

General

Q: Can we assume that Skate Canada: Alberta – NWT/Nunavut Protocols are in line with Skate Canada's Return to Skating Guidelines?

A: Yes, the Section used the Skate Canada Return to Skating guidance documents and have ensured that all Protocols align with delivery standards and programs of Skate Canada. We leveraged the expertise of a COVID-19 Advisory Group, comprised of several coaches and clubs to ensure that those standards were being met.

We have recently received Delivery Standards and Requirements from Skate Canada for CanSkate, CanPowerSkate and STAR 1-5 programs. The Advisory group is currently reviewing those documents and creating Phase 2 Protocols that are concurrent with the provincial guidance documents. This information will be distributed shortly.

Q: Are pair teams allowed to train? If so, are they allowed to train with other freeskaters or do they need separate ice time?

A: Pair teams can train together (without maintaining 2 metres with one another) provided they are living in the same household, or in the same core cohort (previously referred to as cohort family). They may be on the ice at the same time as other freeskaters but need to maintain physical distancing with other skaters and coaches. The pair or dance team can be in contact but not with anyone else other than their partner. It is recommended that close face to face contact be avoided, or if unavoidable additional measures taken to limit spread (eg: wearing of non-medical masks during choreography when intense physical activity is not occurring)

Alberta Health has provided specific information on cohorts in [Guidance for Cohorts](#)

Q: How big is a region? We have skaters from out of town on our synchro teams.

A: Alberta Health Authority has responded to seek sport opportunities in your own community. This means your neighborhood, town or municipality.

Alberta is divided into five health zones: South, Calgary, Central, Edmonton, and North. A map of the five zones can be found at <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/zone/ahs-map-ahs-zones.pdf>.

Albertans should only participate in cohorted sports and physical activities within the zone where they reside; at this time, do not travel for sport to different zones/regions within Alberta (inter regional) or outside of or out of province (cross jurisdictional).

Q: Is the Section restricting personal travel within Alberta? For example, camping.

A: The Section Protocols and accompanying documents are specific to skating related activities. Any guidance offered is not related to participants' time outside Club or Skating School activities.

Note: As defined in Alberta Health's [Guidance for Cohorts document](#) safety recommendations, if a person is participating in a sport cohort group you should not have travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days, and avoid closed spaces with poor ventilation, crowded places and contact settings.

Q: Is within Canada travel a restriction within Phase 1?

A: Provincial guidelines for inter – provincial travel vary by province. Please refer to Provincial Government COVID sites for information. Effective July 1, 2020 Alberta Health indicates that responsible travel within Alberta is permitted however physical distancing and gathering restrictions still apply (<https://www.alberta.ca/covid-19-travel-advice.aspx>). Non-essential travel outside the province is not recommended but is currently not restricted.

As indicated in the [Guidance for Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation - Stage 2](#), travel should be restricted to local opportunities. This means within a neighbourhood, town or municipality. Participants should not seek sport, physical activity and recreation opportunities in other regions, or out of province.

Skate Canada: Alberta / NWT-Nunavut Return to Skating Phase 2 Protocols will align with Alberta Health Stage 2 Guidance above.

Q: How early does the paperwork for approval need to be submitted to ensure we have all the necessary authorization to resume activities?

A: All Return to Skating Club and Skating School acknowledgements must be completed, submitted and acknowledged by the Section prior to resuming activities. Please ensure enough time for this process to be completed. If an incomplete form is submitted, final approval would not be granted immediately, which could potentially limit the Club or Skating Schools' operations. The Section commits to reviewing documents and providing feedback on missing items, if applicable, within one business day.

Once Section Office written acknowledgement of completion is obtained Clubs and Skating Schools may start programming.

Q: Recognizing coaching in two locations in a day is discouraged but not prohibited, is insurance coverage jeopardized if we allow it? Extra precautions in between arenas can be taken if it helps.

A: Coaching between multiple locations in a day is allowed but not recommended. If moving between more than one facility, please ensure enhanced protocols, cleaning measures are considered (consider change of outerwear / clothing). The objective is to mitigate or lower the risk of transfer while moving between facilities and different people. Ultimately, the development of guidance documents and protocols is to minimize the spread or contact transfer than could occur. It is mandatory that each club or skating school is notified of your schedule that day so that contact tracing reflects the change of location and exposure.

Q: Our club has a Special Olympics high-functioning adult skater who is integrated into our programming. Is she permitted in Phase 1?

A: If the skater is able to skate without physical contact, assistance, or additional aids, then yes, she may participate in phase 1.

Please ensure other skaters, coaches and volunteer participants are aware this individual may be more at risk for health complication related to COVID-19 due to specific health condition and disabilities / special needs. Enhanced measures to prevent the transmission of infection should be implemented when an individual may be more at risk.

Q: If a skater is sick, are they expected to isolate for two weeks before returning to the ice or is a negative COVID-19 test sufficient?

A: You are legally required to isolate for a minimum of 10 days if you have a cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat that is not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition. The mandatory isolation period is 10 days from the onset of symptoms, or until symptoms resolve, whichever takes longer.

If you have known exposure to COVID-19 and display symptoms but tested negative for COVID-19 you are legally required to isolate for 14 days. If you have no known exposure to COVID-19, display symptoms and have tested negative, you are not legally required to isolate, however it is important to stay home until your symptoms resolve so that you do not infect others.

See <https://www.alberta.ca/isolation.aspx> for complete details

Q: Does the Section recommend the Alberta Trace Together app by clubs or coaches?

A: Yes, the Section supports Alberta Health in its recommendation to download ABTraceTogether to facilitate quickly identifying and isolating positive cases, preventing the spread of COVID-19. The more Albertans who voluntarily download and use the app, the faster the economy can be reopened.

Information on the ABTraceTogether mobile contact tracing app may be found at <https://www.alberta.ca/ab-trace-together.aspx>

Q: How will communication happen if a large, provincial outbreak (or second wave) occurs and we have to move backwards through the phases?

A: The Section would send a communication via email and social media, similar to the initial notification in March of 2020. Regular updates and communication will continue, within 24 hours of Provincial notification.

Club-specific cases or outbreaks (more than 2 cases of COVID-19) should follow the club/skating school outbreak rapid response plan. A plan or outbreak procedure should include notifying the facility operator, Alberta Health Services, and the Section office. Organizations should follow the direction provided by the facility or AHS.

Q: The Section Protocols and the Return to Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation – Stage 2 guidance document recommend that a parent should attend to their own injured child when possible. Is this compliant with Skate Canada policies?

A: It is recommended that family / cohorted individuals are first to attend to an injured participant, where possible, as it reduces the risk of contact transfer. Skate Canada has confirmed that a family member who attends to the first aid (to avoid contact transfer, provincial recommendation) will not affect Skate Canada insurance coverages. In a case like this the parent who attends the first aid would be responsible of their own act.

Q: Active COVID-19 cases have doubled this past week in Edmonton, will the Section increase protocols if this number continues to rise at the rate demonstrated this week?

A: The Section will be following Alberta Health and Provincial or Municipal Public Health Authority's guidance. For example, should the City of Edmonton implement further restrictions, through their health authorities, or by declaring a municipal State of Emergency, the Section would work alongside the municipality to respond and communicate accordingly.

Q: Are participants restricted to just one club? For example, freeskate at one club and skating synchro at another.

A: They are not restricted to one club, skating school or facility, unless the club or skating school has imposed it as a restriction. Participants (skaters, coaches, choreographers) would be required to follow the protocols and guidelines specific to each club, skating school and facility. Participants should try to limit the number of clubs, skating schools, and facilities as much as possible, as the risk of transfer increases with the number of places, people, and organizations a person is in contact with. Alberta Health has provided further guidance on where a person participates in sport.

June 26, 2020 – Alberta Health Authority response: The guidance states to seek sport opportunities in your own community. This means your neighborhood, town or municipality. Alberta is divided into five health zones: South, Calgary, Central, Edmonton, and North. A map of the five zones can be found at <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/zone/ahs-map-ahs-zones.pdf>. Albertans should only participate in cohorted sports and physical activities within the zone where they reside; at this time, do not travel for sport to different zones/regions within Alberta (inter regional) or outside of or out of province (cross jurisdictional).

Note: Singles freeskating activities do not require creation of a cohort as physical distance is maintained, however Pairs, Dance, Synchronized Skating (in hold/contact) requires the creation of a core cohort or sport cohort group

Q: Are clubs required to submit a protocol checklist if they have not started their own programming and are guest skating at another club?

A: Only the Operating Club or Skating School is required to submit a protocol checklist if another sanctioned club or skating schools' skaters are guest skating on the operating clubs or skating school's ice.

Q: Can clubs allow skaters from different clubs to skate when programs open?

A: Clubs and Skating Schools are allowed Guest Skaters provided they meet criteria as outlined within each of the Club or Skating School protocols or requirements. It is recommended that in the case where multiple skaters from one club are participating in programming under another Club the two clubs work together to ensure all protocols are being met.

Two clubs operating separately within the same facility is permitted. Each club must complete their own Protocols and sign the Club and Skating School Checklist and Acknowledgment form separately as the clubs are operating as separate user groups in the facility.

Note: All Municipal, Provincial Guidelines, facility operator and Section protocols must be met, and participants should be within the same Alberta Health Zones.

Please refer to <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/zone/ahs-map-ahs-zones.pdf>

Q: Should clubs or skating schools who begin programming for Return to Skating Phase 2 (early July) introduce programming under Phase 1 Protocols and gradually increase participants?

A: There have been a number of changes to programming in Skate Canada: Alberta – NWT/Nunavut Phase 2 Protocols. It is recommended that the club assess the environment and the club needs before proceeding with programming.

Section Clubs and Skating Schools who have successfully relaunched in Phase 1 found great benefit in starting with fewer skaters and gradually increasing; in order to test their processes and re-evaluate areas that were difficult, prior to launching full programming.

Q: Will there be any coaching course dates added now?

A: Yes. The first priority was to organize protocols and support documents so that clubs and skating schools could start working on their protocols and get back on the ice. However, as Phase 2 protocols are soon to launch coaching courses will become the priority. All coaches should have received an email regarding the NCCP coaching multisport modules and details for the online delivery schedule. For Section-run coach courses, protocols will be developed to align with the NCCP delivery method, and Provincial Health guidelines. The Section has also been in contact with Skate Canada to determine if a hybrid or blended delivery model could be offered but we are awaiting confirmation.

Information on Section Coach courses will be forthcoming in the next few weeks and will be both posted on the website and emailed to all Section coaches.

Q: Can coach assessments still take place during regular session or during which Phase can assessment days run again?

A: Coaches assessments and assessment days are still not permitted currently. Details will be forthcoming, as the protocols and timing within Phase 2 that assessments and assessment days are allowed is still under review.

Q: Please confirm definition of “close contact” in relation to quarantining when in contact with a person who tested positive for COVID-19?

A: Close contact is defined as someone who provided direct care for the case (family members, caregivers, or health care workers), OR lives with/had close contact (more than 15 minutes and within two meters) with a case without PPE, OR had direct contact with infectious body fluids of a case (was coughed on or sneezed on) without PPE.

If someone in a sports cohort were confirmed to have COVID-19, any member(s) of the cohort who had had close contact with that individual during their infectious period would be considered to be in “close contact” and would need to quarantine (isolate for 14 days after the last contact with the infectious case).

Each case of COVID-19 is managed by Alberta Health Services (AHS). AHS public health investigators will determine the individual quarantine requirements within the cohort and follow up with all contacts.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Q: Are coaches required to change masks? And what is the guideline for that?

A: Alberta Health does have a proper mask use document by which all coaches must be compliant. Please refer to the [Guidance for wearing of non-medical face masks](#) for further information.

Q: Will you be providing suitable options for PPE?

A: The Section is currently working on sourcing a supplier for PPE. The Section Office will not be stocking PPE however we are investigating a potential procurement relationship whereby section clubs and skating schools may pre-order through the Section to take advantage of bulk-ordering. Details are currently under investigation.

Section members will be notified if this option is viable and the process is available for use.

Q: What is the difference between medical and non-medical masks?

A: The filtration level of a mask determines their classification. Inquire with your supplier, as to whether the mask is classified as [medical](#) or [non-medical](#). Medical Masks include surgical and procedure masks, and Public Health of Canada recommends medical masks and respirators (like N95 respirators) need to be used with appropriate eye protection.

Q: Are we asking coaches and skaters to wear non-medical masks while on the ice?

A: It is strongly recommended that Coaches and Program Assistants wear non-medical masks or face shields, and gloves while also maintaining the 2m physical distancing requirements. Mandatory use of non-medical masks for the delivery of certain Phase 2 programming (CanSkate, CanPowerSkate, STAR 1-5 programming) may be included in the upcoming Phase 2 protocols.

Coaches may choose to stand behind the plexi-glass to create an additional barrier as an alternative if non-medical masks or face shields are not worn.

Coaches have the option to wear a face shield however face shields alone do not meet the public health requirements if physical distancing is not maintained - masks must also be used with the face shield under these circumstances.

It is recommended that all participants wear masks when entering/exiting the facility in support of the general health guidance. Skaters may choose to wear a non-medical face mask while training elements or at lower-levels however face masks are not recommended for intense physical activity.

Group Restrictions

Q: Why are only 25 people allowed on the ice when the province is allowing indoor gatherings of 50 people?

A: Phase 1 only allows for singles skating or synchro teams to be on the ice. We are not allowing our Learn to Skate programs that typically have more participants on the ice during Phase 1. 20 skaters with 4 coaches is a common group size for freeskating and aligns with Skate Canada's recommendations and requirements. Increases to this number are anticipated in Phase 2.

In all phases it is recommended that smaller numbers than the maximum permitted are used for the first sessions to allow for better management and oversight until participants and organizations become familiar with the new rules, protocols and processes and ensure they work for the intended purpose.

Q: Are Parents and Guardians excluded in the 25 people maximum during Phase 1, assuming they are not at the ice surface?

A: Yes, Parents and Guardians are not included in the 25 people maximum and are considered spectators. Spectators still need to maintain a 2-meter distance while in the stands and are not permitted to be at the ice level. The province does allow for 25% of seating capacity up to a maximum of 100 spectators, however some facilities may fully be restricting any spectators at this time.

Q: Is the music volunteer included as a participant? Does housing the music player and volunteer in another room or the keeper's box change this fact?

A: A volunteer playing music will always be included as a participant as they are having contact with people at ice level.

Health Screening/Contact Tracing

Q: The Health Screening Questionnaire form indicates the questions can be completed verbally prior to participating in each session. If verbally answered questions are expected, does the child or the guardian (if the child is not of age) answer?

A: A parent or guardian can assist in responding to the questionnaire if there is a child or youth who is unable to do so on their own.

Q: The Contact Tracking Log also must be completed for all spectators. What constitutes a spectator?

A: If a parent/guardian is dropping a child off, they are not required to sign the log. Anyone who remains in the facility for longer than 15 minutes must be signed into the facility. Each club/skating school may create their own process with facility operators for spectators directly involved in the club activities. This process is to ensure, should an outbreak occur, all attendees can be contacted and notified to isolate or be tested.

Q: Are skaters or coaches who are asthmatic or have seasonal allergies and have symptoms due to that allowed to participate in programming?

A: Known asthma or seasonal allergies will not preclude participation of a skater. Alberta Health has updated the Health Screening Questionnaire and will be revised and available on the section website shortly.

Unexplained or new onset (or worsening) symptoms are to be identified and communicated.

Q: Does the club need to keep a copy of each symptom checklist for each participant each day?

A: Responses to the Health Screening Questionnaire do not need to be maintained however acknowledgement that the participant completed the verbal screening successfully should be recorded on the Contact Tracing log.

Q: What age do athletes have to be to answer the health screening questions themselves?

A: Clubs and Skating Schools are able to determine the ability of their skaters to answer the health screening questionnaire daily. An age has not been specified however participants must be able to identify their symptoms or change of symptoms and understand the consequences of untruthful responses.

Q: We are in a facility such as West Edmonton Mall, are we required to collect a list of shoppers who stop at the glass to watch?

A: The facility is responsible for managing the safety and actions of their shoppers and vendors, if they are staying outside of the arena area and not at the ice level or near skaters.

Q: To confirm, the contact tracing log is to be filled by one person for all participants, coaches, and spectators and not passed around to everyone to be filled out.

A: It is recommended one person be assigned per session (group of sessions) to complete the log to minimize contact transfer and to ensure the privacy of individuals is maintained. The binder/forms and pen must be sanitized in between users and the document must never be left out in the open.

Resources

Q: Where can we access COVID-19 signage?

A: COVID-19 signage from the Alberta Biz Connect site is available to download at <https://www.alberta.ca/covid-19-information-posters.aspx> . In addition, each facility may have their own signage displayed as per municipal protocols. There are also some links to signage in the back of the playbook on the Section website.

Q: Are the Skate Canada: Alberta-NWT/Nunavut branded posters available on the section website?

A: Yes, there is template signage posted on the Section website on the Return to Skating Protocols page.

Cohort Groups

Q: Where are the cohort family explanation documents?

A: A new [guidance document for cohorts](#) was recently released by the Province which provides detailed information on Core Cohorts and Sports / Performance cohorts. Skate Canada: Alberta – NWT/Nunavut Return to Skating Phase 2 protocols will also provide additional information, once published.

In the Phase 1 protocols, there is a hot link to the information on core cohorts (formally known as cohort families). <https://www.alberta.ca/prevent-the-spread.aspx>

Q: To clarify regarding synchro bubbles and freeskaters, as many skaters train in both disciplines, if a skater is part of a synchro bubble are they only able to participate in that bubble or are they able to participate in other freeskate sessions?

A: A skater who participates in a synchro sports cohort group may also participate in other disciplines such as freeskate. They may also participate in other non-team sports where physical distancing is maintained (no contact among participants).

Freeskating activities do not require creation of a sport cohort as physical distance is maintained, however Synchronized Skating (in hold/contact team discipline) requires the creation of a sport cohort group.

Skaters who are part of a synchro cohort may NOT belong to another sport cohort (for examples: ringette or hockey).

Overlap of participants on synchronized skating teams is permitted if it falls within 1 cohort group provided the TOTAL number of participants (including coaches that are in contact with team members) does not exceed the maximum of 50 participants.

Q: If someone in a household travels (not the skater), is the skater still able to be a part of the cohort group?

A: Yes, as long as the skater or the travelling family member has NOT exhibited symptoms, been ill, or has come in contact with someone who is being investigated or confirmed to be a case of COVID-19 within the last 14 days, the skater may participate in a sport cohort group. The Alberta Health Screening tool is currently being updated to reflect this situation. Examples would include, but are not limited to, airline crew or truck drivers who travel outside of Canada as an essential worker.

Q: Could you please provide information on siblings in different sports and skaters who play another sport like baseball?

A: As the purpose of cohorts is to limit the spread of the virus, Alberta Health recommends that if possible, households with sports, performing, and/or childcare cohorts consider having a smaller core cohort, given the total number of close contacts between all groups. Sports and performing cohort numbers do not include parents or spectators.

A core cohort (formally referred to as a family cohort) includes the people with whom you regularly spend the longest amounts of time and have the closest physical contact (those you can hug and touch), and those who are part of your daily or regular routines. Core cohorts are expanded to currently include up to 15 additional people outside of your household.

For clarity:

In a situation where a dance partnership trains regularly, and one partner also belongs to a synchronized skating sport cohort.

- A dance partnership does not require a sports cohort group however the dance partners are to be part of each other's core cohort or be living in the same household
- The skating partner, like a sibling, would not be required to be included as part of the synchronized skating sport cohort.

If a synchronized skater has a sibling who belongs to a different sports cohort such as a baseball team.

- Each sibling belongs to one sports cohort and is not included in the other siblings sport cohort.
- The family's core cohort is recommended to be kept smaller than the maximum of up to 15 outside the household as a result of the family belonging to two or more sports cohorts.

For more information on cohorts please refer to the [COVID-19 Guidance for Cohorts](#) document found on Alberta's BizConnect site.

Q: Many coaches have other jobs and professions, even in healthcare, are we considered in a bubble or cohort at work and in a second bubble with coaching at the rink?

A: In figure skating, only synchronized skaters are required to form a sports cohort group or bubble as it is a team, contact sport.

A coach would typically become part of this cohort should they choose to be within 2 metres with any participant at any time. Coaches are only permitted to be included in 1 sport cohort group that they are unable to maintain 2 meters of distance within.

Should another profession require you to be within 2 metres of others, without the use of PPE, you should inquire with your employer or Alberta Health Services whether you, are considered to be part of a cohort group that restricts your activity with sport cohort groups.

Q: Are synchronized skating teams able to hold auditions / recruitment sessions during Phase 1? How could new recruits be accommodated within the session if it is unknown whether they would be a long-term addition to the sports cohort grouping?

A: A sports cohort is only required if members of the cohort will be within 2 metres of one another. It will be up to the individual club to determine if auditions would require in hold elements to be assessed. If so, skaters are required to quarantine for 14 days between being a part of another sports / performing / daycare cohort, which includes changing within synchronized skating cohort groups.

As during auditioning skaters may be placed on one of several teams (depending on skill level) it is recommended that all skaters maintain physical distancing and avoid contact and holds during auditions.

Additional Clarifications: Synchro Cohort/Bubbles

- The Province has recently introduced a new mechanism to mitigate the risk of widespread transmission while still allowing for contact in sport - they are called Cohort Groups, Bubbles, or Mini-Leagues (Our Protocols for Synchro refer to them as a Cohort Group or Bubble)
 - This is different than a core cohort (formerly called a family cohort) that the Province also has in place that currently is a maximum of 15 and is reference in the Section protocols for Dance/Pairs Teams. There are different restrictions and relaxations of health orders for each
- Purpose of this new mechanism is to limit the number of athletes that come within close contact or are unable to adhere to physical distancing. For example, Synchro, Hockey or Ringette.
- Free-skaters are not considered to be in a cohort group as they are individuals maintaining physical distancing at all times
- The total # of participants within a cohort group or bubble, including coaches/staff and volunteers who cannot maintain 2 meters of physical distancing is 50.
 - Must be from within the same area or region (e.g. Calgary and Edmonton participants cannot be in the same cohort group)
 - This number does not include Parents or Spectators

- Participants of a cohort group or bubble cannot be part of more than 1 cohort group. This means anyone who is involved in another team contact sport will have to choose which sport to participate in as the participants cannot move between cohort groups without quarantining for 14 days first
- Synchro Clubs may blend 2 teams into a cohort group (max 50 participants) to accommodate skaters and coaches involved with multiple teams but to a maximum total of 50 participants. Should the combined team number of participants exceed 50, participants or coaches will need to determine which teams form the cohort group or bubble and maintain the cohort or the cohort quarantines for 14 days (no team activity/group skating) during that transition.
- It is recommended that each cohort assign a responsible person to oversee the maintenance of the sports cohort and monitoring of all changes to public health guidance or Section protocols.
- When off ice all participants not living in the same household need to maintain 2 m physical distance. This includes pairs and dance teams as well as synchronized skating team members in a sports cohort.
- Refer to the [Guidance for Cohorts](#) document for additional information

Assumption of Risk and Waiver Form

Q: Does the Assumption of Risk and Waiver Form need to be completed and signed in paper or would the use of an online program like uplifter suffice? Coaches, Volunteers, etc. would have to be handled separately as they do not register for programs.

A: The Assumption of Risk and Waiver form needs to be completed, signed and kept by the skater's club or skating school. Skate Canada has been investigating providing an electronic form via uplifter however this functionality is not yet available. Signed, scanned waivers would also be allowed as uploaded documents. The waiver can be signed once during a season if the activities listed in the appendix are broad enough. Clubs and Skating Schools should create a safe process for handling and storing the waiver forms.

If/when the form becomes available electronically the section will advise all clubs with a summary of requirements.

Q: Do we need the participant's signature if they are not 18 years of age?

A: The form must be signed by a legal adult (parent or guardian). It would be appropriate for the skater to understand what is being signed on their behalf as it may impact their behavior at the arena. A minor's signature is not mandatory but is acceptable in addition to the signature of a parent or guardian.

Q: Do we need both parents/guardians or is only one signature fine?

A: One signature of a person over the age of 18 is all that is required.

Facility Management/Cleaning

Q: Who is responsible for cleaning the arena? For instance, the arena doors.

A: Facility cleaning protocols and responsibilities will vary by facility / club. The section does not have standardized requirements as it will vary depending on municipality, ownership, # of users etc.

Facilities that are run by municipalities will most likely have enhanced cleaning protocols that are managed by staff. Many facilities are run by non-profit organizations or private facilities; their capability or capacity to execute enhanced cleaning protocols through the scheduled session will vary from facility to facility and must be determined by a conversation between the club or skating school and the facility management.

If a facility is not able to accommodate the required protocols the club or skating school will be required to ensure the safety of its participants by creating a cleaning schedule and assigning volunteers with PPE to help.

A suggested Facility / Club agenda has been provided in the [Skate Canada: Alberta – NWT/Nunavut Return to Skating Club and Skating School COVID-19 Playbook](#)

Q: What are some examples of cleaning between sessions?

A: Every facility is different and it will depend on the facility's regular cleaning schedule: what is being cleaned and the frequency of cleaning. A template has been included in the Return to Skating Playbook with suggestions on club-specific cleaning requirements such as wiping off the tops of the boards and any areas that have frequent high-touch areas.

Music equipment or any shared tools or aids must be cleaned between users. Wipes can be made available by the club or coaches may bring their own. Items such as tissues and hand sanitizer should be brought to the rink by the skaters and should be used between sessions. Used tissues should be discarded in a garbage can immediately. Water bottles should not be shared between anyone and they should be labelled with the skater's name and kept in an area with the skater's personal items such as guards etc.

Q: Is the club or the facility responsible for tracking spectators?

A: That will be a discussion between the club or skating school and the facility. Defining who is accountable and responsible for processes required to meet the protocol standards is mandatory before programming is offered to skaters. This prevents problems in the future ensuring everything is getting done and not assuming someone else is looking after it.

Q: Do the facility staff who are at ice level count as participants?

A: Facility staff are not included in the participant count as they rarely interact with the group on the ice.

Q: Who is responsible for the cost of the cleaning measures we have to take. Is it the coaches, club, or arena?

A: The discussion of material costs should take place between the facility operators, the clubs or skating schools, coaches, and potentially the parents of skaters prior to offering programming. There may be a need for shared responsibility in ensuring proper cleaning measures are done.

Q: Are coaches and skaters required to wash their coats and jackets and clothing each day after skating?

A: It is required that training clothes and gloves be washed between sessions. As this may be difficult for outerwear; it has been suggested that coaches / volunteers let a coat sit for 48 hours after wearing it before it is used again at the rink. This would mean rotating a minimum of 2 coats (assuming daily coaching). Retail stores are taking clothes off the shelf for a period of up to 48 hours after they have been tried on (and not purchased) to ensure the safety of their customers. This could be considered a good guideline, when available.

Q: We have lockers in our dressing rooms for skaters to keep their skates – can they be used?

A: The Return to Skating Protocols do not address the use of lockers however Phase 2 Protocols will continue to recommend the minimal use of Dressing Rooms and arrival at the arena training-ready whenever possible as a best practice. In the guidance document for Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation from the province, it is suggested that locker use be kept to a minimum.

Phase 2 and Moving Forward

Q: Will the continued use of masks be required in Phase 2?

A: Skate Canada has recently provided Program Requirements and Delivery Standards for CanSkate, CanPowerSkate and STAR 1-5 programming and the Section COVID-19 Advisory Group is currently working to develop the Section Protocols and programming requirements to align with Skate Canada. More detail will be communicated shortly.

Q: Is there a possibility of handheld harnesses being able to be used in Phase 2?

A: The merits of using a handheld harness are well understood and the Advisory Group, along with the Section Office are currently evaluating how the harness may be used effectively and safely for both the skaters and the coaches. Setting up, clipping / buckling the skater into and out of the harness and enhanced cleaning are all being evaluated and the Section is working towards harnesses being permitted sometime in Phase 2.

Q: Once CanSkate is launched, will there be a protocol regarding props and equipment cleaning for each session?

A: Yes, the COVID-19 Advisory Group is currently developing Phase 2 protocols for CanSkate, CanPowerSkate and STAR 1-5 Programming. Approved / not approved training aids will be outlined in the protocols while responsibility and accountability for cleaning and frequency of cleaning must be determined by the club prior to offering programming. The Return to Skating Phase 2 protocols will detail all areas relative to Learn to Skate programs.

Q: Do you anticipate more changes before some clubs start back in October?

A: Yes, as things continue to remain fluid, and are constantly evolving and changing at times quite quickly. If the curve remains flat, there is a good chance that the province may move into the Stage 3 of the relaunch strategy by the fall, resulting in a further relaxation of restrictions. This could include lifting the restriction in numbers of individuals allowed inside of a facility, in addition to allowing for competitions and events with larger groups of people.

Q: All signs point to a likely second wave in the fall. Are we operating under the assumption that there will be a competition season? Is there a date when the Section or Skate Canada will decide on whether or not there will be a season?

A: Section staff and Competition Committee are optimistic there will be competition this season and are planning accordingly. It is very likely the season will not be typical, and if competitions and events are held in the fall, there will be a need for enhanced safety protocols and possible restrictions.