2020-21 R.I. INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE RETURN TO EDUCATION-BASED ATHLETIC COMPETITION

Modifications and Considerations for Soccer

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- In accordance with RIIL and RIDOH guidance, responsible parties must ensure a distance of at least six feet is maintained among individuals at all times, whether indoor or outdoor, unless safety or the core activity (e.g. practicing, playing) requires a shorter distance. If a shorter distance is required, Athletes are required to wear cloth face coverings/masks per RIDOH guidelines. During play when spacing between players is greater than 10 ft athletes may momentarily take brief face covering relief. The default expectation is that the mask will be on. In addition, coaches, trainers, spectators and all other individuals who are not engaged in physical activity are required to wear a face covering per RIDOH guidelines.
- A mandatory two (2) minute hydration/mask break will be taken at the first dead ball situation after the 20-minute mark. Players must stay on the field during the break and may remove their mask as long as they maintain social distancing. Substitutes who report to the table prior to the break taking place, may enter the game following the break.
- The use of a dropped ball is suspended. To replace this procedure, an indirect kick will be awarded to the team whom the referees deemed to be in possession at the time of stoppage.
- During stoppages of play, athletes and coaches should pass the ball by foot on the ground to its designated location. (Do not pick up and throw.)

PRE-GAME CONFERENCE:

- Limit attendees to head referee or center referee, the head coach from each team, and a single captain from each team.
- Move the location of the pre-game conference to center of the field. All individuals should maintain a social distance of 6 feet.
- No handshakes prior to and following the pre-game conference.
- It is the responsibility of the head coach to certify that their entire team is wearing appropriate/approved face coverings prior to each contest. When the official asks the coach if the team is properly equipped, this will also include that the team has appropriate face coverings.
- Suspend handshakes prior to and following the pre-game conference.
TEAM BENCHES:

- Each bench area must be set up at least 10 yards from midfield. Team benches (or chairs) must be set up to ensure social distancing between players, coaches, trainers, etc. on the sidelines. Teams may end up having players stretched out far down the sideline.
- All individuals located in the bench area shall observe social distancing of 6 feet.
- Team areas may be expanded to promote social distancing.

BALL INDIVIDUALS:

- Encourage social distancing of 6 feet. When possible, additional game balls may be placed around the outside of the field to limit contact with the ball.
- Ball holders are encouraged to use their feet or wear gloves to return balls to designated areas or field players.
- Game soccer balls must be wiped down or sprayed with appropriate disinfecting products by the game administrator at the beginning of the game, during timeouts, at halftime, and at the end of the game.

SUBSTITUTION PROCEDURES:

- Maintain social distancing of 6 feet between the substitute, officials and/or teammate(s).
- All substitutes checking into the game should use hand sanitizer provided at the score table and check into the game “near” midfield but socially distant from others including game administrators.

OFFICIALS TABLE:

- Limit to essential personnel who includes home team scorer and timer with a recommend distance of 6 feet between individuals. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential personnel and will need to find an alternative location.

PRE-GAME, HALF-TIME AND POST MATCH CEREMONY:

- No pre-game world cup introduction line or pre-half team huddles on the field. Send players to their field positions with bench personnel lined up on the touch line (6 feet apart) for introductions.
- Water bottles should not be allowed on the field of play and should be used off the playing surface. Goalkeepers are encouraged keep a water bottle behind the net for the purpose of wetting their gloves rather than spitting.
- Coaches shall hold pre-game, half-time and post-game meetings socially distant and off the playing surface, where possible.
- No post-game shaking hands.
CONSIDERATIONS FOR SOCCER OFFICIALS:

- Social distancing guidelines should be employed during the contest for officials when interacting with coaches and student-athletes (ex. penalties or carding).
- If a player steps in the direction of the referee with intent to complain/argue, that player will be given a yellow card. If the player comes within 6 feet of an official to complain/argue, a red card will be issued.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR COACHES:

- Communicate your guidelines in a clear manner to students and parents.
- Consider conducting workouts in “cohorts” of same students always training and rotating together in practice to ensure more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- Keep accurate records of those athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR STUDENTS:

- Students are responsible for their own supplies
- Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing), and individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout immediately upon returning home.
- Bring own water bottle.