

2022 *FIRST*® Robotics Competition Iowa Regional COVID Policies

Updated March 4, 2022



The Iowa Regional Planning Committee and *FIRST* recognize the health and safety of *FIRST* teams, volunteers, and staff are our top priority. Decisions regarding event planning are made based on the guidance and policies as established by public health officials, the University of Northern Iowa and in the spirit of *Gracious Professionalism*®.

Gracious Professionalism is part of the ethos of *FIRST*. It's a way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of others, and respects individuals and the community. These policies may be more stringent than the precautions that your team or family observe, but the large number of attendees at the event requires a higher level of mitigation measures. Showing respect for the health and safety of all participants at the event - team members, volunteers, event staff and visitors - exemplifies the spirit of *Gracious Professionalism*.

We know teams and volunteers have questions about what the event will look like, and we are sharing the information that we know at this time. Information will be updated as it becomes available, so check back for updates.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Face masks are required for all individuals in attendance at all times when inside the venue regardless of vaccination status, except when eating or drinking. Face masks should be worn correctly, covering both the nose and mouth. Teams must bring an adequate supply of masks for all participants. All other attendees must bring their own supply of face masks sufficient for the duration of the event.
- Face shields, bandanas, single-layer gaiters and masks with exhalation valves are NOT considered effective PPE for mitigating the spread of COVID-19. These items should not be worn at the event.
- Personal protective equipment rules will be enforced as usual. All participants are expected to bring their own personal safety glasses since there will be limited on-site availability. Team should bring their own safety glass cleaning supplies. Anti-fog spray is recommended to help prevent fogging of glasses. Teams are expected to comply with all safety measures included in the *FIRST* Safety Manual.

Venue Entry & Pit Restrictions

- The Iowa Regional pit and match viewing areas are very spacious and provide opportunities for attendees to physical distance. At this point in time the committee is not planning to limit venue or pit access. We are counting on attendees to demonstrate their *Gracious Professionalism* by mask compliance and physical distancing. The planning committee will monitor the COVID-19 situation closer to the event and make changes if deemed necessary.

Daily Health Screening

- Do not come to the event if you are ill or if you have been in contact with someone who is ill. A sample health screening is available at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html). (full link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>)

Teams

- Mentors must ensure anyone traveling with their team has passed a health screening each day of the event. Team mentors must not allow anyone who fails this health screening to enter the event venue.
- Teams need a plan to handle illnesses that may arise during the event, including failure to pass the daily health screening. For example, the plan should include logistics to seek medical help and to send an ill person home or isolate the ill person away from the event venue. Teams must follow their sponsoring organization's guidelines for student/adult ratio during isolation.

Event Volunteers

- Volunteers must perform a daily health screening before coming to the venue. If the volunteer does not pass the daily health screening, they must notify the event's volunteer coordinator and not come to the event venue.

Physical Distancing

- Whenever possible avoid close contact with others by maintaining a distance of 6 feet or more.
- Dedicated locations for robot inspections will be provided to help reduce crowding in team pits.
- Teams are encouraged to allow extra space between individuals and teams in the stands and eating areas.
- Options to enhance physical distancing during the award ceremonies are being developed. The traditional high five line will not take place.
- When possible, volunteer mealtimes will be staggered to reduce crowds in the volunteer lounge. An additional area will be provided to the volunteers during meals to allow more physical distancing.
- Team lunch options are being explored to minimize crowds.
- The student National Anthem choir will not take place this year.
- Please follow all event signage regarding entry into event pits, viewing stands, and other designated spaces.

Cleaning

- Frequent hand washing with soap and water or hand sanitizer is encouraged.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be supplied throughout the facility.
- The University of Northern Iowa custodial teams will continue to clean and disinfect campus in accordance with CDC Guidelines utilizing disinfectant products from the EPA List N that are listed as effective against COVID-19.

Vaccinations

- At this time, the Iowa Regional Planning Committee does not require event attendees to be vaccinated. *FIRST* believes that the best path toward ending the COVID-19 pandemic—and having a successful season—is through vaccination. *FIRST* strongly recommends everyone who is eligible consult with their physician and be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, with booster shots if applicable, prior to attending the event.