

## **Susquehanna Valley Youth Hockey Club (SVYHC) COVID Return to Participation Safety Plan**

*The RETURN TO PARTICIPATION PLAN is subject to change as the need and regulatory requirements demand*

### **Objectives:**

- 1) Protect the safety of our players, coaches, staff and their families
- 2) Comply with the regulatory guidance of our governing organizations
  - USA Hockey
- 3) Comply with the PA Department of Health (DOH) Regulatory mandates and respect the recommendations of the PA DOH
- 4) Facilitate a SVYHC community that respects both the uncertainty of our current situation and the different views of our members as to ensure the viability of the SVYHC in the short and long term.

### **SVYHC Policies for Return to Play**

*These guidelines apply to SVYHC players, coaches and visitors as well as those representing other organizations.*

### **Facility Guidelines**

- All individuals entering the Sunbury Ice Skating Rink will undergo a temperature check. Those with a temperature greater than 100.4F will not be permitted to enter the facility
- All individuals are asked to “self-screen” prior to attempting to enter Sunbury Ice Skating Rink. Those with the following symptoms should stay home
  - Temperature > 100.4° F
  - New onset cough or Shortness of breath
  - “Flu-like” symptoms
  - New onset loss of taste or smell
- Family and spectator attendance at games and practices will be determined based on league, state and local guidelines which are subject to change
- Masks covering the mouth and nose are mandatory at all times for individuals more than 2 years old.
  - Players may remove masks when leaving the locker room
  - Coaches should make every attempt to wear masks when not social distancing of 6 feet but are exempt when significant physical exertion is required

- Exceptions for those individuals with medical conditions preventing the wearing of masks may be granted by the **SVYHC Medical Officer**
- All individuals in the Sunbury Ice Skating Rink. **MUST** maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet at all times
  - Family members sharing a residence are excused from social distancing
- Hand sanitizer will be provided by the rink for frequent washing of hands
- Parents/Guardians/Siblings are **NOT** permitted inside the rink facility with the exception of Mite 8U/6U and Learn to Skate parents. In which case only **ONE** parent or guardian will be permitted to enter the facility to assist with dressing of their player and to be able to be present for their young new player to hockey that oftentimes requires much interaction and comforting until confidence is gained on the ice. The parents that waiting for the players must social distance and wear a mask at all times. We made special accommodations for this group to assure that we can conform to the recommendations with the CDC.
- Players are **NOT** permitted to shower in the Sunbury Ice Skating Rink.
- Players and families will **NOT** be permitted to socialize in the rink after games or practices. They should be exiting the rink within 20 minutes of the completion of games and practices.

### **Player and Coaches Guidelines**

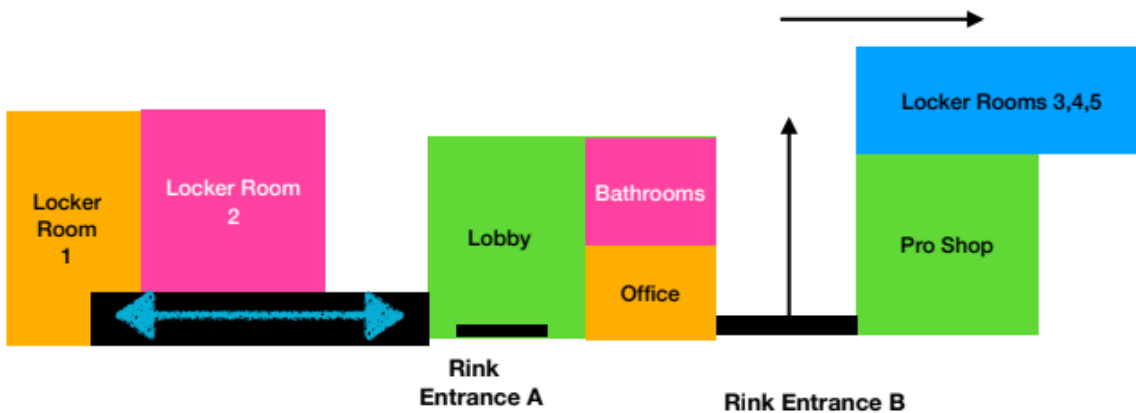
- Accommodations will be made to optimize social distancing of players and coaches in lockers rooms
- Players may remove masks when leaving the locker room for play
- Players **MUST** wear mask before entering and upon exiting the locker rooms after practice and games
- On-ice participants should bring their **own re-hydration liquids** to the rink facility in a **resealable container that is clearly marked** with the participant's identity. Participants should **NOT** plan on refilling their containers at the rink facility.
- On ice participants are excused from social distancing
- **NO** intentional spitting by players or coaches

Players will use designated locker rooms based on practice times EXAMPLE 4:45 -5:45 practice will enter via rink entrance A and utilize locker rooms 1&2 . They will then exit via the same route

The next practice at 6:00pm will enter rink entrance B and utilize locker rooms 3,4,5 . They will then exit via the same route.

This will allow us to practice social distancing and using separate entrance will decrease the need to limit the time before and after practice to get in the locker rooms due to separate egress paths.

Each practice, team, or player will be assigned locker room for each season.



## Medical Guidelines for Players, Coaches, Staff and any Individuals in Sunbury Ice Skating Rink

- Do not come to Sunbury Ice Skating Rink if you have had “close contact” with a COVID-positive individual
  - “Close Contact” in the community is defined as any of the following with a COVID-positive individual <sup>i</sup>
    - You were ***within 6 feet of a COVID-positive individual for a total of 15 minutes or more***
    - You provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19
    - You had direct physical contact a COVID-positive individual (hugged or kissed them)
    - You shared eating or drinking utensils with a COVID-positive individual

- A COVID-positive individual sneezed, coughed, spit or *in some manner you were exposed to direct contact with their respiratory droplets on you*
  - “Close Contact” during competition is defined as any of the following
    - A COVID-positive individual sneezed, coughed, spit or *in some manner exposed you to direct contact with their respiratory droplets.*
    - You had direct physical contact during a close “altercation” with a COVID-positive individual
- **If you have had a “close contact” stay home and monitor your health**
  - Players must wait at least 3 days after close contact to obtain RT PCR Testing. They may then return to play if
    1. The RT PCR test is negative and has been reviewed by the SVYHC Medical Officer.
    2. The RT PCR test must be FDA approved.
    3. There has been no further close contact with COVID positive individual.
  - Stay home for 14 days after your last contact with a person who has COVID-19
  - Watch for fever (100.4°F), cough, shortness of breath, or [other symptoms](#) of COVID-19
  - If possible, stay away from others, especially people who are at [higher risk](#) for getting very sick from COVID-19
  - Obtain COVID-19 RT PCR testing from a certified lab if possible
    - COVID-19 RT PCR testing may not be readily available for asymptomatic individuals.
    - COVID-19 RT PCR testing is available to symptomatic individuals through your health care provider.
- **If you have had COVID-19**
  - You must wait at least 10 days to participate in activities if you are asymptomatic
  - You must wait at least 10 days **and** 72 hours from your last symptoms to return to play if you are symptomatic
  - You must have a physicians note to return to play

## PA Department of Health Green Phase<sup>ii</sup>

- Masks Are Required in all Public Spaces
- Indoor Gatherings of More Than 25 Prohibited; Outdoor Gatherings of More Than 250 Prohibited
- Indoor Recreation and Health and Wellness Facilities (such as gyms and spas) Open at 50% Occupancy with Appointments Strongly Encouraged; Fitness Facilities Are Directed to Prioritize Outdoor Fitness Activities

## PA Department of Health Guidance for Sports

Rev 9/2/2020

### Organizations Subject to This Guidance

The Commonwealth is employing a regional and industry-specific approach to reopening non-life sustaining businesses. For more information, and up to date county designations, please refer to the Commonwealth's Phased Reopening website.

All sports in Pennsylvania, including professional, collegiate, Pre-K to 12 school athletics, and amateur and recreational sports, are covered by this guidance.

Sports organizations and teams may only conduct in-person operations if they are able to do so in accordance with all applicable guidance.

### Guidance

- Everyone involved in sport activities must wear a face covering, such as a mask, unless they fall under an exception listed in Section 3 of the [Secretary of Health's Universal Face Covering Order](#). Coaches, athletes, and spectators must wear face coverings unless they are outdoors and can consistently maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet.
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- Athletes are not required to wear face coverings while actively engaged in workouts and competition that prevent the wearing of face coverings (i.e., swimming), but must wear face coverings when on the sidelines, in the dugout, etc. and anytime 6 feet of social distancing is not possible.

### Pre-K to 12 School Sports

Pre-K to 12 (PK-12) school sports under the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) and the Pennsylvania Independent Schools Athletic Association (PISAA) must follow the [PDE Preliminary Guidance for Phased Reopening of Pre-K to 12 Schools](#) and the [CDC Considerations for Youth Sports](#).

The administration is concerned that holding school sports before January 2021 presents significant health risks to participants and the public, and strongly recommends against holding such events. The administration strongly recommends that Pre-K to 12 school sports be postponed until at least Jan. 1, 2021. The administration is providing this strong recommendation and not an order or mandate. As with deciding whether students should return to in-person classes, remote learning or a blend of the two this fall, school administrators and locally elected school boards should make decisions on sports. This recommendation:

- Applies to youth team and individual school sports, including cheerleading;
- Allows conditioning, drills and other training activities on an individual basis to continue; and
- Includes competitions, intramural play and scrimmages.

Each school entity must develop and adopt an Athletics Health and Safety Plan aligning to the [PDE Preliminary Guidance for Phased Reopening of Pre-K to 12 Schools](#) and the [Public Health Guidance Regarding COVID-19 for Phased Reopening of Pre-K to 12 Schools](#) prior to conducting sports-related activities with students. The plan must include the provisions of this guidance, be approved by the local governing body of the school entity and be posted on the school entity's publicly available website. The Athletics Health and Safety Plan must be included in the school entity's School Health and Safety Plan submitted to PDE.

All sports-related activities must adhere to the gathering limitations set forth by the Governor's Plan for Phased Reopening (25 or fewer people for indoor activity, 250 or fewer people for outdoor activity) and the facility as a whole may not exceed 50 percent of total occupancy otherwise permitted by law. All individuals present at the facility at which such activities are held count towards gathering limitations and must comply with face covering order and social distancing guidelines.

As more public health information is available, the administration may work with impacted entities to release further guidance which could impact future sports seasons.

### **Recreational and Amateur Sports**

- Recreational and amateur sports organizations and teams (not affiliated with a public or private PK-12 school), including, but not limited to basketball, hockey, field hockey, football, soccer, swimming, baseball, softball, lacrosse, gymnastics, and kickball, are permitted to conduct in-person activities, including games and practices, if they strictly adhere to the requirements of this guidance, including the limits on total occupancy outlined below (**25 or fewer people indoors, 250 or fewer outdoors**).
- The administration is, however, concerned that holding recreational and amateur sports before January 2021 presents significant health risks to participants and the public. Similar to school sports, the administration strongly recommends that youth recreational

sports be postponed until at least Jan. 1, 2021. The administration is providing this strong recommendation and not an order or mandate. This recommendation:

- Applies to youth team and individual non-school recreational youth sports;
- Allows conditioning, drills and other training activities on an individual basis to continue; and
- Includes competitions, intramural play and scrimmages.
- Youth sports should also follow CDC guidance

## USA Hockey Organized Youth Sports FAQs<sup>iii</sup>

*This list assumes that organizations have approval from state and local public health officials to practice and play.*

*If the organization is not following local guidance, your child should not return to play.*

- 1) How will the program identify players or coaches who are potentially infected?

Ask your child's administrator and/or coach for the specific procedures in place, e.g. symptom and temperature checking, acknowledgement that a person can be asymptomatic, communication with local health officials and team, cleaning and disinfection procedure, and adherence to home isolation. Many teams are conducting pre-practice questionnaires to ask about symptoms and exposure to COVID-19 and then, if positive, the athlete should stay home. Sick players or coaches should not return to play until they have met the [CDC's criteria](#) to end home isolation.

- 2) How do I determine if my child is infected and should avoid participation?

Common symptoms include 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. If you think your child has been exposed to COVID-19, contact a healthcare provider for testing and a course of action.

- 3) Is my child old enough to understand the reasons for maintaining physical distancing?

If you believe the answer is no, ask the program provider what plans they have in place to prevent violations and if a volunteer can be helpful on site, if recommended limitations on group sizes allow.

- 4) What mask procedures are in place for my child's program?

While it is hard for youth to wear masks during play, it should be encouraged on the sidelines as well as for any non-players (e.g., coaches, officials, family members, and other spectators). Guidelines may change based on level of exertion, weather, local/state/federal guidelines, and evolving medical and health information.

- 5) How comfortable am I signing a COVID-19 waiver?

Many organizers have updated their participation waivers to include language that aims to prevent legal recourse in case your child or anyone else contracts COVID-19. Any waiver you sign should be accompanied by documentation of the measures the program will take to mitigate risk of infection



### **What are some basic guidelines that all USA Hockey participants should follow?<sup>iv</sup>**

- Practice social distancing as much as possible when arriving to the rink, while off the ice and leaving the rink.
- Wash your hands with soap and water often and avoid touching your face. If soap and water is not available, then use hand sanitizer.
- When sneezing or coughing, do so into a tissue or the bend of your elbow. Wash or sanitize hands immediately and discard of tissue into appropriate waste bin.
- Wear a cloth or medical facemask at all times when not playing or during high intensity aerobic activity. A 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. Coaches and other support personnel should wear cloth masks at all times.
- Avoid sharing equipment, towels and water bottles.
- Wash and clean all equipment after every game or practice session.
- If participant has a fever, sore throat, cough or any other symptoms – STAY HOME!

### **What is USA Hockey's position on officials wearing cloth masks?**

The wearing of a cloth mask during a game is the choice of the official. Similar to players, the mask may hamper breathing during exercise and may also become sweaty. However, if the official feels more comfortable wearing the mask, they then should choose to do so. Naturally, a cloth mask should be worn by all officials anywhere in the rink prior to and just after leaving the ice.

### **What is USA Hockey's recommendation for officials wearing latex gloves?**

The CDC and USA Hockey medical experts all recommend that latex gloves NOT be worn by game officials. The concern is if the official's hands come in contact with the virus while wearing the gloves, the virus will remain on the glove until changed. If the official then touches his/her face, the virus would be transferred and there is a greater risk of contracting the virus. So, unless the official plans on changing gloves after every face-off, gloves would not be an effective way to prevent transmission. More important for the officials is the following:

- Bring hand sanitizer to the game and leave on scorer's bench to be able to properly use at the end of each period.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Disinfect any game pucks prior to the game and in between periods

### **What should officials do when they need to communicate with a coach or player?**

Part of the updated Zero Tolerance Policy on Abuse of Officials includes USA Hockey asking the officials to approach each bench, introduce themselves to the coaches and open up the lines of communication with the coaches. This is an excellent opportunity to establish expectations regarding communication with the coaches, or captains, during the game.

However, unlike in the past, the officials and coaches should NOT shake hands and the officials should maintain proper social distancing six feet from the bench. This should be the standard practice/position if it was necessary to communicate with a coach during the game, as well.

In regards to captains and players, this is an excellent opportunity to re-establish the importance of the referee's crease. For any longer conversations, the officials should position themselves in the crease and ask the players to maintain their distance outside the crease. For quicker conversations, the officials should simply remind the players to maintain an appropriate distance

### **How about separating players during an altercation? What is USA Hockey's recommendation for the role of the official in separating players?**

The officials still have a job to do and one of their responsibilities is to protect the players and do their part in maintaining a safe environment for all participants during scrum situations. Awareness and hustle by the officials are more important than ever as doing so will prevent altercations and/or de-escalate heated moments.

When an altercation occurs, the officials should exercise proper techniques to quickly and efficiently separate the players. Once separated, minimize any contact with the players and place yourself in a good position to maintain separation while escorting the player(s) to the penalty bench.

USA Hockey's medical advisors suggest that following proper procedures in separating players quickly and then re-establishing reasonable distance between the official and the players provides minimal risk. Using the stoppage of play to utilize hand sanitizer to disinfect the hands will also provide additional protection.

### **Hockey players, and even many coaches, like to spit in the bench area and on the ice surrounding the benches. What is USA Hockey's position on spitting?**

USA Hockey follows the CDC recommendations on spitting and strongly discourages any game participant from spitting on the ice, bench or anywhere in the arena. Many rinks also have signs that discourage spitting and this will continue to be a significant point of emphasis.

However, officials cannot be expected to be the "spit" police as their focus needs to be with the players on the ice. If it becomes an obvious action by one or both of the teams, then it would be appropriate for the officials to remind the benches that spitting is inappropriate and a continued lack of respect for other participants could result in a bench minor penalty being assessed.

Naturally, any player/coach who intentionally spits in the direction of any opponent or official must be assessed a match penalty.

USA Hockey's medical advisors believe the risk of an official contracting the coronavirus from a puck that has come in contact with spit on the ice is likely minimal, especially if the official is avoiding touching their face and cleaning their hands often.

### **What is USA Hockey recommending for the post-game handshake?**

USA Hockey is strongly recommending local areas eliminate the post-game handshake for all USA Hockey sanctioned games. In its place as a show of sportsmanship, USA Hockey suggests that at the conclusion of the game, both teams line up at their respective blue lines and salute their opponents, and the officials, with a stick tap prior to immediately leaving the ice.

Officials should not shake hands, or fist bump, with players or coaches. If the coaches approach the officials on the ice post-game with the intent of shaking hands, an elbow bump or a quick wave and thank you as you are skating away would be appropriate

## CDC Guidelines for the Return to Youth Sports<sup>v</sup>

### Maintaining Healthy Operations

- Offer options for individuals at [higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19](#) that limit exposure risk
- **Identifying Small Groups and Keeping them Together (Cohorting)**
  - Keep players together in small groups with dedicated coaches or staff, and make sure that each group of players and coach avoid mixing with other groups as much as possible. Teams might consider having the same group of players stay with the same coach or having the same group of players rotate among coaches.
  - Consider staging within-team scrimmages instead of playing games with other teams to minimize exposure among players and teams
- **Staggered Scheduling**
- **Gatherings, Spectators, and Travel**
  - Avoid group events, such as games, competitions, or social gatherings, where spacing of at least 6 feet between people cannot be maintained.
  - Limit any nonessential visitors, spectators, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations as much as possible – especially with individuals not from the local geographic area (e.g., community, town, city, or county).
  - Avoid activities and events such as off-site competitions or excursions (e.g., watching a professional team compete).
  - **Designated COVID-19 Point of Contact**
- Designate a youth sports program staff person to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. All coaches, staff, officials, and families should know who this person is and how to contact them
- **Communication Systems**

Put systems in place for:

- Consistent with applicable law and privacy policies, having coaches, staff, umpires/officials, and families of players (as feasible) self-report to the youth sports organization if they have [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, a positive test for COVID-19, or were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 14 days in accordance with [health information sharing regulations for COVID-19](#)[external icon](#) (e.g. see “Notify Health Officials and Close Contacts” in the **Preparing for When Someone Gets Sick** section below), and other applicable laws and regulations.
- Notifying staff, officials, families, and the public of youth sports facility closures and restrictions in place to limit COVID-19 exposure (e.g., limited hours of operation)
- **Coach and Staff Training**
  - Train coaches, officials, and staff on all safety protocols.
  - Conduct training virtually, or ensure that [social distancing](#) is maintained during training.
- **Recognize Signs and Symptoms**

- If feasible, conduct daily health checks (e.g., [symptom checking](#)) of coaches, officials, staff, and players safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy and confidentiality laws and regulations.
- Youth sports program administrators may use examples of screening methods found in CDC’s supplemental [Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open](#) as a guide for screening children, and CDC’s [General Business FAQs](#) for screening staff.
- **Sharing Facilities**
  - Encourage any organizations that share or use the youth sports facilities to also follow these considerations.
- **Support Coping and Resilience**

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.governor.pa.gov/process-to-reopen-pennsylvania/>

<sup>iii</sup> [https://cdn2.sportngin.com/attachments/document/213b-2202770/Return-to-Organized-Sports-8-Questions\\_Final.pdf#\\_ga=2.181565031.1533540084.1597189127-604366068.1597189127](https://cdn2.sportngin.com/attachments/document/213b-2202770/Return-to-Organized-Sports-8-Questions_Final.pdf#_ga=2.181565031.1533540084.1597189127-604366068.1597189127)

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.usahockey.com/officiatingcovidfaqs>

<sup>v</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html>

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## SVYHC COVID WAIVER

*SVYHC is requiring all participants to sign a COVID waiver.*

### **Assumption of Risk/Waiver of Liability/ Indemnification Agreement for the SVYHC and Its Officers**

a. Participation includes possible exposure to and illness from infectious diseases including but not limited to MRSA, influenza, and Covid-19. While particular rules and personal discipline may reduce this risk, the risk of serious illness and death does exist; and,

b. I KNOWLINGLY AND FREELY ASSUME ALL SUCH RISKS, both known and unknown, even if arising from the negligence of the releasees or others, and assume full responsibility for my participation;

c. I willingly agree to comply with the stated and customary terms and conditions for participation as regards protection against infectious diseases. If, however, I observe any unusual or significant hazard during my presence or participation, I will remove myself from participation and bring such to the attention of the nearest official or management immediately;

d. I, for myself and on behalf of my heirs, assigns, personal representatives and next of kin, hereby release and hold harmless the SVYHC, their officers, officials, agents and or employees, other participants, sponsors, and owners of premises used to conduct the event, with respect to any and all illness, disability, death or or damage to person or property, whether arising from the negligence of releasees or otherwise, to the fullest extent permitted by law.

This is to certify that I, as parent/guardian, with legal responsibilities for this participant, have read and explained the provision in this waiver/release to my child/ward including the risks of presence and participation and his/her personal responsibilities for adhering to the rules and regulations for protection against communicable diseases. Furthermore, my child/ward understands and accepts these risks and responsibilities. I for myself, my spouse, and child/ward do release and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the releasees for any and all liabilities incident to my minor child's/ward's presence or participation in these activities as provided above, even if arising from their negligence, to the fullest extent provided by law.

Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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Date signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent guardian

signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date

signed: \_\_\_\_\_

**ALL PARENTS MUST SUBMIT THIS SIGNED FORM TO [svyhpa@gmail.com](mailto:svyhpa@gmail.com)  
BY Monday , OCTOBER 5<sup>th</sup> TO PLAY OR BRING TO YOUR PLAYERS FIRST  
PRACTICE - NO EXCEPTIONS.**