

Washington Youth Soccer Return to Play Guidelines: Phase 2



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WASHINGTON YOUTH SOCCER RETURN TO PLAY PHASE 2

Based on the phase-in guidelines from Governor Jay Inslee's office that were outlined in the full Washington Youth Soccer Return to Play document, we have developed a set of protocols for Phase 2 that mirror those that apply to the entire state. As with our original Return to Play guidelines, the following are best practices that are intended to offer guidance to the Washington Youth Soccer community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Adherence to these considerations and recommendations does not ensure immunity from exposure. Washington Youth Soccer makes no representations and assumes no responsibility for individual activity or participation decisions by Associations, Clubs, Coaches, Parents, or Players.

Washington Youth Soccer recognizes the importance of phasing in small group training with attention to player and coach safety that is consistent with health guidelines. Use of fields should account for the size of the space so multiple small groups of 5 persons or less can be spaced sufficiently apart (see diagrams below). Some potential benefits to returning to small group soccer training during Phase 2 include:

- Foster mental and physical wellbeing for kids/athletes
- Begin a progression of reconditioning and physical training to prevent musculoskeletal injuries and prepare for larger team trainings and competitions during Phase 3
- Establish safe and healthy hygiene and social distancing habits both on and getting to/from fields
- Test that small group training is safe, without an increase in team or community infections, before advancing to Phase 3

PHASE 2 RECOMMENDED PROTOCOLS

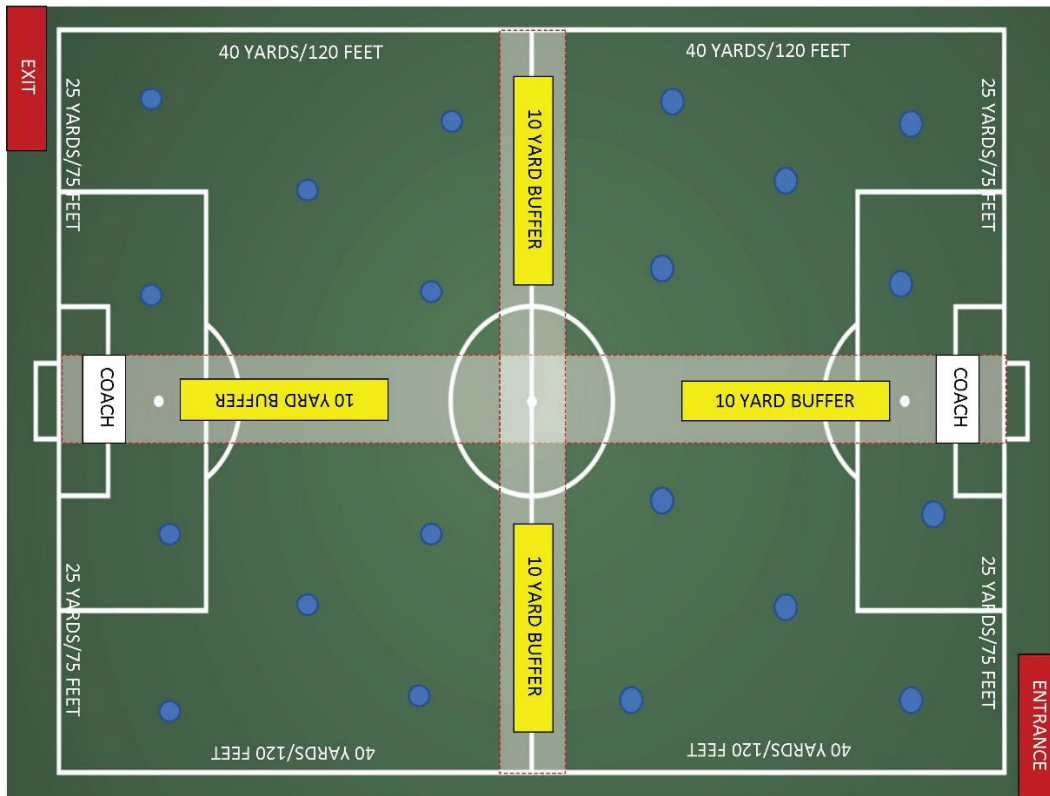
- **Small Groups** - Training sessions may be allowed with fewer than 5 players at a time. Coaches will be centralized to the applicable small groups of players and maintain social distancing.
- **Social Distancing, No Contact** – No physical contact during all activities and drills. All players and coaches will observe 6 feet of distance from each other. No lines, no huddles, no handshakes, no high-fives and no fist bumps.
- **Masks** – Coaches wear cloth masks before, during, and after the training session. Players should wear a cloth mask before and after the training session when transitioning to or from the training field. Use of facial coverings during exercise and drills is optional for players.
- **No Symptoms** - Players and coaches with any of the following signs or symptoms should NOT attend practice: fever (>100.0), cough, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, chills, body/muscle aches, diarrhea, sore throat, new headache, or loss of taste or smell. Players or coaches with a family/household member sick at home with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, or waiting for a test result, should also NOT attend practice.
- **Hygiene and Hand Sanitizer** - All players should have hand sanitizer in their soccer bag. Players should use hand sanitizer before practice and avoid touching their face during practice. Players should immediately use hand

sanitizer after practice before putting on their cloth mask. Coaches should observe players using hand sanitizer before entering and when leaving the training field.

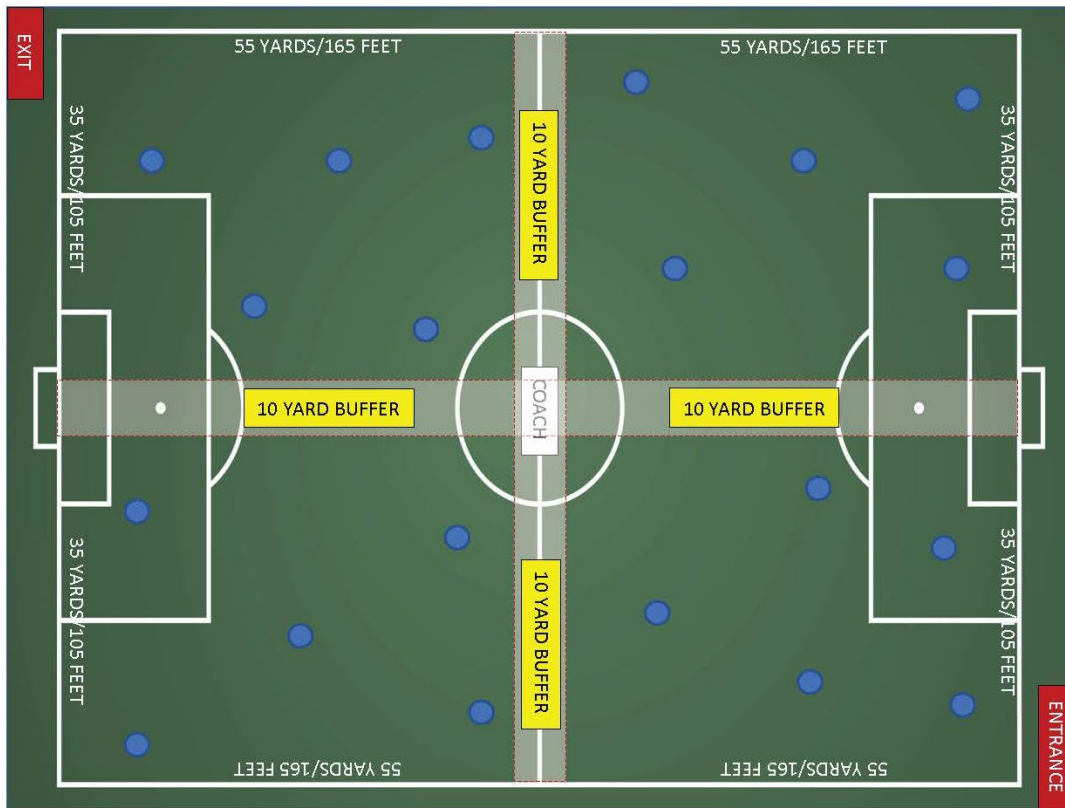
- **No Shared Equipment** - Players should bring their own water bottle and ball to training. There should be no sharing of water bottles, and players should not touch or share training equipment such as cones or gear bags. Coaches will handle all equipment, and pinnies should not be used. If a ball from another group enters your field space, kick the ball back to its original space and do not use hands.
- **10 Minutes between Sessions** - Where possible, teams should approach (enter and exit) the training field from separate directions and avoid touching gates, fences, field structures. Players should remain away from the training field until the 10-minute break after the prior session has concluded. Carpooling should be avoided or limited if possible.
- **No Gathering, No Delay** - Players should avoid social gatherings before and after training to maintain appropriate social distancing of 6 feet and to facilitate rapid turnaround between sessions. Soccer bags should be placed 6 feet apart.
- **Parents Sideline Distance** - Parents should not gather and socialize on the sideline and are encouraged to remain in their cars if staying at the practice site. If parents come to the sideline for pick-up or drop-off, they should wear a facial covering and maintain the appropriate distance from the training group and other parents. Follow your club's pick-up and drop-off procedure.

FIELD DIAGRAMS

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

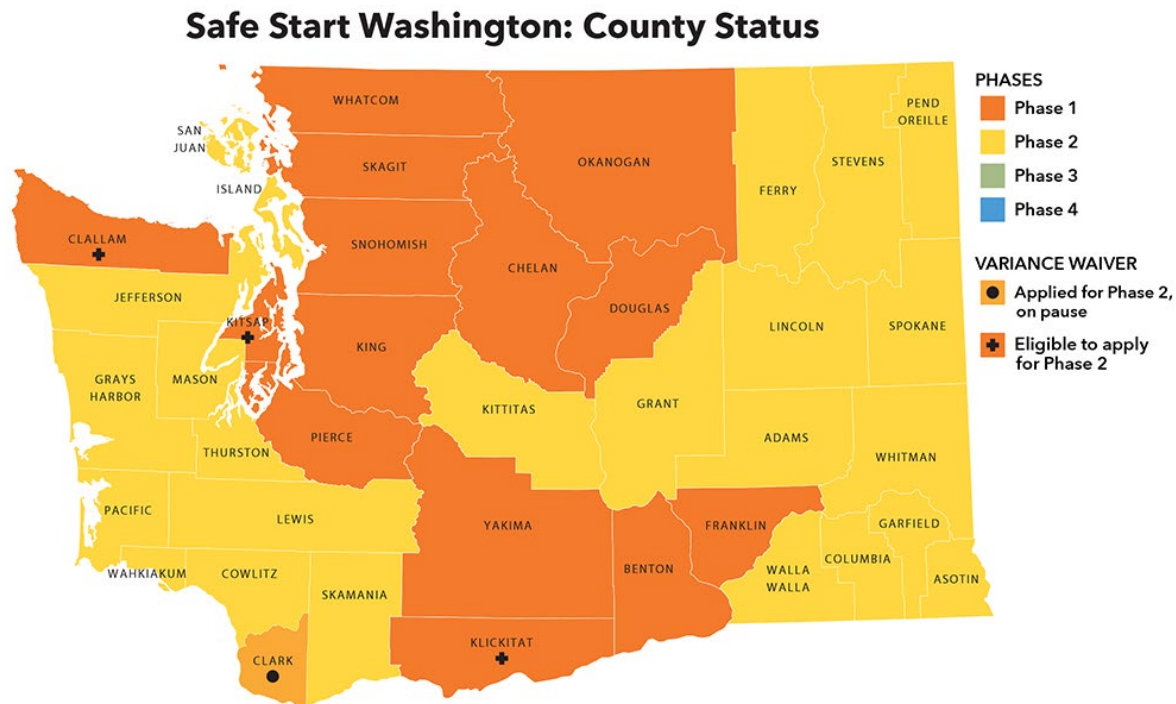


11v11 Field: 5 players per 17,325 sq. feet or 1925 sq. yards or 0.4 acres



In our initial Return to Play document, we laid out guidelines for Washington Youth Soccer members based on the Governor's Phased Approach Plan for reopening businesses and modifying physical distancing measures. After receiving clarification, we have updates on how the plan currently affects youth sports.

Importantly, the State is in Phase 1 allowing only some outdoor recreation (hunting, fishing, golf, boating, hiking), while several Counties have been approved to enter Phase 2. (<https://coronavirus.wa.gov/what-you-need-know/covid-19-county-variance-application-process>).



Under Phase 2 of the Governor's Plan concerning Recreation guidelines, "*all outdoor recreation involving fewer than five (5) people outside your household (camping, beaches, etc.)*" is allowed. However, Phase 2 Recreation guidelines do not include youth sports or other outdoor group sports and recreation activities. Outdoor group sports and recreation activities for 5-50 participants will be allowed under Phase 3 of the Phased Approach Plan.

The *ability* to phase-in certain sports and recreation activities is administered in accordance with the Phased Approach Plan. Whether County or local authorities permit *access* to their sports and recreation facilities, is a local decision and often requires additional components like liability insurance. Because outdoor group sports and recreation activities for 5-50 participants under the Phased Approach Plan are prohibited until Phase 3, it is unlikely that County or local authorities would permit access to their sports and recreation facilities at this time.

However, Washington Youth Soccer is working diligently with the Governor's office and County and local authorities to accelerate our return to play. We are collaborating regularly with authorities to bring youth soccer back as quickly as possible, and we will continue to provide updates as soon as we have them.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this document.

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WASHINGTON YOUTH SOCCER - 100,000 youth players across the state. Affiliated with US Youth Soccer and US Soccer.

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SEATTLE UNITED SOCCER CLUB – A competitive youth soccer program within Washington Youth Soccer that inspires players to develop to their highest potential, and experience the rewards of pursuing excellence, teamwork, and sportsmanship.