

**Policies & Procedures
of the
Vancouver Thunderbird
Minor Hockey Association**

P-24

**COVID-19 IMPACT
POLICY**

Date Revised:	September 2020	Revision No.	1
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1. The purpose of this policy is to provide a singular reference point for required deviations from standard Vancouver Thunderbird policies in the 2020-21 season as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Atypical levels of flexibility may be required in order to provide programming options for our players to remain compliant with viaSport, health authority and facility requirements.
2. This policy will:
 - 2.1. be paramount and will govern in the event of any conflict or inconsistency with other Vancouver Thunderbird policies in force prior to this policy; and
 - 2.2. be subject to future revisions if necessary as new information is provided from sport governing bodies, health authorities and facilities.

3. Registration Fee Policies and Refunds

- 3.1 Vancouver Thunderbirds expects to announce its 2020-21 season program to its members prior to the end of August.
 - 3.2 All fees collected prior to the 2020-21 season program announcement, including base registration and volunteer tryout fees, will be 100% refunded if the 2020-21 season is cancelled prior to the commencement of the 2020-21 season program.
 - 3.3 Vancouver Thunderbirds wishes to ensure that all families will have the ability to make a full and informed decision with no penalty if, for any reason, they do not wish their player(s) to participate in the 2020-21 season. Accordingly, any player that does not wish to participate in the 2020-21 season may provide a written withdrawal request to the Registrar no later than seven (7) days following the announcement of the 2020-21 season program. Each player that provides a withdrawal request within this seven (7) day period will receive a refund of 100% of all fees collected prior to the 2020-21 season program announcement, including base registration and volunteer tryout fees. Any players who withdraw under this clause will be granted a complimentary leave of absence for the season (ie. no leave of absence fee payable) and will be eligible to register the following season as if such player was a returning player who was registered for the 2020-21 season.
 - 3.4 Any refunds requested later than seven (7) days following the announcement of the 2020-21 season program will be subject to the current refund policy schedule in *P3 – Registration Policy, Section 7*.
 - 3.5 If the season is canceled or is otherwise materially interrupted at any point after the season program commences, participants will receive a partial refund as approved by the Board. It is expected that any such partial refund will take into account costs incurred to date and any non-recoverable costs (such as, by way of example only, Hockey Canada insurance, BC Hockey or PCAHA player fees, non-refundable ice rentals).
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- 3.6 If any camp or clinic is canceled prior to the commencement of the camp or clinic, all fees collected in respect of such camp or clinic will be 100% refunded. Note that Vancouver Hockey School programming will be subject to their own refund policies that will be communicated when those programs are offered.
- 3.7 If any camp or clinic is canceled or is otherwise materially interrupted at any point after the camp or clinic commences, participants will receive a partial refund as approved by the Board. It is expected that any such partial refund will take into account costs incurred to date and any non-recoverable costs (such as, by way of example only, insurance, non-refundable ice rentals).
- 3.8 Any player that is required to miss on-ice events due to a health authority or other government mandated self-isolation or quarantine for a minimum of 14 days (excluding any self-isolation or quarantine required as a result of that player travelling outside of Canada) will be eligible to email a request to the Executive Director for a refund of the ice costs as follows:
- 3.8.1 missed team or skill group events per each 7 day period (by division) of:
 - 3.8.1.1 U6 and U7: \$10.75
 - 3.8.1.2 U8 and U9: \$16
 - 3.8.1.3 U11 to U18 recreational: \$16
 - 3.8.1.4 U11 to U18 rep: \$28.50
 - 3.8.2 missed camp or clinic sessions that are operated by TBirds will be refunded at a pro-rated amount for all sessions missed. Note that Vancouver Hockey School programming will be subject to their own refund policies that will be communicated when those programs are offered.
- 3.9 Any exceptional circumstances not covered under this Policy can be submitted to the Board for consideration.

4 Recreational Balancing

- 4.1 Vancouver Thunderbirds will be required to operate the balancing process for the U11-U18 recreational division differently due to venue restrictions, shorter timelines and the viaSport guidelines regarding cohort play.
- 4.2 Ice times between September 8 to 16 will be used to update player assessments and assign ratings to new to TBird players. These ratings will be used to create balancing groups through consultation with staff and head coaches.
- 4.3 Each division will be split into cohort groups as per the viaSport guideline with a maximum of four teams (ie balancing groups) per cohort.
- 4.4 Type of game play will be dependent upon venue restrictions on maximum number of

players and team staff permitted.

- 4.5 If guidelines regarding physical distancing or masks is still intact by the start of game play for balancing groups, players will be required to be prepared to wear a mask while on the bench. Other options may be implemented however Thunderbirds will ensure viaSport guidelines are adhered to.
- 4.6 Balancing will predominantly occur within each cohort, with movements to groups in the other cohort in each division happening only if no other option is available. If a move across cohorts is done, it will be at the end of the balancing round as per the viaSport cohort model.
- 4.7 Each group within a cohort will play a minimum of two other groups within that cohort as part of the balancing round.
- 4.8 After each round within a cohort, coaches will meet via virtual meeting to address any required player balancing movement.
- 4.9 Final rosters will be determined following the PCAHA decision regarding programming post-Thanksgiving.
- 4.10 Note that the process is subject to change as may be required due to changes in viaSport, health authority and/or facility requirements and any such changes will be communicated as soon as possible.

5 REP TRYOUTS

- 5.1 Vancouver Thunderbirds will be required to operate the rep tryouts process for the U11-U18 rep division differently due to venue restrictions and shorter timelines.
- 5.2 The tryout procedure will be created to maximize viaSport Phase 3 programming within venue restrictions. The process will be communicated to the participants a minimum of 36 hours prior to the first evaluated ice time in the official tryout groups.
- 5.3 Every player will be assigned to a minimum of three sessions.
- 5.4 No inter-association exhibition games are permitted as per the PCAHA Return to Play Plan for the 2020-21 season.
- 5.5 The non-parent coaches within a division will lead and evaluate the sessions. Venue restrictions will determine if external evaluators will be able to be added or if it will strictly be coach led.
- 5.6 There will be no face to face interviews and no formal report cards.
- 5.7 Tryouts will end a minimum of 14 days prior to the start of any league competition as per

viaSport Phase 3 guidelines for competition cohorts.

- 5.8 Final rosters will be posted online.
- 5.9 Any player who does not receive a green check when completing the TeamSnap HealthCheck process must email the Executive Director immediately. The player will follow the required steps and, if the player is instructed to remain home, they will be excused from the ice time. Any missed sessions as a result of a failed health check will not be counted against the player and they will be assessed based on any sessions they do take part in. A spot may be held for them until October 15 as per Policy 9 Section 3b for an injured player and they will not be required to attend the team functions until cleared for resumption of play.
- 5.10 Player exemptions for Religious Observances: any player that requests an exemption for religious purposes will be granted approval to miss the session and have previous sessions serve as the evaluation used to assess their placement. They will be required to inform the Executive Director via email no later than noon on Thursday, September 17 if this is their intention.
- 5.11 Final teams will be determined following the PCAHA decision regarding programming post-Thanksgiving.
- 5.12 Note that the process is subject to change as may be required due to changes in viaSport, health authority and/or facility requirements and any such changes will be communicated as soon as possible.

APPEALS

- 5.13 As timelines will be significantly restricted, and the cohort model will require decisions to be made within a short time period, the following steps will be applied to any appeals submitted:

- Step 1: Virtual appointments will be made available a maximum of 48 hours after the release of the final rosters for a discussion to occur with a minimum of two coaches/evaluators and one of the Executive Director, Director of Rep, or Associate Director of Rep.

Note: any player that requests a virtual appointment will not be permitted to in any viaSport Phase 3 programming (ie no contact or game play within a cohort) until it is decided they will not appeal or the appeal process has been concluded. This is to allow them to immediately join a team in Phase 3 programming at the conclusion of the process.

- Step 2: Players will have 24 hours from the start time of their virtual appointment to submit in writing an appeal to the Director of Rep and/or the Executive Director as per Policy 9 Section K-1 and must fulfill one of the following:
 - The decision under appeal was influenced by bias;
 - ~~The process was applied in an irregular manner to the player as compared to~~

- the other players in their division; or
- The decision cannot be rationally supported by the assessments conducted (ie the decision was patently unreasonable).

- Step 3: Any appeal deemed eligible to proceed will proceed to an appeal panel which will conduct one virtual meeting with all parties involved as soon as possible. A decision will be rendered within 24 hours of the meeting.

6 GENERAL HOCKEY OPERATIONS

6.1 Team sizes may be dictated by venue restrictions or viaSport/sport governing body guidelines and recommendations.

6.2 The use of affiliate players may be restricted or altered by sport governing bodies.

6.3 Tournament participation will be determined by the PCAHA Return to Play Plan for the 2020-21 Season and is dependent upon BC Hockey approval for tournaments. If tournaments are permitted, attendance at tournaments outside of the province will not be allowed for the 2020-21 season.

6.4 Rule modifications and changes to game play will follow Hockey Canada, BC Hockey and/or PCAHA adjustments.

7 DRESSING ROOM & TWO DEEP POLICY

7.1 Usage of dressing room or alternative dressing areas will be subject to venue protocols. VTMHA teams will be required to follow the existing two deep policy as closely as possible with two adults providing supervision at all times within the venues.

8 COVID-19 RETURN TO PLAY POLICY

8.1 The steps outlined below have been adopted after consultation with Hockey Canada, BC Hockey and local health contacts.

8.2 It is expected that players and team staff will experience symptoms of Covid-19; be contacted about a possible exposure; or contract Covid-19 themselves. As a result, a clear understanding of the steps involved in the return to hockey is required.

8.3 If a player or team staff member is showing symptoms of Covid-19, including any cold or flu symptoms, they must not attend any Vancouver Thunderbird event and must take a Covid-19 test.

8.3.1 If the Covid-19 test is positive, they need to stay home for at least 10 days from the start of symptoms – public health instructions must be followed. If they receive instruction from public health that they need to stay home for longer than 10 days, they are required to inform their group/team HCSP and remain in communication.

8.3.2 If the Covid-19 test is negative, they need to stay home until they are 100% symptom free. Parents will be required to provide to their group/team HCSP the notification from

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the BC Health Authority of a negative test or a physician's note authorizing the player to resume hockey activities in order to return to play.

- 8.4 If a player or team staff member has been told to self-isolate because of contact with Covid-19, they must not attend any Vancouver Thunderbird event and must notify their group/team HCSP that they have been told to self-isolate and:
- 8.4.1 If they do not have symptoms of Covid-19, they may return to play after 14 days of the exposure. They do not require a note to return to play but must inform their group/team HCSP of the start date. If symptoms occur at any point in the 14 days, including any cold or flu symptoms, they must take a Covid-19 test.
 - 8.4.1.1 If the Covid-19 test is positive, they must remain home on self-isolation for at least 10 more days from when symptoms start – public health instructions must be followed. If they receive instruction from public health that they need to stay home for longer than 10 days, they are required to inform their group/team HCSP and remain in communication.
 - 8.4.1.2 If Covid-19 test is negative, they must remain home until the full completion of the 14 day self-isolation order. If symptoms still remain at that time, they are not to return to play until they are 100% symptom free.