

MDHHS Testing Pilot Program for Organized Sports

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, in partnership with the Michigan High School Athletic Association, Michigan's schools, and Michigan's local health departments, is pleased to announce a limited pilot program for high school athletes to complete their Fall 2020 postseason tournaments and championships by adhering to strict COVID-19 safety protocols.

Who?

Student athletes in Girls Volleyball, Girls Swimming & Diving, and Boys Football who have already qualified or begun competing in MHSAA postseason championship games and meets within the regular Fall 2020 season.

What?

An opportunity for student athletes to finish out their seasons through rigorous COVID-19 antigen (rapid) testing. By agreeing to frequent rapid testing and other COVID-19 safety precautions, student athletes, coaches, and staff who are symptom-free and continue to test negative for COVID-19 can participate in their MHSAA postseason championship competitions.

Where?

Competitions will be held at athletic venues across Michigan. Check MHSAA for competition locations: <https://www.mhsaa.com/sports>. Consult with your school team for practice locations and times.

When?

Upon completion of testing training, signed consent forms, and filing COVID-19 plans with MHSAA, teams can resume practices for championship competitions in January and February 2021. Check MHSAA for competition schedules at: <https://www.mhsaa.com/sports>.

Why?

Athletics play an important role in the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of high school students. Although COVID-19 continues to pose a serious health threat, by taking that threat seriously through rigorous testing, mask-wearing, and cleaning protocols, we can begin to return to activities, like sports, that keep us healthy, build life skills like teamwork and perseverance, and teach us resilience.

In addition to providing a way for student athletes to complete their competitions, this pilot provides an opportunity for public health and schools to assess an antigen testing strategy for students and staff, paving the way for a broader school testing protocol and the safe reopening of K-12 schools.

Requirements

- Student athletes, coaches, parents/guardians, staff, and school districts must be enthusiastic and willing to meet participation criteria
- Student athletes and coaches must be tested by trained staff 3x/week on non-consecutive days and receive negative test results before participating in practice or competition that day
- Any students, coaches, or staff exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms must stay home and self-isolate
- Participating student athletes, coaches, parents, and staff must agree to a code of conduct, including participation in contact tracing, social distancing outside practice and games, and other COVID-19 safety precautions
- Participating teams must report both negative and positive test results daily