

Pacific Storm: Phase 3 Return to Sport

British Columbia is in Phase 3 of the [Restart Plan](#) and as of August 24 sport has moved to the “Progressively Loosen” Phase. In this phase there can be a careful increase to the number of contacts and contact intensity in sport.

Storm’s Return to Water Polo Plan includes the procedures, specific to our facilities. Each facility plan is included in our Return to Sport Document and is updated as new information is received.

The purpose of this guidance is to help clarify the conditions for safe sport activities in Phase 3. Everyone plays an important role in gradually returning to sport activities safely. When sport organizations are making decisions about return to play in Phase 3, it is advised to start conservatively and slowly introduce new activities within this phase. Sport organizations are asked to update their safety plans to reflect the addition of any new activities.

For contact tracing purposes, we must provide the facility operator with the first and last names and telephone number, or email address of all participants. Our PowerUp App allows us to provide all necessary information to our facilities.

Risk management is still the key. All guidance pertaining to personal hygiene, cleaning protocols, symptom screening and other risk mitigation practices still apply in Phase 3. It is also still imperative that we consult and collaborate with our municipal and facility partners before resuming and adding activities. Municipalities and facility operators will have their own policies and processes that also need to be adhered to.

COVID19 has created a challenging environment in which to operate a water polo club. We continue to make the health and well-being of all participants the overriding priority throughout the return to sport process.

Contact Activities

Purpose: to introduce sport activities that may involve instances of contact in a safe way.

In order to align with health guidance, this document defines contact as both close proximity (within two meters) or physical contact.

Levels of COVID-19 transmission risk with respect to contact activities are as follows from lowest to highest risk:

- Skill-building drills or training at home, alone or with family members
- Group or team-based skill-building or drills that maintain physical distancing
- Group or team-based drills that require close contact
- Non-contact competitive activities between teams
- Group or team-based activities that include physical contact
- Competitive activities that include physical contact between teams

In Phase 3:

- Close physical proximity should still be minimized as much as possible.
- In sports and activities that generally involve interaction between participants at a distance of less than two metres, sport organizations should:
 - modify the activity or rules to keep participants at a safe distance;
 - limit the number and duration of contacts between different participants (when physical distancing is not possible);
 - enforce physical distance when outside the field of play (e.g.- dressing rooms, hallways, team benches, staging areas, etc.).
- Any introduction of activities involving either close proximity or physical contact should only occur within a sport cohort (see next section).

SPORT COHORTS

Purpose: Establishing cohorts will limit the number of people that each individual will come into contact with, reducing the risk of transmission and ensuring quicker contact tracing by health authorities if an outbreak occurs. A cohort is a group of participants who primarily interact with each other within the sport environment over an extended period of time (e.g. series of events).

In this phase:

- All guidance related to personal hygiene, cleaning protocols and symptom-screening still apply.
- Cohorts should be used for activities in which it is not possible to maintain two meters physical distancing at all times. When in a cohort, while individuals do not need to maintain physical distancing during sport specific activities, minimized physical contact is still advised.
- A sport organization (PSO or LSO) should restrict participation within their organization to one cohort. The exception to this would be for those athletes that are participating in a PSO- designated high-performance program.
- At least two meters distancing should be maintained between all

participants when outside of the field of play (e.g. dressing rooms, hallways, team benches, staging areas, etc.). If physical distancing cannot be maintained masks should be worn or there should be a physical barrier between people.

- Cohorts should be made up of individuals/teams of similar age or skill level.
- Each cohort can be comprised of multiple teams in order to form a mini-league. With the use of cohorts, game play can resume between teams within the cohort.
- Cohorts should not exceed the number outlined in Appendix H.
- Cohort sizes are different from maximum group sizes. When members of the cohort are gathering for games or activities, gatherings may not exceed 50 people ([see PHO Order](#)).
- Coaches may be counted outside the total cohort number if they are able to maintain physical distancing at all times.
- Keep players together in designated cohorts and make sure that cohorts avoid mixing with each other as much as possible.
- Cohorts should remain together for an extended period of time. If looking to change cohorts, implement a two-week break between activities.
- Individuals should limit the number of sport cohorts to which they belong in order to reduce the number of people they are interacting with.
- Where officials (if being used) are unable to physically distance, an official(s) should be assigned to a specific cohort and avoid having them interact with multiple cohorts.
- Spectators are not permitted at Phase 3 of Return to Sport
- Teams from different cohorts must be safely distanced and not interact, have contact with each other's equipment, etc.

COMPETITION

Purpose: to introduce competitive sport activities. This includes formal, organized games, matches and tournaments between participants where scores are recorded and standings are kept.

Competitive activities fall under the following categories:

- Club play: games or competitive activities that are occurring within the team or club members.
- Regional competition: games or competitive activities occurring between clubs or individuals within a region.
- Provincial competition: games or competitive activities that are sanctioned by the Provincial Sport Organization and draw individuals or

teams from all areas of the province.

- Inter-provincial competition: games or competitive activities that draw individuals or teams from outside the province.

In this phase:

- Competition should only be introduced in the cohort environment.
- Inter-regional competitions are not permitted in Phase 3 for water polo
- Inter-provincial competitions are not permitted in Phase 3 for water polo
- All competitions are required to have a detailed safety plan in place.
- [Provincial Health Office \(PHO\) Orders](#) related to group gatherings are still in effect, limiting group numbers to 50 people.
- Limit contact as much as possible:
 - Plan arrivals and departures of different teams/groups to avoid co-mingling
 - Avoid participants waiting on site between games/activities
 - Discourage groups of people gathering before or after sport activities
 - Schedule activities over a longer period of time (days or weeks) or at different locations
- Conduct symptom-screenings using the PowerUp Health Checkin or the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool: <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>
- Develop a strategy to manage increased levels of staff/volunteers required to host a competition and ensure an illness policy is in place.
- Community spectators (i.e. those who are outside of the participant's immediate family) are not encouraged until Phase 4. If parent and guardian spectators are permitted, implement a strategy to ensure that physical distancing is maintained and minimize opportunities for interaction between athletes and the public while at the venue.
- Participants may be fit and healthy, but groups need to consider the demographics of staff, coaches and volunteers and how to mitigate risk to those individuals.
- Ensure that an outbreak plan is in place and that there are dedicated spaces that can be used for isolation if an athlete/other personnel develop COVID-19 symptoms.
- If outbreaks occur, organizers may be asked to postpone or cancel competitions or activities, therefore a cancellation policy is recommended.

KEY POINT FOR PHASE 3 WATER POLO

- All stakeholders should continue to make the health and well-being of all participants the overriding priority and to have this guide your decision making throughout the return to sport process.
- In order for a club to enter into Phase 3, each club will once again be

required to have recorded motion to accept the revised their club's *Return to Sport Plan* and have the minutes sent to the Water Polo West Executive Director before approval for play at Phase 3 can be granted.

- Clubs who were previously approved for Phase 2 Return to Sport can maintain their current activity (training, development, no contact) should they wish to not move to Phase 3.
- Clubs who have not been approved for a Phase 2 Return to Sport are still required to submit a Return to Sport Plan and the required minutes approving the most recent version of the club's Return to Sport Plan.
- Spectators are not permitted
- Approved clubs will be identified on the BCPFA website as meeting the requirements for Phase 3.
- Clubs need to work within the regulations and polices established by the facility operator
- Gatherings are limited to 50 persons by the Provincial Health Order
- A single club cohort can be no larger than 50 persons
- Each cohort can be comprised of multiple teams in order to form a mini-league.
- With the use of cohorts, game play can resume between teams within the cohort.
- A multi club cohort (e.g. mini league) can include no more than 4 teams and the combine roster size of two teams should not contravene the 50 person rule when two teams play a game, for example:
 - A multi club cohort of 4 teams would limit each cohort to 25 persons
 - A multi club cohort of 3 teams would limit each cohort to 33 persons
- All guidance related to personal hygiene, cleaning protocols and symptom-screening still apply.
- At least two meters distancing should be maintained between all participants when outside of the field of play
- Referees and minor officials do not need to be included in a cohort, but they count toward the 50-person rule.

City of Coquitlam Guidance Regarding Mini-Leagues

The total number of your members could not exceed (including both teams, coaches and executives):

CCAC

- **One club using two 25m pools** - max members per pool = **32**; **up to 64 members** between both pools; plus required number of guards
- Using **one pool (no public** in the second 25m pool or leisure pool) – **max members = 50**; plus required number of guards
- Using **one pool with public in second 25m pool** and leisure pool – **max members = 32**; plus required number of guards
- Using **one pool with another club** using second 25m pool – **max members in each pool = 32**; total number of members between both pools/clubs = 64; plus required number of guards

PSLC

Max number of members = 50; plus required number of guards

This will take effect on Thursday October 15th.