

Oak Park Youth Baseball/Softball (OPYBS) Covid-19 Related Safety Guidelines for Phase 4 (revised 7/23/2020)

Anyone (player, coach, volunteer, umpire, spectator, etc.) at higher risk for contracting Covid because of an existing medical condition, age, etc., should consider consulting a medical professional before attending any practice or game.

PLEASE NOTE: *individuals who do not comply with these OPYBS guidelines will be asked to comply. Repeated offenses may result in action by the OPYBS board of directors, up to and including the possibility of removal from future practices/games.*

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR EVERYONE:

- Players, coaches, officials and spectators should self-isolate from games and practices if they or anyone in their family have symptoms, or if anyone in their family tests positive for the coronavirus
 - The latest CDC guidelines provide that people with cough and/or shortness of breath or difficulty breathing may have COVID-19. In addition, people with the following symptoms may have COVID-19: fever (100.4°F/38°C or higher); chills; repeated shaking with chills; muscle pain; headache; sore throat; new loss of taste or smell.
 - Players should confirm with a medical professional before returning to play.
 - For those with a pre-existing condition that may cause these symptoms (allergies, asthma, etc) please check with your doctor.
- If any player, coach, umpire or volunteer, or anyone who has close contact with these individuals tests positive for Covid-19, they must immediately inform the OPYBS Board of Directors at safety@opybs.org so that proper precautions can be taken for other teams/players/officials.
- For outdoor workouts/practices, there must be no more than 50 total players/coaches on or around the playing field.
- If two practices/games are on adjacent fields, they should be separated by at least 30’.
- It is recommended that athletes travel to the venue alone or with a member of their immediate household.
- It is recommended that masks be worn if traveling in another family’s vehicle.
- Team snacks are not allowed at games or practices. Parents should prepare individual snacks if the team plans to meet together post-game, and any meetings must be appropriately socially distanced.
- If there is a game or practice prior to your event, families and spectators are encouraged to stay in their vehicles or at recommended social distances until the start of their game play to prevent overcrowding of spectator spaces and walkways.
- Cook County provides travel guidance for anyone traveling from a state with a "high incidence" of Covid infections. It is suggested (not required) that anyone traveling from these states self-quarantines for 14 days. Please consider this guidance if you are traveling during the season. For more information: <https://cookcountypublichealth.org/communicable-diseases/covid-19/covid-19-travel-guidance/>

GUIDELINES FOR PLAYERS:

(Parents: please review these guidelines with your player before they attend practice or a game, and remind/assist them as needed in complying with these guidelines)

- Players must wear masks when not actively on the playing field (on the bench, before/after game, between innings, etc.)
 - Players may wear masks on the field at any time (not required)
- Players **MUST** bring their own water bottle – no sharing of water, and no water coolers allowed with multiple users
- No seeds or chewing gum are allowed at games or practices. If a player eats at a game or practice, it should be outside of the dugout and away from teammates. Any remaining garbage, containers, etc. must be disposed of immediately after eating.
- No touch rule – players should refrain from high fives, handshake lines, and other unnecessary physical contact with teammates, opposing players, coaches, umpires, and fans.
 - Players should come up with other creative ways to celebrate good plays, greet each other, and say “good game” at the end of a game (bowing, air high-fives, etc) from a social distance.
- Players should socially distance their gear outside of the dugout (6’ distance)
- Players should do their best to avoid touching their faces during a game/practice
- Players should avoid contact when on the bench, and socially distance (in stands, etc) when possible if not on the field
- Whenever possible, equipment and personal items should have proper separation and should not be shared. If equipment must be shared, proper sanitation should be administered between users.
- Players should bring their own cooling supplies (ice, cold towels, etc) for hot days.
- Players should leave the car ready to play (e.g. wearing shoes/cleats, all necessary equipment ready) to avoid having unnecessary personal belonging at the field.
- Players and coaches should use hand sanitizer each time they return to the field. Players and coaches are responsible for providing their own hand sanitizer.
 - The CDC recommends sanitizer with greater than 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol for best results (80% is better if available)

GUIDELINES FOR PLAYERS SPECIFIC TO T-BALL LEAGUES:

- There will be no “bench” area for T-Ball games. Players are required to have a parent/guardian at the game, and any equipment not needed on the field should remain with that parent/guardian. Parents/guardians should be seated in a socially distanced manner (6’+ between families) in the area behind the dugout and around the bleachers.
- When not on the field, all players should return to the guardian. On-deck and in the hole batters should go to the coach in the dugout area ready to hit when their turn to bat is upcoming.
- Children of coaches' who are playing will sit on the bench (6 feet apart) unless the coach has another guardian present, and should wear a mask.
- All players should still abide by mask wearing and cleanliness rules when not on the field.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for the Covid-related safety of players during games and practices.

GUIDELINES FOR COACHES AND OFFICIALS:

- Coaches should always have a mask on their person, and are required to wear a mask at all times when unable to maintain a social distance of 6’+ from players or each other
- Coaches should assign spots for players to place equipment in or outside of the dugout to maintain a 6’ social distance between each players’ equipment.
- Each team will bring out a baseball/softball from their own bench when they are in the field, and have another ready on the bench when a ball is out of play.
- Team meetings should occur virtually (phone/zoom/etc) or from a social distance. Team huddles are not allowed unless done at a social distance (6’ between people).
- Coaches should limit non-social distanced (6’) interactions as much as possible
- Whenever possible, equipment and personal items should have proper separation and should not be shared. If equipment must be shared, proper disinfecting and sanitation should be administered between uses.
- Players and coaches should avoid contact when on the bench, and socially distance (in stands, etc) when possible if not on the field
- Coaches are responsible for taking attendance of their players at each practice/game.
- For younger leagues (T-Ball, Pinto, 9U): one or more parents should be designated by the head coach as “safety assistants” to assist coaches in making sure that younger players adhere to the rules above, especially in regards to social distancing, hand sanitizing and not sharing water/equipment. These parents should always have a mask on and hand sanitize before interacting with players. This is a recommended option for older leagues.

GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS, GUARDIANS AND SPECTATORS:

- Parents/guardians/spectators may not enter player areas (field, bench/equipment area, etc)
- All participants and spectators should adhere to 6' social distancing when at a game (except with family members), with the exception of team members on the field/dugout.
- When bleachers are used by the players, spectators may not also be on the bleachers. This should be considered a part of the dugout area.
- Spectators should limit their contact with the ball, and whenever possible players/coaches should retrieve foul balls, dropped balls, etc.
- Face coverings are strongly recommended for spectators.
- Parents and players should be sure that each player has plenty of water available for games or tournaments (Eagles/Falcons).
- Families are encouraged to limit the number of spectators per family during the pandemic.

GUIDELINES FOR UMPIRES:

- Umpires should always have a mask on their person, and if physically able are required to wear a mask at all times when unable to maintain a social distance of 6'+ from players or each other
- For scrimmages/games run by OPYBS, umpire will stand behind the pitcher and maintain 6'+ social distancing as much as possible.
- Umpires should limit their contact with the ball, and whenever possible players/coaches should retrieve foul balls, dropped balls, etc. If possible, plate meetings should be eliminated.
- For pre-game or plate meeting:
 - Social distancing of six feet between individuals should be implemented
 - Plate meetings should only consist of one manager or coach from each team, and game umpires.
 - No players should ever be a part of plate meetings.

GUIDELINES FOR USE OF THE OPYBS INDOOR FACILITY IN PHASE 4:

- There should be no more than 6 players at a time in the OPYBS facility, and all players/parents/coaches should maintain appropriate social distancing.
- There should be at least 2 coaches or 1 coach with a parent in the facility when players are present.
- If multiple groups are scheduled, there should be a 10 minute gap between groups, and the next group should wait outside of the facility (with parent/coaches, players should not be left alone)
- Players/coaches should wash or sanitize hands before and after using the facility
- Players should bring their own equipment, and not use communal equipment
- If OPBYS equipment is used (pitching machine, etc.) any surfaces should be sanitized before/after use.
- When possible, doors should be open for ventilation
- Everyone MUST wear masks from the front door of the facility until they get to the OPYBS area.