



### **COVID-19 OFFICIALS PROTOCOL**

Empire 8 will provide specific instructions for officials testing protocols (as applicable) and other institutional instructions for the game for each campus/venue/sport at [www.empire8.com/covid](http://www.empire8.com/covid). You should visit the site and review “Institutional Policies for Officials” in advance of working any contest. The documents will be shared by the assignor as well.

### **MASKING POLICY**

All officials working Empire 8 contests are required to be masked at all times upon arriving to campus, during competition and post competition until in their vehicle for departure. Officials should maintain social distance when addressing coaches and players. It is the responsibility of each official to hold one another accountable for compliance with the masking policy. Coaches are responsible for enforcing the masking policy for its team and the host generally oversees both teams and officials as needed. Violations of the masking policy by officials, coaches, players or game staff are subject to institutional and/or conference/assignor sanction. If an official repeatedly fails to comply with the masking policy, they may be asked to leave and will lose all future assignments for the season.

The conference gives officials the authority to warn coaches about failure to comply with masking policy. If the coach/offender fails to comply after two warnings, the official has the authority to penalize the offender.

Players competing on the field are NOT required to wear masks except for m/w volleyball.

### **TESTING PROTOCOLS**

Please note, we will test officials per NCAA guidelines under advisement of their medical professionals on the NCAA COVID-19 Advisory Group. Testing is only required for officials of the following sports: Baseball, M/W Basketball, Football and Softball. For all other officials, any reference to testing in the “Institutional Policies for Officials” document on [www.empire8.com/covid](http://www.empire8.com/covid) does not pertain to you. ALL sports officials will be required to complete the 48 and 24-hour Self-Screen Form discussed later in this memo.

#### **Sports Requiring Officials Testing**

Baseball  
M/W Basketball  
Football  
Softball

For sports that require testing of officials, you will need to complete the “Results Report and Consent” form in this appendix. The “Results Report” information is a state requirement that each institution must have to enter the test results. If you officiate a sport that does not require testing, you do not need

to complete this form. If your pre-game test was conducted off campus you do not need to complete this form but must bring documentation of the test result.

Empire 8 will provide the specific testing and COVID instructions of each campus venue to the assignor before the start of the season. The assignor will share it with all officials. This will ensure you are aware of the protocols in advance and make for a smooth experience for officials. The up-to-date protocols can also be found at [www.empire8.com/covid](http://www.empire8.com/covid). Nazareth College and Utica College conduct their officials testing off campus so be sure to read the protocols.

Here are the general protocols for officials that require testing:

**Basketball Officials.** All officials must be tested prior to each game in one of the following ways:

1. This is the default, test on-site gameday 90-minutes prior to tip (Instructions provided by host);
2. Get a free PCR test locally (as available) 72 hours prior to game and bring documentation of negative test;
3. Get tested at a local Empire 8 institution during one of their schedule testing times.

**Football.** All officials must be tested on-site no less than 90-minutes prior to kickoff (instructions provided by host) OR get a free (as available) local PCR test three days before competition and provide documentation of negative test result to on-site administrator.

**Baseball/Softball.** Any individual serving as home plate umpire will be tested on-site no later than 90-minutes before first pitch OR get a free (as available) local PCR test three days before competition and provide documentation of negative test result to on-site administrator.

### **SELF-SCREEN**

Empire 8 officials in all sports will be required to complete the “Empire 8 COVID-19 Officials Self-Screening Tool” (see Appendix) and present this to the host administrator or their designee upon arrival. This requires the official to complete a self-screen 48 and 24 hours prior to each contest they work. Should an official exhibit one of the symptoms they will be removed from the assignment and must immediately contact the assignor and conference office [cmitrano@empire8.com](mailto:cmitrano@empire8.com).

### **CHECKLIST**

Here is a quick checklist for officials preparing to work at an Empire 8 institution:

#### **Pre-Event**

1. Refer to institutional protocols provided by Empire 8 assignor or at [www.Empire8.com/covid](http://www.Empire8.com/covid) to learn how you will be tested (as applicable).
2. Refer to this document for additional policies.
3. Complete 48-hour self-check (form).
4. Complete 24-hour self-check (form).
5. Complete “Results Report and Consent” form.

#### **Gameday**

1. If testing day of game, follow institutional instructions.
2. Bring your test result documentation if you tested off-site.
3. Bring your completed “Results Report and Consent” form.
4. Sign and bring your self-check form.

5. Bring your own water bottle and towel.
6. Bring additional masks in the event yours becomes unusable or over saturated.
7. Refer to institutional policy regarding availability of locker room/change room and shower. You may need to come dressed and ready to work if facilities are not available.

#### **FACILITY ACCESS/LOCKER ROOM/CHANGE ROOM**

Empire 8 institutions are playing all of its sports in the spring. As a result, and due to COVID-19 mitigation protocols, availability of locker rooms/change rooms will vary by campus. You are encouraged to call the host the day prior to see if there is availability if you desire access.

#### **WATER/TOWELS/SUPPLEMENTAL MASKS**

Officials should bring their own water and towel to games. The host will have a water jug that can be used to refill your container as needed. Officials should also bring additional masks in the event one breaks or becomes over saturated.

#### **EMPIRE 8 INSTITUTION PARTICIPANT TESTING/POLICIES**

Empire 8 has taken extraordinary measures to ensure the events you officiate are safe. All players and coaches that are not on the competition surface are required to be masked at all times. We have also adopted more rigorous testing protocols than the NCAA recommendations for low and intermediate risk sports. Our testing guidelines are as follows:

##### **High Risk Sports Basketball & Football: Follow NCAA guidelines on testing procedures as follows:**

- Regular and postseason, outdoor sports — Testing of athletes and Tier 1 nonathlete personnel once weekly by PCR testing (within three days before the competition), or three times weekly by antigen/rapid PCR testing.
  - Regular and postseason, indoor sports — Testing (PCR/antigen/rapid PCR testing) of athletes and Tier 1 nonathlete personnel three times weekly on nonconsecutive days, beginning one week before the first competition. If all training and competition are done with universal masking and adherence to infection risk mitigation, then testing in a manner consistent with outdoor high transmission risk sports.
  - **Travel Testing** - PCR testing within three days before travel departure, or antigen/rapid PCR testing within one day before travel for away competitions.
  - For the special scenario in which high transmission risk indoor sports are competing once weekly within a conference or specified geographic locale:>If a single game — PCR test within three days before the game, or antigen/rapid PCR test the day of the game.

**Testing All Other Sports (Moderate & Low Risk).** All other Empire 8 teams will test as follows noting it is more robust than the NCAA standard:

**Regular and postseason** — PCR or antigen testing of 100% Tier 1 individuals on a weekly basis starting one week prior to the first competition plus additional testing for symptomatic and high infection risk individuals as warranted.

**Travel Testing** - PCR testing within three days before travel departure, or antigen/rapid PCR testing within one day before travel for away competitions.

- If back-to-back games against the same team (for example, Friday-Saturday)— PCR test within three days before the second game, or antigen/rapid PCR within one day of each game.

- If two games against the same team are separated by one day (for example, Thursday-Saturday) — PCR test within three days before the second game, or antigen/rapid PCR test within one day of each game.
- These scenarios do not apply to multiple teams meeting in one location, and they do not apply to wrestling.

**Non-Conference Opponents.** Empire 8 members can compete against nonconference teams at its discretion however the opponent must, at minimum, meet the same