

Extracurricular activities and COVID-19

The Utah Department of Health understands how important school extracurricular activities are to students, their families, and our communities. Participation in school sponsored extracurricular activities and sports helps students succeed in school, lowers students' risk of substance use, and provides social and emotional benefits that help students throughout their lives.

This is why we are asking students, schools, families, and community members to take extra precautions to slow the spread of COVID-19 in their communities. It will take everyone working together and taking precautions to make sure students get to participate in these important activities.



If a student who participates in school activities, sports, or clubs tests positive for COVID-19, will the whole group, team, or club be quarantined?



If a student tests positive for COVID-19, the student will need to isolate at home. The student will not be able to go to school or participate in school sponsored extracurricular activities or sports.

Anyone who was in close contact, 6 feet or 2 meters (about 2 arm lengths) with the student should quarantine at home for 14 days. This may include other students who sit closer than 6 feet from the student in class, other participants in events who were in close contact, or teachers and coaches. Even if the people who were exposed test negative for COVID-19, they should finish the 14-day quarantine.

What precautions can we take to make sure students are able to participate in school activities, sports, and clubs?

Schools should follow the specific requirements for extracurricular activities from the [Utah High School Activities Association](#), [Utah State Board of Education](#), and the Utah [Color-Coded](#) Phased Guidelines.

We encourage everyone to do everything they can to make sure students have the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities. These are additional ideas students, families, community members, schools, activity directors, coaches, and training staff may consider implementing.

- ✓ Everyone should wear a face covering in public and when you can't physical distance, even outside. You don't need to wear a face covering outside if you can physical distance from others who do not live in your home.
- ✓ Activity directors, coaches, and training staff should encourage students to wear a face covering, physical distance, limit the number of people they come into close contact with in their personal lives, and the number of places they go where they may be in large groups.
- ✓ All participants, activity directors, coaches, training staff, and spectators wear a face covering at events, practices, and games as much as possible.
- ✓ Space participants and coaches 6 feet apart as much as possible at activities, practice, and games.
- ✓ Consider placing markers 6 feet apart to make it easy for participants and coaches to practice physical distancing without having to think about it. People are more likely to practice health behaviors when they are easy. Place markers in both home and away sections, to keep everyone safe.
- ✓ Limit spectators to only the families of participants, and not the general public.
- ✓ Group bleachers or seating areas to keep household groups 6 feet from other people who do not live in their home. Provide enough space for 5-7 people to sit in each group, separated by 6 feet from the next seating group.
- ✓ Consider blocking off every other row of seating.
- ✓ Place markers 6 feet apart in typical areas of congestion (outside restrooms, at entrances and exits, in front of concession stands).
- ✓ Provide hand sanitizer at concession stands. Only serve individually packaged items or grab and go items at concession stands.
- ✓ Have automatic hand sanitizer stations outside restrooms.
- ✓ Students may not understand the severity of many students being exposed to the virus. Influential adults should consider explaining to students, parents, and community members the effect many students being exposed would have on their events or sports seasons.
- ✓ Influential adults may also consider using the students in their circle of influence as school and community leaders to encourage other students, their families, and members of the community to take precautions at all times. Positive peer influence may help everyone in the school adopt more personal safety measures to stop the spread of the virus in the community, even when they are not at school.