

LANGENBURG MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION RETURN TO HOCKEY



This document is subject to change at any time with new direction provided by the Saskatchewan Health Authority, Government of Saskatchewan, Town of Langenburg, Saskatchewan Hockey Association, Hockey Canada and the Major Hockey League.

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INTRODUCTION

Langenburg Minor Hockey Association (LMHA) is under the direction and guidance of the Government of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Health Authority in developing a “Return to Hockey” plan. Further guidance has also been provided by Hockey Canada, Saskatchewan Hockey Association (SHA), Major Hockey League and the Town of Langenburg.

The LMHA – Return to Hockey is current as of October 20, 2020 and is based on the requirements of the Saskatchewan Health Authority as of this date. Updates will be made accordingly to ensure compliance with evolving requirements.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The guidelines and requirements in place have changed how LMHA will operate. While the program may look different, the Return to Hockey plan is developed on achieving the following objectives:

Safety	Create a safe, healthy environment for our players, coaches, officials and volunteers.
Fun	Maintain an atmosphere where the kids can enjoy the game of hockey.
Development	Create a competitive environment that allows players to develop and grow. This is essential and can be accomplished in both practice and game play environments.

REQUIREMENTS

The Sports and Activities Guidelines defined in Phase 4 of the Re-Open Saskatchewan plan detail the requirements for any organization to resume sports while minimizing physical contact and the risk of COVID-19 transmission between participants.

The SHA Return to Hockey Safety Guidelines, released on October 9, 2020 details requirements specific for organizations and teams to resume hockey. The SHA Safety Guidelines have been set in tentative phases 1 through 5.

Phase 1 – Completed

Phase 2 – Current Phase

Phase 3 – November 1, 2020

Phase 4 – January 18, 2021

Phase 5 - TBD

Within the current Government of Saskatchewan Re-Open Plan and the SHA Safety Guidelines there are a number of requirements that hockey must follow:

Mini-Leagues are groups of players who cannot maintain 2 meters of distancing from others at all times. Spectators, including parents and others who can ensure physical distancing are not included in the mini-leagues.

Mini-leagues will be created within the existing hockey leagues in Saskatchewan.

Participants may only be part of 1 mini-league at any given time. A player may only play on 1 team, therefore the use of affiliated players is not approved and communities/teams may not combine to register a Provincial team.

*** Coaches and officials that cannot consistently maintain 2 metres of physical distancing are considered part of the mini-league numbers. However, the focus is on teams not players. For example for U13 the focus is on having 6 teams in the mini-league, not restricted to 80 players.***

Phase 1	50 person maximum.
Phase 2	4 Teams or 50 players
Phase 3	6 Teams or 80 players
Phase 4	8 Teams or 120 players
Phase 5	TBD

The following are age specific dates for the resumption of hockey games:

	Exhibition Games	League Games	Provincials	Playoffs
U7	Dec 1, 2020	Jan 1, 2021	N/A	N/A
U9	Nov 15, 2020	Jan 1, 2021	N/A	TBD
U11	Nov 15, 2020	Nov 15, 2020	N/A	TBD
U13	Oct 17, 2020	Nov 1, 2020	Feb 1, 2021	TBD
U15	Oct 17, 2020	Nov 1, 2020	Feb 1, 2021	TBD
U18	Oct 17, 2020	Nov 1, 2020	Feb 2, 2021	TBD

Refer to the SHA Safety Guidelines for detailed requirements in scheduling and sanctioning both exhibition and league games.

A maximum of 30 people are allowed on the ice surface at any one time.

No competition outside Mini-Leagues are permitted.

Tournaments and inter-Provincial travel are not permitted.

Physical distancing should be maintained at all times within the arena.

Face Covering Policy

Face Covering: Non-medical mask which covers the mouth and nose.

Material can be cloth or other material.

Players – must be properly wearing a face covering when entering the arena and continue to wear until they reach the spot where they will finish getting their skates/equipment on. Players must keep their face covering

on until they put their helmet on to head to the ice surface. Players must put their face covering back on once they remove their helmet.

On-ice Coaches – must be properly wearing a face covering when entering the arena and continue to wear until they reach the spot where they will finish getting their skates/equipment on. On-ice Coaches must keep their face covering on until they put their helmet on to head to the ice surface. On-ice Coaches are not required to wear a face covering while on the ice, however should have one on their person for instances when 2 metre physical distancing cannot be maintained. On-ice Coaches must put their face covering back on once they remove their helmet.

Bench Coaches – must be properly wearing a face covering when entering the arena and continue to properly wear at all times within the arena, including while on the bench during games.

On-ice Officials – must be properly wearing a face covering when entering the arena and continue to wear until they reach the spot where they will finish getting their skates/equipment on. On-ice Officials must keep their face covering on until they put their helmet on to head to the ice surface. On-ice Coaches are not required to wear a face covering while on the ice. On-ice Coaches must put their face covering back on once they remove their helmet.

Off-ice Officials – must be properly wearing a face covering when entering the arena and continue to properly wear at all times within the arena, including while working in the timekeeper's box/area.

Parents/Spectators – must be properly wearing a face covering when entering the arena and continue to properly wear at all times within the arena.

PROTOCOLS AND SAFETY

The safety and well-being of players, coaches, officials, volunteers and families is of the utmost importance. This section details several Hockey Canada and Government of Saskatchewan guidelines and resources.

Hockey Canada and the SHA have built comprehensive Safety Guidelines documents:

Refer to Hockey Canada – Safety Guidelines
 SHA – Safety Guidelines

Parents and players play a key role in the Return to Hockey plan. Their responsibilities include:

Stay at home if experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19.

Become educated on the safety protocols and procedures prior to attending any session and adhere to them while at the session.

Ensure each player has their own water bottle which is sanitized prior to each session.

Ensure equipment is dried, cleaned and/or sanitized following each session.

Arrange appropriate transportation to and from each session.

Advise their team safety person immediately if experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 or have tested positive for COVID-19.

Each LMHA team manager will be responsible for tracking all participants and attendees during team activities (practice, games, etc). All attendees will be required to sign-in on arrival to the facility. This information is to be kept for one month. A contactless form to be completed online may be available as arranged by each team's manager.

A pre-activity screening must be completed by each participant prior to any hockey activity (practice, games, etc). To be arranged by each team's manager.

Coaches will be responsible for ensuring proper hand hygiene before and after each session. Spitting will not be permitted.

INSURANCE

Under Hockey Canada's current General Liability policy, the following is the definition for 'bodily injury':

"bodily Injury" means bodily injury, sickness, disease, mental injury, mental anguish or nervous shock sustained by a person, including death resulting from any of these at any time.

As it relates to COVID-19, that would fall within the definition - more specifically, under disease. Liability claims against Hockey Canada always need to be proven by the third party, so continuing to update and enforce risk-management guidelines as new risks emerge, such as COVID-19, are imperative. Understand that Hockey Canada and its Members are actively working on updating risk-management protocols related to Return to Hockey guidelines post-COVID-19.

As with all claim scenarios, the insurance company would investigate all claims presented against any member of Hockey Canada that falls within the 'bodily injury' definition and would confirm coverage based on the framing of the allegations.

It will also be important to review new municipal rink/private rink facility contracts post-COVID-19 for all rentals; in all likelihood, they will now contain a new clause which absolves the municipality/private facility owners of any liability related to COVID-19.

New lease agreements will need to be carefully scrutinized given that organizations will potentially have little control over cleaning/sanitizing of rented premises and shouldn't be expected to take on all liability related to COVID-19 in these facilities. (LMHA and Town of Langenburg will each be responsible for sanitizing specified areas of the facility.)

Finally, it should be noted that many insurance companies are implementing Communicable Disease/COVID-19 exclusions on all policies either immediately, or upon renewal. Hockey Canada can advise that AIG, who is Hockey Canada's primary General Liability insurer, has agreed to waive this exclusion in the General Liability policy until Sept. 1, 2023. Hockey Canada will NOT have this exclusion in its policy until that date, at the earliest.

FACILITY

As a user group, LMHA is responsible for following the facility use requirements as defined by the Town of Langenburg. The Town of Langenburg is currently using Government of Saskatchewan and SHA guidelines:

Guidelines for facility use include:

- Attendees to use defined entry/exit doors to the facility (defined by signage, pylons or barricades).
- Players, coaches and team staff are to arrive no earlier than 15 minutes before practice and leave no later than 15 minutes after practice.
- Players, coaches and team staff are to arrive no earlier than 30 minutes before games and leave no later than 30 minutes after games.
- There will be a minimum of 1 hour between the anticipated end of a game, and the start of the next game.
- Dressing rooms are available, teams should use 1 dressing room when appropriate. 2 dressing rooms will be available for larger teams.
- Physical distancing of 2 meters is to be adhered to in dressing rooms. 10 players are able to use each dressing room.
- Showering is discouraged.
- Each LMHA team will be required to sanitize their dressing room and bench after each practice. Sanitizing after games will be done by arena staff. Managers of each team will assign cleaning duties.
- Signage will be posted to caution attendees about the risks of COVID-19.
- Handwashing facilities or alcohol-based hand sanitizer (Approved by Health Canada) will be available to all attendees.
- Should areas be cordoned off, attendees are not to enter those areas.
- Physical distancing of 2 meters is to be adhered to by spectators (outside of family setting) at all times.

- Parents of power skaters, U7 and U9 teams will be allowed to remain in the dressing room used by the participant during practice. All other teams will not have spectators for practice.
- For games, attendees will not be allowed entry to the arena until the scheduled start time.
- For games, spectators must exit the arena no later than 15 minutes after the end of the game.
- For games, attendees must sign in at the admission/registration gate. Attendees must also sign out when leaving the area.
- For games a maximum of 150 people may be in the arena (does not include teams/mini-leagues). Physical distancing of 2 metres must be maintained between household groups.
- Each team is responsible for ensuring that not more than 150 people are in the arena (does not include mini-leagues) during their games.
- Members of extended households must sit together.
- Spectators should not be within 2 metres of players as they enter/exit the ice surface.
- Spectator visiting, moving around and congregating is strongly discouraged.
- Common areas such as lobby's, hallways, washrooms will be frequently sanitized.
- There will not be a concession/kitchen available.

Should LMHA teams fail to follow facility use requirements, the Town of Langenburg may deny use of the facility. LMHA will monitor each team's participation with enhanced sanitizing and may sanction teams should they not participate.

Should any attendee fail to comply with any of the requirements, games will not begin or resume until the attendee has complied. Should the attendee continue to refuse to comply with any of the requirements facility officials may be required to contact the Esterhazy/Langenburg RCMP.

LANGENBURG MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION PHASES

The primary concern for LMHA is that any programs offered focus on the health and safety of all participants.

The season began when the facility became available, beginning with practices only. Practices will have one team on the ice at a time with a maximum of 30 people. LMHA has defined slotted times for each team to practice.

Refer to LMHA scheduling calendar for ice times

LMHA will follow the direction of the Government of Saskatchewan and the SHA in resumption of both exhibition and league games. Proposed schedules and mini-leagues have been developed by the Major Hockey League and are pending SHA approval.

Tournaments are not approved for the 2020-2021 season.