

### **Enhanced Coach Involvement Pilot Project (2021-2022)**

Curling Alberta's Enhanced Coach Involvement (ECI) pilot project has been established to allow coaches to better support their teams' performance and development. This includes putting all coaches in a better physical position to observe the game, listen to their team's conversations, and interact with their teams more frequently and immediately than in the past.

- Coach interactions will replace traditional timeouts in the U15, U18, and U20 age categories for teams who elect to take part in the ECI pilot project.
- Coaches will use assigned seating on the backboards at each end of the rink, with their chairs positioned on the same side as their team's rocks.
- In rinks with insufficient space on the backboards for chairs, participating coaches may stand just in front of the backboards at the discretion of the Chief Umpire.
- The skip and/or vice-skip of the non-throwing team are asked to position themselves between the back-line and the hacks.
- Coaches will travel from one end of the rink to the other between ends, understanding that they must do so on that sheet's designated sideline. Coaches should not stand on the ice at any other point in the game.
- Coach interactions are intended to be between 30 and 60 seconds in duration, and can only be called by the coach whose team is in control of the house. Unless a coaching interaction is called, coaches cannot communicate with players.
- Coaches of the non-delivering team are allowed to speak with their teams during the interaction, but must stop communicating as soon as the interaction has concluded.
- The two coaches are asked to work together to track the number and duration of interactions used. Disagreements should be brought to the Chief Umpire.
- In the U15 and U18 categories, each coach is allowed up to 2 interactions per end, understanding that unused interactions cannot be carried over.
- In the U20 men's/women's, and U21 mixed doubles categories, each coach is allowed 1 interaction per end, again understanding that unused interactions cannot be carried over.
- In all other categories (i.e. men's, women's, mixed doubles, mixed, wheelchair) the traditional 2 timeouts remain in effect.

- In timed events, two minutes will be added to each team's thinking time for U20 men's/women's and U21 mixed doubles games and four minutes will be added to each team's thinking time for U18 games. One minute will be added to all extra ends. Please note that time clocks will continue to run during interactions.
- In non-timed events, the opposing coach is asked to time each interaction.
- Coaches are only permitted to communicate with teams during coach interactions/ timeouts, and between ends (see below).
- Penalties include a warning (first offence), and sitting inside with no interactions or timeouts for the rest of that game and the entire next game (second offence).
- Any coaches who do not wish to utilize the ECI pilot will be provided with alternative seating beyond the playing area and will maintain the ability to call timeouts as per the traditional rules of curling for competitive play (i.e., 2 timeouts per game and 1 timeout during any extra end). These coaches will not be allowed to communicate with their team during opposition coach interactions.
- In timed events, teams not utilizing the ECI pilot will also have two minutes added to their thinking time for U20 men's/women's and U21 mixed doubles games and four minutes will be added to each team's thinking time for U18 games. One minute will be added to all extra ends. Time will continue to run during their traditional timeouts.
- All coaches are required to maintain a 2 metre distance from all other teams and coaches and must wear a mask at all times.

The ECI pilot project will be in effect for all Curling Alberta sanctioned competitions (i.e., provincial qualifiers and championships, and Excel Cup) in 2021-2022. In keeping with the ECI's purpose and intent, the following additional provisions have been put in place for coaches across all age categories:

- Coaches are allowed to join their teams for pre-end meetings, understanding that these meetings should not exceed 60 seconds.
- Coaches are still allowed to use their phone or tablet to record game statistics, but are not permitted to use it for communication purposes.
- Coaches are to maintain a safe and respectful environment at all times. Disrespectful behaviour towards players, coaches, and officials will not be tolerated.
- Coaches can wear a warm jacket overtop of their team jacket, with no expectation that they remove it during coach interactions or timeouts. Coaches are also expected to wear curling shoes while in the playing area.
- In Curling Alberta sanctioned competitions, substitute coaches must meet all category-specific eligibility criteria to participate in the ECI pilot project.