

FOOTBALL

RETURN TO FOOTBALL

APPENDIX 1.1

JULY 7, 2020



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RETURN TO PLAY – OPTIONS



When competition is allowed, we must ensure we stay within the gathering size restrictions laid out by the Provincial Government. Modified play may be required from Non-Contact, 6-a-side Tackle, 9-a-side Tackle, to 12-a-side Tackle. Depending on your region, restrictions may differ.

NON-CONTACT FOOTBALL

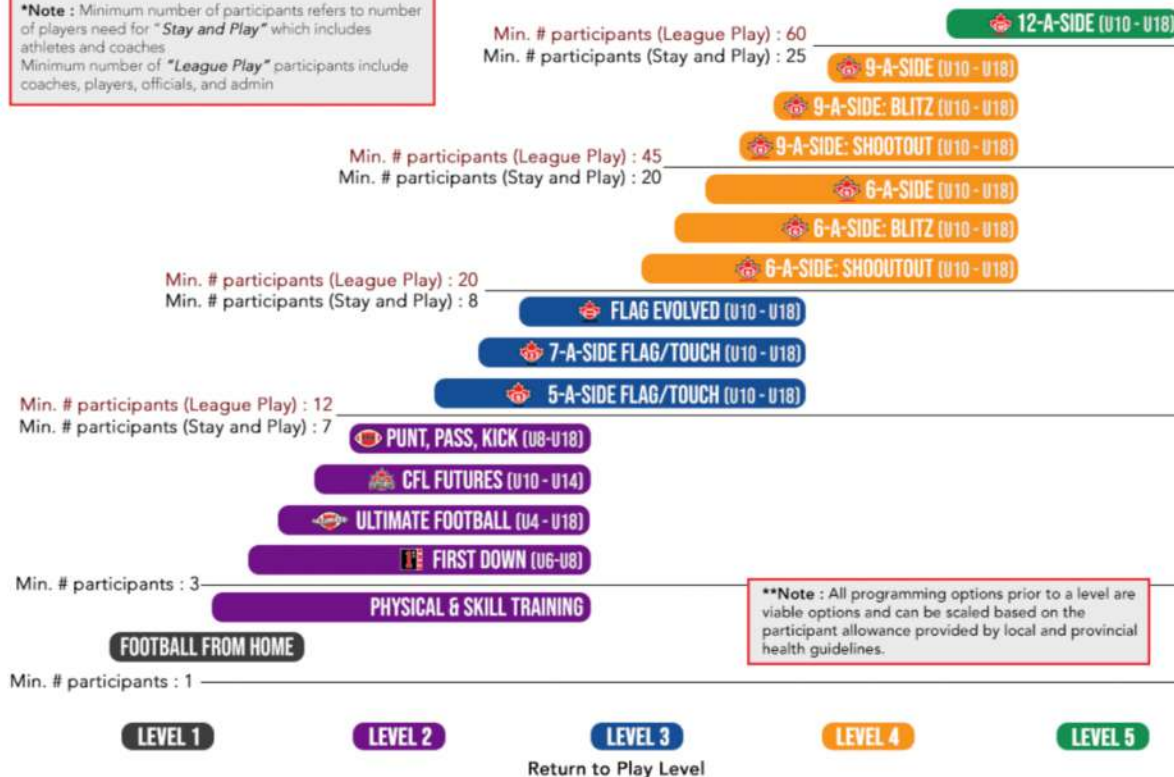
Flag & touch roster limits of 12 players & 3 coaches/staff.

TACKLE FOOTBALL

Potential to reduce to 6 a side or 9 a side tackle football:

- 6 a side: Roster limit of 12 players & 3 coaches/staff per team.
- 9 a side: Roster limit of 25 players & 5 coaches/staff per team.
- 12 a side: No specific COVID-19 roster limits when 12 a side is permitted again.

***Note :** Minimum number of participants refers to number of players need for *"Stay and Play"* which includes athletes and coaches
Minimum number of *"League Play"* participants include coaches, players, officials, and admin



****Note :** All programming options prior to a level are viable options and can be scaled based on the participant allowance provided by local and provincial health guidelines.

Program registrations need to comply with provincial health requirements for social distancing and infection reduction. Below are policy/procedure guidelines to guide that process:

- Where feasible all participant registration should be done online, including collection of payment.
- Try to limit the use of cash and limit the handling of credit cards and loyalty cards wherever possible, by allowing customers to scan or tap their cards and handle the card readers themselves.
- Program organizers should take attendance and keep a record of all participants in case of an outbreak (see Tracing Guidelines | pg. 6).

Football equipment distribution needs to comply with provincial health requirements for social distancing and infection reduction. Below are policy/procedure guidelines to guide that process:

DISTANCING

- Schedule equipment pickups under 30 people at one time (one player & parent) & able to maintain physical distancing at facility.
- Any forms required should be completed in advance online and fees should be collected in advance using online payment or e-transfer.

HYGIENE & SANITATION

- Masks for equipment fitters & players are recommended.
- Equipment fitters are recommended to sanitize between each fitting (wash hands for at least 20 seconds).
- It is recommended all equipment be sanitized before distribution and any equipment that has been tried on and not given out, should be sanitized before the next player. For proper sanitation procedures, it is recommended for associations to contact their equipment suppliers/makers.
- Sanitization stations made available & appropriate physical distance signage visible.

TEAM MEETINGS AND FUNCTIONS

Team meetings and functions need to comply with provincial health requirements for social distancing and infection reduction. It is highly encouraged to do as much of these activities electronically or other avenues such as online registration.

WASH YOUR HANDS

Good hand hygiene helps prevent the spread of the virus when touching surfaces where it could be present. Team healthcare providers should wash their hands:

- (1) Before touching an athlete.
- (2) Before cleaning/disinfecting procedures.
- (3) After body fluid exposure (including respiratory secretions).
- (4) After touching an athlete.
- (5) After touching athlete surroundings (ie. Equipment, external environment).

In addition to performing hand hygiene at all “5 moments of hand washing”, hand hygiene should also be performed in the following situations:

- Before putting on personal protective equipment (PPE) and after removing it.
- When changing gloves.
- After any contact with an athlete with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection, or the environment in the athlete’s immediate surroundings.
- Before and after using the bathroom.
- After the handling and disposing of garbage.
- If hands are not visibly dirty, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer may be used (for 20-30 seconds, until hands are fully dry). However, if hands are visibly dirty, they should be washed with soap and water, and scrubbed for 20-40 seconds.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Physical distancing is the recommended method of preventing contact with respiratory droplets that may contain COVID-19. It is the practice of keeping space between yourself and others outside your household (6 feet or more). Maintain at least 3 meters (10 feet) of distance between yourself and any exercising athlete, as respiratory droplets can travel farther while breathing heavily.

AVOID TOUCHING EYES, NOSE, & MOUTH

Touching infected surfaces can spread the virus to your hands. If you touch your eyes, nose, or mouth, the virus now has a method of entering your body. Good practice also includes refraining from touching the front of your mask.

PRACTICE RESPIRATORY HYGIENE

Covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough, or sneeze reduces the likelihood that the virus will be spread to your hands and reduces potential surface exposure. Tissues should be disposed of immediately after use. The use of personal protective equipment (masks) to reduce the spread of respiratory droplets.

ROUTINE CLEANING & DISINFECTING

Frequently touched surfaces are the most likely to become contaminated with pathogens (examples include doorknobs, light switches, toilet handles, counters, handrails, and touch screen surfaces/ keypads). A routine cleaning and disinfecting routine can help reduce the spread of the virus from surfaces to hands.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE EARLY

Early intervention is critical to reduce the chance of spreading the virus to others. Stay home if you are ill, seek medical attention (call ahead) if you have a fever, cough and/or difficulty breathing, or any other documented symptoms.

PRE-PARTICIPATION MEDICAL HISTORY FORMS

Before athletes commence their seasons, participants should complete appropriate medical forms. A guardian should complete and sign these forms if the athlete is underage. New medical forms should be completed and signed each sport season. They should include an authorization for the release of medical information to others (specify whom on section of the form), as related to participation, injuries, and possible contact tracing. Documentation should be kept for a period designated by national, provincial authorities and legal counsel.

ACCEPTANCE OF RISK

Athletes and/or guardians (if the athlete is underage) must complete and sign acceptance of risk forms that contain information related to COVID-19. Participants must be made aware of the risks of participation and agree to participation. Documentation should be kept for a period designated by national, provincial authorities and legal counsel.

IDENTIFYING AT-RISK ATHLETES

Athlete medical forms should be screened by team healthcare providers prior to participation to identify at-risk athletes for severe illness. Risk factors include:

- Uncontrolled moderate/ severe asthma
- Serious heart conditions
- Diabetes
- Immunosuppression (cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, immune weakening medications)
- Chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- Liver disease
- Severe obesity (BMI of 40 or higher)

Efforts should be made by the team healthcare provider to communicate the risks for severe illness to these individuals, so they can make an informed decision about participating in sport.

LEGISLATION

It is highly recommended to familiarize yourself with your local and provincial health recommendations and orders. Be sure to contact your Provincial Sport Organization to inquire how they intend to implement the specific regulations, and for more information related to participating in football in your area.

EDUCATION

Relevant education and training should be provided to all athletes (and guardian(s), if underage) and team staff related to COVID-19 regulations and best health practices. Education and training should include the following topics: hand and respiratory hygiene, physical distancing, personal protective equipment, protocols if a participant contracts COVID-19 (from Provincial Public Health Authority), COVID-19 testing, recommendations regarding group and individual return to play, and any COVID-19 rulebook amendments.

Ideally, learning should be completed online or via correspondence, where possible. Confirmation of completion should be recorded. Documentation of training completion should be kept for a period designated by national, provincial authorities and legal counsel.

VENUE SELECTION

The adequacy of the facilities used for athletic events should be evaluated prior to use, to ensure that they adhere to the local and provincial regulations pertaining to participating in sport during COVID-19.

- Outdoor playing area.
- Controlled point of entrance/ exit.
- Social distancing markers at entrance/ exit.
- Common areas that allow for physical distancing between athletes (2 meters apart).
- Ability to post signage related to social distancing, hand and respiratory hygiene
- Universal hand washing station present, and hand sanitizer stations positioned throughout the venue.
- Closed bins for the safe disposal of hygienic materials in the washrooms and around the facility.
- Handicap door opening buttons, OR the ability to wedge open doors.
- Dedicated isolation area for any ill individual.

INFECTION RESPONSE PLAN

It is recommended that each team/ organization have a COVID-19 infection response plan, for the occasion if a participant becomes ill. Below are some recommendations:

- Have a dedicated room for isolation, for use by the ill individual.
- Immediately provide the individual with a mask and gloves.
- Advise individual to go home, self-isolate, and contact physician immediately.
- Advise individual to seek COVID-19 testing, following Provincial Public Health Authority's recommendations.
- Comply with contact tracing.
- Temporary suspension of team activities, as per Provincial Public Health Authority's recommendations.
- A "return to sport" protocol, for if/when a participant contracts COVID-19. Protocol should
- Include information related to asymptomatic testing of other team members (where permitted by Provincial Public Health Authority), and minimum number of healthy participants required for team/league participation.
- Documentation of infection response plan should be kept for a period designated by national, provincial authorities and legal counsel.

PRE-PARTICIPATION SCREENING

All team members (including athletes and team staff), must complete COVID-19 screening questions prior to participation. The team healthcare provider should work with the coaching/team staff to ensure the completion by all team members prior to each practice and game. Individuals should not attend practices or games if they have symptoms of COVID-19, if they have been in contact with someone that is confirmed to have COVID-19, or if they have travelled outside the province/country (as per Provincial Public Health Authority) in the last 14 days. A screening checklist can be found in Appendix A11.

CONTACT TRACING

Contact tracing is one of the key tools necessary to reduce the spread of COVID-19, and consists of methods to identify and locate individuals who may have been exposed to the virus, in an effort to keep them away from others. This can prevent a single positive case from growing into several cases. Contact tracing also helps identify where the virus is being spread, and if any areas of concentration exist. To assist with contact tracing interviews, records should be kept of all individuals entering the sporting venue.

To ensure safety for all participants, Ontario Football recommends the following guidelines related to football specific activities:

- Personal water bottles only
- Consider having coaches call plays from the sidelines rather than in a team huddle.
- Consider adding additional timeouts to allow for hand hygiene during each half.
- Provide additional footballs if possible, to allow for more frequent equipment switches and sanitize footballs with disinfecting wipes or alcohol as often as possible.
- Discourage players from removing and re-inserting mouthguards. Mouthguards should be sanitized if they fall out.
- Consider electronic or handheld whistles for officials
- No handshakes
- Disinfecting procedures for practices & games
- Disinfecting procedures for all personal & field equipment
- Spectator limitations
- It is recommended all personnel on the sidelines that will have contact with the athletes within 6ft (i.e. athletic therapists, trainers, volunteers, equipment manager) should wear medical/surgical masks (n95 masks are not required). Homemade masks are not recommended.
- Any player found to have a positive test for COVID-19 and have been exposed to the other participants on that team, would cause the team/club to immediately shutdown.
- Testing policies & procedures are rapidly evolving and will be updated as more information becomes available.

SCREENING CHECKLIST



If an individual answers YES to any of the questions, they must not be allowed to participate in the sport or activity. Children and youth will need a parent to assist them to complete this screening tool.

1. Do you have any of the following symptoms: severe difficulty breathing, chest pain, confusion, extreme drowsiness, or loss of consciousness?

YES or NO

2. Do you have a new onset of any of the following symptoms: fever/chills, cough, sore throat/hoarse voice, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell, vomiting, or diarrhea for more than 24 hours?

YES or NO

3. Were you exposed to someone who is under investigation for COVID-19 or has been confirmed as having COVID-19 in the last 14 days?

YES or NO

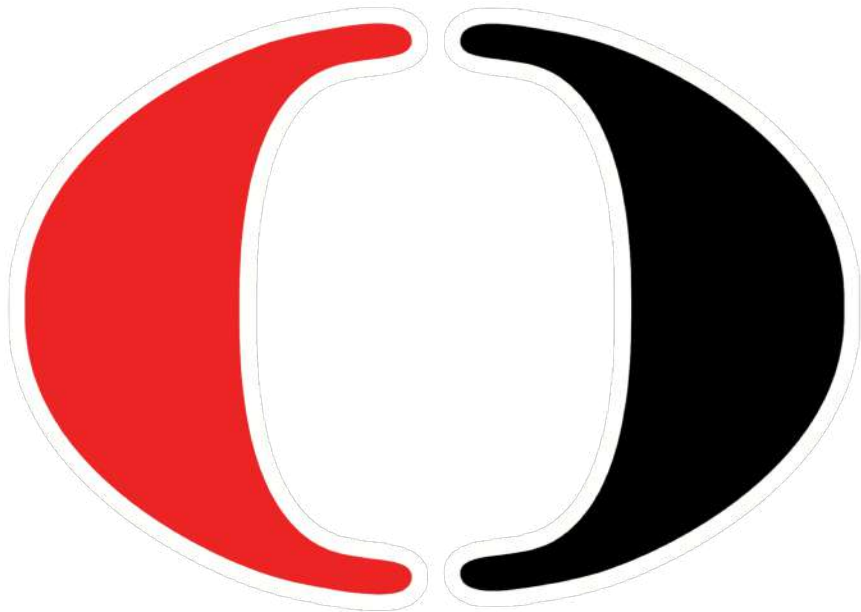
4. In the past 14 days have you returned from international travel?

YES or NO

Coverage is only provided for Provincial Sport Organization sanctioned events. All participants must be registered with the Ontario Football Alliance and the National Registry. The Ontario Football Alliance **STRONGLY** recommends all players, coaches, staff, volunteers, and officials sign waivers prior to returning to football. The following waivers can be found on the Ontario Football Alliance website under its Return to Football section at www.ontariofootball.ca.

- Declaration of Compliance | COVID-19
- Consent & Assumption of Risk Agreement

NOTE: Changes may occur to the above waivers & forms without notice. Please contact the Ontario Football Alliance to ensure you have the most up-to-date forms.



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