



SHERWOOD PARK HOCKEY PARTNERS COVID RESPONSE RETURN TO PLAY GUIDELINES

(effective July 29, 2020)



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1. Philosophy / Mission

As leaders in the community, SPMHA's mission is to create positive opportunities and experiences for all players through innovative leadership and exceptional service. SPMHA's hockey program will always be based upon the following values: Innovation, Integrity, Safety, Enjoyment, Consistency, Respect, and Teamwork. As such, during this COVID-19 crisis, SPMHA is aiming to enhance the experience of our participants, while offering the safe reintegration of children into our hockey programs, supporting their emotional, social, physical, and mental health.

2. Purpose / Objective

SPMHA's goal is to continue offering its high quality, organized and supervised programs, while ensuring that a safe and healthy environment for children, families and rink attendants is the priority. With adherence to the guidelines established by both the Provincial and National hockey bodies, as well as the County of Strathcona, we believe that the facilities can be a safe environment for athletes, their fans, and the arena staff alike. Our objective is to commit to operating our programs in a safe standard in accordance with the restrictions set forth in this proposal with an adherence to physical distancing and the risk reduction recommendations set forth herein and in accordance with Alberta Health and the aforementioned guidance as of July 17th and amended from time to time. We encourage members to revisit this document frequently to check for updates. Many families want their children re-engaging in these positive developmental programs, and are concerned about the long-term consequences of continued isolation and restrictions. Health and safety have been at the forefront for SPMHA's Staff and Board of Directors as they have been thoughtfully planning what a return to hockey participation will look like. This plan relies heavily on the honesty and integrity of athletes and their families, and a commitment by all participants to abide by the rules of the plan. This plan is subject to change based on orders from the Chief Medical Officer, the Province of Alberta, the County of Strathcona, the EFHL and Hockey Alberta. We encourage all participants to review the following documents from the Hockey Alberta Return to Play Hockey Plan, specifically relating to [Roles and Responsibilities](#), as well as Hockey Canada and Hockey Alberta [sanctioning for events](#).



3. Procedures and Protocols

Association Responsibilities:

Following are the proposed requirements of SPMHA as Facility User in these Modified Sports Program Rules:

- To communicate to all participants regularly about the risk of COVID-19 and procedures that should be undertaken to mitigate risk. This will be done through the COVID-19 section of the SPMHA website as well as the appointment of a Communications Officer by the Executive as recommended by Hockey Canada
- To communicate the process of COVID check-in and tracing to all participants outlined in this document
- To maintain contact tracing history as outlined by Hockey Alberta
- To liaise with Strathcona County, the EFHL and its partners, Hockey Alberta, Hockey Canada and Alberta Health Services with the priority of player and community safety.

Prior to the Season - Scheduling Training or Development Sessions:

All athletes must register with SPMHA during the Off-Season Skill Development or Development Season phases. All SPMHA-scheduled training sessions during Hockey Alberta Off Season Skill Development and Development Season phases will receive Hockey Alberta permits to sanction the event and provide Hockey Canada insurance coverage while also ensuring all Hockey Alberta return to train policies are being followed.

Responsibilities of Coaches or Event Leaders:

Prior to each training session:

- All participants are expected to review the Strathcona County Arena Guidelines & Strathcona County Arena Spectator and Dressing Room Capacity documents as they pertain to arrival times, dressing rooms, facility access, spectator recommendations, hygiene and capacity.
- 24 hours prior to each session, the coach, or event leader, will complete a “COVID Check-In” by communicating with all players and families to complete the [COVID-19 Alberta Health Daily Checklist](#). If any athlete or family member of the athlete is experiencing, or has experienced, any of the listed symptoms in the previous 14 days, they will not be permitted to participate in any events, training, etc. for the next 14 days, or until 14 days after the last symptom, whichever is longer. This information will be held in confidence by the coach and communicated to the Association.
- Communicate with athletes a minimum of 24 hours prior to the sessions to provide the session plan so players can review and be aware for social distancing purposes.
- Remind athletes and their families of social distancing guidelines; the need to label all equipment; and gathering restrictions both on the ice, in the arena and the parking lot.
- Disinfect all training equipment.
- Instruct players to eat and use the washroom before they leave home.
- Coaches should arrive at the rink no sooner than 30 minutes before all ice slots with players arriving no sooner than 15 minutes prior to their ice slots.



- SPMHA will ensure that all coaches, players and spectators are aware of the Strathcona County requirement to wear masks while in the arena facilities and to maintain appropriate physical distance from one another.
- Only coaches and players are to be in the dressing room. No parents or siblings. Should a player need assistance with equipment, this should be completed prior to entering the dressing room using the designated areas in the facility.
- If a session is allocated the use of 2 dressings rooms per ice session, coaches shall ensure that as players arrive, they are directed to alternating dressing rooms and that no dressing room shall have more players than the allotted designated dressing spots as identified by posted decals and/or facility guidelines.
- A coach shall remain in each dressing room to ensure that all players follow the dressing room rules, including:
 - Players shall not move around the dressing room, or the facility, and shall remain in their designated spot in the dressing room.
 - One player at a time shall use the washroom facilities (if available).
 - No showering after ice sessions.
 - Ensure players remain seated in the dressing room until the ice is ready for the players to move directly from the dressing room to the ice surface. Coaches shall have players leave the dressing room in an organized and socially-distanced manner, and proceed directly from the dressing room to the ice surface. There is to be no gathering outside the door to the rink prior to the zamboni leaving the ice surface.
- To ensure all water bottles will be filled at home and be properly marked with the player's name so that they are easily identifiable. At no point will any personal equipment, including water bottles, be shared between players.
- Player's helmets should include the name of the player on the front and back so that coaches can easily identify them. This increases the ability to communicate with the players all while maintaining proper physical distancing.

During the training session:

- Upon arrival, all participants (players, coaches, officials, volunteers) must complete, and be recorded on, the Hockey Alberta Contact Tracing Form. As of today, this will be the responsibility of the coach, or event leader, to complete. This is of paramount importance and will need to be made available to SPMHA, Hockey Alberta or AHS within 12 hours of request. Details on submission of the form are below.
- Set up all training equipment and sanitize as needed.
- Set up hand sanitizing stations for participant use before, during and after training if not provided by the Arena facility.
- Consider wearing PPE. PPE must be worn if social distancing cannot be maintained (eg. looking after an injured player). PPE is only acceptable if in a situation in which social distancing cannot be maintained. Do not use PPE to allow participants to break social distancing rules during the sessions.
- Ensure only team pucks are used at the practice and that they are sanitized prior, during and after the practice. Note, athletes can share the team pucks, but this sharing should be limited with no direct hand contact
- Ensure athletes are not touching their face during activity.
- During ice sessions, coaches will:
 - Ensure that instructional "board time" is minimized and done in a physically



distanced manner.

- Ensure players do not remove gloves to touch or pick up pucks.
- Ensure players do not participate in any close contact celebrations.
- Ensure that players use the designated spots on the boards for water bottles and maintain proper distancing while sitting or standing in the player bench area.
- Absolutely no spitting or clearing of nasal passages at ANY time.

After the training session:

- Coaches should ensure that players remove equipment and leave the facility within 15 minutes following the end of their session
- Ensure athletes have retrieved all their personal equipment. (Water bottles, etc.)
- Do not touch another participant's equipment unless you are in the same household.
- Ensure athletes and coaches wash or sanitize hands again.
- Sanitize all training equipment, including team pucks and all commonly touched surfaces (e.g. locks). Sanitation equipment may be provided at all facilities.
- No post-training meeting communication on the ice, in the arena or in the parking lot. Please communicate virtually using email, text, Team Snap or another form of electronic communication.
- Coaches, or Event Managers, are to email a copy of the completed [Hockey Alberta Contact Tracing Form](#) to SPMHA at tracing@spmha.ab.ca. The subject line is to follow the format of "Tracing Form-Date(MM/DD/YY)-Time(24:00)-Facility". For example, "Tracing Form-08/04/20-15:00-Arena". This is required as soon as the event has been completed. SPMHA will ensure that this record is maintained for a minimum of 30 days after the completion of the event before it is destroyed.

Spectator Responsibilities:

All spectators and observers are required to wear masks when inside the County recreation facilities, and should sit physically distanced from one another. Out of respect for facility capacity limits, we encourage minimal spectators subject to family requirements. Spectators of SPMHA and Hockey Alberta sanctioned events must maintain physical distancing with people who are not from the same household and adhere to the following:

- Staggered approach to the facility
- No yelling or cheering as this increases the risk of droplet transfer
- No spitting
- Avoid touching your face.
- Wash your hands frequently and/or use hand sanitizer often.
- Disinfect clothes and equipment following attendance at a session.
- Wipe frequently touched surfaces including cell phones, tablets etc.



4. Player Safety/Health

COVID Check-In:

24 hours prior to each session, or when arriving at the session, the coach or leader will communicate with all players and families to do the Hockey Alberta health status check. If any athlete or family member of the athlete is or has experienced any of the following symptoms in the previous 14 days, they will not be permitted to participate in any events, training etc. for the next 14 days or until 14 days after the last symptom, whichever is longer. This information will be held in confidence by the coach:

- Fever, cough, sneezing or sore throat.
- Mild to moderate shortness of breath.
- Inability to lie down because of difficulty breathing.
- Have been in close contact with a person who has seen a doctor and has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Have travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days or has been ordered to self-isolate since returning from travel.
- Have been ordered to self-isolate or is living with someone who is self-isolating.
- Any person who develops symptoms while at a Hockey Alberta sanctioned event should leave immediately, seek medical attention and inform the coach or manager within 2 hours of leaving.

What to do if a participant answers YES to any of the mandatory check in questions or begins to show symptoms during the training session?

The participant is immediately removed from the session and sent home as safely as possible. SPMHA needs to be notified immediately (within 2 hours) following any participant being removed from any session. To do this, email both tracing@spmha.ab.ca and general.manager@spmha.ab.ca. The subject line is to follow the format of "YES to COVID Questions-Name-Date(MM/DD/YY)-Time(24:00)-Facility". For example, "YES to COVID Questions-John Smith-08/04/20-15:00-Arena". SPMHA will contact Hockey Alberta to facilitate the required AHS protocols under the contact tracing guidelines. Please see the following workflow for a [positive COVID-19 test in a hockey environment](#) in regards to reporting to authorities and returning to play.

General Guidelines:

Please follow the current measures as outlined in the [COVID-19 info for Albertans](#) website, as well as the following:

- Driving alone or with people they are living with (no carpooling).
- Staggered approach to the site e.g. physical distancing of 2 meters.
- Avoiding touching common surfaces while in public.
- Come straight to the Arena from home and go straight home.
- Practice good hygiene by:
 - Coughing into a sleeve.
 - Sneezing into a tissue.
 - Avoid touching your face.
 - Washing hands thoroughly and frequently with soap and water.



- When water and soap is not immediately available, using hand sanitizers with a minimum concentration of 60% alcohol.
- Wash hands prior to and immediately following practice/ training, using the washroom, after handling equipment.
- Sanitize your phones and devices often, leave them in the car or at home when possible.
- Help each other with helpful reminders, this is new to everyone.

Practice/Training Protocol:

Physical distancing has been identified as one of the most effective strategies to prevent the spread of COVID-19. With that in mind the following are the minimum protocols that **MUST** be adhered to for team training/ practice:

- All participants will wash their hands before coming to training.
- All participants will use hand sanitizer:
 - At the beginning of all events.
 - During all breaks prior to drinking water or touching any personal items.
 - Prior to leaving the sessions.
- All participants are required to maintain at least 2 meters distance from each other and avoid person to person contact.
- Coaches will coach from a safe distance at least 2 meters from athletes.
- Nonessential activities that require close contact between individuals will not be permitted.
- **NO SHARING OF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:**
 - Sticks, gloves or any other personal equipment.
 - water bottles.
- **NO SPITTING.**
- Participants will avoid touching the face.
- All participants will be expected to follow the social distancing rules put in place by the County of Strathcona
- Player equipment and clothing must be cleaned with disinfectant where appropriate and or washed prior to each session.
- No unnecessary physical contact e.g. high fives.
- All commonly touched surfaces will be disinfected after each session by Arena Staff.
- Gear, equipment etc. must be sanitized prior to each use.
- Coaches may request the support of an assistant coach or parent to help with sanitizing or ensuring physical distancing is occurring throughout the session.

5. Cohort Information from Alberta Health Services for Sports Teams

Definition of Cohorts:

A COVID-19 cohort – also known as bubbles, circles, or safe squads – are small groups of the same people who can interact regularly without staying 2 metres apart. A person in a cohort should have little to no close contact with people outside of the cohort. Keeping the same people together, rather than mixing and mingling, helps reduce the chance of getting sick, and makes it easier to track exposure if someone does get sick.

Under Stage 2, cohort types and sizes include:

- core cohorts (families and households) – up to 15 people
- childcare programs – up to 30 children and staff
- sports teams – up to 50 players and coaching staff
- performing groups – up to 50 cast members or performers

You should only belong to one core cohort. It is safest to limit the number of other cohorts you belong to reducing the risk of getting sick or spreading COVID-19.

Sport Team Specifics:

With modifications, team sports are permitted under Stage 2, including contact sports. Sports teams can play in **region-only cohort groups** of up to 50 players or “mini leagues”. If participating in, or organizing, a sports activity as part of a cohort group:

- avoid travel outside of regions
- tournaments and large events are prohibited
- clean shared equipment regularly
- maintain physical distancing when not in play (for example, players on the bench)
- decrease/eliminate use of shared locker rooms

