COVID-19 Exposure Management Plan Guidance for Organized Youth Sports Programs

Recent Updates: (Changes highlighted in yellow)
11/7/2022
- Clarified close contact definitions to incorporate CDPH’s specifications for large indoor airspaces. In indoor airspaces greater than 400,000 cubic feet per floor, close contacts are individuals within 6 feet of the infected person for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. In indoor airspaces 400,000 cubic feet or less per floor, close contacts are individuals who shared in the same indoor airspace with the infected person for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.

8/18/2022
- Reporting of individual cases of COVID-19 in the youth sport setting is no longer required. Moving forward, any clusters of 3 or more linked cases within a 14-day period in the Organized Youth Sports Program must be reported immediately and no later than 1 business day.
- Clarifies requirements for athlete close contacts who are asymptomatic and have mask exemptions for continuing participation in program activities after a COVID-19 exposure.
- Youth Sports Programs with 5 or more epidemiologically linked cases over a 14-day period should consider suspending activities for 5 days once the fifth linked case has been identified. If DPH recommends an outbreak response and activates an outbreak investigation, the Public Health Investigator can require a suspension period or extend a suspension period as warranted during an outbreak response.

A targeted public health response to contain COVID-19 exposures at a community-level can help maximize the impact of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH) COVID-19 response.

Organized Youth Sports Programs are trusted community partners that can help DPH improve the timeliness and impact of the Public Health response through rapid initiation of a COVID-19 Exposure Management Plan (EMP). Immediate implementation of an EMP when a single case of COVID-19 is identified within a Recreational Sports program can accelerate the ability to contain the spread of infection and prevent outbreaks from occurring.

The steps for managing exposures to COVID-19 cases in an Organized Youth Sports Program are described below and summarized in Appendix A. Because Organized Youth Sports programs will vary in the level of resources available for COVID-19 exposure management, required steps are the minimum elements that must be included in the EMP. Recommended steps include optional elements for exposure management where resources are sufficient.

Note that this exposure management guidance applies to organized recreational sports leagues, club sports, travel sports, sports events/meets/competitions and sports sponsored by private and public schools serving students in TK12 schools. This guidance supplements the Protocol for Organized Youth Sports which provides a summary of requirements and best practices in this setting. This guidance does not apply to collegiate or professional sports or to community events such as marathons, half-marathons, and endurance races.
The risk of spread of COVID-19 in a Youth Sports Program is affected by the following factors:
- As more individuals are fully vaccinated and boosted against COVID-19, the risk decreases.
- In the absence of COVID-19 vaccination, the risk increases with: (1) sports that have closer levels of contact between participants (particularly face-to-face contact in indoor sports); (2) sports that have increased frequency and longer duration of close contact; (3) high contact sports that have greater exertion levels that increase the rate of breathing and the amount of air that is inhaled and exhaled with every breath.

In the guidance that follows, the term “household” is defined as “persons living together as a single living unit” and shall not include institutional group living situations such as dormitories, fraternities, sororities, monasteries, convents, or residential care facilities, nor does it include such commercial living arrangements such as boarding houses, hotels, or motels. The terms “staff” and “employee” are meant to include coaches, employees, support staff, volunteers, interns and trainees, scholars and all other individuals who carry out work at the site or for the recreational sport activity. The terms “players”, “participants”, “family members”, “visitors” or “customers” should be understood to include members of the public and others who are not staff or employees who spend time at the business or site or take part in the activities. The terms “establishment”, “site”, and “facility” refer to the buildings or grounds at which permitted activities are conducted. “DPH” or “Public Health” is the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.

### Exposure Management Planning Prior to Identifying 1 COVID-19 Case

- **Required:** A designated COVID-19 Organized Youth Sports Program Compliance Officer (referred to as “Compliance Officer”) who is responsible for establishing and enforcing all COVID-19 safety processes and ensuring that all participants receive education about COVID-19. The designated COVID-19 Compliance Officer will serve as a liaison to DPH for sharing information pertinent to controlling spread of COVID-19 in the Organized Youth Sports Program.

- **Required:** A plan for all participants and staff who (1) have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, (2) were exposed in the Sports Program, or (3) are part of an Organized Youth Sports Program with an active public health investigation to have access to testing or be tested for COVID-19.

- **Recommended:** Routine screening testing is strongly recommended for athletes in moderate-risk and high-risk sports. If an Organized Youth Sports Programs chooses to implement a screening testing program, programs should use an FDA-authorized viral COVID-19 test, including a Nucleic Acid Amplification Test (NAAT, such as PCR) or a point-of-care (POC) or over-the-counter (OTC) Antigen test.

- **Recommended:** Organized Youth Sports Programs are advised to apply DPH guidance on Decision Pathways for persons who have not been tested for COVID-19 but screen positive for symptoms prior to or during participation in the Sports Program.

### Exposure Management for COVID-19 Cases in an Organized Youth Sports Program

- **Required:** After identifying 1 confirmed COVID-19 case (participant or staff), the Compliance Officer instructs the case to follow Home Isolation Instructions for COVID-19 (ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation). **NOTE:** A confirmed COVID-19 case is an individual who has a positive COVID-19 test. Refer to sample Youth Sport Program isolation instruction notification (posted on ph.lacounty.gov/EducationToolkitTK12) for a model that can be adapted.
Athletes and staff with COVID-19 can end isolation after Day 5* ONLY if all of the following criteria are met: 1. A COVID-19 viral test** collected on Day 5 or later is negative, and 2. No fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine, and 3. Other symptoms are improving --or-- Isolation can end after Day 10 if no fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine.

*For symptomatic athletes and staff, Day 0 is the first day of symptoms; Day 1 is the first full day after symptoms develop. For asymptomatic athletes and staff, Day 0 is the day the first positive test was collected; Day 1 is the first full day after the positive test was collected.

**The test must be an FDA authorized viral test (e.g., PCR or Antigen test, including at-home tests). An antigen test is preferred for testing out of isolation.

If an athlete meets the criteria to leave isolation after Day 5, they are strongly recommended to continue to wear a highly protective mask around others for 10 days after their positive test or the first full day after their symptoms developed, except when eating or drinking. Staff with COVID-19 are required to wear a highly protective mask in the workplace around others, except when eating or drinking, for those 10 days after their positive test or the first full day after their symptoms developed.

NOTE: For staff, per Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standards (ETS), employers are required to fulfill the following: inform all employees about how they can obtain testing, offer testing at no cost and during paid time, and provide testing in a manner that ensures employee confidentiality. To comply with the testing requirements of the ETS, an over-the-counter (OTC) COVID-19 test may be both self-administered and self-read if verification of the results, such as a time and date stamped photograph of the result or an OTC test that uses digital reporting with time and date stamped results, is provided. Additionally, staff may request masks and respirators from their employer at no cost to staff. See Wear a Mask and Know your Rights for more information.

Required: The Compliance Officer works to identify all individuals or all groups in the Organized Youth Sports Program who have had an exposure to the confirmed positive case(s) in the Youth Sports Program during their infectious period (Close Contacts).

A case is considered to be infectious from 2 days before their symptom onset date until their isolation ends as described in the Home Isolation Instructions for COVID-19 (ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation). A person with a positive COVID-19 test but no symptoms is considered infectious from 2 days before their test was taken until their isolation period ends.

Close Contact: Persons are considered to have been exposed to a case (close contact) during the case's infectious period if:

**In indoor airspaces that are 400,000 cubic feet or less per floor:** They shared the same indoor airspace with the infected person (case) for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period during the infected person’s infectious period. (This definition of shared indoor airspace should be applied to classrooms, offices, and other similar-sized spaces.)

**In indoor airspaces that are greater than 400,000 cubic feet per floor:** They were within 6 feet of the infected person (case) for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period during the infected person’s infectious period. NOTE: Spaces that are separated by floor-to-ceiling walls (e.g., offices, suites, break/eating areas separated by floor-to-ceiling walls) are considered distinct indoor airspaces.

NOTE: Persons with an outdoor exposure are not considered close contacts.
Required: The Compliance Officer is required to report to Public Health all staff and participant clusters of 3 or more cases with confirmed COVID-19 who were participating in an Organized Youth Sports Program team, club, or cohort at any point within the 14 days prior to the illness onset date.

Required: All Organized Youth Sports Program-associated COVID-19 clusters should be reported online through the secure web application, the Shared Portal for Outbreak Tracking (SPOT): https://spot.cdph.ca.gov/s/?language=en_US. If there are multiple cases to report, programs can submit their reports using the “Bulk Upload Template” located within the SPOT Portal. All clusters with information for the cases should be reported to Public Health immediately, and no later than 1 business day of being notified of the third, or last, case in the cluster. Programs can refer to the TK-12 Schools COVID-19 Toolkit for additional information about reporting instructions or contact ACDC-Education@ph.lacounty.gov.

Required: All persons with a known exposure (close contacts) to a COVID-19 positive case in an Organized Youth Sports Program are notified by the Compliance Officer of the exposure and actions to take. Refer to sample Youth Sport Program notification letters (posted on ph.lacounty.gov/EducationToolkitTK12) for templates that can be adapted.

Actions for close contacts

- Asymptomatic close contacts may remain in the Youth Sports program if they meet the following requirements: (1) monitor for symptoms; (2) wear a highly protective mask around others indoors, except when eating or drinking, for 10 days after the last date of exposure; (3) test with an FDA-authorized viral COVID-19 test (e.g., PCR or Antigen test, including at-home tests) within 3-5 days since the last date of exposure.*

  *NOTE: Asymptomatic athlete and staff close contacts who were previously infected with SARS-CoV-2 within the last 90 days are exempt from testing but must mask around others indoors for 10 days after the last date of exposure.

  - If symptoms develop, test using an FDA-authorized viral COVID-19 test and stay home. If the test is positive, follow Home Isolation Instructions for COVID-19 (ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation).

  - For athletes who have a mask exemption* and have been exposed, athletes should wear a face shield with drape at the bottom if their condition allows. For athletes who cannot tolerate a mask or a face shield with drape at the bottom, they may continue participating in program activities if 1) they remain asymptomatic, 2) monitor for symptoms for the 10 days after last exposure, and 3) test for COVID-19 twice during the 10 days after last exposure, once during days 3-5 and once during days 6-9. Athletes who cannot mask after exposure and cannot meet these requirements must remain at home until after Day 10 after last exposure.

*Individuals may be exempt from wearing a mask for the following reasons:
  - Persons younger than two years old.
  - Persons who are hearing impaired, or communicating with a person who is hearing impaired, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.
  - Persons with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability or whose medical provider has determined that it is unsafe for them to wear a mask, may file for an exemption with their school. A certification from a state licensed health care provider attesting that the student has a condition or disability that precludes them from wearing a mask safely will be accepted as proof of exemption. The following
licensed health care professionals may provide such attestations: Medical providers including physician (MD or DO), nurse practitioner (NP), or physician assistant (PA) practicing under the authority of a licensed physician; and licensed mental and behavioral health practitioners including Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), clinical psychologist (Psy.D.) Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC), or Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT).

- Staff who are close contacts exposed at work must follow the guidance outlined in Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standards. Please refer to Table 2 in Cal/OSHA’s COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards Frequently Asked Questions for guidance after an exposure, including for staff who are unable to mask.
- Staff may request masks and respirators from their employer at no cost to staff. See Wear a Mask and Know your Rights for more information.
- For staff, per Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standards (ETS), employers are required to fulfill the following testing requirements: inform all employees on how they can obtain testing, offer testing at no cost and during paid time, and provide testing in a manner that ensures employee confidentiality. To comply with the testing requirements of the ETS, an over-the-counter (OTC) COVID-19 test may be both self-administered and self-read if verification of the results, such as a time and date stamped photograph of the result or an OTC test that uses digital reporting with time and date stamped results, is provided.

**Required:** Youth Sports Programs are required to have a plan to facilitate COVID-19 response testing for persons with an exposure in the Youth Sports Program. Participants and staff who are tested must inform the Youth Sports Program of the test results. Testing resources include: Employee Health Services or Occupational Health Services, Student Health Center, Personal Healthcare Providers, LA City and County Testing Sites: covid19.lacounty.gov/testing, and Community-Based Testing Sites (local health centers and pharmacies). Individuals who need assistance finding a medical provider can call the LA County Information line 211, which is available 24/7.

**Required:** Employees with an exposure should follow guidance outlined in Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standards Isolation and Quarantine section. A summary of requirements is provided in the Public Health guidance document on Responding to COVID-19 in the Workplace.

**Required:** If an individual with confirmed COVID-19 participated during their infectious period in any games, tournaments, or other Organized Youth Sports Program-related activities involving other teams, the Compliance Officer must notify the opposing team(s) of potential exposure. Refer to sample Youth Sport Program opposing team notification letter (posted on ph.lacounty.gov/EducationToolkitTK12) for a model that can be adapted.

**Required:** Compliance Officers for all affected teams must work collaboratively to notify any individuals or groups who meet the criteria for having been exposed.

**Required:** The Compliance Officer will work with Public Health to determine whether the cases within the reported cluster are epidemiologically linked, meaning that the affected individuals were present at some point in the same setting during the same time period while either or both were infectious.* Determination of epidemiological links between cases may require further investigation to assess exposure history and identify all possible locations and persons that may have been exposed to the case while infectious in an Organized Youth Sports Program.

*A case is considered to be infectious from 2 days before symptoms first appeared until isolation ends. A person with a positive COVID-19 test but no symptoms is considered to be infectious
from 2 days before their test was taken until isolation ends.

- Epidemiologically linked cases include persons in an Organized Youth Sports Program with identifiable connections to each other (i.e., on the same team, sharing physical space like a locker room or car, attending a social gathering together), indicating a higher likelihood of linked spread of disease in the Organized Youth Sports Program rather than sporadic transmission from the broader community. If epidemiological links exist, DPH will advise the program on important steps to take and communications to students and employees on precautions to take to prevent further spread, including implementation of program-specific interventions for infection control. Organized Youth Sports Programs should contact DPH for assistance in determining whether cases are epidemiologically linked by emailing ACDC-Education@ph.lacounty.gov.

- Public Health will determine if the outbreak criteria have been met: at least 3 confirmed cases of COVID-19 within a 14-day period among members of an Organized Youth Sports Program who are epidemiologically linked, do not share a household, and are not a close contact of each other outside of the educational or youth program site. Epidemiological links require the infected persons to have been present at some point in the same setting during the same time period while infectious.

**Required:** If outbreak criteria are met and DPH recommends an outbreak response, DPH will notify the Compliance Officer that an outbreak investigation has been activated, and the Compliance Officer will work with the Public Health Investigator to coordinate the outbreak response.

**Recommended:** Youth Sports Programs with 5 or more epidemiologically linked cases over a 14-day period should consider suspending activities for 5 days once the fifth linked case has been identified to control further spread. Individual conditioning and skill building may continue during the suspension period if everyone on the team complies fully with any individual isolation or quarantine orders that apply. If outbreak criteria are met and DPH recommends an outbreak response, the Public Health Investigator can require a suspension period or extend a suspension period as warranted during an outbreak response.

**Recommended:** The Compliance Officer will determine whether additional notification is needed to inform the wider program community about the exposure and precautions being taken to prevent spread of COVID-19. Refer to sample Youth Sports Program general notification letter (posted on ph.lacounty.gov/EducationToolkitTK12) for a model that can be adapted.

**Recommended:** It is strongly recommended that all team members participating on the same team as a confirmed case are tested weekly for 2 weeks from the last date that the case was present on the team while infectious, regardless of vaccination or exposure status.
### Appendix A:
Steps for Managing Exposures to COVID-19 Cases in an Organized Youth Sports Program

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<tr>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
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| 1 Case | 1) *Required:* Youth Sports Program notifies the case to follow COVID-19 Home Isolation Instructions.  
2) *Required:* Youth Sports Program identifies exposed individuals or groups. This may include individuals or groups on an opposing team if the case participated in any games or tournaments during their infectious period.  
3) *Required:* Youth Sports Program notifies contacts of exposure. |
| 2 Cases | 1) *Required:* Follow required steps for 1 confirmed case.  
2) *Recommended:* If the 2 cases occurred within 14 days of each other, Youth Sports Program works with DPH to determine whether the cases have epidemiological (epi) links. If epi links exist, Youth Sports Program implements additional infection control measures. |
| 3+ Cases | 1) *Required:* Follow required steps for 1 confirmed case.  
2) *Required:* If a cluster of 3 or more cases in the Organized Youth Sports Program occurred within 14 days of each other, the Youth Sports Program immediately notifies DPH by reporting the cluster online at: [https://spot.cdph.ca.gov/s/?language=en_US](https://spot.cdph.ca.gov/s/?language=en_US).  
3) *Required:* DPH determines if the outbreak criteria have been met. If outbreak criteria are met, a DPH outbreak investigation is activated, and a Public Health Investigator will contact the Organized Youth Sports Program to coordinate the outbreak investigation. |