

# COVID-19 Return to Play

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**Protocols and Guidelines for a Safe and Gradual  
Return to Soccer**

Whitpain Recreation Association (Whitpain)

Travel Soccer

16June2020



# Safe and Gradual Return to Soccer

These guidelines will be in effect when Montgomery County, PA turns “Green”. Currently, the guidance from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is that no organized youth sports are allowed in the “Yellow” phase.

These guidelines are in alignment with those developed by the US Olympic Committee, US Soccer, US Youth Soccer, the CDC, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer Association and the Whitpain Recreation Association Board. It is a collection of best practices for carefully moving forward in the COVID-19 world.

When we transition to the “Green” Phase, mitigation strategies for COVID-19 are still very much required. It is a cautious and gradual re-opening. As updated guidance is issued by our government or soccer governing bodies, we will consider how to adapt/adjust.

This document does not replace the advice or direction of medical professionals. The guidance here is intended to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 and any other similarly transmitted illness amongst players and their families.

If families have reservations about re-opening and reintegrating, we will be respectful, sensitive and flexible as we restart. If a parent, child or coach is not comfortable returning to play, they shouldn't.



# Phased Restart

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is reopening counties in phases based on the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19. Organizations in **Yellow** Phase counties can not integrate with those in **Green**. Individuals residing in **Red/Yellow** counties must adhere to those established protocols and rules. Travel is for essential purposes and soccer is not essential.

## Phased Opening Restrictions in PA

### RED PHASE

- No Organized Sports
- Stay Home Order in effect
- Travel only for life sustaining purpose

### YELLOW PHASE

- No Organized Sports
- Stay at Home lifted
- Aggressive mitigation

### GREEN PHASE\*

- Mitigation strategies still implemented
- Open for local, controlled, **non-contact practices**.
- Limit per-field training density by field size
- Social distancing required.

### PHASE OUT

- No restrictions

\* More information forthcoming from the Commonwealth of PA for "Green Phase" requirements/restrictions



# Hygiene and Safety for All

To be followed regardless of the Phase, according to CDC and PA Department of Health

## BEFORE Soccer Events

- Do NOT attend if feeling sick
- Do NOT attend if you have been exposed to COVID-19 illness (quarantine per guidelines)
- Notify the Club if you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or other communicable illness (doctor note for return is required)
- Wash and/or sanitize hands
- Gather and label your personal equipment (e.g. water bottles, balls, shin guards)
- Bring and use hand sanitizer and face mask

## DURING Soccer Events

- Do NOT share snacks/water or equipment
- Do NOT shake hands or high-five
- Cover mouth/nose when coughing or sneezing; no spitting
- Social distance on bench or sideline
- Wear a face mask when not playing
- Let players retrieve ball if it leaves field of play
- Let coaches move field equipment (e.g. goals and flags)
- One coach attends to an injured player wearing mask/gloves unless a medical emergency

## AFTER Soccer Events (everyone)

- Exit field while avoiding large groups at the facility (including parking lots)
- Wash and/or sanitize hands
- Wash face mask and practice clothes
- Sanitize personal equipment that is not laundered
- Launder or Sanitize team equipment (e.g. balls, vests)



# Club Responsibilities in GREEN

No organized activities or open facilities allowed until the Green phase.

## We will...

- Communicate our protocols and requirements to all families
- Spot check compliance with coaches/teams
- Coordinate fields/facility opening with Townships and School Districts – we must abide by their rules, as always
- Schedule activities to minimize large group gatherings before/after events as much as possible
- ALLOW **no-contact** training for teams
- NOT ALLOW scrimmages, games, tournaments
- Implement a field density limitation for Club-sponsored events
- Communicate acclimation recommendations for players, teams and competitions (phased restart – see later slide)
- Supplement coaches first aid kit with masks, gloves and sanitizing product
- Respond to illness notification from members – include stopping/shutting down activities if needed



## Field Density Limitations

- 4V4 = 10 people (2 coach)
- 7V7 = 16 people (2 coach)
- 9v9 = 20 people (2 coach)
- 11v11 = 25 people (3 coach)
- Small group activities/training plans
- Player:Coach Ratio = 9:1



# Coach/Volunteer Responsibilities in GREEN

No organized activities or open facilities allowed until the Green phase.

**As Coach, you are the SAFETY OFFICER representing the Club to your families for each event**

## You/We will...

- Ensure your families have executed the WRA wavier prior to participation
- Communicate and **enforce** our requirements with your families and any trainers
- Communicate any related illness to Club Committee (as with any significant injury)
- Communicate and model precautions and social distancing for your team – **wear a mask at all times**
- Ensure your coaches first aid kit has masks, gloves and sanitizing product
- Sanitize common use equipment (e.g. balls, cones) after each training event
- Setup field equipment before/during practice (e.g. goals, flags, cones) – not players
- Help players space their belongings on the sidelines to ensure social distancing
- Communicate alternate shirt colors for players to bring to avoid use of common training vests/pinnies – wash any common training items after each use
- Only have one Coach attend to an injured player wearing mask and gloves unless an emergency requires any additional support
- Implement the phased acclimation suggestions for training/scrimmages (see later slides)
- Develop **no-contact training plans** for players and follow the field density limitations
- Be positive educators about the change and **ENJOY THE SOCCER**

***Return to Play  
June 16, 2020***



# Family/Player Responsibilities in GREEN

No organized activities or open facilities allowed until the **Green** phase.

## The Club and your Coach needs you to...

- Understand and communicate our protocols and requirements to each player and anyone representing you for the team
- Ensure the health of your player prior to attending a team event (CDC and Dept of Health recommendations) – take temperature, assess for other common COVID-19 systems – if any illness, please stay home
- Communicate any related illness to your Coach or the Club Committee (as with any significant injury)
- Ensure the players equipment is labeled with their name (e.g. ball, water bottle, warmup jackets)
- Masks (families need to supply masks):
  - Determine in advance if your child will wear a mask during play – it is not required during play but is allowed
  - Instruct your child that they **MUST** wear a mask when they are not on the field training (e.g. to/from the field)
  - Wear a mask yourself when approaching the field or group activity
- Instruct your child that sharing snacks, water or equipment is **NOT** allowed
- Instruct your child that hand shakes, high-fives and similar physical interactions are **NOT** allowed
- Have your child pack hand sanitizer for use before/after team activities are completed (families provide hand sanitizer)
- Equipment:
  - Let the Coach setup/collect team equipment
  - Let the players collect their things from the field and a ball that may leave the field of play
  - Sanitize any equipment that cannot be laundered after each use (e.g. ball)
  - Launder training clothes after each use
- Let the Coach attend to an injured player unless of emergency (e.g. Coach may summon you)
- Follow any communicated traffic patterns and maintain social distancing at Club facilities (including the parking lot, patio and/or any other gathering space)
- Be **positive communicators** of the rules and **ENJOY THE SOCCER**

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# Resources

Please access the same resources that the Club is using for this plan

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

<https://www.governor.pa.gov/plan-for-pennsylvania/>

PA Department of Health

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>

PA Recreation and Park Society

<https://prps.org/common/Uploaded%20files/Resources/PRPS%20Park%20and%20Rec%20Facility%20Reopening%20Guidelines%20%2020200512.pdf>

CDC Considerations for Youth Sports

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html>

US Soccer

<https://www.usoccer.com/playon/guides/phase-1-grassroots>

US Youth Soccer

[https://www.usyouthsoccer.org/assets/1/6/usys\\_rta\\_notice\\_051920.pdf](https://www.usyouthsoccer.org/assets/1/6/usys_rta_notice_051920.pdf)

Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer Assn

<https://www.epysa.org/return-to-play-protocols-/>





# Club Committee Contacts

Please contact a Committee Member with any questions or concerns

Travel Soccer Program Coordinator	Pat Bailey
Boys Coordinator	Brendan Hill (interim)
Girls Coordinator	JR Defeo
Registrar	Marisa Pigeon
U8 Academy Coordinator	Paul Laub
Field Coordinator	Matt Ferrie
Equipment Coordinator	Eric Peterson
Uniform Coordinator	Julie Stein
Committee Member At-Large	Scott Greenberg

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*Return to Play*  
*June 16, 2020*



# So....when can we open fields and practice?

The following pre-requisites are confirmed to be in place starting JUNE 27, 2020

- PA Governor's Office or Department of Health provide clear guidance to include youth sports resuming **and/or**
- ✓ Montgomery County, PA provides clear guidance to include youth sports **and**
- ✓ Whitpain Township, PA provides clear guidance to open fields (with WRA mitigation plans approved) **and/or**
- ✓ Lower Gwynedd Township, PA provides clear guidance to open fields and approves our permit (with mitigation plans approved) **and/or**
- X Wissahickon SD provides clear guidance that fields are open and approves our permit (with mitigation plans approved) **and**
- ✓ EPYSA provides clear guidance that sanctioned soccer activity can resume (our insurance policy!) **and**
- ✓ WRA Board concurs with all the above guidance and Travel Soccer plan **and**
- ✓ WRA Travel Soccer communicates requirements with all volunteers and families **and**
- ✓ WRA Travel Soccer provides team representatives with first aid supplies (mask, gloves, sanitizing products)

**We will be able to use Centre Square Park, Wentz Upper, Lower Gwynedd Penllyn Woods and Pen Ambler Park**

**Wissahickon SD fields are not yet available for soccer activities**



# GREEN PHASE – Ramping Up

Once we are started, you should plan for the following (with social distancing measures):

PHASE of RESTART	CUMULATIVE TIME (weeks)	EXTENT OF 'TRAVEL'
Phase 1 – acclimate (fitness and compliance)	Weeks 1-3	Internal club only, NO contact, small group training plans (field density limits), no scrimmage, no travel
Phase 2 – team train	Weeks 4-6	Full squad training with contact, scrimmages within the team and club, no travel
Phase 3 – pre-season	Weeks 7-9	Scrimmages/friendlies allowed in GREEN counties, limited local travel in PA
Phase 4 – compete	TBD by Eastern PA Youth Soccer	All are GREEN, most restrictions lifted, full competition, limited out-of-state and regional travel

