

COVID-19 Policy for Fall Semester/Athletics

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INTRODUCTION:

The COVID-19 pandemic has already had an acute effect on collegiate athletics and will continue to pose numerous challenges for an undefined amount of time moving forward. As a result, the Atlantic East Conference, The New Jersey Athletic Conference, and Wesley College are committed to the overall health and well-being of the campus communities that exist at each member institution.

In accordance with the NCAA Core Principles for Resocialization, guidelines from the state of Delaware, and recommendations from the AEC and NJAC, Wesley College Department of Athletics will take a phased approach to reintroducing student-athletes to their sport throughout the preseason. In addition, this return-to-sport guidelines document will serve as the basis for each member institution to follow as it relates to precautions that will assist in reducing the spread of COVID-19. Precautions will continue to be made the entire fall season and potentially the rest of the academic and athletic year.

***** The following procedures are based on guideline recommendations and are subject to change due to new cases of COVID-19 and new guidelines***

ATHLETIC TRAINING CONSIDERATIONS:

Facilities:

- Due to the need for social distancing the Athletic Training room on campus (basement of the College Center) will be by appointment only. The Head Athletic Trainer will discuss procedures during team meetings. Procedures include:
 - Wearing a mask at all times while in the building
 - Practicing proper hygiene and social distancing when possible
- An outside pop-up facility at the stadium will be available daily during preseason (? am – ? pm) and during the academic year Monday – Friday 10 am – 2 pm. This will also be accessible only by appointment.

PHASED APPROACH TO PRESEASON:

Pre-arrival to Campus:

- Getting physical from doctor and completely filling out COVID-19 intake sheet. These are to be uploaded to Castle Branch prior to coming to campus and accepted
- Self-isolate for 7-14 days before arrival on campus
- Starting August 1st temperature self-check daily. Reporting these temperatures to their position Coach during meeting or shared Google Doc.
 - Reporting if they, or someone in their family, experience symptoms to their coach or the Athletic Training Staff

Pre-season Schedule:

- The first 1-2 days of the fall pre-season will be spent on education regarding COVID-19 and baseline concussion testing. This will be done in order to maintain social distancing. No athletic activity will be done during this time. **NO** full team meetings done in person unless able to maintain social distancing.
- Following the educational portion, athletes who have completed all required concussion baseline testing and are medically cleared by the Athletic Training staff are eligible to begin practice. (See attached calendar at the end)
- During preseason practices no more than groups of 10 – this includes the coach.
 - Coaches and ATC must wear face mask at all times during practices
- Practices will be limited to one practice on field and will be allowed one off site conditioning practice.
 - There will be no spitting, “snot rockets”, or vomiting allowed on the turf field. This will cause a suspension of practice to disinfect the turf surface.
 - This is still limited to the same small groups
 - Water will not be provided at these practice – take their water bottles
- Practice times will be staggered to leave time for one team to exit the field and following team to arrive. Limiting exposure.

DAILY OPERATIONS

Symptom Checks

- Before leaving their dorms or arriving on campus student athletes will input any symptoms, or if asymptomatic, on the My Wesley app
- Once arriving on campus they will get a temperature check
- This will be done in the morning and again in the afternoon before arriving at practice. Temperature average of 100.4 °F will be used to determine if a player will be allowed to practice or not. (*Wesley’s temperature for all students, faculty and staff is 99.5°F. Due to athletes possibly running hotter than others, the temperature for athletes was increased throughout the AEC)

Water Distribution (Practices)

- Each student athlete will be given a water bottle at beginning of preseason. They are responsible for that water bottle.
- During preseason they must bring that bottle to practice as common bottles or single use cups will not be provided.
- They can only drink from their OWN water bottle. **NO SHARING REGARDLESS OF NOT PUTTING YOUR MOUTH ON THE TOP.**
- Athletes caught will be suspended from all practices/conditioning sessions the rest of the day. They will have to undergo symptom checks and possible quarantine until it can be determined they have not become ill.

- 10 gallon water jugs will be provided for refills. Water boys will not be provided during football practices.
 - Water jugs will be washed after each practice with dish soap.

Water Distribution (Games)

- 10 gallon jugs will be provided during all athletic competitions to both home and away teams
- Waterboys will be used for home football games only. They will be thoroughly cleaned after each game. Athletes will not be permitted to put their mouth anywhere near the hoses. If caught doing so Waterboy will be drained immediately to be cleaned
- Teams traveling to institutions in Pennsylvania will not be provided with water. Teams will

Locker Room Use

- During preseason/fall season locker rooms will not be utilized unless scheduled and staggered admittance. This will be done under coaches direct supervision.
 - It is advised that this only be done when absolutely necessary. Those in the locker room must have a face mask and practice social distancing. **NO LINGERING IN THE LOCKER ROOM UN-NECESSARILY!!**

SYMPTOMATIC STUDENT ATHLETES

Quarantine and Testing Student Athletes

Student athletes who have reported having symptoms of COVID-19 will be encouraged to return home to recover. If returning home is not possible, then they will be moved to a quarantine room on campus. Student athletes who report being symptomatic will get tested for COVID-19 and contact tracing will be initiated to contain the infection.

Procedures for Traveling to Games

- When the bus arrives, the driver will produce documentation or other proof that he can drive the bus safely with minimal risk of infecting the team.
- Before getting on the bus student-athletes will fill out the app questions and get their temperature checked.
 - If below 100.4°F they will be allowed to get on the bus
- If first temperature is 100.4°F or above, they will be required to wait at least 10 mins before taking their temperature again. This will be repeated for a total of 3 readings, and an average temperature will be the final factor if able to travel. Meaning if average of 3 temperature checks is below 100.4°F the student athlete can travel. If it is above 100.4°F they will be sent back home or to their dorm. (*Wesley's temperature for all students, faculty and staff is 99.5°F. Due to athletes possibly running hotter than others, the temperature for athletes was increased throughout the AEC)

- **If applicable:** on an overnight trip an athlete becomes symptomatic the coach is to pay for a room and the student athlete remains at the hotel and will not travel to the game. Arrangements will be made for the athlete to be transported home.
- Anyone becoming symptomatic on an away trip should be reported to the Athletic Training Staff and reported to the coach at the away institution.

GAME DAY OPERATIONS (AT WESLEY COLLEGE)

Team Travel Temperature Checks

Teams that are traveling to Wesley College will either provide documentation that all athletes passed a temperature check (if not traveling with an ATC) or the away ATC will provide the confirmation. Opposing Coach will report to Wesley College ATC if anyone reports becoming symptomatic on bus ride. That player will be rechecked, and their playing status then determined.

Away Team Arrival Operations (facilities, taping, showering services)

- Teams will travel directly to their field/court destination. They should arrive ready to play as they will not have access to a locker room to change.
- An ATC will be available to do any game day taping if not traveling with an ATC.
 - Those traveling with an ATC will be provided with a table and area away from home team to tape
 - Tent the area in the event it's raining.
- An area will be set up at the end of the bench for athletes coming off the field to catch their breath before putting their face mask back on and returning to the bench.
 - At the stadium this area will be at the end of the bench outside the gate
 - In the gym this area will be at the end of the bench near exits to coaches' offices/that outside area.
- NJAC has requested providing area to shower after football games if they choose to. This will be contained to the Freshmen side of the locker room to keep the away team in one location.
 - Officials will be asked to arrive dressed for the game and to leave directly after the game.

Inclement Weather Policy

In the event of thunder/lightning the stadium will be evacuated. The away team will be directed back to their buses. Home team will be directed to the maintenance shed and locker room (for more space). Alternative location will be directing teams to Wesley West gym in order to maintain social distance. Officials will be directed to their vehicles or the hallway of the locker room building.

References:

1. Resocialization of Collegiate Sport: Action Plan Considerations. NCAA Sport Science Institute. www.ncaa.org/sport-science-institute/resocialization-collegiate-sport-action-plan-considerations
2. Atlantic East Conference Return to Sport Working Document 06/2020.