

Our governing body, South Texas Youth Soccer, has announced Return to Play guidance designed to assist the entire South Texas community in following the appropriate steps to mitigate the risk for all participants in the ongoing COVID-19 environment.

We've reviewed these and adopted the practices that best fit the Angelina Youth Soccer Association. These rules allow us to have a path forward in the current COVID-19 situation. Without them, we'd have to forfeit the season, as was the case last Spring. We look forward to providing the opportunity for the players and coaches to participate once again, and appreciate everyone's patience and support as we navigate these challenging times.

**We'd like to remind everyone that even with best practices, there is still a risk with all group activities of contracting or spreading COVID-19.**

**Directly from the South Texas Youth Soccer Association - South Texas Return to Play Phases:**

### **WE ARE CURRENTLY IN PHASE 3**

Overview - The following sources are used to determine the current South Texas Return to Play Phase and any changes. State of Texas Executive Orders / Mandates U.S. Soccer guidance U.S. Youth Soccer guidance Senior Staff Technical Advice CDC Information Using this information, the South Texas Youth Soccer Executive Committee decides on what is believed to be the best decision for our membership - keeping in mind that all members' health and safety is the priority. Due to variances in local (county, city) policies and mandates, these are not part of the decision criteria, but would supersede any South Texas phase guidance for specific locations. It is expected that all associations, clubs, and teams will adhere to South Texas' phase status and follow all mandates issued by local, state, or federal government.

**Phase 0** - No in-person training or competitions. Virtual training options are permitted.

**Phase 1** - Practices and training sessions can include individual skill training and physical conditioning with a ball. - One player per ball - Distances between players. Practices and training sessions may also include small group training - Passing patterns - No contact - Avoid lines (use markers)

**Phase 2** - Practices and training sessions can include activities and exercises that introduce defensive pressure and contact. Phase 2 includes the use of small-sided games (e.g., 4v4 or 6v6). Intrasquad scrimmages are acceptable within the cohort (team).

**Phase 3** - In this phase there are no restrictions on training activities for players. Teams can return to scrimmaging within their club and playing games outside their club following recommended guidelines and COVID-19 mitigation recommendations. Local and same-day travel only for scrimmages or games with teams outside the same club is recommended.

**Phase 4** - No restrictions on training, games, or travel for players, coaches, or spectators. COVID-19 recommendations no longer apply.

Key considerations to phases:

A phased Return to Play model is not necessarily intended to be followed linearly, as it may become necessary to return to a prior phase, based on the changing status of COVID-19 exposure in the South Texas community. It is possible, if not likely, that there will be local and regional outbreaks and surges of COVID-19 for some time to come. Many programs in our state may need to remain in, or return to, phases 0-2 for prolonged periods. However, following this progressive model will help your players, coaches, and community Return to Play as safely as possible. Members should be prepared to take a step back and revert to an earlier phase if needed to respond to increased risk, cluster outbreaks, updates to public health guidelines, or to maintain COVID-19 prevention and response protocols safely.

**ANYSY Changes:**

ANYSY has appointed a Safety Coordinator to set the example and encourage compliance with new safety measures.

Everyone who attends practices or games is to be sure they're free of COVID-19 symptoms before they leave the home.

Everyone over the age of 24 months old who attends practices or games is to wear a mask.

Players who are actively playing and referees who are actively refereeing will **not** be required to wear masks. Players and referees need to have masks to wear when on the sidelines and when entering or exiting the fields.

ANYSY has established a reporting and communication plan for cases.

Parents and coaches are required to provide their own gear for players. Items such as pinnies and goalie gloves should not be shared among players.

Expect some adjustments to be made to the fields to spread out usage as much as possible.

To avoid possible virus spread by touch, this season there will be no throw-ins. The ball will only be kicked into play.

Close contact is discouraged, including hugging, handshakes and high-5s. In place of the traditional sportsmanship exchange of high-5s at the end of each game, an applause line will be instituted instead.

Signage will be placed at the fields with guidance on these changes and requirements.

**ANYSY encourages the following Best Practices:**

In addition to masks, 6 ft distancing of spectators who are not from the same household is encouraged when possible.

Players need to bring their own water, snacks and sunscreen. Sharing is discouraged.

Players, spectators, coaches and referees are strongly encouraged to stay home if they feel ill. It is much better for the team to have someone absent than to risk potential spread of the virus.

Avoid touching your face

Frequently wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer

Cover mouth and nose (with arm or elbow, not hands) when coughing or sneezing and wash hands afterward.

Wear a clean or new face mask or covering when outside

Understand how to wear a face mask properly

Outdoor spaces pose less risk than indoor spaces

Individuals with a higher risk (including players, coaches, officials, and spectators) should assess their risk level and limit exposure.

#### **Adherence to CDC recommendations:**

Stay at home if you are feeling sick or experiencing the following COVID-19 symptoms. People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus.

People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever of 100.4 degrees F/37.9 degrees C
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

This list does not include all possible symptoms. Other less common symptoms have been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.