

Date: November 26, 2020
To: OMHA Members & Member Associations
From: Geoff Stewart – President
CC: OMHA Board, Town of Okotoks, OAAA



SUBJECT: *Alberta Government/AHS – Announcement Nov. 24*

The Government of Alberta in partnership with Alberta Health Services (AHS) announced a further pause to indoor group activities including team sports. This extended pause is for 3 weeks and our understanding is that it will run from Friday Nov. 27 – Friday Dec. 18.



During this time, all OMHA, OAAA and Member Association events are temporarily cancelled; this includes all practices, games and any activity associated with your team (cohort) both on and off the ice. Virtual team activities are allowed and encouraged.



There have been numerous questions flooding into the OMHA office with regards to different facets of our program, they include but are not limited to the following:

1. Refunds
2. Potential for extending the season
3. Schedule & Re-start Plan
4. Exemptions

Please review the letter sent out Nov 26, 2020 and we will continue to update the membership as information becomes available.

In the FAQ sheet below, you will find answers to some of these questions and more based on the information that we have at the present time.

We are aware this has been a very difficult time for the athletes and their families, and we thank you for your commitment to our program and your patience as we sort out the details. OMHA & OAAA and our Member Associations will continue to do everything we can to get the kids back on the ice as soon as possible.

We can't wait to drop the puck again!!



RESTRICTIONS ON HOCKEY

Q. WHEN DO THE RESTRICTIONS ON MINOR HOCKEY END?

A. Based information we have at this time, all levels of sport will be restricted for at least three weeks starting November 27, 2020. Our understanding is that restrictions will be in place until at least December 18, 2020, and the government will further review restrictions prior to Dec. 15, 2020

Q. ARE ALL HOCKEY ACTIVITIES PART OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT RESTRICTIONS?

Yes. This restriction includes all hockey related activities under the OMHA & OOAA umbrella, including Jr. B. The restriction includes (but is not limited to) the following activities surrounding your teams:

- (1) No games
- (2) No off- ice sessions (unless virtual)
- (3) No team dryland
- (4) No team building (unless virtual)
- (5) No skill sessions

Q. ARE WE ABLE TO PRACTICE OUTSIDE AS A TEAM?

A. All levels of sport (whether indoor or outdoor) are currently restricted. Hockey Alberta is currently working with SPAR (Sports, Physical Activity and Recreation) to determine whether or not outdoor activity could still be permitted by applying the outdoor social gathering limit of 10 people to the activity and still prohibiting the use of locker rooms.

Q. CAN WE DO INDIVIDUAL TRAINING?

A. The current Government restrictions will only permit one-on-one training. No team/group activities are permitted to operate. Our understanding is that facilities can rent ice for one-on-one training only, all inquiries surrounding this must be directed to your facility of choice.



Q. CAN WE SPLIT THE ICE FOR INDIVIDUAL TRAINING? EX. TWO INDEPENDENT ONE-ON-ONE LESSONS HAPPENING ON SEPARATE HALVES?

A. No, one-on-one training sessions must be given the entire ice sheet. No one else is permitted on the ice. We are working with The Town of Okotoks and AHS, but at this time it is limited to one-on-one.

Q. Will OMHA be providing refunds due to loss of playing time?

As we have communicated from the onset, we are in very unprecedented times and concrete refund policies in the event of a pause or missed program time are being reviewed. We will work together to be fair to all members. At this point and time, we can say the following:

1. Our Associations are reviewing the policies
2. These are uncertain times, and we are still unsure about potential time lost and the option of extending the season
3. In the event of significant program reduction each Association will make every effort to provide fair and appropriate refunds based on their individual programs' expenditures.
4. Potential refunds will be reviewed in the new year, once there is better understanding of how much of the season is played.

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we manage this process

Q. CAN MY FAMILY BOOK THE ICE FOR A SESSION?

Yes. Should a family (household) wish to book ice on their own they are permitted to do so. However, only family members who reside in the same household are permitted to be in the facility for the ice time. For more information you must contact the Town of Okotoks facility directly. They will be sending further information to the OMHA to share.

Q. IS OMHA & OAAA LOBBYING THE GOVERNMENT FOR MINOR HOCKEY ACTIVITIES TO CONTINUE DURING THE CURRENT RESTRICTIONS?

A. The OMHA & OAAA are working actively looking at ways to communicate the benefits of youth sport, specifically hockey, and the robust protocols we have had in place since the onset. However, we do not expect restrictions to be lifted prior to December 18, 2020.



Q. ARE WE PERMITTED TO TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF THE GOVERNMENT DEFINED 'PURPLE' RESTRICTED AREAS TO PARTICIPATE IN HOCKEY ACTIVITIES?

A. No. All OMHA & OOAA, association, and team hockey activities are strictly prohibited. Based on clarification Hockey Alberta via SPAR (Sports, Physical Activity and Recreation), teams are not permitted to travel to a community that is not currently within a 'purple region' to host a practice or game.

Q. WHO SHOULD WE CONTACT IF WE IDENTIFY OPERATORS OR INDIVIDUALS ACTING OUTSIDE THE PUBLIC HEATH ORDER?

A. Violations of Public Health Orders are subject to fines up to \$1,000 and complaints can be submitted to the Public Health Inspectors

