RETURN-TO-PLAY YOUTH SPORTS PROTOCOLS

INTRODUCTION

San Clemente has numerous field users and youth sports organizations that utilize the athletic fields within the City. The City of San Clemente is proud to provide these user groups a space for athletic use, and look forward to bringing these activities back in a safe manner that protects the health and safety of players, families, and the San Clemente community.

The following provides the minimum standards that must be achieved to operate athletic fields and programs in accordance with current physical distancing, cohorting, and sanitation protocols. This document includes measures which City staff and facilities will take, as well as requirements for sports organizations returning to play at City facilities.

This document should be treated as a fluid tool which will be updated as state and local health officials release guidelines. The guidelines below are meant to supplement, not replace, any state or local health and safety laws, rules, and regulations with which sports organizations must comply.

As of July 30, 2020 the California Department of Public Health and the Orange County Healthcare Agency have not issued guidelines for youth sports returning to competitive play in the state of California. At this time, the California Department of Public Health is allowing youth sports training, conditioning, and physical education under certain circumstances. Youth sports and physical education are permitted only when the following can be maintained: (1) physical distancing of at least 6 feet can be maintained between participants, and (2) a stable cohort, such as a class, that limits the transmission. Contact drills, intersquad scrimmages, and games or tournaments are not permitted. This document will be updated to reflect any changes from local and state authorities as they occur during this fluid situation.

According to the guidance from the CDPH, all facilities must:

1. Perform a detailed risk assessment and implement a site-specific protection plan;
2. Train employees on how to limit the spread of COVID-19, including how to screen themselves for symptoms and stay home if they have them;
3. Implement individual control measures and screenings;
4. Implement cleaning and disinfecting protocols; and
5. Implement physical distancing guidelines.

The following sections address what City staff is doing to address these site specific guidelines.

ATHLETIC RESERVATION AND PERMIT PROCEDURES

Recreation staff reserve the right to revise these control measures at any time.
- Permits will only be issued for small group practices. No tournaments, games, or scrimmages are allowed.

- Organizations must provide internal return-to-play protocols before permits are issued. These return-to-play protocols are covered in the section Organization Requirements. City staff will review organizational protocols to ensure compliance with the City Return to Play Protocols.

- The fall allocation for San Clemente youth sports organizations will continue with modified scheduling as needed to allow for COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols.

- Each permit will include the “San Clemente Return to Play Protocols” document which must be signed and returned.

- Permits will be issued and we ask that you build in staggered times of at least 15 minutes between groups to allow for physical distancing.

- City staff will monitor usage to ensure return-to-play protocols are being adhered to, and that facilities are operating in a way that complies with all local and state guidelines. City staff reserve the right to cancel a permit at any time if it is in the best interest of public health.

- If organizations choose to not return due to concerns over COVID-19, a full credit will be issued to the organization’s account with no cancellation fees applied.

**Athletic Facility Procedures**

Each athletic field will undergo a detailed risk assessment and implement a site-specific protection plan. City staff will monitor ongoing use and current state and county health guidelines, and may modify or create new protocols for the use of athletic fields. Relevant facility information should be included in organizational return-to-play plans. Site specific information will be provided by City staff during the permitting process.

- Signage highlighting COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols will be placed at each of the athletic field sites.

- A maximum of two user groups may utilize a field if necessary. These user groups may not intermingle and must remain separated for the duration of their permit(s). For example, 1 group per each side of a soccer field.

- Smaller training groups cannot exceed 15 individuals per group. Multiple groups of 10 may utilize the field with no more than 45 total individuals at a time following strict social distancing guidelines.

- Each training group should maintain a solid cohort to help slow the spread. These groups should stay consistent.

- Spectators should be limited to parents and members of the same household, with physical distancing while watching. It is recommended that each organization limit the amount of spectators.
If spectators are not allowing for at least 6 ft. of social distancing, they should be wearing cloth face coverings as directed by the California Department of Public Health.

Team benches and dugouts will be expanded to provide for social distancing wherever possible. When possible, players and coaches should bring their own seating and avoid using benches.

Concessions and snack stands are not available. Vending machines will remain open. Concession and snack stands will be evaluated on an ongoing basis, taking into consideration the most recent state and local guidelines.

Field users should arrive on time to practice and leave as soon as it concludes to prevent unnecessary gatherings.

Organizations must only use one designated space while onsite. Groups may not switch fields within an organization’s permitted space, and organizations may not use space not specifically permitted.

ORGANIZATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Organizations using City facilities for their operations must follow local and state guidelines with regard youth athletics.

The following section provides requirements and guidelines for local organizations to return to San Clemente athletic fields. These guidelines are meant to supplement-not replace-any state or local health and safety laws, rules, and regulations with which sports organizations must comply. Each of the following items must be reviewed by City staff prior to being issued a permit.

All measures of the OCHCA’s Orders & Recommendations must be followed.

- https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Pages/results.aspx?k=#k=youth%20sports
- Organizations will review and apply best practices and considerations as described by the CDC or any superseding information from the CDPH or OCHCA.
  - These considerations are meant to supplement, not replace, any state or local health and safety laws, rules, and regulations with which sports organizations must comply.
- Organizations must provide a copy of their “return-to-play” plan. This should detail measures organizational staff and volunteers are taking to ensure their organization is protecting players, families and the community from the spread of COVID-19. The following section, covers these measures in more detail.
  - This plan must be provided to all organization staff, volunteers, parents and guardians, and youth participants, and should be posted on organization websites.
- Organizations will acknowledge and support decisions to not participate among youth, parents, and adult leaders who are uncomfortable for any reasons.

RETURN TO PLAY PLAN REQUIREMENTS

A Return to Play plan is required for each organization prior to being issued an athletic field permit. These plans may be complex documents from national governing bodies like Little League or
USA Soccer, or concise customized plans for local organizations without governing bodies. It may have another title for your organization, but must be tailored to your organization and participants.

Each plan should include:

- Assessment of risk of your organization to return to play.
- Guidance to when an organization should return to play, including the ability to add restrictions or modifications if required by local or state agencies.
- A plan to provide all staff, volunteers, and participants education on behaviors that reduce the spread of COVID-19.
  - What operating adjustments your organization will make to maintain a healthy operation and environment. This may include information such as: cleaning and disinfection plans, modified layouts and social distancing, cohorting, staggering schedules, coach and staff training.
- A protocol for screening all staff, volunteers, and participants prior to beginning practices.
- A plan for staff to wear appropriate PPE including cloth face coverings when not able to keep at least 6 ft. social distancing between individuals.
- A communication plan for your organization. This should include information on how the City of San Clemente will be notified of any COVID-19 related concerns.
- A designated point person(s), responsible for the return to play plan. This person(s) will be responsible to coordinate with City staff on any modifications or enhancements needed.

City staff may, at any time, request changes to an organization’s return to play plan. These changes may be a result of updated local or state guidelines, or to meet the needs of specific facilities.

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Youth Sport Organization Representative  City of San Clemente Representative