

August 26, 2020

Dear Club Directors and Key Contacts,

On August 25, the Volleyball BC Board of Directors approved an update of A Phased Return to Volleyball Plan to incorporate recommendations and guidelines for clubs and organizations to carefully move into Progressively Loosen (Phase 3).

We are excited to share this amended Plan with you so that you are able to embark on your own planning to align with this new phase. Below are some of the key considerations and principles.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- viaSport BC guidelines for Progressively Loosen phase divide sports into 4 categories based on the number and intensity of contact within the sport. Volleyball has been designated to Group B as a team sport with limited physical contact. Other sports may follow different guidelines depending on the category in which they have been designated.
- A safe return to volleyball will take place carefully and gradually in phases that align with public health guidelines. **From August 26, 2020, volleyball is in the Progressively Loosen phase (Phase 3).** Movement between phases will be decided through collaboration with viaSport BC and the Provincial Health Office and announced by Volleyball BC. Do not move from one phase to another on your own or without approval to do so.
- All guidance relating to personal hygiene, cleaning protocols, symptom screening and other risk mitigation practices still apply in Progressively Loosen / Phase 3.
- In order to reopen, each volleyball organization must:
 1. Create a COVID-19 Safety Plan that meets the guidelines set out in A Phased Return to Volleyball Plan;
 2. Gain approval of the COVID-19 Safety Plan from their Board of Directors/Owner; and
 3. Publish the approved COVID-19 Safety Plan electronically, front and center on the organization's website home page and/or in hard-copy on the walls of the facility, in a conspicuous place.A Director or Owner of your organisation must submit confirmation of these steps to Volleyball BC. You can complete these steps [here](#).
- **If an organisation has already been operating with a Safety Plan, it must be reviewed and adapted to reflect the new guidelines for Progressively Loosen phase.**

KEY PRINCIPLES OF THE PROGRESSIVELY LOOSEN PHASE

(See Section 6 of the Plan for full details)

1. Contact

- Contact is defined by public health guidance and viaSport BC as close proximity (within 2 meters) or physical contact.
- The careful introduction of contact in volleyball is permitted in this phase.
- Close physical proximity should be minimized as much as possible. Physical distancing must be maintained off- court (eg. pre and post-game).
- Any introduction of volleyball activities involving either close proximity or physical contact should be done within a cohort.

2. Cohorts

- Cohorts should be created for all volleyball activities where there is contact or close proximity of less than 2 metres. ViaSport BC defines a cohort as “a group of participants who primarily interact with each other within the sport environment over an extended period of time (eg. series of events)”.
- Cohorts for volleyball should not exceed 100 individuals. All team players and substitutions must be included and counted in the cohort.
- There may be up to 12 individuals per court (six per side).
- Cohorts should be made up of individuals/teams of similar age and skill level.
- Cohort sizes are different from maximum group sizes. When members of the cohort are gathering for games or activities, gatherings may not exceed 50 people.
- When in a cohort, individuals do not need to maintain physical distancing during volleyball activities on-court. At least two metres distancing should be maintained between all participants off-court (e.g. on benches, during intermission, in locker rooms). If physical distancing cannot be maintained masks should be worn.
- Coaches, referees and spectators may be counted outside the cohort number if they are able to maintain physical distancing at all times. If they are unable to do so, they should be assigned and counted within a cohort.
- There should be 1 responsible person or point of contact for a cohort to maintain a central list with full contact information for all individuals participating within the cohort.
- We acknowledge that individuals may engage in multiple sports or activities. Participants, are encouraged to minimise the number of cohorts that they are involved in to reduce the number of individuals that they are interacting with.
- **SPECIAL NOTE:** *Volleyball clubs and organisations are NOT required to create a cohort if they wish to offer small group skills development with physical distancing at all times (in line with Transition Measures (Phase 2) requirements).*

3. Competition and Travel

- League play and competitive activities may occur within cohorts. Each cohort can be comprised of multiple teams in order to form a mini-league or permit game-play.

- Regional competition is permitted in this phase: games or competitive activities occurring between clubs or individuals in a cohort within a region. In volleyball, a “region” is defined by the zones set by the BC Summer Games (see Appendix 2). It is recommended that, wherever possible, cohorts and competition are created based on these regions.
- All competitions are required to have a detailed safety plan in place.
- Individuals should remain primarily within their region when travelling for volleyball. Inter-provincial competition and international travel for sport is not recommended at this time.

4. High Performance

- High performance training opportunities may be introduced that bring together players from different communities in a responsible and safe manner.
- Participants should form a cohort for the duration of the camp/training activity and minimise interactions with individuals outside of the training group.
- Organisers should consider physical distancing, hygiene and safety protocols pre, during, and post-training.

SPECIAL NOTE:

- It is recommended that all new programs, activities or organisations that are commencing volleyball for the first time during Progressively Loosen slowly introduce activities to allow the creation and testing of COVID safety protocols and procedures. For example, clubs should plan a period of in-team training before teams play games or leagues should have the same teams play each other for a period of time before commencing league play.

You can read the full [Phased Return to Volleyball Plan](#) here. Please read these guidelines carefully and develop or revise your Safety Plan to align with them.

Over the next while, we will also be providing further information and guidance to clubs about the competition model for the upcoming indoor season. We would like to invite you to attend two webinars to answer your questions about these guidelines and provide more information about the club season:

- **Phase Three of the Return to Play Guidelines: Wednesday, September 2 at 7:00 PM PDT**
Ask any questions. If we don't know the answers we will find out for you!
- **2021 Club Season Discussion: Monday, September 14 at 7:00 PM PDT**
Information and discussion regarding the upcoming season and modifications due to COVID-19.

This invitation is only being extended to Club Directors, Club Contacts, and specified associations at this time. Please [register here](#) to attend.



We have also developed a [Return to Play section](#) on our website with information for players, coaches, referees and volleyball clubs. We will be continually updating this section with new information and resources as they come available. Please bookmark the page and use it to support your planning.

We all need to play our part in resuming volleyball carefully and gradually. Please support us by sharing and upholding these guidelines. If we can be of any assistance – or answer any questions – please do not hesitate to reach out and ask us.

Take care,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emma Gibbons", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Emma Gibbons
Chief Executive Officer