



The IHSA governs the equitable participation in interscholastic athletics and activities that enrich the educational experience.

IHSA 2020-21 BASS FISHING CONSIDERATIONS

This document is intended to provide guidance for schools conducting practices and hosting bass fishing events during the 2020-21 IHSA Bass Fishing season. The guidelines explained in this document are intended to decrease potential exposure to respiratory droplets and potential for illness through safe practices such as social distancing, proper hygiene, and appropriate protective equipment. This is not an exhaustive list, and school officials may take additional measures based on requirements set forth by their school district and/or local health officials. Please understand that even with this guidance, there is still risk of transmitting illness at events such as bass fishing practices and contests. Additionally, with the changing nature of the circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, these guidelines may change.

Modified Season:

- The IHSA Board of Directors modified the IHSA Bass Fishing season along with all other sport and activity seasons in response to the circumstances surrounding the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The modified bass fishing season is as follows:
 - **May 6 – IHSA Bass Fishing Sectional Tournament (rain date: May 10)**
- Schools can compete in bass fishing events following the appropriate mitigations and guidance outlined in this document, Boating and Fishing Guidelines, and the Illinois All-Sports Policy.

[Illinois COVID-19 Region Map](#)

Requirements and Considerations

- All guidelines of IHSA Return to Play Phase 4 must be adhered to.

Social distancing - The Illinois All-Sports Policy and the COVID-19 Boating and Fishing Guidelines indicate that appropriate social distance of six feet shall be maintained on land and boats. Handshakes, fist bumps, hugging, etc. should be avoided at all times.

Common Areas – Gatherings off boats in common areas, such as launch and weigh-in spaces cannot exceed 50 individuals. All individuals must wear face coverings and maintain 6’ of social distance.

Spectators – Gatherings off boats cannot exceed 50 individuals, making spectators unlikely for launch or weigh-ins. Event organizers should consider ways to stream launches and weigh-ins.

- Managers should work with their local health departments to consider whether spectators will be allowed or not
- If allowed, spectators must maintain social distance and wear masks.



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Competition: Per IDPH guidelines, schools may engage in bass fishing competitions based on the COVID-19 regional status for their school. (See IDPH COVID EMS-Region Map link below in resources).

Transportation - For transportation to and from extracurricular events, schools may adhere to the same guidance provided by ISBE regarding transporting students to and from school.

Practices - Practices are solely intra-team.

Equipment and Accessories

1. Boats

- Boat capacity is subject to the manufacturer's capacity for the boat and the U.S. Coast Guard regulations.
- The full legal load/capacity of the boat underway and moored/touching shore may be utilized if appropriate social distancing of 6' can be observed.
- Face coverings must be worn by anglers, coaches, and boat captains at all times.

2. Launch/Weigh-in Areas

- 6' of social distancing should be maintained between individuals and boats.

3. Fishing Gear (Rods, Reels, Lures, etc.)

- All equipment should be cleaned and sanitized as often as is practical. Equipment should be cleaned and sanitized according to manufacturer's guidance.
- Equipment should not be shared between anglers.

General Practice Requirements and Considerations for Coaches:

- Communicate practice and all competition guidelines in a clear manner to student participants and their parents.
- For practices, consider conducting workouts in "pods" of same students who are always training and rotating together. This will ensure more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- Keep accurate records of those athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.
- Always have a plan to maintain social distancing amongst your team and coaching staff.



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- Require athletes to arrive at all practices and competitions already in appropriate attire. If locker rooms must be used, ensure there is enough space to allow for students and coaches to maintain social distancing.
- Educate your student athletes on proper hand washing and sanitation.
- Have hand sanitizer available at all practices and competitions.
- Coaches must wear masks/face coverings at all practices and competitions.

Requirements and Consideration for Event Organizers/Officials:

- Face coverings must be worn at all times.
- Make hand sanitizer available in common areas.
- Event organizers should keep 6' of social distance between themselves and any competitors or spectators.
- Consider conducting any pre-event safety meeting either online or limit the number of attendees. Any safety meeting held on site should be done outside where individuals can socially distance themselves from one another.
- During launch, check live wells in a 'drive by' fashion.
- Consider allowing the boat captain or coach to put any identification markers on the boat if it's not possible to maintain social distance while putting the identification marker on.
- Conduct safety checks with only one person in the boat while maintaining 6' of social distance.
- Develop "no contact" procedures for weigh-ins. Limit the number of individuals handling fish and maintain 6' of social distance between individuals.
- Consider streaming weigh-in ceremonies for individuals unable to attend.
- Consider ways to distribute any awards in a "no contact" manner. For example, if awards are distributed in person at the site of the event, consider placing the awards on a table where school representatives can pick them up.
- Consider ways to announce and distribute results electronically.

General Requirements and Considerations for Student Athletes:

- Student athletes should be responsible for their own supplies, equipment, food and drink.
- Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing and not share clothing with anyone. All equipment and clothing should be washed immediately upon returning home.
- Hand washing and the use of hand sanitizer should be frequent at all contests and practices.



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- Athletes should tell coaches immediately when they are not feeling well.
- Face coverings are always required.
 - Players should bring multiple masks to replace masks as necessary.
 - Any mask modification requests, due to a documented medical condition, must come through an Accommodation Request through the IHSA School Center.

General Requirements and Considerations for Parents:

- Make sure your child and immediate household members are free from illness before participating in practice and competition (if there is any doubt, stay home).
- Provide personal items for your child and clearly label them.
- Help make sure that your child is washing/cleaning clothing and personal items after each use.
- Know facility/venue limitations on capacity/attendance prior to attending a meet. Always maintain social distance and wear a face covering while in attendance at an event.
- **Transportation:**
Follow ISBE Guidelines: For transportation to and from extracurricular events, schools may adhere to the same guidance provided by ISBE regarding transporting students to and from school.

Eating and Drinking:

- Ask athletes to bring their own water and have their own plan for retrieving their water after competition.
- Ensure 6-foot distance whenever student athletes are eating or drinking.
- Replace face coverings immediately after eating or drinking.

Questions may be addressed to IHSA Associate Executive Director, Kurt Gibson (kgibson@ihsa.org)

Resources:

IDPH Sport Safety Guidance -

<http://dph.illinois.gov/covid19/community-guidance/sports-safety-guidance>

IDPH COVID-19 EMS-Regions Map -

<https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:37ae0de3-609b-4853-8622-b3b9c6d41781>

Boating & Fishing Guidelines –

<https://dceocovid19resources.com/assets/Restore-Illinois/businessguidelines4/boatingfishing.pdf>