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**MAYOR DE BLASIO ANNOUNCES NYC PARKS WILL RESUME PERMITTING  
FOR OUTDOOR YOUTH SPORTS**

**NEW YORK**—Mayor Bill de Blasio today announced that NYC Parks can resume permitting its athletic fields across the city for outdoor youth sports. Supportive of children’s physical and mental health, lower and moderate-risk youth play on permitted fields will resume Tuesday, September 15.

"Our children have been through so much this year and have been yearning for more outdoor play," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "Thankfully we’re continuing to see improvement in beating back this disease, and can safely permit youth sports this fall. We’ll continue to monitor our progress and put health and safety first."

"Our children’s health is supported with outdoor play and physical exercise," said **Health Commissioner Dr. Dave A. Chokshi**. "But safety is paramount. Children will only be able to take the field if citywide transmission remains low, which is dependent on New Yorkers wearing face coverings, maintaining distance, practicing hand hygiene and staying home if ill."

"In a time when our mental and physical health has increased stressors, every opportunity we can provide our city’s youth with safe outdoor play is a benefit to us all. As we look to the start of the fall youth athletic season in our parks, I encourage all to follow the rules and do so safely," said **NYC Parks Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP**.

City athletic fields have been opened for first come, first served, socially distanced play throughout the COVID-19 crisis. Now, youth sports leagues will be issued permits for organized outdoor play. Permitted sports will include baseball, softball and soccer. Indoor sports, including swimming, will not be permitted. Leagues must enforce the following regulations:

- Face coverings must be worn by all coaches, staff, spectators, and players on the sidelines; players are encouraged to wear while playing if possible
- Social distancing must always be practiced by all when not active in game play
- Spectators must be limited to two per player
- All must leave the field post game, there shall be no congregating

Parks will monitor league activities; if a team accumulates three violations, Parks will revoke that league’s permits.

If New York City’s percentage of positive COVID-19 tests exceed three percent positivity, permits will be suspended for all sports.

**Council Member Peter Koo, Chair of the Committee on Parks and Recreation,** said, "Our city's sports leagues, parents, youth, and elected officials have been asking for guidance for when permitting will restart since the beginning of summer, so this is great news for those leagues who have been sitting on the sidelines for too long. Our youth leagues have been hit particularly hard by the lack outdoor field access, and with proper safety precautions in place, this plan to restart permitting will help put our youth athletes on a path toward normalcy."

"I thank Mayor de Blasio for listening to calls for common sense and safety when it comes to our parks. This will not only give kids the opportunity to get some good exercise and learn life lessons from organized sports but it will also bring better Covid-19 safety practices to our parks. This is a win-win for our kids and for our community efforts to defeat the virus," said **Council Member Justin Brannan.**

"After months of staying indoors and collectively limiting outdoor activity to successfully help stop the spread of COVID-19 in our City, it is welcome news that outdoor youth sports will return to our NYC Parks athletic fields this September," said **Council Member Paul Vallone.** "Smart, socially distanced outdoor play will support the health and well-being of our children while bringing an important sense of normalcy and community to our neighborhoods and families this fall."

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