

**STURGEON**  
**HOCKEY CLUB**



# **STURGEON HOCKEY CLUB**

## **RETURN TO PLAY PLAN**

**September 10, 2020**



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## HOCKEY ALBERTA RETURN TO PLAY PROGRAM

Hockey Alberta has worked with Hockey Canada and other provincial branches, Government of Alberta, provincial sport organizations, members, staff, and volunteers to develop Alberta's Return to Hockey Plan. The purpose of the Return to Hockey Plan is to provide options for a safe return to hockey in Alberta, to outline required safety protocols and requirements, and to assist our minor hockey associations with tasks they need to undertake for hockey to re-start.

Full details of the Hockey Alberta Return to play can be found on Hockey Alberta's website or the link provided at the end of this document. Below is the updated version of Hockey Alberta's Return to Hockey Components. The Off-Season Skill Development component has been removed. All hockey activity should now operate under the rules and guidelines in the Development Season.

<b>RETURN TO HOCKEY COMPONENTS</b>				
COMPONENT	DATES	ACTIVITY	PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	TRAVEL
<b>DEVELOPMENT SEASON</b>	Current-TBD	<p>Organizations can take player registrations and start to sort players into similar skill level groupings. Types of programming permitted are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills Sessions</li> <li>• On-Ice Practices</li> <li>• Off-Ice Training</li> <li>• Intra-Squad Game Play</li> <li>• Exhibition Series (Jr, AAA, AA)</li> </ul> <p>Programs may be delivered using Physical Distancing or Cohorting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Programs can operate 'tryout' sessions for each specific level of hockey</li> <li>2. Use physical distancing to identify a group of players to bring into a Cohort.</li> <li>3. A Cohort is a maximum of 50 people.</li> </ol> <p><b>Tournaments are not permitted.</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participants from the established registration area:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tiered Hockey - MHA Boundary</li> <li>• Minor Female - Closest Female Program</li> <li>• HCAS - No Restrictions</li> <li>• AA Hockey - Recruitment Area</li> <li>• AAA Hockey - Draw Zone</li> <li>• Junior/ Senior - No Restrictions</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Registration of at least 1 Team Official per team (2 recommended) is required to comply with Hockey Alberta Regulations.</li> <li>3. Where there are defined/ structured sub-groups that comprise a Cohort, Hockey Alberta requires that each sub-group must have a designated coach/ leader that is part of the 50-person Cohort.</li> </ol> <p>Near the end of the Development Season, formal Team Rosters will have to be registered in HCR.</p>	<p>Players should access programs in their immediate area where possible.</p> <p>For the 'Exhibition Series', Hockey Alberta will work with Leagues to 'pair' programs based on geography.</p>
<b>MODIFIED COMPETITION SEASON</b>	TBD (based on GOA guidelines)	<p>If Government of Alberta (GOA) Cohort guidelines permit, Teams will be grouped into regional 'Pods' of 3-5 teams for competition using a Mini-League concept.</p> <p>This component provides the opportunity to finalize tryouts/ evaluations, register rosters, engage in game play and prepare for an eventual return to the Regular Season, when permitted.</p> <p>Types of programming permitted would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills Sessions</li> <li>• On-Ice Practices</li> <li>• League Series Play</li> <li>• Off-Ice Training</li> <li>• Mini-League Game Play within Pods</li> </ul> <p>Tournaments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pods of Teams or Mini-Leagues can have games in the same location over a weekend.</li> <li>• Restrictions on gathering numbers and sizes of Cohorts must be adhered to.</li> <li>• Teams from other Pods/ Mini-Leagues cannot play against each other</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participants from the established registration area.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tiered Hockey - MHA Boundary</li> <li>• Minor Female - Closest Female Program</li> <li>• HCAS - No Restrictions</li> <li>• AA Hockey - Recruitment Area</li> <li>• AAA Hockey - Draw Zone</li> <li>• Junior/ Senior - No Restrictions</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Using the Development Season criteria, the majority of participants should be registered and the evaluation/ sorting process almost complete.</li> </ol>	<p>Hockey Alberta will work with Leagues to identify Pods/ Mini-Leagues based on geography.</p>
<b>REGULAR SEASON</b>	TBD	<p>When Government of Alberta guidelines permit, regularly scheduled League Play and travel will commence. Types of programming permitted would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills Sessions</li> <li>• On-Ice Practices</li> <li>• Off-Ice Training</li> <li>• League Play</li> </ul> <p><b>Tournaments: TBD based on Government of Alberta gathering number restrictions.</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participants from the established registration area.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tiered Hockey - MHA boundary</li> <li>• Minor Female - Closest Female Program</li> <li>• HCAS - No Restrictions</li> <li>• AA Hockey - Recruitment Area</li> <li>• AAA Hockey - Draw Zone</li> <li>• Junior/ Senior - No Restrictions</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Using the criteria from the Development Season and the Modified Competition Season, participants should be registered on rosters in HCR and teams are prepared for competition.</li> </ol>	<p>Scheduling play within regions/ conferences will be considered.</p>

## HOCKEY ALBERTA RETURN TO PLAY PROGRAM SUMMARY

Programs can be operated in two ways:

i. With Physical Distancing

- Aligning with current physical distancing measures, all participants remain a minimum of two metres apart during participation.

ii. With Cohorts

- Each cohort can be comprised of multiple teams, to a maximum of 50 people. Game play between teams must be limited to teams within the same cohort. Teams in different cohorts cannot play each other.

Finalized details pertaining to the regular season component of the Return to Hockey Plan will be circulated once start dates are able to be identified based upon updates to the Government of Alberta's Relaunch Plan.

Hockey Alberta General Guidelines are outlined in their Return to Play plan revised on September 3, 2020.

Hockey Alberta regulations for Return to Play have instructed associations to play within their boundaries. This means that SHC will operate as in independent internal league. The AA program will operate within its recruitment zone.

All members are to operate within only one (1) sports cohort. This includes coaches.

Hockey Canada has a new Coaching Module that will be required for all coaches and is free for all to take. It is focused on Return to Play during COVID-19.

For individuals within a cohort, masks are not required in the dressing room, on the player's bench or in the penalty box area, or on the ice. These areas are considered within the "field of play" for the sport. Individuals who are not part of a cohort must maintain two-metre physical distancing.

All members are to follow local arena regulations. The Morinville Leisure Centre (MLC) Facility Guidelines are included at the end of this document. Legal Arena Guidelines will be available to members before the start of the season.

Coaches will be responsible for being cohort leaders. Arenas do not allow parents into the dressing rooms.

## HOCKEY ALBERTA RETURN TO PLAY PROGRAM SUMMARY

Hockey Edmonton has put together a Return to Play proposal with the help of the city associations. At this point, SHC and the other interlock association are not included in their plan. We will continue to work with Hockey Edmonton and communicate any updates to their plan with our SHC members once it is available.

Other interlock associations have also been working on their individual plans to return, as SHC has. The plans are very similar in nature as we are all following the Hockey Alberta model.

At this point in time we will move forward with the SHC Return to Play modified format, which is playing in a Development Season within our association, until such a time that an arrangement is made with Hockey Edmonton.

## SHC RETURN TO PLAY PROGRAM DETAILS

SHC will be working with AHS, Hockey Alberta, EFHL, and our neighbouring communities to put together a safe environment for our kids to return to playing hockey. The health and safety of the players is our primary concern, and our focus is to ensure all players and their families have a positive experience in the 2020-2021 Season.

Our Association's goal is for the pandemic to reach a point where it is safe to resume league play and be a part of EFHL for the upcoming season. If this does not happen in time for the season start, we are exploring the option of cohorts within our association. These cohorts will be managed as per the guidelines presented in this document, which follow the guidelines put forth by AHS and Hockey Alberta. At this time, we do not know exactly what this will look like but we will continue to work diligently and provide the latest information to our members.

As we are currently in a constantly changing environment and as new rules and regulations are updated by our governing authorities, we will continue to evolve our plan as we enter different stages as outlined by Alberta Health Services and Hockey Alberta. This plan is subject to change based on orders from the Chief Medical Officer, the Province of Alberta, the City of Edmonton, Hockey Alberta and Hockey Edmonton.

The SHC Executive and Hockey Ops Board of Directors feel that getting our kids back on the ice will help to add some level of normalcy into their daily routine. We appreciate your support and patience while we work to ensure the best plan is put forward for all players involved.

### RETURN TO PLAY OBJECTIVES

We understand that things will look different in the way we operate SHC this season and have developed our plan with several objectives in mind:

#### Safety

We want to create a safe and healthy environment for the players, coaches, volunteers, and spectators.

#### Fun

Hockey is a fun game, and no matter how it looks we want the players to have a fun season.

#### Development

We are working with MCN Hockey to plan a development program for the players and coaches. Development will be scheduled during team practice time slots.

#### Games

We know the kids love to play games, so this season, we will continue to promote games and competition within the association as much as possible.

#### Flexibility to Transition into the Next Phase

Our plan will allow us to adapt to the changing environment so we are ready to join to the EFHL again once Hockey Alberta and Alberta Health Services have permitted a transition to the Modified Competition or Regular Season Components.

## SHC RETURN TO PLAY PROGRAM DETAILS

### **HOCKEY ALBERTA AND AHS REQUIREMENTS**

There are currently two models that are available for us to follow. Physical distancing and cohorts. As we can all imagine how difficult it would be to play hockey and physical distance, we will be using the cohort model.

#### **Cohorts**

A cohort group is a group of 50 people or less who participate in an activity or sport together where physical distancing cannot be achieved. Our cohorts will be made up of 30-42 players as well as coaches. Due to this low number, teams may be smaller than typical situations. The cohorts will remain in place until further notice from Hockey Alberta and AHS indicating we are able to move into the next phase.

There will be no competition or interaction between multiple cohorts throughout the season. If a player needs to join a different cohort, they will be required to wait the mandatory 14 day period before joining another cohort.

Also, all members need to be cautious when participating in private events or activities outside of team cohorts. Players who do not follow physical distancing requirements are required to wait 14 days before rejoining their sport cohort as per AHS guidelines.

#### **Travel**

There will be no travel during the Development Season Component. All practices and games will be held in Morinville or Legal, unless new information arises and the plan adapts to join with the EFHL.

No travel permits or tournament sanctions will be approved during this development phase.

#### **Tournaments**

SHC will follow all guidelines from Hockey Alberta. Currently, this means that tournaments will not be allowed until at least January 2021.

#### **Facilities**

Both the Morinville Leisure Centre (MLC) and Legal Arena will be putting out guidelines for arena use for both participants and spectators. Each member is required to follow these regulations. Each facility will have its own guidelines to ensure the safety of everyone who enters. MLC Facility Guidelines are provided at the end of this document.

#### **Team Selections**

All Mustang teams will be selected through a draft process on Saturday, September 12, 2020. Attendees at the draft will be the head coaches, level director, and a minimum of three impartial SHC board members. Sting AA tryouts will run from September 12 - September 20, 2020. Any SHC players who are cut from AA tryouts will be required to wait 14 days before joining a Mustang cohort team.

## SHC RETURN TO PLAY PROGRAM DETAILS

### Health Check and Tracking

All players and coaches will be required to do a daily health check each time they interact within their cohort as well as prior to each practice or game. Each team will be required to appoint a designated parent as a COVID Liaison who will be responsible for ensuring the Team Snap Health Check is complete for all players and coaches prior to each event. The liaison will also need to ensure that an accurate attendance is recorded on Team Snap for all events. This functionality is built into the app and will make Health Checks and scheduling easier for teams. The use of Team Snap for health checks is preferred; however, a printable form is available at the end of this document and on the SHC website. Team Snap has developed a system where this information can be gathered online and SHC will provide each team with the information they need to access this app. SHC has appointed a Director to act as the Association's COVID-19 resource. All teams must add Robert Potter u18director@sturgeonhockeyclub.com or to their Team Snap as a coach. Further details are available in the SHC COVID-19 Information at the end of this document.

Health Checks must be submitted 8 hours in advance to ensure participants are clear of any symptoms of COVID-19 prior to stepping onto the ice. If a player or coach answers "Yes" to any of the Health Check questions (see form link at the end of this document), that individual is not permitted to participate in any activities and must follow government guidelines for self-isolation. Individuals are under NO obligation to inform SHC, coaches, other players or parents for the reason of missing a practice or game if they are pursuing COVID-19 testing or the results of a test. In the case of a positive case, AHS will investigate close contacts and determine who needs to be notified. Even though there is no obligation to inform SHC of a positive case, in the interest of safety of all players and coaches, we ask that all positive COVID-19 tests be reported immediately to Robert Potter at 587-338-9123 or u18director@sturgeonhockeyclub.com. This is voluntary and the name of the participant will remain strictly confidential. We request this information so we can inform other participants that a positive COVID-19 case has been reported in order to mitigate the spread. SHC will contact AHS and follow any instructions received.

### PPE and Equipment

Masks are recommended but not mandatory at this point in time in both Morinville or Legal facilities. For individuals within a cohort, masks are not required in the dressing room, on the player's bench or in the penalty box area, or on the ice. These areas are considered within the "field of play" for the sport. Any on-ice trainers who are not part of a cohort must maintain two-metre physical distancing, and wear masks within the dressing room and on the ice. Individuals may only remove their mask immediately prior to placing their helmet on and leaving the dressing room to go to the ice.

Players are not to share any equipment throughout the Development Season. Each player/coach will be required to bring their own water bottle. Please ensure it is clearly marked with their first and last name. Each player will be assigned their own jersey and are required to only wear their own during the season. Player equipment and jersey is expected to be cleaned regularly throughout the season. All coaches will be required to sanitize all equipment that is used on the ice after each game or practice. This includes pucks.

All players will be required to arrive at the arena fully dressed. They will be allowed into the dressing room 15 minutes prior to their ice time and will have 15 minutes to exit the facility following their ice time. If a younger player is unable to tie their own skates, please come to the arena in skate guards (wheeled skate guards are NOT permitted in the MLC) or make arrangements with your coach. Please do not drop off your child and expect the coach to tie their skates. As an extra safety precaution, please ensure your child eats and uses the washroom prior to going to the arena.



## SHC RETURN TO PLAY PROGRAM DETAILS

### Responsibilities of Coaches/Cohort Leaders

Communicate with your team at least 24 hours before each practice and provide them the practice drills so they can review and be aware of the plan.

Communicate with your team to ensure everyone is healthy. Also remind the players not to touch their face during the activity.

Ensure there are proper hand sanitizing stations in your area, either provided by the arena or by the coach.

Arrive at 15 minutes prior to your scheduled ice time to lead your team into the facility.

Ensure each player takes all of their possessions out of the dressing room and it is empty after the practice or game.

Ensure their team is respectful and follows the regulations of each facility the team plays in. Coaches/cohort leaders are required to provide their team with all updates communicated by SHC.

Sanitize all equipment used during on-ice activities, date/initial the Equipment Sanitation Checklist provided at the end of this document and submit to SHC at the end of each month. Pucks must be washed in soap and water, all other items are to be cleaned with sanitizing wipes.

There will not be any additional ice available for team purchase during the cohort season. This includes teams purchasing ice from a facility outside of SHC facilities (MLC or Legal Arena). As these are not SHC sanctioned events and therefore not covered by our insurance, participants would be in violation of the cohort rules and any players and coaches will be required to wait the mandatory 14 days before rejoining the SHC cohort group.

### General Stay Safe Measures

Avoid touching common surfaces when in public.

Practice good Hygiene:

- Cough into your sleeve
- Sneeze into a tissue
- Avoid touching your face
- Wash hands or use sanitizer frequently
- Sanitize your phones and other equipment you use often

### Player Protocol

Wash your hands before coming to the arena. Use hand sanitizer at the beginning of each event, during water breaks, and prior to leaving the facility.

Maintain 2m distance (about the length of a hockey stick) between other players and coaches until you are on the ice, and again when off the ice.

No sharing of equipment or water bottles. No Spitting. Avoid touching your face. Wash your equipment regularly.

## SHC RETURN TO PLAY PROGRAM DETAILS

### **Spectator Protocol**

Staggered entry approach to the facility.

No yelling, cheering, or spitting.

Guidelines pertaining to each facility will be provided prior to the start of the season.

For additional information, please see the Alberta Health website link at the end of this document.

### **Divisions**

Each division will be its own cohort.

If a division has more than 44 players, it will be split into two cohorts (ex. U11 is anticipating 60 players, two cohorts of 30 players each, three teams in each cohort made up of 10 players each).

There will be no referees in house league. All games will be officiated by the coaches/cohort leaders.

In each cohort, teams will be made as even as possible for competitive games during the Development Season to ensure that all players have an equal opportunity to learn and grow.

Coaches/cohort leaders will be determined for each division prior to selecting teams. There will be no evaluations in the Development Phase. Teams will be drafted this season in consultation with the chosen coaches, level directors and a representative from the Executive. After selection, teams will play within their age level in a cohort group against each other. However, if government restrictions are lifted and league play does resume, the development phase of the season will be suspended and evaluations will be performed to properly form teams for league play. Our plan has been developed to allow a quick and efficient transition into league play when required.

Teams may be adjusted throughout the development phase to ensure a competitive balance is maintained.

Practice structure will remain the same at every age level and additional guidance will be provided to each team on player development to ensure parity across the blended teams. SHC is currently working with MCN Hockey to assist our coaches with skill development.

### U7 (formerly Initiation)

- The U7 model is based on 60-72 players.
- U7 will operate similar to past seasons prior to COVID-19.
- U7 will be split into three cohorts.
- Each cohort will be split into two equal teams of 10-12 players each.
- Half-ice format.
- Both teams in each cohort will be on the ice together each week.
- Focus on "FUN" and development.

## SHC RETURN TO PLAY PROGRAM DETAILS

### U9 (formerly Novice)

- The U9 model is based on 80 players.
- U9 will operate similar to past seasons prior to COVID-19.
- U9 will be split into two cohorts. Each cohort will be split into four equal teams of 20 players each.
- Half-ice format
- Focus on "FUN" and development.
- Game rosters will be at the discretion of the coaches who will ice a team on half of the ice during games to play against each other.
- Mixing up the team will be recommended to give players some variety for both teammates and opposition.

### U11 (formerly Atom)

- The U11 model is based on 60 players.
- U11 will be split into two cohorts.
- Each cohort will be split into three equal teams of 10 players each.

### U13 (formerly Peewee)

- The U13 model is based on 42 players
- U13 will be its own cohort. All U13 players will be part of the same cohort
- The cohort will be split into three equal teams of 14 players each

### U15 (formerly Bantam)

- The U15 model is based on 42 players.
- U15 will be its own cohort. All U15 players will be part of the same cohort.
- The cohort will be split into three equal teams of 14 players each.
- Due to the absence of referees, the U15 cohort will be non-contact.

### U18 (formerly Midget)

- Due to low numbers at the U18 level, the SHC Executive unfortunately had to make the decision to release all U18 Mustang players to neighbouring associations to ensure they would have a place to play this season.

### Sturgeon Sting AA Program

- The AA program will designate each level as its own cohort in order to accommodate try-outs.
- Once teams have been selected (19 players) and players that have been cut have returned to their home associations or SHC house league, each AA team will continue to operate as its own individual cohort.
- All AA cuts will be required to wait the mandatory 14 days before they will be allowed to join a house league cohort.
- Each AA team will build their own development program specific to them.
- There will be no games for the AA program during the Development Season Component.
- Once the Mid Season is announced, the teams will join their respective leagues (NAHL or EFHL) and be a part of that league moving forward.
- As the AA teams will be finalized in the Development Season, players will not be allowed to try out for an AA team during the Modified Competition Component or prior to the start of the Regular Season.

## SHC RETURN TO PLAY PROGRAM FORMAT

### Season Dates

The SHC Return to Play Development Season will run from September 21 until December 2020. We are anticipating a 13 week season.

### Development

We understand the restrictions that everyone is facing this year and we are doing everything we can to make the season enjoyable for all SHC players. The SHC Executive feels this season will be an opportunity to focus on the development of the players. We are putting a development plan together for all SHC players from U9 to U15 with MCN Hockey. MCN will work with our association to put together plans for each level to further develop the players and coaches. Each team will get multiple sessions with MCN throughout the season during their scheduled practice ice slot. Further details will be provided as we move forward. In regards to goalie development this season, SHC will reimburse 25% to a maximum of \$250 to any goalie who attends a camp or training session from August 1, 2020 - February 28, 2021. Parents will need to fill out an SHC Expense Claim Form, including a receipt of purchase, and submit to our Treasurer before March 1, 2021. The SHC Expense Claim Form is available on our website.

### Fundraising

There will not be any team fundraising or cash calls during the Development Season as there are no tournaments or events where team funds will be required. With the uncertainty surrounding tournaments and casino fundraising opportunities this season, we need to find other ways for our Association to fund programs such as player development going forward. SHC is currently in the process of organizing an Association wide raffle this year. Additional information on the raffle will be provided to our teams once details have been finalized. We are also pursuing sponsors for equipment and would be grateful for any individuals or businesses who wish to support our Association. All fundraising or sponsorship opportunities must be arranged with the Director of Ways and Means with the intent to benefit the Association as a whole, not individual teams.

### Practices/Games

Each team (except U7) will get one (1) practice per week for a total of 13 practices, and will play weekend games as per the season details below. U7 will have 2 practices per week, Saturday and Sunday, as per normal seasons. Additional practice ice for teams will not be considered during the Development Season at this point.

All games to be held within a 1 hour time slot.

All players and coaches will be required to arrive at the arena 15 minutes prior to the practice or game, fully dressed. Coaches are required to escort players to the dressing room as a team, so it is important that all players are ready to enter the arena together 15 minutes prior to their ice time. Players are allowed to bring a bag in the dressing room to carry skates, helmets and gloves. Players are not allowed to change in the dressing rooms. Following the practice or game, players will be allowed only 15 minutes to vacate the dressing room and exit out the arena doors. Players are not to get fully undressed following the event. It is recommended that helmets, gloves and skates only be removed to ensure efficient exiting of the facility.

## SHC RETURN TO PLAY PROGRAM FORMAT

### U7

No games will be scheduled or played at U7 unless it is an inter-squad scrimmage between the two teams in that ice slot and are to be managed by the coaches of the respective teams.

### U9

These two cohorts will take part in a 10 game season. Games will have two 25 minute periods in a 4 on 4 format with no goalies (shooter tutor only). Scores will not be recorded.

### U11

These two cohorts will take part in a 10 game season. Due to only having enough players for three teams, U11 will play either one or two games in a weekend, or will have a weekend off. Games will have three 17 minute periods in 4 on 4 format with goalies. Goalies will switch ends each period. Scores and Win-Loss-Tie records will be recorded on the SHC website under each division.

### U13

This cohort will take part in a 12 game season. Due to the three team format, each team will play either one or two games in a weekend, or will have a weekend off. Games will have three 17 minute periods in a 5 on 5 format with goalies. Goalies will switch ends each period. Scores and Win-Loss-Tie records will be recorded on the SHC website under each division.

### U15

This cohort will take part in a 12 game season. Due to the three team format, each team will play either one or two games in a weekend, or will have a weekend off. Games will have three 17 minute periods (this may start as two 25 minute periods if only 1 goalie is available at the beginning of the season) in a 5 on 5 format with goalies. Goalies will switch ends each period or if only 1 goalie is available, the teams will switch ends so each team shoots on a shooter tutor for half the game. Scores and Win-Loss-Tie records will be recorded on the SHC website under each division.

The format for number of players may be adjusted between 3 on 3 / 4 on 4 / 5 on 5 depending on the number of players on each team prior to the game.

Following the games there will be no handshake line. Also due to the rules at both MLC and the Legal Arena of no cheering, there will not be a celebration on-ice after the game. However, sportsmanship is still highly encouraged throughout the game.

There are no referees for any games. All games will be "officialled" by a coach from each team.

### **Penalties**

All minor penalties will result in a penalty shot and chase format. Shooter gets the puck at centre ice. All other players are to line up behind the opposite blue line. Once the shooter enters the offensive zone with the puck, all other players may chase the play. If the shooter scores, a faceoff will be held at centre ice. If the goalie saves and freezes the puck, a face off will be held in that zone. If there is a save and a live puck, play continues. Due to the absence of referees, there will be no body checking allowed at the U15 level. Any body contact infractions will be deemed a minor penalty unless it is with intent to injure, or from behind in a dangerous situation. Any major infractions will result in game misconduct, and

## SHC RETURN TO PLAY PROGRAM FORMAT

reported to the Game and Conduct Director for possible further discipline. Penalties to include any intent to injure another player, contacting the head in a vicious manner, and checking from behind in a dangerous situation. All major penalties must be agreed upon by both officials (coaches) before a player is ejected from a game. Any disagreement on considering a major infraction between the officials will allow the player to remain in the game; however, the infraction can be brought to Game and Conduct for further review. SHC Game and Conduct Director will reference Hockey Alberta discipline guidelines for any suspensions that may need to be handed out throughout the season.

Upon completion of the first portion of the Development Season, we will take a 14 day break prior to resuming the season with a similar format from January to March. The 14 day break will be a natural isolation period from the cohorts so that we can make any required modifications to the groups.

### **Player Affiliations**

There will be no player affiliations during the Development Season. However, due to the possibilities of a team missing several players, and unable to ice a full team, all teams (U11 - U15) within the cohort will be allowed to use players from another team as replacements. As there are 3 teams in each cohort, the team not playing can provide replacements. In the spirit of sportsmanship, it is encouraged that the coaches use replacements of similar skill sets. For U11, replacements can be used to a maximum of 8 skaters and a goalie. For U13 and U15, replacements can be used to a maximum of 10 skaters and a goalie.

### **Transition to the Regular Season Component**

The Modified Competition and Regular Season Components will be dependant on decisions made by Hockey Alberta and Alberta Health Services.

Once a date has been established, we will be working closely with Hockey Edmonton and NAHL on moving forward. We will end the cohort season to transition to the Modified Competition Component and prepare for the Regular Season.

Please keep in mind that even in the Modified Competition and Regular Season Components, there will still be many changes to how minor hockey will look and specific guidelines we will need to follow.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Q. When will the season start?**

- A. Start dates for the 2020-2021 Season will be determined through the advice of Alberta Health Services (AHS), Hockey Alberta, and Hockey Edmonton. SHC has developed a cohort season that will run from September to December. If the Regular Season has not started by January 2021, SHC will continue to operate the cohort season. Hockey Edmonton is working on a schedule with multiple start date options such as Oct 1, Nov 1, Dec 1, and Jan 1. Once the EFHL is permitted to start the Regular Season, we will immediately end the cohort season, transition into the Modified Competition Season, and eventually move on to EFHL. Any new details will be provided to all members as new information is known.

### **Q. How will players be evaluated?**

- A. There will not be evaluations this season unless we move into the Modified Competition Component. At that time we will end the cohorts and begin the season similar as a normal season start. Please refer to Division information in this document regarding how cohorts will be formed.

### **Q. How will cohort teams be formed?**

- A. After consultation with other associations in the region, SHC has decided to form blended teams at each of the U7-U15 levels for the development phase of the season. These blended teams will play each other in ice slots previously allocated for game play. SHC is not large enough to tier teams and have healthy competition while playing within 50 person cohort groups. Larger associations in the region are also blending teams for internal development at this point in the season.

### **Q. If the season does not start on Oct 1, are there other alternatives for my child to play hockey in SHC?**

- A. The SHC Executive has put together a development phase involving cohorts at each level. Registration for the 2020-2021 season will close on August 22, 2020 in order to allow adequate time for our committee members to finalize our cohorts prior to the start of our development phase. SHC will NOT be accepting mid-season registrations if league play resumes.

### **Q. If the season does not start on Oct 1, will my registration fees be pro-rated?**

- A. Registrations will not be pro-rated for the 2020-21 season. We are working to ensure your child will receive similar ice times as a regular season. An assessment has been done on ice slot length for the modified format and it has been determined at each level that the reduction in ice does not exceed the value of the 20% discount that was offered on registration already this season. Therefore, SHC will not be further reducing or refunding any portion of registration fees. If league play resumes at any point this season, SHC will cover the cost of the extra funds required for game slots.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Q. If a player no longer wants to participate, can I get a refund on my registration?**

A. Refunds will be offered prior to the start of the development phase and in accordance with Sturgeon Hockey Club Bylaws; however, if you choose to withdraw your registration for the 2020-21 season you will need to do so by **August 22, 2020** so that we can finalize our numbers and sign our ice contracts with the Morinville Leisure Centre and Legal Arena. Once signed, our ice contracts will be set for the season.

### **Q. Will we be part of Hockey Edmonton (EFHL) this season?**

A. This will be dependant on the guidelines provided by AHS and Hockey Alberta. If minor hockey is cleared to play, we will be part of the league. If there is a delay to the season, we will host a cohort season until such a time as EFHL resumes normal activity.

### **Q. What happens if someone in my cohort is sick or tests positive for COVID 19?**

A. Hockey Canada has established a protocol for addressing illness. Anyone present who is feeling unwell will be required to leave the facility immediately upon detection/reporting. Each player will also be required to submit a questionnaire from AHS. For more information, visit the Hockey Canada return to hockey document.

### **Q. Can I leave my cohort and join a new one?**

A. Movement among cohorts requires a 14-day isolation period before joining a new cohort.

### **Q. Can I belong to more than one sports cohort?**

A. Players, coaches, and officials must belong to only one sport cohort. A sport cohort is defined as a small group of the same people who can interact regularly without staying 2 metres apart. In choosing to coach/play within your hockey cohort, you are not able to join any other sport/performance cohorts while in phase two of Alberta's relaunch plan.

### **Q. Can I participate in a pre-season camp and join a cohort before the 2-week period lapses?**

A. If you participated in a camp that maintained physical distancing, you do not need to wait 2 weeks before joining a cohort. If you participated in a cohort-camp whereby physical distancing was not maintained, you must wait two weeks before joining a cohort with SHC.

### **Q. Will my cohort operate as a team?**

A. Cohorts are intended to act as a temporary grouping until AHS restrictions are loosened; at which time, we hope to form traditional teams.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Q. What are the rules around spectating?**

- A. All spectators will need to follow all guidelines set out by the Morinville Leisure Centre (MLC) and the Legal Arena. We will ensure all cohorts are provided the information to pass on to their families prior to the season start date.

### **Q. Do I have to wear a mask?**

- A. As per Alberta Health regulations, masks should not be worn during intense physical activity. Spectators are encouraged to wear masks and are discouraged from cheering and yelling.

### **Q. Can I go into the dressing room with my child?**

- A. Unless you are a designated coach, you will not be permitted to enter the dressing room. During this phase, players will be required to dress at home. Players unable to tie their own laces will need to show up in skate guards or have a coach assist. Specific guidelines outlined by the facility you are attending will be provided prior to the start of the season.

### **Q. Can I make a request to be in the same cohort as my friend?**

- A. Teams will be selected by a group consisting of members of the SHC Executive, Level Director and the Head Coaches. We are not taking friend requests at this time.

### **Q. Can I register mid-season after the cohort phase is over?**

- A. We will not be accepting registrations after the start of the cohort season, unless due to special circumstances which are to be presented and decided by the SHC Executive.

### **Q. Can I participate in a on-ice group skate with players outside of my team cohort?**

- A. We are asking SHC members to be cautious of participating in groups outside of their team cohorts where physical distancing measures are not being followed. Any players participating in an activity or event outside of their sport cohort without physical distancing will be required to wait the mandatory 14 days before they will be allowed to rejoin an SHC team cohort.

### **Q. Can my team cohort do a fundraiser?**

- A. There will not be any team fundraising or cash calls during the Development Season as there are no tournaments or purchasing of extra ice permitted.

## IMPORTANT LINKS

Please see the below links for additional information on Return to Play. The SHC Executive will continue to ensure that our members receive all pertinent information produced by AHS, Hockey Alberta, and EFHL. We thank our members for their patience during this unprecedented time as we work toward providing a safe environment for our players to return to the ice.

[Hockey Alberta Return to Play Plan](#)

[Alberta Health Services COVID-19 Information](#)

[Hockey Canada Return to Play Information](#)

[Government of AB Guidance for Sport](#)

[Canadian Government COVID-19 Updates](#)

[Equipment Sanitation Checklist](#)

[SHC TEAM COVID-19 Information](#)

[COVID-19 Alberta Health Daily Checklist](#)

[MLC Facility Rules](#)

[MLC What to Expect Arena Video](#)

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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