

Return to Play Phasing, Protocol and Responsibilities



Louisiana Soccer Association (“LSA”) is committed to protecting the health and safety of everyone across the state. In light of the world-wide COVID-19 pandemic, LSA presents this document to provide our Clubs, coaches, players, parents and families with a guideline to help us all return to the game, and in many respects to life itself, in a safe, thoughtful and responsible manner. Many of the recommendations rely upon rules and regulations set forth by the State of Louisiana and local public health authorities. LSA must and shall continue to adhere to all Federal, State and Local guidelines and requirements.

The information in this document is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. All content, including text, graphics, images, and information, are provided for general informational purposes only. The knowledge and circumstances around COVID-19 are changing constantly and, as such, LSA can make no representation and assumes no responsibility for the completeness of this information. Further, you should seek advice from medical professionals and/or public health officials if you have specific questions about your return to training and competition. The spread of COVID-19 across Louisiana is a very fluid and changing environment, these guidelines may change at any time based on new information. These guidelines address early phases on return to play, additional guidelines will follow as the COVID-19 virus continues to evolve.

Finally, although the young and healthy are subject to less severe cases of COVID-19, every case of this disease is potentially life-altering or deadly, particularly in those with risk factors that may occur within our communities. Until COVID-19 is either eradicated, a vaccine is developed, or a cure is found, the risks of infection shall be ever present.

Resources

CDC recreational guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/parks-rec/index.html>

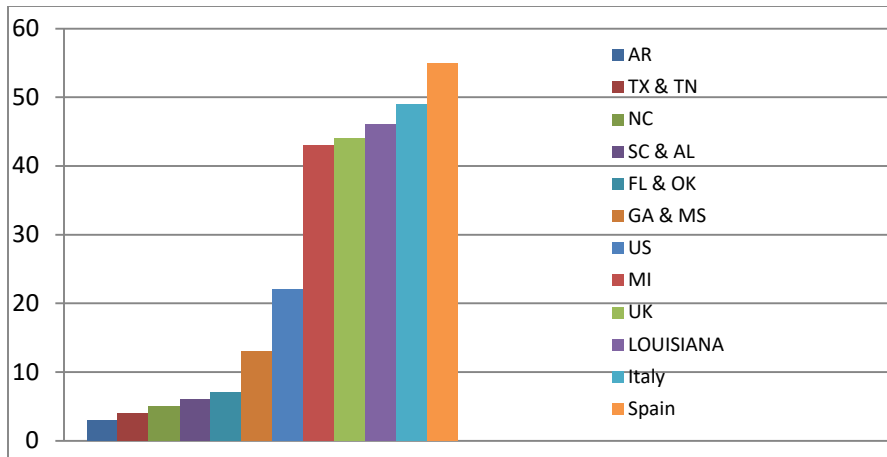
EPA list of COVID-19 effective disinfectants: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>

Caring for Our Children(CFOC) standards for cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting educational facilities for children: <https://nrckids.org/CFOC/Database/3.3>

Where We Stand

Most if not all states will have a phased in approach to reopening businesses and the easing of social distancing requirements, this will be different from state to state not only in the elements of day-to-day life, but also in youth sports. We must all remember that Louisiana and the merciless extent to which the COVID-19 pandemic has attacked us sets our state apart from most others and our response must reflect that.

Louisiana was and remains a global hotspot for the COVID-19 virus. Our state still ranks No. 5 in deaths/100,000 in the US with 46. We have more than double the national rate and Louisiana’s deaths/100,000 still exceeds that of the United Kingdom and is very close to that of both Italy and Spain. To put it in perspective, the rate of deaths/100,000 of those states closest to Louisiana in the South Region are Georgia and Mississippi each with 13.



Rate of COVID-19 – related Deaths Per 100,000 Population

Phasing

Stay-At-Home

On March 16th LSA announced a Comprehensive Ban on all soccer activities across Louisiana. The Governor extended the statewide Stay at Home Order to May 15th. This meant Louisiana will not enter Phase One until that time. On Monday, May 11th, Governor John Bel Edwards announced the lifting of the Stay at Home Order and the commencement of Phase One on May 15th. He indicated that Phase One would last until June Friday, June 5th.

Phasing in General

Phasing is not a simple throw of a switch. It is a gradual, thoughtful, science-based plan to return to play safely and in a manner that minimizes the risk of a COVID-19 resurgence. Phasing and the protocols established for each Phase are subject to change as the effects and behavior of the virus change. The Phasing process has been established by the CDC and the White House Task Force and is being applied by Governor John Bel Edwards across Louisiana.

Phase One

May 15 – June 5

Phase One begins with the lifting of the Governor’s Stay-at Home Order. Maximizing social distancing when in public, non-essential travel and isolation following travel are still required. Further, Phase One requires that “Organized Youth Activities that are currently closed should remain closed”. Therefore, LSA’s comprehensive Ban on all soccer activities set forth in our April 28th notice to our Member Clubs must be extended until June 5th.

Soccer Activities Permitted:	Individual training sessions in your home/residence using your own equipment. Coaching occurs virtually. No coaches or other athletes present during training
Soccer Activities Prohibited:	Practices, scrimmages, games, etc.

Phase Two

June 5 – June 19

During this Phase small groups may return to play under strict adherence with the Return To Play Protocol and Responsibilities below. The goal in Phase Two is to maintain absolutely safe conditions for our players while we give them the opportunity re-establish their soccer fitness and become acclimated to the early summer conditions. Phase 2 IS NOT an open invitation to return to the game as we knew it before the pandemic.

Soccer Activities Permitted:	Small group (10 or less) training in which social distancing is strictly observed and game conditions are avoided. Fitness, speed and agility training
Soccer Activities Prohibited:	Full practices, scrimmages, games, etc.

Phase Three

Commencing June 19

Phase 3 continues our safe and methodical return to play. The focus of our return to play is to conduct tryouts. Other carefully monitored and restricted activities may be undertaken, but Phase 3 is not a return to what we all understand as a normal youth soccer environment. Again, strict adherence to the Return to Play Protocols is mandatory.

Soccer Activities Permitted:	Small group (10 or less) activities Team practices where players are trained in small groups (e.g. functional training) and not as a full team Fitness, speed and agility training Tryouts with strict adherence to the parameters set forth both in the Return to Play Protocol and the Tryout Process and Schedule
Soccer Activities Prohibited:	Full practices, scrimmages, games, etc.

Future Phasing

As the pandemic wears on and as we become more effective in battling the virus future phasing will take place. The US Youth Soccer Return to Play Committee has already begun discussions on future protocol, but it is clear any future phasing is entirely dependent upon our ability as a culture to deal with the COVID-19 virus.

Protocol and Responsibilities

Criteria

In order to participate in any soccer activities other than individual activities at home, an individual including, but not limited to, players, coaches and Club staff (“participants”) must satisfy the following criteria

- 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.
- Live in training location/community for 14 days prior to beginning group training.
- Take temperature before participating in any soccer activity.
- There shall be no activities that would require direct or indirect contact between players.

- Cleaning schedule/protocol of equipment with disinfectant before, during, and after training.

Club Responsibilities

- Create and distribute protocols to its members
- Have an effective communication plan in place and identify strategies for working with public health to notify Club officials, youth and their families if the organization learns a participant has developed COVID-19 and may have been infectious to others while at a soccer activity. Confidentiality of the participant must be strictly maintained.
- Have an action plan in place, in case of a positive test.
- All return to play activities must be published as being voluntary. For example, if a child chooses not to attend tryouts for Classic teams, the Club must accommodate that child's return at a later date. Be sensitive and accommodating to players and parents that many be uncomfortable with returning to play too quickly.
- Train and educate all Club staff to protocols and requirements, including state and local regulations, CDC recommendations and other necessary information.
- Develop plans for temporary closure of facilities and to cancel activities to properly disinfect and ensure other adult leaders or youth are not infected.
- Make sure appropriate infection prevention supplies are present in multiple targeted areas (e.g., hand sanitizer, facial tissues, facial coverings, etc.)
- All soccer activities must be outdoors.
- Staff participating in any soccer activity (e.g. player registration) must wear face masks and observe social distancing at all times.
- Provide adequate field space for social distancing.
- Provide hand sanitizing stations and waste receptacles at fields.
- All Club staff and coaches must take their temperature before each soccer activity and report any high or abnormal temperature to the Club prior to participating.
- Develop a relationship and a dialog with health local officials.

Coach Responsibilities

- Ensure the health and safety of all players
- Before each soccer activity a Coach must organize "stations" for each player at or around the bench area that are at least 6 feet apart in which players must keep all of their belongings. This can be done with cones. They shall be required to return only to their "station" only during breaks.
- Before each soccer activity ask all players how the athletes are feeling and whether they are experiencing any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g. cough, fever, or loss of taste or smell). Also ask when their temperature.
- If the athlete has any signs or symptoms of COVID-19, they should be sent home and instructed to contact their healthcare provider.
- Follow all state and local health protocols and ensure social distancing at all times including team meetings/talks before during and after soccer activities.
- Ensure all athletes have their individual equipment (ball, water, bag etc.)
- Coach is the only person to handle all training equipment (e.g. cones, disk, flags, etc.)
- Wear a face mask, when not actively coaching, maintain social distance requirements from players based on state and local health requirements.
- Have fun, stay positive – players and parents are looking to you to stay calm, supportive and caring during this time.
- The use of scrimmage vest or pinnies is prohibited.

Parent Responsibilities

- Ensure child your child is healthy.
- Check your child's temperature daily and ask whether they are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g. cough, fever, or loss of taste or smell).
- No carpooling
- Parents are not permitted on or near the field.
- Parents must stay inside or in close proximity to their car when at any soccer activity. If outside their car, parents must wear a face mask and must adhere to social distancing guidelines
- Ensure child's clothing is washed after every training session.
- Ensure all equipment, cleats, ball, shin guards etc. are washed or sanitized before and after every training.
- Notify club immediately if your child becomes ill for any reason.
- Do not assist coach with equipment before or after training.
- Be sure your child has necessary sanitizer with them at every soccer activity.
- Should parents feel the need to communicate with a coach, it must be done via email or by telephone.

Player Responsibilities

- Take temperature daily
- Wash hands thoroughly before and after soccer activity.
- Bring and use, hand sanitizer with you to every soccer activity.
- Wear mask before and immediately after all soccer activity.
- Observe the separation of the "stations" established by the Coach at the bench area and make certain to place all of your belongings (bags, water bottle and equipment) at least 6 feet apart.
- Do not touch or share anyone else's equipment, water, snack or bag.
- Practice social distancing
- Wash and sanitize all equipment before and after every soccer activity.
- Observe social distancing. No group celebrations, no high 5's, Hugs, handshakes etc.