

# Mt. Lebanon Flag Football Association Health and Safety Plan

We at the Mt. Lebanon Flag Football Association (MLFFA) are striving to bring Flag Football to our community and provide a safe, competitive environment. We are seeking the cooperation of the athletes, parents, coaches, and all involved as we move forward to plan and sponsor the 2020 season in this unique time of the COVID-19 virus..

In conjunction with the Mt. Lebanon tackle Football Association and with guidance from the Mt. Lebanon School District Athletics Department's Activities Health and Safety Plan and the Mt. Lebanon Recreation Department we are setting out the following guidelines for participation in MLFFA activities such as workouts, practices and competitive games this year.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused club sports to re-evaluate the processes they use to implement their program and these sporting clubs are making changes to these processes to provide a safe environment in which to hold sporting activities

The COVID-19 virus is a highly contagious illness that attacks the upper respiratory system. It has the potential to cause serious illness with very negative outcomes in people of all genders and ages and in all communities.

The goals of safely participating in athletics must focus on mitigating the risk of the COVID -19 transmission, quickly identifying and removing participants who may have been exposed or contracted the COVID -19 virus and also in limiting the participation of vulnerable and at-risk population.

The Mt. Lebanon Flag Football Association will continually monitor and take the appropriate recommendations from the Center for Disease Control, Allegheny County Health Department, Mt. Lebanon School District, and the Mt. Lebanon Recreation Department in running our program. We realize that knowledge regarding COVID -19 is constantly changing as new information and recommendations becomes available. The MLFFA will adjust the following guidelines as needed to make our program and its participants as safe as possible.

As the MLFFA strives to provide the safest environment possible for our children to participate in our program we are providing the following guidelines to be followed by athletes, parents' coaches and all involved with administering the programs activities.

The following are general guidelines that we are asking everyone to follow when participating in MLFFA activities as we work to provide the safest environment given the current pandemic:

1. Be considerate of others. To continue to provide the safest environment for everyone and to continue to use local facilities and resources we work must work together and help each other follow all guidelines.

# Mt. Lebanon Flag Football Association Health and Safety Plan

2. Physical distancing is always encouraged when not actively engaged in sport participation. When spectating or waiting for your athletes, please adhere to the 6-foot minimum spacing guidelines.
3. Wear a mask on and off the field of play. The MLFFA feels that it is essential to helping prevent the spread of the virus as much as possible when we don't know we may be infected by wearing an approved face covering.
4. Wash hands with soap or hand sanitizer regularly. The league will provide a supply of hand sanitizer, but we strongly encourage each player/family to also bring their own hand sanitizer.
5. Sanitizing options will be available on the field and should be used whenever possible.
6. Participants on and around the field of play should be limited wherever possible.
7. Social gatherings and grouping of players and spectators should not occur at this time.
8. Refrain from bringing/sharing any food. Personal water or drink containers with names on them are very highly recommended. Activities that increase the risk of exposure to saliva must not be allowed including chewing gum, spitting, licking fingers, and eating sunflower seeds.
9. If the athlete or any of the athlete support group feels sick, we ask that they stay at home. COVID-19 symptoms include but are not limited to cough; shortness of breath; fever of 100.4 degrees or higher; chills; muscle pain; new loss of taste or smell; sore throat.

## As a Club and an Athletic Association as a whole, we will be:

- Create, monitor, and continually update this Health Plan.
- Keep the parents, coaches and players informed of any changes to the MLFFA Health Plan as recommendations from the above-mentioned advisory organizations change or are updated.
- Coaches and the MLFFA will review and adhere to CDC guidance as a consideration in conducting practices and games to modify the activities to teach new skills or football techniques. We will focus on skill building versus competition drills that will limit close contact in this close contact sport.
- Requiring a check-in sheet by each team for each practice, game, and association sponsored activity to allow for communication should a confirmed case of a COVID-19 diagnosis occurs.
- Provide additional sanitation equipment at the fields of practice or play.
- Staggering the start times and locations where possible at practices and games to minimize the contact between players, supporting family and friends and visitors.

# Mt. Lebanon Flag Football Association Health and Safety Plan

- The MLFFA will handle setting up the cones and markers for the games to minimize the handling of the equipment by numerous parties.
- Keep the lines of communicating open between parents, coaches and the MLFFA administration should any players or parents become uncomfortable with any of the recommended precautions and guidelines set out to provide a safe environment.

We are reviewing operationally how we run games and practices to adopt and update our practices. As we continue the process of planning for the upcoming season, we will consider ways to make the game safer. Below is a list of possible updates to the way we conduct flag football practices and games and we will implement these changes if we feel they may add safety to our program.

- Consider having coaches call plays from the sidelines rather than in a team huddle.
- Consider adding additional timeouts to allow for hand hygiene during each half.
- Provide additional footballs where possible to allow for more frequent equipment switches and disinfect footballs with disinfecting wipes or alcohol as often as possible.
- Discourage players from removing and re-inserting mouthguards.
- Consider electronic or handheld whistles.
- We will focus on skill building versus competition drills that will limit close contact in this close contact sport.

As we all follow the above general guidelines and implement our responsibilities as an organization, we ask that you review learn and practice the following guidelines for parents, coaches and players as practices and games get underway.

## From the Parent's perspective, we are asking you to:

- Wear an approved mask when assisting your child in the proximity of all playing fields.
- Ensure their child is maintaining good hygiene.
- Check their health for symptoms of the virus noted above including taking the child's temperature before games and practices. If individuals participating in sporting activities show symptoms, have a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher, or are sick, they may not participate.
- Notify your child's coach if their child is not feeling well.
- Ensure their child's equipment and uniform are properly sanitized after each game and practice.
- Provide their child with hand sanitizer for each game and practice.
- Stay in their car during practices and games when social distancing is not feasible.
- Stay in their car with their child until the arrival time for each game or practice.

# Mt. Lebanon Flag Football Association Health and Safety Plan

- Do not touch game balls during the course of a game (allow participating players, coaches, and umpires-referees retrieve balls that go out of play).
- Leave the field promptly after each game or practice to minimize unnecessary contact with players, coaches, and spectators from the next game or practice.

## From a player's perspective, we are asking players to:

- Players ARE required to wear an approved face covering while on the field during game due to the close proximate nature of the sport of football.
- Stay home if they are not comfortable returning to play or they are exhibiting signs of the virus.
- Sanitize their hands before, during, and after practices
- Wash and sanitize their equipment after each practice and game
- Bring their own personal drinks to all team activities. Drinks should be labeled with the person's name. Individuals should take their own drink containers home each night for cleaning and sanitation or use single-use bottles.
- Not to share their water or equipment
- Activities that increase the risk of exposure to saliva must not be allowed including chewing gum, spitting, licking fingers, and eating sunflower seeds.
- Players should wear approved face coverings when in close contact areas and in places where recommended social distancing is challenging or not feasible.
- Respect social distancing and to place their equipment at least 6 feet apart from other players equipment. During down time, athletes and coaches should not congregate.

## From a coach's perspective, we are asking coaches to:

- Always wear an approved face mask when on or in proximity to the field of practice or play.
- Survey players and coaches in attendance of their health before practice. If individuals participating in sporting activities show symptoms, have a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher, or are sick, they must be sent home.
- Respect player and parents not comfortable with returning.
- Confirm the attendance of all players and coaches in attendance at games and practices to MLFFA administration.
- Respect social distancing and attempt to remain 6 feet apart from others. During down time, athletes and coaches should not congregate.
- Monitor that there is no use of shared or team beverages or food.
- Help to ensure that all players managers/coaches, volunteers, umpires, referees etc., are wearing approved face coverings whenever applicable and possible.
- Ensure any equipment used for practices are sanitized or cleaned after each game or practice.
- Coaches will focus on practice activities that limit close contact or drills that focus on players making contact with each other. This includes focusing on skill building versus competition and limiting contact in close contact sports.
- Players and coaches should refrain from any unnecessary contact during play.

# Mt. Lebanon Flag Football Association Health and Safety Plan

Handshakes, high fives, or other unnecessary contact should be avoided.

Greetings, hand waving and other forms of sportsmanship are encouraged.

- Should the coach be made aware that a player has become infected with the COVID-19 virus, they will take all necessary information about the child's past participation in team activities so this information may be relayed to MLFFA administration and to the proper authorities.

## Suspected or Confirmed Cases of Coronavirus:

In the event of a suspected or confirmed case of Coronavirus, we have established the following guidelines as well:

- The player's parent or guardian will contact your child's coach so we can communicate to the risk of exposure to the rest of the teams/families. Be assured, we will not share any personal information, our communication will simply alert other participants that they may have encountered a suspected or confirmed case of Coronavirus.
- Review the sign in sheets to be able to assist in identifying any players or coaches that may need to take additional precautions to make sure they have information to take appropriate action.
- Immediately isolate and seek medical care for any individual who develops symptoms.
- Contact health officials about suspected cases or exposure.
- The infected player should not attend any MLFFA sports related activity until cleared by a medical professional

All the above information is set out as guidelines and recommendations based on the most current available information and are subject to change at any time. The decision to participate in the flag football is the sole decision of each family and the MLFFA is not responsible for anyone who contracts any illness, including COVID-19 as a result of participation in MLFFA activities.

Additional resources are provided below to assist MLFFA, coaches' parents and students stay as safe as possible as we provide youth sporting activities to the community of Mt. Lebanon. If at any time any of the guiding agencies referenced above or the MLFFA deems the sport of youth flag football to be unsafe we will be forced to cancel games or possibly the season.

## CDC Considerations for Youth Sports:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html>

## PLAY Sports Coalition:

- <https://playsportscoalition.org/returntoplay/>

## CDC – Additional Information

### Symptoms of Coronavirus:

# Mt. Lebanon Flag Football Association Health and Safety Plan

- [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fabout%2Fsymptoms.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fabout%2Fsymptoms.html)

## Coronavirus Prevention & Treatment:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention-treatment.html>