

UPDATED NJSIAA STATEMENT -- Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) – March 16, 2020



UPDATED NJSIAA STATEMENT -- Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) – March 16, 2020

Status of Spring Sports

On March 16, 2020, the governor issued Executive Order 104, which requires that “all public, private, and parochial ... secondary schools, including charter and renaissance schools, shall be closed to students beginning on Wednesday, March 18, 2020 and shall remain closed as long as this Order remains in effect.”

There will be no interscholastic athletic competition until schools reopen. When they do, the NJSIAA will make every effort to take advantage of whatever part of the spring sports season remains, including holding championships. The NJSIAA remains committed to providing student-athletes as many opportunities as possible.

The following FAQs address questions about the spring sports season. Events are changing rapidly, and we will amend and supplement these FAQs as we continue to assess guidance from the federal government, the CDC, the governor, the NJ Department of Health, and the NJ Department of Education.

- 1. Can a school, school district, or coach continue with practices, scrimmages, or games during the statewide shutdown of all schools?**
 - No. During the governor’s statewide shutdown of all schools, no NJSIAA member school, school district, or coach may conduct practices, scrimmages, or games (which includes all official interscholastic contests). This is a mandatory, no-contact period for all coaches and student-athletes.
- 2. Can practices, scrimmages, or games for spring sports be organized or directed by parents or student-athletes?**
 - No. During the governor’s statewide shutdown of all schools, practices, scrimmages, or games may not be held. This includes any event organized by a parent, captain, or other student-athlete.

3. Can school facilities be used for practices, scrimmages, or games?

- No. During the governor's statewide shutdown of all schools, school facilities may not be utilized in any manner for practices, scrimmages, or games.

4. If, and when, spring sports practices and games are reinstated, what health and safety guidelines will be in place before a student-athlete can participate?

- NJSIAA currently requires six days of practice and one day of rest before competing in interscholastic competition in a strenuous sport (Program Regulations, Section 7). This rule will be modified to allow a scrimmage to count as one day of practice. Therefore, student-athletes will be permitted to participate in strenuous sport games after they have completed six days of practice or scrimmage and one day of rest. Boys and girls golf are considered non-strenuous sports and are therefore not subject to this rule.
- The NJSIAA Heat Participation Policy must be followed in all spring sports; it can be found on the NJSIAA website under Health & Safety: <https://www.njsiaa.org/sports-medicine>. (The Heat Acclimatization Guidelines are different and apply to fall sports only.)

5. If, and when, spring sports practices and games are reinstated, what eligibility guidelines will be in place before a student-athlete can participate?

- Any student-athlete who is subject to the 30-day Transfer Rule will be eligible to participate 30 days after what would have been the start of the regular season – March 25 for boys and girls lacrosse and April 1 for all other spring sports. Participation is day 31 from each of these dates regardless of when the first regular season game is actually played.
- The transfer cut-off dates for post-season participation in all spring sports will remain as set forth in the NJSIAA Specific Sports Regulations.

6. What is the status of NJSIAA State Championships for spring sports?

- A decision on NJSIAA State Championships for spring sports has not been made. Our goal is to provide championship opportunities, if schools are reopened. If we cannot accommodate the traditional post-season tournament structure, we will look at other options and other opportunities. The health, safety, and welfare of student-athletes will always be our top priority. As we continue to assess all available options, please note that the dates, locations, and qualification requirements currently included in each sport's tournament regulations will be subject to change.