

Dear Southampton Families,

As you know, the governor has allowed sports to begin as part of a three part plan this summer. Medium risk sports, such as soccer and field hockey, were allowed to resume full contact practices and competitions on July 8, 2020 provided that certain guidelines were met. The full guidelines can be found here: [NJ DOH Return to Sports](#)

STRA has historically held soccer and field hockey in the fall from September to November. Each season for the past three seasons, we have had less than 75 soccer players and less than 40 field hockey players. These numbers fall well below the allowed 500 people max for outdoor gathering size. All practices and games are held outdoors, with no concession stand or indoor facilities.

In light of these factors, the STRA board met and has decided we will continue to pursue a fall sports season. This is not a decision that any of the board members take lightly. We have reviewed the decision with various professionals, and continue to communicate with insurance, legal, and local officials regularly to monitor the situation. We will be meeting with commissioners for each sport to develop a preparation plan.

Some of the factors that we know are as follows:

1. All players and volunteers will be asked to review the preparation plan and sign a waiver specifically related to COVID-19.
2. Coaches and parents are expected to wear face coverings at all times, unless doing so would interfere with their health. Players are expected to wear face coverings when arriving to and leaving the field. They are not expected to wear face coverings while actively playing.
3. Players and parents will be asked to take temperatures prior to attending practices/games and self report COVID symptoms.
4. Practices will no longer be the same day/time for the whole organization. Practice days and times will be staggered to allow for social distancing.
5. Registration numbers will be capped.
6. Players will need to continue to bring their own equipment to practices and games. If equipment must be shared, disinfecting wipes/spray will be provided to coaches to sanitize the equipment regularly.
7. There will be no more team benches on the sidelines during games. Parents can supply chairs or team staff can supply seating providing six feet between players.
8. There will be no shared food/beverages at any practices or games. Each player should come with their own water bottle.
9. There may be limited games this season due to limited registration numbers/limited amount of neighboring teams. The season may consist primarily of skill building practices.

This is not a comprehensive list of the precautions that will be taken. This is an outline of some of the steps. More will be developed as we continue to develop the season. Additional information on considerations for the return to play can be found here:

[Sadler Insurance Return to Play for Amateur Sports - June 3, 2020](#)  
[NJ.Gov COVID-19 Information Hub - Organized Sports Resources](#)

In addition to the 6U and 8U soccer teams, we are opening registration for 10U and 12U soccer teams. At this time, they will be co-ed teams and will likely focus on skill development during practices. This may change depending on the number of registrants. We will be communicating with the surrounding towns to determine whether games will be feasible, safe, and practical.

As always, none of this will be possible without volunteers. In addition to coaches, we need volunteers to assist with set up of fields, equipment sanitization, social distancing protocols, etc. STRA is a 100% volunteer run organization. It is impossible to host a season without volunteer coaches and staff.

We thank you for your cooperation and patience during this time.

Sincerely,

Samantha Compton  
STRA President