

# ONTARIO HOCKEY FEDERATION

400 Sheldon Drive, Unit 9, Cambridge, Ontario N1T 2H9

T: 226 533.9070 F: 519 620.7476

[www.ohf.on.ca](http://www.ohf.on.ca)



[www.orfa.com](http://www.orfa.com)

Proud Branch Of



Pursuant to the Ontario Government's recent announcement in which Premier, Doug Ford, outlined the gradual easing of public health measures, the Ontario Recreation Facilities Association (ORFA) and Ontario Hockey Federation (OHF) have been working closely with owners of arenas to coordinate the return to indoor hockey on January 31, 2022. In doing so, ORFA and OHF wish to provide additional guidance to owners of arenas, hockey associations, and the OHF Members. This information is intended to help guide discussions and planning amongst the stakeholders that we work most closely with to ensure the remainder of the 2021-22 hockey season is a success for all participants.

As previously stated, OHF's philosophy following the January pause is:

*To ensure all participants have the opportunity, where possible, to participate in a prolonged and meaningful hockey season. In doing so, we encourage our Members and hockey associations to consult with facility owners to determine the extent in which on ice activities may be extended.*

Both ORFA and the OHF recognize that prolonging the hockey season is influenced by many factors and that not all areas of the province will have equal opportunity. With that, it is imperative that hockey associations, owners of arenas, and those that manage and operate these facilities work closely to determine the extent in which on ice activities may be extended. Extenuating factors influencing an extended season opportunity may include, but are not limited to:

- Age of arena
- Capacity of refrigeration plant and associated equipment
- Increased cost to maintain ice
- Seasonal worker staff availability
- Planned construction and other capital project upgrade plans
- Other facility contracts and user commitments

Not all arenas are created equal and therefore not all arenas can sustain spring and summer ice. Influenced by the age of arena, capacity of refrigeration plant, humidity, outdoor temperatures, and utility costs, ORFA and the OHF recognize that some arenas will close before others. This is okay. In previous years, the meaningful hockey season for many teams within the OHF ended sometime in late January or early February. Due to the pandemic, the OHF, its Members, and the hockey associations restructured seasonal calendars to accommodate meaningful hockey being played up to March 1. With the recent pause on indoor recreation activities, the OHF hopes that hockey associations and owners of arenas can navigate a plan to see meaningful hockey extended to the end of March. Again, we recognize that this will not be possible in every arena and that regional differences will exist.

When discussing such opportunity, we encourage stakeholders to plan for meaningful hockey for all participants, irrespective of age, gender, or skill. As leaders, we want to ensure that all participants are provided equal opportunity to enjoy the many physical, social, and mental benefits of recreational activities.

## Requirements When Entering Indoor Facilities

Entering an indoor facility on January 31<sup>st</sup> (and thereafter) will have some distinct differences compared to usage prior to the pause:

- [Proof of Vaccination](#) - you must show your enhanced vaccine certificate with QR code and ID. Including coaches and all team officials.

### OHF Members





- Not required if you are:
  - 12 years and (84 days) 12 weeks of age or younger
- [Medical exemptions](#) must be presented with an authorized QR code.

## Regional Differences to Public Health Measures

ORFA and OHF recognize that, in many cases, public health measures take on a regional approach to deal with the unique demands of their community and the local facilities. It is highly encouraged that hockey associations, owners of arenas, and those that manage and operate these facilities work closely in communication. In particular, it is important to ensure that local expectations are communicated to travelling teams in advance of their arrival. A team approach will ensure safe and timely entrance into arenas while ensuring a positive experience for all participants and spectators alike.

## Indoor Capacity

Upon our return to indoor hockey, the Ontario Government has imposed spectator capacity limits for indoor facilities; 500 people total or 50% capacity, whichever is lower and irrespective of how many ice surfaces are located within one building.

## Tournaments

While the OHF will continue to permit tournaments to continue their operations, it is highly encouraged that hockey associations consult with their owners of arenas and those that manage these facilities to ensure compliance with any and all public health measures.

We continue to encourage tournament operators to consider and follow, where possible, [OHF Tournament COVID-19 Guidelines and Requirements](#).

## OHF Championships

OHF and our Championship hosts will continue to prepare for the delivery of OHF Championships, April 22-24. OHF and host committees will continue to work closely with owners of arenas and those that manage these facilities to ensure necessary public health measures are implemented and to ensure the safe delivery of these profile events. In an effort to reduce public gathering, the OHF has formally removed banquets and opening/closing ceremonies from this year's events. Again, we recognize that additional local public health measures may be in place at the time of these events. Those measures will be directly communicated to all participants, their families, officials and volunteers closer to the event.

## A Reminder to be Kind

Both ORFA and OHF collectively recognize that these are difficult times and that many Ontarian's are COVID fatigued. We appeal to all Members to embrace the hockey and community "no abuse or zero tolerance on violence" with even greater appreciation as we work our way through these back to the rink procedures. A friendly reminder that frontline arena staff do not make the rules, they are there to ensure our collective safe use of the building and all that use them!

Phillip McKee  
Executive Director  
Ontario Hockey Federation

John Milton  
Chief Administrative Officer  
Ontario Recreation Facilities Association

**ONTARIO HOCKEY FEDERATION**

400 Sheldon Drive, Unit 9, Cambridge, Ontario N1T 2H9

T: 226 533.9070 F: 519 620.7476

[www.ohf.on.ca](http://www.ohf.on.ca)