



## FALL 2021 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- 1. My school is having a hard time getting access to enough COVID tests for our pre-departure tests. Can we use an over-the-counter antigen test sold by our local drug store?**

While over-the-counter tests are not preferred, as long as they are administered by a medical professional, which would include athletic trainers, the results will be acceptable for pre-departure purposes.

- 2. Last year, we had a student-athlete who tested negative in their pre-departure test but was identified as a close contact of someone diagnosed with COVID after we were already on site at the championship. The student-athlete had to be quarantined and couldn't compete in the championship. If that same situation happened this year, what would the outcome be?**

An unvaccinated individual who is identified as a close contact while at the championship will be required to immediately take a PCR test and quarantine. If the test result is negative, the individual must continue to quarantine and take another PCR test in 5-7 days or immediately if symptoms develop. If the second PCR test is negative, the person is allowed to compete at the end of the seven-day quarantine.

A vaccinated individual who is not exhibiting symptoms is not required to quarantine, but must wear a mask for 14 days, with the exception of during competition. If a vaccinated individual exhibits symptom, they are required to immediately take a PCR test and quarantine.

- 3. Why is there a testing exemption for vaccinated individuals when we know that vaccinated individuals can still contract COVID?**

While vaccinated individuals can contract and transmit the COVID virus, studies show they are far less likely to pass it onto others than someone who is unvaccinated. Vaccinated individuals generally have less infectious viral particles, minimizing the chance of spreading the virus. They can also rid their bodies of the virus much more quickly, meaning the time they are infectious is much less than for those who are unvaccinated.

However, anyone exhibiting COVID symptoms, regardless of vaccination status, will be assessed onsite to determine if COVID testing is appropriate.

**4. What is the minimum amount of time that could elapse between a student-athlete being diagnosed with COVID and competing in the national championship? In other words, if a student-athlete is diagnosed with COVID just before the national championship when can they qualify for the 90-day exemption?**

The individual's positive test must have occurred at least 14 days prior to the start of competition and they must have remained asymptomatic for the entire 14 days. It is recommended that the individual consult with a healthcare professional before returning to play.

**5. What counts as a participant being "symptomatic"? What happens if a student-athlete shows symptoms of some kind once we're on site at the championship? We know that some symptoms (e.g. runny nose, sore throat) can be caused by several things besides COVID, so how do we ensure that those circumstances are appropriately considered?**

Any Official Party member who begins exhibiting symptoms once onsite will need to consult with the head athletic trainer at the championship site who will assess the severity and extent of their symptoms. This discussion will also take into consideration the individual's overall health and surrounding circumstances. (i.e. Does the person regularly suffer from seasonal allergies? Have they been around someone recently who has a cold with similar symptoms?)

Each site will also have a medical advisor on call to confer with the head athletic trainer, if needed. If deemed necessary by the head athletic trainer and medical advisor, the individual will then be required to obtain a PCR test at a nearby location.

**6. With only minimal testing occurring on-site at the championship, is it possible for a team to be disqualified this year due to COVID positives?**

A team would only be disqualified if the number of unvaccinated, symptomatic players onsite is high enough that a complete team can't take part in competition. For example, if a volleyball team has 16 athletes in its Official Party, but 11 players who are unvaccinated and symptomatic need to quarantine, the team would be disqualified because only five players remain available to play. Due to safety concerns, football will have additional requirements beyond having a certain number of players. Details will be discussed on the qualifier call.

**7. Are there limitations on who can travel with the team to a championship? If others besides Official Party members (like coach's family or school president) are permitted to travel with the team, are they required to do a pre-departure test?**

All individuals traveling with a team's Official Party are granted Tier 1 access and therefore must take part in pre-departure COVID testing. Exceptions to pre-departure testing include those who have completed their vaccination series and those who have had COVID within the previous 90 days and not been symptomatic within 14 days prior to the event. To limit exposure, we encourage teams to limit Official Party members to student-athletes, coaches, and

essential staff. However, it is at the school's discretion whether additional individuals can travel with the Official Party.

- 8. I have a coach who is getting their final dose of the vaccine the week before the opening round, so they will not be considered fully vaccinated prior to the opening round. If we make it to the final site, they would have received the final dose more than 2 weeks prior. Can they use the exemption for the final site, or will they be required to do a pre-departure test for the final site anyway?**

Yes, an Official Party member who completes their vaccination series between opening rounds and final site competition can utilize the vaccine exception for the final site event. This means that the individual has obtained the second vaccination (Moderna or Pfizer) or single vaccination (Johnson & Johnson) approximately 14 days prior to arrival at the event. The specific vaccinated-by date for each sport is included on the Verification of Pre-Departure Form.