



RETURN TO PLAY PLAN

Northwest United FC's #1 priority is to PLAY ON...SAFELY!

Players and their families' health and safety come first; their physical and mental health are of utmost importance to us. Getting our kids outside, in fresh air and playing soccer safely is our goal. When our kids play, their body produces endorphins, which are a natural mood booster that can fight stress and depression. Feelings of empowerment, relaxation, and optimism follow. Play not only promotes healthy weight and cardiovascular fitness, but also enhances the efficacy of the immune, endocrine, and cardiovascular systems.

Below is Northwest United FC's updated return to play plan, based on the **October 6** revision to Professional Sports & Other Sporting Activities COVID -19 Requirements.

<https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/COVID19%20Phase%20%20and%20%20Sporting%20Activities%20Guidance.pdf>

The governor's office provided guidance on games and full practice based on the category of the sport (MODERATE for soccer) and the COVID risk category for the county where the sport is to take place, located on the phase and risk assessment dashboard.

<https://coronavirus.wa.gov/what-you-need-know/covid-19-risk-assessment-dashboard#dashboard>

Protocols

The following best practices are intended to offer guidance. Adherence to these considerations and recommendations does not ensure immunity from exposure. Northwest United makes no representations and assumes no responsibility for individual activity or participation decisions by Associations, Clubs, Coaches, Parents, or Players.

The following areas are addressed below:

- **General**
- **Northwest United FC's Responsibilities**
- **Coaches**
- **Parents**
- **Players**
- **Field Diagrams**
- **Phase 2 & 3 Action Plan / Communication Plan**

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- **General**

1. Be smart: if you are sick, stay home. This applies to everyone: players, coaches, and parents. If you have been sick, stay home for 14 days after recovery.
2. Screening: Greet all participants before practice and ask if they have been sick in the last 14 days or in direct contact with a person who is sick. Send home immediately if the answer is “yes.”
3. Sanitize: have hand sanitizer available and encourage hand washing before and after all activities. Hand-washing will be available at SVC field restrooms.
4. Distancing: While players are not engaged in sporting activities, 6 ft distance must be maintained. Huddles and team meetings must be physically distanced. High-fives, handshakes, or hugs are discouraged.
5. Masks: Players are required to wear a mask directly before and directly after activities and are strongly encouraged to wear masks when not engaged in strenuous activity. Coaches must wear masks at all times. Spectators should wear a mask in public when they cannot reliably maintain 6 ft distance between others outside their household.
6. Drop-off/pick-up: if possible, parents should remain in their car.
7. Water bottles: players must keep their water bottles in their own bag when not in use. Use of SVC water fountain is discouraged.
8. Group play is defined based on the COVID risk assessment dashboard for the county in which play is happening.

HIGH - (>75 cases/100K/14 days OR >5% positivity) - Team practices include only groups of 6 separated by buffer zone. Brief close contact is allowed (ex. 3v3).

MODERATE – (25-75 cases/100K/14 days AND <5%) – Full team practice with scrimmage, intra-team competitions, and league games allowed.

LOW – (<25 cases/100K/14 days AND <5% positivity) – Full team practice with scrimmage, intra-team competitions, and league games allowed. Tournaments allowed (with all participants in a LOW COVID risk county).

9. Have fun, stay positive, be supportive and compassionate to others.



- **Northwest United FC's Responsibilities**
 - Distribute these protocols to our members.
 - Have an effective communication plan in place, passing information between coaches and parents, as well as coaches to directors, and directors to NWU board members. Identify strategies for working with public to notify adult leaders, youth, and their families if the organization learns a participant or adult leader has developed COVID-19 and may have been infectious to others while at a youth activity, while maintaining confidentiality.
 - Small group sessions need to maintain the same group of players. This helps with contact tracing and limits exposure.
 - Have a written action plan in place, in case of a positive test. If a person is diagnosed with COVID-19, the entire group must return to self-isolation until symptom-free for 14 days.
 - Distribute your written action plan to administrators, coaches, managers, and parents, electronically or otherwise.
 - In your action plan include both a communication chain for team personnel, including volunteers and managers, as well as triggers for executing the action plan.
 - Be prepared to shut down and stop operations. Develop plans for temporary closure of indoor facilities and cancel outdoor activities or camps to properly disinfect and ensure other adult leaders or youth are not infected.
 - Provide adequate field space for at least six feet of social distancing per player.
 - Develop a relationship and a dialogue with health local officials. (identify Risk Tolerance)
- **Coaches**
 - Ensure the health and safety of your players. Inquire how the athletes are feeling, send them home if they act or discuss feeling ill.
 - Follow all established federal, state, and local protocols.
 - Ensure all athletes have their individual equipment (ball, water bottles, bag, etc.) and prohibit them from sharing anything. Equipment placement should be spaced at least 6 feet apart.
 - Maintain hand-sanitizer for team use as needed before and after practices.
 - Maintain a roster on TEAM SNAP for each practice and game.
 - The coach is the only person to handle cones, disks, etc.
 - All training must be outdoors and coaches must strictly enforce social distancing per the current guidelines.
 - Coaches must always wear a face mask per current protocol and social distance from players when required.
 - Wash and sanitize your own equipment after every session.
 - The use of scrimmage vests/pennies is not recommended.
 - Increase your communication with parents, they need to know what you are doing as a coach and club to maintain their safety.
 - Have fun, stay positive – players and parents are looking to you to stay calm, supportive, and caring during this time.

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- **Parents**

- Ensure athletes are healthy, check their temperature daily.
- Limited carpooling.
- Stay in car or social distance when at training, wear a mask if you cannot reliably maintain 6 ft distance while outside your car.
- Assist Coach in keeping your TEAM SNAP attendance up to date for each practice and game.
- Ensure child's clothing is washed after every training session.
- Label your child's equipment to guard against cross-contamination.
- Ensure all equipment, cleats, ball, shin guards etc. are sanitized after every training.
- Notify club immediately if your child becomes ill for any reason or comes in contact with someone who is ill, and do not bring them into contact with coaches or other players.
- Do not assist coaches with equipment before or after training.
- Be sure your child has necessary sanitizer and cleaning supplies with them at every training.
- When traveling, take responsibility to sanitize hotel rooms.
- At any event or practice, one parent/guardian/caregiver is allowed to act as spectator for youth under 18 during HIGH and MODERATE risk levels. During LOW risk times, all spectators must follow current gathering limits and 6ft distancing.

- **Players**

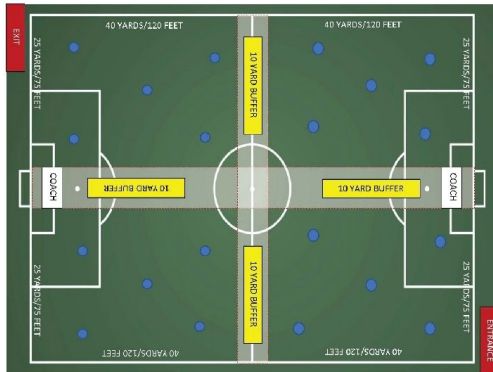
- Take temperature daily.
- Wash hands thoroughly before and after training and any contact outside your home. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Bring and use hand sanitizer with you at every training session. Especially at the beginning and end of sessions.
- Limited carpooling.
- Wear mask before and after all training sessions, and if not strenuously exercising.
- Maintain 6 ft distance with teammates if waiting on the bench during a game.
- Do not touch or share anyone else's equipment.
- Bring your own ball to training, label it as your own.
- Practice social distancing and place bags and other equipment at least 6 feet apart from your teammates' equipment during sessions.
- Wash and sanitize all equipment before and after every training session.
- No group celebrations with players closer than six feet, no high fives, hugs, cheers, etc.



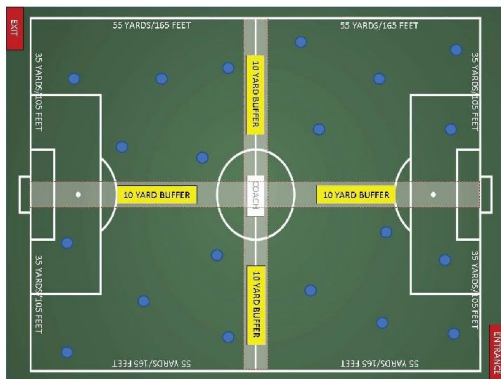
Field Diagrams -- As example for HIGH risk times and subject to location specifics.

FIELD DIAGRAMS

9v9 Field: 5 players per 9000 sq. feet or 1000 sq. yards or 0.2 acres



11v11 Field: 5 players per 17,325 sq. feet or 1925 sq. yards or 0.4 acres



Action Plan

Communication will flow as appropriate via text or email depending on urgency. Information should pass expeditiously (within 24 hours) between coaches and parents, as well as coaches to directors, and directors to NWU board members, while maintaining confidentiality.

Working with public health will include Skagit County health department and city hall for Burlington, Mt Vernon, and any other local city hall relating to the person exposed to infection in order to notify adult leaders, youth, and their families if the organization learns a participant or adult leader has developed COVID-19 and may have been infectious to others while at a youth activity.

Triggers: Any infected or suspected infected individual will be immediately and safely removed from training and contact. Coach, Parent, Team manager notified along with Marcos Vega at marco.vega@nwunited.org.

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Testing and 14 days quarantine may be required.

Communication Plan

This plan will be posted on our website at www.nwunited.org.

All Northwest United board members, directors, staff, and coaches will be required to read and understand this plan and their responsibilities. They will be prepared to answer questions from parents, players, and the community.

Players and parents will communicate any concerns or questions about protocols, cleansing supplies, distancing, etc., to their coaches directly.

If coaches have any questions or concerns, they will contact the coaching directors:

Director of Coaching: Kristian Powell

Girls Director of Coaching: Joana Michaelson

Boys Director of Coaching: Connor Moe

Directors will direct any questions to the board of directors.

Marcos Vega, club administrator, will be a key point of contact to convey information to the club as a whole, especially between parents and players, communicating directly with the board. Marco.vega@nwunited.org.