

FAQ's for Covid 19 Management

Recommendations for AGA Events

Note: answers here will change as new circumstances dictate over time. A record of such changes is at the bottom of this document.

Note: Update date: 02-15-/2023. Change record at bottom.

The current reported case counts are now routinely below 30,000 and the President has announced that the state of emergency will be ended May 11. We expect things to slowly continue to improve.

About Masking

Risk level is not the same for everyone. What is quite safe for some – or most or nearly all – will not be safe for all. We strongly recommend a rule of conduct that requires that a person playing another who chooses to mask respect the other person's self assessment of need, by also masking. Leadership should make it clear that there is no obligation for the masking person to explain the choice, and a definite obligation for others to respect it and comply.

Is it now safe to play go face-to-face?

Yes, providing you follow basic safety precautions (see links below).

NOTE: These recommendations were strengthened to take the Covid delta variation into account, and then with the onset of Omicron. We are relaxing now as vaccination rates improve, case counts go down and effective treatments are more available and effective.

Can I reopen my local AGA chapter for face-to-face play?

YES; providing you follow basic safety precautions (see links below).

This is a local decision, but we suggest that the number of players should be small, and they should know each other well.

Can a local chapter require proof of vaccination for players?

That's a local decision to be made in consultation with members of your chapter. However, at this time we strongly encourage you to do so. Organizers who have instituted this policy have had no problems doing so. (i.e. National Go Center and Seattle Go Center)

Do we have to wear a mask if playing outside?

Generally no provided the area is not crowded.

Do we need to wash stones and/or boards and bowls?

NO: touch transmission has been assessed by the CDC as a very low risk.

HOWEVER: The AGA strongly recommends that sanitizer, gloves and spare masks be made readily available to all; supplemental funding is available to AGA chapters to offset the costs of providing these supplies; email planning@usgo.org

What about casual play at a chapter meeting?

In general, in consideration of Omicron being even more transmissible than Delta, and the B2 and following B4 and B5 sub-variants even more transmissible, these suggestions should be used for casual, as well as tournament play.

Why so strict on being masked at all times?

Two people sitting across from each other for an hour in a closed room is COVID HEAVEN and where its variants are most likely to spread.

Can my local chapter hold a tournament?

YES; providing you follow basic safety precautions (see organizer's resources below).

Are there more detailed organizer's resources available

Yes: see [AGA recommendations](#), Tournament announcement templates for [Low](#) and [Moderate](#) level [risk categories](#), and [best practices](#). These documents are intended to help organizers get us back to competing again, not quite like the good old days, but as safely as we can be in these trying times.

We strongly recommend that you make use of your local Health District to get current local information that will give you good guidance for the local area. Contact info for your county is [here](#).

Change record:

Jul 27, 2021 Added comment re contagiousness of the Delta variant

Jul 31, 2021 Added change record.

Aug 6, 2021 Added note re Delta variant

Aug 15, 2021 Spelling and punctuation only

Sep 5, 2021 Added link to local health districts contact list.

Nov 7, 2021 No change - National incidence is dropping but not enough to justify change of policy.

Dec 14, 2021 Noted onset of Omicron variant and urge all to require proof of vaccination from all attendees. Suggest that these principles apply to casual, as well as tournament play.

Jan 5, 2022 Noted recommendation to pause all tournament play until the Omicron surge is controlled. Conditioned "yes" responses on announced approval of resumption of play.

Jan 14, 2022 Noted the doubling of the case rate over the last two weeks. No policy change.

Feb 3, 2022 Noted sharp decline in case numbers, and suggested continued pause in competition, but encouraged planning for future tournaments in view of expectations of continued improvement of case counts and other parameters.

Feb 15, 2022 Noted sharp decline in case numbers, and expectation of resumption of play in March.

Mar 1, 2022 Noted continued decline in case numbers and recommend high level of care for organized play.

Mar 16, 2022 Noted continued decline in case numbers and recommend continued high level of care for organized play.

Apr 5, 2022 Noted flattening of downward case count trend and recommend high level of care for organized play.

May 5, 2022 Noted rise in case count, introduced community level as a stronger policy driver, and continuation of existing recommendations re tournaments.

May 31, 2022 Noted rise in case count, urge folks to check local conditions and back off if community level is high.

Sep 22, 2022 Note drop in case count. Suggest consultation with local players re acceptable level of precautions.

Feb 15, 2023 Note drop in case count, end of national emergency declaration by President.