



Western Ball Hockey

Return to Sport, Physical Activity, and Recreation - Stage 2

Official Policies and Procedures

Effective Friday, June 12, 2020, the Government of Alberta has given sports organizations the ability to safely resume sports activities, provided these activities comply with the following information and resources, linked below.

- [Return to Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation - Stage 2](#)
- [COVID-19 General Relaunch Guidance](#)
- [Alberta Biz Connect](#)

As a result of these documents, Western Ball Hockey has prepared the following policies and procedures in order to meet (and exceed, in some cases) the guidelines provided for the Stage 2 re-opening of sports leagues and programs.

Implementation of Cohorts

As the traditional game of ball hockey cannot be modified to accommodate physical distancing, the Government of Alberta has given us an exemption from physical distancing **during gameplay only**, provided that our leagues and programs are divided into groups (called cohorts) not exceeding fifty (50) people. This limit includes participants and officials who cannot maintain two metres of distance from others at all times. These cohorts must remain together during Stage 2 of the relaunch.

In light of this, Western Ball Hockey is introducing **Adult Co-ed Cohorts, Youth Cohorts, and Semi-Private Cohorts** for ball hockey that is modified for the Stage 2 Return to Sport, Activity, and Physical Recreation.

These cohorts will form for six (6) weeks, at which point we will re-evaluate if they should continue or be modified according to the latest Alberta Government policies and recommendations.

Adult Cohorts

During registration, you will be prompted to select how many times a week you would like to play and list any specific days of the week that you are unavailable for. We will then group together the players with similar schedules and assign you to a team in addition to the days and times you are set to play.



All games will have a referee and a policy advisor to ensure player safety and public health are being monitored at all times.

While registrations are only accepted on an individual basis, you may request to play with specific players by listing their name(s) in the appropriate fields during registration.

Youth Cohorts

We will run a six (6) week Youth Cohort for kids age 7-15 that follows a similar structure as the Adult-Coed Cohorts. Parents can register their child to play once, twice, or three times per week and select the days that work best for them. Based on the registration results, we will place kids in their appropriate cohorts that follow all current Alberta Health and Safety protocols.

All youth cohorts will have a coach and a policy advisor on hand at all times.

Semi-Private Cohorts

We recognize that some people still feel uneasy about jumping right into games with people they don't know, and they would perhaps like a little more control over the people that they play sports with. If you would like the ability to operate your own cohort, send an email to mark@westernballhockey.com or call Mark at 587-777-0501 to discuss the options that are available to you.

In addition to the new requirements for cohorts during league play, there are additional requirements that must be followed by all sports organizations. These requirements were linked at the start of this document and we will now discuss the key details that are applicable to our sport and organization moving forward.

Facility Considerations

Western Ball Hockey primarily operates in the PKAG Arena inside the Calgary Central Sportsplex (CCS). As a result, many of the facility protocols will be set by the CCS, and Western Ball Hockey will comply with them.

At this point in time, it is not possible for us to relocate activities outdoors, but we will do our best to ensure that doors remain open to outside air in order to maximize fresh air and increase air flow wherever possible.

Participants are discouraged from using scents of any kind in order to help prevent unnecessary sneezing and coughing in the facility.



At all times when the PKAG Arena is being used, **Western Ball Hockey will ensure that a safety advisor is overseeing activities** to ensure that all Return to Sport guidelines are being adhered to.

People who consider themselves vulnerable or at an increased risk to COVID-19 are encouraged to take additional measures to keep themselves safe from potential transmission of infection.

Shared equipment and items such as water bottles are strongly discouraged. All users should bring their own equipment to help reduce the potential transmission of sickness.

Referees

All referees will be given a set of gloves, a face shield, and their own set of hockey balls.

Hockey balls must be disinfected between games (or a new ball must be used and all the balls get disinfected before use in future games).

The referee will not also serve as the safety advisor. These are two separate jobs.

Points of Entry and Controlling Access

Players should arrive no earlier than 10 minutes before their game and leave the building immediately after their game is over.

Exception: Goalies may arrive 15 minutes before their game and leave 15 minutes after the game ends.

Players will enter the building through the regular entrance, and exit the building through the PKAG Arena exit. This will ensure a one-way traffic flow that will reduce potential exposure between participants of different games who may also be part of different cohorts.

Exception: Goalies may use the regular exit as they will need some time to gear down after their game.

Washrooms will only be provided for using the toilets / urinals and washing your hands. Players are asked to arrive at the facility in their game attire and not to use the shower facilities at the sportsplex until further notice.

Goalies will be assigned "isolation zones" to get into and out of their gear. These zones should not be occupied by other people for any reason and must be disinfected after every use.

Facility Screening



We request that all participants complete the COVID-19 self-screening tool before entering the facility, which can be found in Appendix A of this document:

- <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/covid-19-relaunch-sports-physical-activity-and-recreation.pdf>

Any participant who exhibits any of the symptoms linked below will not be allowed to enter the facility or participate in activities provided by Western Ball Hockey.

- <https://www.alberta.ca/covid-19-testing-in-alberta.aspx#symptoms>

Sanitation, Cleaning, and Disinfecting

In addition to the standard facility cleaning procedures, the following areas will be sanitized / disinfected by the safety advisor between all games:

- Bench gates
- Bench seats
- Bench rails
- Entrance gate
- Arena exit door
- Stair handrails

Hand sanitizer will be provided on both benches in addition to being available throughout the facility.

Locker Rooms and Change Rooms

Locker rooms and shower facilities are off limits. Washroom facilities such as toilets and sinks are still available.

Physical Distancing

All games must be completed by the 55-minute mark in order to allow time for proper disinfection of necessary surfaces between games.

Players are expected to maintain a distance of two metres between themselves in the facility until they enter the arena. While the benches may be cramped, players are asked to promote physical distancing there as well wherever possible.

Participant Hygiene



All participants are encouraged to bring their own equipment to the facility (eg: hockey sticks, gloves, shin pads, water bottles, goalie equipment).

Game balls will be cleaned and/or switched out between games to reduce the possibility of COVID-19 transmission.

We strongly discourage the use of shared facility equipment. Any facility equipment that is used must be properly disinfected after every use.

Participants are encouraged to carry and use their own personal hand sanitizer.

Participants are encouraged to avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth while participating in play.

Participants are encouraged to exhibit good respiratory etiquette (eg: sneezing / coughing into elbow, no spitting, no clearing of nasal passages)

Masks

It is not recommended that players wear a mask during intense physical activity as this has the potential to restrict breathing. However, wearing a mask to and from the facility is strongly recommended, provided it does not interfere with your breathing.

Rapid Response to Symptomatic Individuals

The rapid response protocol is required by the Alberta Government and can be found in the [General Relaunch Guidance](#) information package.

If any individual is found to be exhibiting potential symptoms of COVID-19 in the facility, they will be notified and escorted to the isolation zone in the Calgary Central Sportsplex (where the red community tables used to be). A safe ride home will be arranged that does not incorporate the use of public transportation.

Cleaning and disinfecting will occur immediately for all potential touch points of the symptomatic individual.

All current participants will be required to perform hand hygiene through the use of hand sanitizer or washing their hands.

Suspension or cancellation of the current game will be strongly considered.



Western Ball Hockey League Ltd.
mark@westernballhockey.com
587-777-0501

Public Health Recommendations

We strongly recommend that all participants check-in with the referee at the start of every game, so that in the event of a possible outbreak we are able to notify all persons who may have come into contact with someone who may be exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.

Check-in is 100% optional, and records will only be kept for the purposes of contact notification and tracing. All records kept under these measures will be discarded after two (2) weeks without incident, as per current Alberta Government recommended policy.

Check-ins will not be shared with anyone unless we are legally required to do so.

Potential for Conflicting Statements

We recognize that the information surrounding COVID-19 and this pandemic is constantly being updated as new discoveries occur. If this document is found to be in violation with any municipal, provincial, or federal health mandates, those mandates will take precedence and we will update our own mandates as soon as possible to be in complete adherence to the government requirements designed to keep us all healthy and safe.

Questions / Comments / Concerns

If there are additional items that you believe should be included in our return to sport, physical activity and recreation, we strongly encourage you to get in touch with us through email (mark@westernballhockey.com) or by phone (587-777-0501).