



**INTERSCHOLASTIC
HOCKEY
LEAGUE**

ISHL COVID-19 POLICY AND

GUIDELINES

OVERVIEW

The following plan related to the Interscholastic Hockey League (ISHL), based on the current public health situation and recommendations from the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\) USA Hockey \(USAH\)](#), [World Health Organization](#), and state and local health departments, is an overview of the ISHL's COVID-19 policy and recommendations, and will apply to the 2020-2021 hockey season. The situation will be monitored periodically and changes to this guidance may be made in the coming months in response to these changes.

ISHL Team Personnel and Spectators (defined under Face Coverings) will be expected to adhere to the following guidelines and conduct themselves in a safe and responsible manner. It is the responsibility of all those involved to ensure these guidelines are being followed. Failure to follow certain guidelines and policies may result in disciplinary action.

In the event of a COVID-19 **positive** case amongst any team within the league, cases must be reported to ISHL President Michael Cuomo (see COVID Reporting Guidelines below). The ISHL Board will evaluate the situation, take any necessary action promptly and make changes to this guidance accordingly. Rinks are entitled to change game and/or practice schedules as COVID-19 policies change. Teams should be prepared for possible changes or interruptions to practice and games schedules, and should regularly check ISHL Website before traveling for local and out of town games. The ISHL Board will contact each ISHL Team Manager with any changes to the schedule or this policy, and will hold mandatory conference call meetings from time to time with updated information.

PRIMARY GOALS

- Keep players on the ice and in the game while maintaining a safe and healthy playing environment.
- Limit risk of exposure by maintaining social distancing throughout all athletic activities conducted within the rinks.
- Establish a [self-health screening](#) guideline, including a designated COVID Safety Officer to oversee effective use of these guidelines, for players and coaches to follow.

ISHL COVID-19 POLICY AND GUIDELINES

FACE COVERINGS – EXECUTIVE ORDER GA-29

Executive Order GA-29, regarding face coverings, applies to all Team Personnel and Spectators at all practices and games. “Team Personnel” is defined as anyone on the 1-T roster including the head coach, assistant coaches, team manager and players. “Spectators” is defined as anyone not on the 1-T roster but possibly in attendance at a ISHL Team team event, including but not limited to, goalie coaches, team medical personnel, team photographer, penalty box monitor, scorekeeper, parents, siblings, additional family members and friends.

- Masks must be worn by ALL Team Personnel and Spectators the entirety of their time in the rink, except ONLY as follows.
 - Players may remove their masks when leaving their locker room or changing area to go onto the ice, however they must immediately put their masks back on as soon as they return to to their locker room or changing area.
 - Children 2 years or younger are not required to wear masks.
 - While a person is actively consuming food or drink. Masks should be pulled down to drink or eat, then immediately pulled back up.
 - ✦ Each player must supply his/her own water and water bottle. Water bottles may not be (re)filled inside of the facility
- Individuals with health conditions that prevent them from wearing a mask should not attend USAH sanctioned events.
- All scorekeepers and penalty box monitors are required to wear a mask for the entirety of their time spent in the rink. Additionally, penalty box monitors are required to wear gloves and sanitize the penalty box after each usage. (Sanitizer, disinfectant and trash bags will not be supplied by the rinks. Each team is responsible for bringing their own supplies.)
- For the purpose of this policy, face coverings include non-medical grade disposable face masks, cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth), or full-face shields to protect eyes, nose and mouth. Please see [CDC information on appropriate masks](#).

SOCIAL DISTANCING

When possible, all Team Personnel and Spectators must maintain six (6) feet apart from each other. Hockey being a high-risk contact sport, we understand players cannot always stay six (6) feet apart from each other. However, please adhere to the following guidelines to the best of your ability.

- Changing Areas/Locker Rooms
 - Masks must be worn in the locker rooms and changing areas by all Team Personnel for the entirety of their time in the locker room.

- **Players are required to “Dress and Drive”, meaning players must come fully dressed for their game, with exception to gloves, helmets and skates.**
 - ✦ Goalies must come fully dressed, with exception to upper body gear, pads, helmet and skates.
 - Players and coaches may only be in the locker rooms or designated changing areas for 12 minutes at a time. This includes dressing for practice or games and changing at the conclusion. No individual should be in a locker room or changing area for longer than 14 minutes.
 - Changing areas and locker rooms must be limited to changing only, and may not be used for coaching. All whiteboard sessions and video review must be done virtually or conducted in a venue that provides appropriate social distancing and with appropriate mask protection.
 - Players must dress/change in the changing area assigned by the rink to allow for maximum social distancing and affective sanitation between user groups.
 - No showering will be permitted in the locker rooms or changing areas.
 - Upon vacating the locker room or changing area, each team must ensure there is no remaining trash, tape, food, drink, etc.
- **Bench/Ice**
 - All Team Personnel should distance from each other where possible.
 - Goals may be celebrated by fist bumps with gloves; no hugging.
 - There will be no post-game handshakes. Players are encouraged to line up on respective blue lines and raise or tap their sticks.
 - All Team Personnel are required to keep their mask, helmet and gloves on while on the bench or in the penalty box.
 - Spitting will not be permitted on the ice, bench, locker rooms or anywhere within the rinks.
- **Off-Ice Sessions**
 - All dry land or off-ice sessions must be conducted outdoors or in a venue that provides appropriate social distancing.
 - Mask protection will not be required for off-ice training, provided proper social distancing is being practiced.
- **Team Travel**
 - Public travel poses many logistical challenges in regards to potential exposure and appropriate social distancing.
 - All Team Personnel and Spectators are encouraged to practice proper masking and social distancing where applicable when using public transportation for games or games.

- Team Personnel and Spectators are also encouraged to practice a heightened sense of caution when using public transportation to reduce the risk of exposure, included but not limited to, the use of gloves, proper sanitation of belongings and proper usage of masks.
- It is encouraged that All Team Personnel and Spectators refrain from carpooling with other players or families, and only travel with individuals that you are regularly in close contact with. (i.e. immediate family)
- All Team Personnel and Spectators should remain only in their own hotel rooms, and should not congregate in rooms of other individuals or public areas.
- It is recommended that all Team Personnel and Spectators refrain from eating together at restaurants, or if they do, they refrain from sitting together. If you do go to a restaurant please only sit with individuals you are regularly in contact with, and follow proper social distancing guidelines.
- It is recommended that all Team Personnel and Spectators order delivery, go through a drive through, or utilize curbside service while traveling.

HEALTH SCREENINGS

It is being recommended that all Team Personnel and Spectators practice **DAILY** self-health evaluations before participating in any USAH sanctioned team events, including but not limited to practices, games, team meetings and off-ice training sessions. Individuals who feel or identify with any of the following symptoms are to refrain from participating in any USAH sanctioned events, and see their physician before returning.

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Cough or other respiratory symptoms
- Headache
- Chills
- Muscle Aches
- Sore Throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- Pain, redness, swelling or rash on toes or fingers
- New rash or other skin symptoms
- High-risk exposure: a new contact with an infected individual or prolonged contact with a crowd without physical distancing
- Temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or above

Responsible parties for players must ensure they do not send a player to participate in any USAH sanctioned event if the player has any of the above symptoms or is **test-confirmed with COVID-19**. Players will be screened by their designated Safety Officer (See COVID Safety Officer Guideline Below) before every USAH sanctioned event, and may not be allowed to participate if they fail any part of the screening process.

In addition, no Spectator or Team Personnel should attend any USAH sanctioned events if they have any of the above symptoms.

COVID REPORTING

All COVID-19 positive cases must be reported to the ISHL President, Michael Cuomo, through the email, ishlhouston@gmail.com. All reporting must be done by ISHL Team Points of Contact, and must include the following information. In the event of a **COVID-19 positive** case within the league, the ISHL will conduct a Close Contact Tracing Review to determine which, if any, individuals have been in close contact with the confirmed positive individual.

- Name
- Team
- Onset date of symptoms
- Date of positive test
- Details of any direct contact/close contact with other Team Personnel
- Proposed action plan

If deemed appropriate and necessary, any opposing team that may have been in contact with the affected player will be notified by the ISHL Board. **No personal health information will be divulged to the opposing team or ISHL Teams.** Due to the nature of the public health concern, the ISHL President, Michael Cuomo, may communicate about COVID-19 related cases accordingly. Any person that tests positive for COVID-19 may return to ISHL events when all three of the following criteria are met. **Any individual who has COVID-19 symptoms or has been exposed to someone that is COVID-19 positive and is not evaluated by a medical professional will be assumed to be COVID19 positive, and must meet the same criteria listed below.** Additionally, any individual that tests positive for COVID-19 must be cleared by their physician before returning to events.

- At least one day (24 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications)
- The individual has improvement in symptoms
- At least 14 days have passed since symptoms first appeared

- **Or a player may be cleared and removed from the quarantine restriction, with a medically provided negative COVID test taken at least 4 days after the exposure event.**

***Absolutely no private health information will be shared with anyone other than the ISHL Board. All reporting will remain secure and confidential. ***

COVID SAFETY OFFICER

Every ISHL team must identify, at minimum, one (1) suitable person for the role of COVID Safety Officer (“Safety Officer”), which may include but is not limited to, a Head Coach, Assistant Coach, Team Manager, Locker Room Monitor, or a team parent who is related to the healthcare field in some way (i.e. doctor, nurse, paramedic, physical therapist, fireman, medical administrative staff, etc.).

The Safety Officer must be physically and mentally present, at a minimum, at each USAH sanctioned team event (practice, game, dry land) for the duration of the players’ attendance at said event. Additionally, the Safety Officer is responsible for learning, understanding, implementing, monitoring and enforcing the ISHL COVID-19 Policy and Guidelines.

The Safety Officer will also be responsible for conducting self-health checks on all Team Personnel and Spectators before participating in any USAH sanctioned team event. We recommend using TeamSNAP, or any similar application, to complete and track these screenings. In addition, it is recommended that every Safety Officer uses a non-contact temperature assessment device to monitor body temperature. The ISHL is permitted to prevent any individual who fails the screening criteria from participating in or attending any USAH sanctioned events.

The Safety Officer is expected to report all safety policy violations or failed screenings to the ISHL Team Manager, who should then forward the report onto the ISHL Board at ISHLhouston@gmail.com.

TEAM UNFIT TO PLAY

If at any point a team roster falls **40% below its full roster DUE TO POSITIVE COVID CASES**, the team will be declared unfit to participate in all ISHL activities, including but not limited to, league games, team practices, off ice training, team meetings and team activities. Due to the nature of this virus and its high community spread, the ISHL is anticipating an increase to the number of players and teams that may become affected by the following.

- COVID-19
- Concussions
- Fractures or other injuries

- Illnesses unrelated to COVID-19
- Vacation
- School work or conflicts
- Other conflicting activities

If a team becomes unfit to participate in league activities, the ISHL will make a determination on how to proceed, other teams may be assigned on short notice to replace affected teams. If a viable team does not accept a rescheduled game, it will result in a game forfeiture.

SPECTATORS

Effective immediately, and until further notice, there shall be 1 spectator per player in the rink for practice, in exception to one (1) Safety Officer and one (1) Locker Room Monitor. Presently, and until further notice, only immediate family members (Parents/Siblings) of rostered players and rostered team officials (Head Coach/Assistant Coach/Team Manager) will be allowed in the rink for regular season games.

Spectators must wear a face covering at all times, practice proper social distancing and station themselves accordingly within designated viewing areas. Given the fluidity of COVID-19, this Spectator allowance policy could change without notice.

SUSPENSIONS

Coaches and players identified as not wearing masks by their Safety Officer will be subject to automatic suspensions as followed. Tattletale mentality is discouraged, however there will be no appeal process for any of the below, or given, suspensions.

- Coaches – will result in a three (3) game suspension
- Players – will result in one (1) game suspension
- Spectators – will result in one (1) game suspension

Any Team Personnel or Spectator that does not respect their given suspension may receive harsher suspension or expulsion.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Where possible, and to mitigate the 2-way risk of exposure, players are encouraged to wear a plastic protective face mask as set forth in USAH Rule 304© rather than a cage.
- ISHL Teams are encouraged to partner with rinks in effort to communicate the ISHL COVID-19 Policy and Guidelines, as it may be updated from time to time.

- **ISHL Teams should support rink protocols and ensure all guidelines are being met by their respective organizations.**
- All ISHL Team Personnel and Spectators are expected to adhere to all rink policies put in place. It is encouraged that you take time to read the rink policies before arriving to a facility.
- There will be no spitting allowed within the facility. Players may spit while on the ice, however spitting in the lobby, benches, locker room, and common rink areas will not be permitted.
- It is recommended that players use full plastic face shields to limit exposure, transfer and spreading of bodily fluids (sweat, spit, etc.)