



The IHSA governs the equitable participation in interscholastic athletics and activities that enrich the educational experience.

## IHSA 2021 TRACK & FIELD CONSIDERATIONS

This document is intended to provide guidance for schools conducting practices and hosting meets during the 2021 IHSA Track & Field season. The guidelines explained in this document are intended to decrease potential exposure to respiratory droplets and potential for illness through safe practices such as social distancing, proper hygiene, and appropriate protective equipment. This is not an exhaustive list, and school officials may take additional measures based on requirements set forth by their school district and/or local health officials. Please understand that even with this guidance, there is still risk of transmitting illness at events such as track & field meets. Additionally, with the changing nature of the circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, these guidelines may change.

### Modified Season:

- The IHSA Girls and Boys Track and Field season has been modified to be conducted from April 5-June 19, 2021.
- If your school had difficulty meeting the 6 contest requirement as outlined in IHSA By-laws as a result of circumstances surrounding the pandemic, you may contact IHSA Executive Director, Craig Anderson ([canderson@ihsa.org](mailto:canderson@ihsa.org)), to inquire about a waiver.

### General Requirements and Considerations:

- All guidelines of the most current IDPH All-Sports/DCEO Policy must be adhered to.
- **Social distancing** between individuals of at least 6 feet must be maintained when possible. Handshakes, fist bumps, hugging, etc. are not permissible.
- **Facial Coverings** – Per IDPH, facial coverings must be worn at all times whether indoors or outdoors.
- **Participants, Coaches, Officials & Meet Personnel** – There is no limit to the number of participants, coaches, officials, and meet personnel at indoor or outdoor meets as long as social distancing can be maintained. A host may restrict the number of people that fall in this category in order to maintain social distancing requirements.
- **Spectators** If social distancing permits, meet hosts may allow spectators as follows, in accordance with regional Tier/Phase mitigation levels:
  - **Phase 4** – 20% capacity outdoors; 50 spectators indoors are allowed
  - **Tier 1** – 25 spectators, indoors or outdoors, are allowed
  - **Tier 2** – No spectators, indoors or outdoors, are allowed
  - If meet hosts allow spectators, they must maintain 6 feet social distance when possible. Facial coverings are required for indoor or outdoor events.
- **Small meets** (i.e. duals and triangulars) are most effective in maintaining safest practices during a pandemic. Fewer competitors, school personnel, officials, and spectators make safety mitigations easier to manage.



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- **Multi-team Meets** - If schools have scheduled large meets such as invitationals or anything larger than a triangular, then again, hosts must ensure that ALL event attendees are held to the capacity guidelines outlined IDPH/DCEO All-Sports Policy as well as this document.
- **Competition:** Per the IDPH/DCEO All-Sports Policy, competition with other schools is limited to the current Tier/Phase mitigation levels for your EMS Region.
  - **Phase 4/Tier 1** – Schools may engage in out of conference and out of EMS-region play. Out of state play is also allowed.
  - **Tier 2** – Schools may engage in intra-conference, intra-EMS-region play; no out of conference/EMS-region or out of state play is permitted.
  - **Tier 3** – No competitive play permitted
- **Transportation** - For transportation to and from extracurricular events, schools may adhere to the same guidance provided by ISBE regarding transporting students to and from school.

### Requirements and Considerations for Meet Managers.

- **Field Events:**
  - **SP, DT** – Enforce social distancing for all athletes and officials
    - Athletes should provide their own implements (that pass inspection) if possible.
    - Athletes should retrieve their own implements after each attempt or practice attempt.
    - If athletes can't provide their own implements, then implements must be sanitized between each use.
  - **LJ, TJ** – Enforce social distancing for all athletes and officials
  - **HJ, PV** – Enforce social distancing for all athletes and officials
    - Athletes should not share vaulting poles. If sharing of vaulting poles is necessary, then the vaulting pole should be sanitized before a new participant uses it.
- **Individual Running Events:**
  - Every lane may be used for IHSA track & field meets.
  - Multiple heats may be necessary for middle/long distance events with a large number of runners. Another efficient way to accommodate a larger number of runners could be through use of a double waterfall start on tracks that are marked appropriately for this.
- **Relay Events:**
  - **Batons** – Schools should provide their own baton or if the host provides batons, they should be sanitized between each relay event.
- **Team Headquarters at Meets:**
  - Hosts should establish team headquarter areas that allow for teams to space at least 30 feet apart while maintaining social distancing within their own team's headquarters.
- **Coaches Packet Pick-up:**
  - Transmit as much information as possible electronically prior to the meet.

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- For any information that cannot be submitted electronically, organize a method for the packet pick up that keeps coaches socially distanced (i.e. time slots for small numbers of coaches to pick up packets, marks on the ground that are 6 feet apart for coaches lines formed at packet pick-up, etc.)
- Face coverings must be worn by coaches and packet pick-up personnel if done in person.
- **Pre-meet coaches' meetings:**
  - Consider using methods to keep coaches socially distanced during coaches' meetings.
    - Electronic or virtual meetings are encouraged when possible.
    - Multiple smaller meetings with a smaller number of attendees at a time is also a way to allow for social distancing.
    - Face coverings for all officials and coaches are required at pre-meet coaches' meetings.
- **Clerking:**
  - Clerking locations should be arranged so that meet personnel and athletes are adequately spaced apart (6 feet) and not congregating closely together.
  - Do not use baskets to collect apparel for the athletes while they are competing.
- **Crowding:**
  - Avoid meet protocols that cause coaches, participants, and spectators to congregate closely together (results boards, awards ceremonies, water stations, etc.).
    - Consider using an online platform for results.
    - Consider using general PA announcements or an online platform for award recognitions.
    - Ask athletes to bring their own water and have their own plan for retrieving their water after competition.
- **Sanitation:**
  - Have sanitation materials (disinfecting wipes, sprays, hand sanitizer, etc.) in prime locations for meet personnel to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and meet equipment.

### **Requirements and Considerations for Coaches:**

- Communicate practice and all competition guidelines in a clear manner to student participants and their parents.
- For practices, consider conducting workouts in "pods" of same students who are always training and rotating together. This will ensure more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- Keep accurate records and health monitoring of those athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.
- Always have a plan to maintain social distancing amongst your team and coaching staff at all times.



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- Always monitor your team's use of facial coverings to ensure that they are properly following the protocols.
- Require athletes to arrive at the competition venue already in competitive attire. If locker rooms must be used, ensure athletes wear a face covering and maintain social distancing.
- It is recommended to always have sanitation materials available (i.e. hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, etc.) for the team and coaching staff.
- Educate your student athletes on proper hand washing and sanitation.
- Coaches should adhere to appropriate facial covering protocols for their own safety and to set a good example for their student athletes. Per IDPH, Facial coverings are required at all times whether outdoors or indoors.

#### **Requirements and Consideration for Officials:**

- Use of electronic whistle or a whistle cover is required.
- Bring personal hand sanitizer and wash your hands frequently.
- Do not share equipment.
- Follow social distancing guidelines (refer to meet manager section for pre-meet coaches meeting, clerking, and posting of results).
  - Work with the timing system operator to conduct any necessary video review of performance or results while maintaining appropriate social distance.
  - Communication with coaches, participants, meet personnel, or spectators must be done at the appropriate social distance.
- Refrain from shaking hands.
- Per IDPH, Face coverings are required at all times whether outdoors or indoors.

#### **Requirements and Considerations for Student Athletes:**

- Student athletes should be responsible for their own supplies such as a water bottle.
- Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing and not share clothing with anyone. All equipment and clothing should be washed immediately upon returning home.
- Hand washing and the use of hand sanitizer should be frequent at all contests and practices.
- Athletes should tell coaches immediately when they are not feeling well.
- Per IDPH, Face coverings are required at all times whether outdoors or indoors.

#### **Requirements and Considerations for Parents:**

- Make sure your child and immediate household members are free from illness before participating in practice and competition (if there is any doubt, stay home).
- Provide personal items for your child and clearly label them.
- Help make sure that your child is washing/cleaning clothing and personal items after each use.



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- Know facility/venue limitations on capacity/attendance prior to attending a meet. Maintain 6 feet social distance when possible. Per IDPH, Facial coverings are required at all times whether outdoors or indoors.

**Eating and drinking:**

- Ensure 6 foot distance whenever athletes are eating or drinking.
- Replace face coverings immediately after eating or drinking.

**Questions:**

- Questions may be addressed to IHSAA Track & Field Administrator, Kraig Garber ([kgarber@ihssa.org](mailto:kgarber@ihssa.org)).

**Resources:**

IDPH/DCEO All-Sports policy - <http://dph.illinois.gov/covid19/community-guidance/sports-safety-guidance>

IDPH COVID-19 Regions Map - <http://dph.illinois.gov/regionmetrics?regionID=1>