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# NELSON MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION



## COVID-19 SAFETY PLAN

Updated November 6, 2020

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### **PRIMARY RESOURCES USED to prepare this document**

BC Provincial Health Office, BC Hockey, viaSport, RDCK

### **COMMUNICATION**

As part of the Covid-19 “Return to Play” planning process, Hockey Canada has asked that member associations appoint a **Communications Officer**. Positive and open communication about current Covid-19 protocols will be an important part of returning safely to the rink this season. Information must be passed along to administrators, officials, team staff, volunteers, parents and players to ensure the return to hockey and facility use is a success.

Other responsibilities will also include:

- Monitoring all relevant directives from the public health authority, viaSport and Hockey Canada/BC Hockey, and updating the NMHA Safety Plan accordingly
- Regularly communicating with local facilities on Covid-19 guidelines
- Ensuring members are continually updated on the Covid-19 protocols and directives as set by NMHA and the facility as the season progresses
- Regularly engaging and “checking in” with other youth sports groups and minor hockey associations in the East and West Kootenays.

Nelson Minor Hockey’s Communication Officer is

Kathy Conne

Executive Administrator, NMHA

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All changes/updates to this Safety Plan, including any changes to Covid protocols, will be communicated from Kathy to the entire membership.

This plan has been unanimously approved by the NMHA board.

This plan will be posted on the NMHA website @ <https://www.nelsonmha.ca/>

### **PROGRAMMING OVERVIEW**

Sport in BC, as per viaSport, is currently in the Phase 3 “Progressively Loosen” stage of the Return to Sport Activity Chart:

<https://www.viasport.ca/sites/default/files/SportActivityChartcolour.pdf>

### **What does this mean for hockey?**

Phase 3 allows hockey to move to a **COHORT MODEL**. In this model, players remain in designated cohorts for a specified period of time. While they are in their cohorts, they are allowed to break the 2m social distancing barrier while on the **FIELD OF PLAY**. This allows for hockey game play.

### DEFINITIONS:

1. A cohort is a designated group who primarily interact with each other over an extended period of time. To change cohorts at any time during the season, a 14-day break between activities must take place. In hockey, a cohort **must not exceed 4 TEAMS**.

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2. The hockey field of play includes the ice surface, player benches, and penalty boxes. Dressing rooms are NOT included in the field of play.

Under the guidance of BC Hockey, our District Association - West Kootenay Minor Hockey - will be assigning the cohorts and developing game schedules. We hope game play will begin sometime in November.

### **NMHA programming language - Phase 2 activity vs Phase 3 activity.**

Phase 2 = skills/drills where 2m physical distancing is maintained at all times  
Phase 3 = game play allowed based on the cohort model

Nelson Minor Hockey will continue to move between Phase 2 and Phase 3 activity in our programming.

These distinctions will be very important in deciding how/what our participants are able to do. **Kids will be able to do things OUTSIDE of their cohorts if it is done as PHASE 2 activity.**

Cohorts are only necessary for competitive play. Programming such as power skating, goalie clinics, girls practices, skills academies, etc are ALL ALLOWED as long as in these groups it's only Phase 2 activity taking place. If so, participants can leave their cohorts to attend these sessions **without** breaking their cohort or having to take a 14-day break.

For more information, please see BC Hockey's FAQs:

[https://www.bchockey.net/Files/RTH%20FAQ%2008-31-20%20\(v3\).pdf](https://www.bchockey.net/Files/RTH%20FAQ%2008-31-20%20(v3).pdf)

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Can athletes be in multiple cohorts?

- Multi-sport cohorts are allowed. ViaSport is encouraging families to limit the amount of sports their kids do, but there will be no limits or regulation of this.
- Within the same sport they can only be in one cohort – kids can't play hockey in more than one league or on more than one team. Therefore, APs as they are traditionally used will not be allowed.
- However, this cohort model does allow for opportunities to "AP" within the cohort. If one team is short players, they are allowed to take players from another team within their cohort. For instance, if goalies are in short supply, we could have 4 teams with only 3 goalies - the 3 goalies could rotate game play within the 4 team cohort.

### COACHES

- PHASE 2 PROGRAMMING – coaches must maintain physical distancing at all times. When that's not possible, they must wear a mask. No exceptions.
- PHASE 3 PROGRAMMING – coaches are to remain OUTSIDE of team cohorts, so that they can coach more than one group if needed. To do this, they must maintain physical distancing at all times, and wear a mask if that's not possible. **Coaches must wear masks on the bench during games.**
- In Phase 3, if a coach doesn't abide by these rules, then they become part of the cohort and must remain within that group unless they take a 14-day break.

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### OFFICIALS

- Must remain outside of all cohorts
- BC Hockey will be providing training in this regard to all officials.

### TRAVEL

- Travel is allowed for game play.
- Teams must not leave the province. BC Hockey encourages travel to remain as regional as possible but there are no defined limits.
- Carpooling is allowed.
- In hotels – team events (ie-team meals) are allowed for players and bench staff only. The rest of the group (parents, siblings) must social distance/wear masks if they are interacting, and not congregate in groups larger than 6.

### ICE USAGE

- Groups are not allowed on the ice before their designated ice time starts. No exceptions.
- Coaches are to be on the ice first, and off the ice last.
- Spitting on the ice, or anywhere in the facility, is not allowed.

### STORAGE/EQUIPMENT

- Coaches will continue to have access to the NMHA equipment storage room in order to get pucks, cones and other training apparatus for their practices. Coaches must sanitize their hands before and after handling this equipment.
- No sharing of gear will be allowed except goalie gear in our U9 and U11 divisions. Only one child can wear the gear per ice time. The team Safety

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Person will sanitize the gear before returning it to the equipment room. This goalie gear will sit for a minimum of 48 hours before being used again. Gloves/sanitation supplies for this purpose will be provided by NMHA.

### FIRST AID

- RDCK staff will use all required PPE to respond or participate in response to first-aid incidents within the facility.
- Hockey Canada requires that each team has a Safety Person. This person will have taken all relevant Hockey Canada Safety training, but this **DOES NOT** include a first-aid course. As such, any serious first-aid incidents will be attended to by RDCK staff. Also, if a Safety Person requires first-aid it will be RDCK staff that attends to them, not someone else from the team.
- NMHA already provides each team Safety Person with a first-aid kit. This season the following Covid-specific items have been added - simple digital thermometer, antiseptic wipes, gloves, non-medical face masks and hand sanitizer.

In the case of a major first-aid incident in which the Safety Person has had to call 911, NMHA will notify RDCK staff.

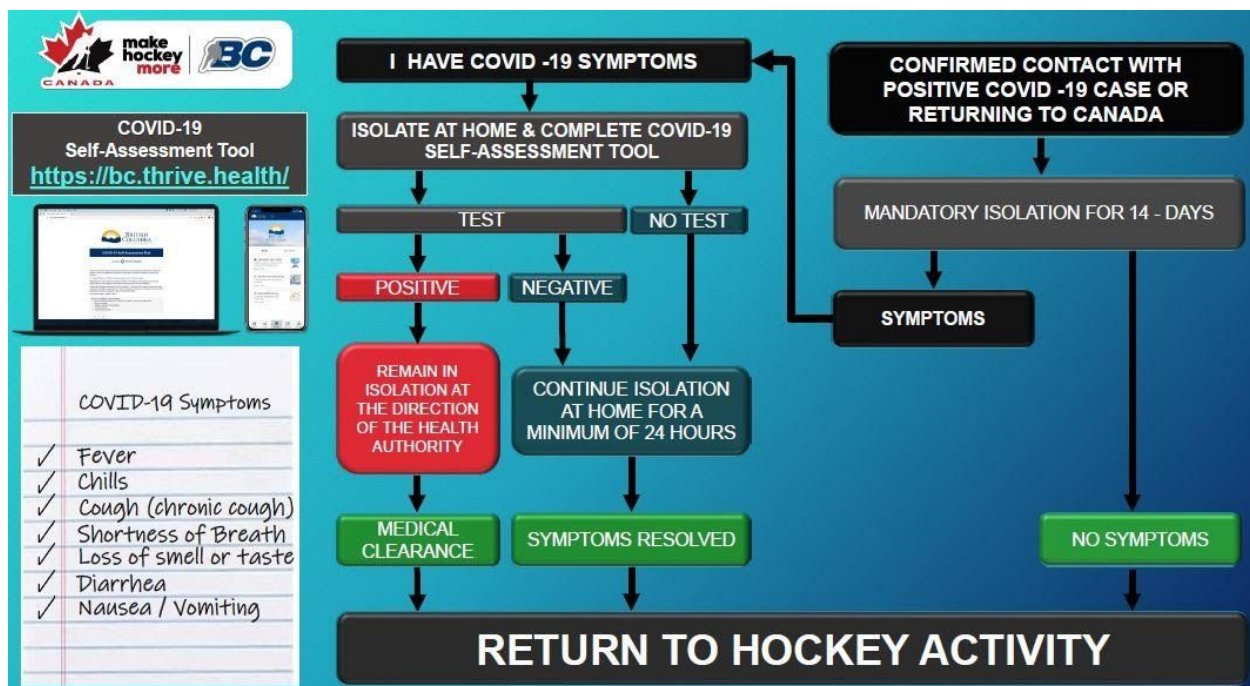
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### PROTOCOL WHEN NOT FEELING WELL



We recognize the importance and role that players and parents play in ensuring that we resume hockey safely. The health, safety and welfare of all participants is our highest priority.



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NMHA members are to follow the above flow chart if feeling unwell. Team Managers must be kept updated throughout.

If Covid symptoms are identified while a player is at the arena – the team Safety Person will remove the player from the ice or dressing room and contact the parent/guardians to come pick the player up.

### TRAINING OF STAFF/VOLUNTEERS

Hockey Canada has created a new e-learning training module called RETURN TO HOCKEY SAFETY GUIDELINES. This is available now, at no cost, and will offer a concise overview of Hockey Canada’s Return to Hockey Safety Guidelines by looking at some key information to help to reduce the risk of COVID-19 in the hockey environment. Throughout this module, Hockey Canada will provide detailed information on specific prevention topics and encourage all Members to become familiar with the public health authority guidelines and restrictions.

NMHA has made this e-module **mandatory** for all coaches, safety people, on-ice helpers, managers and board members. We will also strongly encourage parents to take advantage of this helpful resource.

Hockey Canada has also issued “Safety Guidelines” from which we developed the following checklists:

#### Coaches

- Must maintain physical distancing with players at all times. If absolutely not possible, must wear a mask.
- Team meetings should only be held in controlled environments that allow for physical distancing.



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- Must be familiar with NMHA's Return to Play plan, and adhere to all protocols within.
- Must be familiar with facility guidelines and requirements specific to the prevention of COVID-19, and adhere to all protocols within.

### Safety/Equipment People

- Gloves must be worn when handling equipment.
- Masks must be worn when treating players, dealing with players' equipment or if physical distancing is not possible.
- Shared goalie equipment must be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- Gloves must be changed when required and hands must be washed frequently.
- Educate parents and players on the need for each player to have their own water bottle labelled with their names. Players must take their water bottles home and wash them before after each session.
- Emphasize to players the importance of washing their hands regularly with soap and water or hand sanitizer. Carry extra hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes in the first-aid kit.
- Emphasize to players the importance of keeping their equipment clean.
- Work with coaches to support physical distancing, hygiene and return to play after illness.

### Players

- Always respect and listen to team staff as they create a safe environment.
- Be familiar with facility guidelines and requirements specific to Covid-19.
- Absolutely no sharing of food or drinks.

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- When coughing or sneezing: Cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of the arm, not the hand.
- Wash hands frequently.
- Tell your coach or safety person if you're not feeling well.

### Parents

- Be familiar with public health authority guidelines, and adhere to them.
- Be familiar with facility guidelines and requirements specific to Covid-19, and adhere to them.
- Learn and follow the guidelines put in place by your hockey association and team staff.
- Talk to kids about the importance of preventing Covid-19 in the hockey environment, including physical distancing guidelines.
- Stress washing of hands before leaving for hockey, before going into facility, after using the washroom, after the hockey activity and after leaving the facility.
- Stress to kids not to touch their faces while at the hockey activity.
- Make sure kids let parents know if they are not feeling well.
- Make sure kids have their own clean water bottle, labelled clearly with their name, and stress the importance of not sharing water bottles.
- Make sure kids keep their equipment clean. Jerseys/undergarments are to be washed after each practice.

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# Stay safe and have fun!

For any safety Protocol questions, please contact Kathy Conne  
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