

Empire United Soccer Academy

Return to Play Protocol

June 18, 2020



Implementing our Return to Play protocol will require everyone working together within our Club: Coaches, Team Admins, Parents, and Players. While the **Club, Coach & Team Admins** must create a safe environment, our **Parents** must make the decision for their child to return to play. If, as a parent you are not comfortable in your child's returning to play – **DON'T**. And finally, **Players** must be responsible to adhere to, and respect the social distancing requirements and contact guidelines that have been established. The roles/responsibilities for each include:

Club:

- Inform and educate everyone on Club's plan for **Return to Play Protocol**
- Be sensitive and accommodating to any family (Parent/Player) uncomfortable with returning to play
- Provide a safe environment adequate for social distance requirements
- Ensure all areas have appropriate cleaning/disinfecting supply and garbage collection
- Distribute and collect RTPP, Club Q & A and NY West waiver
- Designate a RTPP Site Point Person → Rick Lill, Empire United Executive Director

Coach:

- Follow all Return to Play Protocol
- Wear a mask during all training sessions and events when on field
- Ask each player how they are feeling. If they are not feeling well isolate and send them home
- Ensure all players have their own individual equipment: Masks, Ball, Water, Shin guards, Hairbands, etc...
- Ensure all exercises provide for the proper social distance including the varying level of contact
- Ensure all shared equipment (balls, cones...) are disinfected after and before each use (session)
- All shared equipment should be set up/picked up by the coach
- Respect all families by accommodating those not comfortable with returning to play

Parent:

- If you are not comfortable with returning to play, Don't!!! You make the decision when your child returns to play
- Follow all Return to Play Protocol
- Check child's temperature before every session, game
- Ensure all clothing is washed after each session, game
- Ensure all equipment, ball, boots, water bottle, shin guards etc. and clothing are sanitized before & after each session
- Follow all social distance requirements Drop off/pick up (stay in your car when possible)
- Ensure players have plenty of their own water!
- Adhere to social distancing, **drop off and pick up only (no spectating during sessions → Phase 1, 2, 3)**
- Mark TeamSnap availability to ensure health of your player
- Notify coach & team admin. immediately if your child becomes ill for any reason (see Appendix A-Symptoms)
 - Should a player show symptoms refer to the communication chain below to whom you should contact:
 - Parent → Head Coach → Program Director → Executive Director
 - Empire Rochester Program Director → Jeff Oliver joliver@empireunited.soccer
 - Empire Buffalo Program Director → Kevin O'Neil kevin@empireunitedsa.org
 - Girls Elite Academy Program Director → Louis Guilfoil louis.guilfoil@empireunitedgea.org
 - Boys Development Academy Program Director → Rory Charchola rcharcho@gmail.com
 - Executive Director Program Director → Rick Lill rlill@empireunited.soccer

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Return to Play Protocol

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Player:

- If you are not comfortable with returning to play, Don't!!!
- Follow all Return to Play Protocol
- Do not share any equipment, water or food
- Wash hands thoroughly before and after all sessions.
- Ensure all equipment: ball, boots, water bottle, shin guards etc. are sanitized before and after each session, game
- Athletes should come prepared with:
 - Dressed ready to play Training tops and game jerseys for each session.
 - Mask not required during training (optional parent's decision)
 - Hand Sanitizer / Sanitizer Wipes (if possible, otherwise a clean cloth to wipe down equipment)
 - Soccer bag: (clearly labeled)
 - Labelled water bottle – type... mouth spout is covered by lid and not to open air, Snack if needed
 - Tissues for any allergies or to blow nose
- Place soccer bag gear 6' from everyone (have your own area)
- No Hand shakes, High 5's Fist bumps or group celebrations! Avoid contact

GENERAL GUIDELINES:

1. Avoid large gatherings or lines of players

Coaches should avoid having players stand or assemble in lines or small groups. Coaches should alter their training methods to incorporate appropriate social distancing (maintaining 6' distancing between players when providing instruction, etc.).

Events do not use team benches...players and referees should provide their own individual seating to allow for 6' separation.

2. Facility structures cleaning and use

Any facilities that are accessible during training and games should be cleaned and disinfected regularly. Railing and other surfaces that are touched frequently should also be cleaned and disinfected at least daily. If permanent bleachers are available for spectators, clubs should display signage on or near the bleachers reminding spectators to maintain 6' distancing from non-family members.

3. Increased signage throughout facilities

Clubs should post reminder signage throughout facilities wherever possible to remind all players, coaches and spectators to maintain social distancing.

4. Social Distancing Oversight

Clubs should assign people to be physically present to monitor fields and facilities to politely but firmly ask any groups of parents or players to disperse and maintain appropriate distancing and that failure to do so risks the sanctioning and protection (including insurance) for the players and the club.

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Four Phases of Our Return-to-Play Guidelines are:

PHASE 1: TRAINING AT HOME (Follow Local Guidelines)

Duration of Phase: 2-3 Weeks (2-3 times / week)

- Follow local guidelines
- Coaches provide training plans to complete at home
- Prepare body for the physical demands of returning to play
- Individual ball work
- Fitness workouts
- S & C workouts

PHASE 2A: SMALL GROUP

Duration of Phase: 0-2 weeks (2-3 times / week)

- Session Time: 60 minutes or less
- *Pod Training* in group of 9 or less (players assigned to groups to stay together through phase 1)
- 9 players → 1 coach
- All individual training with own equipment & own space... technical & physical focus
- Players always 6-10' apart or more
- Group passing is ok if social distancing is maintained
- Training times set to maximize social distancing
- Physical preparation emphasized
- Staff careful not to over train
- Provide coaches with a structure training plan to ensure social distancing
- Staff handles all gear (cones, flags, etc.)
- No handling of the ball (throw ins, etc.)
- GK's train as field players (no hands)
- No heading of the ball

PHASE 2B: SMALL GROUP (Begins July 6, 2020)

Duration of Phase: 0-2 weeks (2-3 times / week)

- Session Time: 60 minutes or less
- *Full team training* while maintaining social/physical distancing.
- Players always 6-10' apart or more
- Maintain no contact during training session
- Training times set to maximize social distancing
- Physical preparation emphasized careful not to over train
- Staff handles all gear still (cones, flags, etc.)
- No handling of the ball (throw ins, etc.)
- GK's train as field players (no hands)
- No heading of the ball

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PHASE 3: FULL TEAM TRAINING

Duration of Phase: 1-2 weeks (2-3 times / week)

- Training group of any size
- Introduce controlled training games—no restrictions
- Contact can exist during competition
- Minimize non-competition contact if possible
- Separate areas on sidelines to social distance still
- Balls can be handled by field players and goalkeepers
- Sharing bibs is allowed but must be washed after each session
- Staff handles all gear still
- No overnight travel for events

Phase 4: RETURN TO LOCAL COMPETITION

Duration of Phase: Indefinite

- More information to come

Phase 5: RETURN TO TRAVEL

Duration of Phase: Indefinite

- More information to come

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

- Pre-Training checks at home by players' families (temperature)
- Verbal Pre-Training checks at field by staff (symptoms, fever)
- Staff maintain accurate attendance
- Post Proper hygiene and social distancing guidelines at facility
- Vulnerable staff should not oversee training until phase 3 based on recommendations
- Disinfectant to wipe down balls/gear by staff
- High contact surfaces disinfected after use
- Players/Staff need to shower and wash clothes after each session
- **No spectators until competition begins (Phase 4 and 5).** Spectator number limited to 2 spectators/parents per player and each spectator brings their own chair and keep 6' between chairs.

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Return to Play Protocol

June 18, 2020



APPENDIX A:

Symptoms of COVID-19 Infection:

Individuals with COVID-19 can exhibit symptoms ranging from mild to life-threatening. The most common symptoms associated with infection include:

- ☒ Fever (≥ 100.4 degrees F)
- ☒ Cough
- ☒ Shortness of breath

Less common symptoms that may still be evidence of COVID-19 infection include:

- ☒ Sore throat
 - ☒ Congestion
 - ☒ Nausea and vomiting
 - ☒ Diarrhea
 - ☒ Headache
 - ☒ Muscle / joint pain
 - ☒ Sudden loss of taste or smell
 - ☒ Chills
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APPENDIX B:

Return to Play Following Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19 Infection

These recommendations are intended to guide decision-making regarding players or staff with a suspected or documented COVID-19 infection in order to reduce the risk of disease transmission.

Symptomatic player / staff with suspected or laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection:

⌵ Cannot attend club events until:

- a) At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since resolution of fever (defined as ≥ 100.4 degrees F) without the use of fever-reducing medications and respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), AND...
- b) At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

OR:

- c) Resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, AND
- d) Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), AND...
- e) Negative results of an FDA authorized molecular assay for detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA from at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected ≥ 24 hours apart (two negative specimens).

Player / staff with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 who have not had any symptoms:

⌵ Cannot attend club events until:

- a) 10 days after date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test assuming no symptoms since that time. If symptoms develop symptoms, then management should be guided as above for symptomatic individuals.

OR:

- b) Negative results of an FDA authorized SARS-CoV-2 RNA test from at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected ≥ 24 hours apart (two negative specimens).
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APPENDIX C:

Return to Play Following Exposure to a Suspected or Diagnosed Case of COVID-19

These recommendations are intended to guide decision-making regarding players or staff following exposure to a suspected or diagnosed case of COVID-19 infection in order to reduce the risk of disease transmission.

Any asymptomatic player or staff member who has been exposed to an individual with a suspected or diagnosed case of COVID-19 should be restricted from participation for at least 14 days and monitor for any symptoms consistent with infection.

If asymptomatic after 14 days since last exposure, they can return to participation. In general, you need to be in close contact with an individual to contract the disease. In this case, exposure means any one of the following:

- ☞ *Caring for a sick person with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection.*
- ☞ *Living in the same household as an individual with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection.*
- ☞ *Being within 6 feet of an individual with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection for around 10 minutes or more.*

OR:

- ☞ *Coming in direct contact with secretions from an individual with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection (being coughed or sneezed on, sharing water bottle or utensils, for example).*
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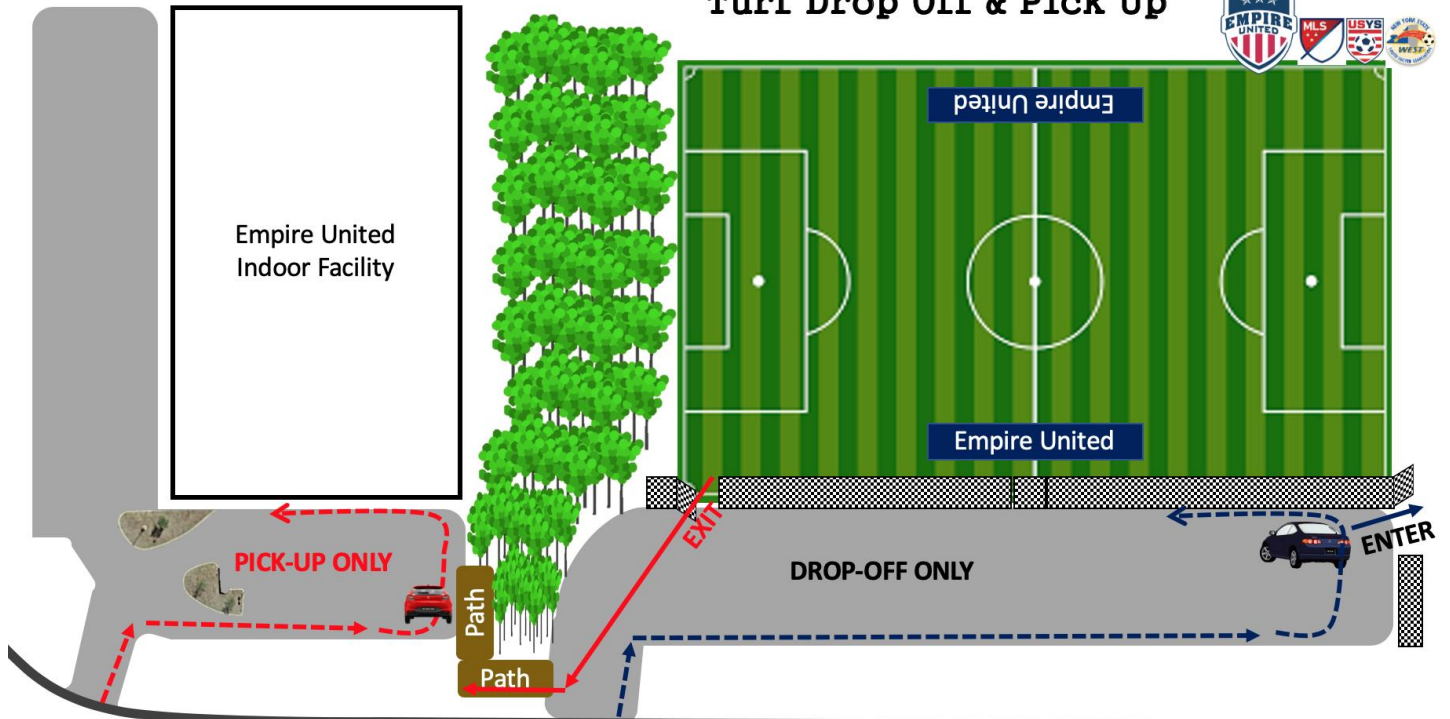
June 18, 2020



APPENDIX D:

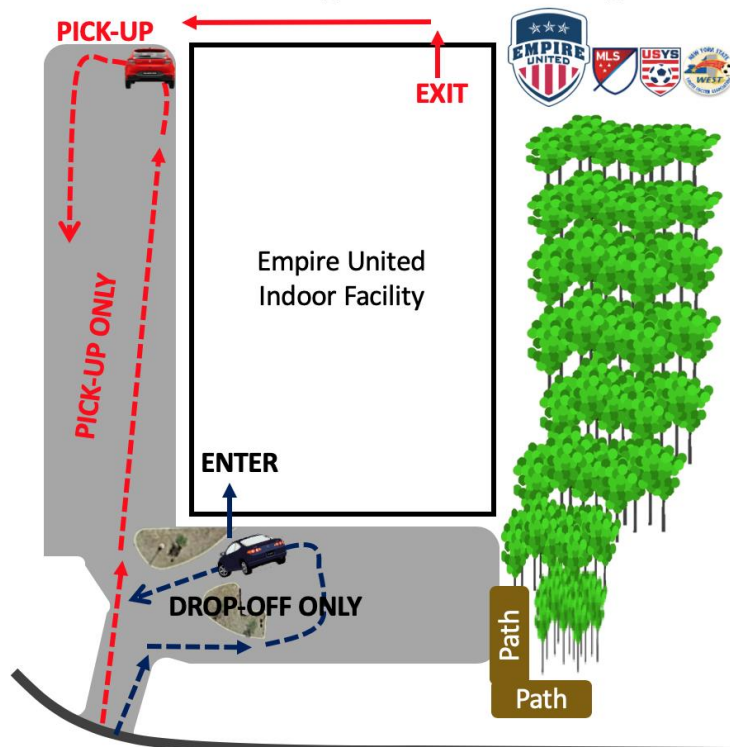
EMPIRE UNITED SOCCER COMPLEX

Turf Drop Off & Pick Up



EMPIRE UNITED SOCCER COMPLEX

Indoor Drop Off & Pick Up



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REFERENCES:

ASPEN INSTITUTE: <https://youtu.be/x8rnND2F9Pc>

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

ECNL: <https://www.eliteclubsnationalleague.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/ECNL-x-Return-to-Play-Recs.-V5-Doc.pdf>

MOVE UNITED: <https://www.moveunitedsport.org/>

NCAA: <http://www.ncaa.org/sport-science-institute/core-principles-resocialization-collegiate-sport>

NFHS: https://www.nfhs.org/media/3812287/2020-nfhs-guidance-for-opening-up-high-school-athletics-and-activities-nfhs-smac-may-15_2020-final.pdf

NY STATE: <https://forward.ny.gov/>

US SOCCER: <https://www.ussoccer.com/playon>

USYS: https://www.usyouthsoccer.org/assets/1/20/usys_rta_notice_051320.pdf?29673

USYS: <https://youtu.be/7qk1nluORKw>