



COVID-19  
Return to Hockey  
Safety & Guidelines

Updated: **November 19, 2020**

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## Introduction

This document was prepared by a joint committee representing all the minor hockey associations (MHAs) in the Capital Regional District (CRD). It was hosted by Capital Regional Female Minor Hockey Association (CRFMHA) with representation and input from adjacent local MHAs including Victoria MHA (VMHA), Victoria Racquet Club MHA (VRCMHA), Juan de Fuca MHA (JDFMHA), Sooke and District MHA (SDMHA) and Peninsula MHA (PMHA).

## Local Impact of coronavirus / COVID-19

The impact of coronavirus and COVID-19 was variable across the globe. Canada fared better than many countries according to [Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center](#), and British Columbia (BC) fared better than most other Canadian provinces for a variety of reasons (See Slide 12 in [COVID-19: Going Forward](#)).

Of the five health regions in BC, Island Health was one of the least affected. The boundaries of Island Health correspond fairly closely with those of our local district of BC Hockey, Vancouver Island Amateur Hockey Association (VIAHA). Review of [BC Centre for Disease Control COVID-19 Daily Situation Reports](#) helps us understand the level of current risk. More specifically, [COVID-19 Status Dashboard](#) gives accurate updates on the prevalence of coronavirus within Island Health at this time.

While the disease burden and general population risk has been relatively low in our area, we recognize the highly contagious nature of this communicable disease and the potential for a rapid increase in case numbers. We plan to maintain the highest standards for prevention of spread in our community.

## Resources

VRCMHA is continuously monitoring statements and guidelines from the Ministry of Health/ Provincial Health Officer, local health authorities, hockey governing bodies and provincial recreation and facility organizations, including:

[BC's Restart Plan](#)

[viaSport - Return to Sport Guidelines for BC](#)

[Hockey Canada Return to Play - Safety Guidelines](#)

[BC Hockey - Return to Hockey](#)

[BC Hockey Return to Hockey Member Template](#)

[BC Parks and Recreation Association - Guidelines for Restarting Operations](#)

[Recreation Facilities Association of BC - COVID-19 Resources](#)

In addition, we have met with representatives of local hockey arenas in formulating this document and followed their published guidelines whenever available, including:

- Ian Stewart Complex with VRCMHA
- Archie Browning Sports Centre with CRFMHA and VMHA
- Westhills Arena with CRFMHA and JDFMHA
- SEAPARC Leisure Complex with CRFMHA and SDMHA
- Oak Bay Recreation Centre with CRFMHA, VMHA and VRCMHA
- Panorama Recreation Centre with CRFMHA, PMHA and SEAPARC
- Pearkes Recreation Centre with CRFMHA and VMHA
- West Shore Parks and Recreation Society
- Wurtele Arena / Naden Athletic Complex
- Save on Foods Memorial Arena / City of Victoria

## Administrative Infrastructure

### Communications Officer

As per the Hockey Canada COVID-19 Return to Play “Safety Guidelines”, the governing District of BC Hockey for this region, Vancouver Island Amateur Hockey Association (VIAHA), requires each MHA to designate a Communications Officer to act as a liaison between the District and the MHA. The COVID-19 Communications Officer for VRCMHA is:

Dr. Anthony Della Siega  
[president@racquetclubkinpgs.com](mailto:president@racquetclubkinpgs.com)

### VRCMHA Resources for COVID-19

VRCMHA has drafted several tools to be used in day to day operations during the pandemic. Links to these are found at [racquetclubkings.com](http://racquetclubkings.com) or on Teamsnap.

### Screening

VRCMHA’s COVID-19 Screening Health Check is included as Appendix A. Each participant (including staff) will confirm they have no key signs of illness prior to entering the facility for any

sanctioned activity. Any player with incomplete responses or response suspicious for possible coronavirus infection will be denied entry and subject to a Return to Play protocol. The name of any such player will be forwarded to the president to ensure compliance with Return to Play protocols.

## COVID-19 Response Plan

VRCMHA has a COVID-19 Response Plan for each scheduled session with reference to which individual is responsible for each aspect of the plan. A Sample COVID-19 Response Plan is included in Appendix C.

## Stay Home If Sick

All participants are advised to stay at home if they are feeling unwell.

If they start experiencing symptoms while at an event, they must:

- isolate themselves from others immediately in the designated area
- notify their coach/manager
- excuse themselves from the event as soon as possible

The participant should call the local public health line (8-1-1) for direction and follow all recommended isolation requirements. Participants not attending or leaving due to illness will require a note from their physician in order to return to association events as part of Return to Play protocol.

All participants will be advised by email if anyone is ill within the duration of their session.

## Mask Guidelines

By order and direction of the Provincial Health Officer (PHO) as of November 19 the use of non-medical masks or face coverings at Ian Stewart Arena during practices and games is required while inside Ian Stewart Arena. The must be worn when entering the facility and in common areas other than when on the ice. Coaches who only belong to one cohort can remove their masks once on the bench/ice.

## Return to Play Chart

This chart explains phase-specific return to hockey.

	Phase 1 (Prior to May)	Phase 2 (Approx. May to September)	Phase 3 August 24, 2020	Phase 4 (Date TBD)
<b>Restrictions</b>	Physical Distance (2m) No non-essential travel	Physical Distance (2m) No non-essential travel No groups over 50 people		
<b>Program</b>	Individual activities Virtual activities	Small Groups No or limited spectators Outdoor is safer	Group size may increase Limited spectators	Large groups No restriction on spectators
<b>Non-contact Activities</b>	Individual activities Virtual activities	Movement skills, drills	Expansion of training activities	No restrictions
<b>Contact Activities</b>	None	None	Introduction of pair or small group contact skills	No restrictions
<b>Competition</b>	None	None	Interclub or regional game play may be considered	Provincial competitions and large scale events may return
<b>Equipment</b>	No shared equipment	Minimal shared equipment Disinfect before and after use.	Enhanced cleaning protocols	No restrictions

## Individual Responsibilities

Members of our organization and volunteers can be grouped according to their individual responsibilities. However, the following recommendations apply to all individuals regardless of their role:

- Anyone displaying **ANY** symptoms of illness or who is in close contact with another who does, **MUST** stay home
- Practice good hand washing/disinfecting practice before and after any event
- Practice physical distancing with a goal of 2m separation between individuals
- Ride sharing for any reason is strongly discouraged
- *“Be kind; Be calm; Be safe.” ~ Dr. Bonnie Henry*

## Players

It is the expectation that players:

- Carry a personal bottle of hand sanitizer in their equipment bag
- Bring a personal water bottle to every event that is filled at home and not to be shared with other players
- Have a non-medical face mask available in their equipment bag in case standard 2m PD cannot be maintained in any facility

- Approved by the Team Manager and/or HCSP as having completed the Screening Health Check and be logged correctly into attendance before entering the facility - without exception
- Players (U7-U11) must arrive dressed in gear; Players (U13 & U15) are encouraged to show up to the rink in half gear, with the exception of their skates. If they players can get dressed and undressed in under 10 minutes, coming in full or half gear is not necessary.
- Refrain from sharing equipment with any other player
- Clean and wash equipment frequently
- Wear hockey gloves continuously from inside the dressing room, throughout the ice session and until return to the dressing room
- Physical contact is allowed within the same team training environment
- Competitive activities (e.g. game play/scrimmage) may occur within designated cohorts

## Team Managers

It is the expectation of VRCMHA Managers that they:

- Are familiar with all aspects of this document for administrative purposes
- Are familiar with the Facility's Safety Plan
- Arrive at team events a minimum of 5 minutes prior to scheduled arrival time for the team in order to ensure all team members arriving for the event are compliant with VRCMHA protocols
- Wear a non-medical face mask when interacting with players, families, other volunteers and facility staff at a distance of less than 2m is required
- With input from team coaches and HCSP, ensure a Facility Response Plan is in place
- Work closely with HCSP Personnel to ensure the team is compliant with the current standard for COVID-19
- Monitor the VRCMHA website regularly for updates regarding safety protocols
- Communicate with the VRCMHA president with queries or concerns
- Have a non-medical face mask available in case standard 2m PD cannot be maintained in any facility

## Coaches

It is the expectation of VRCMHA coaches that they:

- Coaches room is for coaches and on-ice helpers
- The VRC boardroom is strictly an isolation room at this time, and will be equipped with hand sanitizer, Oxivir disinfectant and single use face masks.
- Provide dressing room supervision (or designate) to ensure PD standards are met in that location

- Have a non-medical face mask available in case standard 2m PD cannot be maintained in any facility
- Establish practice plans that are compliant with the current recommendation for PD
- Refrain from sharing whistles, water bottles or use of players' water bottles
- Provide input to the Team Manager as necessary to ensure a Facility Response Plan is developed for each event

## Hockey Canada Safety Program (HCSP) Personnel

**Due to these unprecedented times, VRCMHA recommends there are 2-3 trained and certified HCSP per team and that duties and responsibilities are divided equally between those volunteers.**

In addition to the phase-specific details in the table below, it is the expectation of VRCMHA that the HCSP:

- Carry a personal bottle of hand sanitizer
- Wear a non-medical face mask when interacting with players, families, other volunteers and facility staff at a distance of less than 2m
- Provide input to the Team Manager to ensure a Facility Response Plan is in place
- Ensures all participants (players, coaches and manager) complete the Screening Health Check prior to each event
- Ensures that the attendance is completed at the beginning of each event
- Wear a non-medical face mask when in the facility
- Follows enhanced safety and first aid/assessment protocols when attending to an injured player (Appendix B)

## Officials

it is the expectation of officials for VRCMHA games that they:

- Carry a personal bottle of hand sanitizer in their equipment bag
- Bring a personal water bottle to every event that is filled at home and not to be shared with others
- Officials for the game granted special access to get ready in the upper viewing area. Since there are no spectators, the officials have a maximum of 4 and can physically distance in the room.
- Officials for the game will walk down the wooden stairs in their skates and enter the ice surface through the side gate. Lines officials are required to wear masks on the ice and sanitize after breaking up scrums (as per BC Hockey's rules for officials). Sanitizer provided by the home team.
- Do not share whistle
- Avoid contact with players except when necessary for safety purposes during events, during which time such contact must be minimized as much as possible
- Wear a non-medical face mask when in the facility (can be removed when on the ice).

## Cohorts

- Participants will be placed into four-team cohort
- Physical distancing on the ice is not required while in designated cohorts
- Participants will be required to take a two week pause before joining a new cohort

## Attendance Limits

Facility specific guidelines can be found under facilities.

Recreation Oak Bay the requirements are as follows:

- There is a limit of 50 people in an arena including on-ice participants, team volunteers and coaches
- Safety and manager staff in attendance at no more than 4 people per team
- No spectators permitted in arena
- No siblings permitted

Ian Stewart Arena the requirements are as follows:

- There is a limit of 42 people permitted on the ice (19 players per team plus 4 officials)
- Safety and manager staff in attendance at no more than 2 people per team
- No spectators permitted in arena
- Effective September 21, no adults are permitted in the arena to assist with tying of skates. Alternatively players (U7-U11) have been provided hard guards. Coaches and designated volunteers can assist with hard guards (and goalie equipment). Where social distancing is not possible, volunteers will be asked to wear a mask).

## Physical Distancing

- Maintain physical distance of 2m while off ice at all times or wear a mask when physical distancing can not be maintained
- Physical distancing can be broken on the ice within designated cohorts
- Physical distance (or masks) must be observed on the benches
- Coaches may assist players with equipment coaches must wear face masks and sanitize hands before and after

# Facility Protocols

## Details for programming at our facilities

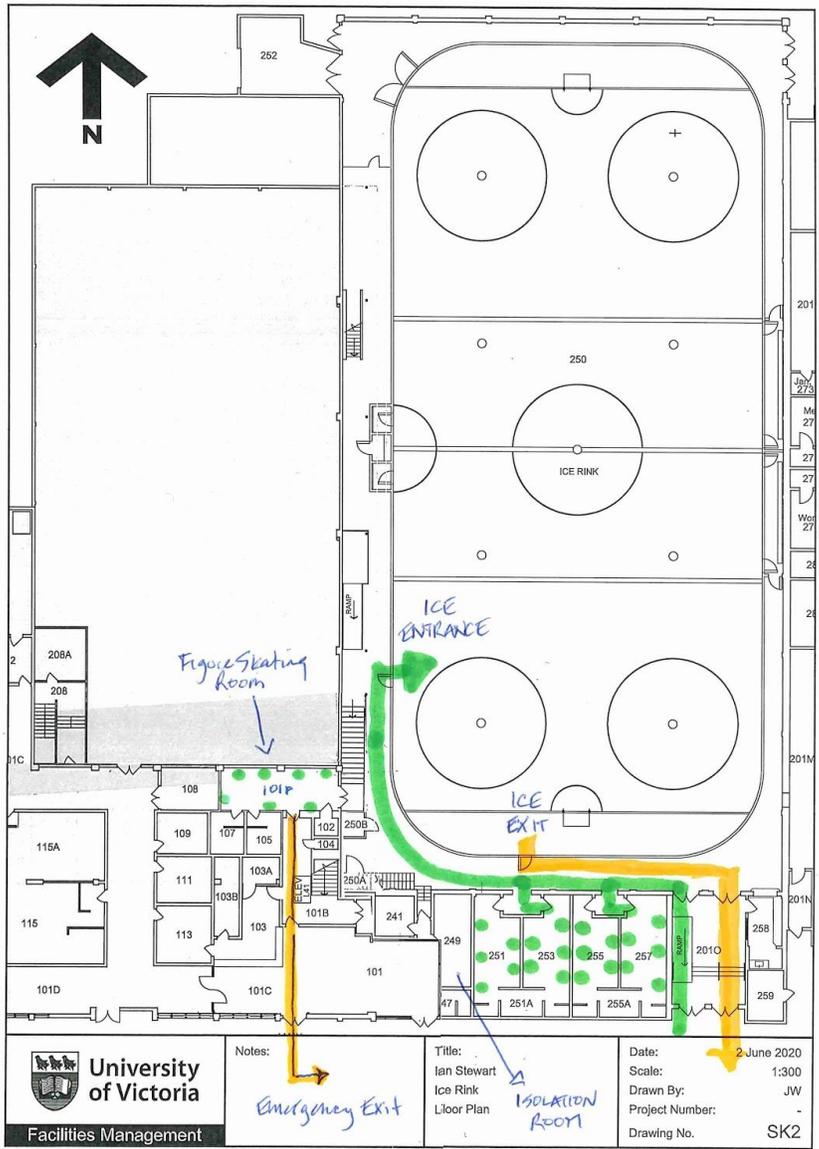
VRCMHA participants are to review and remain compliant with the specific requirements of each ice facility as summarized below. Please access the website for this document as it is subject to frequent revision.

<b>PHASE 3</b>	<b>UVic Ian Stewart</b>	<b>Oak Bay Recreation Centre</b>
<b>PPE</b>	Optional	N/A
<b>Maximum occupancy (facility)</b>	50 person arena max (until further notice)	50 person arena max (until further notice)
<b>Arrival time</b>	15mins	15mins
<b>Arrive in gear</b>	Yes U7-U11, recommended U13 & U15	Yes
<b>Entrance door (facility)</b>	Main glass doors as marked	North Exterior (parking lot in to arena lobby)
<b>Entrance gate (ice)</b>	Below warm room (practices), assigned to teams (games)	Near spectator seating
<b>Signage</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Water available</b>	Yes Bring own labelled bottle, recommend filled DO NOT share	Yes
<b>Hand sanitizer</b>	Yes - located at each entrance/exit point	Common areas
<b>Dressing room capacity</b>	x6 in team room #1, #4 x5 per team room #2,3 x7 in lower figure skating room Players may sit in taped off seating pods Dressing rooms are assigned for practices and games	None
<b>Dressing room use</b>	DR 1/2 OR 3/4 alternating each ice session Overflow/goalies in lower skating room and changing pods	None - use main lobby in designated seating

<b>Isolation Room</b>	Boardroom (only use)	N/A
<b>Coach Change Area</b>	Back room	Lobby in designated seating
<b>Skaters (max)</b>	42	None (included in arena max, must follow cohort model as per viaSport phase 3)
<b>Coaches (max)</b>	None (included in arena max, must follow cohort model as per viaSport phase 3)	None (included in arena max, must follow cohort model as per viaSport phase 3)
<b>Game Bench</b>	Yes within cohorts	Yes within cohorts
<b>Penalty Box</b>	None	None
<b>Body Contact</b>	Physical contact within the same team training environment	Physical contact within the same team training environment
<b>Games</b>	4 teams or 60 people; start dates to comply with VIAHA regulations	4 teams or 60 people; start dates to comply with VIAHA regulations
<b>Spectators (per player)</b>	None	None
<b>Arena Seating</b>	None	Designated
<b>Showers</b>	None	None
<b>Washrooms</b>	team rooms only for players; coaches room for coaches and officials No public access for parents/siblings	Main lobby
<b>Vacate dressing room</b>	15mins	15mins
<b>Touchpoint cleaning</b>	Facility staff	Facility staff
<b>Exit door</b>	Main glass doors as marked	Follow signs (exit doors located inside arena area)
<b>Exit gate (ice)</b>	In front of dressing room #3	Closest to exit door
<b>UPDATE:</b>	Oct 20	Sept 1

# Facility Traffic Flow Diagram

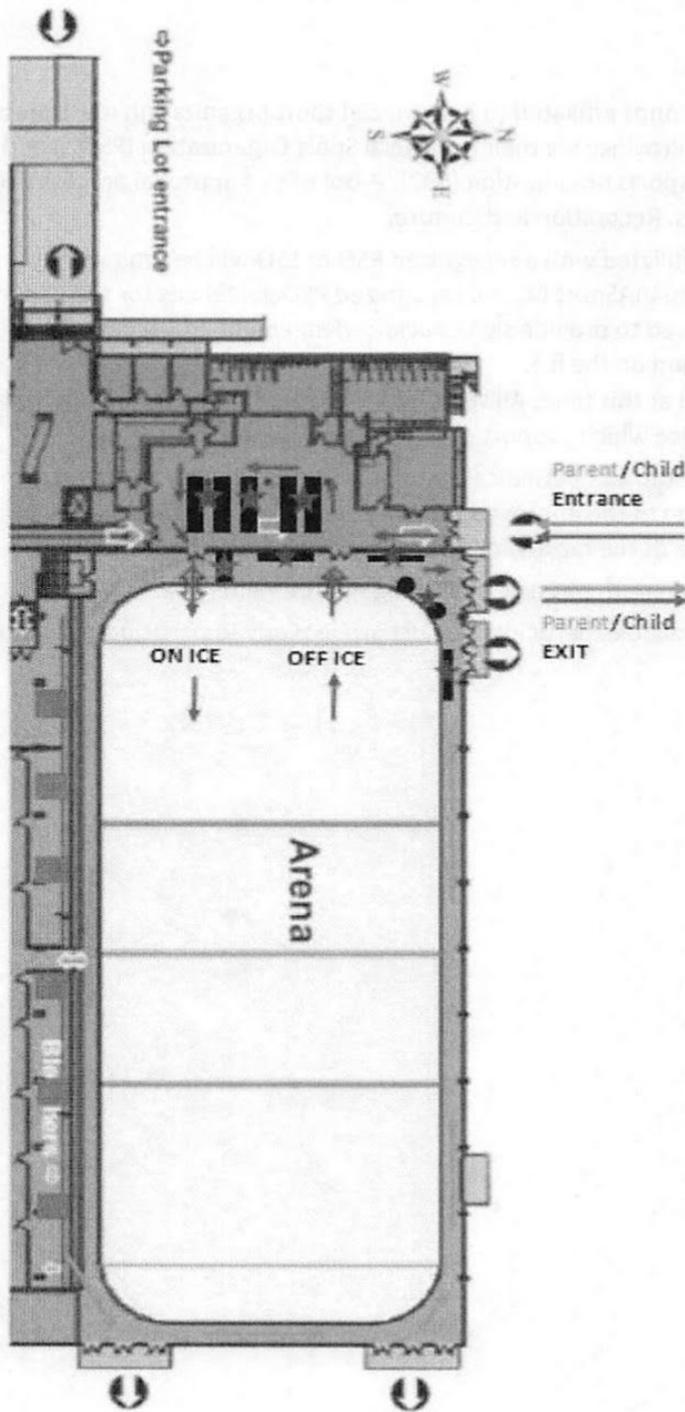
**Ian Stewart Complex**



**Oak Bay Recreation Centre**

# ARENA TRAFFIC FLOW

Patrons must enter the Arena during the 15 minutes before their ice session.



← Parents and Children enter Arena through lobby and access ice and viewing areas

★ Skaters can lace up and off.

Parents & guardians of skaters must keep with them skater's shoes and other items while they are on ice.

★ Skaters who do not have a parents can leave their belongings here.

■ Spectator area for parents & guardians

Patrons must exit the Arena during the 15 minutes after their ice session.



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VRCMHA recognizes the responsibility to enforce compliance among our members, volunteers and participants with the recommendations and requirements of the health authorities, hockey governing bodies and ice facilities. In this regard, each member by checking attendance in Teamsnap confirms they have read and understand this document and the responsibilities associated with each role that applies to them. If attendance is not completed for each event, the player is ineligible to continue participating. Furthermore, as referenced above, any player with concerning symptoms will be immediately removed from the facility and required to complete Return to Play protocol.

## VRCMHA COVID-19 Screening Health Check

1. Have you experienced a fever of 38.0 degrees Celsius or greater in the past 10 days?
2. Have you received a positive result from a COVID-19 test within the past 14 days?
3. Have you been in contact with anyone while they had COVID-19 or symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
4. In the past 14 days, have you experienced any of the following new symptoms not attributed to another health condition: fever, chills, cough or worsening chronic cough, loss of smell or taste, shortness of breath, diarrhea, nausea and vomiting? (*adapted to reflect key symptoms of GVSD61 DailyHealthChecklist*)

# APPENDIX B

## First Aid Kit and Safety Modifications for COVID-19

First Aid Kit to contain:

- Medical face mask
- Hand sanitizer
- Examination gloves

# APPENDIX C

## COVID-19 Response Plan

**VRCMHA Team Event ID:**

**Date:**

**Time:**

**Location:**

**Event type:**

- Game
- Practice
- Development

**Team Manager is responsible for:**

- Arrive 5 min before team
- File COVID-19 Response Plan with Facility (if necessary)
- Assist HCSP in completing Screening Health Check (Teamsnap)

**HCSP Personnel is responsible for:**

- Arrive 5 min before team
- Supervise completion of Screening Health Check for each participant (Teamsnap)
- Submit accurate attendance for all players/officials for every event (Teamsnap)

**Head Coach is responsible for:**

- Dressing room supervision to ensure physical distancing (or delegate)
- Develop a practice plan with drills allowing physical distancing
- On-ice supervision to ensure physical distancing