



Ohio High School Athletic Association

Jerry Snodgrass, Executive Director
Friday, May 15, 2020
Administrator Update

To: All OHSAA Member Schools' Superintendents, Principals and Athletic Administrators
From: Jerry Snodgrass, Executive Director

Good early evening to each of you as we continue to dissect yesterday's announcements by Governor DeWine. While his re-opening of sports appears to be directed to all non-school sports (club/travel/AAU/etc.), the measures do have implications on school districts and regulations for school coaches and student-athletes. This is especially true for the number of non-school sports that utilize school facilities. While we awaited guidance to be posted last evening, it was posted mid-day today and is incomplete as of this communication. Here is what we CAN provide at this time and, while I have tried to limit communication, I also want it to be timely and correct. I encourage you to communicate with your coaches and, while schools often release this to the media, we are not doing that in the attempt to make certain YOU receive this and can directly communicate with your coaching staff and ultimately with student-athletes at your respective schools. While I respect the disagreement coaches often have, I can assure you that decisions have been made in the best interests of health and safety AND utilizing the insight of the professionals we must trust.

Yesterday's Announcement

Information that is available at this time:

1. The OHSAA spring sports seasons and tournaments have been cancelled and will not be conducted during the summer. This decision was made looking at every possible option at the time. It simply is not possible to put spring sports in place **for everyone** at this time. We have continued to use every possible avenue to be involved with "reopening" Ohio's sports and, while our communication has been acknowledged, we still do not have a seat at the table for the reopening.
2. School facilities and buildings are not under the OHSAA's jurisdiction and therefore we have no ability to require them to be opened/closed. We emphasized this in recent communications. Lt. Gov. Husted indicated yesterday that Local Departments of Health will determine the safe reopening of school outdoor facilities. With the Director of the Ohio Dept. of Health's signing of the "Second Amended Order the Closure of All K-12 Schools in the State of Ohio" on April 29, it required the closure of all school buildings.
3. On April 30, the Director of the State Dept. of Health identified various facilities CLOSED in the "Stay-Safe-Ohio-Order" signed on that date. This included but was not limited to STADIUMS (listed in 11 (g) page 5/6) in the order at: <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/publicorders/Directors-Stay-Safe-Ohio-Order.pdf>. Please see item #13 (specifically items 'a' and 'g'). A comment yesterday during the press conference seems to have raised questions about potential school facilities outside school buildings.
4. Yesterday (May 14, 2020) the Governor announced that "low/non-contact sports" would be permitted to 'open' on May 26, 2020, with guidance to be posted later that evening.
 - a. Since volumes of emails/texts/calls began coming in from schools, a communication was sent to all school administrators urging patience while we inquired about the various statements made during the news conference and that more guidance would be sent today (Friday).
 - b. Guidance was finally posted mid-day and was incomplete since it only referred to **Baseball & Softball**. These Guidelines include both **MANDATORY** guidelines and **Recommended** Best Practices and are available at: <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/Baseball-Softball.pdf>

Since the Ohio High School Athletic Association has NO jurisdiction over school buildings or facilities, it is recommended that you read the above orders/guidelines and apply them as your local department of health and governing school board/body would permit; making certain to follow all CDC and Dept. of Health safety guidelines. Any additional questions regarding school facilities should be directed to your local department of health as we do not have jurisdiction with regard to the above orders and/or changes made to those orders.

Governor DeWine's Thursday Announcement Affecting Non-School Sports

Yesterday's announcement from the Governor's office has created many questions for schools and all relevant parties (coaches, student-athletes and parents). While we continue to learn more and dissect the information available, we want to provide you with the most current information.

Additional guidelines may become available from the Governor's office before May 26 regarding gyms, pools and other sports. All provided guidelines will be available at:

<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/responsible-restart-ohio/Sector-Specific-Operating-Requirements/>

Adjustment to the OHSAA's No-Contact Period – Limited Sports

Since Governor DeWine announced yesterday in his "Responsible Restart Ohio" plan that certain sports will be permitted to begin on May 26, it becomes necessary to provide school coaches the opportunities. **Effective May 26**, the OHSAA's No-Contact Period will be lifted for the following sports:

- Baseball*
- Golf
- Softball*
- Swimming & Diving
- Tennis
- Track & Field

Mandatory & Recommended guidelines for baseball and softball are found at:

<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/Baseball-Softball.pdf>

- **Note: These are not OHSAA regulations, but those created by the Governor's office**

Remaining OHSAA Sponsored Sports

Since the Governor has not identified which sports will fall under the "Low/No-Contact Sports," a decision will be forthcoming on the No-Contact Period for those remaining sports as soon as information is provided to us. Under the current decision, all other sports have not been identified as being able to start. Please tell your other sport coaches to remain patient as we will make updates as soon as the Governor's office provides more information on what sports will be permitted, and **every intent is to align with the Governor's orders.**

Previous Approvals of Adjusted General Sport Regulations

Each of the following were discussed and approved by the OHSAA's Board of Directors:

7.5.1) Team Sports – Members of a school team's coaching staff in the team sports of baseball, basketball, field hockey, football, ice hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball and volleyball may coach students from their school teams from June 1 through August 31*, 2020, without restriction except that participation cannot be mandatory.

*Note: The extension of these dates through August 31 is valid only for the 2020 summer period. Beginning with the 2021 summer period, the period of unrestricted coaching for interscholastic team sports coaches with their student-athletes will return to the period from June 1-July 31.

- a.) In the sport of football, only non-contact football is permitted.
- b.) See General Sports Regulation 8.2.1 for regulations pertaining to out-of-season instruction, which is different than this regulation on coaching.
- c.) Individual sports already had this permission of unlimited contact (non-mandatory).