

## **BANKS COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT COVID-19 PROGRAM PROTOCOLS AND BEST PRACTICES**

### **DEPARTMENT MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND PARTICIPANTS**

The health and safety of our participants, parents/guardians, spectators, volunteers, officials, and staff remain our highest priority. Participation may not allow for proper physical distancing and other safety measures currently recommended; therefore, participation in activities may increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission. **Mitigating these risks is a shared responsibility for all involved.** Therefore, Banks County Parks and Recreation Department requests that parents, spectators, volunteers, officials, and staff adhere to the following guidelines to keep everyone safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Stay Home when Appropriate**

- \* Players, parents/guardians, coaches, spectators, and officials should stay home and not attend programs or activities if sick, have fever, tested positive for, or are showing symptoms of COVID-19.
- \* Individuals that have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19 (close contact defined as within 6 feet for a period of 15 minutes or longer) should not attend programs or activities.
- \* Individuals should consult state and/or local guidance on recommendations for returning to activities.
- \* If person develops symptoms during activity, person should be isolated and transported home or to a healthcare facility.
- \* Players, coaches, parents/guardians, and spectators who are at high-risk should seek approval from a medical professional prior to attending any activity.

### **Communicate Potential or Confirmed Exposure**

- \* All players, coaches, and **MUST** self-report to BCPRD if they have symptoms of COVID-19, a positive test for COVID-19, or were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 10 days.
- \* In addition, participants that start to feel ill during an activity/program should inform parent/guardian and/or coach/instructor, isolate from others and go home or to a healthcare facility.

### **Use Cloth Face Coverings**

- \* Face coverings are **STRONGLY** recommended for all not actively participating in the activity/program (players, officials, parents/guardians, and spectators), especially when physical distancing is difficult.
- \* **It is strongly suggested that coaches/instructors wear a face covering.**
- \* Any participant who prefers to wear a cloth face covering during an activity/program is allowed to do so.
- \* Face coverings should cover the **nose and mouth** areas at all times.

### **Maintain Physical Distancing**

- \* Coaches/instructors and parents/guardians should help to maintain social distancing among youth and adults.
- \* Spectators should maintain 6 feet distance between others that are not in their household.
- \* Players/participants should be spaced at least 6 feet apart whenever possible, such as when participating in warm-ups, explaining drills or rules of the game, skill building activities, and simulation drills.
- \* Players are encouraged to wait in their vehicle with their parents/guardians until just before the beginning of a practice, warm-up, or game, instead of forming a group, until program starts.
- \* It is recommended that individuals ride to activities with persons that live in their same household and limit carpooling.
- \* Limit the number of players sitting in confined seating areas, such as on benches or in dugouts, by having players spread out into other areas.
- \* Coaches and players/participants should vacate field/facility immediately at the conclusion of activity to

avoid contact with the next group.

- \* Parents/guardians and spectators are not permitted on the game field/court before, during, or after an activity.
- \* If inclement weather, persons should return to their personal vehicles and not congregate together.

#### **Follow Proper hygiene and Etiquette**

- \* All persons should wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds frequently. Hand washing, or use of hand sanitizer should be used after using the restroom, before and after eating, and before any use of shared equipment.
- \* All persons should cover their coughs and sneezes with a tissue or use the inside of their elbow.
- \* High-fiving, fist/elbow bumps, handshakes, group celebrations, and spitting are not allowed.

#### **Do not share Personal Belongings and Equipment**

- \* Players' personal belongings should remain physically separated from other players' personal items.
- \* Players are encouraged to bring their own equipment whenever able and clean after use.
- \* All personal belongings should be labeled with the owner's name to insure the item is not shared.
- \* All participants should bring their own water bottle labeled with their name. At no time should players share water bottles.
- \* It is recommended that all players bring their own snack; however, if provided to players, they should be pre-packaged and handed out to each player, ensuring no player shares food.
- \* Use of shared objects and equipment should be limited as much as possible.
- \* If scrimmage vests are used, they should not be shared and should be cleaned after each use.
- \* At no time should items such as mouthguards or whistles be shared.

#### **Follow Procedures for When Someone Gets Sick**

- \* Immediately isolate sick person away from others and direct them to be transported home or to a healthcare facility, depending on the severity of their symptoms.
- \* Instruct individuals that had direct contact with the sick person to go home and follow CDC guidance for community related exposure.
- \* Inform persons that they should not return to activities until they have met the CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation.
- \* Close off areas used by a sick person to others and do not use areas until they are cleaned and disinfected.
- \* When possible, wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting areas, otherwise wait as long as possible.
- \* Notify persons potentially exposed to a known COVID-19 diagnosis and advise those who had close contact to follow CDC guidance.
- \* Respect the safety and privacy of the COVID-19 individual by not sharing name or personal details on that individual when notifying others of potential exposure.
- \* Report situation to local health officials.

#### **Coaches/Instructors**

In addition, coaches/instructors are expected to follow the safety protocols below.

- \* **It is strongly suggested that coaches/instructors wear a cloth face covering when coaching/instructing, to help protect the well-being of others and to serve as a role model by following recommended health guidelines.**
- \* Recognize the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and follow safety precautions and guidelines.
- \* Encourage players to wait in their vehicle with parents/guardians until just before the beginning of a practice, warm-up, or game, instead of forming a group, until the program/activity starts.
- \* Maintain 6 feet distance from players and officials at all times.
- \* Space players at least 6 feet apart whenever possible, such as when participating in warm-ups, explaining

drills or the rules of the game, skill building activities, and simulation drills.

- \* Design practice transitions to ensure distance between players is maintained.
- \* Only allow coaches to set up activities and move equipment to limit contact on equipment.
- \* Discourage unnecessary physical contact, such as high-fives, handshakes, fist-bumps, or hugs.
- \* Limit the number of players sitting in confined seating areas, such as dugouts, by allowing players to spread into other areas.
- \* Consider within-team scrimmages instead of scrimmaging other teams, to minimize exposure.
- \* If informed of confirmed COVID-19 case, contact BCPRD and do not share the individual's name with anyone. BCPRD will seek consent from adult participant or parent/guardian of a minor participant before consideration is given to sharing the individual's name.

### **BCPRD COVID-19 Protocols**

The Parks and Recreation Department has implemented several strategies to mitigate COVID-19 risks.

- \* Stagger schedules and increase time between schedules whenever possible to limit contact between persons as much as possible.
- \* Encourage persons to physically distance a minimum of 6 feet from others not in their household.
- \* Promote healthy hygiene practices, such as hand washing before and after activities/programs, encouraging persons to cover coughs/sneezes, and reminding players not to high-five one another.
- \* Educate coaches, officials, and staff of all safety protocols.
- \* Ask players/participants to refrain from sharing equipment, such as gloves, helmets, practice vests, water bottles, etc.
- \* Encourage players/participants to wear a cloth face covering when not actively participating and allow players that opt to wear a cloth face covering when participating, to do so.
- \* Strongly suggest that coaches/instructors wear a cloth face covering.
- \* Request that officials, parents/guardians, and spectators wear a cloth face covering.
- \* Conduct training for coaches virtually, when appropriate.
- \* Monitor absenteeism of coaches, officials, and staff to ensure back-up supply of personnel.
- \* Expect any organization that uses park facilities to follow these guidelines.
- \* Follow state guidelines in relation to group gatherings to determine if an event can be held.
- \* Identify the Director and Assistant Director as the designated COVID-19 points-of-contact responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns.
- \* Regularly have maintenance staff clean and disinfect park facilities, such as restrooms and other indoor areas.
- \* Inform others with potential direct contact of confirmed COVID-19 person.
- \* Be prepared and follow procedures if someone in the program gets sick.
- \* Report any known COVID-19 case to local health officials.
- \* Publicize any park facility closures and/or restrictions related to limiting COVID-19 exposure.

***All protocols are subject to change pending patron compliance and newly established guidelines.***