

All Sports Policy

Updated August 10, 2021

This guidance issued by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) pertains to all youth recreational sports, including, but not limited to, school-based sports (high school and elementary school), travel clubs, private leagues and clubs, recreational leagues and centers, and park district sports programs. This guidance does NOT pertain to adult recreational sports, professional sports leagues, or college division level sports. This guidance supersedes all previously issued All Sports Guidance issued from IDPH and/or ISBE.

Indoor Sports

For sports played indoors, individuals aged two years and older who can medically tolerate a mask, regardless of vaccination status, *must* wear a mask and maintain physical distancing to the extent possible. This is in alignment with [Executive Order 2021-18](#), which requires universal indoor masking for youth in public and nonpublic schools serving students from prekindergarten through grade 12 (P-12). Individuals playing sports indoors must wear a mask during training, competition, other active exercise, and during other contacts that do not occur during gameplay, such as on the sideline or bench, in the locker room, during team meetings, in the weight room, on the team bus or when carpooling, or during meals. Participants may remove their mask while participating in indoor sports when wearing a mask poses an injury risk as described by the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) (see “When should face masks be worn?”).

All spectators, regardless of vaccination status, should wear a mask in attendance at indoor youth sports events. All spectators must wear a mask if the event is held indoors in a public or nonpublic P-12 school setting.

Outdoor Sports

Regardless of vaccination status, individuals may engage in training, competition, and other active exercise without wearing a mask for all sports played outdoors, except where required by laws, rules, or regulations, including local business and workplace guidance. As recommended by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC; see “Consistent and Correct Mask Use”) and the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) (see “When should face masks be worn?”), individuals who are not fully vaccinated are encouraged to wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve sustained close contact with other people who are not fully vaccinated, particularly in areas of [substantial to high transmission](#).¹ This recommendation applies to training, competition, and other active exercise, and contacts with other unvaccinated individuals that do not occur during gameplay, such as on the sideline or bench, in the locker room, during team meetings, in the weight room, on the team bus or when carpooling, or during meals, especially when eating indoors.

Spectators who are not fully vaccinated should wear a mask in attendance at outdoor youth sports events if unable to maintain recommended physical distance of at least 6 feet from non-household members or if the event is held in a community with substantial to high transmission.

¹ CDC defines levels of community transmission as total new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 persons in the past seven days: low (0-9), moderate (10-49), substantial (50-99), and high (≥ 100). Sports organizers and participants can find recent information about new cases in their county from the [CDC](#) or [IDPH](#).

Screening Testing

CDC and IDPH recommend routine COVID-19 screening testing for individuals who are not fully vaccinated and involved with youth sports. Coaches, trainers, officials, and other adults involved in youth sports activities should test for COVID-19 at least once per week, regardless of community transmission. CDC recommends that participants test for COVID-19 at least once per week in communities with low or moderate transmission and at least twice per week in communities with substantial or high transmission. To protect in-person learning at school, CDC recommends that sports that involve sustained close contacts with others be canceled in communities with high transmission, unless all participants are fully vaccinated. Individuals should be tested for COVID-19 and receive a negative result as close as possible to competition and, preferably, within 24 hours before play. Rapid antigen testing (e.g., BinaxNOW) may be most appropriate for screening testing for youth sports. For more information on screening testing, review IDPH answers to [frequently asked questions \(FAQs\) on COVID-19 testing in schools](#) and the [CDC guidance for COVID-19 prevention in K-12 schools](#) (see "Screening Testing").