



INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

THESE INSTRUCTIONS AMEND AND REPLACE INSTRUCTIONS ISSUED OCTOBER 19, 2021
WITH THE SAME EFFECTIVE DATE OF NOVEMBER 26, 2021

DATE: November 2, 2021

EFFECTIVE: November 26, 2021 at 12:01 a.m.

TO: All persons responsible for businesses and organizations that are open with indoor areas of facilities used for Organized Sports and Recreational Fitness Activities¹ in Halton Region, including facility operators and permit holders

I recognize the importance of sports and recreational activities to physical and mental health for children of all ages. Organized Sports and Recreational Fitness Activities nonetheless bring with them specific risks, including high exertion and close contact (between participants and/or participants and coaches and others involved in such activities) that can increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Halton Region has experienced sports-related outbreaks, and recent outbreaks across the province demonstrate that this potential remains of significant public health concern. Those affected can include participants, coaches, officials, spectators and beyond, including throughout the province where these activities involve participants, teams, coaches, officials, spectators and others from outside Halton Region.

Current data from Ontario, across Canada and in other countries around the world make it clear that vaccination against COVID-19 for all those eligible is a crucial strategy for reducing the transmission of COVID-19 in Halton Region, reducing the impact of the fourth wave (including within our health care system) and preventing the need for stronger public health measures including business closures.

Robust compliance with other public health measures in all facilities used for sports and recreational fitness activities in Halton Region also remains essential to protect our community, especially children 11 years and younger who are not yet eligible for vaccination.

Although provincial regulations have now changed to remove capacity limits and requirements for physical distancing in facilities used for sports and recreational fitness activities, other important requirements for public health remain in place. These include the need for proof of vaccination, screening, masking, contact tracing, cleaning/disinfection and safety plans to describe the measures and procedures implemented to reduce the transmission risk of COVID-19. See [Ontario Regulation 364/20](#) issued under the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020* (ROA).

I also strongly encourage facilities used for Organized Sports and Recreational Fitness Activities (including facility operators and permit holders) to continue to implement physical distancing – a highly effective public health measure – to the fullest extent possible for all children 11 years and younger participating in Organized Sports and Recreational Fitness Activities or activities of any kind in which masking may be inconsistent.

Effective November 26, 2021 at 12:01 a.m., I therefore instruct all persons responsible for businesses and organizations that are open with indoor areas of facilities used for Organized

¹ These include (but are not limited to) extracurricular sports and recreational fitness activities, sports leagues, organized pick-up sports, dance classes, gymnastics, martial arts, swimming classes or as otherwise described in the Ministry of Health's [Proof of Vaccination Guidance for Businesses and Organizations under the Reopening Ontario Act](#), including all related training, practices, games and competitions.

Sports and Recreational Fitness Activities in Halton Region, including facility operators and permit holders as set out below.

Where these instructions impose one or more additional requirements not set out in the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020* (ROA) or ROA regulations, the requirement(s) under these instructions must be followed.

These instructions remain in effect until amended or rescinded by me.

PLEASE FOLLOW ALL INSTRUCTIONS CLOSELY

Proof of identification and vaccination against COVID-19

1. You must establish, implement and ensure compliance with a policy to require that each person 12 years and older who attends an indoor area of the facility for the purpose of:
 - a. actively participating in one or more Organized Sports and Recreational Fitness Activities; or
 - b. coaching, training, instructing, officiating or having similar involvement in Organized Sports and Recreational Fitness Activities,

provides, at the point of entry, identification and proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or a valid medical exemption each time they enter.

All children shall be afforded a “grace period” of 12 weeks from their 12th birthday during which they must provide identification in accordance with these Instructions but are relieved of the requirement to provide proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19, to allow a reasonable opportunity for this to be completed.

For guidance regarding what constitutes identification, proof of being fully vaccinated and a valid medical exemption, see the Ministry of Health’s [Proof of Vaccination Guidance for Businesses and Organizations under the Reopening Ontario Act](#).

Public health measures generally

2. You must comply with all requirements that apply to your facility as set out under the ROA and applicable regulations (including but not limited to [Ontario Regulation 364/20](#)), as well as the requirements set out in any applicable instructions I may issue including, but not limited to, these instructions and my instructions for all workplaces in Halton Region effective September 10, 2021 (as amended from time to time).
3. You must implement all COVID-19 prevention measures recommended for your sector in [provincial guidelines](#) and [Halton Region Public Health guidance](#) including but not limited to screening, physical distancing, wearing of masks and eye protection, wearing of other personal protective equipment (PPE), hand hygiene, infection prevention and control and a safety plan.

These measures will help to protect the health of all participants, coaches, officials, volunteers, spectators and others – including, importantly, people with weaker immune systems or who cannot be vaccinated

because of their age or for medical reasons. These measures will benefit all participants in these activities by helping to prevent interruptions and disruptions caused by outbreaks.

Ontario's ROA and *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* (EMCPA) require all persons responsible for a business or organization that is open to operate in compliance with the instructions of public health officials. That includes these instructions issued by me, rendered mandatory by sections 2(2) and (2.1), Schedules 1 and 4 of O.Reg. 364/20 as amended, issued under the ROA.

The Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health has been consulted before issuing these instructions.

These instructions will be enforced by public health officials and by provincial offences officers under one or more of the ROA (sections 9, 9.1, 10 and 10.1), EMCPA (sections 7.0.5 and 7.0.11) and/or the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* (sections 100, 101 and 102). Failure to comply is an offence. Among the enforcement actions that may be taken, you may be charged and penalties imposed including significant fines, imprisonment and/or closure of premises.

A failure to comply with regulations issued under the ROA is an offence punishable by set fines of \$750 for individuals and \$1,000 for corporations under Part I of the *Provincial Offences Act*. Maximum penalties for this offence if prosecuted under Part III of the *Provincial Offences Act* include: for individuals, a fine of up to \$100,000 and imprisonment for not more than one year; for an individual who is an officer or director of a corporation, a fine of up to \$500,000 and imprisonment for not more than one year; and for a corporation, a fine of up to \$10,000,000. A person is guilty of a separate offence on each day that the offence occurs or continues.

While I cannot provide you with an "end-date" for these instructions, I assure you that I will monitor local, provincial and national developments relevant to the spread of COVID-19 in Halton, as I have to date, and adjust our course accordingly. I may amend these instructions (if and as required) and will rescind them as soon I determine they are no longer necessary.

For more information, please visit halton.ca/COVID19 or call 311.



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This letter shall be posted at: halton.ca/COVID19