



MPA Golf Committee

Golf Recommendation for Return to Participation

Referencing Orders and Guidelines from the Following Resources

National Federation of State High School Associations
Governor's Office - State of Maine
Maine Department of Education
Maine Department of Economic & Community Development
Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Maine Principals' Association Sports Medicine Committee

The NFHS, along with the Maine Guidelines for Community Based Sports, has labeled the sport of cross country as a “Lower Risk” (Level 5) activity. “Lower Risk” activities are those that can be done with social distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between use by competitors. The following recommendations are being made in accordance with NFHS and the Maine Department of Economic & Community Development guidelines.

Coaches and School Administrator(s) should hold a team educational session prior to the first contest to educate student-athletes of all rules related to competitive competition with other school districts and the requirements outlined below. In addition, each coach, paid and volunteer, must complete the free Covid-19 course called [Covid-19 for Coaches and Administrators](https://nfhslearn.com/) currently available on the NFHS Learn platform at <https://nfhslearn.com/>.

- **DISTANCING**

- Space players at least 6 feet apart whenever possible (e.g., during warmup, skill building activities, simulation drills, when explaining drills or the rules of the game).
- Organizers should identify staff members or volunteers to help maintain physical distancing among players, coaches, officials, and spectators.
- Require individuals to maintain 6 feet of physical distance from individuals who are not part of their household group whenever possible.

- **SPECTATORS/CAPACITY**

The approval of spectators must follow the guidelines below.

- Organizers of community sports activities are responsible for limiting the number of individuals that can gather in a shared space, in accordance with the [Governor's Executive Order](#) on gathering size limits, currently set at 50 people indoors and 100 people outdoors, or fewer if distancing rules cannot be accommodated.

- Players, coaches, volunteers, and spectators count toward the gathering limit.
 - If a space cannot accommodate the gathering limit without complying with the 6-foot distancing requirement, occupancy in that space must be limited to allow for such compliance.
 - Face coverings must always be worn by coaches, staff, and spectators.
 - Spectators must maintain 6 feet of physical distance between themselves and others.
- **FACE COVERINGS**
 - Face coverings are permitted by any athlete choosing to wear one during activity.
 - Require individuals to wear a face covering when physical distancing is difficult to maintain, per CDC recommendations and pertinent Executive Orders from the Office of the Governor.
 - Players must wear face coverings when not engaged in active play (e.g. during coaching strategy sessions, in bench area, or any indoor activity).
 - Unless the governing body for your sport has a specific recommendation regarding plastic face shields, do not wear them in place of a face covering given potential safety risks.
 - Face coverings must always be worn by coaches, staff, officials, and spectators.
 - To facilitate the use of a face covering, coaches and officials should consider using an artificial noisemaker such as an air horn or electronic whistle in place of a whistle.
- **SCREENING**
 - It should be the understanding of all teams involved that student-athletes and coaches have completed a self-screening for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, prior to participation.
 - All game day staff/officials will be asked to complete self-screening questions prior to arriving at the event.
- **SCHEDULING**
 - Level 5: Competition between teams from different geographic areas within Maine.
 - There shall be no minimum number of matches required.
- **COMPETITION CONSIDERATIONS:**
 - Schools must adhere to local course competition rules in relation to COVID-19 accommodations.
 - Social distancing of at least 6 feet should always be maintained. No hugging, shaking hands, or fist bumps for support/encouragement.
 - Normal golf groups (twosomes, threesomes and/or foursomes) are permitted.
 - Limit use of golf shop and retail operations to maintain social distancing guidelines. A mask must be worn prior to entering a pro shop or clubhouse for any reason. If social distancing cannot be maintained, golf shop access should be prohibited prior to the competition.
 - To limit congestion, limiting field size and starting from one tee only is recommended. Also, consider the expanded spacing of starting times (10 minutes apart for groups of 3 and 12 minutes apart for groups of 4) to match the course policy on tee time intervals. Consider keeping players in the vicinity of the putting green to minimize congregation on the first tee.
 - Team meetings must be held outside and employ proper distancing measurers.
 - Congregating after the round needs to be minimized and monitored by all to ensure proper distancing.

- Players should not touch nor remove the flagstick at any time. Should a flagstick need to be adjusted (i.e. leaning the wrong way) a putter or towel should be used to adjust the flagstick. If a player accidentally removes a flagstick, there is no penalty, and the player must replace the flagstick and sanitize prior to playing their next stroke. If a player makes a stroke with the flagstick out of the hole, it will result in a two-stroke penalty. If a player does this more than one time, then the player will be disqualified.
- Bunker rakes and ball washers should not be on the course. If they are on the course, then they should not be used. In the case of a bunker, the players will be allowed to take a preferred lie of one club length no nearer the hole and remain in the bunker. The preferred lie in the bunker is a lift, clean and place (not drop). The player cannot build a lie in the bunker and should try to smooth out footprints only upon exit with one's foot.
- Tees, pencils and ball-markers and sharpies will not be available. Players must bring their own equipment and food/beverage as needed. Do not plan on water provided by the course on the course as water must be a refill station only. Please ensure players are properly hydrated as conditions warrant.
- Sanitized paper cards will be available but not exchanged. Players will verbally agree on the hole-by-hole scoring and that verbal agreement will act as a signature. A score is official once the players have left the scoring area (which may be a designated area determined by the coaches).
- Electronic scoring is allowable for regular season competition. The exchange of scorecards by players is discouraged and verbal confirmation of scores may be accepted.
- To limit congestion, it is recommended that a window of time be established for players to access practice facilities before their round based on their starting times.
- It is recommended that practice facilities not be used after the round and that all players be encouraged to depart immediately when finished.
- No one will be allowed to ride in a cart (except coaches). If a player must ride, then the cart must be sanitized, and the rider must ride alone. Another player or competitor cannot put their bag on the cart and walk.
- Ensure coaches and courses have a foul weather plan which could lead to congregating, for example, a thunder storm or any sudden departure from the golf course.