



Alberta Cricket Association Return to Play Guidelines

This plan draws extensively on the [International Cricket Council “Back to Cricket” guidelines](#) document prepared by the ICC Medical Committee released on May 20, 2020. Because of the rapidly evolving public health environment associated with CV-19, these guidelines are subject to change.

The objective of this document is to provide guidelines to assist member organizations and affiliated leagues in developing policies that will allow a return to playing cricket without compromising the health of any of the individuals involved.

These guidelines do not answer the question of ‘when cricket can restart’ – as this is dependent on the restrictions in place in each municipality. Rather, this document offers guidance on how members can return to play alongside the resumption of outdoor sport and exercise in their municipality once they are able to. Any national, provincial and local government regulations and guidance always take precedence over these guidelines.

The guidelines are aimed at local community-based cricket only

Note: even if these guidelines are respected, no cricket activity- training or match play – can start until expressly permitted by the relevant province and municipality.

Assessment

Since each municipality reopening plan differs, it is the responsibility of all leagues, clubs and academies to abide by the various requirements outlined by their municipal governments. The timeline for reopening will vary depending on the jurisdiction. Therefore, not all cricket can resume simultaneously.

Before cricket resumes, all leagues, clubs and academies must review their local government and health agency's CV-19 response and develop appropriate practices, policies and procedures for their jurisdictions. They should: -

- Review the provincial and municipal governments current business reopening guidelines.
- Ensure reopening policies and procedures align with the provincial and municipal



- governments guidelines when developing.
- Follow provincial guidelines on numbers of people allowed in the facility at one time and physical distancing requirements.
 - Designate an individual to monitor provincial and municipal government websites for updates or changes to guidelines.

It is the responsibility of all members to abide by policies and procedures designed to ensure a safe environment for all.

By following these guidelines as well as those from provincial and municipal governments and health agencies, cricketers will be able to make informed decisions as to when they can return to play.

Cricket Specific Risks

There are several risks specific to the sport of cricket which must be considered alongside general physical exercise guidance issued by the Canadian and provincial governments. Cricket is a non-contact team sport and so the risks and exposure to CV-19 may differ from full contact team sports. In particular:

- Cricket requires players to be in close proximity at times and involves the use of shared facilities. Therefore, should a team member or opponent develop any CV-19 symptoms or be found to develop an infection, participants will require isolation and testing as they are most likely to have been in close contact.
- Although cricket is not a contact sport, the cricket ball is a potential transmission medium and rules should be applied around the management of the ball.
- On-field behavior that includes celebrations with body contact, and shared use of drink bottles, towels and equipment can pose a risk in cricket and should be strongly discouraged.
- Players should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own items (sunglasses, cap, jumpers, towels etc.) and instructed against handing over any items to umpires or teammates.
- Participants, in particular umpires, scorers and other staff and volunteers may be considered vulnerable individuals that are at higher risk of severe illness due to CV-19. This includes older individuals (approx. 60+) and people of any age with underlying medical conditions such as cardiac, kidney, diabetes, obesity, weak innate immunity, etc.
- Safe and effective return of players to strength and conditioning is important (particularly bowlers). Limited preparation may cause higher injury levels.



- Cricket is officiated by umpires on the field of play and their health and well-being needs to be taken into full consideration as they spend the greatest amount of time in close proximity to players.
- Based on international evidence, transmission of CV-19 is assumed to be greater for indoor sporting activity than for outdoor activity, even with taking similar mitigation steps. Extra caution should therefore be taken for any indoor cricket activity.

Guidelines

General

- Anyone faced with symptoms of respiratory illness such as fever, cough or difficulty breathing, must stay at home and not take part in any cricketing activities. They should consult a physician or public health authorities and follow their instructions. Limit contact with others and avoid interaction with individuals who are ill.
- Anyone who has been in contact with an individual exhibiting symptom of respiratory illness should stay home and follow public health guidelines
- All protocols and guidelines required by municipal facilities must be complied with.
- Until all restrictions are eased, participants should arrive dressed and ready to play or train to avoid use of communal dressing room facilities.
- Any private facilities should develop a comprehensive plan for cleaning and disinfecting common use areas and surfaces, following public health guidelines.
- Health and temperature checks should be monitored for all participants at training and match venues

Back to Training

- Progression to the next stage should not begin until it is deemed safe to do so and there is no evidence that the local CV-19 transmission rate has risen because of this training activity.
- When using a training facility, training should be staggered where possible to minimize numbers, maintain social distancing, and reduce contact. Consider modifying training times so there are less people present at any one time.
- Personal equipment should be sanitized before and after use (training and competition). The use of external equipment should be limited where possible.
- Equipment sharing should be avoided. If unavoidable, an appropriate cleaning protocol should be followed before and after use.



- Consider the age and health of participants and recommend against high-risk individuals participating in training or competition.
- Participants should arrive ready to train and avoid using communal facilities where possible.
- The ICC recommends a phased approach to resuming training activity starting with solo training followed by small group activities and thereafter larger groups and full training (in compliance with government restrictions). Moving through this progression can only take place if aligned with provincial and municipal public health direction. The load and intensity of training over the stages should be progressive to prevent injury.
 - Individual training
 - Training in small groups (3 or less) while following social distancing
 - Training in small groups (<10, including coach)
 - Squad based training while restricting contact

Back to Play

The following procedure is recommended:

- Review playing conditions to minimize risks associated with playing during this CV-19 period.
- Consider rule amendments to allow for the safe management of the ball –
 - Regular hand sanitizing when in contact with the ball
 - Do not touch eyes, nose, and mouth after making contact with the ball
 - Saliva should not be used on the ball
 - Umpires to consider wearing gloves when handling the ball.
- Consideration should also be given to rule amendments to maintain social distancing (e.g. field positioning).
- On-field protocols – For example, no unnecessary body contact and no handing over items (cap, towels, sunglasses etc.) to umpires or teammates. Each player should be responsible for their own items.
- Off-field protocols – For example minimal use of communal facilities before and after the match, social distancing to be maintained at all times. A 'ready to play' approach should be adopted.
- Discourage sharing of all equipment where possible. If it is required ensure equipment is cleaned appropriately.
- If spectators are permitted, social distancing should be maintained.



Back to Travel

- Where possible, players should travel alone to and from training and matches unless they are living in the same household. Where this is not possible, social distancing should be maintained.
- Where using public transport to travel, players should avoid travelling at 'peak' transport times to limit contact with others.

Communication and education

Education of the health risks associated with CV-19 underpins all other measures set out. All administrative bodies should develop an effective communication plan, as well as a monitoring plan to ensure measures are complied with.

- Education will help promote and set expectations for player behavior ahead of resumption in play.
- Education should include preventative measures such as:
 - general hygiene practices – regular and thorough washing of hands with soap and sanitizing with an alcohol-based hand-rub, refraining from touching your eyes, nose and mouth and good respiratory hygiene such as coughing or sneezing into your bent elbow etc.
 - hygiene practices specific to cricket such as no sharing of drink bottles and towels and the safe management of the ball. Wherever possible, items of cricket equipment should not be shared with anyone else unless an appropriate cleaning protocol is followed.
- It is important to educate the cricketing community on strategies to mitigate against CV-19.
- Players should be advised to minimize the use of changing rooms, shower facilities and other communal areas. Where possible, players should be encouraged to shower and change at home instead of at match and training venues.
- Education should include the heightened risk of severe illness caused by CV-19 to vulnerable/high-risk groups.
- Display appropriate CV-19 awareness material within sporting facilities.