

# RETURN TO HOCKEY

VERSION 18 - MARCH 14, 2022



CANADA



RETURN **to** HOCKEY

COVID-19 RESPONSE



## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Hockey New Brunswick has worked in conjunction with Hockey Canada and the Government of New Brunswick to ensure that in every phase of our return to hockey the safety of our Players, Coaches, Officials, Administrators and volunteers are at the center of our plan and decision making. This plan focuses on making the return to hockey fluid while enhancing the experience. The information in this document is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment, as the circumstances are constantly changing.

This document is intended for use by our member Associations and Leagues. Players, Coaches, Officials and administrators will all play a critical role in combating the spread of COVID-19, both on and off the ice.

Hockey New Brunswick would like to thank our Return to Hockey work groups for their commitment and efforts in the creation of our Return to Hockey document.

## CHECKLIST TO SUCCESS

### ✓ REVIEW & FOLLOW

- Hockey New Brunswick Return to Hockey plan
- Hockey Canada Safety & Protocol Guidelines
- Government of New Brunswick, Public Health Guidelines

### ✓ PLAN

- Each Minor Hockey Association to assign a 'Communications Officer'
- Each Minor Hockey team to assign a 'Team Liaison'
- Make all team staff aware of their responsibilities
- Meet with facility, parents / guardians and participants
- Procedures if participants are sick

### ✓ AT THE FACILITY

- Follow Hockey New Brunswick Return to Hockey plan
- Follow facility guidelines
- Practice responsible hygiene
- HAVE FUN!

## SECTION 2: DISCLAIMER

The information included in this document is current to the time of publishing and is aligned with the Government of New Brunswick's Public Health Guidelines. However, recommendations may change depending on local, municipal or facility specific guidelines.

Where anything within this document conflicts with Public Health guidelines, members must comply with Public Health and adapt as required. As information changes, efforts will be made to amend this document when necessary, and to circulate the revisions to the Hockey New Brunswick membership.

# SECTION 3: COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Positive and open communication will be an important part of returning safely to the rink. Minor hockey associations and leagues will want to ensure they understand what controls and guidelines are in place. This information must be passed along to administrators, officials, team staff, volunteers, parents and players in advance to ensure the return to hockey and facility use is enjoyable.

Each Minor Hockey Association will assign a 'Communications Officer' who will be responsible to ensure all updated and relevant information is passed on to everyone within their jurisdiction.

In addition to the Minor Hockey Association 'Communications Officer', each team will have a 'Team Liaison', that will work in cooperation with the Minor Hockey Association's Communication Officer.

- Ensuring any COVID-19 cases are reported as required by the public health authority, Hockey New Brunswick, hockey association, league and facility.
- Provide updates to Association on the Hockey New Brunswick documents.

#### **'TEAM LIAISON' RESPONSIBILITIES MAY INCLUDE:**

- Ongoing communication with Minor Hockey Association's 'Communications Officer' on guidelines and updates.

The appointment of a 'Team Liaison' is the responsibility of the individual team. The position can be an already existing member of the Coaching Staff, the Team Safety representative, Team Manager, or a parent.

#### **MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION 'COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER' RESPONSIBILITIES MAY INCLUDE:**

- Monitoring all relevant updates from Hockey New Brunswick, Hockey Canada and the Government of New Brunswick.
- Communicating with local facilities on guidelines and updates.
- Ensuring teams are following the prevention guidelines set out by Hockey New Brunswick.





# SECTION 4: PREVENTATIVE HEALTH MEASURES

This resource provides an overview of ways protective health measures can be incorporated by Minor Hockey Associations, teams and leagues.



## HAND WASHING AND RESPIRATORY HYGIENE

Promote strict hand hygiene (washing and sanitizing) before and after training.

- Wash hands after using restrooms with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- 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 lined waste basket and wash hands.
- Avoid touching the eyes, nose or mouth with un-washed hands.



## MASKS

Masks and physical distancing remain effective measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses.

Masks are **recommended** when physical distancing is not possible (example: players bench, dressing room, etc).



## EQUIPMENT CLEANING

Some equipment should be washed (jerseys, pant shells, socks, etc) after each session, following manufacturer guidelines.

- Players must ensure that equipment is kept clean.
- Encourage players to take equipment out of bags and dry it out after EVERY session.
- Wash all undergarments after each session.



## TOWELS

Towels are on the bench under the guidance of the safety person / trainer for emergency use.

- Towels are not regular use. If a safety person / trainer uses a towel on the bench, it must be taken out of the use and washed.

- Paper towels / tissue can be kept on hand to wipe face, blow nose if on the bench.
- Garbage cans should be placed close by for disposal.



## HANDSHAKES

No handshakes between teams. Referees can greet coaches, but no handshakes.



## WATER BOTTLES

Players must have their own labelled water bottle, washed after each session.



## SPITTING

The act of spitting directly at any player, team official or on-ice official is currently addressed under Rule 11.3, in which a match penalty is applied. In the current environment, Hockey New Brunswick encourages coaches to promote that players refrain from spitting at any time during any on-ice activities. This would also include spitting water on the ice or in the bench area.



## COMMUNICATION

Host an online meeting with parents / guardians to go through recommendations and allow them to ask questions related to the preventative health measures which have been implemented.



## PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- Avoid crowded places and gatherings.
- As much as possible, keeping a distance of at least 2 metres.
- Avoid common greetings, like handshakes.
- In younger divisions, limit the number of parents in the dressing room.



## COVID-19 E-LEARNING

Hockey Canada has partnered with the Respect Group to create an interactive e-learning course for volunteers, specific to COVID-19 and the Safety Guidelines which Hockey Canada has created. Hockey New Brunswick requires that all coaches and team volunteers complete the online training.

# SECTION 5: RETURN TO HOCKEY STRUCTURE

This document has been prepared to assist and guide all those responsible for the organization and delivery of hockey in the province. The content within the below chart is based off the Government of New Brunswick direction as of March 14, 2022.

|                 | GUIDELINES  |
|-----------------|---|
| ON-ICE SESSIONS | Practices, games, and tournaments are permitted.  |
| SPECTATORS      | No spectator restrictions   |
| TRAVEL          | No travel restrictions  |
| ISOLATION       | It's <b>recommended</b> that participants do not attend activities while sick and until symptoms have resolved. |



## SECTION 6: CONCLUSION

Since the pandemic started in March 2020, Hockey New Brunswick has worked with our members and subject-matter experts to prepare our participants in the best manner possible.

While a number of restrictions that were in place during the 2020-2021 season have been lifted, it's essential that we remain compliant with Public Health guidelines. We encourage a full understanding of these recommendations, as well as facility specific guidelines which are in place.

## APPENDICES

**HOCKEY CANADA SAFETY GUIDELINES / FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**  
<https://www.hockeycanada.ca/en-ca/exclusive/return-to-hockey/plans/safety>