

Provincial Women's Softball Association



Mandatory Return to Play Protocol

January 31, 2022

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Overview

Return to Play Guidelines

*The purpose of this document is to outline plans, guidelines, and procedures in contemplation of a Return to Play, addressing **FIVE (5)** major areas of concern with respect to physical distancing and to provide a certain level of comfort to participants by outlining steps to be taken to help maximize their safety and well-being and allows for any enhanced P.W.S.A./Event protocols that we might develop or that the Province or Municipalities may require to rent the space.*

This document has been developed in accordance with the World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines on the organization of sporting events with the input from the WBSC Medical Commission.

We extend our immense gratitude to all essential and Frontline
workers.
Be Safe.

The items listed in this document are suggestions of recommended safeguards for restarting Softball Activity in Ontario. Provincial/Territorial Associations, Leagues, Tournament Hosts, Staff, Players, Coaches, Parents, and Spectators must continue to follow Federal, Provincial and Local Governmental guidelines. **Feel free to make your guidelines more stringent if you deem necessary.** Remember that information and recommendations during the pandemic are very fluid and are subject to change.

These protocols will be the responsibility of the Association, Home Team, Coach, Tournament Hosts, City/Municipality in which the event is held.

Disclaimer

While the advice given in these guidelines has been developed using the best information available, it is intended purely as guidance to be used at the user's own risk. No responsibility is accepted by P.W.S.A. or by any person, firm, corporation or organization who or which has been in any way concerned with the furnishing of information or data, the compilation, publication or any translation, supply or sale of this Guidance for the accuracy of any information or advice given herein or for any omission here from or from any consequences whatsoever resulting directly or indirectly from compliance with or adoption of guidance contained therein, even if caused by a failure to exercise reasonable care.

January 1, 2022 Addition of Self Assessment tool – appendix 3

October 18, 2021 – Addition of appendix 5 – Vaccine policy

September 25, 2021 – Update to Indoor premises of a facility used for sports and recreational fitness activities – vaccine mandates.

- For Children under 12, youth under 18 actively participating in training, practices, games and competitions and workers or volunteers including coaches and officials participating in sports leagues, organized pick up sport, dance classes martial arts and swimming classes – **Proof of Covid – 19 Vaccination is not required.** unless patron qualifies for an exemption
- For Youth under 18 using a gym or other area with exercise equipment or weights, youth spectating, including at sporting events and adult (18+) patrons accessing the facility for any purpose including parents or guardians of youth participating in youth sport - **Proof of Covid – 19 vaccination is required.** unless patron qualifies for an exemption

If the facility guidelines or City Permit guidelines supersede these then they must be followed

August 12, 2021 – update to Appendix 3 Covid screening, new Appendix 4 Step 3 Re-Opening Ontario Key Updates beginning July 16, 2021.

The key item for step three is the allowance of up to 5000 persons per venue with all spectators and coaches masked as per the government regulations.

We have opted to maintain our current limits of 200 per diamond with the 3-person max per dugout and spectators distanced in the outfield.

If any host or team decides to use the dugouts everyone in the dugout must be masked, and coaches must be masked for the entire game.

If any host or team allows spectators in the bleachers or behind home plate all persons seated there must be masked at all times.

If any host decides to exceed the 200-person limit, then all persons in the park must be masked.

Concession areas may now be open.

Lineup cards may now be exchanged and given to the umpires.

Step 2 Re-Opening Ontario Key Updates

Nonmedical face masks inclusive of gaiters/bandannas are highly recommended but not mandatory where 3-meter distancing can be maintained. Catcher/batter/umpire are considered incidental contact so highly recommended but not mandated for them to wear a face covering.

Incidental contact is contact prolonged over 15 minutes outside.

Spectators will be allowed based on capacity. (Maximum 200) however each city host can set their own spectator numbers.

Screening (**Active** Contact tracing) is mandatory for all team personnel, administrators, umpires, and spectators.

PLEASE NOTE: Reopening is subject to implementation by each individual Public Health Unit. Please check with your local public health unit to verify any restrictions or conditions they might have and communicate this to all visiting teams.

Active screening is mandatory for all games and practices, Name, address, phone, and screening questions. **Temp check no longer required.**

ENTRY

All persons entering the park (diamond area) must agree to wear a mask/bandanna/neck gaiter and be screened, if not, no admission.

Declaration waiver from all participants regarding Covid 19 exposure must be validated with roster/contract.

Signage must be well displayed in the entry area with regards to the spreading of the virus, proper hygiene, information on physical distancing and what to do if you have any symptoms.

Return to play/safety plans must be posted in a conspicuous location and made available on request.

Active wellness testing inclusive of the Declaration (included in Javelin App) each time the athlete, coach, parent, etc. attends a game, practice, tournament. If a person is denied entry, then a procedure/handout should be in place to encourage that person to visit a testing facility immediately and ensure you collect that individual's complete contact information. This is in addition to the collection of contact information for each person admitted to the venue.

During this process, individuals may also be asked if they are experiencing any other symptoms (new or worsening cough, fever, sore throat, respiratory illness, difficulty breathing, have they been in contact with anyone who had Covid 19 and have they travelled outside the country in the past 14 days) to make a determination to help ensure the safety of all individuals involved. (Appendix 3)

- Questions that frontline workers ask before entering/taking care of patients to identify potential Covid 19. (Included in App)
- Have app/screening available to teams/coaches for participants to take before they leave their residence.
- Have coaches re-assess at the field before each game.
- Limit entrances to 1 or 2.

- Any player, parent, coach, umpire, etc. showing symptoms should not show up at the park but if they fail the screening, then they would not be permitted for the weekend and the team/coach would be responsible to ensure the person showing symptoms is isolated from all others and isolate those who were in contact before discovery.
- **There is also the expectation that any individual experiencing symptoms should take the initiative and stay home. Note anyone shown to be experiencing symptoms from the active screening will be turned away before they enter the park.**

Entry ways to field/diamond area(s)

- Considerations in this area will be dependent on the type/location of the complex or playing fields.
- Emphasis should be placed on providing safe travel areas to reduce contact between individuals entering and exiting the park (diamond) /complex.
- Must monitor for mass gathering numbers in the park (diamond) for all teams, leagues, for tournament play this would be the responsibility of the Tournament Director(s) or the Association whose facilities are in use. (Maximum 200 per diamond)
- Can use indoor facilities to a maximum of 50% capacity as long as social distancing can be maintained and must plan for safe use of pathways/trails. Volunteers will all need PPE, masks/bandannas/neck gaiters, again may need multiple tables to meet the distancing rules, work area to be taped off.
- PPE defined as mask/bandanna/neck gaiter, sanitizer.

Team and Player-Sign In

- Should be avoided as much as possible. Strongly recommended - use of electronic registration.
- Team registration – validation of the team contract could be completed by team(s) ahead of tournament, exhibition games, practices, etc., and submitted electronically prior to tournament, exhibition games, practices, etc.
- Registration, announcer's, scorekeeping tables - equipment must be disinfected after each use and personnel change.
- Scorekeepers, announcers, spotters all need 2-meter distancing or must wear masks/bandanna/neck gaiter. May need separate tables.
- Medical team and each team's medic will need to be fully equipped with PPE to be able to be in close contact with the athletes. This includes team trainers, etc.
- P.W.S.A. or tournament personnel will deal with members (on certificate) of the team only. Parents, spectators, fans, etc. are not permitted in the officials' tent/area. It is the responsibility of the coach to communicate this to their team.
- P.W.S.A. or tournament personnel may wear a mask/bandanna/neck gaiter while in the venue (on or near the diamond and in the officials' tent at any time they are dealing with teams/coaches) and shall not share phones, tablets, etc. If 2-meter distancing cannot be maintained, then PWSA personnel must wear a mask/bandanna/neck gaiter.

Entry to concessions, washrooms, food areas

- Entry ways should be properly addressed to ensure 2-meter rule can be followed, or temporary closure of concession/washroom facilities may be required.
- Masks/bandannas/neck gaiters must be worn in the indoor spaces.
- Washrooms: Maintain no line ups, clean every 2 hours, must have hand sanitizer in each, possible more porta potties, to prevent line ups as per city regulation(s).

Hand Sanitization

- The establishment of hand sanitization stations may be applicable for some complexes/facilities, but at a minimum must be on the bench and equipment area of every team for all training, practices, games, and tournament play.
- Hygiene: Hand sanitizer on each bench, park (diamond) entrance, washrooms, at all concessions, souvenir areas.
- Hand sanitizer may be distributed to teams/players upon entry. Teams must be advised of being required to bring their own supply of hand sanitizer to be able to participate.

Frequent hand sanitization will be stressed for players in all league/tournament play and will be enforced as mandatory.

OFF-FIELD

Concession areas/Washroom facilities

- Concessions: May only be allowed to open if they have the ability to provide consistent sanitization and abide by physical distancing guidelines, patrons must be seated at all times, these patrons must be screened with contact tracing
- Concessions: Would be difficult but workers with appropriate PPE, and line ups at 2-meter intervals as in stores. All payments by debit/credit.
- Washrooms: Will require consistent attention and sanitization. Leagues may opt to keep washroom facilities closed during play to reduce possible contamination. Must be cleaned/fully sanitized at least once per every 2 hours.
- Team snacks, picnics, shared lunches, BBQs not allowed.

Medic

- Will have their own training, own first-aid kit and may be able to provide suggestions on further safety considerations and must have their own PPE.

Vendors

- All vendors will be asked to follow outlined guidelines and regulations set out by the event organizer(s) and the Province of Ontario.

- Souvenirs: All payments by debit/credit card, no cash accepted, clothing cannot be tried on prior to purchase, limit amount of people in sales area, line up to be retail store style with 3-meter distancing

Hotels

- Hotels will have their own procedures and guidelines in place to ensure the safety of their guests.

Vehicles

- For shared vehicles (i.e., golf carts), frequent sanitization will be required. Provision of disinfectant wipes/spray for each vehicle will be required. Carpooling should be avoided. Only family members.

Headquarters/Registration

- These locations should remain restricted to use by League/Tournament personnel only, roped off. Guidelines should be considered to keep players/coaches away from these locations as much as possible. Score reporting/complaints may need to be done electronically.
- Draw board will be viewed only at 9-feet.
If a roof, canopy, tent, awning, or other element is used in an outdoor area, it must have at least 2 full sides, or one full side and the roof, open to the outdoors and unobstructed.

Designated Smoking Areas

- Must be in an area away from the playing field and proper disposable cigarette canisters/ashtrays are required. No smoking or throwing away butts on the ground must be enforced.

ON-FIELD

- Covid 19 signage should be in the park (diamond) on fencing.

Hand Sanitization

- Should be done consistently throughout the game.

Coin Toss/Rules and Exchange of Line-up Cards

- Ground rules procedure - one representative from each team should be allowed at home plate with 2-meter distance maintained by all parties. Coaches must wear masks/bandannas/neck gaiters in this situation.
- Coin flip: Either virtual or with physical distancing, line-up cards filled out, disinfected, and placed on backstop for all to view, no exchange.
- Only one representative per team.

Bats

- No bat sharing.
- Only the offensive team will remove a bat from the field, i.e., the batter if unsuccessful at bat or a designated team person with appropriate PPE.
- No bat persons allowed.
- Picking up the hitter's bat will be the responsibility of the bench coach. Must be cleaned after each use.
- In the event there is a bat near home plate that poses a danger for the players, the umpire will kick it out of the way.
- Bats will be lined up in the dugout with the certification marking face out prior to games for the umpires to do a visual inspection.

Player's Equipment

- No gloves on fence, no bringing out gloves except to play, batting gloves, distancing of player's bags – 2 meters.
- Players should be reminded to not share equipment and keep each individual's equipment isolated – 2-meter distance and reduce coming into contact with the equipment of other players.
- Catcher's equipment - each catcher must have their own and should be disinfected after each game.
- Sharing of water bottles is not allowed.
- Label all water bottles and personal equipment so there is no confusion.
- Make it a priority to provide your team with essentials to stay healthy – hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, disinfecting spray, etc. Also, make it mandatory for players to disinfect everything that was used during participation.
- AT ALL TIMES disinfect and sanitize your own personal equipment.

Protective Face Masks/Helmets

- There should be no sharing of protective face masks or helmets at any time.

Masks (non-protective)

- Face masks/bandannas/neck gaiters for the purpose of reducing potential virus transmission will be a required stipulation for all persons entering the park/complex/facility. For all coaches and players and umpires a face covering/bandanna/neck gaiter is highly recommended but not mandatory during the warmups, practices, and games.

Balls

- Defensive team will supply their own balls while in the field to reduce contact with individuals on the opposing team. No one on the offensive team to retrieve or touch ball.
- Consideration should be made for safe ball retrieval (homeruns, foul balls) defensive team only.

- Balls may require consistent sanitization (by team every half inning) - consider how often for practices (every half hour).
- Put more balls into play and have a designated person on each bench “sanitize” the ball. This would require clean water and soap or sanitizing wipes.
- Foul ball(s) must be retrieved by the defensive team only.
- Each team will have a bucket, soap, and water, wipes, and towel. Will also be provided their own game balls; each team is responsible for cleaning their softballs between innings and will be the supplier of the same while on defense. Umpires will not handle the balls.

Catcher and Batter

- Will need to maintain 2-meter distance, when possible.

Catcher and Umpire

- Will need to maintain 2-meter distance, when possible. May need different conditions dependant on the size of the field/backstop.

Batter

- On the bench: responsible bench person/manager only – batter, then on deck, then in the hole outside dugout, then the batting order would have to be spread out at 2-meter intervals behind the dugout (will vary depending on park, (diamond area). Responsible Bench person/manager to disinfect the dugout after each player.
- Sanitizer on benches to allow for frequent handwashing ... in between innings/after at bats. Cordon off the dugouts. Have the “bench” along the baseline/outfield fence, bleachers, perhaps mark off “boxes” painted on the grass in 2-meter squares to ensure physical distancing.
- No contact with coaches at 1st, 3rd, after home run, etc.
- Should attempt to reduce any unnecessary contact with other players. Should also avoid using their hands to contact the ball at any time.

General Protocols

- No handshakes, team huddles, high fives, etc. - NOT allowed. Suggest a new show of respect for the opposition at safe distance.
- Medals/banners: Give direct to coaches in original packaging, no handshakes, presentations (individual). Presentation can be done with masks/bandannas/neck gaiters on
- Protest to be held at a safe distance. Any coach/umpire getting heated, and yelling will be removed from the venue.
- Conferences at pitcher’s circle limited to one person who must remain outside the circle.
- Mound visits with catcher/coach - both must remain outside circle; catcher must have glove in front of face.

- No bat persons permitted.
- Only one team on the diamond at a time for warm-up.
- Players must not lick their fingers.
- Coaches must always stay within their box.

No sunflower seeds, gum chewing or spitting.

- General spitting will be banned for all participants, both on and off the field. Difficult to enforce. Sunflower seeds/chewing tobacco/gum will be handled with a zero-tolerance policy, that will become enforceable through ejection from the game and/or removal from events.

Final Game Sheet/Line-up cards

- If line-up cards are required to be submitted following the completion of the game, these cards should be submitted electronically by sending a picture of the card to the appropriate party or dropped into a designated container.

Pre-Game/Post-Game Huddles/ Handshakes

- Should not be conducted at any time.
- Will not be allowed or required following games at any level.
- Give yourself space from your fellow teammates and coaches. (No tight team huddles/ touching).
- Allow larger circled team huddles and beginning of game cheers. Allow distance when giving advice one on one, prioritize being engaged during conversations while giving yourself space.
- Do not share skin on skin contact. (No high fives, handshakes, elbows, etc.)
- Create a method to show support without having to high five – a practiced in sync clap/ collectively as a team, touch the dirt/ a cheer/ synchronically a hand gesture.
- Air fives, cheers for certain situations and accomplishments, hand gestures and a group cheer thanking your opponent for participating.

Capacity of Players on bench / dugout

- Will need to be consistent with government guidelines relating to number of individuals allowed to gather in each area. Recommend one (1) at each end with a responsible bench person/manager/coach - total of three (3) max without masks, bandannas/neck gaiters, if a team decides to use the dugout all players and coaches must be masked and the coaches must be masked for the entire game.
- Players may be required to sit behind the bench/dugout to help maintain safe distances between them if not masked.
- AT ALL TIMES disinfect and sanitize shared equipment after practices/ games.
- Make it a priority to provide your team with essentials to stay healthy – hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, disinfecting spray, etc. Also, make it mandatory for players to disinfect everything that was used during participation.

- AT ALL TIMES disinfect and sanitize your own personal equipment.
- Keep a hand sanitizing station in your personal team dugout.
- This will allow players and coaches to have the option to feel like they have the resources they need quickly and safely without having to leave the diamond.
- Prioritize not putting your hands or equipment accessible to everyone near your face. Please stress to your players that this is a MUST. (Exception: your own safety helmet and mask).
- Do not eat in the dugout. (Spitz, snacks, etc.)
- Respect other's space.
- Touching of any areas in the dugout must be kept to a minimum to reduce the amount of sanitization required after each player has left the dugout.

Exit from playing field during game.

- During the game, players entering and exiting the playing field should do so in an orderly fashion that allows a 2-meter distance to be maintained between players as much as possible.
- Any player not required to be on the field should not enter the playing surface (e.g., homerun celebrations).

First and Third Base Coaches distance, hand taps

- If the coaches are on the playing field, they should remain a minimum of 2 meters away from the base they are coaching to prevent contact with the defensive player. Also, coaches should not engage an offensive player with high-fives or other physical contact.
- Field dependent: Coaches may be asked to wear a mask/bandanna/neck gaiter if a safe distance is unable to be maintained. Note if coaches are wearing a face mask/bandanna/neck gaiter then distancing not required.

Injured Player

- If medical personnel are on hand, injured players should be dealt with primarily by these individuals, unless further assistance is requested.
- The number of individuals attending to an injured player should be limited to the number necessary based on the severity of the injury. Sufficient first-aid kits should be provided that include latex gloves and nonmedical masks to help increase the safety of their interaction with the injured player.
- Players injured during the game must be positioned in a safe area or at the other end of the dugout. Younger ages - the parent will need to remove the child from the field and place them in a safe place respecting the physical distancing rules. (Recommend the bleachers since they will be off limits to any spectators).

Pitching Conferences/On-Field Conferences

- Will need to be reduced to coach-pitcher conferences only, if not entirely removed.

Scorekeepers

- Scores should be reported electronically to reduce congestion at headquarter locations and scoresheets dropped in designated container.

Call Challenges/Protests

- Challenges/Protests may be made as long as the challenge is made by a recognized coach (mask/bandanna/ neck gaiter required) in a controlled and orderly fashion, and the coach/umpire are able to remain at a safe distance in which neither is put at risk.

Bat Testing/Checks

- Bat testing prior to the start of games/tournaments (when applicable) will be done using a visual check completed by the umpire crew to ensure all bats have the appropriate thumbprint and do not show any visible signs of damage.

Post-Game Bench/Dugout Cleaning

- Emphasis will be placed on mandatory cleaning and sanitization of the bench area following the completion of the game. Access to extra garbage/recycling containers may be a request made to specific parks/municipalities. Responsibility of host or home team association if practice or exhibition play.

SPECTATORS (if applicable)

****PLEASE NOTE: The allowance of spectators will be dependent on the guidelines set out by the Ontario government and local health officials.***

- At no point will a softball event exceed the number of attendees (including players, coaches, umpires, association officials, volunteers, parents, and other family members) noted as the maximum number by the Province of Ontario, or any relevant municipality or public health authority.
- The number of participants involved should be reviewed and kept down to the absolute Essential. (e.g., Team members, Officials, Umpires, Event staff, Volunteers, etc.) Limit the number of non-participants attending. (Limit siblings, parents, extended family, friends, etc.). (Maximum 200 per diamond)

- If the Province of Ontario and/or municipalities or public health authorities establish different maximum numbers of people who are permitted to gather in different areas of the province, the maximum number established for the municipality where the team is located (i.e., home diamond) applies to that team. Travel by a team to another area of the province does not mean that the team can rely on the maximum gathering size of that other area.

Seating

- Spectators will not be allowed to watch the game from inside the infield baselines without a mask. It will be required that any spectators will need to bring their own chairs or blankets and sit down the foul line, beyond 1st and 3rd or outside of the outfield fence if they chose not to wear a mask, bandanna/neck gaiter.

Hand Sanitization

- Established hand sanitization guidelines will need to be followed by all spectators. Personal supply of hand sanitizer is required.

No sunflower seeds, gum chewing or spitting.

- As is consistent with guidelines for participants, spectators will not be allowed any seeds, gum, or chewing tobacco and will be asked to remove it from the area.

Restaurant/Bar/Concession/Playground Area

Spectator use of these areas will be dependent on the operational guidelines of these areas/facilities outlined by facility management.

Crowds

- Crowding will not be tolerated. Individuals will always be asked to respect the **2-meter** rule when possible and gatherings of individuals will be asked to separate when necessary.

UMPIRES

Catcher and Home Plate Umpire

- Umpires change area - may need multiple tents or limit to number inside tent at any given time. Umpire clothing is not to be hung in park, etc. but must go into their own vehicle.
- To ensure a maintenance of safe distance, umpires will be required to utilize an exaggerated inside/outside slot position if the umpire can perform their duties as the home plate umpire from these positions.

- In situations where appropriate distance cannot be accommodated (due to field size for example), umpires may be required to wear masks/bandanna/neck gaiter. Home plate umpire will be required to wear a nonmedical mask/bandanna/neck gaiter.

Player Equipment (removal of bat, handing to on-deck batter)

- Will not be considered the responsibility of the umpire. Specifically, the removal of bats from the field will be the responsibility of the offensive team based on guidelines outlined previously in the 'On-Field' section.

Base Umpire/ Other Field Umpires

- Must be able to position themselves in a position at least 2 meters away from any defensive player.

Umpire Conferences

- Umpire conferences may be allowed to take place, if they are conducted in a safe manner such that the umpires can be away from any players and can maintain a 2-meter distance between one another.

Call Challenges/Protests

- As mentioned, challenges/protests can be made by a coach in a safe and controlled manner. The umpire will have the authority to eject said coach if they feel their safe distance is being encroached upon and the coach has not respected any request to remain at distance.

Water Bottles

- No sharing of water bottles between umpires, and refillable water bottles will be strongly recommended.

Hand Sanitization

- Umpires will be subject to any hand sanitization guidelines provided by the league/tournament organizer.
- Umpires will be asked to supply their own personal hand sanitizer.

Responsibility

- Umpires responsible for enforcing guidelines on-field/inside the dugout during the game.

Lightning/Inclement weather

- All persons must return to the vehicle in which they arrived at the park. No congregating under tents, shelters, etc.

Other Considerations

- Restaurants: Are there enough locally, given physical distancing to feed teams, etc.
- Sunscreen: There is conflicting recommendations and will be used only at the discretion of the player/parent and not shared with any other person/persons.
- Bring your own personal snacks and/or food and be sure to consume away from others or during participation of your practice/ games.

The number of participants involved should be reviewed and kept down to the absolute essential (e.g., Team delegations, Tournament Officials, Event staff, Volunteers, etc.)

Reporting of COVID 19 suspected case/cases

- Refer suspected cases for COVID 19 testing.
- Predetermine emergency contacts and exact protocols with local authorities.
- Establish isolation area - on-site medical treatment clinics/facilities where an individual can be initially assessed.
- The isolation area should be equipped with the necessary supplies determined by the local authorities.
- The medic/personnel attending symptomatic persons should wear masks, rubber/disposable gloves, and glasses or visors, which shall be disposed of immediately after use and the staff shall cleanse thoroughly afterwards.
- The symptomatic patient should be given a surgical type mask before carrying out a careful evaluation.
- In the case of a symptomatic patient (sore throat, runny nose, breathing difficulties and flu-like symptoms) based on clinical data, and recommend, when possible, to perform a COVID 19 test.
- Medic/staff must proceed, immediately after evaluation, with personal and area cleaning protocol as established by the local authorities; Safe Return to Baseball/Softball – Covid 19 Prevention Guidelines.
- If the subject does not fall within the definition of “case” or “suspect case”, they shall be sent home with the indication to contact his/her own physician.

- If a medic/personnel member falls within the definition of “case” or “suspect case”, they shall be directed to test and isolate if a positive case.

Participants who become ill with signs and symptoms of COVID 19 while playing/on-site

- Activate Emergency Action Plan (EAP) COVID 19 Medical and Public Health Response Procedure for the specific venue.
- Participants (personnel, players, coaches, managers, spectators, etc.) who become ill at the field will be isolated and removed from the activity/event.
- P.W.S.A. will designate area at each field for isolation purposes.
- The activity/event will be shut down while:
 - 1) Equipment (dugouts/bases) are cleaned and sanitized.
 - 2) Participants sanitize their hands.
- The Activity Leader (coach, captain, P.W.S.A. personnel, host) will advise the unwell participant to don a face covering or mask (if available) on their exit from the field.
- The Activity Leader (coach, captain, P.W.S.A. personnel, host) will advise the unwell participant to go home immediately (in a private vehicle if possible) and self-isolate, and contact Telehealth Ontario (1-866-797-9000), their health care provider or visit their **Local Health Department website** to determine if further care is needed and learn about **assessment centres**.
- If leaving the field can not be done immediately (waiting for a private vehicle, or a parent/guardian), the participant will remain in the designated isolation area.
- The Coach/Manager/team Medic will advise P.W.S.A., so that the PSO can follow up with the unwell participant, and aid public health authorities with potential contact tracing in the event the unwell participant tests positive for Covid 19.
- If a P.W.S.A. member at any P.W.S.A. activity/event tests positive for Covid 19, they will follow up with close contacts, who may include other P.W.S.A. members. Other Team members who came in close contact with the infected participant may be required to self-isolate.

COVID 19 positive cases, can only return to play/practice/participation after:

- 1) A doctor's note is provided and received by P.W.S.A. leadership.
- 2) Or the local public health authority/unit has advised that the individual is considered recovered per Ontario/Local Public health guidelines and cleared to return to play/work.

Note: The privacy of P.W.S.A members will be maintained; participants who may have been in close contact with a positive COVID 19 case will **only** be advised that someone at the training session/game/tournament has tested positive.

We extend our immense gratitude to all essential and Frontline workers.

Be Safe

Appendix 1

Return to Play Activity Leader Checklist

Prior to Departing for the Field

- Complete your wellness screening/checklist (Javelin App/Paper Form).
- Sanitize equipment that you will be using at the field.
- Ensure you have hand sanitizer in your bag for your athletes and to sanitize equipment at the field.
- Ensure you have your own water bottle, and it is appropriately labelled with your name.
Check the attendance listing (remember only Provincial Mandated # of participants including yourself) and that those who are attending have done their pre-departure wellness screening.

At the Field – On Arrival/At Check-in Location

- Arrive and set up at the identified Check-in location.
- Complete your on-field wellness check (checkmark = good to stay 😊).
- Have the Javelin App open to your event to be able to view your teammates/athletes on-field wellness checks/screenings or to perform them.
- Do a wellness check/screening of your athletes – the app will take you through the questions to ask your teammates/athletes ... you can have your teammates/athletes do the check on their phone key point here is they are symptom-free (green check-mark) and sign the declaration ... you should see 2 green checkmarks ... if they have a green check-mark, direct them to the sideline area where they can put their belongings (remind them to keep 2 meter of spacing between their belongings and others' belongings)
 - If a teammate/athlete does not “pass” the screening, advise them to go home, and recommend that they call telehealth/their medical health provider or go to an assessment centre.
- Direct teammates/athletes to sanitize hands on their way to the designated sideline area.
- Complete/review on-field screenings for all participants, then send from the Javelin App, the wellness check report to P.W.S.A./or your association (the email should already be populated to the correct P.W.S.A./association email).

During the Session

- Maintain 2-meter distancing within the training session – Friendly reminders may be necessary at first.
 - No high-fives.
 - No team huddles.
 - Avoid touching your own face as much as possible.
- Group participants into smaller groups to minimize points of contacts.
- Schedule breaks to hydrate and in that water break, sanitize equipment and wash/sanitize hands.

- If someone shows any symptoms (aside from things like coughing after swallowing a bug, sneezing due to allergies, etc.) during the session, remove them from the group, advise them to call telehealth/their medical professions or to visit an assessment centre.

After the Session

- Encourage all participants to sanitize their equipment and hands.
- Sanitize any bats and other equipment (ex. helmets) before putting them back in your bag.
- Ensure all participants put any garbage/waste (water bottles) they may have into the garbage/waste bin at the venue, or to take it with them and dispose of it at their home.
- Ensure all participants leave the field and the venue in a timely manner (no congregating after in the parking lot).

HOW TO WEAR A MEDICAL MASK SAFELY

who.int/epi-win

Do's →

- Wash your hands before touching the mask
- Inspect the mask for tears or holes
- Find the top side, where the metal piece or stiff edge is
- Ensure the colored-side faces outwards
- Place the metal piece or stiff edge over your nose
- Cover your mouth, nose, and chin
- Adjust the mask to your face without leaving gaps on the sides
- Avoid touching the mask
- Remove the mask from behind the ears or head
- Keep the mask away from you and surfaces while removing it
- Discard the mask immediately after use preferably into a closed bin
- Wash your hands after discarding the mask

Don'ts →

- Do not use a ripped or damp mask
- Do not wear the mask only over mouth or nose
- Do not wear a loose mask
- Do not touch the front of the mask
- Do not remove the mask to talk to someone or do other things that would require touching the mask
- Do not leave your used mask within the reach of others
- Do not re-use the mask

Remember that masks alone cannot protect you from COVID-19. Maintain at least 1 metre distance from others and wash your hands frequently and thoroughly, even while wearing a mask.

EPI•win  **World Health Organization**

Appendix 3

Self Assessment tool [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) self-assessment \(ontario.ca\)](#)

Required Screening Questions

- 1. Are you currently experiencing one or more of the symptoms below that are new or worsening? Symptoms should not be chronic or related to other known causes or conditions.**

For individuals who are 18 years of age and older:

Do you have one or more of the following symptoms?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Fever and/or chills	Temperature of 37.8 degrees Celsius/100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
Cough or barking cough (croup)	Not related to asthma, post-infectious reactive airways, COPD, or other known causes or conditions you already have
Shortness of breath	Not related to asthma or other known causes or conditions you already have
Sore throat	Not related to seasonal allergies, acid reflux, or other known causes or conditions you already have
Difficulty swallowing	Painful swallowing (not related to other known causes or conditions you already have)
Decrease or loss of smell or taste	Not related to seasonal allergies, neurological disorders, or other known causes or conditions you already have
Pink eye	Conjunctivitis (not related to reoccurring styes or other known causes or conditions you already have)

Runny or stuffy/congested nose	Not related to seasonal allergies, being outside in cold weather, or other known causes or conditions you already have
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Headache	Unusual, long-lasting (not related to tension-type headaches, chronic migraines, or other known causes or conditions you already have) <i>If you received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and are experiencing a mild headache that only began after vaccination, select “No.”</i>
Digestive issues like nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain	Not related to irritable bowel syndrome, menstrual cramps, or other known causes or conditions you already have
Muscle aches/joint pain	Unusual, long-lasting (not related to a sudden injury, fibromyalgia, or other known causes or conditions you already have) <i>If you received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and are experiencing mild muscle aches/joint pain that only began after vaccination, select “No.”</i>
Fatigue	Unusual tiredness, lack of energy (not related to depression, insomnia, thyroid dysfunction, or other known causes or conditions you already have) <i>If you received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and are experiencing mild fatigue that only began after vaccination, select “No.”</i>
Falling down often	For older people

For individuals who are under 18 years of age:

Do you have one or more of the following symptoms?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Fever and/or chills	Temperature of 37.8 degrees Celsius/100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher	
Cough or barking cough (croup)	Continuous, more than usual, making a whistling noise when breathing (not related to asthma, post-infectious reactive airways, or other known causes or conditions you already have)	
Shortness of breath	Out of breath, unable to breathe deeply (not related to asthma or other known causes or conditions you already have)	
Decrease or loss of smell or taste	Not related to seasonal allergies, neurological disorders, or other known causes or conditions you already have	
Sore throat or difficulty swallowing	Painful swallowing (not related to seasonal allergies, acid reflux, or other known causes or conditions you already have)	
Runny or stuffy/congested nose	Not related to seasonal allergies, being outside in cold weather, or other known causes or conditions you already have	
Headache	Unusual, long-lasting (not related to tension-type headaches, chronic migraines, or other known causes or conditions you already have) <i>If you received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and are experiencing a mild headache that only began after vaccination, select "No."</i>	
Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea	Not related to irritable bowel syndrome, anxiety, menstrual cramps, or other known causes or conditions you already have	

Extreme tiredness or muscle aches	Unusual, fatigue, lack of energy (not related to depression, insomnia, thyroid dysfunction, sudden injury, or other known causes or conditions you already have) <i>If you received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and are experiencing mild muscle aches that only began after vaccination, select “No.”</i> <i>If you received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and are experiencing mild fatigue that only began after vaccination, select “No.”</i>
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2. Has a doctor, health care provider, or public health unit told you that you should currently be isolating (staying at home)?

This can be because of an outbreak or contact tracing.

☐ Yes

☐ No

3. In the last 10 days, have you tested positive on a rapid antigen test or a home-based self-testing kit?

If you have since tested negative on a lab-based PCR test, select “No.”

☐ Yes

☐ No

4. In the last 14 days, have you been identified as a “close contact” of someone who currently has COVID-19?

If public health has advised you that you do not need to self-isolate (e.g., you are fully vaccinated[†] or another reason), select “No.”

☐ Yes

☐ No

5. In the last 14 days, have you received a COVID Alert exposure notification on your cell phone?

If you are fully vaccinated[†] or have already gone for a test and got a negative result, select “No.”

☐ Yes

☐ No

[†] Fully vaccinated is defined as an individual ≥ 14 days after receiving their second dose of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series or their first dose of a one-dose COVID-19 vaccine series

6. In the last 14 days, have you travelled outside of Canada AND been advised to quarantine per the federal quarantine requirements?

☐ Yes

☐ No

7. In the last 14 days, has someone in your household (someone you live with):

- travelled outside of Canada AND been advised to quarantine per the federal quarantine requirements; OR
- been identified as a "close contact" of someone who currently has COVID-19 AND advised by a doctor, healthcare provider or public health unit to self-isolate?

If you are fully vaccinated, select "No."

☐ Yes

☐ No

8. Is anyone you live with currently experiencing any new COVID-19 symptoms and/or waiting for test results after experiencing symptoms?

If you are fully vaccinated, select "No."

☐ Yes

☐ No

If the individual experiencing symptoms received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and is experiencing mild headache, fatigue, muscle aches, and/or joint pain that only began after vaccination, select "No."

Results of Screening Questions:

- If the patron answered **NO to all questions from 1 through 8**, they can enter the business or organization. In the business or organization, the patron must continue to follow all public health measures, including masking, maintaining physical distance and hand hygiene, where applicable.
 - If the patron answered **YES to any questions from 1 through 8**, they should not be permitted to enter the business or organization (including any outdoor or partially outdoor business or facility). They should be advised to go home to self-isolate immediately and contact their health care provider or Telehealth Ontario ([1-866-797-0000](tel:1-866-797-0000)) to get advice or an assessment, including if they need a COVID-19 test.
 - If the patron answered **YES to question 8**, they must be advised to stay home, along with the rest of the household, until the sick individual gets a negative COVID-19 test result, is cleared by their local public health unit, or is diagnosed with another illness.
-

- If any of the answers to these screening questions change during the day, this screening result is no longer valid and the patron may need to screen again, wherever necessary.
- Any record created as part of patron screening may only be disclosed as required bylaw.

What to do if you have been exposed to Covid 19

Confirm
Test
Inform

<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/exposed#exposed>

Provincial Women's Softball Association (P.W.S.A.) Vaccination Policy

2021 – 2022 Season

Purpose of Policy:

To continue to protect the health and safety of all P.W.S.A. Members by requiring that certain individuals be fully vaccinated as a condition of participating in P.W.S.A. Sanctioned Activities in accordance with defined timelines.

Definitions:

"Accepted COVID-19 vaccine" means a COVID-19 vaccine that has been approved for use by Health Canada.

"Affected Persons" means any Vaccine-Eligible Players, P.W.S.A. Officials, Instructors, Association Officials, Team Ontario Officials and Volunteers.

"Association" means any Club, Team, or League.

"Association Designate" means Association/Club President or Association Secretary.

"Association Officials" means any member of the board of directors, officers, executive and staff (including interns) of an Association.

"Fully Vaccinated" means fourteen (14) days after an individual has received a completed series of an Accepted COVID-19 Vaccine.

"Instructor" means any person engaged by an Association or Team to provide specialized instruction to players, who is not registered to any Association.

"Members" or **"members"** means any person affiliated with the P.W.S.A. through any Association, Team Ontario or Individual, including the parents or legal guardians of any minor aged participant.

“P.W.S.A.” means Provincial Women’s Softball Association.

“P.W.S.A. Official” means any member of the board of directors, officers, executive and staff (including interns) of the P.W.S.A.

“Sanctioned Activity” means any game (league and/or exhibition), tournament, inclusive of any Ontario skills camp or talent ID camp or any other activity involving players and Team Ontario Officials that is approved by the P.W.S.A., Softball Ontario (or any of its member organizations) or Softball Canada (or any of its member organizations).

“Team” means any group of team officials and affiliated softball players, who are qualified in a division and category under the P.W.S.A. Rules & Constitution, who have gathered for a Sanctioned Activity, including any Instructors, Volunteers or Association Officials.

“Team Official” means any person involved in the management of a Team and includes the coach, trainer, manager and any assistant coach or assistant trainer.

“Vaccine-Eligible Player” means any player 12 and over.

“Volunteer” means any person registered by the P.W.S.A. or Association as a volunteer.

1. Policy Statement

The P.W.S.A. requires that all Affected Persons be Fully Vaccinated against COVID-19, in accordance with the remainder of this policy, as a condition of participating in any Sanctioned Activities during the 2021-22 season. At present, this policy does not apply to players under 12 years of age, or spectators in outdoor settings. **Players turning 12 have a 12 week grace period to secure the required vaccines.**

Public health guidance on measures for fully vaccinated, partially vaccinated, and unvaccinated individuals continue to evolve and may affect this policy in the future. The P.W.S.A. reserves the right to amend this policy in response to any new guidance received from or regulations passed by federal, provincial, and local public health and governmental authorities in respect of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additionally, this policy only applies to Associations, Teams and Players who are members of, or who are Affiliated/Associated with, the P.W.S.A. It is not intended to apply to teams and participants of any associations operating outside of the P.W.S.A.

This policy is effective December 1, 2021, with due regard for the availability of Accepted COVID-19 vaccines.

2. Reason for Policy

The health and safety of all Participants is the top priority of the P.W.S.A. The purpose of this policy is to protect the health and safety of all members by reducing the risk of exposure to and transmission of COVID-19, an infectious communicable disease, among all persons involved in the P.W.S.A., and to promote the health and safety of all members of the P.W.S.A. community, through vaccinations against COVID-19.

This policy is necessary to prevent, respond to, and alleviate any outbreak of COVID-19 in the P.W.S.A. because of the significant risk factors for COVID-19 infection that are present while participating in an organized setting as a player and non-player, both on and off the diamond. These risk factors include close contact in predominantly indoor closed-space environments (e.g.: gyms, training facilities, etc.).

3. Affected Persons

This policy applies to the following Affected Persons, which includes the following persons:

- Players 12 years or older
- Team Ontario Officials (Coaches, Trainers and Managers, etc.)
- Association Officials (directors, officers, executive and staff)
- P.W.S.A. Officials (directors, officers, executive and staff, including Team Ontario personnel)
- Volunteers
- Instructors (third parties engaged by Associations or Teams to provide specialized instruction)

At present, this policy does not apply to players under 12 years of age, or spectators in outdoor settings.

4. Vaccination Requirement & Records

All Affected Persons are required to be Fully Vaccinated (i.e.: including the 14-day period after receiving their completed dose) by December 1, 2021, or earlier. All Affected Persons must present to their Association designate, as applicable, evidence satisfactory to the P.W.S.A. demonstrating that they have received the completed series of an Accepted COVID-19 Vaccine.

5. Acceptable Vaccines

The P.W.S.A. recognizes all vaccines approved by Health Canada. All Affected Persons will be required to confirm they are vaccinated regardless of which approved vaccine they receive.

6. Acceptable Documentation

Acceptable documents serving as evidence of COVID-19 vaccination include:

- A digital or physical Dose Administration Receipt.
- Medical records signed by a licensed health care provider indicating vaccine name and date(s) of administration.
- Government verification/language (e.g., Government issued vaccine passport or card)

7. Accommodation

The P.W.S.A. will comply with the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/ontario-human-rights-code> and provide an accommodation any Affected Person who is unable to be vaccinated for substantiated medical reasons and/or on such other grounds protected under the OHRC, unless such an accommodation cannot be made without inflicting undue hardship on other Affected Persons.

If an Affected Person cannot provide the P.W.S.A. or their Association with satisfactory evidence of vaccination, the following will be taken into consideration by the P.W.S.A.:

- The Affected Person's reason for not being vaccinated; and
- Documentation to substantiate a medical or protected ground reason for not being vaccinated.

Any Affected Person requiring accommodation must provide the P.W.S.A. with documentation to substantiate their reason for not being vaccinated. Where accommodation is not possible without undue hardship to other Affected Persons, the Affected Person will not be permitted to be involved in any Sanctioned Activity for the duration of the pandemic or until such time that COVID-19 no longer poses a significant public health risk.

The P.W.S.A. reserves the right to have accommodation medical documentation reviewed by a P.W.S.A. designated medical specialist and to make appropriate inquiries to verify the authenticity of any creed/religion-based claim for accommodation. **Medical exemptions must be approved by the local Public Health Department.**

Any Affected Person who is granted accommodation must undergo regular COVID-19 testing and must provide evidence to their Association Designate and P.W.S.A., of a negative test taken not more than 24 hours prior to each Sanctioned Activity.

To begin the accommodation request process, please complete the application by visiting the following link:
<https://form.jotform.com/212806878439267>

8. Reporting & Record Keeping

All Affected Persons need to provide proof to their Association designate who will record proof of vaccination. However, the Association will not be required to keep any medical records or vaccination receipts on file. The Association designate will simply be required to confirm that proof has been provided and record and maintain on file a list of all Affected Persons who have provided such proof. All applications requesting an accommodation under this policy shall be filed directly with the P.W.S.A., as provided above.

All documentary records about COVID-19 accommodations will only be collected, used, retained, or disclosed by the P.W.S.A. as may be necessary for legitimate operational purposes or as directed or requested by governmental authorities or as may be required by law.

Until no longer required, all records retained under this policy must be kept in a secure location to which access is provided to only a limited number of designated persons who are involved in administering this policy, and no others. Once an Affected Person's accommodation status has been verified and it is determined that there is no further need for the retention of such records, they shall be immediately destroyed in a secure manner.

9. Unvaccinated Affected Persons

On December 1, 2021, any Affected Person not Fully Vaccinated (i.e.: including the 14-day period after receiving their completed dose) or has not been granted an accommodation in accordance with Section 7, will no longer be eligible to participate in any Sanctioned Activities until such time as they have presented satisfactory evidence that they have been Fully Vaccinated or been granted an accommodation.

10. Players under 12 years

At the present time, no COVID-19 vaccine has been approved for use by Health Canada for children under 12 years. However, once a COVID-19 vaccine has been approved for such persons, the P.W.S.A. will re-evaluate this policy and consider extending the definition of Vaccine-Eligible Players to include players under 12 years of age.

11. Spectators

This policy does not presently apply to spectators in outdoor settings, including the parents or guardians of players. Taking into consideration the severity of COVID-19 cases within the P.W.S.A.'s jurisdiction, the P.W.S.A. reserves the right to extend this policy to encompass spectators attending Sanctioned Activities, based on any new guidance received, or regulations passed by federal, provincial, and local public health and governmental authorities, Softball Ontario and Softball Canada.

12. Indoor Facilities

Indoor premises of a facility used for sports and recreational fitness activities – vaccine mandates.

- For Youth under 18 using a gym or other area with exercise equipment or weights, youth spectating, including at sporting events and adult (18+) patrons accessing the facility for any purpose including parents or guardians of youth participating in youth sport - **Proof of Covid – 19 vaccination is required** (*unless patron qualifies for an exemption*).

It should also be noted that individual owners/operators of arenas/domes, fieldhouses and facilities used by the P.W.S.A. or any Association or Team, may impose their own vaccination requirements for spectators.

Some health regions have imposed stricter requirements and all P.W.S.A. members will be required to follow the guidelines of the region in which they are participating.

13. Hotels

This policy also applies to P.W.S.A. board of directors, staff, volunteers, and Team Ontario personnel who share a hotel room with a non-family member.

Policy Name: Vaccination Policy

Ratification Date: October 18, 2021

Review Date: April 2022