



Petaluma American Little League

Covid -19 Response

2021 Season

**Goals:** The following are the five goals that PALL wants to accomplish with our Covid-19 response program.

1. Provide a safe baseball environment for our community.
2. Follow State, County & City Covid-19 recommendations.
3. Prevent person to person contact.
4. Prevent equipment contamination.
5. Prevent facility contamination.

## **California Department of Public Health**

COVID-19 continues to pose a severe risk to communities and requires all people in California to follow recommended precautions and adapt the way they live and function in light of this ongoing risk. This guidance provides direction on outdoor and indoor youth and recreational adult sports activities to support a safe environment for these sports. The guidance applies to all organized youth sports — including school- and community-sponsored programs, and privately-organized clubs and leagues — and adult recreational sports (hereafter youth and adult sports). This guidance does not apply to collegiate or professional sports.

### **Sports Risk Profiles**

In general, the more people from outside their household with whom a person interacts, the closer the physical interaction is, the greater the physical exertion is, and the longer the interaction lasts, particularly when indoors, the higher the risk that a person with COVID-19 infection may spread it to others.

Youth and adult sports include varied activities that have different levels of risk for transmission of COVID-19. Outdoor activities that allow for consistent wearing of face coverings and physical distancing

are lower risk than indoor activities that involve close contact between sports participants and high exertion that increases spread of exhaled particles and limits the ability to wear face coverings consistently. The competition between different teams also increases mixing across groups and outside of communities, which also contributes to the potential for spread of COVID-19 disease.

Youth and adult sports are classified below by their level of contact and transmission risk. This classification applies to competition or training/practice with others. It does not apply to individual conditioning or exercise.

Little League Baseball falls under Moderate-Contact Sports

“Team sports that can be played with only incidental or intermittent close contact between participants.”

## **General Guidance for Youth and Adult Sports Participants, Coaches, and Support Staff**

### **Face Coverings**

Participants in youth and adults sports should wear face coverings when participating in the activity, even with heavy exertion as tolerated, both indoors and outdoors (unless the face covering could become a hazard), and face coverings must be worn when not participating in the activity (e.g., on the sidelines)

### **Physical Distancing**

Participants in youth and adult sports should maintain at least six feet of distance from others to the maximum extent possible, including when on the sidelines. Coaches should avoid contact with participants, and facilitate physical distancing between participants to the maximum extent possible (e.g., staggered starts instead of mass starts for races).

### **Hygiene and Equipment Sanitation**

Shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected before use by another person, group, or team.

When equipment is shared during an activity, participants should perform hand hygiene (wash hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer) before play, during breaks, at half time, and after the conclusion of the activity.

Balls or other objects or equipment can be touched by multiple players and used during practice and play if the above hand hygiene practices are followed.

Drink bottles must not be shared, and other personal items and equipment should not be shared.

## **Observers**

For youth sports (age 18 years and under), immediate household members may observe practices and games as needed for age-appropriate supervision, but observers should be limited to ensure physical distance can be maintained, reduce potential crowding, and maintain indoor and outdoor capacity limits allowed by Tiers.

Observers must stay at least 6 feet from non-household members and wear face coverings.

## **Permitted Youth and Recreational Adult Sports by County Tier**

Physical conditioning, practice, skill-building, and training that can be conducted outdoors, with 6 feet of physical distancing, and within stable cohorts are authorized regardless of county tier status. Such activities may be conducted indoors consistent with restrictions by Tier in the Gym & Fitness Center Guidance Capacity.

In counties under the Regional Stay at Home Order, only activities consistent with the bullet immediately above are permitted, regardless of the county's tier status.

The Table below provides information on which categories of competitions are permitted in each Tier.

The Table is not exhaustive, but provides examples of sports with different levels of contact so that the level of risk and appropriate Tier can be assessed for other sports.

## **Inter-Team Competitions**

As transmission rates are increasing significantly in California, communities across California must act with caution and state agencies will carefully monitor epidemiological trends.

Youth should limit their sport activities to their own households in counties under the Regional Stay at Home Order.

Inter-team competitions (i.e., between two teams) will not be allowed in California until January 25, 2021, at the earliest, based on the guidelines outlined in this document. The return-to-competition date will be reassessed by January 4, 2021 based on California disease transmission trends and is subject to change at any time given the level of COVID-19 transmission in California.

Teams must not participate in out-of-state tournaments; several multistate outbreaks have been reported in CA residents and around the nation.

Inter-team competitions, meets, races, or similar events are authorized only if (a) both teams are located in the same county and the sport is authorized in the Table below; or (b) teams are located in immediately bordering counties and the sport is authorized in both counties in the Table below.

The county-based authorizations outlined in the Table below applies to the locations/counties in which the teams, schools, clubs, leagues, and similar organizations are functionally based (e.g., where the players reside, where facilities are located, etc.).

## **Returning to sports after infection**

Children and teens with symptoms of COVID-19 should not attend practices or competition. They should consult their physician for testing and notify their coach, athletic trainer and/or school administrator of their symptoms.

Youths recovering from COVID-19 will have different paths to return to sports based on the severity of their illness. Those who are asymptomatic or have mild symptoms should not exercise until cleared by a physician. See the American Academy of Pediatrics Interim Guidance on Return to Sports for additional guidance for more serious infections.

## **Substantial Tier (Red)2+**

### **Outdoor moderate-contact sports**

Baseball

Cheerleading

Dodgeball

Field hockey

Gymnastics

Kickball

Lacrosse (girls/women)

Pickleball (doubles)

Softball

## **Health Order- 1/09/2021 (extended from 12/14/2020)**

Under the current extended Stay at Home Order, outdoor recreation is allowed.

Outdoor activities are allowed but only for the purpose of facilitating physically distanced personal health and wellness through outdoor exercise. Outdoor gym operations are allowed, but no indoor activities are permitted.

Playgrounds may remain open to facilitate physically distanced personal health and wellness through outdoor exercise.

As of now, PALL is only cleared for small group baseball activities only. Youths participating in outdoor sports are not required to wear a mask during outdoor activities as long as social distancing can be maintained, however it is recommended that they shall be worn at all times.

Players will carry a mask or neck gaiter on their person and be prepared to put it on when social distancing cannot be maintained.

Players shall arrive and leave practice wearing masks and will be subject to a medical screening questionnaire.

Players may remove their facial covering or mask during practice, as long as social distancing can be maintained.

Adults will wear a facial covering at all times!

## **Health Screening**

### **Personal Health Awareness**

- We ask that any PALL player, coach, manager, volunteer, parent or spectator that is feeling ill or has flu symptoms not attend any PALL events and see their healthcare provider.

### **Manager Reporting**

- When team managers become aware of a coach, player or volunteer that is ill with flu like symptoms, they shall report it to the PALL Safety Officer immediately @brandon.deering707@gmail.com
- Any PALL player, coach or manager that is ill with flu like symptoms will not be allowed to attend or return to PALL events until after they have spoken with the PALL Safety Officer and the PALL Safety Committee determines that the individual can return to PALL events.

### **Safety Officer Clearance**

- PALL will require that any PALL player, coach, manager or volunteer that is suspected of contracting Covid-19 self-quarantine as recommended by the Sonoma County Health Safety Officer and seek medical treatment from their healthcare provider.
- The PALL Safety Officer will report any suspected Covid-19 case to the PALL Board for proper team/division/league notification.
- The PALL Safety Officer will investigate the possibility of spread to the PALL community and report to the Board their findings and recommendations ASAP.
- No player, coach, manager, and volunteer that is/was known to have Covid-19 will be allowed to return until after they received clearance from their doctor to return to organized youth activities.

### **Team Practice Procedures (First Practice)**

Prior to the first practice, the team manager will contact each family and discuss with them the new PALL Covid-19 protocol.

The first practice should include a team discussion on the PALL Covid-19 protocol and the league's expectations regarding PPE, Social Distancing, health screening, health reporting & equipment sanitation and use.

Scheduling of practices will be staggered by 15 minutes to limit the number of families at facilities. Team practices should begin and end on time.

### **Team Practice Procedures (To be conducted at every practice)**

- Health Screening before practice
- No sharing of personal equipment
- Practice social distancing in practice drills
- Social distancing team meetings
- No sunflower seeds or gum allowed
- 15-person team max (coaches & players)
- All coaches will wear masks at all times
- Players may use masks if they choose but must wear masks when social distancing cannot be maintained

### **Gameplay**

Once Sonoma County is placed in the Red Tier, gameplay shall resume.

In the event that we are cleared to play games, the State of California and the County of Sonoma will have strict guidelines under an updated health order that PALL will be following. This document will remain fluid, and will be subject to change when and if the health order allows games to resume.

### **Game Procedures (Protocol for Every Game)**

- All adults on the field will wear facial coverings or masks at all times.
- Adult spectators will wear facial coverings or masks and are limited to immediate household members only. Social distancing will be maintained from members of other households.
- Managers will health screen all players and coaches upon their arrival at fields.
- No shared personal equipment (i.e. bats, helmets, gloves).
- No sunflower seeds or gum allowed.
- All human to human contact discouraged.
- No handshakes or personal contact celebrations.
- Social distancing team meetings.
- Post and Pregame meetings ok.
- No end of inning meetings.
- Game start times staggered to reduce the number of people at facility.

### **Game Procedures (Team at bat and reserve players)**

- Players will social distance on the first and third base lines. All players will wear batting helmets when standing along the fence line. Facial coverings or masks will be worn when social distancing cannot be maintained.
- The on deck batter will report to the dugout and be ready for their turn. The in the hole batter may also be in the dugout, socially distanced.
- Masks are not required for players along the baselines as long a social distancing can be maintained, but may wear them upon the discretion of their parent or guardian.

### **Game Procedures (Team in Field)**

- Players in the field are not required to wear facial coverings or masks as long as social distancing can be maintained, but may do so if they or their guardian desires.
- If social distancing cannot be maintained, players must wear a mask.

### **Game Procedures (Umpires)**

- Health screening of umpires by managers upon their arrival at field.
- Game ball will be changed every ½ inning or pitching change.
- Minors Umpires will stand near the pitcher mound.
- Equipment inspections should still occur, but equipment should be spaced out by players/coaches. Inspection will be visual only. Umpires should not touch equipment.
- Pregame home plate meeting will be conducted to social distancing standards and will only be with one umpire and both managers.

### **Game Procedures (Game Scheduling)**

- All games will be scheduled in a staggered manner to limit the number of people in attendance at PALL facilities.
- A minimum of 30 minutes will be allowed between games.
- Teams/families should immediately leave the field when their game is completed. This will assist with reducing the number of people at the facilities between games.
- All games of the Minors, and T-Ball will have a strict time limit if there is another game scheduled to immediately follow. (Minors (AA, AAA) 120 Minutes, Minors (A) 90 minutes, T-Ball (45 Minutes).
- All games that are not completed when the time limit is reached will end immediately regardless of the score. Scoring will revert to the last completed inning for the Minor Division (AA, AAA) games.

## **Equipment Sanitation**

- No sharing of personal equipment ( Bats, helmets, gloves)
- Any league equipment that is shared shall be disinfected between use. (Catcher's equipment, T-Ball bats, No catcher used in T-ball)
- Baseballs will be sterilized with a disinfectant spray at practices, games and any foul balls that are returned to the field.
- Spacing out equipment in and outside of dugout.
- Game balls will be changed out every inning or pitching change.

## **PALL Facilities**

- Social distancing signs will be placed around all PALL fields.
- Social distancing markings will be identified on the bleachers
- Frequent and daily cleaning of facilities by coaches, board members and snack shack personnel.

## **PALL Facilities (Batting Cages/Bullpens)**

- Social distancing signs will be placed around the cages.
- Use of the batting cages will be limited to 15 people per team. • If social distancing cannot be maintained, masks will be worn.
- No shared personal equipment (i.e. bats, gloves, helmets)

## **PALL Facilities (Snack Shack)**

- Plexiglass affixed to customer counter
- Volunteers working in the snack shack must wear PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) at all times (Gloves & Mask)
- Hand sanitizer will be provided free of charge at Snack Shack counter
- No gum or sunflower seeds will be sold at snack shack, nor will it be allowed at any PALL event.
- Social distancing markings are placed on ground near snack shack.
- Frequent and daily sanitation facilities by board members and snack shack personnel (Counter & Bathrooms)

## **PALL Facilities (Press Box)**

- NO KIDS ALLOWED IN PRESS BOX.
- LIMITED USE TO ONE PERSON (EXCEPT FOR SAME HOUSEHOLD FAMILY MEMBERS).
- DAILY SANITATION OF EQUIPMENT AND SURFACES.



## **Season Suspension**

Any positive test of a PALL player, coach, and manager, volunteer will result in the immediate notification to the league (all families). The individuals name will not be released to league. Their identity will only be known by the reporting party (i.e. manager/parent/etc.) and the PALL Safety Officer.

If 3 or more PALL individuals (i.e. coach/manager/player/volunteer) is suspected of being ill with Covid-19 at the same time, the season will be suspended immediately (practices and games). The board will notify the County of Sonoma Health Officer. The board will collect any possible contaminated equipment so that it can be sanitized by a paid professional. All PALL facilities will be closed and cleaned.

In the event of a season suspension, the entire league will self-quarantine (no practices or games) for 2 weeks before any PALL event may resume.

## **Penalties**

It is the intent of the PALL Board to provide a safe environment for our community to share while watching their child/children play baseball. Any manager, player, coach or volunteer that intentionally avoids following these guidelines shall be subject to removal from the Board.

## **Closing**

Our goal is to provide a safe environment for our kids to play baseball without putting anyone within our community at risk of contracting Covid-19. We believe there is a high probability of being successful if these guidelines are followed. We thank you for your understanding and support.

Let's play ball!

The PALL Board of Directors

[www.petalumaamerican.com](http://www.petalumaamerican.com)