

## SPRING SPORTS

SEASON OF SPORT BEGINS:  
MARCH 1, 2021

SEASON OF COMPETITION BEGINS:  
MARCH 12, 2021

- All students, coaches and sideline/dugout personnel will be required to wear a cloth mask, disposable non-surgical mask, or gaiter for the entirety of a game/contest. Mesh masks do not meet this requirement.
  - **Exception:** students while actively participating in the contest. *Example: BASE/SB players on the field, batting or on base may remove their mask. Masks must be worn by all while in the dugout.*
- Each school will complete the AIA COVID-19 Athlete/Coach Monitoring Form the day of all games/contests and provide a copy to the opposing school prior to the contest.
- Spectator attendance is at the discretion of the home school.
- Anyone who attends spring sports events is required to wear a face covering for the entirety of the contest.
  - **Exception:** students, **coaches** & officials actively participating in the game/contest. *Example: BASE/SB coaches in the coaches box may remove their mask. Masks must be worn by all while in the dugout.*
- In team sports multi-team scrimmages, invitational tournaments, or Region tournaments are not permitted for the 2021 season. If permitted a scrimmage may be held the week of March 8th but must be prior to the first scheduled contest.
- Individual sports tournaments must begin after 3:00pm Monday - Friday. Saturday tournaments are permissible.
- AIA member schools are not permitted to play any out of state team, nor participate in an out of state tournament.
- Must have a minimum of 10 days of practice before any competition.
- For the 2020-21 school year, the Non-school Participation Rule for spring sports will take effect on March 12, 2021. The Season of Competition begins March 12th for all schools in all spring sports without exception.
- Testing is recommended if possible in your county.
- Conference Leadership will determine the minimum number of contests required to qualify for the state tournament.
- **Any school that violates any of the mandatory modifications, including the COVID-19 Return to Play Form, will lose access to AIA officiating.**
- **All sport modifications are required.**



## 2021 AIA Softball Modifications

This document provides guidance and match modifications for schools, administrators, coaches, and players to follow in accordance with NFHS, state and local restrictions and recommendations. Game Administration is responsible for informing all participants of local guidelines for participation.

- **IF YOU ARE SICK PLEASE STAY HOME!**
- **MASK UP FULLY FOR PLAYERS, COACHES, AND OFFICIALS NOT ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING IN COMPETITION.**
- **PHYSICAL DISTANT OF 6' AT ALL TIMES POSSIBLE**

### ❖ PRIOR TO CONTEST & TRAVEL

- Home team Athletic Director should Contact the opponents Athletic Director prior to the day of the contest to discuss any logistics and guidelines including mask requirements for that particular school, district.
- Bring your own equipment and towel. Do not share.
- Bring your own cups and/or water bottles.

### ❖ PREGAME & WARMUPS

- Facilities for teams should be properly cleaned and sanitized prior to arrival of visiting team.
- Before, during, and after the contest, players, coaches, team personnel and game administration should wash or sanitize their hands as often as possible.
- Maintain social distancing of 6 feet at all times while on the field during pregame when possible.
- Plate meeting, one (1) coach only per team and maintain 6'.
- Recommended for lineup cards exchanged team to team and teams to scorekeeper to be shared via photo or text
- No handshakes prior to, during and following the games.

### ❖ COACHES

- **Mask up Fully for Coaches is Mandatory, except when coaching in the coaches' box.**
- NFHS rules allow for dugouts/designated warm up areas to be extended to provide physical distancing.
- Do not share gloves, bats, helmets, equipment, water bottles, and other apparel.
- All teams are responsible for bringing their own hand sanitizer and masks.
- No Spitting allowed including No Sunflower seeds and No shelled peanuts allowed
- Charged Conferences (3-7-1, 3-7-2, and 3-7-3): Coach Visits to pitcher, the coach must be outside of the pitching circle, the pitcher remains on the pitching rubber during the Time Out, infielders must be outside of the circle 6' apart to hear the coaches' message.
- Coaches and Players are encouraged to use hand sanitizer as frequently as possible after every half inning or after every at bat etc.

### ❖ PLAYERS

- **Mask up Fully for Players is Mandatory for those not directly participating in competition.** When on defense mask for players is optional (If required by Home site advance notice to needs to be given to visiting team). Also optional for the batter or base runner.
- Prohibited: Pitchers are not allowed to put their hands to their mouths or blow into their hands prior to pitching the ball. This will be a "no pitch". Any umpire is permitted to make this call. The ball goes to the dugout for sanitizing, pitcher sanitizes hands before play continues.
- Per guidance from the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee, plastic shields covering the entire face (**unless integrated into the face mask and attached to a helmet**) shall not be allowed during contest. Their use during practices increases the risk of unintended injury to the person wearing the shield or teammates.
- Cloth facial coverings are recommended but not required. Facial coverings must be of one color, not distracting, school logo allowed. Pitchers cannot wear yellow facial coverings.