



Renfrew County and  
District Health Unit

# Covid-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreational Facilities

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This document provides public health guidance and regulatory requirements for sports and recreational fitness facilities in Renfrew County and District (RCD) to help control the spread of COVID-19. This document does not constitute legal advice and does not replace the need for sports, recreation and fitness businesses and organizations to consult requirements from the Province of Ontario. There may be situations where provincial rules, local public health rules, organizations and facilities vary in levels of restriction. Please regularly review provincial legislative requirements for sports and recreation [for Step 3](#), as well as specific direction from the sport's government body. Please review current [Covid-19 health measures](#), as requirements may change quickly on short notice. Sports, recreation and fitness businesses/organizations must ensure compliance with the measure that is most restrictive in terms of preventing the spread of COVID-19.

Keeping COVID-19 community transmission low is important to help prevent the introduction and spread of the virus into the community, particularly through the participation in fitness and athletic activities. It is important to remember that even with precautions, participating in sporting activities with others is considered high risk for COVID-19 transmission. Everyone should consider the risk to themselves and other residents when choosing to engage in these types of activities. Sport and recreational facilities are responsible for developing a [safety plan](#) and protocols which meet the guidelines provided by the province and encompass all of the public health measures. Sports teams/cohorts/leagues/trainers/instructors must also develop a safety plan. Sports teams/leagues should make their plan in consultation with their applicable sport's governing body.

We have seen in various cases and outbreaks associated with sports where transmission has likely occurred because of inconsistent adherence to several public health measures, including using indoor facilities like dressing rooms, carpooling with members from multiple households, individuals coaching more than one team, individuals playing or training with more than one team, along with not consistently wearing masks when required. For all sporting, athletic and fitness activities we encourage you to be familiar with and assess your personal risks, obtain the information from the organizers/facilities on their COVID-19 safety plan and ensure that participants follow all the public health measures including screening, masking, hand hygiene and cleaning and sanitization along with adequate physical distancing.

Employers should refer to general and sector-specific guidance provided by the [Province of Ontario](#) and the [Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development \(MLTSD\)](#) to better understand how to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Based on community needs, some municipalities and local medical officers of health have exercised their authority to implement more restrictions or requirements. It is important that you are aware of public health practices in your area.



## A. GENERAL PUBLIC HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

### **Facility Attendance**

It is recommended that sports and recreational facilities consider capacity control measures (i.e. parking lot monitoring, booking times, online reservations, spectator gathering limits per day, etc.) to ensure that the sporting event or fitness or athletic classes meet provincial gathering/capacity limits. These limits ensure indoor and outdoor crowding is minimized, and that social gatherings are not being conducted at the facility (i.e. gathering in parking lot after game/class).

Discourage social gatherings outside household groups and among staff members. Social gatherings in groups greater than 100 outdoors is prohibited. Staff should not be congregating without purpose, including in lunch/break rooms. Encourage individuals to arrive as close to game/practice/class time for example, no more than 20 minutes early to a game/practice/class. Individuals should also leave the facility immediately when the game/practice/class is over.

There should be enough time between events to allow for adequate cleaning and disinfection of required equipment, common high touch areas and removal of garbage.

Food premises (see FOOD PREMISES in section F. below) at a sports and recreational facility (i.e. canteen) are subject to Ontario Regulation 364/20, gathering limits, screening and record-keeping requirements contained in the regulation. See [Ontario Regulation 364/20](#) for all requirements.

### **Capacity Limits**

There are currently no league/team/class capacity limits. The total number of patrons permitted indoors and outdoors (including spectator area, playing area, change rooms) at a sports and recreation facility can be at 100% capacity, as determined by occupancy load calculated in accordance with the Ontario Fire Code.

### **Screening and Record-Keeping**

Sports and recreational facilities are required to actively screen all staff/volunteers/public/instructors/participants/spectators prior to them commencing their shift or attending an indoor or outdoor area of the facility. These records should be kept for a period of 30 days. Guidance for active screening can be found [here](#). Worker screening questions can be used for staff/volunteers/participants, while customer screening can be used for public/spectators.

Sports and recreational facility operators should work with sports league convenors, coaches, instructors, trainers to ensure that active screening is conducted by all participants prior to engaging in the fitness or athletic activity/class. This may be done in person or online prior to attending/commencing practices/games/class and show proof. Screening records should be retained by the league/instructor/facility for 30 days



and made immediately available upon request. Screening tool/questions for workers/employees can be used and is found [here](#). See example of participant screening log in the appendices.

Name and contact information is required to be documented for staff/volunteers/participants/spectators/trainers etc. who enter an indoor or outdoor of the sports and recreational facility. Records must be kept for at least 30 days and made immediately available upon request. See example of contact information log in the appendices.

## **Hand hygiene**

Hand hygiene is one of the key control measures to help prevent transmission of respiratory illnesses such as COVID-19. Provide handwashing facilities and/or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (70-90%) be provided for public use. Hand Sanitizer should be provided at every entrance and be placed in convenient areas of the facility (indoors and outdoors) for people to use. Ensure all hand wash sinks are supplied with warm water, soap and paper towels. Instructors, coaches and participants should be encouraged to carry hand sanitizer.

Regularly remind staff of good hygiene practices:

- Handwashing for at least 20 seconds with soap and water.
- Gloving is not a substitute for frequent handwashing. If used, gloves must be changed frequently, and hands washed between changes and when gloves are removed.
- Frequent use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer when hands are not visible soiled.
- Covering mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing; disposing of tissues and washing hands.

## **Lineups**

Patrons in a line up, indoors and outdoors, including for tickets/admission, washroom facilities and food and beverage services must remain at least **two metres** from others when in line. When indoors, masking is also required when in a line up. Masking is required outdoors in line when physical distancing cannot be maintained.

## **Miscellaneous**

- Participants/coaches/instructors/spectators should not spit or share water bottles.
- Spectators should not go on the field, dugout or in team/participant designated areas or touch team/player equipment.
- Encourage participants to bring their own equipment to minimize sharing and cross contamination.
- Avoid personal clothing, equipment or electronics etc. being left in common places/close to others. Minimize personal items brought to the game and store them away when possible.
- Floor fans, pedestal fans or high-powered fans on/near the floor should not be used as they generate strong air currents within breathing zones or across surfaces which may contain virus particles. If ceiling fans are present, the location of the fans should



not allow droplets blowing from one person to another. High ceiling fans (e.g., 25 feet up in a gym), are less of a concern than low ceiling fans.

- If indoors, avoid stagnant air conditions by opening windows and maximizing outdoor air ratio of the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system settings. Avoid recirculation of air as much as possible.
- Limit the use of water fountains to re-fill water bottles only, not for individuals to drink directly from them.

## B. FURTHER OUTDOOR REQUIREMENTS

### **Masks and Face Coverings**

Every individual **outdoors**, including employees, volunteers and members of the public must wear a mask or face covering in a manner that covers the nose, mouth, and chin when **two metre** physical distancing cannot be maintained (unless an exemption from subsection 2(4) of schedule 1 of [Ontario Regulation 364/20](#) applies, including when engaged in athletic or fitness activities).

Spectators in an **outdoor** spectator area must wear a mask unless an exemption from subsection 2(4) of schedule 1 of [Ontario Regulation 364/20](#) applies or they are seated two metres from those outside their household. Masking signs are available [here](#).

### **Physical Distancing**

Every person who attends an **outdoor** sport or recreational fitness activity must maintain a physical distance of at least **two metres** from every other person at all times OR wear a face covering, unless engaged in sport. Spectators may remove masks to consume food or drink and for health and safety purposes.

## C. FURTHER INDOOR REQUIREMENTS

### **Masks and Face Coverings**

Every individual, including employees, volunteers and members of the public must wear mask or face covering in a manner that covers the nose, mouth, and chin at all times **inside** sports and recreational facilities (unless an exemption from subsection 2(4) of schedule 1 of [Ontario Regulation 364/20](#) applies, including when engaged in athletic or fitness activities).

Employees in areas not accessible to the public must wear masks in work areas where they cannot maintain two metre physical distancing from others. Signs are available from [RCDHU](#). Staff that have to work within two metres of an unmasked person must wear a medical mask and eye protection i.e. face shield. Eye protection guidance can be found [here](#).

### **Proof of Vaccination**

Facilities used for sports and recreational are required to verify proof that anyone entering an indoor area of the facility, including staff/coaches/referees/volunteers/



public/participants/spectators are fully vaccinated against Covid-19 (unless an exemption applies - see schedule 2.1 of [Ontario Regulation 364/20](#) and accompanying [guidance document](#) for details). Vaccination information cannot be retained. It is recommended to post [proof of vaccination required poster](#) at entrance(s) to facility.

Proof of vaccination is **not required** for;

- Workers, contractors, repair workers, delivery workers, students, volunteers, inspectors or others who are entering the business or facility for work purposes and not as patrons/spectators
- who are under 18 years of age, and who are entering the indoor area solely for the purpose of actively participating in an organized sport
- who are under 12 years of age
- who provide a written document, completed and supplied by a physician or registered nurse in the extended class, that sets out,
  - to a documented medical reason for not being fully vaccinated against COVID-19, and
  - the effective time-period for the medical reason
- entering an indoor area solely
  - to use a washroom;
  - to access an outdoor area that can only be accessed through an indoor route;
  - to make a retail purchase;
  - while placing or picking up an order, including placing a bet or picking up winnings in the case of a horse racing track;
  - while paying for an order;
  - to purchase admission; or
  - as may be necessary for the purposes of health and safety.

Some sports organizations (i.e. [HEO](#)), health units or facilities may have more restrictive requirements. As of November 30, 2021, in RCD, all individuals 12 years of age and older, who support indoor Organized Sports, including but not limited to volunteers, coaches, and officials require proof of vaccination. See RCDHUs [letter of instruction](#) for details. Ensure those impacted are aware of, and adhere to any additional requirements. Further, sports teams/ leagues should consult with their applicable sport's governing body for additional requirements.

## D. DISINFECTION

Only use cleaning and disinfecting products that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN), are not expired, and are appropriate for use on the item that is to be cleaned and disinfected. Low-level hospital grade disinfectants may be used. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.



### **Equipment and High Touch Surfaces**

Any equipment (high touch surfaces) that is provided to users of/at the facility must be cleaned and disinfected between each use or, where used in training, a game or practice, at the end of play, such as at the completion of a class, game or practice. This includes free weights, weight machines, treadmills, rowing machines, stationary bikes, classroom areas, balls, rackets, gloves, and other sports/fitness gear - including having a dedicated worker to ensure cleaning between uses.

If shared equipment cannot be adequately cleaned and disinfected between use/participants (due to difficult to clean, absorbent, permeable material), it must be taken out of play after use/game/class and must not be used until a quarantine period of at least 72 hours is completed.

Increasing the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch surfaces (at least once daily) and common or shared spaces, such as washrooms, lobbies, change rooms, areas for workouts and classes, players and spectator seating areas (not outdoors), and workout equipment. Refer to PHO's [Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings fact sheet](#) (PDF). The surfaces most likely to become contaminated include door handles, handrails, toilet and faucet handles, counters, pin pads, and touch screens. Allow the disinfectant sufficient contact time (see product label) between bookings.

Decrease touchpoints such as keys and lockers and consider contactless check-in and touch-free payment systems.

### **Change Rooms/Washrooms**

- The use of disposable paper towels is preferred over the use of hand dryers in washrooms or change rooms.
- Must be cleaned and disinfected at least once per day when open. Encourage participants to come dressed to play/for class.
- Individuals are to be masked in change rooms/washrooms at all times (unless using showers, if open).
- If showers remain open, ensure they are cleaned and disinfected between each use.

## **E. SYMPTOMATIC PATRONS AND STAFF**

Recommendations and requirements for symptomatic patrons or workers are set out by the [Province of Ontario](#). See the section [Screening for COVID-19: guidance for employers](#) for specific instructions.

If a worker or non-worker does not pass screening (has one or more symptom or an exposure to a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case as per the screening tool, or if they receive a positive result on a rapid antigen test) they:

- may **not** enter the facility at that time
- must self-isolate immediately





- should get [tested at a provincial assessment centre](#) (using a laboratory-based PCR diagnostic test). Tests can be booked through [RC VTAC](#)
- may seek medical advice by contacting their health care provider or RC VTAC (1-844-727-6404) or Telehealth Ontario (1-866-797-0000)
- must follow all directions they are given by public health officials

This also applies to patrons or workers who become unwell while at the facility. Workers should notify their supervisor immediately if they become symptomatic while working and workers or patrons should leave the facility immediately, commence self-isolation, and follow the steps above.

## F. FOOD PREMISES

### **Protocols and Procedures for Food Service**

Food premises in sports and recreational fitness facilities are to comply with Covid-19 requirements for both the recreational facilities along with those for food premises. This includes masking, contact tracing, checking proof of vaccination, and screening. See [Ontario Regulation 364/20](#) for all the requirements for restaurants, bars etc.

Staff/volunteers are required to wear BOTH a medical mask and eye protection i.e. face shield if they will be working within two metres of an unmasked person. Eye protection guidance can be found [here](#).

Post signage that promotes wearing of [face coverings](#), [self-screening and physical distancing](#). It is recommended that hand sanitizer be readily available either on tables or at the entry of the food premises.

Ensure staff are properly trained on how best to serve food; maintain safe physical distancing and avoid unnecessary handling (e.g. serve to front of table and let customers distribute, avoid handling coffee cups when refilling, let customer fill/pack leftovers in containers).

Buffet/self-serve style service is permitted. Ensure hand sanitizers are provided at the start of buffet line/at self-service stations and used by the public prior to them serving themselves. Consider using menus that are single-use paper, online for customers' mobile devices, menu-boards, chalkboards. If regular menus are used, they need to be disinfected between uses.

Pre-setting tables is not recommended. Utensils should be rolled or packaged and brought out when customers are seated. Consider replacing regular condiments with single serve versions or sanitize between uses. Consider disposable napkins, etc.

Pool tables, dart boards etc. are permitted providing the following:

- All shared equipment is cleaned and sanitized after each use
- Recommended to bring own equipment
- Masks/face coverings are used while engaged in play



- Consuming food/drink is discouraged while engaged in play
- Ensure hand sanitizer is readily available and hand hygiene is conducted as frequently as necessary

For additional instruction and guidance on food service operation please refer to [Food-Premise-COVID-19-Guidance-FACT-SHEET-November-2-2021.pdf \(rcdhu.com\)](#) and [Restaurant and food services health and safety during COVID-19 | Ontario.ca](#)

## G. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SPORTS AND RECREATION

To assist the sports and recreational facilities with policy development and review, a resource package in addition to regulatory requirements is provided to ensure your procedures incorporate necessary control measures to help prevent transmission of COVID-19. Here is a list of resources for the package:

- [September 1 - Provincewide Proof of Vaccination \(rcdhu.com\)](#)
- [WSPS Guidance on Health and Safety for the Sports Sector during COVID-19](#)
- <https://www.ccohs.ca/covid19/sports-activities/>
- Face covering [FAQ](#) and [Do's and Don'ts of Wearing a Face Covering](#)
- Hand hygiene factsheets ([hand washing and alcohol based handrub](#))
- PHO [cleaning and disinfecting](#) factsheet
- [Guide for Developing your Workplace COVID Plan](#)
- Provincial [resources for workplaces](#)
- Training video for staff training [how to wear a mask](#)

Additional recommendations for consideration include:

- Encourage the use of the [Ontario self-assessment website](#) for COVID-19 before visiting the facility or through social media

RCDHUs Covid-19 posters:

- [Masking](#)
- [Physical Distancing](#)
- [Screening Poster](#)
- [Proof of Vaccination Required](#)



## APPENDICIES



## Collection of Information for Recreational Facilities

Facility Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Anyone attending an indoor or outdoor recreational facility (i.e. coaches, participants, volunteers, parents, spectators) must share their name and contact information prior to entering the facility. This information must be documented. Attendees must also be actively screened using questions (for customers) found at <https://bit.ly/3iYAgmO> and proof of vaccination for attendees must be verified (unless exemption applies).**

**NOTE:** This template may be used or adapted to collect information at your establishment. Please remember, patron information should not be seen by other patrons on the premise, only staff members. Please retain and securely store for 30 days as directed under Ontario Regulation 364/20 from the Government of Ontario.

Patron Information					
First and Last Name	Telephone # <b>OR</b> Alternate Contact ( <i>physical address or email</i> )	Time of Arrival	Verbal active screening <b>OR</b> verified online screening	Proof of vaccination verified	Time of Departure
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	



## Collection of Information for Team Sports Participants

Team: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Anyone participating in team sports or fitness or exercise classes at recreational facility must share their name and contact information prior to entering the facility. This information must be documented. They must also be actively screened using questions (for customers) found at <https://bit.ly/3iYAgmQ> and proof of vaccination for attendees must be verified (unless exemption applies).**

**NOTE:** This template may be used or adapted to collect information at your establishment. Please remember, patron information should not be seen by other patrons on the premise, only staff members. Please retain and securely store for 30 days as directed under Ontario Regulation 364/20 from the Government of Ontario

Participant Information					
First and Last Name	Telephone # <b>OR</b> Alternate Contact ( <i>physical address or email</i> )	Time of Arrival	Verbal active screening <b>OR</b> verified online screening	Proof of vaccination verified	Time of Departure
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
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