

COVID-19: GUIDANCE FOR SPORTS AND RECREATIONAL FITNESS FACILITIES

November 19, 2021

This document highlights requirements under the *Reopening Ontario Act* and York Region Letters of Instruction. On November 12, 2021, Dr. Gould, Acting Medical Officer of Health, provided an update to the [Letter of Instruction](#) for all owners/operators of facilities located in the Regional Municipality of York where organized sports are played and/or practiced. Owners/operators for an open business shall operate the business in compliance with any advice, recommendations and instructions issued by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, or another public health official.

COVID-19 Safety Plan

- Owners and operators of all facilities are responsible for preparing and maintaining a [safety plan](#)
- This safety plan must:
 - Include measures for screening, masks, a process to confirm proof of vaccination, cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces and objects, communication and signage
 - Be in writing and shall be made available to any person for review on request
- Owners and operators of all facilities must ensure all sporting leagues and event organizers prepare and maintain their own safety plan in addition to the facility safety plan

Proof of Vaccination Requirements in York Region

- Refer to the [Proof of Vaccination Guidance for Businesses and Organizations under the Reopening Ontario Act](#) that outlines each patron who enters an area to provide, at the point of entry, proof of identification and proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19
- Patrons aged 12 years or older are required to provide proof of vaccination to access all indoor areas of facilities used for sports and recreational fitness activities
- The Letter of Instruction issued by York Region on October 1, 2021 and updated on November 12, 2021, addresses proof of vaccination for patrons 12 years or older with respect to **indoor organized sports** in York Region
- Effective October 1, 2021, each person aged 12 years or older must show proof of vaccination when attending the indoor area of the facility for the purpose of:
 - Actively participating in organized sports
 - Coaching, officiating at organized sports or volunteers
 - Spectating at organized sports

Note: Organized Sport(s) means sport(s) and recreation including, but not limited to, sports leagues, organized pick-up sports, dance classes, gymnastics, martial arts and swimming classes

- Effective January 1, 2022, all children participating in indoor organized sports will be given a grace period of 12 weeks (3 months) from their 12th birthday during which they must provide identification but are not required to provide proof of being fully vaccinated. This grace period will allow a reasonable opportunity for the children to be fully vaccinated

- Proof of Vaccination requirements apply only to the indoor areas of sports, fitness and recreational facilities

Screening Requirements

- Owners and operators of facilities used for indoor and outdoor sports and recreational fitness activities must **actively screen** individuals who enter the facilities
 - [Provincial COVID-19 workers and employees screening](#)
 - [Provincial COVID-19 customer screening](#)

Contact Tracing

- Owners and operators or the person responsible for the facilities must record the name and contact information for every member of the public who enters the facility
- Records must be maintained for a period of at least one month
- Records must be made available upon request by the Medical Officer of Health or an inspector under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* by the owners and operators or the person responsible for the facility; please review the [Letter of Instruction](#) for York Region businesses and workplaces

Mask and Face Covering Usage

- All individuals in indoor areas of the facility are required to wear a mask or face covering unless actively participating or engaging in an athletic or fitness activity, including:
 - Moving between areas in the facility
 - In changerooms especially when physical distancing cannot be maintained
- Every indoor spectator must wear a mask or face covering unless they are entitled to an exception in [O. Reg.364/20](#)
- Every outdoor spectator must wear a mask or face covering unless entitled to an exception or are seated with members of their own household only, and every member of the household is seated at least two metres from every person outside their household
- Spectators are permitted to temporarily remove a mask or face covering to consume food or drink

Capacity Limits and Physical Distancing

- There are no longer any capacity limits in place for any indoor sports facility, fitness and recreational amenities, except for indoor clubhouses at outdoor recreational amenities where proof of vaccination is not verified by the facility.
- Where possible, stagger patrons' entrances and exits into the facility to ensure there is no crowding at points of entry and exit and in common areas in the facility
- Encourage individuals to arrive at the facility appropriately dressed for their activity to minimize the amount of time spent in change rooms

Ventilation maintenance

- Ensure HVAC systems are operational and routinely inspected by an HVAC professional
- HVAC systems should be maintained as per manufacturer's instructions, and areas near HVAC inlets and outlets kept clear
- Maximize ventilation and the exchange of fresh outdoor air through opening of windows/doors or maximizing the outdoor air intake for ventilation systems

- Use the highest filtration rating recommended for the HVAC system (e.g., highest Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) rating capacity for HVAC)

Infection Prevention and Control

- Encourage staff and customers to practice good hand hygiene and respiratory practices by ensuring soap and water and/or alcohol-based hand sanitizer is readily available for use
- Frequently clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces like payment terminals and washrooms
- Inform staff of a sick policy, outlining that they are required to:
 - Conduct an [active screening](#) test
 - [Monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 and seek assessment and testing, if necessary](#)
 - [Stay home if sick](#)
 - Report any COVID-19 symptoms developed while working onsite

Communication and Signage

- Communicate changes in operation and policies to staff and vendors
- Post [signage](#) for patrons: [practice physical distancing](#), wash your hands frequently and avoid touching your face with unwashed hands
- Patrons who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 should be refused entry. Display posters telling patrons if they have symptoms, they cannot enter
- Post [signage](#) at all entrances, exits and throughout the premises on disposal of gloves and masks

Additional Resources

- [COVID Alert App](#)
- [COVID-19: Help for businesses in Ontario](#)
- Ontario's Stop the Spread Business Information Line **1-888-444-3659**
- [Resources to prevent COVID-19 in the workplace](#)
- [York Region: Resources, Fact Sheets and Videos](#)

More information

For more information about COVID-19 health and safety protocols and measures, visit york.ca/COVID19, email Health.Inspectors@york.ca, or call 1-800-361-5653 or TTY 1-866-512-6228.