

Statewide Sports Reopening Guidelines

Updated June 19, 2020

The below guidelines lay out the planned reopening of certain sports. The State of Nebraska will utilize the April 2008 American Academy of Pediatrics Classification of Sports According to Contact as a guideline for opening sports of differing contact levels. Violation of these rules may mean a team is prohibited from practicing or playing games for the entire summer.

The below guidelines apply only to team sports. Individual sports such as golf and tennis (including doubles tennis) are not prohibited under any Directed Health Measure (DHM), however, participants must practice social/physical distancing.

Classification of Team Sports According to Contact Level

Contact	Limited-Contact	Non-Contact
Basketball	Baseball	Badminton
Boxing	Football, flag or touch	Bowling
Cheerleading	Softball	Crew/Rowing
Football, tackle	Volleyball	Curling
Gymnastics		Dance
Hockey		Rodeo* and horseback riding
Lacrosse		Swimming
Martial arts		Track and field events
Rugby		
Soccer		
Wrestling		

* Exception for rodeo as there is limited or no contact with other people, primary contact is with animals.

Timeline

- **June 1:**
Noncontact and Limited-Contact Sports **practices** may begin unless circumstances dictate a change in date.
- **June 18:**
Noncontact and Limited-Contact Sports **games** may begin unless circumstances dictate a change in date.
- **July 1:**
Contact Sports **practices and games** may begin unless circumstances dictate a change in date.

****All counties and sports teams should refer to their local DHM for the most up-to-date information on restrictions. DHMs can be found at <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/COVID-19-Directed-Health-Measures.aspx>.***

Practices

- Schools are permitted to open weight rooms for use by all student athletes as long as they follow the same guidelines as fitness centers/clubs, gymnasiums, health clubs, and health spas.
- Players, coaches, and staff showing signs/symptoms of COVID-19 (fever over 100.4F, sudden onset of cough or sudden onset of shortness of breath) shall not participate.
 - For contact sports or sports in which players are routinely within six (6) feet throughout practices or games it is highly recommended to actively screen players, coaches, and staff prior to practice or game for signs/symptoms of COVID-19.
 - *For up-to-date information on the wide range of symptoms reported please refer to the CDC's "Symptoms of Coronavirus" found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>.*
- Dugout and bench use is allowed. Players should have designated spots to place their personal items.
- Parents should remain in their cars or drop off and pick players up afterwards.
- Players should use their own protective equipment including gloves, helmets, and bats as much as possible.
 - When protective equipment is needed to be shared, it should be disinfected between players use. Coaches are encouraged to rotate equipment when possible.
- Coaches must disinfect shared equipment before and after each practice.
- Players should wash their hands before and after each practice, especially for sports that contact between players or players handling/touching the same object(s) like a ball, mat, bats, etc.
- Coaches are responsible for ensuring social/physical distancing is maintained between players as much as possible. This means additional spacing between players while playing catch, during drills, or while waiting to participate. It is encouraged to use drills that do not require contact between players or players handling/touching the same object(s) like a ball, mat, bats, etc., as much as possible.
- Players must bring their own water/beverage to consume during and after practice. No shared drinking fountains or coolers.
- Players must bring their own snacks to consume during and after practice. No shared/communal snacks.
 - The use of sunflower seeds, tobacco products, and spitting while practicing or playing is prohibited.

Games

- For baseball and softball, the bleachers located between the dugout and home plate should be used to help spread out players. Players should have designated spots to place their personal items. Coaches should designate an adult who is responsible for ensuring players are seated on the benches unless they are actively participating in the game.
 - For all other sports, additional benches or bleachers should be used to spread out players. Players should have designated spots to place their personal items. Coaches must designate an adult who is responsible for ensuring players are seated on the benches unless they are actively participating in the game.
- Players should use their own equipment including gloves, helmets, and bats as much as possible.
 - When protective equipment is needed to be shared, it should be disinfected between players use.
 - Coaches are encouraged to rotate equipment when possible.
- Coaches must disinfect shared equipment before and after each game/match.
- Fan attendance *will follow gathering requirements under the Directed Health Measures and if the facility/venue has a capacity of 500 or more individuals, (1,000 or more in counties over 500,000 population) shall follow reopening plans submitted, reviewed, and approved by the Local Health Department by the facility.* Fans should keep six (6) feet of social distancing between different groups. No fan seating or standing is allowed within in six (6) feet of the teams' benches or dugouts.
- Teams to play next must be provided designated areas for player warm-ups that provide for necessary physical/social distancing.
- Post-game handshakes or interaction between teams are prohibited.

- When games end, the leaving team must sanitize the dugout or bench area. No post-game talks at the field or court are permitted. Fans and players must leave the playing area and return to their cars immediately after the game.
- The team to play next must remain in their designated warm up area until the prior team has finished disinfecting and is completely out of the dugout or off of the court/field.
- Fans for upcoming games must remain in their cars during player warm ups. They will be permitted to come to the field/court once the team they are there to watch enters the playing area.
- Restrooms must be cleaned and disinfected regularly (at least every 2 hours) while players and fans are present. Markings should be placed on the ground to ensure individuals waiting to use the restroom are spaced six (6) feet apart.
- Players must bring their own water/beverage to consume during and after practices and games. No shared drinking fountains or coolers.
- Players must bring their own snacks to consume during and after practice/games. No shared/communal snacks.
 - The use of sunflower seeds, tobacco products, and spitting while practicing or playing is prohibited.
- Concession stands are allowed to open, if they meet the following:
 - Markings should be placed on the ground to ensure individuals are spaced six (6) feet apart.
 - Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces regularly while players and fans are present.
 - Staff must serve food directly to customers and remove self-serve condiment stations (e.g. provide customers with condiment packets upon request).
 - Whenever possible, practice social distancing between staff.
 - All employees directly interacting with customers should wear face coverings.
 - All food code regulations must still be followed.
 - Employees should wash hands frequently; provide hand sanitizer for customers.

