



Play Together MN– Referee Shortage Symposium

December 15, 2021

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- Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission (MASC)
- National Sports Center (NSC)
- Minnesota Youth Athletic Services (MYAS)
- MN Hockey
- MNRPA
- North Region/USA Volleyball
- Twin Cities Soccer Leagues (TCSL)
- Minnesota Youth Soccer Association (MYSA)
- St. Paul Parks & Rec
- Minnesota Twins
- St. Paul Saints

Sports parents are horrible and referees are finally doing something about it — quitting



The Wells Warriors of College Park, Md., finally had a game Dec. 5, after three games in a row were canceled because of a nationwide referee shortage. (Petula Dvorak/The Washington Post)

Much like bus drivers, baristas and servers — the folks who earn chicken-scratch pay in jobs that include a mountain of abuse — refs have had [coronavirus](#) time away from the chaos and realize they're done with it.

Yes, adults are piling on the kids — the [young refs](#) who were just like their own kids, on the ice or the field a few years ago — and driving them away, one of the older refs I talked to told me. And that's a problem, because **there are more referees over 60 than there are under 30**, according an Aspen Institute [project](#) on youth sports.

I talked to the two refs who officiated at my son's game to ask them for their parent horror stories. **They said coaches are the bigger problem.** The local referee association sent letters to coaches, warning them there would be no referees — and therefore no games — if the level of disrespect and abuse continued.



By [Petula Dvorak](#)

Columnist





Dave Peterson
@davecpeterson

@MSHSLjohn the certified officiating shortage strikes again! Great creativity used by @WDCAD! We were suppose to officiate the girls JV/V games at Wadena-Deer Creek tonight between WDC and Pine River-Backus. (1/2)



Gallant, Norman 9:27 AM

to Kyle, Kevin, Jordan, Tyler, Mary,... ▾

Kyle-

We made some Changes tonight.

The reason is because not one of 13 referee associations within 150 miles could find two refs for tonight's game in Bertha for our Boys Game.

Unless we get more certified officials, we will be doing more creative scheduling or some games will be lost. If anyone reading this is interested in becoming a certified official, please go to the Minnesota State High School League at MSHSL.org to find out how.

10:21 AM · Dec 14, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone



Dave Peterson
@davecpeterson

WDC boys basketball teams were suppose to go to Bertha-Hewitt, but because of certified officials shortage, they are traveling to Wadena. So us 3 certified officials will do both varsity games. And the @WDCAD has to find 2 officials to do the sub-varsity games.

10:23 AM · Dec 14, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

11:00 AM

1. Review and Approve Play Together MN Mission & Code of Ethics
 1. Review media kit and PR push timeline & entities
 1. Discuss On-Site Referee Expo Event on NSC Campus
 - a. Tentatively Saturday February 12, 9-Noon
 - b. Sport bodies, referee certifiers, assigners that need to attend
 - c. Keynote Speaker?
 - d. On-site breakout demo (field sports, court sports, ice sports)

12:00 PM

1. DEED Presentation by from Liz Jennings (DEED Employer Engagement Specialist)

12:30 PM

1. Lunch & Discuss

What role can the Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission play in helping reverse the trend?

- (To Do) Work with the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)
 - Utilize website to attract “job seekers” – (Action) DEED Present's today
- Share data and information from MN Youth Sports orgs on referee shortage through website/press release
 - (To Do) We need a centralized “youth sports message” around the referee shortage – (Action) Play Together MN Doc
 - (To Do) State/local press is starting to cover youth sports shortage. Let's leverage this exposure – (Action) PTMN Press Release
- (To Do) Hold on-site referee summit at the National Sports Center – (Action) Referee Expo 2/12
 - Host Speakers in meeting hall/stadium
 - Breakout into sport-specific sessions in respective facilities
 - Investigate ways to pay individuals to be trained
- Other Ideas?
- DISCUSSION – What are common needs/issues that we all agree on?



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Date: Saturday February 12

Time: 9am-12pm

Who: Sport bodies, referee certifiers, assigners that need to attend

Attendees: All individuals interested in becoming a referee

Format:

1. Trade show format
2. Keynote Speaker?
3. On-site breakout demo (field sports, court sports, ice sports)

Marketing: Press Release from MASC

1. Introducing Play Together MN
2. Discuss Referee shortage and how it effects youth sports in MN
3. Call to Action: Attend referee expo at the National Sports Center

Ways to Improve Sportsmanship at Youth Sporting Events

Pre-Game Coaches Meetings – Establishing A Landscape of Mutual Respect

Training Players, Coaches, and Parents to Have Respect for Officials

Sportsmanship Signs

Purple Cards

On-Site Monitoring of Spectators

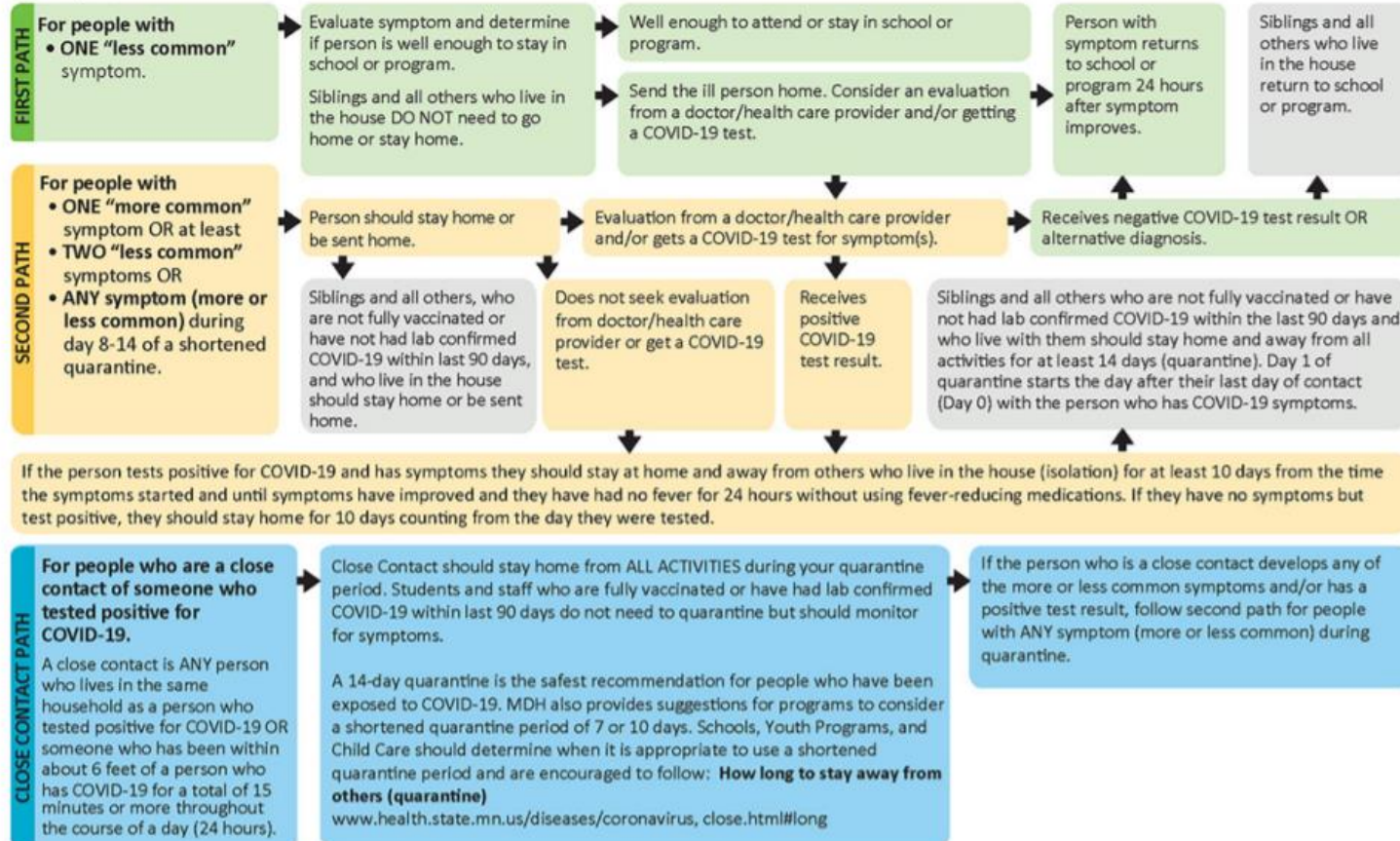
Game Cancellations

Unsportsmanlike behavior by parents, spectators, coaches, and participants at youth athletic events has become a national epidemic. It has led to a dramatic decline in youth sports participation and has been cited as the main reason sports officials quit. Because of this shortage of sports officials locally and nationwide, and because of the exodus of youth athletes from organized sports, solving the sportsmanship issue is critical to the continued growth and enjoyment of amateur athletics.

Recommended COVID-19 Decision Tree for People in Schools, Youth, and Child Care Programs

Settings are encouraged to follow the appropriate path if a child, student, or staff person – regardless of vaccination status – is experiencing the following symptoms.

- **More common:** fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher; new cough or a cough that gets worse; difficulty/hard time breathing; new loss of taste or smell.
- **Less common:** sore throat; nausea; vomiting; diarrhea; chills; muscle pain; extreme fatigue/feeling very tired; new severe/very bad headache; new nasal congestion/stuffy or runny nose.



Updated Decision Tree (5.27.21)

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/exguide.pdf>

It appears COVID will be an issue again this winter. With schools going back into session and the season's changing, I would expect COVID-19 cases to increase for youth athletes.

Monitor for Symptoms even if Vaccinated

Have a plan for contact tracing:

1. Vaccinated Individuals do not need to quarantine when exposed to a positive case, however, they should diligently monitor for symptoms.
2. Un-vaccinated individuals will be held to quarantine recommendations from last year.
 - 10 days from date of exposure unless school requires 14-day quarantine

*If someone gets COVID, they should self-isolate for 10 days regardless of vaccination status

MDH guidance is guidance, not requirements. We can still help a team with exposure assessment or other questions if they have them, still at the same sports inbox email – MN_MDH_Sports.Covid19

health.Sports.Covid19@state.mn.us