



Softball Nova Scotia

Phase 1: Return to Training

Coaches Guidelines

On June 20th, associations and teams can begin on field activities, including tryouts, training, and practices.

As a Softball community, we must be grateful for the opportunity to get on the field this summer. It is everyone's responsibility to adhere to core public health guidelines. The rules and guidelines presented in this document must be adopted by all groups in order to operate. Reasonable attempts to follow these rules must be made. All guidelines including signing of the waiver must be followed, Failure to do so could result in loss of membership, negative impact to insurance, facility usage, and negatively impact the possibility of the sport progressing in the Return to Play plan. Most importantly, we need to ensure the safety of all participants

Softball Nova Scotia acknowledges a perfect environment is impossible. As coaches, you will have the most direct contact with athletes. It is important when considering practice or tryout plans, that you consider how the new guidelines will impact your drills and activities. We know the pressure coaches are under to adapt to our 'new normal'. If you consider the core public health and Softball specific guidelines outlined in this document, you are doing your part to ensure the safety of your athletes.

Please note Softball Nova Scotia and your association require parents and guardians to sign a Release, Waiver of Liability, and Indemnity prior to any activity participation.

General Personal Hygiene

Keep in mind the following core principles when participating in Softball activities.

1) Please tell your athletes to **stay home** if you have any symptoms of COVID-19 or have been in contact with someone who has or had the virus in the previous 14 days. Proof of testing will be required to return to play.

2) Even if you appear to be healthy and have had no contact with someone who is at-risk, it is still important to follow physical distancing and sanitation practices

3) Use sanitary practices recommended by the public health authorities.

a) Practice proper hygiene as it can help reduce the risk of infection or spreading infection to others.

b) Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the washroom– or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available (have these readily available or ask members to bring their own).

c) Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

4) The Coronavirus that causes COVID-19 spreads through droplets that people produce as they breathe, talk, cough and sneeze.

When coughing or sneezing:

a) Cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of your arm, not your hand.

b) Use a tissue and dispose of any used tissues as soon as possible in a lined waste basket and wash your hands afterwards.

c) Keep Physical Distancing of 2 m or 6 feet:

5) Wear a mask if in close contact with others (surgical procedure or cloth mask is sufficient, N-95 mask not required). Masks don't replace proper physical distancing. Masks are not mandated at this time.

6) Avoid large groups where social distancing is not feasible.

7) SNS rules:

- No sharing of water bottles.
- No sharing of food of any kind.
- No spitting.
- No chewing gum.
- No sunflower seeds.
- No water jugs or shared plastic/paper cups.
- No sharing of candy, etc. or spitting of any kind.
- All participants to shower at first opportunity after each event.

Environment

1. Dugouts are off limits to athletes (coaches/organizers can utilize, assuming physical distancing is possible)
2. Athletes are encouraged to not arrive at the field more than 5 minutes prior to their practice time. If they do, they are encouraged to stay in their vehicle or stay away from the field until the previous group has vacated the field. Coaches can arrive as needed to begin their preparations.
3. It is encouraged that spectators be limited to one family member, or no more than one acquaintance of the athlete. All spectators will be expected to maintain physical distancing.
4. Ride sharing is discouraged whenever possible
5. Coaches must ensure athletes clean up after themselves. No garbage should be left on the field.
6. Coaches should sanitize any high touch surface areas prior to vacating the facility (as dugouts are not being used, there should be minimal high touch areas)

Equipment

1. No sharing of personal helmets, gloves, hats, or training devices.
2. No sharing of bats (unless cleaned with a certified disinfectant after every use)
3. No sharing of any other equipment unless disinfected between personal uses
4. No sharing of catcher's gear. Catcher's gear can only be used if the following conditions are met:
 - Personal gear is used
 - 'Association gear' is used by one person per day, and disinfected after each session
5. Coaches should disinfect equipment that may have been used by multiple participants (during or post training).
6. The following precautions are recommended to minimize the risks of multiple people handling the same softballs:
 - Balls should be sanitized after use or not used for four days to reduce likelihood of transmission
 - Two different training groups should not be using the same softballs (unless sanitized between use).
 - Athletes should be provided with the opportunity to sanitize their hands between drills/activities.

Personal Protective Equipment

1. Coaches should communicate personal hygiene recommendations to all athletes and their guardians. SNS to provide Participant Guideline document for communication.
2. All First Aid kits are to be updated to include PPE (as deemed appropriate by public health) should physical contact may be necessary due to injury
3. One designated person to handle injury situations to avoid physical contact between the injured person and multiple people

Tracking and Reporting

1. Teams should have a participant registry or the ability to trace names, dates, time, and contact info for training activities. Tracking information must be kept for 30 days. Should a COVID-19 case be reported, this will assist in tracing.
2. Coaches must report potential cases of COVID-19 to their association and Softball Nova Scotia office immediately. Further activities must be suspended until confirmation of a negative test is provided.

Softball Training, Practices, and Tryouts

1. Drills, practices, and activities must adhere to the guidelines in this document.
2. Activities must ensure physical distancing of 2 metres (6 feet)
3. Activities must not involve the sharing of equipment
4. Gathering limits of no more than 10 must be adhered to (minimum of two (2) coaches on the field).