



Georgia Music Educators Association

“Return to Marching” Guidelines

Guidance for Marching Bands during COVID-19

This guidance is provided to promote public awareness of certain health and safety-related issues. Such information is neither exhaustive nor necessarily applicable to all circumstances or individuals, and is no substitute for consultation with appropriate health-care professionals. Statutes, codes, or environmental conditions may be relevant. GMEA reserves the right to rescind or modify this document at any time.

- For programs beginning rehearsals or conditioning before July 6, 2020, GHSA June Return to Play guidelines should be followed.
- These Return to Marching Guidelines are intended to assist marching bands return to practice in July. These recommendations and restrictions are fluid and subject to change. Safety is our top priority.
 - All directors are encouraged to keep abreast of current studies regarding the transmission of COVID-19, especially in regards to wind instrument playing.
- GMEA Return to Marching Guidelines by level are based upon the Georgia Department of Education “Path to Recovery for Georgia K-12 Schools.”
 - Substantial Spread - Virtual Activities Only
 - Minimal/Moderate Spread - Limited face-to-face activities.
 - Low/No Spread - Regular activities resume with moderate restrictions to prevent additional spread.
 - Three levels will be determined by the Georgia Department of Public Health and local departments of health.
- Students should be instructed to inform a staff member immediately if they begin to feel ill and should be removed from rehearsal immediately. Parents must be available to pick up students during all scheduled rehearsal times. There must be a place to have students who feel ill to wait, away from the rest of the group, until they are picked up.
 - Accurate emergency contact information must be provided by each participant/family.

- Any student with COVID-19 related concerns may choose not to participate in the marching band for the 2020-2021 academic year. Any such decision should not negatively affect eligibility for the following school year. Timely communication between parents and band director is essential in order to plan for a successful marching season for all students.
- Directors are encouraged to be continuously aware of upcoming and updated resources and research as to be an advocate for our programs and the health of our students and staff.

LEVEL 1 | RED SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD

- All activities should be conducted in an online format only, with guidance from your school district.

LEVEL 2 | YELLOW MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD

- A record of all adults and students' health responses in attendance must be kept for each scheduled activity.
- It is recommended that all adults and students involved in any activity be screened by district-approved personnel prior to each scheduled activity and those screening results be recorded.
 - No student should be allowed to attend if they show a temperature of 100.4 degrees F (38 degrees C) or higher.
 - Students should answer the following questions:
 - Do you or have you had a fever in the last week?
 - Have you been diagnosed with COVID-19?
 - Have you been in contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19?
 - Have you traveled to a "hot spot" for COVID-19?
- Follow the State of Georgia guidance for the number of individuals that may meet at one time.
 - Students should work in same groups and not mix between student groups.
 - Consider working with larger groups (brass, woodwind, percussion, guard, etc.) separately when possible.

- Hand sanitizer should be available, and all participants should be encouraged to wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Participants are encouraged to shower and wash rehearsal clothes immediately upon returning home.
- Activities should be limited to outside locations if at all possible.
 - Inside activities should be reduced in numbers and should be adjusted to allow for adequate spacing and ventilation.
- Each student should have their own personal water bottle (gallon minimum recommended). No use of water fountains or shared water coolers is allowed.
- It is recommended to not provide food during rehearsal and that students should bring their own food from home. If feeding students is necessary, it is recommended that pre-packaged boxed or bagged meals be provided, following local district guidelines on meal service.
- Staff should implement staggered arrival and departure times to discourage the congregation of students. Students and staff should arrive dressed for practice.
- Students should plan to leave campus immediately after the end of the activity.
- Students should keep instruments at home where possible and bring them to each rehearsal.
 - For students needing to store school instruments in a band facility, a plan should be in place for students to get to and store instruments maintaining proper social distancing.
 - Students should be responsible for their instrument and equipment only.
- The sharing of instruments or equipment is not recommended. If equipment must be shared, it must be cleaned and sanitized between each use.
- Restroom access will be limited and constrained to emergency need. Students should wash hands with soap for at least 20 seconds after using the bathroom. Restroom facilities should have sanitizing materials available.
- Sanitizing wipes and/or hand sanitizer should be available for students at all times.
- State, local, or school guidelines for masks should be followed--any student who wishes to, should be allowed to. Masks are recommended when possible.
- Severe weather plans should consider any current social distancing guidelines.
- Social Distancing should be in place 6' for still music, 3 step minimum interval for drill and formations. Georgia Department of Public Health guidance should be followed.

LEVEL 3 | GREEN LOW/NO SPREAD

- A record of all adults and students' health responses in attendance must be kept for each scheduled activity.
- It is recommended that all adults and students involved in any activity be screened by district-approved personnel prior to each scheduled activity and those screening results be recorded.
- Vulnerable individuals are ok to participate but should distance, no participation for those with symptoms.
- Hand sanitizer should be available and all participants should be encouraged to wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Participants are encouraged to shower and wash rehearsal clothes immediately upon returning home.
- Inside activities should be adjusted to allow for adequate spacing and ventilation.
 - Rehearsals should be held outside as much as possible.
- Each student should have their own personal water bottle (gallon minimum recommended). If necessary, water stations are allowed but should be cleaned following every rehearsal.
- If feeding students is necessary, it is recommended that pre-packaged boxed or bagged meals be provided, following local district guidelines on meal service or be brought from home.
- Students and staff should arrive dressed for practice.
- Students should plan to leave campus immediately after the end of the activity.
- Students should keep instruments at home where possible and bring them to each rehearsal.
 - For students needing to store school instruments in a band facility, a plan should be in place for students to get to and store instruments maintaining proper social distancing.
 - Students should be responsible for their instrument and equipment only.

- The sharing of instruments or equipment is not recommended. If equipment must be shared, it must be cleaned and sanitized between each use.
- Restroom access will be limited and constrained to emergency need. Students should wash hands with soap for at least 20 seconds after using the bathroom. Restroom facilities should have sanitizing materials (wipes and/or spray) available.
- Sanitizing wipes and/or hand sanitizer should be available for students at all times.
- State, local, or school guidelines for masks should be followed--any student who wishes to, should be allowed to. Masks are recommended when possible.
- Severe weather plans should take into account any current social distancing guidelines.
- Social Distancing should be in place. It is recommended that for drill, 6' or 3 step minimum interval for drill and formations. Georgia Department of Public Health guidance should be followed.

Resources

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