



Introduction

For the 2020 – 2021 hockey season, each team in Manitoba is required to appoint a Communications Officer who will be responsible for ensuring all individuals in and around the team are equipped with updated and relevant information regarding the COVID-19 health crisis. This appointed individual is ideally a parent volunteer OR a team staff member and is responsible for monitoring all relevant updates from the public health authorities and Hockey Manitoba.

The Hockey Manitoba Communications Officer Toolkit will clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of the Communications Officer and provides information to help guide the Communications Officer throughout the hockey season. Through the cooperation of all participants, hockey will return safely and provide a positive and fun experience for everyone.

Responsibilities

The Communications Officer is an important position that must be taken seriously to ensure the health and safety of everyone. The Communications Officer will be responsible for the following:

1. Reviewing and following updates from the [Province of Manitoba](#)
2. Ensuring compliance of [Hockey Manitoba's Return to Play Protocols](#)
3. Completing Hockey Canada's "[Planning a Safe Return to Hockey](#)" course (free of charge)
 - An E-Hockey account is required to access this course. A new account can be created if one does not already exist.
4. Holding a Parent Meeting prior to the regular season starting, either in person or virtually. Be sure to refer to Hockey Canada's [Parent Meeting Guidelines](#)
5. Tracking attendance at all team events (practices, games, off-ice meetings, etc.), click here for Hockey Manitoba's [Player Tracking Form](#)
 - Ensure all participants have completed the screening tool before each session and are actively self-monitoring for symptoms. Screening can be completed online [here](#) or in Interactive Voice Response (IVR) format at 1-877-308-9038
 - Ensuring protocol(s) for participants that are feeling unwell are followed and any COVID-19 cases are reported immediately



Review and follow updates from:

- Provincial Health Authority
- Hockey Canada and Hockey Manitoba
- Local Minor Hockey Associations / Leagues
 - Facilities

Communicate

- With local facilities
- With your MHA
- With your team
- With your volunteers

Stay engaged

- Meet regularly
- Ensure participants are physical distancing
- Ensure proper hygiene is used
- Follow facility guidelines
- Know the procedure for sick participants

Be vigilant

- Ensure positive cases are reported
- Use screening tools
- Follow health and safety protocols

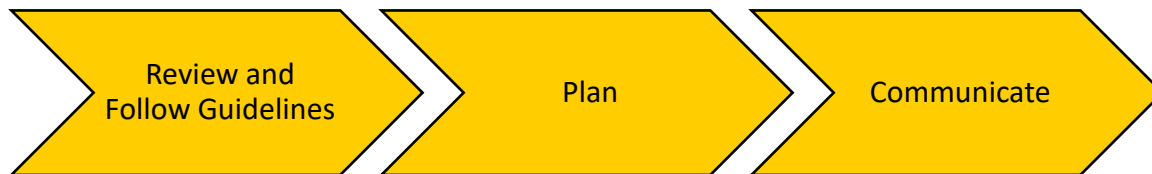
Hosting Team Meetings

Regardless of whether a meeting is hosted virtually or in-person (where permitted), a series of topics must be covered. Meeting with parents/guardians/players either virtually or face-to-face will give everyone a level of confidence knowing that the safety of all players and staff is of the utmost importance.

Covering all topic areas provides a thorough overview of how coaches and staff will manage the hockey environment in the best manner possible. Health and safety goes beyond the boundaries of sport, and it is important that we all follow the Return to Play guidelines with the utmost care. Prior to the team meeting and during the season it is important to realize the importance of this position, and understand that you will be looked upon for guidance during these stressful and uncertain times.

When hosting a team meeting the health and safety of everyone must be the top priority. The objective of this meeting is to outline what to expect for the 2020 – 2021 season as it relates to:

- Return to Play protocols and guidelines
- Local Minor Hockey Association/ Regional and/or League communication
- Facility guidelines
- Hygiene
- Physical-distancing
- Participant illness protocols
- On-ice frameworks
- Travel



At the conclusion of the meeting, thank everyone for their patience and cooperation as hockey returns during these unprecedented times! You may field questions, but for any uncertainty please ensure you reach out to Hockey Manitoba for any clarity. It is important that everyone works together responsibly and respectfully and understand that the health and safety of our members are of utmost importance.

The appointed Communications Officer should meet regularly with its MHA, Region, and/or League. Discuss key elements and expectations of the Return to Play plan, including:

- The approach to re-starting hockey – what hockey will look like and why
- Requirements around participant COVID-19 screening
- Other key topic areas in the plan

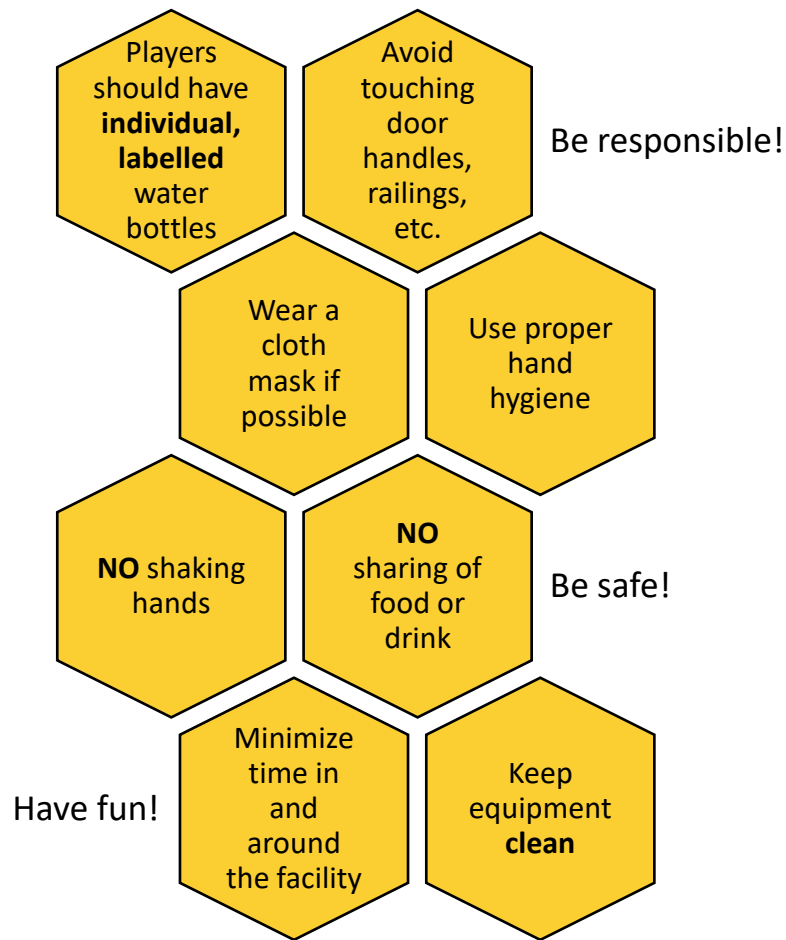
During this portion of the meeting, take the time to highlight any local hockey association or league information and guidelines.

Hygiene

Hygiene is key to helping prevent COVID-19 in the hockey environment. Using Member guidelines and the Hockey Canada Return to Hockey Safety Guidelines as a reference, stress the following:

- Proper hand hygiene – hand sanitizer and proper hand washing are a must
- Responsible physical-distancing, on-ice and off-ice
- Anyone entering the facility should wear a mask when physical distancing cannot be followed (it may also be required by the public health authority and/or the facility)

Steps to reduce the spread of infection:



Offer some general tips everyone can assist with as the Return to Hockey plan goes into effect:

- Assist the coaches and staff in following required guidelines during hockey activities both on and off the ice
- Talk to your kids about the importance of preventing the spread of COVID-19 in the hockey environment, including physical distancing guidelines – and make sure parents follow suit!
- Encourage players to enjoy practicing and playing hockey in the current format
- Be flexible and be ready to adapt when necessary

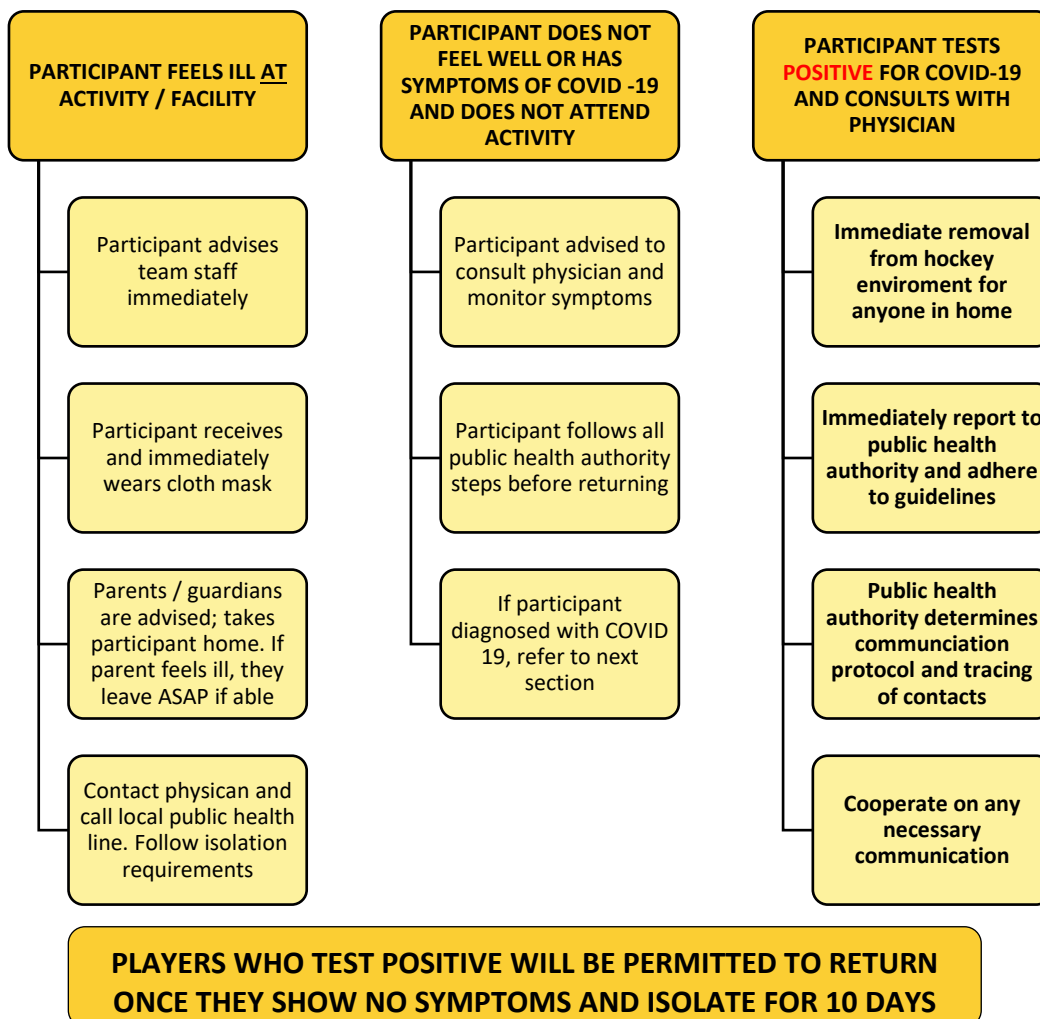
Symptoms, Illness & Responsible Return to Hockey

Stress to participants that if they are feeling ill or have symptoms or suspected/confirmed COVID-19, that they not come into the hockey environment and must follow the public health authority and Hockey Manitoba guidelines. It will also be important that parents/guardians and players understand the steps that will be taken if a participant is ill at a hockey activity, is ill and does not attend a hockey activity, or has suspected or confirmed COVID-19. This includes the steps that need to be taken for a player to return.

These steps will be defined based on many different factors and it is important that prior to your meeting you become familiar with:

- Public health authority requirements
- Hockey Canada and Hockey Manitoba requirements
- Recommendations outlined in the [Hockey Canada Safety and Protocols for a Return to Hockey](#)
- Facility guidelines

Follow the steps below if participants are not feeling well AT or OUTSIDE a team event:



If a sick participant (or their parent/guardian if the participant is a minor) elects to inform a team/Minor Hockey Association/Region 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 Manitoba Public Health of this consent. Explain the communication that will take place and NEVER disclose the sick person's name. If a player tests positive, the Communications Officer will be required to follow the steps listed above. .

Once properly reported, public health would investigate the risk to all those involved in the activity, this includes activities prior to the activity, during the activity and following the activity. This assessment would include players, coaches, spectators, officials and anyone else who may be at risk. Pending the risk assessment, public health may determine that there was zero risk to others and therefore there would be no need for anyone to self-isolate (quarantine). The risk assessment could also determine that all those involved would be at risk and therefore all those who were involved would have to self-isolate (quarantine) for 14 days.

Important Links

[Hockey Manitoba Return to Play Plan – Version 1](#)

[Hockey Manitoba Return to Play Q & A](#)

[Hockey Manitoba Player Tracking Form](#)

[Hockey Canada Parent Meeting Guidelines](#)

[Hockey Canada Safety and Protocols for a Return to Hockey](#)

[Public Health Authority Self-Assessment Tools](#)

[Return to Hockey Plans \(Hockey Canada\)](#)

