

2021 KSHSAA GIRLS SOCCER CONSIDERATIONS

Revised 3/23/2021

With support of the NFHS, the KSHSAA Sports Medicine Committee and the KSHSAA Executive Board, we offer this document as guidance to the member schools of the KSHSAA to consider for the 2021 girls soccer season. The considerations outlined are intended to decrease potential exposure to respiratory droplets by encouraging physical distancing, limiting participation in administrative tasks to essential personnel, and allowing for appropriate and reasonable protective equipment.

Note: This is not an exhaustive list and there might be additional steps in each school, city and county to help prevent the spread of virus. Even when taking all precautions, there will still be risk of transmitting illnesses. Everyone should stay vigilant about the health of members of their teams. Lastly, the situation with COVID-19 is rapidly changing. These considerations may quickly become outdated. Please keep up with the latest from the CDC and other health officials in your state.

Venues/facilities vary greatly. Apply considerations/risk mitigation strategies accordingly.

Face Coverings:

All participants (including but not limited to athletes, coaches, officials, spectators, support staff and all others attending/participating in school activities) shall wear a face covering in the manner it is intended to be worn (for purpose of COVID-19 risk mitigation) while at the event venue and for duration of the event. The only exception is provided for athletes during the time they are competing and for officials during active play. Participants and/or officials may choose to wear a mask during active play unless it poses a safety risk.

(New 3/23/21): *KSHSAA Executive Board interpretation (March 23, 2021): Any participant (including but not limited to athletes, coaches, officials, spectators, support staff and all others attending/participating in school activities) **outdoors, who is able to maintain a minimum of six feet of social distancing** would not be required to wear a face covering. Adherence to a more restrictive local health authority or school district policy is supported and expected.*

Competition Scheduling/Contracts Considerations:

- School administrators/soccer coaches should prepare to be flexible with contracts regarding late cancellations of schools/teams given current health status of schools/team members. If a team is unable to compete due to health concerns/COVID-19, no forfeit will be required. May reschedule contest; otherwise, no contest takes place.
- Schedule/host schools/teams from a closer geographical area; reduce travel from other regions of Kansas and surrounding states.
- Consider not scheduling/hosting or participating in multi-team invitational tournaments.
- For any tournaments, consider playing first round games at higher seed sites instead of at one common site to reduce number of schools/teams at one site.
- Allow for competitions to take longer due to safety/sanitation protocol.
- Consider scheduling only one competition per week.

- Consider alternate game nights for various levels (non-varsity and varsity).
- Consider playing a reduced regular season schedule; not required to play 16 games.

Transportation Considerations:

- Adhere to local board of education/district policies for transportation to/from practices and contests.
- Considerations include single individual per bus seat; staggered bus seating as available; parent support for transporting own child (if within BOE policy).
- Clean/sanitize vehicles before and after each usage.

Locker Room Considerations:

- Adhere to local school policy for usage, cleaning before and after each usage.
- Suggestions include staggered use by teams of locker rooms; maintaining consistent groupings of students in locker room; clothes cleaned after use; equipment cleaned before storing.

Concessions Considerations:

- Follow CDC guidelines.
- Consider only bottled drinks and pre-packaged items.

Admission/Ticketing Considerations:

- Consider cashless admission utilizing digital tickets.

Competition Hosting Considerations:Pre-Competition Health Screen and Temperature Check

- Consider having each individual involved (workers, officials, students, coaches) complete a health screening/questionnaire and temperature check immediately prior to a competition – either offsite under the supervision of each participating school or onsite as schools arrive and check in.
- Health screening/questionnaire including temperature should be turned in by all individuals.

Cleaning/Sanitizing

- Have hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, sanitizing cleaners in each team's locker room, officials' room, team bench areas on field and scorer/officials' table on field.
- Clean/sanitize locker rooms, officials' room, team bench areas, and scorer/officials' table before and after each use.
- Encourage all involved individuals to use hand sanitizer or wash hands before, during and after a competition.
- Consider cleaning/sanitizing of restrooms and other common areas before, during and after a competition.
- Clothes/uniforms (including pinnies) and towels cleaned/washed after each use.
- Athletes should not share pinnies, towels or any other equipment/supplies. Label with names.
- Shin guards cleaned/sanitized after each use by the athletes.
- Balls cleaned/sanitized before and after each game. Also, during the game, ball holders can clean/sanitize balls (see Ball-Cleaning Guidelines). Easiest method is simply wiping down balls with disinfectant wipes.

Masks

- Communicate to workers and participating schools current mask regulations for state/county/school.
- Ask all involved to have their own mask; have extra masks on hand for workers/participants.
- Individuals in team bench areas and at the scorer/officials' table should wear masks at all times.
- Masks can be placed in players' personal bags in the team bench areas when they enter into play.
- Neck gaiters are allowable.
- Consider having plexiglass/clear plastic barrier in front of ticket/admissions and concessions workers.
- Spectators should wear masks at all times.

Social Distancing

- Consider extending team bench areas and officials' table area if needed up to the penalty areas; may mark off 6 feet sections to help with social distancing.
- Consider having team bench areas on opposite sides of the field and possibly at diagonals to minimize interactions with sideline official.
- Ball holders should maintain 6 feet social distancing from others.
- **Spectator considerations** may include not allowing any, limiting numbers, marking off 6 feet sections in bleacher seating, or removing bleachers and asking spectators to bring their own chairs to use in specified/marked areas.

Food/Beverages

- Bottled beverages with names on them are recommended. Each participant should have their own drink container.

Soccer Rules Considerations:

Pregame Conference (NFHS Rule 5-2-2d)

- Limit attendees to head referee or center referee, the head coach from each team and a single captain from each team.
- Move the location of the pregame conference to center of the field. All individuals maintain a social distance of 6 feet.
- Suspend handshakes prior to and following the Pregame Conference.

Substitution Procedures (NFHS Rule 3-4)

- Maintain social distancing of 6 feet between the substitute, officials and/or teammate(s) by encouraging substitutions to occur closer to the center line.

Officials Table (NFHS Rule 6-2; 6-3)

- Limit to essential personnel which includes home team scorer and timer with a recommend distance of 6 feet between individuals. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential personnel and will need to find an alternative location.

Pre and Post Match Ceremony Considerations:

- Suspend the pregame world cup introduction line and send players to their field positions with bench personnel lined up on the touch line (6 feet apart) for introductions.
- Suspend postgame protocol of shaking hands/high-fives/fist bumps.

Soccer Rules Interpretations:Legal Uniform (NFHS Rule 4-1)

- Long sleeves are permissible.
- Long pants are permissible.
- Under garments are permissible but must be of a similar length for the individual and a solid, like color for team.

Equipment and Accessories (NFHS Rule 4-2)

- Cloth face coverings are permissible.
- Gloves are permissible.

Officials Uniform and Equipment (NFHS Rule 5-3)

- By state association adoption, long-sleeved shirt/jackets are permissible.
- Electronic whistles are permissible (supplies are limited).
 - Choose a whistle whose tone will carry outside.
 - Fox 40 Mini
 - Fox 40 Unisex Electronic – 3 tone
 - Ergo-Guard – 3 tone – orange
 - Windsor – 3 tone – grey
 - Check the market for other choices.
- Cloth face coverings are permissible.
- Gloves are permissible.
- May consider asking officials to come dressed to competitions (locker room not provided).
- Have a separate restroom for officials when possible.
- Best scenario is to provide a separate room for officials that is large enough to allow social distancing of 6 feet and allow officials access to a shower.
- Any food/beverages provided to officials should be pre-packaged/bottled or ask officials to bring their own.

Practice Considerations:

- Consider conducting workouts in “pods” of the same students always training and rotating together in practice to ensure more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- Health screening prior to practice (see general guidelines).
- Keep accurate records of who attends practice – days and times.
- Consider temperature checks prior to practice (see general guidelines).
- Athletes are responsible for their own supplies. Label items with names.
- Athletes bring their own water bottle/jug labeled with name.
- No sharing of towels, pinnies, shin guards, etc. Wash and disinfect items after each use.
- Covered face cloths are permitted and should be worn except during conditioning (6 feet apart) and active play. Coaches/managers/trainers should wear at all times.
- Consider limiting the number of students coming to practice.
- Practice social distancing (6 feet apart) whenever possible, even during team meetings.
- Refer to cleaning/sanitizing considerations provided in this document.