



**North Shore Female Ice Hockey
Return to Hockey Plan 2020-2021 Season**

October, 2020



Overview

- The North Shore Female Ice Hockey Association (NSFIHA) recognizes that life is different, as a result of COVID-19 (coronavirus).
- Although the province of BC continues to “open up”, the 2020-21 hockey season will undoubtedly be different.
- Our intention is to communicate what we expect will be different, based on the information available, and communicate the added steps we are taking in concert with our partners (including the facilities we use) to:
 - Mitigate risk to participants, volunteers, and coaches
 - Invest in player development
 - Foster a love of the game and continue to grow the game in our communities
- Until COVID-19 is either eradicated, a vaccine is developed, or a cure is found, there is no way of completely eliminating the risk of infection.
- The 2020-21 season will not be possible without the support, commitment and patience of participants, volunteers, and coaches.



Our Mission is the same

- We are committed to providing young females an opportunity to play competitive or recreational ice hockey in a **safe** and **enjoyable environment**.
- We are committed to providing a **fun** and **enriching experience**
- Our **top priority** is the **health** and **safety** of participants.
- We recognize the importance of hockey and the Avalanche community to participants (players, families, volunteers, and coaches).
- Your feedback and involvement is key to the advancement of our program.



Communication Officer

- Christa Hook, Risk Manager NSFIHA, is our point person should anyone within the Avalanche family test positive for COVID-19 or have questions pertaining to the following COVID-19 Illness Policy.
 - The Communication Officer, along with the NSFIHA President, will share relevant public health updates during the season and communicate on a regular basis with our arenas about their guidelines and updates.
 - The Communication Officer will liaise with families, coaches, managers, HCSPs and public health authorities to assist in contact tracing, if required.
 - safety@northshoregirlshockey.com
- Please review the following COVID-19 Illness Policy for self assessment, illness reporting, self-isolation and return to play requirements.
 - The Policy follows the rules and regulations of our arenas, which comply with public health requirements
 - The Policy is subject to change as a result of new information, guidelines, and/or local, provincial, or federal mandates



NSFIHA Covid-19 Illness Policy

- **Players, families, coaches, and volunteers must remain diligent in following public health instructions. In this policy, “Team member” includes player, volunteer, coach, and parent/spectator.**
- Team members are required to complete a pre-screening questionnaire and/or health check prior to all team activities (practices, games, off-ice training, other activities).
 - The required Canlan Ice Sports pre-screening questionnaire may be found [HERE](#)
 - Team members are also required to complete the TeamSnap health check prior to all team activities. The TeamSnap application allows team officials to flag concerns prior to team activities and direct team members to the illness policy. More information may be found [HERE](#)
 - Please also check out the BC CDC’s [COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#)
- Team members must **NOT** participate in team activities if they are feeling unwell, awaiting a COVID-19 test result and/or have been directed to self-isolate.
 - Click [HERE](#) for a list of symptoms and recommended actions.
- Team members must **NOT** participate in team activities if anyone in their household is feeling unwell and has not yet consulted a healthcare professional, is awaiting a COVID-19 test result or has been directed to self-isolate.
- Team members who travel outside of Canada must wait 14 days before returning to team activities.
 - If anyone in the household has returned from travel outside of Canada or been in contact with a person confirmed to have COVID-19, use the [COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to determine if they should be tested for COVID-19.



NSFIHA Covid-19 Illness Policy Cont.

- If feeling unwell prior to a team activity, team members must remain at home and consult a healthcare professional for direction or self-refer to a COVID-19 testing centre.
 - Healthcare professional may include HealthLink BC 8-1-1 or family doctor.
- If feeling unwell during a team activity, team members must inform team officials immediately, leave the activity and consult a healthcare professional or self-refer to a COVID-19 testing centre.
- If team officials observe a team member exhibiting symptoms of illness during a team event, the team member may be removed from the event and directed to consult a healthcare professional or self-refer to a COVID-19 testing centre.
- Team officials are required to inform the Avalanche COVID-19 Communications Officer of all such happenings.
 - Team officials and/or the COVID-19 Communications Officer may be required to follow up with team members who have left a team activity due to illness or have missed team activities due to illness.



NSFIHA Covid-19 Illness Policy Cont.

- Team members may **NOT** return to team activities before COVID-19 has been “ruled out” **AND** all symptoms have resolved.
 - For the purpose of the NSFIHA Covid-19 Illness Policy, COVID-19 may be ruled out by a negative test result or physician note.
 - Alternatively, if symptom free, team members may return to play 14 days from symptom onset.
- Regarding other members of the household (non team members) feeling unwell, team members may return to team activities after COVID-19 has been ruled out or 14 days after last unwell household member symptom onset, providing the team member is feeling well.
- Team members who test positive for COVID-19 are asked to inform the Avalanche COVID-19 Communications Officer, so that the NSFIHA may act to protect the safety and privacy of all Avalanche families.
 - The timeline and details for team member return to play will be determined by public health and the NSFIHA.
 - Next steps for the team(s), NSFIHA and other interested parties will also be determined by public health.



Resources

- The NSFIHA will continue to following the advice of public health officials
 - **Province of British Columbia** - [B.C.'s Restart Plan](#)
 - **Vancouver Coastal Health Authority** - [Covid-19 General Information](#)
- Our Return to Hockey Plan is based on existing return to sport guidelines:
 - **Hockey Canada** - [Return to Hockey Covid-19 Response Safety Guidelines](#)
 - **B.C. Hockey** - [Return to Hockey Member Plan](#)
 - **ViaSport** - [Return to Sport Guidelines for B.C.](#)

ViaSport – Sport Activity Chart

	Strictest Controls Prior to May 19, 2020	Transition Measures Approx. May 19th to Sept	Progressively Loosen Future date TBC	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 	Refer to PHO and local health authorities	Refer to PHO and local health authorities
Enhanced Protocols	Increased hand hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased hand hygiene Symptom Screening in place 	Increased hand hygiene	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 	Outdoor/Indoor	Outdoor/Indoor
Participants	Individual activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small Groups No or limited spectators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groups sizes may increase Limited spectators 	<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 	Expansion of training activities	No restrictions on activity type
Contact Activities	Should not occur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should not occur Contact sports should look for non-contact alternatives to training 	Introduction to pair or small group contact skills	No restrictions on activity type
Competition*	Should not occur	In club play or modified games may slowly be introduced	Interclub or regional game play may be considered	Provincial competitions and larger scale events may return
Equipment	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"> Some shared equipment Enhanced cleaning protocols in place 	Shared equipment

*Introduction of competitive activities should be in alignment with Sport Specific guidelines



Key Considerations

- We are currently in the “**Progressively Loosen**” stage, as defined by [ViaSport](#), which means small group or cohort contact skills (e.g., compete drills and scrimmages) are permitted.
- At direction of PCAHA, games between teams within predefined “cohorts” may be permitted after Thanksgiving.
 - Click [HERE](#) for frequently asked questions pertaining to cohorts and return to play phase activities.
- Our plan will adjust accordingly and is subject to interpretation of ViaSport recommendations as well as the rules and regulations of our key partners:
 - [Canlan Ice Sports](#)
 - [Harry Jerome Arena](#)
 - [Karen Magnussen Arena](#)
 - [West Vancouver Arena](#)
- Specific facility use safety protocols may be found [HERE](#)
- **All plans are subject to change as a result of new information, guidelines, and/or local, provincial, or federal mandates.**



Key Considerations (cont.)

- The risk of contracting COVID-19 at any defined stage or phase of activity is unknown.
- We cannot eliminate risk we do not fully understand, but we can work with our partners and families to take precautions based on the available information.
- We acknowledge that participants are accepting a level of risk.
 - We recognize that players, families, volunteers and coaches have family, school and work factors to consider and that those factors may affect their assessment and acceptance of risk.
- Although our arenas continue to open up and we are seeing models for modified seasons, we cannot at this time rule out a step back to the “**Strictest Controls**” stage.



What does this mean for the 2020-21 season?

- Although we are currently moving closer to a modified season, which may include games, the primary focus will be on player skill development.
- Participants are required to read and sign a detailed participant agreement prior to the first on-ice session.
- Participants must abide by the rules and regulations of the specified arenas as well as NSFIHA policies and procedures, including but not limited to:
 - Not coming to the rink when you or anyone you have had close contact with exhibits any cold or flu like symptoms
 - Completing required pre-screening questionnaires and/or health checks prior to attending all on and off ice sessions
 - Entering at the rink ready to participate (recommend in full gear) – hands should be washed and/or sanitized
 - Avoiding physical contact with others – no hugs, hand shakes, high fives, etc.
 - Limiting spectators and time spent in arenas before and after designated ice times



What does it mean for volunteers and coaches?

- Coaches and the development coordinator will design stage or phase appropriate on and off ice sessions.
- Participants will be required to practice physical distancing when possible.
 - Participants that fail to follow the instructions of arena personnel, coaches and volunteer will be required to leave the area.
- All approved coaches, on ice helpers, and volunteers will be required to wear a non-medical mask or face shield when physical distancing cannot be maintained (e.g., on the bench, in the room).
- In the event that first aid is required to be administered at a practice or game, all persons attending the injured player must first put on a mask and gloves.
- Coaches and volunteers may be required to work with arena staff to ensure high touch areas are disinfected after ice sessions.



What does it mean for players and families?

- Participants will be required to arrive at use the arena facilities (including the lobby, entrance and parking lot) as per the specified arena's rules and regulations. In addition:
 - We recommended players enter the arena dressed (in full gear) – particularly younger players requiring assistance.
 - We strongly recommend that anyone accompanying a player into the arena wear a non-medical mask or face shield.
- In addition to health questionnaires required by the specified facility, participants will be required to complete a check-in and health assessment via TeamSnap prior to all on and off ice sessions.
 - Players will not be allowed to enter the arena if not confirmed on TeamSnap or they (their parent/guardian) cannot demonstrate they have completed the TeamSnap health assessment.
- At this time players are *not* required to purchase and wear a [full face shield](#), but we do encourage participants (players, on ice volunteers and coaches) to consider this option.



What does it mean for players and parents?

- Proper hygiene is essential this season
 - Every player must have their own marked water bottle – players will not be permitted on the ice without their own water bottle.
 - Absolutely no sharing of water, food, or equipment.
 - Players, parents, volunteers, and coaches should regularly wash their hands and may be required to use hand sanitizer prior to entering the arenas.
 - We also strongly recommend that participants regularly wash and sanitize their equipment.
 - Spitting and blowing the nose without tissue are absolutely forbidden.



Pre-season meetings and information

- Prior to the start of all on-ice activities, you will hear from your team manager regarding current arena specific rules and regulations, including the following:
 - Facility requirements regarding access and use;
 - Restrictions on number of people allowed in public areas;
 - Areas that may not be accessible (e.g. main lobby, dressing rooms, viewing areas, washrooms);
 - If dressing rooms are not available, whether there will be a common area to put on skates, with marked physical distancing seating;
 - Cleaning processes in the facility, including frequency of disinfecting;
 - General facility rules specific to practicing good hygiene; and
 - Ice markings or other visible lay-outs in the building for physical distancing.
- As the situation evolves and new information becomes available, we will continue to update you on what it may mean for Avalanche hockey programming.



Refund Policy

- We understand families may have different comfort levels for the risks associated with returning to the arena and each family will need to make an informed decision about participating.
- Our regular refund policy remains in place. However, should the season be cancelled or shortened, refunds will be issued on a pro-rated basis.
 - We will not be able to refund NSFIHA incurred expenses (e.g., player socks, practice and safety equipment).
- Please consult the [Avalanche registration page](#) for details on registration refunds.
- Thank-you for your patience as we navigate these uncertain times. For the hockey season, our lives won't be back to the way they were before COVID-19 but we are now back to the game we love, albeit in a modified way.