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NATIONAL DIRECTION

FOR RETURN TO RINGETTE



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RINGETTE
CANADA



RINGUETTE
CANADA



WHO SHOULD READ THIS?

This document is for Provincial Ringette Organization Members, sport partners and the broader ringette community. All of us – athletes, coaches, officials, support staff, and administrators – are playing a critical role in combating the spread of COVID-19 so that we can return safely to ringette activities.



A MESSAGE FROM RINGETTE CANADA

The signs are all around us. The COVID-19 lockdown is loosening. Depending on the province you live in, you are seeing authorities start to lift pandemic restrictions and open limited access to shops, restaurants, and recreational activities.

The last few months without ringette have been tough. We have missed our friends, coaches, training sessions, games, and tournaments. But all our efforts have paid off – the self-isolation, keeping our hands clean, and physical distancing. We have not beaten COVID-19, but we're seeing real signs of progress.

That means we can start thinking about a return to ringette! A return that will be smart, safe and fun for everybody.

Physical distancing and strict hygiene practices will mean that ringette will not be quite the same for a while. But we'll be back together and, gradually, it'll start looking more and more familiar.

This is new territory for all of us. Your Provincial Ringette Organizations and local associations and clubs are building plans based on the best available information from authorities in Canada and experts around the world. As a community, we'll adapt as we go along, keeping the best interests of participants at the centre of it all.

This guide represents the work of many ringette people across the sport. Special thanks to our provincial partners who've contributed such valuable insights and expertise, and to many other passionate supporters who are working so hard to make sure we're ready when we get the green light.

We owe a very special thank you to all the frontline workers who have risked so much to protect the rest of us from the ravages of an unpredictable virus. There are many such heroes within our ringette community and we applaud your dedication and commitment during this extraordinary public health crisis.

On behalf of the many local and provincial contributors to this guide, we hope you find it valuable in setting national direction for a return to ringette. We can't wait to see you back!

Sincerely,
NATASHA JOHNSTON
Executive Director

A RETURN THAT WILL BE SMART, SAFE AND FUN FOR EVERYBODY.

This document provides direction from Ringette Canada to guide the work of your Provincial Ringette Organization to develop detailed return to ringette plans. At the national level, we have put together this package of principles and progressions to inform decision-making at the provincial and local levels, and to ensure a consistent approach in every part of the country. The return to ringette is likely going to be a little bit different in each province, depending on guidance from public health authorities and facility owners.

While the heart and soul of our game has not changed, it probably won't look or feel exactly like you remember

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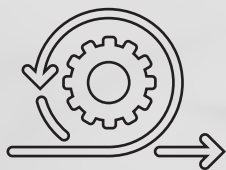
LEGAL DISCLAIMER

This Return to Ringette National Direction is to be only used for the purposes outlined in this document. Ringette Canada is committed to providing relevant and timely information; however, the COVID-19 landscape is shifting quickly, and tomorrow's reality will be different than today. This information is accepted on the condition that errors or omissions shall not be made the basis for any claim, demand or cause for action.

This is not a legal document and should be used as a guide only.

This is not a substitute for actual legislation or orders of the Provincial Health Officers throughout Canada. In the event of ambiguity or conflict between the National Direction for Return to Ringette and the Public Health Act of a Province, regulations and orders within that Act will prevail.

Ringette Canada's Members - the Provincial Ringette Organizations - will comply with requirements of provincial and local governments and health officials.



A PROGRESSIVE PLAN

This document provides direction to Provincial Ringette Organizations and local associations and clubs as they develop their detailed plans for a safe return to ringette activities.

It offers a series of guiding principles in critical areas such as hygiene, on-ice activities and risk management. It also explains the four-step progression that will guide the journey from the first allowable activities to the phase when all pandemic restrictions have been lifted.

This is not a “how to guide” with step-by-step instructions. It is meant to provide clear, general direction and defined parameters to help focus the work of local and Provincial Ringette Organizations who must abide by all the requirements of public health authorities and facility managers.

Provincial Ringette Organizations and local associations are expected to adopt these national guidelines as they implement their respective operational plans.

THERE WILL BE FOUR STEPS OR “PROGRESSIONS”

to ringette’s return. Based on leading practices, they have been developed in close collaboration with all Provincial Ringette Organizations and with the benefit of technical, medical, and legal expertise.

They are called “progressions” to avoid potential confusion with the “phases” of recovery being implemented by provincial governments in different ways and based on different timeframes. Ringette Canada’s progressions are not tied directly to any specific provincial phases. They are meant to ensure consistency in the way that ringette is re-introduced across Canada.

It is essential to recognize that each progression will only be implemented when local and provincial public health officials have deemed it safe to do so. Each progression will also adhere to the guidelines developed by facility operators.






Provincial Ringette Organizations are working closely with government officials to fully understand the required standards for sport and recreation facilities within the province.

Provincial Ringette Organizations will oversee the timing and the roll-out of the 4 Progressions. They will communicate to their member clubs and associations about their current progression level and when they may advance to subsequent levels. Failure to do so may result in a breach of provincial government directives. Provincial Ringette Organizations will require member clubs and associations to adopt the approved government and public health guidelines before being sanctioned to operate.

THE 4 PROGRESSIONS

The following table summarizes the evolution from one progression to the next in **FIVE CRITICAL AREAS:**

- ① Indoor and outdoor activities
- ② Participants
- ③ Contact vs. non-contact
- ④ Training and competition
- ⑤ Travel

	Progression 1	Progression 2	Progression 3	Progression 4
Indoor / Outdoor activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training at home or outdoors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited access to indoor facilities, based on restrictions imposed by local public health authorities • Outdoors remains the safest option, with training at home also strongly encouraged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater access to indoor facilities as public health restrictions are loosened 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All restrictions to indoor facilities lifted
Participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual activities in small groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group activities only • Number of spectators based on public health guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group sizes may increase, and some modified game play permitted • Limited spectators, based on public health guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full games permitted • No restrictions on the number of spectators
Contact vs. non-contact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No contact during off-ice activities (including high-fives, hugs, handshakes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No contact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded training with pair or small group contact drills and games 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No restrictions on contact, both on-ice and off-ice
Training and Competition* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off-ice training only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modified small-sided games may be introduced within clubs or associations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter-association/club or regional game play may be considered if public health guidelines allow it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial competitions and larger scale events may return • Regular game play is permitted • National programming reintroduced across the country
Travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only within the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on provincial and federal health guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic travel permitted. • International travel as dictated by federal guidelines

**Introduction of competitive activities should be in alignment with your Provincial Ringette Organization's Return to Ringette Plan.*

All activities must be sanctioned by your Provincial Ringette Organization and supervised by assigned team staff.

Each Provincial Ringette Organization will provide direction and resources for its member associations and clubs on appropriate activities and modified game structures for each progression. Updated guidance and information will be shared as it becomes available.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Provincial and local return to ringette plans will be guided by the following principles, which are being applied consistently across the country in 5 key areas:



HEALTH



HYGIENE



**LEGAL
CONSIDERATIONS**



**ON-ICE
ACTIVITIES**



**AWARENESS
AND EDUCATION**



PROTECTING **YOUR HEALTH** AND THOSE AROUND YOU

RESPECT THE GUIDANCE FROM HEALTH CANADA:

If you start to develop [symptoms of COVID-19](#), isolate yourself from others and contact your health care provider or local public health authority. Adjust your behaviours and routines based on their advice.

If you or your child are showing symptoms of COVID-19, reduce your contact with others:

- Isolate yourself at home for 14 days to avoid spreading it to others.
- If you live with others, stay in a separate room or keep a 2-metre distance at all times.
- Visit a health care professional or call your local public health authority.
- Call ahead to tell them your symptoms and follow their instructions.

✚ Participants should not return to sport if they have been unwell (even mild symptoms), have had contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, or have travelled outside the country in the previous 14 days.

✚ For anyone at an increased risk of more severe outcomes, they should review their specific health concerns with a primary healthcare provider before attending any ringette activity. Those at increased risk include people aged 65 and over as well as those with compromised immune systems and/or underlying medical conditions.

✚ Besides the physical health considerations, we must all be sensitive to the complex mental health issues that may accompany the return to ringette. Each of us will respond differently to changing conditions – some will embrace the “new normal” with excitement and anticipation, while others will be fearful of the unknown. The way we adapt to new developments will be as individual as we are, and will vary depending on the person, context, and environment.

You will find a variety of mental health resources throughout the summer on the Ringette Canada Resource Hub.



+ Only 1 parent or spectator per player should attend each ringette-related activity. Some exceptions may be permitted under public health guidelines due to the age and ability of the athlete(s).

+ Participants may be asked to complete a written health screening form prior to ringette activities and/or prior to entering a facility.

+ A team staff member or association designate will have full authority to send a participant home if that player is showing symptoms of illness.

+ When travelling to and from ringette activities, avoid any non-essential stops along the way.

+ Leave promptly after the ringette activity and avoid unnecessary interactions with others.

+ Our commitment to safe sport remains steadfast. All return to ringette plans must comply with existing Ringette Canada requirements to create safe, fun and welcoming environments for all participants. Details on Safe Sport Practices can be found on our [website](#).

+ Guidelines are being developed to provide team trainers with guidance on the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) when attending to an injured athlete. The guidelines will be posted on the [Ringette Canada COVID-19 Resource Hub](#).



HYGIENE

FUNDAMENTALS

WASH HANDS WITH SOAP AND WATER FOR AT LEAST 20 SECONDS

👉 Ringette organizers must communicate proper hygiene practices in advance to all participants.

👉 Promote [strict hand hygiene](#) (washing and sanitizing) before and after ringette activity.

👉 Avoid touching your face with your hands.

👉 Sneeze or cough into your elbow.

👉 Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after using the washroom.

👉 Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

👉 It is recommended that all participants bring their own hand sanitizer to all ringette activities.

👉 When public health guidelines allow for facility access, athletes, coaches and officials should arrive dressed in their on-ice uniform. Helmet and skates can be put on inside the facility.

👉 Team Staff must bring their own coaching equipment: boards, cones, etc. and sanitize it after every session.

👉 All teams must carry wipes, hand sanitizer and pump soap in their equipment bags.

👉 Athletes, parents and coaching assistants should avoid handling equipment with their bare hands. Ringette sticks can be used to move equipment.

👉 Take a shower at home instead of at the facility.



LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS & RISK MANAGEMENT

Provincial Ringette Organizations will provide all associations and clubs with updated waivers (for adults) and assumption of risk forms (for minors, signed by their parent/guardian) that address COVID-19. These documents will be required for all participants, coaches, team staff, officials, and volunteers. Provincial Ringette Organizations will have access to templates provided by Ringette Canada.

All participants will also be required to complete Declarations of Compliance. Reviewing and signing these documents will help to protect all participants against the risk of COVID-19 infection.

Clubs should also be implementing attendance tracking and have each person attending an activity sign a daily attestation/declaration relating to COVID-19.

Ringette clubs and associations must also communicate with their Provincial Ringette Organization to find out what they need to know about the risks associated with COVID-19 and what mitigation tools may need to be implemented. A detailed *Club Risk Assessment and Mitigation Checklist* is available on the [Ringette Canada Resource Hub](#).

A DETAILED CLUB RISK ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION CHECKLIST IS AVAILABLE ON THE [RINGETTE CANADA RESOURCE HUB](#).

When considering their risk management strategies, Provincial Ringette Organizations and clubs and local organizations should consider the four strategies for risk management:

- 1 AVOID THE RISK**
(e.g., do not engage in an activity / discontinue program)
- 2 REDUCE THE RISK**
(e.g., manage the risk by modifying the program / changing behaviour)
- 3 TRANSFER THE RISK**
(e.g., insurance (transfer to insurer) / waivers (transfer to participant))
- 4 RETAIN THE RISK**
(e.g., absorb the loss)

Each organization can determine how best it wants to mitigate risk. For some organizations, this may mean not offering a program (like a program for young children where physical distancing may be challenging) or it may mean significantly changing how participants interact on the ice.

Waivers, declarations of health, behavioural changes, and insurance are all risk management strategies. Insurance does not cover everything, so it is recommended that all associations and clubs check with their Provincial Ringette Organization to determine what their insurance policy does not cover and then enact other risk management strategies to address any gaps.

SAFETY OFFICER

(or as identified by your Provincial Ringette Organization)

It is recommended that all ringette groups, associations and/or clubs appoint at least one Safety Officer who will be responsible for overseeing and monitoring the local Return to Ringette Guidelines (based on the Provincial Ringette Organization plan) in addition to specific facility regulations and protocols.

This individual will be responsible for ensuring that all relevant information is shared across the membership in a timely fashion.

Specific responsibilities of the Safety Officer (or his/her delegate) may include but are not limited to:

-  Accessing the latest available information and guidance on the COVID-19 outbreak (e.g., Health Canada websites, provincial health departments and local public health authorities).
-  Liaison with the Provincial Ringette Organization to facilitate updates related to their Return to Ringette Guidelines and to fully understand the consequences of non-compliance.
-  Liaison with local facilities to confirm guidelines, protocols, and updates.
-  Ensuring teams are following the prevention guidelines set by the Provincial Ringette Organization, local association, club, or league.
-  Maintaining Activity Logs that list all participants attending and/or participating in every ringette-related activity. The logs must be kept on file for a least 6 weeks. A sample tool can be found on the [Ringette Canada COVID-19 resource hub](#).
-  Collecting and maintaining documents (including attendance sheets, waivers, assumption of risk forms, and declaration of health forms / attestations).
-  Reminding Team Staff that unsanctioned activities are not permitted.
-  Ensuring that any COVID-19 cases are reported to the appropriate public health authority, Provincial Ringette Organization, local association, league, club and facility.










UNSANCTIONED ACTIVITIES

Under no circumstances should clubs and associations allow teams to gather without adhering to the principles described in this document as well as the appropriate Provincial Ringette Organization Plan. Team staff should not be permitted to organize impromptu training sessions as **any unsanctioned activities would not be covered by insurance through Ringette Canada or your Provincial Ringette Organization.**

This would leave the Team Staff liable for any legal claims or damages, including if a participant contracted COVID-19 because the National Direction and/or provincial plan was not respected during the unsanctioned activity.



ON THE ICE

-  At all times during both on-ice and off-ice sessions, team staff are responsible for ensuring that athletes are adhering to physical distancing guidelines from provincial authorities and facility operators.
-  Equipment should not be shared, except for the ring.
-  If the ring is shared for activities, the following must be implemented:
 - o Handled only with a ringette stick
 - o No touching with hands or playing gloves (modified rules will apply to goalies and will be available through your Provincial Ringette Association)
-  Coaches, athletes and officials should keep rings, equipment and other ringette-related objects in a clean, separate space in their own homes.
-  Each coach, player and official **MUST** have his/her own labeled water bottle and his/her own towel (if they choose to bring one). Sharing is not permitted.
-  Athletes should take water breaks in small groups and not as an entire team. They must not spit water onto the ice or the bench and should avoid spraying water into their mouths.
-  Team staff should send activity plans to athletes at least 12 hours in advance to avoid close gatherings around white boards and to make the most of limited ice time.



AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

A robust provincial or local Return to Ringette plan must include regular communication to athletes, coaches, officials, parents and volunteers. It is recommended that all clubs and associations appoint at least one individual as the primary conduit of current, factual information about new developments.

Prior to the return to ringette, it is strongly recommended that parents and participants be invited to an online videoconference hosted by the Provincial Ringette Organization and/or the local association or club. The meeting would provide essential information about health and safety guidelines, on-ice and off-ice programming, and would allow for questions.

All coaches and association administrators will be required to attend training on your provincial Return to Ringette plans. Further details will be provided this summer through each of the Provincial Ringette Organizations.

OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES AND CHECKLISTS CAN BE FOUND ON THE
[Ringette Canada COVID-19 resource hub.](#)



RINGETTE CANADA'S COVID-19 RESOURCE HUB

IS YOUR SOURCE FOR **THE LATEST INFORMATION**
ON THE PANDEMIC AND UPDATED GUIDANCE ON
OUR RETURN TO RINGETTE.



IMPORTANT LINKS AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Ringette BC](#)

[Ringette Alberta](#)

[Ringette Saskatchewan](#)

[Ringette Manitoba](#)

[Ringette Ontario](#)

[Ringette Quebec](#)

[Ringette New Brunswick](#)

[Ringette NS](#)

[Ringette PEI](#)



GOVERNMENT OF CANADA RESSOURCES

[COVID-19 Website](#)

[COVID-19 Digital tools](#)

[COVID-19 Awareness Resources](#)

