



# Ohio High School Athletic Association

Thursday, September 24, 2020  
Administrator Update

**TO:** Member Schools' Superintendents, Principals and Athletic Administrators  
**FR:** OHSAA Executive Director's Office

Below are general updates and reminders to share related to our fall sports seasons. Please disseminate this information to the appropriate personnel on your staff.

## Views from Week 4 of the Observer's Program

The OHSAA sent Observers to a combined 102 football, boys soccer, girls soccer and volleyball contests last week. Here is a compilation of some of the conclusions from the Observers that show areas in which improvements are needed:

- 1.) **Players:** Players **maintained six-foot social distancing** at all times other than those on the field / court (Home Team)  
66 passed (64.7 percent); 36 failed (35.3 percent)  
**Players:** Players **maintained six-foot social distancing** at all times other than those on the field / court (Away Team)  
52 passed (51 percent); 50 failed (49 percent)
- 2.) **Players:** Players **wore facial coverings** when not on field or court consistent with the ODH's orders (Home Team)  
77 passed (75.5 percent); 25 failed (24.5 percent)  
**Players:** Players **wore facial coverings** when not on field or court consistent with the ODH's orders (Away Team)  
69 passed (68.3 percent); 32 failed (31.7 percent)
- 3.) **Facility:** Players, coaches, officials or spectators **did not congregate** before, during, or after the contest  
80 passed (78.4 percent); 22 failed (21.6 percent)
- 4.) **Players:** **No physical contacting** other participants outside of game play (such as high-fives, handshakes, etc.) (Home Team)  
83 passed (81.4 percent); 19 failed (18.6 percent)  
**Players:** **No physical contacting** other participants outside of game play (such as high-fives, handshakes, etc.) (Away Team)  
84 passed (82.4 percent); 18 failed (17.6 percent)
- 5.) **Facility:** **Maintained one-way ingress and egress** for admission / entrance, exits, aisles, concessions, and restrooms  
85 passed (83.3 percent); 17 failed (16.7 percent)
- 6.) **Coaches and Team Personnel:** Sideline/Bench personnel were **socially distanced and wearing masks** at all times consistent with the ODH's orders (Home Team)  
89 passed (87.3 percent); 13 failed (12.8 percent)  
**Coaches and Team Personnel:** Sideline/Bench personnel were **socially distanced and wearing masks** at all times consistent with the ODH's orders (Away Team)  
85 passed (83.3 percent); 17 failed (16.7 percent)

## Tips for Helping Your School Follow the Ohio Health Director's Order

We continue to give a huge thank you to all school administrators for your tremendous efforts in trying to help ensure that all mandates which are part of the Ohio Health Director's Order are being followed when hosting a contest. As we move into the fifth full week of regular season competition for the sports of football, soccer, volleyball and field hockey, here are some suggestions that the OHSAA Office has heard that you might consider utilizing while hosting a contest in order to help ensure the mandates are being followed:

- **Enlist the assistance of the visiting school athletic administrator** (or representative) to help oversee mandates that impact that visiting school. This can be organized by the host school's Compliance Officer, whether that is the athletic administrator or another person. Don't forget that OHSAA Bylaw 3-3-1 requires the principal, or a person designated to represent the principal, is present for road football contests, and it is highly recommended that this also occur in the sport of soccer. The most successful sites we have observed through three weeks have shown collaboration between the home site's Compliance Officer and the visiting school's representative.
- **Assign and/or hire coaches from sports** that are out of season to assist during home contests. These coaches can be assigned to the sidelines to ensure players and coaches are wearing facial coverings and are socially distanced and to monitor the grandstands or bleachers to ensure spectators are also wearing facial coverings and are socially distanced.
- Continue to **utilize public address announcements** (see samples later in this Update) **and signage** within your facilities. Here is a link to the Ohio Department of Health site where signage and posters can be downloaded:  
<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/responsible-restart-ohio/Posters-and-Signs/>

## Spectator Attendance/Variance

As most administrators are aware by now, the Ohio Health Director's Order has placed limitations on the number of spectators permitted at sports venues. The maximum number permitted for outdoor venues is the lesser of 1,500 or 15 percent of fixed, seated capacity, while the maximum number permitted for indoor venues is the lesser of 300 or 15 percent of fixed, seated capacity. The primary purpose of permitting spectators is to allow and encourage family and household members and loved ones of players, coaches, team staff members, officials and other event participants to observe and share the experience. Should a school have additional tickets remaining after the ticket allotment for family, household members and loved ones is depleted, tickets can be made available to additional patrons per a plan devised by each individual school. Don't forget that all other items within Section 7 of the Order must be followed (social distancing; facial coverings; spectator pathways; ingress and egress plans; signage; groups assigned in staggered rows and sections, etc.). In addition, a venue-specific plan (variance) may be submitted in writing that differs from the venue capacity requirements of the Order to the local health department for review. If approved by the local health department, final approval for variance must come from the Ohio Department of Health.

## Winter Sports Notes

The OHSAA has had conversations with the Governor's Office and Ohio Department of Health to try to determine whether there are any potential modifications expected for the upcoming winter sports seasons. While we do not expect any changes at this time, dialogue will continue in the near future and we will obviously keep the membership updated in the event of any adjustments. In the meantime, please remember that all of the Ohio Health Director's Orders must be followed. This would include:

- Teams are limited to playing one opponent in a single day. For more information, see the **Common Questions Regarding the Health Director's Order – Volleyball Specific** section in the September 1 OHSAA Administrator Update:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/BulletinBoard/20200901AdministratorUpdate.pdf>

There currently are no COVID-19-related additional restrictions on team interstate travel both to and from Ohio. However, as with nearly everything else with the pandemic, the Governor's Office could modify this in an instant. Currently, the Governor's Office issues weekly recommendations for individuals to quarantine for 14 days if they are returning to Ohio from "hot spot" states. Other states may have further restrictions regarding travel from Ohio into their states. The OHSAA has been advising schools to proceed with caution and recommend you compete within your geographical area.

## New Football Regions Announced

In the event you missed some recent information provided by the OHSAA regarding new football tournament regions, here is a link to that information: <https://ohsaa.org/news-media/articles/ohsaa-announces-new-football-regions>

## Tournament Entry Fees

As was shared in the September 3 Administrator Update, the OHSAA Board of Directors has approved \$25 tournament entry fees for selected OHSAA sports: **Fall Sports:** boys and girls cross country; boys and girls golf, and girls tennis; **Winter Sports:** boys and girls bowling; gymnastics, and boys and girls swimming & diving; **Spring Sports:** boys tennis and boys and girls track & field. As OHSAA "emerging" sports, boys and girls lacrosse will continue to have a \$100 fee per gender. Invoices for tournament entry fees will be sent to member schools at the end of each sport season that will include any other fines or fees that the school may incur.

## Fall Sports Tournament Entry/Withdraw Deadlines

As recently shared with member school athletic administrators, October 5 is the deadline to enter or withdraw from the OHSAA cross country, field hockey, soccer and volleyball tournaments. October 5 is also the last day the state rules meeting for these sports will be available. Please login to your school's *myOHSAA* account TODAY and make sure your tournament entry is set correctly and your school has credit for the required state rules meeting for each sport in which your school will participate in the OHSAA tournament. Schools that enter or withdraw from any of these tournaments after October 5 are subject to a penalty. In addition, **schools that have not completed the state rules meeting are ineligible for the OHSAA tournament.** If your school does not have state rules meeting credit for a sport, please contact: **cross country:** Ronald Sayers ([rsayers@ohsaa.org](mailto:rsayers@ohsaa.org)); **field hockey and volleyball:** Emily Gates ([egates@ohsaa.org](mailto:egates@ohsaa.org)), or **soccer:** Kathleen Coughlin ([kcoughlin@ohsaa.org](mailto:kcoughlin@ohsaa.org)).

## Ohio House Bill Provides Educator Licensure Flexibility

Following the passage of Ohio House Bill 197, the coronavirus relief bill, flexibility has been provided to educators regarding the renewal of credentials previously set to expire on July 1, 2020. Under this law, the period of educators to complete their renewal requirements and renew their licenses has been extended to December 1, 2020. This applies to all persons licensed by the State Board of Education, including coaches. The legally required professional development must be completed by December 1, 2020, or an additional three semester hours of professional development will be required for renewal. Educators may need to adjust their individual professional development plans as needed and are also encouraged to complete renewals as soon as they are ready to allow adequate time for processing and to avoid a gap in licensure. Please note that these extensions do not apply to any educator whose license, certificate or permit is suspended as of June 30, 2020. For more information, visit:

<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Reset-and-Restart/Educator-Licensure>

## **Cross Country Reminders**

There is a required state rules meeting for cross country. **This is new for 2020.** Make sure your school has credit! Also, girls that participate as members of the boys cross country team during the regular season may enter the OHSAA girls cross country tournament as individuals OR participate in the OHSAA boys cross country tournament. However, they cannot participate in both tournaments. In order for these female runners to participate in the girls cross country tournament as individuals, your school must have "Cross Country - Girls" checked under "Sports Offered" AND "Yes – 4 or less participants" selected under the Tournament Entry link prior to October 6. Additionally, under Staff Management . . . If the boys cross country coach is also the girls cross country coach, make sure this coach has roles of both 'Head Boys Cross Country Coach' and 'Head Girls Cross Coach' listed in Staff Management. Use the "Edit Roles" option on the coach's listing in staff management to add both sports. If the girls head cross country coach is different from the boys cross country coach, make sure both coaches are listed in staff management.

## **Updates from The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)**

- The National Athletic Directors Conference – cosponsored by the NFHS and the NIAAA – has been moved to a virtual conference for 2020. The goal is to continue with most of the normal conference functions – general sessions, workshops, networking sessions, exhibit hall vendors, meetings and Leadership Training courses. Visit <https://www.adconference.org/> to monitor the registration information, schedule and updates.
- The NFHS Educational Services online "Course of the Month" is Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention: <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/student-mental-health-and-suicide-prevention>. It is widely known that stress, anxiety and depression create challenges for both society and individuals, including interscholastic students. And severe conditions can lead to the worst outcomes, such as suicide. With a focus on wellness, including both physical and psychological, this course highlights causes, strategies and provides helpful resources.

## **Two Sports, Same Season . . . Food for Thought During the Pandemic**

The OHSAA recently received an inquiry from the NFHS asking what policies state associations have in place for students who participate in a school sport while also participating during the same season in a non-school sport and whether state associations have modified these regulations during the COVID-19 pandemic. As you know, OHSAA regulations prohibit a student's simultaneous participation in the same sport on a school team and on a non-school team. In individual sports, students are, however, permitted to participate in the same non-school sport's tryouts and practices simultaneously while on a school team. While a student participating on a school soccer team, for example, is permitted to participate in non-school basketball during the same season, or a student participating on a school swim team, for example, is permitted to practice with a non-school swim team simultaneously, do we really want students within the school "bubble" to participate with students from an "outside bubble" in an uncontrolled environment and potentially bring the COVID-19 coronavirus back into the school "bubble?" While perhaps difficult to manage, this situation is one school administrators may want to strongly consider regulating at the local level about during the pandemic.

Thank you for your attention to this information and for the service you are providing our student-athletes!