

Greater Cincinnati Youth Football League

Pre-Season Workout Guidelines

The Greater Cincinnati Youth Football League recognizes the social impact Covid-19 has on our players, families and officials. The GCYFL believes it is essential to the physical and mental well-being of children to return to physical activity and build team relationships with their peers and coaches. Although teams may not begin practice until July 13, 2020, they are permitted to condition and conduct pre-season workouts. These sessions are voluntary and no player is to be compelled to participate. The purpose of this document is to establish guidelines for the period of time from June 1, 2020 to July 13, 2020. The GCYFL is not governed by the Ohio High School Athletic Association but we will look to their directives for guidance in development of our policies. We suggest each member organization of the GCYFL consult their local school district for guidance especially if they use the school district facilities. The GCYFL Board may halt or regress the phases described below if deemed necessary.

Until there is a cure, vaccine, or effective treatment is readily available, social distancing and other preventative measures will be the 'new normal' during any aspect of sport in Ohio. Decreasing potential exposure to respiratory droplets is the guiding principle behind social distancing and the use of face coverings. Cloth face coverings should be considered acceptable in all phases of this document.

Face Covering Guidance:

1. Decreasing potential exposure to respiratory droplets is the guiding principle behind social distancing and the use of face coverings. The use of cloth face coverings is meant to decrease the spread of respiratory droplets. As state and local COVID-19 prevalence decreases, the need for strict social distancing and the use of face coverings will lessen.

a. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is additionally "advising the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others."

b. Recognizing the benefits and potential drawbacks of the use of cloth face coverings during conditioning and physical activity, OHSAA recommends the following:

i. Cloth face coverings are acceptable. There is no need to require or recommend "medical grade" masks for athletic activity.

ii. Exceptions include high intensity aerobic activities such as running. In these activities, cloth face coverings may be worn when not engaging in vigorous activity, such as before or after instruction, or any time spent on the 'sidelines' when physical activity is not being performed.

iv. Plastic shields covering the entire face (or attached to a helmet) shall not be allowed during play. Their use during practices increases the risk of unintended injury to the person wearing the shield or teammates.

v. Coaches are recommended to wear cloth face coverings during instruction.

“Vulnerable individuals” are defined by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) as people age 65 and older and others with serious underlying health conditions. These conditions include, but are not limited to: high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune systems that are compromised by chemotherapy for cancer, and other conditions requiring such therapy. Every coach and parent must make the best decision for themselves and their family members.

Pre-Workout Screening:

- All coaches and players should be screened for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to a workout, to include a temperature check. Temperature checks will be taken at home prior to the practice.
- Any person with a temperature above 100.4 degrees, coughing, has trouble breathing, vomiting or diarrhea is not allowed to take part in workouts and should contact their medical provider.
- Vulnerable individuals (as defined above) should not oversee or participate in any workouts.
- Coaches shall record all players and coaches present at the workout.

Limitations on Gathering:

- For every coach present, there shall not be more than 7 players present.
- Practices should not consist of more than 10 people at a time, to include all players and coaches. If more than 10 players and coaches are present, the group shall be broken down into smaller groups. The 7:1 ratio must be maintained within each smaller group.
- There should be a minimum distance of 6 feet between each individual at all times.
- Players are encouraged to shower and wash their workout clothing immediately upon returning home.

Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment:

- There should be no shared athletic equipment (towels, clothing, shoes, or sport specific equipment) between players.
- Players should wear their own workout clothing, and clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout.
- No equipment may be used during this period which is touched by multiple individuals except for footballs. That includes but is not limited to blocking shields, tackling wheels and tackling dummies. These items may be used as obstacles similar to cones as they lay on the ground. If used in such a way, they must be sanitized prior to the next workout.
- Footballs shall be sanitized prior to each drill and players and coaches shall use hand sanitizer prior to each drill involving a football.

Hydration:

- All students should bring their own water bottle, and water bottles will not be shared.
- Water bottles shall be spread 6 feet apart.

The GCYFL’s first and foremost concern is the health and safety of the players, coaches, families and officials. We will proceed cautiously which is why these guidelines are intended to cover the first phase of the football season only. Guidelines may be updated as we proceed through the 7:1 pre-season practice period and new guidelines will be established for practice on July 13, 2020.