



Following continued consultation from our partners at the [Provincial Women's Softball Association \(PWSA\)](#), the [Town of Oakville](#) and our Board of Directors we are pleased to provide the following Return to Play Guidelines for the 2022 OGSA Softball Season. The purpose of this document is to outline plans, guidelines and procedures for our Return to Play, addressing key areas of concern with respect to physical distancing and to provide a certain level of comfort to participants by outlining steps to be taken to help maximize their safety and well-being and allows for any enhanced PWSA / Event protocols that we might develop or that the province of Ontario or Town of Oakville may require.

The protocols outlined in this document are to be respected and implemented by ALL MEMBERS within the OGSA. These protocols will be reviewed with coaches, parents, players and all members of the OGSA community. Further, signoff on these protocols will form part of the registration process for the 2022 season.

To ensure a safe experience for our members and players, we will be assigning a Safety Officer for each team to ensure the requirements below are met. Anyone who fails to adhere to these protocols may be subject to removal from the event in question by the Safety Officer and may face further sanctions from the OGSA up to and including relinquishment of membership and its privileges in addition to any Municipal or Provincial measures that may result from their actions.

To be clear, there will be ZERO TOLERANCE for failure to adhere to OGSA protocols and / or mistreatment of a Safety Officer, umpire, coach, OGSA member or Town Official.

1. ENTRY & GENERAL PARTICIPATION PROTOCOLS

Mandatory Provisions

- All persons entering a park or practice area must agree to be screened. Such screening may include a questionnaire regarding symptoms or exposure through to a temperature check by a designated OGSA official.
- **June 30, 2021 Update:** temperature screening is no longer required. Teams may use existing process for logging attendees / contact tracing OR use TeamSnap screening process. One of the two MUST be USED for Screening / Contact Tracing
- If an individual refuses to be screened they will not be allowed to access the park / practice area.
- At the outset of the season and subsequently as required by the OGSA participants (or their guardian) must sign a declaration / waiver that confirms they do not have or have not come in contact with someone with COVID-19 to the best of their knowledge. Any participant who has not signed the waiver at the required intervals is not eligible to participate
- The Safety Officer will collect the names of the attendees at each event and record them on the "COVID-19 Softball Screening Document". A record of each document will be retained should access be required at a later date during the season.
- The Safety Officer will ensure gathering numbers in the park meet Provincial and municipal guidelines for all teams. For example, the 'park' area consists of the space between parking lot and the field, inclusive of the playing field. For greater certainty, if the maximum is 10, we would enforce to that number inclusive of players, coaches, Safety Officer and parents. If the maximum number is reached, the Safety Officer shall stop the event until such time that the maximum number of attendees is respected

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- To ensure the safety of our players, members and the public, parents are asked to wait in their cars in the parking lot or at an offsite location to ensure we are compliant with maximum numbers allowed by Provincial and municipal jurisdiction.
- Where possible, signage will be displayed in the entry area with regards to the spreading of the virus, proper hygiene, information on physical distancing and what to do if you have any symptoms.
- When the Provincial and municipal authorities allow for Rep Team to play games, Rep Teams will only play teams approved to be within their Cohort, as assigned/approved by the PWSA.
 - Specifically, this will mean that should the government order the province or a specific region back to “gray” with a limit of 10 people per cohort; each team will uniquely identify the maximum of 10 rostered participants (including coaches), who will remain per cohort.

Other Provisions:

- Wellness testing will be conducted each time an athlete, coach, parent etc. attends a game, practice or tournament.
- If a person is denied entry, that person should be encouraged to visit a testing facility immediately. OGSA will also collect that individuals complete contact information.
- During this process individuals may also be asked if they are experiencing any other symptoms to make a determination to help ensure the safety of all individuals involved.
- Any player, parent, coach, umpire etc. showing symptoms should not show up at the park
- If they show up and fail the screening then they would not be permitted for the event and the team/coach would be responsible to ensure the person showing symptoms is isolated from all others and also isolate those who were in contact before discovery.
- Individuals that show signs of a fever based on their temperature reading will be turned away before they enter the park or facility. There is also an expectation that any individual experiencing symptoms should take the initiative and stay home.
- Volunteers at tournaments will all need PPE: non-medical mask, gloves etc.
- Team and Player-Sign In should be avoided as much as possible. Strongly recommended use of electronic registration for games and tournaments
- Team registration – validation of the team contract could be completed by team ahead of tournament, exhibition games, practices etc. and submitted electronically prior to tournaments
- Registration, announcer, scorekeeping tables, equipment must be disinfected after each use and personnel change
- Scorekeeping, announcing, spotters all need 6-foot distancing may need separate tables
- Medical team and each team’s medic will need to be fully equipped with PPE to be able to be in close contact with the athletes, this includes team trainers etc.
- Hand sanitizer must be on the bench and equipment area of every team for all training, practices, games, and tournament play.
- Frequent hand sanitization will be stressed for players in all league/tournament play and may be enforced as mandatory.



2. OFF-FIELD PROTOCOLS

Mandatory Provisions

- Washrooms will require consistent attention and sanitization. Leagues may opt to keep washroom facilities closed during play to reduce possible contamination. Must be cleaned/fully sanitized at least once per every 2 hours
- Team snacks, picnics, shared lunches, BBQ not allowed
- Teams will provide their own first aid kit and may be able to provide suggestions on further safety considerations and must have their own PPE. No sharing between teams.
- Playground areas will be subject to local guidelines/regulations.

Other Provisions (e.g. Tournaments)

- Concession areas may only be allowed to open if they can provide consistent sanitization and abide by social distancing guidelines.
- vendors will be asked to follow outlined guidelines and regulations set out by the event organizer(s) and the Province of Ontario.
- Souvenirs – all payments by debit/credit card, no cash accepted, clothing cannot be tried on prior to purchase, limit amount of people in sales area, lineup grocery store style
- Hotels will have their own procedures and guidelines in place to ensure the safety of their guests. They may not allow previously accepted practices (such as sharing of rooms for X# of individuals amongst team members not of the same family).
- Each hotel room booked should be for a family unit only, no player only/team rooms
- Carpooling should be avoided. Only family members
- Designated smoking areas must be in an area away from the playing field and proper disposable cigarette canisters/ashtrays are required. No smoking or throwing away butts on the ground must be enforced

3. ON-FIELD PROTOCOLS

General

- Covid signage should be in park on fencing where available
- Restrictions on number of diamonds in use must be respected
- Hand Sanitization should be done consistently throughout the game / practice
- Coaches will be provided sanitizer for cleaning of equipment and hands

Pre-Game

- Ground rules procedure, one representative from each team should be allowed at home plate with 3 metre distance maintained by all parties.
- Coin flip – either virtual or with social distancing, line up cards filled out, disinfected, and placed on backstop for all to view, no exchange.
- Only one coach per team.

Bats

- No bat sharing outside of members of the same household.
- Each player must have their own, bat, helmet and or facemask which should be cleaned after each use
- Only the offensive team will remove a bat from the field, i.e. the batter if unsuccessful at bat or a designated team person with appropriate PPE.

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- No bat boys/girls allowed
- Picking up the hitter's bat will be the responsibility of the bench coach, must be cleaned after each use
- In the event there is a bat near home plate that poses a danger for the players the umpire will kick it out of the way

Player's Equipment

- no gloves on fence, no bringing out gloves, no sharing batting gloves except of members of the same household, distancing of player's bags 3 metre distancing
- Players should be reminded to not share equipment and keep each individuals equipment isolated – 3 metre distance and reduce coming into contact with the equipment of other players.
- Catchers equipment, each catcher must have their own and should be disinfected after each game.
- Sharing of water bottles not allowed, except of members of same household
- Label all water bottles and personal equipment so there is no confusion
- Make it a priority to provide your team with essentials to stay healthy – Hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, disinfecting spray, etc. Also, make it mandatory for players to disinfect everything that was used during participation
- AT ALL TIMES disinfect and sanitize your own personal equipment

Protective Face Masks/Helmets

- There should be no sharing of protective face masks or helmets at any time, except of members of same household
- Face masks for the purpose of reducing potential virus transmission will be a required stipulation for entering the park/complex/facility.
- **June 30, 2021 Update:** for all coaches, players and umpires a face covering / bandanna / neck gaiter is highly recommended but not mandatory during warmups, practices and games.

Balls

- Defensive team to supply their own balls while on the field to reduce contact with individuals on the opposing team
- no one on the offensive team to retrieve or touch ball
- To ensure safe ball retrieval (homeruns, foul balls), only defensive team may retrieve
- Balls may require consistent sanitization (by team every half inning)
- Put more balls into play and have a designated person on each bench "sanitize" the ball.
- Each team is responsible for cleaning their balls between innings, and will be the supplier of the same while on defense, umpires will not handle the balls

Batter

- On the bench – bench mom/manager only – batter, then on deck, then in the hole outside dugout, then the batting order would have to be spread out at 3 metre intervals behind the dugout (will vary depending on park)
- Sanitizer on benches to allow for frequent handwashing in between innings/after at bats.
- The "bench" will be along the baseline/outfield fence; where possible mark off "boxes" painted on the grass in 3 metre squares to ensure social distancing.
- No contact with coaches at 1st, 3rd, after home run etc.

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- Should attempt to reduce any unnecessary contact with other players. Should also avoid using their hands to contact the ball at any time.
- On-Deck Batter may need to be removed from playing field depending on field size and ability to respect social distancing requirements

General Protocols

- No handshakes, team huddles, or high fives permitted, we MUST maintain social distancing. Suggest a new show of respect for the opposition at safe distance.
- Protest to be held at a safe distance, any coach/umpire/attendee getting heated and yelling will be removed from the venue
- Conferences at pitcher circle limited to one person who must remain outside the circle
- Mound visits with catcher/coach both must remain outside circle, catcher must have glove in front of face
- Mound visits with catcher/coach both must remain outside circle, catcher must have glove in front of face
- No bat girls/boys permitted.
- No sunflower seed, gum chewing or spitting
- General spitting will be discouraged for all participants, both on and off the field.
- Sunflower seeds/chewing tobacco/gum will be handled with a zero-tolerance policy, that will become enforceable through ejection from the game and/or removal from events.
- If lineup cards are required to be submitted following the completion of the game, these cards should be submitted electronically by sending a picture of the card to the appropriate party or dropped into a designated container.

Capacity of Players on bench / dugout

- Will be consistent with government guidelines relating to number of individuals allowed to gather in each area.
- Players may be required to sit behind the bench/dugout to help maintain safe distances between them.
- AT ALL TIMES disinfect and sterilize shared equipment after practice/ games
- Make it a priority to provide your team with essentials to stay healthy – Hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, disinfecting spray, etc. Also, make it mandatory for players to disinfect everything that was used during participation
- Keep a hand sanitizing station in your personal team dug out, this will allow players and coaches to have the option to feel like they have the resources they need quickly and safely without having to leave the diamond
- Prioritize not putting your hands or equipment accessible to everyone near your face Please stress to your players that this is a MUST (exception: your own safety helmet and non-medical mask)

Exit from playing field during game

- During the game, players entering and exiting the playing field should do so in an orderly fashion that allows a 6-foot distance to be maintained between players as much as possible.
- Any player not required to be on the field should not enter the playing surface (e.g. homerun celebrations)
- If the coaches are on the playing field, they should remain a minimum of 6-feet away from the base they are coaching to prevent contact with the defensive player. Also, coaches should not engage an offensive player with high-fives or other physical contact.



- Coaches may be asked to wear a mask / bandana / neck gaiter on the field if a safe distance is unable to be maintained.

Injured Player

- If medical personnel are on hand, injured players should be dealt with primarily by these individuals, unless further assistance is requested.
- The number of individuals attending to an injured player should be limited to the number necessary based on the severity of the injury. Sufficient first-aid kits should be provided that include latex gloves and facemasks to help increase the safety of their interaction with the injured player.
- Players injured during the game must be positioned in safe area or at the other end of the dugout, younger ages the parent will need to remove the child from the field and place them in a safe place respecting the social distancing rules. (Recommend the bleachers since they will be off limits to any spectators)

Scorekeepers

- Scores should be reported electronically to reduce congestion at headquarter locations and scoresheets dropped in designated container

Call Challenges/Protests

- Challenges/Protests may be made as long as the challenge is made by a recognized coach (wearing a mask / bandana / neck gaiter if distancing not possible) in a controlled and orderly fashion, and the coach/umpire are able to remain at a safe distance in which neither is put at risk.

Bat Testing/Checks

- Bat testing prior to the start of games/tournaments (when applicable) will be done using a visual check done by the umpire crew to ensure all bats have the appropriate thumbprint and do not show any visible signs of damage.
- Bat testing/stickering done by leagues/tournament organizers may be postponed for the season to prevent unnecessary contact with equipment.

Post-Game Bench/Dugout Cleaning

- Emphasis will be placed on mandatory cleaning and sanitization of the bench area following the completion of the practice or game. Access to extra garbage/recycling containers may be a request made to specific parks/municipalities. Responsibility of host or home team association if practice or exhibition play

4. SPECTATORS

PLEASE NOTE: The allowance of spectators will be dependent on the guidelines set out by the Ontario government and local health officials.

Mandatory Provisions

- Spectators will not be allowed to watch the game from inside the infield baselines. It will be required that any spectators (if allowed) will need to bring their own chairs or blankets and sit down the foul line or outside of the outfield fence. Seating areas including bleachers and picnic areas will be considered off limits to prevent congregation of groups of spectators. Players who are not required to be present for a game should be



considered spectators and will be required to follow spectator guidelines. (injured players attending to support team)

- Established hand sanitization guidelines will need to be followed by all spectators. Personal supply of hand sanitizer is required.
- As is consistent with guidelines for participants, spectators will not be allowed any seeds, gum, or chewing tobacco and will be asked to remove it from the area.
- Spectator use of playground / concession areas will be dependent on the operational guidelines of these areas/facilities outlined by facility management.
- Spectators/participants will be asked to leave small children/pets at home if possible, to reduce the number of individuals present at a game or event. If they are present, they must always be supervised by a parent/guardian.
- Crowding will not be tolerated. Individuals will always be asked to respect the 3 metre rule when possible and gatherings of individuals will be asked to separate when necessary.

5. UMPIRES

General Protocols

- To ensure a maintenance of safe distance, umpires will be required to utilize an exaggerated inside/outside slot position as long as the umpire has the ability to perform their duties as the home plate umpire from these positions.
- In situations where appropriate distance cannot be accommodated (due to field size for example) umpires may be required to wear masks / bandanas / neck gaiter. Home plate umpire will be required to wear a non-medical mask / bandana / neck gaiter.
- Player Equipment (removal of bat, handing to on-deck batter) will not be considered the responsibility of the umpire.
- 2nd Base Umpire/ Other Field Umpires must be able to position themselves in a position at least 3 metres away from any defensive player.
- Umpire Conferences may be allowed to take place, as long as they are conducted in a safe manner such that the umpires can be away from any players and can maintain a 3 metre distance between one another.
- Call Challenges/Protests can be made by a coach in a safe and controlled manner. The umpire will have the authority to eject said coach if they feel their safe distance is being encroached upon and the coach has not respected any request to remain at distance.
- No sharing of water bottles between umpires, and refillable water bottles will be strongly recommended.
- Umpires will be subject to any hand sanitization guidelines provided by the league/tournament organizer.
- Umpires will be asked to supply their own personal hand sanitizer.
- Umpires are responsible for enforcing guidelines on-field/inside the dugout during the game.
- In the event of Lightning/Inclement weather, all persons must return to the vehicle in which they arrived at the park, no congregating under tents, shelters etc.



6. INDOOR PROTOCOLS

Ontario Royals Baseball Club

505 Iroquois Shore Rd Unit #1, Oakville, ON

General

- All those 18 years and older must show proof of double vaccination before being permitted to enter the facility
- As of November 26, 2021 all those 12 years of age and older must show proof of double vaccination before being permitted to enter the facility
- Prior to November 26, 2021, all those 12-17 years who are unable to show proof of double vaccination will be required to wear a mask at all times
- Covid signage should be in entrance doors or where available
- Restrictions on number of attendees must meet with provincial / regional guidelines
- Hand Sanitization should be done consistently throughout the practice
- Coaches will be provided sanitizer for cleaning of equipment and hands
- All attendees must wear masks at all times unless otherwise directed by provincial health orders.
- All attendees must remain 3 metres separated where possible
- Teams must leave the facility prior to another team entering

Pre-Practice

- Coaches to complete disinfecting of all equipment, door handles, washroom facility touch points with provided sanitizing agent.
- The Covid Officer (who must not be a coach at that practice) will oversee those performing disinfecting.
- The Covid Officer will be responsible for all checking/screening/logging of attendees in compliance with the Associations required undertakings.

Player's

- Players should be reminded to not share equipment and keep each individuals equipment isolated – 3 metre distance and reduce coming into contact with the equipment of other players.
- Sharing of water bottles not allowed
- Make it a priority to provide your team with essentials to stay healthy – Hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, disinfecting spray, etc. Also, make it mandatory for players to disinfect everything that was used during participation
- AT ALL TIMES disinfect and sanitize your own personal equipment

In the event of conflict between the facilities COVID-19 use requirements and the OGSA RTP document, the OGSA participating group will follow the OGSA RTP document as a minimum standard.



Burlington Soccer Club – Dome Facility

5270 Fairview Street, East of Appleby Line, Burlington, ON

General

- Spectators are not permitted in the dome
- All those 18 years and older must show proof of double vaccination before being permitted to enter the facility
- As of November 26, 2021 all those 12 years of age and older must show proof of double vaccination before being permitted to enter the facility
- Covid signage should be in entrance doors or where available
- Restrictions on number of attendees must meet with provincial / regional guidelines
- Hand Sanitization should be done consistently throughout the practice
- Coaches will be provided sanitizer for cleaning of equipment and hands
- All attendees must wear masks while entering and exiting the facility unless otherwise directed by provincial health orders.
- All attendees must remain 3 metres separated where possible
- Attendees must exit the facility before the next group of attendees enters.

Pre-Practice

- Coaches to complete disinfecting of all equipment, door handles on revolving door, touch points with provided sanitizing agent.
- The Covid Officer (who must not be a coach at that practice) will oversee those performing disinfecting.
- The Covid Officer will be responsible for all checking/screening/logging of attendees in compliance with the Associations required undertakings.

Player's

- Players should be reminded to not share equipment and keep each individuals equipment isolated – 3 metre distance and reduce coming into contact with the equipment of other players.
- Sharing of water bottles not allowed
- Make it a priority to provide your team with essentials to stay healthy – Hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, disinfecting spray, etc. Also, make it mandatory for players to disinfect everything that was used during participation
- AT ALL TIMES disinfect and sanitize your own personal equipment

In the event of conflict between the facilities COVID-19 use requirements and the OGSA RTP document, the OGSA participating group will follow the OGSA RTP document as a minimum standard.



Canlan Sports Complex Mississauga

3360 Wolfedale Rd. Mississauga, ON

General

- All those 12 years and older must show proof of double vaccination before being permitted to enter the facility
- Everyone must complete an on-line check in before entering the facility
- Covid signage should be in entrance doors or where available
- Restrictions on number of attendees must meet with provincial / regional guidelines
- Hand Sanitization should be done consistently throughout the practice
- Coaches will be provided sanitizer for cleaning of equipment and hands
- All attendees must wear masks at all times except while on the training surface unless otherwise directed by provincial health orders
- Spectators, when allowed, must wear masks at all times
- All attendees must remain 3 metres separated where possible
- Attendees must exit the facility before the next group of attendees enters.

Pre-Practice

- Coaches to complete disinfecting of all equipment, door handles on revolving door, touch points with provided sanitizing agent.
- The Covid Officer (who must not be a coach at that practice) will oversee those performing disinfecting.
- The Covid Officer will be responsible for all checking/screening/logging of attendees in compliance with the Associations required undertakings.

Player's

- Players should be reminded to not share equipment and keep each individuals equipment isolated – 3 metre distance and reduce coming into contact with the equipment of other players.
- Sharing of water bottles not allowed
- Make it a priority to provide your team with essentials to stay healthy – Hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, disinfecting spray, etc. Also, make it mandatory for players to disinfect everything that was used during participation
- AT ALL TIMES disinfect and sanitize your own personal equipment

In the event of conflict between the facilities COVID-19 use requirements and the OGSA RTP document, the OGSA participating group will follow the OGSA RTP document as a minimum standard.



Town of Oakville Facilities

General

- All those 12 years and older must provide proof of double vaccination before being permitted to enter the facility
- Covid signage should be in entrance doors or where available
- Restrictions on number of attendees must meet with provincial / regional guidelines
- Hand Sanitization should be done consistently throughout the practice
- Coaches will be provided sanitizer for cleaning of equipment and hands
- All attendees must wear masks at all times unless otherwise directed by provincial health orders.
- All attendees must remain 3 metre separated where possible
- 2 Teams will use this facility at the same time, but they must exit the facility before the next group of teams enters.

Pre-Practice

- Coaches to complete disinfecting of all equipment, door handles on revolving door, touch points with provided sanitizing agent.
- The Covid Officer (who must not be a coach at that practice) will oversee those performing disinfecting.
- The Covid Officer will be responsible for all checking/screening/logging of attendees in compliance with the Associations required undertakings.

Player's

- Players should be reminded to not share equipment and keep each individual's equipment isolated – 3 metre distance and reduce coming into contact with the equipment of other players.
- Sharing of water bottles not allowed
- Make it a priority to provide your team with essentials to stay healthy – Hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, disinfecting spray, etc. Also, make it mandatory for players to disinfect everything that was used during participation
- AT ALL TIMES disinfect and sanitize your own personal equipment

In the event of conflict between the facilities COVID-19 use requirements and the OGSA RTP document, the OGSA participating group will follow the OGSA RTP document as a minimum standard.



7. Vaccination Policy

The OGSA requires that all affected persons be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as a condition of participating in any sanctioned activities during the 2021-22 season. At present, this policy does not apply to those under 12 years of age, or spectators in outdoor settings.

Public health guidance on measures for fully vaccinated, partially vaccinated, and unvaccinated individuals continue to evolve and may affect this policy in the future. The OGSA reserves the right to amend this policy in response to any new guidance received from or regulations passed by federal, provincial, and local public health and governmental authorities in respect of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Affected persons are all those 12 years of age and older, and include players, coaches, team officials, OGSA officials, umpires, volunteers, and instructors.

All affected persons are to be fully vaccinated, including the 14-day period after receiving their completed dose, by December 1, 2021, or earlier.

All affected persons must present to the OGSA designate, evidence satisfactory to the OGSA that they have received the completed series of vaccines as approved by Health Canada.

Acceptable documents include:

- A digital or physical Dose Administration Receipt
- Medical records signed by a licensed health care provider indicating vaccine name and dates(s) of administration
- Government verification (eg. Government issued vaccine passport or card)

The OGSA will comply with the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) and provide an accommodation to and affected person who is unable to be vaccinated for substantiated medical reasons and/or on such other grounds protected under the OHRC, unless such an accommodation cannot be made without inflicting undue hardship on other affected persons.

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Thank you to our members for your input in the creation of this document and for your patience in its publishing. The strength of our association is built on our community members, players and the numerous volunteers who put in hundreds of hours annually to ensure our female athletes continue to develop their leadership and softball skills.

It is understood and agreed that provisions within this document may change to reflect Provincial or Local Public Health requirements, that may change from time to time during the outdoor and indoor seasons.