

August 14, 2020



#WeAreBackTogether

PCAHA Return to Play Plan Announced

PCAHA has announced their Return to Play Plan for the 2020-21 season. Information can be found on the PCAHA website at www.pcaha.ca.

Quick hits:

- Game play may be permitted after Thanksgiving within cohort structure
- Start of season will be focussed on skill development until Thanksgiving (potential for extension)
- Tournament blackout period until November 30 - may be extended
- PCAHA will base all decisions on viaSport guidelines

Ice Update

Thank you to everyone who took the time to send a note to the Park Board regarding opening the arenas. They heard us!

Earlier this week, Vancouver Park Board announced they will be opening rinks starting on September 21. They have confirmed to us that all arenas operated by VPB will be open by October 5, with Britannia and the Agrodome timelines still to come.

While this is later than we had hoped, we are working with UBC and the Richmond Olympic Oval to secure ice starting on September 8.

We are planning to be on the ice after the long weekend. As soon as we know what we are able to secure, we will be able to set the program schedule.



We are in this together

This off-season has shown the resilience and strength of our hockey community, and the broader sport world. We firmly believe sport is part of the solution as we deal with a pandemic that has forced so much change upon us.

While we know there will be some changes in the sport we love, each passing day has brought us closer to a solution to play in a safe manner. The Thunderbirds have been directly involved in numerous committees, calls and meetings to ensure we are ready to offer the best program we can for all of our TBird family this fall.

We will take our direction from governing bodies such as viaSport and PCAHA / BC Hockey / Hockey

Canada which in turn will follow the guidance of our health officials. We are very fortunate to be working with strong leadership and are successfully overcoming obstacles.

We really are going to be in this together and we will need everyone to ensure we are remaining compliant with the rules we MUST follow this season. There is no allowance for deviation as we have to stay within the lines to maintain our insurance and our membership in PCAHA. Thank you for doing your part. It is going to be great to be back on the ice this fall!

Tanya Foley, Executive Director
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Summer Camps

This week was the first of four weeks for our U11 - U18 Thunderbirds summer camps at Scotia Barn. It has been going great and we are excited for the next few weeks on the ice. There is space for a couple final spots each week (goalies and skaters) so if you are looking for something to do [click here](#) to see what is open and sign up.

We are also finalizing details for two U8/U9 camps that we will be offering at the Richmond Olympic Oval from August 31 - September 3. Invitations to register will be sent first to those who had pre-registered for the original camps and then will be opened to general registration.

Thunderbird Bursary Program

With the financial impact many have faced recently, we want to remind families that they may be able to receive support from both KidSport and the new Thunderbird Bursary Program. The first step is to submit an application to KidSport and they can inform us who qualifies. We do not see the applications but are here to help those who need it.

If you may need some assistance, please [submit an application to KidSport here](#) as they are now processing them as they are received.

Volunteer Program Launched

With the start of summer camps, the ability to fulfill your required volunteer hours has launched. This season, every player has been assessed a \$75 volunteer fee as part of the initial registration. Each family will be eligible to receive this fee back as soon as they:

- 1) provide support within their team environment in a verified role
- 2) fulfill 3 volunteer hours per player (to a maximum of 6 hours) for roles that can be found on the OnVolunteers portal.

Further information on the Thunderbirds Volunteer Program and the login information can be [found here](#).



Covid-19 Impact Policy

In case you missed it, on August 5 we sent out notice that a new [Covid-19 Impact Policy](#) had been adopted which includes a revised refund policy for this season. It is important that you understand that every family will have the ability to make a decision about hockey after we are able to provide the information on what this season will look like. With the PCAHA Return to Play plan that has now been released, we have a clearer picture of what the pathway could be for this season including game play, however we also want to make it clear that we do not make the decisions and we will be ready for whatever scenario occurs, best or worst case. We will continue to keep you informed but we do ask that you familiarize yourself with the Covid-19 Impact Policy as well.

Season Program Announcement

We are closer to having the information we need to provide the season plan. We are still waiting for the ice allocation information which will then allow us to finalize our planning. We will provide an update by the end of next week at the latest with a new date for a virtual town hall where we will provide the plan.

As rep tryouts will need to be adjusted to reflect the viaSport guidelines, we will provide more information on the process when viaSport announces the timing of moving to Phase 3 and the process involved for contact sports. We will begin the season in tiered skill groups for all players registered for tryouts based on the players' teams or H4 Skill Groups from last year.