



## **Gorham Youth Soccer Association**

### **Return to Play - Final**

This policy has been prepared to provide a foundation and opportunity for coaches, teams, players of Gorham Youth Soccer (GYSA) to affirm our commitment to health and safety. The guidelines contained herein were designed to provide a consistent and deliberate approach to social distancing, screening, training, and interactions to promote the health and safety of all participants and fans of GYSA teams.

#### **General Guidelines for games and training:**

- GYSA will create a “blanket” protocol message for teams to share with its players and families as well as with visiting opponents so all are aware of the protocols GYSA is taking to provide a safe environment for all those attending.
- Scheduling of games should occur with social distancing in mind. There should be a minimum of 30 minutes between the end of one game and the start of another at any field location to allow for the game participants and spectators to full exit.
- Participants for a game must wait in their vehicles until the field is fully clear from the previous competition.
- All teams will have a designated monitor/manager that can monitor that COVID requirements of social distancing, mask wearing and gathering requirements, i.e. number of individuals allowed, are being met.
- Spectators at any games for Fall 2020 cannot exceed one spectator per player. Teams, along with coaches, monitors, referees, and facility personal can easily exceed 50 persons at the oldest age groups, and the younger age groups have less space for social distancing.
- Any parent outside of their vehicle are considered spectators and count toward the group total. Inside the vehicle means inside the passenger compartment. Windows down ok; Motorcycles and bicycles are not ok; Sitting in the bed of a truck not ok; open tailgate of SUV/Van not ok; Open top convertible not ok.



#### General Guidelines for games and training cont.:

- You are a spectator if you are on the property of the event and out of your vehicle, even if you are in the parking area or “far away” from the field of play.
- All spectators must be masked and socially distanced by a minimum of 6 feet. Any spectator that does not adhere to the guidelines risks suspension from attending games and their team’s removal from league play. It is imperative that spectators/parents understand that all spectator policies are extremely important in allowing the kids to play.
- GYSA is responsible for all requirements being met at their home games.
- Games will only take place outside in an area where social distancing can be maintained. GYSA nor Soccer Maine will not sanction any indoor games at this time.
- Portable bathrooms will be at each site, however are not maintained to generally accepted CDC guidelines. They are provided for convenience only and should be considered use at your own risk
- All Gorham fields are carry-in / carry-out. All participants are responsible for their own trash removal. Coaches have been provided hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes and large baggies to dispose of wipes.
- Participants should use their own equipment and properly sanitize the equipment after every game. This includes water bottles, towels, shin guards, etc. Game ball is the only shared piece of equipment. It is the coach/home team’s responsibility to provide this and to sanitize it at specific intervals during the game.
- Any parent outside of their vehicle are considered spectators and count toward the group total. Inside the vehicle means inside the passenger compartment. Windows down ok; Motorcycles and bicycles are not ok; Sitting in the bed of a truck not ok; open tailgate of SUV/Van not ok; Open top convertible not ok.
- Cleaning schedule/protocol of equipment with disinfectant before, during, and after game.
- Coaches must maintain social distancing from all participants and wear a mask at all times.
- Players must wear a mask at all times when on the side line. Players can only remove their mask when on the field and should make every effort to avoid direct contact during the game.
- For training purposes, we ask that only players and coaches be physically on the field. We have a detailed training schedule which identifies what team trains on which field and on which day. Most teams will be sharing a field so we need to adhere to the guidelines. All indoor training has been canceled for this season.



- Teamsnap will be used by all teams to schedule all events. It is imperative that players/parents respond to each event (training & games) with their availability. This is going to be used as documentation for contact tracing should we be asked to provide. In addition, a new feature has been added, Health Check, that we will be utilizing in lieu of screening questions being asked at the field. A health check status must be completed for each training and game, with a green result, in order to participate.
- In the event, a player starts displaying any signs of illness at training or a game, they will be immediately removed from the group. They will be placed in a safe and secure location, at least 12 feet from any other individual and all efforts will be made to contact their parent or guardian immediately to arrange for pick-up.

#### **Modifications to Game for Fall 2020:**

- All heading is suspended. Any intentional heading will be a violation resulting in an indirect free kick for the opposing team.
- Throw-ins will be replaced by a Kick-in. Kick-in procedures will be as follows:
  1. Ball will be placed on touch line or behind touch line.
  2. Ball may not be kicked directly into a team's box/penalty area.
  3. Opponents must be a minimum of 10 yards (8 yards for small-sided) away from the touch line where the kick is being taken.
- Slide tackling is suspended. Any intentional slide tackling will be a violation resulting in an indirect free kick for the opposing team.

**Principles and Responsibilities:** (these remain the same as Phase I, and have been previously communicated to all)

#### **Club Responsibilities:**

- Create and distribute protocols to its members. This must be done prior to beginning any training program. This document represents such protocols.
- Have an effective communication plan in place, identify strategies to notify adult leaders, youth and their families if the organization learns a participant or adult leader has developed COVID-19 and may have been infectious to others while at a youth activity, while maintaining confidentiality.
- Provide health screening platform for parents/players to complete for every GYSA event.



#### Principles and Responsibilities cont..:

- Be sensitive and accommodating to parents that many be uncomfortable with returning to play too quickly.
- Have an action plan in place, in case of a positive test.
- Train and educate all staff to protocols and requirements, including state and local regulations, CDC recommendations and other necessary information. It is the Club's responsibility to see that all coaches, and other staff adhere to these protocols and requirements.
- Be prepared to shut down and stop operations if the State of Maine changes its guidelines to require stoppage.
- Provide adequate field space for social distancing.
- Provide hand sanitizer and waste receptacles at fields. Regarding hand sanitizer, this would be only used if a player or other individual does not bring their own.

#### **Coach Responsibilities:**

- Ensure the health and safety of the Athletes. Check status of Health Check before each GYSA event.
- Follow all state and local health protocols.
- Ensure all athletes have their individual equipment (ball, water, bag, shin guards, etc.) • Coach is the only person to handle cones, disk etc.
- All training outdoors and ensure social distancing per state or local health guidelines.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment if training in a public location setting as mandated by that particular public space, (i.e. face mask.)
- Have fun, stay positive – players and parents are looking to you to stay calm, supportive and caring during this time.
- Will not use scrimmage vest or pinnies at this time.

#### **Monitor Responsibilities:**

- Ensure that coaches and players on the sideline are masked and socially distanced, including the players' belongings.
- Ensure that spectators are appropriately socially distanced and masked.
- Ensure that any game does not have more than one spectator per player.

**Parent Responsibilities:**

- Ensure child is healthy, take your child's temperature and complete the health check screening before attending any GYSA event.
- Ensure they are healthy, stay home if not feeling well.
- Limited or no carpooling.
- Stay in car or adhere to social distance requirements, based on state and local health requirements.
- Ensure child's clothing is washed after every training session.
- Ensure all equipment, cleats, ball, shin guards etc. are sanitized before and after every training.
- Notify club immediately if your child becomes ill for any reason. This is a requirement.
- Do not assist coach with equipment before or after training.
- Be sure your child has necessary sanitizer with them at every training. This is a requirement.

**Player Responsibilities:**

- Take temperature before attending training session, if you have a temperature of 100° or higher, do not attend training session or activity. Complete health check screening before attending any GYSA event.
- Wash hands thoroughly before and after training.
- Bring and use, hand sanitizer with you to every training.
- Do not touch or share anyone else's equipment, water, snack or bag.
- Practice social distancing, place bags and equipment at least 6 feet apart.
- Wash and sanitize all equipment before and after every training.
- No group celebrations, no high 5's, hugs, handshakes etc.

**Additional changes to this year's program:**

1. Festivals for our younger age groups - U9s through U11s - will not take place this fall. Instead, a play date will be added to their schedule.
2. Columbus Day Tournaments will not take place.
3. Post season for U12-U14 will be regionalized. Subject to change



Additional changes to this year's program cont...:

4. Clubs are permitted no more than 2 coaches per game to minimize the number of individuals on the sideline.
5. Specific GYSA changes. The following will not be offered this year:
  - a. Picture Day
  - b. Indoor Trainings at GSC, previously communicated in Phase 1.
  - c. Patriots Raffle, although there maybe other small fundraising opportunities that present themselves, at no obligation, and donations will always be welcomed.
  - d. End of the Year Celebration. We will still honor our graduating class and any league champions. Plan is to also create club video to share via club website.

Our governing body's "Return to Play" protocols can be found at the link below. GYSA and Soccer Maine remain steadfast in our commitment to the safety of our players, coaches, referees, families, and communities. It is imperative that everyone understand their role and demonstrate a commitment adhering to the Soccer Maine Return-to-Play Guidelines which have been created based on federal, state, and local directives and guidance with the intent of providing a safe environment to get back on the field. If there is hesitation in returning to play – DON'T; just because you can does not mean you MUST.

[http://www.soccermaine.com/assets/104/6/sm\\_return\\_to\\_play\\_all\\_phases.pdf](http://www.soccermaine.com/assets/104/6/sm_return_to_play_all_phases.pdf)

We understand this is a lot to process, and greatly appreciate all of your patience along the way. We will make it through this and we look forward to seeing you all this season.

GYSA Board