



OCTOBER 7, 2020

## MASSACHUSETTS HOCKEY COVID-19 POLICY

Massachusetts Hockey, Inc. is committed to providing a safe environment for its participants/spectators, consistent with all applicable standards, mandates and best practices.

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) has issued Workplace Safety and Reopening Standards for Businesses and Other Entities Providing Youth and Adult Amateur Sports Activities – Phase III, Step 1 (copy attached). These standards require that Minimum Mandatory Standards for Modification to Play be met to allow ice hockey facilities to operate and continue to operate.

Pursuant these standards, Ice Hockey has been designated as a Higher Risk sports and recreational activity. The standards include Social Distancing, Hygiene, Staffing and Operations, Cleaning and Disinfecting, and Protective Equipment and Facial Covering standards, there are Protective Equipment and Facial Covering for All Sports. There are standards relating to Protective Equipment and Facial Coverings that are specifically applicable to ice hockey games.

Pursuant to the standards:

Facial coverings **must be worn by all participants** except:

- During high intensity aerobic or aerobic activities, swimming, water polo, water aerobics or other sports where individuals are in the water; or
- When distancing of 6 feet or more is possible between participants whenever feasible; or
- For individuals that are unable to wear a face covering due to a medical condition or disability

Otherwise, Activity Organizers **must require facial coverings to be worn while engaged in an activity wherever possible.**

Some sports by their nature involve intense aerobic activity throughout play. For these sports, it is required that players use facial coverings when possible, taking frequent breaks when they are out of proximity to other players using caution to avoid touching the front or inside of the face covering by using the ties or ear loops to remove and replace. For example, soccer players should have facial coverings with them at all times, and where possible play with the facial covering on, removing it for long runs down the field, for plays without close contact, and in the goal; baseball/softball batters must wear facial coverings while at bat; lacrosse or **hockey players participating in face-offs must wear facial coverings. Participants for ALL SPORTS must wear facial coverings on the bench at all times and in any huddles or time-outs.**

Coaches, staff, referees, umpires, and other officials are required to wear facial coverings and maintain social distancing of 6 feet from players, coaches, spectators, and other persons at all times.



Massachusetts Hockey, Inc. expects that all ice facilities, leagues, associations, coaches, referees, timekeepers, players, volunteers, parents and spectators, will abide by all government, USA Hockey and Massachusetts Hockey, standards, rules, policies and procedures related to the current COVID-19 pandemic.

This encompasses all mandates, restrictions and standards issued by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, including those issued by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts EEA in its Workplace Safety and Reopening Standards for Businesses and Other Entities Providing Youth and Adult Amateur Sports Activities – Phase III, Step 1, and subsequently issued Phases, Steps, updates, cancellations and/or revisions thereto.

While rink operators may bear the ultimate responsibility for the implementation of the applicable standards within their ice facilities, as a condition of their facilities being allowed to remain open, activity organizers, including coaches, teams, leagues and associations shall likewise be responsible for ensuring their members implement the Commonwealth of Massachusetts EEA standards and guidance during all hockey activities within any ice facility, including both on the ice and bench during games. The activity organizer, including coaches, shall be responsible for ensuring the standards are being followed on the bench and ice during games.

No player(s) shall be allowed to take a face-off if not wearing a face covering. Any player that lines up to take a face-off draw without a face covering shall be ejected by the referee from the face-off circle and another player shall take the face-off draw. Massachusetts Hockey considers a face covering to be a piece of Protective Equipment as described in USA Hockey Playing Rule 304. After the first ejection from the face-off circle, the corresponding bench shall be warned, and further violations of these standards may result in a penalty for an equipment violation pursuant to Rule 304(g)1 – Protective Equipment.

As provided on the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' website

- If you would like to report a sports league, team, business or workplace that is noncompliant with the [Sports Guidance](#), issued by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, please reach out to [the Local Board of Health](#) where the non-compliance occurred.
- After contacting your local board of health, you may contact the Department of Labor Standards (DLS) through their hotline: (508) 616-0461 x 9488 or by sending an email to [safepublicworkplacemailbox@mass.gov](mailto:safepublicworkplacemailbox@mass.gov). DLS will call or email you if an investigation is determined to be warranted within 72 hours if an investigation is warranted.

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*1 Rule 304(g) All players must wear the required, or recommended, protective equipment in the manner for which it is designed. For violation of this rule, following a team warning, a misconduct penalty for an equipment violation shall be imposed.*

