

Referees,

We cover this information in our pre-season clinics, but it is worth sharing with our entire cadre here. A little long, but I'm trying to answer the questions I've been getting.

1 - FACE MASKS. The use/non-use of face masks is determined by the local/county health department where the tournament is located. Some facilities may also have face mask requirements regardless of what the local health department has established. Check with the tournament director before you arrive and abide by those mandates. Or, if you are more comfortable wearing a face mask, regardless of a requirement to do so, that's a personal choice - do what you need to do.

**The OVR is not requiring referees, participants, work teams, or tournament staff to wear a face mask. Again, local health department authorities or facility managers dictate this. We must abide by the local regulations.

2 - WHISTLES. You may use a "regular" whistle & lanyard, a whistle beneath a face mask, or an electronic hand-held whistle. The choice is yours. Again, local regulations at the tournament site may dictate your options.

Your work team R2 has the same options. Allow them to do what they are most comfortable with. Referees cannot require a work team R2 to use one type of whistle over another.

3 - LINE JUDGE FLAGS. The use of line judge flags is optional at all events this season. Ask the tournament director if any facility guidelines have been established. In the absence of a prescribed protocol, ask each work team whether they'd like to use flags. If you take your own flags, be prepared to sanitize the handles after each use. Do not insist that a work team use them -- it's their choice, not the referee's.

4 - WORK TEAMS. Consider it "business as usual" this season. We are not minimizing the number of people at the score table, etc., like we did last season. However, a rostered coach/asst coach/chaperone must still be at or near the score table when their team is the work crew. The coach does not need to fill one of the work team positions, but they may surely do so.

5 - SPECTATORS. This doesn't fall under a referee's purview, but just so everyone knows -- while spectator attendance will still be at the discretion of the host facility and local health authority, based on what I've heard, it should be a little more normal. (Hope you enjoyed the silence while it lasted!) There may still be facilities that limit the number of spectators, while others have relaxed their restrictions. For example, as of today, the Greater Columbus Convention Center does not have any attendance restrictions.

6 - VACCINATION STATUS. The OVR will not be asking for any member's vaccination status. If you are asked for your vaccination status to participate at an OVR-sanctioned event, please notify me.

Hope this information gives you an idea where we're headed this season

-- a move to something a little more normal. We may still have adjustments to make, so be flexible, adaptable, and cooperative! We're pretty good at that by now.

If you have any questions about this stuff or related topics, drop me a note.

Brian Hemelgarn
OVR Referees' Chair