



River Falls Youth Hockey Association

Let's Play Hockey!

2020-2021 COVID-19 Preparedness & Risk Mitigation Plan

Last update: 12.5.2020 (most recent updates highlighted in yellow)

Thoughtfully prepared by the RFYHA COVID Committee and Board of Directors with considerations for requirements and guidance from National, State and Local governing bodies, in coordination with Pierce County Public Health and aligned with the processes of River Falls School District.

USA Hockey, along with other governing bodies agree it's safe to play hockey if it's done correctly.¹

September 2020

RFYHA is offering a hockey season amidst unusually uncertain times. Our mission remains unchanged though and we strive to offer a safe and clean environment for kids to learn life skills playing hockey and participating on a team.

RFYHA Mission:

River Falls Youth Hockey Association (RFYHA) strives to provide an opportunity for youth in the River Falls and surrounding areas to participate in an organized hockey program that promotes an educational, fun, challenging and safe hockey experience. We offer each player an opportunity to participate to the best of their ability, with the goal of long-term growth and development in an environment that fosters integrity, teamwork and good sportsmanship.

For this unique season, we have written the below procedures and safety practices outlining the ways in which RFYHA is mitigating the risk of transmitting COVID-19 by following mandated policies (i.e. mask policy per Emergency Order #1 by Governor Evers) and other key recommendations by governing bodies such as WAHA, MAHA, USA Hockey and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). These procedures were written thoughtfully with the full intention of mitigating the risk of spreading COVID-19 to the best of our ability and with consideration for the capabilities and the limitations of our non-profit organization run entirely by volunteers.

As with every season, RFYHA continues to rely on our association members and players to make choices that are considerate of others and will contribute to the health and safety for all.

Authored by the COVID Committee in collaboration with the RFYHA Board of Directors:

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Infection Control:

- SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, is thought to be mostly spread by respiratory droplets released when people talk, cough, or sneeze. It is thought that the virus may also spread to hands from a contaminated surface and then to the nose, mouth or eyes, causing infection. Therefore, personal prevention practices (such as handwashing, staying home when sick, maintaining 6 feet of distance, and wearing a mask) and environmental prevention practices (such as cleaning and disinfection) are important ways to prevent the virus's spread.^{8, 19}
- **Our goal at the Wildcat Centre is to play hockey while preventing sickness and protecting individuals from unnecessarily be deemed a 'close contact' in the event a player or spectator has COVID-19. This will prevent you from being required to quarantine.**
 - **Close contact is someone who:**²³
 - Sleeps overnight in a house with someone who is COVID+
 - Contact with respiratory secretions of COVID+
 - Direct physical contact
 - Within 6 feet for 15 or more cumulative minutes within 24-hour period during the infectious period.
- **Please stay home:**
 - **If you are sick,**
 - **If you have COVID,**
 - **If you have been deemed a close contact,**
 - **If you are awaiting test results**
 - **If you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 within 48 hours of their symptoms.**⁹
- **Face Masks:** Governor Evers has asked that individuals over 5 years old wear a mask in enclosed space and this includes inside the Wildcat Centre.¹⁶
 - WAHA further clarified that they consider this to include players while skating on the ice ^{20,21}
- **Physical Distancing:** Please respect the space of others and be mindful of physical distancing as to limit the spread of any infection by maintaining 6 feet of distance.^{2,4,7} You will find reminders inside the Wildcat Centre.
- **Arrival and Departure:** Plan to arrive no sooner than 15 minutes before an event (practice or game) with your player dressed as much as possible and plan to depart within 15 minutes of the end of the event.^{2,4,7}
- **Please dress in as much gear as possible before coming to the rink, including skates (with skate guards) and helmets into the rink, if possible.** This will reduce the number of people and length of time individuals are in the facility.^{2,4,7} Accommodations will be allowed for goalies, please speak with your coach. **NO HOCKEY BAGS, exceptions for goalies.**
- If dressing at the rink is necessary, please use a locker room. The lobby is for **skates ONLY**.
- **Locker rooms:** The use of locker rooms will be available, and space maximized by opening all available locker rooms. Specifically, LTS & Mites will be assigned alphabetically by last name to

a locker room or lobby to tie skates for the season. All players are encouraged to reduce time spent, specifically **please limit to 5 minutes in the locker rooms** to the best of your ability. If necessary and for assistance with equipment or skate tying, please limit one parent per player in the locker at any time. Please use the locker rooms you have been assigned.

- **NO HOCKEY BAGS.** Because players will be arriving fully dressed with the exception of skates, there should not be a need for hockey bags in the Wildcat Centre. **Please do not bring hockey bags inside to the best of your ability.**
- There will be **no team water bottles.** Please bring and only **use individual water bottles** marked with player's name.
- Please do not congregate in the shared and common areas to the best of your ability.
- There will be no in-door dryland training at the Wildcat Centre this season.^{2,4,7}
- The scorer's/announcer's box should be staffed by no more than two persons and should be staffed by the home team. Each penalty box will be staffed by their own team. If off-ice officials are not from the same household, they should maintain physical distancing at all times. Masks should be worn by off ice officials at all times⁴
- Via a QR code-enabled Google form, spectators will be asked to provide contact information for use in the event of an outbreak.

** RFYHA is a guest member of Minnesota Hockey, District 2. They have written specific D2 rules and instruct that **USA Hockey and MN Hockey Return to the Rink guidelines are strict rules to be followed.** The rules listed below are specifically outlined by MN Hockey, District 2 to ensure we are compliant with our membership requirements.^{4,5} These rules are not currently posted (as of 9.11.20) on their website.

- Only two adults (16 & older) per player per team in attendance and they must be masked at all times.
- Fans allowed in facilities 10 minutes prior to games and must exit immediately following the game.
- Face coverings will be mandatory for all (players, coaches, referees and fans) upon entering or leaving the buildings.
- Coaches will be masked while in the arena and a limit of two coaches on the bench.
- ~~Once the players and referees go to the playing surface, they will be allowed to remove their face coverings.~~ WAHA now requires face masks at all times.
- Referees should remain six feet from all when possible (especially after a whistle).

****It's advised before traveling to other rinks to refer to each rink's policies and procedures as they may differ.**

Preventing and Containing Illness:

- **Please stay home:**
 - **If you are sick,**
 - **If you have COVID,**
 - **If you have been deemed a close contact,**
 - **If you are awaiting test results**

- **If** you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 within 48 hours of their symptoms.⁹
- People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:¹⁰
 - Fever or chills
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Fatigue
 - Muscle or body aches
 - Headache
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Sore throat
 - Congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Diarrhea

This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19.

On-Ice Risk Mitigation:

- **These procedures are in place to maintain physical distance and prevent transmission between players and coaches and to prevent from being named a close contact.**
- **Enabled for contact tracing if necessary; attendance will be taken at all practices and games.**
- **On-Ice procedures listed below are in place to reduce contact time that would meet the definition of ‘close contact’.**
 - Close contact:
 - Sleeping in COVID+ house overnight
 - Contact with respiratory secretions of COVID+
 - Direct physical contact, e.g. hugging, body checking
 - Within 6 feet for 15 or more cumulative minutes within 24-hour period.
- **To facilitate maintaining physical distance at all times, players will be grouped in small identifiable pods. Skaters are asked to be 6 feet or more apart at all times** with the exception of brief exchanges. Players will be physically distanced when not in motion.
- Practices:
 - There will be no use of the benches during practice
 - 6-foot distances are marked alongside the ice to designate physical distancing for players while waiting to enter the ice
 - Players will be grouped in small identifiable pods while on the ice
- Games:
 - There are 44 feet of bench per team at the Wildcat Centre and players will be grouped in identifiable pods during games
 - There will be no celebratory close contact between players

- At the end of the game, players will wave to the other team or slam sticks on the ice to show respect lieu of high fives or handshakes.
- There will be a limit of 2 coaches on the bench at any game
- There will not be comingling of teams across levels at the rink.
- A cloth mask protects the wearer's nose and mouth from contact with droplets and may protect others by reducing exposure to the saliva and respiratory secretions of the mask wearer. This is especially important if someone is infected but does not have symptoms.³
 - WAHA requires the wearing of masks at all times inside the Wildcat Centre, both on and off the ice. ^{20,21}

Cleaning:

- RFYHA has purchased EPA registered disinfectant product that is active against SARS-CoV-2 to use for cleaning hard surfaces. Member's Mark Commercial Sanitizer (128 oz.) Item # 42939 Model # 7700078 (EPA Registration #6836-302. This cleaning material will be available and easily accessible for everyone to use as appropriate.^{12,13}
- Regular cleaning and disinfecting will be conducted by volunteers, coaches and parents including high touch surfaces and concession areas.⁸
- Coaches will clean high touch surfaces including benches and locker room floors after practices and games.
- Parent volunteers will clean high touch surfaces including benches and locker room floors for opposing teams after games.
- A volunteer role will be assigned cleaning duty in Dibs for tournaments at the Wildcat Centre i.e. floater/cleaner to ensure appropriate disinfecting of surfaces during tournaments.

Traveling for Hockey:

Traveling as a team is a fun and builds relationships and comradery. Unfortunately, given the circumstances of this season it also creates some risk.

- During RFYHA Hockey games while traveling as a team to other cities and rinks, please remember that all RFYHA COVID risk mitigation policies are in effect.
- To have the healthiest and most successful season possible, we are relying on players and parents to continue to make informed and responsible decisions that reduce the transmission of COVID or would implicate others as 'close contacts'.
- During personal time when traveling to other cities and rinks, it is recommended that physical distancing and mask-wearing is maintained. RFYHA recognizes and respects that each family and individual reserves the right to not participate in non-hockey events and activities when traveling as a team (i.e. tournament weekends and away games).

Please inform a COVID Committee member listed below if:

- A player tests positive for COVID,
- Someone in their household testing positive,
- Or have had **close contact*** to someone confirmed to have COVID-19.²³
 - *Sleeps overnight in a house with someone who is COVID+
 - *Contact with respiratory secretions of COVID+
 - *Direct physical contact
 - *Within 6 feet for 15 or more cumulative minutes within 24-hour period during the infectious period.

Please contact:

- Kaylan Wilson @ 763-443-9069 or
- Carrie Torgerson @ 763-242-5623 or
- Chad Flanagan @ 715-222-4807

Your Privacy is important to us. After one of us is notified, the team activities will pause for us to conduct, evaluate and potentially take action on the following:

- 1.** In accordance with CDC and Pierce County processes for contract tracing, we will work with the parents, the director of hockey and the coach to gather details and understanding surrounding circumstances of interactions between players since the onset of the infectious period.²²
- 2.** Using the information gained through this evaluation, the COVID committee will make a determination if other players (or the team) is to be implicated as a close contact requiring quarantine, close contact defined above, additionally, the committee will determine if any policies were violated that may require a team quarantine in prevention of an outbreak.
- 3.** Additionally, we will continue to communicate and share information with Pierce County public health as necessary or as requested.
- 4.** Players, teams, parents will be notified of close contact with a COVID+ if determined through the evaluation process above. RFYHA COVID Committee reserves the right to quarantine players, teams if policies were violated or squads if players meet criteria as a close contact through this evaluation.
- 5.** Players that are quarantined from Hockey including the COVID case will follow the below expectations for managing confirmed cases per the MN Dept of Health Decision Tree.

*People who have tested positive for COVID-19 do not need to quarantine or get tested again for up to 3 months as long as they do not develop symptoms again. People who develop symptoms again within 3 months of their first bout of

COVID-19 may need to be tested again if there is no other cause identified for their symptoms.²⁴

We understand these are unusual times. Hockey will be a little different this year and we stand with you in the challenges and feelings of uncertainty. The reasons we are **requesting physical distancing and asking for support with all of the procedures** in this document on limiting time spent inside the rink and locker rooms is to **reduce the chances of being in ‘close contact’ as defined by the CDC to limit the spread and to limit the interference with your daily life due to being defined as having had ‘close contact’ with an individual testing positive for COVID-19.**

RFYHA follows Minnesota Hockey Association, Guidelines for Managing Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

Referenced Minnesota Department of Health Decision Tree^{6,9,17}

For people who are a close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19.	Stay home from all activities for at least 14 days since the last contact with the positive case. Even if the person receives a negative test result, they need to complete 14 days of quarantine before returning to school or program.
Receives positive COVID-19 test result	Stay at home in isolation for at least 10 days from time symptoms started until symptoms improved AND no fever for 24 hours (without fever reducing medications).

Options to reduce quarantine²⁴

Reducing the length of quarantine may make it easier for people to quarantine by reducing the time they cannot work. A shorter quarantine period also can lessen stress on the public health system, especially when new infections are rapidly rising.

Your local public health authorities make the final decisions about how long quarantine should last, based on local conditions and needs. Follow the recommendations of your local public health department if you need to quarantine. Options they will consider include stopping quarantine

- On day 10 without testing
- On day 7 after receiving a negative test result (test must occur on day 5 or later)

After stopping quarantine, you should

- Watch for symptoms until 14 days after exposure.
- If you have symptoms, immediately self-isolate and contact your local public health authority or healthcare provider.
- Wear a mask, stay at least 6 feet from others, wash their hands, avoid crowds, and take other steps to [prevent the spread of COVID-19](#).

CDC continues to endorse quarantine for 14 days and recognizes that any quarantine shorter than 14 days balances reduced burden against a small possibility of spreading the virus. CDC will continue to evaluate new information and update recommendations as needed. See [Options to Reduce Quarantine for Contacts of Persons with SARS-CoV-2 Infection Using Symptom Monitoring and Diagnostic Testing](#) for guidance on options to reduce quarantine.

*Adopted by Pierce County Public Health 12.7.20, no retro changes to quarantines already in place.

Concessions:

- Plexiglass partition is planned for installation as a barrier for protection against viral transmission.¹⁴
- There will not be any food items on display on the countertops to reduce touching and spreading of illness.
- Prepackaged food items and all fountain-type drinks will be sold when the concession is open and hot food individually packaged items will be sold during limited events when two workers are present, i.e. tournaments.
- Cleaning and disinfecting will be practiced in and around the concessions with the product listed above.¹⁴

Refunds:

As of September 9, 2020, RFYHA Plan A is in effect. Plan A is a usual hockey season with risk mitigation procedures outlined in this document. In the event that Plan A is not attainable, Plan B will go into effect. Plan B is a modified in-house hockey season, if possible.

Refund requests for other reasons are still covered by the Handbook policy. Those refund requests would need to be submitted by December 1 to be considered at a prorated rate.

****RFYHA Board of Directors and COVID Committee reserve the right to proactively quarantine teams, squads or individuals from hockey and the Wildcat Centre to prevent outbreaks and continued transmission.**

Governor Ever's FAQs:

What do I do if I see someone not wearing a face covering, even though they should be?

Nothing. Some people have conditions or circumstances that would make wearing a face covering difficult or dangerous.

Just wear your face covering and stay six feet away.

<https://evers.wi.gov/Documents/COVID19/FaceCoveringFAQ.pdf>

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4. [Minnesota Hockey Return To Play Guidelines, Phase 3](#), access 10.30.20
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21. [Considerations for Wearing Masks, Governor Ever's Referenced CDC Guidance](#)
22. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/contact-tracing.html>
23. [Pierce County Public Health Close Contact Definition](#), accessed 12.2.20
24. [CDC Guidance When to Quarantine](#), accessed 12.4.20

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