



Considerations for Recreation and Sport Facilities Reopening's

Overview

The Recreation Facility Association of Nova Scotia (RFANS) looks forward to the remobilization of the recreation sector and to a time when we can open our recreation facility infrastructure up to the public again. During these closures, some recreation and sport facilities have taken steps to reduce energy consumption and employee costs. Others are taking advantage of the current shutdowns to address larger maintenance issues. These actions have taken various areas of our recreation and sport facilities out of commission. Recreation and sport facilities will require time to get back to opening standards. Getting facilities fully operational and addressing new staffing requirements to maintain public health directives will take time.

Our association serves members who represent of a variety of recreation and sport facilities in diverse communities across Nova Scotia offering a multitude of recreation and sport activities. Regardless of the activities and diverse populations our members serve, RFANS recognizes the importance access to recreation facilities and infrastructure plays on the overall wellbeing of our residents. The COVID-19 pandemic has accentuated the affect limited access to recreation and sport facilities has on our physical, mental, social, and emotional health.

Recognizing that we could not possibly address all of the different components within each individual recreation and sport facility in Nova Scotia we have tried to put these considerations together in a common sense approach to develop recommendations for facilities to follow when creating reopening plans. The key priorities guiding these recommendations are aligned with public health directives and focus on the safety of members, employees, communities, and the province. These considerations go above and beyond the required mandates for reopening. Every recreation and sport facility is required to meet Occupational Health and Safety Regulations and current public health directives as a minimum.

No matter what the province announces as it relates to recreation and sport facilities around the loosening of restrictions remember most of these facilities are owned and operated by municipalities, community groups or privately. At some point, we will be given permission from the province to reopen but consider that these allowances may not fall within the regular operation period of the facility or coincide with a manageable plan that follows public health directive. Ultimately, owners and management teams who operate these facilities and infrastructure will need to review the announcement internally and have a plan of action to open that will work for each individual situation. Just because it can open does not mean it has to open; the final decision is made by owners and operators.

To use this document:

This document is meant to serve as suggestions to be considered by our members and other provincial recreation and sports facilities when implementing their reopening plans. The following section is detailed with information to be incorporated into reopening plans and meant to evoke thought into a variety of issues you may encounter in the development of the plan. This may not be a comprehensive list of all things you need to consider for each setting but a great start to the planning process.

You must refer to the **COVID-19 Return to Recreation (Program and Facility) Guidelines** when creating your plans:

http://www.rfans.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COVID-19-Recreation-Program-and-Facility-Guidelines_upd.pdf

Sector	Recommendations
<p>Public Health Directives (to remain in place through all phases)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring physical distancing, with a minimum of two metres between individuals. This applies to all public areas as well as employee designated areas. • Practising good hygiene (frequent hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; if not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains 60% - 80% alcohol, avoid touching face, respiratory etiquette, etc.). • Ensure enhanced cleaning and sanitizing of frequently touched surfaces. • Stay informed, be prepared and follow public health advice. • Limit non-essential travel. • Increasing environmental cleaning and ventilation of public spaces and worksites. • Staying home (not going to school/work) and away from others when symptomatic and follow public health advice. • Considering use of non-medical mask or face covering in situations where physical distance cannot be maintained.
<p>Safeguarding for Facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical distancing must be observed at all times. This applies to all public areas as well as employee designated areas. • Appoint “COVID Coordinators” from your staff to be leaders and inspectors of your facilities to stay up-to-date of ever-changing COVID-19 data and local response. • Adhere to mass gathering limits. • Inform members, renters and participants of new protocols through email, website, member receipts, in house telephone communications, contracts, etc. where appropriate. • Covid-19 screening of all individuals entering the facility. • Participants, employees, coaches, trainers, etc. encouraged to stay home if feeling unwell. • Individuals who have been out of the province or country cannot access the facility until they have self-isolated for 14 days and show no signs or symptoms of COVID-19. • Where possible, a pre-registration process should be utilized to reserve access to the spaces and/or equipment to ensure the number of people on site at any time is not greater than the current public guidelines. • Limit the number of spectators allowed in your facility. • Consider including COVID-19 in your refund policy. • Specific entrances and exits would be marked to indicate “ENTRANCE ONLY” OR “EXIT ONLY” to assist with traffic flow and reduce interaction of users if possible. • Guest/Front Desk Services (cooperating with security) to maintain count of participants within the facility and direct the flow of people in the facility. If not available, an employee should be assigned to act as a counter and direct the flow of people at appropriate entrances and exits. • Use of plexiglass at Guest/Front Desk Services should be considered where appropriate.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floors should be marked to indicate proper flow of those who enter the building and physical distancing where appropriate. • Ensure enhanced cleaning and sanitizing of frequently touched surfaces (eg. entrance, washrooms, dressing rooms, door handles, etc.). • For indoor facilities, periodic cleaning and maintenance of HVAC equipment to be completed. • Provide hand sanitizing (contains 60% - 80% alcohol) or handwashing stations where appropriate. • Limit the number of persons permitted in changing room/washroom at one time to ensure physical distancing requirements are followed. • Clean/sanitize equipment after each use. • Remove or cover any equipment that cannot be cleaned properly. • Play structures should be closed. • Remove self-serve vending machines and/or food sales. Any social areas such as café seating, lounges, etc. should be closed to public access or altered to ensure appropriate physical distancing is being followed. • Public water fountains that are drank directly from should be taken out of commission. Water filling stations are allowed. • Personal items or equipment should not be left at the facility. • Once rentals, classes, or workouts are finished participants should exit the facility promptly and all surfaces involved should be cleaned and disinfected (mats, floors, counters, washrooms). • Ensure that all cleaning products are authorized disinfectants against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19). https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html • Post resources, posters and facility policies throughout the facility for participants and employees on physical distancing, handwashing, staying healthy, etc. found at https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/resources/
<p>Employee Considerations for all Facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical distancing must be observed at all times, with a minimum of two metres between individuals. This applies to all public areas as well as employee designated areas. • Educate employees on ways to stay healthy in a safe manner. Refer to the Government of Nova Scotia COVID-19: Staying Healthy page https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/staying-healthy/. • Employees required to wear PPE as determined by the facility and/or dictated by the job responsibilities. • Information should be shared with employees regarding new policies concerning PPE, physical distancing, illness reporting, their rights, risks and responsibilities as they relate to this public health emergency. • An illness exclusion policy must be in place which requires staff to stay home if they are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. Anyone visiting your facility exhibiting signs of illness will be asked to leave. • Employees should be required to report any symptoms of COVID-19 to their direct supervisor. • Information should be shared with employees regarding disciplinary action to be taken if employees do not follow physical distancing, wear proper PPE, reporting to shift unwell, etc.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid-19 screening done by all employees entering the facility for their scheduled shifts. • Employees should be encouraged not to come in if they are not scheduled to work. • Employees are required to sanitize (contains 60% - 80% alcohol) and/or wash hands regularly while on shift. • Establish sanitation protocols to maintain all workspaces to avoid cross contamination between shift changes. • Each staff room would be marked off to allow for physical distancing. • Prepare your staff for anticipated opening and new operating procedures. • Training on proper sanitization of dressing rooms, washrooms, high traffic areas, frequently touched surfaces and workspaces would be provided to all employees. Ensure staff are trained to follow manufacturers instructions and not mix chemicals. • Employees are required to wear masks if they cannot maintain physical distancing. • Gloves are required for cleaning the facility and equipment between rentals and use. Otherwise, employees are not required to wear gloves as they provide a false sense of safety. Hands need to be washed after wearing gloves or changing gloves. New gloves should be worn or changed for each cleaning. • Personal safety measures such as coughing/sneezing into arm are highly encouraged. • If feeling unwell, you must stay home. • Recreation and sport facilities should refer to and follow the Nova Scotia COVID-19 Workplace Guide found at https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/working-during-covid-19/.
Multiplex Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead time needed to get up and running: 4-6 weeks. • Determine which areas of the facility can be opened safely and which cannot. • Facility capacity shall be determined by supporting physical distancing guidelines and other recommendations and requirements issued by provincial and municipal authorities. • Sanitation protocols established to maintain dressing rooms to avoid cross contamination between rentals and use. • Consider closing off your lockers and showers except for bathroom essentials. • Provide keycards or contactless scanners to facilitate check-in where possible. • Consider a membership hold or opt-out option upon facility reopening for those who are not yet comfortable returning. • Consider operational modifications for high-risk, vulnerable populations. For example, exclusive hours of operation for elderly members, virtual options, etc. • Clean and disinfect equipment prior to and after use. Remove or cover any equipment that cannot be cleaned. • Reduce the number of classes/programs at any one time. • Add time between classes/programs for changeover and/or stagger start and end times to ensure all protocols are met. • Rearrange, remove or spread out equipment for better physical distancing. Determine new layouts for group exercise areas that align with recommendations and requirements issued by provincial and municipal authorities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail stores would be allowed to open but given the limitations on number of people allowed in the facility may choose to limit hours. • Regarding childcare and child minding, in addition to procedures already in place establish an isolation area for children who exhibit symptoms until a guardian can retrieve them.
Arena	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead time needed to get up and running: 4-6 weeks. • Facility capacity shall be determined by supporting physical distancing guidelines and other recommendations and requirements issued by provincial and municipal authorities. • Sanitation protocols established to maintain dressing rooms to avoid cross contamination between rentals and each use. • Operations/janitorial personnel would be assigned to a specific arena for the shift where applicable. • Rental groups must provide details for renting the ice that would include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Areas within the facility they are requesting to access (ice surface, dressing rooms, etc.). ○ Number of participants per rental. ○ How the rental group will social distance while participating in their activity. ○ Proper PPE required for all participants to enter the facility. • Rental groups will be assigned # dressing rooms per rental: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dressing rooms will be sanitized prior to each rental entering. ○ Benches in dressing room will be marked off for physical distancing. ○ Only designated individuals will be allowed in each dressing room. ○ Consider closing off your showers except for bathroom essentials. • Rentals times will be offset by # minutes to allow previous rental to clear the facility prior next rental entering arena. • Rental groups can be “staged” in another area of the facility until prior rental group has left the building if possible. • Player benches will be marked to indicate physical distancing. • Player benches will be sanitized between rental groups. • “Run throughs” will be mandatory for each rental group to ensure they understand the new operating requirements. The intention of the “run through” would be to allow for a smooth transition for the participants. • Renters will be asked to vacate the facility in a timely fashion when their rental finishes. • Establish disciplinary actions to be take on rental groups who do not follow new operating requirements. • Retail stores would be allowed to open but given the limitations on number of people allowed in the facility may choose to limit hours.
Pools and Splashpads	<p>Details listed here are taken from Pool & Hot Tub Alliance Practice Tips for Maintaining and Opening Public Pools and Hot Tubs http://www.rfans.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Reopening-Pool-PHTA-Guidance.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead time needed to get up and running: 4-6 weeks. • Evaluate COVID-19 impact on rescue protocol.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address staffing requirements. • Check with certifying bodies to determine if lifeguard and CPR certifications may be extended beyond current expiration. Confirm if authority having jurisdiction will accept any extension or modified training. • Determine proper PPE for employees in the pool area. • Facility capacity shall be determined by supporting physical distancing guidelines and other recommendations and requirements issued by provincial and municipal authorities. • Determine physical distancing for in the pool, on the deck, restroom and locker room configurations, line ups for slides, etc. Enforcing physical distancing should not be the responsibility of the lifeguard on duty. • Space furniture in accordance with physical distancing requirements. Remove or cover any equipment or furniture that cannot be properly cleaned. • Consider establishing and marking zones or sections of the pool to maximize separation. • Sanitation protocols established to maintain dressing rooms to avoid cross contamination between rentals and each use. • Establish a routine cleaning schedule for opening, shift changes, closing, for frequently touched surfaces and for aquatics equipment (slides, diving board, toys, etc.). • Ensure any cleaning products being used in the pool area do not enter and contaminate the pool water. • Reduce the number of classes/programs at any one time. • Do not permit swimming while wearing cloth or paper masks. • Add time between classes/programs for changeover and/or stagger start and end times to ensure all protocols are met. • Consider impact on programs – recreational swim, water exercise, lap swim, swim lessons, swim team practices. Develop a plan on if and how for each can happen. • Establish safe places for guests to await their turn while remaining apart. • Determine protocol around physical distancing for adults accompanying children. • Determine if showering is permitted onsite or must be done at home. • For non-guarded pools determine how mandated capacity limits and access will be monitored. • In unstaffed pools, instruct patrons to clean and disinfect all surfaces before and after use. • Retail stores would be allowed to open but given the limitations on number of people allowed in the facility may choose to limit hours. • If seasonal pools do not open prepare maintenance for equipment to long term shutdowns. • Plan to have a Certified Pool Operator (CPO) on staff if you do not already. • Are you able to hire trained lifeguards in time for opening?
Fields	<p>Details listed here are taken from COVID-19 Readiness Plan A Guide to Operating CHS Field – St. Paul Saints</p> <p>https://www.saintsbaserball.com/assets/doc/COVID-19-Readiness-Plan-St.-Paul-Saints_Single-Pages-cc6850e281.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead time needed to get up and running: 4-6 weeks.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facility capacity shall be determined by supporting physical distancing guidelines and other recommendations and requirements issued by provincial and municipal authorities. • Schedule to clean outdoor washrooms regularly. • Schedule to sanitize outdoor equipment and outdoor furniture (picnic tables, benches, bins, bleachers, etc.) regularly. • Add hand sanitizing stations for public and employee use around the field. • If allowing spectators, mark off the bleachers for physical distancing. • Add time between classes/programs for changeover and/or stagger start and end times to ensure all protocols are met. • Limitations placed on the use of common “spit” items, including, but not limited to seeds, gum and peanuts.
Playgrounds and Outdoor Spaces	<p>Details listed here are taken from How to Sanitize a Playspace in a COVID-19 World (CPSI) https://www.cpsionline.ca/UserFiles/File/CPSI_forms/HowToSanitizePlaygroundEquipmentInACOVID-19World-r15.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facility capacity shall be determined by supporting physical distancing guidelines and other recommendations and requirements issued by provincial and municipal authorities. • Schedule to clean outdoor washrooms regularly. • Schedule to sanitize outdoor play equipment and outdoor furniture (picnic tables, benches, bins, etc.) regularly. Use only approved hard-surface disinfectants that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN). • Rearrange, remove or spread out equipment for better physical distancing where possible.
Community Recreation Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead time needed to get up and running: 4-6 weeks. • Facility capacity shall be determined by supporting physical distancing guidelines and other recommendations and requirements issued by provincial and municipal authorities. • Consider operational modifications for high-risk, vulnerable populations. For example, exclusive hours of operation for elderly members, virtual options, etc. • Reduce the number of classes/programs at any one time. • Rearrange, remove or spread out equipment for better physical distancing. Determine new layouts for group exercise areas that align with recommendations and requirements issued by provincial and municipal authorities. • Add time between classes/programs for changeover and/or stagger start and end times to ensure all protocols are met. • Consider closing off your lockers and showers except for bathroom essentials. • Regarding childcare and child minding, in addition to procedures already in place establish an isolation area for children who exhibit symptoms until a guardian can retrieve them.
Fitness Centres/Gyms	<p>Public Health is in the process of approving Guidelines for Fitness Facility Reopening Post COVID-19 which will need to be followed.</p> <p>Details listed here are taken from Daxko Reopening Playbook https://f.hubspotusercontent40.net/hubfs/2640042/Re-Opening%20Playbook.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead time needed to get up and running: 4-6 weeks. • Facility capacity shall be determined by supporting physical distancing guidelines and other recommendations and requirements issued by provincial and municipal authorities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider a membership hold or opt-out option upon facility reopening for those who are not yet comfortable returning. • Provide keycards or contactless scanners to facilitate check-in where possible. • Request members do not bring in their own workout equipment. • Ask your members to keep their workout gear in a dedicated bag or wash items immediately after each use. • Consider operational modifications for high-risk, vulnerable populations. For example, exclusive hours of operation for elderly members, virtual options, etc. • Reduce the number of classes/programs at any one time. • Rearrange, remove or spread out equipment for better physical distancing. Determine new layouts for group exercise areas that align with recommendations and requirements issued by provincial and municipal authorities. • Add time between classes/programs for changeover and/or stagger start and end times to ensure all protocols are met. • Consider deactivating every other machine to ensure physical distancing. • Create a schedule for equipment use to maintain the guidelines around sanitizing. • Place signage around all equipment and machines requiring members to sanitize before and after use. • Ask cleaners to create a current plan to execute deep cleaning of all areas of the fitness centre on a regular schedule. • Provide a sanitary towel and personalized spray bottle of sanitizing solution that members can use to clean equipment. The towel should be returned for cleaning when the member leaves. • Consider closing off your lockers and showers except for bathroom essentials. • Regarding childcare and child minding, in addition to procedures already in place establish an isolation area for children who exhibit symptoms until a guardian can retrieve them.
Gymnasium and Courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead time needed to get up and running: 4-6 weeks. • Facility capacity shall be determined by supporting physical distancing guidelines and other recommendations and requirements issued by provincial and municipal authorities. • Rules and procedures for outdoor courts should be clearly posted for reference. • Reduce the number of programs at any one time. • Rearrange, remove or spread out equipment for better physical distancing. Determine new layouts for groups that align with recommendations and requirements issued by provincial and municipal authorities. • Add time between classes/programs for changeover and/or stagger start and end times to ensure all protocols are met. • Create a schedule for equipment use to maintain the guidelines around sanitizing. • Consider closing off your lockers and showers except for bathroom essentials.
Events	<p>Details listed here are taken from The Event Safety Alliance Reopening Guide http://www.rfans.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/2020-05-11EventSafetyAllianceReopeningGuide.pdf When it is Legal and Reasonably Safe</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If small events and venues can reopen without increasing COVID-19 transmission rates, it will open the door for progressively larger spaces to implement similar measures on a larger scale in the future. If, on the other hand, the first attempt at a safe reopening is a failure, that would set back the entire event industry. <p>Patron Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine how to change expectations, what to explain, where to message, how to message and contact tracing. <p>Worker Health and Hygiene</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infection mitigation is essential during this pandemic. Implementing practices for keeping workers and volunteers healthy, practices to undertake when they are sick, responding to a confirmed case of COVID-19 and sick leave should be considered. <p>Sanitizing the Venue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans must be made to deal with sanitizing high-touch areas and how to clean and disinfect properly. <p>Ingress and Egress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patrons experience in the venue should match health guidelines. Considerations should be made around handwashing and sanitizing stations, parking lots, online queuing for ingress, plexiglass for box office windows, physical distancing for queue's, screening process, bag checks, magnetometers and pat-downs, scanning tickets, PPE, security workers and ticket takers, disability accommodations, egress management and emergency egress. <p>Front of House Circulation, Food and Beverage and Merchandise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing with crowd capacity and control to satisfy physical distancing will have to carefully consider occupancy in restrooms, seated venues, general admission venues and intermission. • Food and beverage services will present issues through ordering, counter service, partitions, point of sale terminals, grab and go, bar hygiene, tables and chairs, trays, utensils, beverage packaging, condiments, waste, entry and exit points. Merchant infection control plans for high-touch items and physical distanced dining will need to be considered as well. • Merchandise purchasing interactions, queuing and policies will need to be looked at also. <p>Production Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions around division of authority and responsibility, booking an event space, physical distancing musicians, material handling, equipment deliveries, ground transportation will need to be discussed depending on the event. <p>Legal Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many legal issues may arise as events and venues reopen during a pandemic. Steps to address duty of care and proximate cause need to be taken into consideration.
Resources	<p>COVID-19 Return to Recreation (Program and Facility) Guidelines http://www.rfans.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COVID-19-Recreation-Program-and-Facility-Guidelines_upd.pdf</p> <p>COVID-19 Return to Sport Guidelines http://www.rfans.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/NS-Sport-Guidelines_upd.pdf</p> <p>CDC & HHS Business Pandemic Influenza Planning Checklist https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/pdf/businesschecklist.pdf</p>

	<p>COVID-19 Readiness Plan A Guide to Operating CHS Field – St. Paul Saints https://www.saintsbaseball.com/assets/doc/COVID-19-Readiness-Plan-St.-Paul-Saints_Single-Pages-cc6850e281.pdf</p> <p>Daxko Reopening Playbook https://f.hubspotusercontent40.net/hubfs/2640042/Re-Opening%20Playbook.pdf</p> <p>Event Safety Alliance Reopening Guide http://www.rfans.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/2020-05-11EventSafetyAllianceReopeningGuide.pdf</p> <p>Government of Canada - Authorized disinfectants against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html</p> <p>Government of Nova Scotia – Prepare to reopen Nova Scotia https://novascotia.ca/reopening-nova-scotia/#not-required-to-close</p> <p>Government of Nova Scotia – Resources and posters on physical distancing, handwashing, staying healthy, etc. https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/resources/</p> <p>Government of Nova Scotia COVID-19: Staying Healthy page https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/staying-healthy/</p> <p>Government of Nova Scotia COVID-19: Working https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/working-during-covid-19/</p> <p>Halifax Chamber of Commerce Re-opening Business in Halifax http://www.rfans.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Reopening_Business_in_Halifax_Toolkit_Halifax_Chamber_of_Commerce.pdf</p> <p>How to Sanitize a Playspace in a COVID-19 World https://www.cpsionline.ca/UserFiles/File/CPSI_forms/HowToSanitizePlaygroundEquipmentInACOVID-19World-r15.pdf</p> <p>Pool & Hot Tub Alliance Practice Tips for Maintaining and Opening Public Pools and Hot Tubs http://www.rfans.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Reopening-Pool-PHTA-Guidance.pdf</p>
Appendix A	<p>Examples of useable signage: Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety https://www.ccohs.ca/outbreaks/</p> <p>Construction Safety Nova Scotia https://constructionsafetyns.ca/covid19resources/covid-19-construction-site-printable-signage/</p> <p>Government of Nova Scotia COVID-19: factsheets and posters https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/resources/</p>