



# Athletes for the Cross

## COVID-19 Protocol Information

### Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented athletics across the world with a myriad of challenges. The COVID-19 virus is a highly contagious illness that primarily attacks the upper respiratory system. The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages. Research from the Centers for Disease Control, among others, has found that while children do get infected by COVID-19, relatively few children with COVID-19 are hospitalized. However, some severe outcomes have been reported in children, and a child with a mild or even asymptomatic case of COVID-19 can spread the infection to others who may be far more vulnerable. While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests there are many steps organizations can take to reduce the risks to students, coaches, and their families.

Athletes for the Cross (AFC) will take the necessary precautions and recommendations from multiple sources, including:

- Federal Government and Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
- State Government and PA Department of Health (PADOH)
- Individual sport governing bodies
- Bethany Church

AFC understands that the knowledge regarding COVID-19 is constantly changing as new information and treatments become available. These recommendations will be adjusted as needed in order to decrease the risk of exposure for our participants, coaches, and families.

### DISCLAIMER

**Playing sports with and against other individuals, in any capacity during this time, holds an inherent risk of a person becoming infected and potentially infecting other individuals, such as their household members. Please consider this risk when allowing your child to participate in organized sports. AFC will implement procedures to reduce the risk and prevent the spread. However, the risk still exists.**

**All AFC sports (basketball, flag football, soccer, men's softball) are considered high-frequency-of-contact sports. These sports involve close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, and high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants.**

### Primary Point of Contact

The AFC Director is the primary point of contact for all athletic activity questions regarding COVID-19.

### General Protocol

1. Pre-participation education (before the season and in-season)
  - All athletes, coaches, and families must review:
    - CDC's "Consideration for Youth Sports"  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html>

- PA Governor’s “Guidance for All Sports to Operate During the COVID-19 Disaster Emergency to Ensure the Safety and Health of Employees, Athletes, and the Public”.  
<https://www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/sports-guidance/>
  - All participants work together to monitor developments with local authorities regarding updates to the above information and its impact on this protocol.
2. Pre-participation screening (before every AFC event)
- A pre-participation screening is required at EACH AFC activity (e. g., practice, game, or other event).
  - Parents must conduct their own health assessments of their players prior to arriving at the activity. This includes taking temperatures, and discussing all COVID-19 symptoms.
  - On arrival, all participants will undergo a screening, in the presence of the parent/guardian/caregiver:
    - Each individual must wear a mask or face covering until screening is complete and successful.
    - The screening is conducted by the coach, under supervision of the corresponding sport coordinator and/or AFC Director, as appropriate.
    - The screening includes the temperature check, the discussion of COVID-19 symptoms, , and confirming known quarantine requirements.
    - Results of the screening are recorded and are reported to the AFC Director.
    - Participants may NOT enter early! They must be screened first! After screening, they must go to their designated location as communicated by the coach.
  - Any participant (coach, player, etc.) who is sick must STAY HOME and notify the coach. The coach must notify the AFC Director.
3. Masks and social distancing (all AFC events)
- NOTE: Information in this section is subject to change based on the latest recommendations and requirements.*
- Masks (face coverings) are required of all participants (e. g., coaches, athletes, game officials), unless doing so jeopardizes their health.
    - Athletes may remove masks only while practicing or competing.
    - Coaches are expected to wear masks at all times.
    - Game officials are expected to wear masks unless doing so restricts their ability to perform their duty.
  - Social distancing
    - Coaches are encouraged to achieve social distancing through increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups.
    - Participants must maintain appropriate social distancing at all times possible including in the field of play, sidelines/benches, etc.
    - Limit team huddles. Use only when absolutely necessary.
    - No handshakes, high-fives, fist bumps, or unnecessary contact at any time.
4. Water bottles/hydration/nutrition
- All participants MUST provide their own water bottle for hydration. Water bottles must not be shared. Water bottles must be clearly labeled with the athlete’s name and must be cleaned thoroughly between events.
  - There will be NO EATING at AFC events. Students should not bring any food or snacks.
  - Use of water coolers/hydration stations are not permitted.

## 5. Cleaning and Hygiene

- All participants are reminded to wash hands frequently (20 seconds with warm water and soap), or use hand sanitizer prior to each event, and during the event as needed/appropriate. Hand sanitizer will be available for use as resources allow.
- All participants are reminded to avoid touching the face (especially eyes/nose/mouth), to cough/sneeze in elbow, and to immediately re-sanitize after doing so.
- AFC will make every effort to intensify cleaning and disinfection at all venues/facilities.
- Equipment
  - All equipment used during activities should be disinfected before and after each event and between each use whenever feasible.
  - Equipment is to be used by one participant, when feasible, and limit sharing.
  - All clothing worn during athletic activity (including pinnies) must be washed after use and cannot be shared.
  - Eliminate the use of non-essential equipment where possible.

## 6. Spectators

- Unnecessary individuals should not be present at AFC activities (e. g., non-participating coaches, non-participating children, etc.)
- During workouts/practices:
  - Parents, guardians, and caregivers should remain in their cars.
  - Exceptions may be made, on a case-by-case basis, for activities involving younger children.
  - NO congregating in the parking lot, on the field or in facilities.
- During competitions:
  - Parents/spectators must practice social distancing and must wear masks/face covering (unless doing so jeopardizes their health)
  - Capacity limits will be based on all factors (i.e. legal requirements, facility capacity size, sport, number of spectators, etc.) to promote social distancing.

## Sport-specific Protocols

Each AFC sport may require the implementation of additional practices to promote player health and safety and/or to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

One example is a phased startup approach.

- Phase 1 (2-3 weeks) – No-contact skills session, limited to 10 participants/half of a team
- Phase 2 (2-3 weeks) – No contact skills session, limited to one team
- Phase 3 (2-3 weeks) – Introduction of full contact, scrimmages between AFC teams
- Phase 4 – League play

Another example is to implement scheduling of scrimmages/games within our home geographical area, avoiding out-of-town travel and/or out-of-town teams coming to play at AFC.

## Positive COVID-19 Cases

1. If an individual receives a positive COVID-19 diagnosis:
  - *In accordance with state and local privacy and confidentiality laws and regulations, youth sports organizations should notify proper authorities.*
  - Family immediately notifies the coach.

- Key information includes date of first symptoms, and date of test.
  - Coach immediately notifies the Sport Coordinator and AFC Director.
  - AFC Director confirms that public health authority has been notified, and contact tracing activity begins:
    - Notification and quarantine (to affected participants and families) will be based on the latest CDC recommendations.
    - Due to the high-contact nature of AFC sports, it is possible that the entire team, opposing team, and game officials may be quarantined for up to 14 days (the starting point is 48 hours before the onset of symptoms).
2. An individual with a positive COVID-19 diagnosis can return to play only after presenting written clearance from a medical professional.

# Appendix A: PA Screening Tool

<https://www.education.pa.gov/Schools/safeschools/emergencyplanning/COVID-19/SchoolReopeningGuidance/ReopeningPreKto12/PublicHealthGuidance/Pages/default.aspx>

Complete Daily Prior to School/Work\*

Employee or Student Name:

Assigned Class/Group:

Temperature:

Are you/is the student taking any medication to treat or reduce a fever such as Ibuprofen (i.e. Advil, Motrin) or Acetaminophen (Tylenol)?

Are you/is the student experiencing any of the following?

Group A 1 or more symptoms	Group B 2 or more symptoms
Fever (100.4 or higher) Cough Shortness of breath Difficulty breathing	Sore throat Runny nose/congestion Chills New lack of smell or taste Muscle pain Nausea or Vomiting Headache Diarrhea

**Stay home if, you or the student:**

- Have one or more symptoms in Group A **OR**
- Have two or more symptoms in Group B **OR**
- Are taking fever reducing medication.

*\*May be utilized as a screening tool for both at home and on-site screening practices.*

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