

RETURN TO PLAY -INDOOR

GUIDELINES & RECOMMENDATIONS

In conjunction with Canada Soccer, Sport Manitoba and other provincial soccer associations, The Manitoba Soccer Association has developed this plan for safely easing back into the sport of soccer. The plan uses a multistage approach that respects current Provincial protocols such as physical distancing, disinfecting and use of personal protective equipment that will permit the practice of various soccer activities in a progressive, flexible plan that will evolve as our Province changes COVID-19 management requirements.

Please note that these precautions are temporary, and we will determine a timeline based on the provincial health authority guidelines. Timelines between stages may vary based on recommendations from the province. Club Licensing requirements remain in effect for all member organizations.



RETURN TO PLAY - INDOOR

GUIDELINES & RECOMMENDATIONS



PRE-ACTIVITY ORIENTATION

- Review provincial health authorities recommendations
- Review the Manitoba Soccer Return to Participate document
- Review any other procedures established by the organization you are registered with
- Ensure you are registered with a MSA member organization
- Complete waiver form



WAIVER

- One time waiver
- Must be completed by player and/or parent before participation
- Template provided by the Manitoba Soccer Association
- To be collected by the organization the player is registered with
- Participants must be registered with a MSA member organization before taking part in any scheduled activity



SYMPTOM REPORTING

- Players who are experiencing symptoms: stay home, inform your organization, get tested
- **If there is a positive test, the organization should inform the MSA and must begin contact tracing**



RESPONSE ACTION PLAN

- If provincial health authorities determine that restrictions are to be reinstated, MSA will inform all members
- The MSA, in conjunction with the provincial health authorities, will determine which stage is appropriate at that time



RETURN TO PLAY - INDOOR

GUIDELINES & RECOMMENDATIONS



PRECAUTIONS

- All players, coaches, and volunteers must self-assess before each scheduled activity -
<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>
- Stay informed about current pandemic status
- If any participant (players, coaches, volunteers, guardians) has any symptoms, they shall not be permitted to participate or be present
- If any participant has previously been tested positive and has recovered, recommendations provided by the provincial health guidelines should be followed
- Follow municipal/provincial health authorities' regulations/guidelines for all areas
- All participants are required to go through a pre-activity orientation regarding safety and public health
 - A signed waiver is required
- Travel is not authorized to events/competition outside of Manitoba. Travel within regions of the province may be restricted based on the province's pandemic response system level of risk
- All activities are required to have, at minimum, hand sanitizer readily available (provided by coach/club/each player)
 - Hands must be washed or sanitized before and after each activity as monitored by a designated adult (coach, guardian, volunteer)
- Coaches and players will be required to wear masks inside the facility until they are on the pitch area (field and technical areas). Masks being worn during training or games will be at the discretion of each player. During games, all technical officials must wear masks, except the one coach providing instructions to the players on the field
- All participants are required to have their own labelled water bottle and should be kept at least 2 meters from other participants belongings
- The owner of the equipment (balls, cones, nets, etc.) must wipe down and sanitize all equipment before and after each training practice or game
- All players are to ensure their playing/training kits are washed immediately after each use
- Club/facility operator to provide containers for safe disposal of hygienic materials
- No handshakes at anytime
- All injuries should be dealt with by a designated person who should be wearing a mask and gloves while doing so



RETURN TO PLAY - INDOOR GUIDELINES & RECOMMENDATIONS



CLUB/ORGANIZATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Now is the time to promote sport for all and to alleviate logistical burdens on families. Please consider removing age/gender restrictions in order to allow two or more siblings to potentially participate in a particular training group.
- To reduce the overlap of groups arriving and leaving, it is recommended to add buffer times between practices. For example, practice ends at 7.30, participants on field have until 7.40 to have left the premises, next practice begins 7.45 and athletes leave their vehicle and walk to fields between 7.40 and 7.45.
- Provide information to coaches and guardians about each facility. For example, which facility access points will be used for entrance and exit to reduce bottlenecks and facilitate physical distancing. Implement cleaning protocols as well as pick-up/drop-off and spectator procedures.
- Adhere to facility restrictions or maximum capacities for facilities. Prioritize small game formats where possible.
- Adhere to facility guidelines and recommendations for any rentals used for training purposes. (ie. schools, gyms, community centers)



RETURN TO PLAY - INDOOR

GUIDELINES & RECOMMENDATIONS



FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Facilities must provide buffer times in between field bookings.
- No spectators are permitted at adult competitions. A maximum of one guardian per youth player may attend at youth competitions. If guardians are staying at the facility, they must observe physical distancing regulations/guidelines. Any exception at youth games will be addressed by the facility staff.
- Face masks must be worn inside the facility when not on the pitch (field and technical areas). This includes for players and coaches before and after training or games and for all spectators at youth competitions (anyone over the age of 5).
- No loitering inside the facility (hallways, foyer) before or after training or games.
- No changerooms are to be used. Bathroom facilities need to be sanitized before and after each booking by authorized person only. Only one person should be in the bathroom at a time.
- Provide safe spacing for participants personal belongings which respects physical distancing at field level.
- Clubs/facility operator to provide signage outlining physical distancing and hygiene guidelines and should be visibly posted.
- Facility operator to provide hand sanitizers throughout the facility.



RETURN TO PLAY - INDOOR

GUIDELINES & RECOMMENDATIONS

1

STAGE ONE – NON-CONTACT RETURN

Soccer **training** may resume if the occupancy and activity levels allow people to maintain a physical distance of at least two meters, except for brief exchanges.

- All precautionary measures are still in effect
- Indoor public gathering numbers are restricted to provincial guidelines which include guardians at the location
- Distancing between different groups who are training simultaneously, near one another must be at least 2 meters; increasing the distance is actively encouraged
- No opposition games where players will come into contact with each other
- Structure activities to maximize physical distancing
- Each player brings their own ball (if possible)
- Equipment that is shared (team balls, cones, nets, etc.) must only be handled (using hands) by the owner of the equipment (i.e., in most cases, a coach)
- No heading and no hand contact with the ball
 - Recommended that players only contact the ball below the waist (avoid chest if possible)
- Recommended that bibs/pinnies are not to be used; each player can bring two of their own tops (light & dark)
 - See Coach Recommendations
- If able, drop off and pick up players only. If remaining at the facility, one guardian per youth player is allowed inside the facility and they must follow provincial health guidelines for physical distancing. No spectators at adult competition.
- Any Club owned/operated Clubhouses used for the purpose of administration should follow provincial health guidelines as they relate to occupancy and safety concerns
- No changeroom facilities are to be used
- Participants should come dressed and ready to participate
- Benches should be removed from this stage



RETURN TO PLAY - INDOOR

GUIDELINES & RECOMMENDATIONS

2

STAGE TWO – LIMITED CONTACT RETURN

Soccer **training** may resume with group sizes limited to provincial guidelines and including limited contact throughout. Competition is prohibited.

- All precautionary measures are still in effect
- Indoor public gathering numbers are restricted to provincial guidelines which include guardians at the location
- Training may now include activities with opposition –limited to a maximum of 6v6
- Distancing between different groups who are training simultaneously, near one another must be at least 2 meters; increasing the distance is actively encouraged
- Prolonged physical contact (i.e. team/group meetings/discussions, embraces, etc.) should be actively discouraged
- Each player brings their own ball (if possible)
- Equipment that is shared (team balls, cones, nets, etc.) must only be handled (using hands) by the owner of the equipment (i.e., in most cases, a coach)
- No heading and no hand contact with the ball (except for GKs wearing gloves)
- Recommended that bibs/pinnies are not to be used; each player can bring two of their own tops (light & dark)
 - See Coach Recommendations
- If able, drop off and pick up players only. If remaining at the facility, one guardian per youth player is allowed inside the facility and they must follow provincial health guidelines for physical distancing. No spectators at adult competition.
- Any Club owned/operated Clubhouses used for the purpose of administration should follow provincial health guidelines as they relate to occupancy and safety concerns
- No changerooms facilities are to be used
- Participants should come dressed and ready to participate
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RETURN TO PLAY - INDOOR

GUIDELINES & RECOMMENDATIONS

3

STAGE THREE – RESUMPTION OF COMPETITION

Soccer games/competition may resume in all format types. Training may be increased to full, regular training provided general public health guidelines are followed.

- All precautionary measures are still in effect
- Games must be scheduled to consider reducing traffic between groups arriving and departing to mitigate community transmission
- Recommended to begin with internal small sided friendly matches where applicable before league play begins
- In leagues where there are substitution restrictions, recommended to allow for unlimited substitutions throughout the match to avoid fatigue and injury
- Substitutes are required to observe physical distancing when on the bench/sideline (at least 2 meters) based on provincial health guidelines
- If able, drop off and pick up players only. If remaining at the facility, one guardian per youth player is allowed inside the facility and they must follow provincial health guidelines for physical distancing. No spectators at adult competition.
- No changerooms facilities are to be used
- Participants should come dressed and ready to participate



RETURN TO PLAY - INDOOR

GUIDELINES & RECOMMENDATIONS



COACH RECOMMENDATIONS

- Pre-activity orientation regarding safety – hand washing, non-illness related cough suppression, no spitting or ‘snot rockets’.
- Regarding equipment cleaning, do not go home and then clean – contaminated items may travel into coaches' home environment. This should be done publicly. Only Coaches/Staff should handle equipment.
- Coaches will be required to wear masks inside the facility until they are on the pitch area (field and technical areas). During games, all technical officials must wear masks, except the one coach providing instructions to the players on the field
- Coaches should specify in advance which shirt (light or dark) they'd like each athlete to wear to eliminate the need for athletes to change in public at fields
- At the Active Start and Fundamentals stages, it is encouraged to use family members of players to support on-field delivery as physical distancing would not apply to people from the same household (i.e., child, parent, & ball).

Activity Recommendations:

- Structure activities to maximize physical distancing
- Age Appropriate recommendations may need to be taken when designing activities, for example, Active Start and Fundamentals players may need a sibling or parent to participate with them. This will allow for coaches to have support managing the group of players and physical distancing will not be required between siblings or parent/child (since they are from the same household).
- Design activities so athletes may stay within their existing small groups to reduce amount of contact with different people.
- Regular sanitization breaks combined with water breaks.



RETURN TO PLAY - INDOOR GUIDELINES & RECOMMENDATIONS



PARENT/GUARDIAN RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure child is healthy and no sign of symptoms. Follow symptom reporting guidelines as per the pre-orientation section.
- Make sure child has all items they need to participate.
- If able, drop off and pick up players only. If remaining at the facility, one guardian per youth player is allowed inside the facility and they must follow provincial health guidelines for physical distancing. No spectators at adult competition.
- Face masks must be worn at all times inside the facility (anyone over the age of 5).



PLAYER RECOMMENDATIONS

Players are recommended to come prepared with:

- Hand Sanitizer
- Sanitizer Wipes
- Two (2) cotton masks – in case one gets soiled/dirty/compromised
- Ziploc bag containing: (clearly labeled)
 - Labelled water bottle - where mouth spout is covered by lid and not to open air
 - Snack(s)
 - Tissues for any allergies or to blow nose for non-illness related circumstances
 - Hand sanitizer and wipes
- Face masks must be worn inside the facility until players are on the pitch (field and technical areas). Face masks worn during training/games is at the discretion of the player.
- Soccer organizations can loan balls to players if they do not have one.
- Players are responsible to bring personal player equipment to the field in order to practice and should be sanitized at the field; includes goalkeeper gloves.



RETURN TO PLAY - INDOOR GUIDELINES & RECOMMENDATIONS



MATCH OFFICIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Referees should come dressed and ready to participate.
- Referees should not share any gear (watches, flags, cards).
- Face masks must be worn inside the facility until referees are on the pitch (field and technical areas).
- Timekeepers must wear face masks at all times.
- When assigning, consider reducing the number of referees coming and going to fields by having referees do back-to-back games in different roles (where applicable) and with consideration to the health of the referee.

Laws of the Game – Modifications:

- Yellow and Red cards given to athletes from a safe distance as per physical distancing guidelines
- Physical altercations are an immediate dismissal from match. Referees should stay away and allow situation to dissolve before engaging from a safe distance.
- For instances where there is an injured player, a designated person may attend to the player

Referee Education/Mentorship Considerations

- Assessments and mentorship need to respect physical distancing guidelines and those mentors/assessors should do so from the spectator side of the pitch
- Video chat for post game debrief versus immediately after in person



RETURN TO PLAY - INDOOR

FAQS



HOW LONG WILL EACH STAGE LAST?

We will determine a timeline based on the provincial health authority guidelines. Timelines between stages may vary based on the recommendations from the province. Please remember that these precautions are temporary.

WHEN CAN I REGISTER?

Please contact the member organization that you wish to register with for more information on how to register and player registration fees.

ONCE COMPETITION RESUMES, HOW LONG WILL THE INDOOR SEASON BE?

The length of the indoor competition season will be decided by the leagues.

WILL THE FUTSAL PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIPS RUN? WILL THE FUTSAL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS RUN?

The Canada Soccer Competitions Committee is responsible for making a decision on the Futsal National Championships. If the Futsal National Championships are cancelled, we would not hold Futsal Provincial Championships in 2021.

WHEN CAN TOURNAMENTS AND FESTIVALS RESUME?

Tournament and Festival sanctioning would be dependent on provincial health authority recommendations.

WHEN CAN TRAVEL TO COMPETITIONS OUTSIDE OF MANITOBA RESUME?

Travel outside of Manitoba for competition will be dependant on recommendations from the provincial health authorities. We currently have no timeline as to when this will be allowed.

