



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 BCSPL, specifically related to match play this weekend (March 14-15). Discussions occurred with the 8 BCSPL clubs and the agreed upon process for this weekend is based on club discretion whether to fulfill BCSPL fixtures. It was confirmed that there will be no forfeits or penalties applied for deciding not to play this weekend's BCSPL 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.

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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](#).

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