



Metuchen Soccer Club

Fall 2020

Game & Training Protocols (Covid19)





2020 PROTOCOLS - GAMES



COVID-19 Symptoms

- No Player, Coach, Trainer, Referee or Spectator should be present at any game if they exhibit any symptoms of COVID-19, or if they have a reasonable suspicion that they may have been exposed to someone who does.
- Anyone planning to attend a game as a Player, Coach, Trainer, Referee or Spectator should take their temperature before leaving home and should stay home if their temperature is higher than 100.4°F



Club Responsibilities

- MSC will schedule home games so as to allow sufficient time for players, coaches, trainers, referees and spectators from the previous game to exit the field well before the scheduled start of the next game.
- MSC will not allow any spectators inside the fence for games at Myrtle Field and Charles Park (I&II).
- At Hampton Field, MSC will set up a roped line on the sideline opposite the players. All spectators are required to stay behind the rope and practice social distancing.
- MSC will communicate these Game Day Protocols to visiting clubs no later than the day prior to a game.
- MSC will communicate these Game Day Protocols to all teams, parents and players within the club.



Spectators

- Spectators will be directed (**OUTSIDE THE FENCE OR ROPE LINE**) to the sideline opposite to their team.
- Mixing of spectators from both teams is not acceptable.
- Spectators should continue to wear their masks if social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Spectators should have no contact with the teams on the field after check-in commences



Team Benches / Substitutions

- Teams should set up as far apart as possible on the same sideline.
- Team benches should be positioned 10 feet away from the playing field, whenever possible.
- Substitutions will be carried out on the 40 and 60 yard marks, whichever is closest to their bench.



Masks, Social Distancing and Hygiene

- Anyone planning to attend a game as a Player, Coach, Trainer or Spectator should wear a mask from the parking lot to the field and from the field to the parking lot.
- Spectators should continue to wear their masks if social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Coaches and Trainers should continue to wear their masks.
- Players are not required to wear masks on the field during the game but may do so. When on the sidelines, players should wear masks and spread out the gear and themselves from center line to goal line.
- No handshaking or physical contact between players, coaches, trainers, referees and trainers.
- No sharing of water bottles.
- No spitting on the field.



Check-in / Pre-game (as per league rules)

- Coach will certify all players and coaches have passes and appear on the roster / game card.
- Coach will provide game card and referee fees at time of certification.
- Referee will not examine player / coach passes individually but will confirm they are present.
- Referee will perform a safety check of players' equipment while maintaining social distance.
- No coin toss. Away teams will have possession first.



During the Game

- Deliberate physical contact of any kind outside of game play is prohibited (ex: handshakes, high fives, etc.)
- In the event of misconduct, the referee should show the card while maintaining social distance.
- Use common sense when dealing with players and coaches / trainers to limit contact on and off the field.



After the Game

- No post-game handshakes or physical contact between players, coaches, trainers and referees.
- Spectators should remain on their side of the field and allow the players to go to them.
- All should vacate the field immediately after the game, wearing masks and avoiding physical contact.



COVID Reporting

- Each club will have a single representative for the reporting and dissemination of any COVID-19 related issues.
 - MSC COVID Rep: Ankur Gandhi
 - Email: MSCInfo@metuchentravelsoccer.com
- COVID Rep will be responsible for reporting COVID-19 related issues to MNJYSA
- The individuals' right to privacy will be respected and no names will be reported to MNJYSA. The person(s) in question will only be noted as a player, coach, trainer, referee or spectator as this may dictate what further actions are required.



2020 PROTOCOLS -TRAINING SESSIONS



Scope

- Rec and Travel Soccer programs (MNJYSA, SYL)
- Limited to suspected and/or confirmed cases of COVID affecting the following individuals
 - Player
 - Coach
 - Trainer
 - Household family member
- **Close Contact:** For contact tracing purposes, a "close contact" is anyone who was within six feet of you for more than 10 minutes starting two days before you first had symptoms.



Available Resources

- C19 Sub-Committee
 - MSCinfo@metuchentravelsoccer.com
 - Ankur Gandhi
 - Vijay Maktal
 - Mark Santus
 - Juan Hidalgo
- Additional resources:
 - Middlesex County Dept of Health (<http://www.middlesexcountynj.gov/Government/Departments/PSH/Pages/2019-CoV.aspx>)
 - NJ COVID Guidelines (<https://covid19.nj.gov/>)
 - CDC COVID Guidelines (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>)
 - NJ Youth Soccer (<https://www.njyouthsoccer.com/Default.aspx?tabid=889491>)
 - Suburban Youth Soccer League (<https://www.syslnj.com/page/show/5887010-sysl-covid19-plan-and-guidelines>)
 - Mid NJ Youth Soccer League (https://www.mnjysa.org/news_article/show/1121807)



Roles & Responsibilities - Club

- Distribute and post return to play protocol to all members
- Be understanding to parents/players that may delay returning to play
- Provide adequate field space for physical distancing (minimum of 6 feet)
- Set up training session layout and schedules to minimize contact between groups.
- Ensure all coaches have access to additional masks, gloves and sanitizing products
- Have an effective communication plan



Roles & Responsibilities – Coach / Trainer

- Read and sign waiver
- Follow all return to play protocols
- If player is not feeling well, they must be sent home.
 - Separate player from group
 - Call parent/guardian
- Provide adequate physical distancing of players
 - When play is stopped, ensure all participants are safe distance apart.
- Ensure all players are not sharing water/equipment (ball permitted)
- Track attendance for all sessions, including games, scrimmages, training/practice.
- Wear a face mask when coaching
- Only Coach handles equipment
 - Players do not assist in setting up/picking up cones, pinnies, pop up goals
- Be understanding to families that may delay return date to play



Roles & Responsibilities – Parents

- Read and sign waiver
- Check your child's temperature before any team related event
- Notify the Club immediately if your child has symptoms or is positive for COVID-19
 - Contact information to be provided
 - Notification to Club administrators/board, not just coach
- Ensure your child has sanitizing products and plenty of water
- Stay in car or adhere to social distance requirements
 - Parents are NOT allowed on the practice field (inside the fence)
 - Parents must stay on the spectator side during games
- Ensure washing (e.g. hands) takes place before and after every training
- Ensure clothes and equipment are sanitized before and after every training



Roles & Responsibilities – Player

- Bring and use hand sanitizer
- Be open and transparent with coach
- Place bags and equipment at least 6 feet apart for other players
- Do not touch or share anyone else's equipment, water, food, or bags
- No group celebrations, high-5s, hugs, handshakes, fist-bumps, etc.
- Respect and practice physical distancing
- Wear mask before and immediately after events
- Wash hands thoroughly and immediately after events
- Wash and sanitize all equipment before and after events



NJYS guidelines and State/Local guidelines

It will be a priority to document the positive actions taken (e.g. at the state, league and club level) to demonstrate that reasonable and prudent steps were undertaken and completed to keep players, staff, and spectators as safe from infection as possible

At a minimum, the NJYS insurer has advised us that the state association and its member organizations need to adhere to state/local guidelines on resumption of sporting activities.

Following these guidelines & directives will position us to operate in a reasonable and prudent manner from a risk management standpoint.

NJYS can decide to be more restrictive than the state of New Jersey with respect to return to play but may not be less restrictive.

All participant should adhere to state regulations on travel to/from other states. Please check <https://covid19.nj.gov/faqs/nj-information/travel-information/which-states-are-on-the-travel-advisory-list-are-there-travel-restrictions-to-or-from-new-jersey>



Required communications

There is no obligation to report to the NJ Department of Health or Local Health Officials.
If a person tests positive for COVID-19 in NJ, contact tracing is conducted by the NJ Department of Health.

See

<https://covid19.nj.gov/faqs/nj-information/symptoms-tests-and-treatment/what-is-contact-tracing-how-does-it-stop-the-spread-of-covid-19>

Neither NJYS nor any League, Club, Team, etc., has any obligation to report a positive case or suspected illness and, in fact, should not be, as it presents other issue (privacy, speculation, etc.).

The concern should be reported to people who may have been exposed to the person having the virus (or exhibiting symptoms of the virus), but that notification should be done without identifying the person who was diagnosed with the virus or displayed symptoms consistent with the virus.



Advice on protective masks (coverings)?

From the NJ Department of Health,

“Coaching staff and parents/ guardians should wear cloth face coverings. Athletes are also encouraged to wear cloth or disposable face coverings when not engaging in vigorous activity, such as when sitting on the bench, when interacting with an athletic trainer, etc.

Face coverings should not be worn by staff or athletes when engaging in high intensity aerobic or anaerobic workouts or while in the water, or where doing so would inhibit the individual’s health.”

MSC will require all coaches/trainers/managers to wear a mask during training sessions/games.

MSC will require all players to wear a mask until they arrive ON the field and upon leaving the field.



Best Practices

- Contact tracing will include the 48 hours prior to sample collection resulting in a COVID positive test and/or the onset of COVID symptoms
(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>)
- Attendance tracking at all club training sessions and games is required.
 - Coaches are responsible for keeping attendance for their teams
 - Attendance records should be kept available for sharing to Health Dept if needed.
- Teams should not combine training sessions so as to minimize contact.
 - We need to keep all groups intact and not combine them (if possible) in order to slow the asymptomatic spread of COVID and also expedite contact tracing if needed.
- Accurate attendance list of players and trainers, and contact info within each group AND EACH SESSION to expedite contact tracing if the need arises.
 - Attendance tracking at all club training sessions and games is required.
 - Coaches are responsible for keeping attendance for their teams.
 - Attendance records should be kept available for sharing to Health Dept if needed.



FAQs

What happens if and when a player and/or trainer/coach/manager tests positive for COVID?

- a. Parent/Guardian or coach/trainer/manager, must alert the Board's sub-committee on C19.
- b. C19 sub-committee will advise board and training group.
- c. The team and/or group in question will not be scheduled for any further soccer activities for AT LEAST 14 days.
- d. All participants must self-quarantine for 14 days.
- e. Coaches/trainers/managers can not attend any other club functions or training sessions with any club team.
- f. The board will communicate to all team/group participants that one of the members has tested positive, that all activities for the group are suspended for at least 14 days and that all participants should contact their physician and follow CDC guidelines.
 - i. covid19.nj.gov and/or 211 telephone hotline as to what do next (i.e. quarantine for 14 days, monitor for symptoms, get tested, etc...)
- g. **Participants (coaches, trainers, managers, players) must receive clearance to return from the c19 subcommittee.**



FAQs

IF participant did not test positive but was in close contact with someone (close family member) who did test positive?

- a. Parent/Guardian or coach/trainer/manager, must alert the Board's sub-committee on C19.
- b. C19 sub-committee will advise board and training group.
- c. The board will communicate to all team/group participants that one of the members has been exposed but has not tested positive, and that all participants should contact their physician and follow CDC guidelines.
 - i. [covid19.nj.gov](https://www.covid19.nj.gov) and/or 211 telephone hotline as to what do next (i.e. quarantine for 14 days, monitor for symptoms, get tested, etc...)
- d. **Participants (coaches, trainers, managers, players) must receive clearance to return from the c19 subcommittee.**



FAQs

What if I have been in close contact (as defined by the CDC) with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19??

- a. Contacts are encouraged to stay home and [maintain social distance](#) from others (at least 6 feet) until 14 days after their last exposure, in case they also become ill.
- b. They should monitor themselves by checking their temperature twice daily and watching for cough or shortness of breath.
- c. Per CDC guidelines, testing is recommended for all close contacts of confirmed or probable COVID-19 patients.
 - i. Asymptomatic contacts testing negative should self-quarantine for 14 days from their last exposure (i.e., close encounter with confirmed or probable COVID-19 case)
 - ii. If testing is not available, symptomatic close contacts should self-isolate and be managed as a probable COVID-19 case.
 - iii. If testing is not available, asymptomatic close contacts should self-quarantine and be monitored for 14 days after their last exposure, with linkage to clinical care for those who develop symptoms
 1. For more info on this topic, visit:
 2. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/special-considerations.html>
- d. **Participants (coaches, trainers, managers, players) must receive clearance to return from the c19 subcommittee.**



FAQs

What if I have been around someone who was identified as a close contact (but who has NOT tested positive for COVID-19)?

- a. If you have been around someone who was identified as a close contact to a person with COVID-19, you should closely monitor yourself for any symptoms of COVID-19.
- b. You DO NOT need to self-quarantine.
 - i. [However, you can get tested if you feel it is necessary.]
- c. For more info on this topic, visit:
 - i. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>
 - ii. <https://covid19.nj.gov/search.html?query=should+contacts+of+contacts+be+tested>
- d. **Participants (coaches, trainers, managers, players) must receive clearance to return from the c19 subcommittee.**



FAQs

Can anyone use the field while games or training are taking place?

- a. NO parents or spectators are allowed inside the fence at either Charles, Vidas or Myrtle Fields while games or training sessions are taking place.
- b. At Hampton Field, parents and spectators must remain behind the rope line during games or training sessions.
- c. As per the Town and the Rec Commission, The Club has exclusive use of the fields while training sessions and games are taking place. Any use by anyone else is not allowed and will be asked to leave.



Return to Play

Time-based strategy. Exclude from club activities until:

- 10 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test assuming they have not subsequently developed symptoms since their positive test. If they develop symptoms, then the *symptom-based* or *test-based strategy* should be used. Note, because symptoms cannot be used to gauge where these individuals are in the course of their illness, it is possible that the duration of viral shedding could be longer or shorter than 10 days after their first positive test.

Test-based strategy. Exclude from club activities until:

- Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized COVID-19 molecular assay for detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA from at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected ≥ 24 hours apart (total of two negative specimens). Note, because of the absence of symptoms, it is not possible to gauge where these individual are in the course of their illness. There have been reports of prolonged detection of RNA without direct correlation to viral culture.

Participants (coaches, trainers, managers, players) must receive clearance to return from the c19 subcommittee.



FAQs

Are member clubs permitted to administer temperature checks for participants?

NJYS recommends that parents monitor and check temperatures prior to sending children to any team event. Clubs may establish protocol beyond that.

MSC will NOT be conducting temperature checks on its members.

If a player has a temp/fever but hasn't been confirmed for COVID is there a protocol for return to play number of days before return and/or doctors note necessary?

Clubs should consider requiring clearance from their physician post fever.

MSC will require anyone testing positive or exposed to anyone testing positive, to self-quarantine for 14 days and require C19 committee clearance to return to club activities



FAQs

For families that have doctors and nurses that work in the family:

Within the last 14 days, have you been exposed to, or come into contact with, anyone you know: (a) who has COVID-19, (b) who is/was being tested for COVID-19, (c) who had symptoms consistent with COVID-19, or (d) who was exposed to someone with COVID19?

It is reasonable for clubs not to consider protected health care workers as exposed



FAQs

Are clubs responsible for providing PPE's and disinfectant equipment?

Each club may choose to have requirements above the minimum guidelines set forth by NJYS.

MSC will make gloves, masks and hand sanitizer available to coaches trainers if necessary.

What should we do with a player who does not attend practice with PPE, disinfectant?

Players should not be allowed to participate, and the parent should be contacted immediately.

MSC will provide back up mask and hand sanitizer. The parent will be contacted and made aware if repeat instances occur. It will result in a player not participating in a session.



FAQs

Are there disinfectant and cleaning requirements or minimums?

NJYS recommends referring to the CDC guidelines on cleaning and disinfecting public spaces.

Are there contact tracing requirements or recommendations for clubs?

NJYS recommends maintaining an attendance list for each training session.

MSC will require all coaches to maintain accurate attendance rosters. Use of apps (Teamsnap, SI Play, etc) is acceptable as long as all participants are accurately logging attendance.



FAQs

What is the recommended procedure for attending to an injured player?

1. Remain calm.
2. Stop the activity (training or game).
3. Send players to their designated bag area and call their parents for pick up.
4. Check the scene to make sure it is safe for you and the injured player. Coaches are advised to maintain 6' physical distancing guidelines while questioning the player about their injury. If that is not possible, the coach and anyone attending to the injured player should follow universal precautions and wear personal protective equipment (mask and gloves) before attending to the injured player.
5. Check for bleeding-treat for shock; if you suspect a head or neck injury, do not move the individual call 9-1-1 and the players parents.
6. Follow your emergency action plan



Our Mission

Through soccer to provide our community a fun and rewarding environment where all our children, regardless of their background or ability, can achieve their full potential.





About Us

We will deliver the best soccer experience possible for the children of our community. We strive to provide the right opportunities for children of all different levels - soccer skill, athleticism, socioeconomic, age - to succeed. From our Recreation, InterCounty, and Travel programs to our MiniMeggers, PreK, and Buddy Ball (children with disabilities) programs. We also contribute to the needs of our broader community through student scholarships, equipment donation, and international sister clubs (Ugandan Bulldogs).

The Club is committed to educating and training players, coaches and parents in all relevant aspects of the game, while creating the right environment for them to learn, play, and respect the game; and Instilling the importance of good sportsmanship, the value of teamwork, skills of the game and fair play.

Most importantly we strive to foster the love of soccer for our children.

