

WYHA COVID-19 RETURN TO PLAY PLAN

The WYHA Board has been working to navigate the guidelines and directives from county and state public health officials, as well as recommendations and guidelines from The Ice Pond, the Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association and USA Hockey, working to ensure that we are providing a safe environment for our children to play hockey. The board has developed this Return to Play plan to give WYHA families a framework for what they'll need to do to ensure we are minimizing the potential to transmit COVID-19 at WYHA activities. This is a shared responsibility: We ask each family to read and understand the policies in this document so you can play your part in creating an environment that safeguards the health of our membership.

This plan has been developed in consultation with the board's COVID-19 advisor and using guidance issued by Public Health Madison & Dane County (PHMDC), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), USA Hockey, the Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association (WAHA), current health orders and regulations, and more.

The families involved in WYHA are important to us, and our concern about their safety has driven the development of these policies. The board expects this document to change as the season progresses and we receive new guidance from public health officials. We also want to hear from members of WYHA — while our families are responsible for supporting and carrying out these policies, we also ask that you let us know your observations and experiences that can improve this plan. It's organized into three sections: Protecting Your Health, Return to Hockey, and Rink Policies and Protocols.

Because we expect the Return to Play Plan to change from time to time, especially as new guidance is issued, all Wildcat Hockey families should check for updates and watch communication from the association to be sure they are complying with all policies. This plan is not intended to be a substitute for medical advice or treatment or a medical diagnosis. Any questions about this plan should be directed to Return-to-Play-Info@wildcathockey.org.

This plan was communicated to all WYHA members on Aug. 28, 2020, by email and posting on the WYHA website at wildcathockey.org. ALDs, ALAs, coaches and team managers will be notified about special considerations they must consider in fulfilling their duties. WYHA expects all members to help monitor how the plan is working, ask the board for any clarifications or communicate suggested changes. In addition, when WYHA is a guest at a facility for an activity, our members and guests must also be aware of and comply with all requirements at those facilities.

All rules, policies and procedures in the WYHA Handbook remain in effect except in cases where this Return to Play plan contradicts them. In that case, this plan supplements and supersedes any existing WYHA policies, rules, procedures or regulations. WYHA asks that all members review both documents to understand how they will work together. Please reach out to your respective ALA and ALD with questions and concerns.

PART ONE: PROTECTING YOUR HEALTH

Screening policies and procedures for WYHA members

WYHA members are expected to actively monitor their health for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. We ask that all families follow these policies and procedures for checking the health of members before they attend WYHA activities. Members should report when they're feeling sick or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. This document from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services outlines the symptoms of COVID-19:

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/symptoms.htm>.

Monitoring yourself for symptoms

Members should conduct a thorough check of their health for symptoms or signs of COVID-19 each day before participating in any WYHA activity. Here are some symptoms of COVID-19 recognized by PHMDC:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Fatigue
- Congestion
- New loss of taste or smell

Members should understand that it is critical to not participate in any WYHA activities when experiencing any of these symptoms. Those members who have experienced symptoms of COVID-19 may return to WYHA activities after following guidance from PHMDC about when it is safe to return. The guidelines can be found at this link:

<https://publichealthmdc.com/coronavirus/what-to-do-if-you-are-sick-or-possibly-exposed#symptoms>

The current PHMDC guidelines include these steps:

1. People can stop isolating 10 days after their symptoms started if they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours and their symptoms are improving. The last day for isolation for someone who never had symptoms is 10 days after their positive test.
2. You don't need to get tested again if you've recently had a positive test, your test is likely to be positive for many weeks after you recover. You don't need a negative test to stop isolating.

If a member tests positive or is exposed to COVID-19, the appropriate ALD and ALA for that member's age group is responsible for communicating to team or practice group members, as well as serving as a conduit to the board for any member questions about COVID-19.

Stay home if you're sick

Given the commitment we must all take toward the safety of our members, WYHA members CANNOT join activities when feeling sick. If you have concerns about a skater's health, don't attend an event. If a member starts feeling ill while at an activity, the member should tell the coach or team manager, leave the activity and not return until allowed by PHMDC guidelines. Any member who comes to an activity while sick will not be allowed to participate and will be asked to leave immediately. WYHA may ask members for any relevant information before they're allowed to participate in an activity.

WYHA will inform members if they are aware the member has been exposed to a person with COVID-19 during any WYHA activities. WYHA will protect privacy of the infected person's health status and information, and WYHA will not disclose the name of anyone who tests positive unless that member provides consent.

Members must inform their player's ALD or ALA if a player tests positive for COVID-19 or has been exposed to someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19, or if someone in their household tests positive or is exposed to someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19. [PHMDC defines an exposure](#) as being within six feet of a person with confirmed COVID-19 for about 15 minutes. Members who test positive or have exposure to COVID-19 should self-quarantine according to PHMDC guidelines, which will offer directions about when it is safe to return, and work with the ALD, ALA, WYHA COVID-19 advisor, WYHA board and local authorities to trace and determine the extent of the exposure.

Members must follow all recommendations and guidelines from PHMDC and the CDC if they have been exposed to COVID-19. [According to the CDC guidelines](#), "a [close contact](#) is defined as any individual who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated." Those guidelines say anyone who tests positive will be managed as a COVID-19 case, and those who test negative should self-quarantine for 14 days after their last exposure to a confirmed or probable COVID-19 case.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

To protect the health and safety of all members, it's essential that everyone involved with WYHA activities practice social distancing and members are required to follow them. These social distancing policies have been created based on the facilities at the Ice Pond and expected WYHA activities, and they must be followed at any facility visited by any WYHA member. WYHA will communicate these policies to all members, but those planning to attend activities are expected to have read them and be ready to follow.

Here are the social distancing policies WYHA will follow:

- Coaches and team managers should meet electronically whenever possible.
- Members should follow social distancing rules in place at any facility and maintain 6 feet of distance from each other at all times.
- Members are expected to follow all rink rules, including those regarding where to enter and exit, and closely follow arrival and departure times. These rules are aimed at allowing WYHA members to come and go at different times to maximize time on the ice, and we will only allow skaters to enter and exit at certain locations to limit any unnecessary interactions at the rink.
- The Ice Pond locker rooms will be closed until further notice. Players will be able to put on skates on socially distanced chairs located within the rink
- Members not going on the ice, with the exception of parents of small children who may need help getting ready, are encouraged not to attend practices. Ice Pond restrictions allow only one spectator per player.
- Many facilities limit the number of spectators during games, and WYHA expects all members to follow the rules at any facility. Spectators should maintain a distance of 6 feet whenever possible.

WYHA will work with the Ice Pond and other facilities to ensure there is adequate signage or modifications that would allow for proper social distancing. WYHA members should ask other facilities where teams plan to play for a Return to Play document outlining steps that facility is taking to ensure player health and safety. The team manager, in consultation with the appropriate ALD or ALA, should review that document before traveling to play.

For more information about social distancing, please review these guidelines from the CDC and Wisconsin Department of Health (see the tab called Youth Sports).

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/community.htm>

HYGIENE AND HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Handwashing

All members should remember best practices for washing their hands frequently throughout the day — using soap and hot water and washing for 20 seconds. It's especially important that members wash their hands before any WYHA activity, as well as before eating and after using the bathroom.

More information about hand washing can be found here:

www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html

www.cdc.gov/handwashing

Respiratory etiquette: Coughing and sneezing

Members should cover their cough or sneeze with their sleeve or a tissue to avoid using their hands to touch their face, nose or mouth. Tissues should be thrown in trash cans, and Members should immediately wash their hands or use hand sanitizer after sneezing or coughing.

More information about respiratory etiquette can be found here:

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html

www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/etiquette/coughing_sneezing.html

Masks/face coverings

Members must follow state or local rules and regulations, or policies set by the facility, regarding face masks and face coverings. Current rules require that masks must be worn at all times except when they are participating in an on-ice activity or have a medical condition that precludes the use of a mask.

“To reduce the spread of COVID-19, CDC recommends that people wear masks in public settings when around people outside of their household, especially when other [social distancing](#) measures are difficult to maintain,” [according to the CDC website](#). Such face coverings are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators that are needed by medical professionals for those providing direct patient care. While these face coverings don’t need to be medical grade, they should fully cover a member’s nose and mouth. This includes bandanas, scarves and fabric masks.

As of July 24, 2020, the State of Wisconsin requires use of a mask unless an exception is met, such as exercising when exertion makes it difficult to wear a face mask.

Coaches at WYHA activities are required to wear a mask at all times.

PART TWO: RETURN TO HOCKEY

Before heading to a rink, members should read all policies and procedures for the facility where an activity is taking place. WYHA expects all members to comply with all rules and regulations required by a facility or organization. Members should also remember to self-screen for any signs and symptoms of COVID-19 before arriving at an activity. Anyone who is showing signs or symptoms of COVID-19, or who has been exposed to it, should NOT attend an activity. (see health section above for specifics).

Arriving at the rink

Start times for practices will be staggered to avoid having too many skaters arriving and leaving at the same time. Ice Pond policies currently limit skaters from entering the rink more than 10 minutes before their scheduled start time. Members who arrive earlier are asked to remain outside socially distanced from others until 10 minutes before the start time.

There will be designated entry and exit points for skaters coming and going from the Ice Pond. Please refer to the Entry and Exit plan at the end of this document for for guidance on how to arrive and depart The Ice Pond building safely:

Equipment

Players should arrive at the rink fully dressed and ready to play; if possible, put on skates outside the building and use skate guards to walk into the rink area. There will be areas for goalies to dress separately from other skaters, but they are expected to wear masks until they have their helmets on to go on the ice.

Players should have a clearly marked water bottle that is filled at home before coming to the rink. No sharing of water bottles will be allowed.

Non-goalie players are each allowed to have a small backpack for purposes of carrying in gloves, helmet, and water bottle into the rink. Skate guards should be placed in the backpack during an activity. The backpack should be placed in the respective departing dressing area during an activity.

Goalies may put on all of their outer protective equipment while inside the rink. It is recommended that goalie undergarments and skates are put on prior to entering the building.

During an activity

Current Ice Pond policies and health regulations allow for a maximum of two pods of 10 players or less on the ice at a time with no mixing of groups allowed.(This number may change as PHMDC changes its restrictions.)

Players should maintain a distance from other skaters as much as possible when on the ice. Coaches should promote social distancing on the ice.

Teams should avoid using benches during activities.

Players should not leave the ice during an activity unless it's absolutely necessary.

No player or coach should spit at any time in a facility, including on the ice.

Safesport policies will be in effect at all activities. A minimum of two adults will be at every on-ice activity, and there will be no unsupervised one-on-one interaction between a coach and player.

Indoor dryland workouts at The Ice Pond and other school district facilities have been postponed until further notice. Outdoor dryland or indoor dryland practices at a private facility are a possibility; coaches will communicate to practice teams when those opportunities come up.

Games and scrimmages

Due to the restrictions currently in place in terms of the number of players on the ice and the uncertainty about the playing status of other clubs within Region 4, WYHA will focus on skill development and fundamental practices for the beginning of season. This approach will comply with current Dane County restrictions and will have the added benefit of promoting skill development and maximizing touches on the puck, which will pay off in later games.

Once games are allowed, when scheduling games, teams should consider COVID-19 case activity in the area and make informed decisions about the potential risk. Managers should ask all out-of-town facilities for their own Return to Play documents and review them before traveling to play. Members should relay any concerns about a facility to WYHA.

Tournaments are also allowed once teams are formed and games begin, provided all standard considerations are taken into account.

WYHA members must follow all facility rules about spectators at events, including remaining socially distanced and wearing a mask at all times. Ice Pond rules currently do not allow spectators.

Leaving the rink

Skaters should follow coaches' directions, as well as posted signs, to leave the rink safely after an activity.

There should be no after-practice socializing or interaction, including team meetings or dryland sessions, immediately following an activity. Players should put on skate guards or remove their skates immediately and leave the rink according to the signs and directions from coaches. All skaters and coaches must leave the rink within 10 minutes of the end of an activity.

Parents and guardians picking up skaters from practice should be prompt and not require players to wait to leave the facility. Coaches will stay to be sure players are safe and picked up before leaving, but everyone must be out of the rink within 10 minutes of an activity ending.

Goalies will be allowed to fully remove all pads and pack up prior to leaving.

Members should sanitize and disinfect their own equipment after each use.

PART THREE: RINK POLICIES AND PROTOCOLS

PROTOCOL FOR CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

The Ice Pond staff will clean the rink regularly and follow all CDC and PHMDC guidelines for disinfecting surfaces. Members should notify the Ice Pond staff immediately if they think the rink isn't being cleaned appropriately and report any chronic or repeated problems to WYHA.

Each practice group will be responsible for cleaning door handles and dressing areas after each practice, as well as picking up any trash left behind by the team. Someone in each group should be designated with that job for each practice. Members can earn volunteer hours for cleaning and disinfecting the appropriate areas; completing four cleaning shifts will equal one volunteer hour. Any chronic or repeated problems with cleaning should be reported immediately to WHYA at Return-to-Play-Info@wildcathockey.org.

Equipment should not be shared among members, including water bottles. WYHA will purchase additional sets of goalie equipment so each team has two sets, which will allow one set to disinfect while the other one is being used.

Members should sanitize and disinfect their own equipment after each use.

Restrooms

Members should avoid using the restrooms at any facility unless absolutely necessary, and should instead use the bathroom at home before coming to a rink.

WYHA COVID-19 Return to Play - Entry and Exit Plan

