



FOOTBALL
CANADA



COVID-19 RETURN TO FOOTBALL GUIDELINES





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Legal Disclaimer	3
Acknowledgements	4
Introduction	5
Football Canada COVID-19 Return to Football	7
Resource Purpose	7
COVID-19 and Sport FAQ	8
COVID-19 Info	8
Symptoms	8
Understanding Social Distancing in Sport/Football	9
Social Distancing in Pandemics	9
Community Based Social Distancing Measures	10
Social Distancing Parameters in Sports	13
Standard Safety and Hygiene Guidelines	14
Standard Safety and Hygiene Guidelines	14
Program Administration	15
Equipment	16
Identification, Tracing, and Assessment	17
First Aid	19
Facility Guidelines	19
Football Canada Return to Football Guidelines and Decision Making Framework	20
Possible Return to Football Restrictions	20
Levels of Return to Play	21
Return to Football Decision Making Framework	22
Programming Options	22
“Stay and Play”	22
High Performance Return to Play 2020/2021	27
Football Activity Guidelines	27
Program registration and Equipment Distribution	27
Team Meetings and Functions	27
Tracing and Managing COVID-19 Infections	28
Tracing Guidelines	28
Managing COVID-19 Infections	28
Emergency Action Plan (EAP)	28
Individual Return to Play from COVID 19	29



Communication and Messaging	30
Appendix A- Definitions	A
Appendix B- External Government/Educational Resources	B
Appendix C- Level of Restrictions of Play	C
Appendix D- Return to Football Framework	D
Appendix E- COVID-19 Assessment Tool	E
Appendix F- Emergency Action Plan Tool (EAP)	F
Appendix G- Communication Resources	G



LEGAL DISCLAIMER

Football Canada and the Return to Football Task Force have prepared this document based on the latest information available from third-party sources, including the World Health Organization and local, provincial and federal health authorities. This document will be updated as the situation evolves and as more information becomes available.

This document is meant to provide information and guidance based on current information. It is important to note that the RTF Guidelines are not a legal document and are to be used as a guide only. It is not a substitute for actual legislation or orders of the local, provincial health guidelines. In the event of an ambiguity or conflict between the RTF Guidelines and the public health legislation, regulations or orders thereunder, the Act, regulations and orders prevail.

Each Provincial Sport Organization should comply with the requirements of its provincial and local government and health officials in terms of public gatherings, training and competition when determining a safe to return to activities.

Each organization is responsible for assessing the risks in its particular environment and establishing the appropriate safety procedures to minimize those risks, while following the advice and instructions of public health and government authorities. Please ensure you have checked with your insurance provider before starting any activity.

While we aim to provide relevant and timely information, information known about the COVID-19 coronavirus and recommended health and safety measures can rapidly change, therefore no guarantee can be given as to the accuracy or completeness of any information provided in the RTF Guidelines.

This document contains links to third party web sites. Links are provided for convenience only and Football Canada does not endorse the information contained in linked websites nor guarantee its accuracy, timeliness or fitness for a particular purpose. The information in those links may be updated from time to time. We do not monitor these sites and are not responsible for updates. You should check back regularly to ensure your Plan is up to date.

Anyone using the RTF Guidelines does so at their own risk. Football Canada shall not be responsible for any loss or damage of any kind arising directly or indirectly from the use of the RTF Guidelines including, without limitation, reliance on the completeness or accuracy of the information provided.

Nothing in this document is intended to provide legal advice. Do not rely or treat this document as legal advice.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

To Our Football Nation,

Our Members, stakeholders, partners, local associations, volunteers, officials and fans are asking one question:

“How do we return to football?”

In 2020 the return is facing many challenges due to the Coronavirus pandemic which demands a thoughtful strategy. The one certainty is that the health and safety of everyone involved around our game determines how and when we return.

In response, Football Canada presents our ‘Return to Football’ guide. The goal is to provide our Members a step-by-step process to align with standards provided by provincial government and health authorities. The effort behind this guide provides leadership for Members and stakeholders alike across our football community to ensure an appropriate and safe return to the sport.

In early March, evidence regarding COVID-19 provided Football Canada with a clear decision to be the first National Sports Organization to issue a nationwide stoppage of sport and activity. Our ‘Return-to-Football’ plan recognizes that the reactivation of activity will progress at different speeds at different times in different places based on direction provided to Members from local and provincial levels of government.

We are fortunate in football as versions of participation in our sport come in many forms, from contact to non-contact, with a varying number of participants including football specific training. These options are built into ‘Return to Football’ to provide our Members the ability to respond to continue to engage our players, coaches and officials.

In the midst of this global crisis, I am reminded about the values of our football community. Members have stepped up. Staff have worked diligently to find answers within a fluid situation which changes daily and at sometimes hourly. Non-members have shared information and are looking to us to provide guidance. The CFL has continued to contribute resources to strengthen our effort. Almost everyone I’ve come across during this process has been positively focused on dialogue to move forward to answers. Thanks to the contribution of many, we are making this an open document for all of the Canadian football community to access.

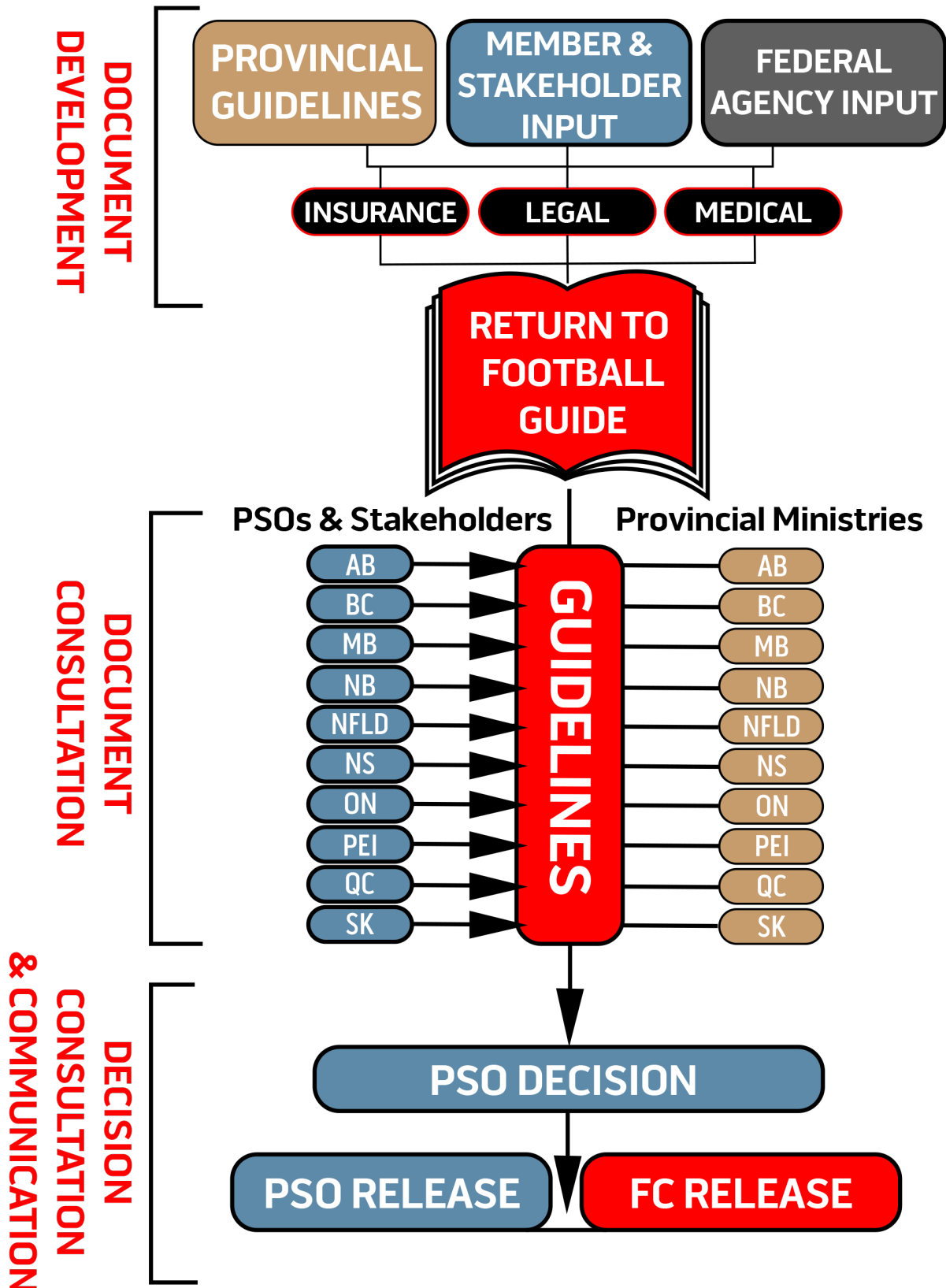
Thank you for your commitment to football and we look forward to seeing you back on the field as soon as possible.

Yours in Football,

Jim Mullin
President,
Football Canada



RETURN TO FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT/IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS



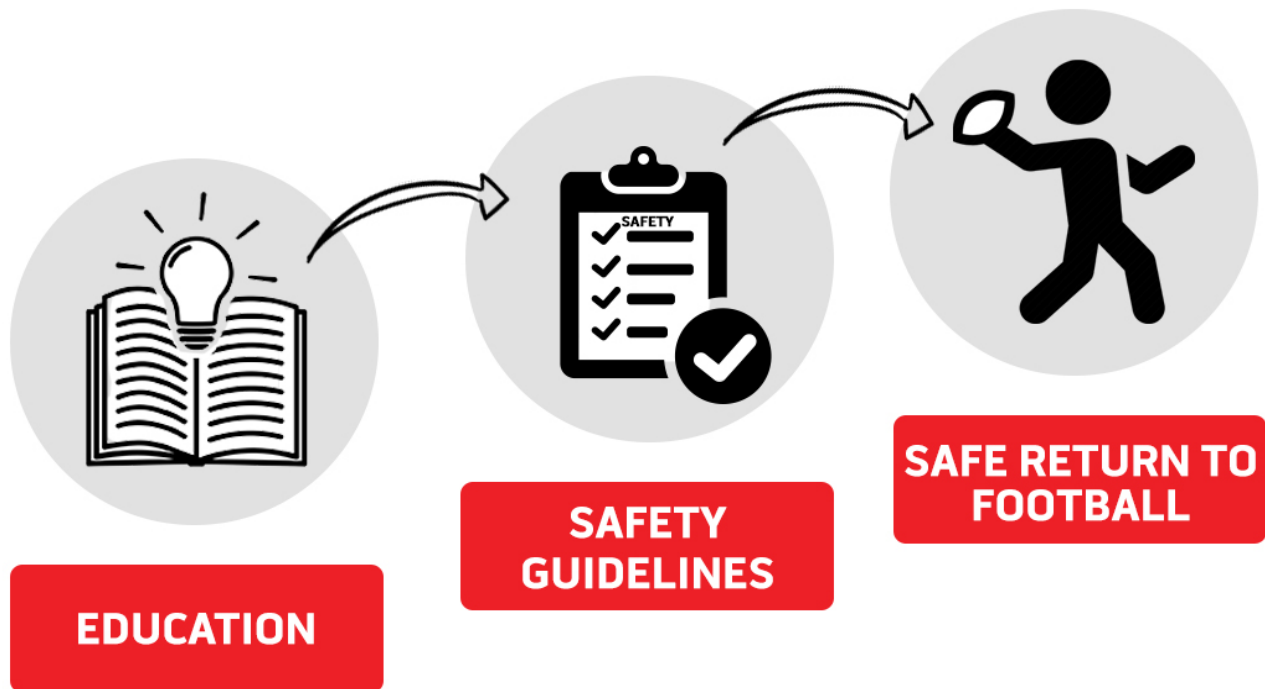


FOOTBALL CANADA COVID-19 RETURN TO FOOTBALL

RESOURCE PURPOSE

The Football Canada developed Return to Football resource has been created to help the football community during the COVID-19 pandemic. This Return to Football document is intended to provide guidelines and resources to inform decision making processes for local and provincial football organizations on how to return to safe football activities. The resource will outline relevant information on the COVID-19 pandemic, safety guidelines for administrators, coaches, athletes, officials and support staff, return to football guidelines and a framework for return to football programming options that coincide with provincial health guidelines.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



NOTE :

This is a live document that will be updated regularly, as this fast-evolving situation continues to change and so, it should be referred to frequently to stay abreast of changes and developments.



COVID-19 AND SPORT FAQ

COVID-19 INFO

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Some cause illness in people and others cause illness in animals. Human coronaviruses are common and are typically associated with mild illnesses, similar to the common cold.

COVID-19 is a new disease that has not been previously identified in humans. Rarely, animal coronaviruses can infect people, and more rarely, these can then spread from person to person through close contact.

There have been 2 other specific coronaviruses that have spread from animals to humans and which have caused severe illness in humans. These are the:

Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus (SARS CoV)
Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS CoV)¹

SYMPTOMS

Those who are infected with COVID-19 may have little to no symptoms. You may not know you have symptoms of COVID-19 because they are similar to a cold or flu.

Symptoms have included:

- Cough
- Fever
- Difficulty breathing
- Pneumonia in both lungs
- In severe cases, infection can lead to death

Symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to COVID-19. This is the longest known incubation period for this disease.

Recent evidence indicates that the virus can be transmitted to others from someone who is infected but not showing symptoms. This includes people who:

- Have not yet developed symptoms (pre-symptomatic)
- Never develop symptoms (asymptomatic)

While experts know that these kinds of transmissions are happening among those in close contact or in close physical settings, it is not known to what extent. **This means it is extremely important to follow the proven preventative measures.**

¹ Public Health Agency of Canada. "Government of Canada." Canada.ca, Government of Canada, 10 May 2020, www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/symptoms.html?topic=ex-col-faq#a.



UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL DISTANCING IN SPORT/FOOTBALL

SOCIAL DISTANCING IN PANDEMICS

Social distancing measures are approaches taken to minimize close contact with others in the community and include: quarantine and self-isolation at the individual level as well as other community based approaches (e.g. avoiding crowding, school measures and closures, workplace measures and closures, public/mass gathering cancellations, sport and recreation modification) which are further described in the section titled community-based measures below.

ISOLATION

Isolation is recommended for a symptomatic individual that is suspected of having, or known to have, COVID-19. They are directed by Public Health Authority (PHA) to isolate themselves in the home-setting and avoid contact with others until PHA has advised that they are no longer considered contagious.

Isolation includes:

- Not going out of the home setting. This includes school, work, or other public areas
- Not using public transportation (e.g. buses, subways, taxis).
- Identifying a “buddy” to check on and do errands for each another, especially for those who live alone or at high risk for developing complications.²
- Having supplies delivered home instead of running errands (supplies should be left on the front door or at least a 2 metre distance maintained between people).
- If leaving the home setting cannot be avoided (e.g. to go to a medical appointment), wear a mask (if not available, cover mouth and nose with tissues) and maintain a 2 metre distance from others. The health care facility should be informed in advance that the person may be infectious.
- Voluntary home quarantine (“self-isolation”) is recommended for an asymptomatic person, when they have a high risk of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19, (i.e., through close contact with a symptomatic person or their body fluids). They are asked to self-isolate in the home-setting to avoid contact with others in order to prevent transmission of the virus at the earliest stage of illness (i.e., should they develop COVID-19).

² Public Health Agency of Canada. “Government of Canada.” Canada.ca, Government of Canada, 10 May 2020, www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/symptoms.html?topic=ex-col-faq#a.



PROTECTIVE SELF-SEPARATION

Protective self-separation is recommended for a person who is at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19² (e.g., older adults, those with chronic underlying medical conditions or immunocompromised) when the virus is circulating in their community. Voluntary avoidance of crowded places is recommended for a person who is asymptomatic and who is considered to have had a medium risk of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19. This involves avoiding crowded public spaces and places where rapid self-isolation upon onset of symptoms may not be feasible. Examples of these settings include mass gatherings, such as concerts and sporting events; not including hospitals (for HCWs) and schools.

MANDATORY QUARANTINE

Mandatory quarantine is the imposed separation or restriction of movement of individuals, groups or communities, for a defined period of time and in a location determined by the PHA. As local circumstances will vary across Canada and within regions, quarantine may be used to contain, delay or mitigate COVID-19, although its effectiveness once there is widespread community transmission is unknown. An individual in mandatory quarantine is asymptomatic but may have been exposed to the virus causing COVID-19. A decision to implement mandatory quarantine requires careful consideration of the safety of the individual/group/community, the anticipated effectiveness, feasibility and implications.³

COMMUNITY BASED SOCIAL DISTANCING MEASURES

Community-based measures are actions taken by planners, administrators, and employers to protect groups, employees and the population. The measures outlined below are relevant to all non-health care settings and aim to reduce transmission within the community settings such as workplaces, schools, public transportation, communal living settings, spiritual and cultural settings, community centres and other places where people gather such as shopping centres, camps and entertainment facilities.

Community-based measures are actions taken by planners, administrators, and employers to protect groups, employees and the population.



³ Public Health Agency of Canada. "Government of Canada." Canada.ca, Government of Canada, 3 Apr. 2020, www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/public-health-measures-mitigate-covid-19.html.



AVOIDING CROWDING

Factors to consider when making decisions:

- The likelihood that people will comply with crowd avoidance.
- People who are suspected or confirmed of having COVID-19 who are self-isolating, should isolate in the home setting and not go out in public.
- People who are self-monitoring for symptoms ([see section above](#)) should always avoid crowded settings (e.g. sporting events, concerts, airplanes, subway) and places where rapid self-isolation may not be feasible should symptoms develop.
- When in crowded settings, people should practice personal protective measures (e.g., frequent hand hygiene, avoid touching eyes/nose/mouth).
- Employers/businesses could consider implementing staggered work hours to reduce crowding on public transit during peak commuting hours and in large workplaces during normal work day hours.
- Voluntary quarantine of a community can be considered based on the local epidemiologic and social assessment of the situation.
- If public transportation is shut down, transportation alternatives may need to be considered for emergency medical services or medical treatments (dialysis, chemotherapy), as well as for critical infrastructure workers.

MASS GATHERINGS

Mass gatherings are highly visible events with the potential for serious public health consequences if they are not planned and managed carefully. They can amplify the spread of infectious diseases and have the potential to cause additional strain on the health care system when held during outbreaks. Examples of mass gatherings include large meetings, conferences, sporting events, religious events, national and international events.

- Providing clear communication to participants before attending about the risks and advice on how to protect themselves and others to reduce virus transmission to inform individual decision making about attending the event.
- Encouraging personal protective, individual and environmental measures by all attendees.
- Increasing interpersonal distancing (ideally separation of at least 2 metres, not shaking hands, avoiding communal sleeping areas).
- Eliminating self-serve buffet style eating at social/religious gatherings.
- Support frequent hand hygiene by providing hand sanitizers dispensers in prominent locations.
- Discourage attendees from sharing food or drinks.
- Requiring that ill be excluded. People or those with high-risk medical conditions not to attend gatherings and ensuring event organizers have arrangements in place to safely isolate and transport people who become ill on-site remain the most important measures to prevent transmission.
- Implementing organizational measures for the event such as cancellation, postponement, or rearrangement of the event (e.g., offering virtual participation, live streaming to allow participation from a distance, moving venue from indoors to outdoors).⁴

4 Public Health Agency of Canada. "Government of Canada." Canada.ca, Government of Canada, 3 Apr. 2020, www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/public-health-measures-mitigate-covid-19.html.



WORKPLACES/WORKSPACES

Strategies that workplaces can put into effect include:

- Increasing awareness about and communication to staff about COVID-19.
- Encouraging the use of individual measures described below such as frequent hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and self-isolation when ill.
- Evaluate the workplace for areas where people have frequent contact with each other and share spaces and objects.
- Workplaces/community settings should identify possible COVID-19 exposure risks and mitigation approaches.
- Workplaces and other similar community settings are encouraged to increase frequency of cleaning of frequently touched surfaces (e.g., phones, elevator buttons, computers, desks, lunch tables, kitchens, washrooms, cash registers, seating areas, surface counters, customer service counters, bars, restaurant tables/menus).
- Provide access to handwashing facilities and place hand sanitizing dispensers in prominent locations throughout the workplace, if possible.
- Consider providing additional tissues should someone develop respiratory symptoms. If symptoms develop the person should immediately be separated from others, instructed on respiratory etiquette and sent home (not using public transit, if possible).⁵
- Where feasible, adjustments to policies and procedures may be put in place to reduce social contact, such as teleworking arrangements, flexible hours, staggering start times, use of email and teleconferencing.

Icon 1: Communication
Increase communication and awareness about COVID-19 to staff. Workplaces should identify possible COVID-19 exposure risks and mitigation approaches.

Icon 2: Hand Hygiene
Encourage frequent hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and self-isolation when ill. Provide access to handwashing facilities and place hand sanitizing dispensers in prominent locations through the workspace if possible.

Icon 3: Cleaning
Increase frequency of cleaning frequently touched surfaces (ie desks, lunch tables, phones, kitchens, washrooms, computers etc.).

Icon 4: Respiratory Protection
Consider providing additional tissues should someone develop respiratory symptoms. If symptoms develop the person should be immediately separated from others, instructed on respiratory etiquette and sent home.

Icon 5: Social Contact Reduction
Where feasible, adjustment to policies and procedures may be put into place to reduce social contact such as teleworking arrangements, flexible hours, staggering start times, use of e-mail and teleconferencing.

***Additional guidelines listed in Football Canada COVID-19 Return to Football Document.

⁵ Public Health Agency of Canada. "Government of Canada." Canada.ca, Government of Canada, 3 Apr. 2020, www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/public-health-measures-mitigate-covid-19.html.



SOCIAL DISTANCING PARAMETERS IN SPORT

To determine a safe approach to Return to Football it is important to understand social distancing parameters that can be present in local, provincial and federal guidelines. Understanding the potential social distancing guidelines and their implications will help guide the decision making process on how to return to football. Each Local and provincial jurisdiction may have differing social distancing guidelines. Ensure all activities follow your Public Health guidelines and restrictions.

SOCIAL DISTANCING PARAMETERS

STRICT SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Maintain physical distance of 2m
- No non-essential travel
- Increased hand hygiene
- Individual Activities
- Outdoor or within Home
- Virtual activities preferred
- No contact activities
- No competition
- No shared equipment

CONTROLLED SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Maintain physical distance of 2m
- No non-essential travel
- Increased hand hygiene
- Symptom screening in place
- Small group gatherings
- No or limited spectators
- No exchange of equipment
- No contact activities
- In club play or modified games and option

REDUCED SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Maintain social distancing where applicable
- Increased hand hygiene
- Increased group sizes
- Limited spectators
- Interclub or regional competition a possibility
- Introduction of contact activities and potential modified games
- Some shared equipment
- Enhanced cleaning protocols in place

LIMITED SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Maintain social distancing where applicable
- Increased hand hygiene
- Potentially larger groups
- Fewer restrictions on spectators
- No restrictions on activity types
- Provincial or domestic scale events possible
- Shared equipment
- Enhanced cleaning protocols



STANDARD SAFETY AND HYGIENE GUIDELINES

The following health, medical, and safety information are considered to be applicable to all levels of the Return to Football framework until such time that public health information and guidelines change. In addition, this information is generally applicable to all training environments including indoor and outdoor facilities. Municipal, Provincial and Federal Public Health information and guidelines must be respected at all times and supersede the information below.

Football Canada recommends these hygiene guidelines to help reduce the risk of transmission for all participants and fans:

STANDARD SAFETY AND HYGIENE GUIDELINES

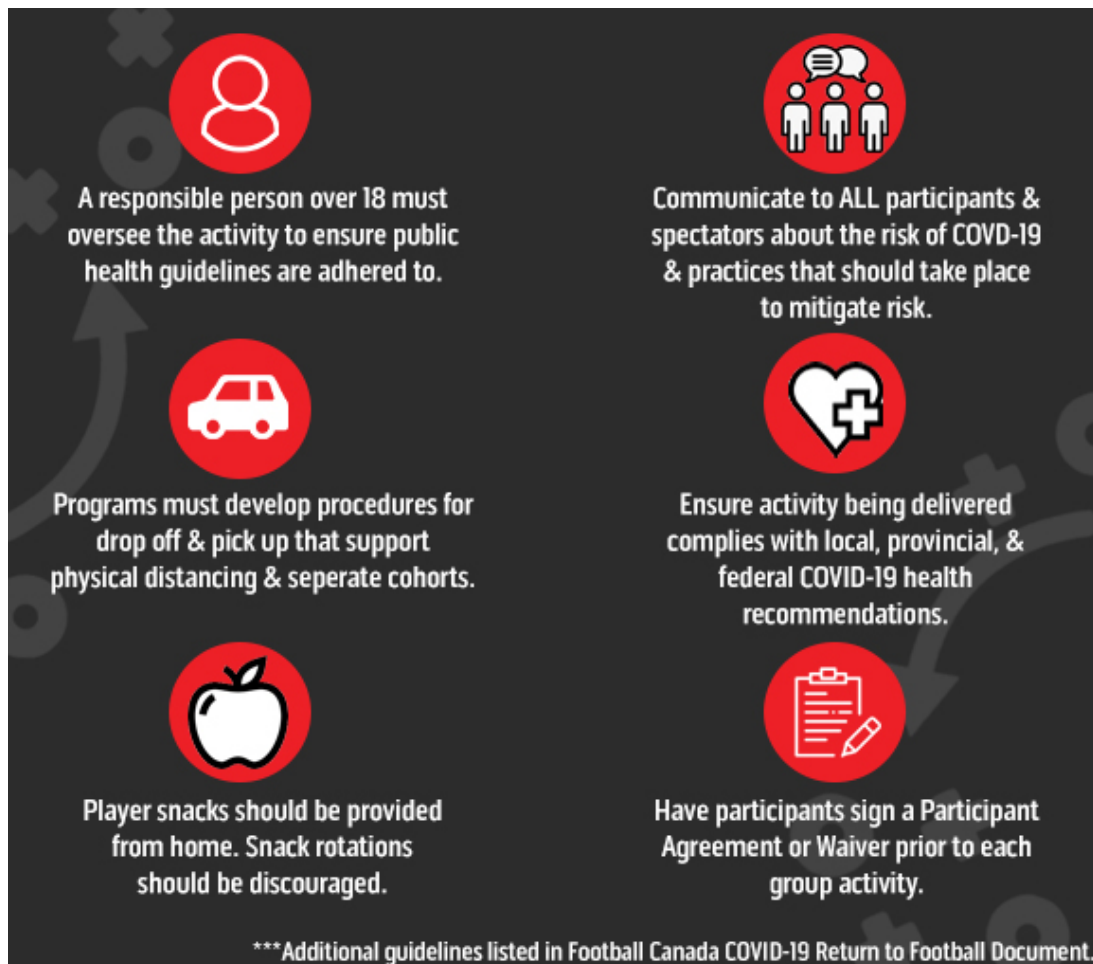


- Anyone participating should proactively and regularly check their health status (e.g., taking temperatures and monitoring for any symptoms).
- Arrive dressed and ready to be active.
- No intended contact with another person.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as masks should be required in circumstances when a minimum 2 metre distance cannot be maintained between individuals. In addition, masks are generally not recommended for use during high intensity activities which involve heavy breathing.



- All adult personnel on the sidelines that will possibly have close contact with the athletes (i.e. athletic therapists, equipment manager, coaches) should wear masks.
- Any individuals spectating activities should be encouraged to wear masks and maintain a 2 metre distance from other spectators and participants.
- Vigorous vocalization should be avoided when closer than 12 feet distance from other individuals (e.g. shouting, cheering).
- Take extra precautions if you are at increased risk, especially those who are aged 65 years and older, have a compromised immune system, and/or have underlying medical conditions, or organize a gathering where individuals at increased risk may be present.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION



- The responsible person should be provided necessary education to provide information, respond to questions and implement necessary protocols and guidelines.
- Communicate to all participants (coaches, players and their guardians, volunteers) and spectators about the risk of COVID-19 and practices that should be undertaken to mitigate risk (e.g., respiratory etiquette such as sneezing or coughing into the crook of your elbow, no spitting, no clearing of nasal passages hand hygiene, physical distancing). Information posters and fact sheets can be located [here](#) and downloaded for use at any sporting, physical recreation or outdoor activity.



- Develop and follow an exclusion policy that ensures symptomatic participants are immediately excluded from activities. ([Appendix F](#))
- Take every reasonable step required to prevent participants who are required to self-isolate from entering activities. ([Appendix F](#))
- Player snacks should be provided from home. Snack rotations should be discouraged.⁶

EQUIPMENT

Player equipment should be spaced out to maintain physical distancing.

Players should bring their own water with them from home; use of water fountains & team water bottles should be discouraged.

Where possible equipment that is handled by hands or head, as well as personal items, should NOT be shared.

Clean & disinfect shared equipment frequently.

Coaches should come prepared with their own practice plans, training tools, technology & avoid sharing with other coaches.

Assign one coach or individual to be responsible for set-up & take down of equipment (ie nets, cones, etc.) to reduce the number of contact points.

***Additional guidelines listed in Football Canada COVID-19 Return to Football Document.

- Providing each player with assigned equipment or allowing the use of self-owned, disinfected equipment. Where possible equipment that is handled by hands or head, and other personal items, should not be shared.
- Clean and disinfect shared equipment frequently. Depending on the activity, this may be after each player's use, between sessions, at specified breaks, after switching stations, and between groups.
- Re-use of items that cannot be easily cleaned and sanitized should be avoided.

⁶ "Indoor and Outdoor Gatherings Guidance." Wordmark of Government of Prince Edward Island, www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-and-wellness/indoor-and-outdoor-gatherings-guidance.



IDENTIFICATION, TRACING, AND ASSESSMENT

- The responsible person(s) must screen all participants for symptoms of COVID-19 prior to the commencement of any activity; any participant that is exhibiting any symptoms cannot participate.
- Ill individuals need to be isolated and provided a mask and gloves until the participant is able to go home.
- If a participant does show symptoms they must be immediately sent home and encourage them to contact your provincial health authorities for next steps.
- Require anyone attending/participating to self-monitor and complete a screening checklist before any/all activity sessions. The responsible person should verify the self-screening has taken place. ([Appendix E](#))
- Athletes, coaches, and staff must answer 'No' to all of the following questions prior to attending any session:
 - Do I have any of the symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, chest pain, difficult breathing, fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, abnormal muscle pain, headache, sore throat, painful swallowing, runny nose, new loss of taste or smell, gastrointestinal illness?
 - Have I been in contact with or cared for someone with COVID-19?
 - Have I returned from a trip outside the province/country within the last 2 weeks?
- Stay home when sick even with mild symptoms.
- Staff or athletes at risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are recommended to review their specific health concerns with their physician.
- Ask all players, spectators, staff and volunteers to sign-in on arrival with name and phone number and/or email to facilitate contact tracing if necessary, and keep attendance records within the organization for a minimum of one month or as long as advised by local/provincial authority.
- If a player, coach, staff or volunteer develops COVID-19 symptoms during the activity they should be sent home to begin isolation immediately and the organization should immediately activate their COVID-19 emergency action plan. ([See EAP section](#))



IDENTIFICATION, TRACING, AND ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES



The responsible person(s) must screen ALL participants for symptoms of COVID-19 prior to the commencement of any activity; any participant that is exhibiting symptoms cannot participate.



Ask ALL players, spectators, staff & volunteers to sign-in on arrival with name & phone number/e-mail to facilitate contact tracing if necessary. Attendance records must be kept for a minimum of one month or as advised by provincial/local authority.



Require anyone attending/participating to self-monitor & complete a screening checklist before ALL activity sessions. The responsible person should verify the self-screening has taken place.



Staff or athletes at risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are recommended to review their specific health concerns with their physician.



If a player, coach, staff or volunteer develops COVID-19 symptoms during the activity they should be sent home to begin isolation immediately. The organization should immediately activate their COVID-19 Emergency Action Plan.



Ill individuals need to be isolated and provided a mask and gloves until the participant is able to go home.

***Additional guidelines listed in Football Canada COVID-19 Return to Football Document.



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>

FACILITY GUIDELINES

- Print and post signage outlining policies and procedures such as:
 - Physical distancing expectations
 - Hand hygiene
 - Respiratory etiquette (coughing and sneezing)
 - Cleaning and disinfection practices and expectations
- Ensure availability to handwashing, or alcohol-based hand sanitizer at the site available to all participants for all program activities.
- Provide participant only zones where spectators cannot enter.
- Physical distancing among spectators, staff and volunteers is to be maintained, and may require measures to promote physical distancing in seating areas.
- Provide adequate entry options that allows for correct social distancing measures and where possible provide one way entry and exit points.
- Do not allow loitering after participation for either participant or spectators.
- Spectators, participants and players, staff, coaches and volunteers should try to minimize cheering and whistling as much as possible as COVID-19 has been shown to spread through vigorous vocalization. Noise-makers and other cheering devices are permitted.
- If restrooms and/or showers are available, either restrict access or limit the number of users at a given time, maintain hand washing supplies, increase cleaning and disinfecting frequency, install no-touch garbage bins and ensure areas are disinfected frequently.

NOTE : Each facility will have their own requirements and will be required to follow the municipal and provincial guidelines and restrictions. It is suggested that you use the above guidelines to ensure facilities have the above minimum requirements.



FOOTBALL CANADA RETURN TO FOOTBALL GUIDELINES AND DECISION MAKING FRAMEWORK

POSSIBLE RETURN TO FOOTBALL RESTRICTIONS

As Football and the sporting community across Canada work towards a return to play all organizations, administrators, participants, spectators and family should be aware of possible local, provincial and federal restrictions and modifications to play.

Possible Restriction to Play

- Type of play allowed: Contact, Non-Contact, Complete distancing, No play
- Level of social distancing required
- Participant distance
- Sanitization requirements
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements
- Number of participants allowed
- Number of spectators allowed
- Facility Restrictions
- Duration of available time for programming
- Field Availability
- Cost

Possible Consideration for Return to Play

- Age group of the athlete
- Football Canada LTAD Competition Review structure
- Capacity
- Tracing guidelines and tracking
- Insurance Guidelines
- Federal/Provincial Guidelines
- Education and communication for participants



LEVELS OF RETURN TO PLAY

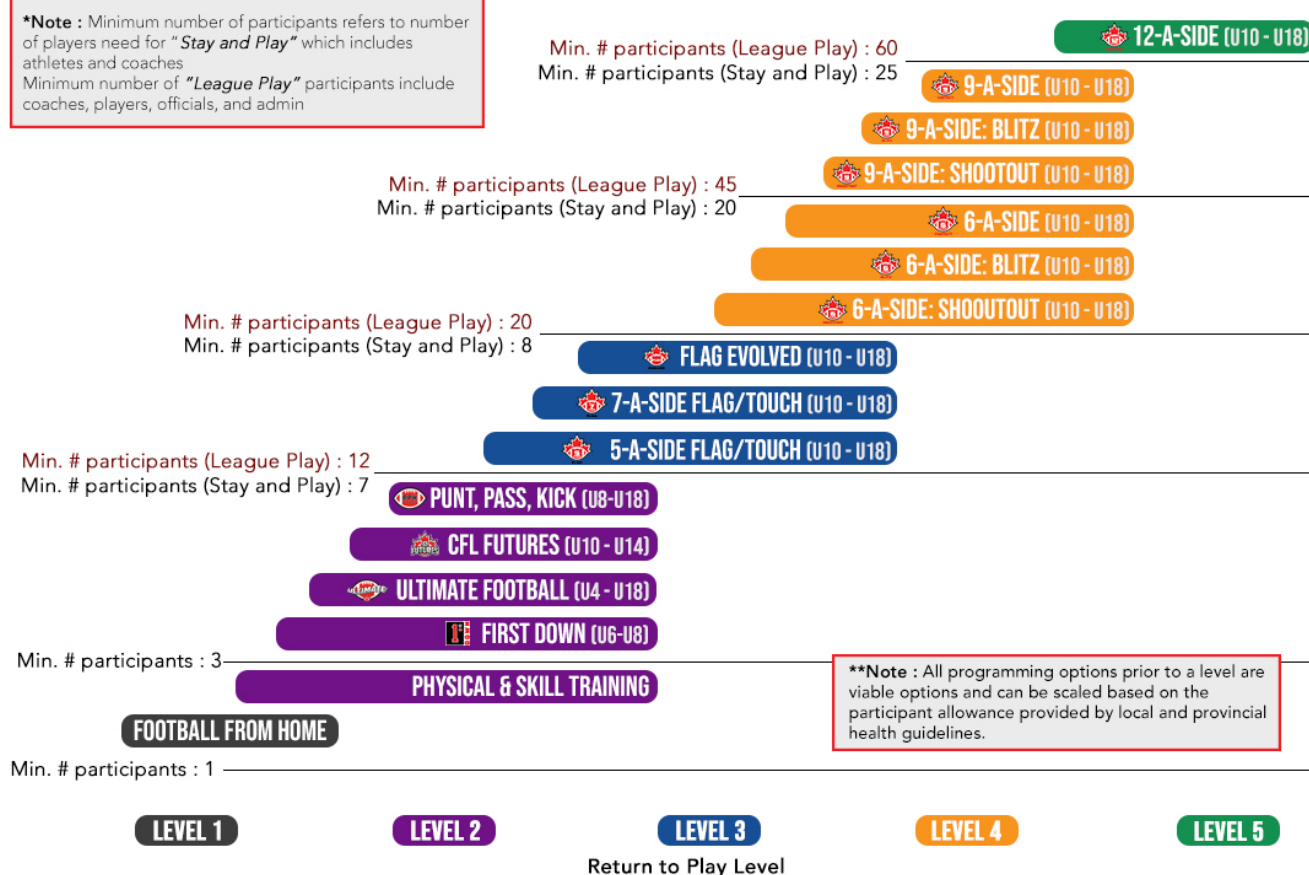
In order to understand the potential programming options and how to implement those options it is important to understand where your local municipality and province may fall in regards to restriction and roll out. It is important to note the below levels of return to play may not match up exactly with your municipal and provincial health guidelines and thus ensure you are following the local and provincial guidelines first.

L1	FOOTBALL FROM HOME	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Strict social distancing▪ No field or facility access▪ No contact activities allowed▪ No competition allowed
L2	PHYSICAL TRAINING & SKILL DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Controlled social distancing▪ Available field or facility access▪ No contact activities allowed▪ No competition allowed
L3	INTRODUCTION OF NON-CONTACT COMPETITIVE ACTIVITIES/GAMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Reduced social distancing▪ Available field or facility access▪ Non-Contact (Flag or touch) Competitive activities/drills allowed▪ Non-Contact (Flag or Touch) Games allowed
L4	INTRODUCTION OF CONTACT COMPETITIVE ACTIVITIES/GAMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Reduced social distancing▪ Available field or facility access▪ Non-Contact (Flag or touch) and Contact Competitive activities/drills allowed▪ Non-Contact (Flag or Touch) and Contact Games allowed
L5	RETURN TO FULL PARTICIPATION WITH MODIFIED DELIVERY FOR SPREAD MITIGATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Limited social distancing▪ Available Field or Facility Access▪ Non-Contact (Flag or Touch) and Contact Competitive activities/drills allowed▪ Non-Contact (Flag or Touch) and Contact games allowed



RETURN TO FOOTBALL DECISION MAKING FRAMEWORK

***Note :** Minimum number of participants refers to number of players need for "Stay and Play" which includes athletes and coaches
 Minimum number of "League Play" participants include coaches, players, officials, and admin



PROGRAMMING OPTIONS

"STAY AND PLAY"

MODIFICATIONS AND GUIDELINES FOR 5-A-SIDE FLAG TO 12-A-SIDE TACKLE

The main concept of "Stay and Play" is to let participants join their club or school team of choice and "stay" within that team for practice and training only. The only "play" part they would get would be inter-squad competitions within their team based on social distancing guidelines. Officials could be added at that point to run the inter-squad game but any official assigned to a particular team would have to remain with that particular team for the duration and ensure that the total number of participants do not exceed health guidelines/restrictions.

"Stay and Play" would limit the cohort of their exposure and ensure that there would be no intermingling of teams during this planning period. No schedule of games or scrimmages against any other clubs or school teams would be allowed. At the younger levels of participation numbers can be kept small to allow for a gradual progression to "League Play".



PROGRESSING FROM “STAY AND PLAY” TO “LEAGUE PLAY”

As provincial health authorities move through their phased re-opening and decrease restrictions around sport moving from “Stay and Play” to “League Play” is the natural transition. Groups will transition from practicing and competing internally with their teams to competing against other teams as long as PHA guidelines allow greater number of participants as well as competition.

Several factors need to be considered when transitioning from “Stay and Play” to “League Play”:

- Length of season
- Competition structure
- Number of allowable participants
- Tracing
- Game Format
- Local and provincial health guidelines and restrictions

LEVEL 1: FOOTBALL FROM HOME

Football from Home is a programming option for members and participants which will provide education, learning tools, engaging activities and football experiences, all from the comfort of home.

Focus: There are four pillars involved in the Football from Home program: learning from home, coaching from home, and programs from home. Learn more about each pillar below.

<http://footballcanada.com/football-from-home/#1587584041259-921b951c-ff7d>

Engage with the *#FootballFromHome* initiative by using the hashtags *#LearningFromHome*, *#CoachingFromHome*, and *#ProgramsFromHome* on social media to share how you are engaging with football from home.





LEVEL 2: PHYSICAL TRAINING AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

FOCUS: Individual skill development that promotes social distancing and can scale based on the number requirements for participation.

PROGRAM OPTIONS:

	PERSONAL TRAINING		CFL FUTURES PROGRAM
	PHYSICAL TRAINING: VOLT ATHLETICS		PUNT, PASS, KICK
	FOOTBALL CANADA'S FIRST DOWN PROGRAM		ULTIMATE FOOTBALL

*Equivalent Provincial Programming

NOTE : All programming options prior to this level are viable options and can be scaled based on the participant allowance provided by local and provincial health guidelines.

LEVEL 3: INTRODUCTION OF NON - CONTACT COMPETITIVE ACTIVITIES/GAMES

FOCUS: Non-Contact or unintentional contact activities and games with lower numbers of participants.

PROGRAM OPTIONS:

	5-A-SIDE FLAG OR TOUCH (NON-CONTACT COMPETITIVE) PLAYERS : 5 - 10+ COACHES : 2+ "STAY AND PLAY" A POSSIBILITY
	7-A-SIDE FLAG OR TOUCH (NON-CONTACT COMPETITIVE) PLAYERS : 7 - 14+ COACHES : 2+ "STAY AND PLAY" A POSSIBILITY

* Equivalent Provincial Programming

NOTE : All programming options prior to this level are viable options and can be scaled based on the participant allowance provided by local and provincial health guidelines.



LEVEL 4: INTRODUCTION OF CONTACT COMPETITIVE ACTIVITIES/GAMES

FOCUS: Contact or Non-Contact activities and modified games with an allowance for more participants.

PROGRAM OPTIONS:

	6-A-SIDE BLITZ (CONTACT WITH LIMITED PARTICIPANTS/TIME)  PLAYERS : 6 - 12+  COACHES : 2 - 4+ "STAY AND PLAY" A POSSIBILITY
	6-A-SIDE (CONTACT WITH LIMITED PARTICIPANTS)  PLAYERS : 6 - 12+  COACHES : 2 - 4+ "STAY AND PLAY" A POSSIBILITY
	9-A-SIDE BLITZ (CONTACT WITH LESS PARTICIPANTS THAN NORMAL AND LIMITED TIME)  PLAYERS : 16 - 22+  COACHES : 4 - 6+ "STAY AND PLAY" A POSSIBILITY
	9-A-SIDE (CONTACT WITH LESS PARTICIPANTS THAN NORMAL)  PLAYERS : 16 - 22+  COACHES : 4 - 6+ "STAY AND PLAY" A POSSIBILITY




*Equivalent Provincial Programming

NOTE : All programming options prior to this level are viable options and can be scaled based on the participant allowance provided by local and provincial health guidelines.

LEVEL 5: RETURN TO FULL PARTICIPATION WITH MODIFIED DELIVERY FOR SPREAD MITIGATION

FOCUS: Full implementation of full contact full field activities and games still with game modifications to reduce opportunities for spread.

PROGRAM OPTIONS:

	12-A-SIDE (CONTACT)  PLAYERS : 25 - 60+  COACHES : 4 - 8+ "STAY AND PLAY" A POSSIBILITY
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*Equivalent Provincial Programming

NOTE : All programming options prior to this level are viable options and can be scaled based on the participant allowance provided by local and provincial health guidelines.



HIGH PERFORMANCE RETURN TO PLAY 2020/2021

Football Canada will be working with provincial members as well as Sport Canada to develop a plan to have both high performance competitions and national teams operating under municipal, provincial and federal health guidelines. Two committees have been tasked with developing an operational Return to High Performance Football. The Football Canada Competitions Committee and High Performance Committee will provide an operational plan over the next couple months.





FOOTBALL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

PROGRAM REGISTRATION AND EQUIPMENT DISTRIBUTION

PROGRAM REGISTRATION

Program registrations need to comply with provincial health requirements for social distancing and infection reduction. Below are policy/procedure guidelines to guide that process:

- Where feasible all participant registration should be done online, including collection of payment.
- Try to limit the use of cash and limit the handling of credit cards and loyalty cards wherever possible, by allowing customers to scan or tap their cards and handle the card readers themselves.
- Program organizers should take attendance and keep a record of all participants in case of an outbreak ([see Tracing and Managing COVID-19](#)).

EQUIPMENT DISTRIBUTION

Football equipment distribution needs to comply with provincial health requirements for social distancing and infection reduction. Below are policy/procedure guidelines to guide that process:

DISTANCING

- Schedule equipment pickups under 30 people at one time (one player & parent) & able to maintain physical distancing at facility.
- Any forms required should be completed in advance online and fees should be collected in advance using online payment or e-transfer.

HYGIENE & SANITATION

- Masks for equipment fitters & players are recommended.
- Equipment fitters are recommended to sanitize between each fitting (wash hands for at least 20 seconds).
- It is recommended all equipment be sanitized before distribution and any equipment that has been tried on and not given out, should be sanitized before the next player. For proper sanitation procedures, it is recommended for teams & leagues to contact their equipment suppliers/makers.
- Sanitization stations made available & appropriate physical distance signage visible.

TEAM MEETINGS AND FUNCTIONS

Team meetings and functions need to comply with provincial health requirements for social distancing and infection reduction. It is highly encouraged to do as much of these activities electronically or other avenues such as online registration.



TRACING AND MANAGING COVID-19 INFECTIONS

TRACING GUIDELINES

In order to provide local and provincial health authorities with the necessary information for tracing and managing infections if they occur, organizations should be prepared to collect information from each participant and spectator for each activity.

Ask all players, spectators, staff and volunteers to sign-in on arrival with name and phone number and/or email, date, venue location to facilitate contact tracing if necessary, and keep attendance records for a minimum of one month.

MANAGING COVID-19 INFECTIONS

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN (EAP)

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.

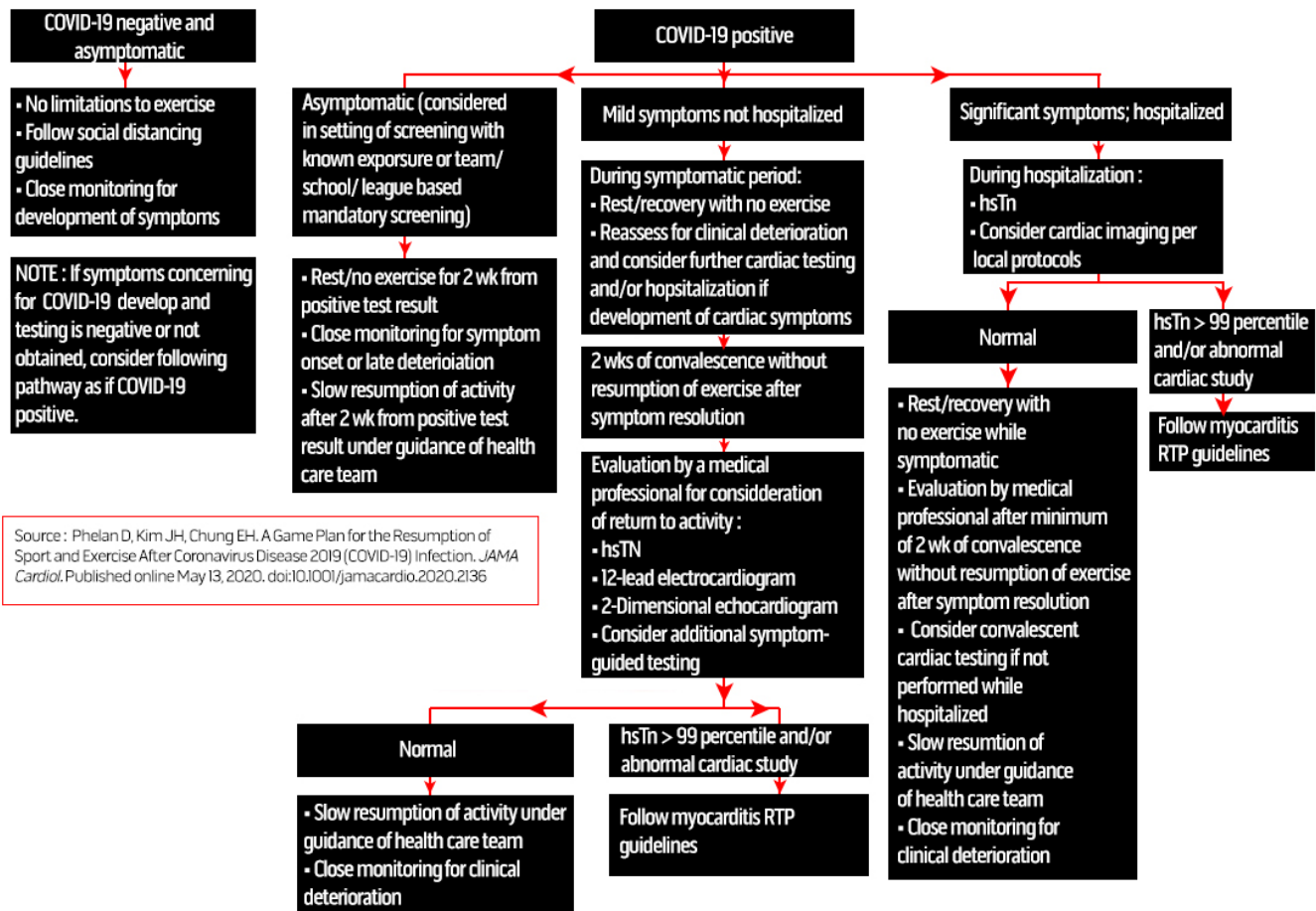
1. Identify the roles and responsibilities of staff or volunteers if a case or outbreak is reported. Determine who within the organization has the authority to modify, restrict, postpone or cancel activities.
2. If staff (including volunteers) or a participant reports they are suspected or confirmed 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 to PHA and not to return to activity for at least 14 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 ([Appendix E](#)) to help determine if further assessment or testing for COVID-19 is needed.
 - Individuals can contact provincial health authorities for health advice.
 - Individuals can learn more about how to manage their illness here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/symptoms.html?topic=tilelink>
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.



5. If your organization is contacted by a medical health officer in the course of contact tracing, cooperate with local health authorities.⁷

INDIVIDUAL RETURN TO PLAY FROM COVID-19

In the event of a participant becoming ill due to COVID-19 please ensure that the individuals consult their physicians and PHA on appropriate steps for when to return. As additional guidance refer to the COVID-19 return to sport protocol below.⁸



⁷ "Return to Sport Guidelines for B.C." VIASport British Columbia, www.viasport.ca/site/default/files/ReturntoSports-Guidelines.pdf.

⁸ Phelan D, Kim JH, Chung EH. A Game Plan for the Resumption of Sport and Exercise After Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Infection. *JAMA Cardiol.* Published online May 13, 2020. doi:10.1001/jamacardio.2020.2136



COMMUNICATION AND MESSAGING

Ensuring safety measures are being met and adhered to depend on everyone being aware of, and understanding the health and sport specific guidelines. Communication of the guidelines to your participants and spectators is an important component of the Return to Football guidelines. See [Appendix E](#) for a sample letter you can share that can be adapted for your organization.

Participants should be asked to sign a participant agreement acknowledging they have read the guidelines and understand their risk before participating. Contact your Provincial Sport Organization for a template participant agreement/waiver (Appendix B).

It should also be communicated to participants that they are subject to removal from activities/facility use should they fail to comply with outlined protocols.

Print and post signage outlining policies and procedures such as:

- Physical distancing expectations,
- Hand hygiene,
- Respiratory etiquette (coughing and sneezing), and
- Cleaning and disinfection practices and expectations.



APPENDIX A - DEFINITIONS

INFECTED PERSON

An infected person is a person who has had a positive PCR (laboratory) test confirming the presence of COVID-19.

POTENTIALLY INFECTED PERSON

A potentially infected person is someone who:

- Has symptoms or signs suggestive of COVID-19
- Awaiting results of testing following a close contact (see below)

CLOSE CONTACT

A close contact is someone who has:

- Had contact with an infected person (being contact within 1 metre and for >15 minutes);
- Provided direct care to an infected person without using proper personal protective equipment;
- Stayed in the same close environment as an infected person (including sharing a workplace, classroom or household or being at the same gathering) for any amount of time;
- Travelled in close proximity with (that is, within 1 m separation from) an infected person in any kind of conveyance.

COVID-19 is most likely spread from person to person through:

- Contact with droplets when an infected person talks loudly laughs, coughs or sneezes
- Direct contact with an infected person while they are infectious (both people are, close enough for disease transfer)
- Touching objects or surfaces that are contaminated by droplets coughed or sneezed from an infected person

QUARANTINE

This is the restriction of activities, or the separation of people who are not ill but who may have been exposed to an infected person or disease. The purpose of quarantine is to monitor symptoms and ensure the early detection of cases, preventing possible further disease spread.

ISOLATION

This is the separation of ill or infected persons from others to prevent the spread of infection or contamination.¹

¹ Falvey, Éanna. Safe Return to Rugby – in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic. World Rugby Federation, 2020.



PARTICIPANTS:

ATHLETE

An individual who is trained or skilled in exercises, sports, or games requiring physical strength, agility, or stamina.

COACH

An individual who instructs or trains athletes in the fundamentals of a sport and directs team strategy.

OFFICIAL

An individual who administers the rules of a game or sport especially as a referee or umpire.



APPENDIX B - EXTERNAL GOVERNMENT/EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL AND TERRITORIAL - COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH LINKS

<u>Canada</u>	<u>Nova Scotia</u>
<u>Alberta</u>	<u>Nunavut</u>
<u>British Columbia</u>	<u>Ontario</u>
<u>Manitoba</u>	<u>Prince Edward Island</u>
<u>New Brunswick</u>	<u>Québec</u>
<u>Newfoundland and Labrador</u>	<u>Saskatchewan</u>
<u>Northwest Territories</u>	<u>Yukon</u>

PROVINCIAL FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION LINKS

<u>Alberta</u>	<u>Nova Scotia</u>
<u>British Columbia</u>	<u>Ontario</u>
<u>Manitoba</u>	<u>Prince Edward Island</u>
<u>New Brunswick</u>	<u>Québec</u>
<u>Newfoundland and Labrador</u>	<u>Saskatchewan</u>

RELEVANT LINKS

Please visit the Football Canada Return to Football COVID-19 Response page for additional information:

<http://footballcanada.com/return-to-football-covid-19-response/>



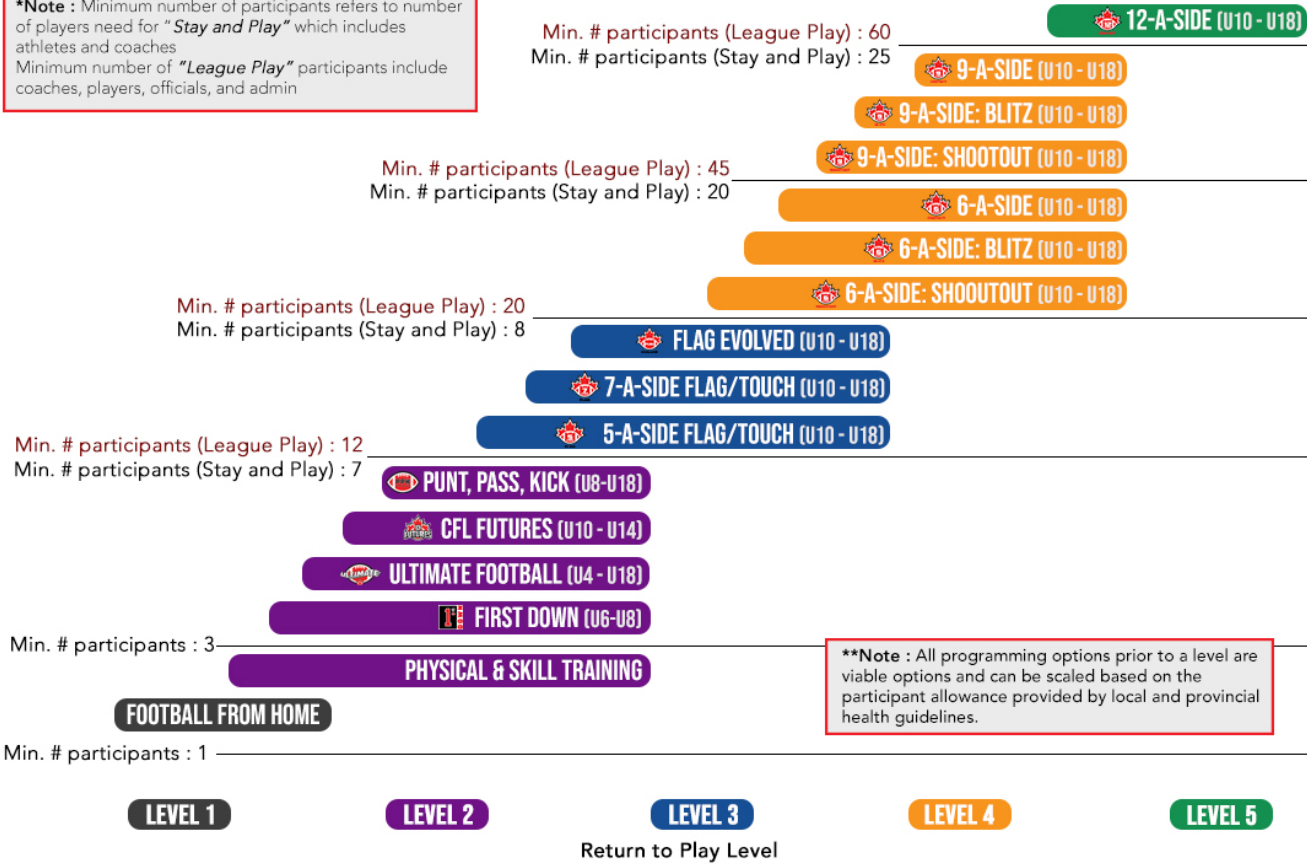
APPENDIX C - LEVEL OF RESTRICTION OF PLAY

L1	FOOTBALL FROM HOME	Strict social distancing No field or facility access No contact activities allowed No competition allowed
L2	PHYSICAL TRAINING & SKILL DEVELOPMENT	Controlled social distancing Available field or facility access No contact activities allowed No competition allowed
L3	INTRODUCTION OF NON-CONTACT COMPETITIVE ACTIVITIES/GAMES	Reduced social distancing Available field or facility access Non-Contact (Flag or touch) Competitive activities/drills allowed Non-Contact (Flag or Touch) Games allowed
L4	INTRODUCTION OF CONTACT COMPETITIVE ACTIVITIES/GAMES	Reduced social distancing Available field or facility access Non-Contact (Flag or touch) and Contact Competitive activities/drills allowed Non-Contact (Flag or Touch) and Contact Games allowed
L5	RETURN TO FULL PARTICIPATION WITH MODIFIED DELIVERY FOR SPREAD MITIGATION	Limited social distancing Available Field or Facility Access Non-Contact (Flag or Touch) and Contact Competitive activities/drills allowed Non-Contact (Flag or Touch) and Contact games allowed



APPENDIX D - RETURN TO FOOTBALL FRAMEWORK

***Note :** Minimum number of participants refers to number of players need for "Stay and Play" which includes athletes and coaches
Minimum number of "League Play" participants include coaches, players, officials, and admin





APPENDIX E - COVID-19 ASSESSMENT TOOL

SCREENING QUESTIONS

1. Do you have any of the following **new** or **worsening** symptoms or signs?

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | New or worsening cough |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Shortness of breath |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Sore throat |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Runny nose, sneezing or nasal congestion
(In absence of underlying reasons for symptoms such as
season allergies and post-nasal drip) |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Hoarse voice |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Difficulty swallowing |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | New smell or taste disorder(s) |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Unexplained fatigue/malaise |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Chills |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Headache |

2. Have you travelled outside of Canada or had close contact with anyone that has travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days?

- Yes No

3. Do you have a fever?

- Yes No

4. Have you had close contact with anyone with respiratory illness or a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19?

- Yes No

5. Did you wear the required and/or recommended PPE according to the type of duties you were performing (eg., goggles, mask and gown or N95 with aerosol generating medical procedures (AGMPs) when you had close contact with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19?

- Yes No



APPENDIX F - EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN TOOL (EAP)

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 ([Appendix E](#)) to help determine if further assessment or testing for COVID-19 is needed.
 - Individuals can contact provincial health authorities for health advice
 - Individuals can learn more about how to manage their illness here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/symptoms.html?topic=tilelink>
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.



APPENDIX G - COMMUNICATION RESOURCES

Email or letter template message: Return to our sport with respect to COVID-19
Dear <<PARTICIPANT, COACH, PARENT>>

As << Insert Province>> public health authorities develop guidelines to lift some restrictions on gathering in a responsible way, <NAME OF PSO> has been working with Football Canada and the Province of <<Insert Province>> to understand the recommendations of our Chief Provincial Health Officer and how they best apply within sport.

The attached Return to Football Plan has been developed for our sport in order to ensure:

- health and safety of all individuals is a priority
- activities are in alignment with provincial health recommendations
- modifications to activities are in place in order to reduce the risks to each sport organization and its participants
- our sport is united and aligned on a plan to reopen throughout the province

While we do hope things will return to normal in the not too distant future, currently this Return to Football Plan will be the new normal until we are advised otherwise by public health authorities.

If you choose to participate, you must follow these rules:

- If you don't feel well or are displaying symptoms of COVID-19, you must stay home.
- If you have traveled outside of Canada, you are not permitted at the facility until you have self-isolated for a minimum of 14 days.
- If you live in a household with someone who has COVID-19 or is showing symptoms of COVID-19, please stay home.
- Wash your hands before participating
- Bring your own equipment, water bottle and hand sanitizer
- Comply with physical distancing measures at all time
- Avoid physical contact with others, including shaking hands, high fives, etc.
- Leave the field of play as quickly as possible after you finish

Our Return to Football Plan is based on current public health guidance. While we are all doing our best to minimize the risk of exposure to COVID-19, while the virus circulates in our communities it is impossible to completely eliminate the risk. Each participant must make their own decision as to whether it is in their best interest to resume participation at this time. You must take into account your own circumstances and make the decision that is right for you. Should you choose to join us, we require your full cooperation with our Return to Football Plan.

Sincerely,



CANADA

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