

COVID-19 INFORMATION

GUIDANCE FOR ORGANIZED OUTDOOR SPORT, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND RECREATION

Overview

This document is to provide guidance on group sport and recreational activities organized by a responsible person, and the [Guidance for Outdoor Recreation](#) is intended for individual, non-organized recreation. In accordance with [CMOH Order 18-2020](#) and [Order 19-2020](#), pools, arenas, community centres, indoor children's play centres, indoor gyms, indoor fitness centres, and recreation centres that offer or provide access to recreation activities must remain closed at this time.

Organized sport events (other than outdoor practice activities that can follow stage one public health guidance), games and competitions/leagues are also prohibited from occurring in stage one, as they present a much higher risk of transmission of COVID-19 (increased contact between participants, higher number of individuals present).

To ensure the safety of individuals, families and communities, the relaxing of restrictions on sport, physical activity and recreation activities will follow a measured approach. Non-profits, businesses or municipalities operating sport, physical activity and recreation activities should follow both these guidelines and the [Workplace Guidance for Business Owners](#); however, this guidance would generally be applicable to organized non-competitive activities (e.g. training and skill development).

This guidance **only** applies to non-contact outdoor activities organized by a responsible person or entity where 2-metre physical distancing is possible (e.g. running, singles tennis, singles badminton, skateboarding). Activities that take place outdoors not prohibited by the current public health orders can resume with physical distancing, gathering limits and enhanced protection controls in place. Guidance for reopening various activities, such as outdoor recreation, is posted on the Alberta Biz Connect website [here](#).

Normal resumption of activities where physical and close contact among participants increases the risk of COVID-19 transmission such as soccer, football, wrestling, martial arts, are not permitted in stage one. However, activities may proceed where organizers are able to change the format to meet public health physical distancing requirements, such as switching to non-contact drills or activities where a 2 metre distance can be maintained between all participants.

In addition to the Government of Alberta's guidance, those participating in organized activities sanctioned by or affiliated with a provincial or national organizations should ensure they are also complying with their governing bodies' guidelines, assuming they meet or exceed provincial requirements. It is recommended that every organization develop a written plan. A template is under development. The Government of Alberta will not be approving the plans.

Alberta Health will continue to assess the epidemiology COVID-19 in Alberta, published literature and science on the risks of physical activity as well as the safety precautions that support return to sport, physical activity and recreation. Alberta Health will monitor other published jurisdictional guidance on sport, physical activity and recreation as well as the impact other jurisdictions are experiencing as they relaunch these types of activities. This guidance will be updated as necessary to reflect science and best practices, as new information becomes available.

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At this time, only low risk activities are permitted to take place in Alberta. The recommendation to move to the next phase of returning to sport, physical activity and recreation will be made by the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

COVID-19 Risk Mitigation

Considerations for organizations	<p>It is recommended every organization develop a written plan to prevent transmission of COVID-19. A template is under development. Considerations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A responsible person over 18 should oversee the activity to ensure public health guidelines are adhered to.• A minimum 2 metre distance must be maintained at all times between all participants, coaches, and spectators.• The number of contacts between different participants should be limited by playing within set cohorts or having a fixed group of participants that do not exceed 50 people, including the responsible person(s). When considering size of the group, a responsible person must be able to provide adequate supervision so as to maintain the principles, recommendations and public health orders from Alberta Health.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ “Cohort” is defined as a closed, small group of individuals who participant in the same sport or activity.• Each participant should be provided with assigned equipment or use self-owned, disinfected equipment. Sharing equipment that is handled by hands or head, and other personal items should be minimized.• The responsible person(s) should screen all participants for symptoms of COVID-19 prior to the commencement of any activity; any participant that is exhibiting any symptoms cannot participate.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Checklist is attached at the end of the document (Appendix A).• All participants should follow proper hand hygiene, which includes frequent hand washing (for a minimum of 20 seconds), refrain from touching their face with unclean hands, and it is recommended that all participants carry and use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol content.• All participants should follow proper respiratory etiquette (such as sneezing or coughing into the crook of your elbow), no spitting, no clearing of nasal passages, hand hygiene, and physical distancing.• Considerations should be given to how to appropriately include or accommodate vulnerable persons such as seniors and people with compromised immune systems.
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<p>Program planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities cannot violate a public health order. To help plan activities, staff and volunteers should ask themselves the following questions to determine the risk of the activities and whether they are allowed to proceed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Does the activity involve shared surfaces or objects frequently touched by hands/sporting gloves? ○ Can an activity be modified to increase opportunities for physical distancing? • To align with physical distancing requirements, activities requiring group transportation should be avoided. • Stagger breaks and activities to promote physical distancing among participants and teams. • Programs should keep daily records of anyone running or participating in the program (e.g. staff/volunteers working each day, participants etc.). This can be done electronically or with a responsible person completing attendance on site. Records including the names of all participants, spectators, and their contact information should be kept up-to-date for six weeks to facilitate contact tracing in the event of an outbreak. These records should be stored in a safe, secure location for six weeks and then disposed of to maintain the confidentiality of participants (shredding of documents). • Encourage all participants to download the ABTraceTogether contact tracing app to assist with contact tracing in the event an outbreak should occur. • Programs should develop procedures for drop off and pick up that support physical distancing and separate cohorts to the greatest extent possible.
<p>Group size and physical distancing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor groups are limited to a maximum of 50 people, with at least 2 metres of distancing between participants. • Groups that share a single space (e.g. soccer field) should be separated at least 2 metres with a clear demarcation between groups (such as with a rope, a line of colored flags, or a chalk line to establish clear boundaries) to restrict mixing. • The 2 metre physical distancing rule does not apply to participants from the same household. • Where possible, space should establish one-way flow patterns to avoid multiple groups from inadvertently interacting. • After activities, individuals should minimize time spent in parking lots and maintain physical distancing when returning to vehicles or homes. • Transportation to and from events should be arranged so only members of the same household or cohort family share rides. • Spectators are not allowed to enter designated participant-only spaces. • Only guardians and/or families of a participant can spectate in a designated area. No public spectators are allowed.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set limits on the number of spectators to ensure overall attendance including participants, coaches and spectators does not exceed gathering guidelines of 50 individuals.
<p>Safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate to all participants (coaches, instructors, participants and their guardians, volunteers) and spectators about the risk of COVID-19 and practices that should be undertaken to mitigate risk (e.g. respiratory etiquette). Information posters and fact sheets can be located here and downloaded for use at any sporting, physical recreation or outdoor activity. • Anyone who has symptoms is not allowed to participate or attend. • Any person who begins to feel sick during the activity should be isolated from other participants and should be required to return home. • If a participant, coach, staff or volunteer develops COVID-19 symptoms during the activity, they should be sent home to begin isolation immediately. • Participant equipment should be spaced out to maintain physical distancing. • Encourage participants to come dressed to play. • Ensure availability to handwashing, or alcohol-based hand sanitizer at the site or encourage participants to carry their own. • Consider adjusting participant age groupings to allow participants from the same household to be grouped together where appropriate and restrict mixing between groups. • Participants should try to avoid sharing equipment that is handled by hands or head. However, when participating in activities such as a singles racquet sport, participants could prepare (e.g. sanitize) and use multiple sets of differently colored/marked birdies/balls, one for each individual, to avoid sharing. • In the event that a participant requires first aid, consider having a family member attend to the injured. If not possible, the first aider should use appropriate Personal Protective Equipment, including medical mask and gloves. Guidance on how to wear a mask properly can be found here. • Personal Protective Equipment such as masks are not generally recommended for use during high intensity activities. Masks and face shields cannot be assured to stay in place during the course of a game, and there is some evidence to suggest that wearing a mask during high intensity activities could have negative effects for the individual wearing the mask (including impeding breathing). • When transferring a participant with a disability in and out of equipment, or assisting with the activity caregivers/program staff should wear masks whenever a 2-metre distance cannot be maintained.

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<p>Food and beverages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant snacks must be provided from home. Snack rotations are not allowed at this time. • Participants should bring their own water with them from home; team water bottles/jugs should be not be used.
<p>Participants (coaches, instructors, staff participants, volunteers and spectators)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anyone participating should proactively and regularly check their health status (e.g. taking temperatures and monitoring for any symptoms). • Wash hands often with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water not available; encourage participants to carry their own hand sanitizer with them. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hand hygiene must occur immediately before and after training. ○ Hands should be cleaned before and after using sporting gloves. ○ Participants should refrain from touching their eyes, nose, mouth and face with their hands and while wearing sporting gloves. Gloves should be cleaned after each use. • No sharing towels, clothing, and other personal items. • Water bottles should be labelled. • Practice respiratory etiquette. • Arrive dressed and ready to train. • Do not loiter after training sessions. • No spitting, clearing of nasal passages, handshakes, high fives, fist bumps, chest bumps, or group celebrations allowed.
<p>Facilities and spaces</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In accordance with CMOH Order 18-2020 and Order 19-2020, non-profit, business or municipal-owned or operated pools, arenas, community centres, indoor children’s play centres, indoor gyms, indoor fitness centres, and recreation centres that offer or provide access to recreation activities must remain closed at this time. See Appendix A of Order 18-2020 and Order 19-2020 for list of businesses, entities and schools that must remain closed to the public at this time. • Any entity that is operating as a day care must act in accordance with the Day Care Guidance document that is posted here. • Any entity that is operating as a day camp must follow the guidance posted here. • Subject to closures by the operator, outdoor recreation activities are permitted in parks, trails and open spaces (e.g. sport fields) • Municipalities may choose to open fields, playgrounds and courts for public use, but competition/league play is not permitted. • Training should be scheduled with enough time between users to allow for any needed cleaning and disinfecting of the space and for one user group to vacate the premises before the next group arrives.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Place appropriate signs throughout the space where possible, with policies and procedures such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Physical distancing expectations○ Hand hygiene○ Coughing and sneezing etiquette, and○ Cleaning and disinfection practices, if appropriate, and practice and play etiquette (e.g. no handshaking, coming to together to celebrate, loitering).
Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At this time, activities should be restricted to local community opportunities. It is not recommended participants seek sport, physical activity and recreation opportunities out of province.

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Appendix A: Screening checklist

If an individual answer **yes** to any of the questions, they **must not** be allowed to participate in the sport. Children and youth will need a parent to assist them to complete this screening tool.

		CIRCLE ONE	
1.	Does the person attending the activity, have any of the below symptoms:	YES	NO
	• Fever	YES	NO
	• Cough	YES	NO
	• Shortness of Breath / Difficulty Breathing	Yes	NO
	• Sore throat	YES	NO
	• Chills	YES	NO
	• Painful swallowing	YES	NO
	• Runny Nose / Nasal Congestion	YES	NO
	• Feeling unwell / Fatigued	YES	NO
	• Nausea / Vomiting / Diarrhea	YES	NO
	• Unexplained loss of appetite	YES	NO
	• Loss of sense of taste or smell	YES	NO
	• Muscle/ Joint aches	YES	NO
	• Headache	YES	NO
	• Conjunctivitis	YES	NO
2.	Have you, or anyone in your household, travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days?	YES	NO
3.	Have you or your children attending the program had close <u>unprotected</u> * contact (face-to-face contact within 2 metres/6 feet) with someone who is ill with cough and/or fever?	YES	NO
4.	Have you or anyone in your household been in close <u>unprotected</u> contact in the last 14 days with someone who is being investigated or confirmed to be a case of COVID-19?	YES	NO

If you have answered “**yes**” to any of the above questions **do not** participate. Go home and use the [AHS Online Assessment Tool](#) to determine if testing is recommended.