



The Ohio High School Bowling Coaches Association, Inc.  
P.O. Box 750996 Centerville, OH 45475-0776 [OHSB.ORG](http://OHSB.ORG)

24 August, 2020

TO: Bob Goldring, Interim Director, OHSAA  
CC: Roxanne Price, Dr. Deborah Moore, Emily Gates  
FROM: Greg Coulles, Exe. Director, OHSBCA  
SUBJECT: **Safety recommendations for 2020-2021 Ohio High School Bowling**

**THE NEW NORMAL:** Participation by athletes in Ohio High School sports under the jurisdiction of the OHSAA is *a privilege not a right*. Unique and unusual circumstances dictate unique and unusual responses to assure the safety of all athletes, athletic staffs, and spectators. In response to our unique and unusual time, the Board of Directors of The Ohio High School Bowling Coaches Association offer these recommendations for consideration by the OHSAA to suggest the safest possible environment for the low/non-contact sports of boys and girls bowling in the 2020-2021 winter season. These recommendations apply to the playing field environment of high school bowling at all practices and contests. They are based on the current and continuously changing COVID-19 environment and are subject to compliance with guidelines issued by The Ohio Department of Health and other governing bodies. *We believe that these recommendations, if put in place by the OHSAA, would result in boys and girl's high school bowling to proceed as scheduled as a 2020-2021 interscholastic sport.*

## **RECOMMENDATION #1: EVERYONE WEARS A MASK.**

### **DISCUSSION**

The mandatory wearing of facial masks that cover both the nose and mouth worn by all athletes, athletic staffs, and spectators at all contests is workable in bowling. **EXCEPTIONS:** 1. a bowler preparing to deliver a ball while facing the pins may remove or lower the mask but must re-apply the mask when returning to retrieve a ball for an additional shot in a frame and to re-join the team after completing the frame. 2. A bowler with approved medical certification verifying the inability to wear a mask.

## **RECOMMENDATION #2: TAKING SPECTATOR TEMPERATURES.**

### **DISCUSSION**

This recommendation assumes that all schools will have a health assessment policy for contest day protocol that includes taking the temperature of all participating school personnel. If mandated by the OHSAA and/or sponsoring school, the option to take the touchless temperature of contest spectators at the point of entry is workable in bowling. Any spectator with a temperature that exceeds established guidelines would not be allowed in the contest area. The taking of spectator temperatures would require a pre-arranged, cooperative effort between the center and sponsoring school. The State of Ohio, the CDC, and bowling centers do not have a mandate that visitors to a bowling center have their temperature taken prior to entering the building. However, the OHSBCA believes that spectator temperature-taking is a positive recommendation to add a safety layer to a contest.

### **RECOMMENDATION #3: ATHLETES MAY ONLY USE THEIR OWN EQUIPMENT.**

#### **DISCUSSION**

The vast majority of bowlers (probably 95+%) have their own equipment. Equipment includes bowling balls, bags, accessory packs, shoes, towels, and other items used in the sport. To reduce contamination possible by shared use of equipment, shared equipment use should be prohibited. Those athletes that do not have their own equipment would need to obtain personal equipment under this recommendation. Resources and discounts are available for high school bowlers from manufacturers and pro shops. Balls & shoes for one-time personal use are available from the bowling center at either no charge or a small rental fee.

### **RECOMMENDATION #4: PROHIBIT SHARED SNACK RESOURCES.**

#### **DISCUSSION**

At most contests (head-to-head matches, tournaments) parents or teams bring snack trays for their bowlers. These snack trays consist of fruits, veggies, and other snacks for consumption. These shared trays can involve multiple, unwashed hands reaching in and touching these food items. Our Association recommends that shared snack resources be banned from use during contests as a method to reduce the spread of disease. Those who have a verifiable medical condition requiring food consumption (i.e.: a diabetic, others) during a contest would be permitted to bring their own snack not to be shared.

### **RECOMMENDATION #5: ENCOURAGE COACHES TO COMPLETE THE NFHS COVID-19 COURSE.**

#### **DISCUSSION**

The course, *Covid-19 for Coaches and Administrators* is available at no charge at the NFHS Learning Center ([nfhslearn.com/courses](http://nfhslearn.com/courses)). The OHSBCA has linked this course to the front page our website, **OHSB.ORG** and notified members the course is available and recommended. We believe that completion of this course should be strongly encouraged for all bowling head and assistant coaches at both the varsity and JV level.

### **RECOMMENDATION #6: NO PHYSICAL CONTACT**

#### **DISCUSSION**

Athletes would be prohibited from utilizing the not uncommon contact behavior traditionally found in bowling. High-fives, fist bumps, individual and group hugs, etc. would be disallowed and coaches would be responsible to emphasize the best possible social distancing among athletes and teams. Approved hand sanitizer is available for use by bowlers at no charge at participating bowling centers.

## ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Here is a list of additional considerations for the safe conduct of Ohio High School Bowling.

### 1. **Establish a maximum roster size at contests.**

Currently, there is no OHSAA maximum roster size regulation for high school teams at Non-OHSAA contests. Some independent tournaments and conferences may have a team roster maximum but this is not an OHSAA regulation and is not in place statewide. In the absence of a maximum roster size regulation at regular season contests, a team can have an unlimited number of players. Other sports have a maximum number allowed at contests. The OHSBCA asks the OHSAA for a sport regulation setting a maximum team roster size of eight (8) bowlers at all contests. *In the COVID-19 environment, to improve social distancing, a maximum roster size of six (6) bowlers is workable.*

### 2. **Limit spectator attendance.**

Establishing a maximum number of spectators permitted to be in attendance at a contest is workable in bowling. Such a maximum number would be in place for all bowling contests, both matches and tournaments. While the OHSBCA will not recommend a specific spectator limit, such a limit could be tied to the team roster size. Example: 1 or 2 spectators per roster bowler. If the OHSAA was to establish a spectator attendance limit for contests, it would be the responsibility of the sponsoring school, in cooperation with the bowling center, to enforce, at the point of entry, the number of spectators allowed on the concourse to attend the contest. *A limited spectator policy has already been successfully executed by the Junior Tournament Bowlers Association (JTBA), the Midwest USA Tournaments, and the Ohio High School Bowling Program (OHSB) this summer at non-interscholastic bowling contests.*

### 3. **Prohibit lane changes between Qualifying Round games at tournaments.**

It is a common practice to move lanes after each game in a bowling contest, especially in tournaments. In the current environment, prohibiting lane changes after each Qualifying Round game would result in significantly less social contact and movement for bowlers and spectators. Spectators would remain settled in their seat without the need to move to follow their team. Teams would be able to occupy a given space for the entire Qualifying Round. **Exception:** Lane changes would be allowed for teams advancing to a Championship Round at a tournament and Baker games at matches based on bowling center requirements. This is workable in bowling.

## SUMMARY

Wearing masks, taking temperatures, using one's own equipment, snack restrictions, COVID-19 coursework, roster size, limits on spectator attendance, and reduced lane movement are the reality of today's bowling environment. **Athletic Directors and their home bowling center must have a clear understanding and close working relationship to assure that the playing field is a safe place to conduct this sport.** There is no substitute for that close working relationship. *The Ohio High School Bowling Coaches Association believes that with the implementation of recommendations and considerations such as proposed herein that the sports of boys and girls bowling can proceed as scheduled in the safe manner.* Such safety mandates from the OHSAA can assure cooperation and compliance.

Education-based interscholastic athletics requires the opportunity to compete in a regulated and safe environment. We hope that the OHSAA will give their best consideration to our recommendations which are offered to meet this standard and allow our sport to proceed in 2020-2021. ***Our Association understands life in a bowling center, and we ask for our input to be considered.*** We are available for further discussion and offer our full cooperation in your execution of safety standards for our sport.

Best regards,

*Greg Coules*

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1 attachment: Bowling Centers Association of Ohio (BCAO)



## Bowling Centers Association of Ohio

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August 5, 2020

Mr. Robert Goldring  
Interim Director, OHSAA  
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Dear Mr. Goldring,

I am writing on behalf of the Bowling Centers Association of Ohio. Our 165 member bowling centers across Ohio host most High School Bowling teams in the state.

Bowling Centers throughout Ohio were dealt a blow this spring when Governor DeWine ordered that our businesses be closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A special task force of bowling center owners devised a re-opening plan and were instrumental in our small businesses being allowed to reopen on May 26th.

Members have taken the initiative to put new processes in place such as: sanitation of house bowling balls, social distancing markers, dividers at high contact locations and updating their sanitizing schedules. Our parent organization, BPAA, made COVID-19 specific training available to better prepare staff members working in our centers.

BCAO has recently released a Fall Bowling Guideline to our members, giving them options on new ways to provide league bowling to their customer base. Throughout the difficult time that every business has faced over the last few months, our members have been resilient and innovative when making decisions regarding operations. BCAA believes league and organized bowling can continue in our establishments while following social distancing guidelines and other mandates from local health departments and the state of Ohio.

While you won't see the exact same procedures in every center throughout the state, I am very proud of the pro-active and inventive steps taken throughout our state to ensure the safety of staff and guests.

Our association has always been a proud supporter of OHSAA and High School Bowling in Ohio. This difficult time is no different. Our centers look forward to working with the OHSAA, OHSB Coaches Association and participating schools to ensure the plan to get back to High School Bowling is effective and ensures the health and safety of athletes, school staff and spectators.

Sincerely,

Jenny Martin-Clarke  
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