APHA 2020 Return to Play –Tryout/Evaluation Protocols

The novel coronavirus (“COVID-19”) has been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization. COVID-19 is extremely contagious and spreads most commonly (but not solely) through respiratory droplets generated through coughing, sneezing, laughing and talking during close interactions. COVID-19 can cause severe illness. The spread of COVID-19 can be reduced by following the protective practices outlined below.

Following the approval of the Hockey Manitoba Return to Play –Phase 2 on August 12th, we are now allowed to conduct evaluations. The primary concern of the board of APHA is the health and safety of our staff, coaches, athletes and their families. We are also committed to providing our athletes with the opportunity to play hockey but that will require a new way to participate in the game. APHA will continue to adapt to the public health measures as they evolve. During the evaluation phase of this year’s season, the following measures must be followed by participants, organizers and volunteers. Most importantly, people who are ill should NOT participate in or be spectators at our events. If your child was not well enough to attend school they should not attend hockey. Likewise, anyone who has been in contact with someone who is sick or not feeling well should not participate. We require those who have symptoms or have potentially been exposed to stay at home until their criteria to discontinue isolation have been met, as determined thru consultation with the local public health authority or their health care provider. Additionally, for everyone’s safety, adherence to the following rules and regulations and those of hosting arena facilities is mandatory. Failure to adhere to these will result in your family’s suspension from the program without refund. If you do not agree with these and or have no intention of following these please do not register;

● All facility staff, players, coaches, officials, volunteers, and spectators must use the Province of Manitoba Online Screening Tool before attending any facility in where APHA sanctioned activities are to take place

● All clothing, uniforms and gear should be washed/cleaned/disinfected between each

use.

● No sharing of water or equipment between participants. Bottles should be labelled.

● The number of spectators allowed during evaluations is limited to one parent and/or guardian per family

● The separation of non family participants by a distance of 2 metres/6 feet while attending is required at all times.

● Participants may only consume their own water and food which must be brought from home.

● No spitting is permitted on or off the ice.

● Participants should dress at home and entry to the facilities is prohibited until 20 minutes prior to your evaluation

● Masks should be worn at all times in the tryout facility by all spectators and players when they’re not on the ice. No mask no entry.

● Families are required to read and understand the Hockey Manitoba Return to Play Guidelines before participating in any APHA-sanctioned activities

●Adults are asked to let the children exit the playing surface before leaving the stands. They are asked to then leave the facility and wait for their child outside the arena. Some flexibility will be afforded for adults responsible for younger children who may need assistance.

Athlete Numbers will be limited to the maximum number of athletes for that age groups/levels maximum allowable roster size. Half-Ice evaluations may be conducted. In that situation, both halves are permitted to have a full roster participating on the ice. In this situation, both “teams” would be required to remain on their half of the ice and there would be no interaction between the two rosters for the duration of the evaluation. The two teams sharing the ice would NOT be permitted to scrimmage against each other.

Athlete Groupings; During all tryout/evaluations in Phase 2 of RTP athletes will be in cohorts for each round of tryouts/evaluation. Cohorts would consist of one full roster of athletes and this group of athletes would have no interaction with athletes in the other cohorts for that round of tryouts/evaluations. This will prevent unnecessary interaction between athletes throughout each round of tryouts.

Ice Session Content; The following types of activity are permitted during tryout/evaluation ice sessions during Phase 2 and perhaps eventually Phase 3: Phase 2–Individual skill development, flow drills, competitive non-contact drills, team tactics, small area games with limited numbers, scrimmages. Phase 3-adds, competitive/battle drills and exhibition games.During phase 2 RTP evaluations our evaluators will strive to ensure;

● Players will be well spaced entering the ice surface from the dressing room.

● Players and coaches will observe physical distancing recommendations as much as possible while on the ice. Coaches will minimize chalk talk sessions or time at the board where athletes are required to congregate. Coaches are aware of physical distancing requirements and should speak to athletes from at least two metres away.

● Benches will be limited to up to 10 participants (including coaches/staff).

● We will reduce the use of contact or battle drills that do not allow for physical distancing.

● When leaving the ice, coaches will excuse players one-by-one in an orderly fashion to ensure athletes are given appropriate time to exit the ice surface without congregating. Adequate time will be allotted to ensure this can be done.

Stations–In both phases stations will be a main aspect of the ice session structure for tryout/evaluation skates. A strong emphasis will be placed on ensuring that athletes are not spending long periods of time waiting in lines and stationary around other athletes.

Exhibition Games/Scrimmages

Phase 2–During Phase 2 of RTP we are NOT permitted to run exhibition games as a part of the tryout/evaluation process, rather will run scrimmages as a part of practice for the purpose of evaluation. Scrimmages will be defined as: Non-contact, heavily controlled full-ice play that can be formatted as 5-v-5, 4-v-4 or 3-v-3. The number of athletes participating in the scrimmage CANNOT exceed one roster consisting of the maximum roster size for that particular level of hockey. During a scrimmage, the maximum number of individuals allowed on the bench cannot exceed 10 players, coaches, or team staff.

Phase 3 (if approved)–During Phase 3 of RTP we WILL be permitted to run exhibition games as a part of the tryout/evaluation process. Exhibition games will be defined as; Regular game protocols while adhering to social distancing guidelines. Number of athletes participating in the exhibition games cannot exceed two rosters consisting of the maximum roster size for that particular level of hockey.

APHA has a Tryout Communications Officer to handle all of the RPT and safety protocols related to COVID-19 during the tryout process. Following team formation these responsibilities will shift to the Communications Officer for each team who will we reporting to the association Coordinator as needed.

Given the uncertainty we face, the team formation process may be adapted to fit the timeline set out by Hockey Winnipeg. This will include a minimum of 2 evaluations. Tryouts will emphasize skating and puck skills, with some time dedicated to smaller area games/scrimmages. Scrimmages may be 3 on 3, 4 on 4, or 5 on 5. In the case that a player must miss a tryout skate(s) due to self isolation, the APHA will use all available data to help place the player at the appropriate level. This could include past tryouts and conversations with the previous year’s coaches.