



Minnesota Hockey Officials Association COVID 19 Preparedness Document

Introduction

With the 2020-21 season of hockey approaching, MHOA stands with our members to support them as they return to the ice this season. We recognize that every official within our organization has their own set of values and beliefs that informs their decision making during the COVID 19 Pandemic. More importantly we appreciate the need more than ever to stand united in our commitment to keeping every official safe along with the players, coaches, and fans we serve. This document is designed to provide local associations and officials guidance when developing policies and procedures that align with the current and every changing requirements set forth by USA Hockey, MN Hockey, Local Rinks, Youth Hockey Associations, MN Dept. of Health and the CDC. It is not intended to replace requirements set forth by these organizations or to provide medical advise, but rather produce a framework for our local referee associations and members to reference as they prepare to officiate hockey. The information contained in this document will be updated as new information becomes available.

Preparing to Officiate Guidelines

Given the unique needs of individual officials in regards to health risk factors, family circumstances, work requirements, and level of comfort working during the COVID 19 Pandemic MHOA believes officials must be able to make the best decision for themselves and family without the fear of punishment from their local associations. Officials are encouraged to be fully transparent with their local assigners and leadership group regarding their health and comfort level when accepting assignments. If an official believes their safety or the safety of others is compromised, they should remove themselves from a game without fear of losing future assignments. MHOA will continue to work with district leadership to promote a safe return to officiating.

Association/Assigner Guidelines

It is strongly recommended that each official's association/local assigners designate a point person that officials will contact when a positive test has occurred. This most likely would be the scheduler/assigner or a person working closely with the scheduler. It will be critical that each organization has a protocol for reporting and notifying officials that have tested positive or been exposed to a COVID positive individual.

If a case of COVID-19 is reported to your organization, notify MDH by email at health.sports.covid19@state.mn.us. MDH will be available to answer any questions you have and can provide guidance. MDH also has template notification letters for close contacts of other individuals who may have questions about their risk of COVID-19. MDH/LPH will interview the case, determine the dates when the case was infectious, identify anyone that may have been exposed, and collect contact information for those individuals. ■ People identified as exposed (close contacts) are those who spent at least 15 minutes within 6 feet of the case while the case was infectious (the infectious period starts 2 days before symptom onset, or 2 days before the case was tested, if they had no symptoms).

■ Exposed persons (close contacts) will need to quarantine for 14 days from the last contact with the COVID-19 case. ■ If necessary, MDH may contact your organization for information on close contacts. ■ It is important to keep rosters of who was at games each day so we can do contact tracing quickly. For more information on how we do contact tracing, see Tracing COVID-19. <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/sportsguide.pdf>

August 24th 2020

Officials Health

The health of our officials and game participants is the number one priority. Any official that does not feel well or has symptoms that match the CDC guidelines for potentially being positive for COVID will not be assigned games. Officials must notify the designated leader (most likely scheduler) within their association to be removed from their games.

If an official tests positive for COVID-19- Stay home, notify the designated member of your official's group. Do not go to work, school, or any other place outside the home and contact your doctor. Stay home until all three of these things are true: You feel better. Your cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms are better. and It has been 10 days since you first felt sick. and You have had no fever for the last 24 hours, without using medicine that lowers fevers. <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/case.pdf>

Arena-Rink Facilities

The majority of Minnesota ice rinks and associated facilities are governed by state and local guidelines. Knowing each arenas protocols will be necessary when receiving an assignment at the given rink. Officials should review these guidelines on the arena's webpage prior to leaving for their assignment.

- Officials must wear face coverings when entering and exiting MN Ice Arenas. Officials should avoid any crowds and maintain social distancing while in ice arenas. It is recommended that officials enter the arena 15 minutes before game time and leave within 10 minutes after.
- Officials should pay special attention to signage directing the movement of participants as many rinks have changed their flow
- Officials are encourage to arrive at the arena with the majority of their equipment on to minimize time in the locker room. Only officials assigned to the game and one supervisor are the only ones allowed in the dressing room.
- When using dressing rooms officials should remember to be respectful and aware of social distancing guidelines. Limit exposure time with partners to less than 15 minutes and wear a mask.
- Officials should sanitize hands before going onto the ice before the game.

In Game Policies

- Face coverings during games are optional. Any official choosing to use a face covering will utilize an electronic whistle.
- Officials will avoid shaking hands with coaches and players during the game. Acknowledging the coaching staff with a wave and brief introduction/greeting should be done while maintaining social distancing protocols.
- If using a water bottle during the game make sure to clearly mark the bottle with your name to avoid the sharing of water bottles.
- Officials will follow social distancing guidelines when communicating with benches, scorers table, players, and partners.

Officials there are no words to express the gratitude we feel towards each and everyone of you as this season begins. Your commitment to the safety of your teammates, players, coaches, and fans is a major step for a successful season. Please remember as officials we are often under a microscope and this season that will be magnified even more. Making sure we follow the safety protocols will send a strong message of leadership by each member of Minnesota Hockey Officials Association. Our ability to be flexible with the ongoing changes will be another major factor that contributes to our success. Thank you for serving the great game of hockey during this on-going pandemic!