

Belle Vernon Area School District

Athletic Department

Participation Waiver for Communicable Diseases Including COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented all Athletic Departments with countless challenges. The COVID-19 virus is a highly contagious illness that primarily attacks the upper respiratory system. The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages. Research from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), among others, has found that while children do get infected by COVID-19, relatively few children with COVID-19 are hospitalized. However, some severe outcomes have been reported in children, and a child with a mild or even asymptomatic case of COVID-19 can spread the infection to others who may be far more vulnerable. While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests there are many steps schools can take to reduce the risks to students, coaches, and their families.

The Belle Vernon Area School District will take the necessary precautions and recommendations from the federal, state, and local governments, CDC, Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH), as well as the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS), and Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) to safeguard the participants and staff of our athletic programs. The Belle Vernon Area School District realizes knowledge regarding COVID-19 is constantly changing, as new information and treatments become available. The recommendations below will be adjusted as needed as new information becomes available in order to decrease the risk of exposure for our staff, students, and spectators.

The following is mandatory for **all phases** for Middle School and High School Athletics during the COVID-19 pandemic:

1. Athletes, Coaches, and Staff will undergo a COVID-19 health screening (temperature) prior to any practice, event, or team meeting. The type of screening will be dependent upon the available resources and the Phase level. The purpose is to check for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
 - If the temperature is 100.4 F, or if any of the question have a positive response, that individual should be removed from the group and their parent or guardian notified of the documented concern for illness/fever.
2. Promote healthy hygiene practices to limit the spread of COVID-19
 - Hand wash (20 seconds with warm water and soap) and employees wearing a cloth face covering as feasible.
 - Students should wear a face covering (masks or face shields) when feasible. (Face coverings will not be required for athletes while practicing or competing.)
 - Face coverings should be used by coaches and staff when coming in close contact, less than 6 feet distance, of a student athlete. Every coach should have a face covering on hand. Face coverings will not be used for athletes while practicing or competing.
 - Hand Sanitizer will be available for team use as resources allow.
3. Intensify cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation in all facilities daily by maintenance. Coaches, players, and staff should disinfect all equipment after each use.
4. Encourage social distancing through increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups, if feasible.
5. Educate Athletes, Coaches, and Staff on health and safety protocols
6. Require anyone who is sick to stay home. If temp is 100.4 F, or above, they go home.

7. If a student or employee gets sick, they will immediately isolated and sent home. It is required that the student or employee seeks medical attention, and they must provide a clearance from a MD to return to their sport.

- 8. Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures
- 9. Athletes and Coaches MUST provide their own filled water bottle for hydration. Water bottles must not be shared. Every athlete will be given a water bottle from the trainers to keep that will be color coded and number based off their specific sport. Water bottles must be taken home and cleaned daily.
- 10. PPE (gloves, masks, eye protection) will be used as needed and situations warrant, or determined by local/state governments.
- 11. Every student athlete and coach must sign a waiver to participate.
- 12. No teams are permitted to travel until further notice.
- 13. Identify Staff and students who may be at a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 due to underlying medical conditions such as:
 - Age 65 or older
 - Lung disease, moderate-severe asthma
 - Serious heart conditions
 - May be immunocompromised
 - Obesity
 - Diabetes
 - Kidney or liver disease
- 14. There will be a mandatory 14-day self-quarantine if any player or coach tests positive for COVID. The 14-day self-quarantine will be applicable for the entire team and coaching staff.

I understand that participating in athletic programs, events, and activities may include a possible exposure to a communicable disease including but not limited to MRSA, Influenza, and COVID-19. While recommendations and personal discipline may reduce the risk, the risk of serious illness and death does exist. I knowingly and freely assume all such risks, both known and unknown, even if arising from the negligence of others, and assume full responsibility for my participation. By signing this document, I hereby release, covenant not to sue, discharge, and hold harmless the Belle Vernon Area School District, its employees, agents, and representatives, of and from the claims, including all liabilities, actions, damages, costs, or expenses of any kind arising out of or relating to COVID-19 or any other illness or injury. I willingly agree to comply with the stated recommendations put forth by the Belle Vernon Area School District to limit the exposure and spread of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases.

Print Student’s Name: _____

Sport: _____

Student’s Grade: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Student Athlete: _____ Date: _____

*A full copy of the Belle Vernon Area School District’s Resocialization of Sports Procedures can be found on the district website.

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