

The Mount Safe Athletics Plan continues to evolve. Many aspects of the plan are based on guidelines and recommendations set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the NCAA and Northeast Conference, in addition to the university Mount Safe Initiative. Student-athletes and Mount Athletics employees must comply with the University plan and the Athletics Plan.

NCAA GUIDANCE

The Mount Safe Athletics Plan incorporates relevant guidance included in the [NCAA Core Principles of Resocialization of Collegiate Sport](#), and the [NCAA Resocialization of Collegiate Sport](#). These documents continue to be updated by the NCAA and shared with the membership.

NORTHEAST CONFERENCE & NCAA DECISIONS

On July 29, the Northeast Conference Council of Presidents voted to postpone all fall sports athletic competitions and championships. This postponement applied to NEC sponsored sports and impacted the following sports at Mount St. Mary's: men's and women's cross country, men's and women's soccer and women's rugby. The Council agreed to reconvene again by October 1 to evaluate the public health crisis and competitive options moving forward.

On August 21, the NCAA Board of Directors approved planning to conduct, if possible, the NCAA Division I fall sport champion-

ships in the spring of 2021. While the Board is committed to conducting these championships in the spring, due to the uncertain nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, determinations will be made at a later date as to whether to proceed should conditions fail to improve.

PENDING DECISIONS

There have been no decisions on the status of winter and spring sports. The NCAA is developing a series of options related to the return of basketball, beginning with the consideration of uniform practice and competition start dates for all Division I institutions. These options assume the current NCAA championship format in terms of start date, length and number of teams. The NCAA anticipates a decision about basketball practice and competition start dates by September 16. The Northeast Conference will work with the athletic administrators to develop basketball and other winter sports practice and competition scheduling models for the NEC Presidents' review and approval in late September.

Based on the need to prioritize the return of winter sports, the Northeast Conference will delay until late September the start of its comprehensive consideration of moving fall sports to the spring. There are many issues and questions that the NEC membership will need to address at that time.

RETURN TO SPORT PRACTICE ACTIVITIES

The concept of transition periods is a key component of the return to sport activities. A transition period is a specified amount of time that is required for a student-athlete to gradually adapt to full return to University life and sport activity/training following a period of inactivity or a change in activity (i.e., pandemic). A collaborative approach that involves sports medicine staff, strength and conditioning and sport coaches is essential to make certain each student-athlete has a successful transition plan for return to training and sport activities.

In-person return to athletic-related activities for student-athletes will be gradual, limited, and phased-in over the course of the semester for all teams. (Virtual individual and team meetings will continue.) This gradual transition is vital for the success of the fall semester and hopeful return to competition. The phasing timeline will be six to seven weeks for each sport. The timeline and plan may be modified if intercollegiate competition is canceled for the entire fall semester. Teams will follow permissible NCAA guidelines for countable athletic-related activities (CARA) hours for their sport.

MOUNT RESOCIALIZATION OF SPORT PLAN

Each sport will have a 6 to 7 week phasing timeline as it transitions to sports activity. Sports will be grouped by their respective championship seasons: fall, winter, spring. (The length of each phase differs slightly depending on the season.) The phasing timeline may be modified at any time based upon guidance from sports medicine, the CDC, state, NEC, and NCAA.

Permissible Activities During Each Phase

Phase 0

All Sports. No athletically-related activities; intercollegiate athletic facilities closed.

- Locker rooms are closed.
- Student-athletes return to campus, learn how to navigate campus life, acclimate to university guidelines.
- Student-athletes must adhere to physical distancing and face coverings as indicated by University policy.
- Student-athletes may continue virtual strength and conditioning programs.

Phase 1

- Individual workouts permitted; one on one with coach.
- Strength and conditioning is permitted.
- Locker rooms remain closed.
- Student-athletes must continue to comply with all Athletic Department and University policies.

Phase 2

- In accordance with best practice guidelines and successful implementation of phase 1, and no evidence of a rebound of viral illness, student-athletes may return to in-person strength and conditioning; and smaller group workouts permitted; < 10 people/group.
- Locker rooms can reopen with reduced capacity and masks/physical distancing required.
- Student-athletes must continue to comply with all Athletic Department and University policies

Phase 3

- Full team workouts permitted.
- In accordance with best practice guidelines and successful implementation of phase 2, and no evidence of a rebound of viral illness, student-athletes may return to in person strength and conditioning and full team practice activities.
- Student-athletes must continue to comply with all Athletic Department and University policies.

After phase 3, return to competition is to be determined. Guidelines will be updated as further decisions are made.

TESTING AND SURVEILLANCE

Baseline testing and surveillance along with contact tracing have been determined to be an extremely effective method to reduce transmission of COVID-19 within a community.

The Mount St. Mary's COVID-19 testing policy coincides with the NCAA sport by sport risk assessment based on contact. The sports sponsored by Mount St. Mary's are categorized by contact risk:

- **Low Risk:** bowling, golf, swimming/diving, tennis, track and field
- **Medium Risk:** baseball, softball, cross country (dependent on student-athlete's proximity to other unmasked individuals)
- **High Risk:** basketball, lacrosse, rugby, soccer, water polo

Testing

- All students are required to obtain a negative COVID-19 test 10 days prior to return to campus.

Phase 0:	No Athletics	1-2 weeks depending on season
Phase 1:	Voluntary/Individual Workouts	1 week-2 weeks depending on season
Phase 2:	Small Groups <10	2 weeks
Phase 3:	Full Team <50	2 weeks
Return to Competition TBD after Phase 3 Complete		

- All students will be tested upon their return to campus.
- Athletics testing plan will merge the sport risk and the resocialization to sport phasing periods. The testing protocol is subject to change based upon state, local health guidelines and recommendations provided from the NCAA.
- All student-athletes and staff/support personnel exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19 will be evaluated by medical professionals and testing may be warranted.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO ALL SPORTING EVENTS

To conduct games and practices, organizations and teams authorized to conduct in-person activities pursuant to this guidance must adhere to the following:

- When the resumption of intercollegiate athletic competition is permitted, all athletic events and competitions must adhere to all university, state, local, conference, and NCAA guidelines.
- All Mount Athletics student-athletes and employees, including coaches, will receive education on health and safety protocol and hygiene practices. Coaches should create a back-up staffing plan that includes cross-training staff. Signage at events/facilities will educate attendees.
- Facility plans for each athletic venue will be created. All university plans and facility information will be disseminated to officials and visiting teams.
- Coaching staff and other employees must wear face coverings at all times unless doing so jeopardizes their health.
- Coaches and student-athletes must maintain appropriate physical distancing at all times to the extent possible, including in the field of play, locker rooms, sidelines, dugouts, benches and workout areas. During down time, student-athletes and coaches should not congregate.
- Mount Athletics will monitor and screen student-athletes for symptoms prior to and during games and practices. If individuals participating in sporting activities show symptoms, have a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher, or are sick, they will be screened again. If the temperature does not change, they will then be sent home
- All student-athletes, coaches and officials must bring their own water and drinks to team activities. Team water coolers for sharing through disposable cups are not allowed. Fixed water fountains should not be used (except for fixed water-bottle filling stations).
- Activities that increase the risk of exposure to saliva must not be allowed, including chewing gum, spitting, licking fingers, and eating sunflower seeds.
- Student-athletes and coaches will be educated to avoid handshakes, fist bumps or high fives before, during or after games and practices, and to limit unnecessary physical contact with teammates, other athletes, coaches, officials, and spectators.

- Whenever possible, equipment and other personal items should be separated and not shared. If equipment must be shared,

all equipment should be properly disinfected between users to the extent possible.