

## Return to Competition: General Considerations for Wrestling



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)  
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)  
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

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**SPORT:** Wrestling

**STAFF LIAISON:** Mark Byers

The NFHS has determined that wrestling is a higher risk sport that involves close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, and high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants.

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### **General Considerations:**

- Have hand sanitizer and wipes available at the table.
- Wash stations or sanitizer at mat side.
- No one touches the score sheet except the scorer.
- If writing implements are used, they should be sanitized and not shared with anyone.
- Disinfect the mats prior to and following competition.
- Events should be structured to ensure compliance with current indoor occupancy limits and mitigation requirements by the PA Department of Health and Governor's Office.
- Athletes and Coaches wear masks off the mat.
- Schools should communicate in advance regarding any screening policies and occupancy levels to be expected from the host site.
- Schools may increase the bench area to assist in social distancing.
- For tournament settings, prohibit all wrestlers from warming up simultaneously for competition. Provide for separate warm-up areas off of the competition mats for use and sanitize regularly.
- Provide for separate warm-up mats off of the competition mat for teams involved in dual competition.
- Schools are recommended to only wrestle those schools within their close geographic area.

### **Considerations for Coaches:**

- Wear masks on and off mat.
- Eliminate handshakes with opposing teams post-match.
- Each team should be expected to provide their own leg bands for competition.
- **Limit the size of their traveling party to include essential personnel, staff, and only those with the ability to wrestle.**
- Consider practicing with wrestlers in pods to limit close contacts across the entire team.

### **Considerations for Wrestlers:**

- Daily screening prior to practice and competition should be conducted pursuant to each school's adopted health and safety plan.
- Shower after each round and put on a fresh uniform, when able and facilities permit.
- Wear masks off the mat when not competing.
- Eliminate handshakes with opposing coaches post-match.
- The use of a fist bump in lieu of a pre and post-match handshake is recommended.

### **Considerations for Referees:**

- Bring personal hand sanitizer. Wash hands frequently
- Don't share equipment.
- Long-sleeved undershirts are permissible. If worn, they are required to be black in color.
- Change whistle several times during the day.
- Follow social distancing guidelines. Consider six feet minimum distance when talking to others (players, coaches, other officials).
- Consider use of a commercially manufactured whistle cover.
- Do not shake hands and follow pre- and post-game ceremony guidelines established by state associations.
- Officials may recognize the winner of the match by pointing to the wrestler and raising the appropriate color wrist band. Contact with wrestlers is discouraged.
- Officials may wear masks or face shields.
- Mask or face shields are required when not actively officiating the match.
- Officials may wear disposable gloves. If worn, they must change after each match.

### **Pre-Match Meeting:**

- Limit attendees to the referee and one captain from each team.

### **Considerations for Parents:**

(A family's role in maintaining safety guidelines for themselves and others):

- Make sure your athlete and immediate household members are free from illness before participating in practice and competition (if there is doubt stay home),
- Provide personal items for your child and clearly label them.
- Disinfect your student's personal equipment after each match or practice which would include wiping down headgear, washing clothing and bags used to transport gear.