



FOOTBALL

Recommended COVID-19 guidelines to implement 2020 Football events:

This document is not an exhaustive list, but it provides recommendations from the LHSAA to member schools concerning football and may be updated before and during the 2020 fall season. It is vital that administrators, athletic directors and head coaches are familiar with the information in this document and purposeful in its application. Due to possible changes in the foreseeable future all the below is subject to change.

1. SOCIAL DISTANCING

- i. Coaches are responsible for ensuring social distancing is maintained between players as best/much as possible.
- ii. Spacing among players while stretching; performing drills; waiting in any line; while on the sideline; and in post-practice “huddles” so that players must remain 6 feet apart.
- iii. Players maintain proper social distancing of at least 6 feet apart when receiving coaching instruction.
- iv. Athletic Directors/Coaches should separate the different levels of football within their program into different areas so that social distancing can be maintained. This includes the use of locker rooms.
- v. Team Box on the Sideline: The LHSAA will expand the team box for the 2020 season to each of their respective 15-yard lines, providing ten additional yards on each side for players and coaching personnel to socially distance. This addition assists in supervision of players by coaches. Teams are strongly encouraged to expand toward the bleachers as well in respect to social distancing.
- vi. Roster Size: Depending on team size, it is recommended that roster limits be implemented to improve social distancing. Travel rosters for teams with large rosters are encouraged to follow this recommendation. This assists in the number of individuals in the team box on the sidelines.
- vii. Sideline Protocol for Essential Personnel: Only essential personnel are permitted on the field of play. The field of play is defined as the area within the boundary lines and the goal lines. Essential personnel are defined as players, coaches, athletic trainers, officials, and the chain crew. Note: We understand that “other” personnel are important to the administration of a football contest. Those personnel are considered to be ball boys, student managers and trainers, and statisticians. All are expected to be on the sideline, maintaining social distance of 6 feet apart, and not entering the playing field. Please remember that LHSAA Handbook Bylaw 6.27, “Contest Management” states, “A school shall be prohibited from allowing non-essential and unauthorized personnel on its sideline and/or its team bench area during any LHSAA contest at any level of play” and must be enforced by school administration. Because of the extension of sidelines



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from the 10 yard line to the 10 yard line, we ask that school administration severely restricts the use of the area from the 10 yard line to goal line on both ends for the proper game administration by officials, contest limits for players and coaches, and chain crew/ball boys. Your help is greatly needed and appreciated in this to help ensure social distancing. **PLEASE** assist in adhering to By-law 6.27.

- viii. Coin Toss/Pre-Game/Post-Game: For the coin toss, the referee, umpire, and one designated player from each team will meet with social distancing of 6 feet. No handshakes will take place prior to or following the coin toss. For overtime protocol, the aforementioned pre-game procedure will be followed. All pre-game and post-game handshake engagements will be suspended.

2. **SCRIMMAGES / JAMBOREES**

- i. For the 2020 football season, scrimmages, jamborees, 7-on-7 practices/tournaments, or other types of practices between teams will not take place. These inter-school competitions will be eliminated to decrease contact between opposing players, coaches, school personnel, and fans.

3. **PRACTICE / GAME PROTOCOLS**

- i. Sanitizing: The wide availability of hand sanitizer should be accessible to all personnel. Hand sanitizing should be used as much as possible. The NFHS and LHSA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) recommends using hand sanitizer when going on and off the field. Players are encouraged to provide their own hand sanitizer and/or disinfecting wipes.
- ii. Game Administration: The break between the 1st and 2nd quarter and the 3rd and 4th quarter should be two minutes in length in order to allow for proper player sanitizing and hydration.
- iii. Masks: Masks will be required to be worn by players, coaches, athletic trainers, chain crews, ball boys, statisticians, managers and ANY non-essential personnel when on the sideline. Only the "22" players participating on a particular play will not be required to wear a mask.
- iv. Mouthpieces: It is strongly recommended that players keep their mouthpieces in their mouths at all times. Each time they touch their mouthpieces, they should sanitize their hands.
- v. Use of Water: Players must have their own water bottles/jugs for water consumption. Water is to be consumed ONLY. Players should not rinse their mouth out for spitting purposes, rinse out their mouthpieces, or pour water on their faces or necks.
- vi. Game Balls: Balls should be cleaned and sanitized throughout the contest using sanitizing solutions recommended by the ball manufacturer. It is recommended that each team provide at least two reliable and knowledgeable



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ball boys for each contest. The ball boys must maintain the appropriate social distance of 6 feet throughout the contest.

- vii. Post-Game Team Meetings: Game administrators should keep all fans and others from congregating/ not engaging with players, coaches, and team personnel in post-game team activity.
- viii. Facility Sanitizing: Follow all CDC and public health guidelines regarding facility sanitization.
- ix. Other Considerations: Coaches must assist to facilitate in the reduction of handshakes, high fives and fist bumps.

4. GENERAL FOOTBALL CONSIDERATIONS

- i. Online Football Rules Clinic: The annual rules clinic has been shifted to an online platform. The clinic will open on September 21st and close on October 4th. All head coaches are required to complete the rules clinic prior to the deadline on October 4th. Coaches who fail to complete the rules clinic by the deadline shall not legally coach in a LHSAA football game this season.
- ii. NFHS Covid-19 Course: All head coaches will be required to complete the FREE course offered by the NFHS on Covid-19. This course will present material from that document along with some other helpful information and materials to assist school coaches to conduct workouts, practices and contests as safely as possible. This course must be completed by September 1st and the certificate of completion must be kept on file along with other LHSAA compliance forms for review. The link is here: <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/covid-19-for-coaches-and-administrators>.
- iii. Bowl Game Option: Due to the reduced regular season, teams that do not make the playoff bracket will have the option of playing a bowl game as an “extra” contest. Schools may schedule other schools that did not make the post-season. Schools have until the Regional round to participate in the contest. Schools are encouraged to play games on Saturday if their bowl game is during the Bi-District round and on Thursday and Saturday during the Regional round of the playoffs. Schools will split the gate after expenses with NO fee to the LHSAA. In order for a contest to be sanctioned the host school must complete the LHSAA Football Sanction Form (similar to the jamboree form) and then officials will be assigned. More information on the process and form will be available on the LHSAA website prior to the end of the regular season.