



Santa Clara County  
**PUBLIC  
HEALTH**

# **MANDATORY DIRECTIVE:**



## Youth and Adult Recreational Athletic Activities

**Issued January 27, 2021**

[sccgov.org/coronavirus](https://sccgov.org/coronavirus)

**County of Santa Clara**  
**Public Health Department**

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**MANDATORY DIRECTIVE FOR YOUTH AND  
ADULT RECREATIONAL ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES**

**\*Please confirm that your activity is allowed under the State Order. Where there is a difference between the local County Order and the State Order, the more restrictive order must be followed. The State also has specific guidance for certain industries and activities that must be followed in addition to this mandatory directive.\***

Information on the State’s Order and State guidance is available at [covid19.ca.gov](https://covid19.ca.gov).

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*On August 28, 2020, the State issued a Statewide Public Health Officer Order (“State Order,” available [here](#)) and the Blueprint for a Safer Economy (“Blueprint,” available [here](#)). The State Order and Blueprint establish statewide restrictions applicable to each “tier” to which counties are assigned.*

*Anyone participating in youth or adult recreational athletic activities must follow the mandatory requirements in this Directive and any other applicable County Health Officer Directive, the County Health Officer’s Revised Risk Reduction Order issued on October 5, 2020, the applicable restrictions under the State Order and Blueprint, and the State’s COVID-19 Industry Guidance documents. When there is a difference between these rules, the most restrictive rule must be followed.*

While recreational athletic activities help many people maintain their physical and emotional well-being, they also can pose significant risks to public health in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Because they bring different households together to engage in physical activity—often involving heavy respiration, communal use of high-touch equipment, and/or close physical contact—anyone participating in youth or adult recreational athletic activities must take extra precautions to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

This Directive explains how youth and adult recreational athletic activities may occur. **This Directive is mandatory, and failure to follow it is a violation of the County Health Officer’s**

**Order issued on October 5, 2020 (“Order”).** Anyone participating in adult recreational athletic activities must comply with the Order, all requirements of this Directive, and all requirements of applicable State industry-specific guidance.

**Note:** This Mandatory Directive applies to all youth and adult recreational athletic activities, including formally organized and informally organized recreational athletic groups, teams, organizations, and businesses hosting recreational athletic activities, and individuals participating in recreational athletic activities. This section does not apply to athletic activities covered by the [Mandatory Directive for Collegiate and Professional Athletics](#) or the [Mandatory Directive for Programs Serving Children or Youth](#).

### *The Order Issued October 5, 2020*

The Order imposes several restrictions on all businesses and activities to ensure that the County stays as safe as possible, including but not limited to the following:

- **The Social Distancing Protocol:** All businesses and governmental entities (including all recreational athletics groups, teams, and organizations) that have not already done so must fill out and submit a Revised Social Distancing Protocol under the October 5, 2020 Health Officer Order. **Social Distancing Protocols submitted prior to October 11, 2020 are no longer valid.** The Revised Social Distancing Protocol must be filled out using an updated template, which is available [here](#). The Protocol is submitted under penalty of perjury, meaning that everything written on the form must be truthful and accurate to the best of the signer’s knowledge, and submitting false information is a crime. The Protocol must be distributed to all workers, and it must be accessible to all officials who are enforcing the Order.
- **Signage:** All businesses must print (1) an updated COVID-19 PREPARED Sign and (2) a Social Distancing Protocol Visitor Information Sheet, and both must be posted prominently at all facility entrances. These are available for printing after online submission of the Revised Social Distancing Protocol. The Revised Social Distancing Protocol specifies additional signage requirements.
- **Face Coverings:** Everyone must wear face coverings at all times specified in the California Department of Public Health’s mandatory [Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings](#) (“Face Covering Guidance”) and in any specific directives issued by the County Health Officer. **This Directive contains additional face covering requirements for participants in outdoor youth and adult recreational athletic activities.**
- **Capacity Limitation:** All businesses must comply with the limitations established in the [Mandatory Directive on Capacity Limitations](#).

See the [Order](#) and the [FAQ page](#) for more details.

In addition to these general requirements applicable to all businesses under the Order, all youth and adult recreational athletic teams, businesses hosting youth and adult recreational athletic activities, and participants in youth and adult recreational athletic activities must comply with the following directives.

### ***Required Safety Measures***

#### *1. State Restrictions on Types of Sports and Activities*

- a. Under State rules, while Santa Clara County is in the Purple Tier of the State's Blueprint for a Safer Economy, **the following sports and activities are allowed outdoors only** so long as they follow all the requirements in this Section 9 and all applicable requirements in this Directive: archery, badminton, biking, bocce, cross country, dance (no contact), disc golf, golf, hiking, ice and roller skating (no contact), lawn bowling, martial arts (no contact), physical training programs (e.g., yoga, Zumba, tai chi), pickleball (singles), rowing/crew (with 1 person), running, shuffleboard, skeet shooting, skiing and snowboarding, snowshoeing, swimming and diving, tennis, track and field, walking, and other sports activities occurring outdoors that allow participants to easily maintain 6 feet of social distance from one another at all times.
- b. Under State rules, while Santa Clara County is in the Purple Tier of the State's Blueprint for a Safer Economy, **the following sports and activities are prohibited, even outdoors:** baseball, basketball, boxing, cheerleading, dance (intermittent or high contact), dodgeball, field hockey, football, gymnastics, ice hockey, ice skating (pairs), kickball, lacrosse, martial arts (intermittent or high contact), pickleball (doubles), roller derby, rowing/crew (with 2 people or more), rugby, soccer, softball, volleyball, water polo, wrestling, and any other sports activities occurring indoors or any sports activities that do not allow participants to easily maintain 6 feet of social distance from one another at all times.
  - i. Participants may still train, condition, or practice skill-building exercises for these sports, but only if they do so outdoors and maintain 6 feet of social distance from one another at all times.

#### *2. Compliance with the Mandatory Directive on Gatherings*

- a. In addition to complying with all requirements in this Directive, all allowed youth and adult recreational athletic activities with members of more than one household must comply with all requirements listed in the [Mandatory Directive on Gatherings](#), including but not limited to the requirements for face coverings and physical distancing.

### 3. *Indoor Activities Prohibited*

- a. All indoor youth and adult recreational athletic activities are prohibited. These activities may take place outdoors only.
- b. Activities are considered outdoor only if they are conducted at a location or facility that allows the free flow of outdoor air through the entire space, as specified in the California Department of Public Health's mandatory guidance on [Use of Temporary Structures for Outdoor Business Operations](#).

### 4. *Shared Equipment*

- a. Except for balls, frisbees, and similar objects used for sports activities, all shared sports and athletic equipment must be cleaned and disinfected between uses.

### 5. *Spectators and Observers*

- a. At all adult recreational athletic activities and events, spectators and observers are prohibited.
- b. At all youth athletic activities and events, participants' immediate family members may observe but only as needed for age-appropriate supervision. No other spectators or observers are allowed.

### 6. *Social Distancing Requirements*

- a. All participants in youth and adult recreational athletic activities must maintain at least 6 feet of physical distance from all participants at all times.

### 7. *Face Covering Requirements*

- a. For adult recreational athletic activities involving more than one household, all participants must wear face coverings at all times while participating in the activity, except that participants may remove their face coverings while engaged in activities in the water. These participants must put their face coverings back on as soon as they leave the water.
- b. For youth athletic activities involving more than one household, all participants age 9 or older must wear face coverings at all times while participating in the activity, except that participants may remove their face coverings while engaged in activities in the water. These participants must put their face coverings back on as soon as they leave the water.
- c. Participants who are unable to wear a face covering for a medical or disability-related reason are exempt from this requirement.

## 8. *Cohorting Requirements*

- a. Before engaging in any youth or adult recreational athletic activities involving participants from more than three households, all participants (including players and coaches/support personnel, if any) must be organized into one or more cohort, complying with the following requirements:
  - i. Cohorts must be as small as practicable for the particular sport. Generally, a cohort should be limited to the number of players and coaches or personnel reasonably necessary for a team or group to participate in the particular sport.
  - ii. Cohorts may not mix. Members of one cohort may not compete against, practice with, or otherwise interact with members of other cohorts at any time, except as otherwise provided in this Directive.
  - iii. Players may participate in only one cohort at a time and may not move from one cohort to another more than once every three weeks.
  - iv. Cohorts may not allow guest players, substitutes, or anyone who is not a member of the cohort to participate in cohort activities.

## 9. *Inter-Cohort Competition*

- a. Provided that both participating cohorts are from Santa Clara County or a county adjacent to Santa Clara County, two cohorts may compete against one another pursuant to the rules of this Directive.
- b. Provided that all participating cohorts are from Santa Clara County or a county adjacent to Santa Clara County, the Health Officer approves competitions or tournaments involving three or more cohorts only if the rules of this Directive are followed and only in the following sports: track and field; cross-country; golf; skiing/snowboarding; tennis; and swimming/diving.
- c. For purposes of this Directive, only the following counties qualify as adjacent to Santa Clara County: Alameda, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, San Benito, Santa Cruz, and San Mateo Counties.

## 10. *Restrictions on Travel for Athletic Activities*

- a. No youth or adult recreational athletic group, team, organization, or business may coordinate, arrange, or engage in travel outside of Santa Clara County so that its participants or members can participate in athletic activity that is either:

- i. Not permitted in Santa Clara County; OR
  - ii. More than 150 miles from Santa Clara County.
- b. Except as provided in Section 9 of this Directive, no youth or adult recreational athletic group, team, organization, or business may participate in recreational athletic activities within Santa Clara County with individuals who have traveled from outside of the county who are not members of the team's cohort.

***Stay Informed***

For answers to frequently asked questions about this industry and other topics, please see the [FAQ page](#). **Please note that this Directive may be updated.** For up-to-date information on the Health Officer Order, visit the County Public Health Department's website at [www.sccgov.org/coronavirus](http://www.sccgov.org/coronavirus).