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February 24, 2021

Re: **UPDATED ADVISORY CONCERNING THE OPERATION OF YOUTH SPORTS**

To Whom It May Concern:

Please be advised that on February 19, 2021, the California Department of Public Health (“CDPH”) issued updated Guidance for Outdoor and Indoor Youth and Recreational Adult Sports (“Guidance for Youth Sports”), which provides direction on the operation of outdoor and indoor youth and recreational adult sporting activities to support a safe environment.¹ Please note that the guidance applies to all organized youth sports and recreation, including school and community-sponsored programs, and privately organized clubs and leagues, and to adult recreational sports. This guidance does not apply to collegiate or professional sports. Additionally, this guidance does not apply to community events, such as marathons, half-marathons, and endurance races. The guidelines set forth in the Guidance for Youth Sports shall take effect on **February 26, 2021**.

By way of background, on March 19, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-33-20², ordering all persons to stay at home to protect the health and well-being of all Californians and to establish consistency across the State in order to slow the spread of COVID-19. This Order encompasses the Order of the State Public Health Officer, also dated March 19, 2020, which states in relevant part: “To protect public health, I as State Public Health Officer and Director of the California Department of Public Health order all individuals living in the State of California to stay at home or at their place of residence except as needed to maintain continuity of operations of the federal critical infrastructure sectors[.]” State Public Health orders must be obeyed by all California residents.³

On August 28, 2020, the State Public Health Officer issued an Order introducing “California’s Plan for Reducing COVID-19 and Adjusting Permitted Sector Activities to Keep Californians Healthy and Safe”, also referred to as the “Blueprint for a Safer Economy”.⁴ The State’s Blueprint for a Safer Economy consists of a color-coded tiered system indicating which activities and businesses can open based upon local case rates and test positivity. Each progressive tier permits a broader range of reopening.

¹ Outdoor and Indoor Youth and Recreational Adult Sports:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/outdoor-indoor-recreational-sports.aspx>

² Executive Order N-33-20: <https://covid19.ca.gov/img/Executive-Order-N-33-20.pdf>

³ Executive Order N-60-20:

<https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/5.4.20-EO-N-60-20.pdf>

⁴ https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/COVID-19/8-28-20_Order-Plan-Reducing-COVID19-Adjusting-Permitted-Sectors-Signed.pdf

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Tier 1 (Purple):

Riverside County is currently in the most restrictive tier, Tier 1 (Purple).

In January 2021, certain inter-team competitions (i.e., between two teams) were permitted to resume. Specifically under Tier 1 (Purple), inter-team competitions, meets, races, or similar events for *outdoor low-contact sports* are authorized where both teams are located in the same county; or where the teams are located in immediately bordering counties and the subject sport is authorized in both counties. See the Table Re: Youth and Adult Recreational Sports Permitted by Current Tier of County ("Table") in the Guidance for Youth Sports for a non-exhaustive list of *outdoor low-contact sports* permitted under this tier.

As indicated in the Guidance for Youth Sports, outdoor high-contact sports, such as football, soccer, and water polo, which were traditionally only permitted to be played once a county had reached Tier 3 (Orange), may be played in Tier 1 (Purple) or Tier 2 (Red) counties with an adjusted case rate equal to or less than 14 per 100,000 under certain restrictions, including:

1. Informed Consent - Athletic programs must provide information regarding the risk of transmission to the parents/guardians of minors participating in sports and must obtain consent indicating their understanding and acknowledgment of such risks.
2. Testing - Weekly COVID-19 testing for participants and coaches of outdoor high-contact sports must be implemented and strictly adhered to. If competing, testing must be performed and test results made available within 24 hours of play. Such testing requirements shall only apply to: (a) football, rugby and water polo programs, as these are high contact sports that are likely to be played unmasked, with close, face to face contact exceeding 15 minutes; (b) when adjusted case rates for the county are between 14-7 per 100,000; and (c) for participants 13 years of age or above. If more than 50% of a team's participants are less than the age of 13, then the entire team is exempted from the testing requirement. Testing will remain mandatory for coaches.

Additionally, outdoor moderate-contact sports, such as baseball and women's lacrosse, may also be played in Tier 1 (Purple) counties with an adjusted case rate equal to or less than 14 per 100,000 under certain restrictions as set forth in the Guidance for Youth Sports.

Tier 2 (Red):

Under Tier 2 (Red), inter-team competitions, meets, races, or similar events for *outdoor moderate-contact sports* are authorized where both teams are located in the same county; or where the teams are located in immediately bordering counties and the subject sport is authorized in both counties. See the Table in the Guidance for Youth Sports for a non-exhaustive list of *outdoor moderate-contact sports* permitted under this tier. Outdoor high-contact sports may be permitted in counties with an adjusted case rate equal to or less than 14 per 100,000 as detailed above.

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Tier 3 (Orange):

Under Tier 3 (Orange), inter-team competitions, meets, races, or similar events for *outdoor high-contact sports* and *indoor low-contact sports* are authorized where both teams are located in the same county; or where the teams are located in immediately bordering counties and the subject sport is authorized in both counties. See the Table in the Guidance for Youth Sports for a non-exhaustive list of *outdoor high-contact sports* and *indoor low-contact sports* permitted under this tier.

Tier 4 (Yellow):

Under Tier 4 (Yellow), inter-team competitions, meets, races, or similar events for *indoor moderate-contact sports* and *indoor high-contact sports* are authorized where both teams are located in the same county; or where the teams are located in immediately bordering counties and the subject sport is authorized in both counties. See the Table in the Guidance for Youth Sports for a non-exhaustive list of *indoor moderate-contact sports* and *indoor high-contact sports* permitted under this tier.

Please note that all sports permitted in lower tiers are also permitted in high tiers (i.e., outdoor low-contact sports are permitted in every tier). Further, please be advised that the status of return-to-competition is subject to change at any time given the level of COVID-19 transmission in California.

Irrespective of setting (outdoor or indoor), case rate, or sport played, the following general guidance requirements must be adhered to at all times:

- Face coverings to be worn when not participating in the activity (e.g., on the sidelines).
- Face coverings to be worn by coaches, support staff and observers at all times, and in compliance with the CDPH Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings.⁵
- Observers maintain a distance of at least six feet from non-household members.
- No sharing of drink bottles and other personal items and equipment.
- Mixing with other households prior to and post any practice or competition must strictly adhere to current gathering guidance.
- Limit indoor sports activities (practice, conditioning) to comply with capacity limits (which shall include all athletes, coaches, and observers) indicated in current CDPH Gym & Fitness Center Guidance Capacity.⁶
- Associated indoor activities for the team (e.g., dinners, film study) are prohibited if engaged in competition given evidence that transmission is more likely to occur in these indoor higher risk settings.
- Teams must not participate in out-of-state games and tournaments.

⁵ https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/COVID-19/Guidance-for-Face-Coverings_06-18-2020.pdf

⁶ <https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-fitness--en.pdf>

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At this time, observers are not permitted at adult sporting activities. Observers of youth sports may *only* consist of parents or legal guardians present for the sole purpose of supervising their child athlete, and no others. Please also be advised that CDPH recommends that participation by athletes and coaches be limited to one team over the same season or time period in order to reduce the mixing of participants. Finally, at this time no tournaments or events that involve more than two teams may occur. Exceptions may be made, with authorization from the local health department where the event is being held and each of the local health departments where teams originate from, for sports where individual competitors from multiple teams are routine such as: track and field; cross-country; golf; skiing/snowboarding; tennis; swimming/diving/surfing; biking and equestrian events. For Riverside County, requests for such authorization should be made to rivco-schools@ruhealth.org. Please note that requestors will be required to submit a written safety plan which must, at minimum, address facial covering enforcement, social distancing enforcement, and ingress and egress, for both competitors and observers and staff, and should include the numbers of expected competitors and staff/volunteers.

For the most up to date information on which activities are permitted in the County of Riverside, you may visit [COVID19.CA.GOV](https://www.covid19.ca.gov). In addition, we encourage you to review the CDPH Guidance for Outdoor and Indoor Youth and Recreational Adult Sports issued on February 19, 2021 and all other resources provided herein.

We thank you for your anticipated cooperation. Should you have any questions, please contact Supervising Deputy County Counsel, Kelly Moran, at kmoran@rivco.org.

Sincerely,



GREGORY P. PRIAMOS
County Counsel