

## Phase III: youth & adult sports guidelines

Beginning in Phase III, youth and adult sports organizations may begin implementing sport activities in accordance with the guidelines established below. In accordance with Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) [emergency regulations](#), organizations should refer to and adhere to the [Reopening RI General Business/Organization Guidelines](#). The State prepared a [fillable checklist](#) to assist businesses and organizations in meeting the requirements outlined in these RIDOH regulations. Youth and adult sports organizations must comply with RIDOH regulations and active [executive orders](#). Youth sports organizations should refer to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [guidance on youth sports](#) and [guidance on visiting parks and recreational facilities](#). Youth sports organizations offering summer camps are subject to the State's [summer camp regulations](#) and [guidance](#).

The guidelines below summarize additional steps Rhode Island is asking youth and adult sports organizations to take during Phase III. **This guidance is expected to be updated before the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year to address school sports.** If you have any questions about this guidance, please contact Cindy Elder, RI Department of Environmental Management, Division of Parks & Recreation, at [cynthia.elder@dem.ri.gov](mailto:cynthia.elder@dem.ri.gov).

### Phase III Operations:

- **Stable groups:** Participants are encouraged to organize teams as “stable groups.” The term “stable groups” means the same individuals, including players, coaches, staff and volunteers, remain in the same group over the course of the entire program. The stable groups should not exceed the size limit for social gatherings as defined in current [executive orders](#). Participants are encouraged not to change from one group to another. Parents and caregivers should choose one stable group for their child per session.
  - It should be noted that coming into close proximity with someone outside your household increases your risk and should be limited as much as possible.
- **Event/Assembly size:** The gathering size for youth or adult sports practices or games (including players, coaches, volunteers and spectators) should be in accordance with the venues of assembly size limit in current executive orders.
- **Physical distancing:** Physical distancing of six feet between persons is encouraged, but not required while engaged in active play. Activities where at least six feet of physical distance can be maintained are encouraged, and 14 feet of physical distance is preferred. When not engaged in active play, members of a stable group should maintain physical distance of six feet between each person.
- **Space between stable groups:** When stable groups are not engaged in active play with one another, the stable groups should maintain a minimum physical distance of 14 feet between stable groups.

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- **Quarantine:** If a player on a team or in a stable group tests positive for COVID-19, the entire team or group (if they have been in close contact with the athlete) needs to quarantine for 14 days. All out-of-state participants in youth and adult sports should be advised of and adhere to current [executive orders](#) regarding the need to quarantine prior to participation.
- **Screening:** All players, staff, coaches, volunteers and spectators should be screened for symptoms related to COVID-19 prior to the beginning of each activity. A screening tool is available, in English and Spanish, to aid with proper screening at <https://health.ri.gov/covid/for/business/>. Any person exhibiting signs of illness and any person who has been exposed to a person with COVID-19 must be excluded from the activity in accordance with CDC and RIDOH guidelines at <https://health.ri.gov/diseases/ncov2019/>.
- **Hand cleaning:** Promote frequent handwashing or hand sanitizing with all participants engaged in sports activities. If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol may be used. Handwashing and/or sanitizing should occur before, during, and after the sport activities.
- **Facilities:** Close shared spaces, such as locker rooms, if possible. Otherwise, stagger use and clean and disinfect between uses. For any facilities in use, a cleaning schedule must be implemented to ensure the frequent cleaning of high-touch areas or equipment, daily cleaning, and cleaning and disinfection between sessions. This may include cleaning frequently touched surfaces on the field, court, or play surface at least daily, or between uses by different stable groups. Find guidance on cleaning and disinfection in the CDC [guidance on youth sports](#).
- **Shared objects:** Discourage sharing of items that are difficult to clean, sanitize, or disinfect between use (e.g., bats, racquets). Participants should bring and use their own equipment where possible, or have equipment designated and labeled for individual use by the organization. Shared equipment should be limited and sanitized between users. Equipment should be staged to allow physical distance between users and to limit multiple touches. Cups, bottles, or other food/beverage items should not be shared.
- **Spectators:** Spectators are allowed in accordance with current [executive orders](#) and RIDOH regulations regarding venues of assembly gathering sizes. Spectators should ensure at least six feet of physical distance between household groups and maintain at least 14 feet of space from the outer limit of play. It is recommended that no more than two spectators attend from any household. Spectators must wear face coverings in accordance with current [executive orders](#) on face coverings.
- **Games for no-contact and low-contact sports:** Games between stable groups for no-contact or low-contact sports may resume. These include sports where physical contact between players rarely occurs, use of shared equipment can be minimized, and face coverings can be worn when physical distancing of six feet between persons cannot be continuously maintained. Games with teams from other states are permitted for no-contact and low-contact sports provided that the team members have complied with all applicable travel restrictions and executive orders. No more than two teams should be at any venue during a game.



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- **Practice vs. team play for close-contact sports:** Participants in close-contact sports (e.g., wrestling, basketball, football) should focus on practice and drills. Close-contact sports include those sports or activities where it is difficult to routinely maintain six feet of physical distance between persons, difficult to wear face coverings, and where use of shared equipment consistently occurs. Participants in close-contact sports should not participate in games with in-state or out-of-state teams.
- **Face coverings:** Coaches, staff, volunteers, players and spectators should wear a face covering in accordance with RIDOH regulations and current [executive orders](#) when unable to easily, continuously, and measurably keep six feet of physical distance from others. Participants are encouraged to wear face coverings when not engaged in active play. While engaged in the active play of sports or strenuous activities, participants do not need to wear face coverings. However, if no face covering is worn, then 14 feet of distance between players is recommended.
- **Plan and communication:** Youth and adult sports organizations are encouraged to provide participants with their COVID-19 plan.
  - Organizations are encouraged to appoint a volunteer to support coaches in monitoring compliance with COVID-19 plans during practices and drills.
- **Resources:** Additional resources can be found in [CDC's youth sports guidance](#) and at the Aspen Institute's ["Return to Play COVID-19 Risk Assessment Tool."](#)