Return to Sport
Protocols and Procedures
Yellowjacket Athletics

The University of Wisconsin-Superior and Yellowjacket Athletics continue to work to prepare for the return of student-athletes and athletic activity. The university’s return to sport plan serves as an initial framework that encompasses strategies to minimize risk of infection and protocols that help protect the health, safety and well-being of student-athletes, coaches, staff and athletics student workers.

Future additions to this plan will be developed as part of continued planning with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the university’s governing sport conferences, the Upper Midwest Athletic Conference (UMAC) and the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC; men’s and women’s ice hockey). The Athletics Department will closely monitor activities alongside campus leadership and with the university’s Office of Environmental Health and Safety to best provide a safe and healthy environment for student-athletes. The university and athletics department reserve the right to update, change, and/or replace any part of this plan and protocols at any time.

Guiding Principles

As the university developed its plan, the following were guiding principles in our planning efforts and decision-making:

1. Support the health and safety of student-athletes, coaches, staff, athletic student workers, campus community, visiting student-athletes and teams, and broader community;
2. Support the essential elements of the student-athlete experience, including practice and competition;
3. Compliance to national, state and local public health directives.
Testing, Quarantine and Isolation

The university and athletics department will follow the NCAA SSI guidelines related to testing of Tier 1 individuals (defined below) for COVID-19 during the competitive season(s) of each sport. This applies to both the traditional and non-traditional periods. The testing protocols differ between two populations: (1) those who are fully vaccinated (14 days after final shot) or an individual who has had a prior infection within the past 90 days, and (2) those who are not fully vaccinated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Fully Vaccinated</th>
<th>Fully Vaccinated or Documented Infection in the Past 90 Days</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During Competition Season</td>
<td>Weekly PCR/NAAT testing or three times-a-week antigen testing when no competition is scheduled.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PCR/NAAT test within three days of first competition of the week or antigen test within one day of each competition</td>
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<td></td>
<td>No testing unless symptomatic, or based on a risk assessment of a documented close contact with COVID-19.</td>
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For many sports, due to the structure of the conference season and weekend series against multiple institutions, three times-a-week testing may be most applicable.

Vaccination

Student-athletes who are fully vaccinated should submit their vaccination information to our Dean of Students Office via the university’s form. Be sure to mark on the form that you are a student-athlete. Athletics and our sports medicine staff will work with the Dean of Students to verify records accordingly.

Testing Appointments and Modality

Student-athletes required to test will be able to do so at the university’s surge testing site. The site utilizes an antigen test for surveillance testing. Additional information regarding how student-athletes will schedule appointments and report their test results will be shared and monitored by the Director of Athletics, Sports Medicine Staff, and Dean of Students Office.

Testing Categorization

The NCAA SSI identifies individuals based off of their interactions with one another:

- **Tier 1** - This is the highest exposure tier and consists of individuals for whom physical distancing and face coverings are not possible or effective during athletic training or competition. Examples of relevant individuals include student-athletes, coaches, athletic trainers, physical therapists, medical staff, equipment staff and officials.

- **Tier 2** - This is a moderate exposure tier and consists of individuals who come into close contact with Tier 1 individuals but can reasonably maintain physical distance and use face coverings. Examples of relevant individuals include certain team staff (for example, executives) and certain operational staff (for example, security, event staff and league staff).
• Tier 3 - This is the lowest exposure tier and includes individuals who provide event services but do not come into close contact with Tier 1 individuals (and should this occur, would be reclassified into Tier 2). Examples of relevant individuals include certain operational staff (for example, housekeeping, catering, sanitation and transportation) and media or broadcast workers.

**Testing Compliance**

Student-athletes are required to comply with all testing requirements. Failure to comply or missed tests will result in the immediate suspension from athletic activity for 10 days. A second violation will result in the dismissal from athletic activity for the remainder of the spring semester.

**Prior Positive Cases**

The CDC and NCAA does not recommend surveillance testing for infected individuals within 90-days following infection. If an individual is within his/her 90-day window, he/she would be excluded from testing. However, once the 90-day window expires, the individual will join the testing cohort. Student-athletes must show valid proof of prior infection to the sports medicine staff.

**Quarantine and Isolation**

The athletics department will follow the university and Douglas County’s guidelines related to quarantine and isolation, which are based off of the guidelines set by the CDC and/or State of Wisconsin. The athletics department works closely with the Dean of Students Office in this regard.

Individuals who are fully vaccinated may not be subject to quarantine, unless they become symptomatic. Individuals who are not fully vaccinated will be subject to quarantine and isolation protocols.

**Return to Play After COVID-19**

If a student-athlete has been infected with COVID-19, the student-athlete will go through an established return to play protocol with the athletics medical staff and team physicians. A student-athlete is required to meet with and receive clearance from a physician prior to returning to play. Student-athletes do retain the choice of working with one of the athletic team physicians or their own health provider. The below diagram outlines the return to play protocol.
Masks and Personal Protective Equipment

As part of the university’s safety procedures, all student-athletes, coaches, staff and student workers will be required to follow the mask policies established by the University, our governing sport conferences and local and state public health officials.

Personal protective equipment will be utilized by coaches, staff and athletics student-workers as necessary. The Athletics Department will work alongside the Office of Environmental Health and Safety to determine necessary PPE requirements.

Practice, Competition and Team Activities

Practice

Programs will be able to conduct practices as permissible under NCAA legislation.

Competition

The university is working closely with our governing sport conferences, the Upper Midwest Athletic Conference and Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, in preparation for the upcoming year. The university expects the resumption of full traditional seasons for all sports, including conference and NCAA championships.

Cleaning and Sanitization Stations and Supplies

Throughout university facilities, sanitization stations have been installed to help best promote a safe environment for all campus community members. Student-athletes are encouraged to use these stations and supplies as needed.

Team Meetings, Study Tables and Activities

Programs will still be able to conduct team meetings, study tables and other team related activities, as permissible under NCAA legislation.
Facilities

To mitigate risk of exposure, the Athletics Department will only be utilizing its own facilities, the facilities of the Superior School District, and Nemadji Golf Course (men’s and women’s golf) for its own practices and home competitions.

Facility Cleaning Procedures

The university is working closely with the Office of Environmental Health and Safety and Facilities Management to continue with the necessary cleaning and sanitization procedures for all of campus, including athletic facilities. Facilities will be cleaned prior to and after each use, in addition to going through a deep sanitization at night while buildings are closed.

Equipment

Equipment utilized in practices, training and competition will be cleaned and sanitized frequently. Programs will try to greatly minimize any shared equipment.

Laundry Services

Laundry services will still be provided to student-athletes in the Marcovich Wellness Center. Student-athletes can use the laundry services by obtaining a laundry loop from their Head Coach.

Water Bottles and Drinking Fountains

The Athletics Department will supply each student-athlete with their own water bottle to utilize during practice, training and competition. Public drinking fountains and water bottle filling stations will be available.

Athletic Training Room

The health and safety of our student-athletes will continue to be the primary focus of our sports medicine team. The athletic training room will be available to student-athletes through appointments only, or in the case of an emergency, to allow for proper social distancing and safety precautions. No drop-in services will be provided. Student-athletes will be able to make appointments with the athletic training staff through the athletics website. Remote athletic training services, such as ankle-taping, will be provided at each practice.

The sports medicine team will monitor appointments and if needed give priority access to student-athletes who are in their declared playing season. Student-athletes who are out-of-season will still be able to access services, though may be asked to visit make appointments that do not conflict with other appointments or practices.

Locker Room and Team Spaces

Locker rooms and team spaces will be available to student-athletes. Student-athletes are still expected to adhere to applicable safety protocols, such as wearing a mask and physically distancing, when accessing spaces. Locker rooms will be closed periodically to allow for cleaning.
Team Travel

Transportation

The Athletics Department is working closely with our transportation partners to develop proper safety procedures. Student-athletes, coaches and staff will be required to comply with any safety protocols, such as wearing a mask, during transportation.

Lodging

Should a team need lodging during travel, student-athletes will room with individuals that most routinely frequent with (such as a roommate). Individuals will sleep one per bed.

Meals

During team travel, coaches will be working to pre-order all meals and/or ensuring they are individually packaged. Meals will either be delivered to the team at the site of competition or scheduled for pick-up. Student-athletes with specific dietary restrictions will be able to work with their coaches to make reasonable accommodations.

Visiting Institution Protocols

The university is working closely with our governing sport conferences, the Upper Midwest Athletic Conference and Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, in determining consistent protocols for all institutions to follow while traveling. These protocols will include access to locker rooms, athletic training, cleaning and sanitization, and specific arrival and departure procedures.

Game Day

Video and Audio Streaming

Yellowjacket Athletics has partnered with iFan Sports Network and KUWS, FM 91.3 Wisconsin Public Radio, to grow the video and audio streaming for the majority of home athletic contests for the 2021-22 academic year. Further information will be available on the athletics website.

Sports Information

The athletics department is planning to maintain its sports information duties, including live stats for home games. The scorer’s table will incorporate physical distancing and all individuals will be required to wear face coverings.

Spectator Access

The university plans to allow spectators for all home athletics contests for the 2021-22 academic year. Spectators would be required to follow University health and safety protocols, such as wearing a mask indoors. Ticket rates still apply.
Eligibility

2021-22 Enrollment Flexibility Waiver

The NCAA passed a full-time enrollment blanket waiver for the 2021-22 academic year allowing a student-athlete to participate while enrolled less than full time as follows:

1. If a student-athlete has graduated, prior to the 2021-22 academic year, then they may be enrolled in a minimum of six credit hours each semester or quarter in a second baccalaureate, graduate program or classes approved by an academic authority outside of athletics that progresses the student-athlete toward a professional or career goal.

2. If a student-athlete will graduate during the 2021-22 academic year, the student-athlete may:
   a. Enroll in a minimum of six hours of academic credit during the fall 2021 term and then enroll in the classes necessary to complete their degree per the final term exception (Bylaw 14.1.8.1.7.1) for the spring semester of 2022; or
   b. The student-athlete enrolls in the classes necessary to complete their degree per the final term exception (Bylaw 14.1.8.1.7.1) for the fall 2021 semester and then is enrolled in a minimum of six credit hours for each subsequent term for the remainder of the 2021-22 academic year (e.g., Spring 2022 semester) in a second baccalaureate, graduate program or classes that progress the student-athlete toward a professional or career goal and are approved by an academic authority outside of athletics.

Student-athletes interest in the waiver should inquire with the Director of Athletics. Additional information on the enrollment blanket waiver can be found in the NCAA Q&A Guide.

Violations to Protocols

To help ensure the safety of all individuals through the enforcement of protocols and safety guidelines, a student-athlete found in violation will face disciplinary action. The Director of Athletics will review the violation and issue necessary discipline as deemed appropriate.

First Offense: Removal from in-person team activities for 10 days. Student-athlete is able to rejoin activities pending a negative COVID-19 test. The student will be responsible for securing their own test.

*A first offense may be warranted by repetitive minor violations, such as not wearing a face covering and breaking university guidelines outside of athletics.

Second Offense: Suspension from all athletic activity for the reminder of the academic year.

Discontinuation or Suspension of Athletics

To help protect the safety of all student-athletes, the campus community and the surrounding Twin Ports community, the university may have to assess the status of athletics and the ability to conduct athletic activity. This evaluation could be sport-specific or inclusive of all programs. The suspension of a team’s activity could be promoted should any of the following conditions be triggered:

- A lack of ability to isolate new positive cases or quarantine high contact risk cases on campus
• Repetitive violations of team members or an egregious violation of safety protocols by a team member.

The discontinuation of athletics could be prompted should any of the following conditions be triggered:

• A lack of ability to isolate new positive cases or quarantine high contact risk cases on campus
• Unavailability or inability to perform symptomatic, surveillance and pre-competition testing
• Campus-wide or local community test rates that are considered unsafe by local public health authorities.
• Inability to perform adequate contact tracing consistent with governmental requirements or recommendations.
• Local public health authorities stating that there is an inability for the hospital infrastructure to accommodate a surge in hospitalizations related to COVID-19.