



AVONWORTH SCHOOL DISTRICT ATHLETICS HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN RETURN TO ATHLETICS

INTRODUCTION

The virus that causes the Coronavirus 2019 Disease (“COVID-19”) is easily transmitted, especially in group settings, and it is essential that the spread of the virus be slowed to safeguard public safety and the safety of our students. COVID-19 can be transmitted from infected individuals even if they are asymptomatic or their symptoms are mild, such as a cough, and it can also spread by touching a surface of an object that has the virus. The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages, and while relatively few children with COVID-19 have been hospitalized, some severe outcomes have been reported in children. While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, current science suggests there are many steps schools can take to reduce the risks to students, coaches, and their families.

The Avonworth School District will take the necessary precautions and recommendations from the federal, state, and local governments, CDC, Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH), as well as the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS), and Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) to safeguard the participants and staff of our athletic programs. The Avonworth School District realizes knowledge regarding COVID-19 is constantly changing, as new information and treatments become available. The recommendations below will be adjusted as needed as new information becomes available in order to decrease the risk of exposure for our staff, students, and spectators.

GOVERNOR WOLF’S PHASED REOPENING PLAN

The office of the Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has ordered that the Commonwealth employ a regional and industry-specific approach known as the Governor’s Plan for Phased Reopening and to designate counties as being “red,” “yellow,” or “green.” The Governor further issued Guidance for All Sports Permitted to Operate during the COVID-19 Disaster Emergency to Ensure the Safety and Health of Employees, Athletes, and the Public (“Guidance”) on June 10, 2020. The guidance includes reference to the phased reopening plan and directs what in-person school sports activities may occur if a county is designated as being either “yellow” or “green.” No in-person sports-related activities may occur in the Avonworth School District if Allegheny County is designated as “red.”

Avonworth School District adopts the following practices and procedures for school sports teams to resume in-person sports-related activities provided Allegheny County remains in either the green or yellow phases for the reopening of counties. These practices and procedures are in alignment with the Pennsylvania Department of Education (“PDE”) Preliminary Guidance for the Phased Reopening of Pre-K to 12 schools and the CDC Considerations for Youth Sports. Sports-related activities may include but not be limited to conditioning, practices, and games or matches.

COMPLIANCE WITH PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION GUIDANCE

The Avonworth School District has reason to believe that the Pennsylvania Department of Education will issue a suggested template for athletic health and safety plans and, if so, the superintendent and athletic director will have the authority to update this Plan so as to be in compliance with the anticipated template and will thereafter publish a revised version of this Athletic Health and Safety Plan as required by the Governor's guidance.

MANDATES

The following items are mandatory for all phases of Middle School and High School Athletics during the COVID-19 pandemic:

1. All Student-Athletes, Coaches, and Staff will undergo a COVID-19 health screening through a google form at least 30 minutes prior to each practice, event, or team meeting. The purpose of health screening is to check for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
2. Promote healthy hygiene practices to limit the spread of COVID-19 including:
 - a. Hand washing (20 seconds with warm water and soap).
 - b. Students should wear a face covering (masks or face shields) when feasible. (Face coverings will not be required for athletes while practicing or competing.)
 - c. The coaching staff and other adult personnel should wear face coverings (masks or face shields) at all times unless doing so jeopardizes their health.
 - d. Use hand sanitizer.
3. Intensify cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation in all facilities.
4. Encourage social distancing through increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups, when feasible.
5. Educate Athletes, Coaches, and Staff on health and safety protocols.
6. Require that anyone who is sick to stay home.
7. Recommend that individuals who travel to any areas designated by the Pennsylvania Department of Health as areas requiring quarantine to self-quarantine for 14 days, or test negative on two COVID-19 tests at least 48 hours apart prior to returning to team activities
8. Follow the plan for a student or employee who gets sick.
9. Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, coaches, staff, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures.
10. Athletes and coaches **MUST** provide their own water bottle for hydration. Water bottles must not be shared. Disposable cups will not be provided. As hydration is essential to maintain health and safety during physical activity, athletes who do not bring their own water and water bottle to team activities will not be permitted to participate
11. Personal protective equipment (PPE) will be used as needed and situations warrant or determined by local/state governments. These items include gloves, face masks, and eye protection.
12. Identify staff and students who may be at a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 due to underlying medical conditions such as:

- Age 65 or older
- Lung disease, moderate-severe asthma
- Serious heart conditions
- Immunocompromised
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Kidney or liver disease

Pennsylvania Red Phase:

- All school facilities must remain closed as per PA State Guidelines.
- Athletes and Coaches may communicate via online meetings (Zoom, Google Classroom/Meet, etc.)
- Athletes are encouraged to participate in home workouts including strength and conditioning.
- Athletes and Coaches should follow all guidelines set forth by the local and state governments.

Pennsylvania Yellow and Green Phase:

Pre-workout Screening:

- All coaches and student-athletes will be screened for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to any workout or event. (See Appendix for COVID-19 Screening Form)
- Screenings will include an online COVID-19 symptom questionnaire that will include a temperature check that must be completed prior to student-athletes reporting to any workout or event. These responses should be recorded and stored to provide a record.
- Attendance should be recorded for contact tracing reasons by a coach of that team.
- If individuals participating in sporting activities show symptoms, have a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher, or are sick, they must be sent home (CDC guidelines).
- Any individual with suspected positive COVID-19 symptoms or have been in “close contact” with any individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 will not be allowed to take part in workouts.
 - Student-athletes will need to contact a parent/guardian for immediate pick-up
 - Parents should contact their primary care provider or other appropriate health-care professionals for guidance.

Out of Season Acclimatization Phases (in Pennsylvania Green Phase)

As many athletes are deconditioned from the quarantine period, the governing sports bodies, such as the NFHS and the NCAA suggest a multi-week acclimatization period in preparation for any season. This should occur in a phased and staggered manner to help prevent the potential spread of illness by the asymptomatic carrier.

Phase One: (14 days)

All teams will be broken into groups of no more than 25. This group of 25 includes all students, student-athletes, coaches, and staff within the practice facility. Smaller groups of 6-8 students and student-athletes (pods) will remain constant for the entire 14-day period. During this period, the students are permitted to participate in non-contact workouts in their small groups. Students are required to continue to wear masks when indoors unless actively participating in an indoor sport such

as basketball, or volleyball. Teams will continue to have all meetings via electronic means such as Zoom, Google Meet, etc. The Athletic Director and Athletic Trainer will work with each sports' coaches to develop appropriate practice plans that will be used to meet the guidelines of this phase. Student-athletes should arrive dressed and ready for activity as no locker room facility will be available to avoid congregating. Restrooms will be available for use with social distancing guidelines in place.

Phase Two: (14 days)

After 14 days of small groups (25 or less) and a community disease load on the team that is not rising, teams may be merged into groups of no more than 50 students who can now participate in contact drills for the following 14 days. Weight facilities may be utilized during this phase however, social distancing should be maintained at all times. Spotters for weight lifts should be stationed at each end of the bar. Wearing a mask while indoors will be required when the student-athlete is not physically exerting themselves. Students are restricted from using the locker rooms.

Phase Three:

After the 28-day period is complete and the disease load in the community on the team is declining, teams may then combine to the total group for full practices and competition. Social distancing protocols should remain in place at all other times.

Other Considerations for Return to Athletics

Limitations on Gatherings:

-By order of the Governor

- Coaches and athletes must maintain appropriate social distancing at all times when possible, including in the field of play, locker rooms, sidelines, dugouts, benches, and workout areas. During downtime, athletes and coaches should not congregate.
- Gatherings shall not exceed 50% of the total occupancy permitted by law for the facility or no more than 250 total individuals (whichever is less), including coaches per field or court. Sports-related activities are limited to student-athletes, coaches, officials, and staff only. Spectators will not be permitted.
- The addition of visitors and spectators will be contingent upon future health conditions within the state and local communities.
- Students will continue to be restricted from using the locker rooms. The use of the locker room will be minimized during in-season events.

Facilities Cleaning

- Adequate cleaning schedules will be created and implemented for all athletic facilities and common areas to mitigate any communicable disease.
- Athletic facilities will be cleaned prior to arrival and following workouts and team gatherings and high-touch areas should be cleaned more often.
- Weight room equipment will be wiped clean after each individual's use.

- Appropriate clothing/shoes will be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment surfaces.

Physical Activity

- Coaches must review and consider the CDC guidance to modify practices and games to mitigate the risk of spreading the virus. This includes focusing on individual skill building versus competing and limiting contact in close contact sports.
- Personal items should not be shared. This includes clothing, towels, and pinnies.
- If equipment must be shared, all equipment should be properly disinfected often during practice and events as deemed necessary.
- Hand sanitizer should be used periodically as resources allow.
- Spotters for maximum weight lifts should be stationed at each end of the bar.

Hydration:

- All athletes, coaches, and officials must bring their own water and drinks to team activities.
- As hydration is essential to maintain health and safety during physical activity, athletes who do not bring their own water and water bottle to team activities will not be permitted to participate.
- Team water coolers for sharing through disposable cups are not allowed.
- Fixed water fountains should not be used.

OTHER GUIDANCE:

Primary Point of Contact

- The Avonworth School District has designated Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Jeff Hadley, as the District's primary point of contact for all questions related to COVID-19. Contact information for Dr. Jeff Hadley is jhadley@avonworth.k12.pa.us.

Transportation

- Modifications for team transportation to and from athletic events may be necessary based on the current Pennsylvania Department of Education guidelines.
- This may include:
 - Reducing the number of students and coaches on a bus or van
 - Using hand sanitizer upon boarding a bus or van
 - Social distancing on a bus
 - Wearing a mask or face shield on a bus
- These potential modifications will be determined by the school district, bus companies, Department of Education, State, and Local governments.
- Cleaning and sanitizing of buses will take place before and after trips.

Social Distancing during Contests/Events/Activities

- Sidelines/Bench Area
 - Appropriate social distancing will need to be maintained on sidelines or bench areas during practices and events, as deemed necessary by the school, PIAA, state, and local governments.

Who should be allowed at events?

-By order of the Governor

- Grouping of individuals into tiers from essential to non-essential:
 - Tier 1 (Essential) – Student-athletes, coaches, contest officials, event staff, medical staff, security personnel
 - Tier 2 (Preferred) – Media
 - Tier 3 (Non-essential) – Spectators
- Only Tier 1 and 2 personnel will be allowed to attend events until state and/or local governments lift restrictions on mass gatherings.
- If state and/or local government restrictions are lifted for Tier 3 (spectators), seating areas, including bleachers, must adhere to social distancing requirements of at least 6 feet of spacing for anyone not in the same household. To assist with proper social distancing, areas should be clearly marked. Adults should wear face coverings (masks or face shields) at all times.
- Once state and/or local governments lift restrictions on mass gatherings, caregivers or spectators will be prohibited to enter the field of play or bench areas.
- The Avonworth School District will evaluate each event and follow all local/state government guidelines on a case-by-case basis.
- All out-of-state travel or travel outside of PIAA Districts 7, 8, and 10 is prohibited without first receiving the approval of the Superintendent.
- Every consideration must be taken as to not expose students to unnecessary or potential high-risk exposure by traveling outside of the region.

Other Important Information:

- Activities that increase the risk of exposure to saliva must not be allowed including chewing gum, spitting, licking fingers, and eating sunflower seeds.
- Avoid shaking hands, fist bumps, or high fives before, during, or after games and practices. Limit unnecessary physical contact with teammates, other athletes, coaches, officials, and spectators.
- If multiple events are to be held at the same facility, adequate time shall be scheduled between contests to allow for facilities to be cleaned and disinfected and to minimize interaction between athletes.
- Sports complexes with multiple fields may operate simultaneous games or practices on fields within a complex only if social distancing can be maintained.
- Establish protocols to limit entrance and exit traffic, designating specific entry to and exits from facilities with clear signage.
- Stagger pick-up and drop-off times and locations for practice and events.
- Coaches ensure that athletes are not congregating while awaiting pick-up and to ensure congregation or crowding does not occur during drop-off.
- Parents dropping off and picking up athletes should remain outside of athletic facilities. Parents should not enter the facility.
- Concession stands must adhere to Guidance for the Restaurant Industry.

- When restarting competitions, the District will start by limiting games, scrimmages, and matches to teams in the region first (PIAA District 7, District 8, and 10 only). The District may expand the area in which its teams compete in games, scrimmages, and matches beyond this regional play if COVID-19 cases continue to stay low.

Positive Cases and Coaches, Staff, or Athletes Showing COVID-19 Symptoms

What are the signs and symptoms of COVID-19?

- Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. The symptoms may range from mild to severe. (See CDC Fact Sheet in Appendix)
- Symptoms may include:
 - Fever or chills
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Fatigue
 - Muscle or body aches
 - Headache
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Sore Throat
 - Congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Diarrhea

What to do if you are sick?

- If you are sick or think you are infected with the COVID-19 virus, STAY AT HOME.
 - It is essential that you take steps to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home or community.
 - If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, call your healthcare provider for medical advice.
- Notify the school immediately (principal, athletic director, school nurse, athletic trainer, and/or coach).
- It will be determined if others who may have been exposed (students, coaches, staff) need to be notified, isolated, and/or monitored for symptoms. HIPPA and FERPA guidelines/requirements must be maintained.

What to do if a student or staff become ill with COVID-19 symptoms during practice, event, or during transportation to or from an event?

- Make every effort to isolate the ill individual from others until the student or staff member can leave the school or event.
- If a student exhibits symptoms of COVID-19, a parent/guardian will be contacted immediately, and arrangements will be made for the student to be picked up.
- The ill individual will be asked to contact their physician or appropriate healthcare professional for direction.
- The facility where the sick individual was present will need to be disinfected immediately.
- For a student or staff to return to athletics following a COVID-19 diagnosis, the student or staff must provide written medical clearance from their medical doctor or CRNP.

- The return to athletics can begin once the individual is determined by a medical doctor or CRNP to be non-contagious, fever-free (without fever-reducing medicine), has a vast improvement in respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath), and experiences no vomiting or diarrhea.

EDUCATION:

- Staff, coaches, parents, and athletes will be educated on the following:
 - COVID-19 signs and symptoms
 - Proper ways to limit exposure to COVID-19 (handwashing, cough in your elbow, disinfecting touched surfaces, social distancing, etc.)
 - The content of this Athletic Health and Safety Plan
 - Any pertinent COVID-19 information released by DOH, local governments, NFHS, and PIAA.

RESOURCES:

<https://www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/sports-guidance/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html>

<https://www.education.pa.gov/Documents/K-12/Safe%20Schools/COVID/GuidanceDocuments/Pre-K%20to%2012%20Reopening%20Guidance.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html>

https://www.nata.org/sites/default/files/covid_19_return-to-sport_considerations_for_secondary_school_ats_1.pdf

https://www.nfhs.org/media/3812287/2020-nfhs-guidance-for-opening-up-high-school-athletics-and-activities-nfhs-smac-may-15_2020-final.pdf



APPENDIX

Avonworth School District Athletic Department Daily Team COVID-19 Screening

Students and Coaches should complete the self-report screening questionnaire prior to each practice/event. Temperatures should be taken prior to reporting to school and athletic facilities.

Students and Coaches should complete the following COVID-19 screening questionnaire prior to each practice/event. Screening responses will be recorded and stored to provide a record.

**For the "Close Contact" question the answer should reflect the following question: Within the past 14 days, have you had close contact with someone who is currently sick with suspected or confirmed COVID-19? (Note: Close contact is defined as within 6ft for more than 10 consecutive minutes, without PPE equipment.)

1. **Have you experienced any of the following symptoms in the last 14 days? FEVER, CHILLS, SEVERE HEADACHE, SHORTNESS OF BREATH, COUGHING, SORE THROAT, ABDOMINAL PAIN, LOSS OF SMELL, OR TASTE.**

YES

NO

2. **Temperature Check. Temperatures of 100.4 (CDC recommendation) or higher should STAY HOME and contact your Primary Care Provider.**

Temperature _____

3. **Have you come in close contact with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19?**

Yes

NO

4. **Are you or any member in your household awaiting any test results for COVID-19?**

Yes

NO



Avonworth School District Athletic Department

COVID-19 WAIVER OF LIABILITY

The novel coronavirus, COVID-19, has been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization. COVID-19 is contagious and is believed to spread mainly from person-to-person contact. As a result, federal, state, and local governments recommend social distancing. Avonworth School District has put in place preventative measures directed by the state government to reduce the spread of COVID-19; however, Avonworth School District cannot guarantee that your student-athlete will not become infected with COVID-19.

By signing this agreement, I acknowledge the contagious nature of COVID-19 and voluntarily assume the risk that my student-athlete may be exposed to or infected by COVID-19 by attending any Avonworth facility and such exposure or infection may result in personal injury, illness, permanent disability, and death.

I voluntarily agree to assume all of the foregoing risks and accept sole responsibility for any injury to my student-athlete (including, but not limited to, personal injury, disability, and death), illness, damage, loss, claim, liability, or expense, of any kind, that my student-athlete may experience or incur in connection with my student-athlete's attendance at Avonworth. On my behalf, and on behalf of my student-athlete, I hereby release, covenant not to sue, discharge, and hold harmless Avonworth School District, its employees, of and from the claims, including all liabilities, claims, actions, damages, costs or expenses of any kind arising out of or relating thereto. I understand and agree that this release includes any claims based on the actions, omissions, or negligence of Avonworth School District, its employees, whether a COVID-19 infection occurs before, during, or after participation in any Avonworth Athletics skills training sessions.

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

Print Name of Parent/Guardian _____

Print Name of Student-Athlete(s) _____



Avonworth School District Athletic Department

Parental Compliance Form

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have read and understood the guidelines in the **AVONWORTH SCHOOL DISTRICT ATHLETICS HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN: RETURN TO ATHLETICS** document.

I agree to abide by all the stated guidelines, including the completion and submission of the **pre-workout screening** required for student-athletes before any workout/practice session. I understand that this screening must be submitted at least **30 minutes** prior to the start of any practice/workout session or the student-athlete will not be permitted to participate.

I understand that my child will need to bring a **filled water bottle** to workout/practice sessions. This bottle will be **labeled with my child's name** and will not be shared with any other individual. If student-athletes do not have a water bottle when they arrive at a workout/practice session, they will not be permitted to participate.

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

Print Name of Parent/Guardian _____