

SIHSAA RETURN TO PLAY  
(BASEBALL/SOFTBALL)  
(Revised as of 8-28-20)

Additional information may be found at:

<https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/sfc/servlet/document/download/069t000000CyndAAF?operationC>

Season Dates

- Contests May Start August 15
- Regular season play should be limited to within conference, or other schools in the same general geographical area, (approximately 30 mile or COVID-19 region only).
- Regional Tournament: Sept. 28-Oct. 5

Eligibility

- Students must be meeting all eligibility requirements.
- Students must have a current physical on file prior to practice.
- E-learning students would be eligible provided the local district allows their participation.

Team Limitations

- Schools limited to a maximum of 2 contests per week and no tournaments.
- Exception: baseball/softball could play 3 games in a given week if one of the events was a DH.
- Schools with multiple teams (i.e. Varsity (8<sup>th</sup>) and JV (7<sup>th</sup>) may allow each team/division the maximum number of contests per week. No player may play more than a combined 3 games in a week.

State Series

- Only a regional tournament will be conducted
- The higher seeded team will host each contest and be responsible for hiring the two contest officials.
- Regional Trophy will be mailed to each regional champion.

Spectators

- Spectator and group gatherings subject to IDPH guidelines during this time.
- Outdoors, multiple groups of 50 are allowed if thirty feet of space is maintained between groups, up to a maximum 20% of the capacity of the space. It is suggested that schools should designate areas for fans to sit in to adhere to IDPH guidelines.
- Adhere to all CDC guidelines regarding hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
- It is suggested that spectators be limited to immediate household members or guardians of participants.
- **Spectators: Face coverings should be worn except for when eating, drinking, OR when outside and able to maintain a safe social distance (6 feet) (Revised 8-28-20)**

Safety:

- Individuals should not congregate in common areas prior to or following the event.
- Schools must have information posted at entrances and around facilities explaining the transmission as well as symptoms of COVID-19, encouraging all visitors to maintain social distance, reminding people to stay home if they feel sick or have any of the symptoms of COVID-19: temperature-above 100.4/38c, fever, chills, cough, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, runny nose, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or loss of taste or smell.
- It is suggested parents remain in cars for drop off and pick up of player's after practice.
- Coaches and or school administration are responsible for temperature checks of players and coaches before practice and game. In addition the COVID-19 Athlete/Coach Monitoring Form should be filled out for practices and games and kept on record. Anyone with symptoms or illness is not allowed to participate.
- Athletes must be at least 6 feet apart in dugout areas, or players seated 6-feet apart in bleachers behind dugout.

- If an Illinois COVID Region or County is placed in Phase 3 or lower of the Governors Restore Illinois Plan, all sports for schools in that Region or County will be suspended or canceled.
- Concession stands are up to each school, but should be approved by their public health department. If concession stands are permitted, pre-packaged items would be the best option..

#### Masks:

- Players must wear face coverings but they may be removed outdoors while actively exercising or participating in practices or competition, as long as social distancing can be maintained. Face coverings may also be removed while eating or drinking; however, strict adherence to social distancing must be maintained during these activities.
- Spectators should wear face coverings over the nose and mouth and social distance a minimum of 6 feet at all times. Face coverings may be removed while eating or drinking; however strict adherence to social distancing (6 feet) must be maintained during this activity. Exceptions are persons with medical conditions, are younger than 2 years of age, have trouble breathing or are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the coverings without assistance.
- Coaches must wear face coverings during practices and games.
- It is recommended that programs require physician's notes for individuals who have a medical contraindication that prohibits the use of face covering. Face coverings must fully cover the mouth and nose, and that they must fit snugly against the sides of the face with no gaps. Reusable face coverings should be machine washed or washed by hand and allowed to dry completely after each use.

#### Coaches and Players

- Coaches are responsible for keeping records of attendance at games and practices.
- Coaches should be knowledgeable of their players with pre-existing conditions and work with the school nurse or other health officials to take additional precautions as needed.
- Use of dugouts is permitted if teams can socially distance. It is recommended that there be an additional section marked off for players so they can observe the 6 foot social distancing.
- Players should bring their own hand sanitizer, water bottle and or sports drink. No shared drinking fountains, water stations, or coolers may be used.
- Coaches are responsible for ensuring social distancing is maintained between players as much as possible. This means additional spacing between players while playing catch, changing drills so that players remain spaced out, and no congregating of players while waiting to bat. Also, the practice of players putting fingers in their mouth, spitting, and sunflower seeds must be banned.
- Coaches must sanitize shared equipment before and after each game.
- No pre-game or post-game hand shakes or fist bumps should take place.
- **Coaches should wear face coverings at all practices and contests unless they are actively engaged in strenuous activity with your team OR when maintaining a safe social distance (6 feet) (Revised 8-28-20)**

#### Confirmed Team Cases:

- Create notification process for all athletes, coaches, event staff, officials and spectators if the school learns of suspected or confirmed cases at practice or a contest.

#### Umpires

- The home plate umpire may have the option to call the plate from behind the pitcher if this situation is agreeable.
- Neither umpire is required to wear a mask when he/she is actively officiating. An umpire can wear a mask if he or she wants to do that.
- Umpires should wear a mask as they approach the field, especially if there are several people close to him. Once they get into the field, they don't have to wear a mask.
- Pregame conference should take place in the middle of the field. All individuals maintain social distance of 6 feet. Limit attendees at pregame conference to one official and the head coach of each team.
- Officials should take their temperature immediately before attending the contest.
- Officials should notify the site administrator immediately if their temperature is elevated above 100.3 or a level recommended by your state health department.