

Guidance for Sports & Recreation



Control – red

Please note:

Effective Monday, December 14, 2020 in accordance with the Control (Stringent Measures) – Red Zone under [Ontario Regulation 263/20](#). This guidance document includes all the measures from the Orange Zone document and has been updated to include changes in the following areas:

- The total number of members of the public permitted to be at the facility in **all classes, organized programs or organized activities** at any one time must be limited to the number that can maintain a physical distance of at least **two metres** from other persons at the facility, and in any event **cannot exceed 10 people**.
- The total number of members of the public permitted to be in an **exercise or fitness class** at the facility at any one time must be limited to the number that can maintain a physical distance of at least **three metres** from every other person in the class, and in any event **cannot exceed 10 persons indoors and 25 people outdoors**
- The total number of members of the public permitted to be in an area of the facility containing **weights or exercise machines** at any one time must be limited to the number that can maintain a physical distance of at least **three metres** from every other person in that area, and in any event **cannot exceed 10 persons**
- Each class, organized program or organized activity must take place in a **separate room** or separate outdoor area
- The limit of 10 people applies to members of the public participating in classes, organized programs or organized activities, not the employees, coaches, officials, trainers, spectators or accompanying parents/guardians
- No spectators are permitted to be in the facility. However, a person under the age of 18 years who is engaged in activities in the facility may be accompanied by one parent or guardian
- **Team sports must not be practiced or played.** Training sessions for members of a sports team that do not include games or scrimmage games are permitted
- Activities that might bring individuals within 2 metres of each other must not be practiced or played in the facility
- Any **locker rooms, change rooms, showers and clubhouses** in the facility must be **closed**, except to the extent they provide access to equipment storage, a washroom or a portion of the facility that is used to provide first aid OR if used in conjunction with a pool, splash pad, spray pad, whirlpool, wading pool or water slide

Please review this document and [Ontario Regulation 263/20](#) for full details.

This general guidance document is one of several resources intended to support sports and recreation (organizations, activities, and facilities) to reduce the spread of COVID-19 by implementing public health measures. It is to be used in conjunction with other public health directives. Please review [Ontario Regulation 263/20](#) and [COVID-19 response framework: keeping Ontario safe and open](#) for more information on the [Control – Red Zone](#). Please also review the Government of Ontario's [Guidance for facilities for sports and recreational fitness activities during COVID-19](#), however, please be aware the allowance indicated in this guidance allowing for the maximum total capacity to apply on a per class/organized program/activity or weight/exercise machine area basis, does not apply to areas in the [Control – Red Zone](#).

This document provides general guidance only, **sport teams should refer to their respective [Provincial](#) or [National Sport Organization](#)** for protocols that are specific to their individual sport and to the Government of Ontario's [Return to Play](#) webpage, under the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries.

Recreational settings and sport associations/organizations **do not require approval** from Public Health to reopen or resume activities. **Public Health is unable to review individual association/organization or sector-specific reopening plans and/or protocols.** Facility owners are responsible to ensure that any activities that they permit comply with Ontario Regulations and safety protocols.

- For [recreational water facilities](#), please review the [WDGPH COVID-19 Guidance for Recreational Water Facilities](#).
- For indoor and outdoor playgrounds, please review the [playground guidance documents](#).
- For fitness facilities (e.g., gyms, fitness, yoga, and dance studios), please review [COVID-19 Guidance Checklist for Fitness Facilities & Studios](#).

Visit [wdgpublichealth.ca](#) for ongoing updates and links to additional resources. Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (WDGPH) is unable to review individual policies and protocols. These are not legal documents.

COVID-19 Transmission

COVID-19 can spread from person-to-person through close contact from respiratory droplets of someone with COVID-19. COVID-19 droplet transmission is much more likely when individuals are in close contact. The likelihood of transmission between individuals participating in sport, physical activity and recreation in an indoor setting is significantly higher. While transmission is less likely in an outdoor setting, where air flow

is greater and there is more space for individuals to keep physically distanced, transmission can occur if public health guidance is not followed.

General

- Stay home when you have symptoms, even if they are mild
- Limit close contact to your household (the people you live with).
- Individuals and families in higher transmission areas should avoid travel to lower transmission areas (for example, from red to orange, from yellow to green), except for essential reasons.
 - Essential reasons for travel would include travel for work, school or for medical reasons. Most recreational, social or leisure related reasons for travel would not be deemed essential and should be avoided.
- Whenever possible, activities should take place in an outdoor setting.
- Participant registration should be done in advance online or over the phone.
- Steam rooms and saunas are not yet permitted to open.
- Any locker rooms, change rooms, showers and clubhouses in the facility must be closed, except to the extent they provide access to equipment storage, a washroom or a portion of the facility that is used to provide first aid OR if used in conjunction with a pool, splash pad, spray pad, whirlpool, wading pool or water slide
- Health and safety protocols should be clearly communicated to all participants (coaches, instructors, participants, guardians).

Screening & Response Plan

- Sport and recreational facilities and organizations must develop a COVID-19 [workplace safety plan](#) for staff and participants that outlines plans to prevent COVID-19 transmission.
- If you are responsible for the business or organization, you must ensure all workers/staff and essential visitors (e.g., delivery, maintenance) are [screened for COVID-19](#) before they are permitted entry into the workplace. Screening should occur before or when a worker enters the workplace at the beginning of their day or shift.
- All coaches/instructors/participants/guardians must complete a self-assessment for COVID-19 using the [Ontario online self-assessment tool](#) or a similar [COVID-19 screening tool](#) prior to coming to the facility or sports field.
- Employees who tested positive for COVID-19 are able to return to work following the guidance from Public Health, as outlined in the [WDGPH Guidance After COVID-19 Testing](#).

- Clearance tests are not required for return to work. Please refer to the [WDGPH Testing & Clearance Guidance for Workplaces \(Non-Health Care Settings\)](#).
- For other illnesses, or if the individual received a negative COVID-19 test, they should not come to work until they are symptom-free for at least 24 hours.
- Any person that does not pass the screening tool, is exhibiting any symptoms or has had close contact with a confirmed case should not be allowed to enter the facility or use sports fields to participate.
- There is a higher risk for severe illness in people over the age of 60, and those with weakened immunity or underlying health conditions.
- Place [signs](#) near entrances informing attendees not to enter if they have symptoms, travelled outside Canada in the past 14 days, or been in close physical contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days, without wearing appropriate medical grade personal protective equipment.

Physical Distancing

- Every person who engages in sports or recreational fitness activity at the facility, must maintain a physical distance of at least 2 metres from every other person at all times during the activity.
 - Activities that are likely to bring individuals within two metres of each other must not be practiced or played.
- **Team sports must not be practiced or played.** Training sessions for members of a sports team that do not include games or scrimmage games are permitted.
- Use pylons/cones or other indicators to ensure physical distance is maintained between participants.
- Minimum age of participants should be considered in light of their ability to maintain physical distance.
- Spectators are not permitted to be in the facility, but for each person under the age of 18 years who is participating in the facility's activities may be accompanied by one parent or guardian.
 - Ensure they are able to maintain 2 metres distance from each other
- Cheering and yelling is strongly discouraged as it presents a high risk of spreading droplets.

Capacity Limits

- The total number of members of the public permitted to be at the facility in **all classes, organized programs or organized activities** at any one time must be

limited to the number that can maintain a physical distance of at least two metres from other persons at the facility, and in any event **cannot exceed 10 people**.

- The total number of members of the public permitted to be in an **exercise or fitness class** at the facility at any one time must be limited to the number that can maintain a physical distance of at least **three metres** from every other person in the class, and in any event **cannot exceed 10 persons indoors and 25 people outdoors**
- The total number of members of the public permitted to be in an area of the facility containing **weights or exercise machines** at any one time must be limited to the number that can maintain a physical distance of at least three metres from every other person in that area, and in any event **cannot exceed 10 persons**
- Each class, organized program or organized activity must take place in a **separate room** or separate outdoor area
- The limit of 10 people applies to members of the public participating in classes, organized programs or organized activities, not the employees, coaches, officials, trainers, spectators or accompanying parents/guardians
- There are not specific limits on the number of employees, coaches, officials and trainers; however, it cannot exceed the number of people who are able to maintain a physical distance of two metres and all people must maintain a physical distance of two metres from anyone else.
- No spectators are permitted to be in the facility. However, a person under the age of 18 years who is engaged in activities in the facility may be accompanied by one parent or guardian
- Swimming pools are not subject to gathering limits.
 - Swimming lessons are considered in-person instruction and cannot exceed 10 persons, while allowing for 2 metre physical distancing and remaining in compliance with the predetermined bather load.
 - Aquafit classes are considered a fitness or exercise class and cannot exceed 10 persons.
- For multi-purpose facilities with different components within the same building (e.g. one facility offering team sports, exercise/fitness classes, weight/exercise machine area, meeting room, etc.), each of these individual uses is governed by their respective capacity limits pursuant to O. Reg 263/20 and must all occur in separate rooms.
 - Where possible, have separate entrances/exits from outdoors that can be used for each use/component to keep groups/participants separate as much as possible
 - Have separate washrooms for groups/participants of each use/component, where possible
 - Stagger entrances/exits of groups/participants

- Businesses unable to reopen or are experiencing challenges with restrictions can work with the government on a [reopening plan](#) at Ontario.ca/reopen.

Face Coverings

- As part of the [Section 22 Order](#) and [O. Reg 263/20](#) face coverings are required to be worn in all **indoor** areas, including:
 - Indoor arenas/sporting venues as a spectator
 - Fitness facilities/gyms
 - Indoor sports facilities/studios
- Parts of the indoor fitness facility/gym/sport facility or studio (including pools) that are covered by the order to wear a face covering:
 - Reception area/lobby
 - Equipment room
 - Exercise classroom
 - Common areas not used for activities (e.g., concession stand)
 - Other indoor areas accessible to the public (e.g., publicly accessible washrooms)
- Patrons/participants may temporarily remove face coverings in the indoor area to engage in an athletic or fitness activity that requires physical exertion
- Staff or patrons may be exempt from wearing a face covering if:
 - They are under the age of 2 years; or a child under the age of 5 years either chronologically or developmentally and he or she refuses to wear a face covering and cannot be persuaded to do so by their caregiver
 - Wearing a face covering would inhibit their ability to breathe in any way
 - For any other medical reason, they cannot safely wear a face covering such as, but not limited to, respiratory disease, cognitive difficulties or difficulties in hearing or processing information
 - The obligation to provide reasonable accommodation under the Ontario Human Rights Code requires exemption from this requirement
- A face covering and eye protection (e.g. goggles, face shield) are required if, while providing services, a person comes within 2 metre of another person who is not wearing a mask or face covering.
- Train staff on the proper way to [wear and care for face coverings](#).

General Facility Considerations

- Post signage around entrances, exits and around building that clearly communicate the COVID-19 precautions and policies for the facility.

- [Signage](#) should highlight face covering requirement, screening criteria, physical distancing suggestions, hand hygiene, etc.
- Any instruction given to members of the public who are engaged in a class, an organized program/activity that is not a sport,
 - Must be delivered through a microphone if, without a microphone, the instructor would need to raise their voice beyond the level of normal conversation, and
 - Must not encourage loud talking, singing or shouting
- Ensure volume of music does not exceed the level of a normal conversation
- Ensure ventilation systems are operational and appropriate for the activities practiced indoors.
 - Avoid stagnant air conditions. Bring in fresh air by maximizing the outdoor air ratio of the heating, venting and air conditioning (HVAC) system settings or by opening windows.
 - Avoid recirculation of air as much as possible.
 - Limit the blowing of air across people and surfaces. The use of fans should be limited as they blow people's exhaled droplets to others.
 - High ceiling fans (e.g., 25 feet up in a gym) are less of a concern than fans on low ceilings.
 - Pedestal fans or high-powered fans on/near the floor should not be used.

Cohorting & Attendance Records

- For group sessions, the same group of participants should be kept throughout the season/set of sessions to minimize exposure risk.
- For group sessions, the number of people in attendance cannot exceed 10 people.
- Only one parent/guardian should accompany their child (under the age of 18 years) to the practice/session, if needed.
- No member of the public may enter a facility unless they have made a reservation/appointment to do so.
 - Only one reservation is needed per team sport
- The facility is required to record the [name and contact information](#) (phone number or email), date and time of visit for **every** member of the public who enters an indoor area of the facility. Facilities must keep these records for at least one month. The records are disclosed only to a medical officer of health or an inspector under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* on request, for the purposes of contact tracing.

- Use [signs](#) to inform patrons of this requirement and have a method developed for recording contact information, such as a [contact information tracking sheet](#).
- No member of the public may be indoors at the facility for longer than **90 minutes** at a time unless they are there to engage in a sport.
- Ensure there is enough time between sessions to avoid overlap between people arriving and leaving.
- Establish drop-off and pick-up protocols for parents/guardians/participants.

Cleaning and Disinfection

- Perform frequent [cleaning and disinfection](#) of all areas of the facility and equipment especially on commonly touched areas/surfaces.
 - Use [disinfectants](#) approved by Health Canada
- Participants should bring their own equipment whenever possible.
- Avoid sharing equipment or other items.
- Any equipment that is rented or provided to users of the facility must be [cleaned and disinfected](#) between uses.
- Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected between sessions.
- Activities that require the use of equipment or fixed structures that cannot be cleaned or disinfected between each use must not be practised or played within the facility.
- Limit the use of water fountains to be used only to re-fill water bottles, not for individuals to drink directly from them.
- Any [washrooms](#), locker rooms, change rooms, showers or similar amenities made available to the public must be cleaned and disinfected frequently.
- Please refer to [Public Health Ontario](#) and the [Government of Canada](#) for cleaning and disinfection in public settings.

Hand Hygiene & Respiratory Etiquette

- Participants/coaches/instructors must wash their hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer (60-90% alcohol based) prior to and following each practice/session.
- Coaches/instructors should ensure that participants understand the proper way to [clean their hands](#) and [cover their cough or sneeze](#). Post these signs to remind people.
- Have alcohol-based hand sanitizer (60-90% alcohol) available at all entrances and exits as per the [Section 22 Class Order](#).

- Have hand sanitizing stations available throughout your facility.
- Consider regular hand sanitizing breaks throughout the session.
- Spitting should be prohibited.
- Remind participants to refrain from touching their eyes, nose, mouth and face.
- Food/snacks should be discouraged.

Plan & Implement Additional Required Safety Procedures

[Prepare and make available a safety plan](#) in accordance with the requirements outlined under [O. Reg 263/20](#), section 5, including:

- Describe the measures and procedures which have been implemented or will be implemented in the establishment to reduce the transmission risk of COVID-19,
- Describe how the requirements under O. Reg 263/20 will be implemented by including screening, physical distancing, masks or face coverings, cleaning and disinfection of surfaces and objects and the wearing of personal protective equipment,
- The safety plan shall be in writing and shall be made available to any person for review or request, AND
- A copy of the safety plan must be posted in a conspicuous place where it is most likely to come to the attention of individuals working in or attending the location

Other Resources

[COVID-19 response framework: keeping Ontario safe and open](#) (ON)

[Ontario Regulation 263/20: Rules for Areas in Stage 2](#)

[Guidance for facilities for sports and recreational fitness activities during COVID-19](#) (ON)

[Risk Mitigation Tool for Workplaces/Businesses](#) (Government of Canada)

[COVID-19 Guidance for Reopening Businesses](#) (WDGPH)

[COVID-19 Checklist for Reopening Businesses & Workplaces](#) (WDGPH)

[COVID-19 Guidance for Public Washrooms](#) (WDGPH)

[Health and Safety Guidance for Parks and Recreation Employers](#) (PHSA)

[Guidance on Health and Safety for Outdoor Recreation & Drive-in/Drive-Thru](#)

[Entertainment Settings](#) (WSPS)

[Signs & Posters](#) (WDGPH)