



MALDEN CATHOLIC

RETURN TO ATHLETICS

PLAYBOOK

WINTER 2020-2021



LANCERS BETTER TOGETHER

The purpose of this playbook is to provide the coaches, athletes, athletics staff and our MC families with the guidelines and procedures that will be implemented and followed for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the ever-changing nature of the pandemic and the recommendations from national and state governing bodies, these guidelines may require adaptation.

To our athletes and coaches, we have always stood together in our workouts, in practices and in competition and now more than ever we need to be there for one another and have support each other as we work to create a positive culture of wellbeing. Our goal this school year is to be able to offer athletic opportunities that will allow us to participate safely while limiting exposure to illness and ultimately successfully completing our seasons. We will continue to assess how COVID-19 will impact our specific safety culture and we'll be prepared to plan to adapt if necessary.

The primary purpose of this document is to provide easy access to procedures relating to our return to play during COVID-19. This does not replace our regular Malden Catholic Athletic Handbook which should be reviewed by each athlete and their family annually and may be found at: <https://www.maldencatholic.org/athletics/register-to-play/student-athlete-handbook>

****PLEASE NOTE THAT MOST OF THIS DOCUMENT IS CONSISTENT WITH THE FALL ATHLETIC MC COVID TASK FORCE PLAN, THE FOLLOWING SECTION IS NEW POINTS OF EMPHASIS.***

Winter Athletics - MC COVID Task Force Plan

This plan is aligned with additional information from the MIAA and Local and State agencies.

Sports approved to run during the winter season 2020-2021

Boys Ice Hockey

Girls Ice Hockey

Boys Basketball

Girls Basketball

Boys Swimming & Diving

Sports not approved to run during the winter season 2020-2021: The MIAA is considering potentially moving these sports to later in the year: Cheer, Indoor Track & Field and Wrestling

Start Date: 12/14

Tryouts: will be conducted by Cohort only and the day students are physically in school only.

Cohorts are:

Blue in Monday and Thursday

Gold in Tuesday and Friday

Red is fully remote and will be not be permitted to participate in winter athletics.

Practices: following tryouts and throughout the season will be:

Freshman and JV - On cohort days only

Varsity - all are permitted every day, those not physically in school on practice or game days must complete MC COVID daily check-in prior to entering building and have temperature checked by the athletic trainer or nurse. *Those choosing to be fully remote may not participate in athletic or extracurricular activities on campus.*

Important Dates:

Practices are permitted 12/14-12/23 and all students and coaches must check-in with the QR code prior to entering practice facility.

12/24- 1/3 Christmas Recess - No Practices or Games Permitted

January 4 - January 15 ALL students are fully remote and No Practice or Games Permitted*

***Amended 12/13**

Winter Athletic Policies- all Teams will be allowed to practice from 12/14 to 12/23. **Varsity teams that would like to resume team activities on 1/6/21 will need to participate in Covid testing.** This means members of the team, including coaches, will need to have a saliva test conducted by the school on 1/2/21 and have a negative result by 1/5/21. All sub varsity teams will be permitted to resume team activities on 1/16/21. Students must be actively enrolled in either the BLUE or GOLD cohort by 12/10/20 to participate in Winter Athletics. Students in the RED cohort will not be allowed to participate in in-person activities including athletics.

First Practice following the holidays will be: January 16th, 2021

First date for Games/Meets following the holidays will be: January 18th, 2021

Other Information:

No Locker Room Use - If practice after school the students will have a ten-minute assigned time by team to change, all items are to be brought to practice with them, no items are to be left overnight in the locker room. Athletes that have practice after school will be permitted to drop their bags/equipment off in the main locker room in the morning when they arrive for storage during the day.

Students coming to practice later or on weekends are to arrive dressed and ready to go.

There will be no available classroom space 12/10-18 however starting 1/16 coaches may reserve the café to use for instruction, install, team meetings etc.

There will be No Spectators permitted to any indoor facilities for games this winter season. This will be reassessed as we progress in the season with hopes to increase to one spectator per athlete at which time each

athlete will be given one lanyard and that lanyard will be required to attend any event in the gym or pool. We expect to live stream all events in the gym and rink.

Students must provide their own water

There should be no sharing of equipment, towels and all should be cleaned between practices.

GENERAL GUIDELINES:

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Social distancing should always be used when possible (six feet at a minimum).

- Large social gatherings in any spaces will be discouraged with virtual team meetings taking place when possible.
 - When at practice or in competition, any unnecessary contact should be avoided such as handshakes, high fives, fist bumps, or elbow bumps.
 - Student athletes should sit every other seat on a bench and should avoid using a dugout when possible. Student-athletes should consciously stand six feet apart when not participating in a drill or activity that requires closer contact.
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SANITIZATION

- All equipment should be cleaned between each individual use. When possible, athletes should not share gear and instead use their own personal equipment.
 - Each athlete should have his/her own personal defined hydration container that is never to be shared.
 - Hand sanitizer or handwashing stations are available and should be used before, during, and after workouts.
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PRE-PARTICIPATION EXAMS

The MIAA along with the Massachusetts Department of Health has issued a statement indicating that despite the difficulty for many to schedule annual exams, it **does not change** current regulatory language which indicates that an examination for student-athletes must be "conducted annually." As for application of this regulation, the current practice supported by the MA DPH of a valid examination within 13-months to the day still stands. The 13-month window was necessary to accommodate many health insurance plans.

For those families finding it difficult to schedule an annual physical scheduled prior to the season the MIAA recently announced a partnership with ConvenientMD and released the following information regarding physicals. In support of local youth, sports, and education, ConvenientMD Urgent Care is offering \$20 sports, school, and camp physicals. In addition, ConvenientMD is offering free flu shots for all ages and will donate \$1 to a local charity for each flu shot given in September through November. Please note that all clinics are following strict protocols to keep patients and team members safe and healthy. Visit your nearest ConvenientMD location in Massachusetts, 8am-8pm, 7 days a week. No appointments needed. Locations also available in New Hampshire and Maine.



THE FOLLOWING PRE-PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES MUST BE FOLLOWED

Student-athletes who presently have COVID-19, or who have tested positive for COVID-19, shall provide clearance from a physician before he/she will be permitted to participate in practices or games.

Student-athletes who have pre-existing medical conditions and/or are immunocompromised (e.g., diabetes, asthma, auto-immune disorders, etc.) shall provide clearance from a physician before he/she will be permitted to participate in workouts.

The daily COVID-19 Questionnaire must be completed by any student-athlete that plays a varsity sport and is coming in for a practice or competition on a non-cohort day and must be completed prior to entering the building. The form may be found at: <https://forms.gle/zcV2byCK23oG5Xrf8>

Any athlete that does not have a COVID-19 Questionnaire on file will not be permitted to participate in any workouts. This is an electronic file and will be shared with coaches for attendance.

Coaches are also required to keep thorough attendance records to support contact tracing by the nurses if necessary.

Registration for sport must be completed on FamilyID.com prior to start.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL PRACTICES AND CONTESTS

1. PRE-SCREENING

- a. Each participant must be prescreened for COVID-19 related symptoms or exposure with the daily questionnaire.
- b. Teams shall stagger arrival and departure times of student-athletes.
- c. Each day all coaches, student-athletes, and staff must clear the pre-screening process before they are permitted to participate in the workouts.
- d. The pre-screening process will consist of a review of the pre-screening questionnaire, which shall be completed and provided to designated school personnel, and a self-temperature check.
- e. Any individual who answers “yes” to any question on the questionnaire, or who has a temperature greater than 99.5°F, shall not be permitted to participate in the workout and shall be required to return home.
- f. Any Individual who answers “yes” to any question on the questionnaire shall be required to provide clearance from a physician before they will be permitted to resume participation in the workouts.

2. PRACTICES

- a. Practices shall be no more than ninety (90) minutes in duration.
- b. All practices shall follow local and state guidelines and any MIAA recommended modifications.
- c. Access to practices must be limited to student-athletes, coaches, and appropriate school personnel and must be voluntary to attend.



- d. Coaches should have pre-drawn structured workouts for the duration of the session.
- e. Student-athletes should be provided with unlimited access to fluids which the student-athletes provide.

During all workouts, coaches, athletes, and staff are reminded to be alert for any students exhibiting signs of distress regarding mental health secondary to the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. FACE COVERINGS

- a. Student-athletes who are engaged in high-intensity aerobic activity, e.g., running, sprinting, etc., are not required to wear face coverings during the period of the aerobic activity with social distancing required. Once the aerobic activity is over, student-athletes shall wear face coverings. This includes walking to and from the practice field.
- b. Student-athletes who are not engaged in high-intensity aerobic activity, e.g., sitting on the bench, reviewing plays, watching videos, waiting in line, etc., are expected to wear face coverings.
- c. Coaches and school personnel must always wear face coverings .

4. GROUPINGS/SOCIAL DISTANCING

- a. The group size cannot exceed 20 (i.e., 18 students with two coaches) grouped together in a single area and the groups should be predetermined by the coach prior to the start of the workout. Additional groups are permitted on the playing surface at the same time but must comply with current DPH recommendations.
- b. Social distancing of at least six (6) feet shall always be maintained between student-athletes and staff ,
including within the student-athlete groupings.
- c. Once student groupings are determined, student-athletes should not switch to another grouping, even for another sport.
- d. More than one group of student-athletes can be in a single area, provided there is a minimum twelve (12) feet between each group of student-athletes but may not involve over 100 participants in that area.
- e. There shall not be celebratory contact, e.g., fist bumps, high-fives, huddles, etc.
- f. There are to be no spectators allowed at practices and limit spectators for contests.

5. ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT

- a. Personal sports equipment shall not be shared at any time.

b. Each student-athlete shall bring individual water bottles and towel to each workout for his/her own personal consumption. There shall not be any trading or sharing of water bottles or towels.

c. All sports equipment and touchpoints (e.g., benches, agility cones, balls, ladders, clipboards, etc.) must be cleaned and disinfected after each workout with EPA approved cleaners and disinfectants against COVID-19.

6. LOCKER ROOMS/RESTROOMS

a. Student-athletes will have very limited access to the locker rooms with assigned times. Locker rooms are for changing clothes only and there should be no gathering and no items are permitted overnight.

b. Restrooms, if available, shall be cleaned and disinfected regularly with EPA approved cleaners and disinfectants against COVID-19.

c. Restrooms, if available, use shall be limited to one person at a time.

d. To the fullest extent possible, appropriate social distancing shall be maintained, and face coverings are worn when more than one student-athlete is in the restroom.

7. HYGIENE

a. Students and staff should make every effort to wash their hands as often as possible including before and after the workout.

b. Hand sanitizer shall always be accessible.

c. Student-athletes shall wear their workout gear to the workout and shall return home in the same workout gear.

d. There shall be no spitting, chewing seeds or gum during the workout.

8. TRASH AND ITEMS BROUGHT TO PRACTICE

a. Students and staff will be required to “Carry In, Carry Out” and no trash or personal items should be left at the practice location when the practices are over.

9. ILLNESS PROTOCOL

Should an individual athlete become ill during any of the above periods, they should be immediately removed from the group, masked if not already, and isolated in their individual space.

The parent or guardian should be notified right away by the Athletic Trainer.

Testing for COVID-19 should be done. If testing is positive, contact tracing should be initiated by the school nurse. This tracing will identify those individuals who would have been within six feet of the sick athlete for more than 15 minutes while the person was symptomatic or within the 48 hours prior to becoming symptomatic.

The athlete with the positive COVID-19 test may return to social interaction 72 hours after resolution of symptoms, including but not limited to: fever (without the use of fever reducing medications), cough, shortness of breath, AND at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared according to CDC guidelines. Emerging evidence in the field of cardiology recommends a 14-day convalescent period from the start of symptoms prior to starting back to strenuous activity and consideration of cardiac testing. Students who test positive for COVID-19 should provide a written release for return to activity from their medical provider before allowing continued participation.

10. TRANSPORTATION

Travel should be limited and when possible, done by parental transportation. When it is necessary and leaving from school, bus transportation will be provided. Weekend events the parents are responsible for transportation to and from athletic events.

Social distancing should be maintained, including masking and windows remained open when possible.

- When on a bus, social distancing is needed with no two athletes sitting in the seats next to each other. - Preparations should be made for limited stops when en route (such as prepackaged meals). -
- Overnight stays will be prohibited at this time. Games will be scheduled in groups in a geographic area when travel is necessary. We will consider limiting out of conference play this season and asking parents to assist in their child's transportation.

11. MC ATHLETIC TRAINING ROOM PROCEDURES

The following are the summary key points and changes in the athletic training room:

1. The athletic training room will have a student-athlete capacity limit of two (2) to accommodate social distancing.
2. Treatment sessions will operate on an appointment only format and student-athletes may only enter the athletic training room during this time. We will have an entrance and exit door marked for use.
3. Non-necessary pre-practice treatments are eliminated.
4. There will be a set time for which student-athletes may receive pre-practice taping.
5. Post-practice treatment will be eliminated. Ice bags will be placed in a specified location for student-athletes to grab.
6. Student-Athletes will be required to wear masks in the athletic training room.
7. Visiting teams may not enter the athletic training room.

12. CONTEST PARTICIPANTS AND SPECTATORS

Group sizes are limited and due to the nature of indoor sports we are implementing a no spectator policy for the start of the season. Those permitted in the gym or the pool are coaches, referees, and athletes only.

Once it is determined safe to do so and to comply with DPH and other state guidelines, we will limit spectators for all Catholic Conference games, home and away, to one guest per athlete and each will be given a lanyard that will be required to enter any athletic competition. The pass (lanyard) must be with you to gain entry to any athletic contest and is also how we will track who is at our events. Each school may have additional guidelines and we will share those with the teams week to week.

We do plan to stream many of our games and we are currently working with several vendors to make this happen in a timely manner.

When spectators are permitted: All should maintain social distancing while in the bleachers with masks remaining on.

Any additional team members can sit on the sidelines 6 feet apart from one another.

30-ft of distancing is maintained between groups/opposing teams on the sidelines, and areas for each group are clearly marked to discourage interaction between groups outside of competitive game play.

Students should maintain social distancing on the sidelines when not engaged in activities..

13. AFTER SCHOOL PRACTICES AND GAMES

To limit social congregating, we are asking those students not on an athletic team to leave the campus at 2:15pm when school is dismissed and the building is closed at 3:00pm to anyone other than those currently practicing or competing.

Sub-varsity practices will be limited to the days students are physically on campus and with their dedicated cohorts. Varsity practices will be permitted each day at coach's discretion.

14. CHANGES IN SCHOOL STATUS

The above is while we remain in our "Yellow" or Hybrid Phase. If for any reason we need to elevate our status to "Red" or Remote Phase, all athletic practices and events will be postponed during that time. The exception to this will be after the holidays and for varsity athletes who will be practicing. These athletes must provide two written negative COVID tests prior to the January 11th start date. See the MC Task Force place for more details.

15. HYDRATION

Hydration is crucial to every athlete's success and experts suspect that proper hydration helps in the prevention of disease. Each athlete is expected to provide their own water bottle for use at each practice and event. This water bottle shall be clearly marked with their name. There is no sharing of water bottles. You should bring more than one bottle of water. Communal water bottles are not allowed based on COVID-19 guidelines from the National Federation of High Schools and hydration coolers are not to be used. We have purchased a touchless refilling station that will be on the field but please consider refilling in school before coming out for practices or games.

MIAA SPORT SEASONS 2020-2021 *UPDATED NOVEMBER 30TH

<p style="text-align: center;">FALL I September 18th - November 20th</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Girls Soccer Boys Soccer Golf Boys Cross Country Girls Cross Country Girls Swim & Dive</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>No MIAA Tournaments</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">WINTER November 20th - February 21st</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Girls Basketball Boys Basketball Boys Ice Hockey Girls Ice Hockey Boys Swim & Dive</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>MIAA Tournaments TBD</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">FALL II February 22nd - April 25th</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Girls Volleyball Football Fall Cheer</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>MIAA Tournaments TBD</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SPRING April 26th - July 3rd</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Girls Lacrosse Boys Lacrosse Baseball Softball Rugby Boys Outdoor Track & Field Girls Outdoor Track & Field Crew Boys Tennis Girls Tennis</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>MIAA Tournaments TBD</i></p>

MIAA Statement on Sport Modifications

The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) is pleased to announce the formation of the MIAA COVID-19 Task Force Sub-Committee. Under the leadership of MIAA President Jeffrey Granatino, Task Force members were appointed and charged to determine appropriate measures for a safe return to MIAA athletics in alignment with guidelines set forth by Governor Baker, MA Department of Health (DPH) and MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

Educational athletics is foundational to the core values and mission of the MIAA. The belief that educational athletics is integral to the holistic development of our students and their high school experience is central to the work, thinking and decision making of this working group.

The MIAA Board of Directors voted to approve sport-specific modifications for the Winter Season. These modifications will continue to be reviewed as they relate to current regulations surrounding COVID-19 and may be modified if necessary. Additional modifications or the decision to participate in MIAA-recognized winter sports will be determined by local school districts and/or their local Board of Health. You may view the Task Force presentation at MIAA.net.

Highlights include: • The Winter Season will have a new start date of December 14, 2020. • Modifications for the sports of Wrestling, Indoor Track, winter Cheerleading and Dance were not created or presented due to committee recommendation for those sports to be moved to a different sport season. Indoor Track is moved to the Fall II Season and Wrestling, winter Cheerleading and Dance are moved to the Spring Season.

MIAA SPORT MODIFICATIONS:

Every school district/program should consult with their local health department to determine which risk level to start this program safely. Continued consultation with the local health department should be used to determine when progression to the next risk level can be initiated.

Playing sports come with inherent risks (twisted ankles to concussions). The COVID-19 pandemic has brought additional risks to group activities/sports. The Mass Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) categorizes sports as: “Lower Risk”, “Moderate Risk”, “Higher Risk”. These categories are based on how the sport is traditionally played. MIAA Committees have developed these modifications to reduce risks associated with COVID-19 using National and State guidelines and input from medical specialists. Playing any sport (even with modified play) will continue to carry some risk of acquiring COVID-19; these modifications were developed to help guide schools with requirements and best practices to limit exposure while offering an opportunity for interscholastic athletics for those sports approved for EEA Level 3 participation. Additional information can be found on the EEA website: EEA Youth and Amateur Sports Resources & EEA Guidance

This document is to be utilized in compliance with all EEA, DESE and DPH guidelines in place. Learn more about participation in athletics during the pandemic by taking the free NFHS online course: “COVID-19 for Coaches and Administrators Pre-Workout/Pre-Contest Screening:

Student-athletes, coaches, spectators, and any others associated with the athletic program may not attend practices or games if they are isolated for illness or quarantined for exposure to infection.

Prior to attending practices or games, athletes and coaches should check their temperature. If a student-athlete or a coaching staff member has a temperature of 100 degrees or above, they should not attend practices or games. Likewise if they have any other symptoms of COVID-19 infection (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>), they should not attend practices or games. Student-athletes and coaches who have symptoms of COVID-19 infection should test and isolate in accordance with DPH guidance.

For students with symptoms who test negative for COVID-19 infection, they may return to sport once they are approved to return to school (when afebrile for 24 hours and symptomatically improved).

Student-athletes and coaches who are diagnosed with COVID-19 infection should rest and avoid exercise for ten days from symptom onset. They may return to school once they have been afebrile for at least 24 hours and with improvement in their COVID-19 symptoms, and once ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared (or the date of the positive test, if asymptomatic), according to DPH guidelines. In addition, persons with COVID-19 infection need to receive written clearance from their health care provider and school administrator/designee to return to sport. Return to activity should be slow and graded.

Student-athletes, coaches, spectators and any others associated with the athletic program who were exposed to COVID-19 must not participate in practices or games until their 14-day quarantine is completed and must receive written clearance from their school administrator/designee to return to sport.

Cohorts and/or Participants:

A record should be kept of all individuals present at team activities i.e. – practices, practice cohorts, competitions, etc.

Social distancing:

□ Practice – Coaches are responsible for ensuring social distancing (6 feet between individuals) is maintained between players as much as possible. This includes additional spacing between athletes while stretching, warming up, chatting, changing drills, etc. Athletes must maintain spacing, and there should be no congregating of athletes while running drills. Workouts, when possible could be conducted in 'pods' of athletes, with the same 5-10 athletes always working out together. Ideally athletes should not move between pods for the entire season. This ensures more limited exposure if someone develops an infection. Records should be kept of who is in each group, each day.

□ Locker Rooms –Locker rooms and changing areas must remain closed per EEA Guidance (EEA Guidance Page 11), except for toilet facilities. For sport activities that occur directly after school, locker rooms may be used for changing only, with no more than 10 users at one time and with social distancing (6 feet between individuals) and face coverings maintained. Locker rooms may not be used for storage. Facility Operators should ensure that users can abide by capacity restrictions and social distancing standards and establish signage and visual guidelines. Signage should remind users to limit time spent in enclosed area. If locker rooms are utilized, staggered use based on time and distance is recommended.

When possible, students should report to workouts in proper gear and immediately return home to shower, clean clothing, and equipment at the end of every workout.

□ Benches – No benches should be used during practice except for ice hockey where facility design has permanent seating. Players' personal items should be separated as referenced below, at least 6 feet apart. Benches should be permitted only during games with 6 feet of distancing required between participants. Athletes and coaches should maintain the same seat for the duration of the game whenever possible.

□ Playing Surface Access – Only essential personnel are permitted on the practice/competition field. These are defined as athletes, coaches, medical personnel/athletic trainers, and officials (competition). All others (i.e. managers, photographers, media, etc.) are considered non-essential personnel and are not to be on the field of play.

□ Personal Items – It is recommended that each athlete bring their own gym bag for personal items (see gym bag information below). All personal items should remain in the gym bag when not in use. Gym bags should be placed in a predetermined area 6 feet apart for the duration of practice.

□ Huddles – Social distancing (6 feet between individuals) must be maintained, and face coverings utilized at all times. Communicating with smaller groups is preferred. Huddles may not occur in locker rooms.

□ Team Handshakes – Athletes shall NOT exchange handshakes before, during or following practices and competitions. Some MIAA sport specific modifications suggest sportsmanship recognition practices which replace handshakes.

□ Spectators – Spectators must practice social distancing (6 feet between individuals) between different household units and accept personal responsibility for public health guidelines. The number of spectators is determined in compliance with EEA, DESE and DPH guidelines.

- Media – All social distancing and hygiene guidelines for spectators must be followed by media members planning to attend games. Media members should contact host school administrators prior to arriving at games to plan appropriate entry and available workspace
- Travel – Student-athletes, coaches, spectators, and any others associated with the athletic program (if not from the same household) are required to wear face coverings during travel to and from game locations. This is particularly important for car pool and bus situations.

Practice and Game Protocols:

- Masks/Face Coverings – **Athletes are required to wear cloth face coverings/masks per EEA guidelines, including covering both the nose and mouth at all times.** Gaiters are acceptable (not permitted per Malden Catholic Task Force Guidelines), if permitted by local/school policy.

Masks with valves or filters are not permitted.

Most effective fabrics for cloth masks are:

- Tightly woven fabrics, such as cotton and cotton blends
- Breathable
- Two or three layers

Less effective fabrics for cloth masks are:

- Loosely woven fabrics, such as loose knit fabrics
- Difficult to breathe through (like plastic or leather)
- Single layer

Mask breaks may be taken for drinking, and when needed for breathing comfort. Mask breaks may only be taken when greater than 6 feet of distance can be maintained from all others.

All athletes, especially those that use mouthpieces, should prepare to have extra face coverings available. Athletes who have their masks become damp should change regularly. Masks should be exchanged when damp or soiled. Caution should be exercised when replacing a mask if hands are soiled or dirty.

All individuals that are unable to wear a face covering due to a medical condition or disability must provide a medical note to the school administrator/designee excusing the player from wearing a mask. This note must always be in the possession of the head coach and available to the opposing head coach and/or game officials upon request. The head coach is the only participant that can submit documented permission of “non-mask” participation. Student-athletes cannot discuss or present non-mask permission to an official. It is recommended that athletic directors work to advise officials assignors in advance of a contest if their teams have non-mask participants. It is the responsibility of the head coach to monitor and ensure that all players are wearing face coverings. Game administrators, home athletic director, or other designee may also assist in monitoring this. Coaches and officials are also required to wear face coverings. Spectators, workers, and others are also required to wear face coverings and are expected to follow social distancing guidelines (6 feet between individuals).

- Player habits – Coaches should work to break old habits and create new ones to minimize the spread of the virus. Spitting, nose clearing on the field, licking fingers, and spitting on gloves during practices and competitions is not permitted. The habit of minimizing any touching of the face and covering the cough should be practiced. Given that indoor conditions and ventilation/airflow impact the playing of indoor sports, it is recommended that indoor participants and all in attendance work to refrain from active yelling due to the

increased opportunity for droplet transmission. Coaches and game administrators are encouraged to monitor this and remind participants to eliminate any unnecessary shouting.

Interaction with Officials – Coaches must follow social distancing guidelines (6 feet between individuals) when interacting with an official or any other individual. Conversations can occur at a distance. Athletes should not approach a referee closer than 6 feet at any time.

Hand sanitizer and/or sanitizing wipes – Athletes, coaches, and officials are encouraged to provide their own hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) and/or sanitizing wipes and use them frequently – including prior to taking the field and upon return to the sideline. Additionally, it is emphasized to avoid touching the face throughout practice and competition.

Ventilation should be optimized: EEA Guidance Page 14

Pre-Game Introductions and Preparation – If pre-game meetings are necessary, they should be held with limited team representation – a single coach, single captain, etc. At the pregame meeting, all participants are required to wear face coverings and to socially distance from all participants

If a school chooses to do introductions, players will take their position on the field prior to being introduced. Introductions are suggested to be limited or eliminated to decrease time of athletes on the competition field.

The National Anthem may be played before competition. Appropriate social distancing (6 feet between individuals) must be maintained by teams and all personnel during the National Anthem. Singing the National Anthem indoors should not be permitted. Indoor musical performances at interscholastic athletic events are not permitted.

Ball Retrievers – Ball retrievers for any sport ARE NOT permitted. See sport specific modifications for extra ball placement procedures.

Post-Game Procedures – Refer to Team Handshakes in this guidance. Recognition of the other team, coaches and/or officials should be done from a distance greater than 6 feet and should not delay departure from the competition venue. Teams and groups of players should maintain social distancing (6 feet between individuals) and/or staggering departure times at the conclusion of the contest.

Equipment:

General Equipment – There should be no shared athletic equipment unless required by the sport rules, i.e. – one basketball is used during competition and must be used by all players. Individual sport modifications should be followed for planned and periodic disinfecting. Any equipment that is used for practice should be cleaned and disinfected prior to and immediately following practice. Only one individual should handle the set-up and break-down of equipment on any given day (i.e. goals, cones, etc.).

Balls - For moderate and high-risk sports - Each player should bring their own ball or use the same school-issued ball during practice. Skill training, conditioning, agility, etc. can be done with the one player/one ball concept. Balls must be sanitized before and after each practice/game. Sport specific modifications also list other ball cleaning practices during competition.

Personal Items – Shoes, clothing, towels, and other personal items must not be shared among athletes. Any items that are not currently being worn/used should be stored inside a personal gym bag. Gym bags should be placed in a predetermined area 6 feet apart for the duration of practice/competition.

Hydration:

All students must bring their own water bottle. Water bottles cannot be shared. Student-athletes should bring enough water for the entire game.

- 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.
- Hydration stations (water cows, water trough, water fountains, etc.) should NOT be utilized. If water coolers or other large volume water container is utilized, it can only be accessed by a “designated” refill person with proper PPE.
- Water fountains are to be used as refill stations ONLY.

COVID-19 Coach:

Schools should designate a coach to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. All coaches, staff, officials, and families should know who this person is and how to contact them.

All athletic directors/designee must follow established EEA guidelines for program and/or game management. Train coaches, officials, and staff on all safety protocols. Conduct training virtually and ensure that social distancing (6 feet between individuals) is maintained during training. (NFHS COVID-19 FREE Course)

Coaches, athletes, officials, and spectators are required to cooperate with the local board of health whenever requested.

Gym Bag – Supplies recommended for your personal gym bag:

- Reusable face coverings/masks – The mask/face covering must be worn at all times. Sport specific modification may have further guidance for face coverings. All participants should have multiple back-up face coverings.
- Warm-up clothing, electronic devices, and other personal items that are used by the athlete, prior to practice/competition, must be placed back in the gym bag before practice/competition begins.
- Athletes are recommended to always have a personal bottle of hand sanitizer available. There will be less chance of possible cross contamination and less time standing around waiting to use a shared hand sanitizer. Be sure to have this inside a sealable bag, in case it leaks. This will be used when you enter and exit the practice/competition site, and at other necessary times in between.
- Athletes are recommended to have disinfectant wipes for personal use. When using a restroom area, it is best to disinfect any surface that may be touched, before and after using the facilities.
- Athletic braces, tape, inhalers, or any other sports-medical item used before, during or after practice/meets should be stored in a personal gym bag when not in use.
- Additional shoes should also be stored in a separate compartment or bag inside a gym bag to prevent possible cross contamination with other items in the gym bag.
- Any other item that is deemed necessary for practice or competition must be stored in the gym bag when it is not being used.

All sports are to adhere to the above and here is a list of sport specific modifications:

Basketball Specific Modifications

Pre-Game Protocol

Pre-Game Meeting

- o Limited to one official and a single captain from each team.
- o Participants stand on the center circle on each side of the division line. All individuals maintain a social distance of 6 feet or greater at the center circle.
- o No handshakes prior to and following the Pre-Game Meeting.

Starting Lineups/National Anthem

- o Starting lineups are announced only – Players and coaches will refrain from high fives, handshake lines, and other physical contact with teammates, opposing players, coaches, officials, and fans.

Game Modifications

Masks: Mandatory facial coverings per EEA document page 6

- o The host school is required to setup designated areas for students from each team to take mask breaks when coming off the court.
- o If a player is in violation of the mandatory mask rule, the referee has the authority to send the player off the court.

Process Between Quarters

- o Halftime will be eliminated.
- o The length of time between quarters will be extended to 2:30.
- o The game ball will be changed at the end of each quarter.

Timeouts

- o Teams are responsible to run their timeout meetings following socially distanced protocols.
- o The length of timeouts will be increased to 1:15 to provide extra time for sanitizing and appropriate social distancing.

Player Interaction

- o Players should refrain from picking up another player by hand if a player has fallen to the court surface. (Unless deemed necessary to help player off court due to injury).
- o Players will refrain from huddling on court as a team prior to, during or following free throws or other game situations.
- o Players will refrain from any hand touching (high fives, handshakes) during substitutions.
- o The postgame handshake is suspended. See MIAA Board of Directors recommendation.

Roster and Participation Limits

- o Game day roster cannot exceed 15 players (active or injured) as long as teams can adequately social distance.
- o No more than 3 coaches will be allowed on the bench at any time
- o A maximum of 18 individuals (including players and coaches) are allowed on the bench
- o The six-quarter rule (MIAA Handbook 66.7.2) will be suspended for this season.
- o The use of swing players (i.e. Freshman/JV or JV/Varsity) is strongly discouraged and should only be utilized in situations to sustain a program.

Game Balls

- o The home team is required to provide at least 4 game balls.
- o Basketballs will be wiped with disinfectant at the end of each period. A disinfected or new game ball will be used to start each quarter and overtime.
- o The visiting team is responsible for providing their own basketballs for warmups.

Game Modifications/Points of Emphasis

Jump Ball

- o The jump ball will be eliminated to start the game and replaced with a throw-in at the division line.
- o A coin toss will be used (visiting team calls) to determine which team is awarded the ball to start the game. The alternating possession arrow will be set for the opposing team.
- o Note – the team that begins the game on defense will retain the A-P arrow even if they secure possession on the initial throw-in.
- o To start an overtime period, a coin toss will be used (visiting team calls) to determine which team is awarded the ball. The A-P arrow will be set to the opposing team in the same manner as to start the game.

Substitution Process

- o One player reports to the scorer's table when a team intends to substitute. Multiple substitutions can be made. When the horn sounds, players must enter through the scorer's table and utilize hand sanitizer.
- o Players must use hand sanitizer when entering or exiting the court at any time (i.e. before game, during substitutions, between quarters, after game)

Closely Guarded/5 Seconds

- o To minimize the amount of time that opponents are face to face, officials will emphasize NFHS Rule 9-10-1-a, "A player shall not, while closely guarded:
 - A. In his/her frontcourt, hold the ball for five seconds or dribble the ball for five seconds.
 - B. In his/her frontcourt, control the ball for five seconds in an area enclosed by screening teammate."

Freedom of Movement

- o Point of emphasis is to enforce the rule that defenders will not physically impede the progress of offensive players (off the ball; see reference NFHS Rules 4-24, 4-26, 4-37 and 10-7).

Free Throw Situations

o To limit congestion and contact, free throw lanes will be limited to four players.

o On two/three shot fouls, free throw lanes will remain empty and players can only enter lanes prior to the final attempt.

o For one-and-one and single free throw attempts, all four players may position themselves on the first attempt.

Sideline Out of Bounds Plays

o To eliminate congestion and contact under the basket during dead ball situations, offensive plays in the frontcourt will be inbounded at the foul line extended (not under the basket/end line).

End of Game Foul

o In order to avoid unnecessary contact while managing time at the end of the game, a team representative will notify the official if they are planning to foul a player receiving the inbounds pass; once the defensive team lightly tags the receiving offensive player the official will stop the play and administer a foul.

Quick whistle for a loose ball/tie up

o Point of emphasis - officials will quickly stop play/whistle during a loose ball/tie up between players in order to limit close contact.

Inbound Play/Throw-In

o On all throw-in/inbound plays, the defender will maintain a distance of 6 feet from the player inbounding the ball.

Team Benches

The home team/host school is responsible for providing socially distanced bench areas.

o Additional chairs or rows may be added when possible to allow bench personnel and players to observe social distancing of 6 feet or greater.

o Players and coaches are required to be assigned a specific seat on the bench for the duration of the contest where feasible. In instances where assigned seating is not possible, the person exiting the court is required to disinfect the seat.

o It is the responsibility of the host school to provide disinfectant and disinfecting wipes for each team.

o Consider seating fans opposite of team benches and separated from one another to promote social distancing.

o If spectator seating is available behind team benches, it must be separated by at least 20 feet.

o The host school is required to setup designated areas for students from each team to take mask breaks when coming off the court.

All players must bring their own water bottles which must not be shared.

Follow school protocols to clean/disinfect bench area between games.

All non-uniformed team members who are not essential to game management shall be seated in the bleachers or general seating and socially distanced from other groups.

Game Officials

- Must wear a mask at all times per EEA document page 6.
- Electronic whistles/artificial noisemakers are required.
- Throw-in: Official may stand 6 feet or greater away from player making the throw-in and bounce the ball to that player on a front court throw-in.
- Free Throw Administration: The lead official shall stand on the end line and bounce the ball to the free thrower.
- If a player is in violation of the mandatory mask rule, the official has the authority to send the player off the court.
- Address broken/damaged masks when the play advantage has subsided (similar to how injuries are handled).
- Must arrive at the facility dressed in uniform per EEA document page 12.
- Must bring their own water bottles.

Scorer's Table

- Personnel must be socially distanced and are required to wear masks. (Announcer, timer, shot clock, scorer, etc.)
- Home team/host school provides hand sanitizer for each team at the scorer's table and disposable PPE.
- Limit seats at the table to essential personnel which includes home team scorer and timer with a recommended distance of 6 feet or greater between individuals. Other personnel (visiting scorer, statisticians, media, etc.) may not be deemed essential personnel and consider an alternate location for them.

Game Management

- Spectators: Reference spectator limitations per EEA Document page 7.
 - o The home team administrator will keep spectator attendance records.
- Cheerleaders
 - o To limit the number of people on the sidelines during games, cheerleaders are not permitted.
- Locker Rooms
 - o Locker rooms are closed per EEA Document page 10.
- Media
 - o Location determined by host school, must wear mask and follow all social distancing guidelines for spectators. Advance notification to host school administration is required.
- Post-Game
 - o Adequate time should be provided between games to allow for social distancing of teams and spectators during entry/exit in multi-team and multigame settings.
- Between games

o Cleaning of the court, benches, scorer's table and playing surface areas takes place.

Concessions

o Concessions are not allowed for basketball games.

Training/Practice

Practices are limited to small group trainings in accordance with current EEA guidelines.

All cohorts must be more than 14 feet apart on the playing surface.

Players cannot share any personal equipment – shoes, towels, water bottles,

etc.

Basketballs and other instructional equipment used for warm ups/practices

must be cleaned before storing for next game/practice.

Other Considerations

Host schools are encouraged to optimize air exchange and/or filtration where possible such as opening windows.

Floor markings for desks/classroom settings can remain on the court.

To the extent possible, it is recommended that schools play only one opponent per week (home/away).

Virtual or live stream broadcast options are encouraged (i.e. NFHSNetwork.com)

Online ticket sales/paperless tickets should be utilized whenever possible to limit the handling of cash.

Ice Hockey Specific Modifications

General Game Requirements

Face Masks are required at all times in the facility and at all times while playing; Gaiters are permissible but must be multi-ply (**Gaiters are not permitted per Malden Catholic Task Force protocols**)

Before, during and after the contest, players, coaches, game officials, team personnel and game administration officials should wash and sanitize their hands as often as possible

At conclusion of contests, coaches and players will manage social distancing while departing benches

No cheerleading teams are permitted at ice hockey games

Team Benches and Personnel

Everyone must have their own beverage container that is not shared; Container must be labeled for each participant

Non-essential personnel at ice level and near participants throughout the contest must be limited.

Limit bench personnel to no more than 3 coaches and one athletic trainer; allow for social distancing of 6 feet or greater, teams must develop additional area(s) beyond the provided team bench for players to spread out for

water breaks, social distancing, and other needs. Team benches must expand to areas in the rink that allow players to use additional seating allocated for players and coaches (only) to adhere to the 6 feet spacing guidelines.

- Disinfect equipment and uniform after use.
- Hockey equipment bags must adhere to specified protocols listed under Personal Items and Gym Bag protocols listed in the Ice Hockey Sport Modifications. Most important are predetermined storage/placement locations within each facility for personal items and supplies.

Locker Rooms

Adhere to established EEA guidelines for locker rooms EEA document page 10.

“Locker rooms are closed and can only be accessed for toileting. Participants must wear-in/wear-out clothes or dress in the parking lot or other designated area.”

Game Officials

- Must wear a mask at all times per EEA document page 6.
- Electronic whistles are required
- Should plan to arrive at the facility dressed in uniform per EEA document page 12.
- If available, dressing facilities for game officials must be large enough for them to use social-distancing protocols and must be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized prior to arrival
- Gloves are permissible
- Do not share uniforms, towels, apparel, and equipment
- Must bring their own water bottles.
- Game officials must bring their own water bottles.

Game Modifications and Management

- Limitations on total players - 20 players per team total, down from 22. Rink design respective of social distancing may dictate total players that may participate in a contest.
- Captains must maintain social distancing of 6 feet when talking or conferring with a game official
- Game officials will maintain social distancing of 6 feet during the pre-game meeting with captains and head coaches.
- Warmup 5-7 minutes – During warm-up, all players must always maintain appropriate social distancing of 6 feet; no team/group gathering prior to, during or after warm-up; teams will maintain social distancing during warmups on each side of the ice; during warmups players will remain on the half of the ice they will defend
- Suspend pregame protocol of shaking hands during introductions/pregame meeting
- Penalty Box:

- o One person in the penalty box at a time, if another player must be in a designated “auxiliary box/location”, they must be social distanced either outside the penalty box or in the bench area as close to the penalty box as possible; when possible the second and or subsequent penalized players must move to the penalty box upon the exit of the previously penalized player
- o In the case that the penalty box is on the opposite side of the rink from the bench, the second and subsequent players penalized will serve it in a designated “auxiliary box/location” on the team bench/bench area and **CANNOT** come off the bench until the penalty is over
- Players lined up opposing each other must be 6 feet apart and face in the direction of the faceoff location
- Players preparing for the faceoff must setup 6 feet apart; referees will call-in participants for the puck drop
- Scrum:
 - o Only one defensive and one offensive player are permitted in any scrum along the boards; a third participant in any scrum will cause an immediate stoppage of play (whistle) by the official
 - o Officials will have the authority to stop play (whistle) if a scrum (in any area of the ice) is prolonged greater than 5 seconds
- Suspend postgame protocol of shaking hands

Swimming & Diving Specific Modifications

All current EEA, MIAA and DESE guidance pertaining to the sport of swimming and diving will be adhered to throughout the Winter 2020-21 season. Any state Mandated Safety Standards for Public and Semi-Public Pools will be incorporated into individual swimming and diving team practices and dual meet planning. Local Boards of Health and individual facilities may impose additional standards as well as restrictions and will be the final authority for onsite usage rules for team practices/meets.

Guidelines & Best Practices for High School Dual Meets

- Only dual meet in person competition will be permitted.
- The host team will be required to contact the visiting school at least 48 hours in advance of the meet to review any facility restrictions in terms of spectators, number of athletes who can compete, warm up protocols, availability of locker rooms as well as the amount of time available to conduct the meet.
- Masks will be worn by all coaches, officials, timers, table workers, athletes when not competing/warming up.
- Swimmers can un-mask as they step onto the starting block. Masks will be placed in a plastic zip lock bag and will be available at the point of exit after they race.
- Hand sanitizer must be provided at the scorer's table.
- Various procedures, rules and disqualification notices require interaction between officials, coaches, and athletes. Alternative methods of communication can include utilization of electronic whistles, PA system, hand signals and/or written communication.
- Virtual meets will be allowed. Teams must compete either on the same day or within 1 day of each other.

General Requirements

Team Seating and Lane Selection

o Teams will sit on opposite sides of the pool whenever possible and remain in this area throughout the meet.

o The visiting team will have a choice of either lanes 1 – 3 or 4 – 6 for competition. (Note this is a change from the traditional even/odd lane selection for competition.)

Spacing for Officials

o 6 foot spacing is recommended to allow officials to work both sides of the pool during a meet.

Warm-ups

o Depending on the time available and number of swimmers allowed per lane, teams may have to adjust within the normal warm-up period to accommodate as many athletes as possible (i.e. 2 – 15 min., 3 – 10 min. 4 – 7min. blocks etc.)

Warm Down

o At the conclusion of each race all swimmers (including anchor leg of relays) must swim to the other end of the pool and exit from this location. This will supplement warm-ups and eliminate any additional congestion in the starting area while times are being collected and preparations for the next race are underway.

o Swimmers participating on the first three legs of relays will depart the starting area immediately after finishing.

Submission of Entries NFHS 5 – 2

o To minimize multiple handling of paper entries and/or if electronic entries are not feasible, alternative submission methods must be designed to reduce face to face interactions.

o One method will be to submit all entries on a single sheet of paper to the scorer's table at the start of the meet with the understanding that a change can be made at any time prior to the long whistle signaling the start of an event.

o Where/how to/when entries are submitted should be a discussion item during the coaches' phone conference and reviewed again in the pre contest meeting with head coaches and an official.

Diving

o To streamline the meet, diving will be the first event per NFHS 5-2a with a 10 minute in water break provided where the event would normally be held.

o The number of exhibition divers expecting to compete should be discussed in the pre meet coaches phone conversation and reviewed again in the pre contest meeting with head coaches and an official.

During Races

o Athletes and team personnel must wear masks and remain on their respective side of the pool while all races are in progress.

o No cheering will be allowed on the pool deck.

Lap Counting

o Per NFHS 2-7 art.6 and 3-4 only one person per team is allowed behind the lane to serve as a counter for the 500 yd Freestyle event.

o Hand sanitizer will be provided, and each lap counter is required to clean their hands as well as wipe down their counting devices at the conclusion of the race.

Sportsmanship

o All post-race and post-meet handshakes/slaps/fist bumps have been eliminated.

Officials and Meet Admin Personnel

Pre-Meet Conference

o Officials will hold the required pre-meet conference with just one member of each coaching staff, and a separate pre-meet captains' meeting with just one representative from each team.

End of Race Times

o At the conclusion of each race, timers will remain behind their respective lane, and one of the two meet officials will record the individual time, maintaining social distancing of 6 feet. The other official will check in with the scoring table after each event.

Relay Guidance

o All relay "take off" judging will be performed from the sides of the pool.

o Relay swimmers will be spaced 3–6' apart from each other behind their respective lanes if possible. If this type of spacing is not possible, the other relay participants will remain on their respective sidelines until it is appropriate for them to move in and swim their respective relay "leg".

o Swimmers competing on the first three relay legs will leave the starting area immediately after finishing.

o Only one relay grouping will be allowed in the area behind the blocks while relay events are being conducted.

Diving Guidance

o The diving event might also require alternative methods of submitting entries and movement of non-electronic information might be required.

o Recommendations would include 6 feet between individuals seated at the scorer's table/desk.

o Creating a 6-foot space between judges and having at least one judge sit on the opposite side of the pool.

Post-Meet Responsibilities and Additional Information

All "high touch" surface areas must be cleaned at the conclusion of each meet to include but not limited to team benches, scorer's table, pool ladders, diving board/handrails and starting blocks.

Activity organizers must ensure that individuals are not congregating in common areas or parking lots following practices or events.

If a team is unable to participate in the Winter 2020-21 season, they can send a request to their District Athletic Committee (DAC) to move to another season.

Sources:

MIAA COVID Task Force, http://www.miaa.net/contentm/easy_pages/view.php?sid=38&page_id=317

Sports Medicine: Return to Sports during COVID-19 Minimum Guidelines (High School) <https://www.upmc.com/-/media/upmc/services/sports-medicine/documents/return-to-play/high-school-athlete-guidelines-pdf.pdf?la=en>

NATA, National Athletic Trainers Association, COVID Resource Center, <https://www.nata.org/practice-patient-care/health-issues/covid-19-coronavirus>

Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Youth and Adult Amateur Sports Activities - Phase III <https://www.mass.gov/doc/safety-standards-for-youth-and-adult-amateur-sports-activities-phase-iii-step-1/download>

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) COVID Information and Resources, <http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/>

Malden Catholic Fall Re-Entry Guidelines,
<https://resources.finalseite.net/images/v1598634114/malden/kw0bwsm5i4uo20opyfhc/MCReopeningBrochure-Final3.pdf>