**Girls Basketball COVID-19 Program Plan**

Holmen School District and the Co-curricular Department understands the difficult situation that COVID-19 has presented to our students and families. It is important that when we return to athletics that we take the utmost care and direction to make sure that our athletes are able to participate in organized activities safely. While COVID-19 has made our preparations vastly different than in years past, we understand the need for our students to participate in a safe and controlled environment that is being overseen by adults. This document is intended to provide student program participants and their parents/guardians with information that will assist in making an informed decision regarding the choice to voluntarily participate in our school sponsored co-curricular activities. While our objective is to provide the safest possible co-curricular options for students, the District warns student participants and their parents/guardians that the risk of being exposed and/or contracting COVID-19/Coronavirus or other communicable diseases cannot be eliminated.

* Parents/guardians who chose to allow their child(ren) to participate in these voluntary programs are asked to:
  + consult their personal family physician(s) for health guidance including social/emotional wellbeing and maturity level,
  + inform coaches in writing of any health concerns and physician recommendation for participation,
  + review with their child(ren) CDC and local health department guidelines, as well as the contents of this document,
  + and discuss with their child the importance of following all safety directives given by coaches/advisors, as well as assess if their child(ren) will comply with directives given by coaches/advisors in consideration if the choice to participate is appropriate for their child(ren).

Program participants should note that guidance may result in the closing of any or all of the programs based on changing community health status, directives from the La Crosse County Health Department or other government authorities, or as directed by District administration.

**COVID Basics**

• The foundations of reducing risk should always be kept in mind:

o Avoid participation and attendance if sick (fever and/or symptoms) – always discuss with your primary care provider if questions or concerns.

o Wear a cloth mask or buff to reduce spread of your aerosol to others (the mask captures some of your aerosol and reduces transmission to other people).

▪ Masks must be worn indoors according to the governor’s mandate while practicing or playing. Cloth masks are safe with exercise, they do not decrease oxygen levels, increase carbon dioxide levels, significantly restrict airflow, or cause heat illness. They will take time to get used to, as they can be uncomfortable and increase the perceived effort of exercise.

▪. Athletes not participating should wear a mask.

▪ Coaches and sideline personnel should wear masks at all times.

o Social distancing of at least 6 feet when not participating (sideline, waiting for turn, etc.)

▪ Continue to train in smaller “pods” of athletes to reduce exposure risk.

▪ “Close contact” is based on the World Health Organization (WHO) recommendation that 15+ minutes of close (within 6 feet) exposure to another increases risk of transmission.

o Continue to emphasize hygiene.

▪ Hand sanitization/cleaning frequently (every time on and off court) – each athlete should be encouraged to have their own water bottle.

▪ Do not share water or food/snacks.

▪ Minimize shared equipment as much as possible and sanitize that equipment frequently.

**WHAT IF AN ATHLETE IS SICK OR EXPOSED**

1. Any student-athlete that has symptoms and/or fever should not participate in any activity (meetings, practice,competition) and begin self-quarantine immediately.
   1. Ensure that student-athletes with a **positive COVID test** (even if no symptoms) do not return to participation in training or competition until:
      1. At least 10 days have passed since positive test; AND
      2. No fever (fever is temp of 100.4°F or more) without the use of fever-reducing medicine for at least 24 hours; AND
      3. COVID symptoms (for example, cough, shortness of breath, etc.) have improved;
      4. Athletes may not return earlier if negative follow-up testing (cannot test out of isolation).
   2. Ensure that student-athletes with **probable COVID** (symptoms of COVID – refer to symptom chart – but not tested), not be allowed to participate in any training or event until:
      1. At least 10 days have passed since onset of symptoms; AND
      2. No fever (fever is temp of 100.4°F or more) without the use of fever-reducing medicine for at least 24 hours; AND
      3. COVID symptoms (for example, cough, shortness of breath, etc.) have improved.
2. Any student-athlete that has “close contact” (teammate, household, classroom, work, girlfriend/boyfriend, friend –someone with over 15 minutes of exposure within 6 feet) should begin self-quarantine immediately.
   1. If the student-athlete that was exposed previously had COVID (with a hard copy positive test) in the last 3 months,then there is no need to continue self-quarantine restrictions.
   2. If the student-athlete that was exposed previously had probable COVID (illness but not tested) in the last 3 months, then must continue with self-quarantine restrictions described below.
   3. “Close contact” to an individual with a positive COVID test, student-athletes should not return until:
      1. They have waited 14 days from last exposure to the infected person; AND
         1. This is a longer period of time than positive COVID test time due to the combination of exposure, virus incubation and elimination from the body. This is similar to influenza, which is why if influenza is caught early enough flu medications may be helpful, but if influenza is caught too late in the course then flu medications are not helpful.
      2. Have no fever without use of fever-reducing medications; AND
      3. No COVID symptoms (for example, cough, shortness of breath, etc.)
      4. Athletes may not return earlier if negative follow-up testing (cannot test out of quarantine).
         1. In rare instances where the infected positive exposure is a family member with prolonged illness, then discussion and medical clearance with health care providers can be individually obtained and reviewed.
3. Athletes may decondition during their quarantine and may require additional time to get back to full speed.

**RULE CONSIDERATIONS**

Pregame Protocol (2019-2020 NFHS Officials Manual, page 16, 1.8; NFHS Basketball Rule Book – 3-4-5)

• Limit attendees to the referee and the head coach from each team with each coach standing 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.

• Suspend handshakes prior to and following the Pregame Conference.

Team Benches (1-13-1)

• Limit the number of bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet or greater.

• Ideally, place team benches opposite the spectator seating with no spectators behind the team benches. However, if spectator seating must occur behind the bench, ensure there is at least 6 feet of separation.

• Additional chairs or rows may be utilized to allow bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet or greater.

• Create separation between the team bench and spectator seating behind the bench.

• Limit contact between players when substituting.

• Personnel not in the game should adhere to any required local/state face covering requirements.

Officials Table (2-1-3)

• The host should sanitize the table before the game and at half time.

• Place officials table sufficiently away from the sideline to allow for additional space for substitutes.

• 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 scorers, statisticians, media, etc.) may not be deemed essential personnel and consider an alternate location for them.

• Table personnel should adhere to any required local/state face covering requirements.

**EQUIPMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

Equipment and Accessories (Rule 4-1)

• Ball given to officials in the locker room, where it is sanitized as recommended by the ball manufacturer and not used for warmups.

• The host school should ensure that the ball is sanitized during time-outs and between quarters.

• Sanitizer should be provided by the host team at the table.

• Cloth face coverings are permissible for players.

• Consider requiring coaching staff and other bench personnel to wear face coverings while on the bench. Masks

• Masks must be worn according to the governor’s mandate upon arrival to the meet venue and until the official warm-ups have started. Face coverings are strongly recommended in all settings where people may come in contact with others, including outdoors when maintaining physical distance is not possible.

o Coaches, team personnel and other meet personnel should wear masks at all times, and should be encouraged to follow social distancing guidelines.

o Spectators should be strongly encouraged to wear masks and are expected to follow social distancing guidelines.

o Athletes may use “buffs” or neck gaiters. Competitors may find that it is easier for them to mask-up when they feel they need to, and pull it back down without it dropping on the ground. **Other Equipment**

• Towels – Athletes should bring their own towel, if needed and they should be washed after each match.

• Warm-up equipment must not be shared among athletes.

• Basketballs will be sanitized after use during water break.

**Other Hygiene Considerations**

• There should be no shared athletic equipment. Any equipment that is used should be cleaned and disinfected prior to and immediately following the meet. Be responsible for your own supplies.

• Athletes, coaches, and officials are encouraged to provide their own hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) and/or sanitizing wipes and use frequently.

• Emphasize to avoid touching the face throughout practice and competition.

• Spitting/Nose Clearing/Coughing – All athletes and coaches are prohibited from spitting/nose clearing and must cover coughs.

• If a player puts their hands/fingers in their mouth or spits on their hands, the event must be stopped and the player must sanitize their hands and/or any equipment touched. Coaches should work to discourage these habits.

• Athletes, coaches and staff should avoid touching doors, benches or other schools’ equipment.

• Players will be encouraged to not shower at the school after practice or event..If they do use the shower facilities they must do so in their cohorts and maintain social distancing when in the locker rooms or shower area.

**PRACTICE CONSIDERATIONS**

**Pre-Workout/Pre-Contest Screening:**

• Athletes and coaches should check their temperature at home before attending practices or games. If a student-athlete or a coaching staff member has a temperature of 100.4 degrees or above, they should not attend practices or games.

• Daily screening of students [Questions](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1QB4GLSPSsXmGtHPRCzXi4a9BbhElX2QiYFaYekowf8Q/edit)

• What if the athlete is sick or exposed? – See above section.

• A record should be kept of all individuals present at team activities.

• Vulnerable individuals can resume public interactions, but should practice social distancing, minimizing exposure to social settings where distancing may not be practical, unless precautionary measures are observed.

**COVID-19 Coach:**

• Designate a coach to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns.

• COVID-19 Coach Responsibilities:

* 1. Daily attendance of all athletes
  2. Isolates any student with symptomes
  3. Contacts parents for ASAP pickup
  4. Follows up with athlete/parents on whether their symptoms remain and/or if a positive COVID test occurred
  5. Helps with contact tracing through “close contact” identification if a positive COVID case has been discovered
  6. Maintains communication with athlete and parents on when the student can return and be a resource for questions they may have

• All coaches, staff, officials, and families should know who this person is and how to contact them.

• Train coaches, officials, and staff on all safety protocols. Conduct training virtually, or ensure that social distancing is maintained during training.

**Social distancing:**

• Practice – Coaches are responsible for ensuring social distancing is maintained between players as much as possible. This means additional spacing between players while playing, chatting, changing drills so that players remain spaced out, and no congregating of players while waiting a turn. Workouts should be conducted in ‘pods’ of students, with the same 10-15 students always working out together. This ensures more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.

• Hydration – All students shall bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.

o Due to the importance of hydration during practice, athletes should not be allowed to work out if they do not have access to their own water bottle.

o Water cows, water trough, water fountains, etc. should not be utilized.

○ Water refill stations should be cleaned/disinfected frequently.

• Gathering sizes up to 50 when inside or outside

• Examples of drills/activities that can be done to reduce exposure, which involve close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, and high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants

* + 1. Intra-squad scrimmage
    2. We will be doing more individual drilling, 2 on 2, 3 on 3, 4 on 4.

**Transportation Guidelines**

• We will travel to other areas not having significantly higher county 7-Day Rolling Average for Positive Case Rate per 100,000 than La Crosse County.

• Decisions to compete will also be made from the determination of the spread of the virus in the school and sports program we are planning on competing against.

• Students would need to sit a maximum of 2 students a seat when being transported (56 riders per bus)

• Windows should be allowed to be lowered when appropriate to allow fresh air to flow through the bus

• Masks must be worn by all riders

• The bus driver would be responsible for disinfecting the bus before students entered the bus

**COMPETITION CONSIDERATIONS**

* At all levels 9-12 the following steps would be taken
  + **Pre Game Protocol**
    - Reminder to members of the team to follow all guidelines laid out.
  + **Game Equipment**
    - Before all games balls will be sanitized by a designated person wearing gloves.
    - Backboards will be sanitized before all games, and again at halftime warm-ups
    - Prior to halftime warm-ups, basketballs will be sanitized by the same designated person wearing gloves.
    - During gameplay, any time outs game ball will be sanitized at scorers table by designated person wearing gloves
  + **Bench Protocol**
    - Coaching Staff will consist of Head Coach and Varsity Assistant on bench.
      * Coaches will use masks or face coverings at all times unless communicating with players on the court.
      * Other coaches will be on the bleachers responsible for ensuring COVID-19 protocols.
    - 8 Guys on the bench with 2 chairs between each player, 4 guys behind on the bleachers for the Home & Away Bench
      * 6’ Social Distance at all times
  + **Huddle Protocol**
    - 5 Players playing in the game will sit with 2 chairs between each player
    - Coaches will be 6’ from players
    - No “Hands in” or team breakdowns before entering game again
    - We will have hand sanitizer for each player playing
      * Players will be advised to sanitize hands upon subbing out of the game
  + **Postgame Protocol**
    - Both teams will follow WIAA guidelines
    - After postgame team meeting players will be required to take home all equipment and clean it.

**WIAA Event Accountability**

• A [tracing sheet](https://www.wiaawi.org/Portals/0/PDF/Health/Covid/Contact-Symptom-Form.pdf) and [verification form](https://www.wiaawi.org/Portals/0/PDF/Health/Covid/WIAA-Fall-Culminating-Event-Req-Verification.pdf) shall be kept of all individuals traveling with the team to the contest verifying that the traveling party has been prescreened that day before departure.

• When departing for the contest, coaches take their tracing sheet and verification form signed by the coach and athletic director acknowledging the tracing sheet’s accuracy. If a coach cannot, or does not produce the tracing sheet when verification is requested, it shall be reported to the WIAA office by the opposing coach.

**Competition Schedule**

• Consider only local, single opponent, single day competitions.

• Consider scheduling adjustments to reduce the number of events, duration and/or participants present.

• All personnel and spectators should follow social distancing guidelines.

• Arrange courts to ensure proper social distancing of all participants and event workers. Consider eliminating side by side courts. Pre- and Post-Game Ceremony

• Suspend the pre-game introduction handshakes.

• Suspend post-game protocol of shaking hands.

**Half-time**

• Consider suspending half-time shows. If cheer and dance perform, wear masks and socially distance.

• Suspend youth and middle school demonstrations and games.

**Throw-in**

• Officials may stand 6 feet or greater away from a 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.

Jump Ball

• Eliminate the jump ball and award the ball to the visiting team the first alternating possession for the throw in.

• To start an overtime period, use a coin toss to determine which team is awarded the ball. **Social Distancing**

• Warm-ups/stretching – Maintaining social distance between athletes.

• Congregating of athletes and/or coaches – Discourage congregating upon arrival to the event, prior to warm-ups, and immediately following the game.

• Huddles – Social distancing to be maintained, as much as possible, when the coach is communicating with the entire team, or in smaller groups.

• Elimination of Handshakes – Teams may find other respectful ways to acknowledge each other before or after a competition, while maintaining social distancing.

• National Anthem – Align team members in a manner that allows them to maintain social distance from others.

• Interaction with Officials – Coaches and officials should maintain social distance when interacting with an official or any other event worker. Wearing a face mask is strongly encouraged.

• Allow only essential personnel in the competition area. These are defined as athletes, coaches, medical personnel/trainers and officials. All others (i.e., managers, photographers, media, etc.) are considered non-essential personnel and are not be to on the court area. Hydration

• All team personnel shall bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared. **Spectators**

•Since the La Crosse County’s recommendation is to reduce the number of spectators to 25% of the capacity of the indoor facility or 50 people, whichever is less we will only be allowing immediate family of the home participants for the level competing

•Use each school district’s county 7 Day Rolling Average for Positive COVID-19 cases to determine in fans (if allowed) from the opposing team will be allowed to attend (must be equal to or lower than the La Crosse County

•Use of a contract tracing sheet for spectators

•Separate spectator flow patterns to minimize contact between home and away spectators

•Designate separate home and away spectator bathrooms

•All spectators are required to wear a face mask

•Limit the seating of spectators to one side of gym

•Social distance family groups by a minimum of 6 feet in the bleachers

•Sanitize commonly touched hard surfaces (door handles, handrails, ect.)

•Announcement reminders for spectators to wear mask and social distance