
Competition	
Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referees will have no contact with participants during competition. Zero Touching by the Referee. • Participants may not shake hands prior to each match start and at the conclusion. • Pre-match handshakes/fist bumps may not occur between participants. • Teams should not huddle before or after the match. • Social distancing must be maintained during half time, injury time, etc.
Post-Match	

Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-game handshakes may not occur. • Teams should remove trash and belongings from their designated area. • Team post-game meetings should be brief and should observe social distancing. • Masks/face coverings must be worn during post-match conversations by all. • All equipment should be sanitized.
Recommendations and Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No extra-curricular or social activity should take place after the match. Participants should consider other ways to show post-game appreciation for opponents and officials. To-Go meals is a great alternative to an after-match social. • Food, drinks, and towels should not be shared. • No congregation after competition. • All participants should leave the facility immediately after the team has completed the competition.

FAQ	
Can we have contact at practice?	Not at this time – subject to change depending on MN Department of Health and MN Stay Safe Plan.
Can we guest coaches?	Yes, but only if they have completed the World Rugby Covid-19 Education Module
If we don't start practices now, can we start later in the Spring season or summer?	Yes, we will allow teams to start practices when they feel comfortable.
Will we have games?	We do not know at this time. While we would like to say yes, we will be adhering to the Governors orders.
If my club decides not to participate this spring, can my players go and play with another team?	Yes, as long as teams are following the safe play protocols.
Can I schedule games out of state?	Please contact MYR to discuss further.
Do we have to wear masks during practice?	Yes – masks are required for players, staff, coaches, parents, etc.
Do we have to wear masks during games?	At this time, MYR is applying for a waiver for all outdoor games to allow player to not wear masks – We will notify all coaches once we have received details.
How many spectators are allowed to attend games per player?	Each player is allowed to have only the residents of their household attend games.
If rugby doesn't happen, do I get a refund from USA Rugby?	If you have already registered with USA Rugby for Spring 2021, you will not receive a refund. <i>*MYR fees will not be charged to any team until we know that we will have a spring season.</i>

What do I do if any of play players or staff get COVID-19?

See above for details on what to do as a coach/administrator. Also, please notify MYR immediately for awareness.