



# Clinton County Health Department

133 Margaret Street, Plattsburgh, New York 12901-2926

“Working Together for a Healthier Community”

www.clintonhealth.org



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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## News Release

Date: January 29, 2021  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Supplemental Guidance for High Risk School Sports

**Plattsburgh, January 29, 2021.** On Friday, January 22, 2021, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo announced he would allow high-risk sports to resume in New York effective February 1, 2021, subject to local health department approval. The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is approving high-risk sports to restart with additional requirements and precautions due to COVID-19.

“The most important step forward for our students right now is returning to in-person instruction,” stated John Kanoza, Director of Public Health in Clinton County. As such, school districts will be required to be offering in-person instruction for two weeks before a final decision on high risk sports will be made. During these two weeks, CCHD and school district leadership will be closely monitoring infection rates, case patterns and evidence of new virus variants in Clinton County. “We need to get our kids back in school without any major disruptions to learning due to COVID-19 cases before we add high risk sports into the mix.”

To facilitate decision making, districts/schools must meet sport-specific minimum requirements and communities must meet COVID-19 metrics to move forward. Section VII officials or individual school districts can choose to enact stricter requirements.

Minimum requirements for higher-risk K-12 school sports include:

- The requirements listed in the [Interim Guidance For Sports And Recreation During The Covid-19 Public Health Emergency](#) must be followed.
- Each school district’s Board of Education or non-public school’s Board of Directors (or other appropriate person/entity) must approve the district/school’s participation in each specific higher-risk sport.
- Each school superintendent/school leader must oversee the creation of a sport-specific Preparedness Plan, to be approved by the district/school’s medical director, circulated to important school staff/leaders, and posted to their school specific website.
- Each parent/guardian must sign an informed consent.
- Each student-athlete must have medical clearance from their healthcare provider.
- Each parent/guardian, student-athlete, and school official must agree to fully cooperate with case investigations and contact elicitation and to adhere to isolation and quarantine orders.
- Each district/school must establish a confidential phone number and email address to allow student-athletes, parents, or others to report concerns and complaints.

– More –



“Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations”

- Cloth face coverings/masks that conform to recommendations from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) must be worn at all times by all student-athletes, coaches, managers, referees/officials, individuals dropping off or picking up student-athletes, etc.
- Districts/schools will not allow spectators at high-risk school sports events, games, or matches so as to minimize the risk of transmission.
- Multi-Team events or tournaments involving high-risk sports are not permitted.
- Travel for sporting events, games, and matches outside of North Country counties including Clinton, Essex and Franklin counties is prohibited.

Community COVID-19 Metrics include:

- The 7-day rolling average percent positivity in Clinton County, as defined and calculated by the NYSDOH, must be at or lower than the previous 7-day rolling average percent positivity.
- The region’s hospital capacity (percent of hospital beds available) must be above 15%, as calculated by NYSDOH.
- The region’s rate of hospital admissions must not be unacceptably high or require additional interventions to control the rate of growth, as determined by NYSDOH.
- The absence of other epidemiological data, information or factors as determined or identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) or the CCHD that impact COVID-19 control or mitigation.

“We have been working with school superintendents and other local health departments in our region to develop this framework we believe to be safe and fair,” added Mr. Kanoza. “If the addition of high-risk sports hinders a school’s ability to offer in-person instruction to their students, school-sponsored sports will be suspended.”

CCHD will be working with the schools to monitor compliance and COVID-19 positive students, teachers, staff, and coaches to evaluate the need for discontinuation or pause of these activities.

“We are hopeful for a successful return to in-person learning in the coming weeks and ask for patience and understanding as high-risk sports are folded in,” explained Mr. Kanoza. “The health, safety, and education of our students must remain the driving force behind any decisions made.”

#### **About the Clinton County Health Department:**

**The Health Department is an accredited full service department serving the residents of Clinton County. The Health Department’s Mission is to improve and protect the health, well-being and environment of the people of Clinton County. Visit our website at [www.clintonhealth.org](http://www.clintonhealth.org) or connect with us on Facebook (@clintonhealth), Twitter (@ClintonCountyHD), and Instagram (clintoncountyhealth).**

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