



VIA EMAIL

August 14, 2020

Attention: BC Soccer Full/Associate Members and Affiliated Soccer Clubs

From: Jason Elligott, Executive Director, BC Soccer

Re: Return to Play Update

Dear Full/Associate Members and Affiliated Clubs,

We understand that everyone within our soccer community is eagerly awaiting “*BC Soccer’s Return to Play Phase 2 Plan – Recommendations and Guidelines*”. Based on our July 16, 2020 communication, we were anticipating being able to release this information by now and progress to the next phase for soccer activity. However, the sport sector in BC has not received the required authorization from Via Sport to do so.

Therefore, in our ongoing efforts to provide relevant information and updates, we are pleased to share the below details with you.

Phase 1 Return to Play (current)

Soccer’s Return to Play Phase 1 commenced June 2 with on-field activity occurring earliest June 12.

BC Soccer thanks and congratulates those Members and Affiliated Clubs that have work hard over the last couple of months to support soccer activity for your communities under the Phase 1 terms.

Similar to inquiries that you are probably receiving, BC Soccer understands there is confusion with some sports in BC offering modified gameplay now while soccer is not. The reason for this is currently Via Sport’s requirements include maintain physical distancing (6 feet), which may work for some sports but not others.

Phase 2 Return to Play (next)

Since June 2020, in consultation with members, stakeholders, and Canada Soccer, BC Soccer has been working diligently with ViaSport to help the sport sector in BC, and specifically soccer, progress to the next phase. For soccer, our understanding is the next phase would allow us to introduce limited contact in training and following a period of time, introduce (in a controlled and responsible way), gameplay while being able to ease restriction on solely in-club activity to allow for limited district/league play. The next phase will most likely also take a cohort’s type model approach.

Phase 2 Return to Play (What is the hold-up?)

The process to move to the next phase for all sports operating under a Provincial Sport Organization (PSO) is:

Via Sport's updated "*Return to Sport Guidelines*" must be approved by the BC health authorities and all PSOs must have guidelines/plans that comply with Via Sport's updated guidelines.

Via Sport has confirmed that their updated "*Return to Sport Guidelines*" have been submitted to the BC health authorities, however, the required approval has not yet been received. On August 13, 2020, Via Sport advised that they anticipate receiving approval soon with plans to share and release publicly as early as next week. Once Via Sport's "*Return to Sport Guidelines*" are released publicly and posted on their website, they will be in immediate effect, however, implementation is determined by each sports organization. For BC Soccer Members and Affiliated Clubs, that means following "*BC Soccer's Return to Play Phase 2 Plan - Guidelines and Recommendations*".

Phase 2 Return to Play (Being Prepared)

With the anticipated release of Via Sport's updated "*Return to Sport Guidelines*", and the goal of being able to respond as quickly as responsible, BC Soccer's Board of Directors has reviewed and approved "*BC Soccer's Return to Play Phase 2 Plan – Recommendations and Guidelines*". Via Sport has confirmed the content is aligned with its guidelines and Canada Soccer has reviewed and supported as well.

Unfortunately, due to Via Sport requirements, we are not able to share "*BC Soccer's Return to Play Phase 2 Plan – Recommendations and Guidelines*" now, however, the summary in the last paragraph on page 1 provides an indication on what soccer activity you can expect to be allowed in the next phase.

Importantly, BC Soccer may be delayed in releasing its "*BC Soccer's Return to Play Phase 2 Plan – Recommendations and Guidelines*" if Via Sport's guidelines are materially changed by the BC health authorities.

BC Soccer understands that some Members and Affiliated Clubs will move quicker than others as we collectively progress to the next phase. As communicated previously, all organizations should do what they feel is best for their organization and members/participants it supports; and BC Soccer will be here to support you as best as we can as we collectively work through the current situation.

Liability Insurance

On June 10, 2020, we informed you that the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, and Culture [announced](#) a Ministerial Order extending liability protection to not-for-profit amateur sport organizations for damages resulting from exposure to COVID-19. This liability protection applies as long as sport organizations are complying with orders from the BC health authorities and following viaSport's Return to Sport Guidelines. For BC Soccer Members and Affiliated Clubs, that means following BC Soccer's Return to Play Guidelines and Recommendations.



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Further, we also wanted to ensure that all were aware the ministerial order that protects amateur sport organizations, their employees and volunteers from liability may be extended by up to one year after the state of emergency is declared over if required. [Read the release here.](#)

Lastly, on the topic of liability, August 13, 2020, Via Sport informed us that the Province has now extended COVID-19 liability coverage to for-profit organizations through the COVID-19 Related Measures Act (CRMA). The regulation protects people (paid or volunteer) from proceedings for civil liability for damages resulting from transmission or exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19. The regulation is retroactive to January 1, 2020 and will remain in force unless and until the CRMA is repealed. [Read the regulation here.](#)

As we have done throughout these uncertain times, we will continue to provide as much information as we can. Similar to Via Sport, and assuming they release their updated guidelines and allow us to release ours, we are targeting the end of next week to be able to release "*BC Soccer's Return to Play Phase 2 Plan – Recommendations and Guidelines*".

Thank you for your work, patience, and understanding.

Kind regards,

Jason Elligott
Executive Director
BC Soccer

CC: Kjeld Brodsgaard, President, BC Soccer
Charlene Krepiakevich, CEO, ViaSport British Columbia
Earl Cochrane, Canada Soccer

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