



Return-to-Play

Guidelines, Procedures, and Recommendations

WPA USSSA Fastpitch's COVID-19 Return-to-Play Guidelines, Procedures, and Recommendations

July 1st, 2020

The continued health and safety of our players, coaches, spectators, directors, staff, umpires, vendors and park personnel is extremely important to us.

With that said, the integrity of the game is important, too. The game on the field will be played as normal. The catcher will NOT be required to be 6 feet from the batter or home plate. Umpires calling balls and strikes should allow adequate distance behind the catcher, while still able to perform their duty. Players and coaches should practice physical distancing at all times. No in-close team huddle/meeting in pitcher's circle or 1st/3rd base discuss plays or situations. Obviously, physical distancing won't always apply to players making plays on the field.

We can play and enjoy the game while maintaining social distancing. However, we need everyone's cooperation to make this happen.

Below are guidelines for most WPA USSSA Fastpitch events. Please note that some of these guidelines may not be applicable at all facilities due to logistics. The Tournament Director may post additions, subtractions, or modifications.

Also note that these guidelines are subject to change at any time. City, local, state and federal guidelines may supersede these guidelines.

Here is our plan.

- Each Diamond is managed to not to exceed gatherings of 90.
- 2 spectators per person allowed. Vulnerable populations should stay home.
- No additional spectators, siblings, grandparents etc. will be allowed. Only those people mentioned above would be allowed in the complex.
- All event participants, spectators, and employees must adhere to the six-foot physical distancing guidelines while at the facility.
- Follow all local and state guidelines for facilities and events.

- Any person who is experiencing symptoms will be prohibited from attending the event/venue of play.
- According to Governor Wolf's new guidelines as of July 1st, 2020 all staff and independent contractors must wear face coverings in accordance with the state guidelines.
- According to Governor Wolf's Spectators must wear face coverings in accordance with the state guidelines.
- Players, Coaches, Umpires (DO NOT) have to wear face mask when they are on the fields. Players and coaches must wear them when they return to the Dugout after each half inning. Coaches it is your responsibility to make sure your players are spaced apart in the dugout and face mask are on.
- Teams, players, coaches, should refrain from handshakes, high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, group celebrations, group prayers, etc.
- No Team Meetings before, during, or after the game.
- In dugouts, discontinue use of water coolers that are provided by tournaments, parks, or teams. Players should bring their own, personal cooler instead of using a team cooler. Players should plan on bringing an individual water bottle and food. No shared water or food coolers.
- Allow teams to spread players out; expand the dugout area when room permits and only if player safety will not be compromised. Expansion of the team dugouts should be done into foul ball areas.
- For the team on offense the 3 players in the batting order due up that inning and 1 coach will be in dugout. The other 2 coaches will be at 1st and 3rd base coaching positions. The remaining players will need to be outside the dugout in the open spaces behind or beside the dugout and other safety fencing and socially distanced. Each team will be required to have a parent/guardian delegated to monitoring those players outside the dugout for social distancing and to monitor and maintain the flow into and out of the dugouts.
- For the team on offense, the coach in the dugout will retrieve the bat from the Home plate area. The umpire nor the catcher will pick it up.
- For the players on defense usually the whole team is on the field with one or two players and 3 coaches are on the bench. Coaches will keep watch to maintain social distancing.
- Parents/Guardians that bring their own chairs to observe, which is the norm, will be required to maintain the standard six-foot distance between chairs. Parents/Guardians must set-up on the out of play line extended or beyond outfield fence. NO setting up behind backstop, dugout or sitting in bleachers.
- When using a tent, please restrict it to immediate family members only.
- Parents/Guardians should supply their athletes with antibacterial wipes and hand sanitizer for disinfecting shared playing equipment and cleaning hands between innings.
- Upon arriving at a dugout for the first time, teams are to disinfect hard surface areas. (benches, bat racks, etc.).

- Teams are to clean their dugout of all trash and other items after each game, and to wipe down (disinfect) hard surfaces such as benches, bat racks, etc.
- Player's items should be lined up against a fence at least six feet apart.
- Players should use their own gloves, helmets, and bats as much as possible.
- Coaches are responsible for ensuring social distancing is maintained between players as much as possible. This means additional spacing between players while playing catch, changing drills so that players remain spaced out, no congregating of players while waiting to bat.
- Players should have designated spots to place their personal items.
- The manager's pre-game meeting at home plate should be limited to one coach from each team plus the umpires. No players at pre-game plate meeting.
- Where possible, consider options for limiting line-up card exchanges, in order to reduce person-to-person contact. Try to get an electronic image of the line-up card from the opposing coach. Umpires will need a paper copy of the line-up card to perform their duty. It is strongly recommended that umpires sanitize their hands after each touch of line-up card or any document.
- Spectators must not enter the player areas (on the field of play or bench area)
- Fans and players must leave the playing area and return to their cars immediately after their game(s) end. No sticking around to watch other teams play.
- Keep social distancing between teams in effect beyond the field of play.
- In the event of inclement weather, including but not limited to rain, lightning delays, etc. fans, coaches, and players cannot congregate under tents, overhangs, or other covered structures in the near proximity of other gatherings or heavy foot traffic. Social and mass gathering guidelines must be maintained at all times.
- Teams to play next should be provided designated areas for player warm-ups that provide for necessary social distancing.
- The team to play next must remain in their designated warm up area until the prior team has finished sanitizing and is completely out of the dugout.
- Fans for upcoming games must remain in their cars or away from the warmup/playing areas during player warmups. They will be permitted to come to the field once their team enters the dugout area.
- At some facilities, concession stands may not be opened. Please plan accordingly.
- Game ball(s) are disinfected before and after every game and practice.
- Team on defense should assign a person(s) to retrieve foul balls and return them to the person on defense in charge of sanitizing balls.
- Do not discard PPE face coverings or gloves on the ground.
- Any person coming within an unsafe distance of an umpire or event director to aggressively argue or discuss a call may be subject to automatic ejection (Game plus next game) or removal from premises.
- Directors have the right to adjust the playing formats and increasing the amount of time between games, to minimize overlap and traffic flow where needed.
- NO sunflower seeds, shell nuts or similar products.

- There will be no team check-ins. All teams are required to have the official roster online with all players approved for both the online Return-to-Play Waiver as well as the roster. Players that do not sign the Return-to-Play Waiver will be ineligible to play for the tournament and will not show up on the roster.
- Team Managers must also sign the Return-to-Play Waiver.
- There will be NO schedules, scores or brackets posted at any sight. All schedules, scores and brackets are online. If an incorrect score is posted, please contact the tournament director.