

Orioles Tennis Academy COVID-19 Health and Safety Plan

For the summer of 2020 we will operate the Tennis Academy with a goal to **maintain social distancing of 6' at all times**. We will do this by educating parents and participants on how we must choreograph all movements as we approach and enter the courts, participate in the tennis drills and games, and exit the courts. Wherever possible we will adopt the safer play recommendations of the USTA, the national governing body for the sport of tennis. In addition to social distancing we will rely on the full cooperation of parents, guardians and players to perform Daily Health Checks (DHC, see below). The Academy will also follow MN Department of Health (MDH) guidelines and implement the safety measures to ensure that we do everything possible to decrease the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

To summarize, the 2020 Orioles Tennis Academy will use 3 main strategies:

- 1) All participants will maintain social distancing of at least 6' at all times.
- 2) All participants will perform and document a Daily Health Check (DHC, see below).
- 3) All participants will frequently sanitize hands and equipment.

Daily Health Check (DHC) THIS IS MANDATORY EVERY DAY YOU ATTEND

- Each morning parents/guardians will perform a Daily Health Check (DHC) and confirm that the participant does not have fever, shortness of breath, regular sneezing or a cough, general fatigue, headache, unusual body aches, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or recent vomiting or diarrhea.
- Each participant must document completion of the DHC by texting "Completed DHC for (player's name)" to 612-532-7000. This will be used for daily attendance records. Participants cannot enter court area unless they have documented completion of the DHC, either on paper or by text message.

We tennis players are lucky to be participating in a sport that is naturally conducive to distancing. The court is bounded by lines 78' long and 36' wide. The actual playing area (behind the baseline and a bit beyond the sidelines) is even larger. We can easily achieve social distancing while playing singles or "one up, one back" doubles. Tennis itself does not involve human contact, nor shared space or equipment — except for the balls, and we know that the ball's fuzzy, porous surface is relatively unfriendly to the virus. This summer we will be modifying the way we play and practice tennis to make our sport as safe as possible. The staff will regularly guide and remind participants, but we will not remind the same person over and over. Participants unable to remember the safety guidelines will be dismissed from the Academy.

Those of us who love the sport do not want to jeopardize our chance to play tennis this summer. We have been asked by Osseo Area Schools and Maple Grove Parks and Rec to adopt this safety plan in order to operate this summer. **If this plan is not followed we will shut down. It's that simple.**

In order to successfully implement our three strategies, we require each participant to:

- Perform Daily Health Check (DHC, see above) and document completion to the Academy every day before entering the tennis courts area.
- Bring full water bottle from home every day.
- Apply sunscreen at home or in the parking lot.
- Approach our two “bottleneck” areas with extreme care. Everyone will approach the shed, check-in table, and main entrance area with extreme care and will maintain 6’ social distancing. Also, everyone will approach the gate connecting the north and south banks of courts with the same caution, maintaining 6’ of social distancing.
- Sanitize hands before entering courts.
- Players in the 8:10a.m. varsity section will check in and enter the courts by the tennis shed and place bags and personal belongings 10’ apart against the far, west fence to the side of court 4, and exit the courts at 10:10am through the southwest gate near court 4, while maintaining social distancing of 6’ apart.
- Players in the 10:15a.m. JV section will enter courts by the tennis shed and place bags and personal belongings 10’ apart against the east fence to the side of court 1, and exit the courts through any gate, maintaining social distancing of 6’ apart.
- Begin each day’s session by proceeding to courts 2-8 for full-court singles warm-up, following coaches’ instructions.
- Follow instructions for drills and games, especially noting court positioning and where to stand while “out,” waiting for rotation back into play.
- All participants will sanitize hands, and staff will disinfect ball hoppers and cart handles after every ball pick-up.
- Hand sanitizer will be used before and after serving practice.
- No “high-fives” or elbow bumps.
- Use only verbal encouragements, or stylized, non-contact “high-fives.”
- Refrain from touching one’s own face or hair, especially during serving practice.
- Sneeze or cough into tissue or one’s elbow, and immediately sanitize area and hands.
- Refrain from touching fence, gates, benches, sound system, net posts, other player’s bag or racquet, or other objects.

The eight tennis courts at Osseo Senior High are arranged into two banks of four adjacent courts. Each bank contains 24,000 square feet, for a total activity area of 48,000 square feet in use by the Orioles Tennis Academy. This area is similar in size to a baseball field or to nearly three hockey rinks.

In keeping with MDH guidelines for sports spacing, we will operate the Academy with three pods of seven participants, meaning 6 six players plus one coach in each pod. We will make every reasonable effort to keep the pods consistent over time and will keep daily records of pod membership.

Singles drills will have a maximum of two pods using one bank of four courts. This will spread a maximum of two coaches and twelve participants over four courts, an average of 3 players per court. Typically, this will mean two players actively hitting balls while one player waits their turn by the fence.

Doubles drills will have a maximum of two pods using one bank. This will spread two coaches and a maximum of twelve players over four courts. Typically, this will mean three or four players per active court. We will often use “shadow doubles” (3 player) drills to spread doubles play over four courts. All doubles activity will use “one up, one back” positioning which will allow doubles play to maintain 6’ social distancing. Servers and returners in doubles will “stay back” and we will be practicing poaching and left-right positioning a lot!

Staff will make frequent visual inspections of all participants for signs of illness which could include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting or diarrhea.

Participants that exhibit or self-identify illness symptoms will be sent to the tree-shaded area near the shed for pickup.

This year we will have potable water or sports drinks on-hand, but only for use in case of emergencies. Each player must bring their own, filled water bottle. We recommend at least 32 oz bottle.

Parents, guardians, and drivers are asked to stay in the parking lot and refrain from using the bleacher area. Social distancing of at least 6’ is requested at all times.

The courts will not be open to the public during the Academy hours.

Participants are not to attend if they show any symptoms of illness. Symptoms consistent with COVID-19 that require MDH exclusion protocols include: new onset or worsening cough OR shortness of breath OR at least two of the following symptoms: fever (100.4 F or higher); chills; muscle pain; headache; sore throat; new loss of taste or smell. Please see the MN Dept of Health website for more information on exclusion protocols.

Further information contact Coach Brian Rusche, 612-532-7000 www.brianrusche.com