



BC HOCKEY RETURN TO HOCKEY FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Updated October 22, 2020

1. What is a cohort?

Answer: In accordance with viaSport's Return to Sport guidelines each Provincial Sport Organization (PSO) may implement cohorts during Phase 3 that will allow for participants to be involved in contact activity and breach the 2-metre physical distance guidelines. A cohort can consist of either fifty (50) people or four (4) teams, whichever is deemed most appropriate by the PSO. BC Hockey's Board of Directors has endorsed the four (4) team cohort model, which allows for up to four (4) teams to participate in Phase 3 activity as a group, which in the case of hockey allows for more than 50 participants, based upon active roster sizes.

2. What are the parameters regarding transitioning cohorts?

Answer: A participant may be part of only **one (1) cohort within a single sport organization at any given time (e.g. Hockey Canada Membership)**. A participant may transition to a new / different cohort as an individual participant or as a member of a team, granted that a 14-day break has occurred prior to participating in Phase 3 activity within the new cohort.

If a participant is transitioning to a new cohort as an individual player, a 14-day break is required before beginning Phase 3 activity with the new team / cohort. However, they are permitted to participate in Phase 2 activity with their new team / cohort during that 14-day break period.

If a participant is transitioning to a new cohort as a member of their current team, that team may continue Phase 3 activity amongst themselves (e.g. contact practices or contact team scrimmages) during the 14-day break prior to joining the new cohort because they are transitioning to the new cohort as a consistent group. Simply, they cannot be introduced to any new cohort participants until the 14-day break period is complete. Furthermore, should any other team(s) also transition from the same existing cohort to the same new cohort, members of those collective teams may be permitted to participate in Phase 3 activity together during the 14-day break because they were and will be members of both cohorts and no new cohort members have been introduced during the break. The premise is that once transition from one cohort to another is complete, participants will be 14 days removed from contact with any previous participants that they will no longer cohort with, before being introduced to a new cohort of participants.

Example:

- Cohort A: September 1-30 = Team 1, Team 2, Team 3 & Team 4
- 14 – day Break: October 1- 14 = Team 1 & Team 2 are transitioning from cohort A to B together, therefore they can continue Phase 3 with each other during the Break.
- Cohort B: October 15 – November 15 = Team 1, Team 2, Team 5 & Team 6

Overall, participants are still recommended to limit the total number of cohorts they are involved with at any given time (simultaneously) in the best interest of their own health, the health of their families and community.

3. How do cohorts operate regarding tryouts and evaluations?



Answer: If a tryout/evaluation consists of Phase 2 based activity only (observance of physical distance / 2-metres & non-contact) this will not to be considered a cohort environment. Therefore, a 14-day wait period prior to beginning Phase 3 activity within any cohort would not be required following the completion of the try-out / evaluation stage.

If a tryout/evaluation includes Phase 3 based activity of any kind, all players will automatically be determined a member of that tryout cohort. Therefore, upon the conclusion of the tryout/evaluation all participants will be required to complete a 14-day wait period prior transitioning to a different cohort with that team or any other team (in the event that the player is not selected for the team they are trying out for).

Please note, during any 14-day wait period, a participant is permitted to participate in any Phase 2 based activity, regardless of their previous or active participation in a cohort.

4. What are the maximum numbers of players on a team?

Answer: Junior, Senior and U18AAA teams' active roster limit is 25 players, of which a maximum of 18 skaters and 2 goaltenders are eligible to play in any scheduled game.

The minor hockey active roster limit is 19 players with a maximum of 17 skaters and 2 goaltenders eligible to play in any scheduled game.

These parameters align with Hockey Canada regulation E 2 and Hockey Canada playing rule 2.2.

5. What is the maximum number of Participants permitted on the field of play and / or total patrons within the arena (facility)?

Answer: Patron capacities are at the discretion of each individual facility, in accordance with the Provincial Health Authority as communicated by viaSport and in alignment with the BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) and Recreation Facilities Association of BC (RFABC). Capacity for building occupancy may vary from facility to facility and the latest Public Health Officer (PHO) order allows for up to fifty (50) patrons above and beyond any essential activity participants, at the discretion of the municipality and facility based upon the ability to accommodate such patrons. Other than the roster limits outlined in question #4 and other essential activity participants (e.g. coaches and officials), there is no hockey specific maximum number of participants allowed on the ice, granted that all participants can adhere to either Phase 2 or Phase 3 guidelines and the facility's established capacity parameters. Local Minor Hockey Associations should update their Safety plans with the advisement that the Home team or member group booking an event at a facility are responsible for collecting contact information for all non-essential activity patrons (e.g. spectators) in attendance at a hockey event. The Hockey Canada [Seasonal Structure](#) document 'Appendix A' provides guidelines regarding recommended numbers of participants on the ice during Phase 2 activity, outlining physically distancing during hockey activities. [CLICK HERE](#) for a document outlines how the most recent PHO impacts to BC Hockey Members

6. Defining cohort / participant interaction

Answer: Any participants within a single cohort, can participate in full Phase 3 activity with any other participants within the same cohort (e.g. games, training, activities and contact skills). If a participant is part of a cohort, they are still permitted to participate in any programming that meets Phase 2 guidelines



with any other participants regardless of cohorts because physical distance is maintained during Phase 2 activities.

7. What are the definitions of 'Region' and 'Community' regarding Return to Sport?

Answer: The definition of '**Community**' for the purpose of Phase 3 activity is the individual cohort a participant or team is part of. A cohort essentially becomes the community based programming and may be made up of teams from the same member association or in some cases participants from surrounding or neighboring associations, based upon the particular program structure or ability to provide reasonable competition.

'**Region**': For the purpose of forming cohorts, participants within the Province of BC are restricted to participating in cohorts with other members of the BC Hockey membership within the geographical Province. Similarly, BC Hockey participants in Yukon Territory are restricted to participating within the BC Hockey Membership within that Territory. However, it is highly recommended that cohorts be formed as locally as possible; within an MHA first, then within a District MHA / League (inter-Association) or potentially within the Province or Territory if it is the only means of coordinating reasonable competition.

8. Will there be rule adjustments?

Answer: BC Hockey is reviewing enhancements to existing procedures, rules and protocols to assist in delivering Phase 3 activity. Any adjustments will be curated and communicated to the membership for implement during Phase 3. This process will include an education period for all participants, including officials. BC Hockey requests that officials not be integrated into Phase 3 activity until these measures have been confirmed and delivered. Please, note officials are not part of a cohort and therefore must maintain 2-metre physical distance during activity.

9. Can coaches participate in more than one (1) cohort?

Answer: Coaches are not considered part of the cohort model, as long as they can keep physical distance (2- metres) and wear a mask during Phase 3 activities. Therefore, a coach can serve as a team official with teams in multiple cohorts if required.

10. Are clinics being delivered online only?

Answer: Coaching and officiating clinics are being reviewed in accordance with Hockey Canada's 2020-2021 minimum requirements. BC Hockey is seeking to make clinic curriculums deliverable online, if necessary. The BC Hockey clinic host request [webpage](#) is currently closed and projected to re-open in mid-September in order to begin processing requests. Unfortunately we are unable to process any requests submitted prior to the release of Phase 3 (August 24, 2020). Therefore, all members wishing to host a clinic should wait until the new clinic guidelines are released and submit at that time. It is projected that clinics may become available for participant registration in late September to early October.

11. What are the restrictions regarding player benches?

Answer: As of today (Sept. 25), based upon feedback from the BC Hockey membership and in collaboration with the BC Recreation and Parks Association and viaSport, an announcement that players' benches are now included in the field of play has been confirmed.

Hockey players **will not** need to wear masks, physical distance or have a physical divider between them on the benches or in the penalty benches, during Phase 3 activity. Players should consider wearing a mask when not on the field of play.



Coaches and/or trainers who are not able to maintain physical distance, must wear masks on the benches, as well of course in areas where distance cannot be maintained. Also, on-ice officials are required to maintain physical distance and further directions are included in this seasons certification clinics and overall game play guidelines will be distributed in the near future.

12. What is the protocol regarding contact tracing information being provided to facilities?

Answer: Any pre-screening (registration/forms etc.) can be set forth by the association / member in accordance with a facility's request. This may vary from facility to facility. However, members should be prepared with contact tracing and pre-screening measures that can be easily shared with facilities either electronically or on site. [CLICK HERE](#) for example.

13. Question: How do we deal with team officials and the inability in some facilities to be on the bench, while keeping physical distance?

Answer: Every facility may vary slightly on how this is handled. Limits to the number of people allowed in an arena and how many people there is space for on a bench will dictate how a team will proceed. A team may have as many team officials (to a maximum of 5) on the bench during a game, as long as they can maintain a minimum 2 metres physical distance from each other and the players or there is a barrier (e.g. plexiglass) between them and the players. Should the number of team officials on the bench be limited by space, some coaches or the HCSP person may be required to stand somewhere other than the bench. In the case of the HCSP, it is important that if they are not on the bench (in order to adhere to physical distancing parameters) that they are able to easily access the ice in the case of an injury or health emergency. The HCSP will still maintain all their responsibilities, regardless of whether or not they are physically on the bench. When necessary, the HCSP you be prepared to escort an ill player to the facilities designated isolation area for assessment.