



## U.S. Soccer PLAY ON Indoor Considerations for COVID-19

Indoor considerations need to be taken seriously when determining whether indoor sports should be played. Adjustments to regular activity may need to be implemented in order to mitigate risk of COVID exposure of players, coaches and spectators.

Prior to moving to indoor training and matches all considerations to remain outdoors should remain as a first option. This can be done safely with colder temperatures while following safety guidelines. Please go to <http://www.recognizetorecover.org/environmental#cold-weather-guidelines> for more information

These guidelines and best practices are intended for use **WHEN AND IF** your local authorities have deemed it safe to return to the practice field. U.S. Soccer is in no way endorsing holding practices or games in violation of any federal, state or local mandates.

Some of the information included in the Play On - Indoor Considerations document were taken from U.S. Soccer Play On Campaign - a comprehensive set of documents with suggested practices for returning to the soccer field.

A risk table can be found in **Appendix A**. It will help users determine risk factors such as size of indoor facility, air exchange levels and mask wearing.

### Type of Facility

- Larger indoor facilities should be considered for indoor activity to allow for acceptable social and physical distancing.
- The below table shows risk level based on size of the facility:

	Playing/Practice Surface Area	Example
Highest Risk	<5,000 Sq. Ft.	Elementary school/church gym
Higher Risk	5,000-10,000 Sq. Ft.	Junior high school gym with 2 basketball courts
Higher to Moderate Risk	10,000-15,000 Sq. Ft.	High school gym with 3 basketball courts
Moderate Risk	15,000-20,000 Sq. Ft.	Small sized field in a medium sized sports facility
Moderate to Lower Risk	20,000-30,000 Sq. Ft.	Half field or less in a large indoor sports complex
Lower Risk	30,000-60,000 Sq. Ft.	Half to full field in a large indoor sports facility
Lowest Risk	>60,000 Sq. Ft.	More than full field in large indoor sports complexes

### Air Exchange Considerations

- Higher frequency air exchanges pose less of a risk to indoor soccer events.
- Newer facilities are preferred as they most likely have improved ventilation systems and fans.
  1. Increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, for example by opening windows and doors. Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk (e.g., risk of falling, triggering asthma symptoms, temperature, etc.) to players or others using the facility.



2. Below is a chart of the various Air Exchange Rates (ACH) typically seen. Please be advised to inquire with your facility about the ACH to best determine the overall risk.

	Air Exchange Rate (Air Changes per Hour or ACH)*
Highest Risk	<2
Higher Risk	2-3
Higher to Moderate Risk	4-5
Moderate Risk	6-7
Moderate to Lower Risk	8-9
Lower Risk	10-11
Lowest Risk	12+

### Rules of Play - Recommendations

- **For Training:** To further mitigate risk during training, the following modifications could be considered
  1. Duration of training shortened. For example, total of 60-minute training session decreased to 45 minutes
  2. Decrease number of players on the field for increased physical space.
  3. No Throw-ins
- **For Match Play:** The laws of the game remain the same

### Masks

- All participants (coaches, players, referees, instructors, administrators) are recommended to wear new or clean masks at all times when not physically active during activities.
- Provided all screening, hygiene and social distancing measures are followed, masks are not mandatory during exertional moments of training (i.e. when physically active). Masks may obscure vision, increase respiratory challenges, or increase other injury risk while being physically active.
- Masks should cover the nose and mouth, be breathable, consist of cotton or wick-type material and follow CDC guidelines.
- PPE should be new or clean for each training session; and disposed or thoroughly cleaned after each training session.
- The below table shows risk level based on size of the facility with or without mask use across all individuals
- The table below shows risk level for mask use across all individuals. All parties should refer to local and state regulations in regard to mask wearing. Refer to Appendix A for a risk assessment comparing mask wearing, size of facility and air exchange frequency.



	Player Mask*	Coach Mask	Spectator Mask
Highest Risk	No	No	No
Higher Risk	No	No	Not Present
Higher to Moderate Risk	No	Yes	Yes
Moderate Risk	No	Yes	Not Present
Moderate to Lower Risk	Yes	No	Yes or Not Present
Lower Risk	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lowest Risk	Yes	Yes	Not Present

*\*This is masked at all times, including during play.*

### Hygiene

- Facility should have hand washing or hand sanitizing stations at all entrances and throughout the facility.
- Facility should have regular cleaning intervals of all high touch areas around the facility (doors, bathrooms, etc.)
- The use of a hydrostatic sprayer could be considered as well.
- Avoid spitting or blowing nose at any time

### Hydration

Resources: Parents, guardians, coaches and players are encouraged to refer to U.S. Soccer's 'Recognize to Recover Nutrition and Hydration Guidelines' for a full overview on nutritional and hydration practices. Learn more about the 3 R's of recovery from play (rehydrate, refuel and rebuild) at <http://www.recognizetorecover.org/nutrition-hydration#supplements>

- Participants should clearly label their hydration bottles with their own name.
- Participants should not touch anyone else's bottle.
- It is recommended that each participant brings at least two drinks to training (e.g. 2 x 32oz bottles). This will limit the need to refill bottles onsite. If a refill station is necessary, ensure there is a handwashing station nearby or provide hand sanitizer to use before refilling.
- Single-use bottles should be discarded of immediately on site.
- Water breaks should adhere to social distancing guidelines. When there is a water break during training, participants should make their way to their personal station, and drink only from their own bottle.
- Fluid breaks are recommended at least once every 15-20 minutes but will largely be dictated by the duration/intensity of the session.
  1. Ensure appropriate hydration policies are in place with athletes having unlimited access to water, especially in warmer indoor facilities.
  2. Avoid water fountains that are general public use

### Arrivals/Departures

- Arrival To Training
  1. Assign areas to enter the indoor facility and area where to exit the indoor facility to prevent crossover.
  2. Work with your groups to stagger individual arrival times so that participants can enter the facility individually.
    - Designate an "entrance" time for each coach and player.



- Participants should wait in their cars until their specific time to enter the facility or field.
- It is recommended that only the participant departs the vehicle.
- Accompanying parents and guardians are encouraged to stay in their cars or depart the area while their child is training. Note that anytime there is one coach alone with players, there should be one adult (designated parent or club staff) observing from a distance, in accordance with the Safe Soccer Framework and the U.S. Center for SafeSport policies and guidance.
- 3. Participants should use hand sanitizer to sanitize hands upon arrival.
- 4. To mitigate risk, the indoor facility could limit or disallow spectators or parents from entering the facility.
  
- **Checking-in At Training**
  1. Clubs and staff should maintain an accurate attendance list for training periods.
  2. Create a Check-In Station adhering to social distancing guidelines.
    - Upon arrival, the participant should be asked a series of health screening questions, aligned with the CDC's ["Coronavirus Self-Checker"](#), to affirm medical clearance to participate. The coach, a staff member or a designated "Safety Officer" can be responsible for asking health screening questions.
    - The station should provide appropriate products to sanitize hands.
    - Only one participant should check-in at the station at a time. Should a line form at the check-in station, those waiting should ensure they practice safe social distancing of 6ft.
  3. As an alternative to Check-In Stations, consider creating a virtual check-in process, including a daily symptoms questionnaire. Ensure the Club follows privacy laws if gathering and storing this information electronically.
  
- **Preparation Areas**
  1. Plan ahead to prepare the field to best accommodate social distancing.
  2. Consider creating "personal prep stations."
    - Set up a line of cones 6-feet apart in an area to the side of the training field.
    - Arrange one cone per participant (player, coach, referee, administrators, etc.)
    - When a participant arrives, designate a cone as their "personal prep station" for the duration of the training session. The individual should place their bags, water bottles, towels, etc. at this cone.



## Appendix A

### Indoor Facility Risk Assessment

Table 1. Air Exchange Risk Stratification for Transmission of Respiratory Virus

	Air Exchange Rate (Air Changes per Hour or ACH)*	Risk Score
Highest Risk	<2	7
Higher Risk	2-3	6
Higher to Moderate Risk	4-5	5
Moderate Risk	6-7	4
Moderate to Lower Risk	8-9	3
Lower Risk	10-11	2
Lowest Risk	12+	1

*\*Recommendation: If ACH of facility cannot be obtained from the facility/is unknown, assume Highest Risk (Risk Score of 7).*

Table 2. Mask Risk Stratification for Transmission of Respiratory Virus

	Player Mask*	Coach Mask	Spectator Mask	Risk Score
Highest Risk	No	No	No	7
Higher Risk	No	No	Not Present	6
Higher to Moderate Risk	No	Yes	Yes	5
Moderate Risk	No	Yes	Not Present	4
Moderate to Lower Risk	Yes	No	Yes or Not Present	3
Lower Risk	Yes	Yes	Yes	2
Lowest Risk	Yes	Yes	Not Present	1

*\*This is masked at all times, including during play.*



Table 3. Facility Size Risk Stratification for Transmission of Respiratory Virus

	Field Surface Area	Risk Score	Example
Highest Risk	<5,000 Sq. Ft.	7	Elementary school/church gym
Higher Risk	5-10,000 Sq. Ft.	6	Junior high school gym with 2 basketball courts
Higher to Moderate Risk	10-15,000 Sq. Ft.	5	High school gym with 3 basketball courts
Moderate Risk	15-20,000 Sq. Ft.	4	Small sized field in a medium sized sports facility
Moderate to Lower Risk	20-30,000 Sq. Ft.	3	Half field or less in a large indoor sports complex
Lower Risk	30-60,000 Sq. Ft.	2	Half to full field in a large indoor sports facility
Lowest Risk	>60,000 Sq. Ft.	1	More than full field in large indoor sports complexes

Table 4. Overall Risk Interpretation and Recommendations

Cumulative Risk Score from Tables 1-3*	Overall Risk	Square Foot Soccer Area per Person Recommendation (Practice)**
<6	Very Low	Use outdoor protocols
7-8	Low	Use outdoor protocols
9-10	Moderate-Low	300
11-12	Moderate	600
13-15	Moderate-High	1000
16-18	High	2000/Consider not using
>18	Very High	Use not recommended

\*Simply add the risk score from the 3 tables together to calculate the cumulative risk score.

\*\*This includes anyone in the facility - players, coaches and spectators.

**Example Calculation:**

A situation has a cumulative risk score of 13. This would yield a recommendation of 1000 square feet of playing surface area per person. If a facility had a playing area of 26000 square feet, then only 26 players, coaches and spectators (26,000/1000) should be present at any one time.

However, if one changes the risk score by increasing air exchange or changing masking requirements and gets the cumulative risk score down to 10, then 87 persons (26,000/300) can be present.

Reference: <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/environmental/appendix/air.html>