



## *Suburban Parochial League Track & Field Return to Play Guidelines (2/26/2021)*

**Note:** The following guidelines are subject to change based on the policies, procedures and protocols established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), Illinois Governor's Office, Illinois High School Association (IHSA), Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA), Archdiocese of Chicago, and Diocese of Joliet at the time of practices and competitions.

- Prior to the start of the season, it is suggested that all Athletic Directors, Coordinators, Coaches, Meet Officials and Workers and Safety Team Members complete the following free training provided by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) regarding COVID-19 in the youth sports environment.

<https://nfhslearn.com/courses/covid-19-for-coaches-and-administrators>

The COVID-19 safety protocols enumerated here should be utilized by all SPLTF teams at both practices and meets. Individual teams may enhance these safety protocols for their practices, such as segregating athletes by their school designated cohort/pod. Teams **will no longer** be required to test all those attending a practice or meet by completing the standard COVID-19 symptoms questionnaire and checking the individual's temperature. Self-testing is suggested.

### ***General Safety Protocols for Student Athletes and Coaches:***

- Common sense dictates, first, and foremost, listen to your body. Do not come to the practice location or workout if you have a temperature  $>100.4F / 37C$ , are coughing, sneezing, or experiencing shortness of breath. These symptoms could be a cold, flu or COVID-19. If you're sick ... stay home!
- Do not arrive any sooner than 15-minutes prior to the start of a scheduled practice.
- Do wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (sing Happy Birthday twice) before and after your practice or a meet. In the absence of soap and water, use hand sanitizer.
- Do use the bathroom at home and **GO** before you leave the house. The availability of bathroom facilities will be limited or non-existent at both practice sites and meet venues.
- Athletes and coaches are to bring a clearly labeled with your name **REUSABLE** water bottle(s) sufficient fluids for the duration of practices and/or meets. Bottled water and/or sports drinks in disposable containers should not be used as this may create potential sources of infection and will eliminate litter. (Remember, coaches are not there to clean up!)
- Note: Disposable bottled water, sports drinks and foodstuffs will **NOT** be available for purchase at meets. There will be no concessions of any sort.
- Pursuant to IDPH requirements, athletes are to: (1) always wear masks, with the exception of warmups, workouts, and competitions; and (2) should take steps to socially distance from teammates and other competitors and meet officials.
  - Note: When not wearing a mask, it should be stored on the athlete's wrist or in the pockets of the athlete's shorts or sweatpants for easy access.
- Every athlete and coach should have a gear/equipment bag in which to store their personal equipment to include their reusable water bottle. There is to be **NO** sharing of personal equipment or cell phones!
- All on site personnel **WILL** be required to wear a mask for the duration of their visit to a practice site or meet venue.
- Social distancing (6-feet) is to always be maintained.



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- Everyone should avoid touching any part of their face as much as possible.
- It is recommended that workout clothes and/or uniforms should be washed immediately after use to limit the spread of the virus.

### **General Communication Protocols:**

- Team coaches and management will communicate via electronic transmission (i.e. email or text message) on a regular basis how the virus can be transmitted, steps to take to mitigate transmission of the virus, and COVID-19 symptoms. (See Appendix A)
- Everyone is to maintain the required 6-foot social distancing and remind people to stay home if they feel sick or have any of the COVID-19 symptoms: Temperature >100.4F/37C, fever, chills, cough, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, runny nose, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or loss of taste or smell. These can also be cold or flu symptoms.

**Note:** Taking temp's and completing the COVID-19 monitoring form (Appendix A) is **no longer** required but does provide a tool for self-check.

### **Practice Safety Protocols**

Each team will implement these safety protocols to assure no transmission of the COVID-19 virus. The following are the minimum protocols and team management can opt to enhance these guidelines.

### ***Screening for all Practice Participants:***

- Generally, student-athletes and coaches will follow the established SPLTF COVID-19 safety protocols and any enhancements implemented by their individual school. At a minimum, **anyone** who has had a fever or cold symptoms in the previous 24-hours **should NOT** take part in practice and workouts. They should contact their primary care provider or other appropriate healthcare professional. COVID-19 testing may be indicated and should not be delayed.
- When symptoms have abated, vulnerable individuals can resume public interactions, but should practice physical distancing, to minimize exposure in social settings where distancing may not be practical, unless precautionary measures are observed.
- Athletes should arrive dressed in their workout clothes. If this is not an option due to time constraints athletes should change in their car and be practice ready when they exit the car or vehicle.
- Athletes should arrive wearing a mask and holding their equipment / gear bag containing their personalized reusable water bottle, extra mask(s), cell phone and other personal equipment. Cell phones are to be kept in the equipment bag and used only for contacting parents or in an emergency! Cell phones should remain in the gear bag and not be shared.
- A record (attendance sheet) tracking those athletes and coaches who attend practice is to be maintained by the Coaching Staff.

### ***Limits on Gatherings:***

- Schools located in IDPH Regions in Phase 4 can allow 20% of an outdoor venue's / site's capacity. Groups of athletes, coaches and other volunteers should continue to practice social distancing.



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- Where practical, it is recommended that coaches segregate their team by school designated cohort / pod for practice based on team size. In addition, teams should not cross-pollinate cohorts / pods before, during or after practice.
- Cohorts / pods can practice at the same outdoor venue / site.
- Regardless of the CDC's and IDPH's limits on gatherings, **NO** spectators are allowed at SPLTF practices.
- When not directly participating in warmups, workouts or competition, care should be taken to maintain a minimum social distance of 6-feet and masks should be worn, covering the nose and mouth.

### **Health Monitoring**

- If a student-athlete, coach, meet official or volunteer reports having any COVID-19 related symptoms, the Athletic Director should be notified and: (1) encourage that individual to see their health care provider immediately; and (2) should immediately notify the school's principal.
- If multiple individuals **report** having any COVID-19 related symptoms, upon notification the Athletic Director and/or Principal should notify their local health department within three days of being informed of the prevalence of COVID-19 symptoms; if multiple individuals **test** positive for COVID-19, the Athletic Director and/or Principal should notify their local health department within one day of positive test results.
- Where appropriate utilize the tracking records and notify all individuals who have been exposed. **Note:** Individuals who have tested positive **cannot by law** be identified by name.
- Any individual who has had close contact of 15-minutes or more, with any person who is diagnosed with COVID-19 should: (a) quarantine for a minimum of 14-days after the last / most recent contact with the infected individual; and (b) should seek a COVID-19 test at an established testing site. All individuals who were potentially exposed should be on alert for COVID-19 symptoms, which include fever/temperature >100.4F/37C, cough or shortness of breath, etc. It is recommended that potentially exposed individuals have their temperature taken if other symptoms develop.
- **Note: If a single member of a cohort/pod contracts COVID, ALL students and coaches in that cohort/pod must follow the procedures and protocols above.**

### **Meet Safety Protocols**

#### ***General Notice for Student Athletes, Coaches, and Volunteers:***

- **Prescreen:** While not required, it is suggested that a parent conduct a prescreen test prior to any meet. Athletes should first, and foremost, listen to your body. **DO NOT** come to the meet venue if you have a fever or temperature >100.4F/37C, are coughing, sneezing, experiencing shortness of breath or any other COVID-19 symptoms (**See Appendix A**). Should the athlete experience any COVID-19 symptoms they should notify their coach immediately that they will not attend the meet and the reason why.
- If the parent initiated prescreen is COVID-19 symptom free, please arrive at the meet site at your designated time. Once you have completed your event(s) please leave the meet site immediately. Athletes will be allowed entrance to the meet site no earlier than 30-minutes prior to their scheduled...



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...event's flight.

- As at practices, wash your hands before you arrive with soap and water and after you race for at least 20-seconds with hand sanitizer that will be available.
- **Bathrooms:** Use the bathroom at home prior to coming to the meet venue. The availability of bathroom facilities or Porta-Potties will be limited. If you must use a bathroom facility or Porta-Pottie, remember to wash your hands with soap and water if available or sanitize your hands with hand sanitizer.
- **Hydration:** Bring a clearly labeled, with your name, reusable water bottle(s) to meets. Concessions, to include bottled water, sports drinks or foodstuffs, will **not** be available for purchase at meets during the 2021 season.
- **Masks:** Pursuant to IDPH requirements, masks are to be worn at **all** times with the exception of warm-ups and competitions. When not wearing a mask, it must be stored on the athlete's arm or in the pocket of their shorts or sweatpants for ease in replacing it.
- **Equipment bag:** Everyone should have a gear / equipment bag in which to stow their personal equipment, to include their labeled reusable water bottle(s), cell phone, extra pair of socks, sweats, rain gear, snacks, etc. There is to be **NO** sharing of equipment or personal items most especially cell phones.
- All on site personnel (coaches and volunteers) **WILL** be required to wear a mask throughout the entire duration of their visit or maintain proper (6-foot) social distancing.
- Social distancing will be always enforced.
- Everyone should avoid touching their face as much as possible.
- Workout clothes or uniforms need to be washed immediately after use.

### **General Meet Venue / Host Protocols:**

- Meet hosts will transmit their *Meet Letter* electronically (email) and must communicate, in addition to normal meet information and worker assignments, COVID-19 protocols that encourage all participants (athletes, coaches and meet officials) to wear masks, maintain social distancing and reminding people to stay home if they feel sick or have any of the COVID-19 symptoms: temperature >100.4F/37C, fevers, chills, cough, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, runny nose, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or loss of taste or smell.
- The meet venues and all sites to include staging and field event locations should have designated entrance and exit locations for all participants to include athletes, officials, meet workers and coaches.

### **Meet Spectators:**

- **NO spectators will be allowed at SPLTF meets** during the 2021 season. It is suggested that if a parent wants to watch their child / children compete, they should volunteer to work as a meet official or volunteer.
- It is understood that as the pandemic environment improves, spectators **may** be allowed to attend meets. However, the final decision on whether to allow spectators at a meet is to be made by the meet's host school administration to include the school's principal and athletic director. The decision to allow spectators will comply with established protocols determined by governmental agencies with regards to: (1) limiting the number of spectators: i.e., 20% of an outdoor venue's capacity; (2) requiring the wearing masks and maintaining social distancing.

It will be the **meet hosts** responsibility to: (1) enforce these protocols; and (2) provide sufficient safety team members/marshals needed to assure compliance. **Special Note:** If SPL officials (officers or safety



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officers) determine there is non-compliance, the meet will be suspended until complied with or the meet will be terminated.

### ***Pre-Meet Screening for all Participants:***

- Subject to self-testing, any person who exhibits a fever/temperature of  $>100.4F/37C$  or cold symptoms within in the previous 24-hours of a meet should **NOT** compete and should contact their primary care provider or other appropriate healthcare professional.
- Vulnerable individuals can resume public interactions, but should practice physical distancing, minimizing exposure to social settings where distancing may not be practical, unless precautionary measures are observed.
- All athletes should be in their uniform but if time constraints require, change in their car and be ready to compete when they are screened, granted entrance and enter the meet venue through the designated entrance.
- Once athletes enter the meet venue, they should proceed to their designated team gathering area wearing a mask and carrying their equipment bag with reusable water container, cell phones and other personal equipment. Cell phones are for emergency use only or to contact parents for pick up and should not be shared.
- A record should be maintained by each team of all individuals associated with their team entering the venue for tracking purposes: i.e. maintain an attendance sheet.
- Student-athletes, coaches, meet officials and volunteer workers will no longer be required to answer the standard COVID-19 questionnaire regarding symptoms and will not be required to have their temperature taken. Self-testing is suggested.
- We are requesting that all non-related individuals in the car wear masks during transport and all folks wear masks after they exit the car.

**Note (1):** If anyone has COVID symptoms, they should defer participating in any athletic activity for a minimum of 14-days after the onset of symptoms **OR** until their temperature registers  $<100.4F/37C$  and they are feeling well, without fever-reducing medication, for at least 24-hours **OR** confirmed to not have COVID-19 via a negative healthcare professional administered COVID-19 test.

**Note (2):** Pursuant to IDPH requirements, athletes who are racing in any events will required to wear a mask during their race. All remaining on site personnel (coaches, meet officials and volunteers) **WILL** also be required to wear a mask throughout the duration of the meet or maintain 6-foot social distancing.

### ***Meet Logistics:***

#### **Assigned Team Sites**

Teams will be assigned to an area (either bleachers or around the facility) for their team to gather, store their personal and team equipment and remain socially distant (30-feet) from other teams. Remember, no team tents are allowed at SPLTF meets.

Masks will be always worn by all athletes, coaches and meet officials/volunteers when (a) present in their assigned team location; and/or (b) moving to the staging area or field event site.



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## Staging Area

The meet host will create a larger than usual staging area in the field, as opposed to our normal location on the track to accommodate athlete's social distancing. Staging is to be maintained as a segregated area.

- Use Hurdles or safety tape to segregate the staging area.
- Only athletes called to the staging area are to be in the area. Athletes not competing need to remain in their team area with their cohort/pod. Penalties will be assessed for athletes who do not comply with this requirement.
- To assist with social distancing, cones/poly spots will mark the social distanced mandated six feet distancing.
- Athletes will wear their masks in the staging area and while being escorted to the starting line. Masks are **NOT** to be removed until instructed to do so.

## Running Events

Athletes will **NOT** be required to run with their masks on for any distance to include relays. **This is an approved IDPH / IHSA action** and applies to the SPLTF, IESA and IHSA. (See IHSA's 4/12/21 Board meeting notice)

The SPL will utilize regular lane usage as constructed on the track for individual races and relays with a **staggered start**. This includes: 200m, 400m, 600m, 400m Relay 800m Relay and JV 800m Medley Relay.

- When staggered starts are not available, alternate lane usage is recommended for the 75m and 100m.
- For the 800m and 1600m where the "waterfall" start is normally used, for the 2021 season runners will start from **alleys** for 800m and 1600m. Note: this is a form of stagger, with a cut in within the first 100m, which must be marked.
- For races where the SPL has traditionally run two (2) runners in a lane (JV 200m & 400m) we will instead run heats.
- Batons used in relays will be sanitized by a team's designated coach at the conclusion of each relay. Batons are to be returned by the last runner to the designated coach.
- Hand sanitizer will be made available to athletes at the conclusion of their race at the finish line or each exchange zone.
- Sanitization stations, with disinfectant spray, paper towels, garbage cans with liner and hand sanitizer will be made available at the staging area and finish line.
- **There will be no varsity hurdle events for the 2021 season.**

## Finish Line

- All finish line workers will be required to wear a mask for the duration of the meet or maintain social distancing.
- **TBD** -- Dependent on maximum group limits (20% of an outdoor venue's capacity), we may have only one finish line team rather than the usual two.
- Meet management with attempt to utilize the "Finish Line" camera and software as much as possible in order the reduce staffing at the finish line.

## Field Events

- Each team will be responsible for providing field event implements for their competitors to include: 4 javelins; 4 six lb. shots (JV); 4 eight lb. shots (V) and 4 discs'. There will be **NO** sharing of field event implements with another team's members. If a team does not have their equipment, they will be disqualified, and no attempts recorded.
- Note: No athletic equipment is needed for High Jump, Long Jump and Triple Jump. Teams assigned to run an event will still need to provide necessary equipment such as rakes, brooms, measuring tapes, etc. in addition to cones or poly spots to set up social distancing lines.
- Social distancing, utilizing cones or poly spots at 6-foot intervals, will be maintained by those waiting to throw javelin or the discs or put the shot. Further, competitors will be segregated...



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...by their school designated cohort/pod. Failure to maintain social distancing will, after being warned, disqualified.

- Each team will have a designated coach at a field event who will be responsible for wiping down the throwing implements with a disinfectant wipe once the athlete has completed a session and before handing off to another member of their team.
- Athletes will retrieve their own implement (a) once instructed by the event judge; and (b) they properly exit the throwing area. Example: An athlete would use the same throwing implement for their two warmup and three official throws. On completion of their five throws the implement will be retrieved by the competitor when instructed, sanitized by a team's designated coach, and then handed off to the next teammate.
- Athletes will wear their mask in the socially distanced lines as they wait to compete. Athletes will wear masks when competing.
- All field event officials/volunteers will wear masks.

### **Championship Meet: Recording Results & Awards**

TBD ... The SPLTF will conduct a "championship meet" at the end of the 2021 season. Given the changing nature of the environment the decision to score the meet and issue awards will be determined at a later date. If the SPLTF decides to score the meet the following applies:

- The recording tent will need to be placed in a segregated area, ideally in the middle of the soccer/football field.
- Poly spots will be placed so as to maintain the required six-foot social distancing separation between athletes approaching the recorder's table.
- The recorders will wear masks, while meet hosts should provide gloves for workers to wear when passing out ribbons / medals / awards unless its determined that all officials and meet workers have been vaccinated and met the minimum 14-days waiting period.
- Additional volunteers will be needed to ensure that social distance is being always maintained.
- Athletes must put their masks on after recovering from their event and prior to moving towards the recording table.

### **~ PLEASE NOTE ~**

**\*\* Compliance with these "Return-To-Play" protocols is required of all SPL Track & Field teams. Failure to comply with these and/or amended COVID-19 safety protocols will result in the immediate suspension of a team's participation in the 2021 spring season.**

**However, it is acknowledged that currently the COVID-19 environment is especially fluid and every effort will be made by SPLTF and meet management to keep up-to-date and communicate required health mandates. \*\***

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