

VIA EMAIL

April 23, 2020

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

From: Jason Elligott, Executive Director, BC Soccer

Re: Requested Action – ideas to consider for a potential and modified return to play

Note: this memo is not being posted publicly on the BC Soccer website as we are seeking information from within the membership, not from the general public.

Dear Full/Associate Members and Affiliated Clubs,

Firstly, we hope you are all well during these strange and challenging times. As we have communicated previously, we are continuing to do our best to support our members and the wider soccer community as we work through the uncertainty.

Dr. Henry's April 21, 2020 - Press Conference

Some of you may have seen Dr. Henry's press conference from April 21, 2020. It was good to hear a question and response regarding amateur sport and specifically referencing soccer. Dr. Henry said that as they work to open our communities, we need to do so while protecting ourselves through low contact, limited number of people, hand hygiene, not circulating for those who are unwell, etc. As we all know, she has been sharing similar messaging over the last few weeks. In the same press conference, she seemed to increase her emphasis on the safety of the outdoors by saying "It is less risky outside" and noting the "importance for physical activity, especially kids, over the summer." These comments provide us, as a collective soccer community, with conservative optimism.

Media

Leading up to and after the press conference, media outlets were in contact with BC Soccer regarding the impacts on soccer (and sport) and asked about what BC Soccer is doing.

- One of those outlets was Global News. Here is their article from April 22, 2020: <https://globalnews.ca/news/6850345/b-c-looking-at-options-for-kids-sports-this-summer-amid-covid-19/>.
- Another outlet was the Vancouver Sun. Here is their article from April 22, 2020: <https://vancouversun.com/sports/patrick-johnston-b-c-youth-sports-get-a-socially-distant-glimmer-of-hope/wcm/9c001995-f9c9-4bb9-8b81-cf481979b556/>.

Industry Guidance

On April 21, 2020 Dr. Henry also stated that she is "looking to industry" to advise her in getting back to some normalcy. Being that any type of return to some form of soccer is not in isolation as other sports are in the same situation, working together across the sport sector is important. Along these lines, a couple of days ago the BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA), in conjunction with Sport BC, established a Recreational Sports Advisory Group and invited three sport PSO (Soccer, Lacrosse, and

Field Hockey). The intent of the group, which is lead by BCRPA and Sport BC, is to work to create a responsible return to play for both the recreation and organized sports sector. Advisory Group discussions have yet to commence, however, our understanding is that the discussion will provide the BCRPA and Sport BC with information they can use to develop a planned and responsible return to play which can then be provided to the BC Government (and health authorises) for discussion.

Requested Action (one response per member organization & affiliated club please)

To help support the work of the advisory group, we are asking all Members and Affiliated Clubs to complete the survey, linked below.

The survey is designed to source and gather information from within our membership on what suggested protocols/guidance could look like, while taking into consideration your organization and (if you have it) the participant's (and parent's) potential comfort level as we work to try and get back to some form of soccer. Of course, we will only speak from a sport and soccer perspective as the health authorities will provide any protocols/guidance from their areas.

As you can see the survey is not overly prescriptive, rather we are looking to gather information, thoughts and ideas around activity prerequisites and/or any restrictions. Bearing in mind that we understand having distancing restrictions is a challenge for soccer activity to occur.

Examples include:

- limiting the number of people on a field (complex),
- removing pre or post-game handshakes,
- working to schedule more locally and spacing out timing,
- no sharing of water bottles,
- consideration on who can participate and when,
- introducing training sessions first under strike guidelines or perhaps modifying small-sided games in some ways, etc.

There are no bad suggestions as we collectively work together through these challenging times. We thank you in advance for any insights you can bring and would appreciate a response to the survey by 5pm on Sunday, April 26, 2020. Our apologies for the tight turnaround, however, as similar to the current situation things are changing on a daily basis. The advisory group has just been formed and we think that they will be looking to act as quickly as responsible.

Please click the link below to take the survey:

SURVEY IS ONLY OPEN TO MEMBERS AND AFFILIATED CLUBS – CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC

Thank you for your attention to this. Keep well and stay positive.

Kind regards,

Jason Elligott
Executive Director
BC Soccer