

FAAST Tournament Protocols

The following are additional guidelines for baseball and softball operations inside the Social Distancing Guidelines to help minimize risk for all attendees and players.

PART I: Game Notes

Baseballs

Teams will be given their own game balls when playing in the field. Defensive teams will be responsible for tracking foul balls, etc. Coaches will be in charge of ball maintenance and player contact issues, etc. Coaches can address all players in contact with the ball per play if necessary or at end of innings. All adults should encourage players to avoid touching their face or establish protocols for doing so (touch face with glove hand after mitt is off, etc). Obviously mitts may touch others so please refrain from using the mitt to address issues.

Bat maintenance after at-bats: FAAST recommends that a coach will be responsible for picking up bats after a player advances to first. Please pick up the bat at the non-handle end of the bat and proper cleaning should occur once the bat is in the dugout. Likewise, if the player wears safety equipment at the plate, a proper protocol must be established inside the social distancing guidelines. At times, opposing catchers, umpire or fellow teammates may move a bat for the execution of a play near home plate. Again, a designated coach must be ready to address this situation for both teams. The coach in charge of bats should try to limit this situation as best as possible by moving quickly – but at times that is not possible.

Other Player equipment: Players must return to their dugout areas after an inning to get their equipment for the field. Again, coaches will be responsible for cleaning any items that violate that concept including catcher's gear.

Home plate area

Catcher/batter relationship – Our expectation for the pitcher and batter will be to deliver a pitch at a good pace of play when no runners are on base. Batters can step out of the box, or at least step out with their front foot in between each pitch for signs, but once set we would recommend a good pace on the pitching exchange. Home plate Umpires will step back after each pitch.

Base areas

Coaching boxes on both bases will be six feet from bases. If a player engages a base with anything beside his shoe/leg area, umpires & coaches will need to address the base prior to the next pitch.

Appeals to Umpire decisions

All concerns or appeals to umpires must be made from a team's dugout or coach's box. No appeals will be heard from other areas of the field.

Pitching changes & Mound visits: Teams will be given a designated area for warming up new pitchers. Proper ball maintenance should be maintained by coaches. Likewise, mound visits should refrain from full team meetings and violations of social distancing when possible.

PART II: Game Day Environment

Rosters -- Head coaches must submit rosters, with names, addresses and phone numbers per Ohio/Michigan rules. This will be emailed prior to the event on the FFAST Form or other form – as long as data is complete. All attendees should review the STATE guidelines included here and posted on sites.

Arrival & Exit at the Venue: We recommend that all spectators & team members wear masks while entering and exiting the facilities or going to the restrooms. A team mom or coach can pick up their passes and game balls an hour prior to their first game at each site.

NOTE : SOME MICHIGAN sites may require masks for spectators so all attendees should be prepared to wear mask.

Spectators need to refrain from touching the game balls in case of foul balls. All spectators and team members should be efficient and considerate of others in the parking lot and field areas. Please limit team meetings & small group conversations even when socially distanced and be aware of others. Facilities will have designated entrance/exit areas & protocols. Restrooms will have designated wait areas and protocols as well and the best social distancing is for spectators to bring their own toilet paper and hand sanitizer. Sites will have these items as well so see site directors for issues.

Attendance: OHIO: Teams will be allowed 40 TOTAL passes for the day of the game – with kids under 7 not included for Ohio
MICHIGAN: Teams are allowed 35 total passes including kids. Coaches and players don't count. Have fun – but be aware of social distancing guidelines and avoid touching permanent structure (fencing, etc). All attendees can expect some form of health assessment prior to attending per state requirements.

Concessions/food: Most sites do not have concessions. Spectators and players can bring individual coolers, etc. No full team coolers per Ohio Guidelines. No seeds, no gum, and no spitting. Facilities will get proper approval for concessions.

Seating – Staff will assist guests with the designated allocations for seating. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own seats, tent, cooler, wipes, etc. Families will be able to sit together inside these requirements. Seating arrangements six feet apart will be marked off via paint/lines/markers. Bleachers ARE NOT available. Note: those attending this event will need to stay within their seating area within reasonable expectations. Young children will need to be supervised inside the social distancing guidelines.

Rain and Weather issues – Spectators must be prepared for weather issues. With rain or storms, spectators should return to their vehicles – they will not be allowed to congregate in the facility, including concessions areas if it violates the social distancing practices.

Warm-ups -- At all sites – Teams will be given a designated area to warm up. We would prefer that spectators remain either in their cars or slotted at 6 feet apart in their seating.

Dugouts –Teams can create dugouts down the baseline if the original dugout spacing is a concern for the team and this is RECOMMENDED. Teams should bring batting nets to set up this added space. Players would need to bring chairs, etc. Teams can have a team mom or assistant coach approved to help players. MANY FIELDS are not allowing Dugout use.

Line-ups – coaches will text their opponents their line-ups. We will exchange cell phone numbers through email prior to the event. Teams can also use Game Changer as an option too.

Game Schedule & Transitions – our scheduling procedure will be to offer teams double-headers or a “one-on, one off” schedule to minimize transitions and population per location. There will be time in between games for teams to leave prior to other teams entering – or facilities will be utilized to minimize transition attendance issues. Please follow the guidelines at each location.

Awards Presentation – awards will be given inside the 6 feet of social distancing. Awards will be disinfected and cleaned prior to presentation.

Field Operations: Staffing will be responsible for all aspects of the event including entrance and parking in the facility. Schedules will allow all workers time to properly sanitize areas as well as prep fields prior to transitions of teams. Facilities will have checklists to address all necessary areas.

Staffing: All staff will have proper PPE (masks) and all staff will go through a health evaluations & Covid-19 recognition training prior to events to make sure they are fit for duty per Michigan/Ohio guidelines. Staff will conduct assessments throughout the event for anyone showing symptoms.