

2020

Ponoka Minor Hockey Association COVID Plan



8/28/2020



PONOKA MINOR HOCKEY RETURN TO PLAY PLAN

28 AUG 2020 – Version 1

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1.0 Introduction

Health and safety have been at the forefront for Ponoka Minor Hockey's Staff and Board of Directors as they have been thoughtfully planning what a return to hockey participation will look like. Ponoka Minor Hockey has taken direction from Hockey Canada and Hockey Alberta in developing this "Return to Hockey Plan".

We are in a very fluid, changing environment as new rules and regulations are updated and put in place by our governing authorities, Alberta Health Services and Hockey Alberta. This plan is updated as of August 21, 2020 and will continue to evolve as we enter different stages as outlined by Alberta Health Services and Hockey Alberta. As the plan continues to evolve and we adapt our program to reflect these changes, we will reflect these changes in future versions of this document, additionally, the most current information will be posted on our website and social media platforms.

This plan relies heavily on the honesty and integrity of athletes and their families and a commitment by all participants to abide by the rules of the plan.

This plan is subject to change based on orders from the Chief Medical Officer, the Province of Alberta, the Town of Ponoka, Hockey Alberta and all Ponoka Minor Hockey and the various leagues.

As you review the documents provided in this information package, please note, this is our "New Normal" in our current Covid-19 environment and will not be a typical hockey season as it will look different. It is our belief that the program provided will allow for continued individual player and team development and allow our players to grow on and off the ice at all levels and programs. We currently have five phases to the Ponoka Minor Hockey "Return to Hockey" Plan that are outlined throughout this document:

1. **Skill Development and Tryout Phase (Phase 1)** – This phase will take place during the month of September and will continue to focus on skill development, training, and conditioning. Tryouts will happen as they have in previous seasons starting on Sunday, September 20th. Teams will be finalized at the end of tryouts and practices will begin for individual teams.
2. **Development Season Phase (Phase 2)** – Teams will continue to practice with their individual teams. 'Cohort Groups' will be established by age category for the purposes of playing intersquad games on the weekend. These 'Cohort Groups' will be divided evenly keeping like minded skill in mind. Some instances may require the joining of 2 or more age categories to balance out the numbers in order to have or remain under the maximum of 50 people allowed in a 'Cohort Group'. As per Alberta Health Services and Hockey Alberta Cohort rules and regulations, players will not be permitted to play against teams or players outside of their 'Cohort Group' until Government Restrictions are lifted. Phase 2 would begin in early October.
3. **Transitional Phase (Phase 3)** - This phase will take place once some of the Alberta Health Services restrictions are lifted, and limited travel is allowed. Will consist of teams forming competitive cohorts with nearby Associations to begin regional competitive play.
4. **Regular Season (Phase 4)** - This would be a return to regular season play and is the final stage of our plan. Depending on the current rules in place by Alberta Health Services and Hockey Alberta, this stage could be pushed back or moved ahead during the fall period.

2.0 Program Objectives

The Covid-19 Pandemic has forced us to think differently about the way we operate for the 2020-2021 season and into the future. While there will be differences in some of the programming this season, it was developed to meet the needs of the players as we remain focused on the following key objectives:

1. **Safety** - Create a safe and healthy hockey environment for our players, coaches, officials, volunteers, and spectators. Safety is paramount, this plan was built in compliance with Alberta Health Services, Hockey Canada and Hockey Alberta guidelines to minimize the risk for all participants.
2. **Fun** - Maintain a culture of Fun! Ensure Participants can enjoy the game they love in a safe environment. Ponoka Minor Hockey is returning to Train and Play in a way that allows kids to have fun and be kids.
3. **Development** - Facilitate a competitive environment that allows players to develop and grow both on and off the ice. Skill and Team Development is essential and can be accomplished in all phases of the Ponoka Minor Hockey return to Hockey Plan.
4. **Game Play** - Facilitate an environment where 'Game Play' exists beginning with limited small area games during phase 2 and 3 until phase 4 resumes with regular season game play. Games will operate in a number of different formats up to the point that the regular season phase may resume. Some of these formats will include the following, 5v5, 4v4, 3v3, etc.
5. **Flexibility to Transition** - These phases will provide us with the flexibility to transition our program as things evolve during the season by way of changes with Alberta Health Services and Hockey Alberta requirements and protocols. This will ensure we continue to adhere to all Alberta Health Services and Hockey Alberta guidelines and protocols while providing a safe and healthy environment for all of our participants.

3.0 Requirements

1. Within the current Alberta Health Services Phase two, there are two different formats that can be considered to operate our programs. Hockey Alberta and Ponoka Minor Hockey will utilize both of these formats in facilitating our programs:

- A. With Physical Distancing – All participants must remain 2 meters apart at all times including coaches and team personnel.
- B. Using Cohort Groups—A Cohort Group allows up to 50 participants to group together to participate in a program where physical distancing cannot be achieved for on ice activities. Cohort Groups must remain together for the duration of 'AHS Phase 2' unless participants enter a two-week (14 day) isolation period, after which an athlete may establish themselves as part of a new 'Cohort Group'.
- C. Programs should operate within a specified community, zone, or region where travel is limited.

2. Ponoka Minor Hockey, as part of routine operations during phase 1, 2, and 3, will be required to track all participants and interactions while maintaining records of each session in a secured location for thirty days from the completion of the activity. This will be completed when players complete their daily check in to ensure they are symptom free (More detailed information is found in the Protocols and Safety section of this document).

3. There will be no competition or any interaction between other teams/cohorts during phases 1, 2, and 3. Only skill development and conditioning, systems training, and mini games will be permitted within phases 1, 2, and 3 and only within the same 'Cohort Group'.

All Ponoka Minor Hockey participants must follow Facility Guidelines:

- Facilities are required to adopt standards as per Alberta Health Services.
- All participants must understand these standards and ensure they are followed.
- Facilities, not Ponoka Minor Hockey, will determine spectator access, dressing room use and may have stronger requirements with regards to participation.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

- Team Officials and Players may be required to wear face masks in facilities and dressing rooms prior to on-ice activities
- Team Officials are encouraged to wear face masks on the bench when social distancing cannot be achieved.

League Play:

- Traditional League Play is not permitted during phases 1, 2, or 3.
- Mini games are only permitted within your 'Cohort Group' and can consist of 3v3, 4v4, or 5v5.

Travel Permits and Tournament Participation:

- Tournaments are not permitted during STAGE TWO of Alberta Health Services relaunch during the Ponoka Minor Hockey Development season.
- No exhibition games, travel, or tournament permits will be approved prior to the approval of Hockey Alberta sanctioning for member organizations.

4.0 Protocols and Safety

Prior to the Season, Scheduling Training or Development Sessions:

- All athletes must register with Ponoka Minor Hockey

Responsibilities of Coaches or Event Leaders Prior to each training Session:

- Communicate with athletes a minimum of 24 hours prior the sessions to provide the session plan so players can review and be aware for social distancing purposes.
- Communicate to see if athletes or family members are feeling unwell or showing signs of COVID19 symptoms and if so, they are not to attend practices for 14 days. A player who has a negative Covid-19 test and their symptoms have resolved are permitted to return within the 14- day period.
- Remind athletes and their families of social distancing guidelines; the need to label all equipment; and gathering restrictions both on the ice, in the arena, and the parking lot.
- Send practice plan outline (if applicable).
- Disinfect all training equipment.

- Instruct players to eat and use the washroom before they leave home.

During the Tryout Session:

- Upon arrival, all athletes must complete and be recorded on the Hockey Alberta Contact Tracking Spreadsheet which will be administered by the individuals running the event and made available to Ponoka Minor Hockey, Hockey Alberta or AHS within 12 hours of request.
 - Set up all training equipment and sanitize as needed.
 - Set up hand sanitizing stations for participant use before, during and after tryout if not provided by the Arena facility.
 - Consider wearing PPE. PPE must be worn if social distancing cannot be maintained (e.g. looking after an injured player). PPE is only acceptable if in a situation in which social distancing cannot be maintained. Do not use PPE to allow participants to break social distancing rules during the sessions.
 - Ensure only team pucks are used at the practice and that they are sanitized prior and after the practice.
- *Note, athletes can share the team pucks, but this sharing should be limited with no direct hand contact
- Remind athletes not to touch their face during activity.

After Tryout Session:

- Ensure athletes have retrieved all their personal equipment. (Water bottles, etc.)
- Do not touch their equipment unless you are in the same household.
- Ensure athletes and coaches wash or sanitize hands again.
- Sanitize all training equipment, including team pucks and all commonly touched surfaces e.g. locks.
- No post tryout meeting communication on the ice, in the arena or in the parking lot. Please communicate virtually using email, text, team snap or another form of electronic communication.

COVID Check – In:

24 hours prior to each session, or when arriving at the session, the coach or leader will communicate with all players and families to do the Hockey Alberta health status check. If any athlete or family member of the athlete is or has experienced any of the following symptoms in the previous 14 days, they will not be permitted to participate in any events, tryouts, etc. for the next 14 days or until 14 days after the last symptom, whichever is longer.

This information will be held in confidence by the coach:

- Fever, cough, sneezing or sore throat.
- Mild to moderate shortness of breath.
- Inability to lie down because of difficulty breathing.
- Have been in close contact with a person who has seen a doctor and has been diagnosed with COVID-19.

- Have travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days or has been ordered to self-isolate since returning from travel.
- Have been ordered to self-isolate or is living with someone who is self-isolating.
- Any person who develops symptoms while at a Ponoka Minor Hockey\Hockey Alberta sanctioned event should leave immediately, seek medical attention and inform the coach or manager within 2 hours of leaving.

What to do if a participant answers YES to any of the mandatory check in questions or begins to show symptoms during the training session:

The participant is immediately removed from the session and sent home as safely as possible. Ponoka Minor Hockey needs to be notified immediately following any participant being removed from any session. Ponoka Minor Hockey will contact Hockey Alberta to facilitate the required AHS protocols under the contact tracking guidelines

https://www.hockeyalberta.ca/uploads/source/Return_To_Hockey/Appendix_5-Positive_Test.pdf

Please follow the current provincial stay safe measures as well as the following:

- Driving alone or with people they are living with (no carpooling).
- Staggered approach to the site (e.g. physical distancing of 2 meters).
- Avoiding touching common surfaces while in public.
- Come straight to the Arena from home and go straight home.
- Practice good hygiene by:
 - o Coughing into a sleeve.
 - o Sneezing into a tissue.
 - o Avoid touching your face.
 - o Washing hands thoroughly and frequently with soap and water.
 - o When water and soap is not immediately available, using hand sanitizers with a minimum concentration of 60% alcohol.
 - o Wash hands prior to and immediately following practice/tryout, using the washroom, and/or after handling equipment.
 - o Sanitize your phones and devices often, leave them in the car or at home when possible.
 - o Help each other with helpful reminders, this is new to everyone.

Practice/Tryout Protocol for Physical Distancing:

Physical distancing has been identified as one of the most effective strategies to prevent the spread of COVID-19. With that in mind the following are the minimum protocols that MUST be adhered to for tryouts/team practices:

- All participants will wash their hands before coming to training.
- All participants will use hand sanitizer:
- General Stay Safe Measures:

- At the beginning of all events, during all breaks, prior to drinking water or touching any personal items, and/or prior to leaving the sessions all participants are required to maintain at least 2 meters distance from each other and avoid person to person contact unless they are participating in a practice within their designated 'Cohort Group'.
- Coaches will coach from a safe distance at least 2 meters from athletes when possible.
- NO SPITTING
- NO SHARING OF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:
 - Sticks, gloves, or any other personal equipment.
 - water bottles.
- Participants will avoid touching the face. All participants will be expected to follow the social distancing rules put in place by the Town of Ponoka facilities.
- Player equipment and clothing must be cleaned with disinfectant where appropriate and or washed prior to each session.
- No unnecessary physical contact e.g. high fives.
- All commonly touched surfaces will be disinfected after each session by Arena Staff.
- Gear, equipment etc. must be sanitized prior to each use.
- Coaches may request the support of an assistant coach or parent to help with sanitizing or ensuring physical distancing is occurring throughout the session.

Spectators of Ponoka Minor Hockey and Hockey Alberta sanctioned events must maintain physical distancing with people who are not from the same household and adhere to the following:

- Staggered approach to the facility
- No yelling or cheering
- No SPITTING
- Avoid touching your face.
- Wash your hands frequently and/or use hand sanitizer often.
- Disinfect clothes and equipment following attendance at a session.
- Wipe frequently touched surfaces including cell phones, tablets etc.
- Please consult the following website for more information about COVID-19

<https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx>

5.0 Facilities

All Ponoka Minor Hockey participants are required to follow the guidelines set forth by the facility they are utilizing.

1. General

Communication of the User Group/Individual User Guidelines to all your participants is the responsibility of the Facility renter. Please be aware that as Public Health Officials update regulations and guidelines, the Town of Ponoka reserves the right to adjust/cancel rentals accordingly. These guidelines are subject to change. All User Groups/Individual Users will be notified. Ensure you read and understand all sections of these guidelines that pertain to your

activity. Section 3 holds facilities/outdoor fields specific information.

2. Guidelines

- A. User Groups/Individual Users must meet all Public Health requirements; it is the User Group's/Individual User's responsibility to ensure they are compliant.
- B. Along with following all Public Health guidelines, if your activity is sanctioned by or affiliated with, a provincial or national organization, you also need to ensure you are complying with your governing body's guidelines.
- C. Health Check Requirement – The person in charge of the activity will be responsible to complete a Health Check (pre-screening questions) with all participants attending the scheduled booking.
- D. Designated entrance and exit points are established for each Facility. See Facility specific information under 3.0.
- E. Access to the Facility will be 15 minutes prior to your scheduled time and you must exit within 15 minutes after your session has ended.
- F. The person in charge of the activity (e.g. coaches, host, and instructors) are responsible to ensure equipment specific to your activity that is brought to the Facility (e.g. balls, pylons, pucks, art supplies, entertaining supplies, etc.) have been sanitized prior to use.
- G. Hand-sanitizers will be located throughout our facilities only for your use. Please ensure that you wash your hands and that physical distancing is maintained at all times.
- H. It is up to your group/individual user to assess the practicality of returning to sport/activity under these restrictions and assess the implications and potential risk in offering programming/activities in the Town of Ponoka Facilities. Failure to comply with the above may result in enforcement action, including ***fines and penalties, cancellation of your rental by the Town or the Province.***
- I. If a person is experiencing flu-like symptoms during their activity they must isolate and notify a facility employee.
- J. You must adhere to Facility specific guidelines as attached.
- K. **Children MUST be under the care and supervision of a parent or guardian at all times.** No children are to be left unattended. It is the discretion of the facility and association to ask families to leave if the rules are not followed.

3. Facility Specific Information

- **Arena entrance – the main doors will be used as an entrance only and other doors will be used as the exit. There will be directional arrows to guide people.**
- Washrooms – there will be hand sanitizer located outside of each washroom. There will be signs posted outside of the washrooms stating capacity.
- Dressing rooms:
 - There will be a maximum of 10 players per dressing room.
 - Players are encouraged to come dressed and ready to play. There will be significantly less time and access to rooms.

- Players will only be allowed in the rooms 15 minutes before their scheduled ice time and 15 minutes after their ice time.
- The rooms will need to be disinfected between groups. Please be patient with the arena staff while they complete this work.
- Masks are strongly encouraged when participants, coaches, players, and parents are unable to social distance.
- Showers will not be available at this time.
- Common Areas – No congregating in lobby areas. The tables will be removed and vending machines turned off. The concession will be closed.
- Bleachers – Certain sections of the bleachers are taped off to encourage social distancing. There will also be directional arrows to guide patrons. Bleachers are limited to 50 spectators on the large ice.

6.0 Refunds

This is an unprecedented time which makes predicting the future incredibly difficult. There are still many unanswered questions and uncertainty around what may lie ahead in the future which makes it difficult to have concrete answers about refund policies in the event of a lockdown, quarantine or other event that impacts the season.

It shall be the policy of the Ponoka Minor Hockey Association that requests for registration refunds are to be in writing and shall be as follows:

- I. By October 15th of the Registration year 100% refund minus a \$10.00 processing fee
- II. By October 31st of the Registration year 75 % refund
- III. By November 30th of the Registration year 50% refund
- IV. By December 31st of the Registration year 25% refund
- V. By January 1 of the season 0% refund

No refunds will be processed after February 1st.

Anything regarding an injury shall be dealt with on a case by case nature prior to the December 15th refund deadline.

7.0 Return to Hockey

Facilitating a safe return to Hockey that meets the guidelines of Alberta Health Services relaunch strategy for stage two is paramount. As we have mentioned previously, Hockey Alberta and Ponoka Minor Hockey will be utilizing two distinct procedures in delivering programming, either Physically Distanced or using Cohorts. Hockey is a contact sport and while we can operate skill development sessions using physical distancing, we understand that in order to meet all of the key objectives of our program, we will need to use 'Cohort Groups' for various phases of our Return to Play. Hockey Alberta Return to Play Plan of August 21, 2020 states that in order for players to change 'Cohort Groups', they must self-isolate for a 14-day period prior to joining a new 'Cohort Group' Cohort Information from Alberta Health Services for Sports Teams.

Definition of Cohorts:

- A COVID-19 cohort – also known as bubbles, circles, or safe squads – are small groups of the same people who can interact regularly without staying 2 meters apart.
- A person in a cohort should have little to no close contact with people outside of the cohort.

Keeping the same people together, rather than mixing and mingling, helps reduce the chance of getting sick, and makes it easier to track exposure if someone does get sick.

Under Stage 2, cohort types and sizes include:

- core cohorts (families and households) – up to 15 people
- childcare programs – up to 30 children and staff
- sports teams – up to 50 players and coaching staff
- performing groups – up to 50 cast members or performers

Sport Team Specifics:

With modifications, team sports are permitted under Stage 2, including contact sports.

Sports teams can play in region-only cohort groups of up to 50 players or “mini leagues”.

If participating in or organizing a sports activity as part of a cohort group:

- avoid travel outside of regions
- tournaments and large events are prohibited
- clean shared equipment regularly
- maintain physical distancing when not in play (for example, players on the bench)
- decrease/eliminate use of shared locker room

A. Skill Development and Tryouts

The purpose of the Skill Development and Tryouts phase is to group players of similar skill. This process will be similar to the tryout and tiering process that occurs each year. PMHA may use previous years playing experience to assist in forming ‘Cohort Groups’ through the tryout phase. When participants have completed their initial tryout sessions to determine skill rankings among their players, we will create ‘Cohort Groups’ of up to 50 players (age category and registration dependent). We will communicate further on numbers of coaches and team officials who should join the ‘Cohort Group’ and those that should remain Physically Distanced. It is the expectation that all Coaches and Team Officials will remain Physically Distanced during the initial tryout sessions.

Tryout Guidelines:

- All Tryout skates will follow a similar plan

- U7 – U9: Minimum of two skates prior to assigning to teams and ‘Cohort Groups’ (only if registration numbers warrant it)
- U11 - U18: Minimum of three tryout sessions prior to assigning to teams and ‘Cohort Groups’ (only if registration numbers warrant it)
 - Every effort should be made to offer all aspects of the U11 Player Pathway. However, Ponoka Minor Hockey and Hockey Alberta understand the complexities around hockey for the upcoming season.
- Once the Tryout sessions have been completed, players and goalies will be placed on their team and “Cohort Group’.
- All coaches and members of the Player Selection committee must remain physically distanced during the tryout sessions

B. Development Season

During the Skill Development and Tryout phase, associations will create similar sized ‘Cohort Groups’ of no more than 50 players and team officials based on results from tryout sessions. All players and team officials included in the registered ‘Cohort Group’ will need to ensure they remain in the same ‘Cohort Group’ during the Alberta Health Services phase two relaunch, or until a two week break can be facilitated in order to create new ‘Cohort Groups’ as per the Hockey Alberta return to hockey plan.

Cohorts:

- Up to 50 players and team officials (depending on age category and registration breakdown)
- Players will now have the opportunity to compete as a group (play together)
- Cohorts may choose to practice with the entire ‘Cohort Group’ on the ice, as long as the facility requirements are being followed, or, split them into smaller groups
- Within the ‘Cohort Group’ players do not need to be physically distanced
- Within this ‘Cohort Group’, ‘Mini Teams’ may be created to facilitate game play

Mini Teams:

- Cohort Groups are encouraged to create evenly balanced ‘Mini Teams’
- Coaches have the ability to rebalance ‘Mini Teams’ if they are not competitive as long as players remain within their ‘Cohort Group’
- PMHA has the ability to assign specific coaches to a ‘Mini Team’ or move them between teams to share resources and experience
- ‘Mini Games’ would be scheduled by Ponoka Minor Hockey for ice availability
- Ponoka Minor Hockey will provide guidelines for number of games, length, uses of officials, bench protocol, etc.

1. U7 (Formerly Initiation):

Regular programming

- Maintain Cross-Ice games for U7
- No changes to seasonal development program

- No Officials

Cohort Groups

- Allows Coaches to be in contact with younger players to better assist with their development, injuries, etc.
- Teams will not change with transition to regular season and 'Cohort Groups'

2. U9 (Formerly Novice)

Regular Programming

- Maintain half-ice games
- Game play will be 4v4 or 3v3 if short players

Cohort Groups:

- Allows coaches to be in contact with the younger players to better assist with their development and injuries, etc.
- Teams will not change with transition to regular season and 'Cohort Groups'
- Mini Teams within each 'Cohort Group' of 9-10 players to allow for three or four mini teams per 'Cohort Group'

3. U11 and U13 (formerly Atom and Peewee)

Regular Programming

- Maintain two-year age groups
- Maintain full ice game play
- Tiering structure and grid will remain the same (transition to regular season)
- Game Play will be 5v5, 4v4, 3v3 during the 'Development Season' phase

Cohort Groups

- Ease of transition to teams of 15-17 players for 'Regular Season' play
- Practice with team selected after tryouts
- Play games within the 'Cohort Group'

4. U15 and U18 (formerly Bantam, Midget) Regular Programming

Regular Programming

- Maintain two-year age groups
- Maintain full ice game play
- Tiering structure and grid will remain the same (transition to regular season)
- Game Play will be 5v5, 4v4, 3v3 during the 'Development Season' phase

Cohort Groups

- Ease of transition to teams of 15-17 players for 'Regular Season' play
- Practice with team selected after tryouts
- Play games within the 'Cohort Group'

C. Regular Season

Ponoka Minor Hockey will continue to follow the lead of Alberta Health Services and Hockey Alberta in order to determine an appropriate time to transition from the 'Development Season' to a normal return to hockey 'Regular Season'. We remain optimistic that we will be able to transition to a traditional 'Regular Season' in accordance with past season guidelines but will only do so once it is safe for all of our participants and we have received approval from Alberta Health Services and Hockey Alberta.

Selecting teams during the Skill Development and Tryout Phase, we are able to transition from the 'Development Season' to 'Regular Season' without any further tryouts of players. Formal teams will be created solely based on the tryouts.

8.0 Referees

Clarification still needs to be made with regards to the use of referees. Hockey Canada, Hockey Alberta and North Region Referee Committee Executives will determine training and clinic protocols. Ponoka Minor Hockey is waiting for further clarification from Alberta Health Services and Hockey Alberta regarding several important clarifications regarding referees, including:

- Are Officials considered part of the 'Cohort Group'?
- Can they effectively do their job while Physically Distancing?
- Are there enough Officials who would be able to commit to officiate all games within a 'Cohort Group' to ensure appropriate scheduling?

9.0 Coaches, Team Officials and Off-Ice Officials

Clarification still needs to be determined with regard to coaches, team officials and off-ice officials. Hockey Canada and Hockey Alberta will determine clinic protocols and certification requirements for coaches and team officials.

Ponoka Minor Hockey will provide guidelines to assist in determining proper usage for coaches, managers and other team officials such as:

- How will the roles of coaches and team officials change?
- Who will be responsible for contact tracking and symptom screening prior to session arrival?
- Who will need to use PPE to protect players and stakeholders?

Ponoka Minor Hockey will continue to work with the Town of Ponoka and Interlock MHA's to determine the appropriate usage of off-ice officials.

10.0 FAQ's

General Questions

1. Are players allowed to opt out of the Skills and Tryout and Development Phases and rejoin their association for the Regular Season?

No, players must be registered with a Ponoka Minor Hockey from the beginning of the season in order to participate in all phases of Return to Play including the Regular Season.

2. Can my child be a part of multiple 'Cohort Groups'? As an example, can they belong to a school based Cohort as well as a Hockey 'Cohort Group'?

Alberta Health Services Cohort guidelines state that "Athletes should not belong to multiple sport mini-leagues; they should select one sports cohort for the duration of Stage 2." They would be permitted to belong to another sports cohort that is operating under the 'Physical Distancing' guidelines. For example, a power skating or skills program that is utilizing 'Physical Distancing.'

3. Do athletes and coaches have to maintain social distancing at all times, or can it just be minimized?

When using 'Physical Distancing' procedures, it is imperative that all participants remain 2 meters apart during the tryout session when possible. When using 'Cohort Group' procedures, participants are reminded to minimize the amount of contact during off ice and dressing room situations.

Skill Development And Tryout Questions

4. Would players released from Elite Clubs need to isolate for 14 days prior to participating in community evaluations?

No, technically they would be going from a 'Cohort Group' to 'Physically Distanced' tryouts at their home Association. However, for later releases and depending on the stage of the tryouts, the player may need to isolate before engaging with their assigned 'Cohort Group'

Contact Tracing and Screening Questions

5. How will Ponoka Minor Hockey handle contact tracing and symptom screening?

Hockey Alberta has set guidelines to follow to ensure all interactions are tracked and that symptomatic players do not participate in any activities. We are actively considering different solutions to make this process as efficient as possible for athletes, parents and cohorts. However, regardless of the process, this will be a required step prior to participation in any session.

6. What happens if a player answers yes to any of the symptom screening questions?

Any player who answers YES to any of the questions may no longer participate in the program until a minimum 14-day quarantine period has elapsed or they have provided a negative Covid-19 test and all symptoms have been resolved.

7. What happens if there is a positive test within a 'Cohort Group'? If that participant gets tested again and the result is negative, can they return to Hockey activities?

There is a formal reporting process if any participant contracts Covid-19. Ponoka Minor Hockey will take all direction from Alberta Health Services. We do not have any more clarity at this time and may not have more clarity as our programs begin. Alberta Health Services is treating each situation differently and are not providing any concrete 'what if's'. We must simply follow the established reporting guidelines and take direction as it is provided to us.