

Identifying Close Contacts of Athletes in High School

What should we do if one of our athletes is COVID-19 positive?

First, all participants, coaches, staff officials, players, and families should be informed that sick individuals should not attend sports activities including practices, scrimmages, games, tournaments or others. If an athlete presents symptoms of and/or tests positive for COVID-19, if someone in their household becomes sick with or tests positive for COVID-19, or if the athlete or player has been exposed to someone suspected of having or confirmed to have COVID-19, the athletic program administrator (coach, athletic director, etc.) should be notified.

Second, close off areas used by a sick person within the last 24 hours, and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting them. For outdoor areas, this includes surfaces or shared objects in the area, if applicable.

Third, notify your regional health officials, athletic program staff, umpires/officials, and families immediately of anyone with COVID-19 while maintaining that person's confidentiality in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Finally, if any coaches, staff members, umpires/officials, or players get sick, they should not return until they have met criteria to discontinue home isolation.

If a player on a team tests positive for COVID-19, does the entire team have to quarantine for 14 days as the CDC recommends.

If anyone on the team including players, coaches, trainers, and staff is identified as a close contact, he or she should quarantine for 14 days after contact with the sick individual.

How do coaches or athletic directors determine close contacts of a COVID+ athlete?

This process will be situational. Some sports are higher risk than others ([Return of High School Sponsored Athletics Guidelines](#)). However, with all sports and athletic activity, air is more forcefully expelled. Therefore, the standard measures used to identify close contacts (within 6 feet of the confirmed positive for at least 15 minutes) has to be adjusted situationally for potentially shorter contact times at close distances.

The standard measures for determining close contacts might be applied to pregame and postgame activity (locker rooms, warm-ups, bus or car travel, etc.) if social distancing measures were taken and are verified. The same might be applied for players and athletes while on sidelines or benches during the game.

For athletes and players involved in games, matches, meets, etc. it is important to remember due to the nature of the activity, forcefully expelled air they potentially breathed in is likely to result in a more substantial exposure, even if it was short. For situational guidance, contact your regional DHEC official.

Should the COVID+ athlete's identifying information be shared with teammates?

No. This information is private and is legally protected. Personal information and/ or any other information that could identify the athlete (jersey number, position, physical descriptions, grade, age, etc.) should not be shared. Please see the attached example of a notice that could be used of a potential

exposure without releasing confidential information. Your regional health office can be contacted to obtain official letters if desired.

Should the COVID+ athlete's identifying information be shared with opposing teams?

No. Identification of close contacts on opposing teams will vary situationally depending on the sport, amount of play time in the game or activity, and other circumstances. It will be important to consider what positions on the opposing team may have been more likely to have come into contact with the ill player. Due to forceful breathing from physical exertion, more casual contact may place a player at risk of infection. Please contact your regional DHEC official for situational guidance. They will work with you to determine which players on the opposing team may be at higher risk and will provide appropriate guidance to them.