

# A SAFE RETURN TO VOLLEYBALL

As our nation begins to look to loosen restrictions, it is important for us to do our part in mitigating the ongoing risk of contracting and spreading the COVID-19 virus. The following document has been created to help inform those looking to restart volleyball programming in their region. Returning to volleyball should only be considered when regional public health restrictions and physical distancing measures allow for it. Public health restrictions will always guide what is allowable in your region. Please consult with your provincial health authority before engaging in volleyball activities or programming.

## FACILITY CONSIDERATIONS

- Outdoor activity has been deemed safer than indoors. Beach and grass volleyball would be deemed safer than indoor volleyball at this time and therefore the preferred training environment.
- Minimize the total amount of users in one space at any given time. The more users of the space the higher the risk, this is especially true for indoor spaces with increased contact surfaces and less air circulation.
- Only required seating, tables, etc. should be made available. Access to water fountains, meeting spaces, change rooms, etc. should be carefully considered and likely discouraged.
- All common contact surfaces within the facility should be cleaned and disinfected regularly.

## PARTICIPANTS

- Group sizes should always be minimized and must abide by regional public health restrictions.
- People over 65 years of age or people with underlying health conditions are deemed to be higher risk. Their involvement should be carefully considered and likely discouraged.
- Participants should know of the common symptoms of COVID-19 and stay at home if displaying symptoms.
- Participants must stay home if they have been in contact with a known case in the previous 14 days.

## CONTACT MINIMIZATION

- Physical distancing should always be practiced by a maximal number of participants
- This may require adjustments to scheduling activities and minimizing inter team/group play.
- Coaching should be completed while practicing physical distancing guidelines.
- Spectators should be discouraged and if present must also abide by physical distancing guidelines.
- Participants should not be sharing water-bottles, towels, or other equipment.
- Use a minimal amount of volleyballs and keep them designated for specific groups of participants.
- Use a sanitizing spray on balls at frequent intervals and especially between different user groups.
- Unnecessary contact between participants, handshakes, high-fives, hugs, etc. should be discouraged.

## PRACTICE GOOD HYGIENE

- Participants should wash their hands before and immediately following participation.
- Hand washing or sanitizing at intervals throughout should be encouraged.
- Participants should avoid touching ones face throughout.
- Participant should consider wearing a mask and gloves.

## RETURN TO VOLLEYBALL PROGRESSIONS

The return of volleyball will adapt as restrictions and policies change regionally. The following is a likely progression of allowable activities. Mitigation strategies will need to be practiced throughout all stages.



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# RISK MITIGATION CONSIDERATIONS

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The following list of considerations has been modified and adapted from the WHO Mass Gathering and Sports Assessment Addendum Tools and the Sport Medicine Advisory Council of Canada's Risk Assessment Tool for Sport.

## STAFF KNOWLEDGE

- Have the relevant staff been informed about the latest available guidance on the COVID-19 outbreak (official web resources available from BCCDC, WHO, CDC, ECDC, UN, local public health authorities)? Are the staff committed to following the available guidance?
- Are organizers aware of global and local daily situation reports as provided by local, provincial, national and international public health authorities?
- Do the responsible staff understand the risks and transmission routes of COVID-19, the steps that attendees can take to limit spread, the recognized best practices (including respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, physical distancing, etc.), and the travel restrictions from different regions that may affect the team gathering to train?

## SPECIFIC MEASURES

- Will there be daily health checks of athletes/staff?
- Will the athletes be separated from other groups, to limit transmission?
- Can athletes practice physical distancing while commuting to and from the activity?
- Are there measures in place to limit the sharing of equipment, water bottles, towels, etc.?
- Will athletes have closed containers to allow for the safe disposal or storing of all hygienic materials (e.g. tissues, towels, etc.)?
- Do common areas provided allow for physical distancing between athletes (minimum of 2 metres)?

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE PLANS

- Have the organizers and facility managers acquired:
  - The necessary personal protective equipment (gloves, masks, etc.) to help reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19?
  - Hand sanitizer and alcohol rubs/gels, tissues, frequently replaced soap canisters and closed bins for safe disposal of hygienic materials (e.g. tissues, towels, sanitary products) in washrooms and changing rooms?
  - Hand sanitizers and alcohol rubs for all entrances and throughout the venue?
- Is there a procedure for athletes/staff to clearly identify whom to contact, and how to do so, if they or other participants feel unwell or show symptoms of COVID-19?
- Is there a protocol regarding whom medical should contact to report suspected cases and request testing and epidemiological investigations, if someone is feeling unwell or showing signs of COVID-19?
- Are there first-aid services or other medical services in place and equipped to support participants with COVID-19?
- Are there isolation rooms available on site until suspected patients can be dealt with appropriately?
- Are there designated medical facilities that manage patients with COVID-19 infection in the region? Are contact numbers and procedures clearly visible?
- Are there transportation services with trained medical professionals available to transport critically ill patients with severe acute respiratory infections to a hospital if necessary?
- Has a cleaning schedule been developed to ensure the venue and equipment is clean and hygienic – wiping surfaces and any equipment regularly with disinfectant is strongly recommended (before, during (between athletes) and between each group)?

- Are there established screening measures, including temperature checks and daily monitoring in place for participants?
- Is the province conducting COVID-19 laboratory diagnostic tests for asymptomatic screening?
- Does the medical response plan include protocols to notify all participants of possible exposure to COVID-19 if staff are made aware of any suspected or confirmed cases that attended the activity?

#### **STAKEHOLDER AND PARTNER COORDINATION**

- Is there an established mechanism for collaboration and coordination with the local public health and recreation / parks sectors in the instance that any new cases arise?
- Are there agreed, clear and easily understood processes in place for reporting to external multi-sectoral stakeholders and disseminating risk communication messages (Media)?

#### **LOGISTICAL COORDINATION**

- Is there a decision-making authority/body and an agreed procedure to modify, restrict, postpone or cancel the activity related to the evolving COVID-19 outbreak?
- Have coaches and staff undergone training and exercises on personal safety procedures and emergency mitigation measures (including those specifically listed in this checklist)?

#### **RISK COMMUNICATION**

- Is there a risk mitigation communication strategy in regard to COVID-19?
- Is there a designated person(s) to lead media activities and tasked with managing all external communications with the public and the media?
- Has coordination been set up with media channels and social media sites so that messaging can be coordinated with, and assisted by, the platforms to provide targeted messaging as needed?

#### **PUBLIC HEALTH AWARENESS OF COVID-19**

- Has public health advice on clinical features of COVID-19, preventive measures, especially respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene practices, and physical distancing, been shared with all staff, athletes, and personnel of all relevant facilities?
- Has information on the at-risk populations been provided to all athletes, and others so they may make an informed decision on their attendance based on their personal risks?
- Has public advice included information on the meaning of the following measures: quarantine, self-isolation and self-monitoring?