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February 16, 2021

To: Athletic Directors and Volleyball Coaches

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Subject: Volleyball Reminders for the 2021 Season

Please review this information with your volleyball staff and best of luck as you start your season! Feel free to contact me if you have questions.

OSAA/NFHS COVID-19 KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

General Guidelines:

- See the [Volleyball Plan Book Season 2](#) for details on health screenings, facilities considerations, practice guidelines and more.
- **Local/Regional Competition:** The OSAA Executive Board is directing schools to prioritize local/regional play when scheduling contests for the 2020-21 school year. It has been determined that schools will not be required to participate in their assigned leagues/special districts for the 2020-21 school year.
- **Masks shall be worn at all times by all individuals in attendance.**
- Physical distancing measures shall be in place at all times other than when engaged in competition.

County Risk Level Guidance: Schools need to continually confirm their county risk level to ensure they remain compliant with OHA restrictions. County risk levels can be found through this [link](#). Once you have confirmed the risk level of your school's county, then you can refer to the [sector guidance chart](#) to confirm capacity limitations for indoor recreation events, including volleyball practices and competitions. Only schools that are in high, moderate or lower risk level counties may compete in indoor volleyball. In high, moderate or lower risk counties, please see the capacity limitations indicated on for the Indoor Recreation information on the [sector guidance chart](#) that will help with district decisions for limitations for practices and competitions.

For schools that remain in Extreme Risk counties, practices may happen with the following restrictions applied:

- **Extreme Risk Counties**
 - Indoor Facility Use
 - Indoor Establishments in Extreme Risk Counties - 500 square feet or larger:
 - Limit capacity to up to four separate groups, up to six students in each group, provided that each group participates in a separate location within the establishment. *Separate location means an enclosed area within the establishment.*
 - *Ensure that physical distancing of at least six (6) feet, or 25 feet, for extreme risk counties, between individuals is maintained at all times, except when playing minimal or medium contact sports.*
 - Limit participation to 45 minutes total.
- Indoor Establishments in Extreme Risk Counties – Smaller than 500 square feet:
 - Limit capacity to one student maximum, along with a limit of one coach.
 - Coach must maintain 25 feet of physical distancing from the student, except for brief interactions.

Facility COVID Protocols:

- The host site should designate a cleaned and disinfected area for teams to unload and load buses separate from fans, spectators, and other individuals not essential to the team or group.

- Before each game, contest, or event, schools should follow the screening protocols to screen all staff members, contractors, volunteers, sports officials, contest judges, and any individuals otherwise involved in working the event. These individuals should also self-screen as described in these screening protocols.
- The host site should provide sports and contest officials an area to enter and exit separate from fans when possible. Officials should be provided a dressing and meeting area, if applicable, that has been cleaned and disinfected prior to their arrival.
- All participants should be provided with entry and exit plans for contest areas that maintain separation from non-participants and fans. Individuals not essential to the team or group should not be given access to contest areas, performance areas, courts, or fields at all before, during, or after contests and events.
- Teams are responsible for providing a plan for individualized hydration supplies for their student athletes on competition days.

Practice/Match Guidelines:

- Masks shall be worn at all times by all individuals in attendance.
- Physical distancing measures shall be in place at all times other than when engaged in competition.
- Bench chairs must be set up 6' apart. Students and coaches should use the same chair for themselves for the whole match.
- Sportsmanship is a key component, while physical contact of handshakes, fist-bumps, etc., are not allowed teams are encouraged to acknowledge their opponents in pregame and postgame rituals with a physical distance observance of the team's choosing.
- Suspend the protocol of teams switching benches between sets.
- It is recommended that volleyball drills and conditioning models designed for athletes to remain six feet apart.
- It is recommended that volleyball drills with competition aspects should also be designed for athletes to remain six feet apart at all times.
- 6 V. 6 intra-squad scrimmages are allowed during team practices.
- Time between matches is critical for sanitization. Schools must take as much time as needed between matches to ensure the air is circulated appropriately and sanitization processes can take place for cleaning the floor, equipment and volleyballs properly.
- A three-ball rotation should be used to allow for the match ball to be sanitized several times during the match.
- Host school can and should provide warm up balls for both teams. They should also sanitize them before the traveling school arrives and in between each match for schools to use for warm up.
- Changing location for athletes changing out of warm-up shirts into jerseys needs to be indicated and allow for athletes to remain 6' apart.

Event Limitations:

- 11 Playing dates
- 5 Multiple Match Days with 2 Tournaments Allowed
- Tournament/Double Dual Considerations: Time between matches is critical for sanitization. It is suggested that at least one hour is allowed between matches to ensure the air is circulated appropriately and sanitization processes can take place for cleaning the floor, equipment and volleyballs properly.

Pre-Game Conference:

- Move the location of the pre-match conference to center court with one coach and one referee positioned on each side of the net. All four individuals maintain a physical distance of 6-feet.
- Limit attendees to one coach from each team, first referee and second referee.
- Suspend the use of the coin toss to determine serve/receive.
- The visiting team will serve first in set and alternate first serve for the remaining non-deciding sets.
- Suspend roster submission at the pre-match conference. Rosters are submitted directly to the officials' table before the 10-minute mark.

Deciding Set Procedures:

- Move the location of the deciding set coin toss to center court with team captains and the second referee maintaining the appropriate physical distance of 6 feet. A coin toss, called by the home team, will decide serve/receive.

Team Benches:

- Suspend the protocol of teams switching benches between sets. In the event there is a clear and distinct disadvantage, teams may switch sides, observing all physical distancing protocols. Officials will determine if a disadvantage is present.
- Limit bench personnel to observe physical distancing of 6 feet.

Substitution Procedures:

- Maintain physical distancing of 6 feet between the second referee and the player and substitute by encouraging substitutions to occur within the substitution zone closer to the attack line.

Locker Rooms and Other Congregate Settings:

- Designate total number of occupants allowed in the locker room at any given time and the length of time that they may be present in the locker room. This should be posted at the entrance and inside the locker room.
- Schools should make hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, soap and water, or similar disinfectant readily available in these areas.
- All congregate areas should be regularly and frequently cleaned and disinfected including all frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs, tables, chairs, lockers, and restrooms.
- Any equipment that will be kept in student lockers and/or in these areas should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected each day prior to students accessing these areas. Schools should develop a plan for managing the storage, cleaning and disinfecting, and redistribution of student equipment.
- Schools should consider identifying staff to monitor locker rooms and other areas where students may congregate to ensure effective use of school protocols. When possible, schools should open windows and/or doors or otherwise work to improve air flow by allowing outside air to circulate in these areas.
- Schools must require staff and students to wear face coverings while inside locker rooms, meeting rooms, training rooms, band halls and other areas where students may congregate other than shower facilities.
- As part of their overall plan, schools should develop a plan for mitigating risk of spreading COVID-19 when disinfecting, cleaning, and laundering items such as towels, practice clothes, and uniforms. This plan should include protocols for redistributing these items to students. Involved staff should be trained specifically on these protocols.

Officials' Table:

- Limit to essential personnel which includes home team scorer, libero tracker and timer with a recommend distance of 6 feet between individuals. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential personnel and will need to find an alternative location.

Pre/Post Game Ceremony:

- Replace handshakes before and after the match with a social distance acknowledgment of the team's choosing.

Athletes' Uniform and Equipment:

- Long sleeves are encouraged to reduce skin contact with the ball.
- Long pants and undergarments are permissible. They must meet NFHS Rules.
- Permissible face coverings are required to be worn at all times by all attendees and participants present.
- Gloves are permissible.
- Players shall utilize their own equipment bin for all personal gear on the sideline.

Officials' Uniform and Equipment:

- Electronic whistles can be utilized to minimize the spread of respiratory particles.
- Game officials are responsible for bringing their own beverages and own food items to the site.
- Officials are responsible for bringing their own hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes.
- Game officials are responsible for bringing their own face covering and whistle. Face shields can be worn if there is a face covering worn over the nose and mouth as well. If the official would like to use a hand whistle that is allowed.
- If available, dressing facilities for game officials should be large enough for them to use physical-distancing protocols and should be properly cleaned and sanitized prior to their arrival.
- Maintain physical distancing of 6 feet while performing duties.

OSAA/NFHS Points of Emphasis for 2020-21

Bench Behavior/Sportsmanship:

Volleyball is a dynamic sport that displays both athleticism and tenacity through both individual and team play. It is important that all team members feel engaged in a contest whether they are on the court or on the bench. Student-athletes should have an opportunity to celebrate when exciting athletic plays occur in a match. Rule 12-2-7a allows bench personnel to, "Spontaneously react to an outstanding play by members of their own team." It has become apparent that these spontaneous reactions have become, at times, more than a short-lived spontaneous reaction. Bench personnel are coming to the sideline or even onto the court to celebrate. These excessive and disruptive reactions may result in an unsporting conduct penalty as described in Rule 12-2 PENALTIES. The goal of this Point of Emphasis is NOT to prevent engagement and celebration, but to remind coaches to educate their teams of appropriate ways to celebrate.

Uniform Bottom Compliance:

For the 2020-21 season, the NFHS Volleyball Rules Committee is emphasizing the importance of adhering to the uniform rules as they apply to uniform bottoms – specifically, manufacturer logos. Rule 4-2-1f states, "A single partial/whole manufacturer's logo/trademark/reference, no more than 2¼ square inches with no dimension more than 2¼ inches, is permitted on each piece of the uniform provided placement does not interfere with the visibility of the player's number." Manufacturers are producing spandex marketed for volleyball with multiple large logos along the waistband. These bottoms, worn with uniform tops tucked or untucked, violate Rule 4-2-1f. The committee understands that many times players and parents are responsible for purchasing uniform bottoms. It is the responsibility of the head coach to ensure that his/her players are properly equipped, which includes items purchased by the individual athlete. Additional rules relating to uniform bottoms can be found in Rule 4-2-1i.

Management of Non-Team Personnel:

Volleyball has grown significantly in both participation and popularity earning the respect of the school community as well as local communities as a major interscholastic sport. This increase in popularity has created increased desire for non-team personnel to be involved in match day affairs, which has created both excitement and confusion. It is necessary to remind coaches of their responsibility to educate school administration and their school community as to the sportsmanship nuances of the game of volleyball. This should include, but is not limited to:

- Appropriate times cheerleaders may or may not cheer and proper location to cheer;
- Appropriate comments, timing of announcements and good sportsmanship by PA announcers;
- Appropriate time for music and sound effects (1-8);
- Appropriate location and behavior of fans and mascots, etc.

Officials have the responsibility to enforce rules that apply. Inappropriate behavior of non-team personnel is the sole responsibility of home management (12-3).

Tournament Format Policy Update:

- Please remember county risk level limitations when preparing to host or attend a tournament.
- Time between matches is required to sanitize all surfaces and allow for ventilation systems to clear the air prior to matches continuing.
- The maximum number of matches allowed in any format is five.
- Tournaments shall be limited to 16 sets per team, including pool play
- Tournament play may not commence prior to 8am and no scheduled round may begin after 7pm. Host schools may apply to the OSAA office for time changes in extenuating circumstances.

GENERAL INFORMATION

OSAA Volleyball Plan: This plan contains information regarding important Covid-19 considerations, NFHS rule changes/points of emphasis, OSAA volleyball specific policies and OSAA general policies.

[2020-21 NFHS Volleyball Rule Changes and Points of Emphasis](#)

[2020-21 NFHS Covid-19 Considerations and Rule Changes](#)

Sub-Varsity Formats: A reminder that the “extra set” is no longer allowed at the lowest level since schools are now allowed to play best 3-of-5 at all levels. Please ensure that you have communicated the format either best 2 of 3 or 3 of 5 for your sub-varsity teams to your commissioner.

Warm-Up Safety Reminder: Risk minimization continues to be a priority for the NFHS Volleyball Rules Committee and the OSAA. Though volleyball continues to have one of the lowest injury rates of the 22 high school sports under surveillance, the growing number of concussions occurring during warm-ups as reported annually by the National High School Sports-Related Injury Surveillance System (High School RIO) has increased awareness regarding warm-up procedures before and during the match.

With the risk for injury being highest during shared net warm up time, no shared net warm up time is allowed. Leagues shall adopt a protocol for warming up that does not include shared net time. Teams can warm up on either side of the net without attacking or serving over the net.

Regular Season Match Warm Up Suggestions:

20 minute warm up time: 4 minutes shared court time- each team stays on their chosen or assigned side of the net. Then the serving team takes the full court for 8 minutes, followed by the receiving team taking the full court for 8 minutes.

18 minute warm up: 4 minutes of shared court time- each team stays on their chosen or assigned side of the net. Then the serving team takes the full court for 7 minutes, followed by the receiving team taking the full court for 7 minutes.

Tournament Match Warm Up Suggestions:

10 minute warm up: 2 minutes shared court time, then the serving team has the full court for 4 minutes followed by the receiving team taking the court for 4 minutes.

5 Minute warm up: Serving team has the full court for 2.5 minutes, followed by the receiving team taking the full court for 2.5 minutes.

Some things to consider when establishing best practices are: facility space, shared court time, placement of athletes and those assisting with warm-ups, and familiarity of all team members with the warm-up procedures for the match. In addition to pre-game warm-ups, it should be noted that warming up between sets is allowed. Rule 11-5-3 clarifies that teams must remain on their side of the net, in their playable area. No hitting or serving is allowed and volleyballs may be used only on their own side of the playing area.

Heat Index: Athletic Directors and Coaches should subscribe to heat alerts through the OSAA website. Alerts are sent about 11am daily when the forecasted heat index in your area is high. If an alert is received, the policy requires that schools check the actual heat index within one hour prior to the start of practice to determine if modifications must be made. If no alert is received, no action is required by the school that day.

Air Quality Guidelines: The Air Quality Index (AQI) should be monitored throughout the day, and during an event, to have the best data possible to make informed decisions about conducting practices and competitions. School personnel shall review the AQI information for all regions throughout the state on either the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) website at <https://oraqi.deq.state.or.us/home/map>, the Oregon DEQ app "OregonAir", or on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Air Now website at https://airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=airnow.local_state&stateid=38 to determine if action is necessary. Schools shall regularly review the AQI throughout events to assess deteriorating conditions.

Concussion Management: OSAA Staff worked with the Oregon Legislature to align Max’s Law (public schools) and Jenna’s Law (private schools) when it comes to the return to participation protocol. Therefore, all OSAA member schools are subject to the same policy when a student is removed after exhibiting signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion following an observed or suspected blow to the head or body. The state still states that, on an annual basis prior to participation, private schools shall require each student and at least one parent or legal guardian of the student to sign a consent form acknowledging the receipt of information regarding symptoms and warning signs of concussions. Private schools shall maintain a copy of each student’s signed form on file for review at any time by OSAA staff.

UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

Eliminates the use of double zero (00) as a uniform number option 4-2-4b: Eliminates the use of double zero (00) as a uniform number option. Rationale: Eliminates confusion surrounding the signaling of “00” and “0”.

Removal of any uniform top or bottom 4-2-7: Clarifies the penalty for the removal of any part of the uniform top or bottom as a yellow card charged to the coach for unsporting conduct.

Hair Control / NFHS Rule 4-1-5: Hair devices made of soft material and no more than 3 inches wide may be worn. Bobby pins, flat clips and flat barrettes, unadorned and no longer than 2 inches, are also allowed. Sewn on sequins are legal on headbands (max of 3 inches wide). Ribbons are allowed, no more than 3 inches wide, but may not contain glitter, sequins, buttons or other adornments made of hard and unyielding material.

Jewelry / NFHS Rule 4-1-6: Jewelry is not allowed during warm-ups or competition. Please note that this also includes rubber plugs, fishing line, etc. that is used to insert in pierced openings when jewelry is removed.

Legal Volleyballs: Per OSAA adoption, schools may use volleyballs that are solid white or a maximum combination of three colors (with each of the 12 panels being a solid color) and of which at least one-third of the panels shall be solid white. The ball shall include the NFHS Authenticating Mark. Schools shall use NFHS-approved Wilson volleyballs for all OSAA playoff matches.

HOME CONTEST MANAGEMENT

Annual Review of Equipment and Facilities: The school coach and athletic administrator have the responsibility to be certain all equipment is in compliance with the rules and kept in good condition. Equally important is the facility set-up for the match to have clear playing area, and proper floor markings and officials table in the proper location along with team benches. The review of equipment should be done annually as well as checking to be sure all is in good order for the night of the contest. **This includes the referee's platform.** If problems arise with equipment, the proper staff member should be notified so the matter can be resolved. Taking time to review your equipment and facilities will benefit the teams and officials.

Scorers and Libero Trackers for Home Matches: <http://www.osaa.org/activities/vbl/information>

It is imperative that all scorers and libero trackers show up on time for matches and are properly trained to perform these important duties.

Line Judges for Home Matches: <http://www.osaa.org/docs/vbl/linejudgesignals.pdf>

If not supplied by your local association, it is vital that all line judges show up on time for matches and are properly trained to perform these important duties. It is strongly recommended that schools use adults, not students, especially for varsity matches.

Blood Kit: Verify that a blood kit is readily available in each gym for all home matches.

Volleyball Formats: Please note that these are the ONLY three formats that are allowed for OSAA volleyball play. All other formats are illegal under OSAA rules. You can find this information on the OSAA website within the OSAA Volleyball Plan at <http://www.osaa.org/docs/planbooks/vblplan.pdf>.

a. Single Match: 2 schools involved; individuals are allowed one match plus one set on this date. Once a student plays in the 2nd set of a match, that is considered her match and she is allowed one more set that day at another level. Varsity matches are best 3 of 5 and sub-varsity matches are best 2 of 3 or best 3 of 5.

b. Double Dual: 2 or 3 schools involved; schools can play a maximum of 2 matches on this date. Individuals can compete in a maximum of 10 sets on this date, at any level, and each match counts towards the 20-match individual limitation. Varsity matches are best 3 of 5 and sub-varsity matches are best 2 of 3 or best 3 of 5.

c. Tournaments: Multiple schools involved; consists of pool play and/or bracket play; limited to 16 sets per team, including pool play.

