

Dear Peninsula Pop Warner Family Members,

The Presidents of Peninsula Pop Warner voted me as their leader, and leaders are expected to make difficult decisions that will be unpopular with many, second guessed by some, and supported by others. As the 2020 season approaches during the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, the Executive Board, the Presidents and I are forced to make a difficult decision. Some of the facts we examined were:

- By losing 72 people on July 12, California's death toll from the coronavirus soared above 7,000 this past weekend, as the infection rate continued to worsen
- Many States that reopened weeks ago are now experiencing consecutive record-breaking days as they report new cases, causing some States to roll back to Phase One
- California has been in Phase 2 for over 8 weeks, would need to be in Phase 3 to have a "regular" practice, and must be in Phase 4 to compete in games where only coaches, players, referees and medical staff are allowed into the site.
- Most of our Associations still have not been able to secure schools or City parks for home fields because school districts have not decided if they will have a football season or if students will be allowed back on campus at all in August.
- As barbers, salon workers and others experienced after being allowed to open their businesses for 2 days, we could be ordered to shut down and end our season immediately

These and many more facts were examined, but it is with a heavy heart and the health and safety of our community residents and our multi-generational families as our focus, that Peninsula Pop Warner has decided it will not put football or cheer teams on the field for a 2020 season. There is no justification to increasing the risk and exposure of our 5 – 15-year-old youth, which in turn exposes their families, sometimes including older adults and those with serious medical conditions in the same household, when the worst-case scenario is the death of any member of our extended Pop Warner family.

I understand many of us are tired of being sheltered in place and were looking forward to getting back to the game we know and love by starting the 2020 season on August 1st. We want our kids on the field learning and playing football, while some parents walk around the track, some parents visit the snack shack, and others talk and laugh in the stands with first time and veteran parents from the past. We can't wait to get through conditioning so we can play and win games and celebrate with a pizza party afterwards.

Unfortunately, the reality of a 2020 season would look more like Associations needing double to triple the number of volunteers to make sure parents drove up, let their kids get out at practice (spectators not allowed), while other volunteers asks each person a set of health questions, collect their contact info, take their temperature, make sure they wash their hands for 20 seconds, then get broken up into groups of 12 and have a social distancing practice with no coach or other player coming within 6 feet of them. This would have to happen every day your child arrived. This would have been a season where family and friends would have not been allowed to stay and watch practices or games and would have been very challenging for all Associations to implement and to enforce among their parents.

This pandemic may have taken our season on the field away, but it has also given us an opportunity to take a deeper look at the structure and stability of our League. I can promise you the Executive Board members and your Presidents will be working hard every month until the 2021 season when we will be recognized as having the best youth football and cheer program around and as a League of Excellence who puts the safety of our kids at the forefront of everything we do so they can have fun learning and playing the game of football.

Sincerely,

Tim Hilton
Commissioner
Peninsula Pop Warner