



PACIFIC COAST AMATEUR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

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SERVING AMATEUR HOCKEY IN THE LOWER MAINLAND SINCE 1941

P.C.A.H.A. 2020-2021 MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 13th, 2020

TO: The Presidents,
PCAHA Member Associations/Leagues

FROM: Rick Grant
PCAHA President

SUBJECT: **PCAHA RETURN TO PLAY FOR 2020-2021 SEASON**

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As everyone is aware, COVID-19 has forced the hockey world to approach the sport in a new way. In spite of this, our key priorities at PCAHA remain the same, to provide a safe, fun and engaging experience for the more than 20,000 participants in the Lower Mainland.

PCAHA under the guidance and governance of Hockey Canada, BC Hockey and viaSport have been working on a Return to Play plan that achieves the goals of maximizing the opportunities for kids to be engaged in the sport and to make sure all participants stay safe. The PCAHA Return to Play Committee has worked in collaboration with many stakeholders to produce this resource to help guide our plans in the Lower Mainland region. We believe that the resources included in this will help local minor hockey associations develop programming that meets the needs of their constituents.

If there is one thing we have learned through this process, it is that we all need to be flexible and open to changes and that greater collaboration and sharing will be key to successfully navigating the challenges we face.

I want to thank the PCAHA staff and volunteers, as well as the MHA leaders who have contributed to this so far and who will continue to work through the implementation of these plans throughout the season.

All information will be posted on the PCAHA website.

August 13, 2020



A Safe Return

PCAHA Level

1-Development

All PCAHA members are currently permitted to operate internal programming and summer camps that adhere to the current guidelines.

Guideline Tracker

All PCAHA members must adhere to the guidelines in the current viaSport phase and apply the relevant Hockey Canada Return to Hockey stage.

CURRENT STATUS

viaSport: Phase 2

Hockey Canada: Return to Ice

Upcoming Decisions

Sept 30*: U11-U21 - move to Level 2 or 3 post Thanksgiving or remain in Level 1

Oct 15: Tournament status Dec 1-Jan 3

Oct 26*: U8-U9 - move to Level 2 or 3 for December 1 or remain in Level 1

Nov 15: Tournament status Jan 4-Feb 28

Jan 15: Tournament status Mar 1-Mar 31

** Future decision dates regarding levels will be communicated after this date*



Coming back together

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Rick Grant
President, PCAHA



viaSport Return to Play Guidelines

viaSport BC is the organization that the BC government assigned to oversee the Return to Sport process for all sport activities. On June 1, the Return to Sport Activity Chart was announced as part of an overall plan. The chart outlines the type of activities permitted during their four-phased approach. To maintain our Hockey Canada insurance, all MHA activities must adhere to these guidelines.

[Click here](#) to review the Sport Activity Chart.



Hockey Canada Resources

Hockey Canada has developed a Return to Hockey framework that will review eight areas that have been identified as opportunities to improve or align our efforts with the customer experience at the grassroots level. Although each focus is unique in its challenges and solutions, there must be collaboration to ensure a shared outcome of a safe return to hockey.

The areas of focus that have documents released are hyperlinked below while the others will be published over the coming weeks.

- [Customer Engagement](#) (*still to come*)
- [Regulations](#)
- [Safety & Protocols](#)
- [Officiating](#)
- [Coaching](#) (*still to come*)
- [Seasonal Structure, Delivery Model & Registration](#)
- [Events, High Performance Hockey & National Teams](#) (*still to come*)
- [Marketing & Communications](#) (*still to come*)

U11 Pathway

U11 hockey should be delivered through a progressive, learn-to-play teaching curriculum that is age-appropriate and skill-specific for 9-10-year olds. It is a continuous opportunity for young players to develop and refine fundamental movement skills (skating, turning, acceleration), manipulation skills (shooting, puck control, passing) and overall motor skills (balance, coordination, agility) in a fun and safe environment, promoting skill development through self-confidence. Mandatory first 4 skates are not to be evaluations. Breakdown of sessions: 1) skating, 2) puck control and passing, 3) balance, agility, 4) cross ice game and fun games session. [Click here](#) to read the U11 Pathway document.



Safety First

The PCAHA Risk Committee has been formed to provide risk and safety specific information and resources for the MHAs. The committee will serve as a liaison between governing bodies and the MHA Risk Managers to allow for an efficient means of information dissemination across PCAHA members.

As many MHAs are on the ice for camps or will be shortly, the following considerations should be discussed:

- every effort should be provided to ensure hand washing or sanitizing options are easily accessible onsite either by the facility or your MHA
- sharing of water bottles or protective equipment should not be permitted
- include communication to all participants regarding staying home if the player is feeling ill
- all activities MUST adhere to the viaSport guidelines which includes the required 2m physical distancing at all times
- work with the facility to identify the process for the required viaSport Phase 2 health screening protocol
- the use of masks in any off-ice area including the entering and exiting of the facility. Note the facility may have requirements you will need to adhere to, but if not, it is recommended that masks are worn at all times prior to the helmet being worn

Safety of our players, team staff, officials and parents should be the first consideration in your decisions this season. If something cannot follow safety first guidelines, it is not an activity that should be pursued at this time.

PCAHA Levels



U6 - U9 Divisions

These divisions may be the least impacted if Levels 2 or 3 are able to be reached by December 1st. They typically have an extended skill development program at the start of the season followed by a 3 vs 3 or 4 vs 4 season against a smaller number of teams. All games that occur must be according to a pre-set schedule distributed by the managing director to adhere to the cohort concept. These divisions will not reach Level 4 Playoffs as they do not participate in a playoff structure. The best case scenario dates for the movement between levels would be:

U6 - Level 1 all season as per the standard pathway

U7-U9 - Level 2 or Level 3 dependent on viaSport restrictions at standard timing for league game play (U8/U9-Dec 1, U7-Jan 1)

U11 - U21 Divisions

These divisions will have a longer period at the beginning of the season with focus solely on skill development. Team formation can occur within the Level 1 Development Phase however it may or may not be permitted to include internal games as part of the process. The movement to Levels 2 Competition with Restrictions or Level 3 Competition will be dependent upon viaSport restrictions. The best case scenario for the movement between levels would be:

September to Thanksgiving - Level 1 Development

Thanksgiving to end of January - Level 2 Competition with Restrictions or Level 3 Competition

February to end of season - Level 4 Playoffs



Cohorts - Competition Groups for Game Play

The concept of a "cohort" is fast becoming the only way for groups to interact in a variety of settings across everyday life. Hockey is no different and PCAHA has been directed to pursue developing a cohort, or competition group, concept in the planning to return to game play.

What is a cohort?

- A cohort is a pre-determined group of players who train or play games with each other
- An advantage of participating in a Cohort is it can more closely resemble regular practices and game play
- Cohort participants can be grouped together to participate in small area games, scrimmages etc
- This structure will reduce the risk that a COVID-19 case could spread widely throughout a division/league and allow for rapid contact tracing or isolation of players or team officials should an infection occur
- Operating within cohorts reduces impact of any potential positive Covid-19 case as only that cohort would need to be paused

PCAHA teams will be organized into competition groups (cohort) when league play is permitted to begin with the size being dependent upon viaSport recommendations.



“The “Idea Book”

As Stage 1 includes an extended in-house skill development program, potentially with physical distancing considerations, on-ice instructors may need additional resources to find new ways to keep players engaged. MHA hockey directors, coaches and volunteers will have to work together and share ideas as we move through Fall programming hopefully leading to modified game play later this year.

Idea #1: Skill Competition events for all levels (potential to join in with other MHAs for the “Bragging Rights Cup”

Be creative, have cumulative points board/posting, have incentives from local businesses.

Possible events: Longest Slide, Fastest Skater, Fastest Skills Course Time, Most Accurate Shooter, Most Accurate Passer, Hit the Dot, Angry Birds (Set up a bunch of objects that players aim to hit), Trick shot competition. You can also check out the NHL Skills Competition for extra ideas.

Skills Competition/Tests Examples:

[Hockey Nova Scotia Provincial Championship Skills Competition](#)

[BC Hockey Special Programs - Skill Testing](#)

[Hockey Canada National Skills Standards & Testing Program](#)

Idea #2: Bubble Hockey

[Hollyburn Twitter post](#)

[North Shore News article](#) - includes rules and description

Other resources

[Hockey Canada Alternative Skills Instruction](#) (excerpt from Season Guidelines document - Appendix A)

[USA Hockey Drill Samples and Grid Hockey concept](#)

[Hockey Canada Network](#) and [Hockey Canada Drill Hub](#)

If you have ideas to share for resources on either physically distanced fun elements or, once contact begins to be allowed, ways to keep players engaged, send them to [Carol](#) for inclusion in the next newsletter.

Other Considerations

- MHA season programming can be a combination of viaSport Phase 3 (for game play) and Phase 2 maintaining physical distancing at all times that will allow for additional skill development outside of team setting
- There will be no tournament play permitted for PCAHA members until announced by the PCAHA Executive (current blackout period in place until November 30 with announcement by October 15 for the future period)
- Tryouts can, and likely will need to be, operated differently this season
 - finalize teams at a later date when game play and roster size will be known
 - remove any policy regarding mandatory attendance to ensure players who are ill stay home
 - use Level 1 Development to put players into tiered groups for assessment purposes
- MHAs may want to consider how they want to address:
 - Electronic Whistles for coaches and officials
 - Recommendation on bubble masks
 - Team Officials involvement with more than one team
 - Potential for referee assignor to assign game officials to cohorts as much as possible
 - For communities that have small number of schools in their district, potential to assign teams/skill groups based on schools they attend
- Game elements that may require flexibility
 - length of game times
 - game location if MHAs don't have access to enough ice
 - post-game salute vs handshakes

Flexibility will be critical to our success this season. We do not get to set the rules but we will be ready to adapt to any new information announced by our sport governing bodies, viaSport or the health authorities. We are in this together and will find the best pathway forward as a group.

#WeAreBackTogether