

## **COVID-19 Sports Advisory Task Force Update:**

July 2nd 2020

The below statement is submitted by David Frazier, Chair of the Sports Advisory Task Force:

The Sports Advisory Task Force is striving to release models for a return to the fall sports regular season next Friday, July 10. The models will identify different scenarios that will be available based on the status of the start of the school year as well as the COVID-19 health guidelines. The goal of the models is to identify practice & competition start dates and regular season periods that will be in place in order to help leagues and conferences begin planning for different scenarios. It is our goal to provide students the much needed opportunity to participate in athletics while providing the safest conditions possible. We all recognize the fluidity of this pandemic, and how information is changing on an almost daily basis which will likely have our fall season look different than athletic seasons prior to the pandemic. Some of these differences include:

1. Travel - CDC guidelines continue to indicate that travel may increase risk. Schools should minimize length and amount of travel for competitions in order to maximize student safety.
2. Length of Season - The regular season length and maximum number of games to be played will most likely need to be reduced.
3. Post-Season Tournaments - The schedule may not permit statewide postseason competition in the format we are accustomed to.

While many are continuing to wait for direction from the NJSIAA, there are factors that Leagues and Conferences can begin to examine. The creation of smaller divisions to reduce travel and risk of exposure, limiting independent contests and giving strong consideration to equitable divisional schedules and utilizing the weekend for competitions that may normally compete on the weekdays to assist with flexibility in transportation to name a few. It is important to note that the models will continue to be assessed all summer for compliance with the current Department of Education return to school guidelines, current health guidelines, as well as decisions coming from the Governor's office. We will continue to strive to find safe solutions that pave the way back to high school athletics.