



VSA Return to Soccer Plan 2020

Updated June 27, 2020

General Considerations

- We will be building groups by combining age groups and including both genders.
- We will attempt to allow parents to sign up for a specific time slot on a given day. This may alleviate parents driving to the field multiple times in a week as they can sign their children up for one or two time slots during the week. May potentially reduce traffic congestion at the facility.
- Parents and/or players will be responsible for registering themselves in specific camp times (even if that means siblings are in the same group). This may assist families in carpooling and reducing traffic congestion at facility and number of spectators.
- In the short-term the notion of 'team' will be defined as the group that the child attends sessions with to maintain a safe environment for participation.
- We will keep practice groups together (i.e. 24 participants in one time slot on a field, split into smaller groups of 12). If a child becomes a COVID-19 carrier then their interactions with others may be limited to a small group.
- When games resume, we will consider playing games within community organizations for a duration of time (mixing age groups and genders if need be) to reduce risk of interacting with other communities/organizations which may help prevention of interacting with a larger number of individuals from other communities
- We will be cautious and send a consistent message that gives parents and participants confidence that their safety has been the highest priority. We will not rush to restart if we do not have everything in place.

Organizational Considerations

- We have read and reviewed the Canada Soccer Response Action Plan Guide and in the absence of a Provincial Government, Provincial Health Agency or Municipal Government outline for such a plan. We will utilize the guide(s) to create one specific for your organization.
- Anyone who wishes to partake in infield activities in any way will be subject to safety education (parents, coaches, players, refs, volunteers etc.)
- All Coaches and Volunteer supporters must complete pre-activity safety orientation on all safety protocols as per provincial guidelines aligned to Phase 4 of the Re-open Saskatchewan Plan (once available) – hand washing, cough suppression, body fluid emissions strictly controlled (for example: spitting, mucus, vomit or other bodily fluids may not be expelled in public areas, immediate clean up required)
- Signage will be employed, to reinforce key risk related messages, control flow of people, improve efficiency, etc.
- We will work with coaches to ensure Safe Sport Roster & Rule of Two are maintained and one coach is of the same gender as the athletes, whenever possible.
- First aid will be administered by, firstly, the parent or guardian of the child, or barring the availability of such a person, any capable coach will administer first aid. The club has first aid supplies on site.
- Hand washing/sanitizer station(s) onsite. Provide coaches with necessary sanitization equipment. The registration desk will have all necessary sanitation supplies, plus additional supplies will be located on the fields in the coaches area.
- Should a child or coach test positive for COVID after attending one of our activities, every coach, child and every parent of all children that attended the activities will be informed directly by our administrator immediately, and VSA will formally inform The City of Warman about such a case, should it occur.
- If there is a positive COVID case within Organizations, the impacted Organization will be required to assist in contact tracing to support local authorities. This is where steps taken to keep consistent groups together will assist greatly.

When Moving Through RTSP Phases:

- We will proceed with an overabundance of caution. We will not rush to restart or between RTSP phases, safety and readiness must come first.
- It is recommend to 4 weeks between RTSP Phases to monitor any possible COVID transmission within practice group. We will contact health authorities if an athlete, coach, referee has contracted COVID and support them in contact tracing.
- To accommodate Return to play games for older youth athletes, practices start approx. 2-4 weeks before games start to allow the athletes body to adapt – this may be more of a concern for older athletes if there is a jump to RTPS Phase 3.
- RTSP Phase 3 - We will consider shortening the length of matches and reducing the number of players assigned to teams (max roster sizes)
- Game sheets should be done online so there is no transfer of paper.

- Set up policies/procedures to pay officials online versus cash payments.

Facilities & Scheduling:

- We will book the field for 3 hours each night, and each session will be 75 minutes long, which will give us 15 minutes between and after sessions to vacate the area and disinfect and clean the equipment.
- Information provided to all coaches and parents about each facility, entrance/exits, reducing bottlenecks as well as screening and cleaning protocols and pick-up/drop-off/spectator protocols.
- Cancel ALL practices where the forecast calls for very likely thunder/lightning. In the event where a weather system moves in quickly, utilizing parent/participant vehicles can be another outlet for participants to take shelter. Consideration needs to be given on how players are released from practice to their parent's vehicle, so players are not searching in open space for their parent if their parent is not readily available.

Coaching Considerations

General Considerations

- Coaches are responsible to ensure a safe environment for the athletes and on field support staff and volunteers
- All Coaches and Volunteer supporters must complete pre-activity safety orientation on all safety protocols – examples: hand washing, cough suppression, body fluid emissions strictly controlled (for example: spitting, mucus, vomit or other bodily fluids may not be expelled in public areas, immediate clean up required)
- Wearing face masks is recommended for coaches and volunteers.
- The use of an electronic whistle is preferred.
- Only trained designated people (coaches/staff) should handle equipment.
- Coaches or trained designates must wipe equipment down using disinfected swabs or towels, before and immediately after each session.
- Recommendation is for athletes to bring light and dark shirts for practice.
- No bibs or pinnies.

Activity Considerations:

- Structure activities to maximize physical distancing – RTSP Phase 1
- Age Appropriate considerations may need to be taken when designing activities, for example, Active Start and Fundamentals players may need a sibling or parent to participate with them. This will allow for coaches to have support managing the group of players and social distancing will not be required between siblings or parent/child (since they are from the same family). Support volunteers must receive safety orientation and be registered.
- Design activities so athletes may stay within their existing small groups within RTSP Phase 2 to reduce amount of contact with different people.
- Ball should stay below the waist to prevent contact with head, hands, chest, mouth in RTSP Phases 1-3.
- Regular sanitization breaks combined with water breaks.

Referee Considerations

- Focus on education for referees in RTSP Phase 1 & 2.
- Referees are not involved until we get to structured Games in RTSP Phase 3:
- Referees come dressed to the game - no need for changing rooms.
- Reduce the number of Match Officials needed for a match (one Head Referee vs. Head Referee and 2 Assistant Referees) if social distancing measures still in place (will not be necessary once social distancing has been removed).
- Maximum facility capacity may impact number of referees.
- Referees should not share any gear (watches, flags, cards).
- Recommend online game sheets and online payment to reduce passing of paper and cash.
- Develop clarity on Lightning Policy with the Member Organization; building capacity may still be limited in RTSP Phase 3 and 4 if players are expected to head indoors.
- When assigning, consider reducing number of referees coming and going to fields; have referees do back to back games where applicable and with consideration to the health of the referee.

Laws of the Game – Modifications

- Referees and Organizations should work collaboratively to ensure that upon the start of RTSP Phase 3 or 4, Laws of the Game may need amending to adhere COVID related safety guidelines. Examples such as:

- Yellow and red cards given to athletes from a safe distance
- Masks reside within safe apparel, consider how a mask check would occur and what types of masks are acceptable
- Pass/dribble where applicable to reduce contact by multiple hands on the ball within a game. No throw-ins initially.
- Physical altercations result in an immediate dismissal from match. Referees should not physically engage with athletes, allow situation to dissolve before engaging from a safe distance.

Referee Education/Mentorship Considerations

- Assessments and mentorship can continue while respecting social distancing guidelines; mentors/assessors operate from the spectator side of the pitch

Parent Considerations

- Ensure child must be healthy and show no sign of symptoms.
- Any parent participating and supporting a practice should receive a pre-activity safety orientation on all safety protocols – examples include hand washing, cough suppression, body fluid emissions strictly controlled (spitting, mucus, vomit or other bodily fluids may not be expelled in public areas, immediate clean up required).
- Drop and pickup player while maintaining desired rules and regulations around pickup/drop-off.
- Maintain prescribed distancing measures as a spectator, if allowed. There will be a parent's area next to the field, where distancing measures are to be respected.
- Do not carpool unless other athletes are a part of your extended bubble family.
- Make sure child has all items they need to participate.

PLAYER CONSIDERATIONS

General Considerations

- All athletes must receive a safety protocol orientation.
- Athletes should come to the field, dressed to play and with a Large Ziploc Bag clearly labelled containing:
 - a) Hand Sanitizer and/or Sanitizer Wipes (if possible, otherwise a clean cloth to wipe down equipment).
 - b) Labelled water bottle - where mouth spout is covered by lid and not to open air.
 - c) Snack(s).
 - d) Tissues – to manage bodily fluids from nose & mouth and, minor scrapes and abrasions.
 - e) Personal first aid supplies needed – band aids, ice pack, etc.
- Participant should be made aware that they will be expected to keep and dispose of items at home.
- Organizations should create a safe and social distance compatible area for players equipment and bags.
- Responsibility to bring equipment to the field in order to practice and equipment (ie. soccer balls) should be sanitized at the field.
- Bring two shirts, light and dark to reduce need for pinnies (coaches should specify which shirt they'd like athlete to wear to prevent changing in public)