

UPDATES ON SUMMER ACTIVITY & RE-OPENING GUIDANCE (JUNE 1, 2020)

This sure has been an interesting time, but it looks like we will be riding bikes with our teammates very soon! After reviewing the [May 29, 2020 announcement](#) from the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) and reviewing [Executive Order 2020-110](#), MiSCA is confident in moving forward with our summer programming beginning June 13, 2020. This document seeks to summarize the guidance reviewed and communicate temporary changes to student and coach requirements. **Additional guidance and direction in the days and weeks ahead should also be anticipated.**

- Parents should assess the potential risks of participating in group activities, as it is impossible to remove all risk until a proven cure or vaccine is available.
- Mountain biking should be considered a “lower risk” sport in terms of potential infection risk. The [MHSAA/NFHS plan](#) places sports into categories based on risk for transmitting the virus (low/moderate/high) and says that “lower risk sports can be done with social distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between uses by competitors” giving cross country running as an example.
- Teams may start official activities on June 13. Individual teams may opt to start activities later than this guidance and team leaders should review local restrictions prior to hosting activities.
- While not all precautions apply to mountain biking, the MHSAA/NFHS plan outlines 3 steps of progression, where step 1 is the most restrictive. Our requirements are based on these steps and given today’s executive order, we are continuing as though we are in step 2 with the hopes we can reduce restrictions, maybe even before June 13.
- MiSCA is planning to provide each team with a touchless thermometer, an initial batch of hand sanitizer, and a screening questionnaire. Coaches will be trained on the screening process.

Requirements (beginning June 13, 2020)

More stringent local guidelines and those relevant to indoor facilities should be followed if applicable.

- All coaches/students will be screened (temperature check and questionnaire) for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to a ride. Vulnerable individuals ([as defined by the CDC](#)) should not oversee or participate in any workouts.
- Coaches/students should not attend gatherings if anyone in the household has been sick with a fever within the last 24 hours, or they are experiencing any two of the [listed symptoms per CDC](#). Sick coaches/students may not return until they have met CDC’s [criteria to discontinue home isolation](#).
- Riding groups should be conducted in “pods” of students/coaches with the same small group always riding together. Larger teams should stagger start times or locations to avoid congestion in parking lots or common areas. Gathering sizes may be regulated as determined by Government and Health Departments officials.
- Each group must have a minimum of 2 certified coaches (always with a minimum ratio of 6 riders to 1 coach). At least 1 of the coaches in the group must hold a first aid / CPR certification, meet all level 1 requirements, have at least watched the [ride guide webinar](#), and completed the [quiz](#) (preferably level 2+ certified). Online-only medical certifications are permitted for 2020-2021 season.
- Social distancing practices must be maintained with 6’ separation when stationary and 12’-18’ while riding.
- Everyone (including non-participating parents) is required to wear cloth face coverings when outside of their vehicle. Students/coaches may remove face coverings while engaged in biking or other high-intensity aerobic activities.
- No sharing of tools or equipment (including bikes, clothing, helmets, water bottle). Coaches can help with repairs to a rider’s bike but should use their own tools and maintain the 6’ distancing from the rider.
- No sharing of food or water (unless medically necessary).
- No socializing before and after the ride. This includes all physical contact, like high-fives or fist-bumps.
- No spitting or snot rockets at all. Yes, even if you are away from the group and aiming toward the ground.
- Anyone not participating (parents, siblings, etc.) must remain in their vehicles or away from the team activity.

About the guidance (from May 29, 2020)

The "[MHSAA/NFHS Guidance for Re-Opening School Sports](#)" is based primarily on direction provided by the MHSAA and National Federation of State High School Associations' (NFHS) Sports Medicine Advisory Committees, in addition to reopening plans provided by the Michigan and federal governments and recommendations from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Concepts from the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee also were consulted.

The MHSAA/NFHS plan recommends a three-step process to returning to full athletic participation, and for each step outlines actions to be taken in five major areas: pre-workout/contest screening of athletes and coaches for sickness, limitations of the number of participants who may be involved in a gathering, proper cleaning for facilities, the use of equipment during activity and best practices for keeping participants safely hydrated. The plan also places sports into categories based on risk for transmitting the virus (low/moderate/high), with adjusted return-to-activity steps based on that level of risk. This plan was presented as 2 updates, "WHEN" and "HOW".

The "WHEN" update (from May 29, 2020)

The state's current "Safer-at-Home" order runs through Friday, June 12. There can be no official MiSCA/team activities until the current stay-at-home order expires or is lifted by Governor Whitmer. When the stay-at-home order expires or is lifted (or other government action takes place in the meantime), the return-to-activity recommendations may be implemented at the team-level.

At the present time, individual outdoor recreational activities, like cycling (as announced in Executive Order 2020-96) are allowed. If this type of individual conditioning activity takes place with more than one person present, it must be in groups of fewer than 10 people with social distancing followed and is not considered an official team activity. A coach could remotely provide a conditioning workout plan to a student to complete on his or her own, but a coach cannot be onsite directing or supervising any activity until the current order expires. Voluntary, virtual (not in-person or onsite) communication and instruction from coaches to any number of students is permitted under MHSAA rules in all sports during the summer. Many coaches are conducting virtual team meetings and creating team challenges; this type of communication can continue with unlimited numbers of students through the summer.

As state government continues to announce changes, dates and plans for re-opening parts of our state, we will continue to communicate with you as these actions impact youth-sports. We will continue to monitor guidance from MHSAA and provide further updates to our community on important dates and timelines during these fluid, changing times.

The "HOW" update

The MHSAA/NFHS plan recommends a three-step process to returning to full athletic participation, and each step outlines actions to be taken in five major areas: pre-workout/contest screening of athletes and coaches for sickness, limitations on the number of participants who may be involved in a gathering, proper cleaning of facilities, the use of equipment during activity, and best practices for keeping participants safely hydrated. The plan also places sports into categories based on risk for transmitting the virus (low/moderate/high), with adjusted return-to-activity steps based on that level of risk. This is an initial roadmap for teams to use once able to return to activity. Know that teams will be allowed to move from step to step based on the size of groups allowed locally by government and health department officials. Step 1, which begins with a limit of 10 people is summarized later, and teams will possibly move to the next steps as those limits are increased.

Note, the "Safer-at-Home" order was lifted on June 1, 2020; however, we are still planning to start programming on June 13, 2020 to give coaches, teams, and schools some time to prepare. Many teams will choose to not start practices until July.

Hygienic considerations

- *Illness reporting:* Create notification process for all event athletes, coaches, event staff, media, spectators and vendors if the organizers/medical personnel learn of suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 at the event.
- *Considerations for Officials, Coaches, Other Personnel:* Vulnerable individuals should not participate in any practices, conditioning activities, contests or events during Steps 1 and 2. Masks may be worn, social distancing enforced and “hygiene basics” adhered to in all situations.
- *Hygiene Basics:* Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer, especially after touching frequently used items or surfaces. Avoid touching your face. Sneeze or cough into a tissue, or the inside of your elbow. Do not spit at all – air, ground, equipment, hands, sunflower seeds, etc. Disinfect frequently used items and surfaces as much as possible. Strongly consider the use of face coverings while in public, and particularly when using mass transit.
- *People Who Feel Sick Should Stay Home:* Do not go to work or school. Contact and follow the advice of your medical provider.
- *Other Considerations:* Availability of hand sanitizer at contests and practices. Participants, coaches and officials should wash and sanitize their hands frequently. Equipment should be wiped down frequently. There should be no pre/post-ride handshakes/high-fives/fist bumps.

Step 2: Conduct of conditioning and practice sessions

- *Pre-Workout Screening:* All coaches/students should be screened (temperature check and questionnaire) for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to a workout. Vulnerable individuals (as defined by the CDC) should not oversee or participate in any workouts.
- *Limitations on Gatherings:* Gathering sizes may be regulated as determined by Government and Health Departments officials. Riding groups should be conducted in “pods” of students/coaches with the same small group always riding together. There must always be a minimum distance of 6 feet between each individual. Cloth face coverings should be worn when not engaged in vigorous activity.
- *Facilities Cleaning:* Individuals should wash their hands prior to attending team activities. Hand sanitizer will be made available.
- *Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment:* There should be no shared athletic equipment (towels, clothing, shoes, or sports specific equipment) between students/coaches.
- *Hydration/Food:* All students/coaches shall bring their own water bottle. Hydration stations (water cows, water trough, water fountains, etc.) should not be utilized. Food should not be shared.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

Is MiSCA associated with the MHSAA?

No, MiSCA not affiliated with the MHSAA; however, many of our scholastic or school-based teams and clubs follow MHSAA guidance at the direction of their school's athletic director.

Why did MiSCA follow guidance from the MHSAA?

While MiSCA is not affiliated with the MHSAA, we felt it was important to seek direction from state and national authorities. Like MiSCA, the MHSAA serves affiliated programs throughout the state; therefore, their guidelines encompass the variety of local restrictions. Ultimately, both organizations have the same goal in mind, to return student-athletes to sport as soon as it is safe to do so.

What is the difference between a group of coaches and kids riding together and an official team activity?

The short answer, insurance. MiSCA-certified coaches have always done rides outside of those organized for the team, like riding with their own children or meeting up with other families – those rides have never been official activities. No teams/clubs are currently authorized to hold team activities typically covered under MiSCA's insurance.

Is it guaranteed that we can start official team activities on June 13th?

Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that MiSCA will start on June 13th. While the "Safer-at-Home" order has been rescinded, it is possible that a new order could have us sidelined. We will continue to monitor the direction from MHSAA. We understand this uncertainty is frustrating; however, we must follow national, state, and local guidance to ensure the safety of our families.

How do I maintain my level 2 coach certification if my in-person first-aid/CPR certificate expired?

We understand there have been no in-person courses offered lately; therefore, 100% online certifications will be accepted for the 2020-2021 MiSCA season. Additionally, coaches may begin participating as a level 2 coach once completing all level 1 requirements and the online components of the ride guide training and quiz.

Will there be races this fall?

The races may look a bit different, but all signs say they should be possible. Coaches and parents should prepare themselves for the likelihood of events being canceled or rescheduled with little notice. While we try to assess safety issues as early as possible, this health crisis is unpredictable. Please be vigilant of announcements from MiSCA and team leadership.

What is your refund policy?

All annual fees are nonrefundable. This includes our annual team, coach, and rider registration fees. Normally, race registrations are nonrefundable; however, a 50% refund will be available by request if a race is canceled and not rescheduled due to Coronavirus. Additionally, we may offer virtual races or other ways to stay connected and active. We would love to offer full refunds on all fees, but there are many expenses associated with running the nonprofit that we are required to pay regardless of Coronavirus.