



# **Irish Soccer Club's Stephan Provides Feedback To Governor's Guidance For Youth Sports**

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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ALTON - Robert Stephan, leader of the Irish Soccer Club in Alton, made some comments in regard to the recent announcement by Gov. J.B. Pritzker on guidance for youth and adult recreational sports, travel clubs, private leagues and clubs recreational leagues and centers and park district programs.

Stephan said under the new guidelines, the Irish Soccer Club will continue to train and practice as well as to have friendlies within our teams.

“Our league games were not set to start until August 22, and we have until the end of December to complete them. Even if there is a postponement of SLYSA league games, we anticipate being able to get games in once restrictions are eased up. We also have

other opportunities outside the league. The overwhelming feedback we have from our 300-plus members is that they want their children to be safe, while continuing to be active and have the socialization that comes through athletics. We have been and will continue to be vigilant about precautions.

“The guidance we have received is that outdoor soccer has very little risk for exposure as long as players are not within 6 feet for 15 sustained minutes, which practically speaking is very unlikely in a soccer game, and does not happen in training sessions where distancing is easy to achieve.

“With respect to the restrictions from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), we do not have an issue as we know cases have been going up locally and steps must be taken to mitigate exposures. The problem comes from picking and choosing who must follow restrictions and who can ignore them. The issue we have is that while many are doing their part, it is not been hard to find businesses that are blatantly ignoring the basics to keeping the community safe. There are some that are serving hundreds of customers a day with no distancing and no masks, even on employees. Others are outdoors, but grossly violating capacity limits. As long as this continues, we will see increases and restrictions and that is very frustrating.”

Stephan added that when you talk to local officials they feel they cannot enforce violations of capacity or masks on employees dealing with the public indoors.

“When you talk to the State, they feel local officials have the authority they need,” he said. “So it's just a vicious circle.

“In short, the restrictions are not the issue. It's the inconsistent application of restrictions with no enforcement. As a community, we must figure out a way to come together with everyone pulling the rope in the same direction.”