



Supplemental COVID-19 Guidance for Youth Sports and Extracurricular Activities in Alameda County

Alameda County values the benefits of youth sports and extracurricular activities. This guidance document:

- Supplements the CDPH guidance found in its *COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California, 2021-22 School Year*¹, and
- Provides recommendations for sports and extracurricular activities *outside of the school setting* for youth in K-12 grade levels.

The purpose of this guidance is to reduce the spread of COVID-19 infection in our communities by supporting a safer environment for youth who participate in sports and other extracurricular activities.

1. Wear masks indoors regardless of vaccination status.

Except as specified below, **masks are required indoors** regardless of vaccination status in accordance with the [CDPH Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings](#), [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California, 2021-22 School Year](#) and [Alameda County Face Covering Order 21-06](#).

Masks are always required indoors for teachers, referees, officials, coaches, support staff, spectators and observers. Masks may be removed indoors by participants only in the following limited situations:

- Participants are playing indoor water sports such as swimming, water polo, or diving.
- Participants are actively practicing, conditioning, or competing in indoor sports, and mask wearing is not practicable due to heavy exertion.
- Participants are playing musical instruments that cannot be played with a mask (e.g. wind instruments). Bell covers and a minimum of 3 feet of physical distancing between participants are recommended if masks cannot be worn. Modified masking, if possible, is recommended in addition to but not in place of bell covers.

If masks cannot be worn by participants due to water sports or heavy exertion, or bell covers are not used when playing instruments, it is strongly recommended that individuals undergo screening testing AT LEAST once weekly:

- Asymptomatic persons who have had a positive COVID-19 test within 90 days do not need to take part in screening testing.
- Schools, teams, and event organizers can accept home/self-testing results, but it is recommended that [one of the methods outlined by CDPH to verify unsupervised or unobserved results is used](#).
- Any FDA-approved antigen test, NAAT (e.g., PCR), or pooled PCR test can be used.
- A positive antigen test in someone with or without symptoms does **not** require confirmatory testing and **should be accepted** for the purpose of isolation and quarantine decisions.
- Individuals who test positive should be sent directly home to isolate. They are **not** allowed to social distance instead.

¹ The requirements and recommendations in the CDPH K-12 schools guidance apply to all extracurricular activities that are operated or supervised by schools, and all activities that occur on a school site, whether or not they occur during school hours, including, but not limited to, sports, band, chorus, and clubs.



Any face mask that feels wet or becomes saturated with sweat should be changed immediately, as wet masks are less effective at filtration.

2. Encourage vaccination

COVID-19 vaccination is strongly recommended for all participants who are eligible for vaccination, as well as coaches, staff, and volunteers. Leagues, teams, tournaments, and events can require that all participants and personnel be fully vaccinated (and boosted if eligible) against COVID-19. Having all athletes and staff in your league fully vaccinated will decrease the risk of transmission of the virus among teammates and between teams, and will provide excellent protection against severe illness, hospitalization, and death. **It will also decrease disruptions in team activities, since fully vaccinated individuals who remain asymptomatic are not required to quarantine if they are close contacts of an individual with COVID-19.**

When COVID-19 transmission is high, it is safest to limit high-risk sports and extracurricular activities (especially when conducted indoors) to youth who are fully vaccinated, as noted in [CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in schools](#).

3. Consider additional testing

In addition to the recommendations for testing in (1) above, regular COVID-19 screening testing in all participants and staff, including volunteers, in INDOOR sports and extracurricular activities may be considered for added safety. Where resources allow, consider testing participants and staff, including volunteers, involved in OUTDOOR sports and extracurricular activities as well.

Additional notes on testing:

- Asymptomatic persons who have had a positive COVID-19 test within 90 days do not need to take part in screening testing.
- Schools, teams, and event organizers can accept home/self-testing results, but it is recommended that [one of the methods outlined by CDPH to verify unsupervised or unobserved results is used](#).
- Any FDA-approved antigen test, NAAT (e.g., PCR), or pooled PCR test can be used.
- A positive antigen test in someone with or without symptoms does **not** require confirmatory testing.
- Individuals who test positive should be sent directly home to isolate. They are **not** allowed to social distance instead.

4. Follow the rules for large events

Very large events (>500 people indoors or >5,000 people outdoors), including sporting events, are subject to [CDPH Beyond the Blueprint recommendations and requirements](#).

5. Prevent the spread of COVID-19 off the field

Remind participants and families that COVID-19 often spreads off-the-field, especially in situations when groups let their guard down and eat or socialize together with their masks off (e.g., post-game parties, locker rooms, carpools).

Locker rooms

- Limit congregating in locker rooms
 - Players should arrive dressed to play as much as possible.



- Use locker rooms only to change or use the restroom. Do not use the locker room for coaching or pregame, halftime, or postgame talks.
- Avoid having different teams use a locker room at the same time.
- Ensure mask use in locker rooms.
- Consider closing showers.

Team buses and vans

- Masks are required
- Keep windows open as much as possible. Turn the fan on high and set it to outdoor air.
- If more than one vehicle is used, have the same people ride together every time.

Carpooling

- Everyone in the vehicle should wear a face mask.
- Keep windows open as much as possible. Turn the fan on high and set it to outdoor air.
- Encourage participants and staff who carpool to ride with the same people each time travel occurs.

Travel

- When traveling overnight, team members not from the same household should sleep in separate rooms or in consistent groups when feasible. Keep masks on whenever visiting other members' hotel rooms.
- Socializing with other teams is strongly discouraged.
- Teams that travel outside the Bay Area or out-of-state are encouraged to follow [CDC recommendations for quarantine after travel](#).
- See also ACPHD's [Guidance for Overnight Field Trips](#).

6. Safely return to sports or physical activity after COVID-19 infection

The [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) recommends that children and youth who have had COVID-19 be screened by their healthcare provider prior to returning to sports or physical education. This screening may be done in person or by phone by the student's healthcare provider depending on the severity of their previous COVID-19 symptoms. Most students will not need further specialized testing before resuming physical activity, but it may be recommended for some.