



IMPORTANT COVID-19 UPDATE – December 23, 2020

PROVINCE OF ONTARIO

The Ontario government, in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health and other health experts, is imposing a Provincewide Shutdown. **The Provincewide Shutdown will go into effect as of Saturday, December 26, 2020 at 12:01 a.m.**

These restrictions will require Ontarians to stay at home as much as possible to minimize transmission of the virus and prevent hospitals from being overcrowded. The impacts of these time-limited measures will be evaluated throughout the 14 days in Northern Ontario and 28 days in Southern Ontario to determine if it is safe to lift any restrictions or if they need to be extended.

OWHA

Effective Saturday, December 26, 2020 at 12:01 a.m., individual training and team sports are NOT permitted either inside or outside and in any format. For greater certainty, no indoor or outdoor sports or recreational classes are permitted at any indoor or outdoor sport and recreational facilities. OWHA Members may continue virtual sessions that meet OWHA requirements such as Code of Conduct and following the 2-deep standards. We emphasize that Groups, Extended Groups, Teams, Cohorts, Bubbles or any other terminology used are shutdown for in-person activities. Individual training, scrimmages, 3 on 3, 4 on 4, tryouts and other activities are NOT permitted.

The only exception to participation in sport is for those High-Performance athletes who are training or competing to be a part of Team Canada at the next winter Olympic Games or Paralympic Games, if the persons are, identified by Hockey Canada and are permitted to train and compete under the safety protocols put in place by Hockey Canada and OWHA. There are no other players or leagues recognized.

We recognize the importance of sport and hockey within the OWHA and we value our Members and participants. As in a hockey game, we face a bad bounce that can give us a loss or a victory and we move on with strength of character with the support of our teammates. Covid-19 is a reality we cannot change. The skills we have learned through sport will give us the tools we need to manage our attitude and reactions as we work through the challenges with a Vision to returning to our teammates and our game, even with modifications through the various stages. By following the directions of strong leadership. We can all play an important role in supporting the health and well-being of our families, friends and total strangers as we support our incredible front-line workers.

It is truly difficult for players at all levels of the game who are not able to participate in the sport they love with the teammates they cherish. We recognize the pressures and the disappointment that is felt by OWHA participants as you do not have games, league play, tournaments, tryouts

and traditional opportunities. Players may only participate with their 1 Group/Extended Group and may NOT attend any other training sessions, skills sessions, scrimmages, practices or other activities. Tryouts are NOT permitted.

We do urge players to look at the strength in character they are gaining through the pandemic. There will be opportunities in the future within sport and within life. We urge everyone to be kind to yourself and understand that you are truly not alone and accept the strength and support of others, as it is there even though it is not in person.

We commend the incredible leadership of the OWHA Members in working through the Covid-19 pandemic in a safe and compliant manner. This has been absolutely critical for the health, safety and protection of participants and others. There have been some activities that have taken place within sport that have not been compliant with legal requirements. Action has been taken with shutdowns and fines issued. We have been informed of activities that have taken place that involve OWHA participants that are not compliant and the OWHA Board of Directors passed the following motions:

- 1) As of January 1, 2021, and when scrimmages and modified games are permitted by OWHA, they must be recorded on the electronic game sheets through Ramp.
- 2) Effective January 1, 2021, any violations of OWHA Covid-19 Return to Hockey requirements and protocols will result in a minimum suspension of 3 months to the individual and/or organization responsible and a fine of \$1000.00 to the relevant association. Any repeat offence may result in a minimum 1-year suspension and/or expulsion for the individual and/or relevant organization from OWHA.

As per the direction of the province of Ontario, **ALL hockey is currently shut down**. OWHA will be posting updated Return to Hockey Protocols when a return is possible, and it is the responsibility of all Members and participants to know and follow all requirements in our collective goal to get the players back onto the ice in a safe environment that supports their mental and physical health and well-being. Everyone must work together within the limits imposed by the various levels of government and health authorities. OWHA requirements must be followed at all times and never lessened. If local PHU's, municipalities and/or facilities have tighter restrictions, these must be followed. The vast majority of OWHA Members have been diligent in their actions but there have been violations of protocols.

We thank you for your attention to this important information. Please direct any questions or comment to team@owha.on.ca.

Questions or comments regarding game sheets are to go to registrar@owha.on.ca

ROWAN'S LAW UPDATE

In light of the ongoing challenges that the health care and sport sectors are facing with respect to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry received approval to defer the proclamation date for Phase 2 of Rowan's Law from January 1, 2021 to July 1, 2021. OWHA requirements remain in place.