

As the circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic continue to evolve, so does our Return to Activities (RTA) action plan. More specifically, SOAZ has modified our Phase 2 guidelines to better align with the Governor’s plan for reopening and the AZ Department of Health recommendations and guidelines. SOAZ’s RTA action plan will continue to focus on the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), mitigation measures, and sanitization protocols throughout all subsets of Phase 2. At this time, SOAZ anticipates our return to in-person activities will remain within Phase 2 of the RTA action plan throughout the duration of the 2020-21 season.

Below are the newly added subsets of Phase 2 of our “Return to Activities” Guidelines:

Phase 2 (a) – 50 people or less

Phase 2 (b) – 100 people or less

Phase 2 (c) – 150 people or less

****It is important to note that the number of individuals permitted is the only thing that is changing within Phase 2. All other guidelines still apply as is written in the original “Return to Activities” action plan and coaches’ guidebook.***

SOAZ’s Mandatory Mask Policy:

Masks will continue to be required through all subsets of Phase 2. To prevent any further confusion regarding the **mandatory mask policy**, the below guidelines were recently published in SOAZ’s “Phase 2 Transition” Memo issued on 10-06-2020.

- **Everyone in attendance at any in-person SOAZ event is required to wear a mask.** This mandate applies to all members of our community – athletes, Unified partners, coaches, volunteers, staff, parents / guardians, spectators, etc. Masks must be worn properly, covering both the nose and mouth. ***If someone does not have a mask to wear and extras are not available, that individual will not be permitted to enter.***
 - HODs, coaches, volunteers, parent/guardians, spectators, etc. are **required to wear a mask at all times – no exceptions can be made.**
 - SOAZ athletes and Unified partners are **required to wear a mask** in common areas (ex. restrooms) & all situations where maintaining a safe social distance of at least six feet is not possible.
 - SOAZ athletes & Unified partners are **encouraged, but not required to wear a mask while actively participating / competing** in sports training and competition. However, as soon as a participant is finished with their turn, drill, practice, etc., they are **required to put their mask back on immediately.**
 - **PLEASE NOTE:** *If a venue/facility requires masks to be worn at all times, athletes & Unified partners must wear a mask while participating/competing in sports.*
- **Anyone who is unable/unwilling to wear a mask due to a medical condition or personal preference is not permitted to participate in in-person programming until SOAZ enters Phase 3 of the Return to Activities action plan.**
 - Please [CLICK HERE](#) to review the official ruling from Special Olympics International:
 - Until SOAZ enters Phase 3, we encourage these individuals to participate in SOAZconnected’s virtual programming opportunities from home. To find a list of upcoming virtual activities and their respective registration links, please visit <https://specialolympicsarizona.org/soaz-connected/>

Making Determinations for In-Person Programming:

SOAZ will be analyzing data compiled by the Arizona Department of Health on a weekly basis to determine if in-person activities (practices, competitions, etc.) can be conducted safely. These benchmarks are as follows:

ADHS Benchmarks	SUBSTANTIAL TRANSMISSION	MODERATE TRANSMISSION	MINIMAL TRANSMISSION
# of Cases per 100,000 People	>100 cases/100,000	10-100 cases/100,000	<10 cases/100,000
Percent Positivity of COVID Tests	>10%	5-10%	<5%
Hospitalizations for COVID-like Illness	>10%	5-10%	<5%

SOAZ <u>PRACTICE</u> DELIVERY MODEL	Return to Activities PHASE 1	Return to Activities PHASE 2	Return to Activities PHASE 3
SOAZ <u>COMPETITION</u> DELIVERY MODEL	Virtual competitions ONLY	In-person competitions permitted with moderate modifications	In-person competitions permitted with minimal modifications

To ensure the safety of our athletes, partners, coaches, volunteers, etc. throughout the return to in-person activities, SOAZ will complete the following process on weekly basis:

1. ADHS posts updated data to the benchmarks dashboard every Thursday. At this time, SOAZ’s Return to Activities Committee will review the COVID-19 data by county.
2. Based on the data at the time of review, SOAZ will identify which delivery model is most appropriate for each individual county for the following week (Thursday – Thursday).
3. If a county’s status changes based on the above criteria, SOAZ will notify Heads of Delegation and Head Coaches of a change in delivery model via email and through a mass text notification system.
 - a. To prevent excessive notifications, communication will only be sent out when a county’s status / delivery model changes or if a previously scheduled competition is being cancelled.
 - i. No communication will be sent if conditions allow for practice and competitions to continue as scheduled in the same delivery model the county was operating in the previous week.
 - b. **HODs and Head Coaches are *REQUIRED to opt-in to receive status updates via text message during the sports season in which their delegation is participating in in-person programming.***
 - c. Assistant coaches, volunteers, athletes, Unified partners, parents/guardians, etc. may choose to opt-in to receive status updates via text message by completing the following process:
 - i. Text SOAZ to **(844) 480-1167**
 - ii. You will receive a welcome message confirming your entry

Below is the list of resources SOAZ utilizes for making determinations regarding Return to Activities:

- [AZ Department of Health – School Reopening Benchmarks / Dashboard by County](#)
- [Special Olympics Arizona – COVID-19 Updates & Resources](#)
- [Special Olympics International – COVID Resources: Frequently Asked Questions](#)