



FAQs about Athletics Return to Play Recommendations for Phase I: Summer Conditioning

Updated 6.4.2020

DISCLAIMER: Please note, this is not a decision regarding the reopening of schools or the use of APS facilities by the community. Community access to APS schools, buildings, and facilities remains restricted until further notice. Parents/caregivers, onlookers, visitors, and anyone else who is not part of the 20-person athletic group will not be allowed on APS campuses. Parents who drop off their children must leave the campus and return to pick up their children after workouts have been completed. Walkers, exercise groups, or outside groups are not allowed on APS campuses at any time.

We are allowing Phase I of summer conditioning for the sports mentioned so our students can participate in what Georgia High School Association (GHSA) has opened up for the summer. These recommendations should not be taken as a final decision regarding whether or not sports will be played in the Fall. As a determination from GHSA has not been made at this time regarding Fall sports, this guidance is subject to change.

Will Atlanta Public Schools allow summer conditioning for athletes?

Per the guidelines published by the Georgia High School Association (GHSA) and to balance the health and preparation of strong athletics for fall sports and the safety of everyone amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Atlanta Public Schools (APS) will allow Phase I summer conditioning for only fall high school GHSA sanctioned sports: cheerleading, boys and girls cross country, football, girls flag football, girls softball, and volleyball on Monday, June 15. The district will at a minimum adhere to guidelines as set forth by GHSA.

Please note that all GHSA sanctioned sport workouts are voluntary, meaning the student-athlete chooses to participate in conditioning on his/her own accord. Middle school sports are NOT part of Phase I.

Which sports are part of the district's Phase I summer conditioning for athletes?

Only FALL High School GHSA sanctioned sports will be allowed to start this initial phase of conditioning. These sports are:

- Cheerleading
- Boys and girls cross country
- Football
- Girls flag football
- Girls softball
- Volleyball

How is APS allowing summer conditioning?

APS is limiting Phase I: Summer Conditioning to groups of 20 persons, including coaches, for all workouts per sport, across all times at each campus/facility. Only FALL High School GHSA sanctioned sports (cheerleading, boys and girls cross country, football, girls flag football, girls softball, and volleyball) will be allowed to start this initial phase of conditioning.

Teams and athletes for all APS high school sports can resume restricted voluntary workouts under their coaches' supervision. The approved workouts are for conditioning only, meaning no balls, bats, or scrimmages. District guidelines impose a limit of 20 athletes and coaches at any workout location at any given time.

The district will limit workouts to 90-minutes a session. Workouts will be scheduled using as many hours of the day as possible to maximize the number of students who can condition while minimizing the number of people on campus at any given time.

What precautions will the district put into place?

The Athletics Department will establish a signing station in which all athletes and coaches must check in and take a temperature check. Those exceeding the threshold of 100 degrees will be sent home immediately. All athletes and coaches must then report directly to their pre-assigned workout locations. Anyone violating guidelines will be dismissed from conditioning sessions.

Workouts must be conducted in "pods" of students with the same groups of students and trainers always working out together. Smaller pods can be utilized for weight training. This ensures a more limited risk of exposure.

There must be a minimum distance of 6 feet between each individual at all times. If this is not possible indoors, then the maximum number of individuals in the room must be decreased until proper social distancing can occur.

Athletes should bring their own water bottles or schools will provide single-use paper cups. No water fountains or water cows allowed.

No student trainers or managers will be allowed to attend or participate during the initial conditioning phase of return to play.

The district will conduct frequent and random monitoring of all activity with high school and athletic department leaders reviewing progress with coaches at the end of every week.

Will students and teams be able to use the locker rooms?

Locker rooms are restricted during Phase 1. Students should report to workouts in proper gear and immediately return home to shower at the end of the workout.

What are the weight room restrictions?

If you wish to use the weight room, it must be wiped down before and after each group of 20 uses it. Weight equipment must be wiped down thoroughly before and after an individual's use of equipment. Any equipment such as weight benches, athletic pads, etc. having holes with exposed foam must be covered.

Participants must maintain social distancing; masks or face coverings are required in the weight rooms.

What are the cleaning procedures during Phase I?

Adequate cleaning schedules must be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable diseases. Before an individual or groups of individuals enter a facility, hard surfaces within that facility should be wiped down and sanitized (chairs, furniture in meeting rooms, locker rooms, weight room equipment, bathrooms, athletic training room tables, etc.).

Individuals should wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds with warm water and soap before touching any surfaces or participating in workouts. Hand sanitizer should be plentiful and available to individuals as they transfer from place to place. Appropriate clothing/shoes must be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment/surfaces. Students must be encouraged to shower and wash their workout clothing immediately upon returning home.

What Personal Protective Equipment is required?

All athletic trainers and staff are required to utilize the following PPE and sanitation supplies during pre-conditioning sessions:

- Masks
- Thermometers
- Hand Sanitizer
- Gloves
- Disinfectant
- Face Shields (for pre-workout screenings only)

How will Sports Physicals be handled?

All athletes will be screened for a fever and COVID symptoms prior to going through with their sports physical. Any athlete presenting with a fever or COVID symptoms will be sent home or referred to a healthcare provider for COVID testing.

If possible, height, weight, BP, and vision will be completed outside to allow for more social distancing. The physician evaluation will be in a private space.

All medical personnel involved with sports physicals will wear a mask, goggles/face shield, and/or gloves.

Physicals will be limited to five athletes per hour to allow space for social distancing and time to clean tables/equipment between each athlete.

What happens if a coach or athlete tests positive for COVID-19?

Anyone testing positive for COVID-19 will not be allowed to continue participation in any form of athletics until cleared by a healthcare professional. In the event someone tests positive, the athletic director of the local school will notify the district's athletic director and Associate Superintendent of High Schools.

Those persons who are diagnosed with COVID-19 should present written information confirming clearance from and by a healthcare professional after testing positive and recovering. After this information is received by the school, student athletes may return to sports activities.