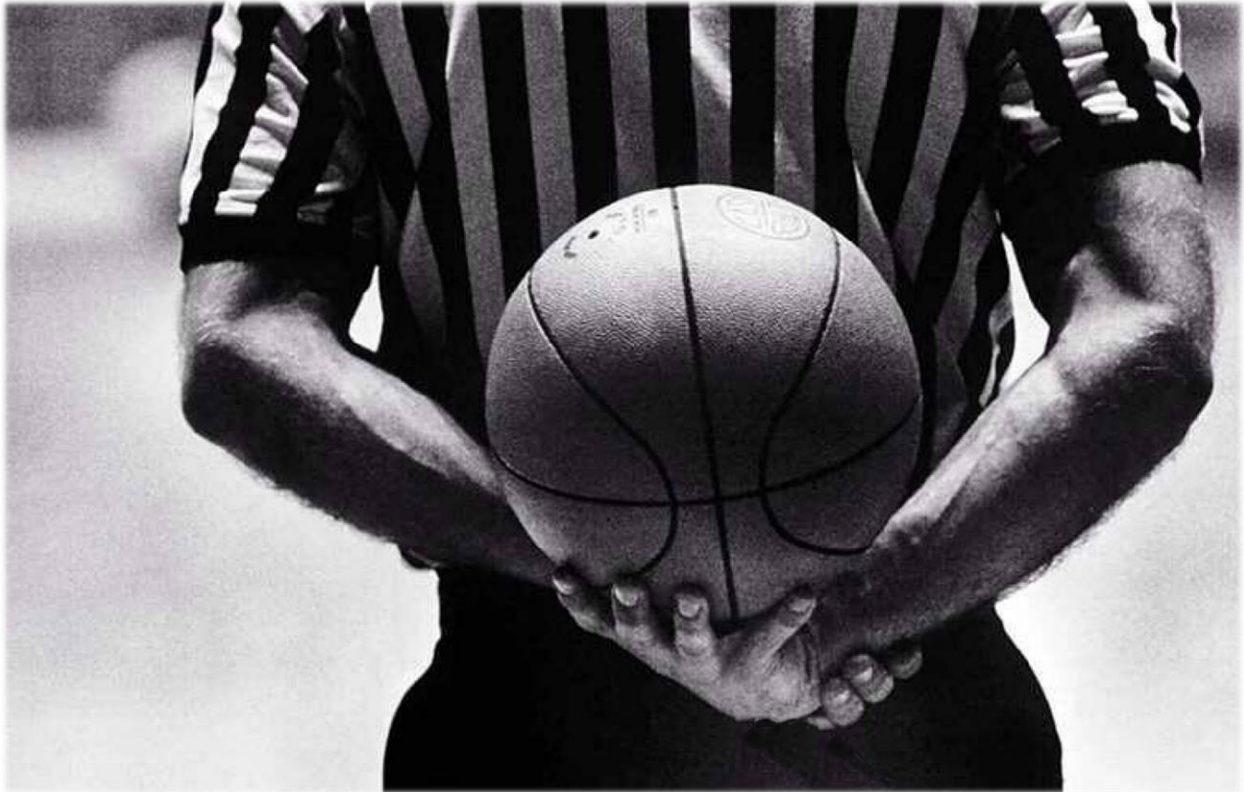


# **OFFICIATING BASKETBALL IN THE COVID ENVIRONMENT**



*The District of Columbia Approved Basketball Officials  
Association's (aka IAABO Board 12) Plan for Officiating  
during the COVID-19 Pandemic*



# Acknowledgement

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I would like to thank CDR Michael D. Cassidy, MSC, USN Retired and Dr. Peter Rumm for their technical and public health advice in creating and reviewing this plan, without their support this plan would not be possible.

# Status of this Plan

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Due to the fluid status of living in pandemic conditions and the expanding knowledge base for understanding COVID, this plan is a "living" document; it will evolve to stay up-to-date. There will be an attempt to highlight the recent changes in **RED**.

It is intended that this plan be consistent with the guidance published by the federal government and its health agencies. If differences are found, please notify [commissioner@board12.org](mailto:commissioner@board12.org). This plan should not be used as a substitute for medical or legal advice.

# Purpose of this Document

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There are many facets to the necessary changes for reducing the risk associated with playing an indoor basketball game during this pandemic environment. Many of those changes are presented in this plan, but the plan's primary focus revolves around changes for officials. We recognize that everyone, Schools and Leagues, wants to reduce the risk for everyone; still, Board 12 feels that official's organizations, like IAABO Board 12, need to be included in the planning because we uniquely understand the demand and restrictions placed on officials. We are also in the best position to suggest changes to the officiating procedures and mechanics.

This plan is meant to generate discussions of the positions presented rather than being a list of demands; in no way do we feel we have all the answers. Our collective wisdom, and cooperation, will produce the best results. Many of the ideas in this plan are also contained in other plans; it is intended that new or unique ideas in this plan be shared with others.

This plan's style is bullet-point format, with the suggestion for the entity responsible at the end of the bullet-point.

<b>Responsible Entity</b>	<b>Key</b>
<b>The host school or organization managing the event/tournament</b>	Host
<b>Board 12, the organization providing the officials</b>	Board 12
<b>The official/independent contractor</b>	Official
<b>The Team; players, coaches &amp; trainers</b>	Coach
<b>Player</b>	Player
<b>Fans</b>	Fans



# Behavioral Risk Mitigation (included for reference)

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Basketball is defined as a Moderate Risk activity by the NFHS.

CDC guidelines define close contact as within 6 feet for 15 minutes (cumulative). But since officials working a basketball game as physically exerting themselves which would increase the rate of breathing, it is recommended that officials be more conservative when thinking about avoiding “close contact.”

Maryland Department of Health defines close contacts as: Persons within 6 feet for 15 or more cumulative minutes within a 24-hour period during the last two days before the onset of symptoms of a person identified as testing positive for COVID-19 or a person experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.

Maryland Department of Health also defines a COVID-like illness as:

1. Any 1 of the following: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new loss of taste or smell, OR
2. At least 2 of the following: fever of 100.4-degrees or higher (measured or subjective), chills or shaking chills, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, and congestion or runny nose.

An essential risk mitigation process is daily self-health checks, physical distancing, wearing a mask, and frequent hand sanitization. CDC recommends the following actions for self-health evaluation:

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Cough or other respiratory symptoms
- Headache
- Chills
- Muscle aches
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- Pain, redness, swelling or rash on toes or fingers (COVID toes)
- A new rash or other skin symptoms
- High-risk exposure: a new contact with an infected individual or prolonged contact with a crowd without physical distancing (for example, attended a party in which there was no masking or physical distancing)
- Temperature of 100.4° Fahrenheit or above

Data makes it clear that along with handwashing and acceptable sanitization practices, physical distancing and universal masking are the most effective strategies for preventing COVID-19 spread at the community level. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations include the following guidelines for proper wearing of masks:

- Wash your hands before putting on your mask.

- Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin.
- Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face.
- Make sure you can breathe easily.
- Masks with exhalation valves or vents should not be worn to help prevent the person wearing the mask from spreading COVID-19 to others.

## Overarching Principles

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- Officials will not be responsible for enforcing any COVID restrictions. Host
- Officials will not be responsible for any cleaning or sanitizing. – Host
- Officials will not sign any legal releases or documents upon arriving at the game site. All documents the Host requires to be signed must be provided to Board 12's Commissioner at least 10 days in advance for review. - Host

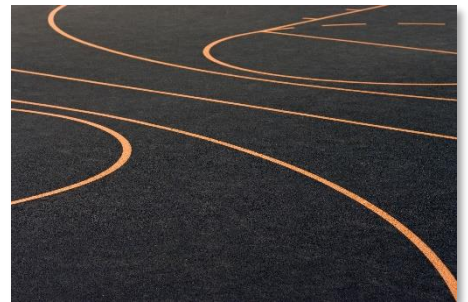


## Game Environment

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### Set up of Gym

1. Chairs for team personnel are not permitted in gyms if the placement of the chairs is within **10 feet** of the sideline or end line of the court – Host & Coach
2. Game administrators are responsible for ensuring that spectators will always properly wear approved masks if allowed in the gymnasium. - Host
3. If fans are allowed, they should be seated in the bleachers opposite the teams/table - Host
4. In gyms that do not have a minimum of 10 feet between all boundary lines and the bleachers, spectators are not permitted to sit or stand on the first 3 rows of the bleachers or within 3 rows of team members if team members are seated on bleachers – Host
5. Hand sanitizer shall be placed on the scorer's table for players and officials. – Host
6. Nobody is permitted at the endlines of the gym unless they are always 10 feet away from the endline. – Host
7. All individuals entering the gym must be screened for COVID, preferably using a questionnaire like what hospitals use. – Host
8. Gyms should have an increased level of ventilation. This could include large floor fans drawing outside air through the gym into a hallway. – Host
9. The basketball bench will be physically separated from all other individuals. Host
10. Officials' pathway to the gym from their pre-game location, and entrance to the gym, should be separate from fans, and if possible, also teams. - Host



## Pre-Game

11. Pre-game conference at center court – 1 official and the head coach from each team (only) wearing masks and keeping social distancing. – Official & Coach
12. Only team members whose names are in the official scorebook are permitted to participate in warm-ups – Coach
13. Each team and all team personnel shall always remain below the 28 ft. coaching box line during pre-game on-court warm-ups – Coach
14. Officials shall wear masks and remain physically distanced and not stand below the 28 ft. lines during warm-ups – Officials
15. No handshakes between participants, before, during, or after the game – Coach & Host
16. Table personnel limited to the official scorer and the official timer and shot clock operator if applicable - Coach & Host
17. Teams shall provide their own towels, beverages, and other necessary equipment. – Coach
18. The home team shall provide towels and materials required for sanitization of the ball and the court. – Host
19. Officials will not check, or sign, the scorekeeper's book before the game. That responsibility will be the scorekeepers. From a social distance, the officials will ask the scorekeeper, 10 minutes before the game, if the book is correct. Because officials are not checking the scorekeeper's book, no Administrative Technical will be issued this Winter season. – Official & Home Team
20. The visitor's scorebook will be kept away from the scorer's table, preferably at the visitor's bench. The two scorekeepers will still check the books at the end of each quarter but from a social distance. – Coach
21. Table personnel should adhere to any required local/state face-covering requirements. - Host
22. The table should be sanitized before the game and at half time. - Host
23. Place officials table sufficiently away from the sideline to allow for additional space for substitutes to remain socially distant. - Host

## Post-Game

24. No handshakes between participants, before, during, or after the game – Coach & Host

# Game Play Modification

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25. In gyms that do not have a minimum of 10 feet between all boundary lines and the bleachers, spectators are not permitted to sit or stand on the first 3 rows of the bleachers or within 3 rows of team members if team members are seated on bleachers – Host
26. No jump ball to start the game. If there are no technical fouls before the game, the visiting team (or team designated as the visiting team if playing at a neutral site) will receive the ball for the throw-in to start the game. This will begin the alternating possession procedure, and the home team will receive the next AP throw-in. If an extra period(s) is required, the extra period(s) will start with an alternating possession throw-in awarded to the team with the arrow at the end of the prior period. – Officials
27. During all game breaks, time-outs or end-of-quarter, the basketball must be rotated out of play and then cleaned. - Host
28. The administering official should stand a minimum of 6 feet from the player making the throw-in and bounce the ball to the player making the throw-in – Official
29. When reporting fouls to the table, stay in the reporting area, but also keep 10 feet away from the table. For clarification purposes, while reporting fouls, the reporting official may point to the team bench prior to reporting the number of the player who committed the foul. - Official
30. Avoid walking through players when reporting fouls. – Official
31. When administering free throws, the administering official should stand behind the endline and bounce the ball to the shooter. – Official
32. A player, who is wearing a mask, is allowed to leave the court without a penalty if they are experiencing breathing difficulty. - Official



## Players

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33. All game participants should adhere to physical and social distancing guidelines when possible – Players
34. Players are permitted to use masks during the game – Player
35. Players and coaches are required to wear masks while on the bench. – Player & Coach
36. All players entering the game, either as a substitute, after a time-out, or after an end-of-quarter break, must sanitize their hands. – Player & Coach





# Officials

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37. Officials must answer an on-line COVID questionnaire the morning before they work a game. If they "fail" the questionnaire, they must immediately notify the Commissioner that they cannot work their game(s) (Sample of Form - <https://www.123formbuilder.com/form-5710332/form>). - Officials
38. There will be mechanics changes for officials. They are still being finalized - Officials
39. Officials are permitted to use approved electronic whistles. – Official
40. If traditional whistles are used, they must be covered with a whistle protective pouch/bag or whistle mask. – Official
41. Officials are permitted to use masks during the game – Official
42. Officials must wear masks when arriving at and leaving the court, during warm-ups, during all timeouts and between quarters, and if they are unable to keep social distance during communicating with players, coaches, table officials, or game management. It is recommended that gaiter mask be worn because of quick use capabilities. – Officials
43. Notification of Commissioner of Board 12 an official test positive for COVID-19 virus infection or exhibit signs or symptoms consistent with those of COVID-19 infection. - Official
44. Gloves are permitted – Official
45. Officials may arrive at the game dressed – Official
46. Officials will not wear game jacket onto the court – Official
47. Black long-sleeved shirts may be worn under an official black and white striped shirt. – Official
48. Long-sleeved black and white striped shirts are permitted but should be coordinated with partner(s) if possible. – Official
49. If an official wants a beverage or a towel, the official should bring his or her own. – Official
50. Even though the officials might arrive dressed, they still need space and time for a pre-game. Whatever space is provided to the officials, it must have been cleaned before they arrive and not reused. It also needs to allow for proper social distancing; a classroom might be better than the traditional locker room/coach's office. – Host & Official



## Positive Case Communication & Quarantining

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51. The following general standards will be utilized in handling cases of officials relating to COVID:
  - a) If an official test positive for COVID, they will need to quarantine themselves from officiating for 14 days and must also not have a fever of 100.4 ° F without fever reducing medicine for at least one day. – Official & Board 12



- b) If an official has been exposed for an extended time to someone who test positive for COVID, , they will need to quarantine themselves from officiating for 14 days from the date of exposure and must also not have a fever of 100.4 ° F without fever reducing medicine for at least one day. – Official & Board 12
  - c) Special circumstances will be reviewed by the Executive Committee of Board 12, relevant to the quarantine timeframes, if requested by the effected official. – Board 12 & Officials
52. The Host will collect accurate contact trace information to allow for proper notification to all individuals involved in the sporting event if there is a case of COVID reported by someone present at the event. This notification at a minimum must provide the location of the person with the positive case (i.e. on-court individual, in the stands, in the building but not the gym, ...). The Host will notify Doug Buschman, Commissioner of Board 12, and he will notify the officials, if anyone at the event test positive for the COVID-19 virus infection or exhibit signs or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection – Host
53. If an official tests positive for COVID, or believes they have symptoms consistent with COVID, or have been in close contact with someone with COVID or COVID symptoms, the official needs to call, and talk with, Doug Buschman, Commissioner of Board 12. – Officials
54. If an official notifies Doug Buschman, Commissioner of Board 12, of a positive COVID test or COVID-like symptoms, he will notify the Host of the event who will then notify all individuals associated with that event. (Doug Buschman will notify the other officials who worked at that event.) – Board 12

## Review of Legal Documents

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55. The Board 12 Executive Committee will establish a team to review and approve all COVID related legal documents presented by a Host or school to the Board and/or member officials. – Board 12

