



**Ancaster Avalanche Girls Hockey Association  
COVID-19 Response Protocol**

**Version 1 July 2020**

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**INTRODUCTION**

COVID-19 has had a profound impact upon all aspects of society including the way we work and play. The OWHA is permitting some sanctioned hockey activities providing they comply with requirements and have prior written approval of the OWHA. The following AAGHA COVID-19 Response Protocol is developed with the safety of all players, coaches, spectators, staff and volunteers in mind. The AAGHA is based out of Ancaster, which is part of the City of Hamilton. The City of Hamilton will provide directions specific to ice facilities that are approved for use. The Hamilton Public Health unit will provide health and safety directions related to COVID-19.

The AAGHA protocols are based on current Ontario statutes, regulations, and Hamilton Public Health directives. These protocols address physical distancing measures, health and safety regulations, size of permitted gatherings, OWHA regulations, rules, policies and procedures. As federal, provincial and municipal laws, regulations, by-laws and OWHA rules may change, the AAGHA will communicate in subsequent versions of these protocols as new information becomes available, through our COVID-19 communication strategy. The AAGHA has established a COVID-19 Safety Committee that will oversee the implementation of this protocol. The AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee is made up of four board members: President; Rep Convenor; House League Convenor; and Head Trainer.

**AAGHA COVID-19 COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

The AAGHA has established a specific COVID-19 communication strategy so that members are aware of any updates or changes as they arise. The AAGHA has established a specific COVID-19 portal on its website that will allow members quick access to information and resources as needed. The strategy will also utilize all social media platforms to communicate updates. A COVID-19 Safety Committee email box has been established for quick communication of any issues that arise. The AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee will also utilize email and communication with coaches so that players and parents are informed.

**AAGHA COVID-19 EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

AAGHA staff, coaches, trainers, participants, parents, administrators and volunteers will receive training through electronic communication on new safety and hygiene protocols as directed from Hamilton Public Health and the Government of Ontario. Training will be tracked by the AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee and will address respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, physical distancing and use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Training will also cover the protocols and procedures when involved in team activities.

Reference Links:

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-guide-physical-distancing.pdf?la=en>

<https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus/physical-distancing>

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<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-hand-hygiene.pdf?la=en>

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-how-to-wear-mask.pdf?la=en>

<https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus/face-coverings-and-masks>

<https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus/face-coverings-and-masks-by-law>

### **PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDELINES**

The AAGHA should follow Hamilton Public Health guidelines regarding COVID-19. These may include:

- Any AAGHA members who themselves have travelled outside of Canada, or has someone in their household who has travelled outside Canada must self-isolate and not participate in club/skating school activities for 14 days.
- Any individual who has been exposed to someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19 should self-isolate and is not permitted to participate in hockey activities for 14 days.
- Any individual with symptoms of COVID-19 is not permitted to take part in hockey activities.
- Any individual who has someone in their household showing symptoms of COVID-19, should not participate in hockey activities.

### **AAGHA COVID-19 EXPOSURE PROTOCOLS**

The AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee will monitor that protocols are adhered to in the following situations:

#### ***IF AN INDIVIDUAL BECOMES UNWELL WITH SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19***

- If an individual becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19, or if someone is aware of an individual that becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19, that individual must immediately stop participation in hockey activities.
  - The individual should be isolated from all others in a well-ventilated area, or outside and provided with a non-medical face mask if one is available.
  - The individual shall be sent home and instructed to contact Hamilton Public Health and follow their guidelines regarding self-isolation and testing. <https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus> (905) 974-9848
  - The AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee will also be notified and will contact Hamilton Public Health to receive direction. <https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus>(905) 974-9848
  - The AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee will take direction from Hamilton Public Health to determine if the City of Hamilton facility should be informed in order to determine if any areas need to be closed off and/or require additional cleaning/disinfecting.
  - A member of the COVID-19 Safety Committee will be in communication with the individual or their parent/guardian to determine if next steps are being taken regarding testing.
  - A member of the AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee will notify the OWSHA President and/or Director Operations will be informed of the situation as soon as practicable.

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***PROTOCOL FOR INDIVIDUALS TO REPORT TO THE AAGHA IF THEY HAVE DEVELOPED, OR BEEN EXPOSED TO SOMEONE WITH COVID-19 SYMPTOMS***

- Self isolate and contact Hamilton Public Health for direction.  
<https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus> (905) 974-9848
- Notify the AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee via the email.
- AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee will contact Hamilton Public Health  
<https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus> (905) 974-9848 for direction.
- AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee will notify the OWHA President and/or Director Operations.

***PROTOCOL IF AN INDIVIDUAL IS TESTED FOR COVID-19***

- Any individual that is part of the AAGHA that has been tested for COVID-19 must not participate in hockey activities while waiting for the results of the test and not until a negative test result is received from Hamilton Public Health.
- The AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee will consult the Session Participation tracking sheets and consult with Hamilton Public Health to inform other participants who might have been in close contact with the individual
- Any AAGHA members who were in close contact with the individual should contact Hamilton Public Health and follow public health guidelines until the diagnosis of COVID-19 is ruled out.  
<https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus> (905) 974-9848

***PROTOCOL AN INDIVIDUAL TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19***

- If AAGHA member tests positive for COVID-19 they should follow Hamilton Public Health self-isolation protocols and inform the AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee.
- The AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee will work where requested with the City of Hamilton facility and Hamilton Public Health officials to assist in contact tracing. The Session Participation tracking sheets may be used to assist Hamilton Public Health officials in informing other members who may have been in close contact with the individual.
- Any AAGHA members who were in close contact with the individual should not participate in any hockey activities and contact Hamilton Public Health until the diagnosis of COVID-19 is ruled out.
- The AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee will also communicate with the members of the AAGHA when a positive COVID-19 test result occurs within the hockey program setting.
- The AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee in consultation with Hamilton Public Health inform and work with the City of Hamilton facility in the case of a positive COVID19 result and determine if any additional cleaning/disinfecting should be performed as per the City of Hamilton facility guidelines.
- The AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee will inform OWHA of a positive COVID-19 diagnosis by e- mailing [team@owha.on.ca](mailto:team@owha.on.ca) .

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***PROTOCOL FOR THE AAGHA TO INFORM DESIGNATED INDIVIDUALS IF THERE HAS BEEN A POSSIBLE EXPOSURE TO COVID-19***

- The AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee will contact Hamilton Public Health to receive direction.
- The AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee in consultation with Hamilton Public Health will utilize the OWHA DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION COMPLIANT WITH COVID- 19 LIST OF ALL PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE to have individuals contacted as required.
- The AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee will inform the OWHA of a possible exposure to COVID-19 by e- mailing [team@owha.on.ca](mailto:team@owha.on.ca) .

***RETURN TO HOCKEY ACTIVITIES FOLLOWING ILLNESS***

- If no test was performed, or the COVID-19 test was negative, the individual may only return to hockey activities once they no longer have any symptoms of COVID-19

***RETURN TO HOCKEY ACTIVITIES FOLLOWING COVID-19***

- Following a positive COVID-19 test, an individual must follow all Hamilton Public Health guidelines regarding return to activities.

***MODIFICATION/RESTRICTION/POSTPONING OR CANCELLING HOCKEY ACTIVITIES***

- Based on the evolving COVID-19 pandemic, the AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee must be prepared to follow Hamilton Public Health, municipal/provincial government, and sport recommendations regarding modifying/restricting/postponing or canceling activities
- Using the AAGHA Communication Strategy, event cancellations will be communicated to the members as soon as possible.
- The AAGHA will keep any modifications and restrictions in place until advised that it is safe to resume activities by public health, government, or sport officials.

***FACILITY CO-ORDINATION***

The AAGHA will coordinate with the City of Hamilton and Hamilton Public Health for compliance with OWHA rules and municipal legislation. The AAGHA will mandate the appointment of one COVID-19 Facility Monitor at each session that will enforce the following protocol for AAGHA members:

- Implementing effective measures to manage the flow of traffic by AAGHA members in and out of the facility
- For AAGHA members, facilitate the completion of the questionnaire and tracking as they enter the City of Hamilton facility utilizing the:
  - OWHA HEALTH SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE, and
  - OWHA DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION COMPLIANT WITH COVID- 19 LIST OF ALL PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE
- Complying with current Ontario Provincial Gathering guidelines
- Encouraging AAGHA members who enter or use the City of Hamilton facility to maintain a physical distance of at least 2m from any other person who is using the facility

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- Coordinating with the City of Hamilton facility operator, the scheduling and implementation of cleaning between each AAGHA training group on the ice or the use of any other part of the facility by AAGHA members
- Coordinating with City of Hamilton facility operator for wiping down / sanitizing high touch areas such as entry / exit doors to the ice, etc.
- Checking for the closure of dressing rooms, locker rooms, change rooms, showers, and clubhouses in the City of Hamilton facility, except to the extent they provide access to a washroom or a portion of the facility that is used to provide first aid
- Ensuring that team sports or other sports or games that are likely to result in individuals coming within 2m of AAGHA members are not practiced or played within the City of Hamilton facility
- Facilitating compliance by the City of Hamilton facility operator with the advice, recommendations, and instructions of Hamilton Public Health officials, including any advice, recommendations or instructions on physical distancing, cleaning or disinfecting.

The assigned AAGHA COVID-19 Monitor will attempt to address any issues onsite and report any violations to the AAGHA COVID-19 Safety Committee email.

**HEALTH SCREENING / SELF SCREENING MEASURES**

All AAGHA members taking part in OWHA sanctioned association/team activities must self-screen in accordance with current Hamilton Public Health guidelines before each training session. *This self-screen should occur at home before they attend any hockey activities.*

AAGHA members must not attend any training sessions or association/team activities if they:

- Exhibit any COVID-19 symptoms, such as a fever, cough, difficulty breathing, or other symptoms identified by health experts
- Have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and have not been cleared for removal from isolation
- Have been in contact with someone with COVID-19 in the past 14 days
- Have returned from travel outside of Canada (must quarantine for 14 days at home)
- Are considered a vulnerable or at-risk individual (individuals over 70 years, weakened immune system or medical conditions such as heart disease, lung disease, cancer etc.)

The “At Home Self-Screening” will be followed by an on-site screening conducted by AAGHA COVID-19 Facility Monitor. The AAGHA COVID-19 Facility Monitor will conduct a screening protocol whereby individuals are screened on-site on a daily basis before participation in any activities. This screening should be done prior to entry into a City of Hamilton facility. This screening may be conducted verbally using the OWHA HEALTH SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE. The questionnaire will be retained by the team trainer for an indefinite period of time.

**PARTICIPANTS TRACKING / CONTACT TRACING**

All AAGHA teams choosing to conduct small group on-ice training must track all participant/ coach / trainer/ and other participation in activities on a session by session basis through the AAGHA COVID-19 Facility Monitor. This must be recorded and kept in order to assist with

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contact tracing in the event of any positive COVID-19 cases within the association/team. Tracking will be conducted using the OWHA DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION COMPLIANT WITH COVID- 19 LIST OF ALL PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE form and retained for an indefinite period of time by the team trainer in attendance.

**AAGHA PROGRAMMING**

The AAGHA shall limit programs until written approval from OWHA is received. Currently participation will be limited to 2019/2020 AAGHA registered participants only once approval has been received. Other non-AAGHA players should not be skating at this time. Once they have registered with the AAGHA they can start participation in AAGHA after September 1, 2020, or until otherwise directed by the OWHA.

**TRYOUTS**

Until otherwise directed by the OWHA, there are no tryouts permitted at this time

**LIMITATIONS ON SIZE OF TRAINING GROUP**

All AAGHA training sessions must follow provincial and Hamilton Public Health as well as City of Hamilton facility guidelines including compliance with the size of gatherings. Note: Subject to City of Hamilton facility guidelines, all individuals on the ice count as part of gathering size, including coaches and trainers. Additionally, size of gatherings is per facility/building and not related to the number of ice sheets or training rooms in the facility.

**SKATERS**

All AAGHA skaters must comply with current Ontario Provincial and Municipal Gathering guidelines. AAGHA players should follow the guidelines below in resuming training:

- Skaters are not permitted to contact each other on or off the ice
- Skaters must respect physical distancing guidelines within all parts of the City of Hamilton facility by staying at least 2m apart at all times.
- All warm-ups and off-ice training should comply with current physical distancing requirements

**GOALTENDING**

All AAGHA goaltenders must comply with current Ontario Provincial Gathering guidelines and Municipal Gathering guidelines. Goaltenders should follow the guidelines below in resuming training:

- Goaltenders are not permitted to contact each other on the ice
- Goaltenders must respect physical distancing guidelines within all parts of the facility by staying at least 2m apart.
- All warm-ups and off-ice training should comply with physical distancing requirements
- Goaltenders will be doing individual drills and taking shots from outside the physical distancing requirement.



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***FACILITY ACCESS AND TRAFFIC FLOW***

Individuals shall follow City of Hamilton facility guidelines by using designated entry and exit doors in the facility and any guidelines to manage the flow of people within the facility.

***NO SPECTATORS***

No spectators are permitted at the City of Hamilton facility, other than up to one accompanying parent, guardian, or other adult for each AAGHA athlete under the age of 18. Anyone accompanying such an athlete is expected to follow facility guidelines with respect to physical distancing, must remain at least 2m apart, and is encouraged to wear a face mask. If a AAGHA player under the age of 18 is dropped off at the arena, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian and the person in charge of the session to confirm the process of drop off and pick up are clearly understood and followed to ensure the safety of the participant.

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-guide-physical-distancing.pdf?la=en>

<https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus/physical-distancing>

<https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus/face-coverings-and-masks-by-law>

***PERSONAL HYGIENE***

AAGHA members should wash / sanitize hands upon entry to City of Hamilton facility.

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-hand-hygiene.pdf?la=en>

***WARM-UP/COOL DOWNS***

Warm-ups and cool downs will be conducted outside following physical distancing protocols by remaining at least 2m apart. If weather does not permit warming up outside, AAGHA skaters/goaltenders may (if permitted by the City of Hamilton facility) warm-up inside in an area designated by the facility while following physical distancing protocols by remaining at least 2m apart.

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-guide-physical-distancing.pdf?la=en>

<https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus/physical-distancing>

***PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)***

**AAGHA Coaches/Trainers/Team Staff:**

- Must adhere to Municipal legislation regarding wearing non-medical face mask when in open areas of the City of Hamilton facility where it is mandated.
- Not required to wear a non-medical face mask while skating
- Must wear a CSA approved hockey helmet Players:
- Must not share hockey equipment

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**AAGHA Skaters/Goaltenders:**

- Recommended to wear a non-medical face mask when in open areas of the City of Hamilton facility and if warming up inside facility and must be in compliance in areas and facilities where it is mandated

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-how-to-wear-mask.pdf?la=en>

<https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus/face-coverings-and-masks>

***DRESSING ROOMS***

AAGHA players must arrive at the arena in their equipment. Dressing rooms, locker rooms, change rooms, showers and clubhouses in the City of Hamilton facility shall remain closed except to the extent they provide access to a washroom or a portion of the facility that is used to provide first aid.

***SKATES ON/OFF***

AAGHA players should put their skates on / remove skates outside of the arena respecting physical distancing protocols and remaining at least 2m apart. Players can use their own vehicles, outdoor benches or bring their chairs (i.e. camping chairs). If weather does not permit doing so outside of the arena, skaters/goaltenders may use open areas of the arena while following physical distancing guidelines and remaining at least 2m apart.

***PERSONAL ITEMS***

Personal items like equipment bags should be left in the AAGHA individual's vehicle (in a safe and secure location) and not be brought into the City of Hamilton facility. AAGHA Players and coaches may carry their own water bottle, tissue box etc. into the arena. Players must also use individual water bottles, tissue boxes etc. during training sessions. No sharing of these items is permitted. Players must have their own closed containers (i.e. Ziploc bag) for disposing of used personal items such as tissues. These must be disposed of at home or in a lidded garbage container in the facility.

***ENTRY/EXIT FROM ICE***

AAGHA players must follow physical distancing protocols and remain at least 2m apart from any other individual while waiting to enter and exit the ice.

***PHYSICAL DISTANCING***

AAGHA players are required to maintain a physical distance of at least 2m from any other skaters/goaltenders and coaches during the session. All coaching should be done using verbal cues from a distance

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***PUCKS***

AAGHA players must not touch hockey pucks with their hands. The lead on-ice instructor is responsible for the management of hockey pucks in a manner that is in accordance with Hamilton Public Health guidelines. If pucks cannot be safely managed, they are not to be used.

***ON-ICE COACHING***

AAGHA coaches and skaters/goaltenders must remain at least 2m apart from each other. Coaches must coach from one spot on the ice or over the boards at rink side. Coaches are not permitted to skate alongside players.

***CONCLUSION***

As we prepare to allow players and people to gather together in the hockey environment it is important that we follow the legislation and guidelines that are established by the OWHA, Province, Hamilton Public Health and City of Hamilton. This document highlights the actions and guidelines that the AAGHA will undertake so that the return to hockey can occur in the safest manner possible.

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**Resource Links**

The following resource links will be posted on the AAGHA website under the COVID-19 portal.

What to do if you have symptoms of COVID-19

<https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus/what-do-if-you-have-symptoms-covid-19>

Hand Hygiene

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-hand-hygiene.pdf?la=en>

Physical Distancing

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-guide-physical-distancing.pdf?la=en>

<https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus/physical-distancing>

How to self-monitor

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet-covid-19-self-monitor.pdf?la=en>

Hamilton Face Coverings and Masks By-Law

<https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus/face-coverings-and-masks-by-law>

When and How to Wear a Mask

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-how-to-wear-mask.pdf?la=en>

<https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus/face-coverings-and-masks>

How to Self-Isolate

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet-covid-19-how-to-self-isolate.pdf?la=en>

<https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus/how-self-isolate>

Ministry of Health – Ontario: COVID-19 Reference Document for Symptoms:

[http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019\\_reference\\_document\\_symptoms.pdf](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_reference_document_symptoms.pdf)

Ontario COVID-19 Online Self-assessment Tool

<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>

Ontario Women's Hockey Association Website:

[www.owha.on.ca](http://www.owha.on.ca)

Hamilton Public Health (905) 974-9848

<https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus>