



## **Safe Return to Play Policy**

### **1. Overview**

This Policy sets out procedures necessary to support the safe return to play for members and participants of the King Township Minor Hockey Association (KTMHA), in a COVID-19 pandemic environment. These procedures have been developed having regard to requirements of KTMHA's governing bodies (the Ontario Hockey Federation, Hockey Canada and the OMHA), as well as guidelines provided by Ontario Public Health, and any requirements imposed by King Township.

More details regarding the Hockey Canada Return to Play COVID-19 response is available at:

[https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Exclusive/return-to-hockey/downloads/HC\\_RTH\\_Safety-GUIDELINES\\_EN.pdf](https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Exclusive/return-to-hockey/downloads/HC_RTH_Safety-GUIDELINES_EN.pdf)

In accordance with these various guidelines, KTMHA (including its local league partners, Schomberg and NobleKing) will implement OHF phase 2 – Stage 3b and 3c local recreational hockey programming based on the procedures outlined below.

Our priority as an organization is on the health and safety of our players. All of our players and participants will be expected to work with the Association, take responsibility for their own personal health situations in monitoring potential symptoms and illness, and comply with applicable public health requirements so as not to put fellow Association members unnecessarily at risk.

As a condition of play, all KTMHA members and participants (players, coaches, volunteers, parents and spectators) will be required to comply with the requirements set out in this Policy, as well as any additional health and safety directives that may be issued from time to time.

By working together, and following these requirements, we have a reasonable opportunity to provide the children of our community with a safe and fun recreational hockey program, despite the ongoing pandemic situation we are facing.

### **2. Program Format**

#### ***(a) Competition (Game Play)***

- Following a minimum two-week development phase for any new programs, modified 3 on 3 or 4 on 4 game play with No Physical Contact
- Player “bubbles” will be created to a maximum of 50 or fewer players, depending on local public health requirements.
- All Game Play is to be held within the local Public Health Unit. No travel hockey is permitted.

- There is a minimum of one registered official per game unless determined otherwise.
- All Game Play must be conducted in conjunction with the local public health requirements, and facility rules for the purpose of sanitation and physical distancing.

Specific game rules and regulations with respect to the 4x4 and 3x3 formats to be followed can be found in the OHF Return to Hockey Framework: [https://www.ohf.on.ca/media/l3pair4n/ohf-return-to-hockey\\_0731.pdf](https://www.ohf.on.ca/media/l3pair4n/ohf-return-to-hockey_0731.pdf)

***(b) Individual and Group Training / Practices***

- The Association will determine the maximum number of participants allowed on the ice for practice purposes, including instructors, upon review of applicable guidelines issued by Ontario Government, and/or local public health.
- Physical distancing is required for the purpose of individual and group training and if a facility has further restrictions all programming must comply.

***(c) Team Budgets***

Given the need for the Association to manage this public health situation in a consistent manner, Teams will not be permitted to operate with additional Team Budgets until further notice. There will be no need or ability to purchase additional ice-time or fund special events outside the scope of this tightly regulated recreational hockey format.

***(d) Team Rules***

The Association will issue a single consistent set of Team Rules which every Team of 10 players will be required to use.

***(e) Payment of Timekeepers and Game Officials***

In order to avoid the need for Team Officials to manage cash transactions for Timekeepers and Game Officials, the Association will fund and manage this centrally for this season, using electronic transfers in order to eliminate the need for any unnecessary social contact or handling of cash.

**3. Pre-Activity Medical Screening Requirements**

As a condition of play, ALL PARTICIPANTS (including players, coaches, officials and spectators) will be required to successfully complete an online health screening process in advance of taking part in any scheduled games, practices or other team activities.

The Association has partnered with **MBSportsWeb/Sportsheadz** to utilize a mobile device enabled screening application, with health screening questions and criteria that follow applicable Ontario and Hockey Canada recommended guidelines. Information necessary to access this App can be found here:

**(Instructions to be updated in this document at health app launch)**

The health screening App will take participants through a list of questions with respect to potential COVID-19 symptoms, as well as other recognized risk factors, such as recent return from international travel, close contact with individuals who are symptomatic or considered probable cases, restrictions

imposed by public health authorities, etc. It will take a few minutes prior to each scheduled activity for each participant to complete the App requirements. This should be completed on the day of a scheduled activity, no more than 2 hours prior to the scheduled activity time. Separate entries will be required for both players and any parent or spectator attending.

Successful completion of this process is a condition of play and attendance in the facility. Anyone who fails to comply with this requirement, or who attends having failed the medical screen, will be denied entry, and may face disciplinary action for attending after a failed health screen or falsifying results.

After completing the health screening process, participants will receive either a “Green” screen, allowing them to proceed with attending the scheduled event, or a “Red” screen, indicating that they have failed the health screening process.

Team medical screening results will be available instantly to Team Trainers and Coaches electronically, so that Team officials are aware of team attendance and whether any players have reported ill.

#### **4. Participants Who Fail Screening Requirements**

Participants receiving a “Red” screen will be directed to report to their physician and public health authorities for assessment, and will not be permitted to enter the arena facility or return to play until such time as they can provide written medical clearance from their physician and/or proof of a negative COVID-19 test result. See Appendices “B” and “C” for the Hockey Canada process flows on these issues.

#### **5. Social Distancing and Hygiene Requirements**

When arriving at the facility participants and spectators will be marshaled in the lobby as indicated by Township signage and will be permitted entry as a group after a team representative (e.g coach, trainer or manager) checks in with arena staff.

Due to Provincial restrictions on indoor social gatherings there can be only one (1) spectator allowed per player. Spectators will only be permitted to sit/stand in an area that will be specifically identified within the facility for each event. Anyone found watching outside of the designated viewing area may face ejection by arena staff.

All participants will be required to wear masks upon entering the facility and utilize sanitizer. Signage will be provided by the Township. Players will remove their masks prior to immediately prior to putting on their helmet and getting on the ice. Masks should be placed in a paper bag or sanitary container. Following the completion of a game or practice, players will be required to immediately put their mask back on. Additional requirements are as follows:

- All coaches on the bench, and spectators in the arena will wear masks at all times.
- Players and participants are required to avoid any physical contact of a social nature, including handshakes, high-fives, hugs, etc.
- Coaches will not be permitted to physically contact players on or off the ice. This will potentially limit “learn to skate” beginner programs, due to minimal numbers of on-ice officials permitted on the ice and the fact that players will need to be self-sufficient in terms of being able to skate on their own.

- Socially distant greetings such as an “elbow bump” or wave are considered acceptable. There will be no team huddles or scrums allowed.
- Players are prohibited from spitting, blowing their nose or discharging bodily fluids while on the ice or engaged in team activities.
- There shall be no sharing of food or beverages among participants. Specific rules about water bottles are describe in the Policy section dealing with Equipment.
- All participants and spectators will be asked to maintain physical distancing while in the facility and follow signage guidelines, addressing the flow of pedestrian traffic, entrances and exits to use, where spectators may be allowed to stand, where players are permitted to lace skates, etc.
- On-ice, coaching staff will be responsible to maintain as much physical distancing of players as possible and on the bench as well.
- There will be a maximum of two officials on a bench (Coach and Trainer).

## **6. Player Medical Forms / Underlying Medical Conditions Requiring Physician Consultation**

As with previous seasons, Players are required to first return a completed OMHA Player Medical Form to their Team Trainer as a condition of play. Given the current pandemic environment, it is especially important that Players return these promptly, before being permitted to engage in any on-ice activities. Parents and Players should be mindful of including up to date information regarding family physician and related contact information, and identification of any underlying conditions that might make a Player or Participant potentially more vulnerable to COVID-19 related infections.

Apart from the normal physical risks associated with playing any sport, and despite the precautions being taken by the Association, OHF, Hockey Canada, the OMHA, and local municipal and public health authorities, an inherent risk of exposure exists in any public or private activity, and all participants accept a voluntary assumption of risk in choosing to take part in KTMHA sanctioned events.

Should any Player or Participant have an underlying medical condition that they may be concerned about, we encourage them to consult with their personal family physician to obtain any necessary advice prior to engaging in any on-ice activities.

## **7. Facility Entrance /Exit Protocol**

King Township is providing 90 minutes in the schedule for each 60 minute ice slot. This will allow for a maximum arrival time of 15 minutes before a game/practice and a maximum of 15 minutes after each game/practice to exit the facility. Participants will be expected to strictly adhere to these time requirements, and to enter and exit using assigned entranceways.

In addition to the Association’s online Medical Screening process through MBSportsWeb, King Township as the facility operator will also require its own screening process upon entry to the premises.

There will be no use of dressing rooms, so all players will be expected to arrive dressed to play. There will, however, be one dressing room open for use by the goalies of each team.

Where required, each player will be allowed one spectator to assist with getting player ready to go on the ice (20 players plus 20 parents maximum).

## **8. On-Ice Safety Requirements**

In order to minimize close contact on the ice all games will be no checking and there will be no face offs. Any physical altercation between players on the ice will result in the ejection of one or both players who may also face supplementary discipline.

Referees will at all times attempt to remain 2 metres from the players and may or may not be masked, as they have been given the option to purchase electronic whistles.

In the case of an injury requiring medical attention on the ice the certified Trainer(s) in attendance may leave the bench to attend to the injured player. Teams must separate and players should maintain 2 metres apart on the ice during any injury stoppage. Where the trainer is required to render physical assistance to the injured player they will be masked and outfitted with non-latex gloves.

## **9. Equipment**

The sharing of any equipment between players and participants is strictly prohibited.

Team Trainers will not be providing water bottles for players. Players wishing to bring a water bottle will be responsible for bringing their own. Water bottles must be clearly marked with the players name, and players may only use their own personal water bottle. These should be cleaned and disinfected at home in between on-ice sessions.

## **10. Mandatory Training for Team Officials**

All Team Officials and Bench Staff will be required to complete the OMHA/OHF “Safe Return to Hockey” Online course, in order to ensure their familiarity with COVID-19 protocols.

## **11. Participants Who Exhibit Illness During Activities**

Any participant who exhibits illness at the arena will be immediately removed from play and asked to put on their mask. They will be taken to an isolated area where they will remain with a team official until a parent or guardian is available to pick them up.

Arena staff will be notified of the removal and it will be the responsibility of the Coach or the Trainer to advise the Director of Risk Management of same.

The player being removed (and their parent or legal guardian) will be directed to have the player report to their physician and public health authorities for assessment, and the removed player will not be permitted to enter the arena facility or return to play until such time as they can provide written medical clearance from their physician and/or proof of a negative COVID-19 test result.

## **12. Managing Confirmed Cases of COVID-19**

The recreational hockey format described above, and as approved by the OHF, Hockey Canada and OMHA, provides for small teams of 10 players, operating within an overall “bubble” of 50 players.

In the event of a confirmed positive case of COVID-19 involving any players or program participant, KTMHA will work with local public health authorities and King Township to manage the situation within

applicable public health guidelines. Player attendance and health screening records from the online MBSportWeb App will be provided to public health and municipal government officials to assist with assessing potential close contact scenarios, and any contact tracing that may be required.

In situations of participant close contact with confirmed cases, participants may be directed to self isolate and monitor for potential symptoms, or report to provincial COVID-19 centres for assessment and testing as may be required. See Appendix “D” for the Hockey Canada process flow on this issue.

Participants who have tested positive for COVID-19 are not required to publicly disclose any medical information, however they will be required to abide by the public health directions. Participants who test positive will not be participate in any hockey related activity for 14 days as per Ontario Ministry of Health guidelines and cannot return to hockey until cleared by public health. Participants with a positive COVID-19 test shall promptly disclose that test result to KTMHA, King Township and York Region public health authorities to ensure proper tracing and notifications can be completed.

Ensuring that players remain within their team “bubbles” of 10, and overall game/practice “bubbles” of 50 players, will allow the Association and public health authorities to isolate discrete groups of players for isolation and quarantine purposes, should that be required.

For that reason, players will not be permitted to AP, transfer or “play up” to other groups or teams outside of their bubble. Game or practice related travel (including tournaments) outside of King Township will not be permitted until further notice. Additional team “dryland” training activities outside the scope of this Policy will also not be permitted for the time being.

### **13. Playing in Non-Sanctioned Leagues Outside of KTMHA**

Please refer to the Memorandum from the Ontario Hockey Federation, attached as Appendix “A”.

### **14. Monitoring and Communication**

The KTMHA Office Administrator has been assigned the task of monitoring Hockey Canada, OHF and OMHA for updates to protocols and regulations and ensure all are communicated to the KTMHA Board and membership.

Participant attendance reports and the results of medical attendance screening will be compiled daily, and in the event of a positive case, shared with municipal and applicable public health authorities, should formal contact tracing be required.

In the event that a participant is identified as a potential close contact to a confirmed case, they will be promptly contacted and advised of applicable public health requirements.

Our Operations Sub-committee (both Association Presidents, Rep Vice Presidents, LL Vice Presidents and Association Administrator) will meet weekly to discuss status of return to play issues as they arise.

Jayson Rider (Head Trainer/Risk Management Director) will deal specifically with all health and safety issues as it pertains to the return to play protocols. He will oversee protocol enforcement, collection and storage of contact tracing programs/tracing questionnaires. Team Trainers will coordinate with the Risk Management Director regarding any safety issues arising.

The Association will continue to provide formal return to play updates to the membership through email, website and social media updates.

As the now well-worn saying goes, “We’re all in this together”! If we all do our part by adhering to the protocols and procedures we have put in place we are confident that we can provide a safe and fun (albeit different) hockey experience this season.

For further general information and guidelines on hockey safety this season you may wish to refer to Hockey Canada’s Safety Guidelines FAQ which can be found at:

**<https://www.hockeycanada.ca/en-ca/exclusive/return-to-hockey/plans/safety>**

## Appendix "A"



### **Non-Sanctioned Leagues Operating Outside the Auspices of Hockey Canada**

## 1. OVERVIEW

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As the governing body of amateur hockey in Canada, Hockey Canada is committed to offering the best development programs in the world. Hockey Canada and our Members have invested significant resources in the development of officials, coaches, administrators and players countrywide. We have a committed strategy toward a cohesive long-term athlete development model and we feel our programs are second to none in sport.

Despite, or perhaps because of, our success in delivering quality programming throughout Canada, other organizations operating outside our structure form leagues from time to time that offer various levels of amateur hockey programming. These “non-sanctioned” organizations do not support the development of Hockey Canada or Member programs. Further, they operate with limited, or no consideration to the impact of their programs on minor, junior, senior, adult recreational hockey, officiating development, female hockey, coaching development or administrator development in Canada. These Non-Sanctioned Leagues choose instead, in many instances, to utilize resources already developed by Hockey Canada and its Members.

Because these Non-Sanctioned Leagues operate outside of our structure, the Ontario Hockey Federation has no way of ensuring that those Leagues implement many of the fundamental safeguards inherent in Hockey Canada programs. As a result, those Leagues may not be using the same Playing Rules that Hockey Canada has

implemented to protect player safety and may not provide adequate insurance for their participants. We also cannot ensure that the quality of play in these Leagues matches the level advertised.

The Ontario Hockey Federation respects the right of every individual to choose between participating in a Hockey Canada sanctioned league or a Non-Sanctioned League at the beginning of each hockey season. Every individual who makes the choice to Participate in a Non-Sanctioned League, however, must understand the ramifications of that choice, as described in greater detail in Section III of this policy.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

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- 2.1 **“Cut-Off Date”** means September 30 of the hockey season in question.
- 2.2 **“League”** means a Non-Sanctioned League.
- 2.3 **“Non-Sanctioned League”** includes any amateur hockey league that operates in Canada outside the auspices/sanctioning of Hockey Canada. This currently does not include summer hockey leagues/teams, adult recreational hockey leagues/teams, high school hockey, and/or hockey schools.
- 2.4 **“Participate”** means to engage, knowingly or otherwise, in an activity within a Non-Sanctioned League that could only be engaged in within Hockey Canada if the participant was properly registered on the Hockey Canada Registry. Such activity includes, without limitation, playing, managing, coaching, officiating, or acting as a trainer.
- 2.5 **“Participation”** in a Non-Sanctioned League will be considered to have occurred if the individual takes part in one game (including an exhibition, tournament, league or playoff game) after the Cut-Off Date.

### **3. CONSEQUENCES OF SUPPORTING OR PARTICIPATING IN A NON-SANCTIONED LEAGUE**

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- 3.1 The OHF will implement the Hockey Canada Non-Sanctioned League Policy and in addition has strengthened the application of that policy as set out below.
- 3.2 Any individual who Participates in a Non-Sanctioned League, or any minor hockey association which supports such a League, is subject to the following consequences:
  - 3.2.1 Any individual who Participates in a Non-Sanctioned League after the Cut-Off Date will lose all privileges with the Ontario Hockey Federation for the remainder of that season, and, subject to paragraph (3) below, may only apply for the reinstatement of those privileges after the end of that season.
  - 3.2.2 The OHF and its Members across the OHF will make every effort to ensure that local minor hockey associations in areas where Non- Sanctioned Leagues exist are not supporting these Leagues in any manner whatsoever. For greater certainty, “supporting” includes, but is not limited to, assisting a Non-Sanctioned League directly or indirectly through advertisement, promotion, ticket sales, volunteer activities, assigning Officials, sharing resources or enabling such a League to participate in Hockey Canada sanctioned activities. We will withhold tournament sanctions and will preclude such associations from benefitting from any OHF sanctioned event by whatever means necessary, including the withdrawal of any such event from any community within the geographic boundaries of that association if need be to stress this point.
  - 3.2.3 Notwithstanding the consequences listed in paragraph 1), anyone who Participates in a Non Sanctioned League after the Cut-Off Date is entitled to seek early reinstatement of their privileges within the OHF by appealing to Hockey Canada’s Non-Sanctioned Hockey

Reinstatement Committee, which may grant early reinstatement if it is satisfied that special circumstances exist.

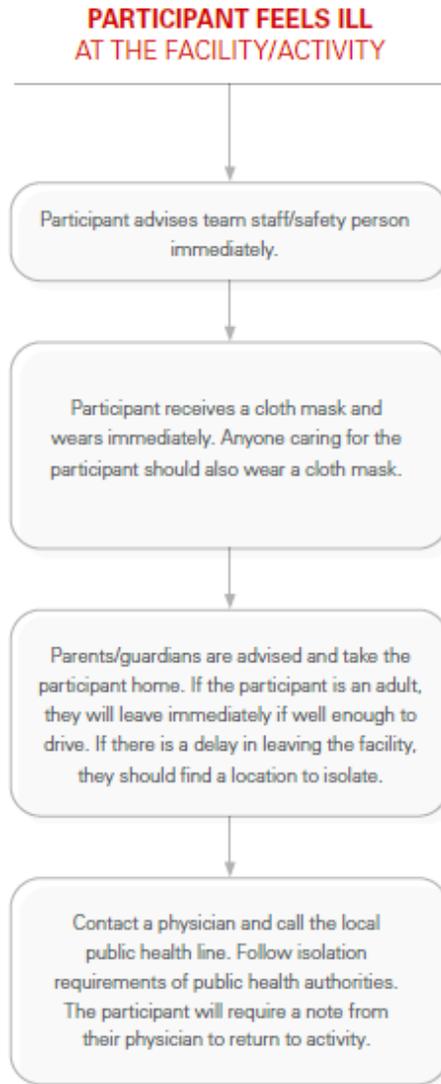
- 3.3 The consequences described in this section of this policy will remain in effect even if the Non-Sanctioned League or team folds, or the Participant is released, suspended or fired from that League or team.

## Appendix “B”

### SECTION 7

# Recommended Return to Hockey Procedures

The following are recommended guidelines for team staff, parents and guardians for participants who are sick or showing symptoms of COVID-19. It is important to remember that public health authority guidelines and advice from physicians must be followed in any situation where a participant is sick.



## Appendix “C”

**Note that the procedure below applies to non-injury related illness and all other return to play guidelines specific to injuries still apply.**

**PARTICIPANT ADVISES TEAM STAFF  
THEY ARE NOT FEELING WELL  
AND WILL NOT BE ATTENDING**

Participant is advised to follow up with their physician. They will require a note from their physician to return to activity.

Any participant with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should not return to the hockey environment until all public health authority steps have been completed. They will require a note from their physician or public health authority to return to activity.

If a participant is confirmed to have COVID-19, refer to the following section for recommended communication.

**PARTICIPANT ADVISES  
THEY HAVE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19  
AND WILL NOT BE ATTENDING**

If a participant has COVID-19, they should follow up with their physician and public health authority for instructions.

Any participant with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should not return to the hockey environment until all public health authority steps have been completed. They will require a note from their physician or public health authority to return to activity.

If a participant is confirmed to have COVID-19, refer to the following section for recommended communication.

## Appendix “D”

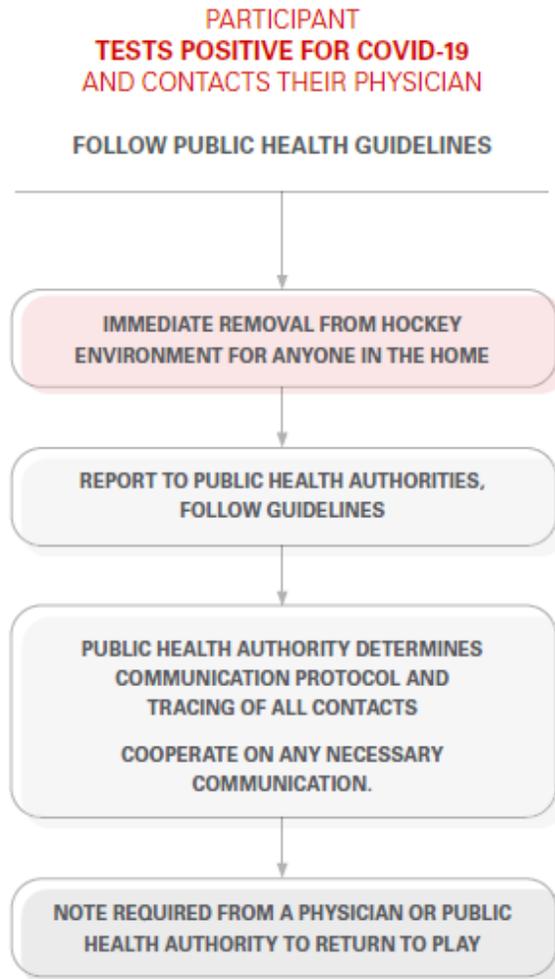
### SECTION 8

# Positive COVID-19 Test in Hockey Environment

#### Important!

If a sick participant (or their parent/guardian if the participant is a minor) elects to inform a team/hockey association/Member that they have been diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual informed shall seek the sick participant/their parent’s/guardian’s consent to contact public health authorities in order to obtain advice on communication with other potentially impacted participants. The sick participant (or their parent/guardian if the participant is a minor) should be asked to advise Public Health of this consent.

Explain the communication that will take place and **NEVER** disclose the sick person’s name.



In Canada, the management of public health crises is a matter involving close coordination between all levels of government. There is therefore a variety of public and private sector privacy legislation at the federal, provincial and territorial levels that govern the collection, use and disclosure of personal information. There are provincial and territorial privacy authorities that oversee compliance with the [privacy legislation](#) at the federal, provincial and territorial levels that govern the collection, use and disclosure of personal information. There are provincial and territorial privacy authorities that oversee compliance with the privacy legislation in their respective jurisdictions, and some have [published their own statements](#) relevant to the matter of COVID-19.