



# Ohio High School Athletic Association

Friday, February 19, 2021

## *Administrator Update*

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

The following updates and reminders are being sent electronically to member school superintendents, principals and athletic administrators. Please share this update with other interested administrators and coaches on your staff.

### **Spring Sports Rules Modifications and Recommendations and General Requirements and Recommendations**

The OHSAA staff has developed sport-specific rules modifications and recommendations and general requirements and recommendations for schools when conducting interscholastic competition in spring sports, and these documents are currently in the hands of the Ohio Department of Health for final approval. Links to the sport-specific spring sports rules modifications and recommendations and general requirements and recommendations will be available in this update soon. We thank you for your patience!

### **Spring Sports State Online Rules Meetings in myOHSAA**

2021 OHSAA state rules meetings for each spring sport (baseball, softball, boys lacrosse, girls lacrosse, track & field) have been available through the Rules Meeting icon in myOHSAA since Feb. 10, and boys tennis will be posted next Friday (Feb. 26). The head coach, an assistant coach or the athletic administrator is required to complete the meeting prior to the final meeting date for each sport which coincides with that sport's tournament entry/withdraw date (April 26 for softball, boys tennis and track & field; May 3 for baseball, boys lacrosse and girls lacrosse). Athletic administrators are encouraged to use the "View State Rules Meeting Attendance" link on the school's myOHSAA account to ensure their school has received credit for these meetings prior to the final meeting dates listed above as completion of the state rules meeting is **required for tournament participation**. Please contact [membershipservices@ohsaa.org](mailto:membershipservices@ohsaa.org) if you have any questions or need assistance.

As a reminder, a \$50 late fee will be charged to access each meeting beginning with these dates (with access ending on the dates listed in the previous paragraph): *March 20*-boys lacrosse and girls lacrosse; *March 27*-boys tennis, and *March 28*-baseball, softball and track & field.

### **Spring Sports Schedules**

With winter tournament season in full swing, spring sports will be starting practices soon. Here is the schedule for the beginning of practices and contests for the OHSAA's spring sports:

#### **Baseball and Softball**

First Day of Practice – Monday, Feb. 22  
Scrimmages with Other Schools – 4 after practice begins (or 3 scrimmages and 1 preview)  
First Contest – Saturday, March 27

#### **Boys Lacrosse and Girls Lacrosse**

First Day of Practice – Monday, Feb. 22  
Scrimmages with Other Schools – 3 after practice begins  
First Contest – Friday, March 19

#### **Boys Tennis**

First Day of Practice – Monday, March 8  
Scrimmages with Other Schools – 1 after practice begins but before first contest  
First Contest – Friday, March 26

#### **Track & Field**

First Day of Practice – Monday, Feb. 22  
Scrimmages with Other Schools – none permitted  
First Contest – Saturday, March 27

### **Winter Tournament Ticketing/Hosting Contests or Events**

All ticketing for OHSAA winter sports tournaments is being handled digitally by the OHSAA's digital ticketing partner, HomeTown Ticketing, and direct contact with the participating schools will come from OHSAA Assistant Director of Operations Jacki Windon. Schools are reminded to put your facility information into myOHSAA so allotments for basketball tournament games can be established since tickets will be split 50/50 split between the participating schools. To clarify the comp tickets policy for administrators at the swimming & diving and wrestling tournaments, these will not be issued due to capacity limitations and the volume of participants.

The Ohio Health Director's Sports Order limits spectators to the lesser of 15 percent permanent, fixed seats or 300 unless a variance was approved. The OHSAA is recommending that, at a minimum, host sites make tickets available to parents and family members with consideration also given to students. Again, additional information on ticketing is being shared directly with schools. Note that

traditional student sections are not permitted in regular season or tournament contests since spectators not from the same household must maintain six-foot social distancing.

Please see these two documents for additional details and ideas for administrators to consider when hosting contests:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/BulletinBoard/20210122WinterSports&TournamentsUpdate.pdf>

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/BulletinBoard/20201204administratorupdate.pdf>

**As your school participates in OHSAA tournaments where spectators are permitted in team sports – either at a higher seed’s facility or a neutral site – the OHSAA is requiring the principal, or a representative authorized by the principal (in addition to the coaches), to be in attendance to help monitor your crowd. Again, this requirement applies only to team sports as the winter individual sports will not have enough spectators to make this necessary.**

### **Tournament Information; Draw Links**

Dates, times and locations for OHSAA regional and state basketball tournaments remain fluid during the pandemic, and we ask for your patience as we work to gather this information. Our goal remains to create a memorable tournament experience for our student-athletes, but we need to do so in a manner which is both safe and financially responsible since attendance restrictions may result in significant financial losses for the OHSAA this season. Here is a link to the regional dates and sites for girls and boys basketball:

Girls - <https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Sports/Basketball-Girls/2021/2021GirlsRegionalandStateTournamentDraw.pdf>

Boys - <https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Sports/Basketball-Girls/2021/2021BoysRegionalandStateTournamentDraw.pdf>

Here are the dates and sites that have been finalized for state tournaments in the other OHSAA winter sports:

Feb. 24-27: Swimming & Diving – C.T. Branin Natatorium in Canton

Feb. 26-27: Division II Bowling – Wayne Webb’s Columbus Bowl

Mar. 5-6: Division I Bowling – Wayne Webb’s Columbus Bowl

Mar. 5-6: Gymnastics – Hilliard Bradley High School

Mar. 13-14: Ice Hockey – OhioHealth Ice Haus in Columbus (attached to Nationwide Arena)

Mar. 13-14: Individual Wrestling – Hilliard Darby High School (Division I), Marengo Highland High School (Division II) and Marion Harding High School (Division III)

For more information on OHSAA winter tournaments, including links to tournament draws, visit: <https://www.ohsaa.org/Sports>.

### **Health Director’s Sports Order Reminders**

**All mandates in the Ohio Department of Health Director’s Sports Order must continue to be followed for winter sports.** Here is a link to the Health Director’s Sports Order: <https://bit.ly/2RWa1jh>. Administrators are reminded of these mandates within the ODH Director’s Sports Order **(please share these with your coaches)**:

- Participants not in the contest **ARE REQUIRED** to wear facial coverings on the sidelines.
- Participants not in the contest and on the sidelines **ARE REQUIRED** to be socially distanced (as close to six feet apart as possible).
- Outside of game play, players are **NOT PERMITTED** to have physical contact with their teammates (such as high-fives and handshakes). Coaches and other team personnel are also not permitted to have physical contact with players.
- Players (and cheerleaders) whose level of participation is upcoming or has been completed **ARE REQUIRED** to be socially distanced and wear facial coverings wherever they sit before or after their contest.
- Any spectators in attendance **ARE REQUIRED** to wear facial coverings and to be socially distanced.
- Facilities/venues **ARE REQUIRED** to designate a Compliance Officer who is responsible for the compliance with the Sports Order. **Note that this becomes especially important for OHSAA tournament contests/events.**
- Disinfect and clean competition and high contact areas frequently.

### **Winter Sports Observer’s Program**

The OHSAA Observer’s Program is continuing this winter, including OHSAA tournaments, and observers are attending contests statewide each week. These designated individuals’ roles are to ensure mandates in the Ohio Health Director’s Sports Order are being followed. **Our observers are very complimentary of the hard work our schools are doing to make their environments safe, and the OHSAA continues to share this with the Governor’s office and Ohio Department of Health (ODH).** Here is a link to the checklist that the observers are using for winter sports:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Sports/2020/ObserverChecklist-WinterSports.pdf>

### **OHSAA Authority to Mandate COVID-19 Protocols/Contract Tracing Update**

The OHSAA continues to receive questions about the Association’s responsibility and authority to mandate and/or interpret COVID-19 protocols and restrictions. Since the health standards are expressed in the Ohio Health Director’s Sports Order, the OHSAA has no authority to mandate and/or interpret these protocols and restrictions, and our role is simply to share the guidelines. **OHSAA member schools shall work with their local health department when specific questions regarding protocols and restrictions arise,**

**and the local health department will make final decisions.** Should the local health department have questions, they will contact the Ohio Department of Health for clarification.

**Additionally, the OHSAA Office has received a number of questions regarding contact tracing and, again, that is something in which the local health department will make final decisions, NOT the OHSAA Office.** Here is information that the Ohio Department of Health has provided that we would like to share with the membership:

*When a local health department conducts contact tracing for a COVID-19 case, its contact tracer will contact every potentially exposed individual identified during the process. Because of high numbers of COVID-19 cases throughout Ohio, not every local health department can conduct contact tracing for every COVID-19 case. When a local health department is simply overwhelmed by the number of new cases within its jurisdiction, it must prioritize on which cases it will conduct contact tracing, and it may ask the affected entity (such as a school) to notify potentially exposed individuals. When schools are asked to conduct contact tracing, **the previous contest's contest officials should be notified regardless if they are considered to be a close contact.** That would allow the officials to take their own precautions, without the benefit of reviewing game video, to determine if they were in close contact with someone who tested positive.*

### **OHSAA Provides School Form for Students Returning to Play from COVID-19**

The Ohio Health Director's Sports Order says that a student-athlete who tests positive for COVID-19, whether symptomatic or asymptomatic, shall not return to sports activities until a documented medical exam is performed clearing the individual prior to the individual returning to participate in practice or games. The exam must specifically include an assessment of the cardiac/heart of high intensity exercise due to the potential of myocarditis in COVID-19 patients. To assist the membership, the OHSAA has developed a form that schools are welcome to utilize for students who have had the medical exam to verify that the student can or cannot return to practices or games. The OHSAA form is not a requirement, **but it is required that a student who has tested positive be evaluated by a physician and cleared in writing before being permitted to return to participation.** If a student's physician is reticent to issue this clearance, please advise parents to seek a second opinion from another physician. This physician is not required to be a cardiologist but could be any qualified physician who is willing to conduct this evaluation. The form is also for use by the student and schools only and is not to be returned to the OHSAA. Administrators can access the form here: <https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Sports/2020/RTPCoronavirus.pdf>.

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