

**Belchertown Soccer Club**  
A Nonprofit Youth Soccer Organization

Return to practice and competitive play 2020  
COVID-19 Safety Guidelines

Introduction

The Safety Guidelines listed here will be followed before, during, and after all Belchertown Soccer Club practices and games. The guidelines follow those that have been set forth by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, and the Massachusetts Youth Soccer Association (MYSA).

Under the current guidelines Youth Soccer is listed as a Moderate Risk Sport and may operate in Phase 3 at Levels 1, 2 and 3. Level 3 allows for inter-team competitions.

This document will be modified in conjunction with any changes to the Commonwealth's and/or MYSA's guidelines. Any changes that revoke the level 3 status will result in immediate suspension of scheduled games.

Personnel

- A Belchertown Soccer Club board member will be around during all practices and games for questions and concerns and to make sure rules and guidelines are followed.
- All Training will be held in Belchertown.
- Rosters will be made available when finalized
- U7-U8
  - Max roster size 10 per team
  - Max 2 coaches per team
  - 5v5 - All games at Roots in Westfield
  - Volunteer referee
- U9-U10
  - Max roster size 16 per team
  - Max 2 coaches per team
  - 7v7 for games
  - 1 referee
- U11-U12
  - Max roster size 16 per team
  - Max 2 coaches per team
  - 9v9 for games
  - 1 referee
- U13-U14
  - Max roster size 20 per team
  - Max 2 coaches per team
  - 11v11 for games
  - 3 referees

## Training/Practice

- Players will wear masks while arriving and leaving practice
- Coaches will wear masks while coaching
- Players will check in with their coach. The coach will have the player wash their hands with hand sanitizer.
- Parents will monitor and report to the coach any symptoms or possible exposure to anyone sick outside of practice.
- Coaches will keep attendance and note any illness or contacts.
- These records will be turned into the club Risk Manager who will keep track of all teams.
- Any player that shows signs of or has COVID-19 or has had contact with anyone that has or shows symptoms of COVID-19 will not be allowed at practice/play until they have showed no signs or symptoms for 14 days or have proof of a negative test result
- Players are required to wear facial coverings while engaged in an activity wherever possible, taking frequent breaks when they are out of proximity to other players using caution to avoid touching the front or inside of the face covering by using the ties or ear loops to remove and replace
- All equipment (balls, cones, poles, ladders, goals, etc) will be washed before, during (if reusing the same equipment), and after practices.
- Each player will have a designated area (cone) to put their bags, equipment, and water bottles practicing social distancing - 6 feet part.
- Players will bring their own recently cleaned ball.
- Large areas will be broken up into proper sized fields with a minimum of 20 feet between fields.
- Individual drills will be conducted 6 feet apart when possible.
- Parents/spectators must stay at least 20 feet away from training sessions while wearing a mask and maintaining proper social distancing amongst themselves.
- Spectators will be limited to 1 per player.
- Maximum Spectators
  - 11v11
    - Practice 20
  - 9v9
    - Practice 16
  - 7v7
    - Practice 16
  - 5v5
    - Practice 10
- Players will leave practice in a timely manner after practice.
- Coaches will pick up equipment and clean field.
- There will be a minimum of 20 minutes scheduled between practices on the same field. Players should not arrive more than 10 minutes early for practice.
- All attempts will be made to not have other organizations from Belchertown using the same fields during or near our practice times to be able to control cleaning protocols
- Per full field (11v11 approximately 120 yards by 60 yards) there will be a limit of 100 people on or around the field. At most there will be 2 teams on the field at once.
- Players will not be allowed to gather at the field, before or after the training session.

## Games

- All team personnel must wear a mask while entering or exiting the field.
- Corner flags, goals, and game ball will be cleaned before the game, at half time, and after the game.
- Players will check in with a coach. The coach will have the player wash their hands with hand sanitizer.
- Parents will monitor and report to the coach any symptoms or possible exposure to anyone sick.
- Coaches will keep attendance and note any illness or contacts.
- These records will be turned into the club Risk Manager who will keep track of all teams.
- Any player that shows signs of or has COVID-19 or has had contact with anyone that has or shows symptoms of COVID-19 will not be allowed at practice/play until they have showed no signs or symptoms for 14 days or have proof of a negative test result
- Games will be scheduled with a minimum of 20 minutes between games.
- Home and visiting teams will be instructed to show up no sooner than 10 minutes before kickoff.
- No team benches will be used. Players may bring their own chairs and keep them socially distant.
- Home and visiting teams will have designated areas on the fields with their spectators across the field from them.
- Players are required to wear facial coverings while engaged in an activity wherever possible, taking frequent breaks when they are out of proximity to other players using caution to avoid touching the front or inside of the face covering by using the ties or ear loops to remove and replace.
- Goalkeepers are not required to wear a mask while playing goal
- Coaches and players not currently in game will wear masks at all times and follow proper social distancing whenever possible.
- Rule modifications per MYSA guidance (See attached)
- Maximum allowance of 50 people per game excluding players, coaches, and refs
- Spectators will be limited to 1 per player.
- Maximum Spectators
  - 11v11
    - Game 36
  - 9v9
    - Game 32
  - 7v7
    - Game 32
- Spectators must wear a mask and follow proper social distancing guidelines while watching the games.
- Referees will use an electronic whistle or similar device
- Injured/non playing players will not be allowed on the team sideline.
- No group celebrations after goals (ex High fives)
- No shaking hands/high five lines will be held at the end of game
- Teams are to clean their own sideline after the game and exit in a timely matter
- Warm ups will not be allowed adjacent to the game field while another game is being played.

## General

- No concessions will be sold at games
- No bathrooms/porta potties will be available at any location
- No “huddles” at any time
- No sharing of equipment (shirts, pinnies, GK gloves)
- No sharing of water bottles
- No spitting of any kind
- If an injury occurs one coach from the players own team may go to the injured player the other coaches will instruct the players to stay away and socially distant
- If the player needs assistance off the field the players own coaches will assist. Once on the sideline masks are required.
- If the injured player needs to leave the coaches will assist the player to the off of the field where the player’s parent can get them.
- All positive test results or close contact of player or staff will be reported immediately to the Board of Health via email [jmetcalf@belchertown.org](mailto:jmetcalf@belchertown.org) and/or phone (413)-687-1387
- Hand Sanitizer and cleaning supplies will be provided to coaches by BSC.



**MASSACHUSETTS  
YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION**



### **MODIFICATIONS TO COMPLY WITH EEA GUIDANCE**

Mass Youth Soccer is hereby immediately implementing modifications for all sanctioned soccer games (scrimmages, friendlies, league). Suspended activities to meet necessary modification include:

- **Heading - All intentional heading of a soccer ball is suspended for all ages. Any intentional heading will be treated as a violation of IFAB Law 12, Playing in a Dangerous Manner, Indirect Free Kick restart**
- **Shoulder to Shoulder contact is suspended and or any other intentional physical contact is to be considered a violation of Law 12, Playing in a Dangerous Manner, Indirect Free Kick restart or other applicable foul or misconduct based on the referee's decision.**
- **Slide Tackling whenever within 6 feet of another player is suspended and is to be considered a violation of Law 12, Playing in a Dangerous Manner, Indirect Free Kick restart or other applicable foul or misconduct based on the referee's decision.**
- **Throw-Ins as defined by IFAB Law 15 are suspended and to be replaced by a Kick-in. The modifications for the procedure for a Kick-in is:**
  - **The player taking the Kick-in must be facing the field of play and need not keep both feet on the ground during the Kick-in.**
  - **Must put part of the ball on the touchline or on the ground outside the touchline**
  - **The ball may not be kicked directly into the opponent's penalty area.**
  - **All opponents must stand at least 10 yards (8 yards for small sided) from the point on the touchline where the Kick-in is to be taken.**
  - **IFAB Law 15 Offences and Sanctions for Throw-ins apply to Kick-ins.**
- **Corner Kicks as defined by IFAB Law 17 are suspended and to be replaced by a Corner Kick-in. The modifications for the procedure for a Corner Kick-in are:**
  - **The ball may not be kicked directly into the opponent's penalty area.**
  - **Opponents must remain at least 10 yds (8 yards for small sided) from the corner arc until the ball is in play**
  - **IFAB Law 17 Offences and Sanctions for Corner Kicks apply to Corner Kick-ins.**
- **For all restarts, all players must comply with the 6 -foot distancing from both teammates and opponents. Opponents must remain at 10 yds (8 yards for small sided) from the ball prior to the kick. The use of a traditional defensive Wall is currently suspended.**
- **The use of a Dropped Ball as a restart is suspended. To replace this procedure, an Indirect Free Kick will be awarded to the team whom the referee deemed to be in possession when the referee stops play.**