

Berlin Youth Soccer
Association
2021
RETURN-TO-PLAY PLAN



Return-To-Play Plan Overview

Our top priority in creating a return-to-play plan is enabling players, families, and coaches to get back on the field in a safe and healthy environment that promotes good habits. With this in mind, we have created a comprehensive plan that includes a step-by-step process which will allow us to phase in a “new normal” for youth soccer. In creating this plan, we have consulted with numerous state, health and youth soccer sources to create what we feel is a comprehensive and executable plan. We want our BYSA players, families, coaches, and volunteers to feel confident in returning to play. Anyone who is not ready to return to the fields should wait until they do feel ready, without any penalty or repercussions. Below is an overview of our plan; the pages that follow will outline each point in greater detail.

The information provided in this document is based on the most current information available. Specifics such as dates given in the Return-to-Play plan are based on guidelines presented by our states’ Governor, local municipalities, and soccer governing bodies. This is a fluid situation; and thus, changes made at the state, local or soccer governing body level may cause this plan to be altered or adjusted.

STAGES of RETURN-to-PLAY (RTP)

We have divided this process into five phases. Each is shown with a projected target date. These dates were created with the best information available to us and may change as conditions change.

- **Phase 0** – No trainings or matches (team or individual) will be sanctioned by CJSA/Berlin Youth Soccer Association. All interaction will be virtual.
- **Phase 1** – Teams will be able to train in limited conditions. Social distancing practices will be employed. There will be no contact allowed, and training times and frequencies will be limited (60 minutes, 2 sessions per week).
- **Phase 2** – Teams will operate under social distancing conditions. Contact will be allowed in game situations. Trainings will be allowed to expand to 75-minute sessions, and competitive matches will be allowed.

- **Phase 3 (Current Phase)** – This will look more like pre-COVID conditions with general health guidelines being applied.
- **Phase 4** – TBD.

BYSA Health Measures Being Undertaken

When we return to play, various new health and safety measures, some temporary and some permanent, will be employed to protect players, coaches and families. These are meant to minimize the risk of spreading COVID-19.

- Assign a club COVID-19 Safety Officer who will communicate policies organization-wide to volunteers, coaches, managers, parents, and players. Regular updates and reminders will be provided.
- Assign each team a coordinator to oversee compliance at the team level (can be a team parent who must register as an Adult with CJSA).
- Train and educate all volunteers/staff on return to activities protocols.
- Develop a plan to communicate with the local health department in the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 within a team.
- If a team member or coach contracts COVID-19, all training sessions will be canceled for that team and any additional team associated with that coach for 10 days.
- Be prepared to shut down and stop operations. Develop plans for temporary closure of facilities to properly disinfect and ensure other adult leaders are not infected.
- Timing: A minimum of 30 minutes in between the time one team concludes and the other arrives. Players must leave immediately after their session. Players should not arrive at their field earlier than 5 minutes prior to their scheduled arrival time.

- Team warm-up time prior to a session must be built into their scheduled session. Warm-ups will not be permitted adjacent to the assigned field prior to the scheduled start time for a team.
- Parents and Players should not congregate in parking lots, at drop off zones, facility entrances/exits before or after a training session.
- Provide adequate space at the field to allow for proper physical/social distancing (6') and groups of 10 (20').
- All parents, spectators, and players should have their own chair. Chairs should be placed to allow for proper physical and social distancing (6').
- All waste should be placed by the respective parent, player, coach, and spectator in the trash receptacle. Nothing should be picked up by anybody other than the originator of the waste.
- Players are required to have their own water, sanitary products (hand sanitizer, facial tissues, PPE (optional for play), ball, GK Gloves (if necessary), and pinnies.

RETURN-TO-PLAY STAGE

Phase 3

- Teams will train in 60–90-minute sessions.
- Teams will train and/or play 2-3 times per week. There will be 15 minutes between training sessions.
- Teams train with social distancing standards enforced.
- Parents and spectators will be required to maintain social distancing. PLAYER TRAINING GUIDELINES will be enforced.
- GENERAL HEALTH GUIDELINES will be enforced.

BYSA TRAINING GUIDELINES

Coaches' Responsibility

- Ensure the health and safety of all athletes.
- Player "bench areas" must be arranged in order to accommodate social distancing practices.
- Player activities should be arranged to maintain social distancing as much as possible in accordance with the stage mandates.
- Upon arrival, inquire how athletes are feeling, send them home if you believe they are acting or look ill.
- No handshakes, fist or elbow bumps, or any other physical contact.
- Coach is to be the only one to handle cones, discs, goals etc.
- Practice and encourage proper hygiene, washing hands frequently with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds at a time.
- Ensure all athletes have their individual equipment. (Ball, water bottle, GK Gloves etc.)
- Ensure player's personal belongings (bags, coats, sweatshirts) remain in their personal space and are kept physically distanced from the belongings of others. Do not allow sharing of personal items.
- Ask players to bring pinnies to eliminate the need of shared scrimmage vests.
- Do not allow shared team snacks. Participants and spectators should only drink from their own containers.
- Wear a face covering, when not actively coaching; abide by the physical/social distance requirements from players and parents.
- Ensure athletes leave immediately after practice. No recreational play, or loitering is allowed
- STAY POSITIVE – Players and parents will be looking to you to remain calm and supportive during this transition time.

Parents' Responsibility

- Ensure your child's health.
- Parents should monitor the temperature of their children. Players with temperatures higher than 100.1 will not be allowed to train.
- Parents cannot send players to practice if they are showing any sign of illness.
- Anyone in your household that you have had close contact with (within six feet for approximately 10 minutes) should self-quarantine for 10 days, even if you have not been tested for COVID-19.
- Notify the club immediately if your child has become sick.
- Adhere to physical/social distance requirements posted by the organization. These are based on state and local requirements. When at training, wear a face covering if you are outside of your car.
- Ensure that your child has a water bottle, equipment (ball / GK Gloves if necessary), and pinnies. Make sure your child's name is written on all belongings.
- Ensure your child's personal equipment, cleats, balls, shin guards etc. are cleaned and sanitized before and after every training.
- Ensure your child's clothing is washed after every session.
- Do not assist the coach with equipment before or after a training session.
- No carpooling with other members of the team.
- Be sure your child has necessary sanitizer with them at every session.

Players Responsibility

- Have temperature taken daily.
- Practice and encourage proper hygiene, washing hands frequently with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds at a time.
- Practice social distancing, place bags and equipment at least 6 feet apart.
- Players should be responsible for their own pinnies (training vest).
- Players are strongly recommended to wear a mask before and after training.
- Players may train in a mask. This is an optional measure. Please consult your doctor if your child has asthma or other chronic breathing ailments, prior to exercising with a mask.
- Players should have their own ball, and players should not handle any other soccer ball except for their own, at any time.
- Players should have their own water bottle. Players are prohibited from sharing a water bottle.
- Players must have their own hand sanitizer at each session. Players should sanitize their hands before and after training and during any breaks.
- No group celebrations, high-5s, hugs, handshakes, fist-bumps, etc.
- Personal gear will need to be clearly marked to identify the player that owns the gear, in order to prevent misidentification and misuse of items.
- Wash and sanitize your equipment before and after each training.

GENERAL HEALTH GUIDELINES

- Players must have hand sanitizer in their bags at all times. They should apply before and after every session and if possible, during any breaks.
- Players must have their own pinnies (training vest) and wash after each use.
- Players must have their own ball that is clearly labeled with their name.
- Players must employ social distancing on the sidelines and during training as much as possible.
- Players will not be permitted to shake hands, high five, etc.
- Players will not be allowed to share equipment, training gear or water.
- Players should have their own water at every training and match, in a bottle that is clearly labeled with their name. Water stations will not be provided.
- Spitting will not be permitted.
- Coaches will discourage player congregation and gatherings as much as possible. No close in-team huddles, no lines in training, etc. will be performed.

PROTOCOLS FOR REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION FOR COVID-19 EXPOSURE

- Volunteers, including coaches, are required to report to the COVID-19 Safety Officer if they test positive for COVID-19, are suspected of being positive for COVID-19, or have been directly exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- Any player who has tested positive for COVID-19, is suspected of being positive for COVID-19 or who has been directly exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 is required to report this information to the club's COVID-19 Safety Officer and head coach.
- If a case of COVID-19 is reported, all volunteers and players who came into contact with that person will be notified. Due to privacy issues and HIPPA laws, the identity of that person will remain anonymous.
- Once notified that an individual who has tested positive with COVID-19 has been in close proximity (within 6 feet) with any volunteer or player, those volunteers and players must adhere to the following protocol.
 - Notify their Primary Care Physician.
 - Volunteers and players should begin in-home isolation for a 10-day period.
 - Volunteers and players may discontinue in-home isolation if they undergo testing and the test result is negative.
- Before a volunteer or player who has tested positive for COVID-19 can return to training or games, the following conditions must be met:
 - A minimum of seven (7) days must pass since the initial onset of symptoms.
 - A minimum of 72 hours must pass without symptoms, and without the aid of fever-reducing medications.
 - The staff member or player must attain a negative COVID-19 test result.

PROTOCOLS FOR PARENTS AND SPECTATORS

- When dropping players off, parents should practice social distancing protocols. Any player who is showing signs of illness or fever will be sent home. Players with a temperature higher than 100.1 should not attend practice/games.
- Parents and spectators are allowed to attend practices and matches but must adhere to social distancing protocols. This extends to not only the field but also in the parking lot and other park facilities.
- All parents and spectators attending practices and matches during these PHASES must maintain a MINIMUM distance of 6 feet off the field's touchline at all times.
- Parents and spectators who repeatedly disregard social distancing standards and/or field spacing guidelines will be required to leave the field and either remain in their car or leave the premises.

Reverting to Earlier Phases

Regardless of which phase we are in, be prepared to step back and revert to an earlier phase if any of the following occur. BYSA will follow local public health official guidelines at all times.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Does my player need to wear a mask during training?

Players are not required to wear masks during training. While masks may limit the transmission of airborne particles, they may also hamper the flow of oxygen that is needed for a player working in a strenuous, athletic environment. Players must wear masks before and after training. Coaches will be required to wear masks. Please consult your doctor if your child has asthma or other chronic breathing ailments, prior to exercising with a mask.

Why are players required to carry their own pinnies (training vests)?

Each player will be issued their own training vest and must keep it and wash it after each session. This will eliminate the need for players to share vests and for parents to wash potentially contaminated vests as well. Players should not share balls, water bottles, equipment, or clothing either.

What sideline practices are being observed to keep social distancing standards?

Player sideline will be organized by each coach, with players' bags a minimum of 6 feet apart. While some close contact is inevitable during the game of soccer, our goal is to minimize the frequency and duration of close contact. Teams will not engage in close-in huddles, post-game handshaking or high-fives, and coaches will be instructed to organize sessions to minimize player congregations – no lines, etc.

My player feels fine but is running a slight fever. Should he/she attend training?

Any player with a fever of 100.1 or greater is not allowed to attend training. This is a zero- tolerance policy. Players showing signs of a fever should be checked for other symptoms and monitored. A fever combined with other symptoms and/or a persistent fever should be referred to your primary physician. Fever reducing medication SHOULD NOT be used to allow a player to attend training.

My player has been self-quarantining with another player this whole time. Why can't they be closer than 6 feet during your activities?

While we understand many precautions were taken by you at home, in a group setting, there are protocols that need to be in effect so that everyone is reminded that social distancing is imperative to help mitigate exposure. When a few players act independent of team rules regarding safety, then that's considered a violation of what we are trying to achieve which is the health and well-being of everyone in attendance.