



Supporting a Safe Return to Competition

July 30, 2020

This presentation will start soon. It will be recorded and all information will be posted online and shared via social media.

The Q&A feature is available to all attendees and will be monitored by panelists.





WEBINAR RECORDING

To view the full video Webinar from 7/30/20,
please visit our YouTube Live recording found
HERE



PRESENTERS



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PURPOSE

These recommendations for returning to training and competition are provided to assist South Texas Soccer members in safely and gradually resuming play while reducing the risk of infection within the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

While our recommendations may be more restrictive than many national, state or city guidelines, they are meant to supplement – not replace – any state or local laws, rules, and regulations.

We hope to empower your program to make informed choices about returning to training and competition **as safely as possible**.



While some organizations and clubs in South Texas may be ready to attempt to return to training and/or competition, exposure of participants to potential risk of infection for the benefit of our sport is not acceptable.

Until there are tangible interventions, including vaccines, widespread testing, or other factors making play ethical and safe, we recognize that some members may choose to implement more restrictive policies.

South Texas Youth soccer firmly believes that if all members follow these recommendations, together we can create a safe environment and that our continued ability to return to play relies on a full commitment from all youth soccer programs.



KEY POINTS

Member organizations across South Texas may experience widely different levels of local infection and disease spread. This makes it unrealistic for South Texas Youth Soccer to mandate or enforce uniform policies applicable across all cities and regions.

However, in order to assure the safest possible environment for our players to continue participating in practices and any competition, South Texas Youth Soccer is asking all members to follow these recommendations and protocols.





PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

Part 1: Recommendations for Returning to Training

General Responsibilities &
Guidance

South Texas & U.S.
Soccer RTP

Club Best Practices

Part 2: Recommendations for Returning to Competition

Administrative
Guidance

Facility & Spectators
Guidance

Game Day
Guidance

Reporting
Procedures

Part 3: Additional Resources and Q&A



GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES & GUIDANCE



CDC OVERVIEW

“The more people a child or coach interacts with, the physical closeness of the interactions and the length of interactions, the higher the risk of transmission spread.”

*CDC Presentation to Youth Sports National Governing Bodies
May 22, 2020*



General Guidance on Return to Play

The following CDC recommendations should be followed, regardless of the Return to Play phase. They currently include:

Stay at home if you are feeling sick or experiencing the following COVID-19 symptoms: People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever of 100.3 degrees F/37.9 degrees C
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

******This list does not include all possible symptoms. Other less common symptoms have been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.



The following practices should be reinforced within your soccer organization to mitigate transmission of any communicable disease.

- Avoid touching your face
- Frequently wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Cover mouth and nose (with arm or elbow, not hands) when coughing or sneezing and wash hands afterward.
- Wear a face mask or covering when outside
- Frequently disinfect commonly used surfaces and equipment
- Avoid contact with other individuals (shaking hands or high fives)
- Maintain a distance of 6 feet between you and others
- Outdoor spaces pose less risk than indoor spaces



LOWER RISK

HIGHER RISK



Skill-building drills
at home



Team practice



Within-team
competition



Competition with
teams from your area



Full competition from
different areas



SOUTH TEXAS & U.S. SOCCER RETURN TO PLAY PHASES



STX YOUTH SOCCER **RETURN TO PLAY PHASE STATEMENT**

The following sources are used to determine the South Texas Return to Play Phase and any changes to the current Phase. We consider input from each of the sources and then, as an Executive Committee, decide what is believed to best serve our membership, keeping in mind that the health and safety of the membership is the priority. The sources include:

- **State of Texas Executive Order / Mandates**
 - **US Soccer guidance**
 - **US Youth guidance**
 - **Senior Staff input**
 - **CDC information**

Note that due to variances in local (county, city) policies and mandates, these are not part of the decision criteria, but would supersede any South Texas phase guidance for specific locations.

Furthermore, it is expected that associations, clubs, and teams will adhere to South Texas' phase status as well as follow all mandates issued by local, state, or federal government.



KEY CONSIDERATION FOR A PROGRESSIVE RTP



A phased return to play model is not intended to be followed in a linear manner, as it may become necessary to return to prior phase guidance and activities, based on the changing status of COVID-19 exposure in our community. It is possible, if not likely, that there will be local and regional outbreaks and surges of COVID-19 for some time to come.



Many programs may need to remain in, or return to, phases 0-2 for prolonged periods of time. However, following this progressive model will help your players, coaches and community return to play as safely as possible.





IMPLEMENTING A PROGRESSIVE RETURN TO PLAY

<u>Phase 0</u>	<u>Phase 1</u>	<u>Phase 2</u>	<u>Phase 3</u>	<u>Phase 4</u>
No in Person training or competitions Virtual training only	Individual skill training and individual physical conditioning with a ball <ul style="list-style-type: none">- One player per ball- Distances between players Small Group training <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Passing patterns- No contact- Avoid lines (use markers)- No catching or use of hands	Introduction to defensive pressure and contact in training. Use of small-sided within the cohort. Intrasquad scrimmages acceptable within the cohort.	No restrictions on training activities for players. Teams can return to scrimmaging within their own club and playing games outside their club following recommended guidelines. Local and same-day travel for scrimmages or games with teams outside the same club is recommended.	No restrictions on training, games, or travel for players, coaches or spectators. COVID-19 recommendations no longer apply

RETURN-TO-PLAY 5 PHASES OVERVIEW



**U.S. SOCCER
PLAY ON**

0

Phase 0: Stay and Shelter

Duration: Based on state and local regulations

- BEND THE CURVE. STAY AT HOME.
- No organized trainings or competitions
- Consider virtual options

1

Phase I: Individual and Small Group Training

Suggested Duration: 4-6 weeks

- State and/or local stay and shelter regulations lifted
- Recommend small group trainings with max of 9 players and 1 coach
- Maintain social distancing
- COVID-19 prevention protocols in place

2

Phase II: Full Team Training

Suggested Duration: 3-6 weeks

- Full team training allowed
- Continue to maintain social distancing
- COVID-19 prevention protocols in place
- Allow 3 weeks for COVID-19 tracking purposes

3

Phase III: Full Team Competitions

Duration: Indefinite

- Full team competitions can occur
- Continue COVID-19 mitigation strategies
- Consider only local and single-day competitions
- Large events guided by local/state public health authorities

4

Phase IV: No Restrictions

- COVID-19 is no longer a public health matter and there are no restrictions directed by federal, state and local authorities.
- Please refer to www.recognizetorecover.org for general health and safety recommendations from U.S. Soccer.

* Across the country, clubs in different regions will be operating under differing state & local regulations and may be in different phases. All phases must be compliant with your region's regulations.



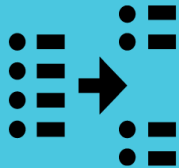
BEST PRACTICES

Guidelines for Creating a Safe Soccer Environment

DO create a Safety Coordinator for the Club or for your Team.



DO create a plan & communicate the plan daily/weekly.



DO create cohorts of players based on Return to Play Phase recommendations.

Face Masks:



- **DO** require masks or face coverings while entering & exiting park for all players, coaches & spectators until able to safely social distance.
- **DO** have coaches wear masks when within 10 ft. of players or other coaches.



DO keep attendance logs and temperature checks for all players and coaches prior to scheduled activity.



DO limit the number of spectators per family and always social distance to help eliminate the number of contact points at a field

DO allow adequate time gaps between sessions/games in order to manage players/spectators as they exit and enter.

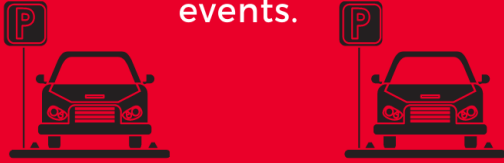


DO have Coaches handle all training equipment to disinfect after each training use.



Guidelines for Creating a Safe Soccer Environment

DO NOT allow spectators to enter the facility during training events.



DO NOT host group talks or large lined activities with players, coaches or parents.



DO NOT loiter in groups before, during or after activities.

(This applies to groups of people at games and even players grouping under a shade shelter for a team talk)

DO NOT mix players and coaches between cohorts.



DO NOT attend any activity if feeling sick!

(Cough, Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, Fever of 100.3 F, Chills, Muscle Pain, Sore Throat & More)

DO NOT have players or coaches share water, clothing or allow/encourage high fives or hugging.





HUMAN ELEMENT

Physical

- Condition of players returning to training
- At-risk individuals should stay at home

Mental

- Consider the age/level of the player and their ability to follow guidelines
- Consider the impact of isolation on players
- Understand that players may be anxious and unsure how to act

Social

- Player interactions may be different
- How do you allow them to be a group without being in close proximity
- People should ALWAYS feel comfortable not attending if they don't feel safe or don't feel well.





RETURN TO COMPETITION RECOMMENDATIONS



ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDANCE

South Texas Youth Soccer firmly believes that if all members follow these recommendations, together we can create a safe environment and continue our ability to return to play relies on a full commitment from all youth soccer programs.



“Coming together is **beginning**,
staying together is **progress**,
and working together
is **success**.”
- Henry Ford



General Administrative Guidelines

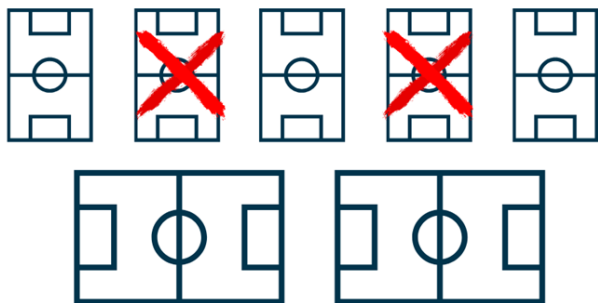
- Adhere to local, State of Texas, and CDC guidelines.
- Only **outdoor** trainings and competitions should be considered in Phase 3 STX Guidelines (slide 15).
- Prepare and communicate any and all health & safety guidelines specific to your organization's participants, including players, coaches, referees, administrators, parents, volunteers, etc.
- Encourage consistent player/coach/staff/referee/spectator/volunteer health monitoring
 - Self screening for symptoms before and after public interactions.
 - STAY HOME, if symptomatic
 - Parents (not the minor player) should communicate with the club or coach, in accordance with the Safe Soccer Framework and the U.S. Center for SafeSport policies and guidance. Speak to a physician and follow CDC guidelines on self-quarantine and additional reporting guidelines.
- Clubs should designate a safety coordinator.
- Consider amending current registration waiver to communicate the inherent risk of competition with COVID 19.
- Be aware of participation risk if attending any non-sanctioned events and trainings.
- Prepare to be flexible with your league or competition dates, formats, reschedule policies, etc.
- Inclement Weather Guidelines - reinforce moving to vehicles NOT facility pavilions or team tents.

Communication

Awareness

Compliance

Competition Scheduling Considerations



1

FIELD USAGE

Adjust the operations standard from "cram it all in" to using less fields, especially adjacent fields. Rotate field use to keep turf healthy.



3

WEEKNIGHT GAME DAYS

Consider using other days of the week to space out games to help with crowd size

Field 1: 8:00 AM



Field 2: 8:30 AM



Field 3: 8:30 AM



Field 4: 8:00 AM



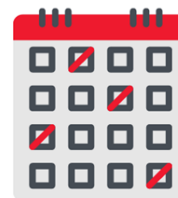
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STAGGERING START TIMES

Field 1 & 4 start at 8:00 AM

Field 2 & 3 start at 8:30 AM

*could vary depending on the facility set-up



4

ALTERNATING GAME DAYS OR WEEKENDS

To open more slots, look at having ON and OFF weekends for age groups or genders



Scheduling and Competition Format Recommendations

- Blocking dates for postponed/games that need to be rescheduled.
 - Create extra space within scheduling to accommodate for reverting to an earlier RTP phase or other necessary adjustments.
- Limiting travel (time and distance)
 - Schedule games within drive and play distance (close to home)
 - Limit and reduce overnight travel whenever possible
 - Consider double-headers (if multiple games necessary) to limit separate travel instances.
- League format (group sizes, game amount, timeline)
 - Adjust group sizes
 - Adjust target game counts
 - Season timeline adjustment - delay start, end later, less games
- Staggered Publishing
 - Consider publishing your competition schedule in stages to allow for adjustments as RTP occurs

Unsanctioned Events

- Your organization's player insurance coverage **may be at risk** while attending unsanctioned (outside current applicable STX Soccer RTP phase) tournaments, training, and events.



Other Administration Reminders/Considerations

- Publish league or competition specific guidelines on website and distribute information to participants through messaging platform
 - Use social media as form of reminders and encouragements for best practices
- Lead by example and acknowledge participant compliance
 - Show appreciation for participants who are following organization guidelines/recommendations
 - Hosting challenges for sportsmanship awards, best theme mask, best post-game celebration, best team spectator sideline, etc. to encourage guideline/recommendation compliance
- Be prepared to adjust your plan or guidelines/recommendations for your organization and competition
 - Create a “backup” plan(s) for unexpected roadblocks
- Over communicate policies, guidelines, recommendations to ALL participants



FACILITY AND SPECTATOR GUIDANCE





Facilities

- 1) All facility or event operators should have a COVID-19 Action Plan and amend their EAP (Emergency Action Plan) to include risk mitigation steps for communicable diseases. The plan should be communicated to all event participants prior to the event and posted on the event website, as well as on-site
- 2) It is recommended that event operators limit spectators attending events.
- 3) Signage at event should include, but not be limited to, facility policies and procedures, COVID-19 symptom awareness, expected behavior and assumption of risk, social distancing markers for restroom and concession lines, handwashing guidelines in restrooms, closures of areas (ie: playgrounds, locker rooms)

Safety Coordinator

The facility should appoint someone to serve as designated safety coordinator. If there is a dispute between the safety coordinator and a participant (ex. if a player displays any symptoms on-site and is pre-screened and cleared by parent to participate), it is the ultimate responsibility of the on-site safety coordinator to determine if the participant (athlete/coach/official) is cleared to play.



Field Layout

Field layout should provide room for teams to spread out along sidelines and spectators to spread out in spectator areas, and in between fields there should be no gathering areas for teams or spectators.

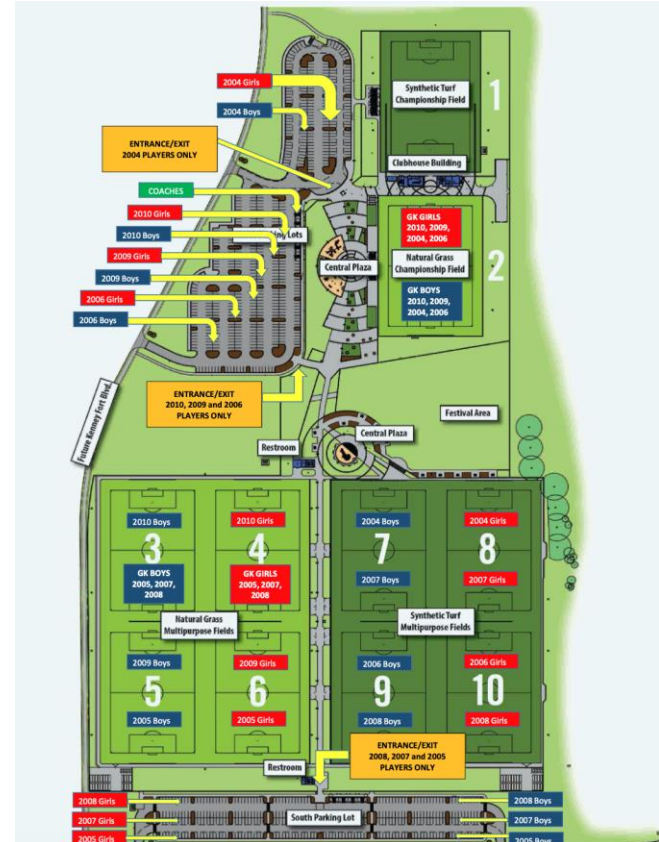
Limit the total capacity at the facility (100% of operation, 75% of operation, etc.).

Intentionally block off fields with the intent to expand capacity levels based on Level of Play Phase

- Designated warm-up spaces marked
- Reduce total # of games in a season
- Refer to local government for additional guidelines of the facility enforcement

Defined Soap/hand washing stations

- Cleaning public spaces/restrooms etc..





Spectators

- 1) Follow facility guidelines and requirements.
- 2) No spectator should attend a game if they are displaying symptoms of Covid-19
- 3) STX Youth Soccer recommends limiting the number of spectators per player family in an attempt to limit contact points.
 - a) ***We highly recommend 1 spectator per family where possible.***
 - b) If more family members must attend, a family unit should be comprised only of people who reside in the same household.
 - c) These family units should sit together and socially distance from other family units before, during and after the event.
- 4) STX Youth Soccer recommends not allowing spectators to enter the facility during training events.
- 5) Unsupervised participants (siblings and pets) should not be permitted at event.





GAME DAY GUIDANCE





Health Checks

Prior to participation, program technical staff, referee assignors, and coaches should obtain confirmation from each player, coach and official that:

1. They are not experiencing symptoms related to COVID-19
2. They have not had close contact with anyone who has had a confirmed case within the last 14 days
3. They are not restricted from participation by a healthcare provider
4. Each individual should check their own temperature & refrain from participation if they have a fever (>100.4 F).

A representative from each team (i.e. head coach or team manager) should confirm with the opposing team that all participating players and staff have met the above requirements.

All referees should confirm individually with both team representatives that all referees have met the above requirements.

Any individual who is unable to confirm this criteria should be restricted from participation and contact their healthcare provider.

A sample health check survey is provided on the next slide



ODP PLAYERS COVID-19 HEALTH SURVEY

Is the player currently experiencing, or have they experienced in the past 14 days, any of the following symptoms?

	YES	NO
Fever greater than 100.4F / 37.8C	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cough	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shortness of breath or difficulty br...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sore throat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A new loss of taste or smell	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Chills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Head or muscle aches	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nausea, diarrhea, vomiting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In the past 14 days, has the player been in close proximity to anyone who was experiencing any of the above symptoms? Close proximity is defined as being 6 feet or closer for more than 15 minutes, or having direct contact with fluids from an individual (ex. being coughed or sneezed on). *

☐ YES

☐ NO

In the past 14 days, has the player tested positive or been in close proximity to anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19? Close proximity is defined as being 6 feet or closer for more than 15 minutes, or having direct contact with fluids from an individual (ex. being coughed or sneezed on). *

☐ YES

☐ NO

Is the player currently waiting to receive results for a COVID-19 test? *

☐ YES

☐ NO

Within the past 14 days, has a public health or medical professional told you to self-monitor, self-isolate, or self-quarantine because of concerns about COVID-19 infection? *

☐ Yes

☐ No



Pre and Post Game

Players, coaches, referees and spectators should:

- Maintain social distancing guidelines when entering and exiting the facility.
- Wear face coverings/masks when entering and exiting the until they are able to social distance or are participating in the game.
- Bring their own equipment (hand sanitizer, water bottles, towels, etc.) that should not be shared between individuals.

Pregame

- Do not enter the facility until 30 minutes or less prior to their game.
- On field warm-ups should be limited to 20 minutes or less.
- Player Cards / Rosters - Check-in Procedures. When possible use electronic methods.
- Pre-game coin toss (if necessary) should follow social distancing guidelines and participants should be wearing masks. Limit number of captains.

Postgame

- Handshakes should be replaced with socially distanced applause lines
- Players, coaches and spectators should leave the facility immediately after their game



During the Game

Players and coaches

- Should remain socially distanced when on the sideline before, during and after games. This includes substitutes.
- Multiple tents, benches, chairs may be necessary for this to be possible.
- Coaches should plan ahead on how to communicate key information to players in a safe manner.

Spectators

- Limiting spectators. Recommendation 1 spectator per player family should attend games
- Must maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet on both sides and be seated 10 feet from the field of play.
- May sit behind the end line but may be asked to move if they are creating a verbal or visual distraction.

Equipment

- Have extra balls available. Any ball that comes into contact with anyone not playing, should be disinfected before being reused.
- Surfaces of shared equipment such as balls, cones and any other equipment should be disinfected before and after each game.
- Players should not share items such as water bottles, sunscreen, or clothing such as training bibs, warm-ups, jerseys, etc.



REPORTING

A COVID Action Plan

should be a part of any youth sports organizational planning for training or competition.

The plan should include protocol for the collection and tracking participants.



The plan should also include what to do when a participant or other person screens positive.



SOUTH TEXAS YOUTH SOCCER POLICY: IF SOMEONE TESTS POSITIVE

- Any individual with a suspected case of COVID-19 should notify their respective team coach immediately.
- Any team with a suspected case of COVID-19 should notify their club safety coordinator immediately.
- Any club notified of a suspected case of COVID-19 in a player, staff member, coach, or referee should follow their COVID-19 Action plan and contact anyone within the club who may have had contact with that individual in the 14 days prior to the diagnosis of COVID-19. Please follow confidentiality requirements.
- Any referee with a suspected case of COVID-19 should notify the league director and referee assignor involved in competitions worked by that individual within the last 14 days.
- Any club notified of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in a player, staff member, coach, or referee should notify any other organization/teams involved in competitions with that individual in the 14 days prior to the diagnosis of COVID-19.
- Any club notified of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in a player, staff member, coach or referee should notify the league director and/or South Texas state office immediately.
- Any team that has more than 3 positive cases of COVID-19 is considered to have an outbreak within their team and should pause team activity until all participants have completed a self-quarantine according to CDC and local health guidelines.

THIS REPORTING PROCEDURE IS EFFECTIVE JULY 31, 2020



RESOURCES



RESOURCES

SOUTH TEXAS YOUTH SOCCER UPDATES <http://www.stxsoccer.org>

CDC CONSIDERATIONS FOR YOUTH SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html>

CDC GUIDANCE FOR VISITING RECREATIONAL FACILITIES <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/visitors.html>

CDC GUIDANCE FOR CLEANING AND DISINFECTING FACILITIES
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019ncov/community/organizations/cleaningdisinfection.html>

STATE OF TEXAS GUIDELINES <https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/organization/opentexas/OpenTexas-Checklist-Youth-Sports-Operators.pdf>

U.S. SOCCER PLAY ON RECOMMENDATIONS & GUIDE <https://www.ussoccer.com/playon>

USYS RETURN TO ACTIVITY RESOURCES <https://www.usyouthsoccer.org/resources/return-to-activity-resources/>

ASPEN INSTITUTE'S PROJECT PLAY- <https://www.aspenprojectplay.org/coronavirus-and-youth-sports>

US OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE CORONAVIRUS UPDATES- <https://www.teamusa.org/coronavirus>



CONCLUSION

These recommendations for returning to training and competition are provided to assist South Texas Soccer members in safely and gradually resuming play while also reducing the risk of infection within the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

We believe that if all members follow these recommendations, together we can create a safe environment and that our continued ability to play relies on a full commitment from all youth soccer programs.

We hope to empower your program to make informed choices about returning to play as safely as possible.



Q&A



South Texas Youth Soccer Office

(512) 272-4553

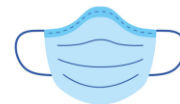
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THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!

