

Club and League leadership,

Please see the statement below from President Guy Hobbs.

NYSA's Return to Play Guidelines clearly spell out what activities are permitted and prohibited as we progress under the current pandemic. In addition, guidelines and directives from the Governor of the State of Nevada and the LEAP Committee also define what activities are permitted or prohibited. Members of NYSA are expected to comply with all guidelines, directives, rules and policies from all of these bodies at all times. While we may be constantly reevaluating whether we can migrate beyond Phase 1 activities, we are still in Phase 1 of the Return to Play protocols. Our objective has been to provide for ways for the youth players to be able to participate in activities – albeit limited due to the health crisis – and do so in a safe and healthy manner.

For those who have been following the directives and policies, we thank you for your cooperation and commitment to the health and well-being of your customers. For those who have chosen not to follow the rules, you are not only risking the health of those you are supposed to be protecting but your standing within this association, as well. Those who are placing profit ahead of the safety of your patrons and members are people who have no business working in youth sports.

The following has been posted on the NYSA website, under the tab “Out-of-State Travel” for the past several weeks:

“NYSA Clubs and Leagues:

We have received a few questions regarding out-of-state play during the phased Return to Play period, and thought that it may be helpful to clarify the position of NYSA regarding such travel.

NYSA is currently in Phase 1 of its Return to Play efforts, meaning that only individual drills emphasizing social distancing are allowed. Full and unrestricted game play is not allowed until we enter Phase 4. This being the case, NYSA will not be approving any out-of-state play until we have reached the fourth phase of our protocols.

If a club or team elects to travel prior to NYSA entering Phase 4, it does so at its own risk and contrary to NYSA restrictions. Not only will such travel and play be void of any insurance coverage under NYSA's policies, those making such trips may be required to quarantine for up to two weeks upon return from another state. Section 28 of the NYSA Policy will be fully enforced.

Let's all remember that the reason we are adhering to common sense and the Return to Play restrictions is due to a serious health crisis. It is very real, and placing youth players at risk by playing in a weekend event would appear to turn a blind eye to the safety and well-being of our players, coaches and families.”

It has come to our attention that a few of our clubs have chosen to send teams to tournaments this week in a neighboring state. Whether the clubs have chosen to do this or simply allowed it to happen makes no difference.

Our position up to this point, as is clearly stated above, is that NYSA will neither approve nor allow teams to travel to conduct activities that are not permitted under our protocols. When confronted with clubs that believe that they are either above the rules or show a disregard for the rules, we felt that our best protection for both NYSA and the balance of the soccer community was to ask them to sign waivers indemnifying NYSA from any consequences of their actions, and to require returning teams to quarantine once they are back in the state. Of course, the consequence of taking this action was to somehow suggest that NYSA is permitting travel. This is absolutely not the case, nor will it be until such actions are deemed safe.

Sections 4 and 28 of the NYSA Policies already apply to this type of situation, though travel was not specifically mentioned in those sections. Those sections are rather clear, however, in the matter of violations of Return to Play protocols and actions that place NYSA and its members at risk. Conducting activities contrary to the Return to Play phases constitutes a violation per Sections 4 and 28, including discipline associated therewith. Further, we will be holding the top administrative personnel of any club that violates Policy or the Return to Play protocols individually responsible for any violations that occur within their club. If the leadership of clubs are not capable of controlling the actions of their employees, they will share in the application of discipline.

Due to a lack of compliance with the various directives and guidelines that have been put forth by the State, LEAP, and municipalities, all sports were very close to being shut down entirely this past week. As noted above, NYSA is committed to keeping our players engaged and only doing so in a safe and responsible manner. It was our intervention last week that helped to keep our players on the fields, continuing a commitment to find a way for our players to safely recreate during these unprecedented times. Frankly, the worst enemy that our players have at this time are the irresponsible few who put everyone else at risk because of their behavior. This needs to stop now.

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