



RETURN TO PLAY 2.0

A Return to Hockey Safety Plan

2021-2022 Season

This Return to Play only applies to Organizations, Teams and participants who are Members of, or who are registered to, the Ontario Sledge Hockey Association (OSHA) or any of its Members.

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Disclaimer

The information in this document is not intended or implied to be, a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. All content, including text, graphics, and information, are provided for general informational purposes only. The knowledge and circumstances around COVID-19 are changing constantly and, as such, the Ontario Sledge Hockey Association (OSHA) makes no representation and assumes no responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of this information. Further, participants should seek advice from medical professionals and/or public health officials if they have specific questions about return to training and competition.

The information included in this document is current to the time of publishing and is the minimum standard for Return to Hockey within the OSHA's jurisdiction. The document is aligned with the Public Health Guidelines of the Government of Ontario, and the Public Health Units of the Province of Ontario, as well as Hockey Canada's Return to Hockey Safety Guidelines and the Ontario Hockey Federation's Return to Hockey Framework. However, recommendations may change depending on local, provincial, and national circumstances; local resources should also be consulted for up-to-date information. Where anything within this document conflicts (*i.e.: is less restrictive*) with Public Health requirements, including regulations, members must comply with Public Health requirements and adapt as required.

Return to hockey is not without risks, including potential exposure to COVID-19. While OSHA has made and is making all reasonable efforts to minimize the risk of exposure to the disease through the development and implementation of this ***Return to Play*** and Return to Hockey Strategy with guidance from health authorities, OSHA does not and cannot guarantee that there will be no risk of exposure and transmission to those who participate in on or off-ice activities.

As circumstances require, e.g.: changes in government regulations or Public Health requirements, this document will be amended accordingly, and the revisions will be circulated to the OSHA membership in a timely manner.

Should guidelines provided by public health authorities, Hockey Canada, the Ontario Hockey Federation or OSHA be ignored, or circumvented, such actions could result in potential reinstatement of suspended hockey activities, or other penalties could result along with governmental consequences determined by local authorities.

Introduction

When the 2019-20 hockey season came to a premature end on March 12, 2020, none of us had any inkling of the devastating impact the COVID-19 pandemic would have on communities, not just in Canada but world-wide, leading to major restrictions being imposed on all sectors of society, including sport.

In August of last year, OSHA developed its Return to Play based on the known factors and regulations at the time to provide a framework for getting sledge hockey in the province back up and running. Unfortunately, because of rising infection rates and hospitalizations, our plan never came to fruition as we were forced to first delay, and then finally cancel, its implementation.

A year later, we now have vaccines and the high inoculation rates has enabled the Province to move to Step 3 of its [Roadmap to Reopening](#), which enables us to plan for a resumption of sledge hockey that, while not normal, is much closer to the pre-pandemic game that we all know and love. Nevertheless, many of the best practices from our previous Plan remain in effect. Mask use, regular personal hygiene, guided pathways for entry and exit through facilities, and physical distancing where possible will remain in place until Health Canada declares an end to the pandemic. Until that time, all members of OSHA are encouraged to exercise good judgement and err on the side of safety in all actions. Additional municipal and community restrictions throughout Ontario may be necessary in specific areas to allow us to return to the sport we love, and it is important that they are followed for the benefit of everyone.

In preparing ***Return to Play 2.0***, OSHA has worked in coordination with Hockey Canada, the Ontario Hockey Federation, and public health authorities to ensure all aspects of the Plan are properly executed with the central focus on players, team officials, game officials, administrators, and volunteers. Part of our commitment includes an ongoing and regular review of the Return to Play's protocols, which will help to enhance the positive hockey experience under both the Province's and public health authorities' directives.

OSHA recognizes the important role the game of sledge hockey plays in the lives of all its players. We are eager to resume play, at the same time taking care to ensure that the health and safety of each participant is the main priority. The pandemic situation and Public Health advice on safety measures are both fluid and may change without notice during the implementation of the Return to Play. Also, the resumption of play may not be linear as increasing restrictions may be required should the numbers of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations increase. As a result, our Return to Play will remain fluid and flexible to accommodate any changes in restrictions or changes in advice from the Public Health.

Section 1: Checklist to Success

Definitions:

“**Game Official**” means any referee, linesperson, or timekeeper.

“**Medical Advisory Team**” – means a team of experts from Ontario Public Health.

“**Organization**” means any Club, Division, Division member or Affiliated Group as defined in OSHA's Rules and Regulations.

“**Team**” means any group that includes players, Team Officials, on-ice instructors, volunteers, Organization administrators etc. who gather for a *sanctioned hockey activity* on and/or off the ice and “**Team Participant**” means any one of them.

“**Team Official**” means the Team’s coach, assistant coach, manager, trainer, or other team official registered with the League.

Review & Follow:

- **Return to Play**
- [Hockey Canada Return to Hockey Safety Guidelines](#)
- [Ontario Hockey Federation Return to Hockey Framework](#)
- Facility Guidelines ([Appendix B](#))
- [Ontario Public Health Measures and Advice](#)

Plan:

1. Assign one or more **Organization Safety Rep(s)** by October 3, 2021.
2. **Organization Safety Reps** should obtain the protocols from each facility used by their Club to ascertain how it will be adhering to the Facility Guidelines (see checklist in [Appendix B](#)). In addition, the facility should be asked to provide a copy of its safety plan as required by Schedule 1, Section 3.3 of the [Reopening Ontario \(A Flexible Response to COVID-19\) Act](#).
3. **Team Safety Reps** (on/off the ice) Protocol:
 - i. Team communications responsibilities specific to COVID-19 Facilities Guidelines
 - a. Liaise with **Organization Safety Rep**
 - b. Explain the role of the **Team Safety Rep** to players and their parents/guardians and to Team Officials.
 - ii. Collect the self-screening information or, if not available, the Screening Tool Template (Appendix C) for each Team Participant [before each sanctioned activity \(on or off ice\) and keep records](#) of the screening results.
 - iii. At the Facility:
 - a. **Follow the Return to Play 2.0**
 - c. Follow the individual facility's specific reopening COVID19 Facility Guidelines
 - d. Practice responsible hygiene.

Be safe and have fun!

Section 2: Safety and Health Guidelines

These guidelines are meant to support OSHA's Clubs, Team Officials, and stakeholders in returning to their hockey-related activities. This includes, but is not limited to, associated on and off-ice activities (including administrative), coaching, and adhering to the Facility Guidelines ([Appendix B](#)) established by facility owners/operators.

Please note that each facility where hockey-related activities take place will have its own specific guidelines related to people coming into the building, use of dressing rooms, washrooms, showers, requirements for masks, etc. (see [Facilities Section](#)). However, concerning actual hockey-related activities, the following must be demonstrated:

Environment and Expectations

- Arrive at the facility at a designated time for the hockey-related activity. Do not arrive early.
- Leave the facility immediately following the hockey-related activity. Do not stay beyond the designated time.
- Physical distancing of two (2) metres (six feet) will be maintained before, during, and after hockey-related activities, except where otherwise stated in Hockey Canada's Safety Guidelines and/or the Ontario Hockey Federation's Return to Hockey Framework.
- Capacity limits will differ from facility to facility to ensure compliance with the limits permitted in Step 3 of the [Ontario Government's Roadmap to Reopening](#) and adherence to [physical distancing requirements](#). Accordingly, we recommend only one parent or caregiver accompany a player to a hockey-related activity.
- We encourage hockey-related activities (including parent meetings and administrative procedures like registration) be conducted electronically as much as possible. Any in-person meetings must be conducted in groups not exceeding the number of individuals permitted in Step 3 of the [Ontario Government's Roadmap to Reopening](#) (25 indoors and 100 outdoors). Indoor meetings must adhere to physical distancing requirements and all attendees must wear a non-medical face mask. Where physical distancing is difficult to maintain, meetings should be held outdoors.
- Carpooling is discouraged. If carpooling cannot be avoided, it is strongly recommended that all passengers wear a face mask while in the vehicle.

Spectators

Parents, guardians, and other spectators are strongly requested to avoid the dressing room areas of facilities at all times, unless it is necessary to attend to an injured or unwell player when a parent or guardian is required to be in attendance.

Equipment

- Players are strongly encouraged to fill their water bottles at home. Each player should ensure that their water bottle is clearly marked with their name. The sharing of water bottles is prohibited.
- The sharing of hockey equipment is prohibited unless it is goaltender equipment which has been properly cleaned and disinfected.
- At the present time, dressing rooms are permitted to be open, provided appropriate cleaning and disinfection protocols are in place and each person respects physical distancing requirements and wears a face mask. Each facility will determine the maximum number of persons that can be in a dressing room. For any parent or caregiver who is concerned about their child mingling with others in a confined space such as a dressing room, we would recommend that the child arrive and depart the facility dressed in their hockey equipment. Likewise, we make the same recommendation for any Team Official with similar concerns.
- While on the ice, players and Team Officials must always leave their helmet and gloves on, with the exception of Trainers who may remove their gloves to deal with an injured player.
- Players, Team Officials, and on-ice officials are **NOT** required to wear a face mask while on the ice engaging in physical activity but are required to do so at all other times, including in the dressing room prior to going on the ice. Team Officials **MUST** wear a face mask while on the bench.
- To limit touchpoints during and after hockey-related activities, Team Officials should keep, distribute, and collect each piece of on-ice equipment that belongs to their team (e.g.: coaching whiteboard, cones, pucks). Team Officials' responsibilities include:
 - minimizing gatherings while instructing from the whiteboard, and
 - keeping participants physically distanced as much as possible.

Personal Protective Precautions

- The health screening of [Team Participants](#) is mandatory. A health screening registry must be maintained. This can be done electronically, or in-person if electronic means are not available, prior to every sanctioned (on or off-ice) hockey activity. It should be noted that if multiple activities are being held during the same day, one health screening will suffice.
- Any follow-up action from the screening process must follow the details set out in the [Screening](#) and [Safety Reps & Communications Flow](#) Sections of the **Return to Play**.
- Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette must be adhered to in accordance with the Guidelines issued by the Public Health Agency of Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Health, or the local public health agency and Hockey Canada.
- Whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained; the use of a face mask is required. These situations could include entering or leaving a facility, dressing room, spectator area, team stretching, etc.
- Face masks are required in all indoor public spaces, except while performing physical activity.

Proper hygiene and personal protective measures can help reduce the risk of infection or spreading infection to others.

Communication

- Keep two metres (six feet) distance from others
- A face mask **MUST** be worn in indoor public spaces and when you can't keep physical distance. Masks can be removed while on the ice during physical activity
- Clean your hands often. Use soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the washroom and before and after play
- Use an alcohol-based (70-90 per cent) hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available
- Avoid touching your face, especially your eyes, nose, or mouth, with unwashed hands
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of your arm, not your hand. Immediately throw the tissue in the garbage and wash or sanitize your hands
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Stay home if you are feeling unwell
- Download the COVID Alert app so you can be notified directly if you have been in close contact with someone who was contagious with COVID-19

- OSHA will make the ***Return to Play*** available to stakeholders via:
 - The OSHA *website*.
 - Direct emails to all Clubs and other stakeholders. Communications materials will be distributed through social media, on-site at facility, etc.

Organizations and Teams:

- **MUST** abide by the ***Return to Play***.
- We recommend having individual Organization plans that are aligned with the ***Return to Play*** and the local facility guidelines.
- The ***Team Safety Rep*** must walk through the details of the ***Return to Play*** and the COVID-19 guidelines of all the applicable local facilities before the season begins. This meeting is to take place with parents/caregivers, Team Officials, and administrators. The following protective measures to keep everyone safe can help reduce the risk of infection or spreading infection to others.

Section 3: Face Masks

Effective October 2, 2020, Regulation 364/20 of the Ontario Government made face masks mandatory for entering indoor public spaces, including recreational facilities.

Everyone entering a facility will be required to wear a non-medical face mask in a manner that covers their mouth, nose, and chin. However, there are a few exceptions, including:

- A child under the age of 2 does not have to wear a face mask.
- A person who has a medical condition that inhibits their ability to wear a face mask.
- A person who is unable to put on or remove their face mask without the assistance of another person.
- A person who is receiving accommodations according to the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#) or the [Ontario Human Rights Code \(ORHC\)](#).

Medical documentation is not required to support any of these exceptions.

Players, Team Officials, and on-ice officials are **NOT** required to wear a face mask while on the ice engaging in physical activity but are required to do so in all other areas of the facility, including in the dressing room prior to going on the ice. Team Officials **MUST** wear a face mask while on the bench.

To ensure a safe environment during any sanctioned on-ice activity (games, practices etc.), no unmasked Team Officials, Club Officials, League Officials or League Staff are permitted on the bench or in the dressing room at any time.

Other than the scheduled on-ice officials, the only other persons permitted to enter the referee dressing room are:

- a referee supervisor on duty
- the game timekeeper

each of whom must wear a face mask at all times.

Face masks will also be mandatory for all facilitators and participants attending in-person coaching and officiating clinics.

For information about wearing a face mask, refer to [guidelines on wearing non-medical masks, how to make your own](#) and the [Special Advisory Committee](#) recommendations on the [use of non-medical cloth masks or face coverings in community settings](#).

Face masks alone will not prevent the spread of COVID-19. You must consistently and strictly adhere to [good hygiene](#) and [public health measures](#), including frequent [hand washing](#) and [physical \(social\) distancing](#).

Mask Exemptions

If an individual has a mask exception for medical reasons, they will be required to physically distance from any other person by at least 2 metres (6 feet) at all times while inside the facility.

Section 4: Vaccination Policy

As a condition of participating in any sanctioned hockey activities, OSHA has established a policy requiring the following persons (“Affected Persons”) to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 (i.e.: including the 14-day period after receiving their completed dose) by **November 1, 2021**:

- Players born in 2009 or earlier
- Game Officials (referees, linespersons, timekeepers)
- Team Officials (coaches, trainers, and managers)
- Volunteers serving in any other capacity.

All involved parties must provide documentation to the OSHA executive and their Club as applicable, evidence demonstrating that they have received the completed series of an accepted COVID-19 vaccine by October 17, or earlier.

OSHA will comply with the [*Ontario Human Rights Code \(OHRC\)*](#) and provide accommodation up to the point of undue hardship to any Affected Person who is unable to be vaccinated for substantiated medical reasons and/or on grounds protected under the *OHRC*.

Any Affected Person who has not been granted an accommodation and who has not received their completed series of an Accepted COVID-19 Vaccine by November 1, 2021, or who has not disclosed their vaccination status by that date, will no longer be eligible to participate in any Sanctioned Activity until such time as they present satisfactory evidence that they are fully vaccinated.

At the present time, the policy does not apply to players born in 2010 or later, or to spectators.

Section 5: Screening

COVID-19 symptoms can vary from person to person and in different age groups. Symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure. The severity of COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild to severe and can, in some cases, lead to death.

Common symptoms of COVID-19 and which are not related to seasonal allergies or other medical conditions, include:

- Fever (i.e., chills, sweats)
- Cough that's new or worsening
- Difficulty breathing, shortness of breath
- Hoarse voice, difficulty swallowing, sore throat
- Runny, stuffy, or congested nose
- Sneezing
- Loss of taste or smell
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- Headache that's unusual or long lasting
- Muscle aches that are unusual or long lasting
- Unusual fatigue or lack of energy

The list of symptoms is updated regularly by the Ontario Ministry of Health - the current list can be found by following this link: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-stop-spread#section-0>.

Screening consists of a number of questions surrounding symptoms but also other factors such as potential exposure to an infected person, recent travel outside Canada etc.– see [Appendix C](#) for details.

If a [Team Participant](#) has one or more of the symptoms or answers YES to one or more of the screening questions, they should not enter the facility and should go home, self-isolate immediately and get tested.

A Team Participant will NOT be allowed to participate in a sanctioned hockey activity unless cleared to do so by a healthcare provider or Assessment Centre and they are symptom-free for 24 hours (48 hours for gastrointestinal symptoms).

Participant screening and registry:

Prior to attending any sanctioned activity (on or off-ice), every [Team Participant](#), Game Official and must self-screen for symptoms of COVID-19 as per the requirements of the Ontario Government. The screening process can be completed electronically on a smartphone or tablet prior to the activity, using any of the following tools:

- 1) the COVID-19 Assessment Tool, which is available for use by all players and all Team Officials at all levels of play, or
- 2) any other third-party electronic tracking platform such as TeamSnap, provided the questions posed are the same as those listed in [Appendix C](#), or

-
- 3) for children under the age of 18, the Government of Ontario [*self-assessment tool for school-aged children*](#), or
 - 4) For all others, the Government of Ontario [*self-assessment tool*](#).

The screening result **MUST** be shown to the **Team Safety Rep** and any other person, e.g.: a facility manager/administrator, who is legally permitted to require it. Any screening result obtained via option 4 must be printed off and physically handed to the **Team Safety Rep**.

If an individual is unable to access any electronic screening tools, they should complete a paper version of [*Appendix C*](#) and distribute as follows:

- to the **Team Safety Rep** in the case of a Team Participant;

The result must also be shown to any other person, e.g.: a facility manager/administrator, who is legally permitted to require it.

Facility managers may require parents/guardians and other spectators to provide proof of a screening self-assessment. They may use either of the tools listed in #3 and #4 above for that purpose.

If an individual does not pass the assessment, they should not attend the activity until they do so and do not have any signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

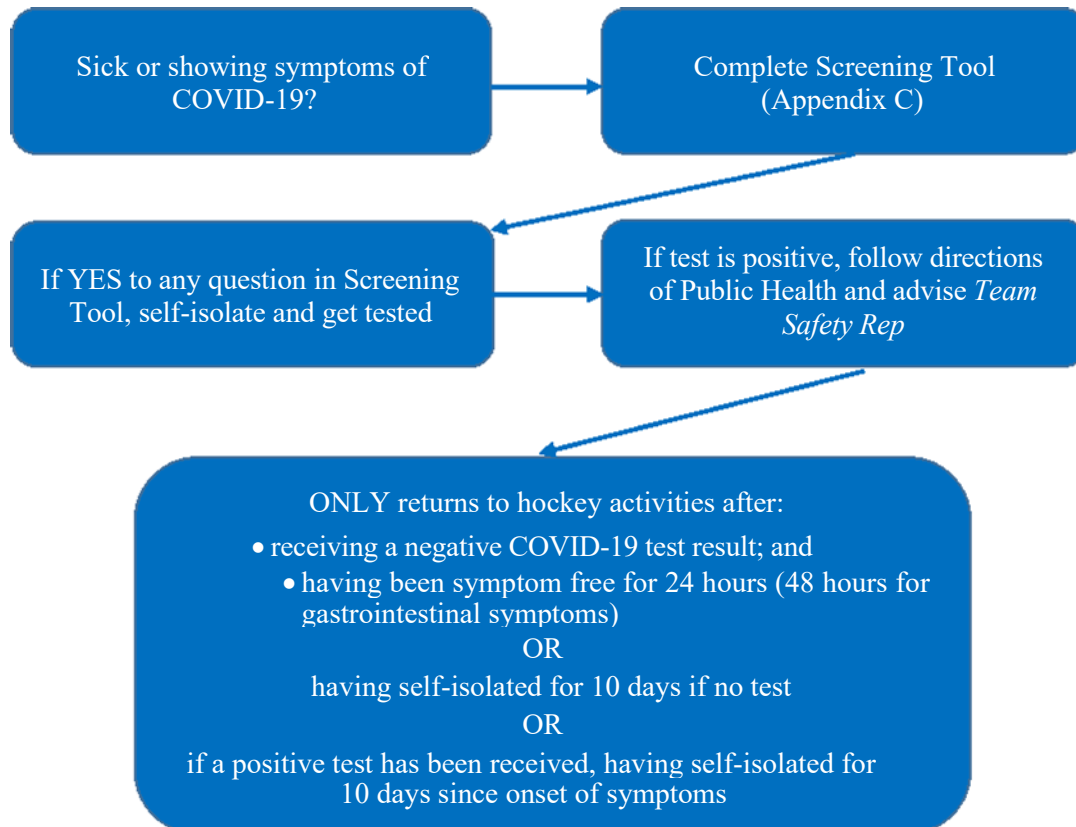
Individuals exhibiting signs and symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should not be present at any facility.

Screening records for [*Team Participants*](#) are to be maintained by the **Team Safety Rep** for a period of 30 days. Records are confidential as described in the detailed training and must be securely stored (e.g.: a locked drawer) and be disposed of in a secure manner (e.g.: shredding).

It should be noted that each of the Public Health Units that govern workplaces, including arena facilities, operating in OSHA jurisdictions have issued [*Orders under Section 22\(5.0.1\) of the Health Protection and Promotion Act, RSO 1990*](#). Violations of these Orders can result in charges being laid and the workplace concerned being closed for a period of time.

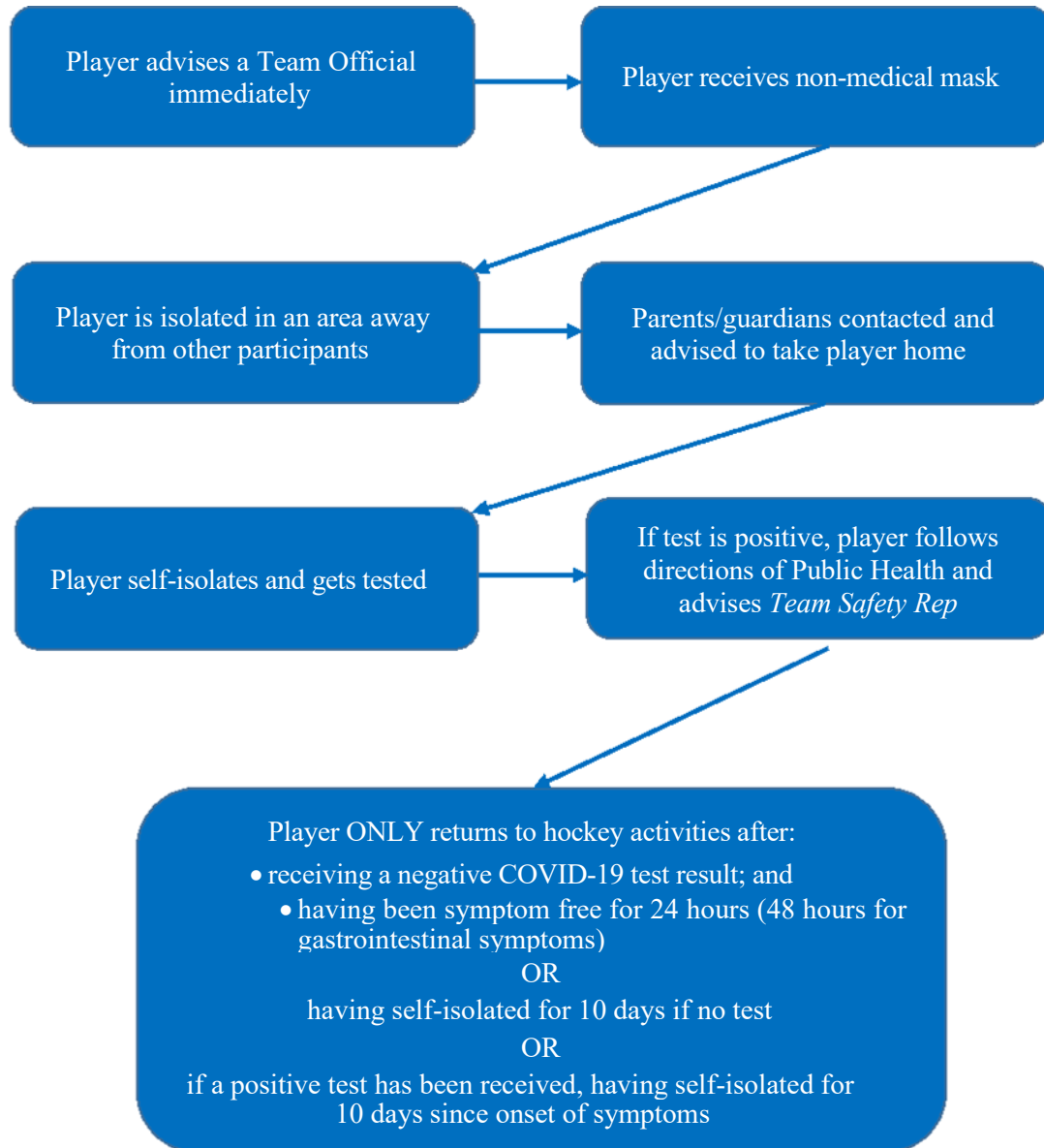
If an individual has symptoms:

The following are recommended steps for players, their parents or guardians and Team Officials who are sick or showing symptoms of COVID-19. It is important to remember that public health authority guidelines and advice from physicians must be followed in any situation where they are sick. For players or their parents/guardians **who are sick or showing symptoms of COVID-19**, they are to advise the Team's coaching staff that they will not be attending and will immediately follow the steps below.



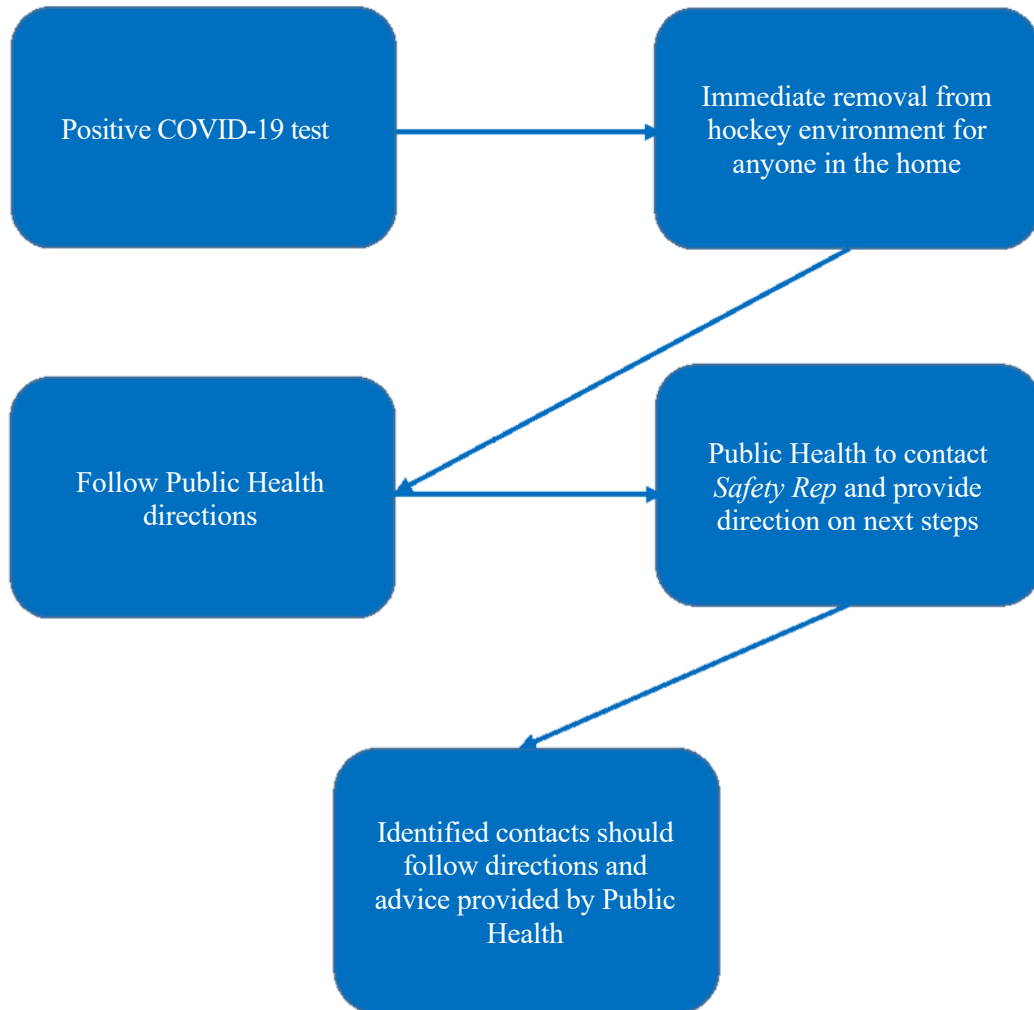
If a player feels unwell at a hockey activity:

Whenever a player becomes ill during any hockey activity, these are the steps that should be followed:



If you have tested positive for COVID-19:

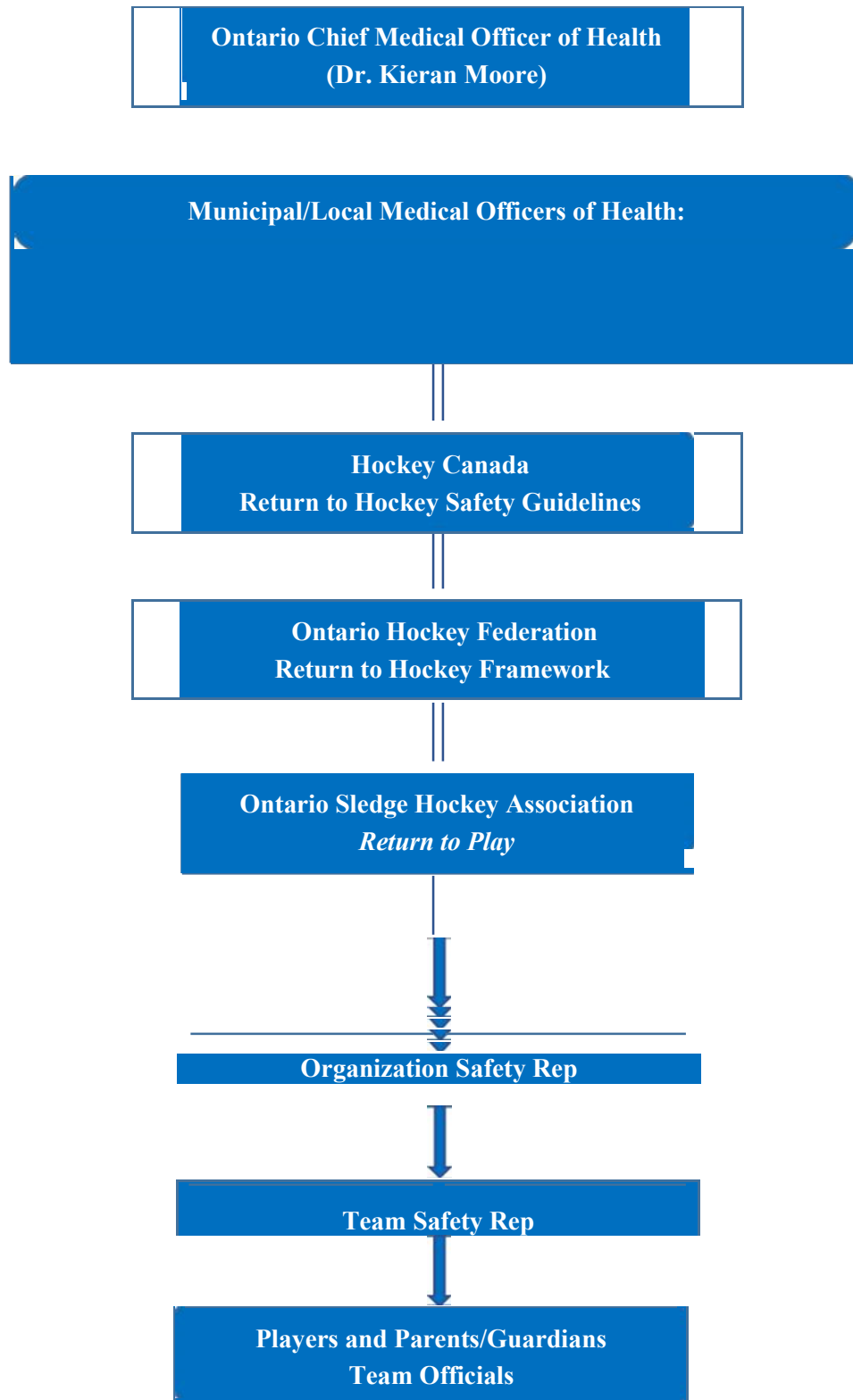
Team Participants or parents/guardians of Team Participants **who have tested positive for COVID-19** are not required to publicly disclose any medical information, however they will be required to abide by the relevant Public Health Unit's directions, which may include informing any close contacts of the infected person. The Team Participant concerned must self-isolate, and therefore may not participate in any hockey related activity for 10 days as per Ontario Ministry of Health guidelines and **cannot return to hockey until cleared by Public Health**, which is a minimum of 10 days from when symptoms began. Follow the steps outlined below.



Return to Hockey Activities

Where a participant is unable to attend a hockey activity because of COVID-19 symptoms, has received a positive COVID-19 diagnosis from a physician, or has been directly exposed to someone who has been positively diagnosed as having COVID-19, it is the responsibility of the Team to ensure that the participant does not attend future sessions until medical clearance has been provided to the ***Organization Safety Rep.*** A physician's note (if the participant tests positive) or a negative COVID-19 test result (if the participant tests negative) to indicate that the participant is not (or no longer) contagious is required to return to hockey activities. It is important to remember that public health authority guidelines and a physician's advice must be followed in any situation whenever a participant is sick. In all situations involving the personal medical information of a participant, **OSHA's** Privacy Policy is in effect.

Section 6: Safety Reps and Communications Flow



Each Club and Team must assign a person to be the **Team Safety Rep** responsible for ensuring that all updated and relevant information is passed on to everyone within their Club or Team (see diagram on previous page). This person must be registered in the Hockey Canada Registry as an Off-Ice Volunteer.

Requirements for the **Organization Safety Reps** and the **Team Safety Reps** include:

- Completion of **Safety Rep** training
- Completion of Criminal Record Check (CRC) and Vulnerable Sector Screening (VSS), where required.
- Completing the **Hockey Canada Planning a Safe Return to Hockey** E-Learning module.

We encourage each Club to list the e-mail addresses of both **Organization and Team Safety Reps** on its website.

Team Safety Rep responsibilities include:

- Meeting with [Team Participants](#) and parents/caregivers before the season begins to walk through the details of the **Return to Play** and the COVID-19 guidelines of all the applicable local facilities that will be used by the Team.
- Receiving updates to health guidelines issued by the Ontario Government and/or local Public Health Units, updates to the **Return to Play** and updates to facility guidelines from the **Organization Safety Rep** and communicating same to Team Participants and parents/caregivers.
- Ensuring that the COVID-19 self-screening is conducted for each Team Participant **before each sanctioned (on or off-ice) activity**, including individual skill sessions, team practices and games and that records are kept of this information. If multiple activities are being held during the same day, one health screening will suffice.
- Completing the health screening registry electronically or in-person.

Section 7: Training

OSHA will be providing mandatory safety training for the **Team Safety Rep** and the **Organization Safety Rep** as well as a COVID-19-specific training session for Team Officials.

This training session will be available via zoom and will provide background and information on the **Return to Play**'s safety requirements.

The sessions will cover:

- Review of *Return to Play* and [Hockey Canada Return to Hockey Safety Guidelines](#)
- Roles and responsibilities of the *Safety Rep* including reporting requirements:
 - Mandatory training requirements
 - The *registry*:
 - Need for the *registry*
 - How to complete the *registry*
 - Storing the *registry* once completed
 - The Screening Tool:
 - Need for the Screening Tool
 - Who must be screened
 - How the screening can be conducted
 - What to do if positive symptoms are reported
 - Facility Guidelines

Hockey Canada's Planning a Safe Return to Hockey course

Hockey Canada's **HU - Planning a Safe Return to Hockey** course is available on the Hockey Canada Registry. The program is **free of charge** and only takes 20 minutes to complete. The course content has been revised from the 2020-2021 version and therefore the course must be retaken by all affected parties.

Planning a Safe Return to Hockey looks at some of the important health and safety protocols that our membership will need to be aware of as we continue our safe return to the ice. The course looks at public health authority guidelines and restrictions, as well as the new Hockey Canada Safety Guidelines.

Hockey Canada and its members have worked diligently on a Return to Hockey plan based on direction from governments and public health authorities. As provinces and territories begin to reopen in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, Hockey Canada has developed this online course to ensure support and inform administrators, players, parents, coaches, safety people/trainers, officials, and volunteers on how to navigate the challenges presented by COVID-19.

This training is **mandatory** for all Team Officials, Safety Reps, and on-ice officials, but all are encouraged to take advantage of this resource.

You can access and register for this free online course at: <https://register.hockeycanada.ca/clinics>.

Training must be completed by **November 1, 2021** for all other Teams.

Section 8: Compliance

Despite the easing of restrictions, those in the sport of hockey like other congregate sporting activities, must remain vigilant when it comes to the health and safety concerns posed by COVID-19.

In an effort to ensure the health and safety of our members and our communities, the resumption of sledge hockey in Ontario and for OSHA will require significant changes.

Further amendments or policies may be required from time to time to address interim issues or local concerns. Such actions may be made by the President and OSHA Executive, in consultation with the provincial health advisors, Hockey Canada or the Ontario Hockey Federation.

The ***Return to Play*** is a framework and critical path for us to return to the ice. Ensuring that our hockey program can commence and continue will depend upon several factors. The most important factor will be our collective compliance with the health and safety guidelines detailed in this plan. The safety of everyone depends upon strict adherence to those guidelines.

Any non-compliance with the ***Return to Play*** will be considered *conduct bringing the League and/or Organization and/or Team into disrepute* and will be dealt with by the OSHA Executive. It should also be noted that the *Return to Play* is aligned with [*Ontario's Roadmap to Reopen*](#). [Breaches of](#) the requirements of the *COVID-19 Return to Sport Guidelines* could also be considered breaches of the Provincial emergency orders made under the [*Roadmap to Reopen - Rules for Step 3 and Roadmap Exit Step, or municipal*](#) by-laws, and dealt with by local by-law enforcement officers or provincial authorities.

Section 9: Insurance

OSHA relies largely on advice from Hockey Canada and the Ontario Hockey Federation in respect of return to play insurance and risk management matters, and the information contained in this “***Return to Play***”, and in this section in particular, is reproduced from Hockey Canada’s [*Return to Hockey Safety Guidelines*](#), and [*Seasonal Structure document*](#).

Hockey Canada has advised as follows:

- Under Hockey Canada’s current General Liability policy which has been renewed for the 2021-22 season, the following is the definition for a ‘**bodily injury**’ which is insured:
“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.
- COVID-19 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.
- 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.

Facility waivers in new lease agreements should be carefully scrutinized given that Clubs 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 pertaining to the use of these facilities.

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 has advised that AIG, which is Hockey Canada’s primary General Liability insurer, has agreed to waive this exclusion in the General Liability policy until Sept. 1, 2023.

Remember that insurance is only one part of the risk-management process. It is important that we all pay special attention to preventing COVID-19 in the hockey environment.

Section 10: Facilities

During all phases of the ***Return to Play*** and re-opening of facilities, a spirit of ongoing patience and flexibility will need to be communicated between the user(s) and the facility owner(s) (and their representatives). At all times, the [*directions of the Ontario government*](#) and local Public Health Units will supersede any general recommendations of OSHA, OHF and Hockey Canada, except where such directions are less restrictive.

Positive and open communication will be an important part of returning safely to the facility. The guidelines for each facility will be different as they vary in size and services offered. The guidelines may be stricter at some facilities compared to others, openings could be delayed, and operating hours may vary.

Before starting hockey activities, it is highly recommended that the **Organization Safety Rep** reach out to a facility representative as part of the facility rental agreement for clarification of the following:

- **Physical Distancing**: Facility guidelines and requirements specific to physical distancing will be provided within the facility and user agreement.
- **Number of People**: The number of people allowed in a public space will be identified by the Provincial emergency orders made under Schedule 2, Section 16 of the [*Reopening Ontario \(A Flexible Response to COVID-19\) Act*](#).
- **Signage**: Facilities will have clear markings well placed around the facility on entry and exit areas. Masks may be required by those entering the facility.
- **Restricted Areas**: There will be some restricted areas closed off for use. These could include showers and main lobbies while the usage of other spaces could be modified. Lobbies will not be used for social gatherings but used as a thoroughfare only.
- **Dressing Rooms**: In some facilities dressing rooms will be usable, but with fewer participants than usual in order to adhere to the required physical distancing protocols. Some temporary dressing areas with temporary seating may be set up. Getting dressed at home is strongly recommended based on age division level. Players will be encouraged to arrive at the facility dressed and ready for the ice session with the exception of skates.
- **Temporary/Alternative Dressing Rooms**: These spaces will be marked as temporary dressing room areas should the dressing rooms be unavailable or fill to capacity. These spaces will be marked according to public health guidelines.
- **Cleaning & Disinfection**: Facilities should have plans implemented before and after all rental times. Facilities will be responsible for enhanced cleaning and disinfection, including high-touch surfaces (i.e., washrooms, chairs, door handles, and vending machines) and fixed structures.
- **User Behaviour**: There will be zero tolerance with breaching contract agreements as far as players respecting the facility's COVID-19 guidelines. Violations of these guidelines will be dealt with by the individual's Organization as they see fit. Organization violations will be dealt with by OSHA.

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- Building Access: Areas will be marked for entry point, traffic flow and exit procedures.
 - Communication: Facilities should have increased communication regarding their COVID-19 guidelines such as in-rink signage, website, and social media.
 - Hygiene: Whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained, the use of masks is required unless it is a social circle. Many municipalities have a By-law requiring masks be worn in all indoor public spaces. These situations could be entering or leaving a facility, dressing room, spectator area. Masks can be removed during physical activity.

Please respect the personal space of others and other user groups. Above all else, respect the facility and all those who work within it.

If a complaint arises regarding compliance with the **Facility Guidelines** ([Appendix B](#)), please direct your concern to the facility owner or the local municipal by-law office.

Appendices

Appendix A: Vaccination Policy

Purpose:

To continue to protect the health the health and safety of all OSHA Participants by requiring that certain individuals be fully vaccinated as a condition of participating in OSHA activities in accordance with defined timelines.

Definitions:

“Accepted COVID-19 vaccine” means a COVID-19 vaccine that has been approved for use by Health Canada.

“Affected Persons” means Vaccine-Eligible Players, Game Officials, Team Officials and Volunteers.

“Fully Vaccinated” means having received the completed series of an Accepted COVID-19 Vaccine. An individual is considered Fully Vaccinated 14 days after receiving their completed dose.

“Game Official” means a referee, linesperson, or timekeeper.

“Instructor” means any person engaged by a Club or a Team to provide specialized instruction to players (e.g.: power skating, goaltender coaching) who is not registered to the League or to any Organization.

“League” means the Ontario Sledge Hockey Association.

“Organization” means a Club, Division, Division member or Affiliated Group as defined in OSHA Rules and Regulations.

“Organization Official” means a member of the Board of Directors or a member of the an Organization.

“Participant” or “participant” means any person registered to the Ontario Sledge Hockey Association through any Club, Division or Affiliated Group, including the parents or legal guardians of any minor aged participant.

“Sanctioned Activity” means any game, on-ice practice, off-ice training, or any other activity involving players and Team Officials that is approved by the League or any of its Organizations, the Ontario Hockey Federation or any of its Members, or Hockey Canada or any of its Members.

“Team” means any group of individuals who gather for a Sanctioned Activity, including but not limited to players, Team Officials, on-ice instructors, volunteers, or Organization Officials.

“Team Official” means a coach, assistant coach, manager, trainer, or other team official registered with the League.

“Vaccine-Eligible Player” means any player born in 2009 or earlier.

“Volunteer” means any person registered by the League or an Organization as a volunteer.

1. Policy Statement

All Affected Persons are required to be Fully Vaccinated against COVID-19 in accordance with this policy as a condition of participating in any Sanctioned Activities. As set out in more detail below, this policy does not apply to players born in 2010 or later, or to spectators, at the present time.

Sanctioned Activities, as well as this policy, will continue to be subject to federal, provincial, and local public health regulations related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Public health guidance on measures for fully vaccinated, partially vaccinated, and unvaccinated individuals continue to evolve and could affect this policy.

This policy is effective immediately, with due regard for the availability of COVID-19 vaccines.

2. Reasons for this Policy

The health and safety of all Participants is the top priority of OSHA. The purpose of this policy is to protect the health and safety of all Participants by reducing the risk of exposure to and transmission of COVID-19, an infectious communicable disease, among all persons involved in OSHA, and to promote the health and safety of all members of the OSHA community, through vaccinations against COVID-19.

This policy is necessary to prevent, respond to, and alleviate any outbreak of COVID-19 in OSHA because of the significant risk factors for COVID-19 infection that are present while participating in an organized hockey setting as a player and non-player, both on and off the ice. These risk factors include close contact in predominantly indoor closed-space environments (e.g.: arenas, dressing rooms, etc.).

The close contact nature of organized hockey makes compliance with social distancing impossible in certain circumstances and reduces the effectiveness of other infectious disease transmission protocols such as masking.

3. Vaccination Requirement and Records

All Affected Persons are required to be Fully Vaccinated (i.e.: including the 14-day period after receiving their completed dose) by **November 1, 2021**.

All Affected Persons must present to the League or their Organization, as applicable, evidence demonstrating that they have received the completed series of an Accepted COVID-19 Vaccine by November 1, 2021 or earlier.

4. Acceptable Documentation

Acceptable documents serving as evidence of COVID-19 vaccination include:

- A digital or physical Dose Administration Receipt.
- Medical records signed by a licensed health care provider on that provider's letterhead indicating vaccine name and date(s) of administration.

5. Accommodation

OSHA will comply with the [*Ontario Human Rights Code \(OHRC\)*](#) and provide accommodation up to the point of undue hardship to any Affected Person who is unable to be vaccinated for substantiated medical reasons and/or on grounds protected under the *OHRC*.

If an Affected Person cannot provide the League or their Organization with satisfactory evidence of vaccination, the following will be taken into consideration by OSHA:

- The Affected Person's reason for not being vaccinated; and
- Documentation to substantiate a medical or protected ground reason for not being vaccinated.

Any Affected Person requiring accommodation must provide OSHA with documentation to substantiate their reason for not being vaccinated. Where accommodation is not possible without undue hardship, the Affected Person will not be permitted to be involved in any Sanctioned Activity for the duration of the pandemic or until such time that COVID-19 no longer poses a significant public health risk.

OSHA reserves the right to have accommodation medical documentation reviewed by applicable medical specialists and to make appropriate inquiries to verify the authenticity of a creed/religion-based claim.

Any Affected Person who is granted accommodation must undergo regular COVID-19 testing and must provide evidence to the President of the Organization, as applicable, or someone designated by that President, of a negative test taken not more than 24 hours prior to each Sanctioned Activity. They will also be required to complete an educational session.

Reporting and Record Keeping

All documentary records about COVID-19 vaccinations and accommodations for Affected Persons will only be collected, used, retained, or disclosed by OSHA or any of its Organizations as may be necessary for legitimate operational purposes or as directed or requested by governmental authorities or as may be required for legal purposes.

Until no longer required, records must be held in a secure location (e.g.: a locked file cabinet). Once an Affected Person's vaccination status has been verified and it is determined that there is no further need for retention of such records, they must be immediately destroyed in a secure manner (e.g.: shredding).

6. Unvaccinated Affected Persons

Any Affected Person who has not received their completed series of an Accepted COVID-19 Vaccine by November 1, 2021, or who has not disclosed their vaccination status by that date, will no longer be eligible to participate in any Sanctioned Activity until such time as they present satisfactory evidence that they are Fully Vaccinated.

This Section does not apply any individual who has been granted an accommodation in accordance with Section 5.

7. Players born in 2010 or later

At the present time, no vaccines have been approved by Health Canada for children born in 2010 or later. However, once a vaccine has been approved, OSHA will consider how this policy will be extended to players in those birth years.

8. Spectators

OSHA is not extending the requirements of this policy to spectators, including the parents or guardians of players, at the present time. However, changes in the positions of authorities, including the Government of Ontario, public health authorities, Hockey Canada, and the Ontario Hockey Federation, and in numbers or severity of COVID-19 cases and/or in health guidance, may result in a vaccine mandate being imposed by OSHA notification at a later date as a condition of continued spectator involvement.

It should also be noted that a vaccination requirement for spectators may be imposed at any time by the owners/operators of any facility used by the League or any of its Organizations or their Teams.

Appendix B: Facility Guidelines

These questions are designed to assist Organization Safety Reps when they are enquiring about the COVID-19 safety protocols that will be in use at each facility used by the Organization. This is a non-exhaustive list and Organizations are free to add any additional question(s) they consider necessary.

Facility Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Environment

How will physical distancing be maintained at the facility, in accordance with [*physical distancing guidelines*](#)?

- How will physical distancing be maintained before, during, and after activities?
- How will the number of people within a facility be limited?
- How will the congregation of people in shared areas (i.e.: common space where participants are checked-in and out of, washrooms, changing rooms, equipment rooms, etc.) be limited?

Equipment

- How will the use of shared equipment be limited?
- How will equipment be managed and cleaned with appropriate disinfecting cleaner before and after each use?

Personal Protective Precautions

- How will enhanced cleaning be managed, including high touch surfaces (e.g.: benches, washrooms, chairs, doorknobs, vending machines, etc.)?
- How will users be encouraged to practice good hygiene?
- How will users be educated to ensure those who are unwell and symptomatic do not enter the facility or participate in any activity?

Communication

- How will users be informed of the safety precautions that they must follow? How will the facility's protocols be communicated to all users?
- How will the facility be maintaining a user registry, (names, dates, time, and contact info) to facilitate potential public health contact tracing?

Appendix C: Screening Tool

The screening must be done before **each OSHA-sanctioned activity including individual skills sessions, practices and games.**

Name: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

Are you currently experiencing any of these symptoms?

Choose any/all that are new, worsening, and not related to other known causes or conditions you already have.

Fever and/or chills

Temperature of 37.8 degrees Celsius/100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher

Cough or barking cough (croup)

Continuous, more than usual, making a whistling noise when breathing (not related to asthma, post-infectious reactive airways, COPD, or other known causes or conditions you already have)

Shortness of breath

Out of breath, unable to breathe deeply (not related to asthma or other known causes or conditions you already have)

Decrease or loss of taste or smell

Not related to seasonal allergies, neurological disorders, or other known causes or conditions you already have

Sore throat or difficulty swallowing

Painful swallowing (not related to seasonal allergies, acid reflux, or other known causes or conditions you already have)

Runny or stuffy/congested nose

Not related to seasonal allergies, being outside in cold weather, or other known causes or conditions you already have

Pink eye (only applies to adults 18+)

Conjunctivitis (not related to reoccurring styes or other known causes or conditions you already have)

Headache

*Unusual, long-lasting (not related to **getting a COVID-19 vaccine in the last 48 hours**, tension-type headaches, chronic migraines, or other known causes or conditions you already have)*

-
- Digestive issues like nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain**
Not related to irritable bowel syndrome, menstrual cramps, or other known causes or conditions you already have
 - Muscle aches/joint pain**
*Unusual, long-lasting (not related to **getting a COVID-19 vaccine in the last 48 hours**, a sudden injury, fibromyalgia, or other known causes or conditions you already have)*
 - Extreme tiredness or muscle aches**
*Unusual, fatigue, poor feeding in infants (not related to **getting a COVID-19 vaccine in the last 48 hours**, depression, insomnia, thyroid dysfunction, sudden injury, or other known causes or conditions you already have)*
 - Falling down often**
For older people
 - None of the above**
-

1. Is anyone you live with currently experiencing any new COVID-19 symptoms and/or waiting for test results after experiencing symptoms? No Yes

If you are fully vaccinated (it has been 14 or more days since your final dose of either a two-dose or a one-dose vaccine series), select “No.”

If the person got a COVID-19 vaccine in the last 48 hours and is experiencing a mild headache, fatigue, muscle aches, and/or joint pain that only began after vaccination, select “No.”

2. In the last 14 days, have you travelled outside of Canada and been told to quarantine (per the federal quarantine requirements)? No Yes

3. In the last 14 days, have you been identified as a “close contact” of someone who currently has COVID- 19? No Yes

If public health has advised you that you do not need to self-isolate (for example, you are fully vaccinated or for another reason), select “No.”

4. In the last 14 days, has anyone you live with:

- travelled outside of Canada and been told to quarantine (per the federal quarantine requirements)?; or

-
- been identified as a “close contact” of someone who currently has COVID-19 and been told to self-isolate by a doctor, healthcare provider, or public health unit? No Yes

If you are fully vaccinated, select “No”.

5. Has a doctor, health care provider, or public health unit told you that you should currently be isolating (i.e., staying at home)? No Yes

This can be because of an outbreak or contact tracing.

6. In the last 10 days, have you tested positive on a rapid antigen test or home-based self-testing kit? No Yes

If you have since tested negative on a lab-based PCR test, select "No."

7. In the last 14 days have you received a COVID Alert exposure notification on your cell phone or via other means? No Yes

If you are fully vaccinated (it has been 14 or more days since your final dose of either a two-dose or a one-dose vaccine series), select “No.”

If you already went for a test and got a negative result, select “No.”

If you have any of the symptoms or answer YES to one or more of the questions, please self-isolate immediately and call your healthcare provider for further advice or assessment. A [Team Participant](#) is not allowed to participate in any hockey related activity or attend the facility unless cleared to do so by your healthcare provider or a COVID-19 Assessment Centre and you are symptom-free for 24 hours.

Appendix D: Screening Tool Registry

Date:		Facility Name (location):		
Start Time of Session:		End Time of Session:		
Safety Rep:		Phone #:		
SS	Player/Coach Team/Group Name (first, last)	Contact Number	Answered "No" to all screening questions	
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				
16.				
17.				
18.				
19.				
0.				
20.				
0.				
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
21.				
5.				

Appendix E: 2021-22 Hockey Structure

As we prepare for the 2021-2022 season, it is important to ensure that we remain flexible so that we can adapt to [Ontario's Roadmap to Reopen](#) and local public health guidelines as they may change from time to time and at short notice. We will need to ensure that our Organizations are equipped with the proper communication tools and given appropriate time to adjust. While there are going to be challenges along the way, this is an opportunity for increased collaboration and innovation for hockey in the province.

All steps below have been designed to follow Ontario's Roadmap to Reopen and public health guidelines.

STEP 1

- No hockey is permitted

STEP 2

- No hockey is permitted

STEP 3

Games

- Full team 5-vs-5 hockey permitted.
- Players and on-ice officials do not need face masks while on the ice.
- Face masks must be worn by Team Officials and spectators.
- Cheering or yelling by spectators is strongly discouraged.

Contact:

- Intentional contact permitted.
- Bodychecking permitted at appropriate age and skill levels (Intermediate C and above).

Competition:

- Normal league and inter-squad competition permitted at all skill levels – representative, select and house league.

Practices:

- Players and Team Officials do not need face masks while on the ice.
- Face masks must be worn by spectators.

Spectators:

- Must wear a face mask at all times.
- Spectator numbers will be limited in each facility in accordance with the Ontario Government's Roadmap to Reopen Step 3 capacity limits or by capacity limits set by local Public Health Units and/or local municipalities and/or facility owners/operators, whichever are the most restrictive.

Tournaments:

- Tournament hosting can commence on October 8, 2021.
- Teams may participate in tournaments in Ontario that take place outside their Public Health Unit.
- Teams cannot participate in any out-of-Province or out-of-country tournament.

POST-STEP 3

- To be determined

Appendix F: Resources

Hockey Canada

[Return to Hockey Safety Guidelines](#)
[Return to Hockey Safety Guidelines FAQ](#)
[Return to Hockey Seasonal Structure](#)
[Return to Hockey Coach Training Guideline](#)

Ontario Hockey Federation

[Return to Hockey Framework](#)
[Non-Sanctioned League Policy](#)

Government of Canada

[Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\): Symptoms and treatment](#)
[Hand Hygiene](#)
[How to safely use a non-medical face mask](#)

Government of Ontario

[Roadmap to Reopen](#)
[Roadmap to Reopen – Rules for Step 3 and Roadmap Exit Step](#)
[COVID-19: Stop the Spread](#)
[School and Child Care Screening](#)
[COVID-19 Self-Assessment](#)

Public Health Ontario

[Coronavirus Disease Resources](#)

Revisions

Version #	Date	Section / Appendix	Revisions / Updates
1	August 25, 2021		