

Barrie Women's Hockey Association

Return to Hockey Plan



**Barrie Women's Hockey Association:
Updated February 13, 2022 (version 6.0)**

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Introduction

Since 1991, the Barrie Women's Hockey Association (BWHA) has strived to create high-quality hockey opportunities for girls and women in Barrie and the surrounding Simcoe County area. We believe hockey provides undeniable physical and mental health benefits and that striving for excellence in the sport – whether at the recreational or competitive level – helps our players to grow as individuals and to expand the limits of what they are capable of achieving, both on and off the ice.

The Covid-19 pandemic has created innumerable risks and challenges for everyone, with almost every facet of our players' lives impacted. The BWHA's first priority during this time has been to ensure that hockey does not add to these risks. At the same time, the physical and mental benefits of hockey are just as important as ever so our organization has worked tirelessly to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances and to find ways to continue delivering safe hockey programs – while pausing when it was no longer safe to play the game we love.

Working with the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, the City of Barrie, and the Ontario Women's Hockey Association, our organization developed a comprehensive Return to Hockey plan which has guided our activities for the past two seasons. Through a strong commitment to the protocols and guidelines in our plan, and directives from the SMDHU and City of Barrie, our coaches, trainers, and parents have worked together to deliver safe hockey programs and allow our players to keep playing the game they love.

With the Ontario Government's recent announcement that the province would return to a "modified Stage 2" phase and move towards the realization of their Reopen Ontario plan, the BWHA's hockey programming has again been authorized to restart as of January 31st, 2022.

This document describes the approach the BWHA will take to plan and manage hockey activities for the Barrie Jr. while Ontario progresses through its reopening plan. This includes a description of the measures which will be followed to ensure the safe delivery of our hockey programs and the protocols that all team officials and players must follow in response to any Covid-19 related situations that might arise.

This plan and the protocols it contains, have and will continue to be informed and guided by Ontario Government regulations including:

- Ontario's "Return-to-play framework for professional and elite amateur sport leagues and events" <https://www.ontario.ca/page/return-play-framework-professional-and-elite-amateur-sport-leagues-and-events>
- Ontario's Step Two of its Roadmap to Reopen (with modifications) <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/public-health-measures>
- Protocols and guidelines provided by the Ontario Women's Hockey Association (OWHA), the Ontario Hockey Federation (OHF), and Hockey Canada.

Additionally, the BWHA will continue seek and follow direction, advice and guidance provided by the City of Barrie, the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, and other relevant authorities

Section 1: General

- 1.1 The following positions and individuals comprise the BWA's Covid Response Oversight Group and will be responsible for ensuring compliance with this Return to Hockey Plan.:

Position	Individual	Contact
President	Rob Whitehead	president@bwha.ca
Chief Trainer	Tammy McKnight	chieftrainer@bwha.ca
Director of Competitive Teams	Rob Emerson	competitive@bwha.ca
Director of Youth House League	Laura Carbis	youthhouseleague@bwha.ca
Registrar	Lee-Anne Whittaker	registrar@bwha.ca
Secretary	Nancy Hooper	registrar@bwha.ca

**ALL COMMUNICATIONS IN RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC PROTOCOLS
WITHIN THIS PLAN SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO covid@bwha.ca.**

- 1.2 For the purposes of this plan, Participant shall mean any player, coach, assistant coach, on-ice assistant, trainer, or other team staff and volunteers present for the purpose of participating in or organizing any on-ice or off-ice hockey activity.
- 1.3 All members of the Barrie Women's Hockey Association, including players, team officials, parents, and others identified later in this plan, will agree to the following as a condition of their continued participation in any hockey activities:
- a) To fully abide by the contents of this Return to Hockey Plan.
 - b) To disclose their health status related to COVID-19 with designated team individuals, including being honest and forthcoming about the timing and presence and severity of any symptoms, for the purposes of implementing this plan and ensuring the safety of teammates and team officials.
 - c) As required by the Provincial and/or Federal Government, to openly disclose to designated team individuals any travel outside of the country, and furthermore to fully comply with any post-travel quarantine restrictions provide by the Government of Canada and/or Province of Ontario. Individuals will not be eligible to participate in hocky activities for 14 days following to return to Canada from a foreign country.
- 1.4 All hockey activities will fully comply with:
- a) The OWHA's Return to Hockey Protocol – including procedures and requirements for Operations, Programming, On-Ice & Off-Ice Activities. A copy of the OWHA's Return to Hockey Protocol has been included with this document in APPENDIX A.
 - b) All federal, provincial, and municipal laws, regulations, by-laws and orders as they may exist from time to time.
 - c) All By-Laws, Regulations, Policies and Procedures, and other regulations of the OWHA, and Hockey Canada.
- 1.5 All BWA activities will be sanctioned by the Ontario Women's Hockey Association and will only proceed once prior written approval has been received from the OWHA.

Section 2: Participant Health & Safety Protocols

2.1 When a Participant becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 during a hockey activity

- a) If a Participant becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19, that individual must immediately stop participation in hockey activities.
- b) If applicable during a BWA activity, a volunteer or facility staff, will be assigned to supervise the individual. The identified BWA volunteer or facility staff must isolate the individual from all others, in a well-ventilated area, or outside and ensure use of a non-medical face mask, if one is available. Where possible, everyone should maintain a distance of 2 metres from the ill individual.
- c) The individual who was isolated, will be required to go home and follow public health guidelines regarding self-isolation and testing. The identified staff, or delegate, may be required to assist with contacting parent/guardian, as the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit does not have the capacity to respond to every person with Covid – 19 at this time. Under the direction of the SMDHU, the isolated individual should visit [SMDHU COVID-19](#) and follow the steps outlined within the documentation.
- d) Facility staff will be informed by team staff, as soon as possible, in order to determine if any areas within that facility need to be closed off and/or require additional cleaning/disinfecting.
- e) The team coach or trainer, if not already guiding the response, will be informed as soon as possible. The team coach or trainer is responsible to inform the BWA's Covid Response Oversight Group as soon as possible, by emailing the information, along with their contact information for follow-up, to covid@bwa.ca. In all cases this notification must happen within 2 hours of them being informed.
- f) The BWA's Chief Trainer (or other individual as designated by the Chief Trainer) will contact the individual or their parent/guardian to determine if next steps are being taken with regards public health protocols.
- g) The BWA will inform the OWHA of any identified situation, as soon as possible, when an individual becomes unwell with symptoms of Covid-19.

2.2 When an individual is tested for COVID-19

While current regulations do not allow for COVID-19 testing for members of the general public, in the event that a team official or player is tested for COVID-19, they will immediately cease all participation in hockey activities. The individual will be required to follow all applicable public health guidelines and COVID-19 protocols and will only be permitted to resume hockey activities, subject to adherence with all other public health guidelines and Covid-19 protocols.

2.3 Player, Parent and Volunteer Responsibilities

Each individual is responsible to familiarize themselves with the public health guidelines relevant to individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19, have tested positive for COVID-19, or have been exposed to an individual who has COVID-19. Furthermore, each individual participating in BWA hockey activities must ensure they are following the guidance and protocols specific to their situation, and to take the proper actions without direction from the BWA. This includes:

- a) Have knowledge of the symptoms of COVID-19 and follow the guidance provided by the SMDHU for determining whether you are experiencing symptoms
- b) Have knowledge of and follow the guidance provided by the SMDHU for determining when an individual is a close contact. At the time of publishing this document, that definition was:

“A close contact is anyone you were less than two metres away from for at least 15 minutes (or multiple shorter lengths of time) before your symptoms began.

- c) Follow all guidance provided by the SMDHU and other relevant authorities, including not participating in hockey activities as directed by these guidelines.
- d) Notify the team coach, manager, or trainer when you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, or when you have been exposed to someone who may have COVID-19 – as soon as possible after such situation becomes known. This includes disclosing honest and accurate information about the timing of symptoms or exposure.
- e) When an individual has symptoms of COVID-19 or has tested positive, the individual will follow all responsibilities defined by the SMDHU related to determining close contacts, including informing such individuals of their possible exposure. The individual (or their parents) will also work with the team coach, manager, or trainer to determine and share close contact information as related to players, coaches or other volunteers within recent hockey activities.
- f) Where individuals are found to be knowingly or unknowingly not following public health guidance or the directions in this Return to Hockey plan, such individuals may be prevented from participating in hockey activities until the BWA is satisfied that all guidance is being followed. In such case, the player may appeal this decision through the Covid Response Oversight Group, via email to covid@bwha.ca.

2.4 BWA Response & Responsibilities

- a) Upon receiving information that an individual is experiencing symptoms or has test positive for COVID-19, the coach, manager or trainer will:
 - i. Communicate such information to the Covid Oversight Group via email to covid@bwha.ca.
 - ii. Work together with the impacted individual (or their parents) to identify close contact information as related to players, coaches or other volunteers within recent hockey activities – including review of Session Participation Tracking Data.
 - iii. Work with the impacted individual (or their parents) to ensure close contacts are informed as quickly as possible.
- b) Where the coach, manager, or trainer has reason to believe an individual associated with the team is not properly following the guidance provided by the SMDHU, the appropriate team official will discuss the circumstances with the player or parents to come to a shared understanding about the appropriate actions to be taken. Should the coach not be satisfied with the outcome of this conversation, the player may be prevented from participating in hockey activities until the coach is satisfied that all guidance is being followed.
- c) Following any situation where an individual is has experienced symptoms or has tested positive for Covid-19, the Covid Response Oversight Group and team officials will meet to review the application of protocols within this Return to Hockey plan, and to assess the safety of continuing with hockey activities. The team will pause activities were deemed best to do so for team players and officials, or as directed by the SMDHU or OWHA.

Section 3: Hockey Activity & Facility Protocols

3.1 Hockey Activities

- a) Team activities will be limited to:
 - i. On ice practices and skill development activities
 - ii. OWHL games, as permitted and sanctioned by the OWHA, and only involving teams that have been granted approval by their local public health unit to participate in games.
 - iii. Off-ice training activities in accordance with all relevant public health guidelines for the activity/facility
- b) The BWHA strongly recommends that teams avoid off-ice social activities including group meals. If teams will engage in these activities, all protocols and precautions should be followed to ensure the health and safety of participants.

3.2 Mask Wearing

- a) Participants will wear a mask upon arrival to the facility for hockey activities and shall remain wearing a mask at all times until taking the ice – including while getting changed.
- b) Players will only remove their masks immediately before leaving the dressing room and proceeding to take the ice. and properly dispose of them as they are proceeding to take the ice – not before. The team will ensure that proper arrangements are in place for the safe collection and disposal of used masks.
- c) Coaches, assistant coaches, trainers, and on-ice volunteers will ensure their masks remain in place while on the bench, or while taking the ice. Coaches may remove their mask while on the ice only to provide direction, and/or to use a whistle – both of which should be done only within not within 6 feet (2 metres) of any players or coaches.
- d) Any individual with a valid medical exemption from the requirement to wear a mask must ensure they remain 6 feet (2 metres) away from all other individuals at all times. Specific situations for team staff and/or players with a medical exemption for mask wearing should be discussed with the Chief Trainer.

3.3 Facility Entry

All Participants and spectators will follow all procedures for facility entry as defined by the facility operator. As entry procedures will change from time to time, current procedures for local facilities will be provided in a prominent location on BWHA.ca This will include:

- a) All Participants and spectators must complete any electronic or paper-based COVID-19 Screening Tool required by the facility, where such measures are in place.
- b) All Participants and spectators must provide proof of vaccination, along with proof of identity, in accordance with the requirements defined by Ontario, the SMDHU and the facility operator. The proofs of vaccine requirements in place will be provided on BWHA.ca

3.4 General Facility Protocols

Participants will always follow all protocols provided by the Facility Operator, including:

- a) Entering and/or exiting facilities, and spaces inside, only through designated/controlled doors
- b) Completing all required screening questions in advance, or as asked upon entry
- c) Following any directional markings or arrows on walls, floor or doors and respecting where one-way traffic has been identified

- d) Maintaining minimum physical distancing of 6 feet (2 meters) at all times

3.5 Pre-Activity Facility Protocols

- a) All players, team volunteers, parents and spectators must follow all facility directions at all times. This includes signs and instructions posted in the facility or provided by facility staff. Protocols and restrictions may vary from facility to facility, and as such everyone is encouraged to familiarize themselves with what is in place at each arena.
- b) For Fundamentals, First Shift, U9, U11, and U13 players one parent will be permitted entrance to the Facility for the purpose of assisting the player to get ready (e.g. skate tying). Once players have taken the ice, parents must immediately proceed to the designated spectator area, as directed by the facility.
- c) Dressing room availability before the start of a hockey activity may be limited, and teams must respect the restrictions that are in place at each arena. Dressing room occupancy limits, if any, will be posted and must be followed by the team. All individuals must maintain physical distancing at all times. A designated team official shall be responsible for ensuring dressing room capacity is not exceeded, and physical distancing and mask wearing is properly maintained.
- d) If there are any other users or groups using the same activity area, participants will remain in the dressing room and the designated acidity preparation area until any previous group has vacated the activity area and any adjacent common area. A coach or designated volunteer shall direct the players when it is time to leave the dressing room.

3.6 Post-Activity Facility Protocols

- a) Following the completion of their hockey activity and immediately upon exiting the ice surface, all participants will remove their helmets and correctly put on their face mask. This must be worn at all times, except when in the shower, including while changing, until the participant has left the facility.
- b) All participants must exit the dressing rooms as quickly as possible, following their activity and no longer than 30mins following their on ice activity.

Section 4: Health Screening and Session Participant Data Collection

- 4.1 Each BWA team will collect the following Session Participant Tracking Data from every Participant of every hockey activity where participants will gather in-person:
- a) Participant Name
 - b) Participant Role (player, coach, parent, official, volunteer, etc.)
 - c) Participant Contact – Phone and Email
 - d) Participant Emergency Contact Name and Phone Number

Individuals who have not provided the required Session Participant Tracking Data may not participate in any activities – no exceptions will be made.

In addition to the Participant-provided information listed above, the BWA will also track the following about each activity:

- e) Team or Group Name/Identifier
 - f) Activity Type (practice, game, training, etc.)
 - g) Coach / Activity Lead
 - h) Trainer
 - i) Start Time and End Time
 - j) Facility Location, including room
- 4.2 All data collected as defined in this plan, including the Session Participant Tracking Data defined above, will securely stored and maintained by a designated team individual. All appropriate measures will be employed to ensure the privacy of member's information. This data will only be disclosed to public health officials or BWA officials as required. Member's information gathered, for the purposes of the BWA's Covid-19 response protocols, will not be used for any other purposes or released to any other organizations or individuals.

Section 5: Education & Awareness

- 5.1 The BWA will ensure up to date contact information for all team members is on-file and shall ensure that this information is readily available to team coaches and trainers to allow for timely communication during urgent situations.
- 5.2 The BWA will ensure up to date contact information for the association's Board of Directors, Covid Oversight Group, and team coaches is maintained and easily accessible through the BWA.ca website.
- 5.3 The BWA's website, including a dedicated section for Covid-19 information, will continue to be maintained to include:
 - a) A copy of this plan
 - b) Communication and training materials for all Covid-19 protocols and procedures
 - c) Links to association contact lists, including the Covid-19 Oversight Group
 - d) An archival copy of all communications and update issued to members
- 5.4 The BWA will work with team officials to establish a regular pattern of communication with team members and parents our members during the season, to keep them up to date on any developments.
- 5.5 The BWA will provide all players, parents, coaches, officials, volunteers, and other members with education on safety and hygiene protocols that should be followed – including government-approved information on ways to limit spread of Covid-19 such as handwashing, mask wearing, and physical distancing.