

The South Carolina Independent School Association

Return to Practice/Return to Play: Basketball

Basketball season will bring a set of new challenges that our schools, athletic programs, and coaches must be prepared for with good protocols and procedures in place. Basketball typically means more students participating, multigame days, travel for several teams, larger crowds, and more gym time required for multiple team practices. The very nature of the game of basketball will demand players to run, sprint and push themselves which can exacerbate a respiratory illness.

Flu season starts in the fall, and this year, the continuing coronavirus pandemic will complicate the picture. COVID-19 and the flu are both contagious respiratory illnesses. Because some coronavirus symptoms are similar to those of bronchitis, the common cold, the flu and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), this year it is likely that a test will be necessary to tell the difference. Both the flu and COVID-19 are spread through infected droplets and particles in the air.

Considerations for Cold and Flu Season Precautions: What to Do

1. **Get a flu shot.** Even if you usually skip a flu shot, this is the year to make sure you get one. It is safe for you to go to the doctor for a flu shot. For the 2020–2021 flu season, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that you get your flu shot in September or October. Ask your doctor if you should get a pneumonia shot.
2. **Care for yourself** and your family with good nutrition, plenty of rest, proper hydration, regular exercise and stress management. And always stay home if you don't feel well.
3. **Continue protecting yourself from the coronavirus.** Even if you are tired of following coronavirus precautions such as washing your hands frequently, cleaning and sanitizing, wearing a face mask and physically distancing, it's especially important now to keep up the good work — and encourage your family to do the same.



Return to Practice Universal Protocols

Face Coverings

- Recommended: Players should wear Face coverings upon arrival, in the locker room and departure.
- Recommended: Coaches should wear face coverings.

Physical Distancing

- Physical distancing has proven to be an effective strategy to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Physical distancing of 6 feet or more is recommended.
- Many drills allow for physical distancing. Utilize physical distancing as much as possible.
- Players shall be separated as much as possible on the bench.

Screening

- Everyone must practice self-assessments. The initial line of defense starts at home. If a student, teacher, staff member, fan or volunteer feels bad and/or exhibits symptoms he or she must stay at home.
- Check temperatures before practice.

Handwashing/Sanitizing Stations

- Handwashing/sanitizing stations should be located in the gym, locker room, and restrooms.
- Wash/sanitize hands after drills and at the start of each break.
- Before, during, and after the contest, players, coaches, game officials, team personnel, and game administration officials should wash and sanitize their hands as often as possible.

Locker Rooms

- Locker rooms should be deep cleaned prior to use (if they are going to be used).
- The use of locker rooms may be discouraged at this time. If used, consider staggering/limiting the number of players allowed to enter at one time.

Hydration

- No sharing of water bottles. Players Can: bring their own water bottles, use paper/disposable cups.
- Filling stations/Coolers should be available for players to refill their bottle.

Personal Equipment/Towels

- They should not share any personal equipment, such as towels.

Basketballs

- The ball should be cleaned and sanitized periodically as recommended by the ball manufacturer.

SCISA Basketball Guidelines

Practice

- Considerations for Coaches - Communicate guidelines in a clear manner to student-athletes and parents.
- Coaches are responsible for ensuring social distancing is maintained between players as much as possible. This means additional spacing between players while playing, chatting, changing drills so that players remain spaced out, and no congregating of players while waiting a turn. Workouts should be conducted in 'pods' of students, with the same 5-10 students always working out together. This ensures more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- Keep accurate records of those student-athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.

Scrimmages

- Intra-squad scrimmaging may be conducted on the first day of practice.
- For 2020-21, no scrimmages will be permitted before the start of the first contest of the season.
- **One scrimmage will be allowed after November 13th. Rationale: The League considers it important for schools to complete two weeks of practice and evaluate where they are and the effectiveness of their medical protocols and procedures.**

Facility Considerations

- Member schools are expected to comply with CDC and SCDHEC related to best practices for facilities.
- All decisions concerning spectators, student sections, seating in indoor facilities, etc., are under the guidance of home or venue management and should be in accordance with the minimum requirements of SCDHEC.
- Utilizing fans or the AC Unit to assist/increase with air flow in the facility.
This will be important in an effort to take affirmative action addressing the latest statement from the CDC: **Airborne Transmission: there is evidence that under certain conditions, people with COVID-19 seem to have infected others who were more than 6 feet away. These transmissions occurred within enclosed spaces that had inadequate ventilation.
- Any time multiple contests are played on the same day, the game floor, team benches and locker rooms should be cleaned and disinfected between games. This may require more time between games.
- Blocking-off or restricting seating on every bleacher in the gym.
- If the team benches are on or adjacent to the bottom row of the bleachers, then a school shall eliminate fan seating for the two rows directly behind team benches.
- Create and display COVID-19 information signage throughout the venue.

Ticket Sales

If unable to eliminate on-site sales, consider steps to establish social distancing and provide a sanitization station.

Concessions

- Post signage at stand for patrons to maintain social distancing of 6' between parties near food stand.
- Maintain a sanitize solution for wiping cloths during operations and increase cleaning/sanitizing frequency – especially high contact surfaces such as equipment, utensils and countertops.
- Discontinue self-service operations for the public such as drink stations, condiment trays, cup/napkin/utensil dispensers and other amenities to help maintain infection control.
- Consider the use of fans or open (screened) windows to improve air circulation in smaller indoor stands.
- Use single-use condiment packets and avoid using shared condiment containers if possible.
- Consider barriers such as Plexiglass between employees and customers if practical.

Transportation to Events

Schools must consider social distancing requirements when scheduling contests and events for the fall. Masking and social distancing will need to be maintained on buses/vans. Thus, multiple buses/vans and/or parental/guardian transportation will likely be needed.

Spectators

- Schools can limit the number of spectators based upon their COVID Protocols.
- Every other bleacher restricted from seating.
- Face Coverings are required.
- Family groups should be spaced 6 feet apart.
- No spectators on the floor standing or sitting.

Face Coverings

- Cloth face coverings are permissible for players, even during competition.
- Recommended: Coaching staff, bench personnel, and non-competing athletes should wear face coverings.
- Spectators should wear a face covering at all times.

SCISA Basketball Guidelines

Team Benches

- Team benches will need to be extended or modified to accommodate social distancing. Benches may be extended to the baseline and beyond or two rows may be created to stagger seats in order to maintain physical distance between players.
- Social distancing should be practiced when possible. Below are some suggestions.
- Limit the number of team personnel. All non-uniformed team members who are not essential to game management shall be seated in the bleachers or general seating and able to socially distance from other groups. Team benches should be placed apart from the stands where possible. When not possible, spectators should be separated from team benches by at least 6 feet or two rows of seats.
- Limit contact between players when substituting.
- Personnel not in the game should be masked at all times.
- Team benches should be cleaned and sanitized between games

Scoring/Officials' Table

- Limited to essential personnel. The Home Scorer. Clock Operator.
- We recommend that the PA is set-up in a different position in the gym if play-by-play is taking place.
- Visiting Scorebook could be set-up near the table but distanced for the safety of all.
- Score table personnel should wear face coverings.

Equipment: Game Ball(s)

- Home Team Personnel will rotate in new or "cleaned" ball throughout the game. The ball handler will clean balls when they are rotated out of play.

Locker Rooms

- Locker rooms should be deep cleaned prior to use (if they are going to be used).
- The use of locker rooms may be discouraged at this time. If used, consider staggering/limiting the number of players allowed to enter at one time.

Warm-ups

- ♦ Teams bring their own balls for warm-ups.

Hydration

- No sharing of water bottles. Players Can: bring their own water bottles, use paper/disposable cups.
- Filling stations/Coolers may be available for players to refill their bottle.

Personal Equipment/Towels

- They should not share any personal equipment, such as towels.

Cheerleaders

- It is strongly recommended that any cheer squads present at a game to remain at least 12 feet away from the spectators and participants in the game.
- Visiting cheer squad should not travel to away games.
- All sideline cheerleaders are required to wear a mask at all times.

Pregame and Post Game Protocol

- Limit attendees to the referee and the head coach from each team with each coach standing on the center circle on each side of the division line.
- All individuals maintain a social distance of 6 feet or greater at the center circle.
- Suspend handshakes prior to and following the Pregame Conference.

Half-time

Consider suspending half-time shows. If cheer and dance perform, wear masks and socially distance. Suspend youth and middle school demonstrations and games.

Throw-in: Officials' Mechanics

Official may stand 6 feet or greater away from player making the throw-in and bounce the ball to that player on a front court throw-in.

Free Throw Administration: Officials' Mechanics

The lead official shall stand on the end line and bounce the ball to the free thrower.