



2020 Return to Sport Guiding Principles
October 2020 (AOA Board Approved)

Sport and the ability to recreate in the outdoors in the winter, is a crucial component in the public health and mental wellness of our community. The COVID-19 pandemic has had devastating effects on communities globally, leading to significant restrictions on all sectors of society, including sport. Resumption of sport can significantly contribute to the re-establishment of normality in Canadian society.

The Alpine Ontario Alpin (AOA) Return to Play Plan will include multiple phases, recommendations, and guidelines for anyone participating in sanctioned alpine ski racing. We would like to stress that when we all return to play; alpine ski racing will look different than before the COVID-19 pandemic arrived, therefore we will not be able to jump right back onto the field of play as per as normal. The multiple phases will have varying degrees of time between phases to ensure the highest level of safety precaution for everyone involved.

In an effort to support member clubs we have created the AOA – Club Return to Sport Plan that define's AOA's approach to return to ski racing in the province. This document comes after much consultation and consideration of all public health recommendations from the Government of Ontario, the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries and the Federal government. This document is also in coordination with our national sport partners including the Canadian Snowsports Association (CSA), Alpine Canada Alpin (ACA), the Canadian Olympic Committee (COC), Federation Internationale de Ski (FIS), and provincial sport partners such as the Canadian Sports Institute of Ontario (CSIO) and the Ontario Snow Resorts Association (OSRA).

AOA requires all member clubs to complete and submit a "Covid-19 Return to Sport Plan" which details the strategies the club will enact and continuously monitor through to the end of the current Covid-19 pandemic.

AOA is implementing a COVID Task Force that will work closely with the Program Directors, RA's and the club appointed COVID Contact at each club to establish training and competition guidelines specific to the needs of individual host clubs. These individual guidelines will focus on how to keep all participants including athletes, coaches, officials, and club staff safe and will have specific details related to all indoor and on-hill club policies. The guidelines will also include details with respect to the conducting of TC Meetings and delivering all pertinent information that needs to be conveyed to visiting clubs via Race Notices and other supporting communications. A formal introduction of the COVID Task Force will happen mid Fall.

Disclaimer

The information in this document is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Alpine Ontario and its Members make no representation and assume no responsibility in respect of their information concerning COVID-19 as the circumstances are constantly changing, and any information on COVID-19 should be obtained from your Public Health Authority.

Terms

“Project” – any training or competition out of home division

AOA Return to Sport Principles

AOA’s Return to Sport plan was developed with the following principles at the forefront:

1. **Health and Safety**
 - a. AOA is prioritizing preserving public health by minimizing the risk of community transmission of COVID-19
 - b. Ensuring proper safety protocols in all training and competition environments and [Safe Sport](#) for all
2. **Quality Training Environments** – considering variables at play in multiple regions across the province, AOA will support clubs in their preparation of season long plans to execute world class programming in the face of return to sport restrictions
3. Community **Education** of our clubs, coaches, officials, parents, etc.

AOA Return to Sport Phases

As of Sept 25, 2020, there is currently no way to 100% remove the risk of contracting or transmitting COVID-19. As such, AOA **DOES NOT** recommend travel for ski race projects for any AOA member club, unless a ACA, AOA and the club deems the development opportunity essential to the athlete’s development and is in alignment with the LTAD. As with all projects, athletes and coach’s commitment towards preparation and fitness must be demonstrated, along with the clubs completion of the AOA COVID Mitigation Planning for Projects out of Division. AOA’s focus for the season, at this time, will be staying close to home to mitigate as much risk as possible of spreading COVID-19, benefit from quality training at home clubs with the goal of more competition opportunities in late winter, when and if restrictions are lifted.

AOA Return to Sport Plan consists of 4 (four) phased approach that includes:

Phase 1: Return to Training

- In club training only
- Follow [CSA Guidelines for Remote Training](#)
- Outdoor and indoor and social distancing required
- Follow all region and provincial restrictions and regulations

Phase 2: Return to Training and Division modified competition

- All Phase 1 Return to Training conditions are met
- In division project's only

Phase 3: Return to Provincial modified competition

- All Phase 2 Return to Training conditions are met
- In province project's only
- Out of province project applications will be considered by AOA

Phase 4: Return to Pre-pandemic Alpine Ski Racing Activities

- Government of Ontario and Public Health Unit restrictions have been lifted
- Vaccine has been developed
- COVID testing is accessible and available for all

AOA will determine timelines for each Phase in alignment with the Government of Ontario public health units involving government orders, restrictions and guidelines.

What you need to know?

Everyone, regardless of where they live in the province, must continue to follow public health advice, including to practice physical distancing, wear a face covering if physical distancing is a challenge, wash hands frequently and thoroughly, create a social circle and avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. The Chief Medical Officer of Health and health experts will continue to closely monitor the evolving situation to advise when public health restrictions can be gradually loosened or if they need to be tightened. AOA will continue to monitor the information that comes from the province, post updates and pass that information to our clubs through the monthly AOA Club Calls and the AOA website. [AOA Covid Updates](#)

What you need to do to stay safe in your region?

Every region in Ontario has experienced the COVID-19 outbreak differently. By grouping regions of the province by local public health units (PHUs), the government's approach reflects the unique realities of different communities in Ontario, recognizing that many areas of the province have seen fewer cases of COVID-19 than others. Directed by the Province, each region will be permitted to enter the next stage of reopening when safe to do so. The government's decision will be based on the public health criteria outlined in the framework being met locally, including virus spread and containment along with health system and incidence-tracking capacity.

Alpine Ontario will continue to work with our partners at the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries as well as the Government of Ontario and the Ontario Ministry of Health to keep our clubs and industry partners informed as we learn more about regional differences in strategy. We encourage each club to get to know their public health units' policies and strategies. [Click here](#) for details on your local public health unit.

How to Stay Safe

Ontario's fight against COVID-19 is not over. Everyone must do their part to keep each other, our families and our communities safe. Ontario's successful recovery depends on you. You can help by:

	Staying at home and away from others if you are feeling ill		Washing your hands frequently with soap and water
	Maintaining physical distancing of at least two metres from people outside your immediate household in public		Using an alcohol-based sanitizer if soap and water are not available
	Practising good hygiene (avoiding touching your face and covering your cough or sneeze)		Wearing a face covering in public where physical distancing is a challenge or not possible
	Limiting outings and public gatherings as per emergency orders		Increasing cleaning of frequently touched surfaces
	Minimizing travel and self-isolating for 14 days after all international travel		Working remotely or redesigning spaces and interactions to make them safer
	Getting tested if you are worried you have or have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19		Protecting the most vulnerable

5 simple ways to keep recreational activities safe for you:

- athletes
- coaches
- officials
- volunteers
- families

-  Practice physical distancing
-  Increase cleaning of frequently touched surfaces
-  Stay at home and away from others if you are feeling ill
-  Wash your hands frequently and practice good hygiene
-  Get tested if you are showing symptoms of COVID-19

What do you need to do?

All clubs will need to submit an “Alpine Ontario – Club Return to Sport Plan Template ” by creating your own or using the template that will be available on the AOA Covid Web Page. [Click Here](#)

- Club Return to Sport plans will need to be board approved by the submitting club
- Club Return plans will need to be submitted before winter activity has commenced

Strategies for developing you clubs Return to Sport Plan

1. Specify the club staff member or volunteer responsible for having a deeper understanding of the risks of COVID-19 and distributing this information as it pertains to club operations to staff and members.
2. Show how the club will share COVID-19 information with all members, including links to appropriate authoritative sources, i.e. Ontario Public Health Notices, Ontario Government Orders, Notices & Guidance, etc. Alpine Ontario has provided a more complete list of resources on its website at [AOA Covid Updates](#)
3. Implement the “Sport Participant COVID-19 Agreement” (Appendix A, and available as external document) for all attendees and determine how the club will be collecting and tracking them.
4. Specify within your Return to Sport Plan that staff and members who are considered “[at risk](#)” should not participate in person at this time.
5. State how the club will follow provincial guidelines regarding physical distancing, PPE usage and maximum group sizes. When activities are being hosted at a venue (ski areas, gyms, etc.), include that their guidelines must also be followed.
6. State how the club will educate and work with coaches and on-hill staff. i.e. What does your pre-season coach education look like? How will your club structure on-hill and off-hill training activities so that athletes are able to physical distance? What plans will you have if an area gets too crowded or social distancing becomes difficult? How will your club modify group sizes and coach to athlete ratios?
7. Examine every space at your club; what non-essential spaces will no longer be accessible to staff, volunteers, and participants? What essential spaces will the club allow to be used and what are the policies governing the use of those spaces, e.g. tuning rooms, kitchens, and meeting rooms may be closed entirely. while the parking lot, washrooms, weight rooms and change rooms may have controlled access? How will the club maintain cleanliness and sanitization of accessible spaces?
8. Explain what new measures will be taken by the club to enhance sanitization of club-based activities and how they will be implemented. Specify handwashing guidelines and communal equipment sanitization processes.



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9. What, if any, local authorities need to be notified prior to the commencement of activities at your club (i.e. Resort Administration)?

10. Specify your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for a COVID-19 outbreak or a single case. This should include at least the following points:
 - a. The organizer is responsible for making decisions to cancel, postpone or modify the activity.
 - b. The organizer must communicate the situation to all participants.
 - c. The person/s showing symptoms must self-isolate.
 - d. The person/s with symptoms must self-monitor using the COVID-19 self-assessment tool provided by the Ontario Ministry of Health

11. Verify that your first aid kit includes masks and gloves, and that anyone administering first-aid understands that they **MUST** be wearing these items when administering first-aid to a participant.

12. Have your “COVID-19 Return to Sport Plan” approved by your Board of Directors and ensure that the “COVID-19 Return to Sport Plan” is posted online and/or physically available at the club.

APPENDIX A) SPORT PARTICIPANT COVID-19 AGREEMENT

Application - all athletes, coaches, members, volunteers, participants, and family members of participants while in attendance at club activities (“Participants”)

All members of the club agree to abide by the following points when entering club facilities and/or participating in club activities under the COVID-19 Response Plan and Return to Sport Protocol:

- I agree to daily symptom screening checks and will let club coaches know if I have experienced any symptoms in the last 14 days.
- I agree to stay home if feeling sick and remain home for 14 days if experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and/or provide documentation that supports a negative COVID-19 test paired with no symptoms for 24 hours.
- I agree to sanitize my hands upon entering and exiting any training facility, with soap or sanitizer.
- I agree to sanitize the equipment I use during my practice with approved cleaning products provided by the club (shared and personal equipment).
- I agree to follow social distancing protocols by staying at least 2m away from others.
- I agree to not share any equipment during practice times.
- I agree to abide by all the club COVID-19 Policies and Guidelines.
- I understand that if I do not abide by the aforementioned policies/guidelines, I may be asked to leave the club for up to 14 days to help protect myself and others around me.
- I acknowledge that continued abuse of the policies and/or guidelines may result in the temporary suspension of my club membership.
- I acknowledge that there are risks associated with entering club facilities and/or participating in club activities, and that the measures taken by the club and participants, including those set out above and under the COVID-19 Response Plan and Return to Sport Protocols, will not entirely eliminate those risks.

Participant Signature:

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Parent / Guardian Signature (If participant is a minor):

Date: _____ Signature: _____



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Resources:

- Definitions —
http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_case_definition.pdf
- [Ontario Emergency Orders](#)
- [Canadian Sport Institute of Ontario Covid-19 Updates](#)
- [Club Risk Assessment and Mitigation Checklist](#)
- [Return to Sport Assessment Tool](#)