

# Seymour Soccer Association Inc.

COVID-19 Safe Return to Play Policy



April 2021

# Introduction

- The goal of this protocol is to ensure the health and safety of all players, coaches, essential personnel and volunteers during their return to soccer
- All training and games will adhere to government/CJSA guidelines
- This protocol is a live document and subject to change with local, state and government updates
- Seymour Soccer Association (SSA) will regularly review, implement and risk assess the chance of COVID-19 based on local, state and federal guidelines
- Seymour Soccer Association will hold regular de-briefings with coaches, players and parents throughout the soccer season.

Our season is about the kids and their ability to return to the field. It requires everyone to follow these policies to help ensure their safety and well-being so that we can have a complete season.



## Per the NVHD

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- We are required to follow the exposure and quarantining policies of Seymour School System.
- If a player is required to quarantine at home, then that also includes practice and games
- If a player lives in a household with an individual who tested positive for COVID 19 - they are required to quarantine from soccer per the Seymour School System policy
- If a player is exposed to someone with COVID, you must inform your coach/SSA



# Before Stepping Foot on a Playing Field

- Parents/Guardians are required to assess players for COVID-19 Symptoms. If a player has any symptoms, regardless if a fever is present, the player should not attend practice or the game.
- Make sure the player has:
  - Bag
  - Shin Guards
  - Ball
  - Mask
  - Hand Sanitizer
  - Goalie Equipment – if applicable

# Key Information

- Any SSA training events in Seymour will have these guidelines to follow. For training events run by Vale/AFC or other organizations, Return to Play guidelines will be followed, in accordance to Vale/AFC's and SSA policies.
- No snacks at half-time or after games snacks are permitted this season.
- Spectators must always wear a mask at all times. IF health reasons prohibit mask wearing, do not enter the field of play or be near other spectators. Watch the game or practice from the safety of your car.
- Players must arrive and leave the field wearing a mask and wear at all times except when on the field of play. Players will not be playing masks.
- Spectators will not be allowed to attend Travel team practice.
- Only 1 parent/guardian per player can attend a game – provided proper social distancing is maintained and a mask is worn.
- Spectators must sit on a hash mark on the side of the field.
- Travel Team Coaches and Managers must make sure all our policies are forwarded to visiting teams. Visiting teams are expected to adhere to SSA Policies.



# Vaccinated Individuals

- Masks must be worn and social distancing must be maintained regardless of vaccination status.
- Our goal is to reduce the risk of a player being exposed to the COVID virus at a minimum. At this time, individuals who are vaccinated but come in contact with someone with COVID-19 must not enter the practice/playing field for 10 days from last exposure.



# Practice Plans

- Travel training sessions not to exceed 90 minutes.
- In-House training sessions not to exceed 60 minutes
- The maximum number of players/coaches is 1 coach to 12 players
- If there are training sessions at the TSA facility in Seymour will follow the guidelines that TSA has implemented for individuals entering their facility
- Prior to season, meetings with coaches will occur to discuss all practice plans and rules to follow for upcoming season



# Practice Sessions

- Seymour will utilize soccer fields at Gary Park, Matthies Field, Seymour High School and Seymour Middle School.
- The club will designate training areas for teams practicing to ensure social distancing, and ensure small group practices
- Contact kept to a minimum
- Players and coaches to practice coughing and sneezing etiquette
- All meetings taking place on the field and should adhere to social distancing rules
- All parents/guardians should remain in their cars during practice. One parent is allowed to sit on the sidelines for IN-HOUSE PRACTICE ONLY.
- Coaches will train the same athletes. No players will be allowed to train with different teams within the club to limit contact.
- Masks will be worn by players, coaches and managers at all times. Players do not have to have to wear masks while playing. Coaches may remove their masks when coaching provided they are not near players or other coaches.



# Travel Coach Responsibilities

- Ensure health and safety of all players and keep a log of all players that attend each session.
- Before each activity coach to designate area for players belongings that will be kept 6 feet apart
- Before each practice, coach to ask players how they are feeling. If any player appears to have symptoms present, athlete and athlete's parent/guardian should be instructed to go home and contact healthcare provider
- All state and local health protocols always followed to ensure social distancing
- Only coach can handle training equipment
- Coach to wear face mask when not actively coaching or when huddles with players.
- Maintain social distance requirements for players and remind players to wear masks when on the sidelines, not actively playing or practicing.
- Coaches will maintain 6 feet distance with all players when at all possible
- Ensure Visiting teams know SSA policies and understand they are expected to adhere to SSA policies
- Ensure players are wearing masks at all times and to schedule appropriate mask breaks.



# In-House Coach Responsibilities

- Ensure health and safety of all players by following all state and local health protocols are always followed to ensure social distancing.
- Before each activity coach to designate area for players belongings that will be kept 6 feet apart
- If any player appears to have symptoms present, athlete and athlete's parent/guardian should be instructed to go home and contact healthcare provider
- Only coach can handle training equipment
- Wear face mask during practice and games unless taking a mask break and is 6 feet or more away from players. Wear face mask in huddles with players
- Maintain social distance requirements for players. Ensure players wear masks while sitting on sidelines, and when not actively playing in a game or participating in practice
- Coaches will keep a log of all players that attend each session
- Coaches will train the same athletes. No players will be allowed to train with different teams within the club to limit contact.
- For in house soccer, no halftime or end of game snacks will be permitted
- Ensure players wear masks at all times and schedule mask breaks.



# Parent/ Guardian Responsibilities

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- Ensure your child is healthy before going to practice or a game.
- Check child's temperature before every practice and game. Child may not attend practice or game if a fever is present.
- Assess child for any COVID-19 symptoms before every practice and game. Child may not attend practice or game if symptoms are present.
- Inform SSA if a player is ill or has been exposed to someone who has/suspected to have COVID-19
- If a parent needs to be near the practice area, a mask is required to be worn. SSA prefer parents stay in their cars during practice.
- Sign and return the SSA Safe Return to Play form and return on the first day

# Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

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- Ensure players are symptom-free and arrive wearing a mask and remind player to wear mask when not actively playing or practicing.
- Wash child's clothing, uniform and pinnie after every practice/game
- Sanitize child's equipment before and after practice/game.
- Notify club immediately if child becomes ill or has been exposed to someone with COVID-19
- Do not assist coach with equipment
- Ensure child has necessary sanitizer with them
- Communicate with coach via telephone or email
- Parents/Family/Spectator are always required to wear a mask when inside the fenced soccer fields when on the side lines of a game, speaking with a coach or interacting with other families.
- No halftime or end of game snacks will be permitted.



# Player Responsibilities

- Make sure you are fever-free and symptom-free before going to a game or practice
- Let your coach know if you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 since the last game or practice
- Wash hands thoroughly before and after soccer
- Bring and use your own bag, ball, shin guards, mask, water bottle and hand sanitizer (Goalie gloves and shirt/pinnie if play goalie)
- Wear mask to and from soccer. (We recommend having a mask or face covering that can be pulled up when talking to coaches or other players)
- Masks are required to be worn at all times- during practice and games.
- Observe the separation at stations and during breaks
- Do not share equipment, snacks or drinks
- Wash and sanitize all equipment before and after practice.
- Observe social distancing. No group celebrations, high fives, handshakes or hugs



# Special Note for Goalies

- There will be no sharing of goalie equipment
- Travel goalies or players interested in playing goalie must bring his or her own goalie gloves.
- Travel goalies or players interested in playing goalie must bring his or her own goalie shirt or pinnie to wear during the game.
- Goalie gloves are to be disinfected after every practice/game. Goalie shirts / pinnie are to be washed after every use.
  
- In-House players typically do not use special equipment when playing goalie. If a player desires to use goalie gloves, he or she must bring their own and cannot share with teammates. Gloves are to be disinfected after each use.



# Practice & Game Day Spectators

- Only 1 parent/guardian is allowed per player. Minor children are allowed to sit with that parent.
- Spectators need to be fever-free and symptom-free before going to a game or practice
- Bring and use your own hand sanitizer
- Masks are always required to be worn. If you have a condition that does not allow for you to safely wear a mask, then please watch the game from your car or other isolated area outside of the playing field.
- Sit only in designated locations.(YELLOW HASH MARKS) No mass gatherings with other spectators.
- Due to CT Gathering Restrictions – the following spectator limits are allowed (may be modified at anytime during the season)
  - **1 spectator per player – GAME DAY**
  - No spectators at Travel Team practices
  - One (1) Spectator per player at In-House practice if necessary. SSA prefers parent/guardian stay outside of field / in car



# REMEMBER

## Stay at home if :

- Have been in contact with someone who has had COVID-19 in the last 14 days do not come to practice or the game. Seymour School Policy will be followed with regards to quarantining and returning to practice.
- If you are required to quarantine from school/work - the same applies to soccer.
- Have flu like symptoms or are feeling unwell (let SSA know)

## You must:

- Check with your doctor to see if you are in a high-risk health category
- Familiarize yourself with COVID-19 safety protocols
- Discuss with your club coach if you have any concerns
- Ensure that is safe for you to return to play

