



RETURN **to** HOCKEY

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Return to Hockey Stage 4 Framework for Minor, Junior, Para, and Special Hockey

Revised August 20, 2021

SECTION 1

Purpose

Hockey Eastern Ontario (HEO), as one of Ontario's recognized Provincial Sport Organizations (PSO), has worked in conjunction with Hockey Canada, the National Sport Organization (NSO) for hockey, and the Ontario Government to ensure that in every phase of our return, the safety of our Players, Coaches, Officials, Administrators and Volunteers are at the center of our planning and decision making. This plan focuses on making the return to hockey fluid while enhancing the experience for all of our members at the Minor, Junior, Para, or Special Hockey Levels.

SECTION 2

Disclaimer

The information in this document is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Hockey Eastern Ontario makes no representation and assume no responsibility in respect of their information concerning COVID-19 as the circumstances are constantly changing, and any information on COVID-19 should be obtained from your Public Health Authority.

As Provincial Legislation and Public Health requirements are continuously evolving this document will remain fluid and all updates to the document will be communicated to our membership via bulletin.

SECTION 3

Framework for Return to Hockey

The impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak have been felt across Ontario, by families, workers, businesses, and communities. Our hockey family has also felt the impacts of this.

COVID-19 has created a unique situation for every person, business, and government body to deal with. Sport for our youth and adults alike closed on March 12, 2020 with no identified return. While the situation is still evolving, HEO continues to work with its partners to prepare for a return to programming with the necessary measures in response to COVID-19.

Our plan recognizes that although hockey was shut down while we were playing 5 on 5 traditional hockey, our return to traditional hockey will be by way of a planned phased in approach. Hockey Eastern Ontario has developed a phased approach to return with programming aligned to the Ontario Government - Framework for the Reopening of Ontario.

HEO has adopted the following principles in developing our plan for Return to Hockey:

- Safety is our first consideration. We will respect all of the mandatory requirements set out by the Province of Ontario and Hockey Canada.
- Flexibility is key in supporting our 11 Minor Districts, over 60 Minor Hockey Associations, 15 Minor competitive and House Leagues, our three Junior Leagues, and our associate members Para and Special Hockey to implement programming that can range from developmental to scrimmaging to modified game play/competition, as and when needs, circumstances and resources permit.
- Responsiveness. Our plan needs to stand ready to respond to expansion AND contraction of Provincial Public Health direction. Our COVID19 situation in each of our four public health units across eastern Ontario, and in the province as a whole, can change quickly. Our plan needs to provide HEO Members with the ability to expand or contract their hockey programming in step with Provincial Public Health direction.

HEO Mandatory Regulations

- All Team Staff must wear masks at all times, can remove masks while taking part in on-ice activities. Medical exemptions can be granted.
- Players must wear masks while not actively participating in an on-ice activity
- Players must bring their own properly labelled water bottle
- **No Tournaments or Jamborees will be permitted until October 1, 2021.**
- Facilities are responsible to administer the amount of people inside a facility; all members must adhere to the Facility and Public Health Guidelines and Regulations.
- Pre or post game handshakes should be done with gloves on in a fist bump manner.

Hockey Canada Mandatory Regulations

- All Minor Hockey Players must be registered with their Local MHA for the 2021/2022 season to be eligible to take part in any sessions. **The start of the 2021/2022 insurance season is September 1st, 2021.**
- Regular HEO/Hockey Canada NCCP On-Line Coach Training is required, this includes Respect in Sport, Gender Identity and Expression, and Rowan's Law Acknowledgment.
- Officials must be properly registered and certified for 2021/2022. (As per Hockey Canada Guidelines)
- All Coaches, Officials, and Team Staff are required to take the Hockey University COVID-19 Planning a Safe Return to Hockey on-line Module.

Stage 4 – Traditional Hockey – July 16, 2021

This stage will involve the return of traditional hockey. Any such return will be in compliance with the Ontario Government Emergency Order and HEO policies. We will continue to update this section as the Provincial Legislation is updated.

- Hockey Returns to Normal
- 5-vs-5 hockey
- Body contact/checking allowed at appropriate levels
- Tournaments and Inter-branch play permitted as of Oct 1st, 2021. - **No sanctions or travel permits will be issued for any tournament or Inter-branch play scheduled prior to October 1st, 2021.**
- Cross USA/Canada border player movement will be decided on a case-by-case basis. International border regulations must be adhered to.

This chart illustrates all the steps that our Teams, Association, Leagues, and Hockey Eastern Ontario took to get to Stage 4 of our Framework.

Stage		Date	Outline	Player Contact	# of Participants	Structure	Travel	Safety Protocols
Return to Ice	2	June/July/ August 21 st	Strict Individual On-Ice Physical Distancing Skill Development Only Off-ice Training & Activity Limited/No Use of Bench Variety of On-Ice Set Ups	None	10 Total participants include staff, Increased numbers as Public Health permits	Rinks Opening Private Instruction	None Community Based Only	** Must be Followed
Return to Practice	3A	August 21 st – October 1 st	On-Ice Physical Distancing No Body Contact permitted Skill Development/Drills Competitive Tryout camps Off-Ice Training and Activity	None	Groups or Cohorts not to exceed 50 people Must follow individual facility requirements facility guidelines	MHA/Leagues/Teams Cohort Groups	None Community Based Only	** Must be Followed
Return to Play	3B	October 1 st - TBD	No On-Ice Physical Distancing No Body Contact permitted Regular Practice Off-ice Training & Activity Competition May be Modified Limited or Normal Use of Bench	None	May be Limited/Defined based on Public Health Guidelines	MHA/Leagues/Teams Modified Game Play or Cohort Groups No Tournaments or Jamborees	None Community Based Only	** Must be Followed
Return to Regular Competition	4	July 16, 2021	No On-Ice Physical Distancing Regular Practice Off-ice Training & Activity Standard Competition Normal Use of Bench	Allowed	Regular Team Sizes	MHA/Leagues/Leagues Regular Game Play	Travel permitted Tournaments (after September 30) Championships	** Must be Followed

Stage 4 – Traditional Hockey – Safety Protocols

Below are the minimum required safety protocols as per the Province of Ontario’s Amended O. Reg. 364/20.

- Teams must have a designated Safety Officer (responsible for Screening and maintaining Participant Logs, and enforcement of all HEO and facility safety protocols).
- Associations must have a designated Safety Officer/s during the Tryout/Sort out process (responsible for Screening and maintaining Participant Logs, and enforcement of all safety protocols).
- COVID Screening must occur before anyone may participate in any sanctioned event.
- Teams/Associations must maintain a participation log for all participants involved in a game, practice, or off-ice event.
- Logs must have full name and contact information of each participant and must be retained for 30 days.
- Home team is responsible to log all participants (home & away) for games they host. And ensure that screening was completed with the Visiting team.
- On Ice Officials must be recorded in the Home Team’s Participant Log.
- Masks must always be worn inside a facility while not taking part in games or practices. Masks must be worn, and social distancing maintained when in dressing rooms. Due to potential space limitations that may exist in dressing rooms, it is still encouraged for players and team officials to put on their equipment as much as is practically possible before a tryout, evaluation, or team event, before entering the facility. **(Please consult with your local facility for all required safety protocols).**
- On-Ice Officials are encouraged to pre-dress before an event if physical distancing cannot be maintained in the dressing room. Masks must be worn at all times while not engaged in game play. **(Please consult with your local facility for all required safety protocols).**
- Coaches, Trainers, Athletic Therapists, Off-Ice officials should wear masks on the Players’ Bench and Penalty Box area. **(Please consult with your local facility for all required safety protocols).**
- Minimize social gatherings of participants and spectators both before and after the activity. This includes spectator areas and the parking lot.
- Limit carpooling and meals (in homes or at restaurants) to those within your household. Reserve carpooling with one (1) other household if there are transportation barriers.
- If travelling as a team by bus, please adhere to all physical distancing guidelines, and wear masks if physical distancing is not possible. Follow the bus operator’s safety protocols.
- Clean and disinfect equipment between uses.
- Do not share your sports gear with other people. If necessary, shared equipment should be sanitized between users.
- Water Bottles must be clearly labelled with the participant’s name. Water bottles cannot ever be shared.

Facility operators are responsible to interpret and enforce all Provincial and local Public Health Safety Requirements. It is imperative that all Associations, Leagues, and Teams work very closely with and adhere to the facility’s COVID safety protocol requirements.

Insurance

Insurance for Members of Hockey Eastern Ontario

Under Hockey Canada's current General Liability policy, the following is the definition for "bodily injury":

"Bodily injury" means bodily injury, sickness, disease, mental injury, mental anguish or nervous shock sustained by a person, including death resulting from any of these at any time.

COVID-19 would fall within the definition of **bodily injury**

Liability claims against Hockey Canada always need to be proven by the third party, so continuing to update and enforce risk management guidelines as new risks emerge, such as COVID-19, are imperative. Hockey Canada and its Members actively working on updating risk management protocols related to return to hockey guidelines post- COVID-19.

As with all claim scenarios, the insurance company would investigate all claims presented against any Member of Hockey Canada that falls within the **bodily injury** definition and would confirm coverage based on the framing of the allegations. **It will also be important to review new facility contracts for all rentals; they may now contain a new clause which absolves the facility owners of any liability related to COVID-19.** New lease agreements will need to be scrutinized given that organizations will potentially have little control over cleaning/take on all liability related to COVID-19 in these facilities.

Facilities participant/organization waivers should be scrutinized to ensure you have a complete understanding of "what" is being waved. These facility waivers are not a requirement of HC or HEO.

AIG, who is Hockey Canada's primary General Liability insurer, has agreed to waive this exclusion in the General Liability policy until Sept 1, 2023. Hockey Canada will NOT have this exclusion in its policy until that date, at the earliest.

Hygiene Guidelines

Proper hygiene can help reduce the risk of infection or spreading infection to others as well it is important to be familiar with facility guidelines and requirements specific to the prevention of COVID-19.

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 second, especially after using the washroom and when preparing food.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

When coughing or sneezing

- Cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of the arm, not the hand.
- Dispose of any used tissues as soon as possible in a line waste basket and wash hands.
- Avoid touching the eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.

Equipment

- Water bottles must be filled at home and labeled with the player's name. The sharing of water bottles is prohibited.
- The sharing of hockey equipment (e.g., Goalie equipment) is prohibited.
- Where possible, players, coaches, and officials should plan to arrive and depart the facility dressed in their hockey equipment.
- While on the ice, participants must always leave their helmet and gloves on.
- To limit touchpoints during and after hockey-related activities, coaches should keep, distribute, and collect each piece of on-ice equipment that belongs to their team (e.g., coaching whiteboard, cones, pucks).

Screening

The screening of a team's players, coaches, officials, and administrators is mandatory. A health questionnaire must be filled out. This can be done electronically or in person prior to every single activity. **See Appendix 1.**

Before you consider playing hockey:

Participants exhibiting signs and symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should not be present at any facility. This includes anyone attending the programs such as players, team officials, coaches, volunteers, parents/guardians, Association/League members etc.

A coach should be prepared to require that anyone exhibiting signs or symptoms of illness should leave the practice/activity.

If participants do not feel well or have identified symptoms, ensure they advise team staff immediately and put on a cloth mask. They should immediately go home and follow up with their physician and local public health unit.

Facility staff should be provided with an incident report based on facility protocol prior to the coaching staff leaving the facility.

HEO Highly Recommends that all participants who are eligible to receive the COVID-19 Vaccine do so as soon as possible.

Appendix 1 – Health Screening Questionnaire

HOCKEY EASTERN ONTARIO



Health Screening Questionnaire

This questionnaire or another similar questionnaire must be completed by each individual prior to participation in any HEO sanctioned activity.

1. Have you been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days? If you are fully vaccinated and have not been advised to self-isolate by your doctor, health care provider, or public health unit, select "No".

Yes No

For the following question:

If you are fully vaccinated, select "No".

If the individual experiencing symptoms received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and is experiencing mild headache, fatigue, muscle aches, and/or joint pain that only began after vaccination, select "No".

2. Is anyone you live with currently experiencing any new COVID-19 symptoms and/or waiting for test results after experiencing symptoms (e.g. cough, fever, difficulty breathing, runny nose)?

Yes No

3. Has a doctor, health care provider, or public health unit told you that you should currently be isolating or staying at home? (This can be because of an outbreak or contact tracing.)

Yes No

4. In the last 10 days, have you tested positive on a rapid antigen test or a home-based self-testing kit? If you have since tested negative on a lab-based PCR test, answer "No".

Yes No

5. Do you have any of the following symptoms? Choose any/all that are new or worsening, and NOT related to other known causes or conditions.

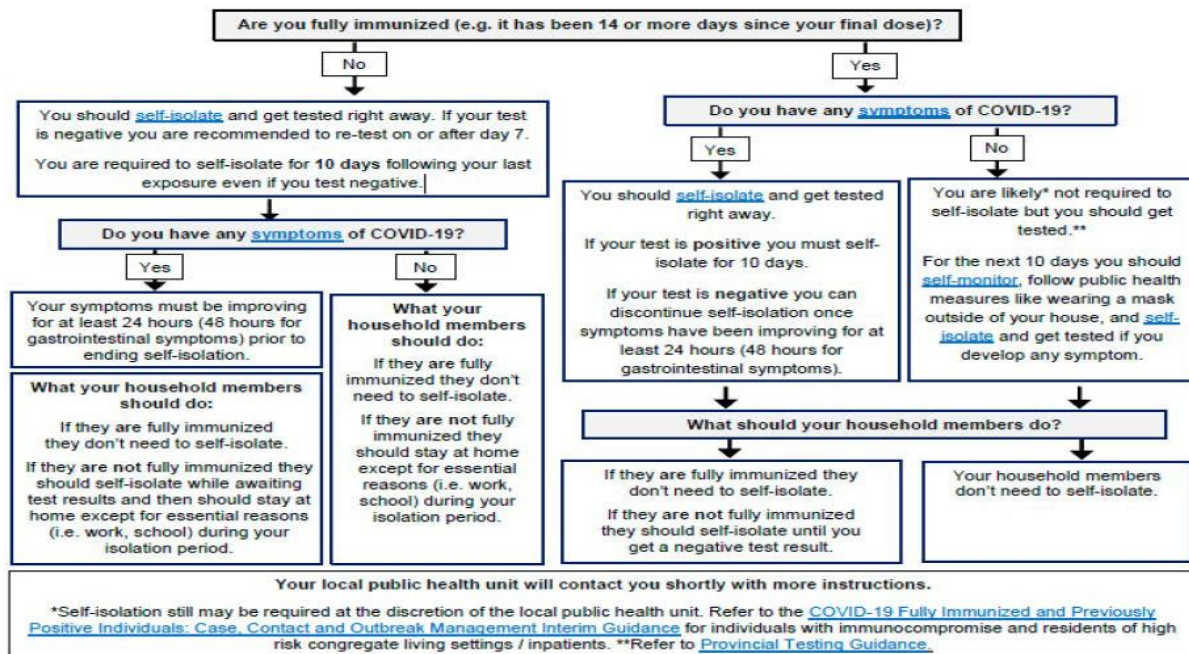
- Fever and/or chills (Temperature of 37.8 degrees Celsius/100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher)
- Cough or barking cough (croup) [Continuous, more than usual, making a whistling noise when breathing (not related to asthma, post-infectious reactive airways, or other known causes or conditions you already have)]
- Shortness of breath (Out of breath, unable to breathe deeply (not related to asthma or other known causes or conditions you already have))
- Decrease or loss of taste or smell (Not related to seasonal allergies, neurological disorders, or other known causes or conditions you already have)

- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing (painful swallowing) (Not related to seasonal allergies, acid reflux, or other known causes or conditions you already have)
- Runny or stuffy/congested nose (Not related to seasonal allergies, being outside in cold weather, or other known causes or conditions you already have)
- Pink eye [Conjunctivitis (not related to reoccurring styles of unknown causes or conditions you already have)] (* not applicable for individuals under the age of 19)
- Digestive issues like nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain (Not related to irritable bowel syndrome, menstrual cramps, or other known causes or conditions they already have)
- Falling down often (For older people)
- No symptoms

If you are experiencing any symptoms, please stay home and contact your local public health unit and follow their instructions. Also contact your Team/Association/League Safety person to report your symptoms and the steps you have taken with your Public Health Unit.



You've been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, now what?



*******PLEASE NOTE THAT FACILITIES ARE FULLY RESPONSIBLE TO INTERPRET AND ENFORCE THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO'S REGULATION AMENDED O. REG. 364/20**

Facilities

Public and Private facilities that are providing training to hockey need to ensure that they maintain their own insurance on their facility and are in compliance with the Ministry of Labour Protocols and those protocols specific to the Ontario Government Emergency Order.

All hockey programming providers that are sanctioned by the Provincial Sport Organizations in Ontario will:

1. be listed on the HEO website and will be able to present a Hockey Canada Insurance Certificate and PSO Certificate of Sanctioning.
2. be required to complete a tracking document of participation use and an ice surface by ice surfacetraining attendance form; and
3. be required to have a COVID-19 Contact Person.

Facilities are directed to utilize the information provided by the Ontario Recreation Facilities Association (ORFA) as an industry standard material: [ORFA Reentering and Reopening](#).

Ontario Ice Sports Harmonized Ice Sports Facility Procedures

Facility Entrance - No Dressing Rooms - Come Dressed – Entrance to Arena is based on facility plan and all sport groups collectively are required to have a meeting with the facility based on the following agenda.

- Parking Lot Entrance
- Entrance Doors
- Entrance Process
- Entrance Time
- Changing of equipment location process
- Dropping off Minor participants – Parents/Attendance – number of attendees permitted to support and watch
- Conduct of Parents in the stands (i.e. food and beverage maintaining facility cleanliness)
- Items allowed in the facility (bags, food, and beverage)

Other Facility Specific Issues

- Tenant Dressing Room Requirements must be dealt with in a meeting with facility to determine contractual agreements on responsibilities
- Elite hockey rental requirements (i.e. longer break if require warmups)
- Look to plan for longer Ice-times rental
- Warming up within the facility

Reporting of incidents of injury or COVID-19 to facility personnel

Chief Medical Officer

Mandate:

The Chief Medical Officer is responsible for providing the Hockey Eastern Ontario's Board and staff with medical advice and comprehension regarding decisions and the impact of those decisions due to COVID-19 and the direction from the Ontario Government and Public Health Authorities.

Key Duties:

- Act as the medical consultant for the Member with respect to COVID-19 with the mandate to abide by the Ontario Government and Public Health.
- Maintain professional status and be in good standing with their respective licensing College.
- Be the medical spokesperson for the Member.
- Advise the Member on risk management issues especially with respect to medical issues.
- Advise the Member on research projects and issues especially with respect to medical issues.
- Advise the Member on event sanctioning.
- Act as a consultant for international tournaments held in the Members jurisdiction.
- Act as a liaison with the Hockey Canada Chief Medical Officer concerning medical issues.
- Such additional duties as may be delegated to the Chief Medical Officer by the Member from time to time

Authority:

The Chief Medical Officer will exercise their authority as set out by any Hockey Canada or Member regulation or in accordance with this job description.

Appointment:

For the role of Chief Medical Officer there will be a short canvassing period of the general membership in HEO. Based on the potential candidates the Chief Medical Officer shall be appointed by the Members Chair of the Board, in consultation with the CEO/EDs, for a one-year term that is renewable. The Chief Medical Officer has no voting rights.

Meetings:

The Chief Medical Officer will attend meetings in person and via conference call, via invitation from any of the Task Team Chair, or the Chair of the Board.

Resources:

The Chief Medical Officer will receive the necessary resources from the Member to the

extent approved in the annual budget, to fulfill his or her mandate. They will also receive the necessary administrative support from the Members office.

Reporting: The Chief Medical Officer will report to the Members Board as required and to the CEO/ED.

Requirements:

The Chief Medical Officer will be licensed to practice as a Physician in the Province of Ontario. Experience as a Sport Medicine Physician and membership in CASEM will be considered an asset.

Hockey Canada Safety Guidelines

Safety and Protocols for a Return to hockey

Where to get a Vaccine

Ontario

Ottawa Public Health

Eastern Ontario Health

Renfrew County Health

Leeds Grenville Health

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