



To: IHSA Official Representatives
Re: Fall Contact Days
Date: August 2020

Per action of the IHSA Board of Directors at the July 29, 2020 board meeting, students and coaches are permitted to participate in contact days this fall in sports that are not in season.

During the Fall Contact Period, schools can conduct contact days that are consistent with the Illinois All-Sports Policy guidelines. As a reminder, the Fall Contact Period is an optional period of participation for students and participation or lack thereof during this time cannot be used as criteria for the selection of a school's team during the team's established season.

September 7 – October 31

Sports that are not in season can have a maximum of 20 contact days for coaches to provide instruction in the skills and techniques of each sport.

Open gyms and open weight rooms can continue during this time and throughout the entire school year, following the open gym by-law (3.160).

Low-risk sports

- baseball, softball, badminton, bowling, gymnastics, sideline spirit, boys swimming & diving, boys tennis, track & field
- Teams in low-risk sports can have intra-squad scrimmages with their own players.

Medium-risk sports

- basketball, soccer, volleyball, water polo, wheelchair basketball, 7 on 7 football
- Teams in medium-risk sports can have intra-squad scrimmages with their own players if parents give consent for their children to participate in these scrimmages.
- Schools develop their own local consent forms.
- Students must wear masks during intra-squad scrimmages in medium-risk sports with the exception of when students are in the water for water polo activities, engaged in strenuous activity outdoors, or social distancing outdoors.

High-risk sports

- football, wrestling, lacrosse, competitive cheerleading, competitive dance
- Teams in high-risk sports can have no-contact practices and trainings.
- Team in high-risk sports are not allowed to have intra-squad scrimmages.

Schools are not allowed to scrimmage or have contests with other schools in any sports during the Fall Contact Period.

GENERAL FAQs

Can a team split into two squads and have contact days with one group on Monday and Wednesday and a different group on Tuesday and Thursday?

Yes. However, the school would have to divide the coaching responsibilities in this situation since each coach is limited to 20 contact days with team members. In this example, if a team splits up and meets four days each week during the eight weeks of contact days, no coach would be able to instruct students on all 32 days. Each student and each coach are limited to 20 contact days.

Do virtual team meetings count as contact days?

No. As we continue to deal with COVID-19 and our return to activities, virtual meetings are permitted and do not constitute the use of a contact day.

Are school teams allowed to participate in non-school leagues this fall? Are school teams allowed to compete against other school teams this fall?

No – to both questions. A school team, coached by a school coach, is not allowed to participate in scrimmages or contests with any other teams during contact days this fall. See IHSA by-law 3.107 regarding what a coach can do with a non-school team during the school year.

Are students allowed to participate on non-school teams this fall?

Yes – in sports that are not in season this fall. See IHSA by-law 3.100 for more information.

During the school year and outside the sport's season, can a group of students who are all from the same school make up the entire roster of a non-school team? Can that team practice and participate in contests during the school year (outside the school season)?

Yes – to both questions. However, no coaches from the school can be involved with this non-school team in any respect (IHSA by-law 3.107). School coaches cannot schedule practices or contests, hire officials, raise funds for the non-school team, or transport students to/from practice and contests. A team like this must be completely independent from the school and its coaching staff.

Are students and coaches required to wear masks when participating in contact days indoors?

Yes

Are students and coaches required to wear masks when participating in contact days outdoors?

Yes. However, students and coaches are not required to wear masks outdoors when they are socially distant or are participating in a strenuous activity.

Are schools allowed to hold open gyms and/or open weight rooms this fall?

Yes. Schools can hold open gyms and/or open weight rooms throughout the school year, provided they are advertised and open to all students. See IHSA by-law 3.160 for more details about open gyms.

Do open gyms count as contact days this fall?

No. Since coaches are not allowed to instruct students during open gyms, they are not considered contact days.

If a certain sport conducts a sport-specific weight room session, does it count as a contact day for that sport?

Yes

What if a school or coach has a question that isn't addressed in this document?

The school or coach should contact the IHSA Sport Administrator in charge of the particular sport or activity.

COMPETITIVE CHEERLEADING FAQs

Can a competitive cheerleading team meet in person with a choreographer during their contact days?

No. Coaches who instruct students during the fall contact days must be officially employed by the school board and meet the requirements of IHSA by-law 2.070.

What kinds of activities can schools conduct for competitive cheerleading during the Fall Contact period?

Competitive Cheer Rules Modifications/Considerations:

- Cheerleader to cheerleader contact will not be allowed.
- Tosses, Pyramids, and Partner Stunts are prohibited. (NFHS Rules 3-2 through 3-7)
- Participants should be appropriately spaced to ensure proper social distancing, 6-ft apart.
- Masks must be worn indoors.
- Poms, signs, banners, flags, etc. or any other equipment should not be shared.

COMPETITIVE DANCE FAQs

Can a competitive dance team meet in person with a choreographer during their contact days?

No. Coaches who instruct students during the fall contact days must be officially employed by the school board and meet the requirements of IHSA by-law 2.070.

What kinds of activities can schools conduct for competitive dance during the Fall Contact period?

Dance Rules Requirements/Considerations:

- *Dancer to dancer contact will not be allowed.*
- *Lifts, Stunts and Partner Stunts will not be allowed. (NFHS Rules 4-2 through 4-7)*
- Participants should be appropriately spaced on floor to ensure proper social distancing, 6-ft apart.
- Masks must be worn indoors.
- If poms are used, they cannot be shared among dancers.

FOOTBALL FAQs

What can football teams do during their 20 contact days?

Football teams can do what they were allowed to do this summer.

Players can:

- participate in ball drills, handoff drills, and passing drills.
- hit sleds, tackle padded dummies or rings, and hold/hit shields.

Teams can run plays against air, against garbage cans, against stand-up dummies, etc.

Are football players allowed to wear equipment during their 20 contact days?

Yes

- Football players can wear helmets and shoulder pads during contact days according to IHSA by-law 3.157.
- Players must wear helmets for two days before wearing shoulder pads on the third day.
- Helmets and shoulder pads are the maximum equipment players can wear. Even if players wear this equipment, they are not allowed to participate in person-to-person contact drills this fall.
- Students are not allowed to share helmets and shoulder pads with teammates.

Since 7 on 7 football and flag football are considered medium-risk sports, can school teams hold intra-squad 7 on 7 or flag football scrimmages with their own players during their contact days?

Yes. Parents must give consent for students to participate. Schools develop their own consent forms.