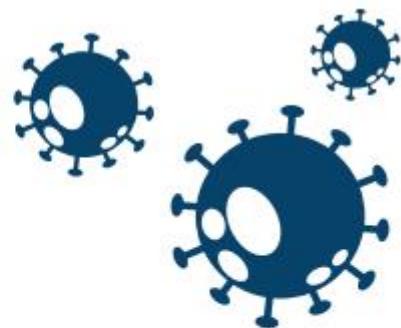


# **Return to Play Guidelines – Low Contact**



*Keeping New Brunswickers Safer Together*



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## RETURN TO PLAY PLAN

In response to discussions with the Minister of Tourism, Heritage and Culture in conjunction with other provincial sports associations, Soccer New Brunswick (SNB) has developed this plan for easing back into the sport of soccer. The plan is based on COVID-19 Operational Plan Guide and uses a phased approach that respects Provincial protocols such as social distancing, disinfecting and use of personal protective equipment that will permit the practice of the various soccer activities in a progressive, flexible plan that will evolve as the Province changes COVID management requirements.

Until such time as group competition activities are permitted, SNB, including SNB Member activities, for returning to play will focus on the individual player development on the physical, technical and cognitive level. This puts individual players at the centre of our priorities with no competition that would contravene provincial health directives. Even though the current situation constitutes a major challenge, it becomes, for us as a soccer organization, an extraordinary springboard for individual player development.

### Guiding principles

Guiding principles will meet or exceed the criteria of distancing and sanitary measures.

#### 1- No matches or games with opposition

There can be no soccer **match** without interaction of less than 2 meters with teammates or opponents. For this reason, no soccer match will be played by any age categories until such time as the Provincial Health Authority deems it appropriate. The focus will be on the practice of soccer skills, techniques and understanding for individual development.

#### 2- Space management and group organization

To avoid large groupings and ensure compliance with the 2-meter social distancing criterion on the field all training sessions must be given outdoors. Permitted player numbers will be calculated based upon the space available and that is required for the designed practice sessions. Players will be divided into small groups and limits on the number of participants will be strictly enforced. The player / area ratio must be respected at all times according to the standards determined by Soccer New Brunswick and will be monitored by non-coaching field marshals.

#### 3- Training in the form of a fixed workshop

Training will be given in the form of fixed workshops (group of players whose number is limited and involved in a predetermined space). The workshops must offer activities authorized by Soccer New Brunswick. Focus will be based upon foot-based skills with heading activities being prohibited. Keeping the ball below waist is recommended.

## 4- Control of Equipment Management and Use

### **Personal Equipment:**

Personal equipment will be authorized under the following conditions:

1. It is disinfected before entering the field  
The field has a space dedicated to equipment and sufficient such that equipment can be separated or organized so players can maintain social distance
2. equipment must be limited to: a bottle of water (Labelled with Player Name), a towel, a disinfectant solution or sanitizer as approved by the Province,
3. a ball and
4. a bag (Labeled).

### **Team Training Equipment:**

Balls, cones, etc. must be disinfected before each practice and between practices and before being stored at the end of training sessions

1. Additional sanitizer must be available for coaches, field supervisor and others

## 5- Creation of the roles of supervisor and reception manager.

Individuals (parents or volunteers) must be appointed and “trained” as supervisors to:

1. Ensure that the physical distance of 2 meters is respected at all times during training,
2. To coordinate access to the field in order to meet the requirements for distance.
3. Ask screening questions related to the symptoms of Covid-19. Use NB COVID-19 [Self-Assessment Tool](#).
4. Make sure that participants (athletes or coaches) at higher risk of severe COVID-19 disease (e.g., people over 65 years of age or people with underlying health conditions) are made aware of the risks.
5. Ensure parents stay in the parking lot and away from training areas but remain close and accessible on cases of emergency.

## 6- Mandatory procedures for training sessions

To ensure the safety of all participants and all stakeholders, strict health protocols must be put in place by the clubs for the organization of soccer events. These protocols are developed by Soccer NB to be consistent with this plan. Each participant and club (member of SNB) must commit to following the requirements for each training session. If the protocols cannot be implemented, it will be prohibited for a club to start its events. The protocols will be revised according to government directives and the evolution of the situation facing COVID-19. The priority at all times will be the protection of participants and the safety of all.

## 7- Continuous Re-evaluation and Improvement

This plan will require regular review and updating as COVID-19 prevention/protection measures evolve. To be effective, any changes will be communicated to members by e-mail and social media as soon as practical so changes can be applied. The technical director (or designate) of the club must ensure follow-up with the Safe-Return-To-Play Coordinator. Soccer New Brunswick will appoint a full-time Safe Return To Play coordinator during the time of the crisis.

## 8- Club program acceptance protocol

SNB will provide a template that each club must complete to demonstrate how they will meet Soccer New Brunswick's requirements for holding events during the COVID-19 phased return to play process. Clubs will need to complete the Canada Soccer Return to Play Risk Assessment/Planning tool in the context of COVID-19.

Each Member must have a program plan for that respects/reflects the mandatory hosting, running, ending and transition procedures for events. Plans must be presented to Soccer New Brunswick for approval. Upon approval of SNB, the club can start its activities.

As with the SNB plan, A re-evaluation of each program must be carried out after each new government directive. Follow-up and assistance will be provided by Soccer New Brunswick.

Coaches and workers will receive return to play training.

## Individual Development Activities

The individual development of the player will be at the center of the activities offered during the progressive return phase. All training must rigorously respect all eight guiding principles presented above. A club which fails to apply these principles will be banned from all operations.

The individual development activities that to be offered are divided into 4 main families:

- **Individual technical development:**

Unopposed activities to develop techniques specific to soccer. For example, exercises of the "Coerver" type, juggling, drift work and ball driving on courses, specific work by shift in small groups. All these activities are carried out individually with a ball.

- **Activation and physical preparation:**

Motor and physical development activities; allow to prepare the body for exercise, to work on coordination, mobility, speed, balance, flexibility, etc. All these activities are carried out individually, with or without a ball.

- **Challenges:**

By challenge activity, we refer to activities which include competition between 2 or more players but without opposition (i.e. no possibility of contact). These activities can take the form of soccer-tennis, accumulating points in a specific time, etc. These activities can be carried out with 2 or more players, with or without a ball.

- **Online activity:**

Workshops for developing mental or tactical skills. This type of activity can be done remotely with more participants. For example, match analysis session, web conferences on various sports themes, cultural soccer activity

Each category of activity can take several forms depending on government safety measures and the evolution of the situation.

With this type of content, Soccer NB ensures a specific activity in soccer that is not conducive to COVID-19 contamination.

## Roles and Responsibilities on the Field

<b>Reception Manager</b>	Take attendance  Must administer the pre-participation questionnaire to all participants before they enter the field  Ensures that all stakeholders and participants who enter the field disinfect their hands
<b>Field Manager</b>	Ensures that the health rules and regulations are respected  Ensures that ratios and obligations are respected  Validate training content and Intervenes with coaches when needed  Ensures that the equipment is disinfected and maintained in the dedicated area.
<b>Coach</b>	Manages the training content and the layout of the field (in order to promote social distancing)  Manage players to ensure compliance with instructions
<b>Supervisor Marshall</b>	Supervises players to ensure compliance with distance rules  Assists the field manager to manage the players  Can play the role of reception manager if necessary  Manage situation when a participant feel unwell

**Note:**

- All organizers and training staff screening ([Screening Toll](#)) will be performed before each training session.
- All organizers and training staff need to take a specific training based on return to play protocol operation plan.
- All organizers are encouraged to wear the Personal Protective Equipment (e.g. masks, gloves, visors) to help reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

PLAYING SOCCER SAFELY  
EXAMPLE: PHASE IN APRROCACH  
RETURN TO PLAY



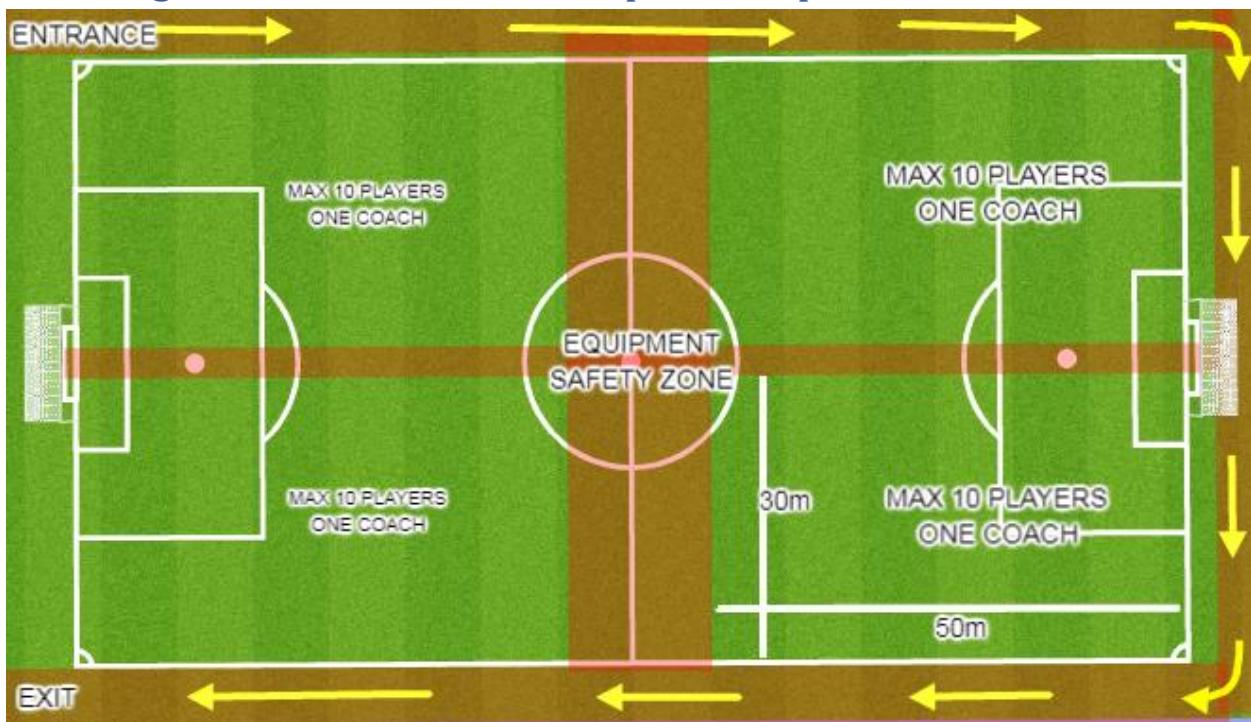
## RETURN TO PLAY DURING COVID-19

### Phase-In Approach for Return to Play in Soccer

Phase Return to play in soccer	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	
	No Contact (2-4weeks)	Minimizing Contact (2-4 weeks)	Low Contact (Until Social Distancing Measure are Removed)		
Objective	Develop Technical, Physical and mental skills Support soccer clubs adaption to new reality and measures	Maintain Physical and mental skills Support soccer club adaption to new reality and measures Introduce new game rules to participants	Maintain Physical and Mental/social skills Support soccer club adaption to new reality and measures Implement new game rules in games		
Activities	Technical & Physical Based Activities	Technical & Physical Based Activities and Introduction of Small Group Activities: 1v1 – 3v3 Technical challenges	Technical & Physical Based Activities and Introduction of Game Formats 5v5 to 11v11with modified rules		
Rules to consider	- No Contact - No Throw-ins - No headers	- Minimizing contact - No Throw-ins - No shoulder to shoulder challenge - No headers - No tackles - No corners	- Low contact - No Throw-ins - No shoulder to shoulder challenge - No headers - No tackles - No corners - If a free kick is awarded in opposing team's half: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The opposition players will not form a wall.</li><li>• If the free kick is taken in the half of the pitch of the team that committed the offence, every player, apart from the player taking the kick and the opposing goalkeeper, must be:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• on the pitch (including the opposing goalkeeper)</li><li>• at least 9.15m away from the ball until it is in play</li><li>• behind an imaginary line level with the ball that runs parallel to the goal line and outside of the penalty area so that they do not obstruct the player taking the kick. No player, except the kicker, may cross this imaginary line until the ball is in play.</li></ul></li></ul>	Fifa Rules	
Age Groups					
U3		- Small Groups less than 10 players. - No opposition - No Match/games - Focus on Individual player . - Minimum space required: 30*50m - Parents to participate with their children	- Small Groups less than 10 players. - No opposition - No Match/games -Focus on Individual player . - Minimum space required: 30*50m - Parents to participate with their children in		
U4					
U5					
U6					
U7	- Small Groups less than 10 players per team - No opposition - No Match/game - Focus on Individual player . - Minimum space required: 30*50m	-Small Groups less than 14 players per team. - No opposition - No Match/game - Focus on Individual player . - Minimum space required: 60*50m	-Small Groups less than 14 players per team. - Opposition with low contact - No Match/game - Minimum space required: 60*50m		
U8					
U9					
U10					
U11	- Small Groups less than 20 players per team. - No opposition - No Match/game - Focus on Individual player . - Minimum space required: 60*50m	- Small Groups less than 20 players per team. - Opposition with low contact - No Match/game - Focus on Individual player . - Minimum space required: 60*50m	- Small Groups less than 20 players per team. - Opposition with low contact - Match/Game wit modified rules - Minimum space required: 100*65m		
U12					
U13					
U14					
U15					
U16					
U17					
U18					
Senior					

**Return to Play to normal play under the recommendations of health authorities.**

## Field Organization and Coaches Tips - examples





## Coaching Tips

Player Management		
Before	During	After
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider sending a session plan to the parents and players prior to the session.</li> <li>• Highlight which zone is allocated to which player.</li> <li>• Ensure parents are aware of the Return to play recommendations and guidelines.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the players to enjoy playing soccer in the current format.</li> <li>• Don't be overly concerned about players lacking technical ability at this time.</li> <li>• Keep distancing measures in place between players and coaching staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Validate the effort your players demonstrated during the session.</li> <li>• Ask the players if they have any suggestions for session activities next time.</li> <li>• Ensure that each player goes home with their designated household contact.</li> </ul>

Equipment Management		
Before	During	After
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a designated bag for your equipment and a designated location on the field to place your own equipment.</li> <li>• Have enough cones and balls available for your session.</li> <li>• Coach sets up all the equipment and follows club procedure for any equipment cleaning process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reset cones that delineate the physical distancing parameters whenever they are moved out of place.</li> <li>• Ask and remind players to avoid touching the equipment.</li> <li>• Be adaptive, if there is not enough goals for the game activities, use cones instead.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that all equipment is taken from the playing field in a safe manner.</li> <li>• Consider cleaning and disinfecting all equipment after the practice is over.</li> <li>• Reflect on how the equipment was managed and distributed to improve this for the next session.</li> </ul>

## GUIDELINES/RESTRICTIONS:

Of primary importance is taking every precaution to help keep all participants safe.

Players, coaches and referees can enjoy the many physical and mental benefits that soccer offers so long as everyone practices social distancing by keeping 2 meters apart from other participants to ensure every individual is in a safe exercise environment and follow all safety guidelines included here.

### BEFORE YOU PLAY.

Do not play if any of you:

a. Are exhibiting any of the symptoms of the coronavirus:

- Fever above 38 degrees Celsius
- A new cough, or worsening chronic cough
- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Headache
- A new onset of fatigue
- A new onset of muscle pain
- Diarrhea
- loss of sense of taste
- loss of sense of smell
- In children, purple markings on the fingers and toes

b. Have been in contact with someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.

c. Have travelled outside the province in the last 14 days

### PREPARING TO PLAY

Protect against infections:

- a) Wash your hands with a disinfectant soap and water (for 20 seconds or longer), or use a hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available, before going to the field.
- b) Clean and wipe down your equipment, including soccer shoes, shin pads and water bottles and do not share any of your equipment.
- c) Bring a full water bottle to avoid touching a tap or water fountain handle. The bottle must be labelled with the player's name.
- d) Take extra precautions such as wearing gloves or a mask
- e) If you need to sneeze or cough, do so into a tissue or upper sleeve.
- f) Arrive as close to the designated time when you need to be there as possible.
- g) Avoid touching field gates, fences, benches. Wipes/hand sanitizer must be available.

## WHEN PLAYING/PRACTISING

- a) Remain at least 2 meters apart from other players. Do not make physical contact with them (e.g. NO SHAKING HANDS OR A HIGH FIVES).
- b) Avoid touching your face after handling a ball, or other equipment. Wash your hands promptly if you have touched your eyes, nose or mouth.
- c) Don't share food, drinks or towels.
- d) Avoid using your hands directly to pick up the balls. No throw-ins will be practiced.
- e) Stay on your side of the field.
- f) Remain apart from other players when taking a break.
- g) If a ball from another field comes to you, send it back with a pass to the safety zone.
- h) No headers will be allowed.

## AFTER PLAYING

- a) Leave the field immediately after practice obeying the required traffic zone and directional flow around the field going clockwise.
- b) Wash your hands thoroughly or use a hand sanitizer after coming off the field.
- c) Do not use the locker room or changing area. Shower at home.
- d) No social activity should take place. No congregation after playing.
- e) All players should leave the facility immediately after play.

If any organization is looking to operate referee specific training, these guidelines must be adhered to.

## SIGNAGE:

As per Public Health's [Guidance Document for General Public Health Measures](#) and WorkSafeNB's [Embracing the New Normal as we Safely Return to Work](#), New Brunswick businesses must follow strict guidelines and follow public health measures in order to open along with an [COVID-19 Operational Plan](#). The health and safety of all New Brunswickers is our top priority, below includes various signage to be displayed at the entrance of the field, different locations in the facility and office space.

- [Important Notice on Travel into New Brunswick](#)
- [Physical Distancing in Elevators](#)
- [Protect yourself and others from getting sick](#)
- [Hand Sanitizer Poster](#) (Government of New Brunswick)
- [Reduce the spread of COVID-19: Wash your hands](#) (PHAC Infographic)
- [Steps for Effective Hand Washing](#)
- [Screening Tool](#) (bilingual)
- [Cleaning and Disinfection for COVID-19](#)
- [Use of a Community Face Mask to Help Reduce the spread of COVID-19](#)
- [Wash your hands poster](#) (bilingual)

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND OUTBREAK PLAN

### First Aid

Are critical interventions likely required? If so call 911.

First aid protocols for an unresponsive person during COVID-19: <https://www.redcross.ca/training-and-certification/first-aid-tips-and-resources/first-aid-tips/first-aid-protocols-for-an-unresponsive-person-during-covid-19>

In the event that first aid is required to be administered during an activity, all persons attending to the injured individual must first put on a mask and gloves. A parent of the injured player should be the first to administer first aid. Try to limit the number of individuals in contact with the sick person.

While wearing PPE, clean and disinfect items which have touched the patient. After cleaning, dispose of PPE and perform hand hygiene.

### Outbreak Plan

Early detection of symptoms will facilitate the immediate implementation of effective control measures. In addition, the early detection and immediate implementation of enhanced cleaning measures are two of the most important factors in limiting the size and length of an outbreak. An “outbreak” is two or more cases; a “case” is a single case of COVID-19.

1. Identify the roles and responsibilities of staff or volunteers if a case or outbreak is reported. Determine who within the organization has the authority to modify, restrict, postpone or cancel activities.
2. If staff (including volunteers) or a participant reports they are suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 and have been at the workplace/activity place, implement enhanced cleaning measures to reduce risk of transmission. If you are not the facility operator, notify the facility right away.
3. Implement your illness policy and advise individuals to:
  - Self-isolate
  - Monitor their symptoms daily, report respiratory illness and not to return to activity for at least 10 days following the onset of fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat and painful swallowing, stuffy or runny nose, loss of sense of smell, headache, muscle aches, fatigue and loss of appetite.
  - Use the COVID-19 self-assessment tool at NB COVID-19 [Self-Assessment](#) Tool to help determine if further assessment or testing for COVID-19 is needed. Individuals can contact 8-1-1 if further health advice is required and 9-1-1 if it is an emergency.
4. In the event of a suspected case or outbreak of influenza-like-illness, immediately report the potential exposure to WorkSafe NB by email ([conformite@ws-ts.nb.ca](mailto:conformite@ws-ts.nb.ca)) or calling 1 800 999-9775.
5. If your organization is contacted by a medical health officer in the course of contact tracing, cooperate with local health authorities.

## REFEREES PHYSICAL TRAINING

It is the referee's responsibility to be in optimal physical condition for the kick-off to the season. This season brings a host of challenges, not least to be able to exercise safely and comfortably while following guidance and guidelines from local authorities during the COVID-19 Health crisis. Canada Soccer provides these suggestions for training in small spaces with a minimum of equipment. It is provided to act as a supplement to your existing programs. Please find the link to the [Canada Soccer Referees Home Training Program](#).

## Conclusion

The safety and health of our participants will be first and foremost in the decision-making to come.

We understand that each municipality has potentially different restrictions and limitations for on-field bookings and activity, therefore, we advise everyone to work with your local city/municipalities to adhere to any appropriate requirements to ensure you are providing a safe environment for all participants.

We encourage all organizations to do what they feel is best for their participants and SNB will be available to support participants as best as we can as we work collectively through the current situation. As we all know, sport is a powerful vehicle that supports the community, improving physical and mental health. We know that soccer will play an important role across NB as we look to the future to support New Brunswickers.

Thank you. We wish you all the best of health and safety during these unprecedented times.