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Mask Mandate Clarification for Impact FC/Iredell County Youth Soccer

March 5, 2021

On Tuesday, March 2, 2021 the Iredell County Commissioners unanimously voted and passed a motion *“for the County Manager to authorize her staff not to enforce that particular part of the mask mandate for youth sports while they are actively participating in a game or practice.”*

Participants are highly encouraged to wear masks as much as possible, in order to reduce possible transmission of Covid-19. However, in cases where youth participants are “actively participating” and/or are able to maintain distancing (6 ft) from others while participating, Iredell County employees will not enforce mask wearing. In addition, if players are on the bench and can social distance they are not required to wear a mask, however if they cannot social distance they must wear a mask. This is specific **only** to youth sports participants on Iredell County Parks & Recreation property, and only during periods of activity (during games/practices). Youth participants are still required to wear a mask outside of the game or practice session as applicable (e.g. arriving or departing a field or facility), and all spectators and other non-participants are still subject to the requirements in EO 195. We appreciate the efforts of all players, families, coaches, and volunteers to keep everyone as safe as possible.

How does this directive apply to the ICRD/Impact FC recreation soccer program?

The soccer program is chartered with North Carolina Youth Soccer Association (NCYSA), and therefore must follow the guidelines set forth by NCYSA and the State. By Executive Order 195 (EO 195) which expires March 26, players are still required to wear masks during practices and games unless the player(s) has a medical condition preventing them from doing so. No changes were made to the requirement for face coverings nor the exception list, and this program must comply with these requirements as required by charter.

Some notes from NCYSA include:

- Please urge coaches to identify only true mask exceptions to keep the season safe and fair, and to minimize canceled matches.
- A referee may stop or end a match if they are concerned about safety from the number of exceptions.
- Referees have been encouraged to allow players to step out of the action momentarily to “catch their breath”, at a safe social distance, by briefly pulling down their masks.
- Encourage players/parents to bring extra masks. Players are adapting to wet and warm weather by having additional clean masks during training or matches.
- As always, parents have the ultimate say in allowing their kids to play.

The March 1 NCYSA statement is available here: <https://www.ncsoccer.org/assets/112/6/ebstatement-3-1-2021.pdf>