



**Public Health Department
Mendocino County**

Healthy People, Healthy Communities



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**COVID-19 Guidance for Youth Sports
and Extracurricular Activities in Mendocino County**

Dated: November 30, 2021

Mendocino County 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.

Mendocino County Public Health has drafted this Guidance on Youth Sports and Extracurricular Activities for public and private K-12 schools operating in Mendocino 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 [CDPH Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings](#) for further recommendations that also take into consideration county transmission rates as noted here [CDC COVID tracker](#).

[K-12 Guidance 2021-22 School Year \(ca.gov\)](#) dated 11/24/2021

Mendocino County recommends that schools use multiple, layered prevention strategies to keep sports activities safer during this phase of the COVID-19 pandemic by following these precautions for all youth sports and extracurricular activities in Mendocino County.

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 asymptomatic close contacts to a case of COVID-19.

RISK

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

- High-contact indoor sports include: basketball, boxing, futbol (indoor soccer), ice hockey, martial arts with sparring, water polo, wrestling and partner dance.
- Moderate sports include: cheer, kickball; volleyball; racquetball or squash; doubles tennis, pickleball or badminton.
- Inform parents and students of the high risk of spreading COVID while playing close-contact or indoor sports (for example wrestling or football).
- Spectators in the bleachers or sidelines are also at risk.
- It is recommended that you relocate the following high-risk extracurricular group activities outdoors, when practical:
 - Cheer, stunt, drill team, etc.
 - Choir, or any singing
 - Drama and dance

Playing wind instruments requires bell covers and (regardless of mouthpiece masks) must maintain a minimum of 3 feet of physical distancing between participants.

VACCINES

- Strongly encourage student-athletes, coaches, fans, and families to be vaccinated

MASKS

- Masks are required indoors for all participants, coaches, personnel, and spectators. 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 the local health Order requiring masking.
- Masks are required in the locker rooms.
- Exceptions to Masking are competitive cheer, gymnastics while on apparatus, swimming, diving, water polo and wrestling and for those activities where masking is not practicable during heavy exertion. Masks must be worn when not actively participating in these activities. Brief breathers without masks on are allowed when at least 6 feet from others.
- Masks are recommended outdoors when distancing between households is not practical or possible, for example for athletes on the sidelines or spectators in the stands.
- When masks are wet or saturated, they must be changed.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Six feet of social distancing should be maintained between individuals or households whenever possible, for example, on the sidelines, and in the bleachers.

TRANSPORTATION

- If buses are used for transportation, windows should be open for increased ventilation
 - Masks required on the bus by everyone
- If private cars are used, they should include only a single household. If not, everyone should wear a mask. Open the windows. Turn the fan on high and set 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 Northern California are encouraged to follow CDC recommendations for quarantine after travel

TESTING

- **Regular testing of unvaccinated participants and staff, including volunteers, in high-risk activities is required.** If it is not feasible to limit participation to fully vaccinated individuals, perform regular COVID-19 screening testing in **unvaccinated** youth and staff involved with all indoor high-risk sports and extracurricular activities. Where resources allow, consider testing for all sports and extracurricular activities. Testing is not required for asymptomatic people who are fully vaccinated or who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days.
- Pre-game testing of all high-risk sports occurs within 24 hours of an event with another school
- Schools may also consider offering pre-game testing to spectators
- Individuals who test positive should be sent directly home to isolate; they are not allowed to stay on the sidelines or stay to watch the event
- Testing Types and Frequency
 - 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.
 - Twice a week if using a rapid antigen test, such as BinaxNOW.
 - A positive antigen test from someone who is asymptomatic (has no COVID-19 symptoms) may be retested with a PCR test within 24-72 hours to confirm. These tests should be treated as true positives and participants should be advised to isolate until confirmatory PCR results are back.

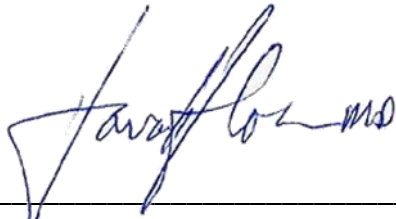
- A symptomatic individual should be retested with a PCR test and are instructed *to stay home until isolation is complete.*
- Do not accept home/self-testing results.

AFTER THE EVENT

- Athletes and their families and friends should be aware that most transmission has occurred off the field (waiting in line for admission or food, at a post-game party, in the locker room)
- Continue wearing masks, social distancing, and proper ventilation

Schools are encouraged to consult with legal counsel regarding liability and the use of waivers for potential COVID exposure.

Please contact DOC-schools@mendocinocounty.org if you have any questions or concerns.



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