

RETURN TO IN-PERSON PLAY AMID COVID-19

An infographic titled "STAYING SAFE AT THE BALLPARK" is enclosed in a blue border. At the top is the Jays Care Foundation logo. Below the title are three icons: a person wearing a face mask, hands being washed under a faucet, and three people standing with 6-foot arrows between them. Below these icons is a numbered list of three instructions.

JAYS CARE FOUNDATION

STAYING SAFE AT THE BALLPARK

PLEASE HAVE A FACE COVERING

PLEASE WASH/SANITIZE YOUR HANDS

PLEASE MAINTAIN PROPER SOCIAL DISTANCING

1. Please wear a face mask/covering at all times
2. Please make sure to wash and sanitize your hands
3. Please maintain proper social distancing of 6ft

An easy guide to support coaches & program leaders across Canada who are ready to return to play

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WELCOME TO THIS GUIDE

COVID-19 has drastically altered the way Canadians live, and it will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. As restrictions are lightened in various provinces and municipalities across the country, many coaches and program leaders are looking to return to in-person programming. However, the number of guidelines that program leaders are expected to follow can feel vast and often insurmountable. It can be hard to know where to start and how to bring in-person programming to life in a safe way. Jays Care has designed this resource to help coaches and program leaders across the country see that in-person play can be done safely and relatively easily by following some tangible steps. All of the coaches and program leaders we have ever worked with have always been concerned about safety. With return-to-play, it's all about ensuring that safety is the top priority. This resource is designed to help you plan and implement your programs in ways that continue to ensure that all of your staff, volunteers, athletes and spectators can stay safe and have fun.

This resource includes lots of illustrated examples to help you better imagine how your new in-person programs may look/feel, and follows these simple steps:



STEP ONE: CHECK YOUR PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL GUIDELINES

It doesn't matter if you and all of your players/participants are keen to return to play if your provincial and municipal guidelines say you're not allowed to. The most essential first step is to ensure that you have reviewed your Provincial Ministry of Health's guidelines in conjunction with your municipality's procedures surrounding recreation and sport in your community. These are usually 2-4 page documents and will help you get a sense of what your province expects of you in terms of return to play guidelines. Here are a few examples:

[Provincial and Territorial Resources for COVID-19](#) – click on your province, then click on “Resources” and/or “Relaunch Guidance Documents”. These titles differ for every province.

[Document Hub: Return to Play by Province](#) – Baseball Canada: click on your province's logo and you will be redirected to their Return to Play document.

It's important to note that as provinces move through different phases of COVID, these guidelines can change. They can become more relaxed or more rigid. It's vital that you check these guidelines regularly so you are aware of any changes that you are expected to adhere to.

Strict compliance with provincial and municipal guidelines and protocols is your sole responsibility and not the responsibility of Jays Care.

STEP TWO: MAP OUT KEY SAFETY PROTOCOLS FOR YOUR PROGRAM

Once you are certain that returning to in-person play is approved in your province and municipality, it's time to start mapping out the safety protocols you need to have in place for your program. Here's how:

GROUP SIZE:

1. **HOW MANY PEOPLE:** Confirm what the permitted size of group gatherings is in your province/municipality. You cannot run an in-person program if your province and your municipality has not lifted restrictions and has not **given explicit permission** for gatherings of 10+.
2. **CONSIDER EVERYONE:** Maximum group size counts need to consider coaches, volunteers, participants, spectators, etc.

PROGRAM LOCATION:

Preparing for in-person programming amid COVID requires you to become remarkably aware of your program location.

1. **SELECT APPROPRIATE LOCATION:** Confirm where you will host the program and ensure that it has enough space to adequately host your group while maintaining social distancing requirements. There must be enough space in the play area to allow for physical distancing between people; this means that in a smaller room, occupancy limits may be much less than your province and municipality's guidelines.

2. **DEVELOP A MAP:** Develop a map that outlines high touch areas such as:
 - Doorknobs / door push bar / door handles
 - Counter tops / bar tops / work stations / desktops /drawers /shelves /cupboards
 - Countertop displays / display cases / bulletin boards
 - Handrails / light switches
 - Elevators / escalators / stair railings
 - Chairs / guest seating areas / tabletops
 - Bathroom counter tops / sinks / taps /
 - Toilets / stall doors / door handles and locks, shelves, hooks, waste disposals
 - Bathroom paper dispensers /soap dispensers / support bars / stools for children
 - Chairs / benches / dugouts / water fountains
 - Baseball equipment
 - Public seating / bleachers

3. **IDENTIFY ANY AREAS THAT WILL BE OFF LIMITS:**
There may be some smaller spaces or storage spaces that you want as no touch zones.

4. **CONSIDER USING FLOOR ARROWS TO MARK PATHWAYS:** For areas that may become congested (registration line up areas, entry and exit points) you may want to consider adding floor arrows to ensure one-way traffic and limit congestion.

5. **IDENTIFY IDEAL LOCATIONS FOR HAND SANITIZING AND DISPOSAL OF DIRTY ITEMS SAFELY:** Ensuring that your participants and spectators are regularly hand sanitizing and disposing of all potentially infected items (Kleenex, masks, gloves) safely, means that you need to ensure your hand sanitizing pumps and disposal bins are in appropriate and accessible places.



AT HOME SCREENING:

Identify the screening requirements for participants and family members **BEFORE** they attend programming.

1. **SELF-SCREENING AT HOME:** All individuals, including athletes, parents/guardians, volunteers, and visitors are expected to self-screen at home prior to arrival AND be screened upon arrival at program prior to entry to ensure they a) do not have a fever, and b) are not exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. This includes:
 - Daily temperature checks (must be below 100.4°F); and
 - Reviewing a symptom checklist (reference symptoms outlined in the COVID-19 Reference Document for Symptoms on your provinces Ministry of Health's COVID-19 website). You can view the COVID-19 Self-Assessment Form to aid in screening here: <https://ca.thrive.health/covid19/en>

2. **MAKE IT ELECTRONIC TO SAVE A RECORD:** Where possible, daily screening should be done electronically (e.g., via online form, survey, or e-mail) prior to arrival at program.

ON SITE SCREENING AND ATTENDANCE RECORDS:

Identify the screening requirements for participants and family members **WHEN THEY ARRIVE** at programming. Here are some of the most consistent protocols that currently exist across the country:

1. **SCREENING:** If screening is done at the program site, volunteers/screeners should take appropriate precautions when screening, including maintaining a distance of at least 2 metres (6 feet) from those being screened, being separated by a physical barrier (such as a plexiglass barrier), and/or wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) (i.e., surgical/procedure mask and eye protection (goggles or face shield)). Refer to your province’s Public Health resources for how to properly wear and take-off masks and eye protection.

2. **AVOID CROWDING:** Along with adhering to your province’s guidelines surrounding group gatherings, you should also make every effort to prevent overcrowding during the screening process (and while athletes/parents/guardians are entering/exiting program) by clearly marking safe physical distancing parameters wherever possible.



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ATTENTION ALL ATHLETES

PLEASE DELAY YOUR VISIT IF:

- YOU ARE EXPERIENCING ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS
- IF YOU HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH ANYONE WITH THESE SYMPTOMS



Please, return home and return to our program **ONLY** when you have been cleared by a health authority

3. **THERMOMETERS:** Many screening processes include thermometers. If you determine that you will use thermometers, it is essential that thermometers are not used between program athletes/volunteers/coaches without single-use protective covers or disinfecting between use
4. **SYMPTOM CHECKLISTS:** In-person screening involves asking every participant and spectator a series of health screening questions before permitting them to attend programming. You can find the most up-to-date list of these symptoms on the Government of Canada’s website here: [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\): Symptoms and treatment](#).
5. **HAND SANITIZING STATIONS:** Alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol content should be placed at all screening stations and entrances/exits to your program. Dispensers should not be in locations that could potentially be accessed unsafely by young children. When purchasing and placing hand sanitizer, consider accessibility for your participants and families (i.e. choosing automated pump over squeeze bottle, etc..)

- DAILY RECORDS:** Programs must keep daily records of everyone (e.g., athletes, parent/guardians, coaches, volunteers and visitors) entering the program setting who stay for 15 minutes or longer. Records (e.g., name, contact information, time of arrival/departure, screening completion etc.) must be kept up-to-date and available to facilitate contact tracing in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case or outbreak.

ON-SITE RULES:

Hosting programming amid COVID means establishing and maintaining new safety rules for your players and spectators that weren't there before. Here are some of the expectations of players and spectators. Consider ways that you can turn these into easy-to-follow rules that all players, families, and spectators are aware of and that can be enforced.

- REGULARLY HAND SANITIZE:** Athletes, volunteers and coaches should wash or sanitize their hands throughout practices and games (e.g., every time a player returns to the dugout) and after the handling of equipment or personal items (e.g., water bottles). Clean hands at least every inning/every 30 minutes after handling shared equipment.
- TRY NOT TO TOUCH YOUR FACE:** Programs should do their best to communicate the elimination of touching of the face (eyes, nose and mouth) when handling shared equipment during sessions (athletes, coaches, volunteers, etc...)
- STAY SIX FEET APART:** Programs should maintain a minimum of 2 metres distancing during ALL activities (including warm-ups, pre-game & post-game). Dugouts/benches should only be used if physical distancing standards can be maintained. Avoid congestion at points of entry to the diamond (ex./ gates & dugout doors)
- BRING YOUR OWN WATER BOTTLE AND SNACKS AND DON'T SHARE THEM:** Prohibit the use of communal water and sport drink coolers/jugs. Individualized water and/or sport drink bottles are to be used instead. Avoid sharing cups, water bottles, food/snacks, and limit all food and drink products (if necessary, within your program) to individualized items. Individual food and drink containers should be sanitized at home after each use.
- WEAR A MASK:** Cloth and/or surgical face masks should be worn during program by coaches, program leaders, athletes and parents/guardians, especially in areas where social distancing is either not possible or difficult to maintain (for example, in the dugout). This includes facilities that are both indoors and outdoors.



- **Helping athletes get used to mask-wearing:** The Masks Toolkit (written by the Strong Centre for Developmental Disabilities) includes some great suggestions for helping athletes feel more comfortable with mask-wearing: [The Masks Toolkit](#)
 - **Exceptions:** For those with sensory sensitivities or those who cannot put a mask on themselves, be sure that you have a clear policy in place to support them (i.e. You may require a doctor's note that explains why they are exempt, the CDC recommends that they consult their healthcare provider for advice about alternatives).
6. **DON'T SPIT:** Gum and sunflower seeds are a common part of the baseball diamond. However, both come with the risk and habit of spitting. Make it clear that spitting is no longer allowed.
 7. **AIR HIGH FIVES ONLY:** Hands-in circles, high fives and group huddles are a common part of team traditions. Introducing air high fives and other distanced and safe methods of cheering each other on is essential to keep your players safe.
 8. **DON'T SHARE EQUIPMENT:** Sharing of equipment is an easy way to spread the virus. That's why players and families need to bring their own equipment (baseball bat, glove, helmet) and disinfect it before and after practice and games. If players don't have their own bats, ensure that a volunteer or staff member is sanitizing bats between each use.
 9. **COVER YOUR MOUTH:** Participants will need regular reminders (especially if they are young) that if they need to sneeze or cough, they should cover their mouth with a sleeve or use a Kleenex.



MANAGING SPECTATORS:

Additional considerations need to be put in place to keep spectators safe.

1. **REDUCE DENSITY:** Programs should make efforts to reduce the density of parents/guardians and spectators on site by setting a maximum number of family attendees and arrival times prior to program.
2. **NO LINGERING POLICY:** Programs should also request safe departure from the program site within a reasonable amount of time at the conclusion of each program session.
3. **FACE MASKS FOR SPECTATORS:** Encourage parents/guardians/spectators to utilize a face mask or face covering while on site.
4. **ADJUST YOUR SEATING:** Consider limiting and/or spacing seating in stands/benches and around playing sites to promote physical distancing.
5. **USE SIGNAGE TO HELP KEEP FOLKS ON TRACK:** There are variety of examples of signage throughout this manual for inspiration and in **Appendix E** (for printable versions).



TEAM AGREEMENT:

All these changes and rules are inevitably going to be a challenge for everyone but could be additionally difficult for any athletes with neurodevelopmental, developmental and cognitive disabilities. Working with your team to draft a new "Team Agreement" at the onset of this new season, is a great way to get everyone on the same page regarding new rules as well as repercussions for breaking them. Bringing your team together and explaining the new rules, their rationale and having images and diagrams that help to support and reinforce the rules can help all of your players better understand what is expected of them. You may choose to create this team agreement in-person with 6 foot distancing, or on a virtual platform (i.e. Zoom or Microsoft Teams) in advance of your first practice/session. It is really important that athletes are informed and involved in creating the rewards (these can be set for individuals and/or for your team) for following the rules as well as the repercussions for breaking them. Here is a great example of how this can look:

Sample Rewards (individualized and team)

If you follow all the safety rules (mask on and 6 foot distancing), mom will take you to Tim Horton's for hot chocolate

If we all follow the safety rules, we all get 5 extra minutes of play time

Desired behaviours demonstrated = continuing to play

1st instance of undesired behaviour = 1 reminder/modeling and 1st warning

2nd instance of undesired behaviour = 2nd reminder and 2nd warning

3rd instance of undesired behaviour = sitting out of the game or going home

ADDRESSING RULE BREAKING:

There are lots of ways to effectively and respectfully intervene when parents or athletes breach the new rules. Consider following these steps when parents, guardians or athletes breach the new safety measures.

For Athletes:

1. Know each individual athlete and how they learn best. A verbal explanation that includes a clear rationale for why the behaviour was unsafe, what the impact of the behaviour could be, and how to adjust the behaviour will work for many players, but not all. For some players, it may be best keep explanations simple and/or augment your explanation with pictures.
2. Consider tools such as contingency maps to help players understand the consequences of unsafe behaviour.
3. It might help to add more visual cues (e.g., additional spot markers to show where to stand, add more arrows to help the group understand the flow between activities).
4. Remember that front loading (e.g., preparing the participant in advance) is critical for many athletes, so provide reminders before each activity starts about specifically what is expected (e.g., "Remember, for our team cheer today, we will stand on an orange dot and do our special new team air handshake!").
5. Consult with parents/guardians (preferably by phone) to talk through ideas about how to help their athlete participate safely. They may have insight from what has worked in other community outings during the pandemic.
6. If an athlete is struggling to follow the new rules, engage parents in helping to nudge their athletes back on track.
7. Remember to keep the focus on the positive, and provide frequent praise to ALL players for following the safety guidelines (e.g., "Thanks for remembering to sanitize your hands! I like how you remembered to give an air high five!").
8. Consider adding a point system for the group where the team can earn a special game at the end to really help to support all athletes to adjust to the many changes to the Challenger routine. Points can be earned for following new protocols such as remembering to sanitize, remembering to keep distance, remembering not to touch others equipment, etc.
9. Speak to the athlete's parent/guardian after the session (or during if possible) to explain any safety concerns and ask them to remind their child of the new safety protocols before the next session.

For Parents:

1. Ensure that parents/guardians understand that as a member of Challenger Baseball, the program is at risk for losing access to in-person play if protocols are not followed.
2. Explain to the parent/guardian that you are doing your best to ensure the safety of all coaches, parents and participants.
3. Explain to the parent/guardian the safety rule that was breached and why the behaviour could be considered unsafe/unsanitary.

4. Apologize to them if the new rule may be inconvenient (i.e. having to watch their child from a further distance, or not being able to interact with other parents/guardians as they usually do, etc.) but assure them that you've been instructed that this measure is important for the safety of all people in attendance.
5. Thank the parent/guardian for their understanding and willingness to comply with the new rules for everybody's safety.
6. Ask the parent/guardian to help you by reminding other parents of the new safety rules if they see them breaching them as well.
7. If the unsafe behaviour happens again, remind the parent/guardian of the new rules and thank them again for their understanding and compliance.

NOTE: If unsafe behaviour continues for either athletes or parents after appropriate, collaborative interventions have been attempted, program removal may need to be discussed. It is important that families understand that provincial health protocols are mandatory for all groups and that the program will be cancelled if safety measures cannot be upheld. If you need to remove an athlete from a program, make every effort to refer them to available online/virtual programs where these new safety protocols won't be a concern.

EQUIPMENT:

Running in-person programming amid COVID requires additional equipment to keep everyone safe.

1. **USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:** Programs should provide PPE supplies for coaches, program leaders and volunteers, including face masks (if they do not have their own), hand sanitizer and safety signage. Athletes and families should be encouraged to bring their own face mask for program (if they do not have one – program should be able to provide).
2. **TYPE OF MASKS:** Cloth and/or surgical face masks should be worn during program by coaches, program leaders, athletes and parents/guardians, especially in areas where social distancing is either not possible or difficult to maintain (for example, in the dugout). This includes facilities that are both indoors and outdoors.
3. **ASSIGNED VOLUNTEERS/STAFFING:** Programs should dedicate 1 volunteer to organize the necessary PPE equipment and signage onsite to minimize contact with multiple people prior to use.



4. **LIMIT SHARING:** If possible, equipment (glove, bat, batter's helmet, baseballs, etc...) should not be shared between athletes. Programs should consider allowing each athlete their own pieces of equipment for the duration of a session and/or utilize "dirty" and "clean" area(s)/buckets for equipment throughout the session. When some equipment needs to be shared, programs should establish protocols for when and how equipment will be cleaned and disinfected in between uses.

5. **EQUIPMENT AT PRACTICES:** Sharing of equipment such as batting helmets, catchers' masks, or other equipment likely to have been exposed to respiratory droplets should be avoided. Each player should have their own bat, helmet, baseball mitt(s), batting gloves, rosin bags, etc. and store these items inside their personal bag when not in use. Equipment that must be shared must be cleaned/sanitized between players' use. General equipment (eg. L-screens, field maintenance equipment, bases) must be wiped down between groups if it must be shared.

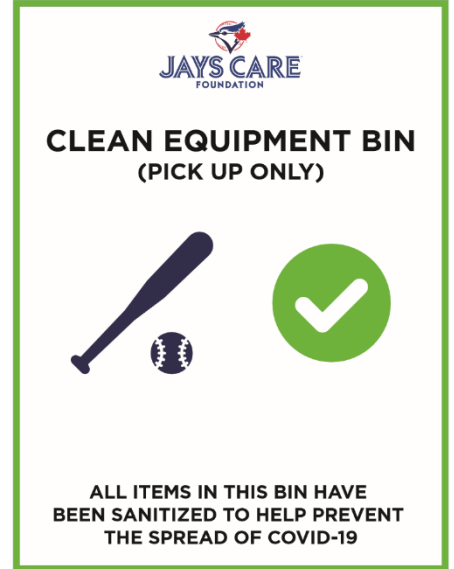
6. **AVOID COMMON PLACES:** Avoid personal clothing, equipment or electronics etc. being left in common places. Store inside personal bag always.

7. **EQUIPMENT AT GAMES:**

- **Baseballs:** Ball prep (mud rubbing) should be done by one appointed personnel with protective gloves. No use of saliva can be included in preparing balls. The defensive team will maintain control of the game balls used while they are on defense. Defensive team will need to chase all foul balls while they are in the field. Members of the offensive team are not to touch the baseballs of the defensive team.
- **Bats:** No bat boys/girls shall be allowed. If batter is not able to retrieve their own bat, a team representative of at least 16 years of age shall pick-up wearing protective gloves. Team representative shall apply hand sanitizer and/or wash hands upon conclusion of the half inning.
- **Other Equipment:** Masks worn by pitchers, when they so choose, will be assessed as per existing rules regarding distracting colours, etc. (recommended that it not be white or grey). No sharing of catcher's masks in warming up pitchers. If no catcher's mask is readily available, warm up pitches may be thrown to a player/coach who is standing, but not squatting. A safety base may be used at first base. It is not mandatory to use it. The home team will determine if it is to be used for a particular game. Coach feeding the pitching machine shall sanitize/clean their hands after every offensive inning.

8. **DISINFECT COMMUNAL EQUIPMENT REGULARLY:** Programs should consider disinfecting communal equipment regularly throughout practices and games (i.e., between innings and/or between activities). Consider limiting the continued use of baseball and softballs without cleaning. Balls should be cleaned throughout an activity or rotated out on a regular basis.

9. **DISINFECT AT HOME:** Request that parents/guardians clean and disinfect any personal equipment before and after group activities.



CLEANING PROCEDURES:

Enhanced **Cleaning Protocols** should be used to minimize transmission risk. Program leaders should work directly with their governing body and associated facility to ensure cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing occurs at regular intervals. The following steps should be considered when establishing cleaning and disinfecting protocols:

1. **HIGH CONTACT AREA CLEANING:** Establish a process for cleaning high-contact areas in accordance with [CDC Guidelines](#) before, throughout, and after use. Frequently touched areas (e.g., door handles, light switches, high-traffic fence posts, benches, etc...) should be cleaned multiple times during program.

2. **HAND SANITIZING AND HAND WASHING STATIONS:** Hand sanitizer and/or hand washing stations should be made available in all high-traffic areas and practice/playing sites. Increase the availability of handwashing and/or hand-sanitizing stations (preferably with contactless dispensers) throughout communal spaces (dugouts) and restrooms. Soap and water, hand sanitizer 70% (or higher), and disinfectant wipes should be available at all times. Here is a list of recommended disinfectants: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid19/list.html>

3. **WASHROOM CLEANING:** It is recommended to work with your facility/play space to develop a plan for washroom cleaning, should washrooms be available at your program site (including accessible washrooms).

4. **EQUIPMENT CLEANING:** Cleaning of equipment shall take place several times a day using different microfiber cloths and disinfectants (from the above list) for each object/surface.

5. **CLEANING PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS:** At minimum, cleaning personnel must be protected appropriately with a face mask and gloves. This is those cleaning both the equipment and facilities.

6. **RENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:** If your sport organization/governing body is a renter or facility user, it is important to understand what protocols are in place at the facility in order to assess the level of risk involved in utilizing the facility. In addition:
 - Programs should consider assigning a dedicated volunteer to manage appropriate cleaning protocols for their facility
 - Those tasked with cleaning should be provided with the necessary protective equipment
 - Program leaders, in conjunction with their governing body, are responsible for monitoring any changes to provincial and municipal cleaning/sanitizing guidelines and appropriately updating their protocols.

7. **SCHEDULING:** Scheduling must allow for 45 minutes between events this allows for:



BEFORE EVENT:

- Teams entering the venue must clean/sanitize the equipment
- Clean/sanitize the common areas
- Creating 2 zones. 1 for clean and 1 for used equipment to be stored. For example near first base is used (needs to be cleaned) and near third base is clean.

AFTER EVENT:

- Dispose of garbage from common areas
- Cleaning equipment once the event is complete and storing safely
- Clean/sanitize the equipment and common area
- All team members must vacate the area while still ensuring the 2-metre distance
- Changerooms are not recommended unless physical distancing guidelines can be observed and must be cleaned/sanitized before and after use
- Disinfecting of common spaces before and after use include these areas:
 - ✓ Frequently touched areas within dugout/bench, Ex./ bench, bat racks, helmet racks
 - ✓ Maintenance equipment
 - ✓ Door/Fence handles
 - ✓ Any other spaces that are frequent to touch

DURING EVENT:

- Designate one volunteer/individual to have a cleaning spray as drills or activities are rotating
- Clean/sanitize the equipment once an individual is complete using it
- Trying your best to enforce personal equipment being used

EMERGENCY PLANNING:

Preparing for emergencies related to COVID is essential before you launch your program. Here are a few common scenarios to establish clear plans and processes for.

- 1. TURNING PEOPLE AWAY WHO FAIL THE SCREENING:** Do not permit program athletes, volunteers, coaches, parents and/or guardians who are ill to attend the program. Signage should be posted at screening stations and entrances to the program to remind volunteers, parents/guardians, and other visitors.
- 2. CONCERN RE: COVID SYMPTOMS:** In addition to daily records of everyone (e.g., athletes, parent/guardians, coaches, volunteers and visitors) entering the program setting who stays for 15 minutes or longer, programs must have a plan to contacts *all* families associated with the program should anyone from the program become ill with COVID-19. This includes both e-mail and phone notification with associated next steps to ensure all program participants have a clear understanding of their next steps to a) get tested, and b) when the program will be cancelled/resume in-person
- 3. CONTACTING PUBLIC HEALTH:** Programs should contact their local public health unit to report an athlete/coach/volunteer suspected to have COVID-19. The local public health unit will provide specific advice on what control measures should be implemented to prevent the potential spread and how to monitor for other possible infected program attendees (See **Appendix B** for an example of an *Illness Policy* from [viaSport British Columbia](#))
- 4. CALLING TO INFORM FAMILIES:** Programs must have protocols in place to notify parents/guardians if their athlete begins to show symptoms of COVID-19 while at program, including the need for immediate pick-up and an area to isolate the athlete until pick-up.

STEP THREE: REVIEW YOUR PLAN WITH YOUR PROVINCIAL BASEBALL OR OTHER GOVERNING BODY TO ENSURE THAT IT IS APPROVED AND ALIGNED

Before launching your program, ensure that you have reviewed your plan with your provincial baseball or governing body to ensure that it is approved.

STEP FOUR: UPDATE ALL REGISTRATION FORMS, WAIVERS AND COMMUNICATIONS TO REFLECT YOUR NEW SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- 1. REVISED CODE OF CONDUCT:** You will need to update your Code of Conduct and Participant Agreements for participants, volunteers and staff to reflect these new policies and procedures. Before redesigning your own, check in with your governing body to see if a revised one already exists. See **Appendix A** for a sample updated **Participant Agreement**.
- 2. REVISED REGISTRATION PROCESS:** Your registration forms and program overviews should include the new rules and expectations to keep everyone safe. Programs should work directly with their governing body to make any necessary amendments to their program waiver and registration forms to reflect any associated risk for COVID-19 in their unique community.
- 3. REVISED WELCOME PACKAGE:** Ensure that your welcome package for registered participants reminds and reinforces all the new ways that the program will look and feel, as well as all expectations you will have for them in order to make the program safe. See an example of a revised **Welcome Letter for Parents/Guardians** in **Appendix C**.
- 4. INCREASED REGULAR COMMUNICATION:** On-going communication is essential to maintain safety and awareness. Enhance regular communication to all program attendees (coaches, program leaders, volunteers, athletes and families) about preventative measures for reducing the risks related to COVID-19. Consider using electronic messages, signage, and other promotional materials to promote the daily practice of preventative actions (including frequent hand washing and/or sanitizing) in all high-traffic areas. See an example of a **pre-practice email for Parents/Guardians** in **Appendix D**.



5. **REVISE YOUR POLICIES:** Many of the policies you have in place to keep staff, volunteers and participants safe, will need to be updated to include your new safety protocols. See an example of an updated *Illness Policy* in **Appendix B**.

STEP FIVE: PLAN YOUR DAY-TO-DAY PROGRAM

1. **RETHINK RATIOS:** Your program should consider the activities you will deliver and the appropriate group sizes in order to ensure proper physical distancing. Program leaders should outline expectations related to coach-athlete ratios that are appropriate for your program and the associated guidelines. *NOTE: While these guidelines suggest reducing non-essential personnel, other safety considerations such as the [Rule of Two](#) should be maintained so not to expose participants to other risk factors.*
2. **FIND WAYS TO ENHANCE SOCIAL CONNECTIONS:** To enhance social connection, consider adding additional virtual meetings and/or sessions to limit physical interactions.
3. **STAY PUT:** Discourage group excursions for your program outside of your practice/session.
4. **SELECT DRILLS, SKILLS AND ACTIVITIES THAT SUPPORT SOCIAL DISTANCING:** With a touch of creativity, it's easy to adjust activities so that physical distancing can be maintained. Refer to *Jays Care's 6 Foot Activity Manual* for ideas and inspiration.
5. **FOCUS ON TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACHES:** COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the social and emotional well-being of children and youth. As you plan your practices and programming, consider ways that you can incorporate trauma-informed approaches into your program (From: [PHE Canada COVID-19 Pandemic: Return to School Canadian Physical and Health Education Guidelines](#))

To foster a sense of physical and emotional safety, coaches/program leaders can:

- | | |
|--|--|
| - Focus their program on the joy of movement rather than compliance | - Encourage athletes to ask questions and self-advocate in a way that is best for them |
| - Set and keep a routine for their program | - Be culturally responsive, fostering cultural pride and self-pride by weaving cultural knowledge into their program |
| - Promote self-awareness through feeling charts and/or using the Zones of Regulation | |
| - Use mindfulness and breathing exercises to support self-awareness and regulation | |

To foster a sense of belonging, coaches/program leaders can:

- | | |
|--|---|
| - Increase focus on athlete voice | - Help the athletes feel connected by encouraging safe (and familiar) team traditions, show and tell online, and/or storytelling |
| - Make time to ask about athletes' interests and finding common interests between athletes | - Embed a sense of responsibility by assigning athletes certain roles within practice (e.g., like helping to remind teammates to physically distance) |
| - Greet athletes by name and create safe and upbeat connections – like air high fives | |

To foster a sense of hope, coaches/program leaders can:

- Encourage athletes to get fresh air outside of program and move their bodies in ways that are best for them whenever possible
- Explore individual athlete talents and strengths
- Give positive affirmation to all athletes equally
- Encourage athletes to discuss things that bring them joy
- Discuss engagement in school (or virtual school) and cultural communities outside of program
- Make time for acknowledging gratitude and celebrating success in their program

To foster a sense of mastery, coaches/program leaders can:

- Encourage athlete ownership of their experience and journey through the program
- Give athletes the chance to share what they've learned and/or a chance to teach their teammates
- Highlight each athlete's contribution to the session/practice
- Support social emotional learning in their program

6. **REVIEW THESE COACHING TIPS:** Review these tips below as you plan your program
(Adapted from *BC Soccer Return to Play Phase 1*)

PLAYER MANAGEMENT		
Before	During	After
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider sending a session plan to the parents/guardians and players prior to the session (avoiding “free flow” activities). - Divide your practice space into zones. Highlight which zone is allocated to which player. - Ensure parents/guardians are aware of the return to play recommendations and guidelines set out by your province and municipality in addition to your governing body's guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage the players to enjoy and have fun playing baseball in the new format. Different is okay! - Don't be overly concerned about players' skill advancement at this time. Focus on FUN! - Keep distancing measures in place between players and coaching staff at all times. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Validate the effort your players and volunteers demonstrated during the session. - Ask the players if they have any suggestions for session activities next time. - Ensure that each player goes home with their designated household contact/parent/guardian.
EQUIPMENT MANAGEMENT		
Before	During	After
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have a designated bag for your equipment and a designated location on the field to place your own equipment that respects distancing requirements. - Have enough equipment (cones, balls, etc...) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reset cones that delineate the physical distancing parameters whenever they are moved out of place. - Ask and remind players to avoid touching the equipment (or avoid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that all equipment is taken from the playing field in a safe manner. - Clean and disinfect equipment after the session is over. - Reflect on how the equipment was managed

<p>available for your session, including equipment to delineate physical distancing or “zones”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One coach sets up all the equipment and follows the organization’s procedure for equipment cleaning processes. 	<p>touching equipment that is not assigned to them)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be adaptive and flexible! If there is not enough of one piece of equipment for the activities, use another instead. 	<p>and distributed to improve this for the next session.</p>
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TIME MANAGEMENT

Before

- Consider all factors when designing your session plan (i.e. explanations, activity durations and safe transitions for water breaks).
- Be prepared that transitions may take a little longer than normal when managing players using physical distancing including session set up.
- Delineate areas for players to arrive and to place their belongings while considering distancing requirements.

During

- Respect the timeline you anticipated in your session so parents/guardians can plan and frontload athletes
- Make use of your time by following your session plan guidelines.
- Don’t stay too long on one activity to prevent boredom.

After

- Make sure you pick up all equipment and belongings before leaving the field.
- Take a brief time to connect, while adhering to distancing requirements, with your players after the practice and validate their efforts.
- Consider following up with positive emails/communication to the players and parents encouraging them about the next practice session.

SPACE MANAGEMENT

Before

- Check with your organization to confirm the amount of space available for your session.
- Prepare a session plan that includes the number of players confirmed for your practice.
- Ensure that you have the right equipment (i.e.. number of cones, balls, tees, etc...).

During

- Always be aware at that you and the players are respecting distancing guidelines as best as possible.
- Consider designating a volunteer to help you manage the spacing throughout the session.
- Add more cones/other objects if required to clearly emphasize the “zone” boundaries.

After

- Make sure you pick up all equipment before leaving the field.
- Don’t leave any personal belongings on the field of play or team bench.
- Reflect on how the spacing worked out in the session and involve your players, volunteers, and parents/guardians by asking for their feedback.

7. BE PREPARED TO MODEL BEST SAFETY PRACTICES: Your players, volunteers, coaches and parents will all be watching you as a text book for how to make this new version of in-person play safe and fun. Here are some ways to model this on and off the field:



- **GRATITUDE:** Thank parents/guardians for coming out and bringing their child to programming, acknowledging the additional measure and steps needed to be there.
- **ASSURANCE:** Assure parents that you are taking all possible measures to assure everybody's safety.

Example: "Safety is of our utmost priority for our program. We are taking all possible measures to ensure all participants, coaches and parents remain safe. We have consulted the Jays Care safety manual to ensure we are doing everything in our power to promote a safe environment".

- **ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Make an announcement to all parents before programming starts outlining the safety protocols.

Example: "Attention all parents! Thank you so much for joining us this evening. I want to take a moment to outline all of our safety procedures for spectators to ensure we all stay safe while all of our participants have an awesome experience!"

- **MODEL 6-FOOT DISTANCING:** Keep a minimum 6-foot distance from parents when interacting them and encourage them to do the same with others.

Example: (As a parent/guardian approaches you...) Hi John, great to see you! Just so you know, I am going to stay 6 feet from you just to ensure we are physically distanced. Thank you so much for understanding!

- **AVOID HAND GESTURES:** Avoid gestures such as hand shakes or hugs with parents that you know well.

Example: Hi John, great to see you! I would love to shake your hand but I am going to stay 6 feet away just to be safe. Thank you so much for understanding!

- **PREPARE PARENTS AND PLAYERS:** Give parents as much information as possible beforehand so they can ensure their child comes best prepared for playing safe (i.e. necessary equipment, when they will be rotating groups, when you will be sanitizing during the session, etc.)

REFERENCES

Baseball BC – [Return to Play Guidelines](#)

Baseball Canada – [Document Hub: Return to Play by Province](#)

Baseball Ontario – [COVID-19 Updates and Resources](#)

BC Recreation and Parks Association – [Guideline for Restarting Operations](#)

BC Soccer – [Return to Play Phase 1: Technical Resources](#)

Canucks Autism Network – [COVID-19 Safety Plan](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – [CDC/EPA Cleaning & Disinfecting Guidance](#)

Government of Canada – [COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool \(Health Canada\)](#)

MLB – Youth Baseball/Softball Development 2020 Return to Play Recommendations

MLB Youth Academy – 2020 Return to Play Recommendations

Ontario Ministry of Health – [COVID-19 Guidance: Summer Day Camps](#)

PHE/EPS Canada – [COVID-19 Pandemic: Return to School Canadian Physical and Health Education Guidelines](#)

viaSport – [Return to Sport: Guidelines for B.C.](#)

WorkSafe BC – [COVID-19 Safety Plan](#)

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - SAMPLE PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT

Sample Agreement via [viasport British Columbia](https://viasport.ca)

**Modify agreement as appropriate where the participant is a minor and the agreement is signed by a parent or guardian*

Application - all athletes, coaches, members, volunteers, participants and family members of participants while in attendance at club activities (“Participants”)

All Participants of <NAME OF ORGANIZATION> agree to abide by the following points when entering club facilities and/or participating in club activities under the COVID-19 Response plan and RTP Protocol:

- I agree to symptom screening checks, and will let my club know if I have experienced any of the symptoms in the last 14 days.
- I agree to stay home if feeling sick, and remain home for 14 days if experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
- I agree to sanitize my hands upon entering and exiting the facility, with soap or sanitizer.
- I agree to sanitize the equipment I use throughout my practice with approved cleaning products provided by the club (shared and personal equipment).
- I agree to continue to follow social distancing protocols of staying at least 2m away from others.
- I agree to not share any equipment during practice times.
- I agree to abide by all of my program’s COVID-19 Policies and Guidelines.
- I understand that if I do not abide by the policies/guidelines, that I may be asked to leave the club for up to 14 days to help protect myself and others around me.
- I acknowledge that continued abuse of the policies and/or guidelines may result in suspension of my ability to attend program temporarily.
- I acknowledge that there are risks associated with entering club facilities and/or participating in club activities, and that the measures taken by the club and participants, including those set out above and under the COVID-19 Response Plan and Return to Sport Protocols, will not entirely eliminate those risks.

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Appendix B – SAMPLE ILLNESS POLICY

Sample Illness Policy (Adapted from Allied Golf Association of BC)

In this policy, “Team member” includes an employee, volunteer, participant or parent/spectator.

1. Inform an individual in a position of authority (coach, team manager, program coordinator) immediately if, you feel any symptoms of COVID-19 such as fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat and painful swallowing, stuffy or runny nose, loss of sense of smell, headache, muscle aches, fatigue and loss of appetite.
2. Assessment
 - a. Team members must review the self-assessment signage located throughout the facility each morning before their shift/practice/activity to attest that they are not feeling any of the COVID 19 symptoms.
 - b. Managers/coaches will visually monitor team members to assess any early warning signs as to the status of their health and to touch base on how they are regarding their personal safety throughout the workday/practice/activity.
 - c. If Team Members are unsure please have them use the self-assessment tool <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en> or through the COVID-19 BC Support App self-assessment tool.
3. If a Team Member is feeling sick with COVID-19 symptoms
 - a. They should remain at home and contact Health Link BC at 8-1-1.
 - b. If they feel sick and /or are showing symptoms while at work, they should be sent home immediately and have them contact 8-1-1 or a doctor for further guidance.
 - c. No Team Member may participate in a practice/activity if they are symptomatic.
4. If a Team Member tests positive for COVID-19
 - a. The Team Member will not be permitted to return to the workplace/practice/facility until they are free of the COVID-19 virus.
 - b. Any Team Members who work/play closely with the infected Team Member will also be removed from the workplace/practice/facility for at least 14 days to ensure the infection does not spread further.
 - c. Close off, clean and disinfect their work/practice/facility area immediately and any surfaces that could have potentially be infected/touched.
5. If a Team Member has been tested and is waiting for the results of a COVID-19 Test
 - a. As with the confirmed case, the Team Member must be removed from the workplace/practice/facility.
 - b. The Public Health Agency of Canada advises that any person who has even mild symptoms to stay home and call the public health authority of B.C.
 - c. Other Team Members who may have been exposed will be informed and removed from the workplace/practice/activity for at least 14 days or until the diagnosis of COVID-19 is ruled out by health authorities.
 - d. The workspace/practice/activity space will be closed off, cleaned, and disinfected immediately and any other surfaces that could have potentially been infected/touched.
6. If a Team Member has come in to contact with someone who is confirmed to have COVID-19
 - a. Team Members must advise their employer/coach if they reasonably believe they have been exposed to COVID-19.

- b. Once the contact is confirmed, the Team Member will be removed from the workplace/practice/activity for at least 14 days or as otherwise directed by public health authorities. Team Members who may have come into close contact with the Team Member will also be removed from the workplace for at least 14 days.
 - c. The workspace/activity area will be closed off, cleaned, and disinfected immediately and any other surfaces that could have potentially been infected/touched.
7. Quarantine or Self-Isolate if:
- a. Any Team Member who has travelled outside of Canada or the province within the last 14 days is not permitted to enter any part of the facility and must quarantine and self-isolate.
 - b. Any Team Member with any symptoms of COVID-19 is not permitted to enter any part of the facility and must quarantine and self-isolate.
 - c. Any Team Member from a household with someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 is not permitted to enter any part of the facility and must quarantine and self-isolate.
 - d. Any Team Member who is in quarantine or self-isolating as a result of contact with an infected person or in families who are self-isolating, is not permitted to enter any part of

Appendix C – SAMPLE WELCOME LETTER FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to XXX (insert program name) 2020! We are excited to reconnect with your child in the safest way possible. As (XXX your province) public health authorities develop guidelines to lift some restrictions on gathering in a responsible way, (name of your organization) has been working to understand the recommendations our Chief Provincial Health Officer and how they best apply to our sport.

The attached Return to Sport Plan has been developed in order to ensure:

- health and safety of all individuals is a priority
- activities are in alignment with provincial health recommendations
- modifications to activities are in place in order to reduce the risks to each sport organization and its participants

In order to ensure the health and safety of everyone, all athletes and families will need to follow the following rules if choosing to participate:

- If your child doesn't feel well or are displaying symptoms of COVID-19, they must stay home.
- If your child has traveled outside of Canada, they are not permitted at the facility until you have self isolated for a minimum of 14 days.
- If anyone in your household has COVID-19 or is showing symptoms of COVID19, please keep your child home.
- Everyone must wash hands/use sanitizer before participating.
- Each participant will need to bring their own glove, helmet, bat (if you have it), water bottle and hand sanitizer
- Participants and spectators must comply with physical distancing measures, following the direction of singe and coaches at all times.
- Athletes and spectators must avoid physical contact with others, including shaking hands, high fives, etc.
- All participants and spectators must leave the field of play as quickly as possible after the session if finished.

While we are all doing our best to minimize the risk of exposure to COVID-19, it is impossible to completely eliminate the risk. **Everyone must make their own decision as to whether it is in their best interest to resume participation at this time.** Please take into account your own circumstances and make the decision that is right for your child and family. Should you choose to join us, we require your full cooperation with our Return to Sport Plan.

We look forward to moving forward in the safest way possible!

Sincerely,

(XXX)

Adapted from ViaSport BC Return to Play, <https://www.viasport.ca/>

Appendix D - SAMPLE PRE-PRACTICE EMAIL

Dear Parents,

I hope you are looking forward to tonight's practice!

To ensure that we take every safety precaution possible, I am hoping you can remind your child that our groups will be rotating every 15 minutes tonight and that they should be using sanitizer during every rotation. We will have lots of extra sanitizer in case anyone forgets!

Thanks again for your help and see you tonight.

Sincerely,

XXX

- **Use signage to make it very clear where parents are supposed to stand or watch during programming**

Example:

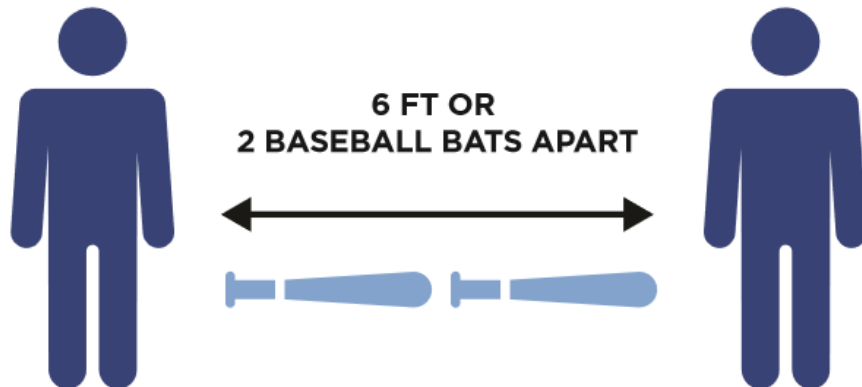
Consider hanging the following signs around the field:

- *Stay 6 ft apart reminders*
- *Designated parent/guardian/spectator viewing areas*
- *Designated participant waiting areas (i.e. where to stand while they wait to bat)*
- *Sanitation station signs*
- *Remember to clean your hands every rotation!*



ATTENTION ALL ATHLETES

**DO YOUR PART
KEEP A SAFE DISTANCE OF**



**YOU CAN STILL WAVE, SMILE
AND AIR HIGH-FIVE...**

THANK YOU FOR PHYSICALLY DISTANCING!



ATTENTION ALL ATHLETES

PLEASE DELAY YOUR VISIT IF:

- YOU ARE EXPERIENCING ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS
- IF YOU HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH ANYONE WITH THESE SYMPTOMS



Please, return home and return to our program **ONLY** when you have been cleared by a health authority



REGISTER HERE!



**THANK YOU
FOR JOINING US TODAY**

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO DO YOUR PART IN
KEEPING OUR SPACE SAFE**



STAYING SAFE AT THE BALLPARK

TO STAY SAFE AT THE BALLPARK, OUR TEAM MUST...

- Not share water bottles or food of any kind
- Not spit chewing gum or sunflower seeds
- Not share equipment like helmets, gloves or bats unless disinfected between personal uses
- Not share the catcher's gear unless disinfected between personal uses
- Disinfect all bases and baseballs after each session
- Disinfect and clean all field prep equipment after every use
- Use hand sanitizer or wash hands at every interval or between each inning



TO STAY SAFE AT THE BALLPARK, EACH ATHLETE MUST...

- Disinfect their own equipment after each use
- Work hard not to touch their eyes or their mouths
- If they have to sneeze, cover their mouths with their arm
- Encourage each other to stay 6 feet apart
- Wear a mask





STAYING SAFE AT THE BALLPARK



1. Please wear a face mask/covering at all times
2. Please make sure to wash and sanitize your hands
3. Please maintain proper social distancing of 6ft



STAYING SAFE AT THE BALLPARK

If you are a parent or spectator, we ask that you keep the ballpark safe by:

- Ensuring a 6ft physical distance from participants and between other parents
- Providing your own chairs for personal use or bring disinfectant wipes to clean the areas you have used
- Try not to use other areas of the park in which the diamond is located
- Refrain from spitting gum or sunflower seeds



THANK YOU



PLAYER HAND SANITIZER STATION



**HELP PREVENT THE
SPREAD OF COVID-19**



SPECTATOR HAND SANITIZER STATION



**HELP PREVENT THE
SPREAD OF COVID-19**



CLEAN EQUIPMENT BIN (PICK UP ONLY)



**ALL ITEMS IN THIS BIN HAVE
BEEN SANITIZED TO HELP PREVENT
THE SPREAD OF COVID-19**



**USED EQUIPMENT BIN
(DROP OFF ONLY)**



**ALL ITEMS IN THIS BIN NEED
TO BE SANITIZED**

**PLEASE PICK UP EQUIPMENT FROM
CLEAN EQUIPMENT BIN**