

INTERNATIONAL FC

RETURN TO PLAY PLAN

In conjunction with Ontario Soccer and Canada Soccer, International Football Club ('IFC') has developed this plan for safely easing back into the sport of soccer. The plan uses a multi-phase approach that respects current Provincial protocols such as physical distancing, disinfecting and use of personal protective equipment that will permit the practice of various soccer activities in a progressive, flexible plan that will evolve as our Province changes COVID-19 management requirements.

Please note that these precautions are temporary, and Ontario Soccer will determine the timeline based on the provincial health authority guidelines. Timelines between phases may vary based on recommendations from the varying levels of governments.

Contact Us for any Questions Regarding this Return to Play Plan

info@intlfc.com



REVISED

1:43 pm, Jun 24, 2020

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PRE-ACTIVITY ORIENTATION

- ✓ Review the steps outlined in the Canada Soccer Return to Soccer Guidelines
- ✓ Review provincial health authorities recommendations
- ✓ Review the Ontario Soccer Return to Play Guide
- ✓ Review any other procedures established by IFC Soccer
- ✓ Complete two waiver forms



WAIVER

- ✓ One time waiver forms
- ✓ Must be completed by player and/or parent before participation
- ✓ Declaration of Compliance and Consent Form provided by OS
- ✓ To be collected by the Team Manager or Program Coordinator
- ✓ Participants must be registered with YRSA before taking part in any scheduled activity



SYMPTOM REPORTING

- ✓ Any staff/player/parent/coach who is exhibiting symptoms of illness should stay home, immediately inform your Coach or Club representative, get tested
- ✓ If tested positive, inform Emergency Response Plan Lead, Frank laizzo and the Club must begin contact tracing



RETURN TO PLAY GUIDE/PLAN

- ✓ Principles outlined in this plan apply equally to recreational, competitive and high performance level soccer.
- ✓ Decisions regarding the timing of this Return to Play Guide three phase process will be determined by Ontario Soccer and the Province of Ontario directives around public health and safety.
- ✓ If provincial health authorities determine that restrictions are to be reinstated, Ontario Soccer will inform all members
- ✓ Ontario Soccer, in conjunction with the provincial health authorities, will determine which phase is appropriate at that time



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PHASE ONE – NON-CONTACT RETURN

Soccer **training** may resume (outdoors only) if the occupancy and activity levels allow people to maintain a physical distance of at least two meters.

- All precautionary measures are still in effect
- Public gathering numbers are restricted to provincial guidelines which include parents and guardians at the location; indoor training is prohibited
- Distancing between different groups who are training simultaneously, near one another must be at least 2 meters; increasing the distance is actively encouraged
- No opposition games where players will come into contact with each other
- Structure activities to maximize physical distancing
- Each player brings their own ball (if possible)
- Equipment that is shared (team balls, cones, nets, etc.) must only be handled (using hands) by the owner of the equipment (i.e., in most cases, a coach)
- No heading and no hand contact with the ball
- Recommended that players only contact the ball below the waist (avoid chest if possible)
- Recommended that bibs/pinnies are not to be used; each player can bring two of their own jerseys (light & dark)
 - See Coach Recommendations for Phases 1 & 2
- No spectators are allowed at training except where having appropriately screened (EPIC) adults is required
- All participants should come dressed, ready to participate
- Benches should be removed from this phase



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PHASE TWO – LIMITED CONTACT RETURN

Soccer training and modified games may resume (outdoors only) with group sizes limited to provincial guidelines and including limited contact throughout. Inter-squad and Intra-squad games permitted (only within the Academy/Grassroots).

- All precautionary measures are still in effect
- Public gathering numbers are restricted to provincial guidelines which include parents and guardians at the location; indoor training is prohibited
- Training may now include activities with opposition –limited to a maximum of 7v7
- Distancing between different groups who are training simultaneously, near one another must be at least 2 meters; increasing the distance is actively encouraged
- Prolonged physical contact (i.e. team/group meetings/discussions, embraces, etc.) should be actively discouraged
- Each player brings their own ball (if possible)
- Equipment that is shared (team balls, cones, nets, etc.) must only be handled (using hands) by the owner of the equipment (i.e., in most cases, a coach)
- No heading and no hand contact with the ball (except for GKs wearing gloves)
- Recommended that bibs/pinnies are not to be used; each player can bring two of their own jerseys (light & dark)
 - See Coach Recommendations for Phases 1 & 2
- Spectators may be allowed at training provided physical distancing guidelines are followed
- Limit to one accompanying parent/guardian or other adult for each athlete under the age of 18
- All participants should come dressed, ready to participate
- In person coaching and refereeing programming may resume following provincial guidelines
- Benches should be removed from this stage



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PHASE THREE – RESUMPTION OF COMPETITION

Soccer games/competition may resume (outdoors only) in all format types. Training may be increased to full, regular training provided general public health guidelines are followed.

- All precautionary measures are still in effect
- Games should be scheduled to consider reducing traffic between groups arriving and departing
- Recommended to begin with internal friendly matches where applicable before league play begins
- Recommended that game lengths be reduced in order to avoid fatigue, burnout and potential injury if there is game congestion in scheduling
- In leagues where there are substitution restrictions, recommended to allow for unlimited substitutions throughout the match to avoid fatigue and injury
- Substitutes are required to observe physical distancing when on the bench/sideline (at least 2 meters) based on provincial health guidelines



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PRECAUTIONS FOR PHASES 1 – 3

- All players, coaches, and volunteers must self-assess before each scheduled activity - Ontario COVID-19 Self Assessment App
- Activities are to be outdoors only, and no clubhouse or bathroom facilities are to be opened
- Travel is not authorized to events/competition outside of Ontario
 - Phase 1 & 2 – stay within own community
 - Phase 3 – travel only within Ontario
- All activities are required to have, at minimum, hand sanitizer readily available (provided by coach/club/each player)
- Hands must be washed or sanitized before and after each activity as monitored by a designated adult (coach, parent, volunteer)
- Coaches and players will be allowed to wear masks during training
 - Coach/player must wear mask when walking to and from the field
- All participants are required to have their own labeled water bottle and should be kept at least 2 meters from other participants belongings
- The owner of the equipment (balls, cones, nets, etc.) must wipe down and sanitize all equipment before and after each training practice or game
- All players are to ensure their playing/training kits are washed immediately after each use
- No loitering in the parking lot before or after training or games for all participants
- If parents are allowed to be at a field, they must observe physical distancing regulations/guidelines
- Parents should consider staying on site (parking lot or in car) in case of emergency
- Timelines between RTP phases will be based on provincial guidelines to facilitate monitoring of any possible COVID-19 transmission within a practice group. Contact health authorities if an athlete, coach, or referee has contracted COVID-19 and support the authorities in contact tracing.
- All injuries should be dealt with by a designated coach who should be wearing a mask and gloves, or the parent/guardian if possible



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PHASE ONE & TWO RECOMMENDATIONS

GRASSROOTS/ACADEMY/FACILITY

- Consider allowing two or more siblings to potentially participate in a particular training group.
- To reduce the overlap of groups arriving and leaving, it is recommended to add 15-minute buffer times between practices.
- Provide information to coaches and parents about each facility. For example, which field access points will be used for entrance and exit of the field to reduce bottlenecks and facilitate physical distancing. Implement cleaning protocols as well as pick-up/drop-off and spectator procedures.
- Adhere to facility restrictions or maximum capacities for facilities. Prioritize small game formats where possible (Phase 2).
- Develop protocols for thunder/lightning (“When thunder roars, go indoors”.) The indoor venues available may not be suitable given existing physical distancing and max capacity restrictions. Parents should remain in the car to offer safety from inclement weather. Practices should be canceled when the forecast calls for a chance of thunder/lightning.
- Provide safe spacing for participants personal belongings which respects physical distancing.



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PHASE ONE & TWO RECOMMENDATIONS

COACH

- Coaches hold an online pre-activity orientation with players and parents regarding safety protocols– i.e., social distancing, modified training, pick up and drop off, hand washing, cough suppression, no spitting or nose clearing, etc., prior to commence your first training.
- Regarding equipment cleaning, do not go home and then clean – contaminated items may travel into coaches' home environment. This should be done publicly. Only Coaches/Staff should handle equipment.
- Wear facemasks.
- Coaches should specify in advance which shirt (light or dark) they'd like each athlete to wear to eliminate the need for athletes to change in public at fields
- At the Active Start (U4-6) stages, it is encouraged to use family members of players to support on-field delivery as physical distancing would not apply to people from the same household (i.e., child, parent, & ball).

Activity Recommendations:

- Structure activities to maximize physical distancing
- Age Appropriate recommendations may need to be taken when designing activities, for example, Active Start and Fundamentals players may need a parent/sibling or volunteer staff to participate with them. This will allow for coaches to have support managing the group of players.
- Design activities so athletes may stay within their existing small groups to reduce amount of contact with different people.
- No heading/hand contact with ball (feet only).
- Use cones and other equipment to ensure appropriate spacing is in place to support distancing.
- Regular sanitization breaks combined with water breaks.



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PHASE ONE & TWO RECOMMENDATIONS

PARENT/GUARDIAN

- Ensure child is healthy and no sign of COVID-19 symptoms.
- Only one parent/guardian attending soccer activities.
- At home, ensure all the player's equipment is washed separately from the other household items.
- Consistently follow good hygiene and public health measures, including frequent hand washing and physical (social) distancing.
- Drop and pick up player while maintaining desired rules and regulations around pick-up/drop-off and being a spectator, if allowed



PHASE ONE & TWO RECOMMENDATIONS

PLAYER

- It is recommended that all players utilize the “Self-Check” on Ontario COVID-19 Self-Assessment App
- Two (2) masks – in case one gets dirty/compromised
- Ziploc bag containing: (clearly labeled)
 - Labeled water bottle - where mouth spout is covered by lid and not to open air. Do not share water bottles.
 - Tissues for any allergies or to blow nose for non-illness related circumstances
 - Hand sanitizer and wipes
- Players are responsible to bring personal player equipment to the field in order to practice and should be sanitized at the field; includes goalkeeper gloves.
- Soccer organizations can loan balls to players if they do not have one.
- If you experience any of the symptoms, please follow recommendations and contact your medical health provider.
- Do not carpool unless with immediate family members.
- Always follow the instructions from coaches and respect physical distancing.
- Arrive no more than 15 minutes prior to activity commencing.
- Do not congregate at the facility entry / exit point.
- Arrive prepared to train – changing rooms will not be in use.
- Follow the hygiene protocols in this document.
- Physical distancing of two (2) metres (6 feet) must be maintained.
- All “non-essential” contacts should be avoided (handshakes, high 5's, etc.).



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PHASE THREE RECOMMENDATIONS

MATCH OFFICIAL - See all Recommendations and Guidelines for Match Officials

- It is recommended that all Match Officials utilize the “Self-Check” on Ontario COVID-19 Self-Assessment App
- Referees do not need to be involved in Phases 1 and 2, but they will be involved in structured games in Phase 3.
- Referees are to come dressed to the game, so they have no need for changing rooms.
- Referees should not share any gear (watches, flags, cards).

Discipline Adjustments:

- ❖ Automatic cautions for any players who are involved in face-to-face (but non-mass confrontation) interactions. Shoving, jostling, and fighting for space will result in a straight Yellow Card for Unsportsmanlike Behavior.
- ❖ Serious physical altercations will result in an automatic red card.
- ❖ Mass confrontations will result in automatic dismissals for all involved.
- ❖ There will be ZERO tolerance for spitting on or around the field of play. This will result in an automatic dismissal from the game. Spitting does not have to be directed at anyone for the dismissal.

Laws of the Game Adjustments:

- ❖ To reduce body fluid transfer onto ball surface, heading of the ball has been removed for this phase.
- ❖ Walls for Free Kicks – Defenders must be (two) 2 meters apart from one another when creating a wall.
- ❖ Throw-ins are not permitted. The ball must be kicked into play. All other requirements of Throw-In Law will still be applied.
- ❖ Corner kicks: Limit the number of players in the Penalty Area. Three (3) of each of defenders and attackers plus the goalkeeper.

Safety Process Adjustments:

- ❖ The Thunder and Lightning Policy will be adjusted to read that if the game is stopped for severe weather, then the game is over in order to avoid gathering of participants in confined areas, and will not be rescheduled due to availability of fields/officials etc.
- ❖ With modified games, a field marshal should be appointed to ensure compliance with social distancing rules and safety protocols. The field marshal should be a recognized authority within the soccer organization. This is not the role of Match Officials.
- ❖ When a player is injured, Match Officials may only observe and refer assistance to the applicable team bench. There is to be no Match Official contact with the player. Only team medical personnel, following proper health and safety protocols may assist the injured player.
- ❖ There will be no handshakes or high 5's between players, match officials, coaches before, during or after the game.
- ❖ Match Officials have the right to abandon any game where the required COVID-19 protocols are not being followed. In these cases, it must be reported on a Special Incident Report to the appropriate authorities.



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Considering Age Groups and Phase-in Restrictions			
Age Groups	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
U4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Social group limit: 10 people -Coach-to-player ratio 1:4 -No contact & opposition -No Match -Focus on Individual player -Minimum space required 4m² -Parents to participate with their children in individual drills -Overly conservative when spacing out areas to maintain physical distancing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Social group limit: TBD -Coach-to-player ratio 1:4/1:8 -Closer contact & opposition -Grassroots Festivals are permitted -SSG formats from 1v1 to 7v7 -Parents to participate with their children in individual drills -Overly conservative when spacing out areas to maintain physical distancing 	<p>Return to Play to normal play under the recommendations of health authorities.</p>
U5			
U6			
U7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Social group limit: 10 people -Coach-to-player ratio 1:5 - (U7-8) -Coach-to-player ratio 1:8 - (U9-12) -No contact & opposition -No League, Exhibition or Tournament games -Focus on Individual player -Minimum space required 4m² -Conservative when spacing out areas to maintain physical distancing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Social group limit: TBD -Coach-to-player ratio 1:6/1:8 -Closer contact & opposition -Grassroots Festivals are permitted -No League, Exhibition or Tournament games -SSG formats from 1v1 to 7v7 -Inter-squad / Intra-squad games are permitted -Conservative when spacing out areas to maintain physical distancing 	
U8			
U9			
U10			
U11			
U12			
U13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Social group limit: 10 people -Coach-to-player ratio 1:9 -No contact & opposition -No Match -Focus on Individual player -Minimum space required 4m² -Players should understand what social distancing is, and be able to respect the physical distancing requirements in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Social group limit: TBD -Coach-to-player ratio 1:9 -Closer contact & opposition -No League, Exhibition or Tournament games -SSG formats from 1v1 to 7v7 -Inter-squad / Intra-squad games are permitted -Players should understand what social distancing is, and be able to respect the physical distancing requirements in place 	
U14			
U15			
U16			
U17			
U21			

RETURN TO PLAY

TECHNICAL RESOURCES



SAMPLE TRAINING ACTIVITIES

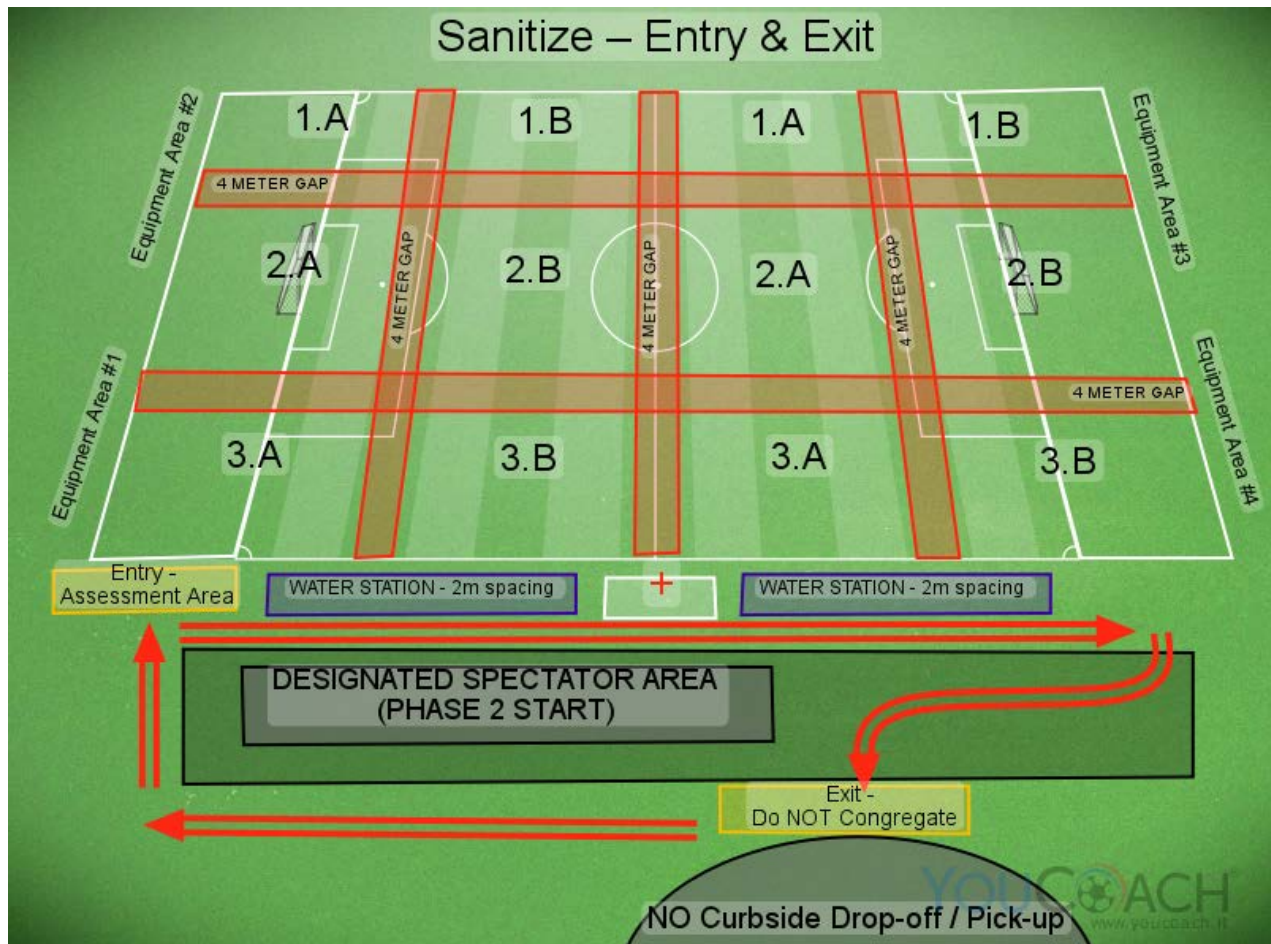
PLAYER MANAGEMENT & SESSION OVERVIEW

- Training Activities are designed to support Grassroots and Academy in delivering soccer programs while adhering to the protocols and recommendations in place
- Session Duration: 60 minutes
 - Activity: 55 minutes
 - Rest & Transitions: 5
- Indicate which player(s) are allocated to each training group/zone
- Use cones that delineate physical distancing parameters



ACADEMY TRAINING GROUND

ST JOAN OF ARC - FIELD MAP



RETURN TO PLAY

COVID-19 SYMPTOM CHECKLIST FOR STAFF / COACHES / PARTICIPANTS

Do you have any of the below symptoms?			
1	a. Fever (greater than 38.0 C)?	YES	NO
	b. Cough?	YES	NO
	c. Shortness of breath / difficulty breathing?	YES	NO
	d. Sore throat?	YES	NO
	e. Runny nose?	YES	NO
2	Has anyone in your household experienced any of the above symptoms in the last 14 days?	YES	NO
3	Have you, or anyone in your household travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days?	YES	NO
4	Have you, or anyone in your household been in contact in the last 14 days with someone who is being investigated as a suspected case of COVID-19?	YES	NO
5	Are you currently being investigated as a suspected case of COVID-19?	YES	NO
6	Have you tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 10 days?	YES	NO

If an individual answers “YES” to any of the above questions, they are not permitted to participate in any in-person soccer activity for a minimum of 14 days.



RETURN TO PLAY PHASE CHECKLIST

All precautionary measures are in effect through all stages

PHASES	1	2	3
Public gathering numbers are restricted to provincial guidelines; indoor training is prohibited	✓	✓	✓
Distancing between different groups who are training simultaneously, near one another must be at least 2 metres; increasing the distance is actively encouraged	✓	✓	
No opposition games where players will come into contact with each other	✓		
Structure activities to maximize physical distancing	✓	✓	
Each player brings their own ball (if possible)	✓	✓	
Equipment that is shared (team balls, cones, nets, etc.) must only be handled by the owner of the equipment. (ie., in most cases, a coach)	✓	✓	
No heading and no hand contact with the ball (except for GKs wearing gloves in Phase 2)	✓	✓	

RETURN TO PLAY PHASE CHECKLIST

All precautionary measures are in effect through all stages

PHASES	1	2	3
Recommended bibs/pinnies are not to be used; each player can bring two of their own jerseys (light & dark)	✓	✓	
No spectators are allowed at training except where having appropriately screened (EPIC) adults is required	✓		
Any Club owned/operated Clubhouse used for the purpose of administration should follow provincial health guidelines as they relate to occupancy and safety concerns	✓	✓	✓
All participants should come dressed; ready to participate	✓	✓	
Prolonged physical contact (ie. team/group meetings/discussions/embraces, etc.) should be actively discouraged	✓	✓	✓
Benches should be removed	✓	✓	
Scheduled competition may resume			✓

RETURN TO PLAY FAQs



HOW LONG WILL EACH PHASE LAST?

Each phase will last for a period of 4-6 weeks. The duration of each phase will depend on the progress of the COVID-19 pandemic and the recommendations of the provincial health authorities. We will provide updates as soon as they are available.

WHEN CAN WE RETURN TO PLAY?

We would like to stress that when we all return to play, soccer will look a bit different than before the COVID-19 pandemic arrived, therefore we will not be able to jump right back into the game as normal. Grassroots Festivals would be able to return in Phase 2 with the introduction of Small Game Formats from 1v1 to 7v7 or Inter-squad and Intra-squad modified games (within the Club/Academy). See Match Officiating section (Phase 2 Laws of the Game Adjustments)

ONCE COMPETITION RESUMES, HOW LONG WILL THE OUTDOOR SEASON BE?

The length of the outdoor competition season will be decided by the leagues, and will depend on when we are safely allowed to enter Phase 3 of the Ontario Soccer Return to Play Guidelines based on provincial health authority recommendations.

WHEN CAN TOURNAMENTS AND LEAGUES RESUME?

Tournaments and leagues would be allowed to resume in Phase 3 of the Ontario Soccer Return to Participate Guidelines, but would be dependent on provincial health authority recommendations.

WHEN CAN TRAVEL TO COMPETITIONS OUTSIDE OF ONTARIO RESUME?

Travel outside of Ontario for competition will be dependent on recommendations from the provincial health authorities. We currently have no timeline as to when this will be allowed.

ARE TRIAL PLAYERS ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN RETURN TO PLAY PHASES?

Trial players would be allowed to participate in in-person soccer activities as long as social distancing requirements are being met, the participant is not on trial (or playing) with another program and is not experiencing any of the COVID-19 symptoms at the time.

