



RETURN  HOCKEY

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Safety Guidelines

Version 3.8 | Published January 27, 2022



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Preface

In Canada and around the world, COVID-19 transmission is increasing. In response, some jurisdictions are decreasing gathering sizes and suspending activities such as sports to help control the spread of the virus.

To date, Saskatchewan residents have done a good job following public health orders to help manage transmission of COVID-19 in the province. However, positive case numbers are increasing in some communities and there is concern community transmission is starting to take place as we progress through winter season.

If COVID transmission continues to increase in the province, increased public health measures may need to be implemented. This may include limiting gathering sizes in communities or regions that are at higher risk, as well as potentially regionalizing competition or suspending play altogether, if necessary.

To ensure a successful 2021-22 hockey season – from beginning to end – it is the responsibility of every player, coach, team official and spectator to ensure they are following the public health measures and doing their best to control the spread of COVID-19.



Purpose of Document

The purpose of this document is to support Hockey Saskatchewan member programs by assisting the development of plans to guide the cautious step-by-step safe Return to Hockey during this pandemic. These guidelines provide information on numerous topics and includes links to additional information and resources that can further support decision making and communication with boards, minor hockey associations, regions, leagues, and sporting members.

Legal Disclaimer

The information contained in this document is not intended as a substitute for professional medical prognosis, recommendations, or treatment. Hockey Saskatchewan makes no representation and assumes no responsibility regarding the information concerning COVID-19 due to the constant updates, and any information on COVID-19 should be obtained from the Government of Saskatchewan.



Terms of Reference

Inter-Provincial Travel: Travel outside the province of Saskatchewan

Intra-Provincial Travel: Travel within the province of Saskatchewan

Activity: Any Hockey Saskatchewan sanctioned training, practice, exhibition game or league game

Face Covering: Medical or non-medical mask which covers the mouth and nose. The material can be cloth or other material.

Minor Hockey Association: A local association which administers hockey in their center (also referred to as MHA or Association)

Exhibition Game: A game which typically takes place prior to League Games. All Exhibition Games must be approved and sanctioned by Hockey Saskatchewan.

League Game: A game which takes place as part of a sanctioned league with results recorded for standings

Training: Any hockey related activity in a team environment (such as practice or dryland)

Self-Isolate: Means staying at home to prevent the spread of infection. If you are sick or have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19, you must self-monitor for symptoms. Should you develop symptoms, seek testing immediately. This will help stop the spread of the virus so that other people don't get sick. Public Health can refer you to supports to help you safely self-isolate during your isolation period.

Self-Monitor: Means paying attention to your health and so you can identify signs of sickness. During a pandemic, everyone should be self-monitoring. It is important to know the symptoms of COVID-19 and to act appropriately if you have those symptoms.

Fully Vaccinated: Fourteen (14) days after an individual has received a completed series of an Accepted COVID-19 Vaccine.

Close Contact: Means an individual who has come into contact with an individual that is currently positive for COVID-19.

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



Face Covering Policy

Effective September 17, 2021, the **Government of Saskatchewan** has mandated an interim [public health order](#) requiring the use of non-medical masks in all indoor public spaces in Saskatchewan.

It is recommended to use a non-medical mask which covers the mouth and nose. The material can be cloth or other material. Please refer to the Government of Canada - [How to safely use a non-medical mask or face covering](#) for further instructions.

Bandanas or gaiter masks are not appropriate face coverings. They are ineffective at blocking respiratory droplets.

Exempt from the masking order will be indoor youth athletics for those 17 years of age or younger while they are actively engaged in athletic activity. Masking in venues hosting youth athletics will remain required for general entry and exit into the facility, for athletes, officials, coaches and spectators.

The above exemption includes the following on-ice personal:

- **Players** that are 17 years of age or younger while participating on-ice in a practice or game;
- **On-Ice Officials** that are 17 years of age or younger while on-ice and participating in officiating;
- **On-Ice Officials** that are 18 years of age or older and are fully vaccinated while participating on-ice in officiating;
- **On-Ice Coaches** that are 17 years of age or younger while on-ice and participating in practice, and;
- **On-Ice Coaches** that are 18 years of age or older and are fully vaccinated while participating on-ice in practice.

Any On-Ice Coach or On-Ice Official that is 18 years of age or older and wishes to participate without the use of a face mask, must provide proof of full vaccination to their Minor Hockey Association in the form of one of the following:

- QR Code on your mobile phone (screenshot from [MySaskHealthRecord](#) or SK Vax Wallet app)
- QR code printed from [MySaskHealthRecord](#)
- COVID-19 vaccine certificate printed from [MySaskHealthRecord](#)
- Wallet cards received at time of immunization (Saskatchewan Health Authority or Indigenous Services Canada)



NOTE: Exempt from the masking order will be Individuals 18 years of age and older while participating in athletic or sports activities, for the duration of the sport or activity only, so long as they are subject to a proof of vaccination policy that is implemented league-wide for all players, team officials, and officials such as the Western Hockey League and Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League. No league-wide exemptions will be made for minor hockey leagues.

Players:

- It is **required** that **Players** properly wear a face covering when entering the arenas and continue wearing their face covering until they reach the spot where they will finish getting their skates / equipment on (chair, bleacher, dressing room).
- Players that are 18 years of age or older must wear a face covering while on-ice as per the provincial health order.
- It is **required** that **Players** promptly put their face covering back on once they get back to their spot and remove their helmet;
- **It is recommended** **Players** exercise physical distancing while entering and exiting arenas and while putting on their skates / equipment;

On-Ice Coaches:

- It is **required** that **On-Ice Coaches** properly wear a face covering when entering the arenas and continue wearing their face covering until they reach the spot where they will put their skates on (chair, bleacher, dressing room).
- It is required that **On-Ice Coaches** wear a face covering while on the ice;
- **On-Ice Coaches** that are fully vaccinated (Fourteen or more days have passed since the individual received the last of the recommended number of doses) may participate in practice without a face mask.
- It is recommended that **On-Ice Coaches** exercise physical distancing while entering and exiting arenas and while putting on their skates;

Bench Coaches/Staff:

- It is **required** that **Bench Coaches/Staff** must be properly wearing a face covering when entering / exiting the arenas and continue properly wearing their face covering at all times - including while on the bench during games;
- It is recommended that **Bench Coaches/Staff** should exercise physical distancing while entering and exiting arenas;



On-Ice Officials:

- It is **required** that **Officials** properly wear a face covering when entering the arenas and continue wearing their face covering until they reach the spot where they will finish getting their skates / equipment on (chair, bleacher, dressing room).
- **On-Ice Officials** that are 18 years of age or older must wear a face covering while on-ice as per the provincial health order.
- **On-Ice Officials** that are 18 years of age or older and are fully vaccinated (Fourteen or more days have passed since the individual received the last of the recommended number of doses) may officiate in games without a face mask.
- It is **required** that **On-Ice Officials** properly wear a face covering when entering the arenas and continue wearing their face covering until they reach the spot where they will put their skates on.
- Exempt from this policy are **On-Ice Officials** while officiating in a Junior or Senior league that has an approved vaccination policy;
- It is recommended **On-Ice Officials** exercise physical distancing while entering and exiting arenas and while putting on their skates.

Off-Ice Officials (timekeepers / scorekeepers):

- It is required **Off-Ice Officials** properly wear a face covering when entering / exiting the arenas and continue properly wearing their face covering at all times - including while working in the timekeeper's box / area;
- It is recommended **Off-Ice Officials** practice physical distancing in the timekeeper's box as much as possible;
- It is recommended **Off-Ice Officials** exercise physical distancing while entering and exiting arenas.

Parents / Spectators:

- It is **required** that **Parents / Spectators** properly wear a face covering when entering / exiting the arenas and continue properly wearing their face covering at all times;
- It is recommended that **Parents / Spectators** exercise physical distancing while entering and exiting the arenas and while sitting or standing inside the arena.

All teams will be required to have a **Team COVID Person** that will be responsible for keeping their teams informed of all applicable protocols and other pertinent information that comes out as the season progresses.



Mandatory Vaccination Policy

Revised: November 15, 2021

Policy Pre-amble

Hockey Saskatchewan and its members associations have obligations to take every precaution reasonable in the current circumstances to protect the health and safety of its employees, volunteers, athletes, and stakeholders.

Purpose

To continue to protect the health and safety of Hockey Saskatchewan Participants by requiring that certain individuals be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or provide proof of a valid negative COVID-19 test as a condition of participating in Hockey Saskatchewan Sanctioned 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.

“Activity” means any team gathering not in a private residence. (Game, Practice, Workout, Team Building, etc.)

“Affected Persons” means any Vaccine-Eligible Players, Game Officials, Hockey Saskatchewan Officials and Team Officials within age divisions and categories defined in the Policy.

“Associations” mean Minor Hockey Associations (also referred to as MHA) registered with Hockey Saskatchewan.



“COVID-19 Test” means any of the following tests, as posted on the Government of Saskatchewan’s website and as updated from time to time:

1. a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test for SARS-CoV-2;
2. a point-of-care antigen test for SARS-CoV-2;
3. any other test for SARS-CoV-2 approved by the Minister of Health;

“Fully Vaccinated” means fourteen (14) days after an individual has received a completed series of an Accepted COVID-19 Vaccine.

“Game Officials” means any referee, linesperson, timekeeper, or other person engaged in officiating a hockey game as may be designated by Hockey Saskatchewan.

“Hockey Saskatchewan Official” means any member of the board of directors, officers, executive and staff.

“Team Official” means all or any of the following registered persons involved in the management of a team and includes coach, trainer, manager and any assistant coach, assistant trainer, or assistant managers.

“Participant” means any person registered with Hockey Saskatchewan through any Association or Team.

“Proof of Negative Covid-19 Test” means all Affected Persons including those claiming exemptions on medical, religious or other grounds, that are not fully vaccinated shall provide proof of a Negative COVID-19 Test result from an acceptable source and provided within 72 hours prior to the start of the activity, along with personal identification. Testing to be done at the participant’s expense.

“Vaccine-Eligible Player” means any player born in the age divisions and categories defined.



1. Policy Statement

Hockey Saskatchewan requires that only Affected Persons be Fully Vaccinated against COVID-19 or provide proof of a valid negative COVID-19 test result from a test administered within 72 hours prior to the start of the activity as a condition of participating in any Sanctioned Activities within the age groups and categories defined as of January 10, 2022.

This policy applies to Associations, Teams and Participants who are members of, or who are registered with Hockey Saskatchewan within the age groups and categories defined within this policy. It is not intended to apply to teams and participants operating outside of Hockey Saskatchewan or the age groups and categories defined in the policy, even if they are participating in Hockey Saskatchewan sanctioned activities (i.e., tournaments/exhibition games). This policy is also not intended to limit any Hockey Saskatchewan Teams from participating in sanctioned hockey events and activities in any other hockey jurisdiction outside Hockey Saskatchewan that may be governed by a different vaccination policy.

2. Reasons for Policy

The health and safety of participants is the top priority of Hockey Saskatchewan. The purpose of this policy is to help protect the health and safety of participants in age groups and categories where commitment and travel is typically higher than others, by reducing the risk of exposure to and the transmission of COVID-19, and to promote the health and safety of all members through vaccinations and testing.

This policy is necessary to help prevent, respond to, and alleviate any outbreak of COVID-19 in Hockey Saskatchewan because of the significant risk factors for COVID-19 infection that are present while participating in an organized and sanctioned hockey setting.

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

It is the responsibility of the Affected Person to be Fully Vaccinated by January 10, 2022 or provide proof of a valid negative COVID-19 test result from a test administered within 72 hours prior to the start of each activity. Hockey Saskatchewan and its Minor Hockey Associations will only collect, use, and disclose information regarding vaccination status and test results in accordance with all applicable laws.

Hockey Saskatchewan and its Minor Hockey Associations will comply with provincial human rights legislation and provide accommodation up to the point of undue hardship to any Affected Person who is unable to be vaccinated or provide sufficient proof of negative testing for substantiated medical reasons and/or on grounds protected under provincial human rights legislation.



3. Affected Persons

Senior Hockey

- Due to the Government of Saskatchewan Public Health order that requires anyone over 18 must wear a face mask while participating in sport activity unless there is a League wide Mandatory Vaccination Policy, Affected Persons includes the following:
 - for players registered in, or affiliated to;
 - or individuals officiating within;
 - or individuals acting in the capacity of a registered team official;
 - or an off-ice official.
- All participants must be Fully Vaccinated against COVID-19 prior to participating in League play or in Hockey Saskatchewan Provincial Playoffs.

U18 AAA Male and Female

- Due to a Hockey Canada Mandatory Vaccination mandate for all National Championships such as the Telus Cup and Esso Cup, Affected Persons includes the following:
 - for players registered in, or affiliated to;
 - or individuals officiating within;
 - or individuals acting in the capacity of a registered team official.
 - All participants must be Fully Vaccinated against COVID-19 by January 10, 2022.

U15 AA, U18 AA Male and Female

- Affected Persons includes the following:
 - for players registered in, or affiliated to;
 - or individuals officiating within;
 - or individuals acting in the capacity of a registered team official.
- All participants must be Fully Vaccinated against COVID-19 by January 10, 2022 or provide proof of a valid negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours of the start of the activity.

Teams Competing in all categories of U15 and U18 Provincial Playoffs

- Affected Persons includes the following:
 - for players registered in, or affiliated to;
 - or individuals officiating within;
 - or individuals acting in the capacity of a registered team official.
- All participants must be Fully Vaccinated against COVID-19 by January 10, 2022 or provide proof of a valid negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours of the start of the activity.

Sask First Female U16 and U18, Male U15 and U18

- Affected Persons includes the following:
 - for players registered;
 - or individuals officiating within;
 - or individuals acting in the capacity of a registered team official.



- All participants must be Fully Vaccinated against COVID-19 or provide proof of a valid negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours of the start of the activity.

Hockey Saskatchewan Staff

Hockey Saskatchewan Skill Licensees

Hockey Saskatchewan Board of Directors

Hockey Saskatchewan strongly recommends that all eligible participants be fully vaccinated.

4. Vaccination Requirement & Records

All Affected Persons are required to be Fully Vaccinated by January 10, 2022, or provide proof of a valid negative COVID-19 test result from a test administered within 72 hours prior to the start of the activity. All Affected Persons must present to their Association/League/Team COVID designate, as applicable, evidence satisfactory to Hockey Saskatchewan demonstrating that they are Fully Vaccinated or provide proof of a valid negative COVID-19 test result from a test administered within 72 hours prior to the start of the activity.

5. Acceptable Vaccines

Hockey Saskatchewan recognizes all vaccines approved by Health Canada. All Affected Persons will be required to confirm they are vaccinated regardless of which Health Canada approved vaccine they received.

6. Acceptable Documentation

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

- Saskatchewan Health Authority wallet cards received at time of immunization
- A printed copy of your MySaskHealthRecord (MSHR) vaccine certificate
- A screenshot of your MSHR vaccine certificate saved to your device
- A COVID-19 vaccine printout from Saskatchewan Health Authority Public Health
- A QR code/MySaskHealthRecord vaccine certificate within the SK Vax Wallet application
- Negative Covid-19 Test documentation acquired from an acceptable source and provided within 72 hours of the start of each activity

Note: Hockey Saskatchewan will perform future random spot checks to confirm the accuracy of an individual's vaccination/test history and this may include an individual having to produce confirmation of their COVID-19 vaccination/testing records.



7. Exemption for Senior

Hockey Saskatchewan will comply with the Province of Saskatchewan's current legislation and there are no exemptions in lieu of vaccinations.

If an Affected Person cannot provide Hockey Saskatchewan or their Association /League/Team with satisfactory evidence of vaccination, the following may be taken into consideration by exemption only:

- The Affected Person's reason for not being vaccinated; and
- Any Affected Person requiring exemption must provide Hockey Saskatchewan with medical documentation to substantiate their reason for not being vaccinated.

Where exemption is not possible, the Affected Person will not be permitted to be involved in any Sanctioned Activity.

Hockey Saskatchewan reserves the right to have medical documentation reviewed by the Hockey Saskatchewan Chief Medical Officer and Hockey Saskatchewan Staff.

8. Reporting & Record Keeping

- All Affected Persons need to provide proof to their association COVID designate who will record the proof of vaccination/negative test. However, the association will not keep any medical records, vaccination receipts, or COVID-19 test results on file.
- The Association /League/Team COVID designate will simply be required to confirm that proof of vaccination or a negative test within 72 hours of the start of the activity has been received and maintain such on file as a list of all Affected Persons who have provided such proof of vaccination/test. The Association /League/Team COVID designate must advise on an individual's vaccination/negative test status when and if a request is made by Hockey Saskatchewan.

All documentary records regarding COVID-19 accommodations will only be collected, used, retained, or disclosed by the Association /League/Team COVID designate as may be necessary for operational purposes, as directed or requested by governmental authorities or as may be required by law.

Until no longer required, all records retained under this policy must be kept in a secure location to which access is provided to only a limited number of designated persons who participate in administering this policy. Once an Affected Person's accommodation status has been verified, and it is determined that there is no further need for the retention of such records, they shall be immediately destroyed in a secure manner.



9. Unvaccinated Affected Persons

On January 11, 2022, any Affected Person that is not Fully Vaccinated and not able to provide a negative test result from a test administered within 72 hours prior to the start of the activity will no longer be permitted to participate in any Sanctioned Activities in the age groups and categories defined until such time as they have presented satisfactory evidence that they have been Fully Vaccinated or provide a negative test result within 72 hours of the start of the activity.

10. Facilities

Facilities are governed by Provincial, Municipal, and Public Health Legislation. Facilities may have other regulations or policies outside of the scope of this policy, which must be always adhered to.



Facilities

Effective Friday, October 1, 2021, the **Government of Saskatchewan** has issued a [public health order](#) requiring Facilities that are hosting ticketed sporting events to adhere to a 'COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination or Negative Test' requirement. Ticketed sporting events are defined as an event in which:

- A physical or electronic ticket is required to gain entrance into the event; and
- GST is charged on the ticket.

For events that meet the above criteria, we ask that you refer to page 5 of the [public health order](#) issued on September 30, 2021.

Exempt from the 'Covid-19 Proof of Vaccination or Negative Test' requirement are facilities hosting amateur sporting events, including youth athletics and recreational leagues or ticketed events in which GST is **NOT** charged on the ticket and/or a physical or electronic ticket is required to gain entry into the event.

Facilities that operate a canteen where food is being served are exempt from the 'COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination or Negative Test' so long as;

- A pick-up style window/counter is being used;
- There is no seated dining area; and,
- No alcohol/liquor is being served.

Facilities that operate a licensed canteen or bar where alcohol/liquor is being served must adhere to the 'COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination or Negative Test' requirement in the area in which alcohol/liquor is being served.

NOTE: Local/rural municipalities may choose to impose a 'COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination or Negative Test' requirement of their own. We recommend that you check with the facility before attending a hockey event.



Minor Hockey Association

Checklist to Success

Review & Follow



- Current [Public Health Orders](#) issued by the Government of Saskatchewan
- Review Hockey Canada: Safety Guidelines
- Review Hockey Saskatchewan: Safety Guidelines
- Review local and provincial facility guidelines

Plan



- As per Hockey Canada Safety Guidelines, assign a person from your Association to be the COVID Representative (MHA)
- As per Hockey Canada Safety Guidelines, have each team assign a Team Official to be the COVID Representative (TEAM)
- Speak with your facility regarding; hygiene requirements, physical distancing, dressing rooms, entrance/exit, washrooms, spectators, concessions, etc. (see 'Facilities' section)
- All registered MHA Executive members, Team Officials and On-Ice Officials must complete the 'Planning A Safe Return to Hockey' online course if they did not do so last season
- Ensure that all members are aware and following Safety Guidelines

MHA COVID Representative

The assigned Minor Hockey Association (MHA) COVID Representative is responsible for;

- Notify Hockey Saskatchewan by **October 15th, 2021** of your MHA's COVID Representative;
- Communicate all safety measure and facility guidelines with all Team Safety Personal within your MHAs;
- Notify Hockey Saskatchewan of any positive COVID test within your membership;
- The primary liaison with the local municipality for COVID-19 health and safety matters at each facility;
- Stay up to date on current [Public Health Orders](#) issued by the Government of Saskatchewan;
- Communicate with Arenas to determine individual municipal restrictions that may have been put in place.



Team COVID Person

Each team will have a designated “Safety Person” that will be the person responsible for ensuring guidelines and protocols are followed. In addition, this person will be responsible for;

- Organizing a pre-season meeting with all parent/guardians to go over the following;
 - Hockey Canada Safety Guidelines
 - Hockey Saskatchewan Safety Guidelines
 - Local facility Guideline(s)
- Notify your MHA COVID Representative of any positive test within your team.
- Communicate with your MHA COVID Representative any issues with regards to safety procedures

Team Hygiene

Equipment

- Equipment such as water bottles and towels should not be shared.
- Players should label water bottles with their names.
- Water bottles should be filled at home.
- Water bottles should be cleaned thoroughly before and after each event.
- Equipment such as jerseys, pant shells, socks, bandanas/skull caps and compression gear should be washed after each event.
- Equipment that is shared (pucks, pylons, etc.) must only be handled by the owner of the equipment.

Dressing Room Protocols

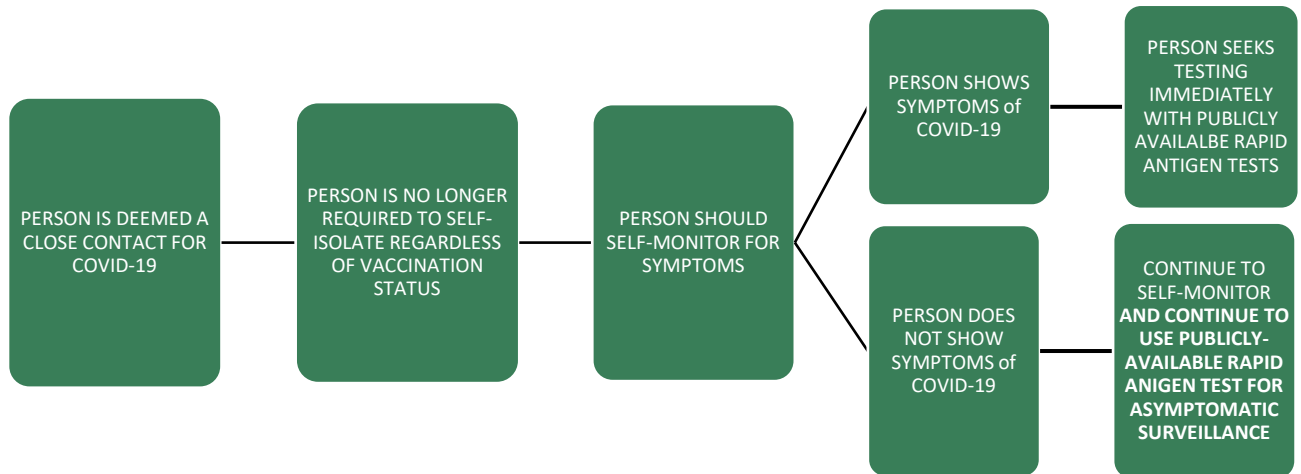
- Participants must follow facility guidelines and enforce physical distancing in dressing rooms.
- Only team personnel will be allowed in dressing rooms (coaches, medical staff, and players).
 - If a parent is required, only one parent per player will be permitted. No additional family members will be allowed in dressing rooms.
- Hand sanitizer approved by Health Canada (DIN or NPN) should be available for players.
- Sharing food or drink is not permitted.
- Individuals may not share clothing, soap, shampoo, or other personal items such as razors and towels.
- Spitting is prohibited.



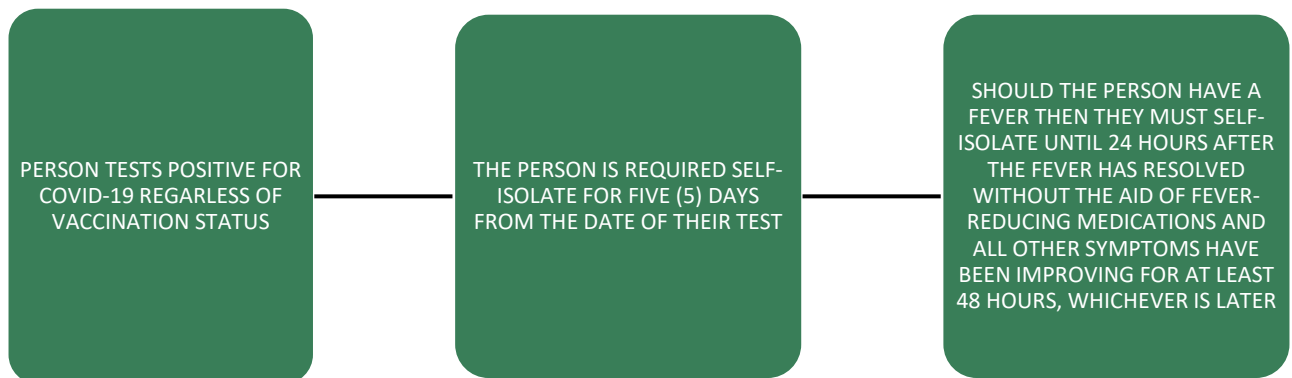
Symptoms or Positive COVID Test

Effective noon, January 28, 2022 residents who receive a positive test result on a PCR or rapid antigen test will be required to self-isolate for five days, regardless of vaccination status. You are required to self-isolate for five days from the date of test or 24 hours after fever has resolved without the aid of fever-reducing medications and all other symptoms have been improving for at least 48 hours, whichever is later. Previously, unvaccinated residents who had tested positive were required to self-isolate for 10 days.

Person is Deemed a Close Contact for COVID-19



Person Tests Positive for COVID-19





Self-Monitoring for COVID-19

If you are experiencing mild, cold-like symptoms, including cough, sore throat, sneezing without fever, it is recommended that you stay home and [care for your symptoms](#), use rapid antigen testing and self-isolate based on a positive result. Free rapid antigen tests are available at more than [600 locations](#) around the province at this time, with Indigenous Services Canada receiving a supply for First Nations communities.

If you are experiencing significant or worsening cold or flu-like symptoms including fever or are considered at-risk due to chronic/underlying health conditions, contact HealthLine 811 who will advise if you should receive a PCR test or if you are a candidate for [available treatments](#). [PCR testing](#) remains available to healthcare workers and eligible at-risk groups.”

Officials

- Hockey Saskatchewan **recommends** that Officials that are carpooling in the same vehicle for games should wear a face covering when traveling if they are not from the same household.
- Officials are allowed to affiliate and travel between provinces in their role as officials. Please consult with those provinces regarding their COVID protocols regarding face coverings, vaccinations, etc.
- Officials will not shake hands with coaches or players before or after the game.
- Officials should communicate with off-ice officials from a distance or through the gate as opposed to using the hole in the box.
- The linesperson who picks up the puck should drop the puck, avoid extra hand offs.
- Officials should position themselves six feet away from the players benches when possible.
- Officials are directed to not pick up any equipment that may be on the ice (broken/dropped stick, neck guards, mouthguards, gloves etc.)
- Officials should have personal hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes or spray and may also take a small bottle with them on the ice or leave a bottle in the penalty box.
- Officials are encouraged to utilize their whistle to stop play earlier and potentially prevent unnecessary scrums and altercations.

Off-Ice Officials

- It is **required** that Timekeepers wear a face covering in the penalty box area.
- It is **required** that Timekeepers wear a face covering while entering/exiting the facility.
- It is recommended Officials should communicate with off-ice officials through the gate as opposed to using the hole in the box.
- It is recommended Timekeepers should remind players in the penalty boxes to physically distance as much as possible.



Facilities

It is recommended that communities advise the leagues their teams participate in if their city, town, village, RM have placed any COVID restrictions on their facility.

Game Protocols

- It is the responsibility of everyone to reduce the amount of time spent in proximity to others.
 - Once the whistle is blown to stop play, players are expected to immediately leave the area and physically distance on the ice where possible.
- Hockey Canada encourages coaches to promote that participants refrain from spitting at any time during any on-ice activities. This would also include spitting water on the ice or in the bench area.
- It is recommended that all players and the official remain distanced at the top, bottom or to the side of the face-off circle until the official blows the whistle and then move to their appropriate positions for the puck drop.
- All participants (including coaches/staff and officials) should avoid handshakes, fist bumps, hugs or any physical contact, including goal celebrations.
- Players will not shake hands following a game. Teams may line up on respective blue lines and raise their sticks.
- Benches, including penalty boxes, should be sanitized between each use by facility staff.
- Hand sanitizer approved by Health Canada (DIN or NPN) should be available on the bench provided by each team.
- It is recommended that all participants are asked to maintain social distancing practices while on the bench or in the penalty box as much as possible.
- It is recommended that the same person open/close the gates and wear gloves.
- If the facility has gates between the time-keeper box and penalty boxes, they should remain closed at all times during the game.
- Timekeepers should remind players in the penalty boxes to physically distance as much as possible.
- Officials are encouraged to utilize their whistle to stop play earlier and potentially prevent unnecessary scrums and altercations.
 - Once the whistle is blown to stop play, players are expected to immediately leave the area and physically distance on the ice where possible.



Team Travel

There is no restriction placed on Hockey Saskatchewan sanctioned teams to travel outside of the province, however you must abide by any Provincial restrictions within that Province. Therefore, ensure your Team Officials complete their homework on what restrictions exist outside the province.

Transportation (Bus)

It is recommended that if a bus is used, the following guidelines are in place:

- Ensure physical distancing so players are not sitting next to each other.
- The bus should be professionally cleaned and disinfected prior to each trip. It is recommended to discuss with the bus company what their cleaning procedures are.
- Discuss with the bus company the importance of following all public health authority guidelines.
- Players and staff should wash their hands prior to boarding the bus.
- Players and staff should clean and disinfect their seat and surface area with provided disinfectant wipes after each stop and prior to each departure.
- Hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes should be available as players board and disembark.
- Players and staff should wash their hands as they disembark.
- Have proper waste disposals on the bus to discard used disinfectant wipes.
- If physical distancing is not possible on the bus, **it is recommended** all passengers wear a cloth mask.
- Teams should request increased air circulation on the bus.

Hotel

If staying at a hotel, consider the following recommendations:

- Ask hotel to remove glasses in rooms and replace with plastic wrapped cups or bring personal cups.
- Bring plates and cutlery.
- Eliminate team buffets. Individual meals should be considered.
- Remember physical-distancing requirements prior to considering any type of meal.
- If eating at a restaurant, follow applicable public health authority guidelines.
- One family per room.

Team Photos

Team Photos are permitted, given that face coverings are worn by coaches and staff members prior to and after the photo has been taken.

The person taking the photo is required to wear a face covering at all times while inside the facility.

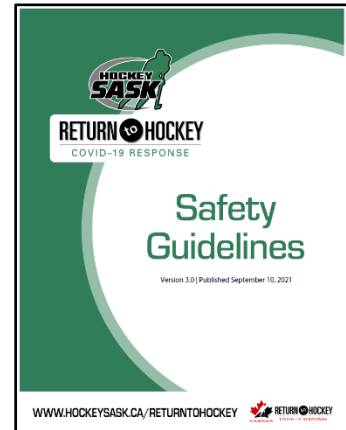


Communication Strategy

Safety Guidelines Document

Hockey Saskatchewan’s Safety Guidelines document for ‘Return to Hockey’ will be a fluid document as changes are made or imposed by the Provincial Government and/or Hockey Saskatchewan. The document will be the primary source for all updates to the guidelines as new information becomes available. The most recent document will be identified with “Version #.#” with the revised date listed.

This document will be sent out via email to all Minor Hockey Associations (MHA) and Leagues, posted on social media and housed on the Hockey Saskatchewan website in multiple places including but not limited to; Hockey Saskatchewan’s [‘Return to Hockey’](#) page.



To ensure an effective communication strategy, Hockey Saskatchewan has identified key channels which we feel will properly communicate the most up-to-date guidelines to our membership.

Our focus is to reach all membership, which includes; Players, Parents / Guardians, Coaches, Officials and Team Staff with this multi-facet approach.

Email Communication

The email communication strategy will be our most direct line to the membership. Through our internal contact list of approximately 200 Minor Hockey Associations and 30 Leagues, this contact list will be important to ensure the MHA and League’ Presidents are aware of any changes to the guidelines as they come about. Additionally, Hockey Saskatchewan has access to the Hockey Canada Registry, a database where all participants of Hockey Saskatchewan are listed with current contact information. The registry includes all teams, players, coaches, team staff and officials that participate as members.





Return to Hockey Webpage

Hockey Saskatchewan’s [‘Return to Hockey’](#) webpage was launched on August 28th, 2020. This digital space will be the hub for any news bulletins/updates and to view/download the most recent Safety Guidelines from our website.

The homepage will display a permanent link to the ‘Return to Hockey’ page to ensure it won’t be missed by any site visitor. Note, all Minor Hockey Associations have been made aware of the webpage and have been encouraged to post this on their own websites to inform membership.

Social Media Awareness

Much like last season, utilizing Hockey Saskatchewan’s social media channels ([Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#)) will be a key resource in relaying information and updates to membership and their extended parent groups. All content sent-out will include the Hockey Saskatchewan Return to Hockey graphic and suggested messaging for the Minor Hockey Associations and Leagues to post on their channels.





Additional Resources



Government of Saskatchewan – Public Health Order:

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/treatment-procedures-and-guidelines/emerging-public-health-issues/2019-novel-coronavirus/public-health-measures/public-health-orders>



Government of Saskatchewan – COVID-19:

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/treatment-procedures-and-guidelines/emerging-public-health-issues/2019-novel-coronavirus>



Hockey Canada – Frequently Asked Questions:

<https://www.hockeycanada.ca/en-ca/exclusive/return-to-hockey/plans/safety>



Hockey Canada – Officiating Guidelines:

https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Exclusive/return-to-hockey/downloads/HC_RTH_Officiating_Guide_EN.pdf