These guidelines have been developed to support associations, coaches, and volunteers with return to sport and recreation as part of stage 3. On Friday, July 17 at 12:01 a.m., the District of Timiskaming entered Stage 3. For the context of this document, sport and recreation will be used to broadly capture all organized team and individual sports and physical activity for the general public.

This document and the guidance within it are subject to change and will be updated as needed. Current information related to COVID-19 can be found at [www.timiskaminghu.com/90484/COVID-19](http://www.timiskaminghu.com/90484/COVID-19)

Refer to the Framework for Reopening our Province during Stage 3 for additional information.

**General Considerations**

- Contact the facility operator where the sport or recreational activity is planned to take place at to ensure compliance with facility-specific guidelines or requirements.
- This guidance should be used in conjunction with any additional applicable facility or sport/activity specific guidance:
  - COVID-19 Guidelines for Recreational Water Facilities
  - Guidance for Reopening Fitness Facilities, and Resuming Group Fitness & Personal Training
  - Guidance for Reopening Sport and Recreation Facilities
  - Return to Sport and Recreation – Guidance for Participants
  - Sport and Activity-specific Considerations for Facility Operators and Organizers
  - Return to Organized Sport and Recreation Plan Template
- For organized activities sanctioned by, or affiliated with, a provincial or national sport organization, ensure you are also complying with your governing body’s guidelines, assuming they meet or exceed provincial requirements. For assistance with finding your governing body’s guidelines, contact THU at 1-866-747-4305, ext 7.
- Develop a publicly available written plan for the safe return of your planned sport or recreation activity.
  - A template to develop the organization’s written plan can be downloaded on our website. THU will not approve plans from sport and recreation associations, clubs or groups but can provide support as needed.
• Designate a responsible person to oversee activities to ensure public health guidelines are followed.
• Ensure that all the requirements are met and that the guidelines are communicated to all coaches, volunteers, participants, family members and spectators (where applicable).
  • Communicate to all participants (coaches, volunteers, officials, participants, family members and spectators) about the risk of COVID-19 and practices that should be undertaken to mitigate risk. Direct participants to www.timiskaminghu.com/90484/COVID-19
  • Share the Return to Sport and Recreation – Guidance for Participants with all the participants.

**Group size**

Group size must not exceed the current government limits on gatherings. Adhere to all ministry guidelines related to what can reopen in each stage, including limits on gatherings and capacity (these should be consulted regularly to understand the requirements for your setting based on the stage of reopening). As of July 17, 12:01 a.m.:

- The total number permitted to be at the facility in classes or organized activity at any one time must be limited to the number that can maintain a physical distance of at least two metres, and cannot exceed:
  - the indoor gathering limit of 50 people; or
  - the outdoor limit of 100.
- Gathering limits do not apply in all other areas (e.g. pools, tennis courts and rinks). However, persons engaging in sports or a recreational fitness activity at the facility, other than team sports, must maintain physical distancing of at least two metres at all times during the activity.
- The total number of spectators permitted to be at the facility at any one time must be limited to the number that can maintain a physical distance of at least two metres from every other person in the facility, and in any event cannot exceed the indoor gathering limit of 50 people or the outdoor limit of 100. People at their place of work, including performers and crews, do not count towards gathering limits.

**Screening**

- Any participants – including coaches, volunteers, participants, family members and spectators – should be directed to perform a COVID-19 self-assessment before coming to the planned activity (e.g. team practice, tennis match, swimming lessons, etc).
- Implement active screening of coaches, volunteers and participants for symptoms of COVID-19 on arrival. Download THU’s Sample COVID-19 Screening Form for Employers.
- Anyone that exhibits at least one COVID-19 symptom must not be permitted to enter, should self-isolate and should be encouraged to visit a COVID-19 Assessment Centre to be tested. Individuals who have symptoms, but who have not been tested for COVID-19, must not participate and should self-isolate for 14 days after the start of their symptoms and until they have been symptom-free for at least 24 hours (whichever is longer).
• Keep a record of attendance for all activities (e.g. date, name, telephone number). This will facilitate contact tracing by the health unit.

**Face Mask (Face covering)**

• Masks (face coverings) are mandatory in the public areas of the Enclosed Public Space. Masks (face coverings) must cover the nose, mouth, and chin. Exemptions apply. Please review the most current directives and information on masks.
  
  • **NOTE:** The temporary removal of a mask where necessary is permitted while engaging in an athletic or fitness activity, including water-based activities.

• When outdoors, coaches, volunteers, participants, family members and spectators should wear a mask or face covering in situations where physical distancing is difficult or impossible.

• Provide information to staff and volunteers on proper use of masks or face coverings, and how to clean or discard single use masks appropriately.

**Ensure Physical Distancing**

• Ensure physical distancing of at least 2-metres is maintained at all times between people, unless from the same household or social circle.
  
  • If the venue or facility permits spectators, the same physical distancing guidelines would apply.

• Amateur and recreational sports leagues may resume so long as they do not allow prolonged or deliberate physical contact between players, or if they have modifications to avoid physical contact between players.

• Team sports in which body contact between players is either an integral component of the sport or commonly occurs while engaged in the sport (e.g. wrestling, judo, etc.) are not yet permitted, unless the approach can be modified to prevent prolonged or deliberate physical contact.

• Refer to the Sport and Activity-specific Considerations for Facility Operators and Organizers for more information. For activities sanctioned by or affiliated with a provincial or national sport organization, refer to your governing body’s guidelines.

• Holding the activity outdoor (when feasible) is preferable.

• Encourage participants to come dressed for their activity to limit the use of locker and change rooms.

• Limit group celebrations and other customs that promote person to person contact and make physical distancing difficult or impossible (e.g. handshakes, high fives, fist bumps, chest bumps).

• Request that attendees arrive no more than 5-10 minutes before the start of the planned activity to and to void lingering at the facility, parking lot or park afterwards.

• Spectators (excluding parents and guardians who are permitted or required to be there) should be kept out of participant spaces (e.g. fields of play, courts, ice surfaces).
  
  • If a parent or guardian is required to be present in participant spaces, ensure they are maintaining physical distancing with everyone except those from their household or social circle.
• Transportation to and from activities should be arranged so that only members from the same household or social circle share rides.
• If a participant requires basic first aid, consider having a family member attend to them. If this is not possible, the organizer should ensure that appropriate personal protective equipment, including a mask and gloves are available for first aid situations.

**Equipment and Personal Items**

• Encourage participants to bring their own equipment to the facility. Wherever possible, limit the use of shared equipment unless participants engaged in the same activity are from the same household or social circle.
  • Participant-owned equipment, including sport gloves, should be visibly clean.
  • Equipment handled by hand or head (e.g., tennis balls, basketballs, soccer balls) during play should be frequently cleaned and disinfected.
• If equipment is shared (e.g. baseball bat), it should be cleaned and sanitized between users. Develop a process to ensure cleaning and disinfection of shared equipment between each use by having readily available cleaning supplies (such as sanitizing wipes). Organizers (coach, volunteers) should ensure that cleaning occurs between uses.
  • If you are unable to buy commercial disinfectant, you can make your own homemade disinfectant.
• Participants should not share any personal items (e.g., water bottles, towels).
  • Personal equipment should be clearly labelled with the name of the owner.
  • Designate an area where participants can place their personal items and equipment spaced out from one another (bags and equipment should not be touching or piled up).
• Clothing should be washed with regular laundry detergent after the activity.

**Hand hygiene and Other Public Health Measures**

• When entering the facility, everyone should perform handwashing with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
  • Handwashing should be encouraged frequently before, during and after the activity.
  • Participants can be encouraged to carry and use their own hand sanitizer.
• Encourage participants to avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth (even if wearing sport gloves).
• Encourage good respiratory etiquette (i.e., sneezing or coughing into the crook of the elbow, no spitting, no clearing of nasal passages, coughing or sneezing into a tissue and sanitize hands after).
• Discourage cheering, chanting and yelling as these practices present a high risk of spreading droplets.

**Leagues**
• Leagues must contain no more than 50 participants total. If participants in a league exceed 50, the league may divide into smaller groups of no more than 50 participants. Players are not yet permitted to play against players outside of their league or group.

• Keeping sport, physical activity, and recreation activities local is preferred. Travel to other regions in the province and out of province should be limited. Current provincial and federal travel restrictions should be followed.

Additional Resources

• Return to Organized Sport and Recreation Plan Template
• Provincial and National Sport Organizations
• Ontario Government – Reopening Ontario

Adapted with permission from the Eastern Ontario Health (originally adapted from Alberta Health)