

## **Memo to ASA Clubs re Directive of May 21, 2020**

All - As you may have heard, this afternoon Governor Hutchinson announced a new directive on team sports. Soccer, along with football, basketball, and volleyball (among others), was deemed by Governor Hutchinson to be a close contact sport, and as a result, Governor Hutchinson issued the directive that team practices and competitions are prohibited due to the close personal contact that is required to participate. Governor Hutchinson indicated during the press conference that he would be re-evaluating the directive in late June but that it would apply through June 30. Arkansas Soccer Association (ASA) is required to abide by Arkansas law and directives issued by the governor's office, so while disappointed by this news, we are nevertheless required to follow this directive.

I would note that the directive indicates that individual practice is permitted. Further, conditioning and training can occur if the following conditions are implemented:

- (1) When in an enclosed space, social distancing must be a minimum of six (6) feet between all individuals.
- (2) If doing calisthenics, running or other conditioning training where vigorous exercise occurs, social distancing is increased to a minimum of twelve (12) feet.
- (3) Individual practice participants should use their own equipment so all players should bring their own soccer ball, water, and other related equipment.

There are a number of additional "General Requirements" that must be adhered to as well when conducting individual training. These include but are not limited to the following:

- (1) Pre-screening questions are required before training. For example, have you had a fever of 100.4 or greater in last 2 days? Have you had a cough? Have you been exposed to someone infected with COVID-19 in last 14 days? Etc.
- (2) Coaches must have their temperature checked prior to entry to the training area.
- (3) Face coverings that completely cover the nose and mouth are required by all individuals 10 years of age and older when not actively participating in the training activity. Coaches and staff must wear face coverings at all times.
- (4) Alcohol based hand sanitizer or adequate handwashing facilities must be provided for use by all attendees.
- (5) Equipment and high touch surfaces should be sanitized frequently.
- (6) No huddles, high-fives, fist bumps, handshakes, chest bumping, etc.
- (7) This directive follows the Large Outdoor Venue directive so it is limited to no more than 50 individuals, including spectators.

These are not all of the General Requirements so everyone should review the full directive:

[https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/images/uploads/pdf/directive\\_team\\_sports.pdf](https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/images/uploads/pdf/directive_team_sports.pdf)

ALL coaches, staff, and parents should review the directive in its entirety so as to ensure that everyone understands what is required of them. Be familiar with the details of the directive, and of course, be sure that you are following any local government mandates as well. ASA will be updating our protocols to mirror the contents of this directive but in the meanwhile, I wanted to get this information out to you as

quickly as possible. While disappointing that we aren't at the point where games may resume or contact practices may occur, our primary concern is the safety and well-being of our extended soccer family. Fortunately, under this directive, we are able to train together as individuals, provided we are 12 feet apart from everyone else and following all of the other requirements in the directive. Again, as I have previously noted, the decision to participate in any trainings is very personal and every family needs to make that decision on their own based upon their comfort level. Individuals that choose not to participate should not be punished or otherwise penalized for that decision, as all families have their own circumstances to consider when contemplating their child's return to training.

As always, I hope all of you are staying healthy. We will get through this together and soon enough, we'll be back to the game we love. We just want to be sure that when we do return to game action, it is safe for everyone to come to the pitch. Thanks for your understanding and stay well!

Jim  
Executive Director  
Arkansas Soccer Association