**Swimming and Diving 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 may wear a mask while participating in exertion, but it is not required. 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 field) – 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.

**EQUIPMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

**Pool Facilities**

• Increase water sanitation level, i.e., keep chlorine closer to 2.0 PPM.

• Eliminate the use of low ventilated spaces and rooms that prevent social distancing, such as locker rooms and small dryland rooms.

• Eliminate the use of locker rooms whenever reasonable.

**Locker Rooms**

• To minimize the use of locker rooms, competitors should arrive wearing their competition swimming suits. For all practices and home competitions, please limit the use of the locker rooms by coming to the facilities already suited up.

**Training Equipment**

• Swimmers/Divers should use their own training equipment. Sanitize after each use.

**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.

• Swimmers and divers are not required to wear cloth face coverings while swimming. They should wear face coverings up until stepping onto the blocks and after they exit the water.

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

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

**Other Equipment**

• Watches, clip boards and lap-counters should be sanitized after each use.

• Do not share uniforms, towels, apparel or equipment.

• Touchpads should be sanitized periodically while out of the water utilizing EPA-registered disinfectants. Diving boards and backstroke flags should be sanitized periodically.

• Any equipment provided by our facilities will be washed/sanitized after each practice/competition. Personal equipment should be washed after each practice.

**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.

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

• During practices, athletes should stay within their own lane unless instructed to do otherwise by a coach.

 **General Reminders for Athletes**

• Personal Items – It is recommended that each athlete bring their own gym bag for personal items. Gym bags should be placed in a predetermined area 6 feet apart for the duration of the event. No shared clothing/shoes.

• Athletes are encouraged to provide their own hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) and use frequently – before and after each event or rotation and when entering into or leaving the competition area.

• Water bottle – All athletes shall bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared. • Tell coaches immediately when you are not feeling well.

**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.

• What if 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.

• For practices, it is asked that all athletes arrive at the YMCA with their practice suit already on.

**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 5-10 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. Circle swimming will be used to ensure the safety of our athletes. This means that athletes will complete the same workouts but will start from opposite ends of the pool.

**Transportation Guidelines**

• We will travel to other areas not having a 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**

* During competition, masks will be worn at all times other than an athletes events. We will follow COVID guidelines and mask wearing policies up until an athlete goes behind the blocks. The athletes will not have to put the mask back on until the race is completed and they have regained their breath.

**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 Structure**

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

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

• Consider dual or triangular meets only.

• All personnel and spectators should follow social distancing guidelines.

**On Deck During Meets**

• Only essential personnel are permitted on the deck. These are defined as swimmers/divers, coaches, athletic trainers, lifeguards and officials. Authorized timers, recorders, runners, computer operators necessary to conduct competition are essential.

• All others, (i.e., team managers, video people, media photographers, family members, non-competing students, etc.) are considered non-essential personnel and should remain in the gallery seating area (when present) and/or must remain outside the deck area.

• All personnel and spectators should follow social distancing guidelines.

**Coach Conferences**

• Coaches should limit the number of individuals in a conference and/or huddle to those who must be in close proximity for these discussions. All individuals involved in the conference should wear a mask.

**Pre-meet Conference**

• Limit attendees to one official, the head coach from each team, and a single captain from each team, or speak with the team representatives in a separate meeting.

• All individuals must wear a mask and follow social distancing guidelines while performing all pre-meet responsibilities.

• Use of headsets with other crew members (if applicable).

• Script the conference to ensure consistency with both teams.

• The location of the pre-meet conference should be in an isolated area with plenty of space.

• Encourage bench personnel to follow social distancing guidelines.

• Maintain social distancing between the substitute, officials and/or teammate(s) by encouraging substitutions to occur closer to the area designated for substituting.

**Scoring Table**

• Limited to essential personnel which includes announcer, scorer and computer software operator – all individuals wear masks.

• Space at the table may limit the number allowed at the scoring table in following social distancing guidelines.

**Social Distancing**

• Coaches are responsible for ensuring social distancing is maintained between athletes and team personnel as much as possible.

• Consider using tape or cones to mark spacing between swimmers/divers while out of the pool. • Teams/individuals shall NOT exchange handshakes before, during, or following the practice or competition.

• Follow USA Swimming guidelines and encourage social distancing to reduce congregation of swimmers when in the pool.

• Social distancing for swimmers while waiting for their event should be enforced (see USA Swimming/Diving Charts).

**Awards & Post-game Ceremony**

• Suspend award ceremonies – awards may be given to coaches wrapped in packaging. **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