

## **BC SOCCER'S RETURN TO PLAY PLAN – Phase 1 – Released June 2, 2020**

### **TIMELINES, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND GUIDELINES FOR MEMBERS AND AFFILIATED CLUBS, ADMINISTRATORS, COACHES AND ANYONE ORGANIZING SOCCER ACTIVITIES**

Considering a gradual and phased-in return to playing soccer may start to occur across BC as health authorities look to lift some restrictions in a controlled and responsible way, BC Soccer is providing its recommendations and guidelines for members, affiliated clubs, administrators, coaches and anyone organizing soccer related activity under the umbrella of BC Soccer (i.e. sanctioned soccer activity).

BC Soccer would like to extend its thanks to the members and affiliated clubs that completed the Return to Play Survey conducted between April 23-26, 2020; the information gathered from the survey combined with wider good practice information from across the Canadian and BC sport sector, has supported the development of these recommendations and guidelines.

With a situation that evolves daily that may differ by area, BC Soccer continues to follow the guidance from the BC health authorities and requires all members and affiliated clubs to do the same. We also understand that each **municipality has potentially different restrictions and limitations** for on-field bookings and activity, therefore, we advise everyone to work with your local city/municipalities to adhere to any appropriate requirements to ensure you are providing a safe environment for all participants.

The information in this document is current to June 2, 2020 and aligned with [ViaSport's Return to Sport Guidelines for B.C.](#)

Below are the working timelines, guidelines, measures, and precautions to support a phased-in return to play. Accompanying this document are sample sessions designed to work within the guidelines and we encourage our members and affiliated clubs to use, tailor as appropriate, and share with each other to support soccer activity for your organizations.

#### **WORKING TIMELINE**

The following timelines are ONLY able to be implemented if the BC health authorities soften restrictions and we are collectively able to get back to some form of soccer activity. Early indication suggests that there may be a softening of restrictions in the near-term, therefore, the following is being shared as we collectively work to prepare accordingly.

- Earliest June 12, 2020 – Return to Modified Training (Phase 1 for soccer)
- Date TBA – Return to Modified Games and/or Competition Structure (Phase 2)
- Date TBA – Return to the NEW Regular Type Training & Games/Competition Structure (Phase 3)

Note: please see ViaSport's Sport Activity Chart on page 23 of their [Return to Sport Guidelines for B.C.](#) which provides added information on what may be allow over time.

## **ORGANIZING SOCCER ACTIVITY**

- The activity must always comply with the distancing measures and recommendations, along with any gathering restrictions issued by the provincial government health authorities, including the arrival and departure of players (except for family members or persons residing in the same household).
  - o As of document date – 6 feet between people and gatherings of 50 people or less (for soccer, unless otherwise stated by the municipality/city, this is 50 people per regular 11 v 11 full-size soccer field).
- Clearly layout, communicate, and mark (in consultation with municipality/city/facility owner) player drop-off and pick-up protocol for arrival and departure.
- Limit your activities to small groups, solely to in-Club/organization activity.
  - o The accompanying sample sessions provide for up to 50 people per regular 11 v 11 full-size soccer field.
- Limit the number of team staff (coaches, managers, etc.) that are on-field, noting the requirement to have a specific number of coaches to lead the session and all while adhering to the Rule of Two.
- Consider the comfort level of all your volunteer coaches under the current situation. Perhaps, in the first instance, limit sessions being led by a select core group of coaches.
- Include the daily requirement for any and all staff/coaches and participants to verbally confirm they are not experiencing any symptoms related to COVID-19.
- Make sure to stagger training session times between different groups to create a buffer between sessions and avoid an overlap of players on the field.
- Limit all occasions for gatherings.
- Communicate all hygiene measures in advance to all your players.
- Provide your employees with any protective items required by the health authorities and ensure that each member of your staff washes their hands regularly.
- Participation should be limited to the ages and levels that understand and can adhere to the distancing measures and recommendations issued by the provincial government health authorities.
  - o Please see the Canada Soccer’s Technical Committee “Age & Stage Considerations – Phase 1” document appended to this document.
- All participants must be registered per the normal process under BC Soccer.
- From a process perspective, if conducting registration, do so only online (no cash).
- Ask parents and guardians to provide written consent for players U18 and younger authorizing them to participate in soccer activity.
- Keep a record of participants that are participating and when, so that you can contact them if needed, for example, if an infected person is identified.
- Adhere to ViaSport’s Emergency Response and Outbreak Plan (appended to this document).
- If any organization is looking to operate referee specific training, these guidelines must be adhered to.

## **PHYSICAL DISTANCING**

- The activity must always comply with the distancing measures and recommendations, along with any gathering restrictions issued by the provincial government health authorities, including the arrival and departure of players (except for family members or persons residing in the same household).
  - o As of document date – 6 feet between people and gatherings of 50 people or less (for soccer, unless otherwise stated by the municipality/city, this is 50 people per regular 11 v 11 full-size soccer field).
- Use cones and other equipment to ensure appropriate spacing is in place to support distancing.
- Remind coaches and players of the distancing requirements.
- Recommend that only one parent/guardian accompany their child/player to the session.

## **COACHING**

- The activity must always comply with the distancing measures and recommendations, along with any gathering restrictions issued by the provincial government health authorities, including the arrival and departure of players (except for family members or persons residing in the same household).
  - o As of document date – 6 feet between people and gatherings of 50 people or less (for soccer, unless otherwise stated by the municipality/city, this is 50 people per regular 11 v 11 full-size soccer field).
- Position players in designated and well spaced-out stations/areas on the field.
- Do not let players manipulate the practice equipment.
- Coaches should take charge of set up and collecting equipment.
- Ensure players do not touch the ball with their hands, or head, and Goalkeepers must not share gloves.

## **EQUIPMENT**

- Exercise caution with any and all equipment that is being used.
- Ask players to avoid touching equipment with their hands.
- Try to restrict soccer ball use, one per player or in small groups. Perhaps, if the session is solely individual skill development, each player could bring from home their own ball for them to solely use at the session.
- If equipment is manipulated by participants, hand sanitation and ball washing at Ingress/Egress is required.

## **PROVIDE A CLEAN AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

BC Soccer understands that in the vast majority of cases soccer occurs on municipality/city fields and then in some small instances some groups do own facilities, while some also have office space. The

following guidance is being provided to ensure operational security procedures are in place during the crisis related to COVID-19. These procedures must also be well displayed and communicated to all users.

- Limit all occasions for gatherings by making all communal or public areas in your facility inaccessible.
- Delimit closed areas or the ones where a maximum number of people is required.
- Use markings on the ground to indicate proper distancing from staff.
- Frequently clean all surfaces, including counters, door handles, benches, toilets, etc.
- All chairs and tables in communal areas must be inaccessible or removed to avoid all gatherings.
- All doors accessible to the public must remain open to avoid contact with door handles.
- Soap or hand sanitizer must be made available to all people in various locations throughout your facility.
- Regularly remind and encourage people to wash their hands and adopt proper hygiene practices.
- Do not use any locker/change rooms and request all participants to change at home prior to and after sessions.
- Close all water fountains and ask that all players bring their own refreshments and do not share water bottles.

#### **OTHER PRECAUTIONS**

Should any member organization and/or affiliated club wishing to add stricter guidelines, measures and precautions they are able to do so for the soccer activity they oversee within their specific organization.

#### **CLOSING COMMENTS**

BC Soccer thanks all members, affiliated clubs, and individuals across BC for your patience and for the work you are doing to support soccer and importantly for your understanding as we navigate through this challenging time.

Of importance, if your organization does look to offer soccer activity in the short-term, we ask that you be respectful and responsible in doing so. Organizations that do offer soccer activity and do not comply with these recommendations and guidelines may be subject to sanctioning.

#### **ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS**

The following two appendices accompany this document:

- Canada Soccer's "Age & Stage Considerations – Phase 1"
- ViaSport's Emergency Response and Outbreak Plan

Following the appendices are the below supporting documents:

- Technical resources providing sample sessions that fall within the recommendations and guidelines to support members and affiliated clubs that want to offer soccer activity. We



encourage our members and affiliated clubs to use, tailor as appropriate, and share with each other to support soccer activity for your organizations.

- Timelines, recommendations and guidelines for participants.

#### **DISCLAIMER**

It is important to note that this document is not a legal document and is not a substitute for actual legislation or orders of the Provincial Health Office. Links to third party web sites are provided solely for convenience.

-End-

**APPENDIX A - CANADA SOCCER'S TECHNICAL COMMITTEE AGE & STAGE CONSIDERATIONS - PHASE 1**

The following has been provided from Canada Soccer's Technical Committee.

# Age & Stage Considerations – Phase 1

Active Start - U5 to U6	FUNdamentals – U7 to U9	Learn to Train - U10 to U13	Soccer 4 Life - U13+
<p>1 Player + 1 Parent/Guardian/Sibling</p> <p>Children at this age may struggle to maintain social distancing and complete technical-based activities. We cannot expect young children to be responsible for maintaining social distancing.</p> <p>Using a parent or sibling will aid the coaches to deliver different activities as the child will have a parent/guardian/sibling to help manage them and some of the logistics to ensure social distancing is maintained. Social distancing does not need to be maintained by people from the same household. This will help create opportunities to plan activities that include a partner or opposition.</p> <p>Be overly conservative when spacing out areas to maintain social distancing.</p>	<p>1 Player + 1 Parent/Guardian/Sibling</p> <p>Children at this age often need interaction with someone to remain engaged and complete technical-based activities. We cannot expect young children to be responsible for maintaining social distancing.</p> <p>Players may not have yet developed focus to find isolated practices with a ball enjoyable. Therefore, utilizing a parent/guardian/sibling to partake in the practice will provide a more fulfilling experience as it will increase the number of different activities the player can experience as social distancing does not need to be maintained by people from the same household. This will help create opportunities to plan activities that include a partner or opposition.</p> <p>Be overly conservative when spacing out areas to maintain social distancing.</p>	<p>Players in the L2T stage should be engaged in the progression of activities within training session during Phase 1.</p> <p>Players at this age need monitoring but may be ready to maintain social distancing as directed. Level of support is based on the maturity of the athletes.</p> <p>Engaging players on their strengths and weaknesses within different activities is a strategy coaches can utilize to differentiate (individualize) tasks.</p> <p>Individualized consideration will help keep the players engaged and focused. Creating fun challenges that include social outcomes will provide an enjoyable and exciting practice environment.</p> <p>Be conservative when spacing out areas to maintain social distancing.</p>	<p>Players in the S4L stage should be engaged in the progression of activities within training session during Phase 1.</p> <p>Players should understand what social distancing is and be able to respect the social distancing requirements in place within their province while at soccer.</p> <p>Engaging players on their strengths and weaknesses within different activities is a strategy coaches can utilize to differentiate (individualize) tasks.</p> <p>Individualized consideration will help keep the players engaged and focused. Creating fun challenges that include social outcomes will provide an enjoyable and exciting practice.</p> <p>Be conservative when spacing out areas to maintain social distancing.</p>

## **APPEINDEX B - VIASPORT'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND OUTBREAK PLAN**

The following is from Via Sport's Return to Sport Guidelines for B.C.

[CLICK HERE](#) to review the complete guidelines which also has templates and additional resources to support your organizations gradual return.

### **First Aid**

In the event that first aid is required to be administered during an activity, all persons attending to the injured individual must first put on a mask and gloves.

A guide for employers and Occupational First Aid Attendants:

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/information-sheets/ofaa-protocols-covid-19-pandemic?lang=en>

First aid protocols for an unresponsive person during COVID-19: <https://www.redcross.ca/training-and-certification/first-aid-tips-and-resources/first-aid-tips/first-aid-protocols-for-an-unresponsive-person-during-covid-19>

### **Outbreak Plan**

Early detection of symptoms will facilitate the immediate implementation of effective control measures. In addition, the early detection and immediate implementation of enhanced cleaning measures are two of the most important factors in limiting the size and length of an outbreak. An "outbreak" is two or more cases; a "case" is a single case of COVID-19.

1. Identify the roles and responsibilities of staff or volunteers if a case or outbreak is reported. Determine who within the organization has the authority to modify, restrict, postpone or cancel activities.
2. If staff (including volunteers) or a participant reports they are suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 and have been at the workplace/activity place, implement enhanced cleaning measures to reduce risk of transmission. If you are not the facility operator, notify the facility right away.
3. Implement your illness policy and advise individuals to:
  - self-isolate
  - monitor their symptoms daily, report respiratory illness and not to return to activity for at least 10 days following the onset of fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat and painful swallowing, stuffy or runny nose, loss of sense of smell, headache, muscle aches, fatigue and loss of appetite.
  - use the COVID-19 self-assessment tool at BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool to help determine if further assessment or testing for COVID-19 is needed.
    - o Individuals can contact 8-1-1 if further health advice is required and 9-1-1 if it is an emergency.

○ Individuals can learn more about how to manage their illness here:  
<http://www.bccdc.ca/healthinfo/diseases-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19/if-you-are-sick>

4. In the event of a suspected case or outbreak of influenza-like-illness, immediately report and discuss the suspected outbreak with the Medical Health Officer (or delegate) at your local health authority. Implement your Illness Policy and your enhanced measures.
5. If your organization is contacted by a medical health officer in the course of contact tracing, cooperate with local health authorities.

For more information on cleaning and disinfecting: [http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/CleaningDisinfecting\\_PublicSettings.pdf](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/CleaningDisinfecting_PublicSettings.pdf)

Regional Health Authorities: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/partners/health-authorities/regional-health-authorities>

For added information, please see [“Appendix C – Illness Policy” in ViaSport’s Return to Sport Guidelines for B.C. on page 29.](#)