

OVA Announces Postponement of Indoor Competition Season until January 2021.

Toronto, ON (June 17) - Due the exceptional situation that our Province and the world is currently facing with regards to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ontario Volleyball Association (OVA) will be postponing the start of indoor competition until January 2021. This means that the youth competition calendar that normally sees tournaments beginning in November, will now be pushed back two (2) months to January.

A decision of this magnitude was not made lightly. The health and safety of our members are of utmost importance and a competitive start date prior to January 2021 appears to pose too many risks in relation to the contraction and spread of COVID-19. There is also still a great deal of uncertainty regarding the timelines of revised government regulations and public health requirements with respect to team sports. Therefore, through collaborative conversations with public health authorities, as well as extensive contingency planning with Volleyball Canada, member Clubs, and Provincial Volleyball Association's across the country, the decision was made to postpone the start of the indoor season.

The continued uncertainty surrounding pandemic protocols from the Government of Ontario, makes it virtually impossible to finalize the Youth Competitions Calendar at this time. Therefore, the Indoor Youth Competitions Calendar, What's New document and the Youth Competitions Manual that are normally posted by end of July annually will be postponed until the direction of our sport is clearer.

The OVA is also modifying the Tryout Window Policy effective immediately to help Clubs navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Policy modifications include:

- 1. Re-opening the early re-signing period that closed on June 15, 2020 to be extended to August 31, 2020.**
- 2. There are no exclusions on which age class athletes can be re-signed to the Club and/or team. If any athlete participated on a competitive travelling team last season in your Club, you could now send a re-signing form to them. I.e. anyone from 10 to 18U can be re-signed (previously re-signing was only for the 15-18U divisions).**

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Due to the uncertainty of what the fall will bring in terms of what gathering sizes are permitted for indoor team sports and the lack of Clubs being able to secure permits for facilities, holding tryouts may pose a significant challenge for Clubs. The Association is suggesting that Clubs resign as many athletes as they can so that the need for tryouts is minimized and teams can start training as soon as possible.

The OVA will make additional modifications to the Tryout Window Policy based on what the COVID-19 environment in Ontario looks like over the summer months. We aim to have another update available for membership and all stakeholders by July 15, 2020 or sooner if the Government of Ontario releases more detailed information on the Ontario Re-Opening plan and updates the emergency orders.

The OVA is diligently working on the Indoor Return to Play/Activity Protocols. As the Government continues to roll out more information on the Province's Re-Opening Plan, we will be able to finalize each phase of our return to volleyball plans.

Although this has been a challenging environment for all involved, the health and safety of our members and their families remain paramount. Subject to government regulations, we are fully committed to delivering high quality and safe OVA indoor competitions starting in January 2021.

In the case that the Government deems it safe to begin indoor competitive sport prior to January 2021, the OVA will be ready to offer some modified competitions at that time. We look forward to seeing all of you back out on the courts as soon as it is possible. In the meantime, please stay safe and be healthy.

If there are any questions on the modified Tryout Window Policy or delayed season start, please contact any of the Youth Competitions staff:

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