



**ONTARIO PARA
NETWORK**

RETURN TO SPORT

STEP 3: INDOOR TRAINING & LEAGUES
Effective January 31, 2022



Last updated:
January 31, 2022

Returning to Our Plan to Safely Reopen Ontario

Ontario's Roadmap to Reopen is a three-step plan to safely and cautiously reopen the province and gradually lift public health measures, based on the provincewide vaccination rate and improvements in key public health and health care indicators.

To blunt the transmission of the Omicron variant and prevent hospitals from becoming overwhelmed, Ontario temporarily moved into Step Two of the Roadmap to Reopen with modifications on January 5, 2022. With key public health and health system indicators starting to show improvements, Ontario has released details of steps to cautiously and gradually ease public health measures, starting on **January 31, 2022.**

The following is a list of guidelines developed by ONPARA in alignment with resources from the Province of Ontario. Our primary goal is to protect the health and safety of our athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers and our entire wheelchair sports community. It is important to note that all members must comply with the requirements and recommendations of Ontario Public Health and their local municipal health authority. Links to those resources can be found at the end of this document. Be well and stay safe!



ASSUMPTION OF RISK

Even with a vaccine for COVID-19 there will always be a risk of contracting the virus when participating in any public activity.

The Ontario Para Network does not carry insurance that covers pandemic diseases or contagions including COVID-19. When practicing and/or training, participants are responsible for their surroundings, equipment, and their own safety, and assume all risks associated with participation in physical activity.

ONPARA's Phased Approach to the Return of Sport



STEP 1: Outdoor Training



Effective: June 11, 2021



STEP 2: Outdoor Leagues



Effective: June 30, 2021



STEP 3: Indoor Training & Leagues



Effective: January 31, 2022 (update)

It is important to note that ONPARA may stay within a step or revert back to a previous step if it is deemed necessary to mitigate risk of transmission within our programming. Prior to participating in any activities, participants should consult their [local public health unit's or municipality's website](#) to review health and safety protocols.

Key Steps for a Safe Return to Sport

Prior to resuming activities, all ONPARA clubs and programs must:

1. Ensure that all members are [registered with ONPARA for 2021/2022](#) (effective Oct 1 – Sept 30)
2. Obtain an updated Certificate of Insurance for all club activities/events
3. Review ONPARA's current Return to Sport guidelines
4. Review and follow ONPARA's [Screening & Health Attestation Tool](#) and [Risk Mitigation Strategy & Outbreak Protocol](#)
5. Develop a [safety plan](#) aligned with ONPARA's current Return to Sport guidelines. Safety plan must be available upon request.
6. Share information with all members



According to ONPARA's Risk Mitigation Strategy & Outbreak Protocol, individuals **MAY NOT PARTICIPATE** in any programming if they:

- Exhibit any symptoms of a cold, flu or COVID-19 or are under the direction of the provincial health officer to self-isolate
- Have travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days and have symptoms of COVID-19
- Have come into close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 days

Individuals experiencing symptoms or concerned they may have COVID-19 should use the [Ontario COVID-19 Self Assessment Tool](#).

Facility Guidelines and Spectator Capacity

- Businesses, organizations, and facilities must comply with the [advice, recommendations, and instructions of public health officials](#). This includes advice, recommendations or instructions on: face coverings, physical distancing, cleaning or disinfecting, screening, and vaccination requirements.
 - Please note that some facilities may choose to set stricter guidelines for their patrons than those recommended by their local public health officials
- Facilities must have a [screening process](#) and [safety plan](#) in place.
- Athletes, coaches, volunteers, and all others participating in sport, recreation, and fitness activities should be aware of all policies & protocols mandated by the facility they are using.
- Under **current guidelines**, facilities used for indoor sports and recreational fitness activities (such as gyms, businesses offering personal fitness training, and sporting events) may open with capacity limits:
 - Indoors: 50% capacity for non-spectator areas
 - Indoors: 50% capacity for spectator areas, or 500 people (whichever is less)



Proof of Vaccination Guidelines (Summary)

As of January 31, 2022 under the updated public health measures, individuals will need to provide proof of vaccination, [active medical exemption](#), or participation in a Health Canada [approved COVID-19 vaccine clinical trial](#) as specified in Ministry of Health guidance, along with valid ID to access some businesses and settings, including **indoor areas of facilities used for sports and recreational fitness activities***

Your proof of vaccination is your enhanced vaccine certificate with an official QR code, sometimes called a vaccine record. Your enhanced vaccine certificate is the most secure and convenient way to store and show your proof of vaccination status. It is now mandatory to use the enhanced vaccine certificate with the QR code to gain access to settings that require proof of vaccination.

Proof of vaccination is not required for individuals aged 12 years and 12 weeks/84 days or younger, unless indicated by a specific program, facility, event, etc.

ONPARA-affiliated clubs and programs, as well as sanctioned events should follow the rules in accordance with the Ontario Ministry of Health's updated [Proof of Vaccination Guidance document](#). Club operations and events run at municipal or private recreation & sport facilities should follow the rules, guidelines, and relevant directions of the facility's owner/operator.

ONPARA highly encourages all its eligible members to get fully vaccinated in support of [Ontario's COVID-19 Vaccination Plan](#)

*includes:

gyms, fitness/sporting/recreational facilities, pools, leagues, waterparks, sporting events, indoor areas of facilities where spectators watch events, and facilities where personal physical fitness trainers provide instruction

Limited exceptions apply.

Sport-Specific Guidelines – STEP 3

Wheelchair Basketball, Wheelchair Tennis, Wheelchair Rugby

1. Full practices, training sessions, games, and events may resume – no limitations on in-sport contact.
 - a) All non-essential contact should be avoided (handshakes, high 5s, etc.).
2. Physical distancing of 2m should be maintained at all times when not on the field of play.
3. When indoors, masks or face coverings that cover the mouth and nose must be worn by:
 - Coaches and assistants at all times;
 - Spectators and volunteers at all times;
 - Officials when not actively officiating games;
 - Athletes when not participating in physical activity
5. When outdoors, masks or face coverings are recommended whenever physical distancing of 2m is not possible.

Clubs/programs may choose to set stricter mask guidelines for members than those recommended by their facilities or local public health officials.



Sport-Specific Guidelines – STEP 3 (cont.)

Wheelchair Basketball, Wheelchair Tennis, Wheelchair Rugby

5. If assistance is required (e.g. transferring, strapping, taping, etc.), it is recommended that the assistant be someone from the athlete's immediate household, whenever possible.
6. Athletes are encouraged to arrive to practices/games “dressed and ready to play”. The use of changerooms, locker rooms, club houses, etc. is permitted, though may be subject to facility-specific capacity limits.
7. No sharing of personal items including water bottles, towels, snacks, etc. Athletes should bring their own water bottles filled from home and avoid the use of public water fountains when possible.
8. All equipment including balls, push rims, and other high-contact touch points should be cleaned and disinfected before and immediately after playing.
9. It is recommended that athletes travel independently or only with those from their immediate household whenever possible.
10. All ONPARA-sanctioned clubs, programs, and events in operation under current guidelines must follow the ‘Key Steps for a Safe Return to Sport’ (page 4). Coaches and administrators are responsible for:
 - Contact Tracing ([Attendance Tracking Sheet](#))
 - Screening ([Screening Tool](#))
 - Risk Mitigation ([Risk Mitigation & Outbreak Protocol](#))



Sport-Specific Guidelines (Summary)

Indoor and outdoor activities	Permitted		
Use of indoor facilities and changerooms	Permitted (with restrictions)		
Scrimmages and Competitions (including in-sport contact)	Permitted		
Travel to other cities/regions within province	Permitted (independent/household travel recommended)		
Club/Program Safety Plan	Required		
Contact Tracing	Required		
Equipment disinfecting after each game/practice	Required		
Maximum Number of Participants	Indoors: 50% capacity	Outdoors: no limits	
Maximum Number of Spectators	Indoors: 50% capacity	Outdoors: no limits	
Face Masks	<u>Indoors</u> Athletes: Required when not playing Coaches, Assistants, Spectators: Required Officials: Required when not officiating		<u>Outdoors</u> Recommended when physical distancing of 2m cannot be maintained.
Physical Distancing	<u>Athletes & Coaches</u> On court/bench: No Everywhere else: Yes	<u>Officials & Assistants</u> On court: No Everywhere else: Yes	<u>Spectators</u> Required at all times

Wheelchair Athletics

Athletics Ontario is the official Provincial governing body for para athletics. All para track and para throws athletes should follow the return to play guidelines set by Athletics Ontario. [AO's COVID guidelines](#)



Resources

There are a high number of para-athletes with compromised immune/respiratory systems. Any athlete with a medical condition which may elevate the risk of serious COVID-19 symptoms is encouraged to consult their medical professional before beginning participation.

Province of Ontario

- COVID-19 Self-Assessment: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>
- Framework for Reopening: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/public-health-measures>
- Proof of Vaccination: [Proof of Vaccination Guidance for Businesses and Organizations under the Reopening Ontario Act](#)
- COVID-19: Stop the Spread: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-stop-spread#section-6>
- COVID-19 and workplace health and safety : <https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-workplace-health-safety>
- Liability Protection: [Bill 218, Supporting Ontario's Recovery and Municipal Elections Act, 2020](#)

Public Health Ontario

- [Multilingual COVID-19 Resources](#)
- [Physical Distancing Fact Sheet](#)
- [Handwashing Fact Sheet](#)

Resources (continued)

International Tennis Federation

- Return to Tennis Guidelines: <https://www.itftennis.com/media/3446/return-to-tennis-guidelines-eng.pdf>

Red Cross

- First Aid protocols for an unresponsive person during COVID-19:

www.redcross.ca/training-and-certification/first-aid-tips-and-resources/first-aid-tips/first-aid-protocols-for-an-unresponsive-person-during-covid-19

Tennis Canada

- COVID-19 Updates on Tennis in Canada: <https://www.tenniscanada.com/covid19/>

Spinal Cord Injury Canada

- Hand Hygiene for People with Spinal Cord Injury:

<https://sci-can.ca/resource/preventing-covid-19-hand-hygiene-people-spinal-cord-injury>

Wheelchair Basketball Canada

- Return to Wheelchair Basketball Guidelines:

https://www.wheelchairbasketball.ca/news_press/canada-basketball-and-wheelchair-basketball-canada-publish-back-to-basketball-return-to-sport-guidelines/

ONPARA COVID-19 Updates: <https://onpara.ca/covid-19-information-and-resources/>