RETURN TO PLAY GUIDELINES

AS OF JUNE 6, 2020

INTRODUCTION

On May 6, 2020, the Government of BC announced BC's Restart Plan. Part of that plan was to ask that sector-specific guidelines be created. Government tasked viaSport, a non-profit society that acts as an agent for the BC Government in providing direction and oversight to amateur sport, was asked to develop Return to Sport Guidelines. Those guidelines were developed with direction from the Provincial Health Officer, and released on June 1, 2020. viaSport has now asks each Provincial Sport Organization (PSO) to develop their own Return to Sport Plan. Baseball BC, the PSO for baseball, has developed this plan for our sport. It has been drafted to be consistent with the federal and provincial health guidelines, and the provisions of the viaSport Return to Play guidelines. However, while Baseball BC has consulted with viaSport in developing our guidelines, viaSport does not provide approval for individual sport guidelines. We emphasize that the Baseball Return to Play guidelines include a requirement to respect the rules and advice of the responsible federal, provincial and municipal authorities.

We strongly encourage baseball organizations to review both the Baseball Return to Play guidelines and the overall viaSport Return to Play guidelines before developing their own written plan. Please note, that just as the Baseball BC guidelines have been approved by the Baseball BC board of directors, individual organizations also need to have their own written Return to Play plans approved by their board of directors. Further, the viaSport directive is clear that these plans must be in compliance with all orders and guidelines from the Provincial Health Officer and must be either posted on the wall of a facility or on the organization's website.

Baseball BC emphasizes the advice of public health officials and viaSport to move ahead slowly, and systematically restart activities in a way that allows your organization and local health authorities to monitor, evaluate and adjust as needed.

OTHER GUIDELINES

With a situation that evolves daily and may differ by area, Baseball BC requires all organizations to follow the guidance from all levels of government and the BC health authorities. We also understand that each municipality has potentially different restrictions and limitations for on-field bookings and activity, therefore, we advise organizations to work with all the stakeholders relevant to your own organization and adhere to any appropriate requirements to ensure you are providing a safe environment for all participants.

The information from other authorities in this document is current to the date of the release of this document.

The sport specific guidelines provided by Baseball BC are meant to supplement the requirements and recommendations from the various levels of government, and the viaSport Guidelines.

- ViaSport Return to Sport Guidelines for BC: https://www.viasport.ca/sites/default/files/ReturntoSportGuidelines.pdf
- BCCDC Covid-19 Resources: http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19
- WorkSafeBC: https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/covid-19-returning-safe-operation

- Government of Canada COVID-19 Resources: https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html

For additional links to information and other applicable guidelines, see Appendix F of the viaSport Guidelines.

ADMINISTRATIVE STEPS

Government and viaSport require several steps to be completed prior to the return to play. These are essential in managing risk and ensuring a safe restart of sport for all involved. Prior to restarting, every organization must have an explicit plan for the measures they will implement and maintain.

Note: When Baseball BC refers to an "organization" in this document, it is meant to be inclusive of each of the Baseball BC members AND their affiliated leagues, local associations, clubs, teams, and any other affiliated entity that offers organized baseball in BC.

POLICY

In addition to anything required by other authorities, organizations who choose to offer organized baseball at any level must develop the following policies (see viaSport Guidelines for further details):

1. COVID-19 Safety Plan ***(Appendix G – viaSport Guidelines)***
2. Illness Policy and Wellness Screening ***(Appendix C – viaSport Guidelines)***
3. Outbreak Plan ***(Page 20 – viaSport Guidelines)***
4. First Aid Plan ***(Page 20 – viaSport Guidelines)***

APPROVAL TO RESTART

Baseball BC does not approve individual plans from organizations. Organizations who belong to other governing bodies (BC Minor, PBL, Little League, etc.) also need to ensure returning to play authorized by their respective body.

Return to play plans and policies for each organization must be authorized by its Board of Directors or equivalent decision makers.

The board or senior management of an organization is responsible for the oversight of risk. Each Board member or manager should review the viaSport Guidelines in detail, including the section on Risk Management.

Restarting is not mandatory – each organization must assess and decide for itself whether and when it is appropriate to restart operations.

When determining if your organization is ready to resume it is important to note that Baseball BC insurance **will not** cover any claims relating to communicable diseases or pandemics and that most policies, including Directors and Officers Insurance, now include specific pandemic exclusions.

Organizations are encouraged to update and use appropriate waivers for registration purposes when conducting baseball activity. It is important organizations understand the limitations of using waivers and are encouraged to obtain legal advice as necessary.

BASEBALL BC GENERAL HEALTH AND PERSONAL HYGIENE GUIDELINES

Please note that all of the below Personal Health and Hygiene Guidelines are intended to be required for anyone involved in youth or amateur baseball which includes, but is not limited to; athletes, coaches, umpires, administrators, volunteers and spectators.

- Anyone displaying ANY illness symptoms **MUST NOT** attend.
- Disinfectant wipe down of all surfaces athletes can be exposed before every event.
- Reminder to all participants daily to avoid touching of eyes, nose or mouth
- No sharing of water bottles.
- No sharing of food of any kind.
- No spitting.
- No chewing gum or sunflower seeds.
- No sharing of any personal equipment or items
- Ride sharing to be discouraged whenever possible.
- All participants encouraged to disinfect their equipment after each event.
- All participants encouraged to wash all clothing and selves after each event.

Baseball BC RTP Summary				
	Phase 1 (Prior to June 7)	Phase 2 (June 7 to September)	Phase 3 (TBA)	Phase 4 (TBA)
Restrictions	No community programming	Maintain Social Distance (2M) No non-essential travel No group gatherings over 50 ppl	Refer to PHO & local health Authorities	Refer to PHO & local health Authorities
Participants	No community programming	Small groups only (10 athletes and 2 coaches) No or limited specators Moving to full team practices (TBA)	Group sizes may increase	Large groups allowed
Equipment	No community programming	No shared personal equipment Disinfect any team equipment before, during and after use	Minimal shared equipment Disinfect any shared equipment before, during and after use	Some shared equipment Enhanced cleaning protocols in place
Activity / Competition	No community programming	Small group training only to start Moving to full team practices (TBA) In club play or modified game play may slowly be introduced. (TBA)	Interclub or Regional game play may be considered. (TBA)	Provincial Compititions and larger scale events may return (TBA)

RETURNING TO BASEBALL - PHASES

The Provincial Restart Plan and the viaSport Guidelines are broken into phases. Right now we are in Phase 2. For ease of reference, we will be referring to the current phase for baseball as Phase 2, as well.

Note that only Phase 2 currently has any timeline attached, and even there, we have only identified the possible start date for that phase. This done entirely based on information supplied by ViaSport related to movement between phases as outlined in their Sport Activity Chart. **(Appendix A – viaSport Guidelines).**

Any movement between phases will be decided through collaboration with viaSport and the Provincial Health Office and announced by Baseball BC. Do not move from one phase to another on your own or without approval to do so.

VIASPORT PHASE 2

Phase 2 in the viaSport Guidelines is referred to as "Transition Measures – Approx. May to September."

This phase applies to Baseball and informs the baseball specific measures in the "Baseball BC Phase 2". Important to note about this viaSport phase is the following:

- 2m physical distance required between participants

- No non-essential travel
- No groups of more than 50 people
- Increased hand hygiene
- Symptom screening in place
- Preferred outdoor activity only
- Train in smaller groups
- No or limited spectators
- No contact-type activities
- In-club play only (no travel and no games between clubs)
- Minimal shared equipment – if shared need to disinfect before, during, and after

See the viaSport Guidelines for all the requirements of this phase.

BASEBALL BC PHASE 2

Phase 2 Guidelines and Recommendations (June 7th to TBA)

- **Small group training and development sessions permitted.**
- Maximum of 10 athletes at an event. Maximum of 2 coaches at an event. Maximum of 1 parent per athlete at an event.
- Verbal symptom screening must be performed at every session to ensure all participants are symptom free.
- All government expectations and requirements to be met, including viaSport Phase 2 guidelines
- All Baseball BC Personal Health and Hygiene Recommended Guidelines to be reviewed and enforced as outlined above.
- 2m physical distance required between participants
- Every event to include reminders to participants regarding 2m physical distancing and include no spitting, no face touching, no contact between the athletes.
- Attendance must be taken and kept at every event for all people in attendance including parents (drivers). These records must be kept for 30 days before being destroyed.
- No team huddles before, during or after the practice for coaching or teaching purposes unless 2m physical distancing requirements are adhered to.
- All drills to be created and implemented ensuring 2m physical distancing requirements are adhered to.
- No dugout use permitted. Athletes must be set up outside of the dugout with 2m physical distancing requirements adhered to.
- No shared use of personal equipment.
- Baseballs should be sanitized prior to every event and every effort given to limit the number of athletes using one ball in a practice environment.
- Any team issue bats should be sanitized prior to every event and between every use by different athletes. No other team equipment should be shared.
- No indoor events (practice, cage) permitted.
- No changing or dressing rooms permitted.
- All field prep equipment to be disinfected and cleaned after every use.

Phase 2 Guidelines and Recommendations
Transition to other guidelines within this phase (Date TBA)

- All guidelines listed above are applicable to this "In Phase Transition" with the following notable changes.
- **Full team practices permitted (Date TBA)**

VIASPORT PHASE 3

Phase 3 in the viaSport Guidelines is referred to as "Progressively Loosen – Future Date TBA."

Important to note about this phase is the following:

- Refer to PHO or local health authorities for current restrictions.
- Group sizes may increase.
- Limited spectators
- Interclub or Regional Play may be considered.
- Increased hand hygiene.
- Some shared equipment.
- Enhanced cleaning protocols in place

See the viaSport Guidelines for all the requirements of this phase.

BASEBALL BC PHASE 3

Phase 3 Guidelines and Recommendations (Date TBA)

- **Game play permitted.**
- Maximum of 1 parent per athlete at an event.
- Verbal symptom screening must be performed at every session to ensure all participants are symptom free.
- All government expectations and requirements to be met as outlined above.
- All Baseball BC Personal Health and Hygiene Recommended Guidelines to be reviewed and enforced as outlined above.
- Every event to include reminders to participants regarding physical distancing requirements and include no spitting, no face touching, no contact between the athletes.
- Attendance must be taken and kept at every event for all people in attendance including parents (drivers). These records must be kept for 30 days before being destroyed.
- No team huddles before, during or after the game for coaching or teaching purposes unless physical distancing requirements are adhered to.
- No dugout use permitted. Athletes must be set up outside of the dugout with physical distancing requirements adhered to.

- No shared use of personal equipment.
- No plate meetings pre-game for lineup exchanges unless physical distancing requirements are adhered to.
- No mound visits by catcher or coach unless physical distancing requirements are adhered to.
- No postgame handshakes.
- A new or disinfected baseball should be entered into the game for every ball put in play.
- Any team issue bats should be sanitized prior to every event and between every use by different athletes.
- All players to sanitize their hands when returning to the dugout from the field, after each at bat and as required.
- All scorekeeping, announcing and scoreboards operation to be performed outside and not in buildings or booths with social distancing requirements in mind.
- Umpires to work from behind the mound at an appropriate distance from others.
- Regional or Community based programming only. Limited travel. No overnight trips.
- No tournaments permitted.
- All field prep equipment to be disinfected and cleaned after every use.

The recommendations and guidelines in this phase are subject to change.

VIASPORT PHASE 4

Phase 4 in the viaSport Guidelines is referred to as "New Normal – Future Date TBA"

Important to note about this phase is the following:

- Refer to PHO or local health authorities for current restrictions.
- Large groups allowed.
- No restrictions on spectators.
- No restrictions on activity types.
- Provincial competitions and larger scale events may return
- Shared equipment permitted.

See the viaSport Guidelines for all the requirements of this phase.

BASEBALL BC PHASE 4

Traditional programming, including league play and championships can resume.

Some restrictions may be required.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND GUIDELINES – FACILITY ADAPTATIONS

The following guidelines and recommendations are provided for organizations, local associations and clubs and are suggested to be considered and incorporated in every phase of Return to Play.

These recommendations and guidelines are in addition to the viaSport guidelines for facility access and use (see page 10)

- Facilities with multiple fields will need to ensure no cross over of scheduling leads to a situation where the restrictions related to group size are broken.
- Signage advising and educating on COVID-19 wellness, hygiene, and social distancing measures should be in place at every field and facility utilized.
- Use cones and other equipment or markings to ensure appropriate spacing is in place to support distancing.
- All fan seating should be configured with social distancing requirements adhered to.
- Directional traffic flow plan and markers may be required in high pedestrian traffic areas
- Field allotments must be modified to allow for all events to stay under the 50 person social gathering limits. It is suggested that you move to 1.5 times the traditional allotment window.
- No gathering should be permitted around the park until the scheduled start time of any event (please consider having arriving participants wait in their car until after the group ahead has vacated).
- Athletes should leave the park immediately after the practice or game.
- Concessions should only be opened or provided through approval of the respective health department.
- Washrooms (if the responsibility of the club or local association) need a defined cleaning schedule at a minimum of twice daily. **See municipal and health authority requirements for washrooms.**
- Water fountains (if present) should be used for only filling of water bottles. Signage should be placed advising not to drink from. **See municipal and health authority requirements for water fountains.**

DISCLAIMER

While we aim to provide relevant and timely information, because information known about the COVID-19 coronavirus and recommended health and safety measures can rapidly change no guarantee can be given as to the accuracy or completeness of any information provided.

It is important to note that the Guidelines are not a legal document and is to be used as a guide only. It is not a substitute for actual legislation or orders of the PHO. In the event of an ambiguity or conflict between the Guidelines and the Public Health Act, regulations or orders thereunder, the Act, regulations and orders prevail. Each Organization should comply with the requirements of the provincial and local government and health officials in terms of public gatherings and sporting events when determining when it is safe to return to activities.

Nothing in this document is intended to provide legal advice. Do not rely on this document or treat it as legal advice.

Anyone using the Guidelines does so at his or her own risk. Baseball BC shall not be responsible for any loss or damage of any kind arising directly or indirectly from the use of the Guidelines including, without limitation, reliance on the completeness or accuracy of the information provided.