



FIRST®

WASHINGTON

COVID-19 Health and Safety Policy

FIRST® is a global robotics community that prepares young people for the future.



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To our *FIRST* Washington Community

Our primary goal is to offer a safe, in-person competition season for all of our *FIRST* Washington programs (First Lego League, First Tech Challenge, and First Robotics Competition). Your cooperation is helping build events that are safe and inclusive for all, and assists us in this goal.

Thank you for your continued commitment to inspiring young people to become STEM innovators of tomorrow.

Whether you are a volunteer, coach, mentor, or parent, your support is critical to creating engaging and meaningful experiences for the kids who participate in *FIRST* Washington programs. We must do all we can to continue empowering young people to become passionate innovators of STEM.

Event staff and attendees participating in this event should recognize that any gathering poses an increased risk of COVID-19 exposure and spread. *FIRST* Washington believes that the best path toward ending the COVID-19 pandemic — and having a successful season — is through vaccination. More information about the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines can be found at [The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and the [World Health Organization](#) websites.

We look forward to a fun and safe competition season for all!

Policy Update - No Proof of Vaccination/Negative Test Required

As of March 14th, 2022 *FIRST* Washington will no longer require proof of vaccination, proof of negative COVID-19 test, or require that masks be worn to attend *FIRST* Washington events.

Event Safety Requirement - Masks Recommended

All event attendees should acknowledge that participating in this event or any large gathering poses an increased risk of COVID-19 exposure and spread. **We continue to recommend that all event attendees wear masks and respect social distancing.**

Event Attendees Include:

- Student participants
- Volunteers
- Coaches/mentors
- Spectators

FIRST Washington Staff – Masks Required

FIRST Washington firmly believes that masks help slow the spread of COVID-19 and create a safer environment for all event attendees. All *FIRST* Washington staff attending events are required to be fully vaccinated and wear masks at all times.

FIRST Washington Volunteers – Masks Recommended

Although it is not required, we do hope that *FIRST* Washington volunteers will continue to wear masks. This will continue to promote a safe and comfortable environment for event attendees.

FIRST Washington Participants, Coaches/Mentors, and Spectators – Masks Recommended

FIRST Washington firmly believes that masks help slow the spread of COVID-19 and create a safer environment for all event attendees. Participants, coaches/mentors, and spectators are

not required to wear masks, but we will have disposable masks available for anyone who may need one.

Tips for Masking

- Masks should [fit well](#) and be worn completely over the nose and mouth.
- The following mask types are **NOT** considered effective by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#):
 - Cloth masks with exhalation valves or vents since they allow respiratory droplets containing the virus to escape.
 - A face shield used alone without a face mask
 - Bandanas
 - Scarves
 - Ski masks
 - Balaclavas

We recommend all event attendees thoroughly consider the risk associated with attending a large gathering unmasked, and how COVID-19 might impact your individual health. **Regional events typically have an average attendance of 1,000 – 2,000 people.**

Event Entry Requirements

Participants, coaches/mentors, and volunteers will receive a wristband so we can monitor attendance in the pits. Our goal is still to limit crowds and provide distance so all event attendees feel comfortable. Spectators will not be required to wear a wristband.

Health Check

If you have any COVID-19 symptoms, please stay home and watch the event remotely. You can find our events streamed in the banner of <https://firstwa.org/>.

Stay Home if you:

- Have tested positive for COVID-19.
- Are waiting for COVID-19 test results.
- Are feeling unwell and/or have any of the following [COVID-19 symptoms](#).
 - 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
- Diarrhea
- Have had [close contact](#) (within 6 feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) with a person who has tested positive for or who has symptoms of COVID-19 within the last 14 days, unless you have been fully vaccinated.

Event Attendance

Contact Tracing

Contact tracing is key to slowing the spread of COVID-19 and helps protect the community by:

- Letting people know they may have been exposed to COVID-19 and should monitor their health for signs and [symptoms of COVID-19](#).
- Helping people who may have been exposed to COVID-19 get tested.
- Asking people to [self-isolate](#) if they have COVID-19 or develop symptoms of COVID-19 or to [self-quarantine](#) if they are a [close contact](#).

Prior to the event, all event staff/volunteers, coaches, and team members attending the event should register with *FIRST*, complete a “*FIRST* Consent and Release Form,” and coaches should bring the “Team Roster” to the event. All team members (youth and adults) must be listed on the “Team Roster.” During the registration process they will provide their name, phone number, and email. Alternatively, a parent or guardian name, phone number, and email if the team member is a minor. Contact information will be accessible to event organizers via the “Team Roster.”

Event attendees will be required to provide contact information prior to entering the event. This information will only be used for the purposes of contact tracing and will be destroyed no more than 30 days after the event.

If a person who attended this event tests positive for COVID-19, someone from the health department may call you to discuss important COVID-19 information, such as signs and [symptoms of COVID-19](#), [testing](#), and [quarantine](#). Discussions with health department staff are

confidential. This means that your personal and medical information will be kept private and only shared with those who may need to know, like your health care provider.

Please review the information for [what to expect to happen during contact tracing](#), provided by the CDC.

Limiting Attendance

As of this moment, we do not plan to limit event spectator attendance. But this could change based on the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic and the regulations placed by each event host. If we do need to limit attendance, teams will be permitted to bring 1 adult volunteer per every 4 team members. If further limitations are necessary to meet attendance limitations, only event staff, team members, coaches/mentors, and additional people traveling with the team may attend this event.

Event Behavior Requirements

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

Hand hygiene should be practiced and encouraged by all event staff and attendees.

- All event staff and attendees should [wash their hands](#) frequently (for example, before, during, and after check-in, touching garbage, using the restroom) with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Event staff and attendees should use hand sanitizer, available at hand sanitizing stations throughout the event, including before and after game play or practice field use or any other time that soap and water are not readily available.
- All event staff and attendees should refrain from singing or shouting, especially indoors. Please use alternate ways to celebrate like clapping, dancing, finger-snapping, etc.

Physical (Social) Distancing

Physical distancing will be practiced at this event.

- Keep 6 feet of distance between yourself and people who don't live in your household or not part of your cohort (members of the same home team) whenever possible.
- Follow all physical distancing guidelines, including direction provided by event staff.
- Follow all signage and marker directions, such as those that are freestanding or on the ground, to indicate the appropriate direction of pedestrian movement or to maintain a safe physical distance from others.

- Do not greet others with physical contact (for example, handshakes) or celebrate with high-fives or fist bumps.

FIRST recognizes a single home team as a cohort, which is not subject to the same 6-foot physical distancing requirement. However, this exception only applies to members of the same home team. In all other cases, the physical distancing requirements outlined in this policy remain in effect.

Signs and Messages

Comply with all COVID-19 health and safety signs that are displayed in waiting areas, near restrooms, in seating areas, and used to control traffic patterns and entrance and exit points.

Follow event staff instructions related to COVID-19 safety.

FIRST Washington Policy Compliance

Acknowledgment Form

Each coach must agree to abide by the *FIRST* Washington COVID-19 Health and Safety Policy, to share this policy and compliance expectations with their team members and their families, and to sign the *FIRST* Washington COVID-19 Health and Safety Policy Affirmation Form and return the form to event organizers prior to the start of the event.

Policy Changes and Non-Compliance

Given the current trajectory of the pandemic, these guidelines may change with little notice up to and including event cancellation based on updates from the CDC and Washington State Department guidelines. If this event must be cancelled, you will be notified via email and the event will be rescheduled or moved to a remote event platform.

The information contained in this document is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. All content, including text and links, are provided for general informational purposes.

Any person entering this event is required to abide by this COVID-19 health and safety policy and the [FIRST Code of Conduct](#). Non-compliance may result in removal from this event and being barred from future participation in *FIRST* activities.