**Community Recreation Association**

**Safe Return to Play Plan**

**Youth Basketball**

**General Information**

The Community Recreation Association has determined the following policies/procedure and modifications be made to youth basketball in order to compete in the 2020-21 Winter Season. This document highlights the information from EEA guidance, been reviewed by the local health agent and will be amended as needed throughout the season. Each participant in the program must have a valid CRA General Membership that indicates that they understand participating in youth sports comes with a risk of injury and illness, including but not limited to COVID-19.

Any player traveling outside the approved “travel area” will have to produce a negative COVID test result or quarantine for 14 days before they can return to participate in the league/program. Players and coaches who were exposed to COVID should not participate in practices or games until their required quarantine period is completed. Athletes and coaches may not attend practices or games if they are isolated for illness or quarantined for exposure to infection.

**Out-of-state travel for recreational play, training sessions, practices or any sporting event are not allowed, without permission from the league. Data indicates that traveling may increase the chances of exposing players, coaches, and others to COVID-19.** Any Massachusetts based athlete or coach who receives permission and chooses to leave Massachusetts to participate in a Sporting Event must comply with the Commonwealth’s Travel Order (COVID-19 Order No. 45) upon returning to Massachusetts and before returning to sports activity, work, school or attending public events. Any individual that violates this order will be subject to removal of the league.

According to the EEA Guidance basketball is listed as a “higher risk” and therefore is limited to Level 3 competition and must follow the guidance listed below. In addition to rule modifications and changes to game administration we will require that prior to attending practices or games, athletes and coaches should check their temperature. If a player or a coaching staff member has a temperature of 100.4 degrees or above, they should not attend practices or games. Likewise, if they have any other symptoms of COVID19 infection (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/ 2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html), they should not attend practices or games. Players and coaches who have symptoms of COVID-19 infection should follow DPH guidance regarding isolation and testing.

The CRA will be following the guidance from the state with some modifications that we feel are necessary to make the activity as safe as possible. For the purposes of these guidelines, a “Competition” is defined as multiple participants or two teams competing against one another in a single contest. A competition includes inter-team games, matches, shows, meets, and races. Teams are limited to competing against a single opposing team per day. There is no tournament format allowed in the basketball season.

**Important Information**

The CRA is committed to following the recommended guidance from the EEA and local board of health. We will be amending policies as needed and when appropriate. We will make sure we are following the Activity Organizers Rules for indoor higher risk sports. In addition to those rules we will be limiting the number of people in the gymnasium to a maximum of 25 people at one time. When players, coaches, or staff are not engaged in the game- they will remain socially distant. It is very important that once athletes have completed their competition or activity, they must leave the area if another team is taking court surface to ensure adequate space for distancing. Parents/Guardians should make sure they pick up their children on time to assist with this process. We will build in a 30-minute sanitization period between games/practices. In addition to these modifications, below are a few more modifications that we will follow:

**Cohorts and/or Participants:** A record will be kept of all individuals present at team activities i.e. – practices, practice cohorts, competitions, etc.

**Personal Habits-** CRA Staff will train coaches, officials, and staff on all safety protocols. Coaches will train/remind their players as well as remind the parents of the COVID related guidelines.

**Practice –** Coaches are responsible for ensuring social distancing is maintained between players as much as possible. This includes additional spacing between athletes while stretching, warming up, chatting, changing drills, etc. Athletes must maintain spacing, and there should be no congregating of athletes while running drills. Workouts should be conducted in ‘pods’ of athletes, with the same athletes always working out together. This ensures more limited exposure if someone develops an infection. Records should be kept of who is in each group, each time they are together.

**Team Benches –**The bench area will have an “X” indicating where people should keep their personal belongs and where they should sit when appropriate. When coaches are talking to the players, they will do so socially distant. communicating with the entire team, or in smaller groups.

**Spectators –** There will be (1) Spectator allowed per player for all practices/games for children in grades Pre K-2 at the Dalton Youth Center. There will be **NO** spectators for players in grades 3 and up.

**Masks/Face Coverings** –Players, Coaches and Officials are required to wear face coverings at all times.

**Hand sanitizer and/or sanitizing wipes –** Players, coaches, and officials are encouraged to provide their own hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) and/or sanitizing wipes and use them frequently – including prior to taking the court and upon return to the sideline. Additionally, it is emphasized to avoid touching the face throughout practice and competition.

**Post-Game Procedures –** There is no post-game handshakes. Players will line up on their respective foul lines at 6 feet apart and acknowledge the other team as an act of sportsmanship.

**Basketball Specific Modifications**

* Each team will have a roster that will not exceed 8 players and 2 coaches
  + At NO time will the gym have more than 25 people in the gym (including game staff, officials, coaches, players)
* All coaches will complete a CORI/SORI Check and COVID training
* Each game will have a COVID Chaperone on site to make sure that all protocols are being followed
* The official will use an electronic whistle, wear a mask and officiate the game from half court and remain socially distant throughout the game.
* Each quarter will be 8 minutes in length- at the end of each quarter there will be a 2-minute break
  + There will be NO Halftime
* Each timeout will last 1 minute and 15 seconds- extending the time to give players a designate mask break. Players will remain socially distant
* Game ball will be sanitized at each break in the game
* No jump ball to start the game. We will start with the “away” team getting the ball first and then we will alternate possession.
* Coaches will indicate to the scorer they want to sub, and they will sub directly from the bench area to avoid “gathering” at the table
* Closely guarded/freedom of movement- new modifications regarding the closely guarded rule in the front court will apply
* Free Throws- Each team can have 2 players from each team in the lane on the FINAL shot
* In the event of dead ball situation, the ball will be played from the sideline. We will remove out of bounds under the basket.
* Quick Whistle on jump ball situations