



HOCKEY EASTERN ONTARIO

RETURN to HOCKEY

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Return to Hockey Stage 4 Framework for Minor, Junior, Para, and Special Hockey

Revised January 31, 2022

SECTION 1

Purpose

Hockey Eastern Ontario (HEO), as one of Ontario’s recognized Provincial Sport Organizations (PSO), has worked in conjunction with Hockey Canada, the National Sport Organization (NSO) for hockey, and the Ontario Government to ensure that in every phase of our return, the safety of our Players, Coaches, Officials, Administrators and Volunteers are at the center of our planning and decision making. This plan focuses on making the return to hockey fluid while enhancing the experience for all of our members at the Minor, Junior, Para, or Special Hockey Levels.

SECTION 2

Disclaimer

The information in this document is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Hockey Eastern Ontario makes no representation and assume no responsibility in respect of their information concerning COVID-19 as the circumstances are constantly changing, and any information on COVID-19 should be obtained from your Public Health Authority.

As Provincial Legislation and Public Health requirements are continuously evolving this document will remain fluid and all updates to the document will be communicated to our membership via bulletin.

SECTION 3

Framework for Return to Hockey

The impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak have been felt across Ontario, by families, workers, businesses, and communities. Our hockey family has also felt the impacts of this.

COVID-19 has created a unique situation for every person, business, and government body to deal with. Sport for our youth and adults alike closed on March 12, 2020 with no identified return. While the situation is still evolving, HEO continues to work with its partners to prepare for a return to programming with the necessary measures in response to COVID-19.

Our plan recognizes that although hockey was shut down while we were playing 5 on 5 traditional hockey, our return to traditional hockey will be by way of a planned phased in approach. Hockey Eastern Ontario has developed a phased approach to return with programming aligned to the Ontario Government - Framework for the Reopening of Ontario.

HEO has adopted the following principles in developing our plan for Return to Hockey:

- Safety is our first consideration. We will respect all of the mandatory requirements set out by the Province of Ontario and Hockey Canada.
- Flexibility is key in supporting our 11 Minor Districts, over 60 Minor Hockey Associations, 15 Minor competitive and House Leagues, our three Junior Leagues, and our associate members Para and Special Hockey to implement programming that can range from developmental to scrimmaging to modified game play/competition, as and when needs, circumstances and resources permit.
- Responsiveness. Our plan needs to stand ready to respond to expansion AND contraction of Provincial Public Health direction. Our COVID19 situation in each of our four public health units across eastern Ontario, and in the province as a whole, can change quickly. Our plan needs to provide HEO Members with the ability to expand or contract their hockey programming in step with Provincial Public Health direction.

HEO Mandatory Regulations

- All Team Staff must wear masks at all times; however, masks may be removed while taking part in on-ice activities.
- All registered participants 12 years of age or older must be fully vaccinated from COVID-19. Only Health Canada approved vaccines will be accepted. Provincially legislated effective December 20th, 2021.
- Teams/Associations are responsible to verify the vaccination status of all participants and members (this includes parents, guardians, siblings and extended family), who may attend team functions.
- Effective January 4th, 2022, the enhanced COVID-19 vaccine certificate (with an official QR code) as proof of vaccination along with identification showing a person's Date of Birth issued by an institution or public body are required to enter a recreation or sports facility. If applicable, the official QR code must contain a Province of Ontario approved exemption.
- Only an enhanced COVID-19 vaccine certificate with official QR code in digital or printed format shall be accepted.
- Teams will be required to re-verify the COVID-19 vaccination status of members and participants by using the enhanced COVID-19 vaccine certificate with QR code and record that verification has been achieved.
- This re-verification will need to be completed prior to a team's first session coming out of the pause on February 1, 2022.
- Association, District, League, Team designated Safety Officers, as applicable, must download and use the Verify Ontario mobile app to scan and confirm that an individual's QR code meets the Ontario government's requirements for entry into recreation and sports facilities, which may also be in accordance with contract holder agreements. [Download the Verify Ontario mobile app](#)
- Players must wear masks while not actively participating in an on-ice activity.
- Players must bring their own properly labelled water bottle.
- Facilities are responsible to administer the amount of people inside a facility; all members must adhere to the Facility and Public Health Guidelines and Regulations.
- Pre or post game handshakes should be done with gloves on in a fist bump manner.

Hockey Canada Mandatory Regulations

- All Minor Hockey Players must be registered with their Local MHA for the 2021/2022 season to be eligible to take part in any sessions. **The start of the 2021/2022 insurance season is September 1st, 2021.**
- Regular HEO/Hockey Canada NCCP On-Line Coach Training is required, this includes Respect in Sport, Gender Identity and Expression, and Rowan's Law Acknowledgment.
- Officials must be properly registered and certified for 2021/2022. (As per Hockey Canada Guidelines).

- All Coaches, Officials, and Team Staff are required to take the Hockey University COVID-19 Planning a Safe Return to Hockey on-line Module.

Stage 4 – Traditional Hockey – July 16, 2021

This stage will involve the return of traditional hockey. Any such return will be in compliance with the Ontario Government Emergency Order and HEO policies. We will continue to update this section as the Provincial Legislation and Regional health directives are updated.

- Hockey Returns to Normal
- 5-vs-5 hockey
- Body contact/checking allowed at appropriate levels
- Cross USA/Canada border player movement will be decided on a case-by-case basis. International border regulations must be adhered to.

This chart illustrates all the steps that our Teams, Association, Leagues, and Hockey Eastern Ontario took to get to Stage 4 of our Framework.

Stage	Date	Outline	Player Contact	# of Participants	Structure	Travel	Safety Protocols
Return to Ice	2 June/July/ August 21 st	Strict Individual On-Ice Physical Distancing Skill Development Only Off-ice Training & Activity Limited/No Use of Bench Variety of On-Ice Set Ups	None	10 Total participants include staff, Increased numbers as Public Health permits	Rinks Opening Private Instruction	None Community Based Only	** Must be Followed
Return to Practice	3A August 21 st – October 1 st	On-Ice Physical Distancing No Body Contact permitted Skill Development/Drills Competitive Tryout camps Off-ice Training and Activity	None	Groups or Cohorts not to exceed 50 people Must follow individual facility requirements facility guidelines	MHA/Leagues/Teams Cohort Groups	None Community Based Only	** Must be Followed
Return to Play	3B October 1 st - TBD	No On-Ice Physical Distancing No Body Contact permitted Regular Practice Off-ice Training & Activity Competition May be Modified Limited or Normal Use of Bench	None	May be Limited/Defined based on Public Health Guidelines	MHA/Leagues/Teams Modified Game Player Cohort Groups No Tournaments or Jamborees	None Community Based Only	** Must be Followed
Return to Regular Competition	4 July 16, 2021	No On-Ice Physical Distancing Regular Practice Off-ice Training & Activity Standard Competition Normal Use of Bench	Allowed	Regular Team Sizes	MHA/Leagues/Leagues Regular Game Play	Travel permitted Tournaments	** Must be Followed

Stage 4 – Traditional Hockey – Safety Protocols

Below are the minimum required safety protocols as per the Province of Ontario's Amended O. Reg. 364/20.

- Teams must have a designated Safety Officer (responsible for Screening and maintaining Participant Logs, and enforcement of all HEO and facility safety protocols).
- All registered participants 12 years of age or older must be fully vaccinated from COVID-19. Only Health Canada Approved Vaccines will be accepted. Provincially legislated effective December 20th, 2021.
- As required by the Province of Ontario, effective January 4th, 2022, the enhanced COVID-19 vaccine certificate (with an official QR code) as proof of vaccination along with identification showing a person's name and Date of Birth issued by an institution or public body are required to enter a recreation and sports facility. If applicable, the official QR code must contain a Province of Ontario approved exemption.
- Only an enhanced COVID-19 vaccine certificate with official QR code in digital or printed format shall be accepted.
- Association, District, League, Team designated Safety Officers, as applicable, must download and use the Verify Ontario mobile app to scan and confirm that an individual's QR code meets the Ontario government's requirements for entry into recreation and sports facilities. This may also be in accordance with contract holder agreements. [Download the Verify Ontario mobile app](#)
- Teams/Associations are responsible to verify the vaccination status of all participants and members (this includes parents, guardians, siblings and extended family), who may attend team functions). Teams will be required to re-verify the COVID-19 vaccination status of members and participants by using the enhanced COVID-19 vaccine certificate with QR code, and record that verification has been achieved. This re-verification will need to be completed before a team's first session coming out of the pause on February 1, 2022.
- Associations must have a designated Safety Officer(s) during the Tryout/Sort out process (responsible for Screening and maintaining Participant Logs, and enforcement of all safety protocols).
- COVID-19 screening must occur before anyone may participate in any sanctioned event. The following Province of Ontario COVID-19 self-assessment screening tool can be used: [Province of Ontario COVID-19 Self-Assessment](#).
- Teams/Associations must maintain a participation log for all participants involved in a game, practice, or off-ice event.
- Logs must have full name and contact information of each participant and must be retained for 30 days.
- Home team is responsible to log all participants (home & away) for games they host. And ensure that screening was completed with the Visiting team.
- On Ice Officials must be recorded in the Home Team's Participant Log.

- Masks must always be worn inside a facility while not taking part in games or practices. Masks must be worn, and social distancing maintained when in dressing rooms. Due to potential space limitations that may exist in dressing rooms, it is still encouraged for players and team officials to put on their equipment as much as is practically possible before a tryout, evaluation, or team event, before entering the facility. **(Please consult with your local facility for all required safety protocols).**
- On-Ice Officials are encouraged to pre-dress before an event if physical distancing cannot be maintained in the dressing room. Masks must be worn at all times while not engaged in game play. **(Please consult with your local facility for all required safety protocols).**
- Coaches, Trainers, Athletic Therapists, Off-Ice officials should wear masks on the Players' Bench and Penalty Box area.

(Please consult with your local facility for all required safety protocols).

- Minimize social gatherings of participants and spectators both before and after the activity. This includes spectator areas and the parking lot.
- Limit carpooling and meals (in homes or at restaurants) to those within your household. Reserve carpooling with one (1) other household if there are transportation barriers.
- If travelling as a team by bus, please adhere to all physical distancing guidelines, and wear masks if physical distancing is not possible. Follow the bus operator's safety protocols.
- Clean and disinfect equipment between uses.
- Do not share your sports gear with other people. If necessary, shared equipment should be sanitized between users.
- Water Bottles must be clearly labelled with the participant's name. Water bottles cannot ever be shared.

Facility operators are responsible to interpret and enforce all Provincial and local Public Health Safety Requirements. It is imperative that all Associations, Leagues, and Teams work very closely with and adhere to a facility's COVID safety protocol requirements.

Insurance

Under Hockey Canada's current General Liability policy, the following is the definition for 'bodily injury':

“Bodily Injury” means bodily injury, sickness, disease, mental injury, mental anguish or nervous shock sustained by a person, including death resulting from any of these at any time.

As it relates to COVID-19, that would fall within the definition – more specifically, under disease.

Liability claims against Hockey Canada always need to be proven by the third party, so continuing to update and enforce risk-management guidelines as new risks emerge, such as COVID-19, are imperative. Understand that Hockey Canada and its Members are actively working on updating risk-management protocols related to Return to

Hockey guidelines post-COVID-19.

As with all claim scenarios, the insurance company would investigate all claims presented against any Member of Hockey Canada that falls within the ‘bodily injury’ definition and would confirm coverage based on the framing of the allegations.

It will also be important to review new municipal rink/private rink facility contracts post-COVID-19 for all rentals; in all likelihood, they will now contain a new clause which absolves the municipality/private facility owners of any liability related to COVID-19.

New lease agreements will need to be carefully scrutinized given that organizations will potentially have little control over cleaning/sanitizing of rented premises and shouldn’t be expected to take on all liability related to COVID-19 in these facilities.

Finally, it should be noted that many insurance companies are implementing Communicable Disease/COVID-19 exclusions on all policies either immediately, or upon renewal. Hockey Canada can advise that AIG, who is Hockey Canada’s primary General Liability insurer, has agreed to waive this exclusion in the General Liability policy until Sept. 1, 2023. Hockey Canada will NOT have this exclusion in its policy until that date, at the earliest.

Hygiene Guidelines

Proper hygiene can help reduce the risk of infection or spreading infection to others. It is important to be familiar with facility guidelines and requirements specific to the prevention and spread of COVID-19.

- Wear your mask at all times when in the facility except when on the players’ bench or on the ice as a player. Team officials and office officials are required to wear their masks at all times when in a facility.
- Practice physical distancing (2 metre minimum) whenever possible.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the washroom and when preparing food.
- Disinfect your hands using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

When coughing or sneezing

- Cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of the arm, not the hand.
- Dispose of any used tissues as soon as possible in a wastebasket and wash or disinfect your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching the eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.

Stay Home When Sick

- Stay at home and do not attend any games, practices or team functions when you are sick. Particularly if you are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or other respiratory illnesses (e.g., influenza, flu).

- You have recently tested positive for COVID-19.
- Are awaiting a COVID-19 test result.
- Have been instructed to quarantine or isolate by your physician or local public health authority.
- If you are sick, please contact your coach, team or Association Safety Officer.

Equipment

- Water bottles must be filled at home and labeled with the player's name. The sharing of water bottles is prohibited.
- The sharing of hockey equipment (e.g., Goalie equipment) is prohibited.
- Where possible, players, coaches, and officials should plan to arrive and depart the facility dressed in their hockey equipment.
- While on the ice, participants must always leave their helmet and gloves on.
- To limit touchpoints during and after hockey-related activities, coaches should keep, distribute, and collect each piece of on-ice equipment that belongs to their team (e.g., coaching whiteboard, cones, pucks).

Screening

The screening of a team's players, coaches, officials, and administrators is mandatory. A health questionnaire must be filled out. This can be done electronically or in person prior to every single activity. See Appendix 1 or the Province of Ontario COVID-19 self-assessment screening tool: [Province of Ontario COVID-19 Self-Assessment](#).

Before you consider playing hockey:

Participants exhibiting signs and symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should not be present at any facility or hockey function. This includes anyone attending the programs such as players, team officials, coaches, volunteers, parents/guardians, Association/League members etc.

A coach should be prepared to require that anyone exhibiting signs or symptoms of illness to leave the practice/activity.

If participants do not feel well or have identified symptoms, ensure they advise team staff immediately and put on a proper mask. They should immediately go home and follow-up with their physician and local public health unit. Participants are to quarantine or isolate as required by the local public health authority.

Facility staff should be provided with an incident report based on facility protocol prior to the coaching staff leaving the facility.

Effective December 20, 2021, as required by the Province of Ontario, everyone 12 years and older must be fully vaccinated (must have received both doses of a two dose vaccine) and provide proof of vaccination along with identification showing a person's name and Date of Birth issued by an institution or public body on each visit to a

recreation or sport facility. This now includes youth actively participating in sanctioned programs and indoor organized sport (training, practices, games, tournaments and competitions). Under this legislation, players, coaches, officials and team volunteers are now required to show proof of vaccination. The provincial legislation does not currently apply to children 11 years old and younger (proof of ID showing name and age may be required).

Effective January 4th, 2022, the Province of Ontario's Proof of Vaccination Policy requires individuals to show their enhanced COVID-19 vaccine certificate (with an official QR code) in digital or printed format as proof of vaccination along with identification to enter recreation and sport facilities.

HEO recommends that everyone should receive their COVID-19 booster vaccinations when eligible.



COVID-19 Screening Tool for Schools/Child Care

Please complete the following questions DAILY before sending your child to school/child care

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In the last 10 days,

- Has your child been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19?
- Has your child received a COVID Alert exposure notification on their cell phone?

Yes

No

For either of the above questions, if your child is fully vaccinated, is not immunocompromised, (e.g., organ or stem cell transplantation recipients, undergoing chemotherapy or immunosuppressive therapies), and has not been advised to self-isolate by their doctor, health care provider or public health unit select "No."



In the last 10 days, has your child tested positive on a rapid antigen test or a home-based self-testing kit?

Yes

No



In the last 14 days, has your child travelled outside of Canada?

- If your child is fully vaccinated and was not told to quarantine (as per the federal quarantine requirements), select "No."
- If your child is not fully vaccinated **OR** was told to quarantine (as per the federal quarantine requirements), select "Yes."

Yes

No



Has a doctor, health care provider, or public health unit told your child that they should currently be isolating or staying at home? (This can be because of an outbreak, contact tracing, or after testing positive on a rapid antigen test.)

Yes

No

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Is anyone they live with currently experiencing any new COVID-19 symptoms and/or waiting for test results after experiencing symptoms?

- If your child is fully vaccinated, is not immunocompromised, and has not been advised to self-isolate by their doctor, health care provider or public health unit select "No."
- If the individual experiencing symptoms received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and is experiencing mild headache, fatigue, muscle aches, and/or joint pain that only began after vaccination, select "No."

Yes

No

If you said yes to **ANY** of the questions above, stay home and visit [OttawaPublicHealth.ca/SchoolsCovid19](https://ottawapublichealth.ca/SchoolsCovid19) for further guidance. If you have questions, call Ottawa Public Health at 613-580-6744.

If your child is feeling unwell and you have questions, contact your health care provider or call **Telehealth Ontario** at **1-866-797-0000** to speak to a registered nurse.

COVID-19 Screening Tool for Schools/Child Care

Please complete the following questions DAILY before sending your child to school/child care

1 Does your child have any of the following COVID-19 symptoms (not related to other known causes or conditions)?



Yes
No

Fever/Chills (temperature of 37.8°C/
100.0°F degrees or higher)



Yes
No

Cough or barking cough that is
continuous or more than usual (not
related to asthma, post-infectious
reactive airways)



Yes
No

Difficulty breathing/ shortness
of breath; out of breath, unable
to breathe deeply, wheezing
(not related to asthma)



Yes
No

Decrease or loss of taste or smell
(not related to allergies, neurological
disorders)



Yes
No

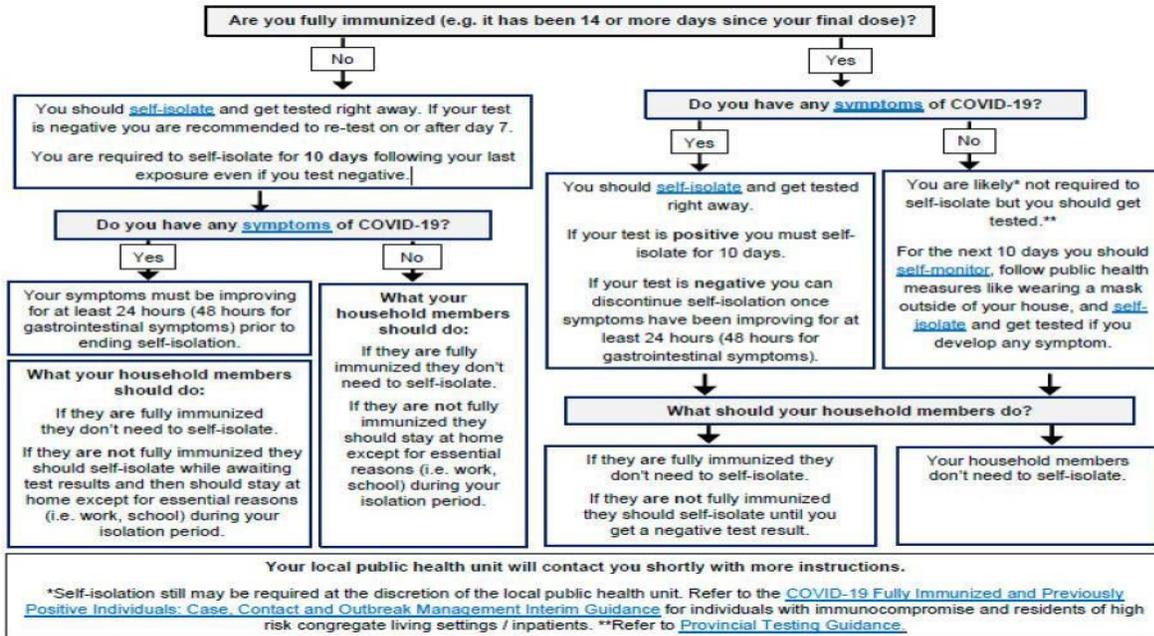
Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea, (not
related to anxiety, irritable bowel,
menstrual cramps)

If you said yes to **ANY** of these symptoms, your child **CANNOT** attend school/child care today and **SHOULD** get tested for COVID-19 as soon as possible. Household contacts who are not fully vaccinated, or household contacts who are fully vaccinated* and have symptoms of COVID-19, must also isolate at home until test results are received. Visit OttawaPublicHealth.ca/COVIDcentre to book your appointment.

*Please note, **fully vaccinated** means that it has been **at least 14 days since** you received:

- the full series of a COVID-19 vaccine authorized by Health Canada (e.g., 2 doses of Moderna, Pfizer-BioNTech or AstraZeneca / COVISHIELD, **OR** 1 dose of Janssen [Johnson & Johnson]) or any combination of such vaccines, **OR**
- one or two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada (e.g., Sinopharm) followed by one dose of a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine authorized by Health Canada (e.g., Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna) **OR**
- three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada (e.g., Abdala).

You've been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, now what?



PLEASE NOTE THAT FACILITIES ARE FULLY RESPONSIBLE TO INTERPRET AND ENFORCE THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO'S REGULATION AMENDED O. REG. 364/20

Facilities

Public and Private facilities that are providing training to hockey need to ensure that they maintain their own insurance on their facility and are in compliance with the Ministry of Labour Protocols and those protocols specific to the Ontario Government Emergency Order.

All hockey programming providers that are sanctioned by the Provincial Sport Organizations in Ontario will:

1. be listed on the HEO website and will be able to present a Hockey Canada Insurance Certificate and PSO Certificate of Sanctioning.
2. be required to complete a tracking document of participant use and an ice surface by ice surface training attendance form; and
3. be required to have a COVID-19 Contact Person.

Facilities are directed to utilize the information provided by the Ontario Recreation Facilities Association (ORFA) as an industry standard material: [ORFA Re-entering and Reopening](#).

Ontario Ice Sports Harmonized Ice Sports Facility Procedures

Facility Entrance - No Dressing Rooms - Come Dressed – Entrance to Arena is based on facility plan and all sport groups collectively are required to have a meeting with the facility based on the following agenda.

- Parking Lot Entrance
- Entrance Doors
- Entrance Process
- Entrance Time
- Changing of equipment location process
- Dropping off Minor participants – Parents/Attendance – number of attendees permitted to support and watch
- Conduct of Parents in the stands (i.e. food and beverage maintaining facility cleanliness)
- Items allowed in the facility (bags, food, and beverage)

Other Facility Specific Issues

- Tenant Dressing Room Requirements must be dealt with in a meeting with facility to determine contractual agreements on responsibilities.

- Elite hockey rental requirements (i.e. longer break if require warm-ups)
- Look to plan for longer Ice-times rental
- Warming up within the facility

Reporting of incidents of injury or COVID-19 to facility personnel.

Chief Medical Officer

Mandate:

The Chief Medical Officer is responsible for providing the Hockey Eastern Ontario's Board and staff with medical advice and comprehension regarding decisions and the impact of those decisions due to COVID-19 and the direction from the Ontario Government and Public Health Authorities.

Key Duties:

- Act as the medical consultant for the Member with respect to COVID-19 with the mandate to abide by the Ontario Government and Public Health.
- Maintain professional status and be in good standing with their respective licensing College.
- Be the medical spokesperson for the Member.
- Advise the Member on risk management issues especially with respect to medical issues.
- Advise the Member on research projects and issues especially with respect to medical issues.
- Advise the Member on event sanctioning.
- Act as a consultant for international tournaments held in the Members jurisdiction.
- Act as a liaison with the Hockey Canada Chief Medical Officer concerning medical issues.
- Such additional duties as may be delegated to the Chief Medical Officer by the Member from time to time.

Authority:

The Chief Medical Officer will exercise their authority as set out by any Hockey Canada or Member regulation or in accordance with this job description.

Appointment:

For the role of Chief Medical Officer there will be a short canvassing period of the general membership in HEO. Based on the potential candidates the Chief Medical Officer shall be appointed by the Members Chair of the Board, in consultation with the CEO/EDs, for a one-year term that is renewable. The Chief Medical Officer has no voting rights.

Meetings:

The Chief Medical Officer will attend meetings in person and via conference call, via invitation from any of the Task Team Chair, or the Chair of the Board.

Resources:

The Chief Medical Officer will receive the necessary resources from the Member to the extent approved in the annual budget, to fulfill his or her mandate. They will also receive the necessary administrative support from the Members office.

Reporting: The Chief Medical Officer will report to the Members Board as required and to the CEO/ED.

Requirements:

The Chief Medical Officer will be licensed to practice as a Physician in the Province of Ontario. Experience as a Sport.

Medicine Physician and membership in CASEM will be considered an asset.

Hockey Canada Safety Guidelines

Safety and Protocols for a Return to hockey

Where to get a Vaccine and Booster

Ontario

Ottawa Public Health

Eastern Ontario Health

Renfrew County Health

Leeds Grenville Health