



VIA EMAIL

June 2, 2020

Attention: BC Soccer Full/Associate Members and Affiliated Soccer Clubs

From: BC Soccer Association

Re: Return to Play Plan Phase 1 and Next Steps

Dear Full/Associate Members and Affiliated Clubs,

We continue working to provide information and updates as things change and evolve to best support you as we collectively work through the ongoing impacts of the current situation. This memo is in follow up to the May 13 and May 29, 2020 memos circulated to the members and affiliated clubs. Note: some content is duplication with previous information shared, however, we felt that for completeness all information should be provided.

Please read this memo thoroughly, along with the accompanying documents as there is important Return to Play information within.

Return to Play Plan Approval Process & Canada Soccer Process for Lifting Suspension of Soccer Activity

On May 14, 2020 Canada Soccer publicly announced the National Return to Soccer Guidelines, which includes Canada Soccer approving the Provincial Member Association Return to Play Plans. Along with this, they will provide BC Soccer a link to their "Return to Soccer Assessment Tool" designed to support BC Soccer Members and Affiliated Clubs.

Below are the five steps Canada Soccer has determined for the lifting of the suspension and gradually returning to play.

1. The easing of stay-at-home orders from the Federal public health authority;
2. The easing of restrictions on public gatherings from the respective Provincial public health authority;
3. The easing of restrictions for field and facility usage by the respective Municipal public health authority;
4. Canada Soccer has received the Return to Soccer Plan from the Provincial or Territorial Member Association, which has been provided to the applicable Provincial or Territorial government department and/or public health authority, and where applicable, has received confirmation from the Province or Territory that it approves of the Plan; and
5. Canada Soccer has received the Return to Soccer Assessment Tool from the member organization and has provided any comments or feedback to the member organization or its Provincial or Territorial Member, if any.

BC Soccer's Return to Play Phase 1 Plan – Recommendations and Guidelines

Accompanying this memo is “*BC Soccer's Return to Play Phase 1 Plan – Recommendations and Guidelines*” for soccer which includes the following:

1. Timelines, recommendations, and guidelines for members and affiliated clubs, administrators, coaches and anyone organizing soccer activities, including two appendices:
 - a. Canada Soccer's Technical Committee Age & Stage Considerations – Phase 1
 - b. ViaSport's Emergency Response and Outbreak Plan
2. Technical resources providing sample sessions that fall within the recommendations and guidelines to support members and affiliated clubs that want to offer soccer activity.
3. Timelines, recommendations and guidelines for participants.

As noted in the May 29, 2020 memo, *BC Soccer's Return to Play Phase 1 Plan – Recommendations and Guidelines* have been approved by BC Soccer's Board of Directors and Canada Soccer.

ViaSport has stated that *BC Soccer's Return to Play Phase 1 Plan – Recommendations and Guidelines* are aligned with *ViaSport's Return to Sport Guidelines for B.C.*, which have been approved by the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, public health authorities and WorkSafe BC and are linked [HERE](#).

Please review ViaSport' Guidelines in full and specifically taking note of the following:

- The section on “Emergency Response” and the subsection titled “Outbreak Plan” (on page 20 and also on Appendix B in *BC Soccer's Return to Play Phase 1 Plan – Recommendations and Guidelines*) as this is important for all BC Soccer Members and Affiliated clubs to have in place.
- The BC Sport Activity Chart (Appendix A in ViaSport's Guidelines) which provides added information on what may be allow over time.

For added reference, linked [HERE](#) are “The Recreation and Parks Sector – Guidelines for Restarting Operations”.

Risk & Insurance

Now that the soccer community has *BC Soccer's Return to Play Plan Phase 1 – Recommendations and Guidelines* for soccer (accompanying this memo), each Member and Affiliated Club needs to determine if they want to operate soccer programming under the plan terms.

BC Soccer's May 13, 2020 memo provided information on risk, liability and insurance.

We are continuing to explore what insurance options may become available through our broker with different underwriters, however to confirm, at this time there is no coverage based on the [Insurance Exclusion Notice](#).

From an organizational level, mitigating against risk is important as next steps are taken. With Canada Soccer approving *BC Soccer's Return to Play Phase 1 Plan – Recommendations and Guidelines*, collectively this provides Members and Affiliated Clubs added assurances.

Further, using Canada Soccer’s “Return to Soccer Assessment Tool” supports Members and Affiliated Clubs to ensure you think through everything needed if your organization chooses to offer soccer activity under the plan terms.

On May 13, 2020 BC Soccer, after receiving guidance from our legal counsel, provided updated [Youth](#) and [Adult](#) Participant Waivers to all Members and Affiliated Clubs and recommend these are used for registration purposes when your organization conducts soccer activity.

To confirm, it is okay if Members and/or Affiliated Clubs choose to not offer programming at this time. Taking that one step further, BC Soccer also understands that there may be coaches, players, and families that do not want to participate in the short-term, which is understandable and okay. It is important to note that those organizations that do offer activity, will need to adhere to the terms within *BC Soccer’s Return to Play Phase 1 Plan – Recommendations and Guidelines* and complete the required next steps (outline further on in this memo).

There is adherent risk to participating in sports and the risk will not drop to zero, however, ensuring your organization is completing all the steps required is important. Ultimately, the most important decision-maker is the parent or person registered to play soccer.

It is important that all organizations do what they feel is best for their organization and your members/participants and we will be here to support you as best as we can as we collectively work through the current situation.

Lifting the Sanction of Soccer Activity in BC

Based on Canada Soccer approving *BC Soccer’s Return to Play Phase 1 Plan – Recommendations and Guidelines*, the Members and Affiliated Clubs can plan to soccer activity under the terms of the plan. To ensure Members and Affiliated Clubs have sufficient time to complete Canada Soccer’s “Return to Soccer Assessment Tool” and establish training programs that adhere to *BC Soccer’s Return to Play Phase 1 Plan – Recommendations and Guidelines* and ViaSport’s Guidelines, the earliest that on-field sanctioned soccer activity may commence in BC under the terms is June 12, 2020 and only when the Member and/or Affiliated Club has completed the required steps as outlined in the next section.

Members and Affiliated Clubs Next Steps for Phase 1 Return

For those Members and Affiliated Clubs that do want to offer soccer activity in accordance with the Canada Soccer approved *BC Soccer’s Return to Play Plan Phase 1 – Recommendations and Guidelines*, the following four mandatory steps must be completed by a Senior Board or Staff Member (signing officer is ideal):

1. Review *BC Soccer’s Return to Play Plan Phase 1 – Recommendations and Guidelines* and *ViaSport’s Return to Sport Guidelines for B.C.*
2. Fully complete Canada Soccer’s “Return to Soccer Assessment Tool” which requires you to commit to offer soccer activity under the terms in *BC Soccer’s Return to Play Plan Phase 1 – Recommendations and Guidelines*.
3. Pass a board motion supporting the soccer activity that your organization is choosing to offer under the terms.

4. Establish the training program(s) and offer the safest possible environment for all participants that choose to participate.

Notes:

- A report from Canada Soccer's "Return to Soccer Assessment Tool" will be provided to the individual completing the assessment, to BC Soccer, and to Canada Soccer.
- As provided in May 13, 2020 memo, and noted above, it is recommended to use the updated participant waivers provided.

[CLICK HERE](#) to access Canada Soccer's "Return to Soccer Assessment Tool".

Next Phase Timings

The timelines for any next phases will be aligned with the BC health authorities and we have not received any indication on when activity beyond what is currently in *BC Soccer's Return to Play Plan Phase 1 – Recommendations and Guidelines* will occur.

Based on *BC Soccer's Return to Play Plan Phase 1 – Recommendations and Guidelines* we know that soccer in the short-term will look different. Looking beyond this into the medium-term (Phase 2), we don't know what the BC health authorities will allow or when. Therefore, as a collective soccer community, we need to start thinking about what this may look like.

BC Soccer is here to help districts and leagues as they consider redefining and perhaps restructuring league play as you work within the larger health authorities' requirements while also supporting your member clubs and the players/families within. Our point here is to ask Youth Districts and Adult Leagues (along with the Affiliated Clubs) to start to think about what soccer league play may look like for their region in the medium-term (and once distancing measures are softened).

Looking Further to the Future and Supporting Families

BC Soccer is continuing to explore with Kid Sport ways to support families that are experiencing challenging times and want their kids to get back into soccer. Along these lines, being mindful of the economic impact of the current situation is important.

Sport, and specifically soccer, plays an important role in our communities and we need to support everyone as best as possible as we collectively work to come through this and establish what soccer delivery looks like in the future. The better we operate now, hopefully, the sooner we will progress to future phases.

Kind regards,

BC Soccer Association

CC: Charlene Krepiakovich, CEO, ViaSport British Columbia
Earl Cochrane, Canada Soccer