



Recommended BCB Return to Play (RTP) Framework for Indoor Lawn Bowling in Canada

Introduction

As bowls clubs move from outdoor bowling to indoor bowling, Bowls Canada recommends that clubs continue to use a phased in approach to Return to Play. Using BCB's existing Return to Play (RTP) documentation, clubs can assess their readiness to run indoor bowls programs, be they short mat or otherwise.

Based on the stage of reopening within their province and region, clubs will need to identify which Return to Play Phase best meets their situation. Clubs are encouraged to read through BCB's existing RTP documentation prior to reading through this document. Where necessary, clubs should adapt BCB's existing RTP documentation to meet their current needs.

COVID-19 restrictions may change throughout the season; it is important that clubs continually monitor local, provincial, and federal public health directives.

It is recognized that indoor activities present a higher risk for COVID-19 transmission than playing outdoors. It is strongly recommended that clubs use this protocol to make an informed decision about whether or not indoor play is appropriate for them.

Disclaimer

Bowls Canada are not experts on pandemics and therefore all Federal, Provincial and local Government and Public Health Authority information, guidelines and directives supersede this information. We have created this set of guidelines to inform the bowls community as to how Bowls Canada is responding to Covid-19 and to provide recommendations as to what we believe is the best course of action for local bowls clubs.

Indoor RTP Readiness

This document contains a series of recommendations for how we might imagine ‘rebooting’ indoor lawn bowling activity during the fall and winter. It is essential that any and all decisions regarding the timing and protocol for a resumption of bowls activity *must* adhere to Federal, Provincial and Local Public Health Authorities. To determine readiness for Indoor RTP implementation, the following steps are recommended:

1. Clubs **MUST** first contact their Provincial Bowls Associations before implementing Indoor Return to Play protocols. Failure to do so may result in clubs unknowingly implementing protocols that are in breach of provincial government directives. Provincial Associations are working closely with their Government representatives on what standards are required for sport and recreation facilities.
2. Clubs must also confirm with their insurance providers that they are covered for Indoor Return to Play protocols.
3. Identify the stage of physical distancing relaxation approved by local public health authorities and confirm that the club is able to implement the required standards.

Only once a club has confirmed its readiness to implement Indoor RTP, should they proceed with development of an RTP protocol for their club. The following are recommendations on how bowls clubs may consider operations once their local authorities have given them permission to access their facilities. This is not definitive and it cannot be emphasized enough that clubs must work with the Provincial Associations and their local Public Health Authorities to create a tailored RTP protocol.

External Venues

This document is targeted towards clubs who will be indoor bowling at their existing facility. For those clubs who rent out space at an external venue (church basement, community centre, school gym, etc.), it will be up to each club to discuss the specific details with the facility owner. Discussions should include, at minimum:

- Cleaning/sanitizing protocols
- Ventilation quality
- Liability, waivers, forms, and insurance
- General health & safety protocols

It would be prudent to follow the rest of this document, as well as BCB’s other COVID-19 [documentation](#) to minimize the risk of COVID-19 as best as possible.

WAIVERS:

In order to rely upon a waiver, an entity must be a party to that agreement. In other words, if the facility requires a waiver, but does not protect or even mention the club, the club cannot rely upon it. It is strongly recommended that clubs continue to use declarations and waivers even if they do not own their own facility. The existing waiver templates that BCB shared should be updated to include the external facility as a named party.

This Framework

This RTP Framework recommends that the following six (6) areas be considered for any return to play implementation plans.

1. Pre-Screening
2. Recommended Operations Protocols
 - a. Clubhouse
 - b. Common Storage and Equipment Use
 - c. Indoor Appropriate Bowls Activity
3. Bowler Expectations
4. Artificial Turf Considerations
5. General Safety Protocols
6. Tracing Protocols

Pre-Screening

- Clubs should ensure that all participants are aware of signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
- Consider encouraging participants to use the Government of Canada [tracking application](#) to monitor and track symptoms before coming out to play. Use of this application would also help with the implementation of a tracing protocol.
- It is recommended that clubs consider appointing a safety officer and/or safety committee that will be responsible for overseeing and monitoring the RTP protocol.

Recommended Protocols for Operations

Clubhouse

Indoor RTP readiness means that their respective Provincial physical distancing protocol plan has moved to the next stage of readiness and is allowing for small gatherings while still maintaining physical distancing requirements. Clubs will need to consider if they are able to implement the ventilation, cleaning and sanitization protocols required by local public health authorities for indoor common spaces and equipment.

If the following safety measures cannot be implemented, then the club should consider whether or not the clubhouse can be safely opened. Note: at all times, the guidelines and legislations of Provincial and Local Health Authorities must be respected and will take precedence over these recommendations.

- Place clearly visible signage by **all** entrances and storage facilities outlining the physical distancing guidelines in place, as well as hand-washing recommendations/protocols.
- Dedicate resources to clean and sanitize the club house on a daily basis. Create a cleaning time log to identify when items are cleaned/sanitized throughout the day. Follow [Government of Canada disinfecting guidelines](#) for cleaning common areas.
- Recommend to still disinfect all surfaces and materials before and after each individual use; discuss with your local health authority to determine if it can be less than this.
- It is recommended the kitchen be closed and participants be strongly encouraged to bring their own food/water.
- Tables/chairs (if use is permitted by local public health authorities) should be setup to adhere to physical distancing requirements.
- Washrooms should only be used if approved by local authorities. If your club washroom is able to open, consider limiting usage to one person at a time. Recommend using a safety officer to clean and disinfect the washroom on a regular basis; check with your local public health authority for minimum requirements. Establish an easy to read recognition tool so others are aware of when a washroom is “in use” and do not enter.
- Adhere to provincial & local guidelines/regulations for indoor gathering capacity.

- Provide hand sanitizer and/or disinfectant wipes in common areas.
- Work with local health authorities on how to manage waste. While it is encouraged for bowlers to take their own waste home with them, this may not be a plausible solution for items such as used disinfectant wipes.
- To reduce the likelihood of COVID-19 being distributed through ventilation, check with your facility owner/operator about the type of ventilation. HEPA grade air filters are preferable, as is having multiple outdoor ventilation exchanges (e.g. ability to open windows and doors).
 - It is highly recommended to avoid recirculation of air (i.e. fans) as much as possible.
 - Learn more from WHO on ventilation by clicking [here](#).

Recommended Protocol for Common Storage and Equipment Use

Ideally, bowlers will bring and use their personal bowls. In those cases, where participants do not have access to their own bowls, consider the following recommendations. At all times, the guidelines and legislations of Provincial and Local Health Authorities must be respected and will take precedence over these recommendations.

- Appoint a safety volunteer who will ensure that used bowls are appropriately cleaned and are ready for use;
- Post signage outlining the Protocol for Club Bowls Storage and Equipment Use
- Designate a “sanitized” area and “un-sanitized area” for bowls and jacks;
- Only one person at a time may enter the bowls storage area to remove a set of sanitized bowls and two sanitized jacks for play;
- Bowls and jacks to be used by one person only before being sanitized by the appointed safety personnel
- Have safety personnel wear appropriate PPE when sanitizing bowls
- Consider assigning a specific set of bowls to a specific person for their use during the indoor season

Recommended Protocol for Indoor Bowls Activity

The following recommendations are for consideration for Indoor RTP by Provincial Bowls Associations and local clubs. At all times, the guidelines and legislations of Provincial and Local Health Authorities must be respected and will take precedence over these recommendations.

Indoor games include scheduled club activities such as jitneys, leagues and tournaments which are restricted to club members only. No spectators should be permitted.

Arrangements for Games

- A games convenor should be appointed for each event. As sign-up sheets in the clubhouse are not recommended, consider using an online tool such as **SignUpGenius** or Google Calendar, email, or telephone to accept entries.
- Club members must register to play prior to an announced entry deadline.
- Entrants should be asked to provide their name, contact information, position (if applicable) and names of other team members (if applicable).
- Entrants must be asked to confirm the following:
 - That they will complete the pre-screening tools prior to arriving at the club and will adhere to club protocols and physical distancing measures during the event.
- Consider scheduling alternate playing times (e.g. a.m. and p.m. time slots) in order to provide opportunities for more bowlers to participate.
- Consider identifying teams for setting up and packing up to ensure adherence to physical distancing.
- Players should arrive no more than 20 minutes prior to their scheduled start time to register and receive further instructions.
 - Where space is limited, it is recommended to arrive no more than 10 minutes prior to scheduled start time to reduce congestion/over crowding.
 - It is recommended to leave time between playing sessions so that one group has left the club before the next group arrives.
- Keep a record of each person who arrives at the club and identify their arrival and departure times. This record should be virtual/digital if possible, to avoid multiple people using the same book/log. The online scheduling tool can help with this process.
- **The size of your facility will dictate which formats are suitable.** At all times, physical distancing must still be maintained. It is anticipated that most facilities should be able to accommodate singles and pairs; other formats could be considered depending on your facility
 - To ensure physical distancing is maintained, it is recommended that there be a minimum of 4m distance at each end of the playing surface, and 2m distance along the sides. If there is less space than this available, indoor play may not be suitable.
- For those facilities with full-length rinks, it is recommended to use every other rink.
 - It is recommended to set the mat and/or the jack at the 3-metre mark instead of the 2-metre mark to allow for adequate space behind the head to maintain physical distancing.

Playing of Games

- Bowlers should use their own set of bowls. Club bowls may be used according to established protocols (see *Protocol for Common Storage and Equipment Use*).
- Clubs should create a protocol for how to deal with mats and jacks during game play such that equipment is not shared without being cleaned/sanitized first. It is recommended that clubs consult their local health authority on this. See the Appendix for suggestions.
- If coaches are available, they should maintain physical distancing practices, and should not share equipment with participants (including bowls, jacks, and mats). Coaches must adhere to all RTP protocols.
- Other club equipment such as scoreboards, pushers/rakes, etc. should be designated to a single user during play to minimize contact points. If players bring their own personal equipment (e.g. bowls lifters, cloths, gripping agent) these must not be shared with any other bowlers.
 - If clubs have assistive devices (i.e. Ubi-launchers or bowling arms), these should be used by one person per game, and cleaned/sanitized by a Safety Volunteer before and after each game.
- Each skip (or player in Singles) should keep a scorecard. At the end of the game, both skips (or players in Singles) should verbally agree upon the details of the scorecard rather than signing it. The results should be verbally communicated to the drawmaster rather than handing in scorecards (if applicable).
- At the start of each end, each team's bowls should be placed on opposite sides of the rink.
- Players at the mat end, when not in possession of the rink, should stand at least two metres behind the mat and on the side where their bowls are, maintaining a safe physical distance from other bowlers.
- Players standing in the head, when they are not in possession of the rink, should stand at least two metres behind the player who is directing the head, while maintaining a safe physical distance from other bowlers.
- Players should only pick up their own bowls. Do not pick up or use your hands to touch someone else's bowls or equipment.
- Agree with your opponent who will do the measuring for the game. This way measures will not be shared. Physical distancing should still be maintained while measuring takes place.

- For longer measures which require two people, it is recommended that the primary measurer hold the measure at the jack, and the secondary person hold the pointer-end. This ensures the main part of the measure is not touched by the secondary person. In all instances where a measure involves two people, both measurers should immediately sanitize their hands and the measure itself after completing the measure.
- When changing ends, players should walk up the right-hand side of the rink while keeping a safe distance apart.

Facilities Arrangements

- Designate separate entrance and exit points to the facility. If this is not possible, consider extending the time between playing time slots, such that one group leaves before the next group arrives.
- Designate a “waiting area” in case bowlers arrive early and ensure it is marked appropriately with physical distancing cues. This waiting area must be away from the playing areas so that any participants in earlier time slots do not cross paths unnecessarily.
- Do not permit bowlers to congregate in the parking lot either before or after they have finished bowling. Post a sign to remind bowlers of this protocol.
- If your benches/chairs are available, consider adding their cleaning to your cleaning protocol. Ensure your participants still adhere to physical distancing if using benches/chairs.
- Ensure appropriate signage is posted throughout the playing area to advise participants of the safety protocols in place.

Bowler Expectations

The following recommendations are for consideration for Indoor RTP by Provincial Bowls Associations and local clubs. At all times, the guidelines and legislations of Provincial and Local Health Authorities must be respected and will take precedence over these recommendations.

- Pre-register to play; do not just show up and expect to play.
- Arrive no more than 20 minutes before your scheduled start time, and leave promptly when you have finished playing.
- Where possible, arrive changed and ready to play.
- Practice physical distancing by staying a **minimum** of two metres away from each other at all times.

- Wear a mask at all times.
- Use your own bowls. If you do not own bowls, make sure you follow the posted safety protocols for using club bowls.
- Only leads (and skips) may touch the jack and the mat (See Appendix).
- Do not share equipment.
- Do not shake hands or high five.
- Do not bring visitors with you to the club.
- Do not access closed spaces or equipment.
- Bring your own chair instead of using club benches/chairs.
- Do not enter the washroom if there is already someone else inside or if the washroom has been closed.
- Bring your own water.
- Take home your own waste material, if possible.
- If you are feeling unwell, regardless of the symptoms, stay home.

Artificial Turf Considerations

The following recommendations are for consideration by Provincial Bowls Associations and local clubs. At all times, the guidelines and legislations of Provincial and Local Health Authorities must be respected and will take precedence over these recommendations.

- Many cleaning chemicals will have a harmful impact on artificial surfaces (droplets from a sanitized mat or jack may ruin the surface). Test the cleaning/sanitizing chemicals on a small section of your artificial surface prior to full usage.
- Reduce the number of touchpoints by nominating one or two individuals to roll up the mats, place the blocks/fenders, and reset any equipment that is moved.
- Post COVID-19 symptom signage regarding physical distancing requirements.
- Post protocols for operations and safety.

General Safety Protocols

The following recommendations are for consideration by Provincial Bowls Associations and local clubs. At all times, the guidelines and legislations of Provincial and Local Health Authorities must be respected and will take precedence over these recommendations.

- Educate volunteers and participants to recognize the symptoms of COVID-19. A list of symptoms is available from the [Government of Canada](#) and or as an infographic at the end of this document.
- Establish a communication plan to keep volunteers and participants informed and updated on issues affecting the club
- It is recommended that clubs continue to use the appropriate waivers, forms, and cleaning procedures that have been recommended in BCB's outdoor Return to Play protocols. To view these, click [here](#).
- Establish a policy that requires volunteers, staff, and participants to inform you when they've been exposed to **any** highly communicable illness. Direct them to the local health agency for testing. Implement a screening program to ensure all staff/volunteers/participants are healthy and have not travelled outside of Canada. Consider using the Government of Canada [tracking application](#) for this purpose.
- Conduct meetings by phone or online where possible. If in-person meetings are required, maintain physical distancing.
- Ensure appropriate signage is well placed throughout the club facility. For example:
 - COVID-19 symptom signage at entrance points,
 - Handwashing techniques and waste removal in the washrooms,
 - Rules and safety protocols in all common areas including clubhouse, green, storage area, parking area, waiting areas, etc.
 - Where to stand, flow-through traffic, etc.
- Educate volunteers and participants on [proper handwashing and hygiene techniques](#).
 - Provide necessary Canadian Government approved sanitation supplies such as wipes and hand sanitizers.
 - Ensure hand washing signage is present at all hand washing stations.
 - It is recommended that bowlers wash their hands frequently rather than wear gloves
 - Provide hand sanitizer stations for volunteers, staff, and participants in multiple locations.
- It is recommended that bowlers and volunteers wear masks while indoors. Refer to your local and provincial guidelines recommended use of masks for both indoor and outdoor activities.

All indoor bowlers should refer to guidance which is specific to their local indoor bowling facility, as this may vary due to individual facility provisions and local authority restrictions.

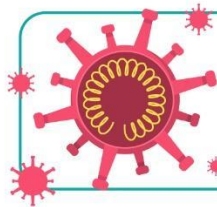
It will be up to clubs and their local authorities for how to deal with individuals who do not follow safety precautions or other guidelines that the club has adopted.

Tracing Protocol

- Follow the tracing protocols established by your local health authorities.
- Ensure you have a process to notify your members and those directly impacted should a participant test positive.
- Consider the consequences and ability to implement tracing protocols before allowing participants to return to play at your facility.
- Consider using the Government of Canada tracing app.

CORONAVIRUS

Covid-19 or 2019-nCov



WHAT IS IT? Q

COVID-19 is a new virus and so health officials are still learning about its impact and severity. At this time, it appears to cause an illness similar to the flu with the most common signs of infection being fever, cough and shortness of breath. In severe cases patients can develop pneumonia, severe respiratory distress, kidney failure and death.



PREVENTION



Stay at home when you are sick



Avoid touching eyes, nose, & mouth with unwashed hands



Avoid close contact with people who are sick



Clean & disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces



Wash your hands at least 20 seconds



Use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol



Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue



Avoid crowded places and all unnecessary travel



SYMPTOMS

Common Less typical



INCUBATION

Because the early symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to other respiratory illnesses, if you have any of the common symptoms (fever, cough and shortness of breath) you should contact your doctor's office and arrange to have a consultation.



REDUCE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19. WASH YOUR HANDS.



1

Wet hands with warm water



2

Apply soap



3

For at least 20 seconds, make sure to wash:



4

Rinse well



5

Dry hands well with paper towel



6

Turn off tap using paper towel



palm and back of each hand



between fingers



under nails



thumbs

1-833-784-4397

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Appendix – Modified Rules for Indoor Return to Play

The National Officiating Committee (NOC) has made the following suggestions to modify typical rules/norms, such that intra club games may take place while still adhering to all local and provincial health guidelines.

- As the controlling body for club games, the club may determine the conditions of play for an event. For competitions which are purely social or recreational (i.e. not leading to the winners being awarded a club title), the conditions of play may include aspects of play that are different from the Laws of the Sport.
- Trial ends are at the discretion of the controlling body, and should be included within the established time limit (if applicable).
- Touchers must be marked by a member of the team that delivered the bowl (or a marker). Spray chalk is recommended in order that nobody else touches the bowl (if permitted), or it may be nominated as a toucher.
- For full length rinks, live jacks and bowls in the ditch should not be indicated with any shared equipment. A player may use their personal bowls cloth, placed on the bank, to indicate the position of the jack or bowl.

Suggested modifications for indoor play

- ☐ Below are various different options that the controlling body (i.e. the club) could implement for social or recreational competitions:
 - The delivery mat is always to be placed by the same lead such that it allows appropriate distancing and minimizes contact points.
 - The jack is to be pre-set by the skip; use 2 jacks, one at each end (in this way the leads would never touch the jack with their hands and reduce the use of shared equipment).
 - Skips can centre the jack with their foot or lifter so they do not touch the jack with their hands. Consider designating one skip to set/centre the jack for the entire game, regardless of who won the end (in this way, only one skip would ever touch the jack).
 - For full length rinks, consider setting the delivery mat and/or jack at the 3-metre mark instead of the 2-metre mark (in this way, people can stand behind the mat and/or jack and still observe physical distancing).