

Ontario Safe Return to Play Protocol For Stage 2 of Ontario Re-Opening

COVID-19

The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to other common illnesses, including the cold and flu such as fever, cough, sore throat, or shortness of breath. At this time, it is recommended that any athlete or coach who has symptoms related to cold, flu or COVID-19 self isolate. Public Health Ontario has provided helpful guidance on [self-monitoring](#) and [self-isolation](#).

Have you been in contact with someone who has COVID-19? Are you having any symptoms of COVID-19? Please take the [COVID-19 Self Assessment](#). If necessary, please contact the following for assistance and instructions.

- Telehealth: [1-866-797-0000](tel:1-866-797-0000) or;
- Your primary care provider (for example, family physician) or;
- Your local Public Health Unit

Preamble:

Cross Country Ski Ontario is working with the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries (MHSTCI) to best manage a safe return to play for our athletes and coaches. We continue to follow the current [Emergency Order](#) in place in Ontario. This is the XCSO Safe Return to Play Protocol is based on [A Framework of Re-opening our Province](#). Our goal is to provide guidance for athletes, coaches and clubs to ensure the safety of all involved while limiting interactions amongst the varied groups in our ski community. It is up to each of us to individually commit to return to and re-think training with a safe, conscientious and 'greater good' mindset. This will enable us to continue to move forward and keep members of the cross country ski community safe.

[Stage 1 of Re-opening Ontario](#)

[Stage 2 of Re-opening Ontario](#)

Cross Country Ski Ontario has taken measures to ensure that this Return to Play Protocol has been vetted by medical professions (Appendix A). This document was vetted by several physicians knowledgeable of the current environment with respect to COVID-19 and familiar with cross country skiing and related training environments. It was also reviewed by several club presidents, club coaches, Nordiq Canada and our 3rd party liability insurance provider.

Risk Assessment Tool for sport:

A risk assessment tool for sport has been developed by our partners at the Canadian Sport Institute Network, Own the Podium, and Canadian Olympic Committee which can be shared with clubs. The tool includes all factors from the general World Health Organization risk assessment and mitigation checklist for mass gatherings as well as additional factors relating to sporting events and training, to enable organizers to determine a more accurate overall risk score. This tool has been adapted specifically for return to training planning in the Canadian context. PLEASE NOTE: This is a RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL and is not a PERMISSION TOOL. If you wish to request this document, please contact XCSO admin@xcskiontario.ca.

As Ontario moves to re-open on a regional basis, all clubs, athletes and coaches must follow the Public Health guidelines of their District Health Unit. If the training location is in a neighboring health unit with more restrictive measures in place, those measures will take precedence over a less restrictive location.

All clubs are encouraged to review their Emergency Action Plan in light of COVID-19 restrictions.

Guidelines

The following information provides guidance for coaches, athletes and facilities. This information will be updated as conditions and restrictions change.

For Everyone

Requirement for participation in group training - coaches and athletes.

- No symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
- No close sustained contact with anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 and/or has tested positive for COVID-19 within 14 days of beginning group training.
- If the person has had a case of documented COVID-19 infection, confirmation from a health professional indicating they have cleared the infection for COVID-19 and are medically cleared to participate in training is required.
- Must be adhering to physical distancing guidelines outside of training environment

General Guidelines:

Training for cross country skiing should take place outdoors in settings with ample space for physical distancing. The exception to this is for strength & conditioning. When possible, training on your own or with others in your household is strongly encouraged.

- No physical touching including high fives, hand shakes etc...
- Avoid touching your face, particularly your eyes, nose or mouth
- Avoid contact with people who are sick and/or have signs or symptoms of COVID-19
- Stay home if you are sick and/or have signs or symptoms of COVID-19
- Avoid high-touch areas, where possible, or ensure you clean your hands after

The use of masks:

Currently, [Public Health Canada](#) recommends wearing a homemade non-medical mask/facial covering in the community for periods of time when it is not possible to consistently maintain a 2-metre physical distance

from others, particularly in crowded public settings. Public Health Ontario has published [When and How to Wear a Mask](#). Wearing a mask while completing training activities is not necessary with an emphasis on appropriate physical distancing while completing training activities. Use of a mask is recommended for arrival and departure and while in the coaching zone (see below).

Coaching Zone:

The immediate vicinity around the area where the athletes engage with the coaches. Examples would be: a ski stadium, parking lot, running track or a section of running trail being used for intervals. Until otherwise advised, the maximum group size* must adhere to the current [Government of Ontario Regulation 52/20](#) governing Organized Public Events & Certain Gatherings. This will be reviewed and updated as conditions change.

- Maximum group size in the 'Coaching Zone' is 10 including athletes & coach(es)*. Athletes in the 'Coaching Zone' must follow provincial guidelines for physical distancing and consider increasing spacing as speed increases and/or physical effort and breathing significantly increases.
- Athletes outside of the 'Coaching Zone' also must follow provincial guidelines regarding physical distancing and not forming into groups.
- Use of a mask is encouraged in the 'Coaching Zone'

**Please note: "Regardless of where you live in Ontario, social gathering limits will be expanded to up to 10 people. People must still practice physical distancing, by keeping at least two metres away from others outside of their direct household. This change to social gathering size will apply to people across the province, regardless of whether their region has moved into Stage 2."¹*

Physical Distancing:

- Maintain a minimum of 2 metres in non speed training
- Increase the minimum distance to greater than 2 metres between other people when engaged in higher speed training activities (ie. roller skiing, running, etc)
- When possible & safe, it is preferable to run / ski BESIDE others instead of BEHIND others (ie on closed roads, wide trails, etc)

Hygiene:

- Do not spit
- Sneeze or cough into your sleeve

- Use a tissue to blow your nose (no snot rockets) and discard tissue immediately and wash your hands or use hand sanitizers afterward.
- Bring hand sanitizer for use before and after training
- Wash your hands when leaving your house, use hand sanitizer when arriving at training
- Shower immediately when returning home and limit contact with others within your “social bubble” until you have showered
- Wash your clothes as soon as you get home

Equipment:

- Do not share equipment (ie. poles, boots, roller skis, helmets, gloves etc)
- Do not share water bottles, food, towels or other personal items
- If using strength training equipment outdoors (ie chin up bar), equipment must be properly sanitized in between users

Transportation:

- Travel to/from practice with people from your household – do not ride share
- Use of a mask is recommended for arrival and departure
- Park at least one car apart rather than right next to each other to allow for physical distancing
- Arrive a few minutes prior to your assigned training start time
- Be prepared for training
- Do not mingle pre or post-workout
- Immediately return directly to your household after training to allow showering and proper hygiene prior to contact with others

Parents/guardians:

- Parents attending practice must adhere to same guidelines
- If involved in practice should be accounted for in maximum number people counting
- If going on walk etc, parents/guardians must remain distanced and follow all of the above guidelines

If an athlete or coach develops symptoms of COVID-19:

- Seek medical attention
- **Suspend group training for 14 days** to ensure no other athletes develop symptoms if close contact with symptomatic individual has occurred
- Follow Public Health Guidelines for testing in your area

Safe Sport:

- Follow [Safe Sport](#) guidelines

Strength & Conditioning:

- Maximum group size in the S&C Coaching Zone is 5, including coaches and athletes.
- The indoor facility or other indoor space MUST allow for a minimum of 2 meters of physical separation at ALL times for ALL participants AS WELL AS 4 meters around anyone executing a lift and/or exercise
- Athletes should follow the coach’s instructions plan for training sessions.
- Athletes will be assigned in advance to one fully independent stations for the duration of the training session
- All primary exercises should be completed at each station
- The coach will supervise all individual stations from a safe distance
- Manual exercise spotting will not be permitted
- Athletes will be required to sanitize each piece of equipment before and after use
- Following each training session, athletes will wipe down all touched surfaces in their training space and will wait for their turn to depart
- Athletes will be required to depart promptly when safely able to do so and will not socialize around the exit

*****It is imperative that all athletes, parents and coaches involved in training respect physical distancing at all times. Failure to do so puts everyone at risk and should not be tolerated under any circumstances. Removal from training is an appropriate repercussion for repeated infractions*****

Planning for Training & Engaging in the Training Environment:

<p>Coaches</p>	<p>Location of Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training locations should be chosen based on the type of workout planned and have plenty of room to allow for physical distancing (city parks, large parking lots etc...) • Plan a Site A and a Site B in case of overcrowding at Site A • Use good judgement in determining if site relocation is necessary • Plan ahead and consult with other local clubs to avoid using the same location at the same time <p>General Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set a consistent routine/procedure to ensure physical distancing at each practice • Structure the training activities so that athletes are able to physical distance • Stagger athletes’ arrival and departure times to limit mingling
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare training sessions ahead of time keeping in mind individual athlete abilities in order to mitigate congestion, passing etc • Communicate workout directions/instructions a minimum of 3 hours prior to on site arrival • On site instructions should be brief and allow for participants to be separated by more than 2 metres • Suggestions for How to Practice Physical Distancing <p>Time Trials/Competitions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual start only with seeding athletes to avoid passing situations • Athlete self timed or coach only (stop) watch • No bibs • Virtual challenges so athletes can compete at different times
<p>Athletes</p>	<p>General Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the minimum distance of 2 metres between other people when engaged in higher speed training activities (ie. Roller skiing, running, cycling etc) • Review instructions/directions provided by coach prior to arriving on site for training • Arrive ready to go with all of your personal gear needed for your workout <p>Time Trial/Competition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self time when instructed by coach • Maintain a minimum of 2 metres between others if passing is necessary
<p>Facilities</p>	<p>Please review the following guidelines from the Government of Ontario for safety re-opening: Emergency Orders Resources for re-opening</p> <p>Regulation 223/20 is an amendment for Regulation 82/20. This governs the requirements for sport facilities. Please ensure you review the Regulation in its entirety. Below is an excerpt which pertains to facilities for cross country skiing.</p> <p><u>Section 34.4: Facilities, other than pools, that are in compliance with Section 8 Schedule 3 and that are being used by one or more of the following organizations, leagues or clubs to train amateur or professional athletes or to run amateur or professional athletic competitions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. a national sport organization funded by Sport Canada or a member club of such an organization II. a provincial sport organization or multi sport organization recognized by the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries or a member club of such an organization <p><u>Section 8 Schedule 3</u> <u>Facilities for athletic training or competitions</u></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. the only persons permitted to use the facility are athletes who are members of an organization, league or club described above; B. any person who enters or uses the facility maintains a physical distance of at least two metres from any other person who is using the facility; C. team sports and pool-based sports are not practised or played within the facility; D. other sports or games that are likely to result in individuals coming within two metres of each other are not practised or played within the facility; E. all sport activities are conducted in accordance with the rules and policies of the applicable organization identified above, including the rules and policies put in place to enable a safe return to the sport; F. no spectators are permitted at the facility, other than up to one accompanying parent, guardian or other adult for each athlete under the age of 18; and G. any locker rooms, change rooms, showers and clubhouses remain closed, except to the extent they provide access to a washroom or a portion of the facility that is used to provide first aid.
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Guidance for cross border clubs:

