

# Organizing, Playing, and Watching Games

**Best Practices on Organizing, Playing, And Watching Baseball During the Coronavirus Pandemic**



**These best practices have been compiled from resources and direct guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO), The Aspen Institute, The Minnesota Department of Health, and the Minnetonka Public School District.**

**Minnetonka Baseball Association 2020**

# General Guidance

## Wash Your Hands Often:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Players are encouraged to bring their own hand sanitizer for personal use.



## Cover Your Mouth and Nose with a Cloth Face Covering When Around Others:

- You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick.
- Everyone should consider wearing a cloth face covering when they go out in public, for example, in public areas around your ballfields and parks.



- Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- The cloth face covering is meant to protect other people in case you are infected.
- Continue to keep six feet between yourself and others. The cloth face covering is not a substitute for social distancing.

## Cover Coughs and Sneezes:

- If you are in a private setting and do not have on your cloth face covering, remember to always cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze, or use the inside of your elbow.
- Throw used tissues in the trash immediately.
- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

## Social Distancing:

- All players, coaches, volunteers, independent contractors, and spectators should practice social distancing of six feet wherever possible from individuals not residing within their household.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home as much as possible.



## Key Audiences

Players  
 Parents/Guardians/Caregivers and Other Children  
 Coaches Umpires  
 League and District Officials  
 Fans/Spectators

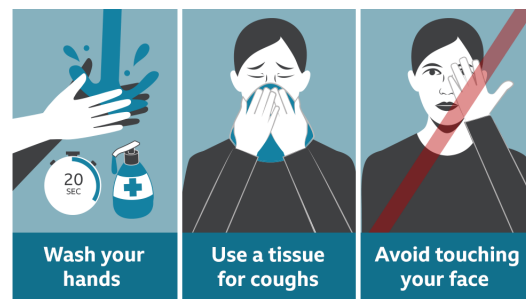
## CDC Resources

[How to Protect Yourself & Others \(PDF Download\)](#)

[Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19 \(PDF Download\)](#)

## MDH Resources

[Covid-19 Sports Guidance for Youth & Adults PDF Download](#)



## Self-monitoring and Quarantine:

- All individuals should measure their body temperature to ensure that no fever is present prior to participating or attending each MBA activity. Anyone with symptoms of fever, cough, or worsening respiratory symptoms, or any known exposure to a person with COVID-19 should not attend any baseball activity until cleared by a medical professional ([CDC Resource: If You Are Sick or Caring For Someone | PDF Download](#)).

# On-Field Guidance

## Healthy Practices:

- All players and coaches should practice good health habits, including maintenance of adequate hydration, consumption of a varied, vitamin-rich diet with sufficient vegetables and fruits, and getting adequate sleep.



## Drinks and Snacks:

- Athletes, coaches, and umpires should bring their own personal drinks to all team activities. All drinks should be labeled with the person's name- even single use bottles.
- Individuals should take their own drink containers home each night for cleaning and sanitation or use single-use bottles.
- There should be no use of shared or team beverages.
- Teams should not share any snacks or food.
- Fans and teams are asked not to bring food to games. In tournament situations this may be unavoidable. Please use your best judgement.

## Spitting, Sunflower Seeds, Gum, etc.:

- **Sunflower seeds, gum, etc., should not be allowed in dugouts or on the playing field.**
- **All players and coaches are to refrain from spitting at all times, including in dugout areas and on the playing field.**

## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

- All coaches, are asked to carry a PPE mask in their pocket during MBA events with their team in case of an injury or a situation where social distancing may not be possible.
- Players may wear PPE items as long as the items do not compromise the safety of any participants in the game.

## Dugouts:

- Teams may use the dugouts for scrimmages and games, but not for practices.
- No more than 6 individuals are permitted in the dugout at any given time (this is dependent on the dugout size. These individuals must maintain all social distancing guidelines throughout the game)
- Allow teams to spread players out; expand the dugout area when room permits, and only if player safety will not be compromised.
- Expansion of the team dugout should not be done into the foul ball areas

## CDC Resources

[Considerations For Youth Sports](#)

## MDH Resources

[Guidance For Social Distancing in Youth Sports](#)

## No Handshakes/Personal Contact Celebrations:

- Players and coaches should take measures to prevent all but the essential contact necessary to play the game. This should include refraining from handshakes, high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, group celebrations, etc. MBA suggests lining up on the baselines and tipping caps to the opposing team as a sign of good sportsmanship after a game.
- Players and families should vacate the field/facility as soon as is reasonably possible after the conclusion of their game to minimize unnecessary contact with players, coaches, and spectators from the next game, ideally within 20 minutes.

- Essential team personnel only
- Require teams to clean their dugout area of all or their personal trash and other items after game.
- After players leave coaches will spray down the dugouts with the given disinfecting spray.

## Baseballs

- Baseballs should be rotated through on a regular basis to limit individual contact.
- Umpires should limit their contact with the ball, and catchers should retrieve foul balls and passed balls where possible.
- Foul balls landing outside the field of play should be retrieved by participating players and coaches, **No spectators should retrieve the ball.**



## Best Practices For Organizing, Playing and Watching Baseball During the Coronavirus Pandemic

### Player Equipment:

- Players should have their own individual batter's helmet, glove, bat, batting gloves and catcher's equipment. No sharing of equipment.
- Player equipment should be spaced accordingly outside the dugout to prevent direct contact.
- Only players assigned to be inside the dugout may have equipment in the dugout. All other player equipment should be in the extended dugout area spaced out.
- Some critical equipment may not be able to be obtained by every individual. MBA owned catchers gear will be assigned to players and used only by those players for the time instructed by the coach.
- If another player will be using the MBA owned catchers gear, it must be cleaned first and then disinfected with an EPA- approved disinfectant against COVID-19 and allowed sufficient time to dry before used by a new player.



- Increased attention should be paid to cleaning of all equipment directly contacting the head and face (catcher's mask, helmets).
- Player's equipment (e.g. bags, helmets, bats, gloves, etc.) should be cleaned and disinfected regularly by a parent/ guardian where applicable.
- Individuals disinfecting equipment are encouraged
- Players should not share towels, clothing, or other items that they may use to wipe their face or hands



### Disinfecting:

- All teams are supplied with a spray bottle with EPA approved disinfectant for use in dugouts, on catcher's equipment, and on balls.
- Coaches are asked to refill the spray bottles with the CDC recommended bleach solution mixing: **4 teaspoons of bleach with 1 quart of water.**



# Game Operations and Umpire Guidance

**Key Audiences**  
Managers/Coaches  
Umpires League/District  
Officials and Volunteers

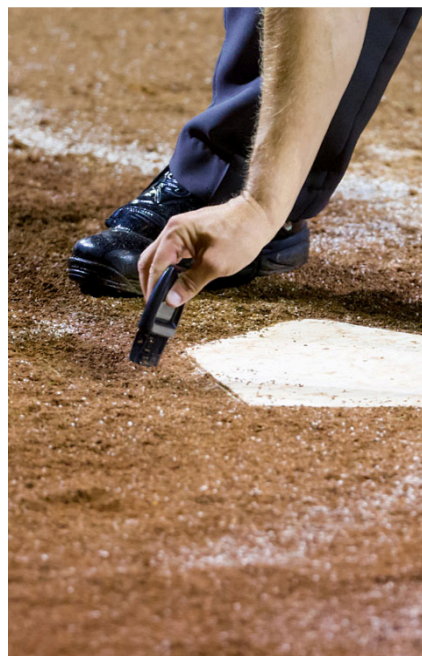
## Pre-Game Plate Meetings:

- If possible, plate meetings should be eliminated.
- Social distancing of six feet between individuals should be implemented during all pre-game plate meetings between teams and umpires.
- Plate meetings should only consist of one coach from each team and the umpire(s)
- All participants are encouraged to wear a cloth face covering
- No players should ever be part of the plate meeting.



## Field Preparation and Maintenance:

- Fields should be mowed, raked, and lined prior to teams and spectators arriving.
- It is recommended that any shared field preparation equipment be sprayed or wiped with cleaner and disinfectant before and after each use.



## Limit League/Game Volunteers:

- For each game, there should only be the required team coaches and umpires.
- Practices should be limited to the coaches and players.
- Scorekeeping should be done by team coaches or team parent/guardian via Game Changer. Proper social distancing should be practiced.

## Umpire Placement:

- Umpires are permitted to be placed behind the pitcher's mound/circle to call balls and strikes. Umpires are encouraged to keep a safe distance from players as much as possible.
- If physically able, umpires are encouraged to wear cloth face coverings while umpiring.

## Equipment Inspection:

- Players should place their individual equipment in a well-spaced out manner for inspection. Umpires should avoid direct contact with equipment where possible but, when required, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol after the inspection of each individual piece of equipment.



# Facility, Fan, & Administrative Guidance Part 1

## Key Audiences

League Administrators  
Parents/Guardians/Caretakers  
Fans/Spectators

## Clean and Disinfect Shared Equipment and Surfaces:

- Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily and in between all facility uses, including practices and games. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, facility equipment, dugouts, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- If surfaces are visibly soiled or dirty, they should be cleaned with a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

## Spread Out Scheduling of Practices and Games:

- League administrators should schedule sufficient time between practices and games to facilitate the complete evacuation of individuals from a previous practice or game from the premises before the next group enters.
- Players/families/spectators are instructed not to show up to fields more than 40 minutes before game time.
- Where possible, individuals should enter your complex through one point of entry and exit through another.
- Arrivals to the complex can be scheduled to help ensure a large number of individuals are not arriving at the same time.
- If there is a game or practice prior to your event, families and spectators are encouraged to stay in their vehicles or at recommended social distances until the start of their game play to prevent

overcrowding of spectator spaces and walkways.

- On-field warm-up should be limited as much as is reasonably possible and no more than 30 minutes.
- Ensure that practices and games follow all local and state directives regarding the number of people allowed to gather in one place.
- Wait in cars before practice or game; limit the use of van pool or carpools.
- Allow time between practices and games for cleaning and disinfecting.

## Limiting Spectator Attendance:

- All spectators should follow best social distancing practices — stay six feet away from individuals outside their household.
- Spectators may have designated seating areas since the players may be in extended dugout locations which are likely to be where the fan sections typically are.
- Local Leagues may choose to minimize the exposure risk to spectators by limiting attendance to only essential volunteers and limited family members.
- Spectators should bring their own seating when possible.
- Leagues are encouraged to utilize streaming opportunities to provide virtual spectating.

## CDC Resources

[Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces](#)

[Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting \(PDF Download\)](#)

[Guidance for Administrators in Parks and Recreation Facilities](#)

[Guidance for Social Distancing in Youth Sports](#)

• A spectator with any of the following conditions should not attend a practice or game until evaluated by a medical provider and given clearance to do so:

- Active COVID-19 infection
- Known direct contact with an individual testing positive for COVID-19
- Fever
- Cough
- Those at higher risk for severe disease should consider consultation with their medical provider before attending a game and should ensure the strictest adherence to guidelines regarding face coverings, distancing, and handwashing.

Such groups include:

- Those with a serious underlying medical condition, including heart disease, morbid obesity, diabetes, lung disease, immunocompromise, chronic kidney disease, and chronic lung disease.
- Those currently residing in a nursing home or long-term care facility
- Those over 65



# Facility, Fan & Administrative Guidance Part 2



## Public Restrooms:

- Communicate information on available facilities and policies to all parents prior to resuming or beginning season.
- Access to public restrooms should be limited if possible.
- A “one-in-one-out” policy, where only one individual is permitted within the restroom at one time, should be implemented to ensure adequate distancing in the confined restroom space.
- Prior to and after any league activity, restrooms should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. Restrooms should be disinfected on a regular basis.
- Public water fountains or refillable water stations should not be used, and should be turned off to discourage use, if possible.

## Concession Stands:

- No food or concession sales should be allowed at facilities.
- Families are encouraged to bring their own beverages, and we ask that no food be brought in to games and

practices. Tournaments may require alternate guidelines, so please be aware of each event's rules on food.

## Post Information to Promote Everyday Preventive Actions:

- Leagues should display posters and signs throughout the park to frequently remind visitors to take steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19. These messages may include information about:
  - **Staying home if you are sick or do not feel well, and what to do if you're sick or feel ill.**
  - **Using social distancing and maintaining at least six feet between individuals in all areas of the park.**
  - [The CDC has downloadable resources available to post at public places; and leagues are encouraged to utilize additional resources from their state or local authorities.](#)



## Member Communication:

- Local leagues should disseminate information to all families, volunteers, and spectators about the Coronavirus risk and the efforts your league will be undertaking to mitigate those risks, as outlined above. Information

should be disseminated by way of email, league website, social media, coach talks, and public announcements.



- Contact the MBA Safety Director with any questions or concerns regarding COVID 19.