



SIJHSAA RETURN-TO-PLAY GUIDELINES

VOLLEYBALL

This document is intended to provide guidance for SIJHSAA schools for the 2020-2021 Volleyball season. This is not an exhaustive list and school officials may take additional measures based on requirements set forth by their school district and/or local health officials. Please understand that even with this guidance, there is still risk of transmitting illness at events such as basketball or football games. Additionally, with the changing nature of the circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, these guidelines may change.

Additional information may be found at:

<https://www.sijhsaa.com/index.php>

SIJHSAA Exceptions to NFHS Volleyball Rules:

https://www.sijhsaa.com/images/stories/pdf/SIJHSAA_Exceptions_to_NFHS_Volleyball_Rules_2020.pdf

Season Dates:

- Practices May Begin: Jan. 19, 2021
- Contests May Begin: Feb. 1, 2021
- Regional Seeding: Feb. 20, 2021
- Regionals: March 1 – 6, 2021
- State Tournament: not scheduled in 2021

Regular season contests should be limited to: 1.) Within conference, 2.) Schools in the same COVID-19 Region

Eligibility:

- Students must be meeting all eligibility requirements (grades, age, residency, etc.)
- Students must have a current physical on file **prior to practice**.
- E-learning students may be eligible provided the local district allows their participation.

Team Contest Limitations:

- SIJHSAA recommends to more than 3 contests per week.

State Series:

- Regional play will be conducted.

- Regional champions will receive a championship trophy from the SIJHSAA office.
- For Regional play, the cost of the officials will be split between the teams competing in the contest.

Spectators:

- Spectator and group gatherings are subject to IDPH guidelines in place at the time.
- Contest hosts should work with their local health departments to consider whether spectators will be allowed.
- Adherence to all CDC guidelines regarding hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.

***Spirit Groups (as of 2-2-21):**

- IDPH suggests that the attendance of spirit groups at basketball contests is at the discretion of local schools. IDPH goes on to suggest that spirit groups and pep bands be part of a lower priority group when schools are making decisions about what groups are permitted to attend basketball contests safely.
- If you choose to permit sideline spirit groups, the 30 ft distance from other athletes per the spectator guidance would be waived as this group is no longer part of the spectator group. 6 ft social distancing with face coverings is an appropriate mitigation.

***Media (as of 2-2-21):**

- Media attendance is also a local decision. The media are also in a lower priority group and schools may allow media coverage at contests when there are safe locations for them. Media members are not considered part of the spectator limit.

Safety:

- If an Illinois COVID Region or County is placed in Phase 3 or lower of the Governor's Restore Illinois Plan, all sports for schools in that Region or County will be suspended or cancelled.
- All equipment should be sanitized prior to the contest.
- Contest host should sanitize the scoring/reporting table prior to the game and between sets. Sanitizer should be provided by the host team at the scorer's table.

Face Coverings:

- Athletes: Face coverings must be worn at all times; Players should bring multiple masks to replace sweat-soaked masks.
- Coaches: Face coverings must be worn.
- Spectators: Face coverings must be worn.
- Game Personnel: Table personnel and officials are required to wear face coverings.

It is recommended that programs require physicians notes for individuals who have a medical contraindication to wearing a face covering. Face coverings must fully cover the mouth and nose, and that it must fit snugly against the sides of the face with no gaps. Reusable face coverings should be machine washed or washed by hand and allowed to dry following each use. Face coverings may also be removed while eating or drinking but must be immediately replaced.

Officials:

- Officials are required to use regular whistles (with a cover) or electronic whistles.
- Officials are required to wear face coverings when they are not actively exercising.
- *As of 2-2-21, sports officials are required to wear a face covering unless there is a medical exemption. The medical exemption for officials (different than student participants) is determined by the individual official and his/her physician
- Officials are allowed to wear gloves and long sleeves.
- Upon arrival at the contest site and throughout the contest, officials should wash and sanitize hands frequently.
- Officials should maintain social distancing while performing all pregame responsibilities.
- Officials should maintain social distancing of six (6) feet while in the locker room and/or on the court.
- Officials should not share uniforms, towels, apparel, and equipment.
- Officials should bring their own water bottles and/or sports drinks.
- Officials are not responsible for monitoring social distancing guidelines on the team benches, sidelines, in the bleachers, or anywhere outside the boundaries of the court.
- Coaches and school personnel are responsible for monitoring their own teams.

Equipment – Volleyballs:

- Prior to a contest, it is recommended that the game ball(s) should be sanitized according to instructions from the ball manufacturer, set aside, and placed on top of the scorer's table. The game ball(s) must not be used for warm-ups.
- Visiting teams should bring volleyballs to be used during their warm-up time. Teams are responsible for placing identification markings each of their volleyballs.
- The host school should ensure that the ball is sanitized during time-outs and between sets.

Equipment – Scorer's Table:

- Limiting seats at the scorer's table to essential personnel which includes home team scorer and timer with a recommended distance of six (6) feet or greater between individuals. Other personnel that can be distanced at least six (6) feet apart (visiting scorer, statisticians, media, etc.) should be allowed at the official's table. However, these other personnel are not considered essential personnel, and an alternate location for them should be considered if spacing cannot be met at the scorer's table.
- Sanitizer should be provided by the host team at the scorer's table.

Equipment – Team Benches:

If possible, place team benches opposite spectator seating.

Consider limiting the number of bench personnel to observe social distancing of six (6) feet or greater.

Additional chairs or rows may be added to allow bench personnel (coaches and players) to observe social distancing of 6 feet or greater.

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

Suspend the protocol of teams switching benches between sets. In the event there is a clear and distinct disadvantage, teams may switch sides, observing all social distancing protocols. Officials will determine if the disadvantage is present.

Rule Modifications:

Pre-Match:

Suspend the use of the coin toss to determine serve/receive. The visiting team will serve in set 1 and alternate first serve for the remaining non-deciding sets.

Limit attendees at the pre-match conference to 1st and 2nd referee and the head coach from each team with one coach and one referee positioned on each side of the net, all 4 individuals shall maintain social distance.

Suspend roster submission at the pre-match conference. Rosters are submitted directly to the officials' table before the 10-minute mark.

Officials should demonstrate their electronic whistle sounds to coaches and captains since tones from different whistles may vary.

Pre-Match Warm-Ups:

Each team will be allowed time on their side of the net during the pre-match conference. It is suggested that this time be limited to bumping to teammates to assure all balls remain on their side of the net.

Following the pre-match conference, each team will be given the entire court for a 4-minute warm-up period. The visiting team will be given the first 4-minute period. As soon as the visiting team has retrieved all of their volleyballs, the home team will begin their 4-minute warm up period.

*Each team should have their own volleyballs for use during their warm-up periods.

Timeouts:

During time-outs and between sets, players and coaches should maintain social distance.

Deciding Set Procedures:

Move the location of the deciding set coin toss to center court with team captains and the second referee maintaining the appropriate social distance of 6 feet. A coin toss, called by the home team, will decide serve/receive.

Suspend the protocol of teams switching benches before a deciding set. In the event there is a clear and distinct disadvantage, teams may switch sides, observing all social distancing protocols. Officials will determine if a disadvantage is present.

Substitution Procedures:

Maintain social distancing of 6 feet between the second referee and the player and substitute by encouraging substitutions to occur within the substitution zone closer to the attack line.

Contest Limitations – Regional Tournaments at One Site

Time for cleaning and sanitation of all used spaces and equipment must occur between matches. Participating teams must exit a facility before participating teams in a following match may enter a facility.

- Indoor gatherings are subject to IDPH guidelines in place at the time.

All spaces and equipment (gym, chairs, scorer's table, locker rooms, bleachers) must be cleaned and sanitized between matches. Spaces should be cleaned and sanitized in a manner consistent with all local and national health guidelines.

All individuals must wear masks.