



SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

RETURN TO SPORT AND ATHLETICS GUIDELINES

November 1, 2020

This document has been developed to support the resumption of sport and athletics occurring after school hours. Activities and sport during the school day must adhere and follow Provincial and Division re-entry guidelines.

This document will continue to be updated based on orders from the Chief Medical Officer from Alberta Health Services, recommendations from Alberta Education, Alberta Schools' Athletic Association (ASAA) and the evolving best practices of staff

NOTE: These guidelines come into effect November 1, 2020

Supporting Documents

The following documents are foundational in the creation of this document and the associated guidelines:

- [AB COVID-19 Information: Guidance for Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation](#)
- [The Safe Return to High School Athletics: Part 2 \(Oct 9, 2020\)](#)
- [Town Hall Follow-up: Frequently Asked Questions \(Oct 9, 2020\).](#)
- [ASAA General COVID-19 Guidelines](#)
- [ASAA Sport Specific Guidelines](#)

INTRODUCTION

Information contained within this document is **subject to change** as additional information about COVID-19 becomes available. New directives and restrictions from the province or the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) may also shift how the Division conducts its practice for student athletes and coaches.

The decision **for a school** to return to sport and athletics ultimately rests with the principal. School context is varied and COVID cases in each community are ever changing. The ability to procure coaches and volunteers is also a factor in the decisions principals and schools make.

GENERAL SPORT AND ATHLETIC GUIDELINES

General Infection Prevention Measures

COVID-19 enters the body through the eyes, nose or mouth (not through the skin) when an individual touches their face. AHS recommends that:

- **Participants do not come to any activity while exhibiting symptoms.**
Appendix A is the guideline and screen for students, coaches/volunteers and officials.
- Attendees should refrain (to the extent possible) from touching their eyes, nose, mouth and face during activities.
- It is important that sports/activities that involve shared equipment (e.g., shared baseballs, basketballs, soccer balls, footballs, volleyballs, etc.) include regular hand hygiene and cleaning of high-touch surfaces.
- Hand hygiene should occur before and after each activity.
- Respiratory etiquette is important to prevent the spread of droplets that may contain the COVID-19 virus. Attendees should refrain from spitting and clearing their nasal passages during activities.
- Attendees should proactively and regularly monitor for symptoms. Symptomatic individuals are prohibited from participating.
- Limit celebration gestures or customs during activities (e.g., handshakes, high fives, fist bumps, chest bumps) that bring attendees within 2 metres or promote physical contact.
- Water bottles should be labelled with the name of the owner and not be shared. Social distancing must be maintained during water breaks.

Equipment Considerations

- Participants should be encouraged to bring their own equipment.
- Any shared equipment should be cleaned and sanitized at an increased

frequency and between each use.

- Discontinue use of equipment that is in disrepair, as these items cannot be effectively sanitized.
- It is recommended that the number of people setting up and putting away the equipment be kept to a minimum and respect social distancing guidelines.
- It is strongly recommended that hand sanitizer and/or sanitizing wipes be made available to participants and those responsible for setting up and putting away equipment.

Cohorts

A Cohort is a **group of up to 50 individuals** who gather for the purpose of participating in a sporting activity.

Student athletes will limit their participation to one athletic or social cohort, including in-school and out-of-school activities.

All students and their parents/guardians participating will need to sign and submit the consent (Appendix C).

All individuals in a cohort must be on, and stay on, the same school team/cohort and **only participate in one school team/cohort at a time.**

If a student athlete is moving from one cohort/mini-league to another, they must wait 14 days prior to joining the new cohort/mini-league.

All schools will follow the GoA [Guidance for Cohorts](#).

The in-school cohort should always include only the same people.

- Cohorts limit the risk of disease transmission because they reduce the number of people with whom players/participants have close contact. The maximum number of individuals that can form a cohort is 50.
- The 50-person maximum includes athletes, coaches/staff, officials, and volunteers who consistently and routinely engage with participants at a distance of less than 2 metres.
- Coaches, staff and officials who primarily interact with individuals or teams at a distance of 2 metres or greater do not need to be counted as part of the cohort. These individuals are required to wear a mask and perform proper hand hygiene if it becomes necessary to temporarily interact with cohorting participants at a distance of less than 2 metres.
- Teams in different cohorts cannot play each other. All participants must be in the same cohort.
- There can be no substitutions in or out of a school cohort without having new participants not participate for 14 days prior to being involved if they have come from another cohort.
- Each cohort must be supervised by a responsible person whose role is oversight

over maintenance of the group and other public health guidance. It is strongly recommended that this individual is a teacher or administrator and has a very in-depth understanding of the AHS guidelines, ASAA recommendations and STAR Catholic's policies and procedures.

Transportation

If transportation is permitted for the purposes of athletics, it is strongly recommended transportation to and from activities be only with members of the same household if possible.

Scheduling

It is recommended that athletics activities be scheduled with sufficient time between activities to avoid any overlap of players on the court or field or other sports facility. Congestion during pick up and drop off should be avoided.

Sanitization and Cleaning

By adding practices and mini-leagues, the sanitization and cleaning requirements within a school becomes more time-consuming and adds to the overall duties and responsibilities of our custodians.

If a school decides to return to in-school practices and in-school mini-leagues, they must:

- Consult with their Lead Custodian and clearly communicate scheduling
- The priority for custodians is to ensure the school is well sanitized and clean for the next school day. Student athletes and staff must be aware and careful not to create double the work for custodians ie. going into bathrooms, classrooms etc after practice, that have already been cleaned.

Cohorts and Mini-Leagues

Schools that wish to participate in mini-leagues with other schools, whether in division or outside of division, **will not do so before December 1, 2020**. After December 1st, outside of school play is permitted, but should not be the expectation. **Schools have full discretion** in making this decision and will weigh the risk factors against their local school and community context.

50-person mini-leagues can be formed for sports. A mini-league can consist of multiple teams, but to a maximum of 50 individuals.

- Game play should be limited to teams in the same mini-league.
- Teams that belong to other mini-leagues should not play each other.
- Individuals should limit the number of cohorts/mini-leagues they belong to.

- If a mini-league comes to completion, a new mini-league composed of new cohort teams may be formed, provided that there is a 14-day period between completion of play in the old mini-league and the beginning of the new mini-league.

It is recommended that mini-leagues appoint an individual whose role is to ensure that cohort rules and other public health guidance as identified by both AHS and STAR are adhered to.

Response to Sick Individuals

If an attendee becomes sick while participating, the following requirements apply:

- While preparing to immediately leave the facility or event, symptomatic individuals should perform proper hand hygiene, put on a non-medical face mask, and maintain at least 2 metres distance from all others.
- Arrangements for immediate transportation of the individual to their home/residence will be arranged by the coach/teacher representative.
- Once the sick individual has left the gymnasium or event, school custodians will be contacted to clean and disinfect all surfaces and areas that the individual may have come into contact with provided that the guidance in this document is being followed, there is no need to cancel an activity, or postpone the undertaking of a cohort group or mini-league, in the event that an individual becomes sick.
- Coaches/teacher representatives should immediately consider and record the names of all participants in which the sick individual has been in contact. This information may be necessary to assist public health officials if the sick individual later tests positive for COVID-19.

Volunteer Coaches

If a school chooses to have a volunteer coach support a team, this person must adhere to the following guidelines:

- The coach must meet all current volunteer requirements as outlined in AP 440.
- All volunteers are required to wear a mask and perform proper hand hygiene at all times when in the school.

Record Keeping by Coaches/Teacher Representatives

Coaches and/or teacher representatives of STAR activities **must** record the names of all individuals (see Appendix B) in each cohort/mini-league to assist Alberta Health Services should an individual test positive for COVID-19 and contact tracing is necessary. The administration of the school must have these lists available if contacted.

- It is recommended that rosters be kept for each event/activity so there is a record

of which individuals were present.

If an attendee tests positive, AHS will only request information about the attendee's participation in the activity (if it is deemed that a potential exposure is likely to have occurred during such activity). When interviewing a person who has tested positive, AHS public health investigators will determine if there are close contacts that should be made aware/notified based on the period of infectivity and the school's compliance with public health guidance. This might involve a call to the team representatives or players, but only if necessary.

Coaches/Volunteers/Officials will be respectful of the privacy and sensitivity of every participant's personal health information at all times, and comply with relevant requirements set out in Alberta's Health Information Act.

Locker Rooms/Change Rooms/Sideline

- The use of locker rooms or change rooms should be used with careful attention and consideration to distancing students. For example, a maximum of 3 students, at any one time, in the change room might be the stipulation a cohort adopts.
- Should students go home after school and return for practices/games, then participants should come to activities fully dressed and ready to participate.
- AHS guidelines suggest physical distancing of 2 metres be followed on the sideline when not in competition.

Masks

- It is recommended that cohort participants wear masks when they are not engaging in physical activity.
- Masks do not need to be worn during intense physical activity.
- Individuals not participating in physical activity such as coaches and trainers must wear masks at all times.

Spectators

- At this stage, spectators will not be given access to indoor settings (if officials are required, masks must be worn and appropriate screening protocol (see Appendix A) be performed upon entry into the school).
- Spectators should be kept out of all participant spaces in outdoor settings (e.g., fields of play, diamonds).
- Physical distancing of a minimum 2 metres should be maintained by spectators at all outdoor events (unless from the same household or cohort).

COVID-19 INFORMATION

**COVID-19 ALBERTA HEALTH DAILY CHECKLIST
(FOR CHILDREN UNDER 18)**

Overview

This checklist applies for all children, as well as all students who attend kindergarten to Grade 12, including high school students over 18. Children should be screened every day by completing this checklist before going to school, child care or other activities. Children may need a parent or guardian to assist them to complete this screening tool.

Screening Questions

1. Has the child:

(Choose any/all possible exposures)

Traveled outside Canada in the last 14 days? When entering or returning to Alberta from outside Canada, individuals are legally required to quarantine for 14 days unless enrolled in the Alberta COVID-19 International Border Pilot Project	YES	NO
Had close contact with a case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days? Face-to-face contact within 2 metres for 15 minutes or longer, or direct physical contact such as hugging	YES	NO
<p>If the child answered "YES" to any of the above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child is required to quarantine for 14 days from the last day of exposure. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the child is participating in the Alberta COVID-19 International Border Pilot Project, they must comply with the program restrictions at all times. If the child develops any symptoms, use the AHS Online Assessment Tool or call Health Link 811 to determine if testing is recommended. <p>If the child answered "NO" to both of the above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proceed to question 2. 		

2. Does the child have any new onset (or worsening) of the following core symptoms:

Fever Temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or higher	YES	NO
Cough Continuous, more than usual, not related to other known causes or conditions such as asthma	YES	NO
Shortness of breath Continuous, out of breath, unable to breathe deeply, not related to other known causes or conditions such as asthma	YES	NO
Loss of sense of smell or taste Not related to other known causes or conditions like allergies or neurological disorders	YES	NO
<p>If the child answered "YES" to any symptom in question 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child is to isolate for 10 days from onset of symptoms. Use the AHS Online Assessment Tool or call Health Link 811 to arrange for testing and to receive additional information on isolation. <p>If the child answered "NO" to all of the symptoms in question 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proceed to question 3. 		

Classification: Public

3. Does the child have any new onset (or worsening) of the following other symptoms:

Chills Without fever, not related to being outside in cold weather	YES	NO
Sore throat/painful swallowing Not related to other known causes/conditions, such as seasonal allergies or reflux	YES	NO
Runny nose/congestion Not related to other known causes/conditions, such as seasonal allergies or being outside in cold weather	YES	NO
Feeling unwell/fatigued Lack of energy, poor feeding in infants, not related to other known causes or conditions, such as depression, insomnia, thyroid dysfunction or sudden injury	YES	NO
Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea Not related to other known causes or conditions, such as anxiety, medication or irritable bowel syndrome	YES	NO
Unexplained loss of appetite Not related to other known causes or conditions, such as anxiety or medication	YES	NO
Muscle/joint aches Not related to other known causes or conditions, such as arthritis or injury	YES	NO
Headache Not related to other known causes or conditions, such as tension-type headaches or chronic migraines	YES	NO
Conjunctivitis (commonly known as pink eye)	YES	NO
<p>If the child answered “YES” to ONE symptom in question 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep your child home and monitor for 24 hours. • If their symptom is improving after 24 hours, they can return to school and activities when they feel well enough to go. Testing is not necessary. • If the symptom does not improve or worsens after 24 hours (or if additional symptoms emerge), use the AHS Online Assessment Tool or call Health Link 811 to check if testing is recommended. <p>If the child answered “YES” to TWO OR MORE symptoms in question 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep your child home. • Use the AHS Online Assessment Tool or call Health Link 811 to determine if testing is recommended. • Your child can return to school and activities once their symptoms go away as long as it has been at least 24 hours since their symptoms started. <p>If the child answered “NO” to all questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your child may attend school, child care and/or other activities. 		

Please note: If your child is experiencing any symptoms from the lists above, do not bring them to visit a continuing care or acute care facility for 10 days from when symptoms started/until symptoms resolve (whichever is longer), unless they receive a negative COVID-19 test result and feel better.

Appendix B

Sample Participant Tracking Log

Participant Tracking Log for [School Name - Sport Team]

All players, coaches, volunteers and parents/guardians who drop-off their children should be included in this log. The log can be electronic or completed on site by school personnel.

The information collected on this document is being collected to assist in the management of the COVID-19 pandemic. This information will be kept in a safe and secure location and will be provided to Alberta Health Services (AHS) on request if it is required for participant tracking purposes.

Date	Name	Address	Email	Phone #	Time in	Time out

Appendix C

Parent Consent

Sports and Athletics - COVID-19

Name of Activity:	
Name of Participant:	
Name of School:	

The Government of Alberta has ordered and published recommendations, guidelines, and some prohibitions regarding sport, physical activity and recreation (the Provincial Guidelines) with the goal of limiting transmission of the COVID 19 virus from person-to-person through respiratory droplets, or other means.

STAR Catholic School Division (the Board) has directed all schools permitting school-based sport, physical activity and recreation to follow all Provincial Guidelines. **NAME OF SCHOOL** will adhere to and observe all Provincial Guidelines in respect of sport, physical activity and recreation offered through the school.

Notwithstanding **NAME OF SCHOOL** adherence to the Provincial Guidelines, there is a risk that participants may be exposed to and contract a communicable disease including but not limited to COVID 19.

In addition, in consideration for participation in sport, physical activity and recreation offered at **NAME OF SCHOOL** the Participant, and in the case of a Participant who is a minor the Participant's parent(s)/legal guardian(s), agrees with the Board as follows:

1. The Participant is aware that there is a risk of contracting a communicable disease, including but not limited to Influenza, MRSA, or COVID-19, which may cause injury or illness, including paralysis or death, as a result of the Participant's participation in **NAME OF SCHOOL** Athletics.
2. **The Participant agrees and understands that they will limit their participation to one athletic or social cohort, including in-school and out-of-school activities.**
3. The Participant has not exhibited symptoms of fever, fatigue, difficulty in breathing, dry cough or any other symptoms identified in the any public health order of Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health as being related to COVID-19 or any communicable disease within the last 14 days.
4. The Participant agrees to refrain from participation in **NAME OF SCHOOL** Athletics activities immediately upon developing symptoms of fever, fatigue, difficulty in breathing, dry cough or any other symptoms identified in the any public health order of Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health as being related to COVID-19 or any communicable disease until such time as the Participant's symptoms have resolved and otherwise in accordance with all public health orders in force in the province of Alberta.
5. Neither the Participant or any member(s) of the Participant's household have traveled internationally within the past 30 days.

6. The Participant is fully and personally responsible for the Participant's own safety and actions while participating in **NAME OF SCHOOL** Athletics and the Participant recognizes that participation in **NAME OF SCHOOL** Athletics may put the Participant at increased risk of contracting COVID-19 or other communicable disease.
7. With full knowledge of the risks involved, the Participant, and in the case of a Participant who is a minor the Participant's parent(s)/legal guardian(s), hereby release the Board its employees, elected trustees, servants, agents and insurers (the Releasees) from any and all liabilities, claims, demands, actions, and causes of action whatsoever, directly or indirectly, arising out of or related to any loss, damage, injury, or death, that may be sustained related to, or arising from, or following the Participant contracting any communicable disease, including COVID-19, as a result of the Participant's participation in **NAME OF SCHOOL** Athletics including the contracting of a communicable disease resulting from the negligence of any of the Releasees.
8. By signing below, the Participant, and in the case of a Participant who is a minor, the Participant's parent(s)/legal guardian(s), agree and acknowledge that:
 - a. I/we have read the foregoing Liability Release Waiver and understand its contents;
 - b. I/we am/are fully competent to give my consent;
 - c. that I/we have sought and received adequate independent advice, including legal advice, as I/we believe is necessary or have voluntarily decided against seeking such advice;
 - d. I/we have been sufficiently informed of the risks associated with the Participant's participation in **NAME OF SCHOOL** Athletics; and
 - e. I/we agree freely and voluntarily agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement.
9. This consent will remain effective for the 2020 – 2021 school year.

Date: _____

Participant's Name

Parent/Guardian Name

Participant's Signature
(If participant is 18 years of age or older)

Parent/Guardian Signature
(If participant is under 18 years of age)

Parent/Guardian Phone #: _____