

Hatboro-Horsham School District Athletics

Reopening of Athletics Plan Recommendations

This guidance is preliminary; as more public health information is available, the administration may work with impacted entities to release further guidance which could impact fall, winter, or spring seasons.

*Items highlighted in yellow throughout the document, meet the adherence guidelines set forth by Governor Wolf in terms of guidance to return to sporting events at all levels.

Introduction:

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented athletics with a variety of challenges. The COVID-19 virus is a highly contagious illness which primarily attacks the upper respiratory system. The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages. Research from the Centers for Disease Control, among others, have found that while children do get infected by COVID-19, relatively few children with COVID-19 are hospitalized. However, some severe outcomes have been reported in children and a child with a mild, or even asymptomatic case of COVID-19, can spread the infection to others who may be far more vulnerable. While it is not possible to eliminate all risks of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests there are many steps schools can take to reduce the risks to students, coaches, and their families.

HHSD will take the necessary precautions and recommendations from the federal, state, and local governments including CDC, PA Department of Health, as well as the NFHS and PIAA. We, as a district, realize the knowledge regarding COVID-19 is constantly changing as new information and treatments become available. These recommendations will be adjusted as needed when new information becomes available in order to decrease the risk of exposure for our staff, students, and spectators.

General Considerations:

- All off-season workouts are open and voluntary to any students in grades 9-12, who are enrolled within HHSD.
- While there is still an inherent risk of infection for those participating, everyone in attendance should be actively working towards decreasing the risk of transmission to others, by **adhering to prevention guidelines**.
- Everyone should arrive and leave at the scheduled time to avoid overlap in groups.
- All athletes are responsible for cleaning individual equipment (personal and school-issued) and clothing after every use. **Coaches are required to thoroughly clean all team/shared equipment after every use.**
- The Athletic Director will be the lead point-of-contact during the implementation of this Plan. His contact information is:

Lou James

Email: ljames@hatboro-horsham.org

A primary point-of-contact will also be designated by each team to receive any questions related to COVID-19. Contact information for this individual will be provided to all parents, athletes, and assistant coaches will be provided with that information. The Athletic Director

will work in conjunction with the Superintendent, the District's Pandemic Coordinator and team-designated points-of-contact during the implementation of this Plan.

Considerations for Coaches:

- Design activities that focus on increasing risk mitigation strategies (social distancing, hand hygiene, etc.).
- Seek guidance from the Athletic Director, school, and/or athletic trainers on educational strategies for student-athletes.
- Design activities to resume in a gradual fashion to avoid overuse injuries and exertional/heat-related illnesses.
 - Consider that all athletes have some level of detraining and may not be returning at the same fitness level and activities may need to be adjusted accordingly. Additionally, if athletes miss sessions, they may need to start at a previous level.
 - Coaches should work with the Athletic Director and/or an Athletic Trainer for guidance on adhering to each stages' recommendations.
- Break time may need to be increased and/or staggered to accommodate social distancing, hand washing, and avoiding shared hydration sources.
- The Athletic Department will continue to work with other district administrators as we continue to develop a Reopening Guide for staff and our general school population.
- Coaches must stay until all members of their team have left HHSD campus.
- Notification of any use of HHSD facility (indoor or outdoor) must be given to the Athletic Director prior to entry into or onto the facility.
- All Coaches must complete the Covid certification through the ACC.
<https://www.openlearning.com/courses/covid-safe-sport-coach-certification/>

Considerations for Athletes:

- Gradually work up intensity of activity.
- Communicate all health and fitness-related concerns with coaches, athletic trainer, or athletic director immediately.
- Athletes should arrive prepared to go and avoid congregating before the workout. Athletes should leave immediately following the workout.
- **Activities that increase the risk of exposure to saliva must not be allowed including chewing gum, spitting, licking fingers, and eating sunflower seeds.**
- Whenever possible, equipment and other personal items should be separated and not shared. If equipment must be shared, all equipment must be properly disinfected between users.

Pre-Workout Procedure: (ALL PHASES)

- **All students and parents/guardians are required to execute a Participation Agreement.**
 - The Participation Agreement Form is included as Exhibit A to this Plan. The waiver form can also be completed electronically.
- **All athletes and coaches in attendance must complete screening prior to practice.**
 - Anyone with positive findings on screening will not be permitted to attend (even as a spectator). Coaches will not allow athletes to return until they are given the okay by an athletic trainer or administrator.

- Coaches will continually monitor screenings and reach out to anyone with positive findings with further instructions.
- Coaches must review the screening report at the start of each workout and confirm that everyone in attendance has completed a screening survey that day.
- Coaches must maintain accurate attendance of each workout and submit to the Athletic Director immediately after their off-season volunteer practice session. **These procedures will continue as we move into official practices in August.**
- Athletes and coaches are required to use hand sanitizer and/or wash hands prior to the start of workout and throughout practice and/or at breaks.
- Each athlete must have their own personal water bottle and a facial covering to participate. No coolers or hydration stations should be utilized at this time.

Screening Procedure:

- Screening survey should be completed the same day as the workout. Athletes and coaches may not remain on campus if the screening survey is not completed.
- Athletes should complete screening in consultation with parents.
- The Athlete and Staff COVID-19 Screening Survey form is attached at Exhibit B to this Plan.
- Athletes who previously were diagnosed with COVID-19 and have since recovered must receive clearance from their treating health care provider and notify coaches and the Athletic Director, in order work with the health officials and/or trainer to set that an appropriate return to play plan can be established.
- If anyone tests positive for COVID-19 who was at a workout within 14 days, appropriate notification and tracing will be initiated by the Athletic Director, in conjunction with the Superintendent and the District's Pandemic Coordinator. Additional information on contracting tracing and the COVID-19 coronavirus is including at Exhibit C to this Plan.

Classification of Sports:

High Risk: Sports that involve close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, and high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants. (Football, wrestling, cheerleading (stunts), dance, marching band, color guard and drumline).

Moderate Risk: Sports that involve close, sustained contact, but with protective equipment in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants OR intermittent close contact OR group sports that use equipment that can't be cleaned between participants. (Basketball, volleyball, baseball, softball, soccer, field hockey, ice hockey, tennis, lacrosse, pole vault, high jump, long jump, & 7 on 7 football).

Low Risk: Sports that can be done with social distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between uses by competitors. (Running events, cross country, throwing events, swimming, bowling, golf, weightlifting, & sideline cheer).

****High/Moderate Risk Sports may move to a Low risk category with non-contact modifications. Team Activities should be limited to individual skill development drills that maintain social distancing.***

Levels of Participation:

The Athletic Director will inform coaches when there is a change in the participation level.

Level 1 - Pennsylvania State/County Red

Team Activities: No in-person gatherings allowed, Athletes and Coaches may communicate via online meetings (Google Meet, Remind, Hudl, etc). Athletes may participate in individual home workouts including strength and conditioning.

- All school facilities remain closed as per PA State Guidelines.
- Athletes and Coaches should abide by guidelines set forth by the local and state governments.

Level 2 - Pennsylvania State/County Yellow (or Green) Board Approval

Team Activities: No in-person gatherings allowed, Athletes and Coaches may communicate via online meetings (Google Meet, Remind, Hudl, etc). Athletes may participate in individual home workouts, including strength training and conditioning.

- All school facilities will remain closed to our student-athletes
 - Coaches may use facilities to meet with the Athletic Director, other coaches, and/or to prepare for off-season training. **In any in person meetings, all parties must wear protective face wear while on site.**
- Coaches and Athletic Director will meet, review and consider the CDC guidance on [consideration for youth sports](#) to modify practices and games to mitigate the risk of spreading the virus. This includes focusing on individual skill building versus competition and limiting contact in close contact sports.
- **Coaches will hold meetings with athletes & their families to inform them of the new requirements to participate in athletics.**
- In order to participate in training once we get into Level 3 and beyond, we may make ATS registrations mandatory for the 2020-2021 school year.
 - Coaches will have access to the app, which will be used for emergency contact information, and to set up reports for school personnel to track.
 - Reports will be created that will highlight students who may have compromised immune systems.

Level 3 - PA State Green (initial phase)

Team Activities May Include: basketball, field hockey, lacrosse, running sports, baseball, softball, soccer, tennis, pole vault, high jump, long jump, 7 on 7 football, etc.

Pre-workout/Contest Screening:

- Any person who has COVID-19 symptoms will not be allowed to participate in practice & games and should contact their primary care physician or another appropriate

health-care provider. A clearance note may be required to return to play.

- COVID-19 Screenings (Questionnaire and Temperature Checks may continue as per State and Local government recommendations)
- Team attendance must be recorded.

Gathering and Group Sizes

- When not directly participating in practices or contests, **social distancing should be considered and applied when able.**
- Outside Facility - 50 or less (This includes coaches and players.)
- Gymnasium - 25 or less (This includes coaches and players.); **As we move closer to the winter sports season, and with the use of indoor facilities, we will continue to work on plans that will adhere to all guidelines set forth by PDE, CDC, and the PA Department of Health.**
- Fitness Center or Weight Room- Groups of 20 or less. **(165 is estimated 50% capacity)**
 - Workouts are required to be contained in pods of 10 or less. These pods will remain together for all activity and intermingle with other pods as little as possible.
 - Some equipment may need to be taped off for non-use, to facilitate distancing and reduce the number of items that will need to be cleaned.
 - Fitness Center activities will be limited to those that allow for social distancing (side-spotting should be utilized when needed) and equipment must be wiped after each use.
 - The fitness center will be cleaned by members of the coaching staff at the conclusion of each day. **Once our cleaning crew is back on site, the facility will be given a deep clean at the conclusion of each night that the facility is being used.**
- No group huddles.
 - Instruction can be given in a socially distant manner.
 - Stretching, warmups, and cooldowns can be done in a socially distant manner.
- No locker room use. Restrooms should be used one at a time if needed.

Facilities Cleaning:

- Adequate cleaning schedules must be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable disease.
- Athletic Facilities must be cleaned prior to arrival and post workouts & team gatherings. High touch areas must be cleaned more often.
- Weight Room Equipment must be wiped down after each individual's use.
- Appropriate clothing & shoes will be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment surfaces.

Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment:

- Low, Moderate, and High-Risk practices & Low and Moderate Risk competitions may begin. (As per State, Local, and PIAA Guidelines.)
- Students should refrain from sharing clothing (including pinnies) & towels and those should be washed after each practice.
- No handshakes, fist-bumps, high fives, etc.
- Athletic equipment that may be used by multiple individuals (balls, shields, tackling dummies, shot put, discus, pole vault, etc.) should be cleaned intermittently during practice and events as deemed necessary.

- Hand Sanitizer should be used periodically as resources allow.
- Spotters for maximum weight lifts should be stationed at each end of the bar.
- Facial coverings are required for all coaches and staff. Facial coverings are required for students when arriving & leaving and during down time when they are not doing exertional activity (i.e. during instruction). Facial coverings are not recommended during activity.
- Athletes should take frequent breaks for handwashing or hand sanitizer use.
- Limit shared objects to those required for sport only (i.e. footballs, soccer balls, tennis balls, etc.).
- **Team equipment will be cleaned at the conclusion of each session by coaching and/or custodial staff. Individual clothing & equipment (team issued or personal) will be cleaned at the conclusion of each session by participant.**
 - Note: No materials will remain on-site. A plan of action for football, field hockey, and other members of sports who will wear padded equipment will continue to be established for when the season begins in August.
- **When appropriate, coaches and athletes should be wearing a mask at all times**

Hydration:

- Students **MUST** bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
- Hydration Stations may be used but **MUST** be cleaned after every practice/event.

Level 4 - PA State Green (final phase)

Team Activities May Include: Low & Moderate Risk Sports may resume as normal. High Risk Sports may begin full person to person contact and competition.

Pre-workout/Contest Screening:

- Any person who has COVID-19 symptoms is not allowed to participate in practice & games and should contact their primary care physician or another appropriate health-care provider.
- COVID-19 Screenings (Questionnaire and Temperature Checks may continue as per State and Local government recommendations).
- Team attendance must be recorded.

Limitations on Gatherings:

- As per State and Local Guidelines.
- When not directly participating in practices or contests, **social distancing should be considered and applied when able.**
- No limitation on group sizes, however, in confined spaces (i.e. fitness center or weight room) special consideration should be given to allow for social distancing, if needed.
 - Some equipment may need to be taped off for non-use, to facilitate distancing and reduce the number of items that will need to be cleaned.
- Limit group huddles when possible for instruction.
- Locker room use may begin with frequent cleaning. Athletes are encouraged to practice social distancing and avoid congregating in locker rooms.
- **No handshakes, fist-bumps, high-fives, etc.**
- Team meetings should allow for social distancing or take place on a virtual platform.

Facilities Cleaning:

- Adequate cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable disease
- Athletic Facilities should be cleaned prior to arrival and post workouts and team gatherings, high touch areas should be cleaned more often

- Weight Room Equipment should be wiped down after and individual's use
- Appropriate clothing/shoes should be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment surfaces
- Team equipment will be cleaned at the conclusion of each session by coaching and/or Custodial staff. Individual clothing & equipment (team issued or personal) will be cleaned at the conclusion of each session by the participant.

Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment:

- All sports may resume normal practice and competition
- Students should refrain from sharing clothing (including pinnies) & towels and should be washed after each practice.
- Athletic equipment that may be used by multiple individuals (balls, shields, tackling dummies, shot put, discus, pole vault, etc.) should be cleaned intermittently during practice and events as deemed necessary
- Hand Sanitizer should be used periodically as resources allow
- Spotters for maximum weight lifts should be stationed at each end of the bar.
- When appropriate, coaches and athletes should be wearing a mask at all times.

Hydration:

- Students MUST bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
- Hydration Stations may be used but MUST be cleaned after every practice/event.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

Transportation:

Modifications for student/coach transportation to and from athletic events may be necessary. This may include:

- Reducing the number of students/coaches on a bus/van
- Using hand sanitizer upon boarding a bus/van
- Social distancing on a bus
- Use of masks or protective face wear on busses

These potential modifications will be determined by the school district, bus companies, Department of Education, State and Local governments.

Social Distancing during Contests/Events/Activities

- Sidelines/Bench – Appropriate social distancing will need to be maintained on sidelines/bench during contests and events, as deemed necessary by the school, PIAA, state and local governments. Consider using tape or paint as a guide for students and coaches.

Who should be allowed at events?

- Tier 1 (Essential) – Athletes, coaches, officials, event staff, medical staff, security
- Tier 2 (Preferred) – Media
- Tier 3 (Non-essential) – Spectators, vendors
 - Only Tier 1 and 2 personnel will be allowed to attend events until state/local governments lift restrictions on mass gatherings.
 - Changes to seating capacity and social distancing may be necessary for each venue facility and will be determined as more recommendations are released by

the local/state governments.

Overnight/Out of State Events/ Events in COVID-19 Hot Spots

- HHSD will evaluate each event and follow all local/state government guidelines on a case by case basis. Every consideration will be taken as to not expose students to unnecessary or potential high risk exposure.

Action Plan for Illness:

The following link contains the plan of action should an athlete or coach fall ill. This includes educating our stakeholders on the symptoms of COVID-19 and when to stay home:

[Positive Cases & Coaches, Staff, Athletes Showing COVID-19 Symptoms:](#)

Scheduling:

If multiple teams request the use of a facility, adequate time shall be scheduled between groups. This will allow for facilities to be cleaned, disinfected, and to minimize interaction between athletes. Sports complexes with multiple fields may operate simultaneous games or practices on fields within a complex only if social distancing can be maintained. Each individual game or practice at a complex must adhere to the gathering occupancy limits, 250 in the green phase, and the facility as a whole may not exceed 50% of total occupancy otherwise permitted by law.

References:

1. [NFHS Guide for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities](#)- May 2020
2. [NATA COVID-19 Return to Sport Considerations for Secondary School Athletic Trainers](#)- May 2020
3. [PA Department of Education Preliminary Guidance for Phased Reopening of Pre-K to 12 Schools](#)- June 3, 2020
4. [CDC COVID-19 Considerations for Youth Sports](#)- May 29, 2020
5. [KSI Return to Sports and Exercise during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Guidance for High School and Collegiate Athletic Programs](#)- June 2, 2020
6. [Washington University Resocialization of Sports Recommendations](#)- June 1, 2020
7. [UPMC Sports Medicine Playbook: Returning to Sports During COVID-19 Minimum Guidelines \(High School\)](#)- May 28, 2020
8. [PIAA Press Release](#)- June 10, 2020
9. [During the COVID-19 Disaster Emergency to Ensure Safety and Health of Employees, Athletes, and the Public](#) - June 10, 2020

Exhibit A
Participation Agreement

Hatboro-Horsham School District Athletics
Participation Agreement for Communicable Diseases
Including COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented athletics across the world with a myriad of challenges concerning this highly contagious illness that primarily attacks the upper respiratory system. Some severe outcomes have been reported in children, and a child with a mild or even asymptomatic case of COVID-19 can spread the infection to others who may be far more vulnerable.

While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, Hatboro-Horsham School District (“HHSD”) will take necessary precautions and comply with guidelines from the federal, state, and local governments, CDC, PA DOH, as well as the NFHS and PIAA, to reduce the risks to students, coaches, and their families. As knowledge regarding COVID-19 is constantly changing, HHSD reserves the right to adjust and implement precautionary methods as necessary to decrease the risk of exposure for our staff, students, and spectators. Some precautionary methods included in the HHSD Reopening of Athletics Plan Recommendations include but are not limited to:

1. Conducting health screenings prior to any practice, event, or team meeting with participation in the activities being limited and/or prohibited where an individual displays positive responses or symptoms.
2. Encouraging social distancing and promote healthy hygiene practices such as hand washing, using hand sanitizer, etc.
3. Intensifying cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation in all facilities.
4. Educating Athletes, Coaches, and Staff on health and safety protocols.
5. Requiring Athletes and Coaches to provide their own water bottle for hydration.

By signing this Agreement, the undersigned acknowledge that they have received, read and understood the HHSD Reopening of Athletics Plan Recommendations and agree to follow the guidelines established therein, and to follow any additional guidelines that may be implemented as additional information becomes available. The undersigned understand and agree that refusal or failure to comply with any provision of the HHSD Reopening of Athletics Plan Recommendations may result in removal from participation in athletic programs.

By signing this Agreement, the undersigned voluntarily agree to release and discharge all claims for ourselves, our heirs, and as a parent or legal guardian for the Student named below, against HHSD, its Board of Directors, successors, assigns, officers, agents, employees, and volunteers and will hold them harmless from any and all liability or demands for personal injury, psychological injury, sickness, death, or claims resulting from personal injury or property damage, of any nature whatsoever which may be incurred by the Student or the undersigned relating to or as a result of the Student’s participation in athletic programs, events, and activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The undersigned acknowledge that participating in athletic programs, events, and activities may include a possible exposure to a communicable disease including but not limited to MRSA, influenza, and COVID-19. The undersigned further acknowledge that they are aware of the risks associated with COVID-19 and that certain vulnerable individuals may have greater health risks associated with exposure to COVID-19, including individuals with serious underlying health conditions such as, but not limited to: high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, asthma, and those whose immune systems that are compromised by chemotherapy for cancer, and other conditions requiring such therapy. While particular recommendations and personal discipline may reduce the risks associated with participating in athletics during the COVID-19 pandemic, the risk of serious illness, medical complications and possible death does exist.

We knowingly and freely assume all such risks, both known and unknown, even if arising from the negligence of others, and assume full responsibility for Student's participation in athletics during the COVID-19 pandemic. We willingly agree to comply with the stated recommendations put forth by HHSD to limit the exposure and spread of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases. We certify that Student is in good physical condition or believe Student to be in good physical condition and allow participation in this sport at our own risk.

Sport: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Student Athlete: _____ Date: _____

Exhibit B
COVID-19 Screening Survey

Exhibit C

Additional Information re: Contract Tracing and COVID-19

BACKGROUND

Contact tracing is the process of reaching out to anyone who came into close contact with an individual who is positive for COVID-19. Contact tracing helps monitor close contacts for symptoms and to determine if they need to be tested. Contact tracing is a key strategy for preventing the further spread of infectious diseases such as COVID-19.

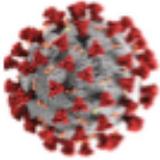
WHAT DOES THIS PROCESS LOOK LIKE?

- In contact tracing, public health staff work with a case to help them recall everyone they have had close contact with during the time they were infectious.
- Public health staff then inform individuals who have had close contact (e.g. “close contacts”) that they have potentially been exposed to COVID-19. Close contacts are only told that they may have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19; they are not told who may have exposed them.
- Close contacts are given education, information and support so they understand their risk. They receive information on what they should do to separate themselves from others who have not been exposed, how to monitor themselves for illness, and are made aware that they could possibly spread the infection to others, even if they do not feel sick.
- Close contacts will be asked to quarantine themselves and are encouraged to stay home and maintain social distancing through the end of their infectious period, which is about 14 days, in case they become sick. They should monitor themselves by checking their temperature twice a day and watch for any other symptoms of COVID-19. Public health staff will check in with these contacts to make sure they are self-monitoring and have not developed symptoms.
- If a close contact develops symptoms, they should isolate themselves and let public health staff know. The close contact will be evaluated to see if they need medical care. A test may be necessary unless the individual is already in a household or long-term care facility with a confirmed case, then the close contact would be considered a probable case without a test.

WHAT TERMS SHOULD I KNOW WHEN IT COMES TO CONTACT TRACING?

- A **case** is a patient who has been diagnosed with COVID-19. A case should isolate themselves, meaning they should stay away from other people who are not sick to avoid spreading the illness.
- A **close contact** is an individual who had close contact with a case while the case was infectious. A close contact should quarantine themselves, meaning they should stay at home to limit community exposure and self-monitor for symptoms.
- A **contact of a close contact** is an individual who had or continues to have contact with a close contact. A contact of a close contact should take all regular preventative actions, like washing hands, covering coughs and sneezes, and cleaning surfaces frequently. A contact of a close contact should be alert for symptoms.

What you should know about COVID-19 to protect yourself and others



Know about COVID-19

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person.
- The virus that causes COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has spread throughout the world.
- COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness.



Know how COVID-19 is spread

- You can become infected by coming into close contact (about 6 feet or two arm lengths) with a person who has COVID-19. COVID-19 is primarily spread from person to person.
- You can become infected from respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.
- You may also be able to get it by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, and then by touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.



Protect yourself and others from COVID-19

- There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to protect yourself is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Stay home as much as possible and avoid close contact with others.
- Wear a cloth face covering that covers your nose and mouth in public settings.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



Practice social distancing

- Buy groceries and medicine, go to the doctor, and complete banking activities online when possible.
- If you must go in person, stay at least 6 feet away from others and disinfect items you must touch.
- Get deliveries and takeout, and limit in-person contact as much as possible.



Prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick

- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Avoid public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.
- Separate yourself from other people and pets in your home.
- There is no specific treatment for COVID-19, but you can seek medical care to help relieve your symptoms.
- If you need medical attention, call ahead.



Know your risk for severe illness

- Everyone is at risk of getting COVID-19.
- Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more severe illness.

