



**Via E-mail**

April 2, 2020

**Attention:** BC Soccer Full and Associate Members (and affiliated soccer clubs)

**From:** Jason Elligott, Executive Director, BC Soccer Association

**Re:** COVID-19 update – Federal Wage Subsidy Program Information

As we have expressed previously, we are working to provide information and updates to our members (full and associate) and affiliated soccer clubs to best support you as we assess and work through the ongoing impacts of COVID-19.

As a collective soccer community, we are working under great uncertainty regarding when the suspension of soccer activity will be lifted by Canada Soccer. Based on our ongoing discussions with Canada Soccer, and rightfully so, their decision will be based on guidance and the lifting of health authority restrictions. It is important to also note that regional differences may be considered in their decision making as the realities of each province and territory is different. Safety is the priority.

Much of the soccer activity within BC Soccer's membership is overseen and, in many cases, operated solely by volunteers. However, some individuals work full and part-time in our game as employees and/or contractors at different levels (i.e. club, academy, league, district, etc.). We understand that the current situation may bring heightened concerns for those individuals.

Over the last couple of days, more detailed information has been shared by the federal government regarding the 75% Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy Program. To help support our members and affiliated clubs (the employers), we have pulled together the below information as it may help you with your decision making while managing your soccer organization during this uncertain time.

**Importantly** we have used our best efforts to summarize the information which we are sharing (below) for information purposes. We suggest you review the information provided in the link to ensure you have the most current details on the program.

**The Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy Program** - <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2020/04/the-canada-emergency-wage-subsidy.html>

Note – We understand the program still requires approval from Parliament and the date of this is currently not know.

Objective

The program's main objective is to support employers by providing them with 75% of salary up to \$58,700 per year (up to \$847 per week), per employee to keep them fully employed between March

2020 and May 2020 if the organization meets the eligibility criteria. It's designed to essentially provide the workforce with confidence, to promote continuity of wages, and encourage rehiring.

Eligibility

The program is available to non-publicly funded businesses, non-profits, and charities. Publicly funded bodies are not eligible and are defined as municipalities and local governments, Crown corporations, public universities, colleges, schools, and hospitals. Therefore, most organizations within Soccer's membership should be eligible.

Timeframe

If eligible, the program is available for up to three months retroactive to March 15, 2020, and organizations must apply monthly. Below is the information shared on the federal website.

Eligible Periods	Claiming period	Reference period for eligibility
Period 1	March 15 – April 11	March 2020 over March 2019
Period 2	April 12 – May 9	April 2020 over April 2019
Period 3	May 10 – June 6	May 2020 over May 2019

A decrease in Gross Revenue

Organizations must (generally) compare revenues to the same month from last year (March 2019 to March 2020, April 2019 to April 2020, and May 2019 to May 2020) and demonstrate a 30% decline in "gross" revenues for each month. From what we understand there will be some flexibility in this approach (i.e. if it can't compare to last year, for example, start-ups). However, if the flexible approach is attempted, it is important to demonstrate that point of comparison for the 30% drop is reasonable, examples given are a prior month or another comparable month (i.e. likely all about finding a reasonable point of reference).

Application Process

We understand that:

- the application will be done through a CRA Portal (via MY CRA and/or separate web-based platform) and they are still currently developing the application and questionnaire to support the process,
- the portal should be set up in next three to six weeks,
- any payments will likely take a further few weeks after application approval and will likely be provided by direct deposit into the organization's bank account,
- employers will have to reapply monthly, and
- it is important to note that employers will have to attest that they are doing everything they can to pay the remaining 25% of employee's wages which will presumably be by formal attestation.

Caveats

- We understand that cash flow may be taken into consideration. However, it is not clear.
- The government has stated that the overall process being put in place is a "High Trust" one and they will take "decisive action for bad actors" for breaking any trust.
- Organizations must work towards reasonable due diligence and document retention.



**10% Wage Subsidy** - <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/campaigns/covid-19-update/frequently-asked-questions-wage-subsidy-small-businesses.html>

On March 18, 2020, the Prime Minister announced a temporary 10 per cent wage subsidy.

Members and affiliated clubs should know that, based on our understanding, you can apply for **both** the 10% Wage Subsidy announced on March 18, 2020 **and** the 30% Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy Program outlined above.

For employers that are eligible for both programs, any benefit from the 10 per cent wage subsidy for remuneration paid in a specific period would generally reduce the amount available to be claimed under the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy in that same period. It is important to note the condition of keeping people employed (and paid).

Therefore, it is suggested in order to assist with any immediate cash-flow needs, members and affiliated clubs may wish to apply for the 10% wage subsidy immediately until you are able to determine if you are eligible for the 30% wage subsidy. If you are not eligible for the 30% Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy Program, you still qualify for the 10% Wage Subsidy.

**BC Soccer Support** - As you work through this information, if you have any questions please feel free to contact Stephen Wurz, BC Soccer Director of Finance at [stephenwurz@bcsoccer.net](mailto:stephenwurz@bcsoccer.net).

Should you have any other questions that you feel BC Soccer can support you with, please note that staff are available and can be contacted primarily via e-mail in the first instance.

See below for previous memos from BC Soccer regarding COVID-19.

-End-

**Via E-mail**

March 31, 2020

**Attention:** BC Soccer Full and Associate Members (and affiliated soccer clubs)

**From:** BC Soccer Association

**Re:** COVID-19 update – Sharing Information during Uncertain Times – Legal Webinar

Alongside our members and affiliated clubs, we are operating in uncertain, unprecedented, and challenging times. As we have expressed previously, we are working to provide information and updates to our members (full and associate) and affiliated soccer clubs to best support them.

With that in mind, we are please to advise you of a webinar being facilitated by a lawyer firm in Ontario designed to support sports organizations and clubs across Canada that are dealing with funding and employment issues as a result of COVID-19.


The below information is solely being provide for information purposes.



**DETAILS**

 **WEBINAR**

[RSVP to this webinar](#)

 **Fri. April 3, 2020**  
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. EDT

Sports organizations and clubs across Canada are grappling with funding and employment issues in the wake of COVID-19.

National and regional not-for-profit sports programs and clubs are facing the loss of programming and a decline in revenues during a pandemic that has prompted the closure of facilities nation-wide.

To learn more about financial support and assistance to sports organizations from the federal and provincial governments, join us at a webinar on **Friday, April 3 at 12:00 p.m.** Along with Anne Merklinger from Own the Podium, lawyers from Gowling WLG will discuss relevant short- and long-term financial programs and supports that will enable sports organizations to navigate through these challenging times. RSVP now to reserve your spot.

### SPEAKERS



**[Roberto Aburto](#)**  
Partner, Gowling  
WLG

📍 Ottawa, Canada



**[Jahmiah Ferdinand-Hodkin](#)**  
Partner, Gowling  
WLG

📍 Ottawa, Canada



**[Colin Green](#)**  
Partner, Gowling  
WLG

📍 Toronto, Canada



**[Anne Merklinger](#)**  
Chief Executive  
Officer, Own the  
Podium

📍 Toronto, Canada

### AGENDA

- 🕒 **Impact on NSO, PSO and clubs**
  - a) Federal Funding
- 🕒 **COVID-19 government programs**
- 🕒 **COVID-19 issue spotting for substantial liabilities**
  - a) Material commercial contracts, force majeure clauses
  - b) Keys to success in the recovery phase
  - c) Employment issues
- 🕒 **ABCs of governance**
  - a) Opportunities for electronic AGMs
  - b) COVID-19 as an opportunity to advance governance

See below for previous memos from BC Soccer regarding COVID-19.

-End-



**Via E-mail**

March 26, 2020

**Attention:** BC Soccer Full and Associate Members (and affiliated soccer clubs)

**From:** BC Soccer Association

**Re:** COVID-19 update – Sharing Information during Uncertain Times

Our collective communities continue to feel the impacts of COVID-19. As we have expressed previously, we are working to provide information and updates to our members (full and associate) and affiliated soccer clubs to best support them during this rapidly changing and unprecedented times.

We have heard from many organizational leaders and individuals within our soccer and sporting communities, all expressing similar concerns; everything from when we will get back to playing our sport, to ensuring the health/safety of our people is the priority, to the economic impact COVID-19 will have on our sector in both the short and longer-term. These concerns are not lost on us and we share them with you, not only in our province with our members, clubs, and communities but also across the country. We too are working through this difficult, uncertain and unpreceded time with optimism for when we will get back to some form of soccer normalcy soon.

**Announcements have been made at the federal and provincial government levels over the last few days/weeks, speaking to the economic impact of COVID-19 on businesses and individuals. To help support our members, affiliated clubs and the people within our communities, we have listed below some of the items that may support you while managing your soccer organization during this uncertain time.**

As we all know the situation is changing on a daily basis, therefore, we have used our best efforts to have the most up to date information for you, however, we suggest you use the links provided to ensure the information is the most current.

**Federal Government Financial Initiatives:** [Canada's Covid-19 Economic Response Plan](#)

**Support for Individuals – Available Immediately**

**Flexibility for Taxpayers**

- Deferral of 2019 income tax filing until June 1, 2020
- Deferral of income tax payments until After August 31, 2020. This includes amounts owed on 2019 income tax filing as well as 2020 installment payments. No penalties or interest will be charged

### **Support for Individuals – Awaiting Royal Assent**

- Goods & Services Tax Credit: Low- and modest-income families who qualify for the Goods and Services Tax Credit can receive a one-time HST payment by early May 2020 of approximately \$400 for singles and \$600 for couples.
- Canada Child Benefit: An additional \$300/child as part of their May 2020 payment
- Canada Student Loans: 6-month interest-free moratorium on repayment for Canada Student Loans
- Mortgage Default Management tools: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp is providing mortgage payment relief by permitting lenders to allow payment deferral. Contact mortgage provider for details.

Important Note: As of March 26, 2020, it is our understanding that these initiatives are not approved as there are limited details available. Please check the following link for the most up to date information - [https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-finance/news/2020/03/canadas-covid-19-economic-response-plan-support-for-canadians-and-businesses.html?mc\\_cid=a8795eede8&mc\\_eid=57ad4396aa](https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-finance/news/2020/03/canadas-covid-19-economic-response-plan-support-for-canadians-and-businesses.html?mc_cid=a8795eede8&mc_eid=57ad4396aa)

### **Support for Workers – Requiring Royal Assent**

Emergency Response Benefit: To support workers and help businesses keep their employees, the government has proposed legislation to establish the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). This taxable benefit would provide \$2,000 a month for up to four months for workers who lose their income as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The CERB would cover Canadians who have lost their job, are sick, quarantined, or taking care of someone who is sick with COVID-19, as well as working parents who must stay home without pay to care for children who are sick or at home because of school and daycare closures. The CERB would apply to wage earners, as well as contract workers and self-employed individuals who would not otherwise be eligible for Employment Insurance (EI).

Additionally, workers who are still employed, but are not receiving income because of disruptions to their work situation due to COVID-19, would also qualify for the CERB. The portal for accessing the CERB would be available in early April. More information can be found here - <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-finance/news/2020/03/introduces-canada-emergency-response-benefit-to-help-workers-and-businesses.html>

Additional benefits: For individuals without paid sick leave who are sick, quarantined or forced to stay home to care for children or someone who is sick:

- 1 week waiting period for Employment Insurance claims removed for those individuals forced or recommended to be in quarantine or isolation.
- Waiving the requirement to provide medical certificate to access EI sickness benefits

### **Provincial and Territorial Government Business and Employee Initiatives**

Most provinces have announced some form of relief for businesses and employees in relation to COVID-19 as well as updated resources for those experiencing mental health challenges. Here is the link to BC information - <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support>

### **BC Employment Standard Act**

BC Soccer is not in the position to provide legal guidance regarding employment or temporary measures that organizations may choose to take. However, it is important to note that if organizations are considering temporary layoffs, they must abide by the BC Employment Standards Act.

We suggest you seek guidance from your legal counsel to ensure any steps you are considering are compliant with the act, linked here - <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/employment-standards-advice/employment-standards/termination#laying-off>

BC Soccer is also exploring ways to further support you in this and other areas.

### **Soccer Specific Reminders**

- Canada Soccer has suspended all sanctioned soccer activity (March 13, 2020). <https://www.canadasoccer.com/canada-soccer-announces-suspension-of-all-sanctioned-soccer-as-precaution-against-covid-19-p162613>
- BC Soccer informed the membership and affiliated clubs of the wider reaching suspension (March 13, 2020). <https://bcsoccer.net/news/post/bc-soccer-suspends-sanctioned-soccer-activity-regarding-concerns-over-the-spread-of-covid-19>
- Latest updated from BC Soccer advising membership and affiliated clubs to plan to not have soccer activity in April 2020 (March 19, 2020). <https://bcsoccer.net/news/post/bc-soccer-operations-and-logistics-update-march-19>

### **BC Soccer Office and Contacts**

Please do not come to the BC Soccer office, rather connect with BC Soccer personnel via phone/e-mail.

We must also continue to work together as a collective community and follow the direction from the appropriate health authorities, which BC Soccer is doing.

### **Safety Precautions**

As a reminder, please follow the direction from the appropriate health authorities and BC Centre for Disease Control recommendations the following for reducing the risk of exposure to novel coronavirus:

- Wash your hands frequently (it is the single most effective way of reducing infection spread).
- Practice other good hygiene habits: do not touch your face/eyes/mouth with your hands and cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough (ideally with a disposable tissue or the crease of your elbow).
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched workspace surfaces.
- Maintain good general health (eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep, exercise in moderation).
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Contact 8-1-1 (HealthLink BC) or your health care provider for questions about your personal health situation.

See below for previous memos from BC Soccer regarding COVID-19.

-End-



**Via E-mail**

March 23, 2020

**Attention:** BC Soccer Membership (and affiliated soccer clubs)

**From:** BC Soccer Association

**Re:** COVID-19 update – Information and Reminders

Our collective communities are feeling the impacts of COVID-19. As the situation continues to change rapidly, BC Soccer is working to provide information and updates to our members (full and associate) and affiliated soccer clubs to best support them.

***Please ensure you read this memo thoroughly as it contains important information and updates.***

**Reminders**

- Canada Soccer has suspended all sanctioned soccer activity (March 13, 2020). <https://www.canadasoccer.com/canada-soccer-announces-suspension-of-all-sanctioned-soccer-as-precaution-against-covid-19-p162613>
- BC Soccer informed the membership and affiliated clubs of the wider reaching suspension (March 13, 2020). <https://bcsoccer.net/news/post/bc-soccer-suspends-sanctioned-soccer-activity-regarding-concerns-over-the-spread-of-covid-19>
- Latest updated from BC Soccer advising membership and affiliated clubs to plan to not have soccer activity in April 2020 (March 19, 2020). <https://bcsoccer.net/news/post/bc-soccer-operations-and-logistics-update-march-19>

**Federal Government Wage Subsidy**

The Federal Government announced on March 19, 2020 a Wage Subsidy that small businesses and non-profits may qualify for. To summarize, the Federal Government has planned to provide eligible small employers a temporary wage subsidy for a period of three months. The subsidy will be equal to 10% of remuneration paid during that period, up to a maximum subsidy of \$1,375 per employee and \$25,000 per employer. They have stated that all will be able to benefit immediately from this support by reducing their remittances of income tax withheld on employees' remuneration. As we currently understand it, there is no subsidy application and the process is to simply make the deduction on the CRA remittance.

More Information can be found here - <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2020/03/canadas-covid-19-economic-response-plan-support-for-canadians-and-businesses.html>

### **Insurance Update – Markel Canada**

BC Soccer is disappointed to inform the membership that on March 19, 2020 we were informed by our Insurance Broker (SBC Insurance Agencies Ltd.) that Markel Canada (insurance underwriter) has issued a Contagion Exclusion which basically states that effective April 1, 2020 there is an exclusion on covering claims related to COVID-19. Accompanying this memo is the notice we received. Further, aligned with the suspension of all sanctioned soccer activity, they have also advised us that we do not have any travel insurance. Once we get through the current situation, we will be able to once again obtain appropriate travel insurance to support our members and affiliated clubs.

### **Soccer Activity Occurring**

BC Soccer has received messages from people within the community (soccer and other) expressing concerns over seeing club teams and other groups practicing/play soccer.

BC Soccer reminds all members and affiliated clubs that if any members, affiliated clubs and teams are participating in such activity, it goes against the suspension of all soccer activity. Therefore, complaints received will be reviewed in accordance with the Judicial Code and Policies of BC Soccer.

### **Planning for Soccer Normalcy in a Respectful and Responsible Manner**

It is a difficult and challenging time for everyone right now. Adding to this, is trying to plan for soccer activity in the future with the uncertainty on when the suspension will be lifted (which will need to be aligned to the local, regional and national health authorities).

We are all hopefully that we will get through this situation sooner rather than later and get back to more normal times. Further, we understand that organizations within our membership are working to plan for soccer to return at a point in the future. However, we encourage those organizations to be mindful of the impacts that COVID-19 is having on people and families within their communities (i.e. potential insecurity on employment, loss of income, etc.). Therefore, we suggest that any communications that an organization is sending out to its members, acknowledges the current situation we are all facing and provides appropriate accommodations under the circumstances.

### **BC Soccer Office and Contacts**

Please do not come to the BC Soccer office, rather connect with BC Soccer personnel via phone/e-mail.

We must also continue to work together as a collective community and follow the direction from the appropriate health authorities, which BC Soccer is doing.

### **Safety Precautions**

As a reminder, please follow the direction from the appropriate health authorities and BC Centre for Disease Control recommendations the following for reducing the risk of exposure to novel coronavirus:

- Wash your hands frequently (it is the single most effective way of reducing infection spread).
- Practice other good hygiene habits: do not touch your face/eyes/mouth with your hands and cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough (ideally with a disposable tissue or the crease of your elbow).

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched workspace surfaces.
- Maintain good general health (eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep, exercise in moderation).
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Contact 8-1-1 (HealthLink BC) or your health care provider for questions about your personal health situation.

See below for previous memos from BC Soccer regarding COVID-19.

-End-

**Via E-mail**

March 19, 2020

**Attention:** BC Soccer Membership (and affiliated soccer clubs)

**From:** BC Soccer Association

**Re:** COVID-19 update – soccer operations and logistics

As Canadian governments, communities and citizens continue to adapt to the rapidly changing situation caused by COVID-19, BC Soccer is continuing to work to provide information and updates to our members and affiliated soccer clubs.

We must also continue to work together as a collective community and follow the direction from the appropriate health authorities, which BC Soccer is doing.

As stated in our March 17, 2020 Memo, BC Soccer is working under a two-week review and decision-making process to cancel and/or postpone programs and activity that BC Soccer directly operates. We understand that longer timelines may be needed at the local levels and having a consistent timeline that everyone across the province is working with would be helpful. Therefore, **BC Soccer is advising members and affiliated clubs to plan for soccer activity to NOT occur in April 2020.** Of course, if Canada Soccer's suspension is lifted earlier, we will work to resume earlier.

We are in the process of developing contingency plans and BC Soccer personnel may be in touch with you (districts/leagues) via phone/e-mail/survey to gather information on the realities of your local situation. We thank you for providing us any information that you can, which will help to best plan and prepare for when soccer can get back to normal.

Like all of you are doing within your respective communities, we are doing the best that we can to support you and your local community. Thank you for all that you are doing. With all of us working together, and supporting one another, we will get through this and get back to what we all love....playing our game!

**BC Soccer Office and Contacts**

Please do not come to the BC Soccer office, rather connect with BC Soccer personnel via phone/e-mail.

**Safety Precautions**

As a reminder, please follow the direction from the appropriate health authorities and BC Centre for Disease Control recommendations the following for reducing the risk of exposure to novel coronavirus:

- Wash your hands frequently (it is the single most effective way of reducing infection spread).

- Practice other good hygiene habits: do not touch your face/eyes/mouth with your hands and cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough (ideally with a disposable tissue or the crease of your elbow).
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched workspace surfaces.
- Maintain good general health (eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep, exercise in moderation).
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Contact 8-1-1 (HealthLink BC) or your health care provider for questions about your personal health situation.

See below for previous memos from BC Soccer regarding COVID-19.

-End-

**Via E-mail**

March 17, 2020

**Attention:** BC Soccer Membership (and affiliated soccer clubs)

**From:** BC Soccer Association

**Re:** COVID-19 update – soccer operations and logistics

We are all experiencing challenging times right now with much uncertainty. BC Soccer is here and committed to providing information and updates as more information becomes available.

The health and safety of the community is of the utmost importance. By working together as a collective community and following the direction from the appropriate health authorities, including the Public Health Agency of Canada and BC's Ministry of Health, we can all help.

**Current Situation (as it related to soccer in BC)**

Currently, as you all know, sanctioned soccer activity has been suspended by Canada Soccer. At this time, we do not know the length of the suspension, however, Canada Soccer will be keeping us updated and informed on an ongoing basis.

As a reminder, sanctioned soccer activities include, but are not limited to, all competitions, training, practices, matches, coach and referee education and team building activities. The intent of this suspension is to limit situations of physical contact.

BC Soccer understands that the longer the suspension is in place, the collective soccer community's level of concern will rise. At the organizational level (clubs, districts, leagues, etc.), we understand the suspension has, and will continue, to impact soccer operations. Everything from canceling Spring Break programming to concerns over when the suspension is lifted and being able to fulfill league schedule, playdowns, and start up of interior season of play. BC Soccer is also directly impacted by the suspension of soccer activity.

Therefore, we want to take this opportunity to inform the members and affiliated clubs on the steps BC Soccer is currently taking to work within Canada Soccer's suspension. We will be working under a two-week review and decision-making process to cancel and/or postpone programs and activity (that BC Soccer directly operates) as more information is known on the current situation.

**Short-term (March and April)**

- We have canceled/postponed programs and activity BC Soccer directly operates/facilitates for the rest of March 2020.
- We are currently not scheduling programs and activity BC Soccer directly operates/facilitates for April 2020.

- For any programs and activity BC Soccer directly operates/facilitates that is already scheduled to occur in April 2020, we have sent communications to those groups/individuals advising them of the current situation and that there is a chance activity may be canceled/postponed if the suspension has not been lifted by the time the activity is set to occur.
- BC Soccer is also working to deliver Referee Refresher Clinics online and exploring (with Canada Soccer) on how and when coaching courses can also be delivered in the same way.

#### **Medium-term (May plus)**

- For programs and activity BC Soccer directly operates/facilitates that is scheduled to occur in May 2020 and beyond, at this time, we are continuing to work and plan as if that activity will proceed.
- Closer to the time, if the suspension is still in place we will adjust accordingly.
- Of importance, we understand there is activity in the Spring that is required to occur to support larger activity (i.e. regional league playdowns leading into Provincial Championships). For these types of situations, the appropriate BC Soccer personnel are working to develop contingency plans depending on the situation/activity. More communication will come from those individuals directly to the impacted groups/individuals.

#### **BC Soccer Office and Contacts**

Please do not come to the BC Soccer office and look to connect with BC Soccer personnel via phone and e-mail.

#### **Safety Precautions**

As a reminder, please follow the BC Centre for Disease Control recommendations for reducing the risk of exposure to novel coronavirus, which are:

- Wash your hands frequently (it is the single most effective way of reducing infection spread).
- Practice other good hygiene habits: do not touch your face/eyes/mouth with your hands and cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough (ideally with a disposable tissue or the crease of your elbow).
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched workspace surfaces.
- Maintain good general health (eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep, exercise in moderation).
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Contact 8-1-1 (HealthLink BC) or your health care provider for questions about your personal health situation.

See below for previous memos from BC Soccer regarding COVID-19.

-End-



**Via E-mail**

March 13, 2020

**Attention:** BC Soccer Membership (and affiliated soccer clubs)

**From:** BC Soccer Association

**Re:** COVID-19 update

**BC Soccer suspends sanctioned soccer activity regarding concerns over the spread of COVID-19**

Over the last 24 hours there have been even more heightened concerns over the potential spread of COVID-19. Therefore, as of March 13, 2020, with this growing and unprecedented uncertainty surrounding this health pandemic, and in accordance with Canada Soccer's direction, **BC Soccer is directing all members and affiliated clubs to suspend all sanctioned soccer activities in the province until further notice.**

BC Soccer sanctioned soccer activities include, but are not limited to, all competitions, training, practices, matches, coach and referee education and team building activities. The intent of this suspension is to limit situations of physical contact.

BC Soccer restates that the health and safety of all participants in the soccer community in BC is of the utmost importance and is central to any decision-making process. Further, in the first instance, all involved in our sport should take direction from the appropriate health authorities, including the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Ministry of Health.

To ensure the health and safety of the players, coaches, match officials and administrators in BC, BC Soccer recommends that all Youth Districts, Adult Leagues, Associate Members and Affiliated Clubs communicate to their members that they will cease operations immediately and until further notice.

BC Soccer will continue to follow the guidelines set forth by the public health authorities, government agencies and soccer governing bodies and will provide appropriate updates as things continue to unfold.

BC Soccer thanks you for your understanding while we work through this challenging and unprecedented time. We also want to take this opportunity to recognize the extra work that this decision is placing on the soccer community in BC.

**Canada Soccer**

[CLICK HERE](#) to view Canada Soccer's March 13, 2020 announcement



### **Government**

- The Canadian Government (and specifically the PHAC) has assessed the public health risk associated with COVID-19 as low for the general population - <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>
- The BC Ministry of Health has also stated that the risk to British Columbians remains low - <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-feature/coronavirus-disease-covid-19>

See below for previous memos from BC Soccer regarding COVID-19.

-End-



**Via E-mail**

March 12, 2020

**Attention:** BC Soccer Membership (and affiliated soccer clubs)

**From:** BC Soccer Association

**Re:** COVID-19 update

**BC Soccer halts sanctioned soccer activity for events of 250 people or more while continuing to empower local organizations regarding COVID-19**

As of March 12, 2020, with the growing and unprecedented uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 health pandemic, and in accordance with the BC Health Minister Adrian Dix's directive, BC Soccer is advising all members and affiliated clubs to not proceed with sanctioned soccer activity where there will be 250 or more people in attendance, including players, officials, team staff, parents, spectators, etc. and to limit all non-essential travel outside of Canada.

BC Soccer restates that the health and safety of all participants in the soccer community in BC is of the utmost importance and is central to any decision-making process. Further, in the first instance, all involved in our sport should take direction from the appropriate health authorities, including the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Ministry of Health.

Outside of ceasing all events with 250+ people, BC Soccer maintains the position of empowering concerned youth district/adult league members and affiliated clubs to determine if they wish to amend or cancel their programming activity to mitigate concerns within their regions/locations. The reasoning for this is British Columbia is a large and diverse province and the fact is that not all communities and regions in BC have been impacted by the [46 cases \(as of March 12\) of the COVID-19](#). Further, in the majority of cases, there is limited public travel and individual matches are not considered "mass gatherings" (more than 250 people). Of course, we support local soccer organizations in BC that do cancel or postpone the activity they are organizing if they choose to.

**Government**

- The Canadian Government (and specific the PHAC) has assessed the public health risk associated with COVID-19 as low for the general population - <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>
- The BC Ministry of Health has also stated that the risk to British Columbians remains low - <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-feature/coronavirus-disease-covid-19>

#### **Canada Soccer**

- Canada Soccer has not provided any further information or direction outside of the information that BC Soccer shared on March 9. If Canada Soccer does provide further direction and guidance, BC Soccer would of course comply.

#### **BC Soccer Premier League**

- There have been concerns raised by the clubs that participate in the BC SPL, specifically related to match play this weekend (March 14-15). Discussions occurred with the 8 BC SPL clubs and the agreed upon process for this weekend is based on club discretion whether to fulfill BC SPL fixtures. It was confirmed that there will be no forfeits or penalties applied for deciding not to play this weekend's BC SPL games, and the games will be made up if the option exists in the calendar.

See below for previous memos from BC Soccer regarding COVID-19.

-End-

**Via E-mail**

March 10, 2020

**Attention:** BC Soccer Membership (and affiliated soccer clubs)

**From:** BC Soccer Association

**Re:** COVID-19

**Purpose of Communication**

To provide information and guidance regarding the concerns associated with COVID-19.

**Health and Safety**

The health and safety for all participants in the soccer community in BC is of the utmost importance for BC Soccer and this is central to any decision-making process. In the first instance, all involved in our sport should take direction from the appropriate health authorities, including the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Ministry of Health.

**Monitoring the current situation**

BC Soccer in concert with Canada Soccer and its Sport Medical Committee are monitoring the COVID-19 situation.

**Canada Soccer Guidance and Information**

At this time, Canada Soccer has provided no notification or directive on the cancellation of soccer activity within Canada, nor has there been any limitations set. They have advised they will continue to conduct risk assessments as part of their ongoing responsibilities and will work with the relevant government agencies including Sport Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Canada Soccer are staging international friendly matches on Vancouver Island on March 27 and 31 for the Men's National Team as well as in Vancouver on April 14 with the Women's National Team. Canada Soccer currently is proceeding with the matches as scheduled.

Canada Soccer have advised that they have adopted the following measures in relation to overseas travel:

- Canada Soccer will continue to accept sanctioning applications for teams to travel; it will base its approvals on the current situation at the time of actioning the request.
- Travel to most destinations within the Concacaf region will continue to be approved at this time.
- Travel to areas identified by the Government of Canada as Level 3 risk will not be approved.
- Other areas that Canada Soccer may consider a risk will be reviewed on a case by case basis.
- Teams should be aware of the travel advisories prepared by the Government of Canada and make their decision to travel on the most recent information before they depart. For upcoming

travel, consult the Travel Advice and Advisories site for destination-specific travel information that provides important advice to help you make informed decisions regarding travel. <https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories>

- A team that has already received sanctioning to play abroad or travel permits are responsible for taking its own decision on whether travel is still appropriate.

### **BC Demographic**

British Columbia is a large and diverse province and, therefore, so too is the soccer community that we support. [As of March 9, 2020, the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Canada is 77. BC has a small number of cases \(32\) having been reported in certain communities.](#) Not all regions and communities have been impacted, therefore at this time, BC Soccer restates there is no need to restrict soccer related activities for players and team officials, or to cancel games, practices and tournaments. However, considering the current and evolving situation, concerned youth district/adult league members and affiliated clubs may institute no pre/post-match handshakes during this time and/or amend their programming activity if they wish to mitigate concerns within their regions/locations.

When travelling to sporting events, BC Soccer recommends that you check for up-to-date travel advisories from the Government of Canada at: [Government of Canada COVID-19 Travel Advice](#).

### **Concerned Participants**

BC Soccer understands that participants (and parents of participants) may have concerns with participating in soccer during this time. We strongly recommend that a common sense approach be taken and if you have individual concerns, please speak to your local team and club staff and remove yourself and/or your child from soccer activity until you are comfortable to return to play.

BC Soccer knows that the clubs, districts and leagues will understand the concerns raised and will work with their members to ensure their concerns are handled appropriately.

### **Other Soccer Jurisdictions**

BC Soccer understands that there are soccer enthusiasts in our community that follow professional soccer teams and leagues in other parts of the world. Some of these high-profile professional leagues (i.e. English Premier League, Serie A, etc.) have taken steps such as eliminating pre-match handshakes, playing matches behind closed doors (no fans), and canceling matches. In the first instances, in these cases, a higher authority (i.e. the government) in these countries have acted, therefore the soccer organizations have followed their lead.

As outlined above, BC Soccer takes its lead from Canada Soccer who is working with the relevant government agencies including Sport Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada to ensure soccer is safe in our country.

### **Reminder on steps to reduce risk and exposure**

As a reminder, BC Soccer would like to share the BC Centre for Disease Control recommendations for reducing the risk of exposure to novel coronavirus:

- Wash your hands frequently (it is the single most effective way of reducing infection spread).
- Practice other good hygiene habits: do not touch your face/eyes/mouth with your hands and cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough (ideally with a disposable tissue or the crease of your elbow).
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched workspace surfaces.
- Maintain good general health (eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep, exercise in moderation).
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Contact 8-1-1 (HealthLink BC) or your health care provider for questions about your personal health situation.

Further information about novel coronavirus is available on the [BC Centre for Disease Control website](http://www.bccdc.ca).

### **Addition Resources**

The following resources are available for your use in your community:

- This [joint message](#) is from the Sport Medicine Advisory Committee comprised of Chief Medical Officers from the Canadian Olympic Committee, the Canadian Paralympic Committee, and the Canadian Olympic and Paralympic Sport Institute Network (COPSIN). It is meant to guide National Sporting Organizations (NSOs) in decision-making with respect to travel to competitions within and outside Canada. Information has been obtained from the World Health Organization, Government of Canada and Australian Institute of Sports websites. This advisory will be updated regularly and distributed to NSOs and other high-performance sport partners.
- The latest WHO statements can be found at [WHO website](http://www.who.int) on Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak.

-End-

**Via E-mail**

February 28, 2020

**Attention:** BC Soccer Membership (and affiliated soccer clubs)

**From:** BC Soccer Association

**Re:** Coronavirus Awareness & Prevention

In follow up to the below communication from January 31, 2020, we wish to restate that there is no need at this time to restrict any soccer related activities for players and team officials, or to cancel games, practices and tournaments. Based on the recent development, concerned members and clubs may institute no handshakes during this time if they wish.

As a reminder, BC Soccer would like to share the BC Centre for Disease Control recommendations for reducing the risk of exposure to novel coronavirus:

- Wash your hands frequently (it is the single most effective way of reducing infection spread).
- Practice other good hygiene habits: do not touch your face/eyes/mouth with your hands, and cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough (ideally with a disposable tissue or the crease of your elbow).
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched workspace surfaces.
- Maintain good general health (eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep, exercise in moderation).
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Contact 8-1-1 (HealthLink BC) or your health care provider for questions about your personal health situation.

Further information about novel coronavirus is available on the [BC Centre for Disease Control website](http://www.bccdc.ca).

-End-

**Via E-mail**

January 31, 2020

**Attention:** BC Soccer Membership (and affiliated soccer clubs)

**From:** BC Soccer Association

**Re:** Coronavirus Awareness & Prevention

The following is information provided by the Ministry of Health:

B.C. Provincial Health Officer Bonnie Henry has announced that the first case of novel coronavirus has been confirmed in B.C. Further details are available [HERE](#).

BC Soccer is aware of the virus, and ongoing monitoring throughout B.C., nationally and internationally. We are confident that all the affected agencies are doing their utmost to ensure all necessary precautions are being taken to prevent the spread of infection. There is no need at this time to restrict any soccer related activities for players and team officials, or to cancel games, practices and tournaments.

As a simple precaution and reminder, BC Soccer would like to share the BC Centre for Disease Control recommendations for reducing the risk of exposure to novel coronavirus:

- Wash your hands frequently (it is the single most effective way of reducing infection spread).
- Practice other good hygiene habits: do not touch your face/eyes/mouth with your hands, and cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough (ideally with a disposable tissue or the crease of your elbow).
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched workspace surfaces.
- Maintain good general health (eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep, exercise in moderation).
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Contact 8-1-1 (HealthLink BC) or your health care provider for questions about your personal health situation.

Further information about novel coronavirus is available on the [BC Centre for Disease Control website](#).

-End-