



MPA Tennis Committee

Tennis 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 the sport of tennis as a “Lower Risk”. “Lower Risk” activities are those that can be done with social distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between use by competitors. 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 currently available on the NFHS Learn platform at <https://nfhslearn.com/>.

- **DISTANCING**

- Space players at least 6 feet apart whenever possible (e.g., during warmup, skill building activities, simulation drills, when explaining drills or the rules of the game).
- The school or organization sponsoring the tennis event will be responsible for enforcing physical distance requirements for all individuals at the tennis match.
- Require individuals to maintain 6 feet of physical distance from individuals who are not part of their household group whenever possible.

- **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.
- **MASKS**
 - Masks must always be worn by athletes, coaches, staff, and spectators.
 - Athletes must replace their mask if it becomes wet or otherwise soiled.
 - Unless the governing body for the sport has a specific recommendation regarding plastic face shields, do not wear them in place of a mask given potential safety risks.
- **HAND AND RESPIRATORY HYGIENE**
 - Regularly and thoroughly wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
 - Make sure to educate all participants on the importance of washing hands or using hand sanitizer before, during, and after play, as well as during practices and all team-based activities.
 - Cheering/yelling by athletes, spectators, and coaches is not allowed. Clapping, and other activities, at appropriate times, that do not involve the projection of respiratory droplets are low-risk alternatives.
- **SCHEDULING**
 - Following the Community Sports Guidelines, in person competition between schools from different geographic regions is allowed.
 - There shall be no minimum number of matches required and the maximum number of matches is 12.
- **FACILITY & PLAYING AREA**
 - When possible, schools should provide separate entrance and exit for teams and spectators to separate the teams from the public.
 - For indoor play, adequate ventilation is required for playing areas, with facilities having flexibility in implementation such as using properly working ventilation systems or outdoor air exchange using fans in open windows or doors. Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk (e.g., risk of falling, triggering asthma

symptoms) to individuals using the facility. Additional information on readying ventilation systems is available from the [U.S. CDC](https://www.cdc.gov).

- o Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces on the court/play area at least daily, or between uses as much as possible. Use of shared objects and equipment should be limited and objects should be cleaned between uses if possible. Follow recommendations provided by the equipment manufacturer when cleaning and disinfecting equipment.
- **VISITING TEAM**
 - o Visiting teams should arrive in a self-sufficient manner.
 - Provide their own tennis balls for warmups.
 - Come ready to play the contest dressed in uniform.
 - Medical kit with necessary athletic training supplies.
 - o All students-athletes must bring their own water vessel clearly labeled with their name.
 - Visiting teams should plan to bring their own water jug for their student-athletes to refill their water vessels.
 - These jugs/refill stations should be clearly marked with the team name and purpose of only for use by such school when possible.
 - o Visiting teams will be briefed by the home team medical staff on protocols and isolation space if an athlete becomes sick during play.
 - o Visiting teams will be briefed on indoor and/or portable bathroom options for their players.
- **SCREENING**
 - o 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.
 - o All game day staff/officials must complete and pass self-screening questions prior to arriving at the event.
 - o Spectators must complete and pass a self-screening for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 prior to attending any event.
- **TEAM BENCHES**
 - o Team areas should allow for teams to observe 6 feet of physical distancing.
 - o There should be sanitizer available for each team.
 - o If team benches or bleachers are provided at a tennis match, the school or sponsoring organization must assure physical distancing requirements are met.
 - o All participants and coaches must always wear mask while on or in the bench area.
 - o Mask may be removed while hydrating so long as the person hydrating is 6 feet from anyone else in/on the bench area.
- **PRE-MATCH PROCEDURES**
 - o Each team should align on the opposite baselines of the court and all individuals should be physically distanced with 6 feet between them.
 - o Each coach will introduce their line-up to the opposing coach and players prior to the beginning of the match. Players will step forward and acknowledge their opponent with a good sportsmanship wave after both players and/or partners are introduced.
 - o Players' bags/gear/water bottles/etc., must be as far back from the net as possible and at least 6 feet from the opponent to maintain physical distancing.
 - o Suspend handshakes prior to and following the pre-match introductions. Coaches and players can use a good sportsmanship wave.

- **IN-MATCH PROCEDURES**

- Athletic Directors and/or coaches should communicate prior to the match on the number of competitors each school will bring to the match.
- Athletes, coaches, and game personnel should sanitize hands prior to entering and exiting the court.
- The home team is responsible for providing a new can of tennis balls for each match.
- The home team will be the only ones to update the score cards.
- When switching sides, players will go directly to their bag and should not cross paths with their opponent.
- Players, when changing sides of the court, should do so on opposite sides of the net posts.
- When returning balls to an adjacent court, players should use their racket only. Player will not touch the ball with their hands.
- Players may not wipe their sweat with the tennis ball.
- No handshakes post-match - utilize the good sportsmanship wave.

- **TRANSPORTATION**

- Transportation to and from sports activities require attention because of increased risk of proximity and poor ventilation.
- Limit the use of carpools or van pools. When riding in a vehicle to a sports event, encourage players to ride with persons living in their same household. Carpooling with individuals from different households is not recommended.
- If carpooling with individuals outside one's household group is necessary, increase ventilation in the vehicle, and all riders must wear a facial covering, and use hand sanitizer.
- If buses are used, spread individuals out to the extent possible, increase the airflow with open windows if weather permits, require use of masks, and provide hand sanitizer for use when entering and exiting the bus.