

**Via E-mail**

March 10, 2020

**Attention:** BC Soccer Membership (and affiliated soccer clubs)

**From:** BC Soccer Association

**Re:** COVID-19

**Purpose of Communication**

To provide information and guidance regarding the concerns associated with COVID-19.

**Health and Safety**

The health and safety for all participants in the soccer community in BC is of the utmost importance for BC Soccer and this is central to any decision-making process. In the first instance, all involved in our sport should take direction from the appropriate health authorities, including the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Ministry of Health.

**Monitoring the current situation**

BC Soccer in concert with Canada Soccer and its Sport Medical Committee are monitoring the COVID-19 situation.

**Canada Soccer Guidance and Information**

At this time, Canada Soccer has provided no notification or directive on the cancellation of soccer activity within Canada, nor has there been any limitations set. They have advised they will continue to conduct risk assessments as part of their ongoing responsibilities and will work with the relevant government agencies including Sport Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Canada Soccer are staging international friendly matches on Vancouver Island on March 27 and 31 for the Men's National Team as well as in Vancouver on April 14 with the Women's National Team. Canada Soccer currently is proceeding with the matches as scheduled.

Canada Soccer have advised that they have adopted the following measures in relation to overseas travel:

- Canada Soccer will continue to accept sanctioning applications for teams to travel; it will base its approvals on the current situation at the time of actioning the request.
- Travel to most destinations within the Concacaf region will continue to be approved at this time.
- Travel to areas identified by the Government of Canada as Level 3 risk will not be approved.
- Other areas that Canada Soccer may consider a risk will be reviewed on a case by case basis.
- Teams should be aware of the travel advisories prepared by the Government of Canada and make their decision to travel on the most recent information before they depart. For upcoming

travel, consult the Travel Advice and Advisories site for destination-specific travel information that provides important advice to help you make informed decisions regarding travel. <https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories>

- A team that has already received sanctioning to play abroad or travel permits are responsible for taking its own decision on whether travel is still appropriate.

### **BC Demographic**

British Columbia is a large and diverse province and, therefore, so too is the soccer community that we support. [As of March 9, 2020, the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Canada is 77. BC has a small number of cases \(32\) having been reported in certain communities.](#) Not all regions and communities have been impacted, therefore at this time, BC Soccer restates there is no need to restrict soccer related activities for players and team officials, or to cancel games, practices and tournaments. However, considering the current and evolving situation, concerned youth district/adult league members and affiliated clubs may institute no pre/post-match handshakes during this time and/or amend their programming activity if they wish to mitigate concerns within their regions/locations.

When travelling to sporting events, BC Soccer recommends that you check for up-to-date travel advisories from the Government of Canada at: [Government of Canada COVID-19 Travel Advice](#).

### **Concerned Participants**

BC Soccer understands that participants (and parents of participants) may have concerns with participating in soccer during this time. We strongly recommend that a common sense approach be taken and if you have individual concerns, please speak to your local team and club staff and remove yourself and/or your child from soccer activity until you are comfortable to return to play.

BC Soccer knows that the clubs, districts and leagues will understand the concerns raised and will work with their members to ensure their concerns are handled appropriately.

### **Other Soccer Jurisdictions**

BC Soccer understands that there are soccer enthusiasts in our community that follow professional soccer teams and leagues in other parts of the world. Some of these high-profile professional leagues (i.e. English Premier League, Serie A, etc.) have taken steps such as eliminating pre-match handshakes, playing matches behind closed doors (no fans), and canceling matches. In the first instances, in these cases, a higher authority (i.e. the government) in these countries have acted, therefore the soccer organizations have followed their lead.

As outlined above, BC Soccer takes its lead from Canada Soccer who is working with the relevant government agencies including Sport Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada to ensure soccer is safe in our country.

### **Reminder on steps to reduce risk and exposure**

As a reminder, BC Soccer would like to share the BC Centre for Disease Control recommendations for reducing the risk of exposure to novel coronavirus:

- Wash your hands frequently (it is the single most effective way of reducing infection spread).
- Practice other good hygiene habits: do not touch your face/eyes/mouth with your hands and cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough (ideally with a disposable tissue or the crease of your elbow).
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched workspace surfaces.
- Maintain good general health (eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep, exercise in moderation).
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Contact 8-1-1 (HealthLink BC) or your health care provider for questions about your personal health situation.

Further information about novel coronavirus is available on the [BC Centre for Disease Control website](http://www.bccdc.ca).

### **Addition Resources**

The following resources are available for your use in your community:

- This [joint message](#) is from the Sport Medicine Advisory Committee comprised of Chief Medical Officers from the Canadian Olympic Committee, the Canadian Paralympic Committee, and the Canadian Olympic and Paralympic Sport Institute Network (COPSIN). It is meant to guide National Sporting Organizations (NSOs) in decision-making with respect to travel to competitions within and outside Canada. Information has been obtained from the World Health Organization, Government of Canada and Australian Institute of Sports websites. This advisory will be updated regularly and distributed to NSOs and other high-performance sport partners.
- The latest WHO statements can be found at [WHO website](http://www.who.int) on Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak.

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**Via E-mail**

February 28, 2020

**Attention:** BC Soccer Membership (and affiliated soccer clubs)

**From:** BC Soccer Association

**Re:** Coronavirus Awareness & Prevention

In follow up to the below communication from January 31, 2020, we wish to restate that there is no need at this time to restrict any soccer related activities for players and team officials, or to cancel games, practices and tournaments. Based on the recent development, concerned members and clubs may institute no handshakes during this time if they wish.

As a reminder, BC Soccer would like to share the BC Centre for Disease Control recommendations for reducing the risk of exposure to novel coronavirus:

- Wash your hands frequently (it is the single most effective way of reducing infection spread).
- Practice other good hygiene habits: do not touch your face/eyes/mouth with your hands, and cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough (ideally with a disposable tissue or the crease of your elbow).
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched workspace surfaces.
- Maintain good general health (eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep, exercise in moderation).
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Contact 8-1-1 (HealthLink BC) or your health care provider for questions about your personal health situation.

Further information about novel coronavirus is available on the [BC Centre for Disease Control website](http://www.bccdc.ca).

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**Via E-mail**

January 31, 2020

**Attention:** BC Soccer Membership (and affiliated soccer clubs)

**From:** BC Soccer Association

**Re:** Coronavirus Awareness & Prevention

The following is information provided by the Ministry of Health:

B.C. Provincial Health Officer Bonnie Henry has announced that the first case of novel coronavirus has been confirmed in B.C. Further details are available [HERE](#).

BC Soccer is aware of the virus, and ongoing monitoring throughout B.C., nationally and internationally. We are confident that all the affected agencies are doing their utmost to ensure all necessary precautions are being taken to prevent the spread of infection. There is no need at this time to restrict any soccer related activities for players and team officials, or to cancel games, practices and tournaments.

As a simple precaution and reminder, BC Soccer would like to share the BC Centre for Disease Control recommendations for reducing the risk of exposure to novel coronavirus:

- Wash your hands frequently (it is the single most effective way of reducing infection spread).
- Practice other good hygiene habits: do not touch your face/eyes/mouth with your hands, and cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough (ideally with a disposable tissue or the crease of your elbow).
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