

CURLING ALBERTA UPDATES RETURN TO PLAY GUIDELINES REGARDING MASKS

With rising COVID case numbers in the province, and several curling clubs reporting members who have tested positive, Curling Alberta wants to further its efforts to help flatten the curve and to continue to provide our curlers with a safe and positive curling environment. As such, Curling Alberta now recommends that clubs should *request* that masks are used during play but can and should be safely removed when needed (e.g., before and while sweeping, when drinking water, when regaining a comfortable rate of breathing, when replacing a wet mask, etc.).

We understand that not everyone can safely wear a mask when curling. If and/or when you are not wearing a mask, please be especially aware to adhere to all on-ice physical distancing measures at your facility or in effect for a particular event/competition. Curling Alberta will also be making the same request to curlers who compete in Curling Alberta sanctioned events. All curlers are also encouraged to sanitize their hands regularly while playing.

We thank all curling clubs and their curlers for complying with our [Return to Play Guidelines](#) and all health authority protocols this season. We must all continue to look out for one another and to do our part to ensure that curling clubs can continue to safely operate this season. Thank you for your help as we all work together for a safe winter ahead.

Tips on using a mask while curling:

- 1. Breathing:** Attentively breathing through the nose rather than the mouth has been helping many curlers learn to breathe more comfortably with a mask on during games.
- 2. Types of masks:** Players should consider investing in performance-wear masks and should bring multiple masks with them because masks can become damp during play. Damp or wet masks should be replaced during games.
- 3. Safe mask removal:** It is not unreasonable nor irresponsible to safely remove your mask at certain points during play (e.g., before sweeping a rock, to catch your breath, to drink some water, etc.). Healthy breathing and proper hydration are important parts of exercising and an active lifestyle. If you find that during the course of play that you need to remove your mask, simply adhere to [AHS's safe mask-removal protocols](#) and continue to respectfully adhere to all on-ice physical distancing measures at your facility (e.g.,

remain at least six feet away from others).

4. **Glasses fogging up:** If your glasses are fogging up during play, then please consider options such as wearing contacts, using an anti-fog spray, or trying to wear your mask higher up on your face. If there is no reasonable option possible for you that helps you to see, then it is of course important that you be able to safely see while you are curling.
5. **Benefits of masks:** Although masks can be an inconvenience, the benefits of mask-use outweigh these inconveniences. The benefits of on-ice mask use include:
 - provides a safer indoor airspace for all participants in the curling arena
 - mitigates against the possibility of the spread of the COVID-19 virus
 - allows teammates and the opposition to more safely communicate with one another during play.

We thank you for your assistance as we all work together to keep our curling clubs safe and open this winter. Please reach out to your local curling club manager or Curling Alberta for more tips and suggestions for a healthy and positive curling experience this season!