

CIF SAC-JOQUIN SECTION

To: CIF Sac-Joaquin Section Principals / Athletic Directors
From: Michael S. Garrison, Commissioner
Date: December 18, 2020
Re: CIF Sac-Joaquin Section Update (CDPH Sports Guidelines)

Good Morning, I hope this correspondence find you well and ready for a much-needed break 😊!

On Monday, December 14, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) released its guidelines for return-to-play for high school sports. With these guidelines, our student-athletes and our schools now have a pathway to getting back to the fields and courts of play. We know that you all want to get back to play as soon as we can; we do as well, as soon as it is safe and healthy to do so.

The guidelines as presented by the CDPH are not what was recommended by the CIF Sports Medicine Advisory Committee; that request was to have all sports conducted in the red tier. The CIF will continue to advocate with the CDPH with the hopes for a little more leniency to allow more of our sports to be played. We are asking for the chance to be able to play all of our sports, and I assure you that we will continue to advocate for that cause!

That being said, we need to plan for the upcoming Season 1 in the Sac-Joaquin Section. We are of the belief that the chance to play more sports contests outweighs the possibility for a postseason. With the guarantee that Season 1 will be starting late, the SJS will forego a traditional postseason to allow all our schools a chance to participate in more contests.

Below are the SJS alterations for Season 1:

- Due to the current travel restrictions, combined with the late start, the full-length Season 1 postseason for football/water polo/girls volleyball is canceled. The dates reserved for the state and regional playoffs will be used for a potential “bowl game” matchup. The Section postseason dates are now part of the regular season. Therefore, the new regular season end-date for girls volleyball and water polo is March 13 and the new regular season end-date for football is April 10. The “bowl game” dates are March 20 (girls volleyball and water polo) and April 16-17 (football). The status of the “bowl games” will be evaluated by the Section office on January 25.
- The status of the cross country postseason will be evaluated in mid/late January.
- Due to the current travel restrictions, league opponents may not be able to play each other. Season 1 teams should schedule the contests they are able to play following the travel guidelines. Some leagues may be able to contest a full season, and that is recommended if possible.
- We are not looking at any changes for Season 2 at this time.
- The CIF is currently advocating on behalf of our student-athletes with the California Department of Public Health. We are hopeful some of the guidelines will be relaxed when reevaluated on or around January 4. Until then, we don't anticipate any further information.

- Some have asked about shuffling seasons to allow for more sports to be played. We do not see this as a viable option at this time, because we don't know exactly when our schools will be able to contest sports again. We do not want to jeopardize a spring sport after our spring sports were canceled for the 2019-20 season. The CIF put its plan together in July, and we are hopeful we will see that plan through. While the CDPH and our county color tiers will ultimately determine what is played this year, we remain hopeful the majority of our sports will be contested this year.

With the release of the CDPH guidelines for outdoor and indoor youth and recreational adult sports (includes Education Based Athletics), the CIF State office, in conjunction with the 10 Sections, have prepared the following information directly related to high school sports to help clarify our return to sports participation (these documents are attached):

- ✓ **CIF COVID-19 Cover Letter titled, "CIF Proposed Plan for the Return of Education Based Athletics"**
This document is a summary of those elements contained within the CDPH guidelines that pertain to education based athletics; No athletic competition permitted in California until Monday, January 25, 2021; Practice within stable team cohorts, limitations/restrictions on travel, etc.
- ✓ **CIF COVID-19 Sports & Tiers**
This document relates to the four-color tiered system the State of California is currently using for the 58 counties within the state. It shows the current status of each county within the state and identifies/categorizes CIF sports into a tiered color, which means no competition in that sport until the county color corresponds with that sport.
NOTE: This document will be updated weekly by the State CIF Office)
- ✓ **CIF COVID-19 Sports Guidelines/Recommendations**
This document provides guidelines/recommendation sport by sport (for every CIF sport) for modifications while participating with said sport.

I know these past 10 months have been extremely frustrating for all of us. In reviewing these guidelines, we are certain to continue to experience frustrations as we move forward. But to focus on the positive side, at least we have a roadmap for the return to play. It's a challenging roadmap for sure, but I know we will all do all we can to give our student-athletes a chance to play, this school year.

Thank you for your support and for all you do, it's greatly appreciated by all of us. If you have any questions, or we can help you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us – we are here for you!