

## **Return to Play Phase #2**

On August 24<sup>th</sup> BCSA announced the transition to Phase #2 of their Return to Play plan. While maintaining the safety measures implemented in Phase #1, Phase #2 presents an option for limited contact in training and games based on a “cohort” model.

Phase #2 is still predicated by BC Health measures and recommendations. Soccer activity must always comply with the distancing measures and recommendations, along with any gathering restrictions issued by the BC health authorities. All guidance pertaining to personal hygiene, cleaning protocols, symptom screening and other risk mitigation practices still apply in Phase 2. It is also still imperative that sport organizations consult and collaborate with their municipal and facility partners before resuming and adding activities. Municipalities and facility operators will have their own policies and processes that also need to be adhered to.

**Restarting is not mandatory – each organization must assess and decide for itself whether and when it is appropriate to restart operations.**

Clubs must complete the following steps prior to offering Soccer Activity in Phase #2.

Clubs *that have* offered programming in BCSA’s Return to Play Phase #1 must:

1. Review *Via Sport’s Return to Sport updated Guidelines for B.C.*
2. Review *BC Soccer’s Return to Play Plan Phase 2 – Recommendations and Guidelines*
3. Pass a board motion supporting your organization’s decision to offer soccer activity under the Phase 2 terms.
4. Ensure the soccer activity is offered in the safest possible environment for all participants that choose to participate.

Clubs *that have not* offered programming in BCSA’s Return to Play Phase #1 must:

1. Review *Via Sport’s Return to Sport updated Guidelines for B. C.*
2. Review *BC Soccer’s Return to Play Plan Phase 2 – Recommendations and Guidelines*
3. Fully complete Canada Soccer’s “Return to Soccer Assessment Tool” which requires you to commit to offer soccer activity under the terms in *BC Soccer’s Return to Play Plan Phase 2 – Recommendations and Guidelines*. <https://returntoplay.canadasoccer.com/>
4. Pass a board motion supporting the soccer activity that your organization is choosing to offer under the terms.
5. Ensure the soccer activity is offer the safest possible environment for all participants that choose to participate.

## **Organizing Soccer Activity in Phase #2**

A “Soccer Cohort” will consist of a maximum of 50 unique participants or up to 4 teams (18 Players per team)

Coaches and Parents are not included in the cohort assuming they are able to physically distance at all times during the session. It is recommended to limit the number of coaches on field while still adhering to the “rule of two”.

It is strongly recommended that all participants and coaches wear face coverings when on field and not engaged in play.

Any players involved in a LISA soccer cohort cannot take part in another phase #2 soccer cohort (e.g. Academies offering contact training). In the short-term families and players will have to make a choice where they play, with their LISA club, or with an academy. The exception being academies solely operating Phase #1 “socially distanced soccer” and school soccer programs.

Players and families must recognize and adhere to the two week rule prior to changing cohorts. Players attending “tryouts” or sessions within one club cohort who are released or choose to play elsewhere must take a 14 day break before joining a new cohort or club.

If possible, officials may be assigned to a specific cohort.

Corner kicks should be taken as short corners in order to reduce the number of contested headers in a game. We don't want to remove heading from games, however in the short term, we believe decreasing the number of heading duels in a game is in everyone's best interests

Throw-ins are no longer to be used, instead kick-ins in the form of indirect free kicks are to be used. When your team is awarded a kick in, as with corners, please encourage your team to keep the ball on the ground from these types of restarts, again we would like to take every step to decrease heading duels in this phase of play.

If players spit or clear their nose, they must be removed from play as soon as possible for a minimum of 15% of the game time.

- If a player/participant does spit or clear their nose, the coach is required to substitute the player as quickly as possible. The player must sit on the sideline for a minimum of 15% of the total game duration. (For example, the match duration is 50 minutes per the BC Soccer Small Sided Soccer Development Manual, the substituted player would need to sit for 7.5 minutes).

Limited player contact is allowed in training as of **August 24** and modified games are allowed as of **\*September 7<sup>th</sup>\***

\*Earliest possible date\*

### **LISA Recommendations for Inter-District Play.**

LISA's recommendation is that exhibition cohort soccer may commence the weekend of **October 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>**. This is not to be mandated across the district and will be at the choice of the individual clubs. This start date will allow clubs to slowly build programs and introduce and prepare cohorts prior to match play.

Cohorts of 4 teams will be formed based on information gathered from the clubs as part of the regular team declaration process that the TD's and Registrars go through each year. This process is already underway.

Due to ferry travel Salt Spring United will not be involved in the BC Soccer phase 2 play within the LISA district.

At U13 and below LISA recommends that clubs play “in-house” or form partnerships with neighboring clubs to provide enough teams to form cohorts and that at full field, U13 and above, cohorts are formed across the district. Cohorts of 4 teams will be scheduled a minimum of 2 rounds of play, home and away, within the cohort which will span 6 weeks. The 6-week period of play will conclude on the weekend of **October 31/ Nov 1**. At that point it may be possible to take a two week break where teams return to in club training and then form new cohorts of 4 with play commencing **November 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>** and concluding on **December 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>**. If a scheduling break is not necessary teams will continue to play throughout the phase.

7vs7 small sided matches with rosters of 11 players or less is recommended to allow for multiple games to take place on one field and still meet the 50 person gathering limit put in place by the Provincial Health Authority.

All “league play” is to be exhibition without standings and where necessary small sided games may be used to ease strain on cohorts and scheduling.

It is imperative that the Clubs, in conjunction with LISA, work together to insure the best possible playing environment for those that opt in to interlocking play.

### **Risk Management**

When determining whether or not your organization is ready to resume sport activities it is important to note that at the time of publishing this document most insurance policies will not cover any claims relating to communicable diseases or pandemics and that most policies, including Directors and Officers Insurance, now include specific pandemic exclusions.

On June 10, 2020 the provincial government announced a ministerial order that protects amateur sport organizations, their employees and volunteers from damages resulting directly or indirectly, from COVID-19. This liability protection will be in place as long as sport organizations follow applicable guidance, such as viaSport’s Return to Sport protocols and public-health guidance. This order is in place for the duration of the Emergency Program Act. The risk mitigation practices below still all apply.

Role of the Board: The board of an organization is responsible for the oversight of risk. A board may delegate much of the work involved in managing risk, but cannot delegate its responsibility for oversight.

Ministerial Order: [http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/mo/mo/2020\\_m183](http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/mo/mo/2020_m183)

Participants should be asked to sign a participant agreement acknowledging their acceptance of the risks. Existing waivers, releases and/or participant agreements should be reviewed to confirm that they are broad enough to encompass COVID-19 related risks. Consider revising such documents to explicitly reference COVID-19 related risks. Further consider whether any such documents which were completed by participants before the COVID-19 pandemic should be completed again before activities resume. ([BCSA Participation WAIVER](#) May 2020)

For contact tracing purposes, if sport organizations are not the owner or operator of the sport facility, they must provide the facility operator with the first and last names and telephone number, or email address of all participants.

Community spectators (i.e. those who are outside of the participant's immediate family) are not encouraged until the next phase. If parent and guardian spectators are permitted, implement a strategy to ensure that physical distancing is maintained and minimize opportunities for interaction between athletes and the public while at the venue.

### **Disclaimer**

The RTS Guidelines is intended to be used for the purposes set in this document. While we aim to provide relevant and timely information, because information known about the COVID-19 coronavirus and recommended health and safety measures can rapidly change no guarantee can be given as to the accuracy or completeness of any information provided in the RTS Guidelines.

It is important to note that the RTS Guidelines is not a legal document and is to be used as a guide only. It is not a substitute for actual legislation or orders of the PHO. In the event of an ambiguity or conflict between the RTS Guidelines and the Public Health Act, regulations or orders thereunder, the Act, regulations and orders prevail. Each Provincial Sport Organization should comply with the requirements of the provincial and local government and health officials in terms of public gatherings and sporting events when determining when it is safe to return to activities. Nothing in this document is intended to provide legal advice. Do not rely on this document or treat it as legal advice.

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Anyone using the RTS Guidelines does so at his or her own risk. LISA shall not be responsible for any loss or damage of any kind arising directly or indirectly from the use of the RTS Guidelines including, without limitation, reliance on the completeness or accuracy of the information provided

### **References:**

ViaSport Phase #3 Return to Play Guidelines:

<https://www.viasport.ca/sites/default/files/Phase3ReturntoSportGuidelineswebV2.pdf>

BCSA RTP Phase #2:

[https://bcsoccer.net/files/MemberService/ReturnToPlay/August\\_2020\\_Timelines\\_Member\\_Club\\_Recommendations\\_Return\\_To\\_Play\\_Phase2\\_cohorts.pdf](https://bcsoccer.net/files/MemberService/ReturnToPlay/August_2020_Timelines_Member_Club_Recommendations_Return_To_Play_Phase2_cohorts.pdf)

Conduct symptom-screenings using the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool:

<https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>