



## COVID-19 Return to Play Information FAQ

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### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Is hockey being played this year?**

Yes – Hockey Alberta & Hockey Edmonton have worked closely with Alberta Health Services (AHS) to create a plan that meets all Provincial regulations and guidelines.

#### **Is it going to be safe for my child to play hockey?**

Yes, every decision is being made with the safety of players, coaches, and parents at the forefront. Collectively, the Province and the City have implemented a combination of physical distancing, mask, small cohorts, and increased sanitation requirements to minimize the risk for all participants.

#### **What will evaluations look like?**

Players and coaches will be “distanced” and the groups will be small. Each age category (with the exception of U7 - Discovery) will have a timed skill skate which will be used to create mini-cohort groups; the drills are posted [here](#). These mini-cohort groups will be combined to create Development Groups within Divisional Cohorts. These Development Groups may not be the final teams. We will be taking a three-step approach to this process:

1. Evaluations - Timed Skill Skate Session
2. Mini-Cohort Group Creation (approx. 9-12 players)
3. Development Cohort Group Creation (3-4 mini-cohorts)

#### **Are there scrimmages for evaluations?**

No. Prior to being placed in a cohort, scrimmages are not possible in accordance with AHS guidelines.

#### **Why are the initial skates just based on individual skill evaluations?**

This is in order to adhere to the ‘Physically Distanced’ guidelines in order to evaluate players and place them in further ‘Cohort Groups’. More skills based sessions mean a larger sample size for the evaluators. If a player has an abnormally poor or good skate, it will impact their overall rankings less, creating a more accurate score of the players’ average ability.

#### **When will evaluations start?**

Players will be notified of their evaluation skate time no later than 5-7 days prior to their first skate. Players may be on the ice as early as:

- U7 JR & SR - September 12th
  - U9 - September 7th
  - U11 - September 7th
  - U13 - September 12th (Goalies - September 7th)
- NOTE:** There are no evaluations for U7 - Discovery

**NOTE:** Confederation Hockey will be offering pre-evaluation skates (for U9-U13) this year, which will be offered September 1 - 7 (information will be sent out via email).

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### **When will cohort groups be created?**

Players will be notified of their cohort group placement as soon as possible following evaluations. In some cases, first cohort practices may occur within a day's notice.

**Why do we have mini-cohort groups? Why can't we just do regular team sizes of our designated 'Cohort Groups?'** There is not enough room on the players benches or in dressing rooms to accommodate full teams and allow them to 'Physically Distance' safely. As per Alberta Health Services "Note: Even while using cohorting, physical distancing must be maintained in all aspects of hockey activity except while participants are on the ice. (For example, dressing rooms, benches, and in public areas)."

### **What will the season look like for U11 and U13?**

- Maintain two-year age groups
- Teams will be made up of approximately 11 skaters plus one goalie.
- A cohort of four teams (to a max of 50 people) will be created to provide game play opportunities.
- The game play will be 4v4 on full ice.

### **What will the season look like for U9?**

- Maintain two-year age groups
- Teams will be made up of approximately 9 skaters.
- A cohort of four teams (to a max of 50 people) will be created to provide game play opportunities.
- The game play will be 4v4 on half ice.

### **What will the season look like for the U7 Timbits Program?**

- Maintain one year age groups
- Maintain practices and cross-ice games for Senior Timbits
- Maintain practices for Junior Timbits
- Maintain practices for Discovery
- Teams will be made up of approximately 9 skaters.
- A cohort of four teams (to a max of 40 people) will be created to provide game play opportunities.
- Scrimmages will be in small ice areas.

### **Will there be different protocols around the locker room and benches?**

Yes. Players are strongly encouraged to arrive with their required equipment on, as dressing room space will be limited to accommodate physical distancing. Shower facilities are not available. Players are to bring a pre-filled, labelled water bottle. Bottle fillers are available but drinking fountains are not available.

### **Why is Physical Distancing mandatory on the players bench and in dressing rooms if they are within their 'Cohort Group'?**

This is an Alberta Health guideline and a Hockey Alberta mandate. Technically, there should be no activities with any close contact. However, if the activity must have close contact, such as

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hockey, then the contact should only take place when it is necessary. All other efforts to 'Physically Distance' must be taken including on players benches and dressing rooms.

### **Can parents watch games & practices?**

Spectators will not have access to the facility until the scheduled booking time, and should exit the facility as soon as the booking time slot has ended. Spectators will not be allowed in the participant areas. Physical distancing should be maintained and masks are recommended for spectators. There is limited spectator space. Spectator areas are restricted to 25% of total seating to a maximum of 100 people as per the Alberta Health Guidelines.

### **What about the Confed Christmas Tournament, Minor Hockey Week, Playoffs, etc?**

At this time these events cannot happen as they do not comply with Stage 2 of AHS guidelines during the Hockey Edmonton Development Season.. However Hockey Edmonton has a plan in place should AHS guidelines change in a way that allows these events to occur.

### **Can coaches help with multiple teams?**

Yes. However, coaches are only to be part of one Cohort. If a Coach wants to help with multiple teams, s/he can be part of one team Cohort but must wear a mask and practice physical distancing when interacting with any other teams.

### **How will Confederation Hockey handle contact tracing and screening?**

Hockey Alberta has set guidelines to follow to ensure all interactions are tracked and that symptomatic players do not participate in any activities. Players are required to complete a daily COVID check-in. Confederation Hockey will be using Health Check, which will be available through TeamSnap once cohort groups are created.

### **What happens if a player answers yes to any of the symptom screening questions?**

Any player who answers YES to any of the questions may no longer participate in the program until a minimum 14 day quarantine period has elapsed or they have provided a negative Covid19 test and all symptoms have been resolved.

### **What happens if a player / coach tests positive for COVID-19?**

The individual must immediately remove themselves from the session and go home as safely as possible. Hockey Edmonton Discipline needs to be notified immediately following any participant being removed from any session Hockey Edmonton Discipline will contact Hockey Alberta to facilitate the required AHS protocols under the contact tracking guidelines.

### **Is COVID-19 coverage included as part of the Hockey Canada Insurance?**

Yes. Under Hockey Canada's current General Liability policy, there is a specific definition for the term 'bodily injury' and that definition includes sickness and disease. Many insurance companies are implementing Communicable Disease/COVID-19 exclusions on policies, but Hockey Canada has successfully negotiated to leave that exclusion off until September 1, 2023 at the earliest.

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**Can my child be a part of multiple 'Cohort Groups'? As an example, can they belong to a Soccer 'Cohort Group' as well as a Hockey 'Cohort Group'?**

Confederation Hockey asks its members to follow the recommendation of Alberta Health, which suggests that athletes should not belong to multiple sports mini-leagues; they should select one sports cohort for the duration of Stage 2. They would be permitted to belong to another sports cohort that is operating under the 'Physical Distancing' guidelines. For example, a power skating or skills program that is utilizing 'Physical Distancing.'

**NOTE:** Confederation Hockey is offering a Physically Distanced Practice team opportunity to allow players to continue with hockey and another sport while complying with Alberta Health's recommendations.

**Can my child play in the recreational hockey league and play another sport?**

No, the recreational hockey league will not be following the physical distancing guidelines and will be considered a sport cohort group.

**How do I register my child for a physically distanced practice team, recreational hockey league, the female program or regular stream hockey team?**

Registration is available online for all of these programs. Rules of registration apply. Please visit our [registration webpage](#).

**Please remember that this situation is very fluid and constantly changing. Confederation Hockey is committed to returning our players to the ice this fall in accordance with the guidelines and recommendations of the governing authorities in a safe manner. As more details become available, questions posed or guidelines are amended we will update this page accordingly.**

**Resources:**

[Hockey Alberta - Return to Hockey Guidelines](#)

[Hockey Edmonton Return to Play Guidelines](#)

[City of Edmonton Arena Use Guidelines](#)

[Alberta Health Services Return to Sport - Phase 2 Guidelines](#)

[Government of Alberta - Guidance for Cohorts](#)

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