



2021-2022 RETURN TO SCHOOL SPORT PLAN

Updated: February 17, 2022

PREAMBLE

School sport has countless physical, mental, and emotional health benefits. As much as any other group or individual, the MHSAA is excited to see school sport return. First and foremost, the safety of all involved with school sport is the priority of the MHSAA and directives from the Government of Manitoba take precedence over any decision made at the MHSAA, school division or school level.

In accordance with the Government of Manitoba's Public Health Orders, the MHSAA's Return to School Sport plan permits school sport to return.

It should be emphasised that this plan is current and fluid. The MHSAA will continue to re-evaluate and adapt as new information and guidelines are available, with the best interests of our student-athletes always in mind.

RETURN TO SCHOOL SPORT APPROVAL

It is vital that before any Return to School Sport occurs, that you consult and obtain approval from your school division's administration, or school administration for independent schools. Further, each school's administration will be responsible to determine how Return to School Sport will be implemented in their building, ensuring all current Provincial Public Health Orders are followed and each sport specific Return to Play Protocol is being adhered to.

USE OF MASKS

Current Public Health Order:

A person who enters or remains in an indoor public place must wear a mask in a manner that covers their mouth, nose, and chin without gapping.

The operator of an indoor public place must ensure that every person who is not wearing a mask while in the indoor public place is given a reminder to do so as soon as practicable.

The above statements do not apply in respect of the following:

- *a child who is under five years of age;*
- *a person with a medical condition that is unrelated to COVID-19, including breathing or cognitive difficulties, or a disability, that prevents them from safely wearing a mask;*
- *a person who is unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person;*
- *a person who is swimming or engaged in other athletic activities, including referees and other game officials;*
- *a musician or other performer at licensed premises or at a performing arts venue or an announcer or broadcaster at a sporting event;*

- *a person who needs to temporarily remove their mask while in the indoor public place for the purpose of:*
 - *receiving a service that requires the removal of their mask,*
 - *consuming food or drink,*
 - *an emergency or medical purpose,*
 - or*
 - *establishing their identity.*

Schools must adhere to each sport specific Return to Play Protocol and facility guidelines regarding the use of masks, and if they are needed be worn on the field of play while actively participating in the sport.

If there is a discrepancy in mask use policies between a sport specific Return to Play Protocol and a facility or school division policy, the policy with the highest level of protection must be adhered to for all participating.

IMMUNIZATION

18-year-old student athletes who participate in indoor school sports **MUST** provide proof of full vaccination to participate. Rapid antigen testing for this age group is not an option.

Coaches & Officials:

Coaches, volunteers, and officials aged 18 years and older (whether teachers, parents, or members of the public) **MUST** provide proof of full vaccination. Rapid antigen testing for this age group is not an option.

Outdoor School Sports:

There are no current immunization requirements for outdoor school sports.

EXHIBITION & LEAGUE PLAY

The MHSAA permits exhibition and league play provided that the Zone receives approval from their respective school division(s), or school(s) administration for independent schools. All current Provincial Public Health Orders must be followed and the sport specific Return to Play Protocol must be adhered to. No out-of-province teams are permitted to participate.

TOURNAMENTS

Hosting and participating in tournaments within Manitoba may proceed. The MHSAA is accepting sanctioning requests for tournaments in all sports.

All teams participating must have received approval from their respective school division(s), or school(s) administration for independent schools. All current Provincial Public Health Orders must be followed and the sport specific Return to Play Protocol must be adhered to. No out-of-province teams are permitted to participate.

PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

The MHSAA is moving forward with the Provincial Curling and Mixed Doubles Curling Championships, the Provincial Hockey Championships, and the Provincial JV and Varsity Basketball Championships.

All teams participating must have received approval from their respective school division(s), or school(s) administration for independent schools. All current Provincial Public Health Orders will be followed and the sport specific Return to Play Protocol will be adhered to.

As current public health orders now contain no capacity restrictions for spectators, and with the province planning to remove proof of vaccination requirements effective March 1 and mask requirements and other restrictions will be lifted effective March 15, the MHSAA will be permitting spectators in all Provincial Championship venues for Curling, Mixed Doubles Curling, Hockey, and Basketball.

The MHSAA respects that each host facility has absolute discretion when determining their own policy on the allowance of spectators. The MHSAA will fully support and abide by any spectator policy set by a host facility.

SPECTATORS

At all times, physical distancing should be encouraged to the greatest extent possible.

Each school division's administration, or school administration for independent schools, is responsible to determine their own policy on the allowance of spectators.

It is the full responsibility of the 'home' or host school to ensure the Provincial Public Health Orders regarding spectators are adhered to. If a school is willing to have spectators, the current Provincial Public Health Orders can be summarized as follows:

Indoor sporting events:

Anyone 18 and older who is entering any indoor sporting or recreational facilities (including schools) is required to provide proof of full vaccination.

Ticketed sporting events:

Anyone 12 and older who is entering any indoor sporting or recreational facilities (including schools) to spectate a ticketed sport event, where admissions are collected, is required to provide proof of full vaccination. This includes all events that have gate admission (indoor and outdoor sport events).

INTERPROVINCIAL TRAVEL AND TOURNAMENTS

MHSAA member schools will not be sanctioned to travel out-of-province or attend out-of-province tournaments at this time and until further notice.

PROVINCIAL SPORT ORGANIZATION (PSO) RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOLS

Sport specific guidelines for each of the MHSAA's sports is available below. These links provide access to approved PSO Return to Play Protocols.

Football Manitoba: <http://footballmanitoba.com/>

Golf Manitoba: <http://golfmb.ca/>

Manitoba Soccer Association: <http://manitobasoccer.ca/>

Athletics Manitoba (Cross Country and Track & Field): <http://athleticsmanitoba.com/>

Volleyball Manitoba: <https://volleyballmanitoba.ca/>

Hockey Manitoba: <http://www.hockeymanitoba.ca/>

Basketball Manitoba: <https://www.basketballmanitoba.ca/>

Curl Manitoba: <https://curlmanitoba.org/>

Manitoba Badminton Association: <https://www.badminton.mb.ca/page/37761/COVID19-Return-to-Play>

Baseball Manitoba: <http://www.baseballmanitoba.ca/>

Softball Manitoba: <http://www.softball.mb.ca/>

Manitoba Organization of Disc Sports (Ultimate): <https://mods.mb.ca/>

Manitoba Lacrosse Association: <https://manitobalacrosse.com/>
Rugby Manitoba: <https://rugby.mb.ca/>

The MHSAA remains committed to protecting the health and safety of our student-athletes, staff, coaches, member-schools, and the health of all our fellow Manitobans.