

June 10, 2020

Dear League and Club Association Presidents,

Thank you for continuing to engage with Ringette BC and the ringette community. While this is ringette's traditional 'off-season', due to the abrupt ending to the 2019/20 season, we know a number of families are asking when ringette will be back. Ringette BC is confident that there will be ringette this coming season but, it will likely be delivered differently, for at least the first few months of the season. Families, Coaches, Players and Volunteers will need to be prepared for changes as we adapt to a 'new normal'.

If you are receiving questions from your parents and volunteers, please direct them to the Ringette BC [Message Board](#) where the information that has been shared with Presidents since the pandemic began is posted. Ringette BC continued to be committed to frequent communication with Leagues, Club Associations and families.

Ringette BC is planning for a September start to the season. However, we are also preparing for phased-in or modified activities based on the guidelines set forth by the Provincial Health Officer. The ringette season will be different this season to reflect programming adaptations that can be started quickly (and stopped during a possible second wave of COVID), flexibility, and reduced financial costs and risk. The ringette season will hopefully resume with ringette as we know it in January.

#### **Update – COVID-19 and Return to Play**

BC Premier announced, today, that the Provincial Government released an [Order](#) effective immediately that provides protection from liability for directors, officers, staff and volunteers of not-for-profit sports organization recognized under the B.C. Societies Act. Further details are still to be released regarding this announcement. The Order will be in effect until the State of Emergency is lifted. The Provincial announcement is available on the [Government of BC website](#).

The Order requires that all organization adhere to the return to sport process and follow the guidelines set out by viaSport and the Provincial Sport Organizations to ensure that sport organizations are mitigating risk.

ViaSport released the [Sport Sector Guidelines](#) on June 1, 2020. The publication closely followed the release of the [BC Parks and Recreation Association Guidelines](#) published on May 28, 2020. Ringette BC is currently reviewing both sets of guidelines as they relate to ringette.

Ringette BC is currently working on return to activity and competition guidelines. We expect to provide those in early to mid-July. These guidelines will involve coordination with Ringette

Canada, other provincial sport organizations in BC, other provincial Ringette Associations, facility operators and a legal review.

In our last communication, Ringette BC provided an overview of the resources that would be provided through the *Return to Sport* process.

These resources include:

1. *Return to Activity* and *Return to Competition* guidelines;
2. League and/or Club Association requirements for adhering to guidelines;
3. Updates on insurance, including a new waiver;
4. Updated Codes of Conduct for players, parents/spectators, coaches, volunteers, officials that include a clause related to health and safety;
5. Educational training on new COVID-19 guidelines for coaches, volunteers and local association administrators; and
6. Educational material for parents and players.

There are a series of steps that Ringette BC and our Local Club Associations will need to follow and complete for ringette to return. While the steps need to be completed in a timely manner, they will need to be completed diligently and with the utmost care.

### Steps for Returning to Ringette:

Below is a brief overview of the current steps. **\*\*Please note these may be subject to change\*\***

Action	Organization Level	Timeline	Additional Comments
<b>Sector Guidelines Published</b>	viaSport	Published	June 1st
<b>Return to Ringette Guidelines:</b> - COVID -19 Safety Plan - Updated Waiver of Liability - Participant agreement - Illness Policy	Ringette BC	In-progress	Guidelines and policy documents subject to legal review
<b>Leagues and Club Associations Adopt Return to Ringette Guidelines</b>	Ringette BC/Club Associations	August	Each Association must adopt <i>Return to Ringette</i> Guidelines at their local level prior to season start
<b>Club Association COVID-19 Safety Plans</b>	Club Associations	August	Each Club Association is required, under the BCRPA Guidelines to have a COVID-19 Safety plan that must be displayed for participants to view at all activities
<b>Club Association Registration Process</b>	Club Associations	August	Club Associations will need to have a clear registration process to ensure that members understand the updated waiver of liability.

## Private Facilities

Ringette BC is aware that private facilities are re-opening and are offering rentals for private groups. Ringette BC would like to be very clear to all members that all ringette-related activities are suspended. If members are renting and/or participating at private facilities, they are doing so privately as individuals, not members, and without the permission, guidance, insurance coverage or oversight of Ringette BC.

If you have members inquiring about joining private training through private academies or training groups, please advise members that ringette-related activities remain suspended; this includes evaluations, team formation or *any* organized ringette activities related to Ringette BC, Leagues, or Club Associations in any way. Should member(s) choose to register for private training, it is their choice to participate. They need to be aware that they do so at their own risk as they are not covered by Ringette BC's insurance.

## Athlete Experience Pathway Updates

### *Excellence Ringette Updates*

Ringette BC has launched the **Virtual Excellence Ringette program**. Last week, registration opened for coaches and players interested in participating in the Excellence Program. Orientations, via webinar, are taking place for parents and players and for local Club Association administrators interested in learning about the program.

The **Virtual Excellence Ringette Program** is open to all athletes in U16 and U19 this season; regardless of past ringette playing experience. If you would like more information on the Excellence Ringette Program, or would like to register for a webinar, please visit the [Excellence Ringette](#) page on our website.

### *Zone Program Updates*

The 2020-2021 season intends to see full implementation of the Zone program at U16 and U19. Please note that updated U14/U16/U19 Zone guidelines will be provided once updated information on *Return to Ringette* is available.

As the transition period for the U14 Zone division is complete, participation in this division will be female-only and male-only. If there are not sufficient numbers of competitive athletes to form male-only teams, competitive male players who are U14-aged should consider submitting requests to advance to U16 Zone or U16 Club.

The U16 and U19 Zone teams will remain co-ed through 2020/2021 transition period. U16 will shift to female only Zone for the 2021/2022 season and U19 will remain co-ed for one additional season. More information will be available leading up to the Ringette BC AGM. Details on the male ringette player pathway will be presented to the Club Associations at the AGM to provide

clarity on the future vision for male participation in ringette in BC. Recent policy changes by Ringette Canada align with this vision.

### **Ringette BC Annual General Meeting**

The Ringette BC Annual General Meeting has been rescheduled for August 15 and 16, 2020 at Sun Peaks Resort. Proceeding in person, as long as it is permitted by the PHO, allows for the exchange of information and ensures frank dialogue about liability and return to play requirements. Details regarding the Annual General Meeting will be sent in the coming weeks to Member Associations.

As always, we are available by phone or email to discuss your concerns and/or to answer any questions you may have. We look forward to returning to ringette soon.

Sincerely,

Dennis Callaghan  
Chair of the Board of Directors

Nicole Robb  
Executive Director

CC: Ringette BC Board of Directors