



VIRGINIA HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VHSL clarifies new statewide measures and impact on VHSL sports and activities

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. – The Virginia High School League (VHSL) clarified the impact of updated statewide measures and recommendations to contain COVID-19 on VHSL sports and activities, specifically, guidelines for wearing facemasks and spectators attending athletic competitions.

During times of substantial COVID-19 activity VDH strongly advises athletes to wear masks at all times during group training, competition, and on the sidelines. There is strong evidence to show that mask use prevents the spread of COVID-19. We also know that participating in sports has both physical and psychological health benefits. Risks from the virus can be decreased if athletes, coaches, officials, and spectators follow public health guidelines.

Additionally, if wearing a mask makes participation in sports difficult, it is advisable not to participate in sports at this time.

“With the support of the Governor’s office and our VHSL Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC), the VHSL is requiring each school to follow the recommendations of the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP),” said VHSL Executive Director, Dr. John W. “Billy” Haun. “There are some sports in which the mask should not be worn, such as cheerleading, gymnastics, wrestling and swim and dive.”

In addition, the VHSL will comply with Executive Order 72 capacity limits:

- a. For sports played indoors, spectators must be limited to 25 persons per field (indoor courts). For sports played outdoors, spectators are limited to two guests per player. The total number of spectators cannot exceed 30 percent of the occupancy load of the certificate of occupancy for the venue.

The current VDH language relative to the wearing of masks may be accessed using the following link:

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/schools-workplaces-community-locations/sports/>

Executive Order 72 link

[https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-72-and-Order-of-Public-Health-Emergency-Nine-Common-Sense-Surge-Restrictions-Certain-Temporary-Restrictions-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-\(COVID-19\).pdf](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-72-and-Order-of-Public-Health-Emergency-Nine-Common-Sense-Surge-Restrictions-Certain-Temporary-Restrictions-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-(COVID-19).pdf)

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