

WASHINGTON YOUTH SOCCER RETURN TO PLAY GUIDELINES







Updated 6/8/20

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Washington Youth Soccer's #1 priority is to PLAY ON...SAFELY!

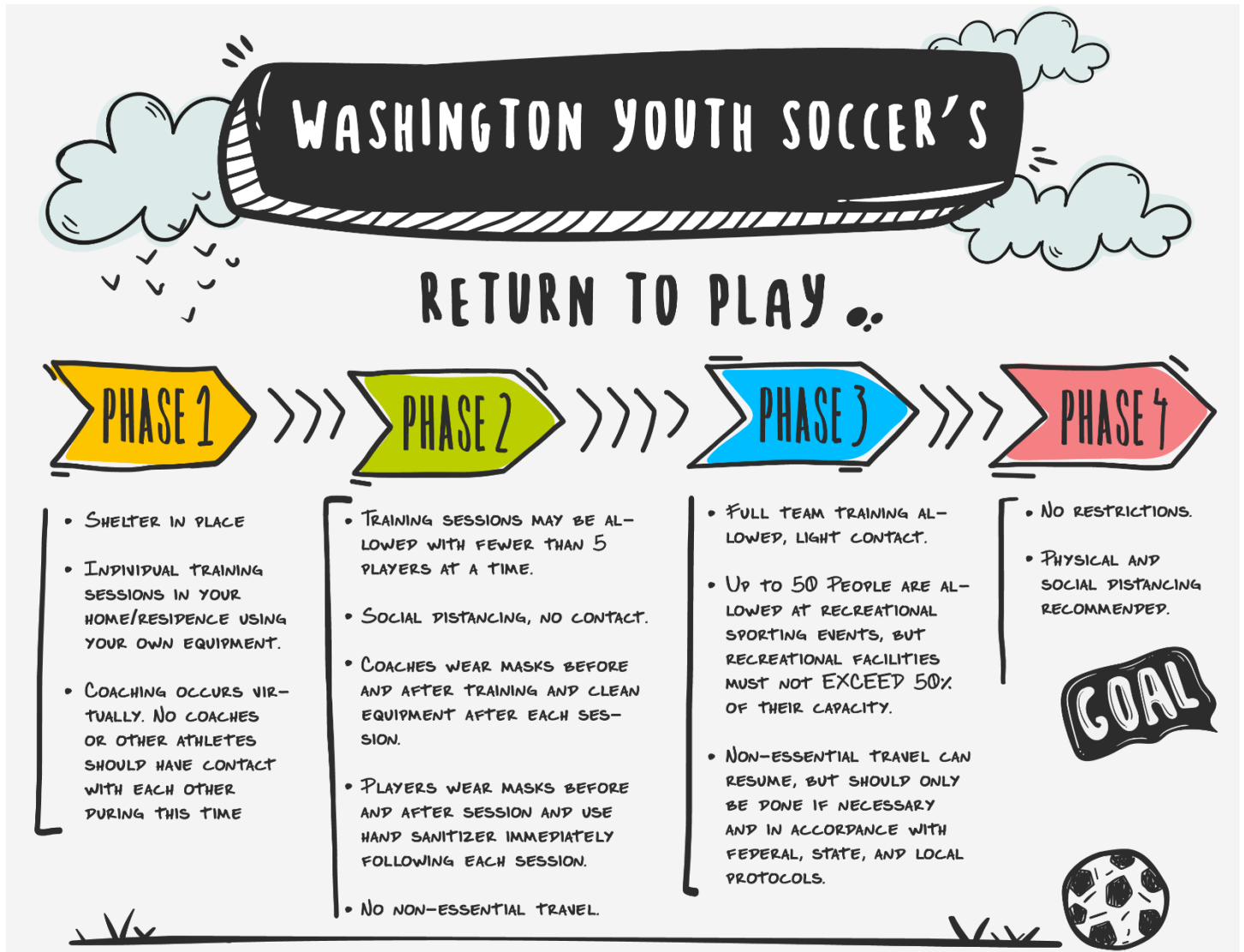
Players and their families' health and safety come first; their physical and mental health are of utmost importance to us. Getting our kids outside, in fresh air and playing soccer safely is our goal. When our kids play, their body produces endorphins, which are a natural mood booster that can fight stress and depression. Feelings of empowerment, relaxation, and optimism follow. Play not only promotes healthy weight and cardiovascular fitness, but also enhances the efficacy of the immune, endocrine, and cardiovascular systems.

Below is the phased approach to reopening Washington State businesses and modifying physical/social distancing. Washington Youth Soccer has built its recommended approach around this model.

WASHINGTON'S PHASED APPROACH Reopening Business and Modifying Physical Distancing Measures				
	 Phase 1	 Phase 2	 Phase 3	 Phase 4
High-Risk Populations*	Continue to Stay Home, Stay Healthy	Continue to Stay Home, Stay Healthy	Continue to Stay Home, Stay Healthy	Resume public interactions, with physical distancing
Recreation	Some outdoor recreation (hunting, fishing, golf, boating, hiking)	All outdoor recreation involving fewer than 5 people outside your household (camping, beaches, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outdoor group rec. sports activities (5-50 people) - Recreational facilities at <50% capacity (public pools, etc.) 	Resume all recreational activity
Gatherings (social, spiritual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - None - Drive in spiritual service with one household per vehicle 	Gather with no more than 5 people outside your household per week	Allow gatherings with no more than 50 people	Allow gatherings with >50 people
Travel	Only essential travel	Limited non-essential travel within proximity of your home	Resume non-essential travel	Continue non-essential travel
Business/Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Essential businesses open - Existing construction that meet agreed upon criteria - Landscaping - Automobile sales - Retail (curb-side pick-up orders only) - Car washes - Pet walkers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Remaining manufacturing - New construction - In-home/domestic services (nannies, housecleaning, etc.) - Retail (in-store purchases allowed with restrictions) - Real estate - Professional services/office-based businesses (telework remains strongly encouraged) - Hair and nail salons/Barbers - Housecleaning - Restaurants <50% capacity table size no larger than 5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Restaurants <75% capacity/ table size no larger than 10 - Bars at <25% capacity - Indoor gyms at <50% capacity - Movie theaters at <50% capacity - Government (telework remains strongly encouraged) - Libraries - Museums - All other business activities not yet listed except for nightclubs and events with greater than 50 people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nightclubs - Concert venues - Large sporting events - Resume unrestricted staffing of worksites, but continue to practice physical distancing and good hygiene

* High-risk populations are currently defined by CDC as: persons 65 years of age and older; people of all ages with underlying medical conditions (particularly not well controlled) including people with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma, people who have serious heart conditions, people who are immunocompromised, people with severe obesity, people with diabetes, people with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis, and people with liver disease; people who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility.

PHASE-IN PLAN, BASED ON WASHINGTON STATE PHASED APPROACH



LATEST RETURN TO PLAY UPDATES

6/5/20 12:00 PM

Governor Inslee's office posted an update last night on phase 2 requirements for outdoor activities in line with much of what you see on this page and in our documents, and it does not change our recommended guidelines for contacting local officials, but it provides another document to show them when requesting return to play in your county.

[Professional Sports & Other Sporting Activities Phase 2 and 3 COVID-19 Requirements – WA Governor's Office](#)

The most notable section re: youth sports:

In Phase 2, team practice can resume if a) players are limited to groups of five in separate parts of the field, separated by a buffer zone and b) practice can follow social distancing of a minimum of five feet between players with no contact. Each league, organization, or club must publish and follow a “return to play” safety plan. Parents and household members must not congregate on the sidelines during practice.

To be clear, this statement and the WYS Return to Play documents DO NOT give clubs automatic permission to resume play in Phase 2. If your county is in Phase 2, clubs MUST reach out directly to their local county officials, city council, and parks and recreation departments and get permission to rent fields. Clubs should use the above document from the governor’s office, as well as the WYS RTP documents to craft their own Return to Play safety plan as required by the release. If permission is granted, you CAN return to play. If permission is NOT granted, you CAN NOT return to play until Phase 3.

As Washington progresses through the Phased Approach on a county-by-county basis, we urge you and your members to contact the appropriate departments about returning to play in their respective counties if one has not been established. Contact the following groups and be sure to mention the governor’s release and your club’s Return to Play safety plan:

- local city council
- county officials
- parks and recreation departments

6/1/20

As counties across the State of Washington adjust their criteria for safe return to play for youth soccer, it is imperative that associations, clubs, and their members work hand in hand to understand these local criteria. Applications and approval for use of fields need to be directed to your local county officials, city council, and parks departments. Please continue to use the Washington Youth Soccer RTP documents as a resource in your application process. We are here to support you.

There has been no change in Washington Youth Soccer liability coverage for facilities that were requested for the seasonal playing year that runs from September 2019 to the end of August 2020 by our members. Those COIs (certificates of insurance) remain on file and were issued to your facilities as requested in the past nine months.

PROTOCOLS

KNOW YOUR ROLE! KNOW THE PROTOCOLS. The following best practices are intended to offer guidance to our Washington Youth Soccer community. Adherence to these considerations and recommendations does not ensure immunity from exposure. Washington Youth Soccer makes no representations and assumes no responsibility for individual activity or participation decisions by Associations, Clubs, Coaches, Parents, or Players.

Club Considerations:

- Distribute these protocols to your members.

- Have an effective communication plan in place, identify strategies for working with public health to notify adult leaders, youth, and their families if the organization learns a participant or adult leader has developed COVID-19 and may have been infectious to others while at a youth activity, while maintaining confidentiality.
- Small group sessions need to maintain the same group of players. This helps with contact tracing and limits exposure.
- Have a written action plan in place, in case of a positive test. If a person is diagnosed with COVID-19, the entire group must return to self-isolation until symptom-free for 14 days.
- Distribute your written action plan to administrators, coaches, managers, and parents, electronically or otherwise.
- In your action plan include both a communication chain for team personnel, including volunteers and managers, as well as triggers for executing the action plan.
- Be prepared to shut down and stop operations. Develop plans for temporary closure of indoor facilities and cancel outdoor activities or camps to properly disinfect and ensure other adult leaders or youth are not infected.
- Provide adequate field space for at least six feet of social distancing per player.
- Develop a relationship and a dialogue with health local officials. (identify Risk Tolerance)

Coach Considerations:

- Ensure the health and safety of your players. Inquire how the athletes are feeling, send them home if they act or discuss feeling ill.
- Follow all established federal, state, and local protocols.
- Ensure all athletes have their individual equipment (ball, water bottles, bag, etc.) and prohibit them from sharing anything. Equipment placement should be spaced at least 6 feet apart.
- The coach is the only person to handle cones, disks, etc.
- All training must be outdoors and coaches must strictly enforce social distancing per the current phase guidelines.
- Coaches must always wear a face mask per current phase protocol and social distance from players when required.
- Wash and sanitize your own equipment after every session.
- The use of scrimmage vests/pinnies is not recommended.
- Increase your communication with parents, they need to know what you are doing as a coach and club to maintain their safety.
- Have fun, stay positive – players and parents are looking to you to stay calm, supportive, and caring during this time.

Parent Recommendations:

- Ensure athletes are healthy, check their temperature daily.
- Limited or no carpooling.
- Stay in car or social distance when at training, wear mask at all times if outside your car.
- Ensure child's clothing is washed after every training session.
- Label your child's equipment to guard against cross-contamination.
- Ensure all equipment, cleats, ball, shin guards etc. are sanitized after every training.

- Notify club immediately if your child becomes ill for any reason and do not bring them into contact with coaches or other players.
- Do not assist coaches with equipment before or after training.
- Be sure your child has necessary sanitizer and cleaning supplies with them at every training.
- When traveling, take responsibility to sanitize hotel rooms.

Player Recommendations:

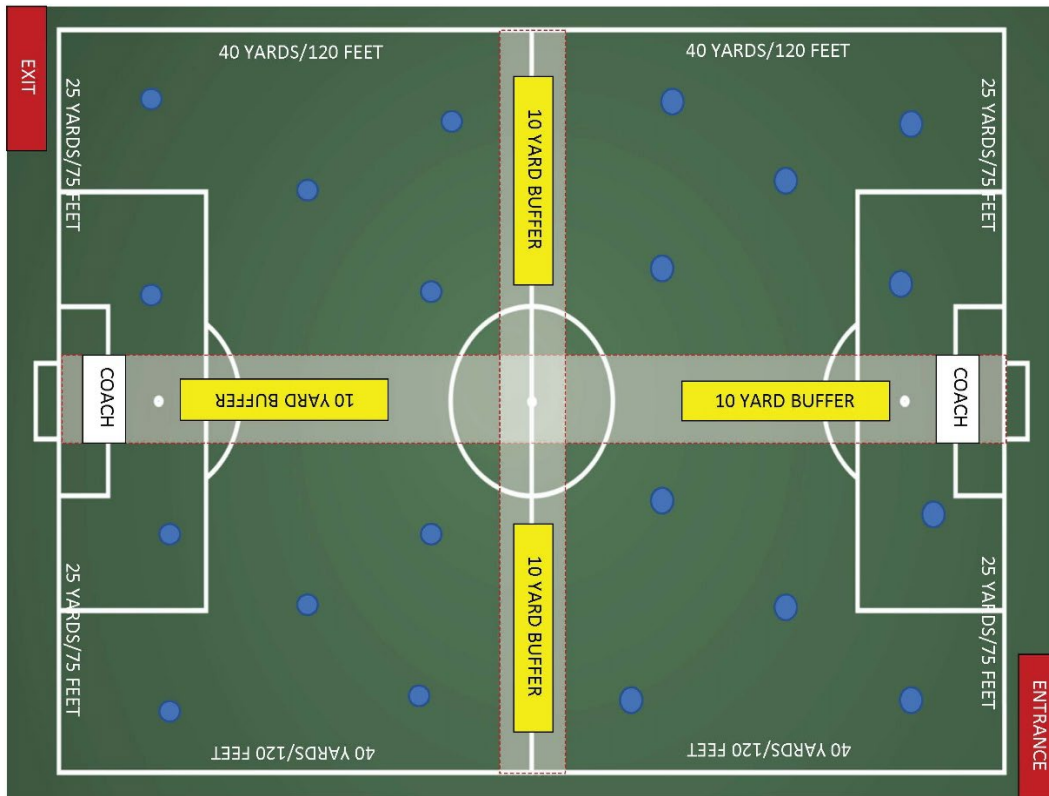
- Take temperature daily.
- Wash hands thoroughly before and after training and any contact outside your home.
- Bring and use hand sanitizer with you at every training session. Especially at the beginning and end of sessions.
- Limited or no carpooling.
- Wear mask before and after all training sessions. This protects others in the event that you are unknowingly carrying the virus.
- Do not touch or share anyone else's equipment.
- Bring your own ball to training, label it as your own.
- Practice social distancing and place bags and other equipment at least 6 feet apart from your teammates' equipment during sessions.
- Wash and sanitize all equipment before and after every training session.
- No group celebrations with players closer than six feet, no high fives, hugs, cheers, etc.

General Protocols:

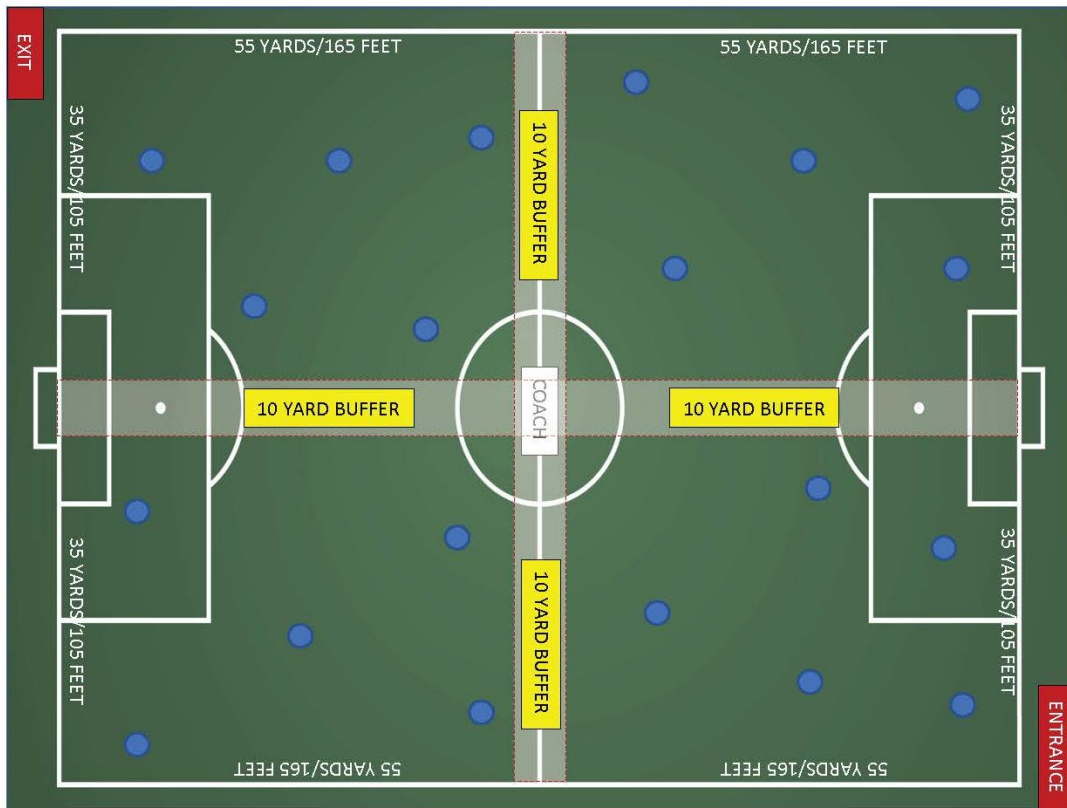
1. Be smart: if you are sick, stay home. This applies to everyone: players, coaches, and parents. If you have been sick, stay home for 14 days after recovery.
2. Screening: Greet all participants before practice and ask if they have been sick in the last 14 days or in direct contact with a person who is sick. Send home immediately if the answer is "yes."
3. Sanitize: have hand sanitizer available and encourage hand washing before and after all activities.
4. Group play: all activities must be limited to the max number allowed in the current phase.
5. Physical play: facilitate soccer activities that eliminate physical contact. All drills and small-sided games should have as little physical contact as possible. Tackling, shielding, etc. should not be included in small-sided games or drills.
6. No high-fives, handshakes, or hugs: as much as we want to physically connect, this is not a safe practice for anybody right now.
7. Masks: coaches and spectators should wear a mask before, during, and after practice. Players should wear a mask when not actively practicing.
8. Drop-off/pick-up: if possible, parents should remain in car for drop-off and pick-up. All spectators must remain 6 feet apart.
9. Water bottles: to minimize accidental sharing of water, players must keep their water bottles in their own bag when not in use.
10. Have fun, stay positive: everyone is looking to each other to stay calm, supportive, and compassionate during this time.

PHASE 2 FIELD DIAGRAMS

9v9 Field: 5 players per 9000 sq. feet or 1000 sq. yards or 0.2



11v11 Field: 5 players per 17,325 sq. feet or 1925 sq. yards or 0.4 acres



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Is it even safe for players to wear masks and play at the same time? Especially in any kind of heat?

A. Understanding that masks can inhibit a player's ability to breathe during exercise, players will only be asked to wear masks to and from the field.

Q. Do we limit drill time for contact drills?

A. In the initial Phase 2 and 3 plans, we encourage non-contact activities, and instead focus on technical and tactical. For training sessions, clubs will be encouraged to have their players engage in non-contact activities until a full return to play is better known.

Q. Can we use kick ins? No handling of the ball except for GK wearing gloves.

A. This would be at the directive of USYS as the governing body.

Q. What will WYS' role be? Level of control? Advise or mandate? Firm leadership from WYSA will help us stay together on this. If left to our own decisions, there will be bickering between clubs and staff... all levels.

A. WYS will advise clubs on best practices.

Q. If not soon then, why, when statistics clearly demonstrate at this point that healthy youth are no more likely to succumb to protracted health issues from COVID-19 than any other illness, are we to be expected to radically alter our way of life to a "new normal" both within and without the circle of soccer?

A. Because kids can be carriers, and will interact with other at-risk individuals, they may pass the virus on to others unknowingly. Additionally, just as we Honor the Game in soccer, which means following the rules even when you can get away without following them, we choose to partner with our Governor and local officials and follow all mandates to insure the safety of all in our community.

Q. Should parents be allowed to stay and watch games?

A. Yes, but we ask that they wear masks and social distance, according to current phase of return to play. Phase 3 has a max of 50 people at events, as long as it's under 50% capacity for the venue.

Q. Should adaptations to rules be made (eg. no throw-ins, no heading) to reduce chance of transmission?

A. WYS will follow CDC guidelines and USYS directives regarding the transmission of the virus.

Q. There have been discussions around taking temperatures of players and attendees prior to attending sporting events. What does this look like?

A. WYS recommends that parents monitor and check temperatures prior to sending children to practice.

Q. Are there going to be any safety precautions for the referees?

A. Referees will follow the same protocol as players.

Q. There are youth with asthma or allergies that take the risk to play soccer despite the outdoor nature. Are we to expect them to wear masks in case they happen to wheeze or sneeze? Odds are that expecting anyone with asthma to wear a mask and attempt to run around is going to necessarily exclude them from that activity.

A. Coaches and sidelines observers will be asked to wear masks initially, but players will only need to wear them to and from the car and the field.

Q. The biggest challenge may be what happens if someone on a team gets infected? That could cause a domino effect of things to follow with the entire team being quarantined, and possibly any opposing teams that may have come into contact within the period of time they were contagious. What a mess!

A. Players with symptoms should stay home to limit the spread. Players and coaches should still practice social distancing when they can, no high fives, handshakes, hugs, etc., and wash their hands/use hand sanitizer if they come in contact with another player/coach. If a person is diagnosed with COVID-19, the entire group must return to self-isolation until symptom free for 14 days.

Q. How are we helping recreational clubs with volunteer staffs who will have short timetables for registration and finding coaches and getting everyone in compliance?

A. We would promote the return of soccer via our platform. When we have a better idea on when we will return to play and at what capacities, we will support our members to make sure they get all the help they need.

Q. Parents and players need to have a clear understanding of rules put in place to protect them. How will we keep updated?

A. All our policies will be shared on all members association websites, as well as the WYS website.

Q. Should we be canceling all tournaments for the remainder of the year and looking out for the best interest of youth players?

A. WYS simply sanctions tournaments but it's up to individual organizations and teams to make decisions on whether or not to hold or attend these tournaments. Organizers should be following the current state guidelines on outdoor gatherings when planning.

Q. My main concern is that there will be no soccer season. The basic view seems to be that children are disease vectors and we should just lock them up for the duration. How are you speaking up for the rights of children to get outside and resume team sports?

A. Players come first. Their physical and mental health are important to us. Being outside in the fresh air and with their team safely is our goal. We will also follow federal, state, and local guidelines.

Q. Will WYS be supplying or paying for all necessary cleaning products, masks and gloves for all players and coaches per practice and all games? How can a small club like ours be expected to pay for all of that? How can coaches be expected to pay for additional costs related to safety?

A. Each club will be responsible for providing masks and cleaning supplies to their staff. Perhaps this can be added to the team's budget so the cost is spread out.

Q. What is the liability for the associations if a player/coach is diagnosed with COVID 19?

A. WYS insurance covers injuries only, not infectious diseases or viruses. When a player participates, they are willingly accepting the potential risks that come along with that. Each club has the option to review and offer a "play at your own risk" waiver.