



City of Phoenix

To: Inger Erickson
Deputy City Manager

Date: October 19, 2021

From:  Cynthia Aguilar
Parks and Recreation Director

Subject: TOURNAMENT PLAY

Each year, the Parks and Recreation Department hosts a number of local, regional and national sporting events such as softball, football, soccer, lacrosse and other sports, that attract thousands of teams from across the country. This includes tournaments primarily played at the following sports complexes: Reach 11 Sports Complex, Rose Mofford Sports Complex, Papago Softball Complex and Desert West Softball Complex. Some of these tournaments are as new as two years old, while others have been held at Phoenix sites for over 40 years.

In March 2020, the increased COVID metrics in Maricopa County caused the shutdown of all tournaments, games and sporting events. In September 2020, sports complexes reopened. However, after the number of positive cases again increased, coupled with concerns regarding large events at the complexes and the potential for COVID spread, complexes and tournaments closed at the end of November 2020. Subsequently, in March 2021, COVID case numbers dropped and City Council approved reopening the complexes and resuming athletic field reservations for practices, games and local tournaments with COVID mitigation measures in place.

Since March, Phoenix Parks and Recreation sports complexes have continued to operate with COVID mitigation measures in place, including hand sanitation stations, COVID signage throughout the facilities and painted circles around fields to promote physical distancing among spectators. Tournament organizers are tasked with ensuring these measures are followed, with City staff on site to oversee tournament compliance.

With the start of the 2021-22 tournament season in August, tournament organizers and Visit Phoenix have expressed concerns about the negative impact of not allowing out-of-state teams to participate in tournaments held

in Parks and Recreation facilities. Staff researched the majority of cities in the state to assess COVID restrictions and requirements and found that Phoenix was the only city not allowing any out-of-state teams at this time. The following cities have no out-of-state restrictions: Buckeye, Chandler, Flagstaff, Gilbert, Glendale, Goodyear, Marana, Maricopa, Mesa, Peoria, Prescott, Scottsdale, Surprise, Tempe, Tucson and Wickenburg.

For the current season, which continues until May, Reach 11 Sports Complex, Rose Mofford Sports Complex, Papago Softball Complex and Desert West Softball Complex had 62 total tournaments scheduled with 9,500 teams participating. Of the remaining 36 scheduled tournaments, 30 have out-of-state teams.

The Parks and Recreation Department has consulted with Epidemiologist Dr. Saskia Popescu on how out-of-state tournament play can resume safely. Dr. Popescu was supportive of allowing out-of-state teams to return, with the following mitigation measures:

- COVID signage posted at each facility encouraging physical distancing and proper hygiene.
- COVID signage posted on all restrooms stating face masks are required when inside restrooms.
- Tournament organizers being required to bring in additional hand sanitation stations.
- Spectator circles painted on fields to encourage physical distancing.
- Recommending all spectators and coaches wear masks.