



NPJ Guidelines for COVID-19 (formerly titled “NPJ Indoor Return to Play Guidelines for COVID-19)

We all must follow the Governor’s current order and Oregon Health Authority (OHA) requirements related to COVID-19 and public safety. All our NPJ guidelines for COVID-19 exist so we can return to play responsibly and help maintain a practice environment and gym culture that minimizes the potential spread of the virus. All Participants must also sign our NPJ COVID-19 Waiver prior to participating in any NPJ organized program. NPJ employees, staff, coaches, contractors, representatives and volunteers must review and follow the [OHA General Guidance for Employers on COVID-19](#) and the [OHA Reopening General Guidance for the Public](#). (New guidelines issued after the time of this writing will be applied where applicable.)

Stay home if you/your athlete are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19. Avoid possible exposure to COVID-19 if you are at risk for severe complications (over age 60 or have underlying medical conditions) by staying home even if you feel well. Stay home if any of your household members have recently tested positive and if they are currently in a 14-day self-isolation period.

In accordance with the Oregon Governor’s current orders and Oregon Health Authority requirements, coaches, players, and trainers **are required to wear a mask, face shield, or face covering, when actively participating in an indoor sport or an outdoor sport when six (6) feet of physical distance cannot be maintained.** This includes any NPJ hosted program or event (“program” or “event” is meant to include any of the following: practice activity, lesson, camp, clinic, league, or tournament).

To participate in any NPJ hosted program or event Participants will be required to adhere to the statewide mask requirement. The new guidance by the Governor went into effect on Friday, July 24, 2020. The Statewide Mask, Face Shield, Face Covering Guidance can be found at the following link: <https://sharedsystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/1e2288K.pdf>

As of Friday, July 24, 2020:

- Children age 5 and up are required to wear a mask, face shield, or face covering.
- Face coverings are now required statewide when exercising indoors, plus outdoors when you can’t physically distance.
- People with a disability or medical condition may request reasonable accommodation from NPJ if they cannot wear a mask, face shield, or face covering.
 - **NOTICE:** It is well established that COVID-19 may be spread by individuals who do not have symptoms/do not feel sick. Therefore, to protect the health and safety of others, NPJ will not simply waive the face covering requirements at this time. We are, however, committed to providing other reasonable modifications and accommodations for disabled individuals in accordance with applicable public health and legal requirements. If you are an individual with a disability that impacts your ability to wear a face mask, covering or shield, please contact our Director of Volleyball, Mike Gee, at mikegee@npjvolleyball.org or call him at 925-899-7485 to discuss available reasonable accommodations.



- NPJ and its representatives want to be careful about limits on our ability to ask specific medical questions. However, we acknowledge that we might not be able to determine what reasonable accommodations are available if we do not know what the problem is or at least the scope of the problem. We are happy to work with those seeking accommodation, and we ask that we keep the conversation/discussion focused on what, if any other solutions may work to alleviate the problem caused for such individuals.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Considerations for Wearing Masks:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>

- CDC recommends that people wear masks in public settings and when around people who don't live in your household, especially when other [social distancing](#) measures are difficult to maintain.
- Masks may help prevent people who have COVID-19 from spreading the virus to others.
- Masks are most likely to reduce the spread of COVID-19 when they are widely used by people in public settings.
- Masks should NOT be worn by children under the age of 2 or anyone who has trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

Imaged taken from CDC website and accessed on 7/31/20

As a starting point, the Governor's current order and OHA requirements in Oregon provide the following key provisions:

1. For permissible sports play, leagues, coaches, players, and trainers **are required to:** "Wear a mask, face shield, or face covering, when actively participating in an indoor sport or an outdoor sport when six (6) feet of physical distance cannot be maintained in accordance with Statewide Mask, Face Shield, Face Covering Guidance."
2. Permissible face coverings include medical grade masks or, "a cloth, paper, or disposable face covering that **covers the nose and the mouth**" or a face shield, which is a "clear plastic shield that **covers the forehead, extends below the chin, and wraps around the sides of the face.**"
3. OHA has issued FAQ Guidance here:
<https://sharesystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/le2390e.pdf>

After careful consideration, NPJ believes that it is important that we preserve the competitive aspects of sport participation at our programs and events. After all, that is one of the main reasons for signing up to play in the first place. NPJ does not believe that we can implement reasonable modifications that would ensure participants maintain 6' (feet) of distance at all times, in which case participants would not be required to wear a face mask, face shield, or face covering, while



also preserving the competitive aspect of competition. This also extends to our philosophy on practice design, where competitive games or free play is designed-in to the practice session. Therefore, we must abide by the new statewide mask requirement. We would like to emphasize that this is a statewide requirement and that NPJ must act in accordance with the Oregon Governor's current orders and OHA requirements.

Please come prepared with 4-6 disinfecting wipes per session, and personal sanitizing spray or gel. We are adjusting to new protocols and want athletes to be aware that they could be asked to assist in wiping down balls & carts at the end of their session. Sanitizing spray or gel must be used prior to taking the court or entering the restroom.

Daily contactless temperature checks, reminders, and logs:

- Contactless temperature checks – players and coaches will be checked upon check-in.
- Daily reminders that the facility drinking fountain is for filling water bottles only. Drinking directly from the drinking fountain is prohibited. Please bring the appropriate amount of water. We want to avoid using the drinking fountain as much as possible. NO sharing of water bottles.
- Daily reminders that the only contact allowed is contact among participants/players needed to play the game. Players are encouraged to avoid making plays that would lead to physical contact with a teammate such as colliding with or brushing against each other. What we know is that it is more important than ever before, that players avoid unnecessary contact. Under our current modifications to the rules of play, there is never a time where players need to make physical contact with another player. Supportive, encouraging, and celebratory interactions must be sensitive of physical distancing guidelines. We want to emphasize the importance of extending these behavioral practices to all situations. For example, during a time out or when switching sides, players should keep their distance. When off or officiating, players, even teammates or partners, must watch their distance. Eliminating these seemingly little, innocent, or even insignificant contacts can play a much larger role in keeping our doors open and events happening. We all want to keep playing volleyball, so let us please do our part to ensure that we can keep it going.
- Daily reminders that players must refrain from handshakes, high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, hugs, and group celebrations like coming together and wrapping up. We will replace these interactions with air fives, air fist bumps, smiles and flying around/away from each other like airplanes.

Daily attendance logs will be kept assisting with contact tracing if necessary. It is important that we understand, accept, and support contact tracing efforts and the need for contacts to separate themselves from others who are not exposed. This is one way we can help protect friends, family, teammates, and coaches from future potential infections. We all need to take responsibility to follow the guidance from public health agencies.

- 1) Athlete/participant name
- 2) Date and practice, lesson, or session time
- 3) Team, group, or cohort



- 4) Name of contact if you are being dropped off or picked up by a person who you do not live with (e.g., a baby-sitter, relative that you do not live with, or a carpool or ride share situation). *This does not apply to teammates arriving together, in the same vehicle, for the purpose of attending the same practice or lesson. These athletes will be accounted for in the log already, therefore, this information would be redundant for contact tracing purposes. However, carpooling is not recommended if it can be avoided. If carpooling or ride sharing is the only option, then we remind you that statewide guidance like wearing a mask and watching your distance should still apply. Once an athlete's adult emergency contact info is on file, we no longer need to collect this information daily.*

We will be monitoring and increasing social distancing where possible. Reduced number of players allowed per half court will be regulated. As we phase into small group lessons and resume practices, we will start by limiting four (4) players actively participating on a side. Players waiting to rotate onto the court will be asked to stay at least six feet apart from other individuals. We will also adopt modified blocking rules and only allow blocking if players can maintain increased distancing than normal. For example, only permitting one single blocker to block and only against back row hitters, or in drills where hitters must stay five feet off the net when attacking.

Athletes will enter the premises through a designated entrance and exit through a designated exit. We will post signs to direct one-way flow of traffic. We will also stagger practices times to minimize large numbers of individuals arriving and exiting at the same time. Details for your specific facility location and program will be communicated separately.

If your athlete will not be attending makeup practices, but is interested in virtual online learning, please reach out to us and we will work with you. We will work to provide a level of personalized virtual online learning opportunities for athletes that will not attend makeup practices due to COVID-19. This is not meant to supplement missed practices due to high school scheduling conflicts or other similar circumstances. This is meant to serve those who may be inadvertently excluded from learning opportunities due to risk factors related to COVID-19.

Until further notice, parents and spectators will not be allowed in the facility for viewing purposes.

NPJ reserves the right to deny participation to anyone that does not meet or cannot agree to adhere to any of our written or verbal instructions. See signed NPJ COVID-19 waiver agreement.

The following information has been adopted from [USA Volleyball's Return to Play Guidelines May 2020](#) and [OHA Phase 2 Reopening Guidance – Recreational Sports, Limited Return to Play for Specified Sports](#).

The risk of transmitting the COVID-19 virus depends on a number of factors including:

- 1) Number of people in a location
- 2) Type of location (indoor versus outdoor)
- 3) Distance between people
- 4) Length of time at location
- 5) Level of protective equipment used (e.g. face coverings).



As general guidance, smaller groups are safer than larger; outdoor locations are safer than indoor; sports that can ensure distance of six (6) feet or more are safer than closer contact; and shorter duration is safer than longer. For most sports activities, this guidance assumes that use of face coverings while playing is not feasible, although they should be worn by players and spectators while on the side lines. Recreational sports directors and coaches need to consider all these factors as they plan to return to play.

Risk Categories – current volleyball activities are segmented into three types of risk categories:

- a. *Low Risk* – Individual skill development (passing drills, blocking, hitting, setting, serving, general fitness, strength training) at home (backyard, driveway, in-home), alone or with household members and with owned and sanitized equipment.
- b. *Medium Risk* – The above activities in public spaces alone or with household members; individual skill development with non-household members following the recommended physical distancing and sanitizing volleyballs.
- c. *High Risk* – Individual skill development with non-household members not following the recommended physical distancing & not sanitizing volleyballs. Participating in any team or group play.

Here is what NPJ will do to minimize risk as we return to play:

A. Before Activities

- Sanitize or disinfect the floors and frequently touched equipment (like volleyballs). Volleyballs will be sanitized after each session. Volleyball must be sanitized before they can be used for the next session. Frequently clean and disinfect high-traffic areas, and commonly touched surfaces in areas accessed by staff, coaches, and athletes. Ensure that restrooms are cleaned and disinfected prior to and after practices.
- Verify that venue staff, club staff and participants are symptom free for at least 14 days prior to any activity.
- Post signage clearly outlining our COVID-19 policies.
- Wear a face mask or covering unless an accommodation for people with disabilities or other exemption applies.
- Wash and sanitize hands often.
- Provide hand sanitizer for those who do not have their own.

B. During Activities

- Teach and monitor safe physical distancing expectations. Encourage players to avoid making plays that would cause them to collide, bump into, or otherwise come into unnecessary contact with someone else.
- When possible, balls will only be used by single team, group, or cohort and will not be shared across groups. Will work with coaches and adjust scheduling as needed to ensure that we are meeting the equipment sanitizing standards.
- Further modifications to drills, games, scrimmages, and activities will be implemented to reduce or eliminate situations where players repeatedly come into close contact. For example, only permitting a single blocker to block and only against back row hitters, or in drills where hitters must stay five feet off the net when attacking.



- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow if you cough or sneeze, and wash or sanitize immediately after.
- NPJ staff and coaches must wear a mask indoors unless an accommodation for people with disabilities or other exemption applies. Coaches might have to temporarily uncover their mouth to project their voice. It is for this reason that coaches must always stay at least six (6) feet away from athletes.
- Bring hand sanitizer (alcohol-based gel or spray that contains at least 60% alcohol) and disinfecting wipes.
- Properly dispose of your personal trash, single-use, or disposable items used.
- Keep a list of people you were in contact with during the activity.

C. After Activities

- Wash and sanitize your hands often.
- Do not touch your face, eyes, or mouth with unclean hands.
- Monitor your health and report any symptoms after every activity.
- Practice social distancing as often as possible.
- Wear a face mask when possible to reduce exposure to airborne particles.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow if you cough or sneeze.
- Wash and sanitize all gear, uniforms and apparel used during the activity.