



## Recreation Sector Guideline for Ice Sport User Groups

Intended for internal Member circulation only

October 27, 2020

With sport in Phase 3 of viaSport's Return to Sport cohort model as of August 24<sup>th</sup>, and with the October 9<sup>th</sup> updated PHO Order on Gatherings and Events, we offer this update on the guideline for ice sport events. Our initial checklist to managing hockey user groups was circulated in June; this is the second revision following changes noted above, and now also encompasses all ice sports.

The purpose of this Guideline is to provide recommendations that will assist with preventing facilities from being closed due to exposure of COVID by keeping facilities safe, ensuring the well-being of community members, and keeping participants able to play.

Facilities will create their facility guidelines in reference to BCRPA, viaSport, and RFABC recommendations as they exercise best practices to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in public facilities.

This is a time when municipalities are moving cautiously to ensure that our facilities, workers, and public are safe as the sector begins the game phase of Progressive Loosening in the safe return to sport. Furthermore, the PHO has confirmed we are in the COVID second wave and flu season will soon be upon us, and advises to take it "low and slow."

**BCRPA's recommendation at this time, and for the remainder of 2020, is for municipalities to focus on supporting the "event" participants (those who are essential to the activity) *not* spectators until local facility protocols and sport user group agreements can be established.**

On October 13<sup>th</sup> Dr. Henry issued a preventative reminder about recreational sports for both players and spectators:

"As recreational sports like hockey and youth soccer return, we have seen an increase in COVID-19 exposures. In some cases, sport facilities have been closed. Like many other activities that have restarted, provincial sports organizations and sports facilities require COVID-19 safety plans to ensure a safe return to sport. Similar to the approach in the recent NHL playoffs, the plans have prioritized the players over the spectators, with restrictions in place in arenas and on the sidelines. We have to remember that spending time socializing or cheering with other parents and fans before, during and after games, increases the risk of transmission and exposure for you and your family. As much as we want to see the winning goal or celebrate the perfect pass after the game, we need to ensure we are keeping ourselves and our loved ones safe by always following our COVID-19 safety basics. It is important for all of us to think about our cumulative interactions."

BCRPA is coordinating a province-wide approach among member municipalities, guided by the expert opinion of our Ice Advisory task force and in consultation with sector partners viaSport and RFABC, to ensure a consistent experience for ice sport groups no matter where they are playing.



**The Advisory Group’s key recommendations include:**

- The **size** of the ice sport group (hockey, ringette, figure skating, speed skating, sledge hockey) that can be safely accommodated is determined by the facility capacity limits and comply with Provincial Sport Organization recommendations. The agreed upon group size maximum should be outlined in the user group’s COVID Safety Plan.
- The **size** of the ice sport group for each “event” (both practice and game are events) depends on the number of individuals required for the event. The PHO Order Gatherings and Events (the Order) the “essential event personnel: event staff, volunteers, the members of a team, team managers, coaches, referees, time keepers, score keepers, and staff associated.”
- **Volunteers** who form part of the ice sport user group (as above) could include: one responsible adult, if required, for each child 9 years of age and under; or one responsible adult for a person who requires special assistance in order to participate. Parents and care-givers who are not volunteers are spectators and fall into the “patron” category of the Order. Volunteer positions must align with the ice sport organizations’ protocols for establishing these roles (e.g. requirement of a criminal record check).
- **The size of the essential ice sport participant group** could be comprised of example scenarios such as the following examples. Each facility will work with the group to determine the size based on need and facility feasibility. BCRPA recommends a maximum group size of no more than 65 (full participants plus essential event personnel):

Example of Hockey: Minor, Juniors, U18 AAA - total event group size up to 65

- 48-56 Full Participants to enable the ability to play:
  - The participant roster, per team:
    - 17 skaters + 2 goalies players per team (Minor)
    - 18 skaters + 2 goalies players per team (Juniors, and U 18 AAA)
  - Team officials, per team:
    - Head Coach (maximum of 1)
    - Assistant Coaches (up to 3)
    - HCSP/Trainer (maximum of 1)
  - Officials
    - On-ice: 1-2 referee(s), 1-2 linesperson(s)
    - Off-ice: scorekeeper, time keeper
- Plus Additional Essential Event Personnel not to exceed the total group size of 65, such as:
  - Broadcaster
  - Camera Operators/Videographer

Example of Hockey: U9s, - total event group size up to 65

- 35-38 full participants to enable the ability to play:
  - The participant roster: 17-18 players per team
  - 1-2 on-ice officials
- Plus Essential Volunteers such as a trusted adult to assist children, as required



#### Example of Ringette - total event group size up to 50

- 30 full participants to enable the ability to play:
  - The participant roster: 10 players per team
  - 3 team staff per team
  - 2 on-ice officials (including referees)
  - 2 minor officials
- Plus Essential Volunteers such as one trusted adults per child to assist U9's, as required

#### Example of Figure Skating, Event Group of 18 plus volunteers

- 18 full participants “on or near the ice” to enable the sport, including skaters, coaches
- Plus Essential Volunteers such as one trusted adults per child to assist, as required

- **Spectators (patrons) may not exceed 50, but are not recommended at this time.** A spectator is an individual who attends an event but who is not part of the essential event personnel  
Note, volunteers required for the event are not patrons and would be permitted to remain in the arena (e.g. U9, figure skating).

Municipalities are cautious at this early stage of restarting contact sports, and are focusing on accommodating the participant groups. Accommodating spectators will be assessed through this early phase of game play while developing recommendations on how to safely include spectators/patrons in arenas. For most facilities the target is for early 2021 so that user groups and facility operators can assess the impact of increased numbers in the building (sport participants group and essential event personnel).

As the event host, the Ice sport groups are expected to make the case on how they will safely include spectators as a separate event which follows the PHO guidelines. Responsibilities include collection of contact information, monitoring the size and movement of the group, and assurance the spectators commit to adhere to the Patron requirements cited in the Order (e.g. use the designated entrance and washrooms, not come in contact with anyone in the facility that is not part of the ice sport event). Pertinent Order sections are 2, 2-14, & 17.

### **General Guidelines to discuss with Ice Sport teams**

#### **Participant Group**

- 2 metre physical distance at all times in all places except the field of play (ice surface, player' benches, penalty box) and transitory spaces such as hallways.
- Players in the same cohort must maintain physical distance with those in their cohort when outside of the field of play (e.g., dressing rooms, staging areas, etc.).
- Players in the same cohort must wear masks within the cohort environment when outside the field of play if they are not able to maintain physical distancing; this includes all shared spaces such as **dressing rooms**, hallways, staging areas, etc.
- Municipalities are advised to continue to provide dressing room occupancy based on 2 metre distance; where this is not possible however occupancy can be increased for sport cohorts by requiring the wearing of masks in the dressing rooms.



- Participant access to the ice:
  - State minimum access to the ice rink facilities by arranging a brief period (e.g. arrival time up to 15 minutes before ice time and departure within 15 minutes after ice time) to ensure efficient turnover and time to clean and clear.
  - If possible, provide one-way entrance and one-way exit; if not possible schedule gaps between groups to ensure comings and goings do not coincide
  - Require a plan for warm-up in order to avoid participants undertaking their own warm-up in uncontrolled areas
  - Players could be prepared to come dressed in as much equipment as possible to reduce required time in the facility
- Showers: participant access to showers is up to the municipality.
- Spitting is not allowed and will not be tolerated.
- Players will not share equipment and will have their own labelled water bottle.
- A COVID Ambassador be assigned and be a visible presence (e.g. arm band signifier): this volunteer/parent/coach or instructor would oversee adherence to the return to play plan, and ensure COVID protocols are being followed, and would monitor PSO/LSO updates. Onsite, the Ambassador is also expected to monitor COVID safety plan compliance with the visiting team should that team not have a COVID Ambassador.

### **Spectator Group**

- Ice sport groups are defined as an event (both practice and game), and while the participant group is no longer restricted to a maximum of 50, the spectator group *is* restricted to a maximum of 50 by the PHO Order. However, the total number of spectators is a decision of the facility based on to can safely be accommodated, which will range from 0-50 throughout the province.
- Spectators and are not recommended at this early phase of restoring game play. The focus in the coming weeks is on getting the players back in the game in our facilities. Spectator groups add a level of complexity we recommend be considered once our recreation facility network has assessed readiness of both the facilities and the user groups to manage the spectator group attending their event. Refer to BCRPA's guide to accommodating spectators.
- Encourage ice sport groups to use technology to live-stream practices and games so that trusted adults may watch remotely in order to reduce the risk of exposure by keeping the on-site numbers low.