

2020 Aquinas Academy of Pittsburgh Athletics Health and Safety Plan

(updated August 26, 2020)

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented a number of unique challenges to sports worldwide. In accordance with regional guidelines and in keeping with the guidance from our school's COVID-19 Task Force, we are implementing the following plan to reduce the risk of exposure to students, coaches, and families while being able to return to play.

Participating in interscholastic athletics is a privilege at Aquinas Academy and it is vital that everyone involved work together to help adhere to the guidelines outlined in this document. It is the responsibility of the participating student-athletes, parents, coaches, etc. to follow these guidelines. Failure to follow these safety measures will jeopardize everyone's ability to participate.

The primary point of contact at Aquinas Academy for all athletic questions related to COVID-19 will be Jim Richthammer (724-444-0722 ext. 16 or richthammer@aquinas.pvt.k12.pa.us)

Social Distance, Face Coverings, and General Guidelines

Coaches will educate student-athletes on social distancing, proper hand washing and sanitizing, discourage athletes from touching their faces, and remind them of these guidelines as needed.

Face coverings (masks or shields) are required of coaching staff and adult personnel at all times when inside, and outside when social distancing cannot be maintained.

Athletes should bring a mask and wear it when social distancing cannot be maintained and when not participating in a workout. Face coverings are not required when actively working out.

Face coverings should cover both the mouth and nose. Individuals who cannot wear a mask due to a medical condition are exempted, but should maintain social distance.

All participants should maintain social distance whenever possible, including in the field of play, locker rooms, sidelines, benches, etc. During down time, athletes and coaches should also maintain social distancing.

Screening for COVID-19

If you are ill or think you are infected or otherwise exposed to someone diagnosed with COVID-19, **STAY AT HOME**. Exposure is defined as contact in close proximity of approximately 6 feet for at least 15 minutes.

Parents must perform daily screenings of student-athletes at home, checking for COVID-19 symptoms, including taking a daily temperature. If the athlete exhibits symptoms or have a temperature of 100.0 °F or higher, the athlete should not participate in the day's activities. Parents will be asked to sign a Certification of Daily Screening before their child(ren) can participate in athletic activities.

If an athlete begins to exhibit symptoms during an activity, coaches must isolate the athlete from others until he/she can leave the event. The athlete's parent/guardian will be contacted immediately so that arrangements can be made for the athlete to be picked up.

If infection with COVID-19 is suspected, we encourage you to contact your healthcare provider for medical advice. If your child tests positive for COVID-19, please be sure to indicate their participation in athletic activities as part of contact tracing. In that situation, or in a situation where your child has been exposed to COVID-19 through another contact, we request that you confidentially contact Jim Richthammer as soon as possible.

If an individual is diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual must provide written medical clearance from his/her healthcare provider before returning to organized athletic activities.

If an individual has been exposed to someone with a known COVID-19 diagnosis, the individual should refrain from play for 14 days after that exposure.

If an individual was tested for COVID-19, that individual should not return to play until a negative test result is received and the student is symptom-free for 24 hours.

If an individual is ill but is not diagnosed with COVID-19, that individual should not return to play until being symptom free for 24 hours.

Travel

If your family is planning to travel or has traveled at all, and especially if you have traveled via airplane or other forms of public transportation (i.e., you're not traveling in your personal vehicle) to a location designated as a "hot spot" by the PA Department of Health ([LINK](#)) ask yourself the following four questions upon your return home.

1. Did you practice essential health and safety protocols while traveling? Specifically, were you wearing a mask in public places, practicing social distancing, and frequently hand washing/sanitizing while avoiding touching your face?
2. While travelling, did you avoid large groups (>25 individuals) and/or if you were around larger groups, did you practice essential health and safety protocols including wearing a mask, frequent hand washing/sanitizing, and social distancing?
3. Are you free of COVID-19-like symptoms including a cough, fever, shortness of breath, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell, and body aches?
4. While traveling, did you avoid exposure/contact with any individual that was exhibiting COVID-19-like symptoms or that is positive or suspected for COVID-19? Exposure is defined as being within 6 feet of someone for 15 minutes or more without protective equipment (e.g., no mask).

If your answer to each question is “Yes,” then students can attend school and athletic events upon their return. Be sure to monitor your family members for COVID-19 symptoms for 14 days from the date of your return and be diligent about wearing face coverings consistently during those 14 days.

If your answer to any of the above questions is “No,” then please call the school office to speak with the nurse for a verbal assessment upon your return. Your student may be required to self-isolate for 14 days.

Athletic Event Requirements

All athletes, coaches, etc. must bring their own water and drinks to team activities. Team water coolers for sharing will not be provided and fixed water fountains have been disabled and replaced with water bottle fillers. Athletes will not be permitted to participate in the day’s activities without their own hydration container, since no other containers will be available.

Activities that increase the risk of exposure to saliva are not allowed, including chewing gum, spitting, licking fingers, etc.

Unnecessary physical contact should be limited, including shaking hands, fist bumps, high fives, huddles, etc. Social distance should be maintained whenever possible.

Athletic equipment should not be shared whenever possible, and if it must be shared (e.g. Field Hockey Goalie Pads), it must be properly sanitized between uses by coaches or their designee.

Concessions are suspended until further notice. Any snacks or team meals should be pre-packaged and served “grab-and-go” style.

Non-essential personnel are prohibited from athletic practices. Parents/guardians should not remain to spectate, nor congregate during pick-up or drop-off.

PIAA’s current regulations are that **spectators are not permitted at competitions**. We are exploring live-stream and video-on-demand options to allow parents and family to view athletic competitions remotely.

Facilities

High touch surfaces will be frequently disinfected. Other areas will be cleaned daily.

Occupancy signs will be posted on locker rooms. No more than 10 individuals should be in locker rooms at a time. No more than 5 individuals should be in other bathrooms at a time.

Showers in the locker rooms will be closed until further notice.

COVID-19 best practices reminders (maintain social distance, wash hands frequently, avoid touching one’s face) are posted throughout athletic facilities.

Transportation

Due to the strain on our resources this fall (e.g. field availability, bus capacity, availability of drivers, etc.), transportation to events, both practice and games, is not guaranteed this fall. When transportation will not be provided to students, parents will be notified in advance that they will need to coordinate transportation for the team.

When Aquinas Academy is providing transportation, students must wear face coverings, sit with siblings (if present), and maintain as much social distance as possible.

Schedule Changes

Some of our typical competitors have decided, or may decide, to not participate in external competitions this fall. For this reason, there will be fewer competitions than a normal season. In addition, due to the strain on our resources, especially field availability, there may be fewer practices than is typical. We ask that you be as patient and cheerful as you can be in this ever-changing environment!