COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDANCE FOR OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL AMENITIES (INCLUDING SKI HILLS AND TRAILS) - RED CONTROL

Last revised: March 8, 2021

This guidance document is intended to provide public health guidance and regulatory requirements for outdoor recreational amenities (including downhill ski hills and snow tubing hills) as well as municipalities, businesses and community groups who operate snowmobile, cross country ski, dogsledding, and snow shoe trails in the County of Simcoe and the District of Muskoka to help stop the spread of COVID-19. Due to the developing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and provincial regulatory response, the guidance contained within this document is focused on stage 2 requirements for operation under Ontario Regulation 263/20 as per the Province of Ontario’s Keeping Ontario Safe and Open Framework.

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) is currently identified as a Stage 2 health unit in the Red-Control zone of the Keeping Ontario Safe and Open Framework; therefore is subject to the regulations contained in Ontario Regulation 263/20. Ski and snow sport operations including trails for snowmobiling, cross country skiing, dog sledding and snowshoeing, are designated in this Regulation as “outdoor recreational amenities” and as such have a responsibility to implement the legal requirements related to this designation as well as broader requirements within the same regulation for businesses in stage 2. This document also refers to the Province of Ontario’s public health recommendations contained in “Guidance for facilities for sports and recreational fitness activities during COVID-19” as applicable.

On January 27, 2021, the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries provided operational direction on Stage 2 and 3 restrictions to ski and snow sport operations in Ontario, which is included in the directions provided in this guidance document. In addition outdoor recreational amenities must follow the instructions from the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit Medical Officer of Health.

PUBLIC HEALTH REQUIREMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL AMENITIES

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
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| Outdoors (including lineups, chairlifts, outdoor equipment rental, outdoor washrooms facilities and outdoor food and beverage service) | • Ensure physical distancing of 2 metres (6 feet) is maintained at all times unless other persons are members of a single household.  
• Any person in line at the outdoor recreational amenity, including a line for a ski lift or a surface lift, must wear a mask or face covering that is tightly fitted to cover their mouth, nose and chin during the time they are in the line (see exceptions for masking, below). |
| Outdoor vehicles | • Any person, including a person who performs work at the amenity, while driving or riding on an open air vehicle within the amenity, must wear a mask or face covering in a manner that is tightly fitted to cover their mouth, nose and chin unless all persons driving or riding on the vehicle are members of a single household (see exceptions for masking, below). |
| Outdoor classes, organized programs and activities | • Attendance is limited to the total number of members of the public at any one time that can maintain a physical distance of at least 2 metres (6 feet); however, must not exceed 25. The limit of 25 people applies to members of the public participating in classes, organized programs or organized activities, not the employees, coaches, officials, trainers, or parent or guardian (unless the parent or guardian is directly participating.)  
• During lessons, ensure physical distancing of 2 metres (6 feet) is maintained at all times unless other persons are members of a single household (this includes employees, coaches, officials and trainers) except where necessary teaching and instruction that cannot be effectively provided if physical distancing is maintained.  
• Organized programs or activities that are not a sport must be delivered through a microphone if, without a microphone, the instructor would need to raise their voice beyond the level of normal conversation. Loud talking, singing or shouting must not be encouraged. |
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outdoor Amenities</th>
<th>Instructions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outdoor Classes</strong></td>
<td>Every person participating in a fitness or exercise class must maintain a physical distance of at least 3 metres from every other person.</td>
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<td>Every person participating in any other kind of class, organized program or organized activity must maintain a physical distance of at least 2 metres (6 feet) from every other person.</td>
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<td>The total number of members of the public permitted to be in all outdoor classes, organized programs and organized activities at the facility at any one time cannot exceed 25 persons.</td>
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#### Chairlifts and Surface Lifts

- Any person using a downhill ski lift, including a surface lift, must wear a mask or face covering that is tightly fitted to cover their mouth, nose and chin unless all other persons using the ski lift are members of a single household.
- Physical distancing is **not** required for the following where masks or face coverings are in use (unless all other persons using the ski lift are members of a single household):
  - Persons using a downhill ski lift that is a surface lift
  - Persons using a ski lift chair if at least one empty seat is left between any persons who are not members of a single household
- Physical distancing is **not** required for Parasport participants and their attendants or guides.
- If a child or student cannot effectively receive teaching or instruction while maintaining physical distancing then the instructor may come within 2 metres (6 feet) to assist with safe chairlift aid and/or accompaniment during the lift.

#### Indoors (This includes work vehicles, enclosed warming stations, all workplace buildings and washrooms)

- Ensure physical distancing 2 metres (6 feet) is maintained at all times unless other persons are members of a single household.
- Employees, volunteers and members of the public are required to wear non-medical masks or face coverings when indoors (see exceptions for masking, below).
- The person responsible for a place of business or facility that is open to the public shall limit the number of members of the public in the place of business or facility so that,
  - the members of the public are able to maintain a physical distance of at least 2 metres (6 feet) from every other person in the business or facility; and
  - the total number of members of the public in the business or facility at any one time does not exceed 75% capacity, as determined by taking the total square metres of floor area accessible to the public in the business or facility, not including shelving and store fixtures, dividing that number by 5.3 and rounding the result down to the nearest whole number.

#### Indoor Food Premises

- 10 people maximum
- Ensure physical distancing of 2 metres (6 feet) is maintained at all times unless other persons are members of a single household.
- Non-medical masks or face coverings that are tightly fitted to cover their mouth, nose and chin are required at all times except when eating or drinking (see exceptions for masking, below).
- It is required that operators keep a contact log for ALL patrons dining at the premises, including a first and last name, as well as a telephone number (or e-mail address). Logging assigned server to patrons may also be helpful. This log shall be in the custody of the food premises and not accessible to the public.
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- Maintain log records for at least one month.
- Only disclose records to a medical officer of health or a public health inspector.
- Post signage to promote wearing face coverings, self-screening and maintaining physical distancing. Sample signage can be found here.
- Capacity and physical distancing requirements are available along with additional instruction and guidance on food service operation in SMDHU’s COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Food Premises.

| Gathering limits for organized public events and social gatherings (including team sports & tournaments) | The practice and playing of team sports is prohibited including tournaments. |
| For outdoor organized public events that are not related to a sporting event (e.g. media event, entertainment, etc.) the gathering limit is 25 people. Outdoor social gatherings are likewise limited to 25 people. |
| Indoor organized public events and social gatherings are limited to 5 people. |
| SMDHU recommends canceling or postponing all non-essential public events (e.g. meetings, dinners, communal services), particularly if they include people who are more vulnerable to the virus, such as the elderly or those who are immunocompromised. |

| Locker rooms, change rooms, showers and clubhouses | All closed, except to the extent they provide access to equipment storage, a washroom or a portion of the amenity that is used to provide first aid. |

EXCEPTIONS FOR MASKING
i. children younger than two years of age,
ii. person who has a medical condition that inhibits their ability to wear a mask or face covering,
iii. person who is unable to put on or remove their mask or face covering without the assistance of another person,
iv. person who needs to temporarily remove their mask or face covering as may be necessary for the purposes of health and safety,
v. person who is being accommodated in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, or
vi. person who is being reasonably accommodated in accordance with the Human Rights Code

COMMUNICATE PUBLIC HEALTH RECOMMENDATIONS TO ATTENDEES AND VOLUNTEERS BEFORE COMING TO THE OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL AMENITY

- Encourage attendees and volunteers to conduct a self-assessment for COVID-19 symptoms before attending an outdoor recreational amenity and remind them to stay home if they have COVID-19 symptoms, seek testing and self-isolate.
- Encourage attendees and volunteers to maintain a 2 metre (6 feet) distance from those they don’t live with, when possible, and to wear a mask or a face covering outdoors when physical distancing cannot be maintained. Post signage to reinforce these messages. Sample signs can be found here.
- Encourage attendees and volunteers to wash their hands frequently and/or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with minimum 60% alcohol content and to practice proper cough/sneeze etiquette. Post signage to reinforce these messages, such as the samples linked.
- Remind attendees and community volunteers that it is mandatory to wear a mask or a face covering in all indoor public spaces.
- Limit the volume of music to be no louder than the volume of a normal conversation.
- Post a Safety Plan in a conspicuous location for settings where this is required.
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LIMIT ATTENDANCE AND ENSURE PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- It is recommended that outdoor recreational amenities implement capacity control measures (i.e. parking lot monitoring, booking times, online reservations, gathering limits per day, etc.) to ensure that outdoor attendance does not overwhelm indoor facilities which could result in indoor gathering limits exceeding the regulated gathering limits.
- Physical distancing means keeping a distance of 2 metres (6 feet) from those you don’t live with.
- Plan and modify the layout of trails and outdoor areas to ensure enough space is provided for employees, volunteers and attendees to maintain physical distancing at all times.
- Ensure sufficient space during breaks and within the lunchroom(s) that allows for appropriate physical distancing of at least 2 meters (6 feet) between volunteers and staff. Consider staggering break times to prevent overcrowding or individuals from grouping together.
- Using visual cues (e.g., signs, posters, floor markings, stanchions, etc.) to guide patrons from outside to throughout the facility (including hallways, common areas) to exit. Recommendation for routing people through the facility are outlined in the Province of Ontario’s Guidance for facilities for sports and recreational fitness activities during COVID-19.
- Develop procedures that allow for uncongested entry and exit (e.g., dedicated one-way entry and exit pathway for each activity area).

SAFETY PLAN

- Pursuant to Ontario Regulation 263/20, the person responsible for a business, place, facility or establishment that is open shall prepare and make available a safety plan that outlines all public health measures and is posted in a conspicuous place where it is most likely to come to the attention of individuals working in or attending the location.
- The safety plan shall describe the implementation in the location including by screening, physical distancing, masks or face coverings, cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces and objects, and the wearing of personal protective equipment.
- For more information on preparing your safety plan, please see provincial guidance called “Develop your COVID-19 workplace safety plan”, as well as SMDHU guidance.

SCREENING, RECORD-KEEPING AND RESERVATIONS

- All staff must be actively screened prior to attending work. Please see the instructions from the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit Medical Officer of Health for direction on screening employees and volunteers.
- It is recommended that active screening occur for all persons who attend the facility including guests, staff, and contractors, and keep related records for a period of 30 days. See screening section of Guidance for facilities for sports and recreational fitness activities during COVID-19.
- It is recommended that all visitors and members are required to make a reservation.

MUSIC

- Music must not be played at a decibel level that exceeds the level at which normal conversation is possible.
CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

Disinfection recommendations for facilities for sports and recreational fitness activities are set out in the Province of Ontario’s Guidance for facilities for sports and recreational fitness activities during COVID-19 -- see the section entitled Recommendations for health and safety and specific instructions.

- Any equipment that is rented to, provided to or provided for the use of users of the facility must be cleaned and disinfected between each use.
- Activities that require the use of equipment or fixed structures that cannot be cleaned and disinfected between each use must not be practised or played within the facility.

HAND HYGIENE, PUBLIC WASHROOMS & WASTE RECEPTACLES

- Post handwashing and hand sanitizing posters in high traffic areas.
- Encourage proper cough etiquette and individuals to perform hand hygiene when entering and leaving rooms within the facility.
- Make alcohol-based hand sanitizer with minimum 60% alcohol content available at entrances and exits.
- Follow Public Health Guidance for Use of Public Washrooms for important information about requirements for safety and cleaning precautions.
- Provide sufficient numbers of garbage receptacles for attendees to dispose of used sanitizing wipes, masks, gloves, and other waste properly.

DRINKING WATER SYSTEMS

- Private drinking water supplies must be sampled ahead of opening, with samples sent to a private licensed laboratory and operators continuing to sample throughout the operating season in accordance with drinking water regulations.
- Small Drinking Water System (SDWS) operators must provide specific information to the SMDHU Medical Officer of Health in writing before reopening after a 60 day closure, or alter the construction, installation, alteration, or extension of the SDWS. To comply with these requirements, owners/operators must complete and submit the SDWS notice and designation form.
- Limit the use of water fountains to be used only to re-fill water bottles, not for individuals to drink directly from them. Sample signage can be found here.

SYMPTOMATIC PATRONS AND STAFF

Recommendations for symptomatic patrons or workers are set out in the Province of Ontario’s Guidance for facilities for sports and recreational fitness activities during COVID-19 -- see the section entitled Recommendations for symptomatic patrons or workers and specific instructions including:

1. Patrons or workers who become unwell while at the facility should be instructed to immediately self-isolate and separate themselves from others. They should be told to go home immediately (if possible, with private transportation, avoiding taxis, ride shares, and public transit) and encouraged to get tested. Information about assessment centres can be found here. If they have questions related to COVID-19, they should contact their primary care provider or Telehealth Ontario (1-866-797-0000) or visit Ontario’s COVID-19 website.

2. Workers who become unwell while at work should notify their supervisor immediately.
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
To assist outdoor recreational amenities with policy development and review, resources in addition to Ontario Regulation 263/20 are provided below to ensure your procedures incorporate necessary control measures to help prevent transmission of COVID-19.

- Guidance for facilities for sports and recreational fitness activities during COVID-19
- Face covering FAQ, signage, and Do's and Don'ts of Wearing a Face Covering
- Hand hygiene factsheets (hand washing and alcohol based hand rub)
- PHO cleaning and disinfecting factsheet
- Guide for Developing your Workplace COVID Plan
- Provincial resources for workplaces
- Training video for staff training how to wear a mask

Please contact the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit if you have any questions at 1-877-721-7520, Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

REFERENCES