



Ontario Ball Hockey Federation

Fall 2021/Winter 2022 Return to Play Guidelines

For Phase 3 Opening and New Vaccination Requirements

*These guidelines are subject to change with any new information or updates from either the provincial government, or the OBHF and its governing bodies.

The Ontario Ball Hockey Federation and its leagues will strive to provide a safe, fun, and fair environment for all participants during these unique times.

Phase 3 allows for the opening of indoor and outdoor facilities. Leagues are no longer limited to player bubbles, however for spectators: indoor facilities are limited to 50% of the usual indoor seating capacity, or 1,000 persons, whichever is less; and outdoor facilities are limited to 75% of the usual outdoor seating capacity, or 15,000 persons, whichever is less. All spectators must maintain a physical distance of at least two metres from every other person and wear a mask at all times.

Beginning September 22, 2021, Ontario will require proof of vaccination in indoor public settings, including facilities used to play ball hockey.

Player Requirements and Exemptions:

Players aged 18 and older will need to be fully vaccinated (two doses plus 14 days) and provide their proof of vaccination as well as proof of identity (such a driver's licence or health card) to access ball hockey facilities.

A receipt signed by an Indigenous Health Provider may be used as proof of vaccination for Indigenous individuals. An Indian Status Card or an Indigenous Membership Card with the name and date of birth are appropriate documentation to provide proof of identity.

Players under 18 years of age are exempt from showing proof of vaccination.

Exemptions for players with medical documentation will be honoured in Ontario if the individual's name, the physician's name and physician's contact information are provided. The note must clearly state that there is a medical reason for the individual not to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and the effective time-period for the medical reason.

Coach, Official, Administrator, Staff and Spectator Requirements and Exemptions

Coaches, officials, administrators, staff and spectators aged 12 and over will need to be fully vaccinated (two doses plus 14 days) and provide their proof of vaccination as well as proof of identity (such a driver's licence or health card) to access ball hockey facilities.

A receipt signed by an Indigenous Health Provider may be used as proof of vaccination for Indigenous individuals. An Indian Status Card or an Indigenous Membership Card with the name and date of birth are appropriate documentation to provide proof of identity.

Exemptions for coaches, officials, administrators, staff and spectators with medical documentation will be honoured in Ontario if the individual's name, the physician's name and physician's contact information are provided. The note must clearly state that there is a medical reason for the individual not to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and the effective time-period for the medical reason.

An enhanced vaccine certificate, as well as a verification app to allow businesses to read the QR code, will be available and acceptable for gaining entry into facilities beginning October 22.

All players MUST also complete a waiver either online, or at the arena. There will be a link to the form on your league's website's front page. No players will be permitted to participate in a game unless this form has been completed.

Team coaches/managers are to inform their players on making sure these guidelines are being followed.

Building Entry/Spectators

The league **will assign a staff member** to perform the following when players, coaches, staff, and spectators are entering building:

- Players, staff, and spectators to be screened using the screening tool for symptoms prior to participation each day of the activity and are not allowed to participate if they are ill with COVID-19 symptoms, have travelled outside the country or have been exposed to an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- Enter each person to game-sheet (no players will be required to sign in individually)

Equipment

Players may share equipment. Any equipment that is provided must be cleaned and disinfected after each use prior to another player using it.

Hygiene, Hand Washing, Touching Face, Laundering

Players must practice proper hygiene, wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol), abstain from touching their face (mouth, eyes, or nose), and cover their cough or sneeze with a tissue and throw tissue in the trash. Absolutely no spitting on the bench.

Facilities should provide hand washing and hand sanitizer stations upon entry & throughout the facility. If these stations are not provided leagues should provide sanitizer upon entry, on benches and in changerooms.

Dressing Rooms - In most cases (if open)

- Enhanced and frequent cleaning and disinfection of Team Dressing rooms (when they are permitted to be open) will be completed after every game.
- Showering will be permitted as long as a physical distance of at least two metres is possible.

Players as Spectators

If players want to watch any games they are not involved in, they must do the following:

- Check in with arena captain and leave their contact information.
- Use a facial cover and watch the game from the stands (and not the lobby)

Water Bottles

Players will be required to bring their own water bottles to all games to help to reduce the risk of transmission. Individuals will take their own water bottles home each night for cleaning and sanitation.

Game Play

- It is important to minimize contact in front of the goaltender as much as possible with players keeping a safe distance once the goalie freezes the ball and the play is whistled down.
- Players must refrain from handshakes, high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, group celebrations etc. Teams can recognize their opponents by standing on their respective blueline before play begins or at the end of the game and raise their sticks similar to the IIHF World Junior Championships.
- Players must practice physical distancing on the bench during game-play. This will not always apply as there will be some brief exchanges while players are entering and leaving the bench area during game play.
- It will be at the referee's discretion to blow the play down along the boards if they feel there is prolonged engagement which may bring additional players into the fray.

Player Conduct

We remind all participants that we are still currently in a pandemic. Players must follow specific guidelines regarding unnecessary engagement and contact with opposing players.

The league will be taking all the necessary measures to protect game officials during circumstances involving player engagements and altercations.

The league's goal is to minimize any unnecessary physical contact and verbal engagement that involves close contact with opposing players and officials.

Any situation were a player or players are involved in a **VERBAL ALTERCATION**, the official(s) will address the matter in the following manner:

- The referee will blow the whistle with a verbal warning to disperse or separate.
- If player(s) refuse to comply, a **GAME EJECTION** will be called.
- If player(s) persist, **GAME MISCONDUCT** penalties may be enforced.
- Players are reminded to respect physical distancing between them and officials, especially after a whistle.

Any fighting or unnecessary rough play will not be tolerated. The current suspension matrix is sufficient in addressing these concerns and will be strictly adhered to.

Although these appendices to the CBHA Rulebook may appear severe, it is our due diligence to:

- mitigate physical contact and rough play
- limit the number of players confined to the enclosed space of the penalty box
- lessen the impact of special teams on the outcome of the game
- respect social distancing and limit the spread of COVID-19
- recognize the privilege to be playing ball hockey again

Updated COVID Screener Questions

Children and youth will need a parent to assist them to complete this screening tool.

1. How old are you?
 1. 17 years old or younger
 2. 18 years old or older
2. Do any of the following apply to you?
 - a. I am fully vaccinated against COVID 19 (it has been 14 days or more since your final dose of either a two-dose or one-dose vaccine series)
 - b. I have tested positive for COVID 19 in the last 90 days (and since been cleared)

3. Are you currently experiencing any of these symptoms?
 - a. **Fever and/or chills** (temperature of 37.8 degrees celsius/100 degrees fahrenheit or higher)
 - b. **Cough or barking cough** (croup) (continuous, more than usual, making a whistling noise when breathing (not related to asthma, post-infectious reactive airways, COPD, or other known causes or conditions you already have)
 - c. **Shortness of breath** (out of breath, unable to breathe deeply (not related to asthma or other known causes or conditions you already have)
 - d. **Decrease or loss of taste or smell** (not related to seasonal allergies, neurological disorders, or other known causes or conditions you already have)
 - e. **Muscle aches/joint pain** (Unusual, long-lasting (not related to getting a COVID 19 vaccine in the last 48 hours, a sudden injury, fibromyalgia, or other known causes or conditions you already have)
 - f. **Extreme tiredness** (Unusual, fatigue, lack of energy (not related to getting COVID 19 vaccine in the last 48 hours, depression, insomnia, thyroid dysfunction, or other known causes or conditions you already have)

4. In the last 14 days, have you travelled outside of Canada and been told to quarantine (per the federal quarantine requirements)?

5. Has a doctor, health care provider, or public health unit told you that you should currently be isolating (staying at home)?

6. In the last 10 days, have you tested positive on a rapid antigen test or home-based self-testing kit?

If individuals have answered “YES” to any of questions 3-6 they are not able to participate.