

# East Hudson Youth Soccer League (EHYSL) and Hudson Valley Soccer Referee Association (HVSRA)

## Joint Health and Safety Committee

### Fall 2020 Return to Play Requirements

#### **REMINDER: WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER**

The joint committee of EHYSL and HVSRA have worked diligently and tirelessly to review *the return to play for amature soccer recommendations and requirements currently (as of August 31, 2020, published by the: New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), United States Center for Disease Control (CDC), United States Soccer Federation (USSF), Eastern New York Youth Soccer Association (ENYYSA), Eastern New York Soccer Referee Association (ENYSRA)*. The committee reserves the right to amend these requirements upon revisions to the above referenced documentation.

The intent of this document is to afford the league, clubs, players, coaches, referees, and spectators the guidance and recommendations, for the return to play for amature soccer, at the recreation and travel levels. This document is intended to establish clear requirements for the league, clubs, and referees.

This document is divided into four primary categories:

1. Facility and field setup
2. Pre-game check-in
3. Player/Coach/Referee/Spectator safety
4. Game reporting.

In addition to the referenced guidelines for training events, the items listed below **will be put in place for match-day (competition) events.**

#### **New Team Official designation requirements for all teams**

**Team Safety Manager:** As defined in the NYS Interim Guidance for Sports and Recreation during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency [1], *each team must* provide a designated point of contact which we shall refer to as the Safety Manager, who **will be present at each game.** The Safety Manager may be a designated team manager, coach, or assistant Coach. The Safety Manager must complete the risk management training. This individual is responsible for:

1. Ensuring that the players and team officials have met the current COVID-19 safety procedures by completing the Team Questionnaire;
2. Ensuring that players, team officials and spectators are wearing face masks;
3. Act as the team's liaison with the Referee(s) for Health and Safety concerns;
4. Coordinate with the Club's administration for the execution of safety protocols outlined in this document and referenced documents.
5. Will be the primary contact for team officials and players to report suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 for the team.

6. Is the primary contact to sanitize the equipment (benches, corner flags, linesperson flags, etc.) at the conclusion of the match. Each team must be responsible for the technical area their team has used during the match.

If the four questions in Article IV.A are observed by the Center Referee and answered in the negative *at any point during the match*, then the Referee has the authority to abandon the match. Refer to Advice to Referees at the end of this document for additional information regarding certain scenarios.

## I. Facility and field setup

- A. Entrance and Exit of park facility: Registered club shall provide the League office with a clear diagram of vehicular and pedestrian entrance and exit to the:
  1. Facility as a whole;
  2. To each playing field within the facility from parking areas or public ways (streets).
- B. The Registered club shall provide the League office with a clear diagram of the layout / location of each playing field within the facility. The diagram shall denote (see example diagrams):
  1. Dimension of each playing field;
  2. Technical areas (bench area) at each field;
  3. Spectator areas at each field;
  4. Referee area at each field;
  5. This Diagram shall be suitable for publication on the Club's, EHYSL and HVSRA website;
  6. The Club shall provide their guidelines on how they will manage the entrance and exit to the field(s) when there are multiple games scheduled for the field(s).
- C. Size of fields and boundaries. These requirements are necessary to provide a safe distance between technical areas, referee areas, and spectator areas at each level of participation, while providing enough space for referees and assistant referees to perform their duties. It is anticipated that the registered club will use the field dimensions outlined in the ENYSSA recommendations. All lines described in this document must be painted. *Refer to [Diagrams 1 for single field](#), and [Diagram 2 for multi-field layouts](#).*
  1. ***No more than 2 spectators are allowed per registered player during any match play (refer to NYSDOH).*** Home team spectators shall sit on either side of the home team technical area, visiting team spectators shall sit on either side of the visiting team technical area. **NOTE:** Home team players and spectators must be seated on the opposite of the field from the visiting team players and spectators. *Refer to [Diagrams 1 for single field](#), and [Diagram 2 for multi-field layouts](#).*
    - a) **Spectator area** shall be defined as follows:
      - (1) A painted line of not less than 6" wide, for the length of the touch line, between the top of the penalty areas, not less than ten feet (10'-0") from the touch line opposite the technical areas. **NOTE:** If 10'-0" cannot be provided, no spectators shall be allowed along the touchline.
      - (2) Spectators areas will be marked as a four feet (4') wide section separated by six feet (6') along the spectator line to comply with social distancing regulations. Again - only 2 spectators per player and all spectators must wear masks on the sidelines.

- b) In the event that the spectator area is defined as bleachers, the home club must designate socially distanced seating arrangements in accordance with State and Federal guidelines.
- 2. **Field Entrance:** At each playing field, there shall be a **field entrance** of not less than 10'-0" wide, centered on the centerline of the field, between the spectator seating area. No spectators shall be allowed to sit within the field entrance;
- 3. **Referee Area:** At each playing field, **the referee area** shall be located adjacent to one of the corner flags, along the touch line of the home team.
- 4. **Technical Areas:** At each playing field, **the Technical Areas** (team bench), shall be located along the touch line, as shown in the field diagrams. The length and depth of the technical area shall be sufficiently sized to accommodate social distancing for the number of substitutes and team officials (coaches and managers) for each team. Technical areas shall be **no less** than thirty feet square 30'-0" x 30'-0" and six feet (6') from any spectators.
  - a) Arrange one cone per participant (player, coach, manager), socially distanced in the technical area;
  - b) When a participant arrives, designate a cone as their "personal prep station" for the duration of the training session or pre-game activities. The individual should place their bags, water bottles, towels, etc. at this cone.
    - (1) Create a line of cones 6-feet apart (or use paint or other markings to clearly delineate) where players can sit socially distanced in the technical area.
- D. All players, coaches, referees, and spectators must wear face masks from the time they enter the field arena, to the time they exit.
- E. Participants (players and referees) while actively warming-up and during the match are not required to wear masks.
- F. Substitutes and Team Officials in the technical area, during the run of play must wear masks and be socially distanced.
- G. If match balls are used during warm-up, they must be re-sanitized before the match. It is recommended that seven match balls be provided by the home club.
- H. **Line Flags:** For U13 and below matches: Each Club (home and away) must provide one line flag to be used by their volunteer club linesperson (CL) to assist the Referee during the match. Home team provides the home CL with their flag, the visiting team provides the visiting CL with their flag. Whoever uses the flag does so for the entire game, no switching off to another individual is permitted without notifying the Referee or their team's Safety Manager. This direction will be given by the referee to the Club Linesperson. The volunteer linesperson(s) must wear masks at all times.
- I. **Additional considerations (for the Club and Teams)**
  - 1. The Home Team Safety Manager must ensure visiting teams and spectators are given advanced knowledge of facility policies.
  - 2. Fixed equipment (benches, lavatories, etc.) must be disinfected and cleaned before and after each competition day.
  - 3. Facilities must be constantly cleaned and sanitized throughout competition days with focus on high-touch areas such as restrooms and bleachers.
  - 4. Hand sanitizer or hand washing stations must be located around the facility and very easily identifiable.

5. Ground markings must be used to indicate socially distanced queuing and floor markings can be used to encourage a one-way flow of traffic.
6. If fields have a compact layout, consider creating one-way walking paths to the fields.
  - a) Paths should be created for both technical areas and spectator seating.
7. Restroom operations shall be adjusted to allow for social distancing and prevent the spread of the virus.
  - a) If the restroom is small, consider making it a single-occupant restroom or limiting the number of people inside. Individuals need to properly social distance while in the Restroom.
  - b) CDC recommended hand washing procedures above each sink
  - c) If Porta-potty(ies) is/are provided: Hand sanitizer shall be provided inside the unit, or hand washing stations should be located outside the unit.
  - d) Consider adding a porta-potty for each field for use by players only
8. Restrooms with multiple doors shall be clearly marked "entry" and "exit" doors in order to control the flow of traffic; Floor markings to encourage a one-way flow of traffic; External ground markings to indicate restroom queuing that maintains social distancing. These marks must be at least 6-feet apart.
9. To manage inclement weather, any personal tents can not be shared, use per family only.
10. Use signage, paint or other markings to delineate team areas and spectator areas.
11. Facility policies and procedures, as it is related to any COVID-19 mitigation measures, must be posted at each entrance and/or at the arrival/check-in location.
  - a) This shall include clear signage indicating PPE should be worn.
12. Social distancing signage shall be posted around the facility including field areas.
13. If present at field locations, close and cover water fountains; drain and shut off domestic water lines.
14. Registered Clubs shall maintain cleaning and disinfecting logs for facilities in use.
15. If there are alternative game fee payment options (i.e.: Venmo, PayPal, etc.), this should be discussed with the coach with the pre-game email communication with the Referee(s).

## II. Pre-Game Check in

- A. Each team must provide to the Referee, through the Team Manager/Safety Manager, a copy of the current match team roster. The roster shall indicate that all individuals associated with the team have met the appropriate **COVID-19 safety procedures** [discussed in [US Soccer Play on Phase III Grassroots Soccer Recommendation Guide](#)]. The Safety Manager can obtain the information from an on-line form, app or paper checklist (this is left to the individual club). The following must be listed on the roster:
  1. Coach, Assistant Coach, Team Manager or Trainer
  2. Safety Manager - if the Safety Manager is a dual role - it should be indicated on the roster or if the Safety Manager is assigned to the field by the Club it must be added to the roster
  3. Player's name, jersey number, identification number

- B. The Referee shall take a photograph or scan (using their hand-held mobile device) of each roster and use the photograph to check each team in.
- C. Players must socially distance themselves during check in, wearing masks.
- D. Only a Team Official shall handle passes and show them to the Referee during check-in as the Referee announces each player and team official. The Referees will not handle player/team official passes.
- E. The Referee shall announce the player and team official names individually; player and team official shall present themselves to the referee showing the pass and their face (without mask). Upon completion individually, the player/team official may return to training activities.
- F. Uniform or jewelry checks should be visible checks only, maintaining 6-ft between the referee and player.
- G. The Referee must still check the conditions of the field, goals visually observed (NYS Law for goal anchoring remains in effect), corner flags visually observed, and the like. If issues are identified -for example a goal net needs to be repaired or an object needs to be removed from the field of play - the Referee must bring the issue to the home coach.
- H. Referees should maintain at least six feet distance when communicating with their referee crew, players and coaches.
- I. Coin toss shall include the Referee and **only one (1) captain** from each team; all shall wear a face mask. Only the Referee shall touch the coin.
- J. Coaches, Trainers, Team Managers and Safety Manager must wear their EHYSL issued card on a lanyard at all times while at the match. If a person(s) is in the technical area who is not listed on the roster, the Referee at the next stoppage of play, will calmly go to within close proximity of the technical area, and direct the head coach to direct the offending person to retreat to the spectator area. The game will not restart until that person is in the spectator area.

### III. Post-Game Activities

- A. One Team Official from each team, shall confer with the Referee to verify the final score of the game, notating the score on their team roster.
  - 1. Each Team Official shall sign the team roster and present the signed roster to the Referee for a final photograph or scan.
- B. In the event of a potential head trauma or send-off (red card), the following shall occur:
  - 1. The Referee shall request the player or team official pass(es) of the person who left the field due to a potential head trauma or the send-off.
  - 2. The Team Official shall present the pass(es), to the referee by placing it/them on the team bench;
  - 3. The Referee shall take a picture or scan of the pass(es) for attachment to the Match Report. In no case shall the Referee take possession of the pass(es).
- C. No post-game handshakes will take place. Consider other forms of sportsmanship or instituting new acknowledgement traditions, such as clapping, etc, as long as social-distancing is maintained.

- D. Teams should pack-up and immediately leave the field following the game, exiting at the designated exit point.
  - 1. Post-game meetings should be no longer than 10 minutes, if any meeting is held at all.
  - 2. All participants should wear proper PPE and endeavor to maintain space between themselves and others. Prolonged proximity, even with masks should be avoided.
  - 3. Huddles should be avoided.
- E. Do not have a team snack that is shared among the team members.
- F. Players shall not take off any equipment until they have left the facility.
- G. Teams shall clean up the technical area so that it is clean of all trash.
- H. The Referee shall remind the home and visiting team's Safety Managers to sanitize the fixed equipment associated with their technical area, prior to them leaving the field of play.
- I. Spectators are encouraged to maintain social distancing following the game while waiting for their child.
  - 1. Depending on the field layout, spectators may need to wait further away from the field.
- J. Referees should leave the field immediately following the game and referee duties have been completed assuming they have no other games to officiate.
- K. Referee debrief sessions should be conducted in a space where the referees can social distance but still in view of the game field. Masks shall be worn during the debrief.

## IV. Game Reporting

- A. Match Reports by the Referee shall be submitted to the league office within 24 hours of the completion of the match. In addition to the traditional report information, the updated game report includes:
  - 1. Is the field marked correctly for spectators and technical area, Home team / visiting team? Y | N
  - 2. If present at the match, are the spectators maintaining social distancing and wearing a mask, Home team / visiting team? Y | N
  - 3. Are the coaches maintaining social distancing and mask wearing of substitutes and team officials in the technical area, Home team / visiting team? Y | N
  - 4. Is the Safety Manager present, Home team / visiting team? Y | N
- B. Match Reports by the Team Official shall be submitted to the league office within 24 hours of the completion of the match.

## Advice to Referees:

Our role as a Referee is to apply the Laws of the Game, and the rules of competition for the safety of the players; in a fair, equitable and professional manner; for the enjoyment of the game for the players, coaches and spectators.

It is the intent of this document to provide you with the protocol to officiate a match within District 4, mid-Hudson Valley, with the necessary tools to manage the game with the authority you have been given. If during your time at a field you observe a violation of the covid19 requirements, your first obligation is to the safety of the players. ***A professional conversation with the team's Safety Manager should occur to rectify the matter. If the matter cannot be rectified, or there is a persistent violation, you as the Referee have the authority to abandon the match.***

Referees are ***required*** to communicate via email with the home team coach, not later than two days prior to the date of the match (i.e.:Friday for a Sunday match). Confirmation of the day, time and location of the match is necessary. Further, if the Referee(s) require an alternative game fee payment options (i.e.: Venmo, PayPal, etc.), this should be discussed with the coach at this time. Do not forget to communicate with your referee crew if there is a three-referee team.

## Scenarios:

1. Upon entering the field of play, prior to the start of the match, you observe that there are several spectators seated in the spectator area for both teams who are not wearing masks, nor socially distancing themselves.
  - a. Approach the team Safety Managers and professionally direct them to notify that the spectators are not wearing masks;
  - b. The match will not start until their masks are worn appropriately;
  - c. Do not proceed with team check-in until the spectators are wearing their masks. *Avoid engaging with the spectators.*
2. During the run of play, you observe that half of a team's substitutes are not wearing masks.
  - a. At the next stoppage of play, blow your whistle stopping the restart;
  - b. Calmly walk over to the offending team's technical area, and direct the Safety Manager to have the offending players wear their masks;
  - c. If the players comply, restart the match as required;
  - d. If the players do not comply, or if there is a subsequent violation, the Referee has the authority to abandon the match.
  - e. DO NOT caution or send off a team official. Rather, notate the reason you abandoned the match in your game report. Be very descriptive and concise in your notation.
3. Post Game: During the Post-game briefing, the Referee should confirm with the Safety Managers that the technical areas (and bleachers if applicable) will be cleaned/sanitized. If the Referee observes that no visible cleaning or sanitizing of the technical area (and bleacher area if applicable) has occurred between games, the Referee should notify the incoming home team Safety Manager and note this on the prior match report.
4. At any time during a match; a Referee (Center or Assistant) witnesses a player off the field of play not wearing a mask (i.e. technical area, spectator area etc); at the next stoppage of play, in a professional and non-confrontational manner, immediately notify the team safety manager of the concern and note this in the match report.

## References:

- [1] [NYS Governor Sports and Recreation Summary Guidance](#)
- [2] [NYS DOH Interim Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)
- [3] [US Soccer Play on Phase III Grassroots Soccer Recommendation Guide](#)
- [4] [CDC Toolkit for Youth Sports](#)

Sample of COVID-19 team questionnaire:



**EFSC Covid-19 Game/Scrimmage/Training Questionnaire**

Date / /20

Coach at Game \_\_\_\_\_ Coach at Game \_\_\_\_\_  
 Coach at Game \_\_\_\_\_ Coach at Game \_\_\_\_\_  
 Game Location \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Team \_\_\_\_\_

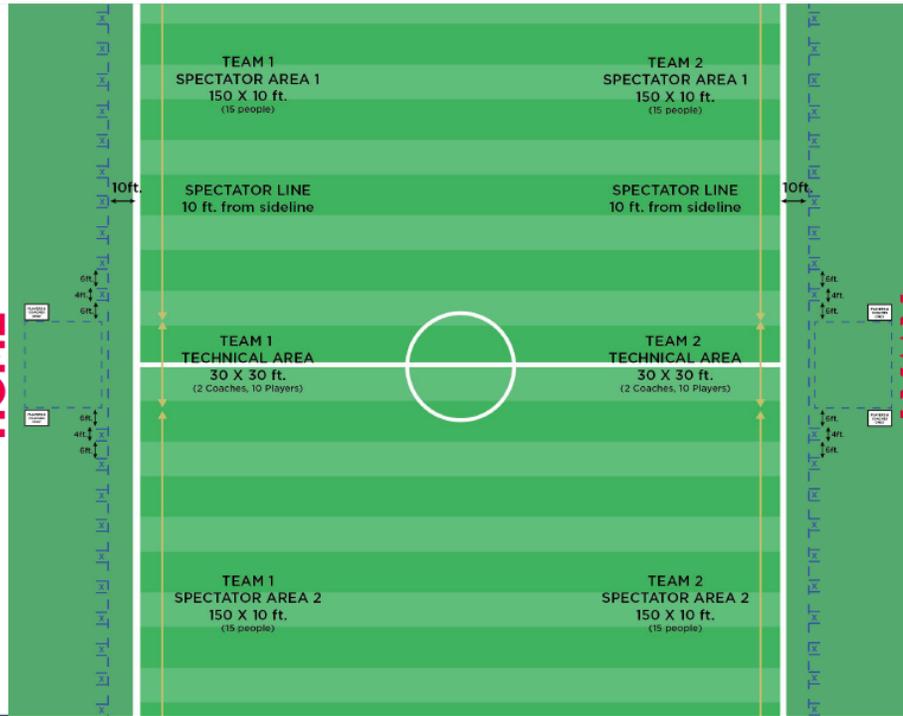
Players Name	Fever	Serious Cough	Runny Nose	Shortness of breath	Around someone who has tested positive	Travel out of Tri-state area
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N

**ENHANCE  
SOCIAL  
DISTANCING**

**NEW FIELD  
MARKINGS**



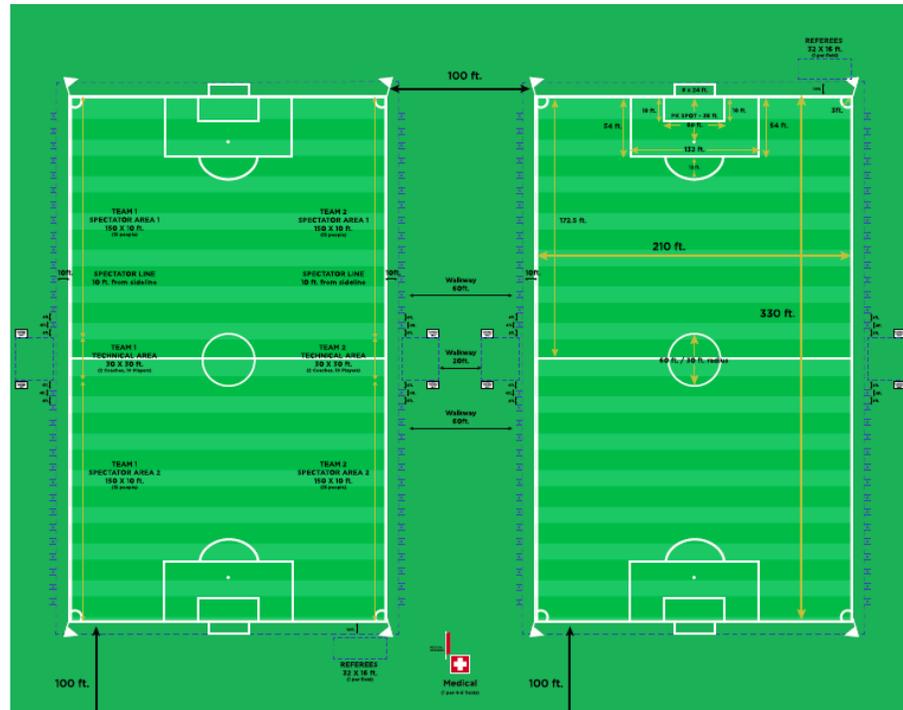
**HOME**



**US YOUTH SOCCER NATIONAL LEAGUE**

Diagram 1: Single Field layout

**SAMPLE  
MULTI-FIELD  
LAYOUT**



**US YOUTH SOCCER NATIONAL LEAGUE**

Diagram 2: Multi-field layout diagram