



# Ohio High School Athletic Association

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**Tuesday, August 18, 2020**  
**Administrator Update**

**TO:** OHSAA Member Schools' Superintendents, Principals and Athletic Administrators  
**FR:** Bob Goldring, Interim Executive Director

As Governor DeWine announced today, the OHSAA, in conjunction with the Governor's Office and Ohio Department of Health, continues to move forward with our plans to begin our fall sports seasons as scheduled. That means the following sports can begin school vs. school **regular season contests** as follows:

**Friday, Aug. 21:** Contact sports of soccer and field hockey and low/non-contact sport of volleyball

**Monday, Aug. 24:** Contact sport of football (most schools will begin on Friday, Aug. 28)

**Monday, Aug. 24:** Low/non-contact sport of cross country

**Note:** The low/non-contact sports of golf and girls tennis have already started their seasons

With the revised Ohio Department of Health Director's Order nearly finalized, and as Governor DeWine said today, this means that the COVID-19 testing requirements for students in contact sports is no longer required.

Since the Health Director's Order becomes effective on Aug. 21, the OHSAA **IS PERMITTING** scrimmages in each of the contact sports as follows:

**Football: One scrimmage only** Aug. 21 or Aug. 22 (please be respectful of previously scheduled Aug. 21 Futbol Friday Night soccer contests)

**Soccer:** Normal policy of maximum of four scrimmages and one preview beginning Aug. 21

**Field Hockey:** Normal policy of maximum of five scrimmages beginning Aug. 21

## **COVID-19 General Guidance (Including Mandates and Recommended Best Practices)**

As Governor DeWine also noted, the Governor's Office and Department of Health are close to finalizing a new Health Director's Order. With that comes two separate **mandates and recommended best practices documents** for schools to follow for competitions, and the OHSAA could issue consequences for the violation of these requirements as prescribed in Bylaw 11, Penalties. The mandates and recommended best practices are related to many of the same mandates and protocols already in place for many other sectors as they relate to symptom assessments; facial coverings; social distancing; cleaning and sanitizing, and confirmed COVID-19 cases/exposure to the virus. We have not received the final versions of those two **mandates and recommended best practices documents** but will send them to you (likely on Wednesday).

The Governor understands that interscholastic sports are different than other forms of competition because we are education-based and are able to implement best safety practices and have structure in place for dealing with COVID-19 restrictions. So, if we want our students to have the privilege of competing in interscholastic athletics, it's going to be up to all of us to make sure all mandates and protocols are being followed. We all need to be diligent and be disciplined.

## **Capacity Limitations/Students Dressing for Contests Limitations/Bands Restrictions**

Spectator capacity for our events will be limited, with the specific details to be listed in the guidance pieces. As Governor DeWine mentioned today, an emphasis will be on allowing families and loved ones to see students participate.

In addition, OHSAA requirements, based on guidance from the Governor's Office, is for schools to limit the number of players dressing for contests. The limits are 60 in football; 22 in soccer and field hockey, and 15 in volleyball. In addition, the OHSAA, based on guidance from the Governor's Office, is limiting marching and/or pep bands to performing only at home contests.

### **Additional Modifications and Recommendations**

The OHSAA staff has also developed sport-specific requirements, recommendations and modifications for schools when conducting interscholastic competition. Links to these sport-specific documents were originally included in the July 22 memo when we released the *Return to Play Recommendations* document. Links to **updated sport-specific requirements, recommendations and modifications** are here:

**Cross Country:** <https://bit.ly/CovidXCRecs>

**Field Hockey:** <https://bit.ly/FHRecs>

**Football:** <https://bit.ly/FBRecs>

**Golf:** <https://bit.ly/CovidGORecs>

**Soccer:** <https://bit.ly/SORecs>

**Girls Tennis:** <https://bit.ly/TERecs>

**Volleyball:** <https://bit.ly/CovidVBRecs>

### **Clarity on “Spring Seasons”**

As Governor DeWine noted today, the OHSAA is prepared to remove the impediments in our bylaws and regulations that would otherwise preclude schools from playing fall sports in the spring. In other words, schools that have opted out of fall sports participation due to the pandemic – meaning the school has not participated in fall sports during the currently defined fall season – will have an opportunity to play their sports in the spring. However, a task force will be needed to work with our staff to create certain parameters to see what those spring sports opportunities look like. As the pandemic has proved, this is an evolving situation, so more details will be shared with the membership when appropriate.

### **Questions and Answers on Why Are We Moving Forward**

Originally developed as part of the July 31 Administrator Update when the OHSAA affirmed its position of starting our practices as planned, the OHSAA has updated a series of questions and answers related to why we are moving forward with our seasons. All scenarios have been discussed and, in making its decision, the OHSAA has had great collaboration with the Governor’s Office; Ohio Department of Health; the National Federation of State High School Associations; our colleagues at other state high school athletics/activities associations; members of the OHSAA’s Joint Advisory Committee on Sports Medicine, and members of the Governor’s Sports League Advisory Group. We encourage you to review the series of questions and answers at this link:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Sports/2020/OHSAAReturnToPlayQA.pdf?sv=2017-04-17&sr=b&si=DNNFileManagerPolicy&sig=ISyeXBdfjjEf9z5EmEft7k%2BGiygRovna10RaORAX4fw%3D>

Thank you for what you are doing to make **#IWantASeason** become a reality for your student-athletes, coaches and communities, and thanks also for your attention to this information!