



# GYSA

## Return to Play Guidelines

Guidelines and Protocols to promote a SAFE & FUN  
experience for our players, families  
and volunteers.



# Return to Season Overview

- GYSA will be following the combined guidance of Massachusetts Youth Soccer and the MIAA. We will provide updates as needed, remember this situation is ever changing.
- Soccer is classified as Moderate Risk\* which permits Level 1, 2, and 3 types of play. However, we must modify play to engage in Levels 2 or 3.
- It will take everyone to make this work. Players, Coaches, Referees and Fans must adhere to these guidelines for our kids to be able to play this season. Coaches and Parents should model good behavior, our kids are always watching.
- Consistent, positive communication from our coaches and administrators. “We want to play and this is how we can make that happen”.

\*As defined by the WORKPLACE SAFETY and REOPENING STANDARDS FOR BUSINESS and OTHER ENTITIES PROVIDING YOUTH and ADULT AMETUER SPORTS ACTIVIITES from the MASSACHUSETTS EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIORNMENTAL AFFAIRS.



# The Basics

1. Daily Health Check at home: Remind families every week, if a player is not able to attest to full health, they should not go to practice or play in a game. **STAY HOME** if you are sick.
2. Face Coverings: Players, Coaches, Referees and Fans **ALL** are required to wear face coverings to all practices and games. More details to come.
3. Hand Sanitizer: Each player should have personal hand sanitizer as part of their soccer gear. We will provide PPE to the teams as well.
4. Social Distancing: Players, Coaches, Referees and Fans should all maintain six feet social distancing.



# Players Responsibilities

- Hand Sanitizer
- Water Bottle
- Equipment: Bring your own equipment (ball, shin guards, \*pinnie, etc.). GYSA will only provide game balls. We cannot share equipment.
  - \*Pinnie – each player will receive their own Pinnie to use throughout the season.
- No high 5's, handshakes, or other group celebrations that cannot be done safely (6' social distant) – The kids are creative, we are confident they will think of creative ways to celebrate!
- 6' or more Physical Distancing whenever possible (on the sidelines, during drills, etc.). Set up cones on the sidelines to help with this.
- Face Masks - must cover the nose and mouth and attach via ear loops



# Coach Responsibilities

- Consistent, positive communication
- Follow the return to play protocols
- Be flexible, situations can change quickly and we will all have to adapt
- Wear your face mask
- Send players home if they are not feeling well.
- Attendance must be taken AND recorded at every practice and game. Save these records.
  - We will enable the Team Connect app for teams to utilize.
- Ensure adequate 6' social distancing for players when possible (practice, drills, sideline set up, etc.)
- Ensure all players have their own equipment (no sharing)
- Distribute individual Pinnies to each player to use for the duration of the season.
- Coaches handle all equipment used for practice such as cones, goals, etc.
- Encourage “creative”, new forms of celebration!



# Spectator Responsibilities

- No spectators will be allowed at practice. Players should be dropped off and picked up by Parents/Guardians.
  - Parents/Guardians are welcome to stay in their cars and observe practice if they wish.
- During games, only 1 parent/guardian will be allowed to accompany each player so long as social distancing is possible.
- Spectators will need to maintain 6' social distancing. There will be markings painted on the field to help with this.
- Each team will designate a parent or coach as a Covid Safety Monitor to assist in adhering Covid-19 restrictions on the spectator sideline. This is a critical component to the overall success of the plan.



# Pre-Practice/Game Guidelines

- Parents/Guardians must ensure their players health.
  - If a players temperature is over 100.5 degrees, the player is not permitted to attend and must be 24 hours temperature free prior to returning.
  - Players should also attest to not having any of the following symptoms (per the CDC, “this list does not include all of the possible symptoms and symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus.”)
    - Fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion, runny nose, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
  - Players must also attest that they have not been in close contact with anyone confirmed to have Coronavirus (Covid-19) in the past 14 days.
  - Before entering the fields, players are required to apply hand sanitizer (personally supplied).
  - Players who have traveled out of state must follow the state guidelines for quarantine, prior to returning to play.



# Face Mask Practice and Game Guidelines

- Players are required to play with a Face Mask
  - No gators, bandanas, scarfs - face mask must be “loop over the ear” style
  - Only allowed to remove when not in close proximity to others (10’ apart) for short breaks.
    - A player may **temporarily** remove or lower their facemask when not in close proximity to a player (a long run down the field, play is at the other end, playing goal keeper, or to catch their breath).
- Coaches are required to wear a face mask and maintain 6’ social distancing
- Coaches (not referees or parents) will re-enforce face mask requirements with players while they are on the field/sidelines during games and practices.
- Coaches cannot help the players with their face masks. This must be done by the player themselves.





# Game Play Modifications

- No Heading
  - *An intentional heading will result in an Indirect Free Kick*
- No Throw-Ins (to be replaced by a kick-in)
  - *Player does not need to keep both feet on the ground*
  - *Ball is placed on the touchline or outside the touchline*
  - *Player cannot kick the ball directly into the opponents penalty area*
  - *Opponents must stand at least 10 yards (8 yards for small sided) from the touchline where the kick-in is to be taken*
- No Corner Kicks (to be replaced by a kick-in)
  - *Ball is placed anywhere on the Corner Arc*
  - *Player cannot kick the ball directly into the opponents penalty area*
  - *Opponents must stand at least 10 yards (8 yards for small sided) from the Corner Arc where the kick-in is to be taken*



# Game Play Modifications

- **No Slide Tackling when within 6'**
  - *Permitted to go to the ground to block a ball (prevent a goal, pass, out of bounds, etc.) so long as the player is NOT within 6' of another player.*
  - *Violation will result in an Indirect Free Kick (or other applicable foul or misconduct based on the referee's decision)*
- **No Shoulder to Shoulder contact**
  - *Violation will result in an Indirect Free Kick (or other applicable foul or misconduct based on the referee's decision)*
- **No Dropped Ball Restarts**
  - *Indirect Free Kick will be awarded to the team whom the referee determines was last in possession of the ball.*



# Game Play Modifications

- Restarts
  - *For ALL restarts, all players must comply with the 6' distancing from both opponents and teammates.*
  - *Opponents must remain 10 yards (8 yards for small sided) from the ball prior to the kick.*
  - *The use of a traditional defensive wall is not allowed.*



# Field Capacity

- No more than 25 players or participants on a single field at any one time. Fields must be spaced at least 14' apart when sharing larger field. GYSA should have no issues here, based on our proposed number of players, coaches and referees.
- No more the 50 people excluding the above mentioned players, coaches and referees on the surrounding area around the field, provided the spectators can maintain at least 6' social distancing.



# Covid-19 Reporting Procedures

We will follow the procedures outlined by Mass Youth Soccer. The following steps should be completed if a member of your team has come in contact with or has been diagnosed with Covid-19.

1. Affected individual or Parent/Guardian should contact their Coach, who then should then notify GYSA Stephanie Smith and Ross Olson.
2. GYSA will then notify local Department of Public Health/CDC and follow their direction in regards to next steps (canceling of games, practice, etc.)
3. GYSA will then notify close contact or others on the team who may have questions about their risk of Covid-19 by sending out the Notification Form. Names of individuals will not be released. Be prepared to stop all activities with the affected team(s) for 14 days.
4. GYSA will then notify Mass Youth Soccer Covid-19 Officer, using the Exposure Reporting Form.
5. For full transparency GYSA will also notify the school system in an effort of cooperation



**GYSA**

**Thanks you for your continued  
commitment to our kids!**