



2021-2022 RETURN TO SCHOOL SPORT PLAN

Updated: October 27, 2021

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 become available, with the best interest 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 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;*
 - *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

Student Athletes:

In the current Public Health Orders, there are **NO** immunization requirements for K-12 students to participate in indoor school sports in an **indoor school owned facility (gymnasium)**.

18 year-old student athletes who participate in indoor school sports in indoor community/recreation facilities (arena, curling rink, community centre) **MUST** be fully vaccinated to participate. The Public Health Orders apply the proof of vaccination requirement to the facility and not the activity.

Coaches:

Mandatory vaccination is **NOT** required for coaches in **indoor school sports**. Anyone who is not fully vaccinated and who has ongoing and direct contact with student athletes will need to follow the mandatory testing guidelines.

Coaches **MUST** be fully vaccinated to enter non-school venues and facilities (arenas, curling rinks, community centres, etc.). Although Manitoba Education policy provides the option for either being fully vaccinated or mandatory testing, non-school venues require coaches to be fully vaccinated.

Officials:

Officials 18 years of age and up **MUST** be fully vaccinated to participate in all indoor school sports.

Outdoor School Sports:

There are no current immunization requirements for outdoor school sports.

***NOTE:** It is the full responsibility of each school to ensure their coaches, team personnel, and officials staff comply with all Provincial Public Health Orders regarding immunization.*

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

Provincial Championships will take place, if and when possible.

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.

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:

Outdoor sporting events:

The number of spectators at an outdoor sporting or recreational facility must not exceed 50% of the usual spectator capacity of the facility.

Indoor spectator capacity:

As proof of vaccination is required for indoor sport facilities, no spectator capacity restrictions apply.

Indoor sporting events:

Anyone 18+ who is entering a sport facility for an indoor sport event is required to provide proof of full vaccination.

Anyone U18 who is entering an indoor facility to spectate a sport, does not need to provide proof of vaccination or be accompanied by a parent/guardian.

Ticketed sporting events:

Anyone 12+ who is entering a facility to spectate a ticketed sport event, where admissions are collected, is required to provide proof of full vaccination. All events that have gate admission (indoor and outdoor sport events) are subject to Provincial Public Health Order 16.

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://rugbymb.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.