



COVID-19 Return to Play - Gameday Protocol (Updated 3/25/21 for Phase 3)

*This protocol was created based on the [Washington State COVID-19 Sporting Activity Guidelines](#) and the Washington Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) [Return-to-Play guidelines](#) for baseball. The protocol will be continuously updated to match current state regulations and are the **minimum baseline requirements**; if municipalities or school districts require stricter guidelines, those requirements will be mandatory based on field, county, etc. Home teams are responsible for alerting their opponent of any additional requirements at their home facility.*

YELLOW highlights indicate changes from the previous version, which was written based on Phase 2 guidelines

Required Items for Teams

- Printed copy of these guidelines (posted in dugout)
- Have hand sanitizer, lysol or other disinfectant wipes available for players & coaches
- Roster of all players for the purposes of taking attendance at all practices & games for mandatory contact tracing

Mask Policy

- Facial coverings **must be worn** by athletes when training or NOT actively competing (on the bench, in the dugout, etc.)
- Athletes may remove facial coverings when at bat, on base, or playing a position
- Facial coverings **are required** for all coaches, umpires, and volunteers at all times
- Spectators from different households should remain physically distant (6 feet or more) when possible. **When not physically distant, facial coverings are required for spectators**

Spectator / Capacity Guidelines

- A maximum of **400 people** are allowed at competitions, which includes athletes, coaches, officials and spectators
- For facilities or complexes with more than one field or area of play, a maximum of **150 people** allowed per field or area of play, which includes athletes, coaches, officials and spectators
- **School districts and municipalities may have different spectator and capacity requirements.** Those requirements would take precedence over any of the Seattle Elite recommended protocol
- All spectators of different households are to remain physically distant, 6 feet or more, as much as possible. When not physically distant, facial coverings **are required** for spectators
- All families in the organization must be informed of these policies prior to any contests or games. Coaches should be aware of the guidelines and are encouraged to monitor spectators to ensure that policies are being followed

Pre-Game

- Athletes, coaches, umpires/referees, spectators and any other paid or volunteer staff are required to stay home if they feel unwell, show any signs of COVID-19 (fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, etc.), or are a close contact of a confirmed case
- Players and coaches should not enter the facility until the prior activity at that facility is complete.
- Each team is responsible for cleaning high touch surfaces and disinfecting shared equipment
- Upon arrival, coach/team rep is responsible for a wellness check, which includes asking all attendees if they have shown any symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days. **If the answer is YES, that player or coach must leave the premises**
- Handwashing stations and/or hand sanitizer must be available for all practices and games - **this is the responsibility of each team.** Players and coaches must wash and/or sanitize their hands upon arrival
- All teams are required to keep attendance records of every athlete and coach present at each practice, training session, and game to assist with contact tracing in the event of a possible exposure. **Attendance rosters must be kept on file for 28 days after the practice or contest.**



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Pre-Game Plate Meeting

- Coaches & umpires wear masks and stay 6+ feet apart to discuss game rules
- Exchange of lineup cards from coaches to umpires **is at the home plate umpire's discretion**; In situations where lineup cards are not given to umpires prior to the game, they must be available in each team's dugout to resolve any potential conflicts
- Umpires are provided a copy of these guidelines to review at home plate
- **The policing of the guidelines and physical distancing is the responsibility of each team's coaching staff, not the game officials**

Baseballs

- At the discretion of both teams and game officials, baseballs will either run through the umpire (per normal protocol) or through the defensive team
- In situations where the umpire (or teams) choose to not have officials handle the baseballs, the defensive team will provide balls when their team is in the field. When balls go out of play, they will be thrown in by the defensive team bench to their pitcher to resume play. When sides change, the offensive team going out on defense would provide their own game balls for that inning
- Teams are discouraged from throwing the ball around the horn

Player Gathering / Celebrations

- **Facial coverings must be worn** by athletes when NOT actively competing (on the bench, in the dugout, etc.)
- Teams are encouraged to gather in space other than the dugout (bleachers, along the fence line outside the field of play, etc.) if physical distancing is not able to be met in the dugout
- Teams are encouraged to limit physical contact and avoid large group celebrations (walkoffs, home runs, etc.)
- Team huddles and pre/post-game meetings should be physically distanced (maintain 6 feet)

Umpire / Coach / Player Interactions

- Physical distancing must be maintained during any discussion/clarification with umpires
- The foul line will be the boundary for any discussion/clarification with umpires

Post Game

- No post-game handshakes - alternate ways to acknowledge your opponent (hat tip, etc.)
- Each team is responsible for cleaning high touch surfaces and disinfecting shared equipment
- All players and umpires must vacate the field within 15 minutes of the end of the game. All equipment and garbage must be removed from the field.
- If another game follows at the same site, exit the facility quickly:
 - Organizations are encouraged to space games out accordingly to allow for all pre/post-game protocol
 - New teams must wait until all players, coaches & spectators have exited to enter facility
 - Coaches for next game must follow pre-game sanitization protocol



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Transportation / Contact Tracing

- Families are encouraged to travel to and from practices and games with those in the same household
- All teams are required to keep attendance records of every athlete and coach present at each practice, training session, and game to assist with contact tracing in the event of a possible exposure
- **Attendance rosters must be kept on file for 28 days after the practice or contest**

Miscellaneous

- No sunflower seeds or spitting allowed for players, coaches, umpires
- Players not allowed to go to their mouth to improve grip on the ball - in cases where this happens, the ball must be thrown out of play
- All players required to provide their own clearly marked water/gatorade bottles
- Sharing of equipment is discouraged - bats, gloves, catcher's gear, etc.