

NOTICE:



We are aware of and support the changes that Alberta Health Services (AHS) announced October 8th and we are currently awaiting any formal changes to be posted to the GoA's Return to Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation guidelines. We would like to make all our members in the Edmonton area including the communities noted below aware of the following changes:

1. Keep your family and social gatherings small - no more than 15 people.
2. Wear a mask in all indoor work/school settings, except when alone in a workspace like an office or cubicle where you are safely distanced from others, or an appropriate barrier is in place.
3. Limit your cohorts to no more than 3: your core household, your school, and one other sport or social cohort. For the communities noted this '3 cohort' limit supersedes anything in the following document.
4. Young children who attend child care could be part of 4 cohorts, given that child care settings have not been a high risk for spread.
5. Health officials are closely monitoring the Edmonton Zone. Additional measures may be recommended if needed.

Please note that we take these measures very seriously and would like to remind our members outside of Edmonton that although these measures are only currently applicable to the Edmonton and surrounding communities noted below, things can and will change rapidly, so let's all stay safe and follow the suggestions and rules put forward.

Impacted Communities:

- | | | | |
|---------------------|--|--------------|---------------|
| - Beaumont | - Devon | - Edmonton | - Evansburg |
| - Fort Saskatchewan | - Gibbons | - Leduc | - Morinville |
| - Sherwood Park | - Spruce Grove | - St. Albert | - Stony Plain |
| - Thorsby | - Surrounding villages and businesses. | | |



**OCTOBER 8
2020**

THE SAFE RETURN TO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS

PART 2



GUIDELINES FOR THE SAFE RETURN OF HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS IN ALBERTA

This document is the second component of a series of guidelines developed by the Alberta Schools' Athletic Association (ASAA) for a safe return to high school athletics. These documents are intended to be a useful summary of information relating to Covid-19 guidelines for schools that are running their school athletics program.

Current Government of Alberta (GoA) documents allow for sport to occur under clear guidelines and restrictions. Regardless of whether or not your school jurisdiction will permit athletics to occur at this time, it is prudent for each school to prepare a plan of action to ensure a safe return to athletics when permitted by your school jurisdiction and Principal. Please review these guidelines to assist you with this preparation for a return to sport in the school setting, but please let teachers and students settle into their "new normal" educational environment before actively pursuing athletic opportunities in your school. A slow and steady start is recommended.

Currently the GoA is in Stage 2 of their relaunch plan. There is currently no timeline for when the GoA will move into Stage 3 or what Stage 3 would mean for high school athletics. ASAA would like to be able to provide a more definitive statement on what school sport will look like moving forward, but as there has been no written direction from GoA at this time on how sports will look in Stage 3, such a statement is not possible at this time. The ASAA has struck a Sports Season Committee to examine possible contingencies for school sport during the pandemic from January 2021 onwards and recommendations will be forwarded to the ASAA Executive committee and eventually the ASAA Board of Governors for a decision. Throughout all of this, ASAA Executive and staff will stay informed on all GoA decisions and modify its documents/decisions accordingly.

[Click here for the Alberta Government Relaunch Strategy](#)

SUMMARY OF GUIDELINES FROM THE ASAA

- Authority for approval of school athletic activities: In order, authority rests with Government of Alberta (GoA), Alberta Health Services (AHS), school superintendent and principal.
- The purpose of the guidelines is to assist athletic directors and coaches prepare for school athletic activities during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Spectators must adhere to the GoA restrictions on gatherings.
- Screening/Forms: Any participant that is exhibiting any symptoms cannot enter the facility or participate per AHS guidelines. Pre-Screening of participants is recommended.
- Any changes to ASAA Seasons of Play dates and/or provincial championship dates will be addressed in a timely manner by the ASAA Executive based on direction from the GoA and AHS.
- Coaches should adjust their expectations around fitness levels of student athletes as research shows it will be lower than it would be if there were no pandemic. This may require modifications to practices as insufficient fitness levels are an athlete health risk.
- Cohorts of up to 50 people (inclusive of student athletes and all team personnel unable to maintain 2 metres of distance) are permitted to participate in sports, but one cohort cannot interact with another.
- Competition is permitted in a mini-league/cohort format only. Check with your school and school division to ensure compliance with all relevant rules and regulations.
- General safety protocols being employed in schools and the general community should be observed at all times e.g. hand sanitizer, masks, physical distancing, etc.
- Masks are strongly recommended for all coaches, training staff, and attendees of events regardless of their ability to maintain physical distance. Cohort participants are recommended to wear masks when they are not engaging in physical activity.
- Participant Tracking: A "Responsible Person" (definition provided) should be appointed for each team to maintain attendance records for all gatherings of each sport cohort, including meetings, practices and, when permitted, competition.
- Rapid response plan: each school jurisdiction will likely have a rapid response plan
- In school guidelines/protocols around: equipment, scheduling, locker rooms, transportation, entry/exit points, spectators, etc.
- See Alberta Government policy regarding gathering restrictions and health regions
- Insurance related considerations must be a factor in return-to-sport planning



COHORT GUIDELINES

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

- Limit the total number of other cohort groups to which you and your core cohort belong. This might mean changing your daily routines or reducing the number of teams or groups you join.
- When interacting with people in other types of cohorts, do it safely, in ways that keep risks low. Minimize the amount of time you spend with them and limit the close physical contact you have with them.
- When participating in other types of cohort groups, you should:
 - interact outdoors if possible – it's safer than indoors
 - avoid closed spaces with poor ventilation, crowded places and close contact settings
 - keep the cohort in your local community or neighborhood to reduce geographic spread
- Sports teams can play in cohorts of up to 50 players and coaching staff (mini leagues)

TAKEAWAYS

- Individuals may participate in more than one sport cohort at a time but are encouraged by the ASAA to limit their participation to one sport cohort at a time.
- Joint school teams may function if they are in accordance with all GoA guidelines. Cohorts can comprise of students from more than one school.
- The GoA SPAR document states "Individuals should limit the number of Cohorts/Mini-Leagues to which they belong". It must be the decision of each individual family whether or not to have their child involved in more than one sport cohort (school and/or community); ASAA does not prohibit student-athletes from being on a school team cohort and a non-school team cohort in a different sport or activity at the same time. However, school jurisdiction policies may be more restrictive and must be adhered to, and it is up to families to be aware of any such restrictions.

COHORT GUIDELINES

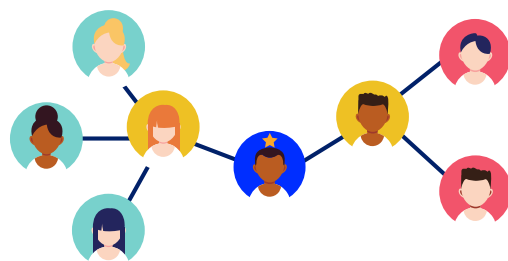


Changing Cohorts

- If a person moves from one school sport or community sport Cohort or Mini-League to another, they must sit out 14 days before participating in any sporting activity as per current AHS Guidelines. For example: in a mini-league of Team A, Team B, and Team C, the 3 teams have played games against each other and are looking to move on to new competition. Before Team A can join a new mini league with Team D and Team E, all teams involved (A, D, and E) must go 14 days without engaging any other team in that sporting activity, but may continue to practice.
- Albertans might find themselves in more than one cohort at the same time. Limit the total number of other cohort groups to which you and your core cohort members belong. Interacting with the same people and the same cohorts will be safer than constantly changing the people you interact with. It is recommended if possible that households with sports cohorts consider having a smaller core cohort, given the total number of close contacts between all groups.

Team Cohorts

- The maximum number of individuals that can form a cohort is 50. The 50-person maximum includes any coaches/staff, instructors, participants, officials, and volunteers who consistently and routinely engage with participants at a distance of less than 2 metres.
- Coaches, staff and officials who primarily interact with individuals or teams at a distance of 2 metres or greater do not need to be counted as part of the cohort. These individuals are required to wear a mask and perform proper hand hygiene if it becomes necessary to temporarily interact with cohort participants at a distance of less than 2 metres.



THE GUIDANCE FOR COHORTS DOCUMENT IS INFORMATION DIRECTLY DEVELOPED BY THE GOA AND AHS. PLEASE REVIEW THE DOCUMENT IN FULL DETAIL BY CLICKING

[HERE](#)

INTERSCHOOL COMPETITION

As of Sept 9, 2020, the ASAA will permit students/schools to engage in competitions during the current season of play. All schools and Zones must follow ASAA “Seasons of Play” and the “Participation on a non-school team” policy, gain permission from their jurisdiction superintendent and school principal, and any competition must follow GOA Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation (SPAR) guidelines which are available [here](#)

Tournaments, races and competitive events are permitted for sport, physical activity and recreational activities where participants can maintain 2 metre physical distancing at all times, or they follow the mini-league model. If 2 metres distance or the mini-league model are not options, the tournament/event is not permitted.

Tournament/events that compel a new cohort team to be formed for a short period (e.g., a weekend) are not permitted at this time.





TRAVEL

Where 2 metre physical distancing between individuals is maintained or the Mini-League model is employed, travel for sport, physical and recreational activities is allowed. Travel policy will differ greatly by school jurisdiction. Ensure that all travel complies with relevant school district policy.

TRANSPORTATION

If transportation is permitted for the purposes of athletics, it is strongly recommended transportation to and from activities be only with members of the same household if possible.

SCHEDULING

It is recommended that athletics activities be scheduled with sufficient time between activities to avoid any overlap of players on the court or field or other sports facility.

Congestion during pick up and drop off should be avoided.



GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA GUIDELINES REGARDING SPECTATORS

The ASAA supports the following GoA guidelines:

- Spectators (excluding parents and guardians where necessary for player support) should be kept out of participant spaces (e.g., fields of play, courts, ice surfaces).
- Physical distancing of minimum 2 metres should be maintained by spectators at all times, unless from the same household or cohort.
- It is strongly recommended that spectators wear masks.
- It is strongly recommended that activities occur without spectators at this time, and event hosts consider live-streaming competition where possible
- If spectators are approved by the school jurisdiction and principal to be present, they must comply with the maximum gathering limits and must maintain physical distancing of at least two metres from other individuals or household groups.

200

MAXIMUM NUMBER
OF SPECTATORS
PERMITTED
OUTDOORS

100

MAXIMUM NUMBER
OF SPECTATORS
PERMITTED
INDOORS

2M

DISTANCE TO BE
MAINTAINED
BETWEEN MEMBERS
OF DIFFERENT
HOUSEHOLDS (WITH
THE EXCEPTION OF
COHORT FAMILIES)

0

RECOMMENDED
NUMBER OF
SPECTATORS

Click [here](#) for the Alberta Government restrictions on gatherings



GENERAL RETURN-TO-SPORT GUIDELINES

Group Equipment

- If any equipment is being used, it is strongly recommended at a minimum that equipment be sanitized before and after each session.
- It is recommended that equipment not be shared with other cohorts without proper sanitizing.
- It is recommended that the number of people setting up and putting away the equipment be kept to a minimum and respect social distancing guidelines
- It is strongly recommended that hand sanitizer and/or sanitizing wipes be made available to participants and those responsible for setting up and putting away of equipment.

Individual Equipment

- It is strongly recommended that participants not share their personal equipment with anyone. (e.g. cleats, pads, helmets, clubs, etc.)
- All participants should have their own labeled water bottles and water bottles should not be shared or stored in close proximity to one another.
- All equipment of individuals should be labeled with the participant's name.
- All equipment of individuals should be kept at least 2 metres from another participant's equipment whenever practical.

GENERAL RETURN-TO- SPORT GUIDELINES

ENTRY AND EXIT POINTS

- Entry and exit points such as doors are recommended to be propped open if possible. It is strongly recommended that entry and exit points be sanitized before and after each session.
- It is strongly recommended that hand sanitizer be supplied near entry and exit points.
- It is strongly recommended that if athletic facilities allow, different entry and exit points should be used.



LOCKER ROOMS, CHANGE ROOMS, AND SIDELINES

- It is strongly recommended that locker rooms or change rooms not be used at this time.
- If locker rooms or change rooms are used, all high-touch surfaces should be sanitized between uses (e.g. benches, door handles, etc.)
- All participants should come to activities fully dressed and ready to participate.
- AHS guidelines suggest physical distancing (2m) be followed on the sideline and when not in competition.

GENERAL RETURN-TO-SPORT GUIDELINES

SCREENING & FORMS



Screening

- Active screening of attendees at a meeting, practice or game should be considered to monitor for symptoms of fever, sore throat, cough, runny nose or difficulty breathing. As noted in the Alberta Government's [*Guidance for Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation – Stage 2 document*](#), “any participant that is exhibiting any symptoms (of COVID-19) cannot enter the (athletic) facility or participate”.
- Schools may choose to use the [*Alberta Health Daily Checklist*](#).
- Schools may also recommend that all involved in school athletic activities complete the [*AHS COVID-19 Self Assessment Tool*](#) daily.
- Schools and those appointed to be the Responsible Persons for teams should consider making use of testing facilities in their communities in accordance with AHS guidelines (i.e. regular testing of random team members may offer reassurance that the cohort is virus free).

Forms

Since each of the 60+ school jurisdictions in Alberta may have different guidelines, waivers, forms and participant tracking procedures, the ASAA does not plan to provide an example for anything other than a participant tracking form which is located later in this document. The ASAA does, however, suggest each school jurisdiction give consideration to the creation of forms that address:

- Athletic Informed Consent
- Daily Athletic Screening Checklist or “Attestation of no COVID-19” symptoms
- Cohort List, which would ensure compliance for the requirement for no more than 50 individuals; this could be in the format of a participant tracking form.

Various PSO's have examples of a variety of forms in their return to play documents located [here](#)





PARTICIPATION ON A NON-SCHOOL TEAM POLICY

With the support of the ASAA Zones, the ASAA Executive Committee is immediately suspending enforcement of the following ASAA Policy:

Section IV.5 Participation on a Non-school team:

- To be eligible for high school participation in the ASAA sports of basketball, volleyball, football, cheerleading, team handball and rugby, a high school student is not permitted to play on a nonschool team in the same sport during the same season. (Note: individual sports are not impacted by this policy). The purpose of suspending the enforcement of this policy is to support the dynamic changes to the traditional school athletic calendar.
- The ASAA wants to support students, parents, coaches and schools in all efforts to successfully return to sport under the guidelines imposed by the Government of Alberta, AHS and school superintendents.
- This limited time policy modification will enable student athletes, in consultation with their parents/guardians, to make choices during the very fluid nature of the 2020-2021 school athletics calendar.

Please see the [full September 29, 2020 memo](#) regarding COVID-19 related limited time flexibility regarding ASAA participation on a non-school team policy

RESOURCES & LINKS

Sport Specific PSO Resources

Use the links below to access the COVID-19 safety guidelines and/or return to sport protocol for each sport.

- [Athletics Alberta](#)
- [Badminton Alberta](#)
- [Alberta Basketball](#)
- [Alberta Cheerleading](#)
- [Cross Country Alberta](#)
- [Curling Alberta](#)
- [Football Alberta](#)
- [Alberta Golf](#)
- [Rugby Alberta](#)
- [Volleyball Alberta](#)
- [Alberta Amateur Wrestling](#)

Government of Alberta and Alberta Health Services Links:

- [Alberta Government Guidance for Sport and Recreation](#)
- [Cohort Guidelines](#)
- [Importance of Participant Tracking](#)
- [COVID-19 Self Assessment Tool](#)
- [Guidance for Parents of Children Attending School and/or Childcare](#)
- [Alberta Government Gathering Restrictions](#)
- [Alberta Government Health Region Information](#)

Schools and school jurisdictions may also have their own rules, regulations, and restrictions. It is important that families remain informed of the most recent policies and procedures within their school.



CONTACT

For more information on the ASAA's Safe Return to Sport guidelines, please contact us at:

Phone: 780-427-8182

Email: info@asaa.ca

Website: www.asaa.ca

All updates to the COVID-19 Return to Sport guidance, including any information about provincial championships, will be sent out to principals and athletic directors listed in our registration system as well as posted on our website and social media. We encourage all schools to check that their contact information is up to date to ensure that they receive information in timely manner.



[@ASAAPROVS](https://www.instagram.com/ASAAPROVS)



[@ASAA](https://twitter.com/ASAA)



[ASAA LIVE](https://www.youtube.com/ASAA_LIVE)