

ONTARIO HOCKEY FEDERATION

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OHF Bulletin

To: OHF Member Partners, Minor Hockey Associations, Female Hockey Associations, and Junior Hockey Leagues and Teams

From: Phillip McKee, Executive Director

Date: 7/31/2020

Re: OHF Return to Hockey Stage 3

Following the release of the OHF Return to Hockey Framework Stage 3A, the Ontario Hockey Federation and their Members have released Stages 3B-3E in accordance with the Ontario Government, Public Health Unit and Hockey Canada Safety Protocols that will allow for our participants to return to sport safely, when they are ready to do so.

The OHF's Return to Hockey Framework Stage 3 is an incremental approach for participants to develop essential hockey skills. OHF Members and Minor Hockey Associations (MHA's) will have different levels of preparedness and readiness which means the pace at which they move through the OHF Return to Hockey Framework will vary for Associations based on what capacity they can manage.

Stage 3 provides for additional hockey opportunities beyond the individual and group training that were approved in Stage 1 and 2 of the OHF Return to Hockey Framework. Participants can register in Hockey Canada programming that will include game play with rules that focus on removing deliberate and prolonged contact.

Stage 3 will be based on the following philosophies:

- Flexibility on registering players for participation in the 2020-2021 season and the cooperation between Associations and Members.
- Processes put in place for new participants to register as:
 - Participants and families become open to registering for hockey programming, and
 - More arenas become available for use.
- The opportunity for adjusted program offerings on a four-week cycle as the Government updates numbers for gathering and group participation.
- To allow for staggered opening or closure of programming based on Ontario's regional approach to reopening with minimal disruption to programs operating.



- Individual and Group Training remains a focus in August and September with the addition of participants.
- No tryouts for the formation of Teams. Members to determine approach for tiered structure based on category of participation last year.
- No affiliation or integration allowed between leagues.
- May only participate in one league/team within the OHF.
- The boundaries of the Public Health Unit will be a guideline for competition between teams.

From July 28 to August 31, the OHF will be in Stage 3A. In Stage 3A Member approved programming is based on Stage 1 and 2 requirements for participants who were registered with the association for 2019-2020 in geographic areas that the Ontario Government has deemed to be in Stage 3 of Ontario's Reopening Plan. Individual and group training allows for a maximum of 25 participants on the ice, including instructors, or a lower number if determined by Ontario Government, local PHU, the facility or Member. Physical distancing is required for the purpose of individual and group training and if a facility has further restrictions all programming must comply.

Associations may begin to gather fees for programming offered in accordance with the OHF Return to Hockey Framework Stage 3A. The collection of fees must only be done for the purpose of Stage 3 programming.

Beginning September 1, the OHF will move to Stage 3B. Following a two-week development phase for any new programs, Stage 3 Modified Programming will begin. Essential to the safety of participants, modified programming is Member Sanctioned hockey programs in compliance with the requirements of Stage 3 operated within the Minor Hockey Associations or the Member including game play, scrimmage in practice and team practice drills. After a break from physical sport, modified programming encourages players to focus on developing hockey skills while being able to physically distance on the ice.

To determine the appropriate people that can be on the ice in OHF Sanctioned Programming as we begin to transition through the OHF Return to Hockey Stages 1 to 4 of Phase 2, the OHF Board of Directors have passed an On-Ice Personnel Policy. This policy establishes that the following individuals and/or groups can return to the ice for skill development purposes:

- Hockey Canada Licensed Development Specialist (can charge fee for service);
- OHF Member coaches (coaching within his/her Member and Association outside of their register team) (volunteering to MHA);
- Ontario Hockey League head coach, assistant coach or goalie coach (expand) volunteering to the MHA;
- OWSHA coach at Provincial or National Level; or
- Registered Skate Ontario Certified Instructors.

All other personnel that go on to OHF Sanctioned Ice that do not meet the requirements must indemnify Hockey Canada, its Members and Registered Participants. In addition, must provide proof of commercial general liability insurance in an amount of not less than \$5,000,000, in Canadian funds.

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In all instances the OHF Directors will make the final determination as to the active level within Stage 3 of the OHF Return to Hockey Framework that a Member is eligible to progress to. This determination will be communicated by way of Bulletin from the OHF to the Members and posted on the OHF website. The OHF will maintain an updated posting on its website of the OHF Stage that each Public Health Unit has progressed to. Associations will operate their programming in accordance with the Framework of the Stage as well as the rules established by their particular Member, the Ontario Government, the local Public Health Unit and the facilities.

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