

October 6, 2021 **REVISED Oct. 8, 2021**

To: Owners/Operators of Facilities located in Huron and Perth Counties where organized sports are played and/or practiced

RE: Huron Perth Public Health Letter of Instruction for Owners/Operators of Facilities used for organized sport

Issued by: Dr Miriam Klassen, Medical Officer of Health

Thank you for all your efforts thus far to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 in your Facilities. We commend you on your continued leadership and cooperation in this important work to keep our communities safe.

I am writing to all Owners and Operators of the Facilities used for organized sport in Huron Perth to highlight your current responsibilities and outline additional requirements with respect to proof of vaccination for all persons eligible for vaccination who enter indoor Facilities used for organized sport. For a definition of organized sport please see definition at the end of this document.

We are currently experiencing a fourth wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Delta variant is circulating in our community, as it is across the province and elsewhere. Ontario's Science Advisory and Modelling Consensus Tables have advised that the Delta variant is twice as transmissible as the original SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19 disease. The [table](#) also reports that Delta is the predominant variant circulating provincially.

In Huron Perth, unvaccinated individuals of all ages now consistently account for a greater proportion of new COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations than those who are fully vaccinated. These facts are important reminders that continued vigilance is needed to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in Huron Perth. Furthermore, due to increased travel associated with organized sports across Huron Perth and in our neighbouring jurisdictions, Huron Perth Public Health is issuing these instructions aligned with similar instructions issued by Middlesex-London Health Unit and Southwestern Public Health. Adherence to the instructions outlined in this letter will assist our collective efforts by reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission during high-risk activities that occur in Facilities used for organized sports.

Provincial proof-of-vaccination requirements came into effect September 22, 2021 and help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in high risk settings, including Facilities used for organized sports. [Ontario Regulation 364/20](#) requires that proof of identification and proof of being fully immunized be assessed at the point of entry for all patrons 18 years of age and older who enter such Facilities for the purpose of actively participating in organized sports or recreational fitness.

Currently those aged 12 to 17 who participate in organized sports, and those aged 12 and older who are integral to organized sports but who are not active participants, including coaches, trainers, officials, and volunteers, are currently eligible to be immunized against COVID-19 but are not included in provincial proof-of-vaccination requirements. This letter of instruction now extends this requirement to individuals noted above.

Through their roles these individuals have close and prolonged contact with active participants and others, including some who may be too young to be immunized. Verifying proof of vaccination for persons 12 years and older in Facilities where organized sports are played, in accordance with this Letter of Instruction, will strengthen protections for communities in Huron Perth by helping to curb the spread of COVID-19.

Activities related to organized sports have the potential to enhance COVID-19 transmission. Specifically, close contact among participants, forceful exhalation and increased respiratory rate, prolonged exposure, crowded indoor spaces and the removal of masks/face coverings during physical activity contribute to enhanced likelihood of COVID-19 transmission.

As of September 27, 2021, 77.8% of individuals 12 years of age and over in Huron Perth are fully vaccinated and 68.8% of youth aged 12-17 are fully vaccinated. Increasing vaccination rates among our youth will create safer environments and minimize exposures among those participating and involved in organized sports.

Instructions:

As Medical Officer of Health for Huron Perth Public Health, the following are my Instructions, pursuant to Section 2(2.1) of Schedule 1 to Ontario Regulation 364/20: Rules for Areas at Step 3 And At The Roadmap Exit Step made under the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020, S.O. 2020, c. 17* (the "*Reopening Ontario Act*"), formerly a regulation made under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* and now a continued section 7.0.2 order under the *Reopening Ontario Act*.

This Letter of Instruction was developed in consultation with the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health. Where this Letter of Instruction imposes additional requirements not set out in the *Reopening Ontario Act*, the requirements under this Letter of Instruction must be followed.

Effective 12:01 a.m. on October 31, 2021, and until further notice, I am instructing all Owners, Operators, and Persons Responsible for Facilities used for organized sports within Huron and Perth Counties to:

1. Require each person, age 12 years and older, who attends the indoor area of the Facility for the purpose of:
 - a. actively participating in organized sports,
 - b. coaching, officiating organized sports, or volunteering,
 - c. spectating at organized sports,to provide identification and proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or a valid medical exemption at point of entry.
These instructions do not apply to a person who is entering an indoor area solely for the following purposes:
 - a. to use a washroom;
 - b. to access an outdoor area that can only be accessed through an indoor route;
 - c. while paying for an order;
 - d. to purchase admission; or
 - e. as may be necessary for the purposes of health and safety including an emergency.
2. For youth turning 12 starting in January 1, 2022, at this time they may have an 8-week grace period to become fully vaccinated. Starting April 2022 all children turning 12 must be fully vaccinated. This direction is based on the premise that children turning 12 in 2022 will become eligible on January 1, 2022; this direction may be revised as additional Ministry direction is received.
3. You are required to develop and implement a vaccination policy for your facility staff, contractors and/or subcontractors and volunteers as further outlined in the [Letter of Recommendation](#) issued by Huron Perth Public Health for workplaces and employers.

4. Comply with all other requirements under the *Reopening Ontario Act* and its regulations that apply to the Facility. This includes, but is not limited to, observing reduced capacity limits, screening upon entry, maintenance of physical distancing within the Facility, and ensuring that masks or face coverings are worn when required.

For clarity, this requirement does not apply to emergency responders such as police, firefighters, or paramedics at the time that they are responding to an emergency.

Failure to Comply

Failing to comply with the requirements of Ontario Regulation 364/20 can result in charges under the *Reopening Ontario Act*. If charged under Part I of the Provincial Offenses Act (POA), set fine amounts are \$750 for individuals and \$1,000 for corporations. Maximum penalties based on a prosecution under Part I or Part II of the POA include fines of up to \$100,000 and up to a year in jail for an individual; up to \$500,000 and up to a year in jail for an individual who is a director or officer of a corporation; and up to \$10 million for a corporation.

These Instructions, including any revisions to them, are available on the Huron Perth Public Health's website at www.hpph.ca/instructions.

For question or inquires related to these instructions please go to our website at www.hpph.ca/instructions or call HPPH at 1-888-221-2133.

Sincerely,

<original signed by>

Dr. Miriam Klassen
Medical Officer of Health and CEO

Definitions

For the purpose of these Instructions:

“Facility” means a facility located within Huron Perth where organized sports are played and/or practiced.

“Fully Vaccinated” means a person who has received (a) the full series of a COVID-19 vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or any combination of such vaccines, or (b) one or two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada, followed by one dose of a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or (c) three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada; and they received their final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days ago.

“Organized Sport(s)” means sport and recreational fitness activities including, but not limited to, sports leagues, organized pick-up sports, fitness classes, soccer, hockey, basketball, volleyball, dance classes, gymnastics, martial arts and 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](#).

“Owner/Operator” means an owner/operator of a facility located within Huron Perth where organized sports are played and/or practiced.

“Person Responsible” means the person responsible for the facility, or, where there is no such person, the holder of a permit/rental agreement to use the facility.