



September 29, 2020

Communication Advisory

Re: Province of Ontario Update regarding Gathering Size Limits

Effective September 19, 2020, the Province of Ontario instituted a new mandate outlining changes to gathering limits. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/reopening-ontario-stages#gathering-changes> .

In response to that new mandate and the application to Special Olympics Ontario activities; we provide the following clarifications regarding the new gathering limits:

- Sport team training sessions conducted within commercially operated facilities (bowling centres, swimming pools, Golf Courses, Municipal Facilities, etc.) are not affected by the new mandate and may continue with the following gathering size limitations (50 indoors, 100 outdoors).
- SOO gatherings hosted at an un-staffed or unsupervised sport/recreational area (parks, conservation areas, etc.) must abide by the new gathering limitations. Examples of these events include banquets, fundraisers, meetings and all social events.
- SOO fitness training sessions and sport training sessions led and supervised by registered Special Olympics Ontario Coaches in sport/recreational areas (parks, conservation areas, etc.) must be fully approved in the Return to Program process to be able to take place and will be evaluated according to the gathering limits imposed by local and provincial public health agency for the program type.
- SOO discourages hosting meetings on personal properties. While we are aware that this type of gathering could be permissible in some jurisdictions, it poses a risk not worth taking at this time.
- We encourage our membership to consider outdoor fitness programs and continue with virtual programs to help keep our membership active and keep them safe at the same time.

Since September 1st, we have seen a continuous increase in the COVID-19 cases across the province. The current upswing of active cases appear to be in larger metropolitan areas although recent reports indicate other public health districts across the province are also reporting significant increases in their COVID-19 cases. We as an organization are watching these reports closely and will be prepared to implement a pause to the Return to Program process as needed.

All Return to Program applications will be individually evaluated on a case by case basis. Only programs that have received full approval in the Return to Program process may begin. The Return to Program process is required for ALL programs (both new and previously existing programs).

The safety of our athletes, coaches and volunteers remains a high priority within our organization and as such, we will work together to ensure that we meet the guidelines listed above to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Our plans for Return to Program will remain in place for now. This allows the province to treat each application on a case by case basis.

As we've learned, this could change at anytime and we'll be keeping communication flowing, as things change.

Please stay informed by going to our website www.specialolympicsontario.com for the latest updates.

Should you have any questions or would like to speak with a staff person about the pandemic please email covid19@specialolympicsontario.com or call 1-888-333-5515 ext. 311 and leave a message and we will follow up.

Stay safe everyone!

Thank you for understanding,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Glenn MacDonell', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Glenn MacDonell
President & CEO

cc: Special Olympics Board of Directors