

NYSA Board Members, Club and League leadership,

Please see the statement below from Guy Hobbs, President NYSA.

Over the past couple of days, an update from the Local Empowerment Advisory Panel (LEAP) has been circulating that contains the following language: "MANDATORY AS OF 6/10/2020: NO TOURNAMENTS OR COMPETITIONS ALLOWED. Spectator-less tournaments, competitions and other sporting events MAY be allowed following submission of an operation plan to and approval by the NV Department of Business & Industry." This language has created some confusion and will require some clarification.

Everyone needs to bear in mind that restrictions and protocols that are in place because of the pandemic are a product of due diligence at multiple levels. The State, through the Governor and LEAP have issued several directives and guidelines, including one specific to youth soccer. The counties and local municipalities have issued directives and guidelines regarding permitted activities on their respective fields. NYSA, as the governing organization for USYS, has issued guidelines and policies for a Return to Play plan. The directives issued by the State must be followed by everyone within the State. The municipalities and NYSA are allowed to be more restrictive than the State due to the general nature of State-issued directives and factors that may be specific to a particular group or locale within the State. Thus, all directives, guidelines, rules and policies of the State, local governments and NYSA are applicable and must be followed. This is not a matter of selecting the policies or directives that you may prefer, while ignoring all others.

I have spoken with the Governor about the language that has created the confusion, and am comforted by the fact that his intentions are still to continue to limit activities to those that are in the best interests of the health and well-being of the public. A clarification regarding tournaments and other competitions may be coming forward in the next few days. I am well aware that a number of our members, based upon a convenient reading of the LEAP update, began contacting local municipalities and the State to attempt to move forward with approvals for tournaments; each of those contacts were reported to me. Those who thought this was a wise course need to remember a few things. First, approval at any level requires approval at all levels. If the State Department of Business and Industry were to approve someone's plans for an event, the event would still require approval to use fields and approval from the municipality and sanctioning by NYSA.

It will be August at the end of this week. Infection rates in Nevada and locally are still not encouraging. It is difficult for me to imagine that there is anyone who believes that we will begin hosting tournaments and conducting games in September. Frankly, any events scheduled between now and the end of the calendar year are highly doubtful to occur. While we have yet to officially shut the door on these events – mostly out of hope – we need to accept reality. The Consumer Electronics Show will not be an in-person event this January, impacting the Las Vegas economy by several hundred million dollars. The hospitality industry is mothballing their entertainment planning through the end of the year. Meeting after meeting, and event after event, are cancelling or deferring past the end of 2020. Hotels and other businesses are scaling back employment due to changing visitation conditions. Professional sports leagues, even through the best of planning efforts, are struggling to squeeze in partial seasons - those that have are either in secluded "bubbles" with high levels of oversight or are struggling to keep positive results from spreading. High school sports have been deferred until 2021. Any events involving the gathering of people in a compact area where social distancing cannot be practiced are being cancelled or deferred. Yet, somehow, playing youth soccer games – with full contact and without social distancing – is something that some feel should be allowed at this time?

We have had a lot of feedback from the general public about the belief that kids are less likely to contract or spread the virus, but there is a failure to recognize in that returning to soccer means regular contact with parents, coaches and spectators. We have had reports of coaches playing full contact soccer and coaching youth teams shortly after. A coach could be asymptomatic, pass symptoms onto players, and the players can spread it through their home. In order to be confident in our Return to Play, we have to be positive that, on all levels, the guidelines of social distancing are being followed at all times, and that is simply not the case.

There is no one that wishes to see things return to normal more than NYSA. Having kids playing soccer is our entire reason for existing. However, we can never endorse placing the kids in harm's way in meeting this mission. To that end, we continue to fight for the ability to keep our teams on the fields, albeit under safe and rational protocols. The municipalities are working with us to keep fields open, as they share our desire to keep our youth active and able to recreate. We continue to have open and candid conversations with both the Governor and LEAP about our plans and approach. They, too, want to see our kids able to get exercise and enjoy their chosen sport. However, there is

almost universal agreement that if this cannot be done with safe protocols it is at risk of being shut down.

Over the next few days, if the Governor, LEAP, and the local governments allow, we will be considering some new measures to help ensure that we are able to keep our players on the fields. This will include an evaluation of our Phase 1 restrictions to determine if modifications can safely be made to enhance training content. In addition, we will be considering a monitoring program that will aid with compliance.

Please be aware that the activities of all sports are now being monitored and recorded by local governments and by NYSA. If there are instances of non-compliance, these will be noted. Section 28 of the NYSA Policies continues to apply and will be enforced. The goal is to achieve a state of compliance that demonstrates that youth soccer is fully capable of adhering to the health-related protocols and, compared to other sports groups, is a leader in navigating the challenges of the pandemic. If we demonstrate that we are compliant, our chances of both maintaining use of the fields and migrating to new phases improve materially. If there are instances of non-compliance, it puts these efforts at risk. This is truly a case where the few bad actors could cause those who are compliance to lose their ability to operate.

Returning to the earlier topic, the LEAP committee meets later today, and the Governor is expected to deliver another update on Monday. Following those, we will update you further on the direction that we are collectively taking.

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