



MPA Outdoor Track Committee 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 Maine Guidelines for Community Based Sports have labeled some events in the sport of outdoor track as “Lower Risk” activities. “Lower Risk” activities are those that can be done with physical distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between use by competitors. Other events have been labeled as “Moderate Risk”. “Moderate Risk” activities are those that involve intermittent contact, but with protective equipment or mitigating measures in place may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants. (e.g., wearing masks, modifying play to maintain 6 feet of physical distancing, cleaning, and disinfecting). The following recommendations are being made in accordance with the Maine Department of Economic & Community Development guidelines.

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

- **SPECTATORS**

- Organizers of school-based 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. (Updated 11/6/20)

- Players, coaches, volunteers, officials, and spectators count toward the gathering limit. (Updated 9/10/20)
 - If a space cannot accommodate the gathering limit without complying with the six-foot distancing requirement, occupancy in that space must be limited to allow for such compliance.
- All gathering limits as further established by the [Governor's Executive Order](#) are subject to the following limits: (Updated 3/5/21)
 - All indoor gatherings limits:
 - **Effective March 26, 2021 through May 23, 2021:** 50% of permitted occupancy or 50 persons, whichever is greater.
 - **Effective May 24, 2021 and thereafter:** 75% of permitted occupancy or 50 persons, whichever is greater.
 - Any outdoor gathering taking place at a facility or event that is subject to a permitted occupancy limit is subject to the following limits:
 - **Effective March 26, 2021 through May 23, 2021:** 75% of permitted occupancy.
 - **Effective May 24, 2021 and thereafter:** 100% of permitted occupancy.
- Face coverings must always be worn by athletes, coaches, staff, meet officials/workers, and spectators.
- Spectators must maintain 6 feet of physical distance between each other and athletes.

- **FACE COVERINGS**

- All individuals must wear face coverings at all time, including athletes during competition.
 - Athletes must replace their face covering if it becomes wet or otherwise soiled.
- 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**

- Student-athletes must complete and pass a self-screening for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, prior to participation or entrance into an opposing school's facilities.
- All game day staff/officials must complete and pass self-screening questions prior to arriving at the event.
- Spectators must complete and pass a self-screening for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, prior to attending any event.

- **SCHEDULING**

- Organizers of outdoor track meets are responsible for limiting the number of individuals that can gather in a shared space, in accordance with the [Governor's Executive Order](#).
 - All individuals, including athletes, coaches, meet officials/workers, and volunteers 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.
- Whenever possible competition should be scheduled between teams from a geographic area.

- **FACILITY**

- When possible, the host facility should provide separate entrance and exit for teams and spectators to separate the teams from spectators.
- Medical staff must brief coaches on protocols and isolation space for if an athlete becomes sick during the meet.
- Host sites shall provide hand sanitizer/sanitizing stations.

- **VISITING TEAMS**

- Visiting teams should arrive in a self-sufficient manner.
 - Come ready to compete dressed in uniform.
 - Medical kit with necessary athletic training supplies

- This should include back up face coverings and gloves.
- Visiting teams should plan to bring their own water jug for their student-athletes to refill their water vessels.
- These jugs/refill station should be clearly marked with the team name and purpose of only for use by such school when possible.
- Host site medical staff must brief visiting coaches of protocols and isolation space if an athlete becomes sick during competition.
- Keep teams separate to the greatest extent possible.
 - Establish separate areas in the facility for each team.
 - Discourage the mixing of teams in competition areas by limiting the number of athletes in each heat or flight, to the extent practicable.

● RETURN TO COMPETITION

○ General Considerations

○ Throwing events

- During discuss, javelin, and shot put competition, officials must enforce physical distancing for all individuals, including athletes and officials.
- To limit contact athletes can provide their own implement (that pass inspection) and retrieve their own implement after all throws.
- Shared equipment (starting blocks, shot put, discus, javelin, pole vault poles) should be sanitized on a regular basis.
- Additionally, athletes should wash or sanitize their hands before and after using any shared equipment.

○ Jumping events

- During long jump, triple jump, high jump, and pole vault, officials must enforce physical distancing for all individuals, including athletes and officials.
- Meet directors are encouraged to periodically clean the mats using manufacturers recommendations.

○ Running events

- Sprint, hurdle, and relay events that are run entirely in lanes may use every other lane to assist with distancing.
- Using baskets for apparel at start lines is not recommended.
- Runners must disperse immediately after they finish their race and return to their team area.
- Eliminate hugs, handshakes, high fives, belly bumps, and fist bumps after the event or at the end of the meet.
- Athletes must always wear a face mask.
- The baton is the implement used in a relay race and is handed by each competitor to a succeeding teammate.
 - Gloves are not currently permitted in relay events but may be used for this year.
 - Schools can bring their own batons. Batons must be cleaned and disinfected after each heat/race, even if they are provided by schools.
 - Relay runners must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before and after the race.

○ Considerations for Officials

- Bring personal hand sanitizer and wash hands frequently.
- Do not share equipment.
- Follow physical distancing guidelines:
 - Pre and Post Meet conferences.
 - Clerking at the start line.
 - Tabulations and posting of results.
- Consider using electronic whistle.
- Do not shake hands and follow pre- and post-game ceremony.
- Officials personnel must always wear a face covering.

○ Considerations for Coaches:

- Communicate your guidelines in a clear manner to students and parents.
- Consider conducting workouts in "pods" of same students always training and rotating together in practice to ensure more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- Keep accurate records of those athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.
- o **Considerations for Students:**
 - Consider making each student responsible for their own supplies.
 - Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing), and individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout immediately upon returning home.
 - Hand sanitizer must be made available at all contests and practices.
 - Athletes must tell coaches immediately when they are not feeling well.
 - Face coverings are required.
 - Bring your own labeled water bottle.
- **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUSING/TRANSPORTATION**
 - o If transport vehicles (e.g., buses) are used, drivers should practice all safety actions and protocols as indicated for other staff (e.g., hand hygiene, face coverings). Drivers should be a minimum of six feet from passengers to the extent possible; drivers must wear a face covering; consider physical barriers for driver.
 - o Open bus/vehicle windows open if weather allows.
 - o Masks/face coverings must be worn by everyone on the bus.
 - o Hand sanitizer should be available and used when entering and exiting the bus.
 - o To the extent possible, maximize the distance between individuals on the bus. Since vehicles have difference sizes and capacities, there is no single recommendation for spacing. That said, filling a vehicle to its maximum capacity even with masks/face coverings poses a public health risk and is inadvisable.
 - o Assign seating, individuals from the same household should sit together if space on the bus is limited.
 - o Minimize the number of people on the bus at one time within reason.
 - o To minimize contact between passengers, load the bus from back to front and unload the bus from front to back.
 - o Routinely clean and disinfect buses or other transport vehicles.
 - o Encourage alternative modes of transportation to competitions for athletes who have other options. Advise athletes who carpool to wear face coverings while in the vehicle, maximize outdoor air circulation, and open vehicle windows if weather allows.