



September 11th, 2020

To the Members of our Michigan Hockey Community:

Over the last week, Governor Whitmer has signed several Executive Orders which allow for a return to hockey activity in Michigan. The details contained in those Executive Orders have been the subject of discussion, as well as debate, as there are significant conditions required for returning to organized sports, while still navigating the COVID-19 pandemic. The Michigan Amateur Hockey Association (MAHA) has actively sought out clarification on the issued Executive Orders, including direction from the Governor's legal counsel. Due to the fluid nature of this situation, the MAHA will continue to assist its associations in understanding the requirements, as well as provide continued points of clarification as they become available.

The attached document is a revised version of the MAHA Return to Play Standards for the 2020-21 season. We have incorporated the mandated guidance, as well as clarifications, of the Executive Orders into this revision. It should be noted that these are not MAHA regulations, and thus the MAHA has no legal authority to waive or modify Executive Orders from the Governor's office.

As you review the document in full, there are a few key considerations to note:

- 1) Although the mandate for facial coverings to be worn by athletes, coaches and spectators is not ideal, its intent is to protect our own families, as well as the members of our hockey family. It has been proven that mask use and proper social distancing significantly slows the spread of COVID-19. Despite the fact that our rinks have re-opened and a new season is beginning, it is not time to forget about the risk mitigation strategies for minimizing the spread of COVID-19. This is a challenge that all organized team sports are faced with at this time – not just hockey.
- 2) Fortunately, the sport of hockey lends itself additional flexibility in meeting the mask mandate for organized sports. This is based on the fact that youth hockey players are required to wear helmets with a face mask (either cage or shield). As a result, our athletes have more options available to them for meeting the facial covering standard. Whether it's a traditional cloth mask, a neck gaiter or a newly-released helmet accessory, our community will find many options for meeting this requirement. We highly encourage you to research the various options available in the marketplace, in an effort to find the best solution for your athlete.
- 3) Based on all updates provided by the Governor's office this past week, it is evident that the Governor discourages contact sports, and/or indoor athletic activity, at this time. With rinks re-opened, it is up to our statewide hockey community to show that we can safely operate at this stage of the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on this challenge, compliance is critical. Now that we are fortunate to have achieved our goal of re-opening for hockey activity, we must take all necessary steps to ensure that our doors remain open and our season is not interrupted. While we anticipate challenges along the way, we're confident that the protocols in place will allow us to safely, and efficiently, enjoy our 2020-21 hockey season.

As a follow-up to this revision of the MAHA Return to Play Standards, the MAHA Executive Committee will plan on scheduling a follow-up Zoom call for additional discussions, as well as Q & A. The call will be tentatively scheduled for the week of September 14th – 18th. We will provide confirmed call information as it becomes available.

As previously noted, this will continue to be a very fluid situation. With that in mind, the Michigan Amateur Hockey Association (MAHA) will commit to providing regular updates, as they become available. We sincerely appreciate the patience and support of our hockey community, and we look forward to seeing you at the rink!

Sincerely,

George Atkinson

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President

Michigan Amateur Hockey Association

Jason Reynolds

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Director of Operations & Marketing

Michigan Amateur Hockey Association