

Ontario Safe Return to Play Protocol

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 or family physician or;
- Your local Public Health Unit

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

- Immediately self isolate
- Contact your local Public Health Unit for guidance on testing and contact tracing in your area
- Seek medical attention if necessary
- Follow Public Health recommendations regarding suspension or continuance of group training

Preamble:

Cross Country Ski Ontario continues to work with clubs to manage the safe return to play for our athletes and coaches. We continue to follow the current [Emergency Orders](#) in place in Ontario. 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 3 of Re-opening Ontario](#)

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

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

Cross Country Ski Ontario has taken measures to ensure that this Return to Play Protocol has been vetted by medical professionals knowledgeable of the current environment with respect to COVID-19 and familiar with cross country skiing and related training environments.

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.

This Return to Play Protocol is intended for use by clubs of Cross Country Ski Ontario when conducting group training for their members. All coaches and athletes engaging in training must be members of their clubs. Additional guidance for clubs is available from their local District Health Unit for local conditions.

As of July 17, 2020, gathering limits apply and are subject to physical distancing. Please keep informed of the current restrictions in place in your area.

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 specific guidance for coaches, athletes and facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. This information will be updated as conditions and restrictions change.

For Everyone

All athletes and coaches are reminded of the requirement to not attend training or workouts when ill. The COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated that strict adherence to self isolation when ill limits the spread of infection amongst teammates and coaches. Please engage in a self assessment of your personal health prior to training and STAY HOME if unwell.

Requirement for participation in group training - coaches, athletes and other attendees (volunteers, parents etc).

- 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, following public health guidelines for ending isolation is required. A [gradual return to training](#) should commence following the isolation period.
- 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. Mandatory use of masks indoors is a regional decision - please keep informed as to what applies in your area.

Wearing a mask while completing training activities, unless mandated by local by-laws or public health directives, is not necessary with an emphasis on appropriate physical distancing. Use of a mask is suggested for arrival and departure locations where appropriate physical distancing may not be possible. The use of a mask while in the coaching zone (see below) is not necessary unless 2 metres of physical distance between athletes and coaches isn't possible.

***Please note: We have received feedback from the ski community that the coaching zone size was restrictive and have revised it to be reflective of what we are allowed to do at this time based on public health directives. Good judgement and planning are imperative to ensure continued group training. Consider starting with smaller coaching zone group sizes if starting back to group training.**

Coaching Zone:

The immediate vicinity around the area where coaches engage in instruction with athletes. Examples would be: bottom of a hill, roller ski technique instructions or a section of running trail being used for intervals.

- Group size in the 'Coaching Zone' including athletes & coach(es) should be based on location constraints to ensure physical distancing at all times. Consider increasing spacing as speed increases and/or physical effort and breathing significantly increases.
- Maintain a consistent training cohort of 'Coaching Zone' athletes as much as possible
- Athletes outside of the 'Coaching Zone' also must follow provincial guidelines regarding physical distancing and not forming into groups.

- Use of a mask is not necessary in the 'Coaching Zone' unless the training location doesn't allow for physical spacing of more than 2 metres

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.
- Wash your hands when leaving your house, use hand sanitizer when arriving and departing 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:

- Arrive a few minutes prior to your assigned training start time 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

Safe Sport:

- Follow [Safe Sport](#) guidelines

Strength & Conditioning:

- Group size in the S&C Coaching Zone including coaches and athletes must adhere to facility capacity and provincial guidelines.
- Maintain consistency of training cohort of 'Coaching Zone' athletes as much as possible
- 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.
- The coach will supervise all individuals from a safe distance
- Manual exercise spotting will not be permitted
- Athletes are required to follow facility guidelines for sanitizing each piece of equipment before and after use
- 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 ● Establish and maintain training cohorts ● Structure the training activities so that athletes are able to physical distance
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Consider staggering athletes' arrival and departure times to limit mingling● 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 minimize passing situations● Athlete self timed (stop watch) or volunteer/coach timed● No bibs● Virtual challenges so athletes can compete at different times
Athletes	<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>Para Athletes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Consideration of potential medical needs of para athletes should be evaluated when training
Club/Team Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● At the discretion of the coach, identify a safe training monitor for each team practice. The safe training monitor is an additional volunteer who will monitor compliance with the requirements, and remind participants as needed.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This person should be authorized to communicate with athletes and remove participants who are non-compliant. This person could also be an athlete designated at each practice.
Facilities	<p>Please review the following relevant regulations from the Government of Ontario for safety re-opening:</p> <p>Emergency Orders</p> <p>Resources for re-opening</p> <p>Regulation 263/20 comes into effect on July 17, 2020</p> <p>Regulation 223/20 is an amendment for Regulation 82/20. This governs the requirements for sport facilities. Please ensure you review all the related regulations in their entirety.</p>

Guidance for cross border clubs:

