



Return to Play FAQs based on Alberta Health Guidance

The latest AHS COVID-19 Guidance for Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation - Stage 2, can be found [here](#). Although Curling Alberta will aim to offer clarification on the latest Alberta Health (AHS) guidance specific to curling, it may not always be possible. The following questions and answers are in response to the guidance published on [September 3, 2020](#). For further guidance, speak to your local authorities. Curling is now specifically mentioned in the guidance as a sport where 2 metre distancing can be maintained.

Noteworthy updates have been added and highlighted in **blue font** within this document.

Definitions:

Physical distance: 2 metres (6 feet) away at all times.

TRAVELLING

The AHS guidance updated on August 29, 2020, no longer refers to regions or zones.

Q: Can I travel to curl?

A:

- Where 2 metre physical distancing between individuals/teams is maintained or the mini league model is employed, travel for curling is allowed. This includes travel across provincial/territorial borders, noting that all other public health guidance should be observed. Alberta's updated relaunch guidance no longer refers to regional or zone restrictions.
- It is important to understand that some other provinces/territories are still not allowing/recommending participants to enter their boundaries for sport (Alberta *is* allowing individuals or teams to enter the province if they are complying with our own provincial guidance, specifically if they can physically distance or if form a sport cohort).
- Curling Alberta will continue to honour free agents from out-of-province, however, substitutes utilized in the men's and women's category must reside within Curling Alberta's boundaries.
- Free Agents, players, teams, coaches from outside of Alberta need to ensure that they are allowed to travel outside of their province/territory as per their Provincial/Territorial Health Guidelines and have the approval of their respective Provincial/Territorial Sport Organization.



Q: Are participants restricted to just one curling centre?

A: Curlers may choose to play in multiple leagues at more than one curling centre as long as either all individuals practice physical distancing for each league, participants follow the cohort guidance (i.e. cohort as a team but do not come into contact with opposition), or the club adheres to the mini-league concept.

MASKS

Q: Should I wear a mask while I'm curling?

A: You should keep up to date with masking requirements set at the local level, which your curling club will be able to inform you on. Feel free to wear a mask when you are not engaging in intense physical activity. Masks should not be worn during intense physical activity, as masks and face shields cannot be assured to stay in place. There is also some evidence to suggest that wearing a mask during high intensity activity could have negative health effects.

COMPETITIONS & COMPETITIVE CURLING

Q: Can my club host a bonspiel right now?

A: The updated AHS guidance states that tournaments and competitive events may occur during Stage 2 as long as all participants maintain 2 metre physical distancing at all times or the team decides to cohort within their team and remain distant from all other teams.

With respect to curling specifically, this means that bonspiels which would typically attract registrants from outside the local municipality may now proceed under the updated guidance.

Please [click here](#) to view the status of Curling Alberta's provincial schedule.

Q: Will Curling Alberta host provincial qualifiers and championships this season?

A: The current guidance allows Curling Alberta to proceed with its schedule of sanctioned events; no further cancellations are foreseeable at this time. The 2020-'21 Competitors' Guide and all other related policies will be released as soon as possible. For information on Curling Alberta's Competitions Contingency Policies and other announcements already release regarding the 2020-'21 season, please click [here](#).

COHORTS, PARTICIPATION & GATHERINGS

Q: What is the maximum number of people my curling club can have on the ice at one time?

A: Where team members on one team are able to keep 2 metres distance from members of other teams, there is no maximum number of teams that can play in a league or be present on the ice surface. When players are waiting for their turn to throw/shoot, they should remain



physically distant from participants in neighbouring sheets. If a club or league chooses not to maintain physical distancing, a mini-league should be created (click [here](#) for more information on cohorts). For casual or drop-in leagues, participants should maintain 2 metres distance from one another, unless they are from the same household or cohort.

If other people are in the ice area, such as coaches or ice technicians, they should wear a mask and also maintain physical distance.

Q: What is a cohort and how many cohorts can I have?

A: A COVID-19 cohort, also referred to as a bubble, circle, or safe squad, is a small group whose members – always the same people - do not always keep two metres apart. A cohort scenario would apply to curling if your [team](#), league, or program chooses not to employ physical distancing protocols. [Individuals should limit the number of cohorts/min-leagues they belong to.](#)

Core Cohort (formerly a family cohort): Your core cohort includes the people with whom you regularly spend the longest amounts of time and have the closest physical contact - those you can hug and touch - and those who are part of your daily or regular routines. Core cohorts can now be expanded to include up to 15 additional people from outside of your household.

Sport/Performance Cohort: Sports teams can play in cohorts of up to 50 players and coaching staff (mini leagues). Note: Sports cohort numbers do not include parents or spectators.

Further information can be found here <https://www.alberta.ca/prevent-the-spread.aspx> and <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/covid-19-relaunch-guidance-cohorts.pdf>

[Note, your club may not encourage/allow a cohort model for league play or programming. Please refer to your club's guidance.](#)

Q: If a coach is part of a cohort, can they coach another group?

A: Yes, a coach may coach more than one cohort, however physical distancing should be maintained. If a coach cannot maintain physical distancing, such as moving an athlete's arm to demonstrate stroke technique, they must be part of that cohort. Coaches are encouraged to wear a mask when physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Q: Can curlers in a cohort carpool?

A: When possible, non-family members should not travel together. However, curlers in the same cohort could choose to carpool.

Q: Can a single household have two players in different curling cohorts (i.e. U15 and U20) or do they have to be in the same cohort?

A: A single household can have different players in different cohorts.



Q: If a curler is sick, are they expected to isolate for two weeks before returning to the ice or is a negative COVID-19 test sufficient?

A: You are legally required to isolate for a minimum of 10 days if you have a cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat that is not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition. The mandatory isolation period is 10 days from the onset of symptoms, or until symptoms resolve, whichever takes longer. If you have known exposure to COVID-19 and display symptoms but tested negative for COVID-19 you are legally required to isolate for 14 days. If you have no known exposure to COVID-19, display symptoms and have tested negative, you are not legally required to isolate, however it is important to stay home until your symptoms resolve so that you do not infect others. See <https://www.alberta.ca/isolation.aspx> for complete details

Q: If a member of a cohort tests positive for COVID-19, what will the procedures be for the rest of the cohort?

A: Alberta Health Services (AHS) leads case investigation and contact tracing. AHS will look at each scenario on a case-by-case basis and determine the best public health actions. Close contacts will be notified of the need to quarantine (14-day isolation for the last contact with the case when infectious). Contacts may be asked to get tested for COVID-19. The activity may be shut down for a period of time.

Visit [here](#) for complete details

HEALTH SCREENING AND CONTACT TRACING

Q: Does Curling Alberta recommend the ABTraceTogether app and the national COVID Alert to be used by clubs, curlers and coaches?

A: Yes, the Curling Alberta supports Alberta Health in its recommendation to download ABTraceTogether or COVID Alert to facilitate quickly identifying and isolating positive cases, preventing the spread of COVID-19.

The more Albertans who voluntarily download and use the apps, the faster the economy can be reopened. Information on the ABTraceTogether mobile contact tracing app may be found at [here](#) or [here](#) for COVID Alert.

Q: Curling Centres should keep a log of everyone entering the facility. This tracking log must also be completed for all spectators. What constitutes a spectator? A: If a parent/guardian is dropping a child off, they are not required to sign the log. Anyone who remains in the facility for longer than 15 minutes must be signed into the facility. Each club may create their own process with facility operators for spectators directly involved in the club activities. This process is to ensure, should an outbreak occur, all attendees can be contacted and notified to isolate or be tested.



Q: What age do athletes have to be to answer the health screening questions themselves?

A: Clubs are able to determine the ability of their curlers to answer the health screening questionnaire daily. An age has not been specified however participants must be able to identify their symptoms or change of symptoms and understand the consequences of untruthful responses.

Parents must be in attendance to correctly answer questions on behalf of younger children. If it is believed that the child would not understand the questions, a parent is encouraged to be present.

Q: Does the Alberta Health Daily Checklist need to be completed every day by staff, volunteers and curlers?

A: Attendees should fill out this checklist prior to participating in the activity or program.

Although it is highly recommended that the checklist is completed each day, clubs can create a process that is less strenuous to their operations. One option is to have the individual complete the form at the first encounter with the facility (first shift, league, practice) and ask them to inform the office if their answers to the checklist changes. It may be wise to post the checklist in the office or around the facility to remind individuals what was asked. Another option is to include it in the attendance process.

The intent is that clubs are able to ask individuals the screening questions to confirm daily screening while taking attendance.

Q: Can the screening questionnaire be available as an electronic form other than the fillable PDF?

A: Yes, as long as the form is being filled out and presented to the necessary parties (club office), then the form may be filled out online.

Q: Does the club need to keep a copy of each symptom checklist for each participant each day?

A: AHS guidance states that screening questionnaires must be kept at the site for at least 14 days at which time it can be destroyed in a confidential manner. It is strongly recommended to keep the contact tracing log/attendance records for at least that time as well. However, Curling Alberta's independent legal advisors have recommended that clubs securely store the forms for up to two years.



WAIVERS, DECLARATION OF COMPLIANCE & LIABILITY

Q: Should waivers be signed before participating in curling activities? **A:** Yes, waivers need to be signed prior to participating in curling activities. A generic waiver, declaration of compliance and COVID-19 declaration has been included in the Return to Play Guidelines and is in the Curling Alberta Affiliated Clubs Repository. Clubs just have to insert their club name and find a way to ask their members and non-member curling participants to sign the forms.

Q: What is the difference between the forms?

A: Release of Liability, Waiver of Claims and Indemnity Agreement: This waiver should be executed by all participants over the age of majority (18 years old and older).

Informed Consent and Assumption of Risk Agreement: This agreement should be executed by participants under the age of majority (17 years old and younger). A parent or guardian is expected to share all elements of this agreement with the youth and will sign it on the youth's behalf.

Declaration of Compliance – Covid-19: All individuals entering the facility and/or participating in sanctioned activities must comply with this declaration.

Q: If the waiver is online will a checkbox indicating "I agree" suffice, or is a written signature required?

A: Forms may be completed online as a minimum standard. However, best practice would be a unique signature either by mouse or signature upload. Alternatively, a hard copy of the form with a signature would suffice.

Q: How will the curlers sign these forms?

A: Each club may have a different process for asking curlers to sign these forms. If clubs choose an online system, signing the waivers and declarations once is fine. From a legal perspective more often is preferable, but clubs must balance risk management with administrative tasks. If forms are being signed only once, they should be signed prior to the start of the curling activity or league. Clubs may want to remind everyone verbally about social distancing, etc. at each event depending upon where we are in the pandemic.

For Curling Alberta sanctioned events, the related waiver and declaration forms will be part of the registration process in Curling IO. All curlers registered for Curling Alberta sanctioned events will be required to complete the waiver online before the event begins.



Q: How long should the forms be kept for?

A: These forms must be kept at the site for 14 days at minimum. From a legal perspective, it may be prudent to securely store the forms for up to two years. Afterwards, they can be destroyed in a confidential manner.

Please send any additional questions to info@curlingalberta.ca.