



RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL | PHASE I - Return to Train

Introduction

The Manitoba Junior Hockey League (MJHL) and its 11 member teams have been closely monitoring the re-opening plans for COVID-19 in Manitoba. Hockey Canada has recently determined that the best approach for a return to hockey in Canada is to allow each member and organization the opportunity to work with health authorities in their respective province to determine when it is safe to return to hockey activities.

With Manitoba easing restrictions and allowing indoor and outdoor sporting organized activities to operate again in a phased in and cautious approach, the MJHL has prepared a Return to Play Protocol for your review.

Please Note

The following guidelines are only to allow the MJHL and member teams the ability to conduct summer hockey activities in preparation for the upcoming season in a modified manner.

The following guidelines do not permit extended contact.

The following guidelines have been prepared in accordance to the Hockey Canada Return to Hockey Safety Guidelines as they pertain to Junior Hockey.

The following guidelines have been prepared in accordance to the recommendations of the provincial health authorities.

The objective of the MJHL Return to Play Protocol | Phase I – Return to Train is to demonstrate how the MJHL and its member teams plan to return to play in a safe, structured and responsible manner utilizing a phased in approach (PHASE I – Return to Train) in accordance with necessary health restrictions and facility guidelines.

As a result, the following clearly defined guidelines and procedures have been recommended to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants - The health and safety for everyone involved is our number one priority.

Return To Play Protocol | PHASE II – Return to Hockey will be presented for review in the coming weeks in which will include our full plan for return to hockey in September.



About the Manitoba Junior Hockey League

The Manitoba Junior Hockey League (MJHL) is a Junior 'A' ice hockey league made up of eleven member teams operating exclusively in the province of Manitoba and is one of eleven member leagues that make up the Canadian Junior Hockey League (CJHL).

The goal of the MJHL is to develop elite players and ultimately have them develop into elite citizens who make a positive contribution to their community. To provide fans, communities and supporters with the best possible hockey product through dedication to improvement in all areas of the game both on and off the ice.

MISSION STATEMENT - To provide each MJHL player with an elite hockey development experience with a strong emphasis on education and positive citizenship. To deliver exciting Junior 'A' hockey action to fans throughout the province and enhance Manitoba communities in the spirit of sports excellence and goodwill.

PHASE I – Return to Train (June 22nd)

MJHL Team Activities – Off-Ice Training Sessions/On-Ice Practice Sessions/Prospect Camps/Development Camps

Players, coaches, managers, training staff and medical personnel employed by, affiliated with or invited by a MJHL team or the MJHL may attend the identified and approved facility for the purposes of off-ice training activity and on-ice activity.

On and off-ice Sessions to maintain occupancy and activity levels that allow players and staff to maintain a physical distance of at least two metres, except for brief exchanges.

All necessary precautions will be taken and followed, such as physical distancing and enhanced cleaning of equipment and indoor spaces as outlined by the Provincial Health Authorities and Facility Protocols/Restrictions.

Non-participating members of the public attending the activities must maintain a physical distance of at least two metres, except for brief exchanges.

Facility operators must implement measures to ensure members of the public attending the facility can maintain a physical distance of at least two metres.

Members of the public are to be reminded to stay home if they are feeling unwell, even if their symptoms are mild.

Patrons at higher risk of serious illness will be reminded to consider waiting to return to these facilities.

Each facility must establish a plan for how to minimize physical contact and the risk of COVID-19 transmission between members of the public.

Teams/Facility to post signs indicating physical distancing guidelines.



Enhanced cleaning of facilities, particularly washrooms/locker rooms to be conducted on a daily basis.

The following guidelines are to be followed:

Teams are to continue to offer virtual instruction or training where possible.

Players and staff will be instructed to practice social and physical distancing on and off the ice.

Individuals must use screening posters or self-screening tool before reporting each day, and should stay home when ill.

Individuals are not allowed to participate if they are ill with COVID-19 symptoms.

Individuals displaying any illness symptoms are not allowed to participate.

Individuals who have been in contact with anyone who is sick or not feeling well should not participate.

Individuals to be given information on social and physical distancing.

Each entry point to be managed to maintain physical distancing and ensure staff are present to control access.

Hand sanitizer will be made available at all entrances and high-contact areas such as lobby, check-in desk, dressing room and high traffic areas.

*All necessary public health authority guidelines and facility COVID-19 distancing protocols to be strictly followed.

*All out-of-province travel restrictions and guidelines as outlined by the provincial health authorities will be adhered to.

Dressing Rooms & Other Areas

When public health authority protocol and facility guidelines allow use of dressing rooms, teams should have players appropriately physically distanced (using multiple dressing rooms where possible).

Dressing rooms should be cleaned and sanitized (all surfaces and fitness equipment) after each use.

Equipment must be cleaned frequently. Team Staff to ensure this is being done properly.

Individuals may not share equipment of any kind (sticks, apparel, water bottles, towels, etc)

Individuals may not share clothing, soap, shampoo or other personal items such as razors and towels.

Hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes to be available as players enter and leave.

Disinfectant spray or wipes to be available for participants to disinfect high contact surfaces before and after use.

Enhanced and frequent cleaning and disinfection of locker rooms to be conducted.



Media interviews should be conducted outside the dressing room in a dedicated area with proper physical-distancing procedures.

Access to the dressing room should be strictly monitored – Only team personnel, on-ice officials, medical staff and essential facility staff should have access.

Teams will be encouraged to limit the use of dressing room area.

Signs are to be posted indicating physical distancing guidelines.

Individuals will be encouraged to bring all equipment and clothing home after each training and practice session when appropriate.

Jerseys/Socks/clothing will be washed after each training/practice session.

Common use items to be removed from locker rooms.

Off-Ice Training Areas

Physical distancing to be used to determine the number of players permitted in the weight room or workout area at one time.

Equipment to be wiped down with disinfectant wipes after each use.

Hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes to be made available as players enter and leave.

Medical Rooms

Physical distancing to be used to determine number of players in the medical room at one time.

Hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes to be made available as players enter and leave.

Medical rooms/tables will be disinfected between player treatments.

Protective masks and gloves to be worn when physical distancing is not possible during treatments.

Coaching Staff

Members of the coaching staff must maintain physical distancing with players whenever possible.

Team meetings will only be held in a controlled environment with physical distancing.

Masks to be made available for the coaching staff if they cannot physically distance.



Trainers & Equipment Staff

Disposable gloves must be worn when handling player/team equipment.

Disposable gloves must be worn when on the bench for each on-ice session.

Masks to be worn when physical distancing is not possible during treatments.

Disposable gloves must be changed when required and hands must be washed frequently.

Therapists & Medical Staff

Disposable gloves must be worn for all practices and games.

Hands must be washed and gloves changed between each player contact.

Cloth masks to be made available and worn when treating players and when physical distancing is not possible.

Benches

Teams will work with facility staff to ensure the bench area is wiped down and disinfected after each session.

For all on-ice activity including practices, scrimmages and/or games, bench capacity will be limited and clearly marked to allow for necessary physical distancing.

Players and staff are to use one bench door to enter the ice and the other bench door to exit.

Disposable gloves and disinfectant to be made available on benches for players and staff.

Ensure a non-touch garbage can or plastic garbage bag is available on the bench.

On-Ice/Off-Ice Warm-Ups

Players and staff must have their own personal towel if showering.

Players and staff must use their own water bottles (cleaned after each practice and game).

Additional towels and a laundry basket must be available (towels cleaned and replaced after each use).

Players are to warm-up for training/practice sessions individually as opposed to in groups.

Sanitary tissues and a non-touch waste basket to be made available.

Hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes to be made available.

Cleaning of jerseys, face shields and mouthguards must take place before and after every practice and game.



Spacing in areas where individuals congregate (e.g. line ups, spacing of players sitting on benches, and/or dressing rooms) will be monitored and modified where applicable to ensure social distancing.

Team huddles of any kind, handshakes, hugs, high fives, etc to be eliminated.

Physical distancing between coaches, participants, spectators, on ice and off ice officials to be monitored and enforced.

Meals

Players and staff must wash hands before and after each meal.

Players to be reminded to disinfect their phones regularly.

To go meals to be provided when possible/applicable.

Restaurant should have a private room and dedicated person to serve meals to players and staff. Buffet-style food services should not be permitted. Beverages should be single-serve and not jug-style service.

Players and staff are not to share food or drink at any time.

Hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes to be made available as players enter and leave.

Cloth masks to be made available for all players and staff if necessary.

Arrange seating and tables to ensure physical distancing.

Other Safety Measures

Players and staff will be leaders in practicing physical distancing off the ice.

Any violation will result in the player or staff member being subject to team and/or league discipline.

Protocol for Symptoms of COVID-19

Should a player or staff member who exhibits symptoms such as a cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose or sore throat, and has a suspected case of COVID-19, the individual must adhere to the following protocol:

Notify the Head Coach or a Team Staff member immediately;

The individual will be instructed to be isolated and the Team Doctor notified;

The individual must contact the local health authority to determine if a COVID-19 test is required;



The individual will remain in isolation until a negative test result is received and/or a minimum period of 14 days;

If the test result is negative, but symptoms continue, the individual will remain isolated until such time the Team Doctor agrees that he can return to train.

Should a player or staff member test positive for COVID-19, the individual must adhere to the following protocol:

Upon notification by the health department of a positive test, the individual must notify the Head Coach or a Team Staff member immediately;

The Team General Manager must notify the MJHL Office immediately of the positive test;

Any team that has been in contact with the positive case must have all members of that team tested immediately;

The individual must self-isolate for 14 days or should symptoms get worse notify a Team Staff member or call 911;

The Club and the MJHL Office will cooperate fully with health authorities while they perform case management and contact tracing (all individuals who have been in close contact in the 48 hours prior to when the symptoms started);

The Team and MJHL Office will follow any other additional prevention and control measures as required by the local health authority

The Team and Facility management will ensure all areas of the facility, where the infected individual has been, are disinfected in accordance to the procedures and protocols provided by the health officials;

The individual will remain in isolation for a period of 14 days or until such time he is approved for return to play by the Team Doctor.

The MJHL will monitor any new regulations and directives introduced by Government, Health Authorities, Hockey Canada and other sports organizations and, if applicable, will be incorporated into the MJHL Return to Train Protocol.

Facilities

Positive and open communication will be an important part of returning safely to the rink/facility. Prior to starting any team activities, a team official will be required to reach out to a facility representative as part of the facility rental agreement for clarification of the following:

What are facility guidelines and requirements specific to physical distancing?

Are there restrictions specific to the number of people allowed in public areas?

Are there restrictions specific to the number of people allowed on the ice?



What are entry and/or re-entry rules? Will masks be required?

Are there areas that may not be accessible in the facility – main lobby, dressing rooms, observation areas, showers, washrooms, etc.?

If dressing rooms are not available, what alternative option may need to be conveyed to players and parents?

Are common areas available to put on skates or remove skate guards with marked physical-distanced seating?

What additional cleaning and disinfection processes have been implemented by facility owners and how often are common touchpoints serviced?

Participant Meeting

It will be required for teams to provide participants/family with programming details while outlining the safety measures being followed (this can be done electronically and/or virtually).

Topics can include:

Facility/hockey association/league protocols for spacing/limits, number of patrons using the parking lot for drop-off/pick-ups, entering and leaving the building and/or dressing room, washroom restrictions and other limits and patterns.

Facility guidelines for the number of people that are permitted in the facility and/or on the ice at any given time. Families should be prepared to minimize the number of parents/guardians/spectators that attend to limit the number of people in the facility. Work with the facility to determine what is best.

The system in place to limit the number of patrons entering and exiting the facility at one time. Work with the facility to determine what is best.

Execution of on-ice and off-ice activities following public health authority and facility requirements.

Player arrival/departure – what to expect on arrival and how soon players need to leave.

Players not feeling well and what steps are to be taken by the team.

Prior to Team Activity

Encourage or require participants to register and pay online prior to arriving.

Look at making payment/refund policies more flexible so families do not feel pressured to attend an ice session.

If a participant does not feel well, has a fever or a cold (runny nose, sore throat, cough, etc.) they should stay home and advise the coach. All those participating in or attending a hockey activity should stay home if sick.



Learn and follow the guidelines specific to the number of people allowed in the building and on the ice, and plan accordingly.

Emphasize to participants the importance of strict hand hygiene before and after training. If possible, players should be encouraged to carry hand sanitizer.

Players should have a labelled water bottle. Use only that water bottle when participating in the activity.

Parents/players/team should wash water bottles after each session.

When arriving at the facility, players should be instructed to leave their hockey bags in their cars if early and the dressing room/area is not available.

It is recommended to plan staggered arrival times to avoid groups of players entering and exiting the facility at the same time.

If doing off-ice training, players should reduce the time needed to change at the facility by having a bag with dryland clothing. If possible, have warm-up clothing on before arrival.

Conclusion

These uncertain times have necessitated specific measures to allow us to return to the sport we love.

We fundamentally believe these protocols, if adhered to, put the MJHL, its Member Teams and all participants in the best position to return to summer hockey activities in a safe and healthy manner.

Together, we can return to the sport we love and do so in an environment that is as safe as possible.



APPENDIX - Roles & Responsibilities

Communications Officer

Positive and open communication will be an important part of returning safely to the rink. It is important to the MJHL to ensure that all involved understand what controls and guidelines are in place. This information will be passed along to administrators, officials, team staff, volunteers, parents and players in advance to ensure the return to hockey and facility use is enjoyable and safe.

The MJHL and each MJHL team will assign a communications officer who will be responsible to communicate and oversee all health and safety protocols.

Responsibilities to include:

Monitoring all relevant updates from the public health authority.

Monitoring all relevant updates from the member teams.

Communicating with local facilities on guidelines and updates.

Ensuring teams are following the Return to Play guidelines.

Ensuring any COVID-19 cases are reported as required by the public health authority, Member, hockey association, league and facility.

The MJHL communications officer to be in contact with the member team communications officer on a regular basis to assist in facilitating updates.

Team Administrators

Be familiar with public health authority guidelines, and adhere to them.

Communicate with your players and staff on requirements specific to the Return to Play plan.

Be familiar with facility guidelines and requirements specific to the prevention of COVID-19.

COVID-19 conditions are different across the country. It will be important to assess the current situation in the province/territory to help to build programming that fits.

Prior to starting hockey activities, reach out to the facility and discuss the following:

- o Facility guidelines and requirements specific to physical distancing.
- o Restrictions specific to the number of people allowed in public areas.
- o Areas that may not be accessible in the facility – main lobby, dressing rooms, observation areas, showers, washrooms, etc.



- o If dressing rooms are not available, have a common area to put on skates or remove skate guards with marked physical-distanced seating.
- o Cleaning processes in the facility, including how often it is disinfected.
- o General facility rules specific to practicing good hygiene.

Relay information to coaches, managers, players and parents.

Work with the coaching staff and managers on any health-related issues with teams, and be prepared to advise the hockey association board and Member.

Coaching Staff & Managers

Be familiar with public health authority guidelines, and adhere to them.

Review the MJHL Return to Play Protocol and Hockey Canada Return to Hockey Safety Guidelines.

Be familiar with facility guidelines and requirements specific to the prevention of COVID-19.

COVID-19 conditions are different across the country. It will be important to assess the current situation in the province/territory to help to build programming that fits.

Host an initial meeting with parents/guardians/participants to review how programming will look and allow them to ask questions (can be done virtually if required).

To minimize large groups in the facility as much as possible, players can meet family in vehicles (if their age permits) to follow physical-distancing requirements of the public health authority and local facilities.

Minimize congregation in areas of the facility, such as the lobby, as much as possible.

If there are multiple entrances to the ice surface, split the players into groups and have them space appropriately to meet physical-distancing standards at each entrance.

Encourage participants to minimize their time in or around the facility. Have participants put on their shoes or skate guards so that they can leave quickly.

Remind players and parents to follow physical-distancing guidelines when leaving.

Dressing room use, if available, will be controlled by the facility. It will be important to respect all facility controls so adequate cleaning and disinfecting can be done.

When public health authority protocol and facility guidelines allow use of dressing rooms, have players appropriately physically distanced (using multiple dressing rooms could help).

Players should not shower at the facility. Follow facility guidelines specific to the use of showers. If showers are used, physical distancing must be followed.



Safety Person & Trainer

Ensure the health and safety of the players and help to create a safe and welcoming environment.

Educate parents and players on the need for each player to have their own water bottle labelled with their names. Players should take their water bottles home and wash them before the next session.

Emphasize to players the importance of washing their hands regularly with soap and water or hand sanitizer. Carry extra hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes in the first-aid kit.

Emphasize to players the importance of keeping their equipment clean.

Be familiar with the Return to Hockey plan and emphasize to players and parents the need for total cooperation concerning hygiene.

Work with coaches to support physical distancing, hygiene and return to play after illness.

The safety person/trainer should wear disposable gloves on the bench for practices and games.

Gloves should be worn when handling equipment and when treating a player.

Hands must be washed and gloves changed between each player contact.

Cloth masks should be worn when treating players and when physical distancing cannot be practiced.

Players

Always respect and listen to team staff as they create a safe environment.

Be familiar with facility guidelines and requirements specific to the prevention of COVID-19.

Minimize going in and out of doors, including dressing room doors. Facility doors are considered high-risk touchpoints. Use the elbow to open.

Absolutely no sharing of food or drinks.

Assist the coach in establishing required guidelines during hockey activities while on or off the ice.

When coughing or sneezing:

- o Cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of the arm, not the hand.
- o Dispose of any used tissues as soon as possible in a lined waste basket and wash hands.
- o Avoid touching the eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.

Avoid contact with anyone who is sick.

Follow the instructions of your public health authority if you are notified that you have been in contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.



Parents/Family

Be familiar with public health authority guidelines, and adhere to them.

Be familiar with facility guidelines and requirements specific to the prevention of COVID-19.

Learn and follow the guidelines put in place by your Member, hockey association and team staff.

Talk to players about the importance of preventing COVID-19 in the hockey environment, including physical distancing guidelines.

Stress washing of hands before leaving for hockey, before going into facility, after using the washroom, after the hockey activity and after leaving the facility.

Stress to players to not touch their faces while at the hockey activity.

Make sure players let parents know if they are not feeling well.

Make sure players have their own clean water bottle, labelled clearly with their name, and stress the importance of not sharing water bottles.

Review all updates to public health authority guidelines

Follow the instructions of your public health authority if you are notified that you have been in contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.



APPENDIX – Team Disclosure Form

TEAM:

This certifies that the MJHL Return To Play document has been circulated to all coaches, staff, volunteers, officials, athletes and family members of athletes involved at team activities/events. (“Participants”)

This certifies that all Participants have agree to abide by the following points when entering team/event facilities and/or participating in team activities.

All Participants understand the policies and guidelines outlined in the MJHL Return to Play document.

All Participants have agreed to abide by the policies and guidelines outlined in the MJHL Return to Play document.

All Participants agree to symptom screening checks, and will let the team know if they have experienced any COVID-19 symptoms in the last 14 days.

All Participants agree to stay home when/if feeling ill.

All Participants understand that if they do not abide by the policies and guidelines outlined in the MJHL Return to Play document, that they will be asked to leave the team activity immediately for up to 14 days.

All Participants acknowledge that continued abuse of the policies and guidelines outlined in the MJHL Return to Play document may result in further sanctions.

All Participants acknowledge that there are risks associated with entering team facilities and/or participating in team activities, and that the measures taken by the team and participants, including those set out in the policies and guidelines outlined in the MJHL Return to Play document, will not entirely eliminate those risks.

DATE:

NAME/POSITION:



APPENDIX – Team Activity/Event Disclosure Form

TEAM:

The purpose of this document is to ensure that all MJHL member teams adhere to the appropriate policies and guidelines as outlined in the MJHL Return To Play Protocol. The policies and guidelines shall be followed in conjunction with the provisions of the Provincial Health Authorities and the facilities involved.

As a member of the MJHL, I am disclosing the information below is up to date and correct as it pertains to the operation of team activities/events.

DATE OF TEAM ACTIVITY/EVENT:

LOCATION/FACILITY:

NUMBER OF SKATERS:

NUMBER OF COACHES/STAFF:

DESCRIPTION OF TEAM ACTIVITY/EVENT:

NAME/POSITION:

SIGNATURE: