

Columbus Youth Soccer Parents, Coaches and Players –

Indiana has now made the wearing of face coverings mandatory, **effective 7/27/2020 – thru 8/26/2020 (unless updated)**. According to “Executive Order 20-37 Face Covering Requirement” the directive states that, “every individual within the State of Indiana shall wear a face covering over the nose and mouth when: b. in an outdoor public space wherever it is not feasible to maintain six feet of social distancing from another person not in the same household.” We will be enforcing this mask mandate and expect our coaches, players and volunteers to do the same.

We recognize that there are exemptions and will honor those. Without detailing out the Executive Order, because you can access it yourself here: <https://www.in.gov/gov/2384.htm>, we wanted to outline the rules for participating in your event located at Blackwell Park. Please know, we are doing this to protect all parties involved: your family, our volunteers and our staff plus our greater community. We know that if we do not slow the spread, we are likely moving backwards in the days to come and we do NOT want that to happen.

Who must wear a face covering (face covering and face shield are different, see Executive Order for definitions):

Players will wear masks:

- Walking to practice or game; walking from practice or game.
- During games, reserves on the sideline should be a minimum of 6’ apart. If they are closer, they are required to wear their mask.

Players may remove masks:

- When practice/warm-ups and when the games begin.
- During games, reserves on the sideline should be a minimum of 6’ apart. If they are a minimum of 6’ apart, they do not have to wear their mask.
- Consuming food or drink.

Coaches are expected to wear masks when:

- Walking to training or game; walking from training or game.
- During initial instruction and greeting to team.
- Anytime they would come within 6’ feet of a player, coach, or parent.
- During all pre-game introductions with opponent coaches and referees.
- On the sideline during games.

Coaches may remove masks, but have masks readily available when:

- They are greater than 6 Feet from a player, coach, or parent.
- Addressing the team with players being at minimum 6 feet away from coach not exceeding 10 minutes.
- Giving sideline instruction or coaching points to a player greater than 6 feet away.
- Consuming food or drink.

Referees and Assistant Referees are required to wear a mask when:

- Going to or from the field.
- On the sideline, when there is more than one referee working the game, social distance yourself from the other referees (minimum of 6’ apart).
- Field inspection
- Introducing yourself to the coaches (stay a minimum of 6’ apart).
- Team check-in (stay a minimum of 6’ apart).
- Referees and assistant referees ARE NOT REQUIRED to wear a mask during the game.
- Keep a mask in your pocket in case you need to be within 6’ of a player. Maintaining 6’ social distancing when practical.

- During the half-time break, if the referees can maintain social distancing (minimum of 6'), they are not required to wear their mask.
- There should be no physical contact between players, coaches or referees pre-or post-game.
- When leaving the game or moving to another field, referees are required to wear their mask.

Spectators are required to wear masks when (applies to those 8 years and older that do not meet an exemption):

- Making their way to the designated side-line space for spectator seating. Parks and Rec will have clearly marked areas that comply with social distancing protocols for spectator seating.
- They move from their designated seating area.
- Interacting with other spectators (other families) at the field/complex, they are required to wear their mask and maintain the minimum social distance 6' apart.

Spectators may remove masks when:

- Sitting in their designated viewing area as long as they are sitting a minimum of 6' from another household.
- Consuming food or drink.

We understand that, 'unless you can social distance,' is a part of the stipulations for this work order. We recognize that soccer is at an advantage over some other sports as there might well be adequate room around the fields to social distance. Our approach for soccer during practices and during games is "you must social distance **or** wear a mask." However, if we find, upon visual inspections or complaints, that this mask mandate is not being enforced AND social distancing is not occurring, there will be ramifications. We will let those who are not in compliance know and be given the chance to distance themselves or wear a mask. If they are approached two times, both the child and guardian(s) will be asked to sit out of practice and games for one week. If upon return, they are still unable to follow our requirements by masking up or social distancing, they will be removed from the program for the remainder of the season.

We understand that this is a polarizing topic and appreciate the varied opinions, but we have one job to do and that is to protect those in our programs as best we can in a climate of complete uncertainty. Right now, the best way we can do that is by following the lead of those who put these Executive Orders in place. We hope you understand our position and can help us to ensure everyone is looking out for each other. We believe more than anything that these kids have earned the right to play a sport and that the returns of this season could be so great for them. Please help us to not put any of them at jeopardy – Mask Up or Social Distance. I promise, your child can hear your positive praises even if you aren't right on top of the sidelines, they know your voice 😊

Thank you,

Nikki Murphy, Director of Sports Programs
Columbus Parks and Recreation Department