



Below you will find the on-field phase 1-3 requirements. In addition, this document contains guidelines provided by US Soccer, US Youth soccer, Connecticut Junior Soccer Association, The State of Connecticut, and the Town of Vernon that have guided our club's requirements. Please keep in mind that additional local municipalities that we visit or may visit Vernon may have additional requirements in place that will need to be adhered to.

# Return to Soccer Activities Guidelines



# Vernon Soccer Club



Vernon Soccer Club is dedicated to protecting the health of all people in and outside of our community. In an effort to assist our players, coaches and parents with their efforts to return to play after the recent suspension of activities, due to COVID-19, Connecticut Junior Soccer Association has put together guidelines for our club to use. Given the nature of this pandemic, this framework may change at any time based on the most recent CDC and or Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) guidelines. Please keep in mind that local municipalities may have additional guidelines in place that will need to be adhered to with the various teams and towns we interact with.

All club members and spectators must adhere to the mandatory State of Connecticut travel rules. If you travel to a state that is on the current hot spot list you must either wait 14 days or provide a verified negative virus test before you may participate in any VSC activity.

<https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/Covid-19-Knowledge-Base/Travel-In-or-Out-of-CT>

All content, including text, graphics, images, and information, are provided for general informational purposes only.

Implementing the Return to Soccer Activities Guidelines presented here will require a cooperative relationship between the club, coach, parent, and player. While the club and coach must create a safe environment, the parent(s)/guardian(s) are the only ones who may make the decision for your child to return to soccer activities.

U.S. Soccer recommends approaching our return-to-play activities sequentially through phases. It is critical to assure processes, habits and strict compliance to our current phase, before advancing to the next. It needs to be recognized that across the country at any given time, teams, clubs and organizations in different regions will be operating under differing state and local regulations – and thus will be operating in different phases. All phases must be first based on, and compliant, with our region's regulations. Lastly, a minimum amount of time is suggested to remain within each phase. This time provides the opportunity to build up the physical strength necessary for each phase. Vernon Soccer Club will carefully consider the conditions necessary to advance to the next phase and be prepared, if necessary, to stay in the current phase for longer than the timeline indicated or revert to an earlier phase to ensure the safety of all participants. We will not proceed to the next phase if it is not compliant with our town or region's social distancing policies.

**If there is hesitation in returning to play – DON'T; just because you can, does not mean you must.**



# Vernon Soccer Club



## RETURN TO PLAY PHASE 1 - SMALL GROUP TRAINING (Minimum 2 weeks)\* CAN START JUNE 20, 2020

Criteria to participate in these Phase 1 training sessions should adhere to these guidelines (adapted from US Youth Soccer Guidelines)

All participants must be registered properly with the club before playing.

- No signs or symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days and have not been exposed to someone that has been ill in 14 days.
- Not travel to a mandated quarantine location for 14 days prior to participating in group training. This requirement reduces the risk of introducing COVID-19 into the training group by someone traveling from a different region.
- Take temperature before going to training.
- Upon arrival to training, coaches or staff should ask each athlete if they are experiencing any signs or symptoms of COVID-19. If the athlete has any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 they should be sent home and instructed to contact their healthcare provider. They will not be allowed to return to training until they are cleared by a healthcare provider. A doctor's note must be provided.
- Participants, organizers, spectators, volunteers and facility employees in high risk categories should not participate or attend organized sport activities. List of high-risk categories can be found [here](#).
- Be sure appropriate infection prevention supplies (e.g. hand sanitizer, facial tissues, facial coverings) are present in multiple targeted areas (outlined later in this document).
- Small group training should take place in an area where physical distancing (6' apart) can be maintained.
- All spectators must adhere to CDC and DPH assemblage and distance guidelines. Spectators, nonessential visitors, staff, volunteers and activities involving external groups or organizations should be limited as much as possible. Operators are encouraged to mark off spectator/chaperone viewing sites to allow for social distancing.
- Spectators/Chaperones must wear face coverings.
- Participants should use their own equipment and be instructed to sanitize their equipment after every training session.
- Each participant will be required to have their own water bottle, towel, and personal hygiene products (hand sanitizer, facial tissues, face coverings). Players are not required to wear face coverings during soccer activities but must wear them when arriving and leaving a session. Coaches and spectators will be required to wear face coverings by DPH guidelines (currently whenever within 6 feet of others a face covering must be worn). Tissues, wipes, or disposable gloves must be properly disposed in the appropriate receptacles.
- Follow cleaning schedule/protocol of equipment (cones, goals etc.) with disinfectant before, during, and after training.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment (gloves, face coverings/masks) must be worn as required per DPH guidelines.
- Wear a face covering, when not actively playing and when a player cannot abide by the physical/social distance requirements from coaches, other players and parents.

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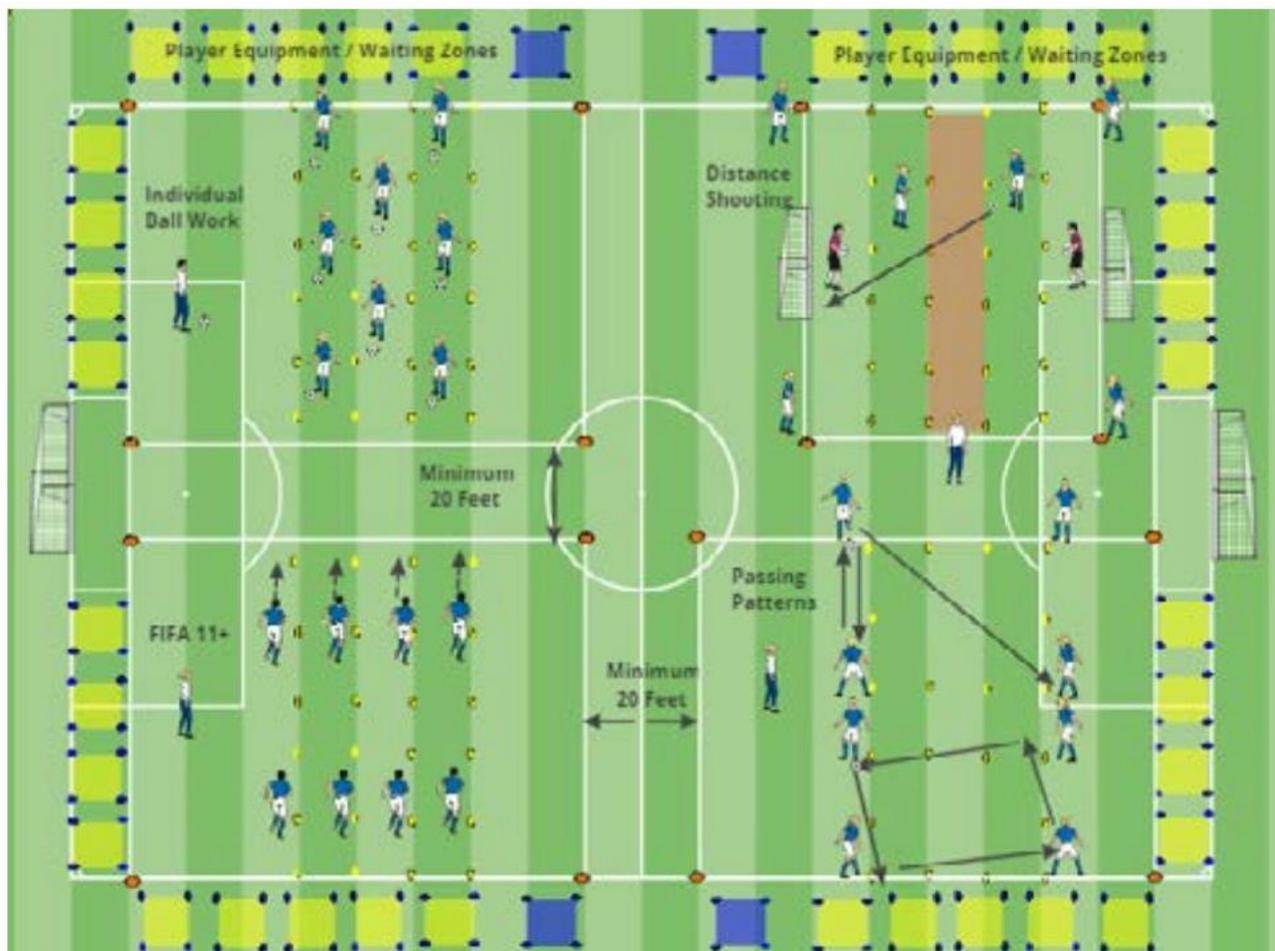
# Vernon Soccer Club



## PHASE 1

With Soccer classified as a contact sport, activities under this phase will be allowed but will be limited to no-contact drills and training exercises only. No scrimmages, league games or tournaments may be held during the duration of this phase. This includes friendlies, intrasquad scrimmages or other arranged games. **Session plans for conducting practice sessions using physical distancing are available on the Connecticut Junior Soccer Association Website under the section “Resources > Return to Play” [CLICK HERE](#).**

Programs must separate participants into groups of no more than 10 participants including coaches and staff. Larger playing areas and surfaces such as athletic fields may be used by more than one group of 10 at a time, provided that adequate social distance and group separation can be maintained. To ensure group separation, groups must be spaced at least 20 feet apart while sharing a playing surface.



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# Vernon Soccer Club



## PHASE 2

Vernon Soccer Club moved to Phase 2 in early July, which permitted full team practices, after operating under the Phase 1 requirements for a minimum of two weeks.

As VSC continued our return to play, it was important that we continued to implement the following, minimum, return to play requirements for Phase 2 that were implemented for Phase 1, except that our coaches were able to remove face coverings when actively engaged in coaching activities requiring physical exertion and controlled scrimmages as described.

Introduced Under Phase 2:

Full Team Training / Introduction of Intrasquad, controlled scrimmages

- Full team training allowed
- Continue to maintain social distancing
- COVID-19 prevention and response protocols in place and followed
- No sharing of water, or equipment
- During this phase, full team training is allowed, but COVID-19 prevention and response protocols must be maintained.
- Physical contact to be minimized in training and controlled scrimmage
- Travel to out of state events is prohibited
- Practice times should be set to maximize social distancing
- Limit spectators as much as possible
- 30 minutes may be allocated to an Intrasquad scrimmage, A Intrasquad, controlled, scrimmage is defined as;
  - An event involving two teams participating in an informal competition
  - Coaches on-field throughout the session providing instruction on position play and game situations
  - No scoreboard
  - No game clock may be used
  - No officials may be used
  - Physical contact limited
  - Play may be stopped periodically for instructional purposes.
- Intrasquad is defined as (sports) within a team.

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# Vernon Soccer Club



## PHASE 3

Vernon Soccer Club moved to Phase 3 July 18th, which permitted full team practices, after operating under the Phase 1 & phase 2 requirements for a minimum of two weeks each.

All rules of Phase 2 apply except as noted below.

### Training

- Contact is allowed within the training environment; however, this should be limited to actual training and managed to avoid prolonged contact.
- Clubs/teams should still keep intermixing to a minimum.
- Adhere to social distancing requirements when participants are not playing (on the bench, sideline, etc.).
- Adhere to wearing masks when not playing
- Don't share equipment or water
- All equipment must be sanitized after each training session
- Any benches must be sanitized after each training session
- In an effort to communicate in a safe manner - setup a staging area outside of the field where players place their belongings and water. This should also be where the coach communicates with the players while socially distanced.

### Games / Matches

- Out of state travel is prohibited, regardless of game or tournament
- Everyone must adhere to social distancing recommendations when participants are not playing (on the bench, sideline, etc.).
- Adhere to wearing masks when not playing and on the bench
- Coaches to wear masks
- Consider COVID-19 case activity level and risk in those communities when making travel decisions.
- Teams and referees are not to engage in traditional sportsmanship gestures, such as post-match handshakes. Teams are encouraged to find new ways to show sportsmanship
- If spectators do attend, they should limit the retrieval of soccer balls should they go out of play and let the players retrieve the ball.
- Minimize crowding at games and practices. For example, field space must be large enough to provide for social distancing or all in attendance; spectators must be distanced from the field, provide separate entrances and exits and space out practice and game times.
- Spectators must follow social distancing recommendations including the wearing of masks as well as maintaining at least 6 feet of physical distance from each other. This includes from Assistant Referee's
- Stagger start of games to ensure that there is the possibility for social distancing amongst all spectators if they are present.
- Game balls must be sanitized at halftime of all games, and after games
- Any benches must be sanitized after each game.
- Don't share equipment or water
- In an effort to communicate in a safe manner - setup a staging area outside of the field where players place their belongings and water. This should also be where the coach communicates with the players while socially distanced.

\* Please be prepared to revert back or pause based on environmental changes or a change in soccer's risk category as defined by the local government.

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# Vernon Soccer Club



## CLUB

- Assign a COVID-19 Safety Officer who will communicate policies organization-wide, to coaching staff, administrators, parents, and players. Regular updates and reminders should be provided.
- Assign each team a coordinator to oversee compliance at the team level (can be a team parent who must register as an Adult with CJSA).
- Train and educate all volunteers/staff on return to activities protocols.
- Develop a relationship and dialog with local Health Department officials (identify risk tolerance).
- Develop a plan to communicate with the local health department in the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 within a team.
- If a team member or coach contracts COVID-19, all training sessions will be canceled for that team and any additional team associated with that coach for 14 days.
- Be prepared to shut down and stop operations. Develop plans for temporary closure of facilities (indoor, outdoor) to properly disinfect and ensure other adult leaders are not infected.
- Provide coaches and team coordinators with PPE (masks) and sanitizing products.
- Schedule groups/teams with a minimum of 30 minutes in between the time one team concludes and the other arrives. Players must leave immediately after their session. Players should not arrive at their field earlier than 5 minutes prior to their scheduled arrival time.
- Teams who wish to schedule warm-up time prior to their sessions must build that into their scheduled session/rental time. Warm-ups will not be permitted adjacent to the assigned field prior to the scheduled start time for a team.
- Players and/or parents are not allowed to congregate in parking lots, at drop off zones, facility entrances/exits before or after a training session.
- Provide adequate space at the field to allow for proper physical/social distancing (6').
- All parents, spectators, and players should have their own chair. Chairs should be placed to allow for proper physical and social distancing (6').
- All waste should be placed by the respective parent, player, coach, and spectator in the trash receptacle. Nothing should be picked up by anybody other than the originator of the waste.
- Require players to have their own water, sanitary products (hand sanitizer, facial tissues, PPE (optional for play), ball, GK Gloves (if necessary), dark and light shirt (in lieu of shared scrimmage vests)

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# Vernon Soccer Club



## COACH

Please review the Coaches toolkit document found on the [Return to Soccer Activities](#) webpage for more information regarding responsibilities during coaching sessions

- Understand that there may be parents/guardians who may not be ready to have their child return to activities at this time.
- Understand some parents/guardians may require their child to wear a face covering. If so, it should be a face covering which attaches around the ears so as not to cause any injury if accidentally tugged or pulled on. No head or neck face coverings permitted during play.
- Ensure the health and safety of all athletes.
- Ensure athletes arrive dressed for practice and leave immediately after practice. No recreational play, or loitering is allowed.
- Upon arrival, inquire how athletes are feeling, send them home if you believe they are acting or look ill. Use no-touch thermometer as a backup if parents forgot or unsure. Spray all participants' hands with sanitizer solution spray.
- No handshakes, fist or elbow bumps, or any other physical contact.
- Practice and encourage proper hygiene, washing hands frequently with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds at a time. Use alcohol based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol). Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or sleeves, do not use your hands. Do not touch your face (eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands). Launder clothing after training session.
- Follow all state and local health protocols.
- Coach is to be the only one to handle cones, discs, goals etc.
- Ensure all athletes have their individual equipment. (Ball, water bottle, GK Gloves etc.)
- Ensure player's personal belongings (bags, coats, and sweatshirts) remain in their personal space and are kept physically distanced from the belongings of others. Do not allow sharing of personal items.
- Ask players to bring a dark and light shirt to eliminate the need of shared scrimmage vests.
- Do not allow shared team snacks. No use of public water bubblers, fountains or bottle fillers if present on site. Participants and spectators should only drink from their own containers.
- Wear a face covering, when not actively coaching and abide by the physical/social distance requirements from players and parents.
- STAY POSITIVE – Players and parents will be looking to you to remain calm and supportive during this transition time.

As a reminder you must adhere to state of Connecticut travel rules. If you travel to a state that is on the current hot spot list you must either wait 14 days or provide a verified negative virus test. This applies to all players, coaches, and volunteers.

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# Vernon Soccer Club



## PARENTS

- Ensure your child's health. Take temperature daily. The average normal body temperature is generally accepted as 98.6°F (37°C). Some studies have shown that the "normal" body temperature can have a wide range, from 97°F (36.1°C) to 99°F (37.2°C). A temperature over 100.4°F (38°C) most often means you have a fever caused by an infection or illness.
- If your child has any symptoms, even mild ones, public health urges you to stay home and isolate until:
  - You have had no fever for at least 72 hours (without the use of medicine)
  - AND
    - Other symptoms (cough, shortness of breath) have improved AND
    - At least 7 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.
- Anyone in your household that you have had close contact with (within six feet for approximately 10 minutes) should self-quarantine for 14 days, even if you have not been tested for COVID-19.
- Notify the club immediately if your child has become sick.
- Adhere to physical/social distance requirements posted by the organization. These are based on state and local requirements. When at training, wear a face covering if you are outside of your car.
- Ensure that your child has a water bottle, equipment (ball and GK Gloves if necessary), light and dark shirt (no shared scrimmage vests will be provided).
- Ensure your child's personal equipment, cleats, balls, shin guards etc. are cleaned and sanitized before and after every training.
- Ensure your child's clothing is washed after every session.
- Do not assist the coach with equipment before or after a training session.
- Limit carpooling with other members of the team.
- Be sure your child has necessary sanitizer with them at every session.

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# Vernon Soccer Club



## PLAYERS

- Take temperature daily (see information outlining this in the parent's section).
- Practice and encourage proper hygiene, washing hands frequently with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds at a time. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol). Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or sleeves, do not use your hands. Do not touch your face (eyes, nose, mouth with unwashed hands).
- Have your own hand sanitizer with you.
- Wear a face covering before and immediately after each training session. They may be removed while participating in practice and drills, provided players are able to maintain at least 6 feet of distance from other persons present.
- Practice physical distancing on the sidelines. When sitting on the sidelines you should be 6' from the next player. Your belongings should remain in your space when not in use.
- Bring your own equipment (Ball, GK Gloves (if required), shin guards, jacket etc.) Do not touch anyone else's equipment.
- Bring your own water bottle and snack. Do not touch anyone else's belongings as sharing will not be permitted.
- Wash and sanitize your equipment before and after each training.
- No group celebrations, hugs, handshakes, fist bumps, etc.

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# Vernon Soccer Club



## Additional Resources for All Club Members Planning

[Reopening Connecticut](#)

[Center for Disease Control - Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)

[CDC Considerations for Youth Sports](#)

[CDC Guide to Mass Gatherings](#)

[CDC List of people in high risk categories](#)

[COVID-19 Outdoor Recreation Facility Restroom Cleaning Best Practices EPA](#)

[Recommended Disinfectants](#)

[WHO Handwashing Video](#)

[FIFA COVID-19 Resources](#)

[US Soccer Play On](#)

[US Soccer Recognize to Recover - COVID 19 and Mental Health US](#)

[Youth Soccer Return to Activity Notice](#)

[Aspen Institute - Coronavirus and Youth Sports](#)

[COVID Safety Officer Enrollment Form](#)

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[Social Distancing Exercises](#)

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