

COVID-19 INFORMATION

GUIDANCE FOR SPORT, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND RECREATION – STAGE 2

Overview

Under current Chief Medical Officer of Health Orders, businesses and entities are required to:

- implement practices to minimize the risk of transmission of infection among attendees;
- provide procedures for rapid response if an attendee develops symptoms of illness;
- ensure that attendees maintain high levels of sanitation and personal hygiene;
- comply, to the extent possible, with the [COVID-19 General Relaunch Guidance](#) this guidance, and any other applicable Alberta Health guidance found at: <https://www.alberta.ca/biz-connect.aspx>.

This document has been developed to support sport, physical activity and recreation organizations and facilities in reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19 among attendees (including participants, staff, volunteers and the general public). The guidance outlines public health and infection prevention and control measures specific to (a) sport, physical activity and recreation (indoor and outdoor) and (b) the operation of indoor facilities.

COVID-19 droplet transmission is much more likely when individuals are in close contact. Further, the likelihood of transmission between individuals participating in sport, physical activity and recreation in an indoor setting is significantly higher. While transmission is less likely in an outdoor setting, where air flow is greater and there is more space for individuals to keep physically distanced, transmission can occur if public health guidance is not followed.

COVID-19 can also be transmitted if someone touches a contaminated surface and then touches their face without washing their hands. Many activities involve shared equipment among participants, coaches/staff, instructors, officials or volunteers (for example, shared baseballs, basketballs, volleyballs). The virus does not enter the body through skin; it enters through the eyes, nose or mouth when an individual touches their face. This is why regular hand hygiene and cleaning of high-touch surfaces are so important.

In addition to following the Government of Alberta's guidance, those participating in organized activities sanctioned by, or affiliated with, a provincial or national organization should ensure they are also complying with their governing body's guidelines, assuming they meet or exceed provincial requirements. It is recommended that every organization develop a publicly available written plan. A template can be found in the appendices of the [General Relaunch Guidance](#). The Government of Alberta will not be approving written plans.

This document and the guidance within it is subject to change and will be updated as needed. Current information related to COVID-19 can be found: <https://www.alberta.ca/covid-19-information.aspx>

GUIDANCE FOR SPORT, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND RECREATION – STAGE 2

1.0 General Considerations for Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation Organizations

Considerations for Modifying Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organized sports, physical activity and recreation may proceed (programming, training, practice and competition) if physical distancing is possible.• For sports and activities that involve participant interaction a distance of less than 2 metres, it is recommended that:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ the activity occur outdoors, or○ the activity be modified to keep participants at a safe distance.• The 2-metre physical distancing rule can be relaxed for participants from the same household. <p>To help plan activities, practices or games, consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can the activity be modified to reduce the sharing of equipment?• Can the activity be modified to increase physical distancing?• Can the activity be done outdoors instead of indoors?• Can activities, practices and game play be shortened, or performed with fewer participants?
Mini-leagues: Cohorting Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mini leagues are a way to cohort individuals who participate in a sport or physical activity in close proximity of others.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Mini-leagues help to mitigate risk of widespread transmission by limiting the number of individuals in close contact.• In Stage 2, 50-person mini-leagues can be formed for sports or physical activity that involve participant interaction at a distance of less than 2 metres.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The 50-person maximum includes coaches/staff, instructors, participants from multiple teams, officials, and volunteers.• Each mini-league can be comprised of multiple teams, but still only a total of 50 individuals.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Game play should be limited to teams in the same mini-league.• Teams in different mini-leagues should not play each other. Athletes should not belong to multiple sports mini-leagues; they should select one sports cohort for the duration of Stage 2.

GUIDANCE FOR SPORT, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND RECREATION – STAGE 2

Public Health Contact Tracing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants, coaches, instructors, officials or volunteers who become symptomatic during an activity are required to be isolated from others and must return home immediately.• To support public health contact tracing efforts in the event that an attendee tests positive, operators should consider collecting the names and contact information of attendees.• Providing information is voluntary for patrons. An organization must obtain an individual's consent and notify them about the purpose and legal authority for the collection.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Any personal information that is collected for COVID-19 contact tracing can only be used for this purpose,• Information about attendees will only be requested by Alberta Health Services if a potential exposure occurs onsite.• Records should only be kept for two weeks. An organization must make reasonable security arrangements to protect the personal information.• For more information, the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner has released Pandemic FAQ: Customer Lists about collecting personal information from customers during the COVID-19 pandemic.• For questions about operator obligations under the <i>Personal Information Protection Act</i> (PIPA), please contact the FOIP-PIPA Help Desk by phone at 780-427-5848 or by email at sa.accessandprivacy@gov.ab.ca.• Organizations may encourage participants to download the ABTraceTogether contact-tracing app to assist public health officials with contact tracing in the event an outbreak should occur.
Masks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants can wear masks when they are not engaging in intense physical activity.• Masks should not be worn during intense physical activity.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Masks and face shields cannot be assured to stay in place.○ There is some evidence to suggest that wearing a mask during high intensity activity could have negative health effects.• Guidance on how to wear a mask properly can be found here.
Participants, Coaches,	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants should proactively and regularly monitor for symptoms.

GUIDANCE FOR SPORT, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND RECREATION – STAGE 2

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice respiratory etiquette. Participants should refrain from spitting and clearing their nasal passages during activities. • Limit group celebrations and other customs during activities (e.g., handshakes, high fives, fist bumps, chest bumps) that bring participants with 2 meters or promote contact. • Water bottles should be labelled with the name of the owner. Do not share water bottles. • To the extent possible, arrive dressed and ready to participate. There will be limited access to locker rooms to prevent gathering. • After activities, individuals should minimize time spent in dressing/locker/change rooms and maintain physical distance lobbies and common spaces. • Transportation to and from activities should be arranged so that only cohort members, or members from the same household, share rides.
<p>Spectators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spectators (excluding parents and guardians where necessary for player support) should be kept out of participant spaces (e.g., fields of play, courts, ice surfaces). • Physical distancing of minimum 2 metres should be maintained by spectators at all times, unless from the same household or cohort. • In Stage 2, with 2 metres of distance maintained between members of different households (with the exception of cohort families), the following capacity restrictions apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A maximum of 200 spectators are permitted for outdoor seated/audience events/settings. ○ A maximum of 100 spectators are permitted for indoor events/settings. • Cheering and yelling is strongly discouraged as it presents a high risk of spreading droplets. • It is strongly recommended that spectators wear masks.
<p>Travel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Stage 2 of Relaunch, activities should be restricted to local opportunities. This means within a neighbourhood, town or municipality. Participants should not seek sport, physical activity and recreation opportunities in other regions, or out of province. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cross-jurisdictional, or inter-regional, play should not occur at this stage.
<p>Tournaments</p>	<p>Tournaments should not be held during Stage 2.</p>

GUIDANCE FOR SPORT, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND RECREATION – STAGE 2

2.0 Sport and Activity-Specific Considerations

High intensity Fitness Classes and Studios (Dance, High Intensity Classes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is no scientific evidence establishing a ‘safe’ distance between participants during indoor high intensity activities.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Both operators and participants should proceed with this type of exercise with caution and should take appropriate measures to reduce risk of exposure and transmission.• For high-intensity classes (e.g., Zumba®, Spin®/cycle class, hot yoga, boot camp), reduce the number of participants to ensure that a minimum distance of 3 metres is maintained in all directions of each participant, unless from the same cohort or household.• Participants should be encouraged to bring their own equipment. Any props and shared items should be cleaned and disinfected at an increased frequency. Allow adequate time to thoroughly clean and disinfect equipment between each class.• Instructors should be assigned and wear microphones to reduce the need for shouting.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Participants singing along to the music or shouting back at the instructor should be discouraged.• Consider creating cohorts of classmates, to a maximum of 50 people, by assigning specific times for the same participants to partake in classes. More information on cohorts can be found here.• Reduce opportunities for classmates to gather before and after a class within the facility.• Ensure group fitness classrooms are well ventilated (e.g., open windows if possible).• For classes with significant movement, it is recommended that participants be assigned a designated area in which they can move about. Participants should stay in their designated area for the duration of the activity (no swapping places).
Low Intensity Fitness Classes (e.g. Yoga, Pilates)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants should be encouraged to bring their own equipment. Any shared equipment should be cleaned and sanitized at an increased frequency. Allow adequate time to thoroughly clean and disinfect equipment between each class.

COVID-19 INFORMATION

GUIDANCE FOR SPORT, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND RECREATION – STAGE 2

Weight Rooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Space weight machines at least 2 metres apart.• Consider greater distances (3 metres) between aerobic fitness equipment where high exertion is common (e.g., treadmills, rowing machines, stationary bikes).• Designate areas for the use of certain equipment (e.g., stretching areas, kettle bell areas) and for movement (e.g., heavy rope, tire flipping zone) to ensure distancing is maintained.• Consider using markers on the floor to define designated areas and manage flow of participants.• If equipment cannot be moved, and positioning will result in participants being within a 2-metre distance, consider blocking off every other piece of equipment or erecting barriers such as acrylic glass between equipment.• Where spotting is necessary for heavy weight lifting, participants may form small cohorts to limit direct contact with others.
Indoor Tracks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Width of track lanes should be considered for physical distancing. Consider limiting the use of every second lane.• It is suggested that runners travel in the same direction on the track.• Encourage outdoor running wherever possible.
Squash and Racquet Ball Courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where not playing with family members, participants should play within a mini-league.• Encourage participants to bring their own clean equipment.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Where equipment is rented, operators should clean and disinfect between uses.
Gymnastics and Rock Climbing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish appointments and designate climbing times to ensure physical distancing can be maintained.• Climbers and gymnasts should be asked to thoroughly wash their hands before and after using shared equipment (e.g., climbing holds, beams, rings).• Many surfaces in these settings cannot be effectively sanitized. Facilities may consider modifying training to limit the number of surfaces handled by participants.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Encourage climbers to clean hands immediately prior to and after use.• Remove any self-serve chalk bowls and require participants to bring

COVID-19 INFORMATION

GUIDANCE FOR SPORT, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND RECREATION – STAGE 2

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consult the Alberta Gymnastics Cleaning Guide for specific instructions on how to clean equipment.
Arena Sport (Figure Skating, Ringette, Hockey)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ice use should be limited to organized activities (e.g., figure skating, hockey, ringette). No more than 50 people can be on the ice/boxes at the same time. This includes referees and coaches, but does not include spectators.
Multi-use Gymsnasiums, Fieldhouses and Community Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Total number of spectators in a gymnasium setting should not exceed 100.• If different activities are conducted in the gymnasium setting, cohort groups should be kept separate. Physical barriers (e.g., curtains) are recommended if possible.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Participants of different activities should not mix with other activity participants.• Organized court sports (e.g., volleyball, basketball, badminton, pickle ball) may occur with mini-leagues.• Players should follow marked one-way traffic patterns when entering and exiting the gymnasium.• Gymnasium floors should be thoroughly cleaned at an enhanced frequency.
Martial Arts, Mixed Martial Arts, Wrestling, Boxing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For any activities with close and sustained contact between participants, cohorts should be used to the greatest extent possible.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ For this setting, cohorts should be comprised of those from the same weight class or skill level.• Remove any mats or equipment that is torn or in disrepair, as these items cannot be properly cleaned and disinfected.
Personal Training /Coaching/Nutritional Consultations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• These services should continue to be offered virtually, or outdoors, if possible.• In-person sessions should allow for physical distancing or barriers between the client and trainer. If this is not possible, the trainer should consider wearing a mask.
Pool and Aquatic Activities (Swimming, Diving)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consult the Guidance for Swimming Pools.

GUIDANCE FOR SPORT, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND RECREATION – STAGE 2

3.0 Facility Considerations

General

- This guidance should be used in conjunction with any additional applicable guidance on the Alberta Biz Connect [website](#).
- Wherever possible, activities should be re-located to outdoor settings.
- Facility ventilation systems should be both operational and appropriate for the activities practiced within.
 - Facility owners may wish to consult with an expert in Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) for assistance.
- Support healthy indoor air quality by:
 - Discouraging use of scents to prevent sneezing and coughing.
 - Maintaining appropriate humidity levels.
 - Limiting the casual use of overhead ceiling fans or portable pedestal fans as much as possible. If fans are used, minimize air flow that directs current from one person directly toward another.
 - Air filters used in ventilation systems should consider MER-14 or High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) rated filters.
 - Discard air filters carefully to prevent the discharge of viral particles.
- Provide natural ventilation by opening windows and doors wherever possible to increase air flow.
- Designate a responsible person to oversee activities to ensure public health guidelines are followed.
- Consideration should be given to how to appropriately include or accommodate vulnerable persons such as seniors, those with disabilities and persons with compromised immune systems.
 - Examples include reducing attendance, offering virtual methods of engagement and dedicating certain rooms/times for those at greater risk.
 - Instructors/responsible persons may not know who is an at-risk person, so consideration may be given to beginning

GUIDANCE FOR SPORT, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND RECREATION – STAGE 2

	<p>are provided, place a garbage receptacle close by for any used cups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indoor child play centres remain closed at this time.
<p>Staff and Volunteers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign equipment and supplies to individual staff members and avoid any unnecessary sharing. • All Albertans must follow CMOH Order 05-2020, which establishes legal requirements for quarantine and isolation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19; with a history of international travel in the last 14 days; or with close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days must remain at home. • It is recommended that all staff be knowledgeable with respect to how COVID-19 is transmitted. • It is suggested that facilities designate a responsible person to ensure public health guidelines are followed (e.g., watching for adherence to physical distancing). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The responsible person should not be someone engaged in other critical duties (e.g., referee, lifeguard). • Encourage hand hygiene among staff. • Staff should wear masks when they are not separated by a physical barrier or 2 metre distance from participants. Other personal protective equipment may be appropriate depending on the task being performed (e.g., First Aid or resuscitation). • When facility staff are transferring a participant with a disability in and out of equipment, or assisting caregivers with an activity, both the staff member and participant should wear masks whenever a 2-metre distance cannot be maintained.
<p>Points of Entry and Controlling Access</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical barriers are recommended to separate front-desk attendants and patrons. • Provide hand sanitizer (60% alcohol or higher) at entry and exit points, and encourage patrons to also bring their own. • Limit physical contact by using online payment and registration or hands-free check in. If wrist-bands are required, the operator should use self-applied bracelets and advise patrons to remove them once

GUIDANCE FOR SPORT, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND RECREATION – STAGE 2

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Request that participants arrive no more than 5-10 minutes before their appointment or game. Coordinate appointment or game times to avoid crowding and reduce wait times.• Encourage patrons to limit their time spent in the facility and to maintain physical distancing when returning to vehicles or homes.
Sanitation, Cleaning and Disinfecting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In addition to routine facility cleaning protocols, increase frequency of sanitation of high traffic areas, common areas, public washrooms and showering facilities as well as commonly touched surfaces and shared equipment (such as water fountain handles, doorknobs, handrails, light switches, countertops, tables, equipment handles and consoles).<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ A written cleaning and disinfecting schedule is recommended. Encourage staff to document the time a specific area is cleaned.• Increase the frequency of cleaning of gymnasium floors to reduce the risk of transmission from shared objects (e.g., balls) and those who use wheelchairs.• Provide hand sanitizer throughout the facility and ensure that hand washing sinks are fully stocked with soap and paper towels.• Follow the cleaning and disinfecting guidance in the General Relaunch Guidance and AHS' Public Health Guidelines for Environmental Cleaning of Public Facilities during Respiratory Illnesses in the Community.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Follow the disinfectant label instructions for use.○ Consult the manufacturer's instructions before applying disinfectant to any potentially sensitive equipment in the facility (i.e. touch pads, electronics).• Ensure that used cleaning supplies are properly disposed of in a lined waste bin that is emptied at least daily.
Locker Rooms and Change Rooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilities should discourage the use of locker rooms and change rooms whenever possible.• Set capacity limits for locker rooms and adjust lockers to support physical distancing.• Clean and disinfect surfaces, sinks and toilets regularly.• Remove self-serve and common use items such as hair dryers

GUIDANCE FOR SPORT, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND RECREATION – STAGE 2

Physical Distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants and spectators should maintain a distance of 2 metres in lobbies, change rooms, multi-purpose rooms, free-weight areas and while off the field of play (players' bench, bleachers, etc.).<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ For high intensity physical activity (e.g., rows of treadmills and elliptical machines), consider physical barriers or at least three metres distancing between equipment.• Wherever possible, promote physical distancing by:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ promoting one-way traffic flow to avoid individuals from inadvertently interacting;○ placing stickers or signage on the wall/floor at 2 metre distances;○ spacing seats, or assigning seating, at 2 metre distances;○ limiting classes and group fitness to cohort groups only (e.g., assigned class times).• Facilities should develop procedures that allow for uncongested drop off and pick up of participants. (e.g., drive-thru lanes for pick up and drop off of sport participants, dedicated entrances and exits for incoming and outgoing sport teams)• Common area chairs and tables should be stacked, roped off or removed from the area to promote distancing.
Participant Hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage participants to bring their own equipment to the facility. Wherever possible, limit the use of shared equipment unless participants engaged in the same activity are from the same household.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Participant-owned equipment, including sport gloves, should be visibly clean.○ Equipment handled by hand or head (e.g., tennis balls, basketballs, soccer balls) during play should be frequently cleaned.• Where rental equipment is provided, it should be assigned to one person only and be cleaned and disinfected upon return. Do not use equipment that cannot be disinfected.• Participants should not share any personal items (e.g., water bottles, towels).• Encourage participants to perform frequent hand hygiene before.

GUIDANCE FOR SPORT, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND RECREATION – STAGE 2

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage participants to exhibit good respiratory etiquette (i.e., sneezing or coughing into the crook of the elbow, no spitting, no clearing of nasal passages, coughing or sneezing into a tissue).• Communicate to all participants (coaches/staff, instructors, officials, participants, and their guardians, volunteers) about the risk of COVID-19 and practices that should be undertaken to mitigate risk.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Communication platforms could include online registration forms, rental contracts and automated telephone switchboards.• The use of highly visible posters that remind attendees to practice respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene is strongly encouraged (e.g., entrances, washrooms and staff rooms).<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Posters are available here.
Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reconfigure fitness equipment (e.g., weight machines) to promote physical distancing. Consider installing physical barriers between equipment wherever increased distancing is not possible.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ It is strongly recommended that both physical barriers and at least 3 metres of distance greater distances be placed between equipment used for high intensity activities (e.g., treadmills, stationary bikes) to lessen the likelihood of transmission from higher exertion.• Have processes to ensure enhanced cleaning and disinfection of shared fitness equipment between each use by having readily available supplies and cleaning reminders and instructions located in accessible places. Facility staff should ensure that cleaning occurs between uses.
Screening & Response Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider implementing active screening of attendees (where applicable) and staff for symptoms of fever, sore throat, cough, runny nose or difficulty breathing.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Operators may choose to use Alberta Health Daily Checklist.○ The Alberta Health Services COVID-19 Self-Assessment tool can be used by attendees.• Any participant that is exhibiting any symptoms cannot enter the facility or participate.• A rapid response plan sets out a fast-action plan for operators when an attendee shows symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19.

COVID-19 INFORMATION

GUIDANCE FOR SPORT, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND RECREATION – STAGE 2

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Cleaning and disinfecting all surfaces that may have come into contact with the symptomatic attendee.○ Requiring hand hygiene and masking of the attendee.○ The attendee must isolate as soon as possible.
Facility Amenities / Food and Beverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Food service providers are required to follow the Food Regulation and Food Retail and Foodservices Code and existing occupational health and safety requirements.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Operators should also follow the COVID-19 General Relaunch Guidance and the Restaurants, Cafes, Pubs, and Bars Guidance● Ensure vending machines are cleaned frequently, in particular touch keypads.