

NEW YORK STATE AMATEUR



HOCKEY ASSOCIATION, INC.

TO: All NYSAHA Members
FROM: NYSAHA Board of Directors
DATE: February 3, 2021

Dear NYSAHA Members:

As you may know, NYSAHA, the Western NY League and several ice rinks filed a legal action against the State of New York, seeking a court order reclassifying ice hockey as a low or moderate risk sport to permit games to be played, starting immediately, on a simplified basis statewide that keeps our membership and communities safe. That action is being considered by a Court on an expedited basis, and we will immediately notify our membership if the Court grants us relief.

In the meantime, however, and as you may be aware, as of Monday February 1, 2021, the Governor approved High Risk Sports, including ice hockey, to resume playing games (including competitions and tournaments) **on a limited basis**. This approval is contained in the *Interim Guidance For Sports And Recreation During The Covid-19 Public Health Emergency*, revised January 22, 2021. A highlighted (in yellow) copy of the *Guidance* is attached.

There are significant and complex restrictions that must be adhered to as required by the *Guidance*. Our understanding of the *Guidance* requirements is as follows –

1. Check with the Department of Health (DOH) for your County (where you reside) for what you may and may not do. For individuals (“participants”), check if your County DOH allows you to play games within your County, and whether you are allowed to travel to other Counties to play games. Many Counties are specific about what individuals are “permitted” to do, and cannot do.
2. For Associations and their teams, check with the DOH of your County (where the team’s home ice is located) for what the team may and may not do. For example, check if that County’s DOH allows for teams to play games within the County, and whether teams are allowed to travel to other Counties to play games. Many Counties are specific of what teams are “permitted” to do and cannot do.
3. Check to determine if the County in which the game is to be played is permitted by that County’s DOH, and whether that County has placed any restrictions on what is permitted. For example, a County may permit a game to be played but only by teams whose home ice is located in that County, and/or only with players who reside in that County. In short, all the relevant DOH permissions for the Counties involved have to line up: each DOH covering each player, each team and site of the game must all permit the game.

4. Finally, the *Guidance* restricts how far players and teams may travel for a game or competition within New York State. If all the County DOH's permit the game to be played by the players and the teams involved, then the game must be played:

- (i) within the "region" or a "contiguous region" (meaning, a region that shares a border with your region); and/or
- (ii) within the County or a "contiguous county" (meaning, a County that shares a border with your County).

A region is an *Economic Development Region of NY State*. A map of the Regions is attached, which also shows the Counties contained within each Region.

It should be noted that interstate play for practices or games "is strongly discouraged" under the *Guidance*, and "if undertaken, must strictly adhere to the requirements of the State's travel advisory" (including any quarantine requirements). The *Guidance* also provides for special considerations if travel for practice or play involves a red, orange or yellow "Zone", and the *Guidance* should be carefully consulted if such a Zone is involved.

Although the *Guidance* is complex, teams and players must follow the DOH for each County involved, as well as rules and regulations under the *Guidance*. It is imperative that we make sure we keep everything within these guidelines and avoid taking actions that would cause the State to shut us down.

Good luck, stay safe and follow the rules.