

COVID and Sports FAQs

April 9, 2021

Updates in italics

Youth and Adult Recreational Sports:

1. Are there any resources for school districts to offer testing for athletes and coaches?

Yes, CDPH has provided resources and additional information on testing through the [COVID-19 Testing Task Force](#).

2. Who is responsible for collecting test results for athletes and coaches?

Organizations (e.g. Little League, AYSO) and teams are responsible for collecting test results.

3. Who is responsible for managing the collection of test results?

Organizations and teams can designate someone to collect and manage the test results.

4. What do I do if an athlete or coach tests positive?

For K-12 school-based teams, please report through your school liaison. For other organized teams, please complete this [Intake Form](#).

5. What forms of test results can organizations accept?

Test results can be sent via email, text message or paper format. Test results need to have proof of identity attached to it such as the athlete's name, date of birth and phone number.

6. How long should test results be filed and kept?

Test results should be kept for 2 weeks post-game/competition prior to being shredded or deleted. A test result record document should be kept until the end of the season.

7. Should test results be made available before OR after the competition?

The test results need to be made available 48 hours before the competition to be eligible to compete. It is important that test results are received before the competition because it will ensure the athletes have received a recent negative test before they compete. Allowing a test

result to be submitted after the competition would defeat the purpose of the testing. An athlete could unknowingly be positive and be transmitting the virus to others at the competition and find out after the fact the test was positive.

8. How long before the competition should testing be completed?

Testing can be done 1 week before a competition to meet the testing requirement and results from that test can be used for any competitions that week. A rapid antigen test will provide results the same day if an athlete needs to have their test results submitted the same day or next day. PCR testing can take 48-72 hours for results, sometimes longer, depending on the volume of testing being done. Therefore, PCR testing should be done at least four days before competition to ensure results are received on time. If the test results from a PCR test are not received on time, a rapid antigen test can be completed to ensure results are received within 24 hours of the competition.

9. Does proof of vaccination exempt an athlete from the testing requirement?

No. At this time, athletes, coaches, and staff must still be routinely tested, even after receiving the vaccine. This guidance may change.

10. Can teams compete in multiple competition per day?

A single team may only play another single team within the same day.

11. Can inter-team competition occur within the state?

Inter-team competitions, meets, races, or similar events are permitted to occur only with other teams within the state. Local Health Departments are to be notified of any cross-county competitions within their jurisdiction and reserve the right under their own discretion to deny the competition at any time in their jurisdiction. Teams participating in cross county competitions will follow the more stringent rules if the participating teams are coming from counties that may be at different case rate thresholds.

12. What sports are allowed?

Physical conditioning, practice, skill-building, and training that can be conducted outdoors, with 6 feet of physical distancing, and within stable cohorts are authorized regardless of case rate or sport. A team in any sport, including indoor sports, may return to competition and contact practice at any time (i.e., earlier than otherwise authorized by this Guidance), if the team adheres the additional requirements imposed on collegiate sports, as specified in the [Institutions of Higher Education Guidance](#), dated September 30, 2020. Please see charts below to determine what sports need to test under which tier.

13. Is sideline cheer and dance an allowable youth sport and recreational activity?

Yes, sideline cheer is considered comparable to competitive cheer as a moderate-contact sport, and as such, should follow all requirements of other outdoor moderate contact sports. Outdoor dance is an approved low-contact sport and should follow all the requirements of other outdoor low-contact sports.

14. Are band, drumline, choir and drama approved as youth recreational activities that can be

conducted now? Yes, band, drumline, choir and drama are considered low contact youth recreational activities and should follow all relevant requirements and recommendations.

Orange Tier: CR between 1-3.9 per 100K Weekly (periodic/routine) testing for anything indoor until it reaches the tier that it is allowed in:

Widespread Tier (Purple) 1	Substantial Tier (Red) 2	Moderate Tier (Orange) 3	Minimal Tier (Yellow) 4
Outdoor low-contact sports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archery • Badminton (singles) • Biking • Bocce • Corn hole • Cross country • Dance (no contact) • Disc golf • Equestrian events (including rodeos) that involve only a single rider at a time • Fencing • Golf • Ice and roller skating (no contact) • Lawn bowling • Martial arts (no contact) • Physical training programs (e.g., yoga, Zumba, Tai chi) • Pickleball (singles) • Rowing/crew (with 1 person) • Running • Shuffleboard • Skeet shooting • Skiing and snowboarding • Snowshoeing • Swimming and diving • Tennis (singles) • Track and field • Walking and hiking 	Outdoor moderate-contact sports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Badminton (doubles) • Baseball • Cheerleading • Dodgeball • Field hockey • Gymnastics • Kickball • Lacrosse (girls/women) • Pickleball (doubles) • Softball • Tennis (doubles) • Volleyball 	Outdoor high-contact sports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basketball • Football • Ice hockey • Lacrosse (boys/men) • Rugby • Rowing/crew (with 2 or more people) • Soccer • Water polo Indoor low-contact sports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Badminton (singles) • Bowling • Curling • Dance (no contact) • Gymnastics • Ice skating (individual) • Physical training • Pickleball (singles) • Swimming and diving • Tennis (singles) • Track and field 	Indoor moderate-contact sports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Badminton (doubles) • Cheerleading • Dance (intermittent contact) • Dodgeball • Kickball • Pickleball (doubles) • Racquetball • Squash • Tennis (doubles) • Volleyball Indoor high-contact sports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basketball • Boxing • Ice hockey • Ice skating (pairs) • Martial arts • Roller derby • Soccer • Water polo • Wrestling

15. Will teams have to stop competing if the case rate in their county goes above 14 per 100,000?

If sports activities are permitted to resume in a county pursuant to this updated guidance, competition is not required to cease if the county's adjusted case rate exceeds the 14 per 100,000 threshold.

16. Is testing required?

Testing is required for some sports and strongly encouraged for others. Because football, rugby and water polo are high-contact sports that are likely to be played unmasked, with close, face-to-face contact exceeding 15 minutes, weekly testing is required for all participants age 13 and over and coaches in counties with a case rate between 7 and 14 per 100,000. For competition, test results must be made available within 24 hours of play. VCPH strongly encourages weekly testing continue for outdoor high-contact sports once the county case rate drops below 7.

Outdoor moderate-contact sports, such as baseball, cheerleading and softball, can be played in these counties without the testing requirement.

17. Do teams made up of participants of varying ages need to comply with this testing requirement?

When adjusted case rates for a county are between 7 and 14 per 100,000, weekly testing is required for all high-contact sports participants age 13 and over. This applies to football, rugby and water polo. However, if more than 50% of a team's participants are under the age of 13, the entire team's participants are exempted from the testing requirement. For purposes of this exemption, it would be defined as more than 50% of an entire team roster. Coaches for these teams, however, will still be required to test weekly.

18. What do teams do when an asymptomatic athlete or coach tests positive with an antigen test in their weekly routine testing?

VCPH has created a decision tree to help athletic teams know what to do in these situations.

This decision tree can be viewed on the Ventura County Recovers website – [COVID-19 Routine Testing Decision Tree](#).

19. Are athletes or coaches able to participate in more than one sport at a time?

Athletes and coaches should treat their team as a cohort and should only participate on one team over the same season or period of time.

20. Is anyone allowed to watch youth or recreational adult sports?

For all youth and adult outdoor sports, spectators and observers are permitted pursuant to Outdoor Seated Live Events and Performances. Spectators and observers for indoor sports is limited to observation of youth sports (age 18 years and under) and is further limited to immediate household members for the strict purpose of age appropriate supervision. This prohibition shall remain in effect until such time as Indoor Seated Live Events and Performance Guidance is posted and becomes effective.

21. Does the March 4, 2021 updated guidance mean indoor youth sports can resume immediately?

No. This update does not authorize indoor sports to resume at will. Teams can return to competition **only if** they implement and adhere to the rigorous requirements in place for college teams. Few amateur and high school teams are likely able to adhere to the college guidance, which includes substantially more than just testing requirements, such as contact tracing and site-specific protocols. Indoor sports teams can review requirements that teams must adhere to in the [Institutes of Higher Education Guidance](#) (begins on page 27).

22. Do previously COVID-19 positive athletes or coaches need to continue to test?

Once an individual has tested positive, they could continue to test positive for 90 days without being infectious. For this reason, VCPH follows the CDC's guidelines that individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 3 months and recovered do not have to quarantine or get tested again as long as they do not develop new symptoms.

23. How many swimmers can swim in each lane during swim practice and meets?

VCPH has approved 2 swimmers per lane if swimming is done outdoors. Swimmers and swim coaches may follow USA swim guidelines.

24. Can solo dancers be exempt from wearing masks while performing on stage alone?

CDPH guidance states face coverings worn by participants during practice, conditioning and during competition, even during heavy exertion as tolerated is strongly recommended. Sports guidance from the AAP states cloth face coverings should not be worn for competitive cheerleading (tumbling/stunting/flying) and gymnastics (while on the different apparatuses), because the covering may get caught on objects and become a choking hazard or accidentally impair vision. VCPH strongly recommends face coverings for solo dancers except in instances where the individual dancer's routine includes tumbling, stunting, flying, or using apparatuses.

Collegiate Sports:

1. Do collegiate sports need to follow the same guidelines as the youth and recreational adult sports?

While the youth and recreational adult sports guidelines state: This guidance does not apply to collegiate or professional sports; however, per Covid-19 Industry Guidance: Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) states, "To the extent local health department guidelines impose additional restrictions or requirements beyond this guidance, are stricter than NCAA guidelines, institutions of higher education and athletic departments must adhere to stricter requirements. Local public health departments may have more stringent requirements than these guidelines that must be followed." Collegiate sports should follow the guidelines in the COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Institutions of Higher Education <https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-higher->

[education--en.pdf](#). Schools grades K-12 should follow the Youth and Recreational Adult Sports Guidance.

2. What type of testing do athletes and team coaches need to adhere to?

Regular periodic Covid-19 testing of athletes and support staff must be established and implemented by the IHEs, including minimum testing standards that includes frequency of testing, who is subject to testing (all athletes and staff that have close contact with the athletes). Either daily antigen testing or periodic PCR testing are acceptable testing methods for baseline and ongoing screening testing. If following a daily antigen testing protocol, the protocol must begin with PCR test followed by daily antigen test. For high-risk contact sports (basketball, field hockey, football, ice hockey, lacrosse, rowing, rugby, soccer, squash, volleyball, water polo, and wrestling), competition between teams is permitted only if the team can provide COVID-19 test results of all athletes and support staff within 48 hours of each competition.

3. Do athletic departments in IHE's need to have a COVID-19 prevention plan?

Yes, a written, facility-specific COVID-19 plan must be completed as well as a comprehensive risk assessment of all work and athletic areas. The risk assessment must be reevaluated if an outbreak occurs. Each facility will need to designate a person to implement the plan. IHE's should collaborate with their local public health officials and other authorities for all decisions about their specific plans.

4. When can competitions begin for collegiate level sports?

Competition between teams without spectators is permitted to begin now and only if: The IHE can provide Covid-19 testing and results within 48 hours of competition in high risk contact sports. The classification specified in the National Collegiate Athletic Association's guidelines for resocialization of sports which include basketball, field hockey, football, ice hockey, lacrosse, rowing, rugby, soccer, squash, volleyball, water polo, and wrestling.

5. Can collegiate level sports have spectators present during training or competitions?

Nonessential visitors, staff and volunteers must be limited as much as possible. No spectators are currently permitted during training or competition.

6. What should the athletic department do in the event of an outbreak among workers or student-athletes?

The local health department in which the facility is located should be notified with the contact information of all those involved in the outbreak. IHE's can report to covidhighereducation@ventura.org. The Public Health Covid Higher Education team will contact them.

7. What is the criteria to discontinue practice with contact and competition for collegiate level sports teams?

The local health department may consider discontinuation of practice with contact and competition for the rest of the season if more than 10% of athletes on a team test positive within a 14-day period. For teams less than 20 athletes total, if more than 5 members test positive, discontinuation of practice with contact and competition may be considered.

8. Where can collegiate sports teams train and how many athletes can train together?

Training should be conducted outside as much as possible. If daily antigen testing is adopted, teams may train outdoors in groups of no more than 75; however, it is recommended to divide teams into cohorts of 25 or less including coaches and staff as best as possible. Athletes in high contact risk sports are strongly encouraged to be provided dedicated on-campus housing separate from the rest of campus to minimize transmission risks to other members of the campus community.

9. How can travel to games be done safely?

Travel should be limited to essential personnel (e.g., athletes, coaches, medical staff). Teams

should drive to events. If more than one vehicle is used, travel parties should be split according to those already with the closest contact (e.g., cohorts). Face coverings must be worn and removed only minimally for eating or drinking. If traveling by bus, seats in front and behind each person should be kept open. When traveling to away games, teams must remain in a team cohort. When traveling to away games teams must not mix with the host team or members of the host community.

10. Does the collegiate sports guidance allow for indoor practice and competitions?

Yes, however as a general guidance, outdoor locations are safer than indoor. Athletic directors and coaches need to consider all these factors as they resume training and conditioning. Indoor facilities should increase fresh air circulation by opening windows or doors, if possible. Ensure indoor practice and game spaces are large indoor areas with good ventilation and air exchange.

11. What is the collegiate sports guidance position on face coverings?

The collegiate guidance assumes that for most sports activities face coverings are not feasible while playing, although players on the sideline waiting to play, staff, coaches and others who are not actively playing must wear face coverings. They also have the added benefit of preventing wearers from touching their face.