



Football Re-Opening in Alberta





Football Re-Opening in Alberta

The Plan for the Roll Out of Football during the Alberta Government's Stages of Relaunching

OBJECTIVE:

The membership of Football Alberta wants to return to play the sport of football. Football Alberta will make all reasonable efforts to prevent the spread of any infectious disease, including the COVID-19 virus, and follow all health orders from the Provincial Government.

Football Alberta cannot ensure that their members will not be infected while participating in the sport of football, which is a contact sport. While Football Alberta will continue to recommend all reasonable efforts to oversee rules intended to minimize the risk of transmission, it is up to all leagues, teams, and participants to take precautions as necessary to protect themselves and others from the risk of transmission of the COVID-19 virus and other infectious diseases, plus their aftereffects..

Insurance helps organizations such as Football Alberta manage the risk associated with organizing and staging events that are inherently dangerous. Football is a contact sport and there is always a risk of injury. Historically, Football Alberta has been able to put insurance in place that protects the organization in the event someone is injured and sues the organization. Fortunately, it is there if we need it.

COMPLIANCE:

Our current understanding is that insurance coverage for claims against Football Alberta and its members related to infection of the COVID-19 virus or other disease is not available. Therefore, all participants who wish to participate as a member of Football Alberta during the declared pandemic and beyond must confirm their understanding of the increased risk and the contagion exclusion of insurance for a COVID-19 related claim by signing an Informed Consent Form (Appendix "A"). These forms must be supplied to the teams/clubs at registration and be kept on-site. Confirmation of their acceptance of this Informed Consent will be required for Football Alberta on-line registration and the hard copies of the executed form must be kept with the teams/clubs and available to be produced to Football Alberta upon demand.

Each team/club will have to assign a RESPONSIBLE PERSON who will ensure their team/club is meeting all standards set for re-opening. The duties of the RESPONSIBLE PERSON will be listed within this document.

MONITORING & ENFORCEMENT:

Football Alberta expects all of those who participate in Football Alberta sanctioned events to self-monitor their own behavior and conduct to ensure that they are at a minimum complying with the rules set out within this document and any other rules or recommendations published from time to time by Football Alberta, facility providers or local municipalities.

Football Alberta further expects those organizing and staging events at a league level to be aware of the rules related to minimizing the risk of transmission of the COVID-19 virus or any other infectious disease and to monitor and enforce compliance with those rules.

Football Alberta does not have the resources to monitor all of the participants or to enforce compliance. It will be the expectation of each team/club to do so via their RESPONSIBLE PERSON and file a Compliance Form (see Appendix "B") with their league and Football Alberta.

Football Alberta will, upon receiving notice of a lack of monitoring or enforcement of compliance with the rules, take appropriate measures and impose penalties and sanctions which may include, but not be limited to: suspension of practice rights, forfeiture of a result from a game that has been played, or suspension or disqualification of the right to play future games, including at the provincial playoff or championship level.

ALBERTA RE-OPENING STAGE 2 (as of June 10, 2021):

During Stage 2 teams may register and commence regular activities with the following restrictions:

NEW RULES FOR FOOTBALL TEAMS

- All outdoor activity for football, both contact and non-contact, can take place with no restrictions. This means full practices with full participation are free to take place.
- There are no cohorting rules or maximum number of participants caps.
- Competitions between teams and clubs can take place as per Football Canada guidelines for days between competitions and number of players necessary to field teams. No 14-day period between competitions is in place anymore.
- With all the freedoms no allowed it is still important to note that all indoor gatherings are still banned at this stage. This means no access to locker rooms, meeting rooms, or other areas that would gather players and coaches in an indoor setting until the Province declares Stage 3.
- Officials are free to officiate as many games for as many different teams/clubs as they wish, however they do are subject to no indoor gatherings in locker rooms or otherwise.
- Teams/clubs are permitted to travel outside of their Health Region for the purpose of competition.
- High School football teams may proceed under the Football Alberta Rules and Guidelines of this Stage within this document, but they must receive approval from their Superintendents and Principals to do so as well as follow the ASAA Policies on Seasons of Play.

HANDLING A POSITIVE COVID TEST

- If a player or coach tests positive, Alberta Health Services will be in charge of how to handle the team/club and will only request information about the attendee's participation if they deem a potential exposure is likely to have occurred during your activity.
- AHS investigators will determine if there are close contacts that should be made aware/notified based on the period of infectivity and the organization's compliance with public health guidance.

The restrictions set out in Football Alberta's Stage 2 plan are the equivalent of those at the **Level 4** section of **Football Canada's National Reopening Plan**. It is our hope that if things continue to improve during the pandemic in the areas of reduced infections, increased mitigation from health care, or vaccination, that our sport may progress to competitions between team/cohorts at Stage 3 but that will be a decision for Alberta Health Services and the Alberta Government to make.

Make no mistake, these restrictions in Stage 2 recognize that in our **sport it is not always possible to maintain Physical Distancing**. Through **adapted practice sessions**, team/cohorts will do their best to comply with the 2 Meter rule. However, the very nature of the sport which involves contesting for an implement of play (in our case a football) and also playing defense makes that impossible to do all the time. As well, the **vast majority of skills that need to be taught and the conducting of the competition itself will require a breaking of that barrier**. By following the above restrictions and guidelines set out in this document, the requirement of Alberta Health Services Guidelines will be met for re-opening in Stage 2 of Alberta's Relaunch.

FOOTBALL ALBERTA RESPONSIBLE PERSON

Each team/cohort's RESPONSIBLE PERSON will have the following duties:

- Ensure each registered member (including all associated adults) with the team/cohort fills out and signs the Informed Consent Form (see Appendix "A") prior to entering the field of play. These must be available to be produced upon demand from their league/association or Football Alberta for the next seven years.
- Ensure a Compliance Form (see Appendix "B") is filled out and signed on behalf of the team/cohort and filed with their league/association and Football Alberta within two weeks of commencement of any team/cohort activity. Failure to do so may result in Insurance being withdrawn from the team/cohort.
- Maintain an up-to-date registration list for the team/club in case AHS requires it for contact tracing. This list must be available upon demand to the league/association or Football Alberta.
- Do a general check of the health of the participants each day and ensure anyone not feeling well is sent home to recover.
- Ensure that Membership/Insurance is acquired and paid from Football Alberta within two weeks of the start of activity for their team/cohort and that on-line registration is completed as well.
- Ensure all sanitation and cleaning requirements are conducted as listed below each day and follow any guidelines set out in that area by the municipality or school providing the facility.
- Ensure all participants and their parents/guardians are fully aware of the General Safety Guidelines listed below.

GENERAL SAFETY GUIDELINES

Regardless of when your team/cohort begins activity, the RESPONSIBLE PERSON must ensure:

- Equipment handouts for Stage 2 will be scheduled appointment to make sure the numbers are kept as low as possible (under 15 people Physically Distanced together at any given time). All personnel handing out equipment will be wearing PPE's as well as gloves and wipe down the space used to equip at the end of each session. Proper Physical Distancing of 2M, will be practiced as much as possible.
- Post practice all communal equipment (i.e. blocking dummies, footballs, pylons) will be wiped down with a disinfectant.
- All coaches will attempt as much as possible to keep Physically Distant (2M) from the participants and fellow adults during any team/club gathering. Team huddles and group gatherings will be as limited as possible.
- As a rule, all adult medical or equipment personnel on the sidelines that will possibly have close contact with the athletes should wear PPE's.
- No off-field team/club indoor gatherings will be permitted. Any "film work" or strategy sessions will be done on-line.
- Carpooling to practices/team events will be discouraged but family cohorts will be on their own to monitor their behavior in this circumstance.
- Spectators (excluding parents and guardians where necessary for player support) will be kept out of participant spaces (e.g., fields of play, sidelines). **No spectators/parents will be allowed at practice unless the facility can allow for proper Physical Distancing in seating or areas away from the field of play or sidelines.** The maximum number of spectators is up to a maximum of 150 people based on the current AHS guidelines. A good guideline would be that unless the spectators come from the same household they should maintain a minimum two-meter distance from one another at all time, provided there is space in the stands.
- There will be no team water stations or shared water bottles. Players will be 100% responsible for their hydration needs and must mark their own water bottles clearly and ensure it goes to and from the on-field session with them.
- Indoor locker room gatherings will be discouraged as well as all players and staff will come dressed for play to the game or practice site. Any halftime meetings in competitions will have to be done on the sidelines.
- To protect vulnerable populations such as people with compromised immune systems, underlying health problems or seniors; team/clubs may consider some type of virtual method of engagement to discourage them from attending to watch their child. This may include FaceTime or Zoom type broadcast monitored by the Responsible Person.
- Participants will be encouraged to wipe down and disinfect their equipment after each session – particularly the helmet.



APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Football Alberta Informed Consent Form

Football Alberta **INFORMED CONSENT AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK AGREEMENT** (to be executed by parents/guardians of Individuals who are under the age of majority) **WARNING!** By signing this document, you will assume certain risk and responsibilities. Please read carefully!

Individual's Name: _____

1. This is a binding legal agreement. Clarify any questions or concerns before signing. As an Individual in activities, programs, classes, services provided and events sponsored or organized by Football Alberta and its affiliated districts, leagues, clubs and teams (collectively the "Organization") and the sport of football, which includes but is not limited to: games, tournaments, practices, training, personal training, dry land training, the use of strength training and fitness conditioning equipment, machines and facilities, nutritional and dietary programs, orientational or instructional sessions or lessons, and aerobic and anaerobic conditioning programs (collectively the "Activities"), the undersigned, being the Individual and Individual's Parent/Guardian (collectively the "Parties"), acknowledge and agree to the terms outlined in this agreement.
2. I am the Parent/Guardian of the Individual and have full legal responsibility for the decisions of the Individual.

Description of Risks

3. The Parties understand and acknowledge that:

- a) The Activities have foreseeable and unforeseeable inherent risks, hazards and dangers that no amount of care, caution or expertise can eliminate, including without limitation, the potential for serious bodily injury, permanent disability, paralysis and loss of life;
- b) The Organization may offer or promote online programming (such as webinars, remote conferences, workshops, and online training) which have different foreseeable and unforeseeable risks than in-person programming;
- c) The Organization has a difficult task to ensure safety and it is not infallible. The Organization may be unaware of the Individual's fitness or abilities, may give incomplete warnings or instructions, may misjudge weather or environmental conditions, and the equipment being used might malfunction; and
- d) The novel coronavirus, COVID-19, has been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization and COVID19 is extremely contagious. The Organization has put in place preventative measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19; however, the Organization cannot guarantee that the Individual will not become infected with COVID-19. Further, attending the Activities could increase your risk of contracting COVID-19.

4. The Individual is participating voluntarily in the Activities. In consideration of that participation, the Parties hereby acknowledge that they are aware of the risks, dangers and hazards and that they may be exposed to such risks, dangers and hazards. The risks, dangers and hazards include, but are not limited to:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Contracting COVID-19 or any other contagious disease;b) Executing strenuous and demanding physical techniques;c) Vigorous physical exertion, strenuous cardiovascular workouts and rapid movements;d) Exerting and stretching various muscle groups;e) The failure to properly use any piece of equipment or from the mechanical failure of any piece of equipment;f) Spinal cord injuries which may render the Individual permanently paralyzed;g) Serious injury to virtually all bones, joints, ligaments, muscles, tendons and other aspects of the Individual's body or to the Individual's general health and well-being;h) Abrasions, sprains, strains, fractures, or dislocations;i) Privacy breaches, hacking, technology malfunction or damage;j) Concussion or other head injuries, including but not limited to, closed head injury or blunt head trauma; | <ol style="list-style-type: none">k) Physical contact with other Individuals, spectators, equipment, and hazards;l) Not wearing appropriate safety or protective equipment,m) Failure to act safely or within the Individual's ability or within designated areas;n) Grass, turf, and other surfaces including bacterial infections and rashes;o) Collisions with fences, poles, stands, and football equipment;p) Negligence of other persons, including other spectators, Individuals, or employees;q) Weather conditions; andr) Travel to and from competitive events and associated non-competitive events which are an integral part of the Activities |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

____ (initials) We have read and agree to be bound by paragraphs 1 to 4.



Terms

5. In consideration of the Organization allowing the Individual to participate in the Activities, the Parties agree:

- a) That the Individual’s mental and physical condition is appropriate to participate in the Activities;
- b) That when the Individual practices or trains, the Parties are responsible for the Individual’s surroundings and the location and equipment that is selected for the Individual;
- c) To comply with the rules and regulations for participation in the Activities including the additional General Safety Guidelines listed in Football Alberta’s Reopening Plan as enforced by the RESPONSIBLE PERSON in their club/team/cohort;
- d) To comply with the rules of the facility or equipment;
- e) That if the Individual observes an unusual significant hazard or risk, the Individual will remove themselves from participation and bring such to the attention of an Organization representative immediately;
- f) The risks associated with the Activities are increased when the Individual is impaired, and the Individual agrees not to participate if impaired in any way;

- g) That it is the individual’s sole responsibility to assess whether any Activities are too difficult for the Individual. By the Individual commencing an Activity, they acknowledge and accept the suitability and conditions of the Activity;
- h) That COVID-19 is contagious in nature and the Individual may be exposed to or infected by COVID-19 and such exposure may result in personal injury, illness, permanent disability or death and voluntarily agree to assume all of the foregoing risks.

6. In consideration of the Organization allowing the Individual to participate, the Parties agree:

- a) That the Parties are not relying on any oral or written statements made by the Organization or their agents, whether in a brochure or advertisement or in individual conversations, to agree to be involved in the Activities; and
- b) That the Organization is not responsible or liable for any damage to the Individual’s vehicle, property, or equipment that may occur as a result of the Activities.

_____ (initials) We have read and agree to be bound by paragraphs 5 and 6.

General

7. The Parties agree that in the event that they file a lawsuit against the Organization, they agree to do so solely in the province of Alberta, Canada and they further agree that the substantive law of Alberta will apply without regard to conflict of law rules.

8. The Parties expressly agree that this Agreement is intended to be as broad and inclusive as is permitted by law and that if any of its provisions are held to be invalid, the balance shall, notwithstanding, continue in full legal force and effect.

Acknowledgement

9. The Parties acknowledge that they have read this agreement and understand it, that they have executed this agreement voluntarily, and that this Agreement is to be binding upon themselves, their heirs, their spouses, parents, guardians, next of kin, executors, administrators and legal or personal representatives.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Individual (print)	Signature of Individual	Date

_____	_____	_____
Name of Parent/Guardian (print)	Signature of Parent/Guardian	Date



APPENDIX B: DECLARATION OF COMPLIANCE – COVID 19

DECLARATION OF COMPLIANCE – COVID-19

Team/Association/Cohort (print): _____

RESPONSIBLE PERSON (print) _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____

Football Alberta, and _____ (name of Team/Association/Cohort collectively the “Organization”) require the disclosure of exposure to illness in order to safeguard the health and safety of all participants and limit the further outbreak of COVID-19. This Declaration of Compliance must be returned to the Team/Association/Cohort’s league as well as Football Alberta within two weeks of the start of activities and will not be disclosed unless as required by law or with your consent.

Individuals (or the individual’s parent/guardian, if the individual is younger than 18 years old) who are unable to agree to the terms outlined in this document are not permitted to enter the Organization’s facilities or participate in the Organization’s activities, programs, or services.

I, the undersigned being the RESPONSIBLE PERSON above, hereby acknowledge and agree to the terms outlined in this document:

1. The novel coronavirus, COVID-19, has been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization and COVID-19 is extremely contagious. The Organization has put in place preventative measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and requires all individuals (or their parent/guardian, when applicable) to adhere to the compliance standards described in the Football Alberta Reopening Document (as written below).

RESPONSIBLE PERSON:

Each team/cohort’s RESPONSIBLE PERSON will ensure the following:

- Ensure each registered member (including all associated adults) with the team/cohort fills out and signs the Informed Consent Form (see Appendix “A”) prior to entering the field of play. These must be available to be produced upon demand from their league/association or Football Alberta for the next seven years.
- Ensure a Compliance Form (see Appendix “B”) is filled out and signed on behalf of the team/cohort and filed with their league/association and Football Alberta within two weeks of commencement of any team/cohort activity. Failure to do so may result in Insurance being withdrawn from the team/cohort.
- Maintain an up-to-date registration list for the team/club in case AHS requires it for contact tracing. This list must be available upon demand to the league/association or Football Alberta.
- Do a general check of the health of the participants each day and ensure anyone not feeling well is sent home to recover.
- Ensure that Membership/Insurance is acquired and paid from Football Alberta within two weeks of the start of activity for their team/cohort and that on-line registration is completed as well.
- Ensure all sanitation and cleaning requirements are conducted as listed below each day and follow any guidelines set out in that area by the municipality or school providing the facility.
- Ensure all participants and their parents/guardians are fully aware of the General Safety Guidelines listed below.



GENERAL SAFETY GUIDELINES

Regardless of when your team/club begins activity the RESPONSIBLE PERSON must ensure:

- Equipment handouts for Stage 2 will be scheduled appointment to make sure the numbers are kept as low as possible (under 15 people Physically Distanced together at any given time). All personnel handing out equipment will be wearing PPE's as well as gloves and wipe down the space used to equip at the end of each session. Proper Physical Distancing of 2M, will be practiced as much as possible.
 - Post practice all communal equipment (i.e. blocking dummies, footballs, pylons) will be wiped down with a disinfectant.
 - All coaches will attempt as much as possible to keep Physically Distant (2M) from the participants and fellow adults during a any team/club gathering. Team huddles and group gatherings will be as limited as possible.
 - As a rule, all adult medical or equipment personnel on the sidelines that will possibly have close contact with the athletes should wear PPE's.
 - No off-field team/club indoor gatherings will be permitted. Any "film work" or strategy sessions will be done on-line.
 - Carpooling to practices/team events will be discouraged but family cohorts will be on their own to monitor their behavior in this circumstance.
 - Spectators (excluding parents and guardians where necessary for player support) will be kept out of participant spaces (e.g., fields of play, sidelines). No spectators/parents will be allowed at practice unless the facility can allow for proper Physical Distancing in seating or areas away from the field of play or sidelines. The maximum number of spectators is up to a maximum of 150 people based on the current AHS guidelines. A good guideline would be that unless the spectators come from the same household they should maintain a minimum two-meter distance from one another at all time, provided there is space in the stands.
 - There will be no team water stations or shared water bottles. Players will be 100% responsible for their hydration needs and must mark their own water bottles clearly and ensure it goes to and from the on-field session with them.
 - Indoor locker room gatherings will be discouraged as well as all players and staff will come dressed for play to the game or practice site. Any halftime meetings in competitions will have to be done on the sidelines.
 - To protect vulnerable populations such as people with compromised immune systems, underlying health problems or seniors; team/clubs may consider some type of virtual method of engagement to discourage them from attending to watch their child. This may include FaceTime or Zoom type broadcast monitored by the Responsible Person.
 - Participants will be encouraged to wipe down and disinfect their equipment after each session – particularly the helmet.
 - **Anyone found on in any club to have a positive test for COVID – 19** should not be allowed to return until they can provide a negative test. Only those who receive a negative result will be allowed to return but normal club activity can continue.
2. This document will remain in effect until the Organization, per the direction of the provincial government and provincial health officials, determines that the acknowledgements in this Declaration of Compliance are no longer required.
 3. The Organization may remove an individual from the facility or from participation in the activities, programs or services of the Organization at any time and for any reason if the Organization believes, in its sole discretion, that the individual is no longer in compliance with any of the compliance standards described in this document.

Signature: _____ Date: _____



ALBERTA RE-OPENING STAGE 3 (as of June TBD, 2021):

During Stage 2 teams may register and commence regular activities with the following restrictions:

NEW RULES FOR FOOTBALL TEAMS

- All outdoor activity for football, both contact and non-contact, can take place with no restrictions. This means full practices with full participation are free to take place.
- There are no cohorting rules or maximum number of participants caps.
- Competitions between teams and clubs can take place as per Football Canada guidelines for days between competitions and number of players necessary to field teams. No 14-day period between competitions is in place anymore.
- All indoor gatherings are now allowed. This means access to locker rooms, meeting rooms, or other areas that would gather players and coaches in an indoor setting are now allowed.
- Officials are free to officiate as many games for as many different teams/clubs as they wish, however they do are subject to no indoor gatherings in locker rooms or otherwise.
- Teams/clubs are permitted to travel outside of their Health Region for the purpose of competition. Interprovincial competition will be at the discretion of Provincial Health Guidelines.
- High School football teams may proceed under the Football Alberta Rules and Guidelines of this Stage within this document, but they must receive approval from their Superintendents and Principals to do so as well as follow the ASAA Policies on Seasons of Play.

HANDLING A POSITIVE COVID TEST

- If a player or coach tests positive, Alberta Health Services will be in charge of how to handle the team/club and will only request information about the attendee's participation if they deem a potential exposure is likely to have occurred during your activity.
- AHS investigators will determine if there are close contacts that should be made aware/notified based on the period of infectivity and the organization's compliance with public health guidance.

The elimination of restrictions set out in Football Alberta's Stage 3 plan are the equivalent of those at the **Level 5** section of Football Canada's National Reopening Plan. Any reimplementations of restrictions will be a decision for Alberta Health Services and the Alberta Government to make.