

# SOCCER CLUB OF NEWINGTON 2020 RETURN-TO-PLAY PLAN



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## **Return-To-Play Plan Overview**

Our top priority in creating a return-to-play plan is enabling players, families, and coaches to get back on the field in a safe and healthy environment that promotes good habits. With this in mind, we have created a comprehensive plan that includes a step-by-step process which will allow us to phase in a “new normal” for youth soccer. In creating this plan, we have consulted with numerous state, health and youth soccer sources to create what we feel is a comprehensive and executable plan. We want our SCN players, families, coaches, and volunteers to feel confident in returning to play. Anyone who is not ready to return to the fields should wait until they do feel ready, without any penalty or repercussions. Below is an overview of our plan; the pages that follow will outline each point in greater detail.

The information provided in this document is based on the most current information available as of June 19, 2020. Specifics such as dates given in the Return-to-Play plan are based on guidelines presented by our states' Governor, local municipalities, and soccer governing bodies. This is a fluid situation; and thus, changes made at the state, local or soccer governing body level may cause this plan to be altered or adjusted.

## **STAGES of RETURN-to-PLAY (RTP)**

We have divided this process into five phases. Each is shown with a projected target date. These dates were created with the best information available to us and may change as conditions change.

- **Phase 0** – No trainings or matches (team or individual) will be sanctioned by CJSA/Soccer Club of Newington. All interaction will be virtual. This stage will continue until June 16, 2020.
- **Phase 1** – Beginning June 17, 2020, teams will be able to train in limited conditions. Social distancing practices will be employed. There will be no contact allowed, and training times and frequencies will be limited (60 minutes, 2 sessions per week).
- **Phase 2** – Projecting by July 6, 2020 (or later) teams will operate under social distancing conditions. Contact will be allowed in game situations. Trainings will be allowed to expand to 75 minute sessions, and competitive matches will be allowed.

- **Phase 3** – This is the “new normal” situation. By August/September 2020 and extend until eradication or vaccination of COVID-19 is released or new guidelines are set forth from health agencies. This will look more like pre-COVID conditions with general health guidelines being applied.
- **Phase 4** – No restrictions. October/November 2020

More detail on each stage is provided on subsequent pages.

### **SCN Health Measures Being Undertaken**

When we return to play, various new health and safety measures, some temporary and some permanent, will be employed to protect players, coaches and families. These are meant to minimize the risk of spreading COVID-19.

- Assign a club COVID-19 Safety Officer who will communicate policies organization-wide to volunteers, coaches, managers, parents, and players. Regular updates and reminders will be provided.
- Assign each team a coordinator to oversee compliance at the team level (can be a team parent who must register as an Adult with CJSA).
- Train and educate all volunteers/staff on return to activities protocols.
- Develop a plan to communicate with the local health department in the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 within a team.
- If a team member or coach contracts COVID-19, all training sessions will be canceled for that team and any additional team associated with that coach for 14 days.
- Be prepared to shut down and stop operations. Develop plans for temporary closure of facilities to properly disinfect and ensure other adult leaders are not infected.
- SCN will provide coaches and team managers with PPE (masks) and sanitizing products.
- Timing: A minimum of 30 minutes in between the time one team concludes and the other arrives. Players must leave immediately after their session. Players should not arrive at their field earlier than 5 minutes prior to their scheduled arrival time.

- Team warm-up time prior to a session must be built into their scheduled session. Warm-ups will not be permitted adjacent to the assigned field prior to the scheduled start time for a team.
- Parents and Players should not congregate in parking lots, at drop off zones, facility entrances/exits before or after a training session.
- Provide adequate space at the field to allow for proper physical/social distancing (6') and groups of 10 (20').
- All parents, spectators, and players should have their own chair. Chairs should be placed to allow for proper physical and social distancing (6').
- All waste should be placed by the respective parent, player, coach, and spectator in the trash receptacle. Nothing should be picked up by anybody other than the originator of the waste.
- Players are required to have their own water, sanitary products (hand sanitizer, facial tissues, PPE (optional for play), ball, GK Gloves (if necessary), and pinnies.

## **RETURN-TO-PLAY STAGES**

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### **Phase 0**

#### **Prior to June 16**

There will be NO team or INDIVIDUAL training provided by the Soccer Club of Newington.  
There will be NO competitive matches or events.

#### Team communications / Individual Development Plans

At-home training plan, guided by club communications or other resources

Social media challenges

Virtual competitions

Online seminars and podcasts

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### **Phase 1**

#### **June 17 – July 6**

No signs or symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days and have not been exposed to someone that has been ill in 14 days.

Parents should monitor children's temperatures before training. Players cannot train if their temperature exceeds 100.1 degrees.

Teams will train in 60 minute sessions.

CT teams can train.

There will be 30 minutes between training sessions.

Players train with social distancing standards enforced (6 ft. apart)

A maximum of 10 people per ¼ field will be allowed (at least 20 ft. apart)

No contact will be allowed at training.

There will be no goalkeeping specific activities.

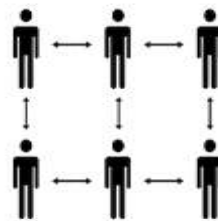
Coaches will be required to wear masks.

All spectators must adhere to CDC and DPH assemblage and distance guidelines.

Spectators/Chaperones must wear face coverings.

PLAYER TRAINING GUIDELINES will be enforced.

GENERAL HEALTH GUIDELINES will be enforced.



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## Phase 2

### July 6 – August (TBD)

Parents should monitor children's temperatures before training. Players cannot train if their temperature exceeds 100.1 degrees.

Upon arrival to training, coaches or staff should ask each athlete if they are experiencing any signs or symptoms of COVID-19. If the athlete has any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 they should be sent home and instructed to contact their healthcare provider. They

will not be allowed to return to training until they are cleared by a healthcare provider.  
A doctor's note must be provided.

Teams can train in 60-75 minute sessions.

Teams can train and/or play 3 times per week.

There will be 30 minutes between training sessions.

Players will train in isolated team groups.

Teams train with social distancing standards enforced.

A maximum of 10 people per ¼ field will be allowed.

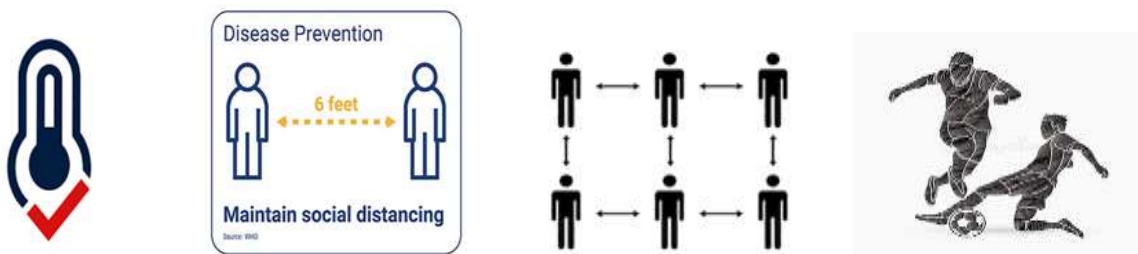
Parents and spectators will be required to maintain social distancing.

Contact will be allowed in game situations and context only.

Coaches will be encouraged to wear masks.

PLAYER TRAINING GUIDELINES will be enforced.

GENERAL HEALTH GUIDELINES will be enforced.



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### **Phase 3**

#### **August – September (TBD)**

Teams will train in 75-90 minute sessions.

Teams will train and/or play 2-3 times per week.

There will be 15 minutes between training sessions.

Teams train with social distancing standards enforced.

Parents and spectators will be required to maintain social distancing.

PLAYER TRAINING GUIDELINES will be enforced.

GENERAL HEALTH GUIDELINES will be enforced.

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### **Phase 4**

#### **October – November (TBD)**

No restrictions

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## **SCN TRAINING GUIDELINES**

### **Coaches' Responsibility**

- Ensure the health and safety of all athletes.
- Player "bench areas" must be arranged in order to accommodate social distancing practices.
- Player activities should be arranged to maintain social distancing as much as possible in accordance with the stage mandates.
- Upon arrival, inquire how athletes are feeling, send them home if you believe they are acting or look ill.
- No handshakes, fist or elbow bumps, or any other physical contact.
- Coach is to be the only one to handle cones, discs, goals etc.
- Practice and encourage proper hygiene, washing hands frequently with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds at a time.
- Ensure all athletes have their individual equipment. (Ball, water bottle, GK Gloves etc.)
- Ensure player's personal belongings (bags, coats, sweatshirts) remain in their personal space and are kept physically distanced from the belongings of others. Do not allow sharing of personal items.
- Ask players to bring pinnies to eliminate the need of shared scrimmage vests.
- Do not allow shared team snacks. Participants and spectators should only drink from their own containers.
- Wear a face covering, when not actively coaching; abide by the physical/social distance requirements from players and parents.
- Ensure athletes leave immediately after practice. No recreational play, or loitering is allowed
- STAY POSITIVE – Players and parents will be looking to you to remain calm and supportive during this transition time.



## **Parents' Responsibility**

- Parents must sign acknowledgement of Return-to-Play form before players may attend training.
- Ensure your child's health.
- Parents should monitor the temperature of their children. Players with temperatures higher than 100.1 will not be allowed to train.
- Parents cannot send players to practice if they are showing any sign of illness.
- Anyone in your household that you have had close contact with (within six feet for approximately 10 minutes) should self-quarantine for 14 days, even if you have not been tested for COVID-19.
- Notify the club immediately if your child has become sick.
- Adhere to physical/social distance requirements posted by the organization. These are based on state and local requirements. When at training, wear a face covering if you are outside of your car.
- Ensure that your child has a water bottle, equipment (ball / GK Gloves if necessary), and pinnies. Make sure your child's name is written on all belongings.
- Ensure your child's personal equipment, cleats, balls, shin guards etc. are cleaned and sanitized before and after every training.
- Ensure your child's clothing is washed after every session.
- Do not assist the coach with equipment before or after a training session.
- No carpooling with other members of the team.
- Be sure your child has necessary sanitizer with them at every session.

## **Players Responsibility**

- Have temperature taken daily.
- Practice and encourage proper hygiene, washing hands frequently with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds at a time.
- Practice social distancing, place bags and equipment at least 6 feet apart.
- Players should be responsible for their own pinnies (training vest).
- Players are strongly recommended to wear a mask before and after training.

- Players may train in a mask. This is an optional measure. Please consult your doctor if your child has asthma or other chronic breathing ailments, prior to exercising with a mask.
- Players should have their own ball, and players should not handle any other soccer ball except for their own, at any time.
- Players should have their own water bottle. Players are prohibited from sharing a water bottle.
- Players must have their own hand sanitizer at each session. Players should sanitize their hands before and after training and during any breaks.
- No group celebrations, high-5s, hugs, handshakes, fist-bumps, etc.
- Personal gear will need to be clearly marked to identify the player that owns the gear, in order to prevent misidentification and misuse of items.
- Wash and sanitize your equipment before and after each training.

## **GENERAL HEALTH GUIDELINES**

- Players must have hand sanitizer in their bags at all times. They should apply before and after every session and if possible, during any breaks.
- Players must have their own pinnies (training vest) and wash after each use. Soccer Club of Newington will provide two pinnies to each player.
- Players must have their own ball that is clearly labeled with their name.
- Players must employ social distancing on the sidelines and during training as much as possible.
- Players will not be permitted to shake hands, high five, etc.
- Players will not be allowed to share equipment, training gear or water.
- Players should have their own water at every training and match, in a bottle that is clearly labeled with their name. Water stations will not be provided.
- Spitting will not be permitted.
- Coaches will discourage player congregation and gatherings as much as possible. No close in-team huddles, no lines in training, etc. will be performed.

## PROTOCOLS FOR REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION FOR COVID-19 EXPOSURE

- Volunteers, including coaches, are required to report to the **COVID-19 Safety Officer** if they test positive for COVID-19, are suspected of being positive for COVID-19, or have been directly exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. The Director Contact list can be found at [www.newingtonsoccer.org/scnboard](http://www.newingtonsoccer.org/scnboard).
- Any player who has tested positive for COVID-19, is suspected of being positive for COVID-19 or who has been directly exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 is required to report this information to the club's **COVID-19 Safety Officer and head coach**.
- If a case of COVID-19 is reported, all volunteers and players who came into contact with that person will be notified. Due to privacy issues and HIPPA laws, the identity of that person will remain anonymous.
- Once notified that an individual who has tested positive with COVID-19 has been in close proximity (within 6 feet) with any volunteer or player, those volunteers and players must adhere to the following protocol.
  - Notify their Primary Care Physician.
  - Volunteers and players should begin in-home isolation for a 14-day period.
  - Volunteers and players may discontinue in-home isolation if they undergo testing and the test result is negative.
- Before a volunteer or player who has tested positive for COVID-19 can return to training or games, the following conditions must be met:
  - A minimum of seven (7) days must pass since the initial onset of symptoms.
  - A minimum of 72 hours must pass without symptoms, and without the aid of fever-reducing medications.
  - The staff member or player must attain a negative COVID-19 test result.

## PROTOCOLS FOR PARENTS AND SPECTATORS

- Parents and spectators are **ENCOURAGED NOT** to be on or around the field during Stage 1. Parents may watch training from their car.
- When dropping players off, parents should practice social distancing protocols. Any player who is showing signs of illness or fever will be sent home. Players with a temperature higher than 100.1 should not attend practice/games.
- Once we begin Stage 2, parents and spectators are allowed to attend practices and matches but must adhere to social distancing protocols. This extends to not only the field but also in the parking lot and other park facilities.
- All parents and spectators attending practices and matches during these PHASES must maintain a MINIMUM distance of 6 feet off the field's touchline at all times.
- Parents and spectators who repeatedly disregard social distancing standards and/or field spacing guidelines will be required to leave the field and either remain in their car or leave the premises.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RETURN-TO-PLAY PROTOCOL**

Every family must electronically acknowledge that they have read the ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RETURN-TO-PLAY PROTOCOL, understand its contents and agree to abide by the protocols set forth in it. This acknowledgement will be completed through Soccer Club of Newington's website during registration. Players will also be asked to acknowledge and agree to the Assumption of Risk Statement shown on the following page.

The form will be accessible via the Soccer Club of Newington website for you to download. Players will not be allowed to participate in any Soccer Club of Newington sanctioned events or trainings without the completion of this form. We will ask that the form be signed and reuploaded during registration checkout.

## **ASSUMPTION OF RISK**

Training for and playing soccer carries with it certain dangers and risks that cannot be eliminated regardless of the care taken to prevent or minimize harm. Soccer is a vigorous team sport involving severe cardiovascular stress, exertions of strength using various muscle groups, quick movement involving speed and change of direction, and potential contact with equipment, fixed objects, and other participants (including participants that are older or younger and may be larger or smaller in terms of height and weight). The specific risks vary from (1) minor injuries such as cuts, bruises, muscle strains or sprains, to (2) major injuries such as broken or fractured bones, concussion or lost teeth, to (3) catastrophic injuries, such as heart attacks or fractured skull or those that cause disfigurement, loss of mental capacity, loss of sight, speech or hearing, paralysis or death. Participants may also be exposed, or expose others, to contagious and potentially harmful or deadly diseases such as influenza, common cold, chicken pox, meningitis or measles. This risk includes exposure to COVID-19, the virus that causes the coronavirus disease.

In addition, participants may also be exposed to risks while travelling for club activities including vehicular accidents and those risks arising from hotel stays, exposure to crowds, and exposure to risks related to the receipt of treatment for any physical or mental condition.

By signing this statement, the participant and his or her parent/guardian acknowledge that they have (1) read the previous paragraphs; (2) understand the nature of the activities offered by SCN; (3) understand the demands of those activities relative to the physical condition and skill level of participant; (4) appreciate the types of injuries and illnesses that could occur and; (5) understand the risks related to travel and treatment which may occur as a result of participation with SCN. Participant and parent/guardian hereby acknowledge that participating with SCN and use of the facilities and services is

voluntary and that participant and parent/guardian knowingly and expressly assume all related risks.

## **PLAYER PRESEASON AND PRACTICE CHECKLIST**

Below is a checklist for every SCN participant prior to starting the season:

- Parents and players have completed Return to Play and Assumption of Risk Form.
- Parents must monitor the temperatures of their children.
- Players have their own ball with their name on it.
- Players have their own water bottle with their name on it.
- Players have hand sanitizer (must use before and after training) with their name on it.
- Players have their own training pinnies which must be cleaned before each training or game, with player name on it.
- Players may only interact with their own team / training groups.

## **Timeline and Key Dates (CJSA Projections)**

- Expecting some sort of return to play orders from the State of Connecticut and CJSA on or around June 17<sup>th</sup> = Phase 1
- Phase 1 to last approx. 2 weeks – Small group numbers to be dictated by State of Connecticut - Approx. July 6<sup>th</sup> or a week later.
- Phase 2 to follow. Phase 2 to last 3-6 weeks – Approx. August 10<sup>th</sup> or a week later
- Phase 3 to follow. Phase 3 to last 3-6 weeks – Approx. September 7<sup>th</sup> or a week later
- Phase 4 to follow. No restrictions – Without setbacks on or around October 5<sup>th</sup>

## **Reverting to Earlier Phases**

Regardless of which phase we are in, be prepared to step back and revert to an earlier phase if any of the following occur. SCN will follow local public health official guidelines at all times.

- Cluster of infections occur
- Inability to maintain COVID-19 prevention and response protocols
- Inability to track and/or isolate players or staff
- External factor exposes a COVID-19 risk to your team or club
- Changes to local public health official guidelines regarding group gatherings

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **Does my player need to wear a mask during training?**

Players are not required to wear masks during training. While masks may limit the transmission of airborne particles, they may also hamper the flow of oxygen that is needed for a player working in a strenuous, athletic environment. Players must wear masks before and after training. Coaches will be required to wear masks during phase 1 and encouraged to wear them during phase 2. Please consult your doctor if your child has asthma or other chronic breathing ailments, prior to exercising with a mask.

### **Why are sessions during phase 1 limited to 60 minutes?**

There is scientific research that shows that after being inactive for a prolonged period, the body's immune system may be weakened during prolonged strenuous activity. Sessions that extend beyond 60 minutes may increase the risk towards players until they have been able to reacclimate to longer sessions.

### **Why is there 30 or 15 minutes between training sessions in phase 1, 2, and 3?**

The time between training sessions will allow us to clear the previous session before players arrive for the next session. Players will be encouraged to go directly to their cars at the end of training. Players should not get out of their car until no more than 10 minutes before their session starts. This will limit the amount of player interaction between sessions.

### **Why are players required to carry their own pinnies (training vests)?**

Each player will be issued their own training vest and must keep it and wash it after each session. This will eliminate the need for players to share vests and for parents to wash potentially contaminated vests as well. Players should not share balls, water bottles, equipment, or clothing either.



**What sideline practices are being observed to keep social distancing standards?**

Player sideline will be organized by each coach, with players' bags a minimum of 6 feet apart. While some close contact is inevitable during the game of soccer, our goal is to minimize the frequency and duration of close contact. Teams will not engage in close-in huddles, post-game handshaking or high-fives, and coaches will be instructed to organize sessions to minimize player congregations – no lines, etc.

**My player feels fine but is running a slight fever. Should he/she attend training?**

Any player with a fever of 100.1 or greater is not allowed to attend training. This is a zero-tolerance policy. Players showing signs of a fever should be checked for other symptoms and monitored. A fever combined with other symptoms and/or a persistent fever should be referred to your primary physician. Fever reducing medication SHOULD NOT be used to allow a player to attend training.

**My player has been self-quarantining with another player this whole time. Why can't they be closer than 6 feet during your activities?**

While we understand many precautions were taken by you at home, in a group setting, there are protocols that need to be in effect so that everyone is reminded that social distancing is imperative to help mitigate exposure. When a few players act independent of team rules regarding safety, then that's considered a violation of what we are trying to achieve which is the health and well-being of everyone in attendance.