

Waltham Athletics COVID-19 Protocol

The Waltham Public Schools Athletics staff is concerned about the health and well-being of all the student-athletes, coaches, and all other athletic department staff. In order to ensure safety and to also reduce the exposure of spreading the COVID-19 virus, this protocol will be implemented for all of Waltham's in-season and out of season sports. Please note that these guidelines will be based on local protocols as well as DESE, CDC, EEA, and DPH guidelines and the regulations provided by the Governor of Massachusetts. This protocol is subject to change or modification. The Waltham Athletics staff will ensure the enforcement of any future changes in health guidelines. Please also note that different sports will have different levels of COVID-19 exposure (i.e. high risk, moderate risk, and low risk) and precautions will be taken in accordance with each sport.

As a Waltham student-athlete, one must follow and adhere to the Waltham Public School COVID guidelines. These guidelines might look different from the current CDC/BOH recommendations. All athletes must follow the instructions given by the school nurses, athletic trainer, and Athletic Director. For instance, the Waltham Public Schools guidelines state that if an athlete is deemed a close contact the quarantine period is 14 days, which is currently is more stringent than the CDC guidelines that recommend a quarantine period of 7 to 10 days. This protocol outlines all of the guidelines that are implemented for the student athletes. Please feel free to contact the school nurses, athletic trainer, or Athletic Director if you have any questions or concerns.

SHARED DEFINITIONS UNDERSTOOD DISTRICT-WIDE

- **Isolation** – refers to separating people who are infected with COVID-19 from others to prevent the spread; this period lasts a minimum of 10 days from either the onset of symptoms or specimen collection of a positive test in the absence of symptoms (meaning person is asymptomatic but has positive COVID test).
 - Example: an individual who is COVID-19 positive stays isolated from others especially in the same household (separate room, basement, hotel, etc.).
- **Quarantine** – refers to separating people who have been exposed to a positive case of COVID-19 to prevent the spread; this period lasts for 14 days from the date of last exposure regardless of testing status.
 - Example: an individual identified as a close contact of someone who tested positive for COVID-19 must quarantine for 14 days. The last day of exposure would be day 0, and day 1 would be considered the following day.
- **Close Contact** – individual who has been within 6 feet of distance to a confirmed case of COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes over the course of 24 hours, during the infectious period which begins 48 hours prior either to symptom onset or specimen collection of a

positive test in the absence of symptoms. A close contact must fulfill their 14 day quarantine despite a negative test result.

- Example: If someone in your household has COVID-19, you have direct physical contact with COVID-19 (hug, kiss, shared common areas), you shared eating or drinking utensils, or if the COVID-19 person sneezed, coughed, or spreads any respiratory droplets on you.
- **Contact of a Contact** – an individual who has come into contact with someone who is a “close contact” of a COVID-19 positive case. A “contact of a contact” has not yet been directly exposed to positive COVID-19 but may have a higher risk of transmission.

POTENTIAL INCIDENT

*Onset of COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

WHO	IF	THEN
Coaches/Athlete	Develops symptoms at home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● STAY HOME. ● Coach: Enter absence in Frontline (if a teacher) and alert Athletic Trainer. ● Student: Parent alerts athletic trainer <u>and</u> nurse about symptoms. ● Contact Primary Care Provider (PCP) to arrange testing.
Coaches/Athlete	Develops symptoms at practice/game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Call/ alert the Athletic trainer. ● Proceed to the Isolation room if appropriate. ● Coaches: Alert athletic trainer and GO HOME. Notify nurse. ● Athlete: must be picked up within 30 minutes. Notify nurse. ● Contact PCP to arrange testing.
Coaches/Athlete	Develops symptoms on the bus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coach/Bus Driver alert athlete’s parent and athletic trainer ahead of drop off. ● Athlete must exit bus first. ● Athlete must be picked up within 30 minutes. ● Notify nurse.

Waltham Athletics COVID-19 Testing/Contact Tracing Protocol

IF	THEN
Symptomatic, POSITIVE TEST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolate for a minimum of 10 days per state guidelines and until 24 hours have passed with no fever and no other COVID symptoms (lingering diminished smell and taste may still be present) . • Cooperate with the athletic trainer, school nurses, and Board of Health (BOH or CTC) contact tracer. • Coaches/Athletes: report to athletic trainer and school nurses with status and test results as well as onset of symptoms. • Once cleared from doctor/BOH provide documentation of clearance letter from PCP to athletic trainer and the school nurse. • Complete the gradual return to play (RTP) protocol with the athletic trainer. • Once an athlete completely/successfully does COVID-19 RTP protocol they are fully returned to sport.
Symptomatic, NEGATIVE test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide documentation of negative test/letter from PCP to athletic trainer and the school nurse. • Return to school/sport only after being symptom free 24 hours without use of any medications. • Complete the gradual return to play (RTP) with the athletic trainer. • Once an athlete completely/successfully does COVID-19 RTP protocol they are fully returned to sport.
Symptomatic, NO TEST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must conservatively assume the likelihood of a positive case. • Isolate for at least 10 days (from symptom onset) and fever free and with symptom improvement for 24 hours (lingering diminished smell and taste may still be present). • Provide clearance documentation from PCP to athletic trainer and the school nurse. • Return to school/sport only after being symptom free 24 hours without use of any medications. • Complete the gradual return to play (RTP) protocol with the athletic trainer. • Once an athlete completely/successfully does COVID-19 RTP protocol they are fully returned to sport.
Close Contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The athletic trainer will contact the school nurse who will confirm the status of close contact with BOH. • Quarantine for 14 days per state guidelines (day 0 is the last day of exposure and the first day of isolation is day 1). • Contact PCP to arrange testing no earlier than day 7 following last exposure (NOTE: a negative test does not shorten the quarantine period as the virus may take this time to develop).

	<p>However, testing can help provide future information about close contacts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide documentation of clearance letter from PCP to athletic trainer and the school nurse. • If athlete has symptoms they must complete COVID-19 RTP protocol with athletic trainer. • Once an athlete completely/successfully does COVID-19 RTP protocol they are fully returned to sport. • If athlete has no symptoms/negative test they may return to sport after the 14 day quarantine.
Asymptomatic, POSITIVE test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 day isolation beginning with the date of the test. • Provide documentation of clearance letter from PCP to athletic trainer and the school nurse. • Athlete is able to return to sport after providing proper documentation.
Possible COVID-19 Exposure (“Contact of a Contact”)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If an athlete was exposed to someone who is considered a close contact (close contact is deemed by BOH) they should not participate in sports (i.e. if an athlete's sibling, parent, household member, etc is considered a close contact, then they should not participate in sport). • The athlete should isolate from the close contact (i.e. sibling, parent, etc.) and count the last date of exposure as day 0. • The athlete cannot return to sport until the close contact (i.e. sibling, parent, etc.) tests negative for COVID-19. This close contact's COVID-19 test should be done within 4-7 days. • If the athlete's close contact is negative, the sibling must provide the athletic trainer with the negative test result before returning to play. • If the athlete receives a positive COVID-19 test and/or develops COVID-19 symptoms please refer to Symptomatic, POSITIVE test; Symptomatic, NEGATIVE test; Symptomatic, NO TEST; or Asymptomatic, POSITIVE TEST.
Positive COVID Athletes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When an athlete tests positive for COVID and there is another potential risk of exposure, they do not have to quarantine if they are within the 90 day period.

AFTER POSITIVE CASE IDENTIFIED AT SPORT PRACTICE/GAME/SESSION

WHO	WHAT
Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affected athletes, coaches, athletic trainers, etc. will receive notification that a positive case had occurred among a team member. • Any close contacts will be notified by athletic trainer, school nurse and local BOH.

Athletics/WHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Entire community will receive notification that a positive case has occurred in athletics and in school.*
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***all identifying information will remain confidential**

COVID-19 Return to Physical Activity Protocol

Given the circumstances and potential emerging health risks not yet fully recognized with the COVID-19 virus, Waltham Public Schools and the Athletic Department recommends that all student-athletes who have tested positive for COVID-19 will complete a gradual return to physical activity. It is required that any infected student-athlete who had COVID-19 symptoms such as fever, cough, postnasal drip, other cold-like symptoms, chills, aches, pains, vomiting, diarrhea, etc. complete the gradual return to physical activity with the presence of an appropriate healthcare professional (i.e. athletic trainer, school nurse, doctor). Please note that any student-athlete who tested positive for COVID-19 but was asymptomatic (symptom free) does not have to complete the gradual return to play.

First, the student-athlete will provide a doctor's note stating that the athlete may return to physical activity/sports. This note will be given to the athletic trainer and school nurse. Once the athletic trainer has the note, the athlete may start the gradual return to physical activity (this could be the same day they provide the note, unless the athlete's doctor otherwise specifies another return/start date). The athlete needs to be asymptomatic, and without a fever for 24 hours (and without taking any medication).

Day 1- 5: The athlete will be allowed to practice with their team, but in a modified way. The athlete will first be able to complete 50% of their practice/training for the first 5 days of returning to physical activity. The athlete will not be allowed to participate in a game situation during this time. The athletic trainer and coach will determine the frequency, duration, and the workload of a practice. The student-athlete will check in daily with the athletic trainer to report progress and symptoms. The athletic trainer will evaluate the athlete's performance and symptoms, paying particular attention to any changes in breathing/respiratory or heart/cardiovascular issues.

If the athlete is able to compete and perform 50% of the practice with little to no difficulty, they will move onto day 6 without restrictions. However, if the athlete is struggling through the first 5 days, they should consult with their doctor before proceeding to day 6 (week 2).

Example: Dana is a soccer player who tested positive for COVID-19 and had COVID-19 symptoms. Dana was cleared by the doctor to return to soccer. The school athletic trainer told Dana that she can complete half (50%) of her soccer practice and to monitor her symptoms. Dana reduced her practice in half, she completed half of the drills her coach had planned (i.e. Dana completed 5 minutes of a 10-minute shooting drill). After practice Dana reported her performance progress and symptoms to the athletic trainer. Dana did not participate in any soccer games during these first 5 days. After day 5 Dana is ready to check in with her athletic trainer to plan the next 6 to 10 days.

Day 6 - 10: The athlete will complete the next 6-10 days at either a 30% or 20% decrease in workload, frequency and/or duration of practices. During this week 2 (day 6 to 10 period) the athlete may be allowed to compete in contests/games/meets. This will be predetermined by the doctor, athletic trainer, and coaching staff. If the athlete is progressing without symptoms or restrictions, the athlete may slowly increase their workout in this period. However, if the athlete shows signs of fatigue, respiratory, cardiovascular, or any other physical symptoms, they should be referred to their doctor and reduce the physical workload.

Example 1: After Dana completed day 1 to 5 of the gradual return to play, she checked in with the athletic trainer. Dana reported that she feels great that she has no fatigue, no breathing problems, and no cardiovascular issues. The athletic trainer was happy with Dana's progress and told Dana only to decrease her practices by 20% (she can complete 80% of her practice) and to take breaks as needed. Dana can play in her soccer game during these 6-10 days but is still monitored by the athletic trainer and coaching staff.

Example 2: After Dana completed day 1 to 5 of the gradual return to play, she checked in with the athletic trainer. Dana reports that she still feels fatigued, has trouble breathing, and reports that her heart rate is beating faster than usual. The athletic trainer is concerned about Dana's respiratory and cardiovascular health and tells Dana to contact her doctor. After communicating with the doctor, the athletic trainer reduces Dana's practice time by 30% (she can complete 70% of her practice) and to take breaks as needed. Dana can play in her soccer games but with modifications that her doctor recommended. Dana continues to play soccer for the next 6 to 10 days and reports her symptoms daily to her athletic trainer.

Day 11: The athlete may return to full physical fitness without any modifications or restrictions, unless warranted by their doctor and/or athletic trainer.