

Stillwater Area Hockey Association Return to Play Guidelines

Created on September 13, 2020

Updated on January 12, 2021



In an effort to maintain the health and safety of the players, families, spectators, coaches and officials participating in events hosted by the Stillwater Area Hockey Association (SAHA), the following best practices have been adopted with the guidance of the Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Hockey, USA Hockey, the St. Croix Valley Recreation Center (SCVRC), and our various arena partners. Compliance with these guidelines is **required by all** to help mitigate the transmission of COVID-19. These changes from our normal routines will help us keep our communities healthy and our kids playing the game they love.

This plan became effective September 1, 2020, when Minnesota Hockey moved into Phase 3 of the Return to Play Plan and has been updated January 12, 2021 as Minnesota Hockey moves into Phase 5 on January 14, 2021. With the constantly changing environment surrounding COVID, we expect to be updating this guideline document throughout the season. We will communicate changes to our membership via email or on our COVID website at: stillwaterhockey.net/covid-19.

Thank you for your cooperation and support in this effort.

Please be aware that the guidelines set forth in this document represent SAHA's perspective, and it is likely that these may differ from the guidelines of any ice arena you visit this season. We remind you to be respectful of each arena's policies and follow those, even if they are more stringent than what SAHA has published.

The information in this document is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. The knowledge and circumstances around COVID-19 are changing constantly and, as such, Stillwater Area Hockey Association makes no representation and assumes no responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of this information.

SCREENING

1. If you are sick and/or knowingly have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 **do not** attend SAHA events and see below for contact protocols.
2. Screening will be conducted of all players, coaches, and volunteers, prior to entrance to the arena. This information will be collected for contact tracing purposes. It will consist of demographics for the individual as well as the following questions, please return home and contact your healthcare provider:
 - a. Fever or feeling feverish?
 - b. Chills?
 - c. A new cough?
 - d. Shortness of breath?
 - e. A new sore throat?

- f. New Headache?
 - g. New Loss of smell or taste?
 - h. New muscle aches?
 - i. Within the past 14 days, have you been in close physical contact (6 feet or closer for at least 15 minutes) with a person who is known to have laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 or with anyone who has any symptoms consistent with COVID-19?
 - j. Are you isolating or quarantining because you may have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 or are worried that you may be sick with COVID-19?
 - k. Are you currently waiting on the results of a COVID-19 test?
3. If a player or coach begin experience symptoms of COVI019 while at SAHA event, he/she will be sent home immediately. If he/she cannot leave immediately, they will be isolated from others, and parent/guardian will be contacted to arrange a timely pick up of the player. Frequent handwashing and sanitizing is highly recommended; cough/sneeze hygiene is required.
 4. If a player, family member, or a close contact has tested positive, please contact Peter Schuna, SAHA Association COVID Manager (peterschuna@hotmail.com) and also fill out the [Positive COVID Case Submission Form by clicking here](#) or visiting our [Association COVID Page](#).

Players

1. Masks are required at all times both to enter the arena and the entire time while playing on the ice.
2. As a general rule, players should not arrive more than 10 minutes before their ice time. They must come dressed as much as possible to allow for quick transition to ice. This will include all equipment except for helmets, gloves, and skates. We understand that there will be difficulties tying skates with full gear on; please coordinate with your team staff to make accommodations as necessary.
3. Players are asked to maintain physical distance when entering and exiting the ice, in hallways, and in locker rooms (when they are able to use them again). Additional seating will be available in addition to the locker rooms to assist with this spacing. Coaches will guide players to the applicable entrance on and off the ice.
4. Players should not spit while on the bench, on the ice, in the locker rooms or hallway floors.
5. Players are required to bring their own filled water bottles as the water fountains will not be accessible. Water bottles must have the player's name clearly marked. Players are not to share their equipment or water bottles.
6. No showers are available.
7. Sanitizing of equipment (helmets, sticks, gloves) is recommended.

Spectators – Individual Arena Rules May Differ

1. Masks are required for all spectators 5 years of age and older.
2. A maximum of two spectators per player are allowed for games, with exceptions made for parents or guardians that must bring in young children. If arena or MDH guidelines are stricter, teams must adhere to the arena/MDH policy. Spectators should be physically distanced at all times.
3. Physical distancing of people not from the same household is required; please maintain six feet

between unrelated spectators.

4. Spectators are not to watch games from any arena lobby; please sit in the arena bleachers, maintaining six feet of physical distancing.
5. Any child who is not actively participating in a team even must be supervised and in close proximity to their parent or guardian.
6. Do not congregate in the lobby areas of the arena before and after games. Please go outside to your vehicles to wait for your player.

COACHES

1. Coaches are required to wear a face mask at all times (before practice or game and during both on and off the ice)
2. Coaches are to exit the benches immediately following the game and leave the ice immediately following games and practices so that the arena can be sanitized.
3. Team staff will have contact information for each player in the event that a player becomes ill during practice or a game.

Practice and Game Play

1. Two pods of 25 people (players, coaches) are allowed on the ice at the same time.
 - a. Interactions between pods is not allowed.
2. Avoid use of benches during practice.
3. Dryland activities, including warmups, inside the arena are not allowed.
4. Locker room use is strongly discouraged. However, in some facilities, keeping players and officials socially distanced in lobbies and other common areas is not possible. In such cases, there should be no more than seven people in a locker room at any one time, and all should be socially distanced by at least six feet. Locker rooms can only be used to put on skates for players, with the exception of goalies.
5. Leaving the ice during practice should be avoided unless absolutely necessary.
6. The scorer's/announcer's/penalty box be staffed by no more than two persons, preferably from the same household, and should be staffed by the home team. If off-ice officials are not from the same household, they should maintain social distancing at all times. Masks should be worn by off ice officials at all times.
7. No resurfacing of the ice during games (between periods).
8. There should be no more than three coaches allowed in the bench area during games. Coaches on benches must be wearing masks. One coach should monitor players on the bench and keep them physically distanced as much as possible. Coaches should figure out a system that maximizes physical distance between players on the bench during game play, stoppages, intermissions, etc. Space outside the bench area (next to bench) should be utilized whenever possible.
9. During a stoppage of play caused by a save by the goalie, the goalie must drop the puck to allow the official to retrieve it.
10. There should be no pregame or postgame handshakes. Teams should honor each other after the game with a stick salute.

11. There should be no pregame or postgame huddles or post goal gatherings on the ice.
12. A two official system shall be used for games at all levels. Officials are required to wear a mask. The use of electronic whistles is encouraged but not required.

After On-Ice Activities are Completed:

1. No on or off ice interaction (socializing, team meetings, dryland activities) should occur following the conclusion of practice. Players must remove skates and helmets and leave the premises within 10 minutes of the end of practice.
2. Players must vacate the arena immediately to allow for the next user group to enter.
3. Parents/Guardians must be made aware of the time when the players will be done. The parents or person assigned to pick up players at the arena must be punctual. Players should not have to wait for a ride.
4. Coaches or other responsible adults should remain until all players are safe and removed from the premises.
5. While at home, players should clean and disinfect gear after each use.

Volunteers

Any person performing either association or team volunteering must wear a mask at all times while performing said duties.

Out of State Travel

All out of state travel by Stillwater teams must be approved by the District Director. Travel of out of state teams into Stillwater must be approved by the District Director.

Teams are expected to self-enforce these guidelines. Players, coaches and spectators who do not follow these and other guidelines place their team's involvement in the future events at risk.

Please refer to Minnesota Hockey's [COVID-19 News and Resource page](#) for the most up to date guidelines on Return to Play.

