



# 2020 COVID-19 Safety Plan and Guidelines

Draft Updated 7/21/2020 12pm

With the current COVID-19 situation, player and umpire safety is paramount. The Boston Men's Baseball Organization (BMBO) has developed these new guidelines with safety in mind.

The BMBO will follow guidelines as established based on Federal, CDC, State and local authorities.

The league has specifically modeled its guidelines after the [regulations set by the State of Massachusetts](#) which has deemed baseball a moderate risk sporting activity.

Other guidelines are suggested by MSBL National, other leagues as well as common sense to reduce risk and maximize the safety for our players and umpires (Collectively called *Participants*). These guidelines are temporary and may be amended during the course of the season. We will shape our approach as we learn more information and get more feedback.

Participants should understand that even with these guidelines, no activity is 100% safe.

**The general rule of thumb:** Participants should stay six feet apart as much as possible. To reduce risk, players are required to wear a face covering in and around dugouts, while on offense, and when they can't socially distance.

## **MABL COVID-19 Waiver of Liability, Release, and Indemnity**

Prior to playing in any BMBO event, all participants must individually accept the guidelines and the *BMBO Waiver of Liability, Release, and Indemnity Agreement* acknowledging the contagious nature of COVID-19 and agrees to indemnify, save, release, covenant not to sue, discharge, and hold harmless the league from any and all liability, claims, demands, actions, suits, loss, and causes of action it may incur, including court costs and attorneys' fees, arising out of or related to any loss, damage, or injury, including but not limited to, death, illness, injury and/or disease that in any way may be related to or arising out of COVID-19 that may be sustained in connection with attendance at any BMBO event, regardless of whether they arise in tort, contract, strict liability, or other legal theory.

## Keeping Participants Socially Distanced

1. All participants should maintain six foot social distancing to the extent possible. This includes batting cages, pre-game warmups and pregame umpire/manager rules reviews. Face coverings are required when you can't socially distance.
  - a. It is recommended that managers swap lineups via text messaging.
2. Per the State of Massachusetts "dugouts, benches & bleachers are allowed to open only if they can be thoroughly cleaned before and after every use and six feet of distance can be maintained."
3. Where possible, all other players will spread six feet out behind the dugouts, down the fence lines, etc.
4. No touch rule. No post game handshakes or high fives (A tip of the cap is suggested to acknowledge the opposing team).
5. When holding a meeting on the mound, all participants need to stay a safe distance from each other.
6. First and third base coaches are reminded to stay at least six feet from other participants.
7. Post game gatherings at the field and in the parking lots are strictly prohibited until further notice.
8. Where possible, participants are strongly recommended to travel to/from the field alone or with a member of their immediate household.
9. Home plate umpire will stand behind the catcher giving more space than normal between the catcher and umpire.
  - a. If teams/umpires agree, the umpire may stand behind the pitcher's mound.

## Face Coverings

When worn/applied, face coverings should be worn properly completely covering the mouth and nose.

1. Per the State of Massachusetts "Face coverings **and** social distancing of six feet is required when participants are not actively engaged in an activity (e.g., on bench, huddles, breaks, locker rooms, pre/post practice)" For BMBO, examples include: **Updated 7/21/2020**
  - a. All players are required to wear coverings while in and around the bench/dugout areas where other players may congregate.
  - b. When not actively involved in play, it's strongly recommended players wear their face covering properly over their nose and mouth.  
NOTE: If a player needs to take a face covering break, he should do so outside the bench/dugout at least 10 feet from other players.
2. Per the State of Massachusetts "facial coverings to be worn while engaged in a moderate risk sport/activity where intermittent contact might occur and it is safe to do so." For BMBO, offensive players are required to wear face coverings to add a layer of protection between the other team and umpires.
  - a. Batters must wear face coverings. A batter who steps to the plate without a face covering may be assigned a strike by the umpire. A second offense may lead to an ejection. **Updated 7/21/2020**
  - b. Runners must wear face coverings.
  - c. Defensive players are not required to wear face coverings with the following exceptions.
    - i. Positional players shall wear face coverings when holding runners on base (example: a first baseman holding a runner on at first).

- ii. It is strongly recommended, but not required, that catchers wear face coverings (due to safety concerns, face coverings could impact visibility while wearing catchers gear, also heat exhaustion concerns).
3. Per the State of Massachusetts, "Coaches, staff, umpires and other officials are required to wear facial coverings and maintain social distancing of six feet from players, coaches, and other persons at all times."
  - a. This includes players who are temporarily coaching first or third base.
4. Face covering exceptions may be made with a doctor's note and with the prior approval of the league President. **Updated 7/21/2020**

### **Sanitizing/Risk Reduction Guidelines**

1. The defense team will supply the baseballs for their inning of play from the defensive dugout. This way, umpires do not have to touch any baseballs, and only the defensive team touches their own baseballs.
2. Players should not throw the ball around the horn after outs.
3. Whenever possible, equipment and personal items should have proper separation and should not be shared. If equipment must be shared, proper sanitation should be administered between players.
4. Participants are encouraged but not required to wash/sanitize their hands before/after each game as well as during the game.
5. Teams are encouraged to provide hand sanitizer to their players.
6. Pitchers will NOT be allowed to go to his mouth between pitches. This will constitute an illegal ball and the ball must immediately be replaced by the pitching team.
7. No team water coolers or shared drinking stations.
8. No spitting seeds or other similar products.

### **Other**

1. Managers/Players are required to sign an extended liability waiver noting the additional COVID-19 risks.
2. Managers must ensure all his players are following COVID-19 guidelines.
3. Please keep all people who are sick at home.
4. Per State of Massachusetts, "no spectators allowed for sports and activities played by individuals 18 years and older."

### **Quarantine Protocol**

1. Any reports of a COVID-19 positive player must be reported to the league by the player or player's manager.
2. Any COVID-19 positive player must quarantine and is not allowed to return to his team until he tests negative twice in a row.
3. If a participant has contact with anyone who tested COVID-19 positive, the participant should check for fever, cough and shortness of breath. The participant can not attend games for 14 days from the last day the player had close contact with the person.