



# RESTARTING MAINE'S ECONOMY

## COVID19 Prevention Checklist Industry Guidance

The State of Maine has adopted a staged approach, supported by science, public health expertise, and industry collaboration, to allow Maine businesses to safely open when the time is right. The plan is available at [www.maine.gov/covid19/restartingmaine](http://www.maine.gov/covid19/restartingmaine).

This is one of many industry guidance documents the State is preparing for businesses so they can be prepared to meet health guidelines and reopen safely. Please make sure you pair this document with the general guidance document that applies to all industries, which is available on [maine.gov/DECD](http://maine.gov/DECD).

Please note: This document may be updated as additional information and resources become available.

### **Phase 2: Community Sports** *Released May 20, 2020*

Community sports activities for both youth and adults require unique consideration during the COVID-19 pandemic. Health experts recognize the role of outdoor recreation and exercise in promoting mental health, physical fitness, and cognitive development. Reducing exposure to respiratory droplets through physical distancing and face coverings, as well as increased hand hygiene and avoidance of shared and common touch items, remain the primary tools to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Because of the increased possibility of infection through droplets, vigorous exercise in closely confined spaces should be avoided.

At this time, outdoor trainings with social distancing may be prudent. These guidelines focus on maximizing opportunities for social distancing and keeping small, distinct cohorts of participants whenever possible. To this end, travel teams or scrimmages between teams in the same community are strongly discouraged.

Sports activities present multiple challenges in the effective use of primary prevention strategies. These challenges include:

- Risk of exposure to the virus due to close physical proximity during sports activities through participation in the sport activity itself, group seating, and group travel.
- Increased risk during intense and sustained physical contact whether purposeful or accidental.
- Projection of respiratory particles during cardiovascular activities (panting), yelling or shouting as part of play, or common sneezing or coughing. This increase in respiration expulsion of droplets can well exceed the typical physical distancing recommendation of 6 feet between individuals.

- While face coverings are recommended to reduce the risk of viral transmission between individuals in public areas, face coverings are not compatible with many sports and inhibit respiration during exercise. Face coverings are not currently recommended for players during practice or competition. Face coverings can be used, if feasible, during coach strategy sessions and whenever possible.

## Considerations for community sports activities

- Organizers of community sports activities are responsible for limiting the number of individuals that can gather in a shared space, in accordance with Executive Orders from the [Office of the Governor](#).
- Risk of virus transmission decreases in the outside environment. Indoor sports activities significantly increase exposure to respiratory droplets in the shared air space.
- Activities and sports typically require coaches and athletes who are not from the same household or living unit to be in close proximity, which increases their potential for exposure to COVID-19.
- Youth activities require adult supervision to ensure careful attention to mitigation strategies.
- Coaches, volunteers, leaders, and athletes must stay home if they are feeling ill or have any symptoms of COVID-19.
- Spectators must maintain 6 feet of physical distance between themselves and other spectators as well as players.
- Cleaning and disinfection of equipment and other shared items is a challenging consideration. Shared items and common touch items present opportunities for viral transmission.
- Hand hygiene is an important mitigation strategy, yet many sports activities occur in locations without restroom facilities for handwashing. Hand sanitizers with a minimum of 60% alcohol content should be used frequently. Providing a method to rinse hands before applying hand sanitizer is recommended for situations where participants may become dirty or dusty.
- Individuals participating in group sports should not share any food items or beverages. Water bottles may be labeled to avoid cross-contamination.
- Transportation to and from sports activities require attention to physical distancing. Carpooling with individuals from different households is not recommended. If buses are used, spread individuals out to the extent possible and increase the airflow with open windows.
- Oftentimes restroom facilities without running water, such as portable toilets, are not stocked with hand hygiene products. Encourage visitors to be prepared to bring their own hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol for use in these facilities.
- For contact tracing purposes, to the extent practicable, team leaders should maintain a record including contact information for athletes and coaches who have direct prolonged interaction.
  - Based on current knowledge, a close contact is someone who was within 6 feet of an

infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before illness onset until the time the patient is isolated. Close contacts should stay home, maintain social distancing, and self-monitor until 14 days from the last date of exposure.

- The [Aspen Institute “Project Play” Return to Play Risk Assessment Tool](#) is a helpful guide to consider the risk for particular sports activities. The guide includes recommendations for lowest, medium, and highest risk activities related to each sport. The guide currently includes sports such as bicycling, running, skateboarding, walking/hiking, yoga, baseball/softball, basketball, football, golf, lacrosse, soccer, swimming, and tennis, with other activities added as guidance is developed.

## Swimming pools and other aquatic activities

- Pools must continue to follow Governor’s current Executive Order regarding gathering size.
- There is an increased risk of transmission in an indoor pool. Therefore:
  - Indoor pools are recommended to be limited to single swimming lanes.
  - Free/open swim times are not recommended for indoor pools at this time.
- Keep swimming pools properly cleaned and disinfected. Proper operation, maintenance, and disinfection (with chlorine or bromine) of swimming pools should kill the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Swimming pool directors must plan for cleaning and disinfection of items that are typically shared between individuals.
- Face coverings should not be worn in the pool.
- Physical distancing must be maintained to the extent possible in the pool, on the pool deck, in diving board areas, and in seating areas.
- Common touch surfaces such as hand rails, ladders, and diving platforms should be cleaned and disinfected frequently.
- Use of hot tubs, spas, water playgrounds, or water parks is not recommended at this time. While proper operation, maintenance, and disinfection (with chlorine or bromine) should kill COVID-19 in hot tubs, spas, water playgrounds, and water parks, you should not use these facilities within local, state, or national parks at this time because:
  - They are often crowded and could easily exceed recommended guidance for gatherings.
  - It can be challenging to keep surfaces clean and disinfected.
  - The virus can spread when people touch surfaces and then touch their unwashed hands to their eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Swimming in the ocean, lakes, and ponds is allowed. Physical distancing must be maintained on any beach areas.

## High Risk Populations

- Vulnerable or high-risk populations require special consideration for sporting activities.
- Parents should work with their primary care provider to determine if sports activities are a reasonably safe option for their child.
- The following populations are at higher risk. Higher risk should be considered in regard to participation in sporting activities as a player or a coach (and in some settings, as a spectator):
  - People 65 or older
  - People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility
  - People of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled including:
    - People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
    - People who have serious heart conditions
    - People who are immunocompromised: Many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications
    - People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher)
    - People with diabetes
    - People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
    - People with liver disease