

# ASAA COVID-19 Softball Recommendations

## as of 3/10/2021

This document is intended to provide guidance for schools to consider with their stakeholders in writing mitigation plans for softball at any risk level.

District mitigation plans should be designed in accordance with state and local restrictions. The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) is available to provide consultation on mitigation plans. To request assistance, please email [karol.fink@alaska.gov](mailto:karol.fink@alaska.gov) or call 907-310-8721

### Points of Emphasis

- Do not allow any softball event to take place unless all protocols can be followed.
- Educate coaches, advisors and parents on the symptoms of COVID-19. Any individual who has even one of the symptoms must stay home and get tested.
- Educate coaches, advisors and parents on the importance of following protocols in order to keep their activity going.
- Advisors and coaches should take the NFHSlearn COVID-19 course and/or view the ASAA COVID-19 Educational Presentation.
- Parents should view the ASAA COVID-19 Educational Presentation for parents and receive the COVID-19 handout.
- It is recommended that people who are at increased risk for severe illness including coaches, students, staff and officials, consult with their health care provider to determine whether participation in activities or events is prudent under the circumstances. Information from the CDC on who are at increased risk can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/>
- There should be a designated individual on site responsible for monitoring and following all screening, cleaning and social distancing protocols.
- Schedule a minimum of 20 minutes between the end of one event and the beginning of individuals showing up for another event.
- Schools must be prepared for periodic closures and the possibility of some athletes or teams having to quarantine for up to two weeks.
- Close contact between any individuals should be limited to the extent possible. Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of an infected individual for at least 15 minutes. The 15 minutes is cumulative so even a 30 second huddle adds to the risk.
- Require visiting teams to screen their participants prior to arriving at your venue.
- When attending an event you are responsible to bring your own towels, hand sanitizer and medical kits.
- Individuals should screen at home before arriving at practice or event. STAY HOME IF SYMPTOMATIC.

### Facilities

- Cleaning and disinfecting must be conducted in compliance with CDC. The most current guidelines can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.html>

- Weight equipment should be wiped down thoroughly before & after each individual's use.
- Any equipment such as benches, athletic pads, etc. having holes with exposed foam should be covered.
- Facilities must have visual indicators (cones, tape, etc.) of proper spacing between individuals.
- Hand sanitizer should be plentiful and available to all participants. Place them at entrances, meeting rooms, locker rooms, dugouts, benches, etc. Encourage all individuals to use often.
- Train outdoors whenever possible.
- When indoors ensure ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air. Open windows and doors when feasible.
- Block off areas to keep participants and spectators separated by a minimum of 12 feet.
- Have separate entrance and exit points. Use signage for direction of walking traffic.
- Monitor locker rooms to maintain 6 feet between all individuals.
- Use signage or close every other stall to encourage physical distancing of all individuals in restrooms.

### Participants/Advisors/Coaches/Supervisors

- Prior to attending advisors, coaches, supervisors & participants must sign a waiver of liability related to COVID-19.
- Advisors, coaches, supervisors, and participants should be screened prior to arriving at an event or when they arrive. Includes questions and phone number/email. Information should be recorded and stored to help facilitate contact tracing of a confirmed exposure.
- Anyone with a temperature of greater than 100.3 degrees or with positive symptoms reported should not be allowed to participate, should self-quarantine, and contact their primary care provider or other health-care professional.
- Maintain physical distancing of 6 feet between all individuals at all times except when actively competing.
- Cloth face coverings by participants should be used when 6' of distance cannot be maintained between individuals.
- Participants should always be allowed to wear face coverings, if desired.
- Plastic shields covering the entire face will not be allowed in baseball due to the risk of unintended injury to the person wearing the shield or others.
- Coaches should wear face coverings (ideally surgical grade). Especially when physical distancing is not possible.
- Participants must come dressed to participate and leave to shower and change.
- Individuals must bring their own water bottle that is labeled and filled. No sharing of water bottles.
- No pre or post game handshakes or high fives.
- Avoid all non-sport related contact. I.e. high fives, fist/elbow bumps, group celebrations, huddles, etc.

### Softball Specifics

- Follow all NFHS Baseball Rules Considerations.
- Balls should be sanitized prior to and after use. Allow to dry completely before using.

- Conduct practice in pods of students with the same 6-10 students training together to limit overall exposure.
- Each pod should have their own set of balls for the entire practice. Once the pod is done the balls should be sanitized.
- Batting helmets, bats, catcher's equipment etc. should not be shared
- Sanitize all equipment after each practice or game.
- Cloth face covering may be worn while actively participating but must be of one color and have no designs.
- Remind participants to not touch their face.
- Limit the consumption of food to decrease the amount of hand face contact.
- Each team should have a bucket of sanitized balls for each game.
- Limit dugouts to essential personnel (coaches & participating players).
- Limit huddles, celebrations, conferences etc.
- The size of your facility will determine if you have spectators. You must allow for 6' of distancing between all individuals including participants.
- Bleacher seating should be marked and restricted such that there is 6' of physical distancing and every other row is unoccupied.
- Face coverings should be worn by all spectators when physical distancing of 6' cannot be maintained.
- Discourage yelling and cheering by allowing artificial noise makers that do not interfere with the game. No use of airhorns or megaphones.
- No concessions. To decrease the amount of hand face contact, no food or drink allowed.
- Post flyers and make PA announcements with COVID information ie. symptoms, protection. [Print Resources](#)
- Workers should wear face coverings.

### Important Information

- You cannot test yourself out of quarantine.
- Adherence to mitigation plans is crucial.
- If there is a positive test, schools will work with public health officials and communicate with students and families.

Using these guidelines to develop quality mitigation plans for practices and events will allow activities to continue in Alaska high schools.