



As we head into our Spring Return to Activity the following requirements will be in place for a program to begin training:

- **PHASE B:** No more than 10 total participants (including athletes, coaches, and volunteers) are permitted at a training site or event during the first phase of in-person activities.
- **PHASE C:** No more than 25 total participants.
- **PHASE D:** No more than 50 total participants.
- **TEAM SPORTS:**
 - **Basketball:** Only Level 1 and Level 2 skills activities are permitted.
 - **Softball:** Only Level 1 and Level 2 skills activities are permitted in Phases B and C. If a Local Program reaches Phase D team play will be permitted.
- COVID-19 Coordinator (either the coach or another volunteer) is required at each training site or event. This individual will conduct a basic screening protocol prior to each practice and have several additional responsibilities.

General Guidelines

Training sites must follow all of the required guidance and processes set forth in the [Return to Activities Plan](#).

FACILITIES

Facilities used by SOPA programs for training and competition must also abide by the State of Pennsylvania's [limits on total occupancy](#). Programs must follow the guidance of the stricter regulation.

TRAVEL

Participants will not be able to cross county lines for in-person activities if either their county of residence **OR** county where their training site is located is designated by the Pennsylvania Department of Health as having a moderate [level of community transmission](#) of COVID-19.

Participants who travel outside the State of PA must notify their COVID 19 coordinator to determine whether or not they will need to quarantine for 14 days. The same notification requirement applies if a participant travels to a county with substantial levels of community transmission.

USE OF FACE COVERING

We recommend that everyone involved in a sports activity wear a face covering based on Governor Wolf's [COVID-19 Guidance for Sports](#), including while outdoors.

"Everyone involved in sport activities must wear a face covering, such as a mask, unless they fall under an exception listed in Section 3 of the [Secretary of Health's Universal Face Covering Order](#). Coaches, athletes, and spectators must wear face coverings unless they are outdoors and can consistently maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet." 11/19/20.

Coach Responsibilities:

- To ensure the safety of everyone at their training site by following all policies outlined within the Return to Activities plan.
- Disinfect equipment immediately if cross contamination occurs or before passing it onto another person. All equipment must be disinfected at the beginning and end of practice. Once disinfected there is a 5 minute wait time between contact, be sure to enforce this rule.
- Be aware of the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and isolate participants from others at practice if they are displaying signs. The COVID-19 Coordinator will contact their family/caregivers to have them picked up as soon as possible.

Requirements for all Phases:

To conduct training and competition, organizations and teams authorized to conduct in-person activities must adhere to the following:

- The training site must designate a primary point of contact for all questions related to COVID-19, and all participants must be provided the person's contact information. The COVID-19 Coordinator must communicate potential cases to the local health authorities for testing and to SOPA (within privacy laws).
- All participants must bring their own water and drinks to team activities. Team water coolers for sharing through disposable cups are not allowed. Fixed water fountains should not be used.
- Whenever possible, equipment and other personal items should be separated and not shared. If equipment must be shared, all equipment should be properly disinfected between users.
- Avoid shaking hands, fist bumps, or high fives before, during or after training and competition. Limit unnecessary physical contact with participants.
- Ensure that the venue is disinfected or sanitized, especially bathrooms. Training site should have adequate hand washing facilities. If not, hand sanitizer must be made available. SOPA has a supply of masks and hand sanitizer that can be requested by a training site.
- Activities that increase the risk of exposure to saliva are not allowed including chewing gum, spitting, licking fingers, and eating sunflower seeds.

- Participants must maintain appropriate social distancing at all times possible, including in the field of play, locker rooms, sidelines, dugouts, benches, and workout areas. During down time, participants should not congregate.
- Limit entrance and exit traffic, designate specific entry to and exits from facilities. Ensure staggered pick up and drop off for training and competition; participants are not congregating while awaiting pick up; congregation or crowding does not occur on drop off. Pickups and drop offs should remain outside.
- COVID-19 Participant Code of Conduct and Risk Assessment Form: Prior to returning to any in-person SOPA activities in Phases B through E, all participants are required to complete and return a [COVID-19 Participant Code of Conduct and Risk Assessment Form](#) which provides information and guidance on assessing risk and acknowledges that participation could increase risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19.
- SOPA and Local Programs ensure that all participants are educated about those that are at higher risk of complications from COVID-19 as well as all procedures and expectations for return to activities.
- SOPA and Local Programs must provide a safe participation option for those who are at high risk and thus not permitted to participate in person.
- Prior to moving on to the next phase, training sites must follow the minimum weeks (2-3) requirements in each phase to evaluate the success of the mitigation and infection control precautions.
- Regular education must be provided to all participants reminding them stay home if they have a fever or any signs and symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea). Individuals must not participate in any activities if they are sick, for their own health and to reduce transmission of any infections to others. Instruct anyone who is ill to contact their own health provider for further evaluation.
- No spectators are allowed to congregate on the sidelines of activities. Individuals providing transportation for participants are to remain in vehicles until sessions are over. If participants need assistance, caregivers may remain provided but will be considered participants and must abide by all outlined requirements for participation.



Sport Specific Guidelines

In-person Athletics (Track and Field) can return to training and competition in Phase B, C, and D following the requirements outlined in the Return to Activities plan, as well as the specific Sport requirements listed below:

SOPA Requirements

- Must ensure that the venue is following the protocols outlined in the NGB guidance:
<https://www.usatf.org/covid19>
- Track Events
 - Use every other lane
 - No starting blocks to be used for training and competition
- Field
 - Use consecutive throws by athletes to avoid sharing of equipment
 - Athletes to retrieve their own equipment and immediately sanitize for next athlete
 - Standing long jump on a secure surface
 - Running long jump not to be done on grass. Must be done with sand pit
 - High jump will not be permitted for Spring 2021
 - Pentathlon to be done without high jump for Spring 2021

SOPA Recommendations

- Relays
 - Use of disposable gloves when handling the baton
 - Use batons minimally to avoid touching of baton
- Field
 - If coaches retrieve equipment, coaches must use disposable gloves and they must be disposed of after each contact with an athletes equipment
 - Encourage athletes to wear disposable gloves when feasible to avoid contact with equipment
 - Use softballs in lieu of shot put to increase number of training equipment
 - We will offer softball put as an alternative to shot put

Basketball

Sport Specific Guidance

Special Olympics
Pennsylvania



Sport Specific Guidelines

In-person Basketball Skills can return to training and competition in Phase B, C, and D following the requirements outlined in the Return to Activities plan, as well as the specific Sport requirements listed below:

SOPA Requirements

- Must ensure that the venue is following the protocols outlined in the NGB guidance:
<http://www.fiba.basketball/news/fiba-publishes-guidelines-for-the-return-to-basketball>
- Athletes must have their own ball
- Individual Skills Level 1 and Level 2
 - For Level 2 Skill 3 “Catch and Pass” in Phase B and C there is one change:
 - Use a wall or bounce back equipment in place of the volunteer ball feeder located at cone C



Sport Specific Guidelines

In-person Bowling can return to training and competition in Phase B, C, and D following the requirements outlined in the Return to Activities plan, as well as the specific Sport requirements listed below:

SOPA Requirements

Must ensure that the venue is following the PA Department of Health protocols.

Lanes

- No more than four (4) athletes permitted per lane.
- All games must be played on the same lane with no alternating between lanes.
- There must be an empty lane between athlete groups (i.e. Lanes 1, 3, 5 to be utilized and 2, 4, 6 to remain empty).
- There must be an empty lane between SOPA athletes and the general public.

Equipment

- No equipment should be shared between athletes.
- Each athlete must use their own ball.
- All balls must be sanitized before practice begins including house balls.
 - House balls must be sanitized by the COVID-19 Coordinator.
- Athletes are responsible for their own equipment including bowling bag, shoes, towels, gloves, rosin bag and ball.
- No other athletes, Unified partners or volunteers should touch equipment unless from the same household.
 - If equipment is shared, COVID-19 Coordinator must ensure all equipment is properly disinfected between participants.

Additional Guidance

- Must adhere to the more restrictive measure for lane spacing, alternating lanes, or alternating pairs, per bowling house.
- While at the bowling house, ensure athletes practice social distancing as outlined in the R2A plan.
- All participants (coaches, volunteers, athletes) are required to wear masks.
- No food or drink purchased from bowling house.
- No spectators allowed at this time.

Equestrian Sport Specific Guidance

Special Olympics
Pennsylvania



Sport Specific Guidelines

In-person Equestrian can return to training and competition in Phase B, C, and D following the requirements outlined in the Return to Activities plan, as well as the specific Sport requirements listed below:

SOPA Requirements

- Must ensure that the venue is following the protocols outlined in the NGB guidance: <https://www.usef.org/forms-pubs/XhKGVYiivTA/usef-covid-19-action-plan-for-operating>
- Any athlete who requires a side walker will be unable to participate in Equestrian training and competition at this time.



Sport Specific Guidelines

Our recommendation is to allow in-person golf (level 1, 2, 4) to return to training and competition in Phase B, C, and D following the requirements outlined in the Return to Activities plan, as well as the specific Sport requirements listed below:

SOPA Requirements

- Must ensure that the venue is following the protocols outlined in the NGB guidance: <https://www.usga.org/course-care/covid-19-resource-center.html>
- Flags should not be removed from the hole or touched for any reason
- No bunker rakes will be permitted
- Players must be in singles or pairs only, wear masks, and maintain social distancing
- Players must walk the course

SOPA Recommendations

- Use of Caddies
 - Participants are encouraged to carry their own equipment
 - If a caddie is necessary, the participants must maintain social distancing and athletes must pull their own equipment from the bag



Sport Specific Guidelines

Artistic

In-person artistic gymnastics will not be permitted for Spring 2021. Due to the close proximity of the spotters we do not believe this sport can be played safely.

Rhythmic

In-person rhythmic gymnastics can return to training and competition in Phase B, C, and D following the requirements outlined in the Return to Activities plan, as well as the specific Sport requirements listed below:

SOPA Requirements

- Must ensure that the venue is following the protocols outlined in the NGB guidance: <https://usagym.org/pages/aboutus/pages/coronavirus.html>
- Must have a dedicated practice time and space, may not share with other groups
- Must ensure that any stored mats (if using a non-gymnastics venue) are cleaned and disinfected appropriately



Sport Specific Guidelines

In-person softball skills can return to training and competition in Phase B and C and in-person team softball to begin in Phase D following the requirements outlined in the Return to Activities plan, as well as the specific Sport requirements listed below:

SOPA Requirements

- Must ensure that the venue is following the protocols outlined in the NGB guidance:
<https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Softball/covid-resources>
- Phase B and C
 - Do not allow athletes to share equipment that has not been properly sanitized; including bats, helmets, and balls
 - Equipment must be sanitized prior to use by another athlete
 - Avoid use of dugouts, if 6 feet distance cannot be maintained
- In addition to above, during team play in Phase D,
 - After COVID-19 screening, have athletes, wash and sanitize hands
 - Have athletes sanitize after a drill that involves shared equipment
 - Change softballs often and sanitize used softballs before being used again
 - Limit equipment and limit community use items



Sport Specific Guidelines

In-person Swimming can return to training and competition in Phase B, C, and D following the requirements outlined in the Return to Activities plan, as well as the specific Sport requirements listed below:

SOPA Requirements

- Must ensure that the venue is following the protocols outlined in the NGB guidance: <https://www.usaswimming.org/utility/landing-pages/coronavirus>
- Participants must be able to swim independently without in-pool support or assistance.
- Participants must avoid close contact while entering and exiting the pool and the facility.
- Participants need to be able to follow the instructions for safe spacing in the water.
- Swimming activities must be structured so that social distancing can be maintained throughout the entire practice time - including facility arrival, entering the pool, during swim time, exiting the pool and exiting the facility.
- Dedicated lanes for SO athletes is a requirement. If a pool must be shared with the general public:
- The training facility must be able to provide an empty lane between SO athletes and members.

SOPA Recommendations

- Share the information on rules and expectations with the athletes and parents ahead of time so that everyone understands what to do and why
- Consider the facility layout - location of the pool in the building, rest room facilities, deck space, lane lines, and where the ladders or steps for entering and exiting the pool are located
- Check with the facility for the protocols used for their swim team (if they have one) or their member use of the pool.
- Develop practice plans that allow for athlete and coach spacing during the in-pool session.
- **Protocols for athlete safety in the pool:**
 - There should be a maximum of three swimmers per lane.
 - Lap swimming should be done in circle swims with swimmers of similar ability in a lane. Swimmers must be able to properly maintain speed in order to ensure proper distance is kept between swimmers

- If swimmers stop for instructions, only one swimmer should be at a wall at one time. For example, with 3 swimmers in a lane, one swimmer could be at the wall each end, and one in the middle of the pool would hold the lane line to rest.
- At least one coach should be at each end of the pool to ensure that swimmers don't crowd at the wall.

- Use of locker rooms should be avoided
 - Athletes should arrive at training already dressed in their swimsuits to minimize the risk of using changing facilities. Athletes leaving the pool can be assigned to an area on deck to dry off and cover up properly to be to return to their vehicles without needing to change out of their swimsuits
 - Athletes should use the restroom before leaving home, but if needed during practice, restrooms should be used one person at a time. It is recommended that the covid coordinator is wiping down the area between use.

Tennis

Sport Specific Guidance

Special Olympics
Pennsylvania



Sport Specific Guidelines

In-person doubles tennis will not be permitted for Spring 2021.

In-person tennis skills and singles tennis can return to training and competition in Phase B, C, and D following the requirements outlined in the Return to Activities plan, as well as the specific Sport recommendations listed below:

SOPA Requirements:

- Must ensure that the venue is following the protocols outlined in the NGB guidance:
<https://www.usta.com/en/home/usta-covid-19-updates.html>

SOPA Recommendations:

- Marking individual athletes tennis ball so it is not shared with opponent
- Server should use their marked tennis ball
- Opponent should not touch opponents tennis ball