



2020-21 Volleyball Requirements, Rule Modifications and General Recommendations

With the support from the NFHS Volleyball Rules Committee and the Ohio High School Athletic Association, the considerations outlined in this document are meant to decrease potential exposure to respiratory droplets by encouraging social distancing, limiting participation in administrative tasks to essential personnel and allowing for appropriate protective equipment.

Note: This is not an exhaustive list and there might be additional steps in each school, city, and state to help prevent the spread of virus. Ohio schools are required to follow state COVID-19 general guidance for “Youth, Collegiate, Amateur and Professional Sports

<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/Youth-Collegiate-Amateur-Club-Pro-Sports.pdf>

Even when taking all precautions, there will still be risk of transmitting illnesses. Everyone should stay vigilant about the health of members of their teams. Lastly, the situation with COVID-19 is rapidly changing. These considerations may quickly become outdated. Please keep up with the latest from the CDC and other health officials in your area.

Visit the COVID-19 General Guidance Document for further requirements and recommendations that apply to all sports, including volleyball. Please know that some of the requirements and recommendations in this sport-specific document duplicate state guidance.

*A **rule modification** is a modification to a playing rule from the governing body of the sport and is a **requirement** to adhere to and follow. A requirement must be adhered to and followed. A **recommendation** is a consideration to the sport and allows for optional guidelines. Recommendations are not required but are permitted.*

REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for Coaches:

- Coaches must wear face masks at all times, including arriving and departing the facility and during active play.
- Limit day-of roster to 15 dressed players.

Requirements for Facility Hosts

- Inform the local health district when events are scheduled and establish a plan to handle those persons who fail a symptom assessment or temperature check or exhibit signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
- Limit sideline personnel to participants, coaches, medical staff and game-day staff.
- If possible, provide designated space (locker room, classroom, etc.) for officials’ pregame and post-game activities. If the designated space cannot accommodate six-foot social distancing of all officials, then a separate space should be provided where officials can observe six-foot social distancing and be removed from spectator/team interaction.
- Clearly review prior to the contest mandates, best practices and school/host facility policies with visiting team administrators and/or coaches and officials as they relate to, but are not limited to, parking; entrances and exits; medical care; spectators; ticketing; locker rooms/showers; athletic

training rooms and restrooms; water; towels; equipment, and shelters in the event there is inclement weather.

2020 NFHS RULE MODIFICATIONS

Pre-Match Conference

- Limit attendees to one coach from each team, first referee and second referee. One team captain may attend as well. Cloth masks/face coverings must be worn.
- Move the location of the pre-match conference to center court with one coach and one referee positioned on each side of the net. All four individuals maintain a social distance of 3 to 6 feet.
- Suspend the use of the coin toss to determine serve/receive. The visiting team will have the choice to serve or receive for set 1 with first serve alternating for each subsequent non-deciding set. Officials will determine if a disadvantage is present and a coin-toss may take place for that reason *only*.
- Suspend roster submission at the pre-match conference. Rosters are submitted directly to the officials' table before the 10-minute mark.

Team Benches

- Suspend the protocol of teams switching benches and courts between sets. In the event there is a clear and distinct disadvantage, teams may switch sides, observing all social distancing protocols. Officials will determine if a disadvantage is present and communicated at the beginning of the match. Sanitizing chairs in between is a switch is recommended. If the teams switch benches during the match, the following procedure must be followed to avoid close contact between teams during the switch:
 - The team to the R1's left will pick up gear and water bottles and the entire team will go around the R1 stand to the new bench. The team to the R1's right will pick up gear and water bottles and the entire team will switch in front of the official's table.
- Limit bench personnel to observe social distancing of 3 to 6 feet.
- Players are permitted to stand along bench/sideline area to observe social distancing as long as players remain outside of playable area(s). Playable area must be maintained.

Deciding Set Procedures

- The home team will choose to serve/receive. A coin toss will be suspended.
- Suspend the protocol of teams switching benches/courts before a deciding set. In the event there is a clear and distinct disadvantage, teams may switch sides, observing all social distancing protocols. Officials will determine if a disadvantage is present. Sanitizing chairs in between is a switch is recommended. Please note the switching bench protocol listed above if it needs to apply.
- The only time a coin toss will take place for the deciding set is if the officials determined a disadvantage is present.
- Should this occur, move the location of the deciding set coin toss to center court with team captains and the second referee maintaining the appropriate social distance of 3 to 6 feet. The home team captain shall call the toss. The winner shall choose to serve/receive or choose the playing area/side.

Substitution Procedures

- Maintain social distancing of 3 to 6 feet between the second referee and the player and substitute by encouraging substitutions to occur within the substitution zone closer to the attack line.

Officials Table

- Limit to essential personnel which includes home team scorer, libero tracker and timer with a recommend distance of 3 to 6 feet between individuals. Visiting team personnel (scorer,

statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential personnel and will need to find an alternative location if a scorer's table cannot properly fit this individual at the table with the recommended distances.

Pre and Post Match Ceremony

- Social distancing of at least 6 feet should be maintained during the pre-match ceremony. Handshakes and/or fist bumps shall be eliminated before and after the match.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for Coaches:

- Communicate your guidelines in a clear manner to students and parents.
- Consider conducting workouts in "pods" of same students always training and rotating together in practice to ensure more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- Keep accurate records of those athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.
- Sanitize equipment as often as time permits, including warm-up balls, with an EPA approved sanitizer for emerging pathogens.
- If supplying flag for line judge, allow for proper sanitization of flag.
- Provide visiting team separate ball cart for warm-up balls, if possible.
- Consider limiting contests against only teams in your local area or, if out-of-state, against teams located in counties that are contiguous to Ohio.
- Should not share clipboards, whiteboards, dry erase boards or any other equipment used for coaching purposes.

Recommendations for Students:

- Consider making each student responsible for their own supplies.
- Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing), and individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout.
- Hand sanitizer should be plentiful, in plain sight and easily accessible at all contests and practices.
- Athletes should tell coaches immediately when they are not feeling well.
- Cloth face coverings/masks are permitted, if an individual prefers to wear one. Cloth face coverings/masks are not required (*NFHS Rule 4-1-4*) while engaged in active play. State and local requirements for face coverings are to be followed when not actively engaged in play.
- Gloves are permissible (*NFHS Rule 4-1-1*).
- Bring your own water bottle.

Recommendations for Officials:

- Bring personal hand sanitizer. Wash hands frequently.
- Do not share equipment.
- Follow social distancing guidelines. Consider six feet minimum distance when carding or talking to others (players, coaches, other officials).
- Electronic whistles are permitted, if an official prefers to use one. Electronic whistles are not required.
- Do not shake hands including in the pre-game and post-game ceremony.
- Use of radios to communicate with partner is permissible.
- Line judges may supply their own flag.
- Cloth face coverings/masks/shields are permitted, if an individual prefers to wear one. Cloth face coverings/masks are not required while engaged in active play. State and local requirements for face coverings are to be followed when not actively engaged in play.
- Gloves are permissible.

Recommendations for Parents

(A family's role in maintaining safety guidelines for themselves and others):

- Make sure your child and immediate household members are free from illness before participating in practice and competition (if there is doubt stay home),
- Provide personal items for your child and clearly label them.
- Disinfect your student's personal equipment after each game or practice.
- Educate yourself on the risks and benefits of athletic participation in the time of COVID and ensure you and your athlete are aware of the guidance surrounding athletic events.

Recommendations for Facility Hosts

- If applicable, stagger the entry of all participants, coaches, officials, student game-day auxiliary groups and spectators to adhere to six-foot social distancing.
- Consider multiple points of entry to help ensure there is six-foot social distancing.
- Use contact-less payments where possible.
- Bench water may be provided by the facility host, but the visiting team/participants should supply their own coolers unless agreed upon by the facility host. If used, water coolers shall be sanitized prior to use and frequently during the contest and disposable one-time-use cups shall be utilized.
- Limit official's table to essential personnel only and demonstrate social distancing as much as possible.
- Appoint an individual(s) who is responsible for assisting the host facility manager(s) in logging all incidents and action plans when mandates have not been followed and/or incidents occur; logging recommendations for improving the host facilities' game-day strategies, and creating reports on said items that were logged.

COVID-19 Resources:

- Ohio Department of Health Coronavirus Website (coronavirus.ohio.gov)
- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (cdc.gov/coronavirus)