

Folsom National Little League (FNLL)

COVID-19 Safety and Health Guidelines

The safety and health guidelines below are proposed additional measures to be taken before, during, and after a youth baseball conditioning session, practice and/or game. All other key prevention strategies outlined by the CDC, California Department of Public Health, and/or Sacramento County Department of Health Services will be followed in order to promote a safe return to play.

FNLL understands that we have a role to play in the health and the safety of our families, and it is the expectation that anyone associated with our league will read and adhere to the rules and restrictions as written. Failure to comply may result in removal of the family from our organization.

Throughout all phases, and until further notice, parents are required to check temperatures and assess wellness before attending practices or games. If a parent or player exhibits any of the conditions listed below, we will ask that the individual not attend a practice or game until evaluated by a medical provider and given clearance to do so:

- Active COVID-19 infection
- Known direct contact with an individual testing positive for COVID-19
- Fever (which is defined by a temperature of 100 degrees or more) or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Note: We understand that Sacramento is also an allergy-impacted area during all seasons, and this may complicate determining whether some of the symptoms above are due to allergies or a cold/flu/COVID-19. However, we will advise parents and caregivers to err on the side of caution in determining whether they or a player should attend a practice or game.

In the event of notification of a player or coach within FNLL has tested positive for Covid-19, we will close the fields temporarily for disinfecting and cleaning. No practices or games will be allowed during that time.

FNLL understands that updates to our safety and health guidelines may be necessary as the practice and game seasons progress. We will continue to partner with the City of Folsom to ensure that we provide a safe and fun environment for our players and their families.

Phased Approach for Return to Play

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Phase One: Conditioning/Practices Begin

Baseball is an outdoor sport with our participants occupying natural positions that are greater than social distancing standards. This will allow our teams to begin holding conditioning/practices.

- Smaller cohort sports groups (stable groups) will be created and limited to 10 players (not including coaches). The players in each of these cohort groups will be consistent.
- At no time with the cohort groups or the staff assigned to that group be allowed to intermingle or move between groups.
- Practices should be limited to coaches and players only. If a parent/guardian opts to stay and observe, they may do so from pre-designated areas, while keeping proper distancing from athletes and other parents/guardians.
- Masks or other PPE items are not required for players, coaches, umpires, or spectators during physical exertion. However, masks will be required outdoors in public spaces if unable to maintain the physical distance of six (6) feet from persons who are not members of the same household.
- If a player chooses to consistently wear a mask or face covering, the items cannot compromise their safety of participating in the game (such as obstructing their vision).
- We will require hand washing or use of hand sanitizer before allowing participation, directly after participation, and breaks will include hand washing or use of hand sanitizer during the session.
- The coaches of each cohort group will be responsible for sanitizing all sports equipment necessary for practice and drills for each cohort group after they are collected and before they are returned to circulation (example: baseballs). Coaches must not allow the shared sports equipment to intermingle or move between cohort groups.
- The minimum equipment necessary must be used for practices and drills. The league will provide the disinfecting equipment and the EPA-approved disinfectant to the coaches of each cohort group.
- Players within each cohort group will have separate and distanced designated areas for their personal equipment such as bags, gloves, bats, batting gloves, helmets, etc.

Phase 2: Games Begin

Once the cap on the number of persons at gatherings rises to 50, we would begin playing games. FNLL would still recommend that vulnerable populations continue to follow stay-at-home and other health and safety guidelines.

Team Personnel: The dugouts will be extended outside of the physical distance of the physical structure to behind the dugout and behind the backstop for both teams.

- This will allow players and coaches to socially distance throughout the game. This area will be reserved for players and coaches only.
- No more than 3-5 persons are permitted in the dugout at any given time (this is dependent on the size of the dugout). These individuals (players, coaches, or any combination) must maintain social distancing throughout the game. All other team personnel must practice social distancing in the extended area of the dugout as referenced above.
- It is recommended that players line up in their batting order behind the dugout/backstop area with a social distance of 6 feet apart. Coaches will provide visual markers distanced 6 feet apart for the players.
- Masks or other PPE items are not required for players, coaches, umpires, or spectators during physical exertion. However, masks will be required outdoors in public spaces if unable to maintain the physical distance of six (6) feet from persons who are not members of the same household.
- Players may wear masks or other PPE items if they choose, if the items do not compromise their safety of participating in the game (such as obstructing their vision).

Equipment: It is recommended that team personnel have access to hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes to be used before, during, and after games, whenever appropriate. Examples include but are not limited to: if/when coming in contact with any other players/coaches or shared equipment such as bases.

- Players will refrain from sharing equipment in general. This includes, but is not limited to bats, helmets, gloves, water bottles, and catcher equipment.
- Players will be encouraged to leave unnecessary equipment at home or in automobile. Each player should have their own designated area away from other players for their personal equipment.
- Each team will provide their own baseballs when on defense. Each team is responsible for switching out their baseballs each half inning.
- Each team should have a designated coach responsible for assisting with sanitization needs to prevent unnecessary cross contamination.

Game Protocol: All players and coaches must maintain social distancing guidelines during game play.

- At the pregame meeting and throughout the game, coaches and umpires will not be allowed to shake hands or have any physical contact with each other.
- Players and coaches are asked to refrain from high fives or any other gestures of celebration involving physical contact.
- Coaches are not required to exchange lineup cards. Instead, coaches are encouraged to exchange lineup information via text or email prior to the game.
- All scorekeeping will be done by team coaches or team parent/guardian via GameChanger.

- Hand and equipment sanitizing between innings is recommended.
- No “team” water jugs or shared hydration methods will be allowed.
- Coaches will stand 6 feet from players when coaching the bases.
- Spectators/fans/families should refrain from retrieving foul balls. A designated coach or volunteer from each respective team will retrieve foul balls.
- No food of any kind (including gum and sunflower seeds) can be consumed by players or coaches during the game.
- All players and coaches are always to refrain from spitting, including in dugout areas and on the playing field.
- If a player needs to use the restroom during the game, the player should maintain social distancing between the player and spectators. After washing hands and returning to the dugout, the player will apply hand sanitizer before resuming play.
- The catcher will be allowed to assume the normal catcher distance from home plate to prevent injuries that might be related to the catcher being distanced 6 feet away from the hitter.
- Players will retrieve their own bats after hitting. If a player is unable to do so because they are on base, the team’s designating coach will retrieve the player’s bat in a sanitary way.
- Umpires will have the choice of officiating the game 6 feet or more behind the pitcher’s mound **OR** from 6 feet behind the catcher while practicing social distancing with all players.
- Umpires will not handle baseballs and should remind players to retrieve extra baseballs from their designated coach.
- At the conclusion of the game, players and coaches will forego the traditional sportsmanship line. Instead we ask for each team or the manager from each team to line up on their respective foul line (socially distanced) and “tip their cap” as a salute to the other team to promote sportsmanship.

Spectators: Masks are recommended for everyone spectating; however, they would only be required if the CDC and/or the state or county requires them.

- Parents and spectators are advised to observe the game while maintaining social distance from other spectators outside of their own family members.
- It is highly encouraged that young children who are unable to understand and comply with the idea of social distancing do not attend the game.
- Parents and spectators are not allowed within 6 feet of the dugout area or dugout extended area.
- Players and families should vacate the field/facility as soon as is reasonably possible after the conclusion of their game to minimize unnecessary contact with players, coaches, and spectators from the next game, ideally within 15 minutes.

Snack Bars: Only those individuals scheduled for snack bar coverage will be allowed in the snack bar area. Family members, spectators, or other individuals are not allowed to loiter in the snack bar area.

- All snack bar workers must wear masks and gloves while working in the snack bar and grilling food.
- One (1) snack bar worker will be responsible for working work within the snack bar. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
 - Serving pre-packaged food and beverages, such as candy, soda, sports drinks.



- Preparing made-to-order snacks such as pretzels, nachos, and popcorn.
- Taking orders for grilled items, such as hot dogs and hamburgers.
- One (1) snack bar worker will be responsible for the actual grilling of made-to-order food such as hot dogs and hamburgers. This individual will be the only person within the grilling area.
- One (1) snack bar worker will be a “floater”. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
 - Monitoring physical distance of spectators ordering and waiting for their food.
 - Delivering food to those individuals who choose not to wait at the snack bar for their food.
 - Assisting with re-stocking of snack bar items when necessary.

Phase Three: Return to Normal Participation and Operations

Once there are no limits on group size, we can look to return to normal participation and operation. During this phase, FNLL will continue to:

- Follow key prevention strategies outlined by the CDC, California Department of Public Health, and/or Sacramento County Department of Health Services.
- Recommend that vulnerable populations can continue to take precautionary measures at their own discretion.

