



## **RETURN TO PLAY PLAN**



*September 2020*



Curling Canada and the Nova Scotia Curling Association are committed:

- To the health & well-being of the athletes playing our sport at the community level and ensuring a safe environment to the satisfaction of local authorities.
- To the health & well-being of the fans attending our sanctioned events.
- To the health & well-being of our competitive athletes, supporting their training and opportunities, including field of play safety.

All Member Curling Clubs of the Nova Scotia Curling Association will adhere to the guidelines in this document, including:

- All Nova Scotia Public Health Guidelines.  
<https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/staying-healthy/>
- Extra cleaning and hand sanitizing procedures as required to follow provincially required protocols. This includes deep cleaning in the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 on site.
- Food and beverage services in the Member Clubs will adhere to the guidelines as outlined by Restaurants Canada.  
<https://www.rans.ca/reopening-guidelines>
- Member and Guest Check in upon arrival at the Member Club as required for traceability.
- Masks are strongly encouraged and to be put on prior to entering the club.

**Each Member Club is advised that they must follow the Nova Scotia Health Guidelines and monitor the Guidelines throughout the year for changes.**

This plan was developed by a volunteer-driven Committee of 14 people across Nova Scotia representing small and large clubs, rural and urban clubs, ice makers, club managers and athletes. The main premise was 'how to we open curling clubs while keeping our members safe.' The National Sport Organization (NSO – Curling Canada) will provide a template of Acknowledgement of Risks and waivers through the Provincial Sport Organization (PSO – Nova Scotia Curling).



## **1. The Game in Phases**

There are five (5) phases for returning to curling in Nova Scotia. The phases are flexible so that curling can adapt should the epidemiology change within our Province during the curling season.

During Phase One through Phase Three there is the need to maintain the physical distance of 6 feet between all players. Personal masks within the club and the ice shed are recommended. The details for this approach are listed below and are aligned with each phase.

The Phases are identified to align with the Nova Scotia Public Health Guidelines. Depending on the status of the virus in October, the traditional beginning of a season, clubs may begin the year in Phase One, Two, Three or Four. The key is that we need to remain flexible and open to change as we move through the Curling Season.

In May 2020, Dr. Strang, Public Health Officer for Nova Scotia, indicated that all sports should consider 2020-21 as a year of skill development and not one of competition. Our main objective is to get curling clubs to open in the Fall and allow Nova Scotians the opportunity to enjoy the sport of curling throughout the winter while maintaining their physical and mental wellbeing.

Lockers rooms and washrooms available if the club can maintain a 6 foot distance protocol.

### **Phase One – Learning the Rules**

- This is an orientation period of a few days or up to two weeks to ensure all curlers get into the club to learn how new rules work.
- 6 feet of physical distancing required.
- Limited games (ends and/or timeframe).
- Focus on practice and walk through of how games will work with physical distancing.
- Education sessions for curlers and completing necessary registration forms and waivers for all members.



## **Phase Two: Game Play with Courtesy Lanes**

- This phase is recommended to allow for additional distancing space during the game.
  - Note: Space in Member clubs varies. There are clubs with 3, 4, 5, and 6 sheets. Member size also varies from 65 to 475. Many of our members are over the age of 60. Not everyone will be comfortable returning to curling if all sheets are in use.
  - Note: Reducing the number of sheets used at one time will be financially challenging for some clubs and they may choose to remain closed for the season.
  
- 6 feet of physical distancing required.
  
- One sweeper per stone thrown. Sweeper must stop at the tee line.
  
- Courtesy Lanes in effect for curling games to increase physical distancing. For instance:
  - For a Three sheet club only use sheets 1 and 3
  - For a 4-sheet club, use side boards on sheet 1 and 4 for courtesy lane. Take sheet 2 out of play and use it for courtesy lane for 3. Can also be used for sheet 1.
  - For a 5-sheet club – use side boards on 1 and 5. Take sheet 3 out of play and use it as lanes for sheets 2 and 4.
  - For a 6-sheet club – use side boards on 1 and 6. Take out sheets 2 and 5 and use as courtesy lanes for sheets 3 and 4.

## **Phase Three: Curling with Physical Distancing**

- Adherence to the six foot distancing protocol must be maintained.
  
- Same as Phase 2 but Courtesy Lanes no longer required.
  
- One sweeper per stone thrown. Sweeper must stop at the tee line.
  
- All sheets in play.



### **Phase Four: Second Sweeper**

- Each sheet of ice to adhere to protocols.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> sweeper is allowed.
- Subject to the current Nova Scotia Public Health protocols.

### **Phase Five: Normal Operations**

- Physical Distancing no longer required.
- Locker/washrooms open for use
- Curling like 2018 – back to normal activities!!



## **2. Entering the Curling Club Facility**

1. All members, guests, renters, or those trying curling for the first time must sign a Declaration of Compliance and a Waiver or Assumption of Risk.
2. A log will be maintained for each draw for trackability. Anyone who enters the building must be recorded.
3. Hand sanitizing stations to be placed strategically throughout the facility.
4. Signs will be posted:
  - a. If you have any symptoms of illness, stay home.
  - b. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
  - c. Cough or sneeze into the bend of your arm.
5. No Locker room access unless physical distancing can be maintained. Curlers will arrive dressed to play.
6. Shoe and outerwear change and storage area will be designated. 6-foot distancing change stations will be designated.
7. The number of curlers on the ice at any one time will be dictated by the space inside the lounge.
8. Draw times may be staggered, to reduce the amount of people in the club at a given time.
9. Stones color and hammer will be pre-determined before teams enter the ice shed.
10. Bar Service will be determined by following Restaurants Nova Scotia recommendations.  
<https://www.rans.ca/reopening-guidelines>
11. Spectators are allowed permitted that the facility can adhere to the current Nova Scotia Health Guidelines.



### **3. Entering the Ice shed**

1. At the start of game Hammer teams will proceed to ice first while maintaining physical distancing requirements.
2. Hammer teams will sanitize their stones then go to the far end for warmup slides.
3. Non-Hammer teams then enter ice shed and sanitize their stones and complete their warmup.
4. At the end of the game teams proceed to the change areas while maintaining their physical distancing requirements.
5. No Handshakes.
6. Stones will be placed in a straight line on the ice and curlers will touch only their 2 stones.
7. Measuring devices will not be used. Members will be encouraged to identify one person on each team to carry a tape measure from home for disputed measures.
8. At the beginning of a game, one person will be appointed to be the score keeper and manage the scoreboard. All numbers will be sanitized prior to the start of the next game.
9. Rental or loaned equipment will be sanitized after every use.

### **4. Approaches to Maintaining Physical Distance while Curling**

Member Clubs will be advised that these guidelines will result in slower games and schedule adjustments will be necessary. These approaches are applicable for Phases One, Two and Three.

1. Only throwing team shall sweep any stones.
2. Non-throwing skip shall remain on end boards until shot is completed.
3. One sweeper per team. No tagging in or sharing of sweeping.
4. One Non-sweeper or thrower may follow stone maintaining 6 feet distance. Other player to remain near center line at the throwing end hog line.





5. Sweeper can sweep stone to the tee line, with skip calling line from back line. Sweeper must not **travel** past the tee line. Sweeping must stop soon enough to ensure this.
6. Position of players not involved in the shot – non sweeper, opposition thrower, both sweepers for opposition – shall have predetermined standing locations. Each club will have to determine the exact locations based on their # of sheets and the setup in their ice shed. (see attached Curling Canada diagram)
  - a. As an example, for a 4-sheet club, they could be on the left side of sheet one and two, right side of 3 and 4 as you look at the club from the lounge.
    - i. Non-throwing team – three locations – mid ice and 10 feet on each side
    - ii. Throwing team – shooter in the hack, sweeper beyond the Tee line, non-sweeper outside the hog line – opposite side from sweeper.
  - b. The selected side should not change from end to end. (i.e. always the left side as you see it from the lounge)
  - c. Only variation would be if sweepers from your sheet or neighboring sheet might get too close based on shot called, they can switch sides if both sheets can do so. This will take some attention to what is happening, communication within your game and between sheets.
  - d. Non-Throwing Skip – behind the hack/on the back boards. Near centre line.
7. To transition (see attached Curling Canada diagram) – team that just threw will move to waiting positions on the centre line, next team will move to positions (hack, sweeper, non-sweeper) via sideline. Always maintain 6 feet of distance.
8. Similar transition for two skips – one on sideline, one on centre line. Key is to maintain 6 feet of distance between them and with any other players on neighboring sheets.
9. Skip and third must maintain 6 feet of distance. Only the person holding the broom for the next shot (third) can be in the house. Skip should be outside the rings, or beyond the hog line for peels or brooms placed in the Free Guard Zone.
10. Non-throwing skip and third – person who just threw will wait outside hog line on the designated side. Person who just held the broom will take up non-throwing skips position. After non hammer team’s final skips stone, skip will wait in previous thrower’s position as noted above.
11. Any in-game conferences must be held at six-foot distance. All four players will maintain a 6-foot distance from each other. E.g. If they are all in the house, they can position themselves in the 12 foot using positions on the clock - 12, 3, 6 and 9.





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12. Same positions would permit timeouts with coach positioned at the back board. If the skip wants to move around to suggest shots or broom placement remaining players must return to throwing end to maintain the distance.
13. Between ends – the team throwing first shall clean up stones. Team without hammer take up their mid ice positions.
  - a. Sweeper cleans up stones in the rings, non-sweeper cleans up stones in Free Guard Zone. Push stones to appropriate corner and the thrower places stones in corners.
  - b. Members will be encouraged to Be Patient and Safe. There is no rush to get stones in place. To move the stones, they will use their broom and their feet. Players will not touch the handles the stones.
14. Between end chats will be limited to two people at a time to reduce space required.

## **Communication and Education**

The Six Foot Curling Committee has recommended that several weeks before the clubs open that members receive the two Waivers to be signed and given to the Club prior to stepping on the ice.

Members will also receive the Return to Play Plan so that they are aware of their position on the ice at all times as well as the new sweeping guidelines.

During the first couple of weeks, volunteers who greet members at the door will be familiar with the new protocols and will answer any questions members may have.

Posters will be mounted inside the ice shed to remind players where they need to stand and to maintain six feet distance at all times.

There will be signage inside the club house on hygiene, safety and six foot protocols.

# Appendix



## Ready to Deliver



## Stone is Delivered

