

## Return to Play Guide

## Plan, Protocols and Recommendations

(Last updated: March 9 for implementation March 21, 2022)



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**Contact Us for any Questions Regarding this Return to Play Guide** 

helpdesk@ontariosoccer.net

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## Introduction

Sport positively impacts Canadians; sport promotes physical and mental health, improves self-regulation, and enriches academic achievement.

The <u>COVID-19 pandemic</u> has had devastating effects on communities globally, leading to significant restrictions on all sectors of society, including sport. Resumption of sport can significantly contribute to the re-establishment of normality in Canadian society.

Ontario Soccer in consultation with its sport partners, Canada Soccer and the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, has developed for its membership this Return to Play Plan and Guide.

Based on current regulations and directives from the Government of Ontario, Ontario Soccer has developed this Return to Play Guide.

The principles outlined in this document apply equally to recreational, competitive and high performance level soccer. The Return to Play plan is a timely tool for 'how' reintroduction of soccer

activity will occur in a cautious and progressive manner, to optimise participant and community safety. Ontario Soccer and the Government of Ontario directives as they relate to public health and safety will form the foundation of this Return to Play Guide. The priority at all times will be to health, while preserve public minimising the risk of community transmission.



This document details the Return to Play Plan and Protocols for Ontario Soccer's member Clubs.

This plans detail and recommendations are guidelines for member Clubs, administrators, coaches, match officials and anyone organizing sanctioned soccer activities within the Province of Ontario. The plan will provide technical resources in the form of sample sessions, which fall within the recommendations and guidelines of Canada Soccer, to support members that want to offer soccer programming; as well as recommendations and guidelines for players and parents.

Ontario Soccer continues to follow the guidance of the Province of Ontario, provincial health authorities and requires all members and affiliated Clubs to do the same. We also understand that each municipality has potentially different localized governmental restrictions and limitations for onfield bookings and activity, therefore, we advise everyone to work with your local town/city/municipality to adhere to any appropriate requirements to ensure you are providing a safe environment for all participants.

It is highly recommended that Clubs use this document to design their own return to play plans and /or use this document to submit to their municipal facilities, **if required**.

Also included in this document are measures and precautions to support a safe Return to Play approach. We encourage our members and affiliated Clubs to use, tailor as appropriate, and share with each other to support soccer activity for your organizations.

We understand and appreciate the eagerness to prepare for our *Return to Play*. We ask that organizations do not develop protocols that are independent of Ontario Soccer, Government of Ontario regulations and/or local public health unit directives. **Organizations, teams, and/or coaches that offer soccer activity and do not comply with these recommendations and guidelines would expose themselves to claims under the Supporting Ontario's Recovery Act (Bill 128) and may be subject to sanctioning.** 

Our primary objective is to keep the health and safety of our participants' front and center in all of our planning.

Ontario Soccer

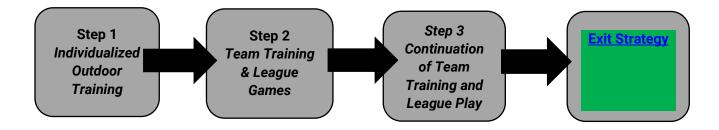
## Government of Ontario Re-Opening Framework Exit Strategy

The Government of Ontario announced on May 20, 2021 their new Road Map to Re-Opening Framework. The Government of Ontario confirmed that Outdoor Team Sports would reopen with Step 1 on June 11, 2021, Step 2 on June 30, 2021 and Step 3 on July 16, 2021. Step 3 will continue to our Indoor Season. On October 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Government of Ontario announced the beginning of the Exit Strategy and the further removal of restrictions. On Jan. 3, 2022, the Government of Ontario announced that the province was returning to Step 2 of the Road Map to Re-Opening Framework effective immediately, thus suspending all in person soccer activity. On Jan. 20, 2022 states this pause will expire on Jan. 31, 2022 with the province returning to Step 3 of the Road Map to Re-Opening Framework. On February 14, 2022, the Government of Ontario stated some restrictions would be lifted effective February 17, 2022, which include the removal of capacity limits in non-spectator areas and allow for 50% capacity limits in spectator areas.

The Government of Ontario announced on Mar. 9, 2022 that it is relaxing public health measures, in response to the recent status of the COVID-19 pandemic.

# As part of those changes, effective Mar. 21, 2022 at 12:01 a.m. the Government of Ontario will remove the masking requirements for sport and recreational fitness facilities.

Ontario Soccer's Return to Play Guide (RTP) has been adjusted to reflect the Government of Ontario's new Three-Step Re-Opening Framework and to reflect the exit from this framework



## **Reference Guide - OVERVIEW**

Organization's own RTP Guide/Plan in alignment to Ontario Soccer's RTP Guide (Clubs/Leagues)	YES
Safety Field Marshal	OPTIONAL
Equipment disinfecting after each game/practice	YES
Use of Change rooms	YES
Indoor Activities Permitted	YES
Outdoor Activities Permitted	YES
League Games or Scrimmages	YES
Travel to other Districts or Regions	YES
Trials/Tryouts/Open Evaluations/Camps	YES
Number of Participants (players, match officials and coaches) allowed in a sporting facility.	No limit
Maximum number of spectators allowed in an indoor facility. (does not include facility staff)	No limit
Masking Requirement (Exemptions Apply)	PARTICIPANTS: NOT REQUIRED SPECTATORS: NOT REQUIRED
Contact Tracing	NO
Proof of Vaccination	The Government of Ontario has lifted proof of vaccination requirements for all settings at this time. Facilities and other settings may choose to continue to require proof of

vaccination but the Government of Ontario
will no longer require it.

## **Recommendations for Clubs**

Ensure information included in this document is widely available to your members. All Club officials, coaches and anyone coordinating the training sessions must have read and be familiar with these guidelines.

It is recommended that all participants utilize the "Self-Check" on Ontario COVID-19 Self-Assessment App
It is mandatory for insurance and risk management purposes; that all participants are registered in OSCAR, Ontario Soccer's official participant registry.
Prioritize use of online registration for programs to reduce gathering at Club office and/or handling of hard copies.
Communicate all hygiene measures in advance to all your players, parents, match officials and coaches.
Provide your employees with any protective items required by the health authorities and ensure that each member of your staff washes their hands regularly.
Contact health authorities if an athlete, coach or match official has contracted COVID-19 and support them with contact tracing. Commence and activate your Club <a href="COVID-19 Emergency Response Plan">COVID-19 Emergency Response Plan</a>
Verbal and/or documented health checks for symptoms and Contact Tracing Logs should be completed prior to every training session. <u>See appendices section of the Guide for checklist.</u>
If an individual is exhibiting symptoms related to COVID-19, they must be sent home immediately. If an individual is experiencing symptoms of fever, cough, shortness of breath, runny nose or sore throat, they should contact your local Public Health Unit for further direction.
Source written approval (permit) from the proprietor of your training facility (e.g. Municipality or Private Owner).
Comply with any additional requirements imposed by the proprietor or the local Public Health Unit.
Ensure the venue meets all conditions in this document particularly the hygiene protocol. Ask parents and guardians to provide written consent for players authorizing them to participate in soccer training, and ensure they understand hygiene protocol. See Appendices for applicable registrant waivers.
Stagger activity times between different groups to create a 15-minute buffer between sessions and avoid an overlap of players on the field.
Limit gatherings size to comply with capacity limits dictated by the Government of Ontario. Consider the comfort level of all your volunteer coaches under the current situation. Perhaps, in the first instance, limit sessions to being led by a select core group of coaches.
Ensure that first aid materials and an AED are available at all times and are accessible. Regularly remind and encourage people to wash their hands and adopt proper hygiene practices.
Close all water fountains and ask that all players bring their own refreshments and do not share water bottles.
Establish protocol for attendance to be taken at each training session. Recommendation: This is the time to promote soccer for all and to alleviate logistical burdens on families so siblings can potentially participate at the same time, on the same day and with the same group.

	Provide information to coaches, match officials and parents about each facility, which field entrances will be used for entrance and exit to the field to reduce bottlenecks. Implement screening and cleaning protocols as well as pick-up, drop-off and spectator procedures.
	Adhere to facility restrictions or maximum capacities for facilities. Prioritize small game formats where possible.
	Hand washing/sanitizer station(s) onsite. Provide coaches with necessary sanitization equipment.
	Complete an online pre-activity orientation regarding safety – hand washing, cough suppression, no spitting or nose clearing for players, coaches, match officials and parents.
	Create a protocol for use of face coverings except when playing.  Provide fitness and law refresher courses for Match Officials. These sessions must adhere to
	the physical distancing measures and recommendations, along with any gathering restrictions issued by the provincial government health authorities.
	Removal of cash payment to Match Officials at games. Advise all Match Officials of the preferable method of payment for services.
Reco	ommendations and Guidelines for Players
	If you experience any of the symptoms, please follow Public Health recommendations and contact your medical health provider.
	Do not carpool unless with immediate family members.
	Always follow the instructions from coaches and respect physical distancing.
	Arrive no more than 25 minutes prior to activity commencing.  Bring your own water bottles clearly labelled with your name. Do not share with others.
	Do not share water bottles.
	Follow the hygiene protocols in this document.
	All "non-essential" contacts should be avoided (handshakes, high 5's, etc.).
	Only use your own equipment.
	Wash hands with hand sanitizer immediately before leaving home, after soccer activities, and during scheduled breaks.
	Do not spit at any time.
	Any individual equipment used should be taken home and washed separately from others in the household (e.g. uniform).
	Carry hand sanitizer in order to enable good personal hygiene.
	Cover mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze.  Avoid the use of public toilets, however if necessary, ensure hands are washed thoroughly.
	Avoid the use of public tollets, however if necessary, ensure flands are washed thoroughly.  Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth.
	Shower at home before and after training.
П	ammendations and Cuidalines for Devents
	ommendations and Guidelines for Parents
	Follow the <u>hygiene protocols</u> in this document.  Avoid congregating at facility entry points.
	Remind players to arrive to training dressed and ready, as change rooms will not be available.
	Parents/guardians to keep a reasonable distance from the field.  Masking at all times (Exemptions Apply).

	Ensure to check-in with coach for completion of attendance at the soccer activity.
	At home, ensure all the player's equipment is washed separately from the other household
	items.
	Ensure child is healthy and has no sign of COVID-19 symptoms.
	Drop and pickup player while maintaining rules and regulations around pick-up/drop-off and
	being a spectator if allowed.
	Snacks should be discouraged, however if allowed, ensure they are consumed and/or
	disposed of on site and not taken home.
Reco	ommendations and Guidelines for Coaches
	Coaches hold an online pre-activity orientation with players and parents regarding safety
	protocols – i.e., social distancing, modified training, pick up and drop off, hand washing, cough
	suppression, no spitting or nose clearing, etc., prior to commencing your first training session.
	Coaches should wipe down personal and field equipment using the disinfected swabs or
	towels, before and immediately after each session (do not go home and then clean -
	contaminated items may travel into the home environment).
	Only Coaches/Staff should handle equipment.
	Avoid using shared pinnies or any other additional equipment.
	Regular sanitization breaks combined with water breaks.
	Frequently clean all surfaces, including counters, door handles, benches, tables, etc.
Ш	Soap or hand sanitizer should be made available to all people in various locations throughout
	facility.
Dece	ommendations and Guidelines for Match Officials
Mecc	millicituations and buldennes for Match Officials
All Ma	tab Officials report he registered with Ontaria Conser before participating in any second activity
	tch Officials must be registered with Ontario Soccer before participating in any soccer activity.
Ш	All match officiating activities must be aligned with Canada Soccer/Ontario Soccer
	recommended Return to Play guidelines.
	When a player is injured Match Officials may only cheers and refer assistance to the
	When a player is injured, Match Officials may only observe and refer assistance to the applicable team bench. There is to be no Match Official contact with the player. Only team
	officials may assist the injured player.
Ш	No handshakes or high 5's between players, match officials, coaches before, during or after
	the game.  Parents are not permitted to enter the playing field at the end of game or during training. If
	this occurs, it is an expectation that the team coach will address with the parent(s).
	When Match Officials are taking part in practical training sessions, they must follow Canada
	Soccer/Ontario Soccer return to play as well as the Province of Ontario health and safety
	guidelines.
	Parents/Guardians of youth Match Officials are considered general spectators, therefore at
Ш	any facility, they must adhere to rules and all Public Health and safety protocols.
	Wash equipment, towels, clothes, bags, water bottles, and other items after use.
	Individuals to bring a full personal use water bottle(s) and avoid touching or using public water
	fountains.
	Use new grip or fresh tape on flags if possible.
	Do not share pens, cards etc.
	Wash hands prior to leaving for games; bring personal use hand sanitizer to the fields.
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Match Officials have the right to abandon any game where the required COVID-19 protocols
are not being followed. In these cases, it must be reported on a Special Incident Report to the
appropriate authorities.

## **Equipment Safety and Cleaning**

Any soccer activity must comply with the health and safety protocols as outlined in this Return to Play Guide along with any new protocols issued by the Government of Ontario Public Health authorities.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Bring a personally marked water bottle(s) to any soccer activity and avoid touching or using public water fountains. Note: Water fountains should be closed.
- Cleaning of equipment and physical distancing should be practiced and conform to recommendations from the Government of Ontario Public Health authorities.
- Disinfect all equipment after soccer activities before storing at home.
- Match Officials do not share pens, cards etc. Where required, wipe down pens with sanitizing wipes after use.
- Each player should be provided with personal pinnies that they do not share and take home and wash. The coach/manager should not be collecting team pinnies and washing them. An alternative can be the use of two different shirts (dark and light).
- Thoroughly wash or wipe down your equipment, towels, clothes, bags, water bottles, white boards, caps, cones and other items you have used or touched immediately after use.
- Wash hands thoroughly in warm soapy water for at least 20 seconds or use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer if water and soap are not immediately available.
- Do not share equipment this includes shin guards, shirts, socks etc.
- When sneezing or coughing cover your mouth and nose with your arm or a tissue to reduce
  the spread of germs. Remember if you use a tissue, dispose of it as soon as possible and wash
  your hands afterwards. Ensure all discarded materials (tissues, wipes, sock tape etc.) are
  placed into an approved garbage receptacle.

### **Electronics**

For electronics such as cell phones, tablets, touch screens that could be used by Coaches:

- Do not share electronics.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products.
- When possible, consider the use of cleanable covers for electronics.
- If no manufacturer guidance is available and when possible, consider the use of alcohol based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol to disinfect touch screens.
- Dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid pooling of liquids.

# Provide a Safe and Clean Environment Field, Clubhouse and Office Guidelines and Protocols

The following health and safety guidelines relate to providing clean and sanitized facilities to allow a safe Return to Play. This has been developed using recommendations from the Provincial Government provincial health authorities.

Additional public resource documents can be found here:

https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/novel-coronavirus/public-resources

Or

https://covid-19.ontario.ca/

## Risk Management and Insurance Considerations

## **Risk Management**

As restrictions begin to ease relating to COVID-19, Canada Soccer in collaboration with Ontario Soccer are directing all member Clubs to complete Canada Soccer's **Return to Soccer Assessment Tool** for determining preparedness to mitigate COVID-19 risks and implications upon the resumption of soccer and related activities.

The Guidelines are primarily designed to help member organizations manage their liability and remain compliant with all applicable public health authorities when returning to play. The Guidelines may help member organizations determine which new policies need to be adopted, including social and physical distancing for training, restricting the number of players participating in such training and restricting game play.

In preparation for this opening date for our sport, Ontario Soccer members are encouraged to complete these **critical sport specific steps and directives from Ontario Soccer**.

- All affiliated Clubs must register their participants in OSCAR the official Registry for Ontario Soccer.
- 2. All affiliated Clubs must read and understand <u>Ontario Soccer's Return to Play Guide (the plan) Protocols and Recommendations document.</u>
- All affiliated Clubs must prepare their own Return to Play Plans for use within their membership. Use of Ontario Soccer's Return to Play Guide (the plan) is strongly recommended.

Last year, Ontario Soccer lobbied for and secured the Supporting Ontario Recover Act and COVID-19 Liability Protection for its members, which ensures, that if they follow all protocols, workers, volunteers and organizations are protected from any legal action, which may arise as a result of the public health situation.

However, this protection is only available to registered members and their participants registered in OSCAR with Ontario Soccer.

Failure to register participants will result in members being exposed to liability risk and lack of protection.

#### Insurance

Ontario Soccer, in consultation with our insurance provider, HUB International, has been monitoring the most recent developments with COVID-19 and the impact the pandemic is having on soccer activities.

During this unprecedented time, we will continue to support our member District Associations and Clubs by delivering education, communication and guidance.

The most critical factor under our risk management and insurance considerations is Ontario Soccer must ensure our members are compliant with the policies and procedures regarding participant registration and insurance coverage. Without exception, all participants must be registered in OSCAR, Ontario Soccer's official registry. Without this registration, there is no standard accident and liability insurance coverage.

As we know, there are different types of risks associated with participating in sport and soccer. The current situation has potentially added to the assumption of risk. Ontario Soccer's insurance underwriter has provided us with an exclusion notice, which we are sharing with our membership at this time.

This pandemic exclusion clause is not specific to our sport in Ontario and is being applied across amateur sport throughout Canada. Considering this, Ontario Soccer has received guidance from our legal counsel and as a first step, have proceeded with an update to the Youth and Adult Participant Waivers for all members of affiliated Clubs to utilize for registration purposes. Please see the "Legal Considerations" section for more information.

Members must note the risk and liability for return to play is at the local community level where implementation takes place. Ontario Soccer and each of their members/affiliated Clubs are independently operated. Affiliated organizations must be comfortable and prepared to take appropriate and reasonable steps to mitigate risks associated with approving and/or implementing any form of soccer programming under a Return to Play Plan.

An overview of our standard insurance program and frequently asked questions are provided HERE.

It is highly recommended that each District, affiliated Club/Academy and Associate Member ensure your insurance policy is up to date. Ensure you have Director and Officer (D&O) liability insurance for your Board Members and insurance coverage for business losses. Furthermore, it is recommended that each member organization ensure their governing documents are current and take into account the protocols recommendations to ensure a safe return to soccer.

## **Emergency Response Plan (ERP)**

A specific **COVID-19 Emergency Response Plan** will need to be developed. This will serve as a mandatory risk management tool to allow for the proper environmental assessment and care of your participants on and off the field of play who may have tested positive for COVID-19.

During the current pandemic, the luxury of time to respond as soccer leaders is not available. Management of a breach within your soccer organization must be and can be dealt with quickly and efficiently if you have a clearly defined **COVID-19 Emergency Response Plan**.

Whenever it is practical or appropriate, the emergency response plan should be prepared in alignment with local health authorities and other trained health care personnel associated within your organization. As part of the plan, assign key roles to people within the organization.

Included below for your reference are key components of a recommended **COVID-19 Emergency Response Plan.** The underlying objective of your plan, should someone test positive within



your soccer organization, is to ensure that the virus transmission is contained and that the infected person(s) is removed and receives immediate care from healthcare professionals.

Each Organization should have an ERP Lead who oversees and leads the emergency action plan and has thorough knowledge of the protocols that need to be enacted. This person should also be someone with direct access to your organization's leadership group (i.e., Board of Directors, Owner/Operator) to ensure top-down management of the plan. Secondly, it is imperative that records of plan execution and management is maintained and kept on file. This ensures factual record keeping should reporting be required.

## **Plan Overview**

## Organization and Structure of the Plan

The main body of this COVID-19 Emergency Response Plan is organized in three sections, which outline the key roles and responsibilities of your soccer organization in each of the three (3) pandemic phases:

- 1. Pre-pandemic Phase: This is the critical stage for COVID-19 pandemic preparedness. The pre- pandemic phase is NOW, and planning efforts need to focus on Club education of the membership (i.e., volunteers, staff, coaches, parents, players, match officials) on Ontario Soccer and Canada Soccer's Return to Play Plan and Protocols. Please note that the Return to Play Protocols comply with the Province of Ontario emergency orders and health authority directives. In addition, coordination with facilities (especially if third party) should be included as they may have additional plans & procedures in place.
- 2. **Positive Test Phase**: Confirmation of a COVID-19 positive test within your soccer organization will declare when it is time to activate your COVID-19 Action Plan. During this phase, the key

- goals will be to prevent further infections within your organization and minimize program disruption. This phase remains active until the infected party has been isolated and under the control of professional health authorities and there is no further threat to the health and safety of your soccer organization's participants.
- 3. **Post-pandemic Phase**: The post-pandemic period begins when the Provincial Health Officer declares that the COVID-19 pandemic is over. The primary focus of work at this time is to restore normal services, deactivate pandemic response activities, review the impact, and use the lessons learned to guide future emergency response planning.

## **Pandemic Phase:**

1.	Pandemic Activities	Responsibility
1.	Planning and Coordination  a. Determine COVID-19 Emergency Response Plan (ERP) lead for soccer organization.  b. Create Emergency Response Plan for COVID-19 or add to existing ERP and include a section on pandemic influenza.  c. Complete Canada Soccer/Ontario Soccer's Risk	Board of Directors or Owner/Operator ERP Lead
	Assessment On-line. d. Incorporate Canada Soccer/Ontario Soccer's Return to	ERP Lead
	Play protocols.  e. Educate all internal organizational leaders of ERP Procedures Manual.	ERP Lead
	f. Written communication plan flowchart if a positive test for COVID-19 in the soccer organization.	ERP Lead
	<ul> <li>g. Verify Ontario Soccer, Province of Ontario and/or local Municipal government permissions for Return to Play implementation following Ontario Soccer Return to</li> </ul>	ERP Lead
	Play protocols of implementation.	
2.		Responsibility
2.	Play protocols of implementation.	Responsibility
2.	Play protocols of implementation.  Positive Test Phase  Confirmation of a COVID-19 positive test within your	Responsibility

## **Advise Sick Individuals to Stay Home**

Sick coaches, staff members, officials, or players should not return until they are well enough based on Public Health Agency of Canada and Provincial Health Authority guidelines.

## ERP Lead

ERP Lead

## Isolate and/or Transport Those Who are Sick at Club Activities

Make sure that coaches, staff, officials, players, and families know that sick individuals should not attend a Club activity, and that they should notify officials if they (staff) or their child (families) become sick with COVID-19 symptoms, test positive for COVID-19,or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 symptoms or a confirmed or suspected case.

Coaches, staff, officials, and players with COVID-19 symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, shortness of breath) at any club activity must be immediately separated and isolated. Individuals who are sick should go home or to a healthcare facility, depending on how severe their symptoms are, contact their Family Physician, and follow Health Agency guidance for caring for oneself and others who are sick. Individuals who have had close contact with a person who has symptoms should be separated and sent home as well. If symptoms develop, individuals and families should follow Health Agency guidelines for caring for oneself and others who are sick.

Establish procedures for safely transporting anyone who is sick to their home or to a healthcare facility. That means having parent contact information readily available, parents within a safe, socially distanced but easily accessible waiting area, or if you are calling an ambulance or bringing someone to the hospital. If calling an ambulance, please alert them that the person may have COVID- 19.

#### **Clean and Disinfect Areas**

Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting them (for outdoor areas, this includes surfaces or shared objects in the area).

Ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfection products, including storing them securely away from children.

## **Notify Local Health Officials and Governing Bodies**

**ERP Lead** 

**ERP Lead** 

**ERP Lead** 

In accordance with Federal, Provincial and Territorial privacy and confidentiality laws and regulations, the SPOC should notify local health officials, District, Provincial or Territorial Associations, club staff, officials, and families immediately of any case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

SPOC should work with local health officials to develop a reporting system (e.g., letter) to notify health officials and close contacts (logs and/or contract tracing information) of cases of COVID-19.

The Provincial and Territorial Health agencies and their Contact Tracing procedures will be responsible for advising those who have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 and determine whether someone should stay home and self-monitor for symptoms. Members of the Club/Academy should continue to self-monitor for symptoms.

The SPOC must notify the Provincial or Territorial Association of any cases of COVID-19. A weekly reporting system should be instituted for SPOC to advise the Provincial or Territorial Association of any cases of COVID 19, suspected cases, and where athletes or staff have been refused admittance to any training session. Even if there are no suspected cases, a 'nil' report should be required.

## 3. Post-pandemic Phase

#### **Action and Communications**

- a. Confirm Provincial Health Officer has declared the COVID-19 pandemic is over.
- b. Send official written notice to your membership (i.e., volunteers, staff, coaches, parents, players, match officials) that the pandemic is officially over, the province's state of emergency order has been lifted and soccer activities can resume its full operations. Note: During this phase, there may be specific sport protocols to follow from Canada Soccer/Ontario Soccer and/or the Provincial health authorities (i.e., implementation of Infection Control Policies and Procedures).
- c. Conduct a full review of your COVID-19 Return to Play Implementation Plan as well as your COVID-19 Emergency Response Plan. Include a list of recommendations for improvements.
- d. Update your soccer organizations Emergency Response Plan for future use and have approved.

## Responsibility

**ERP Lead** 

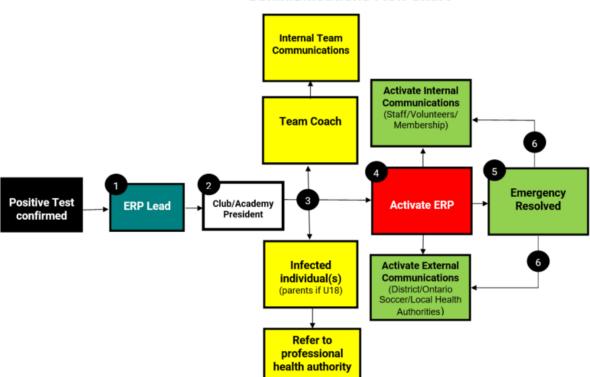
President

**ERP Lead** 

ERP Lead in conjunction with Board of Directors or Owner/Operator

## **COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN (ERP)**

## **Communications Flow Chart**



## **Legal Considerations**

As stated previously in the Risk Management and Insurance section of this Guide, member organizations must note the risk and liability of Return to Play is at the local community level where implementation takes place. Ontario Soccer and each of their members/affiliated Clubs. Therefore, affiliated organizations must be comfortable and prepared for the appropriate and reasonable steps that need to be taken in order to mitigate risks associated with approving and/or implementing any form of soccer programming under a Return to Play Plan.

Youth and Adult Participant Waivers are required for all participants registered with affiliated Clubs and/or Ontario Soccer. (Age of Majority is 18 years of age)

Contained within the Appendices section of this Guide and through the links attached, you will find;

1. **Informed Consent and Assumption of Risk Agreement**This form is must be signed by the parent or guardian of participants under the age of majority (17 years of age and under).

https://www.ontariosoccer.net/page/show/5787197-ontario-soccer-return-to-play-guide

2. **Release of liability, waiver of claims and indemnity agreement**. This waiver is to be signed by participants of the age of majority and over. (18 years of age and older)

https://www.ontariosoccer.net/page/show/5787197-ontario-soccer-return-to-play-guide

# Everyone is Welcome Ontario Soccer's Return to Outdoor Campaign

## THE WHY:

Over the past two years, Ontario Soccer has supported the Clubs and Districts in their Return-to-Play efforts. For the 2022 Outdoor Season, Ontario Soccer is continuing this support – but in a slightly different way.

#### THE WHAT:

Provide marketing and resource materials to Clubs and Districts to support their 2022 Return-to-Outdoor efforts

## **MARKETING TOOLKIT:**

- Social Share Graphics (1200px x 630px)
- Custom 'Everyone is Welcome' Logo for co-branding
- Web-Friendly graphics to share over many platforms and environments



# For your use of our <u>Everyone is Welcome</u> marketing assets, please <u>click here</u>.





## Summary

In summary, the "Return to Play Protocols" included in this document are recommendations and guidelines directed at Ontario Soccer affiliated Clubs participating in sanctioned soccer activities.

Our collective focus, during the Return to Play Plan must be focused on the health and safety of our participants.



We recognize the incredible work that our membership has done throughout this pandemic and we are extremely proud of how organizations have rallied together to ensure our participants will Return to Play in a safe and cautious manner.

Soccer will play a special role in helping our participants recover from this pandemic and we will show how the power of sport can serve to transform and empower our youth.

Lastly, the choice to participate in soccer rests with the individual participant and/or their guardian. This is a very personal decision and must be made based on the trust and comfort they will have with your organization and the recommended safety protocols that are set in place and followed.

Best of Success.

### Soccer is ON!

**Ontario Soccer** 

# **Appendices**

## Appendix 1

## What is COVID-19 and Infection Prevention?

### COVID-19

<u>Coronaviruses</u> are a large family of viruses. Some cause illness in people and others cause illness in animals. Human coronaviruses are common and are typically associated with mild illnesses, similar to the common cold.

COVID-19 is a new disease that has not been previously identified in humans. Rarely, animal coronaviruses can infect people, and more rarely, these can then spread from person to person through close contact.

There have been two other specific coronaviruses that have spread from animals to humans and which have caused severe illness in humans. These are the:

- 1. Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus (SARS CoV)
- 2. Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS CoV)

Those who are infected with COVID-19 may have little to no symptoms. You may not know you have symptoms of COVID-19 because they are similar to a cold or flu.

Symptoms have included:

- cough,
- fever,
- difficulty breathing, and
- pneumonia in both lungs.

In severe cases, infection can lead to death. Symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to COVID-19. This is the longest known incubation period for this disease.

Recent evidence indicates that the virus can be transmitted to others from someone who is infected but not showing symptoms. This includes people who:

- have not yet developed symptoms (pre-symptomatic) and
- never develop symptoms (asymptomatic)

While experts know that these kinds of transmissions are happening among those in close contact or in close physical settings, it is not known to what extent. This means it is extremely important to follow the proven <u>preventative measures</u>.

### **Preventative Measures**

Canadians should continue to think ahead about the actions they can take to stay healthy and prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Canada. This includes **staying at home** as much as possible and <u>being prepared</u> in case you or a family member becomes ill. Everyone should be practising **physical (social) distancing**. Even if you do not have symptoms of COVID-19, you could become infected by others.

As we continue to see transmission of the virus within different communities, we know that everyone must take precautions, even those who have not travelled outside of Canada.

In an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within communities and across the country, all Canadians are advised to:

- Stay at home, unless you have to go to work. Talk to your employer about working at home if possible.
- Avoid all non-essential trips in your community.
- Do not gather in groups. Respect Government of Ontario directives.
- Limit contact with people at higher risk, such as older adults and those in poor health.
- Go outside to exercise but stay close to home.
- If you leave your home, always keep a distance of at least three (3) meters from others. Household contacts (people you live with) do not need to distance from each other unless they are sick.

## You can go outside if you:

- Have not been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Do not have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Have not travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days.
- Are not in quarantine (self-isolating).

What you need to know to help you and your family stay healthy

Wash your hands with soap and water thoroughly and often.

Cough and sneeze into your sleeve or a tissue. Dispose of tissue immediately and wash your hands.

Keep surfaces clean and disinfected.





If you go out for a walk, do not congregate and always practise physical (social) distancing by keeping at least three (3) metres apart from others at all times.

### Hygiene

Proper hygiene can help reduce the risk of infection or spreading infection to others:

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the
washroom and when preparing food. Use alcohol-based <a href="handsanitizer">hand sanitizer</a> if soap and water are
not available.

 When coughing or sneezing, cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of your arm, not your hand. Dispose of any tissues you have used as soon as possible in a lined wastebasket and wash your hands afterwards. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

## How to wash your hands





## How to use hand sanitizer



## Cleaning

Coronaviruses are one of the easiest types of viruses to kill with the appropriate disinfectant product when used according to the label directions. Health Canada has published a <u>list of hard surface disinfectants</u> that are likely to be effective for use against COVID-19.

Although they do not claim to kill COVID-19, cleaners can play a role in limiting the transfer of microorganisms. Health Canada recommends cleaning high-touch hard surfaces often, using either regular household cleaners or diluted bleach according to the label directions. This bleach solution should be prepared according to the instructions on the label or in a ratio of 250 mL (1 cup) of water per 5 mL (1 teaspoon) of bleach. Directions are based on bleach that is 5% sodium hypochlorite, to give a 0.1% sodium hypochlorite solution. Never mix bleach with other chemical products and use it in a well-ventilated area. Special precautions must be used when cleaning with bleach to avoid serious incidents.

These surfaces include:

- Toilets,
- Phones,
- · Electronics,
- Door handles,
- · Tables and chairs, and
- Remotes.

Refer to the <u>quidance on cleaning and disinfecting public spaces</u> for more information.

### Wearing masks or face coverings

Medical masks, including surgical, medical procedure face masks and respirators (like N95 masks), must be kept for health care workers and others providing direct care to COVID-19 patients.

Wearing a non-medical mask or face covering while out in public is **recommended** for periods of time when it is not possible to consistently maintain a three (3) metre physical distance from others, particularly in crowded public settings, such as training and competition facilities.

Public health officials will make recommendations based on a number of factors, including the rates of infection and/or transmission in the community. Recommendations may vary from community to community.

If you do choose to wear facial covering, refer to <u>guidelines on wearing non-medical masks</u>, how to <u>make your own</u> and the <u>Special Advisory Committee</u> recommendations on the <u>use of non-medical cloth masks or face coverings in community settings</u>.

Masks alone will not prevent the spread of COVID-19. You must consistently and strictly adhere to good hygiene and public health measures, including frequent hand washing and physical (social) distancing.

### Resources used:

https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/novel-coronavirus/health-care-resources
https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html

## Appendix 2

**RTP Waivers** 

### **ONTARIO SOCCER**

## INFORMED CONSENT AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK AGREEMENT

(To be executed by Participants under the age of majority - 17 years old and younger)

WARNING! By signing this document, you will assume certain risk and responsibilities. Please read carefully!

Particin	ant's Name:	

- 1. This is a binding legal agreement. Clarify any questions or concerns before signing. As a Participant in activities, programs, classes, services provided and events sponsored or organized by Ontario Soccer and its affiliated districts, leagues, clubs and teams (collectively the "Organization") and the sport of soccer, including but not limited to: games, tournaments, practices, training, personal training, dry land training, use of strength training and fitness conditioning equipment, machines and facilities, nutritional and dietary programs, orientational or instructional sessions or lessons, aerobic and anaerobic conditioning programs (collectively the "Activities"), the undersigned being the Participant and Participant's Parent/Guardian (collectively the "Parties") acknowledges and agrees to the following terms outlined in this agreement:
- 2. I am the Parent/Guardian of the Participant and have full legal responsibility for the decisions of the Participant.

### **Description of Risks**

- 3. The Parties understand and acknowledge that:
  - a) The Activities have foreseeable and unforeseeable inherent risks, hazards and dangers that no amount of care, caution or expertise can eliminate, including without limitation, the potential for serious bodily injury, permanent disability, paralysis and loss of life;
  - b) The Organization may offer or promote online programming (such as webinars, remote conferences, workshops, and online training) which have different foreseeable and unforeseeable risks than in-person programming;
  - c) The Organization has a difficult task to ensure safety and it is not infallible. The Organization may be unaware of the Participant's fitness or abilities, may give incomplete warnings or instructions, may misjudge weather or environmental conditions, and the equipment being used might malfunction; and
  - d) The novel coronavirus, COVID-19, has been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization and COVID-19 is extremely contagious. The Organization has put in place preventative measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19; however, the Organization cannot guarantee that the Participant will not become infected with COVID-19. Further, attending the Activities could increase your risk of contracting COVID-19.
- 4. The Participant is participating voluntarily in the Activities. In consideration of that participation, the Parties hereby acknowledge that they are aware of the risks, dangers and hazards and may be exposed to such risks, dangers and hazards. The risks, dangers and hazards include, but are not limited to:
  - a) Contracting COVID-19 or any other contagious disease;
  - b) Executing strenuous and demanding physical techniques;
  - c) Vigorous physical exertion, strenuous cardiovascular workouts and rapid movements;

- d) Exerting and stretching various muscle groups;
- e) The failure to properly use any piece of equipment or from the mechanical failure of any piece of equipment;
- f) Spinal cord injuries which may render the Participant permanently paralyzed;
- g) Serious injury to virtually all bones, joints, ligaments, muscles, tendons and other aspects of the Participant's body or to the Participant's general health and well-being;
- h) Abrasions, sprains, strains, fractures, or dislocations;
- i) Concussion or other head injuries, including but not limited to, closed head injury or blunt head trauma;
- j) Physical contact with other participants, spectators, equipment, and hazards;
- k) Not wearing appropriate safety or protective equipment, such a helmet;
- I) Failure to act safely or within the Participant's ability or within designated areas;
- m) Grass, turf, and other surfaces including bacterial infections and rashes;
- n) Collisions with fences, poles, stands, and soccer equipment;
- o) Negligence of other persons, including other spectators, participants, or employees;
- p) Weather conditions; and
- q) Travel to and from competitive events and associated non-competitive events which are an integral part of the Activities

## We have read and agree to be bound by paragraphs 1 and 4

#### **Terms**

- 5. In consideration of the Organization allowing the Participant to participate in the Activities, the Parties agree:
  - a) That the Participant's mental and physical condition is appropriate to participate in the Activities;
  - That when the Participant practices or train in his or her own space, the Parties are responsible for the Participant's surroundings and the location and equipment that is selected for the Participant;
  - c) To comply with the rules and regulations for participation in the Activities;
  - d) To comply with the rules of the facility or equipment;
  - e) That if the Participant observes an unusual significant hazard or risk, the Participant will remove themselves from participation and bring such to the attention of an Organization representative immediately;
  - f) The risks associated with the Activities are increased when the Participant is impaired and the Participant agrees not to participate if impaired in any way;
  - That it is their sole responsibility to assess whether any Activities are too difficult for the Participant. By the Participant commencing an Activity, they acknowledge and accept the suitability and conditions of the Activity;
  - That they are responsible for the choice of the Participant's protective equipment and the secure fitting of the protective equipment;
  - That COVID-19 is contagious in nature, the Participant may be exposed to or infected by COVID-19, and such exposure may result in personal injury, illness, permanent disability or death and voluntarily agree to assume all of the foregoing risks.
- 6. In consideration of the Organization allowing the Participant to participate, the Parties agree:
  - a) That the Parties are not relying on any oral or written statements made by the Organization or their agents, whether in brochure or advertisement or in individual conversations, to agree to be involved in the Activities; and
  - b) That the Organization is not responsible or liable for any damage to the Participant's vehicle, property, or equipment that may occur as a result of the Activities.

We have read a	and agree to l	be bound b	by paragraphs 5-6
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### General

- 7. The Parties agree that in the event that they file a lawsuit against the Organization, they agree to do so solely in the province of Ontario, Canada and they further agree that the substantive law of Ontario will apply without regard to conflict of law rules.
- 8. The Parties expressly agree that this Agreement is intended to be as broad and inclusive as is permitted by law and that if any of its provisions are held to be invalid, the balance shall, notwithstanding, continue in full legal force and effect.

## **Acknowledgement**

 The Parties acknowledge that they have read this agreement and understand it, that they have executed this agreement voluntarily, and that this Agreement is to be binding upon themselves, their heirs, their spouses, parents, guardians, next of kin, executors, administrators and legal or personal representatives.

Name of Participant (print)	Signature of Participant	Date of Birth
Name of Parent or Guardian (print)	Signature of Parent or Guardian	
Date		

### **ONTARIO SOCCER**

## RELEASE OF LIABILITY, WAIVER OF CLAIMS AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

(To be signed by Participants of the age of majority and over - 18 years old and older)

## WARNING! By signing this document, you will waive certain legal rights. Please read carefully.

1. This is a binding legal agreement. Clarify any questions or concerns before signing. As a Participant in activities, programs, classes, services provided and events sponsored or organized by Ontario Soccer and its affiliated districts, leagues, clubs and teams and the sport of soccer, including but not limited to: games, tournaments, practices, training, personal training, dry land training, use of strength training and fitness conditioning equipment, machines and facilities, nutritional and dietary programs, orientational or instructional sessions or lessons, aerobic and anaerobic conditioning programs (collectively the "Activities"), the undersigned acknowledges and agrees to the following terms outlined in this agreement:

#### Disclaimer

2. Ontario Soccer, its affiliated districts, leagues, clubs and teams, and their respective directors, officers, committee members, members, employees, coaches, volunteers, officials, participants, agents, independent contractors, subcontractors, sponsors, owners/operators of the facility in which the Activities take place, , successors and assigns, and representatives (the "Organization") are not responsible for any injury, property damage, expense, loss of income, damage or loss of any kind suffered by a Participant during, or as a result of, the Activities, caused in any manner whatsoever including, but not limited to, the negligence of the Organization.

## ☐ I have read and agree to be bound by paragraphs 1 and 2.

## Description of Risks

- 3. I understand and acknowledge that
  - a) The Activities have foreseeable and unforeseeable inherent risks, hazards and dangers that no amount of care, caution or expertise can eliminate, including without limitation, the potential for serious bodily injury, permanent disability, paralysis and loss of life;
  - b) The Organization may offer or promote online programming (such as webinars, remote conferences, workshops, and online training) which have different foreseeable and unforeseeable risks than in-person programming;
  - c) The Organization has a difficult task to ensure safety and it is not infallible. The Organization may be unaware of my fitness or abilities, may misjudge weather or environmental conditions, may give incomplete warnings or instructions, and the equipment being used might malfunction; and
  - d) The novel coronavirus, COVID-19, has been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization and COVID-19 is extremely contagious. The Organization has put in place preventative measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19; however, the Organization cannot guarantee that the Participant will not become infected with COVID-19. Further, attending the Activities could increase your risk of contracting COVID-19.
- 4. I am participating voluntarily in the Activities. In consideration of my participation, I hereby acknowledge that I am aware of the risks, dangers and hazards associated with or related to the Activities which could result in damage, loss, serious physical injury, or death. The risks, dangers and hazards include, but are not limited to, injuries from:
  - a) Health: executing strenuous and demanding physical techniques, physical exertion, overexertion, stretching, dehydration, fatigue, cardiovascular workouts, rapid movements and

- stops, lack of fitness or conditioning, traumatic injury, bacterial infections, rashes, and the transmission of communicable diseases, including viruses of all kinds, COVID-19, bacteria, parasites or other organisms or any mutation thereof.
- b) Premises: defective, dangerous or unsafe condition of the facilities; falls; collisions with objects, walls, equipment or persons; dangerous, unsafe, or irregular conditions on grass, turf or other surfaces, extreme weather conditions; travel to and from premises
- c) Use of Equipment: mechanical failure of the equipment; negligent design or manufacture of the equipment; the provision of or the failure by the Organization to provide any warnings, directions, instructions or guidance as to the use of the equipment; failure to use or operate the equipment within my own ability.
- d) Contact: contact with soccer balls, other equipment, poles, stands, soccer equipment, nets, fences, or other persons, whether intentional or unintentional, is a common part of soccer programs, and may lead to serious bodily injury, including but not limited to concussions and/or other brain injury, or serious spinal injury.
- e) Advice: negligent advice regarding soccer programs
- f) Ability: Failing to act safely or within my own ability or within designated areas
- g) Sport: the game of soccer and its inherent risks
- h) Conduct: My conduct and conduct of other persons including any physical altercation between soccer participants
- i) Travel: Travel to and from the Activities
- j) Negligence: My negligence and negligence of other persons, including NEGLIGENCE ON the PART OF THE ORGANIZATION, may increase the risk of damage, loss, personal injury or death. I understand that the Organization may fail to safeguard or protect me from the risks, dangers and hazards of soccer programs, some of which are referred to above.

#### **Terms**

- 5. In consideration of the Organization allowing me to participate in the Activities, I agree:
  - a) That my mental and physical condition is appropriate to participate in the Activities and I assume all risks related to my mental or physical condition;
  - b) That when I practice or train in my own space, I am responsible for my surroundings and the location and equipment that I select;
  - c) To comply with the rules and regulations for participation in the Activities;
  - d) To comply with the rules of the facility or equipment;
  - e) That if I observe an unusual significant hazard or risk, I will remove myself from participation and bring such to the attention of a The Organization representative immediately;
  - f) The risks associated with the Activities are increased when I am impaired, and I agree not to participate if impaired in any way;
  - g) That it is my sole responsibility to assess whether any Activities are too difficult for me. By commencing an Activity, I acknowledge and accept the suitability and conditions of the Activity;
  - h) That I am responsible for my choice of protective equipment and the secure fitting of that equipment; and
  - i) That COVID-19 is contagious in nature and I may be exposed to or infected by COVID-19 and such exposure may result in personal injury, illness, permanent disability or death and voluntarily agree to assume all the foregoing risks.
    - $\Box$  I have read and agree to be bound by paragraphs 3 -5.

## **Release of Liability and Disclaimer**

- 6. In consideration of the Organization allowing me to participate in the Activities, use its equipment and facilities, I agree:
  - a) That the sole responsibility for my safety remains with me;
  - b) To ASSUME all risks arising out of, associated with or related to my participation;
  - c) That I am not relying on any oral or written statements made by the Organization or its agents,

- whether in a brochure or advertisement or in individual conversations, to agree to be involved in the Activities:
- To WAIVE any and all claims that I may have now or in the future against the Organization;
- e) To freely ACCEPT AND FULLY ASSUME all such risks and possibility of personal injury, death, property damage, expense and related loss, including loss of income, resulting from my participation in the activities, events and programs of the Organization;
- f) To FOREVER RELEASE AND INDEMNIFY the Organization from any and all liability for any and all claims, demands, actions, damages (including direct, indirect, special and/or consequential), losses, actions, judgments, and costs (including legal fees) (collectively, the "Claims") which I have or may have in the future, that might arise out of, result from, or relate to my participation in the Activities, even though such Claims may have been caused by any manner whatsoever, including but not limited to, the negligence, gross negligence, negligent rescue, omissions, carelessness, breach of warranty, breach of contract and/or breach of any statutory duty of care of the Organization;
- g) TO HOLD HARMLESS AND INDEMNIFY the Organization from any and all liability for any damage, loss, expense or injury to any third party resulting from my participation in the Activities.
- To FOREVER RELEASE AND INDEMNIFY the Organization relating to becoming exposed to or infected by COVID-19 which may result from the actions, omission or negligence of myself and others, including but not limited to the Organization;
- That the Organization is not responsible or liable for any damage to my vehicle, property, or equipment that may occur as a result of the Activities;
- j) That negligence includes failure on the part of the Organization to take reasonable steps to safeguard or protect me from the risks, dangers and hazards associated with the Activities; and
- k) This release, waiver and indemnity is intended to be as broad and inclusive as is permitted by law of the Province of Ontario and if any portion thereof is held invalid, the balance shall, notwithstanding, continue in full legal force and effect.

### **Jurisdiction**

- 7. I agree that in the event that I file a lawsuit against the Organization, I agree to do so solely in the province of Ontario, Canada and further agree that the substantive law of Ontario will apply without regard to conflict of law rules. I further agree that if any portion of this agreement is found to be void or unenforceable, the remaining document shall remain in full force and effect.
- ☐ I have read and agree to be bound by paragraphs 6-7

#### Acknowledgement

8. I acknowledge that I have read and understand this agreement, that I have executed this agreement voluntarily, and that this agreement is to be binding upon myself, my heirs, spouse, children, parents, guardians, next of kin, executors, administrators and legal or personal representatives. I further acknowledge by signing this agreement I have waived my right to maintain a lawsuit against the Organization on the basis of any claims from which I have released herein.

### **Acknowledgement**

9. I acknowledge that I have read this agreement and understand it, that I have executed this agreement voluntarily, and that this agreement is to be binding upon myself, my heirs, spouse, children, parents, guardians, next of kin, executors, administrators and legal or personal representatives.

Name of Participant	Date
Signature of Participant	- Witness

## Appendix 3

## **Covid-19 Public Health Resources**

**Ontario Soccer COVID-19 Updates** 

**Province of Ontario COVID-19** 

**COVID-19 mental health online and phone support** 

**Updates from the CSIO Sport Medicine Advisory** 

**Health Canada** 

**U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** 

**World Health Organization** 

**Travel Advice and Advisories site** 

**COVID-19 and Mental health and well-being** 

**Coping with stress and anxiety** 

## Covid-19 Self Assessment Tools For Spectators and Participants

Self-Assessment tools for *spectators* and *participants*, which includes players, team officials and Match Officials, are listed below.

The **Declaration of compliance – COVID-19**. This declaration is for use by member organizations that own or operate facilities. Is to be completed by those persons that enter the facility to participate in club/academy activities

The Declaration of Compliance below can be used by Clubs in either hard copy or mobile application as long as a record is kept by the club/academy of the submission.

https://www.ontariosoccer.net/page/show/5787197-ontario-soccer-return-to-play-guide

The Province of Ontario Self Assessment tool is to be used personally and is not a substitute for the Declaration of Compliance of applicable application chosen by the club.

https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/

