



Return-to-Play Protocols COVID-19

(*Revised 12.10.20 - Version 6)

Montana Youth Soccer has created the following Return-to-Play Protocols based on Governor Bullock's *Reopening the Big Sky* plan, recommendations from local health departments, guidance from the US Youth Soccer Return-to-Play Committee and guidelines from the U.S. Soccer PLAY ON campaign. The measures outlined within this document are intended to keep both our soccer families and Montana's general population healthy and safe.

The knowledge and circumstances around COVID-19 are changing constantly and, as such, Montana Youth Soccer makes no representation and assumes no responsibility for the completeness of this information. Clubs should contact local health officials about current guidelines. No guidance from Montana Youth Soccer outlined within this document shall supersede local health department guidelines as clubs must adhere to their local directives. These protocols are subject to change pending new information and instruction from the offices of the Governor and state health departments.

*New in Version 6 – To address the different conditions between indoor soccer and out soccer, Montana Youth Soccer has added the U.S. Soccer Guidelines for Indoor Soccer, which is part of its PLAY ON campaign. The guidelines advise the use of larger indoor facilities for acceptable social and physical distancing, as well as higher frequency air exchange rates to reduce risk. Shorter training sessions with fewer players on the field and no throw-ins can also help decrease risk, while players and coaches should continue to wear a mask when not physically active. The indoor soccer considerations supplement comprehensive phased guides available at ussoccer.com/playon. PLAY ON guidelines are intended for use only when and if state and local authorities have deemed it safe to return to the field, indoors or outdoors. Many recommendations for indoor soccer reinforce those presented as part of the initial PLAY ON guidelines. Facilities should assign areas and times for arrival and departure of participants and have hand sanitizing stations readily available. Participants should also clearly label their individual hydration bottles and not touch others' bottles.

REOPENING THE BIG SKY – PHASED APPROACH LANGUAGE

Section 1

Indoor Activities – **U.S. Soccer PLAY ON Indoor Considerations (LINK)**

Applies During: Phases 1, 2 and 3

Montana Youth Soccer has adopted the considerations and recommendations for indoor soccer developed by U.S. Soccer as part of their PLAY ON campaign. MYSA member clubs are expected to utilize the information provided when operating indoor soccer activities during Phases 1, 2 and 3. In addition, member clubs and all stakeholders must act in accordance of the guidelines, parameters and responsibilities detailed in Phases 1, 2 and 3 during all indoor soccer activities.

Indoor considerations need to be taken seriously when determining whether indoor sports should be played. Adjustments to regular activity may need to be implemented in order to mitigate risk of COVID exposure of players, coaches and spectators.

Prior to moving to indoor training and matches all considerations to remain outdoors should remain as a first option. This can be done safely with colder temperatures while following safety guidelines.

These guidelines and best practices are intended for use WHEN AND IF local authorities have deemed it safe to return to the practice field. Some of the information included in the Play On – Indoor Considerations document were taken from U.S. Soccer Play On Campaign – a comprehensive set of documents with suggested practices for returning to the soccer field.

Section 2

Phases 1, 2 & 3

Applies During: Indoor and Outdoor Activities

PHASE 1

*“**ORGANIZED YOUTH ACTIVITIES** can consider becoming operational if physical distancing guidelines can be implemented. Avoid **GATHERING** in groups of more than **10 people** in circumstances that do not readily allow for appropriate physical distancing.*

***OUTDOOR RECREATION** can become operational if sites adhere to strict physical distancing between groups and exercise frequent sanitation protocols if public facilities are open.*

***ALL VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS** should continue to follow the stay home guidance. Members of households with vulnerable residents should be aware that by returning to work or other environments where distancing is not practical, as they could carry the virus back home. Precautions should be taken to isolate from vulnerable residents.*

Vulnerable Individuals: people over 65 years of age and/or those with serious underlying health conditions, including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma and those whose immune system is compromised such as by chemotherapy for cancer and other conditions requiring such therapy.

***MINIMIZE NON-ESSENTIAL TRAVEL** and adhere to Montana guidelines regarding quarantine.”*

MYSA Sanctioned Activities

- Practices of 10 people or less

PHASE 2

*“ORGANIZED YOUTH ACTIVITIES remain operational and should avoid **GATHERING** in groups of more than 50 people in circumstances that do not readily allow for appropriate physical distancing.*

***OUTDOOR RECREATION** remains in the same operational status as **PHASE ONE**.*

***VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS** should continue to adhere to the stay home guidance.*

***NON-ESSENTIAL TRAVEL** guidelines remain the same as **PHASE ONE** for individuals traveling into Montana and for Montanans returning home.”*

MYSA Sanctioned Activities

- All soccer activities with the exception of MYSA member club tournaments

PHASE 3

*“There is no limit on **GROUP SIZE** during this phase, however **PHYSICAL DISTANCING** should still be observed. For **ALL INDIVIDUALS** there is no limit on group size, however everyone should consider minimizing contact time with others and limit time spent in crowded environments.*

***OUTDOOR RECREATION** Interstate tourism travel resumes. Campground, group-use facilities, playgrounds and visitor centers are fully open.*

***VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS** can resume public interactions but should practice physical distancing and continue to take precautionary measures.”*

MYSA Sanctioned Activities

- To be determined by the MYSA Board

Section 3

Stakeholder Responsibilities

Applies During: Indoor and Outdoor Activities

Club Responsibilities

- Create and distribute protocols to its members
- Maintain ultimate oversight that club, team and spectator activities do not violate protocols or local health department guidelines
- Have effective action and communication plans prepared in the event someone within the club tests positive for COVID-19. Identify strategies for working with the local health department to notify its membership of the situation and provide guidance. Plans shall maintain confidentiality.
- Develop a relationship and dialogue with local health officials
- Wear masks at all times during club soccer activities OR maintain physical distancing of 6 feet
- Mark clearly defined technical, official and spectator areas on each field to control distancing
- Educate and train all club personnel on current guidelines from the local health department
- Publish all return-to-play activities as being strictly voluntary
- Display signage throughout facilities promoting health and safety practices
- Utilize club personnel to monitor and enforce physical distancing during all hosted activities
- Make available hand sanitizing stations and waste receptacles at fields
- Discourage handshaking and encourage the use of other noncontact methods of greeting
- Routinely clean and sanitize equipment

Coach Responsibilities

- Ensure the health and safety of all players
- Before any soccer activity, the health of each player shall be assessed with these questions:
 - Have you had a cough, fever or loss of taste or smell?
 - Have you been in contact with a person with COVID-19?

If a player answers YES to either question, they shall not participate and must be sent home

- Adhere to all state and local health department guidelines
- Wear a mask during team activities OR maintain physical distancing of 6 feet
- Confirm each player has their own individual equipment – ball, drink, bag, etc.
- Remain the only person to handle discs, cones, etc.
- Sanitize equipment before and after every practice
- If practice pinnies are necessary, players will be assigned their own. Players will be responsible for bringing their pinnie to practice and for washing the pinnie at home
- Have fun and stay positive – players and parents are looking to you to stay calm, supportive and caring

Player Responsibilities

- Take temperature daily
- Wash hands thoroughly before and after every practice
- Wear a mask when on the bench or not actively training OR maintain physical distancing of 6 feet. Masks can voluntarily be worn during activity based on the personal choice of the player
- Have personal hand sanitizer available at every practice
- Do not touch or share anyone else's equipment, drink or bag
- Refrain from spitting on the field
- Observe physical distancing when not in play
- Avoid high fives, handshakes, hugs, etc. at all times
- Sanitize equipment, cleats, ball, shin guards, etc. before and after every practice

Parent Responsibilities

- Ensure your child is healthy and take their temperature daily
- Keep your child home if they feel ill for any reason and notify the club
- Limit or avoid carpooling altogether
- Make sure your child has hand sanitizer with them at every practice
- Wear a mask OR maintain physical distancing of 6 feet between households
- Only communicate with a coach or club personnel member via phone or email
- Wash your child's clothes after each practice
- Sanitize your child's equipment, cleats, ball, shin guards, etc. before and after every practice