



Ohio High School Athletic Association

Jerry Snodgrass, Executive Director
Friday, June 19, 2020
Administrator Update

Responsible Restart Ohio for Contact and Non-Contact Sports: Practices & Competitions

<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/Contact-Sport-Practices-Non-Contact-Sport.pdf>

To: All OHSAA Member Schools' Superintendents, Principals and Athletic Administrators
From: Jerry Snodgrass, Executive Director

Good afternoon to each of you as we continue to provide updated guidance, recommendations and clarifications on the Governor's Responsible Restart with sports programs. Initially, there was a bit of confusion on the differences between 'summer sports' and school sports. However, this has been resolved and, over the past few weeks, we have had great dialogue with the Governor's office and **are now part of the Advisory Groups**. We were able to have valuable input into Thursday's announcement so orders/restrictions that affect non-school sports affect school sports in the same manner. Representing each of you, it is a great step and appreciated. The purpose of this communication is to update you and attempt to eliminate any confusion moving forward.

Governor's Announcements to Responsibly Restart Sports

As mentioned, we were involved in the recommendations that led to today's advances. An important overview of Thursday's announcement:

"Phases": Maybe the biggest area of confusion that could occur. Recently, the OHSAA provided a **guidance document** that listed 'Phases' to re-open sports that utilize school facilities – everything from gyms to fields to weight rooms. That guidance recommended PHASES to slowly and safely open up to the permissions granted by the Governor's orders for low/no-contact sports as well as contact sports as defined by the Governor. At that time, there were no 'phases' outlined by the Governor – simply a 'date' for responsibly restarting those programs (low/no contact and contact). Today, they outlined Phases for what the Governor's orders will now permit. **The Phases provided by the Governor today and the Phases previously provided by the OHSAA are two entirely separate documents.** If we had known the Governor would release 'phases,' we may have chosen to use a different term. This is important to note since these words could lead to possible confusion.

Phase 2 Announced Thursday . . . What was Phase 1?

With Thursday's announcement, the permissions granted on May 26 for low/no-contact sports and contact sports (skill training) are being revised on the www.cornavirusohio.gov website to now be called "Phase 1." Phase 1 is what is currently permitted by the Governor's office in respect to competition and skill training that was permitted beginning on May 26.

Phase 2 Announced Thursday . . . What exactly does that mean?

With Thursday's announcement, Phase 2 permissions will begin on **Monday, June 22**. Mandatory and recommended restrictions are posted at: <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/Contact-Sport-Practices-Non-Contact-Sport.pdf>. Please read these carefully and we would recommend posting these and sharing them with participants and your various attendees in your open gyms/workouts/etc. Basically:

- Beginning Monday, June 22, schools may now have open gyms/open fields/workouts/training for Contact Sports.
- All NON/LOW-Contact sports may continue with competitions previously granted beginning May 26.
- Daily assessments of participants must still occur as previously required.
- "Spectators" (parents, others) are permitted but must follow restrictions that include social distancing.

- While there is no restriction on the number permitted to attend Open Gyms/Fields/Facilities, any individuals not participating in intra-team play or skill sessions must remain socially distanced. Example: If you have 20 individuals playing in two open gym cross court games, any remaining individuals must remain socially distanced when not playing. Consider limiting attendance for this reason.
- Athletic Trainers have restrictions identified that include wearing facemasks when treating an individual.
- Skill Training identified from May 26 may still occur.
- There is no REQUIREMENT that any school must begin Phase 2 on June 22. It is merely *permitted to begin* on June 22.
- Since the OHSAA's "10-Day Rule" has been waived for the summer of 2020, there is no limit to the number of days in which coaches/schools may conduct open gyms/open fields/workouts/training.
- Local Health Departments continue to be given control/oversight of schools and facilities within their jurisdiction. They retain the right to restrict permissions in Phase 2.

Recommendations:

- Strongly consider limiting attendance at Open Gyms/Open Fields and weightlifting to students in your school.
- Consider assigning oversight to one staff member to comply with all mandated and recommended restrictions.
- Consider limiting attendance at your 'open gyms/fields' to ensure social distancing for those not directly involved in participating.
- Consider posting signage at your facilities emphasizing the health and safety restrictions for the events in your various facilities. Paul Powers at Aurora High School has some great suggestions/examples.

Note 1: The word "Scrimmages" is used in regulations within Phase 2. In school sport language, the term 'scrimmage' generally references competitions between schools that do not have to follow all the normal playing rules of the game. In the context of the Governor's orders, 'scrimmage' refers to games/competitions being played only with members attending your 'Open Gym' or 'workout.' **Competitions between different schools or communities is NOT permitted at any time during Phase 2 for contact sports. NO '7 on 7's,' 'Summer Tournaments' or 'Team Camps' involving different schools or communities is permitted for contact sports during Phase 2.**

Note 2: While many of us have received communications from different venues/colleges announcing 'Team Camps,' there is still no date announced by the Governor in which these would be permitted. Under Phase 2 restrictions, they currently are not permitted.

Note 3: Many have asked about teams participating in out-of-state 'events/competitions,' especially in Indiana. Each state has different restrictions. While CDC guidelines for sports lists individuals/teams from one geographic area traveling to another geographic areas as the highest risk for spreading COVID-19, there are no mandated restrictions.

Note 4: While "Phase 3" appears as the inevitable next step, there has been NO suggestion or indication of what the date for launching "Phase 3" would be.

Odds & Ends

Input Requested

To continue to provide input that will permit us to serve you better, please take a few very short minutes to answer the few questions at this link:

OHSAA Compliance

A reminder again with Dr. Debbie Moore's upcoming retirement and other staff's current leave and layoffs, patience is urged when submitting transfer requests and affidavits. You can also help us by:

- Getting eligibility requests in as early as possible, especially on Bylaw 4-7-2 Exception 1 requests.
- Make certain that all Exception 1 requests are completed correctly. Review these carefully before submitting. Most notable exclusions/errors are:
 - * Missing dates, especially the 'date of transfer.'
 - * Affidavit is not notarized.
 - * Submissions that clearly do not meet requirements of the Bylaw typically due to the student-athlete being the only one making the move (those cannot be approved).
 - * Failure to submit correct NEW voter registration and Driver's License from the NEW address along with the affidavit.
- Understanding affidavits are reviewed on a 'first in – first out' basis and **they take time**. During the busiest times of the year, they naturally may take up to seven days to approve/deny.
- Take time to view information at the following link: <https://www.ohsaa.org/Eligibility>.