



**July 21, 2020**

Re: Return to Play Update on 2020-21 Community Evaluations

**(Please note, all plans outlined in this document are subject to change due to any new directions provided by the Alberta Government or governing hockey bodies. We appreciate your understanding.)**

Dear GHC Families and Players,

As early summer camps and training programs slowly re-open, many Calgary hockey players are strapping on their skates and returning to the game we all love. We are also learning the new precautionary protocols in place at our arenas. We know you are anxious for more details on the 2020-21 minor hockey season and we want to help you get you the answers you need.

We want you to know that we will be looking out for the player's and family's best interests when coming to the rink. Our goal is that GHC is the association that follows the guidelines, regardless of individual opinions and societal preconceptions, and ensures the safety, fun and growth of our female hockey players. **Safety is our first priority, and will be a shared responsibility among all members.** Stu Bridle, Director of Operations and Chief Safety Officer, and Jeff Walker, Safety Coordinator, have been feverously building GHC's COVID-19 response to ensure that all GHC families are informed and assured. We await our directives from Hockey Calgary and will communicate with members quickly and frequently.

Members of the GHC Board, development team and Evaluations Committee have been meeting regularly to examine any changes handed down by our governing hockey bodies. Despite the uncertainty of next season, please know that the GHC development team is working diligently to prepare and assist coaches, and to ensure every players skill level will be challenged. Whether it's individual skills, decision making, compete drills or an overall increase of hockey IQ — these game-like situations can be recreated in whatever format AHC guidelines allow.

At this time, Community Evaluations are moving forward, however, we cannot confirm exact dates and format. In the next few weeks, an information package for Community Evaluations will be emailed to members and published on our website. Families are asked to review these new rules thoroughly. We have received unofficial word to prepare our Community Evaluation process as follows:

- Evaluation sessions will be skill-based, to better allow associations to adhere to physical distance requirements.
- "Cohorts" will be set after the initial skate, and will consist of players in the same age division and general skill category. Please note, these "Cohorts" are not finalized teams.
- Once a player is set in their "Cohort," she will skate with this group for the remainder of the evaluation process.
- Evaluators will continue to evaluate players within these "Cohorts." All "Cohorts" will have an equivalent number of evaluation sessions and drills.



- The size of the initial “Cohorts” will depend on registration numbers and the restrictions in place by our governing hockey bodies and health authorities.
- Teams will be formed at a later date and will follow a development and competitive structure outlined by Hockey Calgary.
- This timeline is highly dependent on the go-forward plan from Hockey Alberta and Hockey Calgary, and the safety protocols issued by the Province. We will have more details on evaluations once we hear from Hockey Calgary.

Also, please note the following changes for player identification during Community Evaluations:

- We will not be using evaluation jerseys this year, and will instead issue each GHC player a unique set of helmet stickers (two stickers per player).
- Each player will be assigned a number. This will be her number for the entire evaluation process.
- Each player is required to bring one (1) black and one (1) white practice jersey to all evaluation sessions. GHC will not be providing these.

Finally, as we work through our Evaluation and operational planning, we ask that our GHC families be mindful to the following over the next few days, weeks and months:

- This hockey season will not be what we’re used to, but our goal is to provide a safe, fun environment for our players to grow and play the game with their peers.
- Provincial and health guidelines will be our guiding principles in every aspect of what we do.
- Measures will be in place to address the added responsibilities around safety and reporting, including new protocols and volunteer roles.
- Families will be asked to remain flexible to sudden changes in this fluid environment.

We sincerely appreciate the patience and support of our members. Please enjoy your summer and stay safe.

Thank you,

Ted Oloriz

VP Operations

Girls Hockey Calgary Association (GHC)



### **More About Sport Cohorts (Hockey Alberta)**

If an athlete is participating in a camp or program not using physical distancing, that group is considered a Cohort. A Cohort is a closed, small group of no more than 50 individuals who participate in the same sport or activity and remain together for the duration of Stage 2 of the Government of Alberta's relaunch.

The following Sport Cohort guidelines are from Hockey Alberta's Return to Hockey Plan, which is current as of June 30, 2020. These guidelines meet the current health and safety requirements of the Government of Alberta and aligns with Hockey Canada's Return to Hockey Safety Guidelines in focusing on the safety and wellbeing of all participants. Updated versions of the Plan will be published and posted to the Hockey Alberta website based on changes to the Government of Alberta's Relaunch Plan.

- Cohorts include those individuals (participants, officials, coaches and trainers) who cannot maintain a 2-metre distance from others at all times.
- Sports teams can play in Sport Cohorts of up to 50 players and coaches.
- Individuals can only be part of one Sport Cohort at any time. If an individual wishes to move to a new Sport Cohort, she is to complete a 14-day non-participation period prior to joining the new Cohort.
- Instructors, Coaches and/or Team Officials can be part of one Cohort and remain with that group throughout the duration of this program, or they may maintain physical distancing from all other participants.
- Interacting with the same people and the same cohorts will be safer than constantly changing the people you interact with.
- Cohorts are only to play within the same geographical region (for example, within a county, town or quadrant of a city).
- Even while using cohorting, physical distancing must be maintained in all aspects of hockey activity except while participants are on the ice (for example, dressing rooms, benches, and in public areas).
- Sports cohort numbers do not include parents or spectators.
- Spectators are subject to physical distancing measures and any specific directions provided by facility management.

#### **Hockey Alberta Return to Hockey:**

[https://www.hockeyalberta.ca/uploads/source/Return\\_To\\_Hockey/RETURNTOHOCKEYJUNE30.pdf](https://www.hockeyalberta.ca/uploads/source/Return_To_Hockey/RETURNTOHOCKEYJUNE30.pdf)

See Section 6 – Return to Hockey Programming

#### **Government of Alberta Website:**

<https://www.alberta.ca/prevent-the-spread.aspx>

See Appendix 7 – Guidance on Cohorts

#### **Girls Hockey Calgary Association (GHC) Return to Play:**

<http://www.girlshockeycalgary.com/return-to-play>