

DORCHESTER MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION RETURN TO PLAY PLAN



DMHA proposes to provide minor hockey programming for the 2020-2021 season to promote fun, hockey skill development and, where possible, competition in a safe environment and in accordance with the guidance provided by federal and provincial governments, the local municipality, the local public health unit, Hockey Canada, OHF and OMHA. To the extent that required, DMHA policies and procedures are modified to comply with the foregoing guidance and the provisions below.

Return to Practice and Play (OHF Stage 3)

OHF has established a number of progressions for Stage 3 of its return to play plan, with Stage 3b beginning on September 1, 2020 and Stages 3c-e to follow if and when available. The DMHA return to play plan contemplates beginning in Stage 3b and allows for progression if possible.

DMHA will begin minor hockey programming on September 14, 2020 with individual and group training consistent with Member (OMHA) Approved Programming for a geographic area that is in Ontario government Stage 3. The following will apply:

(a) Before Arrival to the Facility

The bench staff of each group/team will have a list with each group/team member's name and phone number prior to each ice session. That list may be provided to the facility if required.

Parents of participants will be given an outline of the pre-ice, on-ice and post-ice protocols and will be encouraged to give their child direction and awareness of the protocols and what to expect.

Every person who will enter the arena for a DMHA scheduled ice time must accurately complete an OHF screening questionnaire on the day of the activity and before arrival. Forms will be available on the DMHA website and will be emailed to each family.

Any participant who is not able to attend a scheduled ice session must notify the designated group or team bench staff person no more than 1 hour before the scheduled ice time.

Each screening questionnaire must be filled out completely and must include the players' and/or parents' cell phone number in case of an emergency. If anyone has answered "yes" to any of the questions, they should advise the group/team coach and not attend their ice session and/or will not be allowed into the facility.

Anyone exhibiting any COVID symptoms should not attend at the facility.

No warm-ups or off-ice activities will be permitted inside the facility. Use of the track is not permitted. Warm-ups directly supervised by bench staff may be done outside the facility, but only if physical distancing is practiced. Warm-ups must be completed before entering the facility for an on-ice session. Participants may not repeatedly enter and exit.

All players should be wearing all equipment except skates and helmets when they enter the facility. Dressing rooms will be available for putting on skates. All participants who require assistance with tying their skates will be encouraged to come to the facility fully dressed, including skates. Skate guards will be strongly recommended, or parents/guardians may carry the participants to the lobby entrance and let the participants walk from there. Parents/guardians will be encouraged to teach skate tying as early as possible. Each group/team will designate bench staff to tie skates for those participants who cannot do so on their own.

(b) At the Facility

All participants may enter the facility no more fifteen (15) minutes before the scheduled ice time. Physical distancing must be maintained while waiting to enter and while in the facility.

The completed screening questionnaire will be provided to the group/team trainer before entry to the facility. Anyone who does not provide a complete and acceptable screening questionnaire will not be permitted to enter.

The group/team trainer will maintain a contact tracing chart for all participants for each of the group/team's ice sessions.

If any participant exhibits COVID symptoms, has a confirmed positive case of COVID and/or has come into contact with anyone exhibiting symptoms or who has been diagnosed, the participant (including all players, bench staff, volunteers and spectators) must promptly contact the group/team trainer, who will report this to the designated DMHA safety contact. Any person exhibiting symptoms or who has had contact as described above is encouraged to go for testing. The DMHA safety contact will report any suspected exposure by a person who was at the facility or any confirmed positive test results to other members of the person's group/team, Thames Centre, the public health unit and OMHA as required and the player will not be able to attend group/team activities for at least 14 days.

Face coverings which cover the nose, mouth and chin are to be worn by everyone, including participants, bench staff, spectators and volunteers, at all times when entering the FlightExec Centre. Participants going onto the ice can remove their face covering once they are ready to put on their helmet. At no point before this should a participant not be wearing a face covering.

Designated entrances and exits to the facility, and directional flow within the facility, must be used as required and will be enforced. The north and south pads will have their own designated entrances and exits. Participants are to follow the directional signage to the dressing rooms and ice area.

To allow for physical distancing, two dressing rooms will be provided per ice session. There will be a maximum of ten (10) participants plus two bench staff in a dressing room at one time.

Coaches will minimize the amount of times that players enter and leave the dressing room. In general, it is expected that a player will only exit the dressing rooms to go onto the ice or to exit the facility. Players will stay in the assigned rooms until the ice is ready and then they may proceed as a group onto the ice through the designated ice entry point in a physically distant format.

Participants must keep all equipment, including gloves and helmets, on and properly secured from the time they leave the dressing room until they return to the dressing room. No sharing of sticks or other equipment is permitted.

Each participant will bring their own clearly labelled and filled water bottle to the facility, and may only use their own bottle. Bottles will be spaced out on the boards/bench.

At least two bench staff will be present in all dressing rooms while players are present, and for all on-ice activity. A trainer must be present for each on-ice session for each group/team. The trainer will use hand sanitizer and wear gloves and a mask at all times while attending to an injured or ill participant.

No more than four people may be on a bench at one time, and they must maintain physical distancing.

Once back in the dressing room, participants may remove their helmets and must then immediately put face coverings back on. Face coverings must continue to be worn until they exit the facility.

Players will remove skates, helmets and gloves in the dressing rooms only after completion of ice session, quickly gather their things and exit without showering.

Players must exit dressing rooms within 15 minutes after the completion of on ice session. Bench staff will monitor this time limit. No participant may exit the dressing room until the participants using the next ice slot have fully entered the ice surface.

Pucks, pylons and other training tools will be sanitized by bench staff after each on-ice session. Participants should sanitize their own equipment, jerseys, socks, water bottles, etc. after each ice session.

If using the garbage or recycling bins, players will walk over the bins and drop in their garbage/recycling, and must not throw it.

If any participant must cough or sneeze in the facility, they must do so by covering their mouth/nose with their arm or elbow, and not into their hand. No spitting will be permitted in the facility, including on the ice.

Hand washing and/or hand sanitizer use is required before entering and before exiting the facility. All participants are expected to practice good hand hygiene, including sanitization upon arrival, after removing gloves and washing hands with soap and water following the use of the toilet/urinal.

Greeting and congratulatory contact such as high fives/handshakes/fist bumps/hugs are discouraged.

A maximum of one spectator per player will be permitted to remain in the facility, although people are discouraged from attending to watch on-ice activities unless necessary. Any person who wishes to stay at the facility must present a current, complete, accurate and acceptable screening form, including the person's contact information, to the group/team trainer before each entry to the facility and will comply with all rules and guidelines for spectators entering the facility. Any such person may enter the facility no more than 15 minutes and no less than 5 minutes prior to the scheduled ice session, and must leave the facility no later than 5 minutes after the completion of the ice session. All spectators must comply with the facility guidelines and follow all directions at all times. Spectators may clap but may not whistle, yell, shout or cheer. No parent/guardian/spectator may open any door to the ice surface or verbally communicate with any participant on the ice.

Spectators must sit in the assigned seating within the South Rink Bowl. Spectators are to sit in sections H, I, or J ONLY, and may not access the track from the assigned seating area. If spectators need to use the washroom, the main washrooms located in the lobby must be used. No one is to congregate in or watch on-ice activities from the lobby.

(c) General

1. A maximum of 20 registered players (the word players as used herein includes goalies unless otherwise specified) and up to 5 approved and certified bench staff or skills development instructors will be permitted on each ice session as per Thames Centre guidelines. If/when possible, progression to up to 30 participants on the ice, including instructors, or a lower number if determined by Ontario Government, local PHU, the facility or Member in Stage 3b, with further progression to up to 40 participants on the ice for each session in Stages 3c-e (per OHF).
2. During Stage 3, there will no traditional representative or local travel hockey leagues and no team tryouts.
3. Registered players in each age group from U8 to U18 will be divided into groups of up to 20 players prior to the first skate. Players will be divided into these groups in a manner designed to foster individual and group development while adhering to limits on the

number of participants on the ice. The criteria will include general player skill, position and level of hockey played in the prior season.

4. The groups will be established through collaboration by the coaches selected by the association for the 2020-2021 season, subject to executive approval. The selected 2020-2021 BB coaches will coach group A in each age group, selected AE coaches will coach group B, and coaches will be selected to coach remaining groups if any.
5. The current plan is for each group from U8 to U18 to have two on ice sessions per week throughout the season. Plans for U7 and below are being finalized.
6. Each group will begin with a minimum two week development phase. The development phase may be extended. The focus in this phase will be a readjustment to on-ice activity and skills development. Development and practice plans will be established by the coaches and bench staff for each group.
7. No body checking or intentional physical contact is permitted. Physical distancing is required in the facility, including on the ice where practical, for the purpose of individual and group training. It is recognized that unintentional minor physical contact may occur in the course of drills and game play but bench staff will stop play to decrease such contact and provide distance if needed. Coaches will be required to prepare skill development and practice plans which minimize gathering/lines. See below for current additional facility guidelines provided by Thames Centre.
8. Following a minimum two-week development phase, modified 3 on 3 or 4 on 4 game play with no physical contact hockey may begin (with progression to 5 on 5 play if possible in Stage 3c and beyond). Playing rules will comply with all guidelines and regulations of the Ontario government, local PHU, the facility, OHF/OMHA and the Hockey Canada Safety Protocols and the OHF Return to Hockey Framework. See below for game play guidelines and rules.
9. Scrimmages may be used by coaches for development and practice purposes after the two week development phase, using the game play guidelines and rules below.
10. A plan for competition with likely up to two other local minor hockey associations in the same public health unit is currently in progress. Any "league" or competition grouping will have a maximum of 50 players, or less depending on the public health unit. The number of 50 refers to players only. That number may be increased if permitted by the province and OHF/OMHA. Bench staff are not included in this number.
11. All competition or game play will be with other associations within the same local public health unit. If there is progression to Stage 3d, and subject to "league" sizes, play in adjacent health unit may be permitted. In Stage 3e, there may be further progression to permit play within one LHIN (local health integration network).
12. If DMHA partners with up to two other local minor hockey associations within the same local health unit for competition/game play, each association will organize teams based on similar player/group skill levels.

13. All practices and game play will be conducted in conjunction with the local public health and facility rules for the purpose of sanitation and physical distancing. See below for the facility rules and rules for game play.
14. Notwithstanding group/team sizes, players may interact, through practice and/or play, with a larger group or “league” of no more than 50 total players. This number may change depending on provincial, public health and OHF/OMHA guidance.

(d) Safety

If your child tests positive for COVID-19, you must keep your child home and out of the hockey environment. It is also important to communicate with your physician and public health authority, ensuring you follow the steps identified.

If a parent or family member tests positive for COVID-19, the player and their family will need to stay out of the hockey environment. They should contact their physician and public health authority for instructions. The player will need a note from their physician or public health authority to return to play.

If someone on your child’s team tests positive, public health authority guidelines will determine contact tracing and isolation requirements. It is possible, therefore, that one diagnosis on a team could lead to that team being required to pause hockey activities until the public health authority determines it is safe to return.

Resources/References

HC safety guidelines and FAQ: https://e-registration.omha.net/OMHAPortal/Download/HC_RTH_SafetyGUIDELINES_8.5X11_FAQ_ENG_FINAL.pdf

OHF Health Screen Tracking Sheet: [https://e-registration.omha.net/OMHAPortal/Download/OHFSessionParticipationnHealthScreeningTracking\(August2020\).pdf](https://e-registration.omha.net/OMHAPortal/Download/OHFSessionParticipationnHealthScreeningTracking(August2020).pdf)

OHF Health Screen Questionnaire: <https://e-registration.omha.net/OMHAPortal/Download/health-screening-questionnaire.pdf>

Thames Centre/Flight Exec Centre Facility Guidelines

Face Coverings

Face coverings are to be worn by everyone at all times when entering the FlightExec Centre. Participants going onto the ice can remove their face covering once they are ready to put on their helmet. At no point before this should a participant not be wearing a face covering.

As per By-law 46-2020, all persons entering or remaining in these premises shall wear a mask or face covering which covers the nose, mouth and chin as required under The Municipality of Thames Centre.

Entering the FlightExec Centre (South Side only for now)

All participants are encouraged to arrive at the facility, dressed and no sooner than fifteen (15) minutes before scheduled rental. There is limited amount of space and time available within the change rooms. To allow for physical distancing, change rooms will only accommodate a maximum of ten (10) participants at one time. Standard rentals will be provided two (2) change rooms, per rental, allowing for a maximum of twenty (20) skaters per rental. If a user requires their skates to be tied, a coach or guardian may assist while wearing a mask but must exit the dressing room immediately. Due to gathering limits of 50 people, we will only be allowing one (1) spectator per family and we are encouraging spectators to not be in the facility if they do not need to be.

Each organization or renter who is utilizing the facility shall conduct a passive screening of all participants and spectators before gaining entry into the ice area. If an organization or renter does not have a screening tool, they can utilize this self-assessment document, below. Each organization will be responsible for retaining these screenings.

Dressing Rooms

Participants are to follow the directional signage to the change rooms and ice area. Players are to stay in their rooms until the ice is ready and they will proceed onto the ice through the designated ice entry point in a physically distant format.

Players who just exited the ice surface have fifteen (15) minutes to change and exit the facility through the identified exit. No player is to exit the dressing room until the other players have fully entered the ice surface.

At this time, there will be no keys provided for locking change rooms.

It will be the responsibility of the organization or renter to monitor physical distancing and direct people to the appropriate locations.

Showers will not be available to users at this time.

On Ice Etiquette:

Players are to enter and exit the ice at the designated entry points. Once on the ice, coaches and participants are to partake in physically distant activities. There are to be no more than four (4) users on each player's bench at one time.

Track Use

The track is not for ice rental warm ups.

Main Lobby and Hallways:

The FlightExec Centre Lobby is for in and out traffic only; this area is not for a warm viewing area. Users and spectators are to sit in the assigned seating within the South Rink Bowl. Spectators are to sit in sections H, I, or J ONLY. Do not access the track from your assigned seating area. If spectators need to use the washroom, they are to use the main washrooms located in the lobby.

Exiting the FlightExec Centre:

Participants and spectators who are within the facility will be required to exit through the main entrance in the designated lane. Users and participants are not to gather in the lobby and/or hallways.

Game Play Structure

All game play must comply with rules of the Public Health Unit, the facility and PHF/OMHA. Accordingly, the following are guidelines for game play structure:

1. Game play does allow for players to engage within the 2-metre physical distancing as long as the rules of play, modified for no physical contact are complied with.
2. When participants are not engaged in on-ice activity they must maintain their physical distance. Dressing rooms will have limited numbers of players (currently 10) and physical distancing requirements. Benches will require physical distancing of players (no more than 4 players per bench at present).
3. Bench staff must wear masks/face coverings at all times when on the bench. Only two bench staff are permitted on the bench at one time.
4. OHF recommends consideration of 4 on 4 cross ice hockey for U9 and below using middle zone as “benches” (the U6, U7, U8 and U9 Pathways).
5. OHF suggests 3 on 3 cross ice hockey for U10, U11 and U12, U13 middle zone as “benches”.
6. OHF suggests 4 on 4 full ice using benches with physical distancing (two lines) for U14 and U15.
7. OHF suggests 3 on 3 or 4 on 4 full ice using benches with physical distancing (two lines in 4 on 4 or three lines in 3 on 3) for U16 and older.

Game Play Rules (per OHF SECTION 14, Appendix F):

Rules for 3 on 3 and 4 on 4 - U12 to U21 (if full ice)

Game Play:

- Game time structure based on a 50-minute ice rental
- 5 min warm up
- 2 x 22 min period run time
- 1 min intermission between 1st and 2nd period
- No overtime / no shootout for tied games
- No faceoffs
- Period 1 – visiting team has first possession
- Period 2 – home team has first possession
- No Physical Contact
- Players must remain one stick length apart
- Accidental/incidental contact may occur
- No body checking
- When a scrum or gathering occurs the puck will be given to the defending team and the attacking team must retreat. A whistle will be blown to separate the players and another whistle to signal the resumption of play once the official is satisfied the attacking team has retreated and the defending team has gained puck possession.
- A player that loses a glove must immediately retrieve the glove or leave the ice.

Line Changes

- Teams will change on the fly.

Goals

- Goals result in a change of possession. The team that scores the goal must allow the other team to advance the puck past center ice before applying pressure. If the puck has not advanced past center ice within 10 seconds of the whistle the official will signal the team that scored to proceed with the attack.
- Example:

- Team A scores goal and then Team A must allow Team B to advance the puck past center ice before applying pressure.

Icing

- Icing the puck results in a change of possession. The team that iced the puck must allow the other team to advance the puck past center ice before applying pressure. If the puck has not advanced past center ice within 10 seconds of the whistle the official will signal the attacking team to proceed with the attack.
- Example:
 - Team A ices the puck, Team B retrieves puck and Team A cannot apply pressure until Team B has advanced the puck past center ice.

Offsides

- Offsides will result in a change of possession. The team that was called for offside must exit their attacking zone (all players simultaneously in neutral zone) before re-entering their attacking zone and applying pressure.
- Example:
 - Team A is called for offside and all players must exit their attacking zone. Once all Team A players are simultaneously in the neutral zone they may re-enter their attacking zone

Goaltender Freezes the Puck

- When the goaltender freezes the puck, the attacking team must exit their attacking zone (all players simultaneously in neutral zone) before re-entering their attacking zone and applying pressure.
- Example:
 - Team B goaltender freezes puck. Team A must exit their attacking zone. Once all Team A players are simultaneously in the neutral zone they may re-enter their attacking zone

Penalties

- Penalty shots will be awarded for penalties as per:
 - 2 min penalties = 1 penalty shot
 - 4+ min penalties = 2 penalty shots
 - All major penalties will result in 2 penalty shots and an ejection from the game
 - Intentional body contact or body checking = 2 penalty shots and may result in removal from the game at the discretion of the referee

- Intentionally entering the goaltenders crease = 1 penalty shot
- Co-incidental penalties will result in NO penalty shot being awarded
- The penalty shot must be taken by the individual the infraction was committed against unless they are unable to do so because of injury
- The time clock will continue to run during a penalty shot. If the buzzer sounds while the penalty shot is in process, the shot will be allowed to be completed and then the player change will occur.
- If a delayed penalty is called near the end of the game and the clock runs out, and where the result of the penalty shot(s) could change the outcome of the game, the penalty shot(s) will be taken. If the outcome of the penalty shot(s) would have no impact on the outcome of the game, the penalty shot(s) will not be taken.

Penalty Shot Procedure

- When a penalty is called, the clock will not stop (all divisions)
- Penalty shot must be taken by the player infringed upon (if applicable) and all players on the ice must remain there until the shot is taken
- The player taking the penalty shot will line up at center ice
- All other players from both teams will line up by the far blue line
- All players will start from a standing position
- Referee will blow the whistle to start play
- All players may begin skating on the whistle; players on the non-penalized team may “chase” the player taking the shot and can prevent it if able to do so.
- Penalties can still be called on penalty shots.
- Should the player miss the penalty shot, play will continue.
- If a goal is scored, the team that scores the goal must allow the other team to advance the puck past center ice before applying pressure. If the puck has not proceeded past the hashmarks within 10 seconds of the whistle the official will signal the attacking team to proceed with the attack.

Roster

- 9 players plus 1 goaltender (per team)
- Both teams must start the game with a minimum of 5 players plus 1 goaltender

Game Play/Rules (per OHF for cross ice 3 on 3 and 4 on 4 for *U7 to U11*)

- Game time structure based on a 50-minute ice rental
- 5 min warm up
- 2 x 21 min period run time
- 1 min intermission between 1st and 2nd period
- No overtime / no shootout for tied games
- No faceoffs
- Period 1 – visiting team has first possession
- Period 2 – home team has first possession
- No Physical Contact
- Players must remain one stick length apart
- Accidental/incidental contact may occur
- No body checking
- When a scrum or gathering occurs the puck will be given to the defending team and the attacking team must retreat. A whistle will be blown to separate the players and another whistle to signal the resumption of play once the official is satisfied the attacking team has retreated and the defending team has gained puck possession.
- A player that loses a glove must immediately retrieve the glove or leave the ice.

Line Changes

- 1.5 min shifts (timekeeper will sound the horn to notify shift change).

Goals

- Goals result in a change of possession. The attacking team must retreat and allow the team that was scored against the opportunity to play the puck. If this does not occur, the official may blow their whistle and signal the opposing team to provide more space.

Goaltender Freezes the Puck

- When the goaltender freezes the puck, the attacking team must retreat and allow the team that froze the puck the opportunity to play the puck. If this does not occur, the official may blow their whistle and signal the opposing team to provide more space.

Icing

- There is no icing in cross-ice hockey.

Offside

- There are no offsides in cross-ice hockey.

Penalties

- Penalties will be handled in the same manner as modified ice programming per the Hockey Canada Player Pathways. Intentional body contact or body checking may result in removal from the game at the discretion of the referee.

Roster

- 9 players plus 1 goaltender (per team)
- Both teams must start the game with a minimum of 5 players plus 1 goaltender