

# COVID-19 Readiness Plan

A Guide to Operating Bravehearts Baseball in 2020



Worcester, MA



# General Statement

The Worcester Bravehearts and the Futures Collegiate Baseball League look forward to starting their 2020 season on July 2 in a responsible and safe manner. Set forth below is the Bravehearts organization's tailored plan to host players and guests – wherever the team may play – for the season which is anticipated to run from July 2 through August 23. The Bravehearts anticipate hosting 19 regular season home games and travel to other FCBL teams for approximately 20 road games.

This plan has been and will continue to be informed by policies and regulations from local, state, and national agencies; guidance and input from medical and public health professionals; directives from the Futures League; as well as industry best practice.

While risks of operating are addressed in the plan below, the advantages presented by the Bravehearts' 2020 season include:

- Being an outdoor venue
- Having spacious dimensions allowing for ample social distancing between guests
- Involving small enough groups of people, such as families, to be effectively managed
- Attendees being in place for a limited duration, roughly equivalent to an outdoor dining experience
- Food and beverages provided by a professional catering company prepared and presented safely in similar ways to how restaurants have been presenting take-out food to patrons since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Baseball is a low- or no-contact sport allowing for participants to be distanced responsibly
- Providing an opportunity for the Bravehearts student-athletes, including several local players, to play baseball this summer after their respective college and university spring seasons were canceled
- Providing a safe and clean outdoor outlet for families and individual fans to be outside of their homes this summer to enjoy fresh air, socially-distanced company, a hot dog, a cold beverage, and the national pastime.



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# 1. Staffing Policies

- All staff will be cross-trained on proper and frequent cleaning, hand-washing, sanitation, and social distancing techniques
- Staff will be required to wear masks. Gloves will be required when necessary and appropriate
- Staff time & attendance system features:
  - Employees must complete symptom questionnaire before clocking in
    - Do you have a fever of 100° Fahrenheit or higher; a cough; shortness of breath; or a sore throat?
    - Have you had close contact or do you live with any person diagnosed with COVID-19?
    - Have you been asked to self-isolate or quarantine by your doctor or a public health official?
  - Employees clock in and out from their personal smart phones
- At the first sign of illness, the staff member will take a leave of absence until symptoms have subsided and they are cleared to return to work by their doctor or based on CDC guidelines
- Work spaces such as the ticket booth and press box will have limited staff only and will be cleaned and disinfected before and after each game



## 2. Payment Methods

- Credit card and near-field communication ("NFC") transactions will limit cash exchanged when purchasing food, tickets and merchandise
- The food & beverage operation anticipates using an online ordering and payment system accessible from guests' smart phones
- ATMs will not be available







### 3. Socially Distanced Seating



- Seating manifests are adjusted to allow for maximum social distancing
- Stairway aisles in grandstands will operate in alternating directions
- Ushers will:
  - Assist guests to their seats and get them situated in accordance with social distancing guidelines
  - Direct fans exiting and entering sections and rows to adhere to social distancing protocols
  - Manage gates and carry disinfectant wipes to clean high-touch surfaces – such as railings – throughout the game



### 3. Socially Distanced Seating (cont.)

- Season ticket holders will be the only reserved seats
- All single-game tickets will be general admission with open seating
  - Once a group is situated, the adjacent seats will be marked and blocked from usage to respect social distance guidelines
- Beginning of season not to exceed 25% capacity of field seating



## 4. Crowd Management

- Parking will be free of charge as always, and will be directed by team security staff
- Golf cart shuttles will transport guests in need. Guests will be required to wear a mask. Seat, hold bars, and surfaces will be disinfected before and after each shuttle ride.
- Concessions traffic will be separated by direction to create a traffic flow allowing for social distancing
- Gates will open one hour prior to first pitch to spread out entering guests
- Marketing tables will require social distancing marked line systems
- Ushers will monitor any stairwell traffic communicating as necessary







## 5. Ballpark Cleanliness

- High-touch areas such as railings, door handles, work stations, equipment, and screens will be frequently cleaned and sanitized
- Restrooms will be cleaned before, during, and after each game
  - High-touch surfaces will be disinfected throughout games
  - Disposable toilet seat covers will be available in stalls
  - Signage will be posted encouraging proper hand washing techniques and social distancing
- Seating will be cleaned after each game and grandstand wiped with disinfectant
- Additional hand sanitizing stations will be added around the ballpark, located at:
  - Gates
  - Restrooms
  - Dugouts
  - Concession areas
  - Ticket Office
  - Press box





## 6. Player Protocol

- Clubhouse and dugout access will be limited to essential personnel; social distancing measures will be implemented with these spaces
  - Players would access the clubhouse in shifts of smaller groups
- Clubhouse food for players, coaches and staff will be distributed as individually packaged meals
  - Shared utensils are no longer permitted
  - Sunflower seeds and gum will not be allowed
- Any shared equipment like helmets, bats, etc. will be disinfected after each use
- Home, visitor's, and umpires' clubhouses will be cleaned prior to every home game, and again at the conclusion of the game



## 6. Player Protocol (cont.)

- Upon arrival, visiting players will report directly to their clubhouse using the side gate entrance
  - All players and coaches will wash and sanitize hands upon arrival in the clubhouse
  - Fans will not have access to the visitor clubhouse gate or walkway
- Travel will be on a minimum of 44-person capacity bus
  - Players & coaches will wear masks on the bus and sanitize their hands upon entry & exit
  - Food and drink will be prohibited on the bus
  - Buses will be disinfected by bus company before and after each trip





## 6. Player Protocol (cont.)

- Clubhouse attendant will wear a mask and gloves and change them frequently while cleaning, doing laundry, prepping food, setting lockers, and packing equipment
- Player interactions with fans will be limited:
  - Autographs, game used baseballs, and player gear will not be given to fans during the 2020 season
  - Players will be prohibited from handshakes and high fives with fans, visiting players, and umpires before, during, and after the game





## 6. Player Protocol (In the Event of a Positive Case)

- Athletes shall inform their coaches, and follow state and local testing and contact tracing protocols.
- Staff or players who report symptoms or test with a positive result will be isolated.
- Symptomatic persons will be tested and will be quarantined until test results return.
- If confirmed positive, then the athlete will be excluded until they've been fever free for 72 hours; any respiratory symptoms such as cough and shortness of breath have improved; and it has been 10 days since the onset of symptoms.
- Other contacts will be investigated by the local health department.
- The local health department will be notified and contact tracing investigation will be conducted. The health department will determine if other athletes have been exposed.
- A potential exposure means having close contact within 6 feet and in close contact for 15 minutes or longer with a confirmed or suspected positive case.
- Potential exposure will be required to be tested prior to returning to team activity or work.





## 7. Ticketing & Entry Into Ballpark

- Guests will be required to wear a mask in order to enter the ballpark
- The ticket window line will be marked and spaced between parties
- Ticket Distribution: Exchanges or additional tickets will be delivered to mobile/print-at-home tickets
- Block Seats online and in system which will be open for social distancing
- Encourage pre-purchase of tickets to allow fans to display tickets on their smart phones





## 8. Fan Experience

- Merchandise will be displayed on hangers and only handled by merchandise store attendant
  - Customers will not be allowed to try items on
  - Check out procedure will encourage credit card and NFC transactions to limit cash transactions
  - Guests in the merchandise area will be limited and socially distanced
- Community Appearances will be limited to those that allow for social distancing for staff and players
- Kids Zone inflatable bounce houses will not be in operation for the 2020 season because of social distancing guidelines
- Mascot handlers will implement and communicate the following:
  - Mascots can take photos using social distancing
  - Not available for high-fives or hugs during 2020
  - Mascot costumes will be sanitized after each use



## 8. Fan Experience (cont.)



- Promotions and giveaways will not occur during the 2020 season
- Non-essential staff will not be permitted on field, or in the press box, ticket booth and concession stands
- On Field Community Engagements
  - First pitches will limit the amount of friends and family accompanying on the field and use a new ball from the bag
- Foul balls hit into the seating bowl will be cleaned by staff with disinfectant wipes



## 8. Fan Experience (cont.)

- On Field Pre-Game:
  - Anthem Singers – Microphone sanitized before and after each use
  - Field of Dreams, where youth groups run onto the playing field with players, will not occur in 2020
  - Players will not be permitted to sign autographs, shake guests' hands, slap high fives, or give away game balls, bats, or other equipment
- In-Game / Between-inning Entertainment and Games:
  - On-Field games will only occur if contestants are from the same household
  - T-Shirt Toss will be performed by staff members wearing gloves







## 9. Food and Beverage Policy

- All food, beverage and bartending staff will wear gloves & masks while performing their duties, as required and appropriate
- Counter tops, registers, and equipment will be wiped down on a constant basis while open for service
- A plexiglass shield will be set in front of point of sale locations
- Food production areas will adhere to the following
  - All areas will be deep cleaned before cooking starts
  - All surfaces will be constantly wiped down and disinfected throughout each event
  - Employees required to wash hands each time they change gloves
- Only single-serving condiment packets will be available
- Food & beverage operations anticipates using an online ordering and payment system accessible from guests' smart phones
- All lines will be marked with 6-foot increments to keep social distancing standards between parties





## 9. Food and Beverage Policy (cont.)

- Picnic Areas and Hospitality Gathering Spaces:
  - Guests will be socially distanced, and capacity will be limited in accordance with state guidance for outdoor dining
  - No buffets will be self-served, but rather staff will serve hot food items, cold food items, packaged condiments, and canned/bottled beverages to each guest
  - Employees will constantly disinfect and clean food service areas
  - All guest tables and chairs will be wiped down before and after each use



## 10. Communication & Messaging



- Utilize social media to highlight steps taken to enhance health and safety measures
- Increased signage displayed for fans, players and staff and added to all areas of the ballpark including restrooms, clubhouse, ticket booth, concessions, and other common spaces
- Public Address Announcements will remind fans and staff to wash hands and practice social distancing while at the ballpark



Play Ball!