



Rinks are open, tryouts are being scheduled,  
skates are being sharpened...

The Coronavirus has not gone away.

*The information provided in this document is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice. The knowledge and circumstances around COVID-19 are changing constantly, and area ice rinks, associations, parents and participants are encouraged to follow-up with local and federal public health department or their physician for specific questions regarding return to any hockey activities.*

June 27, 2020

Statement from Debbie Moon, CBHL Commissioner,

For those that do not know me, I have a degree in Biochemistry and my full time (non-hockey) job is selling laboratory equipment for research and testing. COVID-19 has not only impacted me in my professional world, but it has impacted something very near and dear to my heart. My hockey family.

While I am not an expert, I have been carefully monitoring and collecting the rules and regulations of the states, counties, districts, the [CDC](#), WHO, [USA Hockey](#), the [US Ice Rink Association](#), etc, as they pertain to the safe reentry to youth sports programs.

On March 13, 2020, the [PVAHA issued a statement](#) regarding the 2019-2020 USA Hockey National tournaments being cancelled due to COVID-19.

March 23, 2020, [PVAHA announced that tryouts were being postponed](#) and “all ice rinks within PVAHA are currently closed based on state or local restrictions.”

We spent from April to June without on-ice hockey. Even today, we do everything we can to be safe and not spread the virus. We social distance, wear masks, and wash our hands. We pray for friends and family that have the virus. We rejoice when they recover. We hope that no one else gets sick.

June 10, 2020, [PVAHA released a statement on Virginia ice rinks opening](#). The guidelines they collected and shared include:

- Ten feet of physical distance must be maintained by all instructors, participants and organizers of recreational sports activities.
- Competition that involves close contact with other athletes must be avoided.
- The total number of attendees for indoor recreational sports cannot exceed the lesser of 30% of the lowest occupancy load on the certificate of occupancy or 50 persons. For ice rinks we will be dealing with a maximum of 50 people.
- Conduct daily screening of coaches, officials, staff and players for COVID-19 symptoms prior to admission to the facility.

From what I’ve seen and heard, rink operators in our area have done a herculean job to modify their operations, alter their facilities and train their staffs in order to accommodate everyone’s desire to get back out on the ice.

To help facilitate the safe return to hockey, [USA Hockey put together](#) drills and guidance for coaches to lead players. "Follow local regulations and CDC guidelines. Remind players to always stay at least 6 feet apart. Only use personal water bottle, do not gather at a white board for instruction or form lines of players" are emphasized in their guidance.

Rinks are opening. Players are excited to get back on the ice. Social media shows so many smiling faces that are happy to be back to the rink!

Tryouts are being set up. Schedules will follow and the season will start! Happy days, right?

Now...here is the issue.

Why do people think that because a rink is open that they are immune to the virus when they enter the facility? How does a stick and puck or a clinic with 50 kids equate to everything being normal?

An example: kids get to the rink and see their friends. What happens.....PHOTO OPP! There is a picture of all the friends standing next to each other, hugging, arms around each other – no masks and definitely not 6-feet apart. What is the possibility that one of the kids has Coronavirus? What are the chances it will spread to others? What if the kids bring the coronavirus home to their family? What if the rink staff becomes infected? In my world, the bubble continues to grow.

All organizations are diligently sending out communications that they are dedicated to the safety of the players. My hope is that these communications are being taken seriously and everyone follows the guidelines set forth by our public health officials.

For me, this is personal. While I am sure that I will get a phone call or email, I write this because of safety.

Let us go back to the smiling faces. Imagine them now standing 6-feet apart as they go through protocols to enter the rink, smiling under their masks and so excited to get back on the ice. On the ice, they are separated by cones or must stand in line on the "X" marked on the ice. The coach skates over to them, staying 6-feet away and while wearing a mask, tells them they are doing a great job. Imagine how much safer they'll be!

If you are still reading, thank you. Here is the conclusion. I fear that anyone who visits the rinks and disregards any of the guidelines, and even common sense to not get or spread the virus, is likely to also exhibit that behavior when away from the rink. And that behavior may ultimately put so many others at risk. If someone who disregards the rules shows up to the rink sick...then someone else gets the virus. And then someone else gets the virus.

Then it gets to the point where hockey stops.

**HOCKEY STOPS.**

No season. No games. No ice-time. No camaraderie. No hockey families. No banners. No champions.

No hockey.

There is no one more excited about getting our kids back on the rink than I am. But with nearly 4,000 CBHL'ers looking to get ice time here soon, I am worried about doing our part and stopping the spread of this potentially deadly disease.

Be smart. Be safe and do your part. Guidelines are in place for a reason.

Please.