

Para Ice Hockey

Return to Sport Guidelines



SPORTABILITY
CP SPORTS OF BC

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Introduction

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, viaSport BC, the governing body of the BC Sport Sector, has advised: “every organization must have an explicit plan for the measures they will implement and maintain over the coming 12 to 18 months. These plans must be in compliance with orders and guidance from the PHO, and must be made available to the public either by posting on the wall of the organization’s facility or on its website”. ([viaSport BC Return to Sport Guidelines \(pg 3\)](#)). As the Disability Sport Organization (DSO) for Para Ice Hockey in BC, SportAbility has put together Return to Sport Guidelines for Para Ice Hockey Programs. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to our members for a gradual, safe return to sport process. Please note, the intent of these guidelines is to implement safe practices in order to reduce the risk of coming into contact with COVID-19 while participating in your sport program. Following these guidelines does not guarantee immunity from COVID-19 while in attendance at your program session.

The Para Ice Hockey Return to Sport Guidelines have been created from the guiding principles provided by [viaSport Return to Sport Guidelines](#), [BC Hockey: Return To Hockey COVID-19 Response Member Plan](#), [BC Hockey: Return to Hockey FAQ’s](#), and [Hockey Canada: Return to Hockey COVID-19 Response Safety Guidelines](#). Para Ice Hockey is an integrative sport for people living with and without disabilities. Programs across the Province are open to all ages and ability levels. It is important to note these supporting guidelines are based on what we know to implement as best practices for the general population to return to hockey. However, we also know individuals living with a disability, those with underlying medical conditions, and older adults could be more susceptible to the health risks associated with COVID-19. It is advised that all participants assess their personal health risk, that of those that they are close to, and the risk mitigation measures before returning to play. The [COVID-19 and people with disabilities in Canada](#) page offers information specific for persons with disabilities. Additional COVID-19 resources can be found in the [resource](#) section of this document.

All safety measures and protocols must be followed in order for athletes, companions, coaches, volunteers, and program leads to be able to attend practice sessions.

General Overview and Recommendations

We ask that all participants (athletes, companions, coaches, volunteers, and program leads) attending programs follow the guidelines outlined in this document, and follow any protocols in place at their training facilities. It is important to note that each facility may have slightly different protocols in place and may be at a different phase than what your program is ready for.

With these guidelines available, each program can present this document to facility bookings if requested to show the program expectations and alignment with facility protocol. There is no specific date set for return to play as this will be dependent on facility access, communication between the facility and program leads, and program readiness. Athletes returning to sport is not mandatory, and will depend on each individual athlete’s personal comfort level and health status. If you are not yet fully comfortable with an in-person return to sport, please contact SportAbility or your respective club lead to see if we can help with any accommodations and alternate plans to assist you. We will do our best to support you and make alternate arrangements with those who are not yet suited to attend in-person sessions. Please also contact your program lead or the SportAbility office if there is something we can assist with to make your

return to sport process more comfortable. [The Hockey Canada: Planning a Safe Return to Hockey e-Module](#) has been created to help prepare hockey participants for what to expect when returning to the ice.

When programs do return to sport, all programs shall start in the “Transition Measures” phase to allow for a gradual re-entry to sport programming. Any updates regarding Return to Sport plans and procedures will be communicated to our athletes and program leaders directly by email, and will be posted on our website’s [Return to Sport](#) page. To stay up to date with information related to COVID-19, please visit the [Federal](#), [Provincial](#), and [Regional](#) resources.

Return to Sport Phases

Transition Measures Phase 2

The Transition Measure phase includes a specific focus on local training and skill development within your programs. When programs do return to sport, programming is to start in Phase 2 guidelines to allow for a gradual re-entry to sport programming.

Here is the definition of the Transition Measures Phase provided by viaSport:

- Low risk activities that can occur with following public health recommendations in place:
 - Ability to maintain physical distancing at a minimum of 2m
 - Prohibition of gatherings of 50 people or more
 - Minimal sharing of equipment, reducing touch points (equipment, facilities, etc.)
 - Focus is on skill development, not competition
 - Community focused - Community focused sport activities take place within the home sport community or clubs where participants are members. This means avoiding cross-regional, inter-provincial or cross-country travel for sport.

Progressively Loosen Phase

As of August 24, sport has moved to the “Progressively Loosen” Phase. In this phase, there can be a careful increase to the number of contacts and contact intensity in sport. The purpose of this guide is to help clarify the conditions for safe sport activities in Phase 3. The bulk of this information for Phase 3 has been directly taken from [viaSport Return to Sport Guidelines pgs 22 - 26](#) with slight modifications to apply sport specific topics and to the audience in which this document is speaking to.

- Risk management is still the key to determining whether or not your sport program is ready to include new activities.
- **All guidance pertaining to personal hygiene, cleaning protocols, symptom screening and other risk mitigation practices still apply in Phase 3.**
- Municipalities and facility operators policies and processes still need to be adhered to in conjunction with these guidelines

Before moving from Phase 2, “Transition Measures” to Phase 3, programs must:

- ***Run a minimum of 4 sessions following Phase 2 guidelines to allow for a gradual re-entry to sport programming***
- ***Ensure participants are comfortable and ready for transition***
- ***Ensure facilities have updated guidelines that support Phase 3 and are aligned with our sport-specific plan***

All criteria must be met for program progression.

In the Progressively Loosen phase:

- Programs can carefully increase the number of contacts and contact intensity in sport
- Sports have been divided into four categories based on the number and intensity of contact

For specific details of Phase 3, please refer to [pages 12-16 of this document](#).

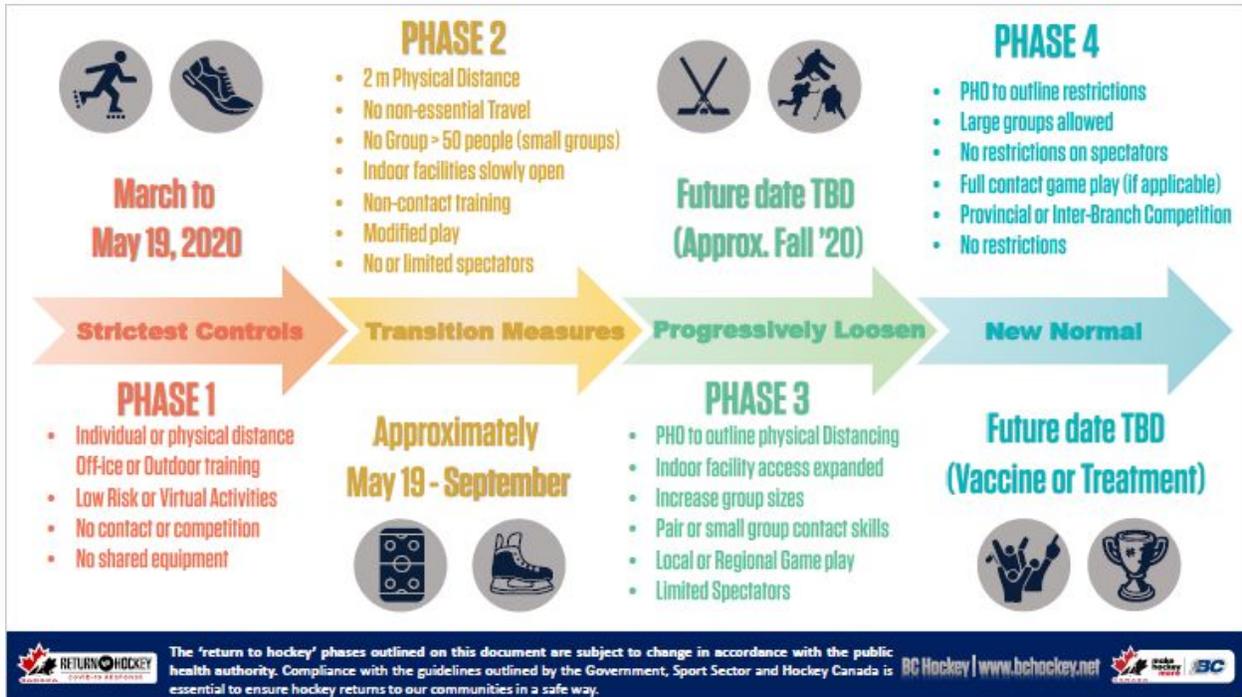
SPORT ACTIVITY CHART

This chart outlines the types of activities that can be considered in the various return phases.

	Strictest Controls Phase 1	Transition Measures Phase 2	Progressively Loosen Phase 3	New Normal (Future date TBC)
Restrictions in Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain Physical Distance (2m) • No non-essential travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain Physical Distance (2m) • No non-essential travel • No group gatherings over 50 people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to PHO and local health authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to PHO and local health authorities
Enhanced Protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased hand hygiene 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased hand hygiene • Symptom Screening in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased personal hygiene, cleaning protocols and symptom screening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased hand hygiene
Facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor or within home • Facilities and playgrounds closed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor is safest • Indoor facilities slowly re-opening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants should maintain physical distance while not on field of play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor/Indoor
Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Groups • No or limited spectators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups sizes increase based on sport type (i.e. level of contact). • Participants and spectators must adhere to 50 people max per event public health guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large groups allowed • No restrictions on spectators
Non-contact Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low risk outdoor activities can occur (biking, running, etc.). • Virtual activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundamental movement skills • Modified training activities, drills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where feasible, limit contact (i.e. coming within two metres) in training and sport activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No restrictions on activity type
Contact Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should not occur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should not occur • Contact sports should look for non-contact alternatives to training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohort model introduced for sports that cannot maintain 2m physical distancing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No restrictions on activity type
Competition*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should not occur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In club play or modified games may slowly be introduced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition slowly introduced. • Regional competition for sports in cohorts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial competitions and larger scale events may return
Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No shared equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal shared equipment • Disinfect any shared equipment before, during and after use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced cleaning protocols in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared equipment
Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlimited

*Introduction of competitive activities should be in alignment with sport-specific guidelines.

[Source: viaSport Return to Sport Guidelines—Appendix A: Sport Activity Chart](#)



Source: [BC Hockey and Hockey Canada Return to Hockey Phases](#)

Safe Training Environment

Health Safety Officer

A Health Safety Officer must be appointed for each program. It is the responsibility of the program lead to ensure a Health Safety Officer is appointed before programming can resume. The Health Safety Officer certifies at each session that all in attendance adhere to the general and sport specific before, during, and after guidelines in this document and oversees program safety measures outlined in this document.

First Aid

- When administering First Aid during the COVID-19 pandemic, please follow information on this [information sheet from WorkSafeBC](#), which provides information to employers and occupational first aid attendants on safely treating patients. It provides additional precautions to first aid attendants on following the public health directives—including physical distancing, hand hygiene, and sanitization—while treating a patient. In this resource, you can also review these protocols used in three first aid scenarios, as well as link to further COVID-19 health and safety resources.
- Each program is required to have a [HCSP](#) person(s) in attendance at each session.
- Each program is required to have a first aid kit readily available at each session. The first aid kit shall include standard materials as well as PPE supplies such as medical gloves, face masks, and protective eyewear for the HCSP person to use in the occurrence first aid is needed. A face mask or shield should also be applied for the person receiving first aid if possible.
- Each program should have an [Emergency Action Plan](#) in place. It is recommended coaches and the HCSP person(s) complete the [NCCP Emergency Action Plan E Module](#).

Mental Health Support

During this pandemic, people may understandably be experiencing challenges affecting their mental health. For information about mental health resources specific to COVID-19 support, we encourage you to visit the [Mental Health and COVID-19](#) page on the Health Link BC website and the [Mental well-being during COVID-19](#) page on the BC CDC website. Resources are available for British Columbians of all ages. If there is something we at SportAbility can do to support your mental health in returning to sport, please reach out to us by email.

Someone shows symptoms, now what?

Program Leads or Health Safety Officers must take attendance and keep a record of all participants in case of an outbreak ([see Section on Outbreaks for further details](#)). If a participant is symptomatic with cold, influenza-like or [COVID-19 symptoms](#), the following steps should be taken:

1. Athletes must inform an individual in a position of authority (coach, team manager, program coordinator) immediately if, you feel any symptoms of COVID-19 such as fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat and painful swallowing, stuffy or runny nose, loss of sense of smell, headache, muscle aches, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea or diarrhea. [See BCCDC website for a full list of symptoms.](#)
2. Assessment
 - a. Individuals must review the self-assessment signage located throughout the facility each morning before their shift/practice/activity to attest that they are not feeling any of the COVID 19 symptoms.
 - b. If Individuals are unsure please have them use the [BC COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#).
 - c. Managers/coaches may visually monitor individuals to assess any early warning signs as to the status of their health and to touch base on how they are regarding their personal safety throughout the workday/practice/activity.
3. If an individual is feeling sick with COVID-19 symptoms
 - a. They should remain at home and contact Health Link BC at 8-1-1.
 - b. If they feel sick and /or are showing symptoms while within the sport environment, they should be sent home immediately and contact 8-1-1 for further guidance.
 - c. No individual may participate in a practice/activity if they are symptomatic.
4. If recommended by a healthcare professional or the Self-Assessment Tool, the participant should go for COVID-19 testing and self-quarantine until they receive the results

Someone tests positive, now what?

If a participant tests positive for COVID-19, the following steps should be taken:

1. Follow the direction of health officials (as outlined in the [Illness Policy](#))
2. Immediately notify Program Lead and SportAbility staff

What you need to know for training

24 Hours Before Session

- Only registered participants (including athletes, companions, coaches, volunteers, and program leads) may attend the session. No drop in is allowed at this point.
- Program leads have been provided with registration forms and a process that they will communicate with all program members. Due to program size limitations, each session may operate on a first-come, first-serve basis or a rotational schedule. This is up to the discretion of the program lead.
- Everyone in attendance (athletes, companions, volunteers, coaches, and program leads) must complete and submit their registration and wellness questionnaire within 24 hours prior to attending the program session. The daily attestation form must be completed by each person attending the session. Additionally, all participating members must complete the waiver that is relevant for the 2020/2021 season.

Day of Session

- To Bring:
 - Personal hand sanitizer
 - Non-medical or cloth mask, face covering, or face shield
 - Own or assigned equipment
 - Personal water bottle labeled with your name. Water bottles should be washed after each session and filled at home. Fill stations will likely not be available at the facility.
- Familiarize yourself with facility protocols.
 - Find your program information here or by contacting your program lead directly. Some links may lead to the source you need to contact for information while others will lead directly to facility protocols:
 - [Kamloops](#)
 - [Kelowna](#)
 - [Prince George](#)
 - [Quesnel](#)
 - [Surrey](#)
 - [Vancouver](#)
 - [Victoria](#)
- Athletes: Please only have a companion accompany you at your session if needed.
 - Only your companion can assist you with equipment, transferring, and sanitation.
 - No coaches, volunteers, or others in attendance should assist another participant at this time.
- Athletes are to bring their own equipment, or pre-arrange with the program lead to have a set of program equipment designated for their use. No equipment sharing during the session.
 - If possible, It is recommended that assigned program equipment travels to and from the facility with the designated user to reduce the risk of the equipment coming into contact with others in the facility.
 - Loaned or shared sport equipment must be sanitized and isolated for at least 72hrs between users.

- It is recommended that participants (athletes, companions, volunteers, coaches, and program leads) from different residences do not travel to practice in the same personal vehicle at this time unless they are from the same social circle. If participants from different residences must travel together, it is recommended that everyone wear a mask while in the vehicle and practice proper hand hygiene when loading and unloading the vehicle.
- Participants (athletes, companions, volunteers, coaches, and program leads) who use public transit to attend the program are advised to follow physical distancing protocol, maintain proper hand hygiene, and wear a mask during their travels.

Before Entering the Facility

- Program participants (athletes, companions, volunteers, coaches, and program leads) are to arrive no earlier than the time allotted by the facility protocol. If this is not outlined in the facility protocol, a general recommendation is to arrive no earlier than 15 minutes from your practice start time.
- Equipment and mobility devices must be sanitized prior to entering the facility.
- (eg. sleds, sticks, hockey facemasks and chin guard, mouthguard (wash in hot water with soap), wheelchair, walker, crutches).
 - [BC CDC Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings Graph](#)
 - [BC CDC Cleaning and Disinfecting](#)
 - [Health Canada: Hard-surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers \(COVID-19\)](#)
- Athletes shall come prepared, dressed in as much hockey equipment as possible to reduce the time at the facility before and after on ice sessions.
 - Everyone (athletes, companions, volunteers, coaches, and program leads) is to limit the amount of personal items brought to the program.
- Everyone in attendance (athletes, companions, volunteers, coaches, and program leads) must thoroughly wash or sanitize their hands immediately before practice.
 - [Handwashing poster](#)
- Manual wheelchair users should use hand sanitizer or wash their hands after pushing their wheelchair before, during, and after the session.
- We highly recommend that a non-medical face mask, cloth face mask, or face shields be worn by everyone (athletes, companions, volunteers, coaches, and program leads) when entering and exiting the facility before and after practice. Wearing a mask is particularly important when in shared spaces such as hallways and locker rooms. Face masks or shields are an effective way to reduce the spread of COVID-19 when physical distancing is difficult to maintain. A ziplock bag or personal bag is suggested to store your mask when not in use.
 - [Masks: Risk Prevention Information](#)
- ***Everyone at the session (athletes, companions, volunteers, coaches, and program leads) is expected to be vigilant in maintaining physical distancing from others, maintain proper hand hygiene, follow sanitation protocols, and avoid touching their face while in the facility.***

During Your Session

- Everyone (athletes, companions, volunteers, coaches, and program leads) shall have a designated space to keep their personal belongings while on the ice. This space and belongings in this space shall not cross over with someone else's space.

- Everyone (athletes, companions, volunteers, coaches, and program leads) must maintain safe physical distancing of 2m at all times. This includes all activities off and on the ice before, during, and after your session. Body Contact is prohibited during Phase 2 Transition Measures programming.
 - For programs that have moved into Phase 3 Progressively Loosen, physical contact with the same team training environment can be introduced when a cohort has been established. However, it is still highly recommended to reduce physical contact where possible. For the game or competition environment, rules should be modified to minimize physical contact. Please refer to the [Phase 3 section](#) of this document for more specific details on Phase 3 guidelines.
- Face masks or shields can be removed while participating in hockey activity on the ice while physical distancing is practiced.
 - Coaches and on ice volunteers particularly should be highly aware of their distancing measures while on the ice instructing or assisting.
 - Face masks must be worn by coaches and support staff on the bench if physical distancing cannot be maintained (Phase 3) ([BC Hockey: Return to Hockey FAQ's #11](#)).
- Avoid physical contact with others such as handshakes, high fives, fist bumps etc.
- Minimize locker room and bench use as much as possible. Avoid entering and existing the locker room and ice surface as much as possible to reduce touch points and maintain physical distancing with others.
- Make sure you are re-sanitizing or washing your hands when coming into contact with shared program equipment or high touch points. Reduce contact with high touch point areas such as facility doors.
- Avoid touching your face at all times. Hand sanitation or washing should be applied before and after touching your face.
- Spitting and blowing your nose without a tissue is forbidden.
- Program Leads or Coaches: designate one or two people to set up the ice for the sessions (eg. cones, goals, pucks etc.) to avoid multiple people touching the same items and crowding each other. Set up equipment should be sanitized before and after the session.
- Coaches and athletes shall avoid touching the puck with their hands while on the ice.
- Athletes: Any equipment adjustments/maintenance to the sledge/sticks must be done only by the athlete or their companion. No other participant (athletes, companions, volunteers, coaches, and program leads) at the program should physically assist with equipment adjustment at this time.
- Athletes: If your companion does not need to be in the arena during practice to assist you, it is highly encouraged that they watch practice from outside of the arena (ie. viewing area) or leave the facility until practice is over.
- Athletes: If there are multiple entrances to the ice, players are encouraged to utilize these access points to reduce wait times, space out, and maintain physical distancing.
 - Players who can set up in their sled on the ice are encouraged to do so giving priority and space to those who need access to the puck board in order to get onto the ice.
- Health Safety Officer: If possible, have a designated entrance door and a designated exit door to the arena and locker rooms to help maintain physical distancing. Entering and exiting single file both on and off the ice is required. Leave doors open where possible to limit the use of touchpoints.
- Health Safety Officer or Program Lead: Appoint one person who is responsible for uprighting any player that cannot get up on their own while on the ice. The appointed person must have a helmet, mask, and gloves on at all times and must change the gloves after each time they have contact with an athlete. If the athlete makes contact with the mask, it must also be changed.

- If a lever or “picker-upper” is available, it is best to use this device to upright the participant.
- Having this appointed person on skates is ideal.
- Health Safety Officer: Garbage cans should be placed close to the benches to allow for proper disposal of tissue used to wipe the face or blow the nose if on the bench. Hands should be washed or sanitized after disposing of the tissue.

After Your Session

- Program Leads or Coaches: The same appointed people who set up practice shall clean up and handle the program practice equipment to avoid multiple people touching the same items and crowding each other.
 - Program practice equipment must be sanitized before being put away.
 - Shared program equipment should be stored in a safe space at the facility or travel with the program lead or coach to and from practice.
 - Players can assist with clean up by pushing the pucks towards the designated person with the puck bag using only their sticks while maintaining physical distancing.
- Athletes: If there are multiple exits from the ice, players are encouraged to utilize these access points to reduce wait times, space out, and maintain physical distancing.
 - Players who can, are to get out of their sled on the ice and remove the rest of their equipment off ice in their designated space.
 - Exits with puck boards are to be prioritized to those who need access to the puck board in order to get off the ice.
- Athletes or companions: Sanitize ALL your equipment and mobility devices (eg. sleds, sticks, hockey facemasks and chin guard, mouthguard (wash in hot water with soap), wheelchair, walker, crutches).
 - [BC CDC Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings Graph](#)
 - [BC CDC Cleaning and Disinfecting](#)
 - [Health Canada: Hard-surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers \(COVID-19\)](#)
- Athletes: If possible, no equipment should be left at the facility. It is recommended that assigned program equipment travels to and from the rink with the designated user to reduce the risk of the equipment coming into contact with others in the facility.
- Everyone (athletes, companions, sport assistants, volunteers, coaches, and program leads) shall wash their hands thoroughly with warm water and disinfectant soap or with hand sanitizer.
 - [Handwashing poster](#)
- At the end of the session, everyone (athletes, companions, volunteers, coaches, and program leads) is to leave the arena within the time allotted in the facility protocols. If this is not outlined in the facility protocols, we recommend exiting the facility within 15 minutes after your session. No congregating.
- It is recommended to change out of and wash the clothes and outer equipment (eg. jersey, gloves, socks) you have been wearing once returning home.



Phase 3 Return to Sport: Progressively Loosen

As of August 24, sport has moved to the “Progressively Loosen” Phase. In this phase there can be a careful increase to the number of contacts and contact intensity in sport. The purpose of this guide is to help clarify the conditions for safe sport activities in Phase 3. The bulk of this information for Phase 3 has been directly taken from [viaSport Return to Sport Guidelines pgs 22 - 26](#) with slight modifications to apply sport specific topics and to the audience in which this document is speaking to.

- Risk management is still the key to determining whether or not your sport program is ready to include new activities.
- **All guidance pertaining to personal hygiene, cleaning protocols, symptom screening and other risk mitigation practices still apply in Phase 3.**
- Municipalities and facility operators policies and processes still need to be adhered to in conjunction with these guidelines.

Review the following criteria for programs operating in Phase 2 “Transition Measures” looking to progress to Phase 3 “Progressively Loosen”. All programs must follow this criteria when looking to move into Phase 3.

- Run a minimum of 4 sessions following Phase 2 guidelines to allow for a gradual re-entry to sport programming.
- Ensure participants are comfortable and ready.
- Ensure facilities have updated guidelines that support Phase 3 and are aligned with our sport-specific plan.

All criteria must be met for program progression.

Para Ice Hockey in Phase 3

Group C: Para Ice Hockey

Sports have been divided into four categories based on the number and intensity of contact within the sport. [Para Ice Hockey has been classified by viaSport as a Group C](#) sport meaning it is a sport with frequent or sustained contact.

Please note, this guidance is subject to change at any time based on community transmission rates and the advice of provincial and/or local public health officials.

Contact

Contact defined: being within 2 metres of another individual or physical contact.

Purpose: to introduce sport activities that may involve instances of contact in a safe way.

- Maintain physical distancing (2 meters). Close physical proximity should still be minimized as much as possible.

- In sports or activities that generally involve interaction between participants at a distance of less than two metres, program leaders or coaches should:
 - Modify the activity or rules to keep participants at a safe distance;
 - Limit the number and duration of contacts between different participants (when physical distancing is not possible).
 - Use physical distance with those outside of your cohort when outside the field of play (e.g. - dressing rooms, hallways, staging areas, etc.)
- Any introduction of activities involving close proximity or physical contact should only occur within a sport cohort (see next section).

Levels of COVID-19 transmission risk with respect to contact activities are as follows from lowest to highest risk:

- Skill-building drills or training at home, alone or with family members
- Group or team-based skill-building or drills that maintain physical distancing
- Group or team-based drills that require close contact
- Non-contact competitive activities between teams
- Group or team-based activities that include physical contact
- Competitive activities that include physical contact between teams

Cohorts

Cohorts defined: A cohort is a group of participants who primarily interact with each other within the sport environment over an extended period of time (e.g. series of events).

Purpose: Establishing cohorts will limit the number of people that each individual will come into contact with, reducing the risk of transmission and ensuring quicker contact tracing by health authorities if an outbreak occurs.

SportAbility recognizes six (6) established Para Ice Hockey programs in the Province of BC. At this time, individual programs and members within those programs are considered their own cohort and may not exceed up to fifty (50) participants (athletes, companions, volunteers, coaches, and program leads).

- Kamloops Para Ice Hockey Program
- Kelowna Para Ice Hockey Program
- Lower Mainland SportAbility Surrey and City of Vancouver Para Ice Hockey Programs
- Prince George Para Ice Hockey Program
- Quesnel Para Ice Hockey Program
- Victoria Para Ice Hockey Program

At this time and with the structure of Para ice Hockey in BC, SportAbility is only approving club or program play for [competition](#). Thus, individual programs and members within those programs are considered their own cohort and may not exceed up to fifty (50) participants (athletes, companions, volunteers, coaches, and program leads). This approach will remain in place for the remainder of 2020 and will be reviewed in 2021.

As outlined in [Appendix H of the viaSport Guidelines](#), Para Ice Hockey is a sport with frequent or sustained contact. Sports within this category are allowed cohorts up to fifty (50) people or four (4) teams (whichever is deemed most appropriate by the Provincial Sport Organization).

It is important to note, cohorts sizes are different from maximum gathering sizes. When members of the cohort are gathering for games or activities, gatherings (ie. in a facility) may not exceed fifty (50) people ([see PHO Order](#)).

- Cohorts allow for participants to be involved in contact activity and breach the 2-meter physical distancing guidelines when engaged in sport activity.
- Cohorts are designed to be used for activities in which it is not possible to maintain 2 meter physical distancing at all times. When in a cohort, while individuals do not need to practice physical distancing during sport specific activities, minimized physical contact is still advised.
- A participant may be part of only one (1) cohort within a single sport organization at any given time. Participants may transition to a new cohort as an individual or as a member of a team, granted that a 14 - day break has occurred prior to participating in Phase 3 activity within a new cohort. (e.g. switching from your program cohort to Provincial, Development, or National team cohorts) ([BC Hockey: Return to Hockey FAQ's #2](#)).
- As benches are included in the field of play, participants on the same team of the same cohort sharing a bench do not need to practice physical distancing when on the bench. When feasible, players should consider wearing a mask. Coaches and support staff must wear a mask when physical distancing cannot be maintained on the bench. Two meters physical distancing must be maintained between all participants (athletes, companions, volunteers, coaches, and program leads) when outside of the field of play (e.g. dressing rooms, hallways, staging areas etc.).
- Gameplay can resume between teams within a cohort ([see competition section](#)).
- Coaches may be counted outside of the total cohort number if they are able to maintain physical distancing at all times.
- Individuals should reduce the number of sport cohorts to which they belong in order to reduce the number of people they are interacting with.
- Spectators are still prohibited. Companions are to drop off and pick up the athlete if the athlete does not need their assistance in order to participate during the session.

Competition

Competitive activities fall under the following categories:

- Club or program play: games or competitive activities that are occurring within the team or club members.
- Regional competition: games or competitive activities occurring between clubs or individuals within a region.
- Provincial competition: games or competitive activities that are sanctioned by the Provincial Sport Organization and draw individuals or teams from all areas of the province.
- Inter-provincial competition: games or competitive activities that draw individuals or teams from outside the province.

Purpose: to introduce competitive sport activities. This includes formal, organized games, matches and tournaments between participants where scores are recorded and standings are kept.

- Upon the release of this document, if a sport has not yet resumed activities, activities should continue to be slowly phased in. Return to sport activities should not jump straight to competition or high risk activities without having tested safety protocols. Organizations should begin with

training activities and slowly layer in different levels of competition. See [SportAbility criteria for phase transitions](#).

At this time, club or program play is the only competitive activity SportAbility is approving. This includes competition within a program (cohort) (e.g. scrimmages, contact play). This approach will remain in place for the remainder of 2020 and will be reviewed in 2021.

High Performance Camps and Training Environments

High performance definition: refers to individuals that have been selected to provincial or national team training environments. Typically, these training environments are centralized or multi-day camp settings.

Purpose: to introduce high performance training opportunities that bring together athletes from different communities and/or provinces in a responsible and safe manner without compromising the health of the individuals or community members.

Participants may transition to a new cohort as an individual or as a member of a team, granted that a 14 - day break has occurred prior to participating in Phase 3 activity within a new cohort. (e.g. switching from your program cohort to Provincial, Development, or National team cohorts) ([BC Hockey: Return to Hockey FAQ's #2](#)).

- Participants are permitted to participate in Phase 2 activities with their new team / cohort during the 14-day break period.

While preparing to attend a provincial or national team event, participants should:

- Communicate with the organizers of the event to receive and understand their expected protocols.
- Reduce exposure to others and minimize visits to public places for at least one week leading up to the camp.
- Pay attention to health (proper rest/sleep, nutrition, symptom screening).
- Plan travel to minimize interactions with other people where possible.

While at the event, participants should:

- Follow physical distancing, hand hygiene protocols and ensure proper rest and recovery.
- Clean and disinfect equipment.
- Wear masks outside of a training environment where physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- Form cohort for duration of camp. Stay as a cohort as much as possible to minimize interactions with individuals outside of the training group.
- Have meals ordered in vs. eating out at restaurants.

Post-camp, participants should:

- Plan travel for returning home to minimize interactions with other people where possible.
- Individuals are to monitor their health (proper hygiene, symptom screening) and notify public health if symptoms develop.
- Comply with public health officials directives in the event of an [outbreak](#).

Travel

Purpose: while intra-provincial travel restrictions have been lifted as of June 25th, 2020, travel for the purposes of sport and group activities should be slowly introduced.

At this time, SportAbility is not advising travel for sport outside of your [region](#). Special consideration may be given for athletes or coaches attending provincial or national team events. Participants attending these events should consult with SportAbility staff ahead of time to discuss safe practices leading up to the event and returning to their regular programming post event.

- Inter-provincial and international travel are not endorsed at this time.
 - If an individual chooses to travel internationally, they are required to self-isolate for 14 days under both provincial and federal orders upon return to Canada.
- If choosing to travel, the following recommendations are in place for individuals:
 - Check before you go - consider the number of active cases in the community/region to which you are travelling and respect travel advisories
 - If sick, stay home, even if symptoms are mild
 - Wash your hands often
 - Practice safe physical distancing. Two meter distance from others
 - Wear a mask if you cannot keep a safe distance from others

Appendix

Training and Drills for Phase 2 & 3

[Phase 2](#) parameters of the viaSport guidelines: skill development and small group activities that are designed to ensure physical distancing is maintained. [SportAbility's: Para Ice Hockey Coaching Resource](#) provides skill development and drill options for coaches to implement into their sessions. Some drills outlined in the resource guide may need to be adjusted to respect Phase 2 guidelines. Program coaches are encouraged to develop a progressive practice plan for each session to keep participants engaged with skill development and age appropriate drills while respecting the current phase parameters. Coaches are not required to solely use drills from the coaching resource. Creative ideas are encouraged for the relevance and enjoyment of the program members.

In reference to the [Hockey Canada: Return to Hockey Covid-19 Response Seasonal Structure](#) document, Section 2: Alternative Delivery Models outlines Possible On-Ice Game Play Adaptations on page 11. These adaptations are listed below with additional notes added that pertain to the appropriate return-to-sport stage in which this item can be introduced as well as Para Ice Hockey considerations. Moreover, this document provides drills designed to maintain physical-distancing measures located on page 34 Appendix A: Alternative Skills Instruction. Note, this document caters towards stand up hockey. Adaptations and creative ideas are encouraged for relevance and enjoyment of program members. These drills can also be found on the [BC Hockey: Return to Play Alternative Training Plan](#) webpage. Instructions to download the Hockey Canada App. for mobile access to these drills are also outlined on this page.

1. Continuous play
 - a. Limit or remove face-offs during the game (Phase 3)
 - b. Incorporate simple changes for possession for: (Phase 3)
 - i. Start of periods
 - ii. Offsides and icings
 - iii. Goal or stoppage of play
2. Crease
 - a. Extend or spray painting a line six feet in front of each regular crease. (Phase 2)
 - b. Can be used as a "shot line" in warm-up and practice for skaters to avoid contact and ensure proper distance.(Phase 2)
 - c. Used as a reminder to avoid prolonged contact in the area during game play (Phase 3)
 - d. Potential violation for entering the regular crease at any time (Phase 3)
3. Play the Puck
 - a. Players must always play the puck, not the opponent (no contact, stick checks only). For Para Ice Hockey, stick lengths do not allow players to maintain physical distancing. For the Transition Measures stage of return to sport, no checking is allowed. Other skill development drills should be considered for practice. To work on skills such as puck protection, deeking etc., equipment such as cones should be used.
 - i. For Phase 3 Progressively Loosen, physical contact with the same team training environment can be introduced when a cohort has been established. However, it is still highly recommended to reduce physical contact where possible. For the game or competition environment, rules should be modified to minimize physical

contact. Please refer to the Phase 3 Progressively Loosen Section for more specific details on Phase 3 guidelines.

- ii. May result in change of possession if not followed (Phase 3).
4. Shift Changes (Phase 3)
 - a. Create age-appropriate protocols for entering and leaving the bench during game play that limits prolonged contact. For Para Ice Hockey, players should avoid using benches and use the space in front of the benches while maintaining physical-distancing if off for a shift.
 5. Penalty Shots (Phase 3)
 - a. Penalties served through penalty shots.
 - b. May also be applied only if the team already has a player in the penalty box.
 6. Bench Awareness (Phase 3)
 - a. Players and coaches adhere to physical-distancing requirements on the bench at all times, except for brief exchanges or in case of injury (bench marked).
 - b. Coaches recommended to wear cloth masks.
 - c. Limit number of coaching staff on the bench (others in stands).



Resources

SportAbility Resources	SportAbility Illness Policy Key Points for Athletes
Sport	BC Hockey: Return to Play Alternative Training Plan BC Hockey: Return To Hockey COVID-19 Response Member Plan BCRPA Guidelines Facility Protocols: Kamloops Kelowna Prince George Quesnel Surrey Vancouver Victoria Hockey Canada: Planning a Safe Return to Hockey e-module Hockey Canada: Return to Hockey COVID-19 Response Safety Guidelines Hockey Canada: Return to Hockey Covid-19 Response Seasonal Structure Key Messages for Returning To Sport - viaSport SportAbility's: Para Ice Hockey Coaching Resource SportAbility's Return To Sport Page viaSport Guidelines
Government	BC Restart Plan Federal COVID-19 information Provincial COVID-19 information Provincial Health Officer Orders Regional Districts in BC Regional health authorities: Fraser Health Interior Health Island Health Northern Health Vancouver Coastal Health
Vulnerable Populations	BC CDC People with Disabilities BC CDC resource for people living with chronic illness Canada Public Health resource for people with disabilities COVID-19 and people with disabilities in Canada
Health and Safety	BC CDC: Mental well-being during COVID-19 Health Link BC: Mental Health and COVID-19 Hockey Canada Safety Person (HCSP)

	<p>Redcross: First aid protocols for an unresponsive person during Covid-19</p> <p>SportMed BC: Emergency Action Plan information</p> <p>NCCP: Emergency Action Plan E Module</p> <p>Work Safe BC: OFAA Protocols During Covid-19 Pandemic</p>
Sanitation	<p>BC CDC Cleaning and Disinfecting</p> <p>BC CDC Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings Graph</p> <p>BC CDC Handwashing poster</p> <p>Health Canada: Hard-surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers (COVID-19)</p>
Additional COVID-19 Resources	<p>BC CDC How to Isolate</p> <p>BC CDC Masks - Risk Prevention Information</p> <p>BC CDC if your are sick</p> <p>BC CDC Self-Assessment Tool</p> <p>BC CDC Testing information</p>



Signage

We recommend that programs and facilities refer to and make use of the below printable signage from the BC CDC. We would also suggest using tape to mark 2m interval spacing reminders along main walkways and corridors.

- [Physical Distancing poster](#)
- [Handwashing poster](#)
- [Do not enter if you are sick poster](#)

We have also created several [additional materials](#) specifically for use during practice.

<p>Markers for gear placement: Please ensure that these are placed along the walls of the gym with a minimum 2m between each sign</p>	 <p>Help prevent the spread of COVID-19</p> <p>Please place your gear here</p> <p>↓</p> <p><small>This measure has been put in place following recommendations provided by the BC Provincial Health Services Authority and viaSport for a safe return to sport.</small></p>
<p>Extra sanitation supplies: For any additional wipes, sanitizers, etc.</p>	 <p>Help prevent the spread of COVID-19</p> <p>Extra Sanitation Supplies Here (ONE AT A TIME)</p> <p>↓</p> <p><small>This measure has been put in place following recommendations provided by the BC Provincial Health Services Authority and viaSport for a safe return to sport.</small></p>

<p>Please stay behind this line: For use in high traffic areas, ex. Sanitation station, equipment room, etc. To be accompanied by a tape marker 2m away</p>	
<p>Absolutely no sharing equipment</p>	
<p>Chair placement</p>	

Athletes must familiarize themselves with our [Key Points for Athletes](#) document prior to attending practice. We recommend having an easily accessible copy of this document (either on your mobile device or printed) to refer back to before, during, and after sessions. All safety measures and protocols must be followed in order for athletes, companions, sport assistants, coaches, volunteers, and program leads to be able to attend practice sessions.