

June 30, 2020

***Message from the Ringette BC Board Chair***

Dear Ringette Families,

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 that a number of you are wondering when ringette will be back.

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), are flexible, and reduce financial costs and risk.

Please see the Ringette BC [Message Board](#) for updates and information that has been shared with Association Executives since the pandemic began. Ringette BC continues to be committed to frequent communication with Leagues, Club- Associations and families.

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

ViaSport released the [Sport Sector Guidelines](#) on June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The publication closely followed the release of the [BC Parks and Recreation Association Guidelines](#); published on May 28, 2020. Ringette BC reviewed both sets of guidelines throughout the drafting of our own return to sport guidelines.

Ringette BC staff have been working diligently to research the requirements for COVID-19 Return to Activities, to draft the Return to Ringette Guidelines and to create relevant and useful resources to accompany the Return to Ringette Guidelines. Ringette BC has completed the *Return to Ringette* Guidelines and they are currently under legal review. We expect to provide those to our members by mid-July. 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.

The guidelines were created in coordination with Ringette Canada, other provincial ringette organizations and were informed by guidelines from other Provincial Sports Organizations in BC, as well as, facility operators and a legal review.

Ringette BC will be providing resources and educational material to Leagues and Club-Associations as we all navigate through the *Return to Sport* process.

**These resources include:**

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

**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 COVID -19 Safety Plan Updated Waiver of Liability Participant agreement Illness Policy</b>	Ringette BC	In-progress	Guidelines and policy documents undergoing legal review
<b>Leagues and Club Associations Adopt Return to Ringette Guidelines</b>	Ringette BC/Club Associations	July/August	Each Association must adopt <i>Return to Ringette</i> Guidelines at their local level prior to ringette resuming in any form
<b>Club Association COVID-19 Safety Plans</b>	Club Associations	July/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 these are not events sanctioned by Ringette BC. 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.

Ringette BC activities remain suspended, for at least a little while longer; this includes evaluations, team formation or *any* organized ringette activities related to Ringette BC, Leagues, or Club Associations in any way. Should you choose to register for private training, please be aware that you are doing so at your own risk and without Ringette BC’s insurance coverage.

**Athlete Experience Pathway Updates**

### *Excellence Ringette Updates*

Ringette BC has launched the **Virtual Excellence Ringette program**. The program is open to all U16 and U19 aged athletes regardless of past ringette playing experience. If you would like more information on the Excellence Ringette Program, 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 through the summer months. Details on the male ringette athlete pathway will be presented to Leagues and 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.

### **Thank You**

Thank you to all Athletes and Volunteers for continuing to be involved in Ringette. The coming season will see some COVID-related changes, but Ringette BC is very hopeful that the season will be meaningful for participants, and that things will be back to normal before the end of the season. Please continue to watch for updates, stay safe, and we will see you at the rink this fall.

Have a great Canada Day!

Sincerely,



Dennis Callaghan  
Chair of the Board of Directors

CC: Ringette BC Board of Directors; Staff