

COVID-19 Guidance for Youth Athletic and Club Programs

The Fairfax County Health Department (FCHD) developed this guidance document for managing COVID-19 cases and outbreaks in youth athletic and club programs, including both in-school and after-school recreational programs. The guidance is reflective of current public health recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Virginia Department of Health (VDH), and FCHD. Programs are encouraged to adopt these public health recommendations, but policies and practices are up to the discretion of the program administrators in most scenarios. Health department authority may be applied in significant outbreak situations.

What metrics are used to determine COVID levels in our community?

The CDC developed metrics for [COVID-19 community levels](#) that are based on recent hospitalizations, hospital capacity, and the number of cases in the community. These levels, organized as Low, Medium, and High, delineate the prevention steps that individuals and organizations should take based on those community levels. This guidance applies to the general population including schools, recreational athletic teams, and recreational club programs. The chart below shows current CDC guidance on what precautions individuals should take when communities are in different levels.

Low	Medium	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccinesGet tested if you have symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">If you are at high risk for severe illness, talk to your healthcare provider about whether you need to wear a mask and take other precautionsStay up to date with COVID-19 vaccinesGet tested if you have symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Wear a mask indoors in publicStay up to date with COVID-19 vaccinesGet tested if you have symptomsAdditional precautions may be needed for people at high risk for severe illness

Our program has a COVID-19 case. What happens next?

FCHD no longer investigates sporadic, individual cases of COVID-19. When individual cases are identified in staff or participants in your program, exclude that individual from program activities based on the isolation guidance detailed below. If three or more cases are identified in that athletic team or club, please report the potential outbreak to the Health Department.

We have three or more cases in our program. What do we do?

An outbreak of COVID-19 is defined as three or more epi-linked cases (cases with known exposure or close contact to one another) within 14-days of another case in a single group, such as a recreational team or after-school activity. The Virginia Regulations for Disease Reporting and Control requires outbreaks to be reported directly and immediately to the local health department. If you identify three or more COVID-19 cases in a group in your program, please report it to the Health Department's Containment Branch through the following REDCap Reporting Survey: <https://redcap.link/outbreak.notification>. Containment will review the submission and determine whether the situation meets outbreak criteria, as well as provide guidance on next steps. This survey is HIPAA-compliant, and FCHD will follow procedures during the outbreak investigation to maintain privacy of the personal health information. The health and safety of your team/club members, staff, spectators, coaches, and volunteers is the



primary focus of FCHD. Failure to comply/cooperate with FCHD investigations may result in losing your organization’s ability to use County facilities (permitting through Fairfax County) for this and upcoming seasons.

When can a team/club member participate in activities if they are under isolation or quarantine?

Please refer to the table below for the current guidance on [isolation and quarantine](#):

Tested positive for COVID-19 and/or have symptoms of COVID-19	Days 0-5: Exclusion from all team/club activities. Must isolate at home. Days 6-10: May resume team/club activities if they meet criteria for 5-day isolation and wear a well-fitted mask at all times around others. If unable to wear a mask, can return to facility if they have 2 negative tests administered 48 hours apart. The first test can be administered on or after Day 6.
Close contacts	No quarantine required. Monitor for symptoms for 10 days. If you develop symptoms, get tested and stay home. Consider wearing a mask for 10 days from exposure. Consider getting tested on Day 6. If you test positive for COVID-19 during this 10-day period, follow the isolation guidance above.

When can a team/club member return from isolation?

A COVID case may return to team/club activities after five full days have passed from their symptom onset date or their positive test if they did not have symptoms. Their symptoms must be improving, not worsening, before they may return. If the case continues to have fever or if other symptoms have not improved after five days of isolation, the case should wait to end isolation until fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and other symptoms have improved. To return to activities on Day 6, the case **must wear a mask at all times around others** (within 6 feet of others indoors and outdoors). If the case is unable or unwilling to wear a mask, they can return to the facility **if they have two negative antigen tests administered 48 hours apart**. The first test can be administered on or after Day 6—otherwise they must remain home until the end of Day 10. Team/club members and staff may remove their masks to eat or play as long as they are at least 6 feet from others. If they are unable to do so, they should not participate in team/club activities until the end of Day 10.

Below is what a 5-day isolation would look like (e.g., individuals able to comply with mask wearing):

Day 0	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10	Day 11
Symptoms start (or positive COVID test if asymptomatic)	Isolation at home					May leave house if symptoms are resolving and no fever. Must wear well-fitted mask around others at all times. If unable to comply with masking, case must isolate until the end of Day 10.					May resume team/club activities

Below is what a 10-day isolation would look like (e.g., individuals unable to comply with mask wearing):

Day 0	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10	Day 11
Symptoms start (or positive COVID test if asymptomatic)	Isolation at home										May resume team/club activities

When can a team/club member return from quarantine?

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) recently made changes to quarantine recommendations for close contacts of cases. Close contacts are no longer recommended to quarantine and do not need to pause attendance as long as they do not have COVID-19 symptoms. VDH does recommend (but does not require) that close contact consider wearing a well-fitted mask on days 1-10 and consider getting tested on Day 6 after exposure. With the discontinuation of quarantine exclusion for exposures, FCHD urges facilities to emphasize the screening and exclusion of ill staff and children.

What if we have a sick participant or staff member who is not tested for COVID?

Anyone who is sick should not participate in your program's activities while symptomatic. If the sick person was exposed to someone with COVID, they should isolate and get tested for COVID. If there was no known COVID exposure, the sick person should seek testing or alternative diagnosis through a medical provider. If unable to get tested or seek an alternative diagnosis through a provider, the sick person should follow isolation guidance until they meet the criteria to return to the program.

Should we require a negative test or clearance letter before a case can return to our program following isolation?

The Health Department encourages teams/clubs to follow the guidance outlined above to determine when a can return to the program. If individuals are not symptomatic (or symptoms are resolving) and have completed the required timeframe for their isolation, they should be permitted to resume normal activities in the team/club.

When should staff and participants in our program wear masks?

When a community is in High COVID levels, individuals should wear masks indoors regardless of vaccination status. Masks indoors are optional when community levels are Low or Medium, though individuals considered higher risk (e.g., immunocompromised, pregnant) should consider wearing them as an additional precaution.

Masking is a critical piece of CDC's guidance for isolation, as individuals may remain infectious during Days 6-10. If someone is a COVID case and is unable to wear a mask when they are within 6 feet of others, they can return to the facility if they have two negative antigen tests administered 48 hours apart. The first test can be administered on or after Day 6—otherwise they should stay home through Day 10 of their isolation. Taking off a mask to participate in team activities while not maintaining social distance from others does not comply with the mask wearing recommendations; if staff or team/club members are unable to do this, they should not participate in the program until after their full 10-day isolation period. Individuals who are close contacts to a COVID-19 case may choose to wear a mask on days 1-10 following last exposure.

What does it mean to be up-to-date on COVID-19 vaccinations?

CDC recommends that individuals stay "[up-to-date](#)" by receiving any additional or booster doses of COVID vaccination for which they are eligible, according to CDC's recommendations, to ensure they have optimal protection from COVID-19. The technical definition for "fully vaccinated" – two doses of an mRNA vaccine or one dose of the J&J vaccine – has not changed. Individuals are considered fully vaccinated once they have received their primary series. You are considered up to date on COVID-19 vaccinations if you meet any of the following criteria:

- Are 5 years or older and have received all recommended vaccine doses including booster dose
- Are 6 months to 4 years old and are 2 weeks or more after receiving the 3-dose primary series of the Pfizer

COVID-19 vaccine or the 2-dose primary series of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine.

- Received a first dose of J&J vaccine within the last 2 months
- Have had COVID-19 within the last 6 months confirmed by a positive viral test

Please note that VDH currently considers children ages 6 months to 4 years up-to-date if they have completed their primary vaccination series and do not need to quarantine as long as they are not symptomatic.

What can we do to limit the spread of COVID-19 in our program?

- Notify staff and families whenever there is a COVID exposure in the program. FHCD has template notification letters your program may use.
- Promote [vaccinations](#) for those eligible in your program.
- Screen team/club members and staff for [COVID-like symptoms](#). COVID symptoms are wide ranging and can appear like allergies or other conditions. Communicate with your community the importance of being vigilant for symptoms and not participating in the program when ill.
- If team/club members develop symptoms while participating in your program, identify an area of your facility where the participant can isolate away from others until a parent or guardian can pick them up (e.g., a sick room or empty office). Symptomatic individuals should be removed from the group to limit potential transmission to other team/club participants.
- Clean high-touch surfaces with an [EPA registered disinfectant](#) considered effective against COVID-19.

Who should we contact with additional questions?

For questions regarding COVID-19 or other infectious diseases, please contact the Fairfax County Health Department's Acute Communicable and Emerging Diseases (ACED) team at (703) 246-2433 or HDCD@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Additional Resources

- [VDH K-12 Schools and Child Care Programs](#)
- [VDH What to do if you were exposed to COVID-19?](#)
- [VDH: Considerations for Recreational Sports](#)
- [AAP: COVID-19 Interim Guidance: Return to Sports and Physical Activity](#)
- [FCHD: Isolation and Quarantine Guidelines](#)
- [FCHD: COVID-19 Handouts and Other Resources](#)
- [VDH: Overnight Camps](#)