

Return to Play Protocols for STEPS Lacrosse, LLC Events

STEPS Lacrosse LLC has prepared ***Return to Play*** recommendations for all participants. The following recommendations and protocol are fluid and changing, based upon current guidelines set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, US Lacrosse, and other Federal and/or local government agencies.

Participants must proceed with the understanding that there is no way to eliminate all risk of infection and, as a result, STEPS Lacrosse LLC strongly encourages all participants to follow these recommendations as safety precautions. The information in this document is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.

COVID-19 Protocols/Waiver/Athlete Admittance Ticket

Event management will share all COVID-19 Return to Play protocols with participating clubs in a timely manner. Participating clubs should adhere to all COVID-19 Return to Play protocols in good faith. Event management will require a COVID-19 Waiver and Athlete Admittance Ticket for all coaches and players (see appendix). It is required that the COVID-19 waiver be agreed to via online player rostering within the assigned parameter for each individual event. It is required that the Athlete Admittance Ticket be submitted to the event staff on the day of the event and prior to the individual teams' first game.

Vulnerable Public/Participants

There are certain segments of the population that have an increased risk of being infected by the COVID-19 virus. Individuals who are 65 years of age or older, those with heart, lung, kidney or liver complications, and those with diabetes or any other pre-existing health conditions are highly encouraged not to attend. Parents and coaches should assess levels of risk based on individual players on the team who may be at higher risk for severe illness such as children who have asthma, diabetes, or other health problems.

Signs and Symptoms of COVID-19

COVID-19 affects different people in different ways. Infected people have had a wide range of symptoms reported – from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms that may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus:

- Cough / Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever / Chills / Repeated shaking with chills
- Headache / Sore throat / New loss of taste or smell

This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you. If you develop any of these emergency warning signs for COVID-19, get emergency medical attention immediately:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

COVID-19 Screenings

Event staff

- should participate in daily health screenings, (ie: a temperature check and symptom reporting.)
- Any staff experiencing symptoms will be directed to local health resources and will not work their scheduled shift.

Spectators

- Spectators are expected to self-screen for symptoms and temperature check before arriving at the facility.
- Upon entrance to the facility, every spectator is required to adhere to all social distancing and face covering protocols.
- Any guest or participant reporting COVID-19-related symptoms in the screening process should be directed to local health care resources.

Athletes

- COVID-19 waiver must be agreed to online prior to the event by all athletes.
- Athlete Admittance Ticket should be required for all athletic participants the day of the event. For multi-day events, the Athlete Admittance Ticket should be required for each individual day of play.
- Any athlete reporting COVID-19 related symptoms in the screening process should be directed to local health care resources.

Face Coverings

COVID-19 [spreads](#) mainly from person to person through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks, or raises their voice (e.g., while shouting, chanting, or singing). These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. [Recent studies](#) show that a significant portion of individuals with COVID-19 lack symptoms (are “asymptomatic”) and that even those who eventually develop symptoms (are “pre-symptomatic”) can transmit the virus to others before showing symptoms.

To reduce the spread of COVID-19, CDC recommends that people wear cloth face coverings in public settings when around people outside of their household, especially when other [social distancing](#) measures are difficult to maintain.

It will be recommended that every event participant (event staff/players/parents/officials/spectators) use a face covering when within close proximity (within 6 feet) of other people, especially when social distancing cannot be maintained, unless it jeopardizes their health.

- Athletes may wear a face mask during lacrosse activity.
- When interacting with other people in a public setting, off the field, all athletes should wear cloth face coverings. (US Lacrosse)
- It will be recommended that parents and spectators wear face coverings at all times at the facility that covers nose and mouth.
- It will be recommended that athletes, officials, and coaches wear face coverings when not actively engaged in a competition.

Social Distancing

Limiting face-to-face contact with others is the best way to reduce the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Social distancing, also called “physical distancing,” means keeping space between yourself and other people outside of your home. To practice social or physical distancing stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms’ length) from other people. (cdc.gov) All individuals, on or off-field, must maintain a social/physical distance of at least 6 feet away from others whenever possible.

Signage to maintain social distancing will be placed around the facility and communal spaces.

Event Staff Social Distancing:

- It will be required that all event staff members wear face coverings when social distancing cannot be maintained. In addition, event staff should wear gloves to maintain hygiene.
- Table staff should maintain distance from each other.
- Table staff and officials should make sure no contact on sidelines is occurring between athletes, coaches or officials – pre-game, mid-game or post game. (No huddles, handshakes, high-fives, fist bumps, etc...).

Player Social Distancing:

Team to team interaction will be limited by implementing the following rules:

- Game scheduling - teams will be scheduled on no more than 1 or 2 fields, and teams will play with limited games off, all in an effort to minimize the time a team spends at the facility.
- Length of time in between games will be limited to minimize the possibility of team interaction.

- Removing the customary team cheer and hand shake after each game - no team huddles and team cheers will be permitted.
- Removing all communal equipment - team benches will be removed and it will be recommended that players place bags and equipment at least 6 feet apart from each other, main tables will not be placed, scores will not be kept manually by a tabletop flip chart, and communal water will not be provided.

Spectator Social Distancing:

- The number of spectators will be capped at 1 per athlete.
- Events will not be open to the general public in an effort to minimize the number of people on site at one time.
- It is advised that all attendees maintain 6 feet distance between non-family members at the event

Team Social Distancing During Non-Playing Time:

During times when players are not actively participating in competition, attention should be given to maintaining social distancing by increasing space between players on the sideline. It will be recommended that all athletes, coaches, and spectators maintain 6 feet distance at all times possible.

- No group huddles
- No team tents will be erected, individual family shade tents only, spaced at least 6 feet apart from from other families.
- No tailgating in parking lots.
- Please leave immediately after the last game; do not linger at the venue.

Equipment (Event, Athlete, Coach, Spectator)

Because it is also possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes we will remove all communal equipment. Event management should ensure that there is adequate time provided to teams and officials for hydration, sanitation and recovery between games.

- No communal water jugs, benches, flip charts.
- It is advised that all athletes, coaches and officials sanitize hands with hand sanitizer before and after each game.
- Mouthguards should be kept in athletes' mouths at all times during practices and games. When removed, mouthguards should be kept in a protective case, and cleaned before future use. Hands used to touch a removed mouthguard should be sanitized before touching anything or anyone.
- If needed for personal comfort or need, spectators, athletes, and officiating staff should bring their own chairs or other seating.

- Open lid trash cans will be spread around the facility, so there will be no need to touch it when discarding trash.
- Lacrosse Balls: Balls will be in buckets marked “clean.” Player is to scoop the ball out with his/her stick. If the ball is touched by hands, it must be dropped in the bucket marked “dirty” and a new ball from the “clean” bucket must be used to continue play.

Safe Game-Play Guidelines

Game specific modifications to the rules may be necessary to comply with Federal, state and/or local guidance and regulations (i.e. no draw control or face offs to start games).

Maintaining Healthy Operations

Tournament and event staff are committed to maintaining healthy operations on-site. All staff will be advised and trained in proper protocols. In order to maintain healthy operations:

- Keep athletes, coaches, officials, staff and parents aware of state or local regulatory agency policies related to group gatherings.
- ATC's will be designated Covid-19 Point of Contact and this will be reiterated to all athletes, coaches, officials, staff and parents.
- A back up staffing plan will be in place and STEPS Lacrosse will monitor absenteeism of staff.
- Our event staff and officials will be trained on safety protocols. It will be recommended that all Coaches and club staff will do the same.

Event Sanitation

While participants are encouraged to bring their own sanitation supplies (disinfectant wipes, hand sanitizer, etc), event management should provide adequate sanitation options for all people in attendance. This includes access to bathrooms that will be monitored by an attendant to allow for disinfecting between use. Hand sanitizer or hand washing stations should be made available throughout the venue and marked sanitation stations.

Cooperation & Responsibility for All Participants

Each stakeholder as outlined below has a responsibility to cooperate within the framework of this plan. STEPS Lacrosse emphasizes the need for cooperation and an acceptance of responsibility from all members of our lacrosse community--we will be safer when we work together to minimize risks.

Participating Club

- Distribute and post *Return to Play* protocols
- Be sensitive and accommodating to parents that may be uncomfortable with returning to play
- Train and educate all stakeholders in the stages of *Return to Play* protocols

Club Coach

- Follow all *Return to Play* protocols
- Send players home if they are not feeling well
- Ensure all players have their own individual equipment
- Ensure activities provide adequate social distancing, as applicable
- Respect players, parents and families by accommodating those that may not yet be comfortable returning

Parent

- If you are not comfortable having your child return to play, **DON'T**
- Check child's temperature prior to attending any activities
- Ensure child's clothing is washed after every activity
- Ensure all equipment is sanitized prior to any activity
- Notify Club/coach if your child becomes ill for any reason
- Supply your child with individual sanitizer
- Adhere to all social distancing expectations
- Ensure your child has plenty of water

Player

- If you are not comfortable with returning to play, **DON'T**
- Adhere to all *Return to Play* protocols
- Wash hands thoroughly before and after all activities
- Ensure all equipment is sanitized prior to any activity
- Do not share water, food, or equipment
- Respect and practice social distancing, as required in these guidelines
- Place equipment, bags, etc. at least 6 feet apart

- No High Five's, handshakes, knuckles, or group celebrations

General Safety Guidelines

In addition to the aforementioned safety guidelines, general safety guidelines recommended by the CDC should be followed by event management, attending clubs, spectators and athletes:

- Stay at home if you (or a member of your immediate household) are feeling sick or experiencing the following COVID-19 symptoms: People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure to the virus**. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Fever of 100.3 degrees F/37.9 degrees C
 - Chills
 - Muscle pain
 - Sore throat
 - New loss of taste or smell

(additional less common symptoms can be found at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov))

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and equipment (including balls, mouthguards, sticks, water bottles, helmets, eyewear, pads, uniform).
- No sharing of equipment, water bottles, towels.
- Thoroughly wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (sing “Happy Birthday” twice) or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Have sanitizing options available, including, but not limited to hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes.
- Arrive dressed and ready to play.
- Minimize use of changing rooms, bathrooms, communal areas.
- Eat off-site.
- Bring your own water bottle.
- Any tasks that can be done at home, should be done at home.
- Cover your mouth and nose with elbow or tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Follow the public health guidance of the host location for the lacrosse activity, when determining what necessary return to play and risk mitigation plan to follow.
- Each program should assign a designated safety or hygiene coordinator as the point of contact for all COVID-19 information, education and hygiene protocols. (See resources)

- Establish a CAP (COVID-19 Action Plan), to determine what steps you need to take, should an athlete, coach, or family member get sick or test positive for COVID-19.

COVID-19 Action Plan

Event management should have an action plan to determine what steps will be taken should event staff, official, athlete, coach, or spectator get sick or test positive for COVID 19.

Common COVID 19 symptoms include but are not limited to: [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)

- Cough
- Fever
- Sore Throat
- Shortness of breath
- Close contact with a COVID-19 positive
- Temperature
- Participant Screening Procedure for event staff, coaches, officials, spectators and athletes.
- A Paper Athlete Admittance Ticket is mandatory for each event.
 - This ticket will include all personal data including: name, date, team as well as answers (Y or N) to medical questions and a parent signature.
 - This ticket will be completed by a parent/guardian prior to participation.
 - If the ticket is not submitted, the athlete will not be admitted.
- Event staff, official, coach, athlete, or spectator has shown symptoms of illness during event
 - Will immediately be segregated and sent to an on site medical tent
 - Parent/guardian will be contacted to pick-up the player immediately
 - Individual will be advised to see a medical professional.
 - Will be advised of home isolation criteria: Any persons that are sick or have been exposed to someone sick and have not been quarantined for fourteen days, need to stay home and should not return until they have met CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation
 - If you are calling an ambulance or bringing someone to the hospital, try to first alert them that the person may have COVID-19.
 - Individuals who have had close contact with a person who has symptoms will be separated and sent home as well.
 - A medical professional will determine if COVID 19 test is necessary.
 - Individual will be advised to follow CDC guidelines for community related exposure.
 - A medical professional will determine if COVID 19 test is necessary
 - Participants in direct contact with the individual will be notified by event management

Participating Event Staff, Athlete, Coach, Spectator has tested positive for COVID 19 ([cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov))

- Stay at home.
- Contact Event Management immediately with the date of positive test result.
- Event management will contact the local and state health officials and follow all local and state protocols.
- Those most at risk will be advised to self-quarantine and monitor symptoms

Appendix

- Center for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov
- State of New Jersey Department of Health: www.nj.gov
- US Lacrosse: www.uslacrosse.org

COVID 19 Waiver

In consideration of being allowed to participate in a STEPS Lacrosse LLC event ("STEPS Event"), the undersigned acknowledges, appreciates, certifies and agrees that:

1. My participation includes possible exposure to and illness from infectious diseases, including but not limited to MRSA, influenza, and COVID-19. While particular rules and personal discipline may reduce this risk, the risk of serious illness, injury, and death does exist.
2. If I have a pre-existing health condition, exposure to COVID-19, or any other infectious disease may be more likely to cause serious illness, injury, or death;
3. STEPS Lacrosse cannot ensure that all other participants, including coaches and volunteers, are taking precautionary measures to mitigate risks to ensure the health and safety of other participants, coaches, and volunteers, and therefore, participation in a STEPS Lacrosse Event involves risk of exposure to infectious disease; and,
4. I KNOWINGLY AND FREELY ASSUME ALL SUCH RISKS, both known and unknown, EVEN IF ARISING FROM THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASEES or others, and assume full responsibility for my participation; and,
5. I certify that I have not recently tested positive for, and am not exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, which include a cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, loss of taste or smell, headache, chills, muscle or body aches and/or sore throat.
6. I certify that I do not have a household family member/roommate who has recently tested positive for or exhibited the above-referenced symptoms of COVID-19.
7. I willingly agree to comply with all recommendations provided by STEPS Lacrosse to ensure safe play. If, however, I observe any unusual or significant hazard during my presence or participation, I will remove myself from participation and bring such to the attention of the nearest coach, staff member or volunteer, or official immediately; and,
8. I, for myself and on behalf of my heirs, assigns, personal representatives and next of kin, HEREBY RELEASE AND HOLD HARMLESS STEPS Lacrosse LLC, and their partners, officers, officials, agents, and/or employees, other participants, volunteers, sponsoring agencies, sponsors, vendors, advertisers, and if applicable, owners and lessors of premises used to conduct the event ("RELEASEES"), WITH RESPECT TO ANY AND ALL ILLNESS, INJURY, DISABILITY, DEATH, or loss or damage to person or property, WHETHER ARISING FROM THE NEGLIGENCE OF RELEASEES OR OTHERWISE, to the fullest extent permitted by law.

I HAVE READ THIS RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK AGREEMENT, FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS TERMS, UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE GIVEN UP SUBSTANTIAL RIGHTS BY AGREEING TO IT AND I/WE NEVERTHELESS DO SO FREELY AND VOLUNTARILY WITHOUT ANY INDUCEMENT.

FOR PARTICIPANTS OF MINORITY AGE (UNDER AGE 18 AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION)

This is to certify that I, as parent/guardian, with legal responsibility for this participant, have read and explained the provisions in this waiver/release to my child/ward including the risks of presence and participation and his/her personal responsibilities for adhering to the rules and regulations for protection against communicable diseases. Furthermore, my child/ward understands and accepts these risks and responsibilities. I for myself, my spouse, and

child/ward do consent and agree to his/her release provided above for all the Releasees and myself, my spouse, and child/ward do release and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Releasees for any and all liabilities incident to my minor child's/ward's presence or participation in these activities as provided above, EVEN IF ARISING FROM THEIR NEGLIGENCE, to the fullest extent provided by law.

Athlete Admittance Ticket

Parents/Caregivers complete the Athlete Admittance Ticket before EACH practice.

Players without a ticket will NOT be allowed to participate. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

Player First Name

Player Last Name

Team: _____

Player temperature prior to attending practice: _____

Does the player live in the same household or have close contact with someone who in the last 14 days has been in isolation for COVID-19 or had a test confirming the virus. **Yes No**

Has the player or anyone in the family (household) been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 days? **Yes No**

Has the player or anyone in the family (household) been asked to quarantine due to NJ COVID 19 travel restrictions. If yes, please list player/family member and dates of quarantine. **Yes No**

Dates of quarantine: _____

Family member: _____

Has the player exhibited any of the following symptoms today (or within the last 24 hour) which cannot be better explained by another condition?

Fever	Yes	No	Difficulty Breathing	Yes	No
Chills	Yes	No	Unusually Weak/Fatigued	Yes	No
Repeated Shaking/Shivering	Yes	No	Loss of Taste or Smell	Yes	No
Cough	Yes	No	Muscle Aches or Pain	Yes	No
Sore Throat	Yes	No	Runny/Congested Nose	Yes	No
Shortness of Breath	Yes	No	Diarrhea	Yes	No

Please provide additional information if symptoms present are better explained by another condition (e.g. exercise induced muscle soreness, diagnosed seasonal allergies).

If the player is experiencing any of the above symptoms prior to practice, without an explanation not related to possible COVID-19, the player is required to STAY HOME from practice until symptom free.

I certify to the best of my knowledge; this information is accurate.

parent/caregiver full name printed

date

parent/caregiver signature