

NCHSAA MEDIA COVID-19 INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

This guidance is for site administrators, coaches at member schools, and media personnel to ensure safe competition and coverage of NCHSAA activities, the participants and their communities. Following protocols and risk-mitigating guidelines is critical to assuring the safety of event participants.

For further guidance, consult your district's COVID-19 plans, as well as information from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Site administrators are responsible for informing all media personnel of any local guidelines for coverage that may exist.

For further NCHSAA assistance, contact James Alverson at james@nchsaa.org.

Prior to working at an NCHSAA event, media members should check temperature and do a COVID-19 symptom check. If an individual's temperature is at or above 100 degrees, or if the individual has any symptoms of COVID-19 or reason to believe they may have been exposed to COVID-19, the individual should not attend any NCHSAA event or come to an NCHSAA member school's facility.

GENERAL ITEMS

MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA:

- Must submit to a COVID-19 screening upon arrival and as required by local policy.
- Must wear face coverings at all times, whether indoors or outdoors. Coverings must cover your mouth AND nose. The only exceptions to the requirement are for play-by-play or broadcast analysts providing live broadcasting where they can maintain social distancing from all other individuals present. Prior to the broadcast and upon completion of the broadcast, these individuals must also use face coverings.
- Must wash hands often, including after each visit to the restroom. Carry your own hand sanitizer.
- Must void personal contact with any individual on site (no handshaking, hugging, high fives, etc.)
- Must maintain six feet of social distance at all times.
- Must disinfect your equipment prior to arrival and after leaving the facility.
- Must inform the host athletic director in advance of their intent to cover the contest. Please ask at that time about specific guidelines in place at the district/school level.

PRACTICE CONSIDERATIONS

- Media members should not attend a practice, workout, or skill development session without specific, written permission from the school and/or district administration (athletic director, principal, etc.). Permission from a coach is not sufficient.
 - o In situations where practice attendance is permitted, every effort should be made to conduct interviews virtually.

GAMEDAY CONSIDERATIONS

- Gameday administrators will determine when the venue will be open to the media and when it will close. Media should limit time in the facility, keeping pre-game entry time to a minimum amount needed. Limit post-game activities as much as possible.
- Gameday administrators should provide a handout to media upon arrival that details policies and procedures relative to COVID-19 and social distancing.
- Post-game interviews should be conducted virtually, when possible. Host site or visiting athletic director should advise about the possibility of virtual interviews prior to the contest.
 - o In cases where an athletic director or designee determines that a virtual interview is not feasible, media may conduct interviews in an area designated by the gameday administrator which allows for proper social distancing. Any equipment used in these interviews should be properly sanitized between interviewees and masks must be worn.
- Media must not enter the team bench area at any time.
- Media must not enter the locker room at any time.
- Media must avoid use of or touching any sports/game equipment at the venue.
- In places where social distancing is not possible, as determined by the gameday administrator, media will not be permitted seating in the press box or at the scorer's table. When possible, host school should provide preprinted

rosters to media at check-in/screening. Media may temporarily approach the scorer's table or enter the press box to retrieve rosters or statistics. Social distancing must be maintained, and masks must be worn during this activity. The duration of this task should be as brief as possible.

- o Gameday administrators may make accommodations for media members in a press box or at a scorer's table if space is available (including social distancing guidelines) after all required game personnel and staff are accommodated with the required six feet of social distancing in place. In these circumstances, priority should be provided to radio/television commentary and production teams with equipment to protect from the elements. **A school or an LEA is not required to open the press box or scoring table area to media members.**

CONTACT TRACING AND POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST REPORTING

- Editors/Managers should maintain a document that lists which staff members attended which schools/locations/events on specific dates.
- Editors or Managers who become aware of a positive test for a member of their staff must notify the athletic directors at NCHSAA Member Schools where the individual has attended contests within the past two weeks. If the editor or manager needs assistance to contact the schools, please reach out to James Alverson at the NCHSAA, james@nchsaa.org.
- To facilitate contact tracing, testing and potential quarantines of individuals who may have been exposed, athletic administrators should maintain a list of media who check-in/sign-in at an event at their school.

NUMBER OF MEDIA AT INDOOR EVENTS/CONTESTS

- At Indoor Events where the number of available media personnel spots does not meet the demand for the contest, gameday administrators should give priority to media members who agree to fulfill a "pool reporter" role, sharing gathered materials from the venue with other media who may have been denied access due to number restrictions. These pooled resources could include but are not limited to quotations from interviews, video highlights, photos, statistics, scoring recaps, etc. and should only be supplied to media outlets that requested to cover the event/contest but were denied due to space limitations/social distancing requirements.
- Up to one streaming partner with essential personnel only (Maximum 4 persons). Preference should be given to NFHS Network school broadcast programs, student broadcasts, and official booster club broadcasts.
- Two radio broadcast stations, total of four individuals. (No more than one per school/team.) Radio crews should be limited to no more than two individuals on-site for indoor events. (Preference should be given to registered NCHSAA Media Outlets and Community Media Partners of the Schools involved)
- Four print media, total of four individuals. (No more than one per school/team.) To include no more than one reporter and one photographer per team. (Preference should be given to those with longstanding coverage of the school and team.)
- Gameday administrators for the host school should designate and mark media areas for each of these parties: Official Streaming area, Visiting Radio, Home Radio, Visiting Reporter, Visiting Photographer, Home Reporter, Home Photographer. There should be no cross-over or swapping of work areas. Proper social distancing should be provided and observed in each of these spaces away from spectators, cheerleaders, players, coaches and game administration/support personnel.

NUMBER OF MEDIA AT OUTDOOR EVENTS/CONTESTS

- The number of official media for an event/contest is determined by the host site administration.
- Gameday administrators for the host school should designate and mark media work areas for each attending individual or broadcast team. There should be no cross-over or swapping of work areas. Proper social distancing must be provided and observed in each of these spaces away from spectators, cheerleaders, players, coaches and game administration/support personnel.
- In the event of a stadium evacuation, media members should return to their vehicle unless it is unsafe to do so (i.e. a tornado warning has been issued or other similar circumstance). A gameday administrator from the school should advise all media members and spectators in the event sheltering indoors is necessary or advisable.