



September 14, 2021

COVID-19 Interim Guidance for Youth Sports and Extracurricular Activities in Contra Costa County

Contra Costa Health Services (CCHS) has drafted additional guidance on school sports and extracurricular activities for public and private K-12 schools operating in Contra Costa County, along with other youth sports and extracurricular activities outside of the school setting. The purpose of this guidance is to reduce the incidence and spread of COVID-19 infection in our communities by supporting a safer environment for all who participate in sports and other extracurricular activities. Following this guidance is important regardless of the vaccination rates among adults or children. Please also review the [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention \(CDC\) Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 schools](#) for further recommendations that also take into consideration county transmission rates, and the [California Department of Public Health's \(CDDH\) Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California, 2021-22 School Year, updated Sept. 1, 2021 and the associated FAQs for CDPH K-12 guidance](#). The CDPH has also updated its [Face Coverings FAQ](#) with information relevant to non-school activities.

The requirements and recommendations in this guidance apply to all school based and non-school based extracurricular youth activities including, but not limited to, sports, band (especially the playing of musical instruments that cannot be done with a face covering (e.g. wind instruments)) chorus, and clubs.

CCHS values the many benefits of extracurricular activities. The latest surge of the COVID-19 pandemic, fueled by the highly infectious Delta variant, necessitates we direct actions to protect our younger population while taking into consideration community transmission rates as noted on the [CDC COVID Tracker](#) and case data on the [CCHS Data Dashboard](#).

CCHS requires indoor masking. Masks are required indoors for all participants, coaches, personnel, and spectators. Masks decrease risks of transmission indoors. Everyone must wear face masks indoors, regardless of vaccination status. Masks are required for both competition and practice, during physical education, conditioning/weightlifting, and other indoor activities, in accordance with the [CDPH Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings](#) and/or [county health orders](#) requiring all people to wear masks while in an indoor public settings, including school settings.



Exceptions:

- Participants in indoor water sports such as swimming, water polo, or diving, may remove their face masks while they are in the water. Participants must wear face masks when not in the water.
- Participants in wrestling or certain martial arts where masks cannot be worn during matches due to the risk of suffocation. Participants must wear masks when not actively engaged in a match.
- When playing wind instruments (woodwind, brass), participants must use modified face masks (slit masks with an opening for the mouthpiece) and bell covers indoors. Slit masks are not required for flutes.

CCHS also recommends the following precautions for all youth sports and extracurricular activities, especially when the [CDC Community Transmission](#) level is “High” in Contra Costa County.

1. **Masks are strongly recommended outdoors**, when community transmission is high, as well when distancing between individuals or households is not practical or possible, or is not consistent. This includes students on campus for recess, lunch breaks (when not actively eating or drinking) and moving between classes. This also includes athletes on the sidelines and spectators in the stands. While outdoors is generally a lower risk setting for COVID-19 transmission, spread of COVID-19 outdoors can and does occur especially when individuals are unmasked and in close proximity.
2. **COVID-19 vaccination is strongly recommended for all participants who are old enough to be eligible for vaccination, as well as coaches, staff and volunteers.** Leagues, teams, and tournaments/events can require that all participants and personnel be fully vaccinated for COVID-19.

Having all athletes and staff in your league fully vaccinated will greatly decrease the risk of transmission of the virus among teammates and between teams, and will provide excellent protection against severe illness, hospitalization, and death. It will also decrease disruption in team activities, since fully vaccinated individuals are not required to quarantine if they are close contacts to a case of COVID-19.

3. **When community transmission is high, it is safest to limit high-risk sports and extracurricular activities to youth who are fully vaccinated**, as noted in [CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in schools](#). These activities include indoor sports, outdoor football, water polo, and other activities that involve singing, shouting, band, or exercise, especially when conducted indoors.,.



High-risk sports also include, but not limited to, basketball, boxing, American football, futbol (indoor soccer), ice hockey, martial arts with sparring, cheer, water polo, wrestling and partner dance, racquetball, squash, kickball and volleyball.

4. Regular testing of unvaccinated participants and staff, including volunteers, in high-risk activities

If it is not feasible to limit participation to fully vaccinated individuals, regular COVID-19 screening testing is strongly recommended in **unvaccinated** youth and staff involved with all indoor high-risk sports and extracurricular activities when the community transmission is high. Consider also testing **unvaccinated** youth and staff who participate in high-risk activities when the community transmission is substantial. Asymptomatic people who are fully vaccinated do not need regular testing, unless they participate in high-risk indoor activities without masks, as noted below. Testing is not recommended for asymptomatic people who tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days. Where resources allow, consider testing in unvaccinated youth and staff for all sports and extracurricular activities.

As noted in [CDPH K-12 guidance](#), in instances where high-risk sports or extracurricular activities are taking place indoors and they cannot be done with mask, such as playing musical instruments that cannot be done with a mask on (e.g., wind instruments or brass instruments) or wearing a mask during play poses a choking hazard, then at least one of the following option is required:

- a) Use modified face coverings and bell coverings when playing wind and brass instruments, AND maintain 6 feet of physical distancing; OR
- b) Test all individuals at least weekly, regardless of their vaccination status.

5. Testing Types and Frequency recommendations for unvaccinated youth and staff participating in high-risk activities when community transmission is substantial or high

- a. Once a week if using a PCR test, such as school-based Color or Cue PCR tests, or PCR testing performed at a clinic or medical facility.
- b. Twice a week if using a rapid antigen test, such as BinaxNOW.
 - i. A positive antigen test from someone who is asymptomatic (has no COVID-19 symptoms) should be retested with a PCR test within 24-72 hours to confirm. These tests should be treated as true positives and patients should be advised to isolate until confirmatory PCR results are back.
 - ii. A negative antigen test in a symptomatic individual should be retested with a PCR test within 24-72 hours to confirm. *This scenario should be*



uncommon as people with symptoms are instructed to stay home until they have been tested and received a negative result.

- c. Do not accept home/self-testing results.
 - d. Individuals who test positive should be sent directly home to isolate. They are not allowed to continue to participate in activities outside the home even with social distancing.
- 6. It is recommended that you relocate the following high-risk extracurricular group activities outdoors, when practical:**
- a. Cheer, stunt, drill team, etc.
 - b. Choir, or any singing
 - c. Drama and dance
 - d. Playing wind instruments (regardless of bell covers and mouthpiece masks)

7. Prevent spread of COVID-19 off the field

Remind participants and families that COVID-19 often spreads off-the-field, especially in situations when groups let their guard down and eat or socialize together with their masks off (post-game parties, locker rooms, carpools).

Locker rooms

- Limit congregating in locker rooms
 - Players should arrive dressed to play as much as possible.
 - Use locker rooms only to change or use the restroom. Don't use the locker room for coaching or pregame, halftime or postgame talks.
 - Avoid having different teams use a locker room at the same time.
- Ensure mask use in locker rooms.
 - Consider closing showers.

Transportation

- Team buses and vans
 - Masks are required
 - Keep windows open. Turn the fan on high and set it to outdoor air.
 - If more than one vehicle is used, have the same people ride together.
- Carpooling
 - Encourage participants and staff who carpool to ride with the same people each time travel occurs.
 - Everyone in the vehicle should wear a face mask.
 - Open the windows. Turn the fan on high and set it to outdoor air.



Travel

- When traveling overnight, team members not from the same household should sleep in separate rooms or in consistent groups when feasible. Keep masks on whenever visiting other members' hotel rooms.
- Socializing with other teams is strongly discouraged.
- Teams that travel out-of-state or outside the Bay Area are encouraged to follow [CDC recommendations](#) for quarantine after travel.

