



For Immediate Release

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Safe recreation guidelines in Waterloo Region: Check before you Rec!

Waterloo Region – As we continue to meet the challenges of the pandemic, we recognize how important city and township recreational facilities are to participants and families. Facility staff are focused on providing a safe and healthy environment, and depend on everyone to follow the safety protocols in place. The cities and townships of Waterloo Region have worked together to standardize the protocols for recreation facilities and community centres as much as possible to ensure consistency and help everyone understand the rules.

Standardized rules around pre-screening, physical distancing, use of face coverings and no re-entry after screening have all been developed in consultation with Region of Waterloo Public Health. Additional procedures specific to each facility may differ slightly (due to differences in facility size, number of entry points, staffing levels, building type, etc.) but were also developed with public health guidance, and are equally important to minimize the risks in these specific settings.

To do your part, all recreation participants and organizations are asked to **Check before you Rec**. Check yourself with the mandatory pre-screening, as set by your sports organization or municipal programming. If you are feeling unwell, stay home. Check to make sure you know the rules of the facility you are going to. And check that you understand the recommendations provided by Public Health in their general guidance on recreational group sport activities.

The standardized rules for recreation facilities and community centres across Waterloo Region include:

- Mandatory pre-screening before arriving at facilities. This information is important for contact tracing purposes.
- Physical distancing of 6 feet/2 metres from others applies at all times, including outdoors while waiting for entry or when exiting, and indoors while wearing a mask. Follow sport distancing rules during play.
- Face coverings are required at all times with the exception of sports participants during play (e.g. on ice, on a court). Face coverings are required on all walking tracks.
- Enter the facility “dressed to participate” in your program. Please check with your specific organization for details. The current state of virus transmission places

dressing room areas as potential high risk, and continued patience with this is appreciated.

- Once participants have been screened and admitted, re-entry is not permitted.
- Only one guardian per minor aged participant is permitted, for capacity requirements. If a guardian arrives with an additional sibling, the sibling is allowed to enter with the guardian; once the participant is ready for their activity, the guardian and sibling are required to leave.

Facility-specific rules are available for each city and township on their website, and each municipality can provide clarity on their own limitations and rules. Procedures have been sent to all affiliated sports organizations and rental groups.

We know that these rules and procedures create an additional challenge during an already tough time, and appreciate everyone's patience and understanding across Waterloo Region. We are all in this together, and the guidelines will continue to be assessed as our local situation evolves.

Participants in group sport activities are also reminded of how important it is to follow public health guidance outside of sport. Activities among participants and families before, during and after play can all have an impact on potential spread. By working together to follow the rules, we can all do our part to protect each other and minimize risk while participating in the activities we love.

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