

Sporting Activities Frequently Asked Questions

Why does this guidance have different measurements as opposed to referencing the phases of the Safe Start Plan?

The October 6 update now uses a measurement of cases per 100K for the previous 14 days combined with the testing positivity rate of county to better align with the [Decision Tree for In Person Learning for K-12](#), which uses the same measurement.

Do counties need to meet both measurements to be consider moderate or low level in county COVID activity?

Yes. For example a county with 60 of cases per 100K for the previous 14 days, but with a testing positivity rate of 6% would still be considered at a high level county COVID activity. In order to be considered moderate cases per 100K need to be below 75 and testing positivity must be under 5%. High testing positivity is an indication that not enough testing is being done to capture all the infection currently occurring.

Where can I find the current numbers for my county?

Current infection rate trends in every county can be found at Washington state [Covid 19 Risk Assessment Dashboard](#) (scroll down and click on “Summary Data Tables” for county-by-county list).

How often should we consult the DOH COVID 19 Risk Assessment Dashboard for changes in county case per 100K and testing positivity rate?

A: Organizers and participants in sporting activities should consult the DOH COVID 19 Risk Assessment dashboard twice a month, on the 1st and 15th. If the dashboard shows a change in county metrics, which moves the county from its previous level of low, moderate, or high COVID activity to a different level on either of those days then sporting activities allowed must be adjusted accordingly going forward starting the following week.

Whose responsibility is it to make sure teams are adhering to hygiene, distancing and facial covering requirements?

Each league and each team need to have a return-to play safety plans. Teams are responsible for ensuring participants on their team are adhering to their plans.

Whose responsibility is it to make sure spectators are adhering to distancing and facial covering requirements?

Teams are responsible for ensuring that their spectators, including the parents/caregivers of their athletes, adhere to the state’s requirements for face covering use and maintaining physical distance of 6 feet between any people not from the same household.

Can you do 3 on 3 basketball game in a county with moderate or high county COVID activity?

According to the guidance, “Brief close contact (ex: 3 on 3 drills) is permitted.” This is intended to allow for training purposes and should be brief. A 3 on 3 basketball drill would need to be altered to only allow brief close contact. A standard basketball game, 3 on 3 or otherwise, is considered to have extended close contact, and is not allowed in counties with high COVID activity.

Does every student need to be in school in my county before school sports can come back?

No. The decision to begin in person learning and school related sports are local decisions. The [Decision Tree for In Person Learning for K-12](#) is meant for school districts and schools. Once a district or school in a high level of COVID activity county resumes any portion in in-person learning then that district or school could begin to consider if it is appropriate to resume some level of school sports beginning with practice in groups of 6.

Do coaches need to wear masks?

Yes. Everyone involved sporting activities need to wear masks in accordance with the [Secretary of the Department of Health's Facial Coverings Order](#), with the exception of athletes who are currently actively participating in the field of play or competition course, and also an exception for referees that need to run in the field of play.

Can teams from high level COVID activity counties travel to counties with moderate or low level COVID activity to play games or competitions not allowed in their county of residence?

No. A team can't travel to play a game that would not be allowed in your county of residence. So, for example, a soccer team in a county with a moderate COVID activity could travel to a county with low COVID activity to play a game, since soccer games are allowed in both counties. But a team in a high risk county could not travel to a low or moderate COVID activity county to play that same game.

Do counties and cities need to give approval before these sporting activities can resume?

No. The guidance does not require cities and counties to grant approval, however, cities and counties have authority to restrict sporting activities beyond what is required in this guidance if they feel they cannot be done safely at this time. Also, cities and counties are under no requirement to open up their fields and facilities for use for sporting activities under this guidance—that remains a local decision.