



Delayed Start to Season FAQs

Why did the NCHC choose Nov. 20 as an anticipated date on or after which to begin competition?

- The NCHC is focused on ensuring competition begins in a safe and responsible manner for all involved with athletic competitions on our campuses, particularly our student-athletes.
- The NCHC has an obligation to our member campuses and Presidents/Chancellors to start competition in a safe and responsible manner. This delay allows our campuses to safely reopen before introducing athletic competitions.
- The scheduling models being explored are built around this date.
- College hockey is aligning with the direction from other sports, in particular basketball.
- The medical guidance provided to the NCHC believes this timeframe is the best chance to start the season safely and successfully.
- The extra time will afford our member institutions time to implement their institutional and NCHC return-to-play protocols, following the NCAA Resocialization to Sport guidelines, while making sure they are familiar and efficient with implementing the protocols once competition begins.
- Many institutions across the country, including some of our own member schools, will be dismissing students for the fall semester within the week of Thanksgiving. The density of campus populations will be less around the potential start date of competition.
- The medical guidance provided believes COVID-19 testing methodologies will continue to evolve and improve. The delay affords more time for higher volume and better testing methods, which will help with a safe return to play.
- All NCHC member-school multi-sport conferences (Mid-American Conference, Summit League, Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference and Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference) have cancelled or postponed fall sports, including some until January 1.

Is there a chance NCHC competition begins before Nov. 20?

Although the conference does not expect competition to commence until on or after Nov. 20, the NCHC Board of Directors always reserves the right to make an adjustment. Any adjustment to do so would come because there is clear medical information and guidance stating the ability to start competitions can be done safely.

Will NCHC teams play any non-conference games?

No decisions have been made about a conference-only schedule or to allow non-conference games.

What schedule format is the NCHC looking at?

Numerous scheduling models are being considered and a decision about those models won't be made for some time, providing the conference time to assess the climate of COVID-19 before making a decision on which model gives the NCHC the best chance to safely begin play.

When will NCHC teams be allowed to practice?

Teams will be able to commence in-season practice and other countable athletically related activities (CARA) based on existing NCAA rules (currently Oct. 3) and in conjunction with local, state, and institutional restrictions and guidelines.

Will fans be allowed at games this season?

That will be determined by local health authorities. If allowed, each institution will work with those authorities to determine what a safe capacity is for games.