Bemidji State University COVID-19 Back-to-Campus Preparedness Plan ADDENDUM—Athletics Update

Risk of transmission of COVID-19

As reported by the CDC, while surface contact may be a risk, the most impactful determinant of COVID-19 spread is human-to-human contact. COVID-19 spread is greatest when individuals are in a crowded environment with prolonged close contact. Further, the risk of COVID-19 transmission is greater in indoor areas with poor ventilation. Indoor areas with good ventilation are better, and outdoor areas are best. Thus, COVID-19 spread is most likely when individuals are in prolonged close contact in an indoor area with poor ventilation, which has implications for both sport training and sport competition planning.

The CDC defines high risk of COVID-19 transmission as any situation in which there has been greater than 15 minutes of close contact, defined as being less than 6 feet apart, with an infectious individual. Importantly, there is a risk of transmission from being present with infectious individuals who are symptomatic, pre-symptomatic or asymptomatic.

The CDC recently updated its guidance to emphasize that, among adults, the risk for severe illness from COVID-19 increases with age, with older adults at highest risk and 8 out of 10 COVID-19-related deaths reported in the United States to date occurring in adults age 65 and older. In addition, the CDC also has established that individuals of any age with the following underlying medical conditions are at increased risk:

- Chronic kidney disease
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
- Obesity (body mass index of 30 or greater)
- Serious heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
- Sickle cell disease
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus

Finally, the CDC has advised that children who have complex medical situations, who have congenital heart disease or who have neurologic, genetic, metabolic conditions are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 than other children.

While data is still fairly limited, the CDC has said people with the following conditions might also be at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19:

- Asthma (moderate to severe)
- Cerebrovascular disease (affects blood vessels and blood supply to the brain)
- Cystic fibrosis
- Hypertension or high blood pressure
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids or use of other immune weakening medicines
- Neurologic conditions, such as dementia
• Liver disease
• Pregnancy
• Pulmonary fibrosis (having damaged or scarred lung tissues)
• Smoking
• Thalassemia (a type of blood disorder)
• Type 1 diabetes mellitus

As published data confirms that the risk of death from COVID-19 increases with age and high-risk underlying medical conditions, students and student-athletes who are not in high-risk categories themselves may be unlikely to have complications from COVID-19, but they represent a significant threat to any high-risk category individuals with whom they may have unprotected contact. These risks must be considered as part of the risk/benefit ratio of resocialization of collegiate sport. Of note, sports such as football may have an overrepresentation of student-athletes (for example, football linemen) who meet the high-risk criteria as it relates to obesity. For this reason, prevention and testing strategies should recognize that some athletes may have an increased risk of adverse outcomes from COVID-19.

Athletes and staff with the above conditions must consult with their physician prior to being involved in collegiate athletics at BSU. If an athlete or staff member must routinely come in contact with another individual with one of the above complications they must also determine if they should be involved.

**Mitigating risk with daily self-health checks**

Every student-athlete and all athletics personnel will practice daily self-health evaluations via the online tool prior to coming on campus. Individuals who identify any of the following symptoms or signs during the daily self-health evaluation is required to contact their designated athletic trainer or coach by telephone or text before coming on campus or to any athletics facility:

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.
- Cough or other respiratory symptoms.
- Headache.
- Chills.
- Muscle aches.
- Sore throat.
- Congestion or runny nose.
- New loss of taste or smell.
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.
- Pain, redness, swelling or rash on toes or fingers (COVID toes).
- New rash or other skin symptoms.
- High-risk exposure: a new contact with an infected individual or prolonged contact with a crowd without physical distancing (for example, attended a party in which there was no masking or physical distancing).
- Temperature of 100.4°F Fahrenheit or above.

Athletes will be checked daily prior to participation in athletics activities on campus to determine if self-symptoms evaluation and contact check has been done and have their temperature checked via infrared thermometry.

**Mitigating risk with face coverings and Social distancing**

Masking
- BSU athletics will follow BSU, NSIC, WCHA, MinnState, MDH, and CDC guidelines for masking in all activities.

Social distancing
• Social distancing principles shall always be used excluding situations mandated by the nature of the games being played
• Practices should be altered to maintain social distancing as much as possible while still meeting the requirements to practice for each specific sport

**Mitigating risk with outdoor training**

There is good evidence that risk of COVID-19 transmission is greater in indoor areas with poor ventilation. Indoor areas with good ventilation are better, and outdoor areas are best. This means, to the extent possible, there should be maximization of outdoor activity during training as a strategy to mitigate COVID-19 risk.

When outdoor training is not feasible, or for indoor sports, it is important to try to ensure that ventilation systems are operating properly, air flow is maximized, and physical distancing is maintained. Consider the following CDC recommendations:

**Impact of activities outside of athletics**

It is important to remember that activities of student-athletes, coaches, and staff outside of athletics can affect the transmission of the virus inside of athletics. All are encouraged to limit their social and family bubble to help reduce the risk of exposure. Dorm life and social life are areas that can create additional exposures and care must be taken to limit risks in those areas.

**Strategies for resuming activity following positive test results**

Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 will

- Isolate for – at least 10 days following start of symptoms AND 24 hours fever free (not medically controlled) AND significant reduction in symptoms OR if completely asymptomatic they will isolate for 10 days following the date that the test was done.
- Obtain physician clearance post COVID including cardiac testing
- Undergo a monitored exercise return to play following clearance by physician

**Team practice considerations**

**Functional units**

Team shall operate practices, meetings, and other team activities maintaining groupings of functional units to minimize spread throughout the entire team where possible

**Locker Room usage**

Locker rooms will be opened for usage to allow athletes to shower and for equipment storage.

- Loitering will not be allowed in the locker room spaces
- Athletes must maintain social distancing and mask usage when not in the shower
- Each team will follow MDH guidelines for max occupancy and social distancing in locker rooms
- Practices should be accommodating to allow for lower numbers in the locker rooms
- Each individual team will make plans for locker room usage

**Meetings and Film**

- Meetings should be done via online format whenever possible
- When in person meetings are needed, social distancing and masking must be done at all times

**Whistles**

- Electronic whistles are strongly encouraged

**Water**

- Each athlete shall have an individual water bottle
• Water bottles must not be shared
• Athletes can fill their water bottles with touch free filling stations or with the help of an athletic trainer or other designated personnel
• Athletes must not touch water coolers/dispensers

**Cleaning**
• Surfaces (including athletics implements) in athletics areas will be cleaned per MDH and CDC guidelines

**Athletic training room and weight room**
• These spaces will have max occupancies that are set by MDH and CDC guidelines.
• Masking, appropriate PPE usage, and social distancing principles will be maintained
• Weight room will have scheduled times for each athlete, and they will not be allowed to change times
• Athletic training room will be available by appointment only for treatment and rehabilitation
  ▪ Space will be reserved for emergency evaluations
  ▪ Taping, icing and other first aid procedures will be done in an isolated entrance area in the athletic training room or in an established area outside of the athletic training room
• Regular cleaning procedures recommended by the MDH and CDC will be practiced

**Recruiting visits and tryouts**
• Recruits will be allowed on campus for visits
• They must follow campus rules for social distancing and masking
• Established procedures for campus tours will be followed
• Tryout workouts will be allowed with the following procedures
  ▪ Workouts must be individual, no groups, or inclusion of our current athletes in drills
  ▪ Multiple recruits can have a workout at the same time but they but be distanced and doing separate drills from the other recruits
  ▪ Locker room use must follow the procedures established by each team
  ▪ Equipment and facilities must be cleaned following established BSU, MDH, and CDC procedures

**Testing strategies**
• Athletics has contracted with Hennepin County Medical to conduct regular screening of our athletes and staff.
  ▪ Athletes and staff must sign a consent form to allow testing and for the results to be released to BSU Head Athletic Trainer via fax or online portal.
  ▪ Samples will be collected by BSU athletic training staff and sent overnight via climate-controlled shipping boxes to HCMC for laboratory testing.
• BSU will follow established testing guidelines through the NCAA Resocialization in Sport plan.
• Teams must enter one of the testing strategies to conduct practices that are not socially distanced. That strategy will be based on NCAA recommendations per sport and competition season.

**Contact Tracing**
BSU will collaborate with and County and State officials to conduct contact tracing
• Head athletic trainer and athletic training staff will be the main contact tracers for athletics
  ▪ Will refer obtained names of non-athlete BSU students to student health
  ▪ Will refer obtained names of faculty/staff to HR
  ▪ Will refer obtained names of general population to Beltrami county
• If exposure with a positive case is determined athletes will – Quarantine for 14 days, recommendation for testing at 7 days from contact (results do not change quarantine duration)
• If an athlete that tests positive for COVID-19 was determined to have participated in a non-socially distanced practice or game BSU will immediately quarantine that individual’s team “inner Bubble” and follow guidance of the NCAA and MDH to conduct contact tracing in conjunction with Beltrami County and MDH.
  o In the event that this was a competition with an outside entity, BSU Head Athletic Trainer and BSU administration will make contact with that entity’s representatives and the conferences representatives.

**Discontinuation of Athletics**
The decision to discontinue athletics as a result of a surge in COVID cases will be made in conjunction with BSU administration, MDH, MinnState, NSIC, WCHA, Beltrami County, and Sanford Health

**Certification**

This plan has been certified by Bemidji State University leadership and was shared and posted throughout the campus community. It will be updated as necessary.

Certified by:

[Signature]

October 4, 2020

*Bemidji State University President*