



MODESTO CITY SCHOOLS

Educational Services

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March 31, 2021

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) released guidance for [Outdoor and Indoor Youth and Recreational Adult Sports](#) which outlines specific, allowed, athletic activities and competitions based on the County tier assignment as specified by California's [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#). Additionally, the CDPH released the [Youth Sports Q&A](#) which clarifies requirements for the conduct of youth sports in Modesto City Schools (MCS). Finally, as per CDPH guidance, some lower tier sports are allowed to commence in higher tiers with additional requirements as per those imposed on collegiate sports, as specified in the [Institutions of Higher Education Guidance](#), dated September 30, 2020, and outlined below. The combination of this new guideline, improving [COVID data](#) for our area, the January 25, 2021 lifting of the [Regional Stay-Home](#) order, CCAL and WAC three-season schedules, and updated sport-by-sport [CIF Guidelines & Modifications](#) have enabled us to move forward with our athletic programs effective immediately.

MCS recognizes the importance of athletic activities for our students, schools, and community. The CDPH [Outdoor and Indoor Youth and Recreational Adult Sports](#) guidance provides direction on outdoor and indoor youth and recreational adult sports activities to support a safe environment for these sports. The guidance applies to all organized youth sports, including MCS athletic programs, community-sponsored programs, privately-organized clubs and leagues, and adult recreational sports. These guidelines must be followed by all MCS athletic programs, regardless of their physical meeting location, and all outside organizations utilizing MCS facilities. **Failure to do so may result in suspension of the MCS program and will result in immediate cancellation of outside organization reservations.**

The California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) has suggested [sport-specific guidelines](#) and COVID-19 modifications to provide additional guidance for sports competitions. Unless modified by MCS policies below, these guidelines should be reviewed and followed, on a sport-by-sport basis, for the conduct of all youth and adult sports competitions regardless of CIF affiliation. Additionally, strategies in these guidelines should be used to safely conduct conditioning and practice activities. Where conflicts exist, CDPH guidance takes precedence.

Site Administrators, Athletic Coaches, and Athletic Directors are responsible to ensure they understand these guidelines and that these guidelines are followed by all.

Effective Wednesday, March 31, 2021, these updated guidelines supersede all previous MCS COVID-related sports, athletics, and conditioning guidelines.

General Guidelines

- Conduct of all sports competitions shall be in strict accordance with [California Interscholastic Federation](#), regardless of affiliation, in Appendix B unless modified by this document.
- Each site's coaches and athletes must adhere to the [MCS COVID-19 Return to Play Safety Plan](#) for athletes that are returning to participate post-COVID positive
- Any coach, assistant, student, or other participant in conditioning, practice, competition, etc. who has been exposed to, or tests positive for, COVID-19 must be reported to the appropriate site administrator for further guidance.
- Student-athletes, coaches, assistants, etc. are to immediately report to their coach (or supervisor) any symptoms of COVID-19 while at home or during activities. Those exhibiting such illness during activities should be sent home immediately.
- Conditioning activities (for sports that have not officially started) are voluntary for all student-athletes.
- If a sport is "in-season," the student-athlete can only participate in physical activities (including conditioning) if they have cleared their pre-participation physical and it is on file with the school.
- If a sport is "in-season," student-athletes who are not able to complete their physical may only participate in "non-physical" activities.
- For away competitions, MCS participants, coaches, assistants, observers, etc. shall follow the hosting school's policies and procedures.
- No loitering around athletic facilities is allowed before or after conditioning, practice, or competitions.
- The following links to MCS COVID-19 documents are provided as resources to support athletes, coaches, and parents safe participation in MCS athletics, including indoor sports:
 - [MCS COVID-19 Facilities Site Specific Indoor Sports Plan](#)
 - [MCS COVID-19 Return to Play Safety Plan](#)

Face Coverings

- The CDPH [Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings](#) applies to all Californians and must be followed. As such, all coaches, assistants, observers, etc. shall wear face coverings at all times regardless of physical distancing ability.
- All athletes participating in conditioning, practicing, or competition **must wear face coverings at all times** when participating in the activity, even with heavy exertion as tolerated, and as prescribed in the CIF [sport-specific guidelines](#) (regardless of CIF affiliation) with the following modifications:
 - Masks are required at all times, for all sports, by all participants, coaches, assistants, observers, etc. when not actively participating in play. This includes athletes on the bench, sidelines, pool deck, etc. unless prohibited by activities such as drinking water or receiving care.
 - Masks can be removed at any time for an athlete to catch his or her breath during or after heavy exertion. Wherever practicable, physical distancing of six feet should be achieved before removal of masks and they should be replaced as soon as safe to do so.
 - Masks are recommended, but not required, when athletes are actively participating on the court, field, etc. for the following sports, due to athletes being regularly COVID surveillance tested: Football, Volleyball, Wrestling, and Basketball.
 - Masks are required when athletes are actively participating on the court, field, etc. for the following sports: Tennis, Golf, Softball, Soccer, and Baseball.
 - Masks are required at the start of Cross Country competitions unless staggered start times achieve appropriate social distancing guidelines. Masks may be removed (but must be kept with the athlete) after the start of the competition when athletes have achieved physical separation.

- Masks are required for all Track & Field events with the exception of races with a staggered start; masks may be removed (but must be kept with the athlete) after the start of the competition when athletes have achieved physical separation.
- Masks shall not be worn at any time while in the pool for any activity.

Physical Distancing

- Physical distancing of six-feet is required at all times, for all activities, for all out-of-season sports.
- Participants in youth and adult sports should maintain at least six-feet of distance from others to the maximum extent possible, including when on the sidelines.
- Coaches should avoid contact with participants and facilitate physical distancing between participants to the maximum extent possible (e.g., staggered starts instead of mass starts for races).
- When observing, individuals must stay at least six feet from non-household members. The allowance of observers will be based on the capacity of each site as well as the CDPH guidelines in place at the time of the event.
- Cheerleading programs should follow the CIF [sport-specific guidelines](#) for Competitive Cheer. It should be noted that, as MCS does not have a competitive cheer program, *physical distancing protocols and mask wearing shall be in place at all times for Cheer.*

Use of Locker Rooms/Changing Areas

- Visiting teams must come dressed out and ready to compete; locker room facilities will not be provided. Likewise, MCS athletes must travel dressed out and ready to compete; changing at a visiting site will not be permitted.
- Students attending school on their “In-Person” days may change/dress into athletic gear in locker rooms (physically distanced locker assignments). Athletes coming in from “At-Home” instructional days should come dressed (will not have access to locker rooms).

Hygiene and Equipment Sanitation

- Shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected before use by another person, group, or team.
- When equipment is shared during an activity, participants should perform hand hygiene (wash hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer) before play, during breaks, at half time, and after the conclusion of the activity.
- Balls or other objects or equipment can be touched by multiple players and used during practice and play if the above hand hygiene practices are followed.
- Drink bottles must not be shared, and other personal items and equipment should not be shared.
- Hydration stations may be used but must be dispensed by a single individual wearing appropriate PPE.
- Every athlete must clean and disinfect his or her own and assigned athletic equipment.
- Student-athletes should shower and wash clothing immediately after each workout.

Cohorting

- Coaches must complete a **COVID-19 Athlete/Coach Monitoring Form** at the beginning of each conditioning, practice, and competition session. These forms should be kept by the appropriate Athletic Director for one year.
- Strongly discourage multi-sport participation (during the same season) by athletes - evaluate the implications.

Band and Cheer

- Band will be allowed for the duration of any outdoor game for the period of time that aligns with their performance at the game.
 - Band members may attend the football game only during the period of time in which they are playing. If the band is only performing at halftime, the band shall arrive and leave at the beginning and end of halftime.
- Band members shall be physically separated to the greatest extent practicable from other attendees and participants (i.e., the band shall sit in a “reserved” section separate from spectators).
- All music PPE will be worn at all times.
 - Keep a non-music mask at hand to switch when not playing.
- No equipment will be shared.
- Each student must have their own stand and music.
- Band members shall sit with no less than 10ft between each band member.
- There must be access to hand sanitizer for band members.
- Wind playing will be minimized to further mitigate risk.
- Non-ensemble members are not allowed to sit with the band.
- Social distancing will be required through the entire evening - including during setup and transportation of equipment.
- Cheer is allowed to cheer for the duration of the game on the sidelines as well as a half-time show.
- For Cheer and Band, physical separation of 10 feet required at all times (i.e., stationary performances only), facemasks required at all times.
- Appropriate PPE, hand sanitizer, etc. shall be made readily available to cheer and band.
- Band and Cheer are not currently allowed for indoor competitions.

Observers and Spectators

- Parents/guardians cannot attend workouts, practices, or conditioning for MCS sports. Only coaches and athletes will be allowed to attend workouts.
- Until further guidance is received from CDPH, for outdoor sports competitions, home or away, each athlete, cheerleader, band performer, etc. is limited to inviting two immediate household members to provide age-appropriate supervision for the period of time that aligns with their participation in the activity, as the facility allows. This will be adjusted as additional CDPH guidelines are received.
- Observers for indoor sports will be updated when further guidance is received from CDPH.
- For youth sports (age 18 years and under) by outside organizations, two immediate household members may observe practices and games as needed for age-appropriate supervision, but observers should be limited to ensure physical distance can be maintained, reduce potential crowding, and maintain indoor and outdoor capacity limits allowed by Tiers.
- For adult sports, observers and spectators are not allowed at this time.
- Credentialed media are allowed in outdoor venues at this time. All members of the media must follow all appropriate COVID related protocols as they relate to physical distancing and masking.
- One supervisor and up to 4 student photographers are allowed in outdoor venues strictly for media and yearbook related activities at this time. These participants must follow all appropriate COVID related protocols as they relate to physical distancing and masking.
- All observers and spectators outlined in the above allowances are required to perform self-screening before entry; failure to follow posted COVID-19 mitigation measures may result in removal from premises.

Informed Consent

- The [MCS COVID-19 ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES WAIVER OF LIABILITY \(Informed Consent\)](#) is required for all MCS student-athletes as part of the “clearance” process to participate in co-curricular athletics.

COVID Testing and Reporting

- Football, Rugby, and Water Polo are allowed while our County’s adjusted COVID case rate is equal to or less than 14 per 100,000 with as long as weekly rapid antigen or PCR testing is completed. Results of tests must be provided to opposing team within 24 hours of competition.
- Indoor sports (i.e., Basketball, Volleyball, Water Polo, & Wrestling) are allowed to return as long as weekly PCR test are taken with either PCR or antigen test *taken*, and *results received* and shared with the opposing team, within 48 hours of each competition.
- For any and all sports, if positive test results for any participant in a competition with another team are received (either antigen or PCR), this information shall be shared with site administration. Site administration shall inform Associate Superintendent Mark Herbst, Associate Superintendent Brad Goudeau, and District Nurse Aurora Licudine, who will report such to the Stanislaus County Public Health, so they can notify the opposing team.
- MCS will follow contact tracing protocols detailed in our COVID-19 Safety Plan ([Modesto City Schools COVID-19 Safety Plan](#)) MCS will also utilize SCHSA, Public Health protocols on “Contact Tracing for Athletes” for sports-related contact tracing.
- MCS will adhere to SCHSA, Public Health requirements for “Notification for Competition-Related Exposures.”

Returning to Sports after Infection

- Children and teens with symptoms of COVID-19 should not attend practices or competition. They should consult their physician for testing and notify their coach, athletic trainer, school nurse, and/or school administrator of their symptoms.
- Youth recovering from COVID-19 will have different paths to return to sports based on the severity of their illness. Those who are asymptomatic or have mild symptoms should not exercise until cleared by a physician. See the [American Academy of Pediatrics Interim Guidance on Return to Sports](#) for additional guidance for more serious infections.

Post COVID-19 Return to Play (RTP) Protocol

Any athlete returning, post recovery from their bout with COVID-19, must bring in a clearance note from their physician stating they are healed and free of all symptoms associated with COVID-19. **Before being released back into their sport, the athlete must also go through the COVID-19 RTP Protocol.** This graduated return to play progression will increase the athlete’s activity level and allow safe monitoring of any lingering effects of COVID-19 infection. Athletes must complete the progression without development of chest pain, chest tightness, palpitations, lightheadedness, dizziness, or fainting. If these symptoms develop, athlete should be referred back to their healthcare provider who signed the form.

- **STAGE 1: (2 Days Minimum)** Light Activity (Walking, Jogging, Stationary Bike) for 15 minutes or less at intensity no greater than 70% of maximum heart rate. NO resistance training.
- **STAGE 2: (1 Day Minimum)** Add simple movement activities (EG. running drills) for 30 minutes or less at intensity no greater than 80% of maximum heart rate
- **STAGE 3: (1 Day Minimum)** Progress to more complex training for 45 minutes or less at intensity no greater than 80% maximum heart rate. May add light resistance training.
- **STAGE 4: (2 Days Minimum)** Normal Training Activity for 60 minutes or less at intensity no greater than 80% maximum heart rate
- **STAGE 5: Return to full activity**