

 **TCMBHA Return to Play / COVID-19 Safety Guidelines**

As we continue to work through the current pandemic, we’ve drafted out our guidelines & procedures below for the upcoming Spring Ball Hockey season. This plan has been designed with estimated Via Sports Phase 3-Return to Play guidelines. It is important to note that these guidelines are subject to change and may be done so without notice with any new information or updates provided to us from either the provincial government, Via Sport, Work Safe BC, or Tri City Minor Ball Hockey Association (TCMBHA) and its governing bodies.

The Canadian Ball Hockey Association, its leagues and TCMBHA will strive to provide a safe, fun, and fair environment for all participants during these unique times.

All players MUST print out, complete, and hand in to TCMBHA the new **CBHA - Informed Consent & Assumption of Risk** waiver. No players will be permitted to participate in any TCMBHA sanctioned event unless this form has been completed and received.

Board Executives, team coaches, COVID coordinator, and all volunteers acting on behalf of TCMBHA are to inform their families and players on making sure these guidelines are being followed.

Players, coaches or COVID coordinator with any symptoms, cannot attend any training sessions, game, or competition and will be asked to self-isolate for 14 days before they may return. No spectators will be allowed at games or practices.

Along with this Return to Play plan, TCMBHA will also follow the COVID safety protocols and guidelines set out in West Coast Minor Ball Hockey Associations of BC Return to Play plan.

*In the information noted below, the term PPE stands for personal protective equipment which is any device or appliance designed to be worn or held by an individual for protection against one or more health and safety hazards.*

**Building Entry / Change Rooms / Spectators**

The teams COVID Coordinator will be required to ensure all steps below are followed for each team:

* All coaches, assistant coaches, COVID coordinator, officials, and players are required to wear appropriate PPE face masks when entering or leaving a playing facility.
* All coaching staff are required to wear appropriate PPE face masks when on a bench, on the playing surface, or assisting a team.
* Any volunteer offering to assist or manage a team, are required to wear appropriate PPE face masks when on a bench, on the playing surface, or assisting a team.
* Coaches/COVID coordinator must complete the “Attendance sheet” as the health check prior to any team member entering a building or attending a training session even if a session is being held outside.
	+ All players will be required to meet the COVID coordinator prior to entry to log attendance and to ensure the health check was completed.
* BC Health COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment questions include:
1. 1. Are you experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (refer to the link above for the most up to date list of symptoms)?
2. 2. In the past fourteen (14) days have you been outside of Canada or BC?
3. 3. In the past fourteen (14) days have you been in close contact with anyone who is symptomatic or has been diagnosed with COVID-19?
	* If a player does not pass the health check, they are not permitted to enter a facility, or take part in the said event.
* No member will be permitted entry if they exhibit **any** COVID-19 symptoms.
* If any attendee shows COVID-19 symptoms during an event, the participant will be excused and removed from the event.
* All attendees must enter facilities using the designated entrance and designated exit and must read and follow all signs posted by the facility.
* All attendees must follow facilities directional one-way arrows or markings while in the facility.
* Players, coaches, & COVID coordinators may arrive 10 minutes before the scheduled event only and must leave the building no more than 10 minutes after each session. This will allow teams & officials to sanitize all areas before the next cohort, and there will be no loitering in common areas permitted.
* It is recommended that players refrain from bringing in any large bags or valuables in case facilities do not allow the use of change rooms.
* It is also recommended for players to arrive at the facility, completely dressed, with all equipment to limit use of a changeroom.
* If a facility does allow for the use of a change room: a coach or COVID coordinator must be the last person to leave the change room and is required to wipe down and sanitize all change room benches, door handles, and touched surfaces prior to leaving.
	+ Coaches will be supplied one set of the necessary cleaning supplies by TCMBHA but will be required to purchase additional items if lost or misplaced.
* Showering at the rink will not be permitted.
* Any items left behind by players or coaches will not be kept or stored and unfortunately will be disposed of accordingly.
* On floor officials will be required to wipe down and sanitize all player benches, gate handles, railings, penalty boxes, & timekeeper boxes after each event and prepare for the next cohort.

**Equipment**

The use of hockey sticks and any form of player equipment will be limited to individual players and shared equipment will not be permitted:

* Players will be required to bring their own labelled, pre-filled water bottles to all games to help to reduce the risk of transmission. Individuals must take their own water bottles home each night for cleaning and sanitation. **At no time are water bottles permitted to be shared.**
* All clothing, uniforms, jersey’s, and gear must be washed/cleaned/disinfected after each use.

**Hygiene, Hand Washing, Touching Face**

All members must practice proper hygiene:

* wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
* use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol)
* if hand sanitizer is provided by the facility, all members must sanitize upon entry into the facility
* No spitting.
* abstain from touching their face (mouth, eyes, or nose)
* cover their cough or sneeze with the inside of their elbow, or use a tissue and throw tissue in the trash after use.
* Washrooms may be available, however with limited capacity-this will be dependent on facility rules.

**Cohorts**

In the event ViaSports requires associations to facilitate cohorts for gameplay, the following procedures must be followed to minimize and control contacts:

* Participants assigned to a cohort will be required to stay within that cohort for games and/or practices.
* Participants will not be allowed to scrimmage or play outside of that cohort unless the following procedures are followed:
	+ Any participant (or team) leaving a cohort, with the expectation of playing in a different cohort, must not engage in any scrimmage, or game for 14 days.
	+ During this time, the participate (or team) will be authorized to practice or run drills only to ensure COVID-19 safety precautions are followed.
* Physical distancing on the floor and the bench is not required while in designated cohorts, however coaches must wear a mask on the bench.

**Game Play / Team Rosters**

Each team will consist of a maximum of 20 runners, 2 goalie, 1 head coach, 2 assistant coaches (max), and 1 COVID coordinator.

* During game play, a maximum number of 20 will be authorized on the playing surface with no more than 2 coaches permitted at one time on the bench
* Players will refrain from handshakes, high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, group celebrations etc. Teams will recognize their opponents by standing on their respective blueline before play begins and raising their sticks similar to an IIHF World Junior Championships.

**Officials**

All officials will be required to ensure they are following any specific guidelines as laid out by BC Ball Hockey Guidelines for Officials, and required to adhere to the following:

* All officials will be required to use the new electronic whistle system and will not be allowed to use a “blow” type whistle.
* All officials are required to wear an appropriate PPE face masks when entering or exiting a playing facility:
	+ Officials may choose to wear a PPE face mask when they are officiating a game but are not required to do so.
	+ All officials will be required to wear appropriate PPE face masks when entering or leaving a playing facility.
	+ Officials may remove their mask when entering the playing surface.
* Officials using water bottles must adhere to the following rules:
	+ Officials must bring pre-filled and labelled water bottles
	+ At no time are officials authorized to share water bottles
* Officials will be required to keep hand sanitizer in their equipment bag
* Officials will be required to maintain physical distancing from participants except when necessary for safety reasons

**Player Conduct**

We remind all participants that we are still currently in a pandemic. Players must follow specific guidelines regarding unnecessary engagement and contact with opposing players:

* The league will be taking all the necessary measures to protect game officials, and players during circumstances involving player engagements and altercations.
* The league’s goal is to minimize any unnecessary physical contact and verbal engagement that involves close contact with opposing players and officials.
* Any situation with two or more players or coaching staff in a **VERBAL ALTERCATION**, will be addressed by the officials in the following manner:
	+ The referee will signal the whistle and give a verbal warning for the players to separate.
	+ If player(s) refuse to comply, a **GAME EJECTION** may be called.
	+ If player(s) persist, **GAME MISCONDUCT** penalties may be enforced.
	+ Players are reminded to respect physical distancing between each other and officials, especially after a whistle.

Any situation with two or more players that involves **UNNECESSARY CONTACT,** may result in a **GAME EJECTION** plus any other penalties he/she may incur which may include **GAME MISCONDUCTS**

**Any fighting or unnecessary rough play will not be tolerated**. The current suspension matrix is sufficient in addressing these concerns and will be strictly adhered to.

Although these appendices to the Canadian Ball Hockey Association Rulebook may appear severe, it is our due diligence to:

* mitigate physical contact and rough play
* limit the number of players confined to the enclosed space of the penalty box
* lessen the impact of special teams on the outcome of the game
* respect social distancing and limit the spread of COVID-19
* recognize the privilege to be playing ball hockey again
* It will be at the referee's discretion to signal the play down along the boards if they feel there is prolonged engagement which may bring additional players into the fray

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