

Horizon School Division Volleyball COVID-19 Protocol

(Version 4 – Nov. 2, 2020)

Compiled by Brian Grest, Horizon SD ASA, from a variety of sources, including Sask Government, SHSAA, Sask Volleyball, and Horizon SD protocol documents.

League Notes (these are the league notes that are COVID-19 specific):

- **Please refer to Appendix A for notes pertaining to COVID-19 protocols. Some COVID-19 related notes are also interspersed in this section and are in blue.**
- The teams in this mini-league are the only teams you are permitted to play against this volleyball season.
 - Teams may choose to play matches with other teams in this mini-league outside this schedule (exhibition matches).
- Match rules shall be those as set out in current SHSAA policy (notwithstanding exceptions written here for the sake of league play or **exceptions related to COVID-19 protocols**).
 - **When serving, consider having your front row players start near the attack line to facilitate physical distancing during game.**
- Make sure you are familiar with the **new warm-up procedures** (refer to “Warm Up Protocol” in Appendix A)
- Players from the visiting team **MUST** come dressed to play. The host will not be providing change areas for the visiting team. Visiting teams – change before you leave your home school.
- **OFFICIALS:** Please make sure your **head referee** is comfortable and capable of officiating this level of ball. **It is recommended no 2nd referee be used.**

Consider having an assistant coach or some other capable person that is already in the “mini-league bubble” officiate if possible.

Please read all comments pertaining to referees in various sections of Appendix A

It is recommended minor officiating be done by players dressed for the match:

- Each team would provide a lineperson for their own side of the court (mask on).
- The home team would provide the scorekeeper (mask on).
 - It is further recommended no scoresheet be used. The score would be kept on the scoreboard only, and lineups and rotations would be done using the honor system.
- The league champion gets a pennant and the title of “League Champion 2020”. **There will be no awards ceremony at the league final, as per current public health orders.**
- It is not practical to dictate a set start time for games, as travel distances come into play in some cases, and each school’s situation may vary from day-to-day. In a perfect world, every reasonable attempt to start the match as early as possible after 3:30 would be made, staying sensitive to the policy that **the visiting team shall not be entering the host school until after classes have dismissed and most of the students from the host school have left the building**, and that no sub costs should be incurred (if your school administration is willing and able to find coverage to allow your team to leave early, please do so). **Communication with your in-school administration is vital.** Host coaches should be proactive here – phone the visiting team the day before the match to find out when they plan on arriving. **Please avoid starting later than 4:30 when possible.**

- The visiting team must contact the host school two days prior to a scheduled match to:
 - determine how many players and coaches the host team will have in attendance. This will ensure the visiting team knows the maximum number of players and coaches they may arrive with (total of 30 max between the two teams)
 - let the host know how many parent-driver volunteers are likely to be arriving with the team so the host can plan attendance and seating accordingly.

APPENDIX A – COVID-19 Protocols

Please refer to the [Horizon School Division Return to Sport Protocol](#) document for Horizon School Division general and volleyball-specific guidelines, some of which are posted below.

Mini-Leagues

By public health order, mini-leagues in volleyball are permitted, as long as the number of players and coaches combined from all teams in the mini-league does not exceed 50.

- The mini-leagues have all been formulated, thus it is imperative that no new player, coach, or supervisor join a practice or game without prior written permission from the Horizon SD ASA, Brian Grest.
- Officials, minor officials, and approved volunteers do not count in the mini-league numbers if they maintain social distancing at all times possible and wear a mask. Thus, we are requiring these people to do exactly that.

Number of People in the Gym

1. Players and Coaches

The number of players and coaches combined from both teams is limited to 30. This would suggest the home team will dress as many players and have as many coaches as they choose on that day, and let the visiting team know, in a timely manner, how many players and coaches they may then bring to ensure this number is at 30 or less.

2. Head Referee (no 2nd referees should be used for league play)

The referee does NOT count in the maximum 30 from point 1. above. However, the referee must maintain social distancing at all times and not touch the ball. When at the score bench, the referee must wear a mask and try to stay at least 2 m away from the minor officials when possible. Also, when talking to captains (whether on the stand or not), the referee must wear a mask and keep the captains 2 m away.

The coin toss must be done in a no touch manner (e.g. “heads, blue wins, tails, white wins” – ref flips coin into own hand and declares whether it was heads or tails. No need for the coin to be anywhere other than the refs hands).

As of this writing, a referee may officiate in more than one mini-league, but this may change. Stay tuned.

A "Guidelines for Horizon School Division Volleyball Officials 2020" document is currently being edited and will be distributed soon.

3. Minor Officials (from outside the team only if needed)

Minor officials do NOT count in the maximum 30 from point 1. above if they maintain social distancing at all times and wear a mask at all times.

However, it is strongly recommended that the teams use bench players as minor officials instead of bringing "outsiders" in. For instance:

- a) Each team does lines for their own side of the court (mask on).
- b) Home team runs the score bench (mask on). It is also recommended not bothering with a scoresheet (one less person at the scorekeeping bench) and use the honor system for lineups and rotations.

4. Spectators

The decision to allow spectators into a volleyball match rests in the hands of each host school's administration. The current public health order discourages spectators. It is a privilege, not a right, for parents/guardians to attend a volleyball match during this pandemic. Decisions must be based on safety, not pressure.

If your school decides to allow spectators, the number of spectators for **indoor sports** (volleyball etc.) cannot exceed 60 people, safely seated and socially distanced as per current public health orders. As the size of gymnasiums will differ, each host school's administration will determine the maximum number of spectators within these guidelines.

- A seating plan will be created
- Designated seating will be clearly indicated
- All spectators must wear masks

Spectator seating priority will be done in the following order:

- First priority is given to the Horizon School Division approved volunteer drivers from the visiting team for that day. **Note:** no other spectators from the visiting team will be allowed.
 - If there are seats remaining, one parent/guardian from each player dressed for the home team that day may attend. If not enough seats to fulfil the number of requests, the host must determine how to administer.
 - If there are seats remaining, the host can approve other parents/guardians up to capacity in the manner they determine.
- For the sake of simplifying administration of this guideline, the maximum number is firm, regardless of whether two or more people from the same household are able to attend and sit together.

Volunteers and minor officials who can stay socially distanced and wear a mask are exempt from the spectator count.

Major officials are exempt from the spectator count.

5. Other Volunteers (e.g. COVID-19 Protocols Officer)

Other volunteers, such as the COVID-19 Safety Manager and the volleyball sanitizer, do NOT count in the maximum 30 from point 1. above if they maintain social distancing at all times and wear a mask at all times.

Masks

1. Players

Players on the court during game time or scrimmage time may choose to play without a mask on. Players on the court during warm-ups or drills may choose to warm up or do drills without a mask on, but it is highly recommended they wear a mask during warm-ups or drills, and especially those warm-ups and drills where they are going to be in relatively consistent close proximity to others.

Players on the bench or players not participating in a scrimmage or drill must be masked unless they are clearly maintaining a 2 m social distance from all other people.

- Spacing of the players on the bench or players not participating in a scrimmage or drill should be the maximum possible given the size of the team and the limits of the gym size.
- If 2 m between bench players or players not participating in a scrimmage or drill is not possible, these players must be masked while on the bench or not participating in the scrimmage or drill.

2. Coaches

Coaches must be masked at all times during practices and games.

3. Referee

The referee will officiate the game with a mask on.

- If using an electronic whistle, should wear a mask on the stand.
- The referee must make every effort to social distance at all times when not on the stand. A mask is not required if they are socially distanced, but it is recommended the referee have a mask on at all times when not on the stand.
- When talking to captains (whether on the stand or not), the referee must wear a mask and keep the captains 2 m away.
- When at the score bench speaking with the minor officials, the referee must wear a mask and try to stay at least 2 m away from the minor officials when possible.

4. Minor Officials

Minor officials must be masked at all times, even if they are players acting as minor officials.

5. Spectators

Spectators must be masked at all times.

6. Other Volunteers (e.g. COVID-19 Safety Manager, volleyball sanitizer)

Other volunteers, such as the COVID-19 Safety Manager and the volleyball sanitizer, must be masked at all times.

Transportation

Please refer to the [Horizon School Division Return to Sport Protocol](#) document for general protocol surrounding **school bus usage**.

For transporting volleyball student-athletes, the following are considered acceptable methods of transportation, and in the following priority:

- **Option 1:** Each child is transported by their own parent/guardian. No other passengers would be allowed.
- **Option 2:** Use school buses, maintaining all current guidelines for bus travel.
 - o Masks are worn.
 - o One student per seat.
 - o Two students per seat if they are family members.
 - o If necessary, two students can ride in one seat.
 - o Maintaining school cohorts shall be the first priority when students are riding on buses for any curricular or extra-curricular travel.
- **Option 3:** 15 passenger vans.
 - o Masks are worn.
 - o Two students per row, for a maximum of 9 athletes and a driver.
- **Option 4:** Parent driver cohorts. The same parent drives the same 3 students (their own child and two others) during the entire season. This could be 5 students if the vehicle has third row seating.
 - o Masks are worn.
 - o **NOTE:** The coach or a staff member can act in the same manner as a parent driver. For any staff member to transport students, permission shall be attained from Horizon SD ASA Brian Grest as per the Horizon School Division Re-Entering Horizon plan by filling this online form found [HERE](#).
- **Option 5:** A combination of the above 4 options.

Warm-up Protocol

In an effort to reduce the incidence of injuries and concussions during match play, Volleyball Canada has developed the following warm-up protocol. This protocol is to be followed by all teams during the hitting portion of the team warm-up:

- Athletes are not permitted to cross under the net and into the receiving court after completing their attack.
- Athletes must remain on their side of the net immediately following an attack and only move to the opposite side of the net from outside of the court.
- Balls being entered to the attacking side of the net from the receiving side of the court must be entered from outside of the court at a minimum distance of six meters from the net.
- Retrieved balls must be returned along the sidelines of the court and not through the receiving court.
- For teams that do not follow the warm-up protocol, the referees will note on the score sheet the noncompliance of the warm-up protocol. The league commissioner will determine the appropriate sanction for not following the warm-up protocol.

This video will provide some examples for your team to follow so we can eliminate unnecessary headshots.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CVGRLZ8boQg>

Warm up procedures as follows:

- Serving team hits first for 5 minutes shagging their own balls following Volleyball Canada guidelines (e.g.
- Receiving team hits for 5 minutes shagging their own balls following Volleyball Canada guidelines.
- Teams serve within their five minutes.
- The non-hitting team is not allowed on the court.

Practice, Game Day, and Safety Protocols

- Participants and coaches must stay home if they have sign or symptoms of illness, or been in contact with a known case of COVID-19 in the previous 14 days. If a participant or coach is showing signs of cold, flu, or COVID-19 with coughing or sneezing, they must be removed from the activity and self-isolate immediately.
- Retain detailed records of all participants in each practice and each game day.
- Coaches:
 - o Must wear a mask during practice and games
 - o Are encouraged to wear gloves during volleyball activity
 - o Should social distance at all times possible
 - o Should lead and instruct without touching the ball as much as possible
 - o If handling the ball, should use hand sanitizer and/or gloves when they move between different individuals or groups.
 - o Should modify the flow of training so that there are no congregation points
- Volleyballs should be sanitized regularly during practice sessions and during games.
 - o Consider having separate equipment for each team but where that is not feasible, a “clean bin” should be utilized to ensure that sanitized volleyballs can be separated from those requiring cleaning
 - o All equipment must be sanitized following a training session so it is ready for use by the next team that will be accessing the equipment and training area.
- Emergency Preparedness:
 - o Ensure all coaches are fully educated on symptoms of COVID-19 and all and all associated Horizon School Division procedures to minimise risk.
 - o Establish protocol for participants and coaches to report and manage sickness.
 - o Establish protocol for handling any participant or coach in the event that they develop signs of cold, flu or COVID-19 during a volleyball activity. This should include identification of an isolation area, notification process (all families within an affected group) and school administration.
 - o Ensure that you have gloves, masks, hand sanitizer and cleaning materials available to coaches for all practices.
- Game Day
 - o **Designate one or more people as COVID-19 Safety Managers to be responsible for ensuring compliance with all guidelines.** This should not be someone not involved in coaching the team playing on that day.
 - o Ensure only authorized spectators are permitted entry to the gym
 - The names and phone numbers of each spectator in attendance must be recorded
 - Spectators must be shown where they can sit.
 - o A hand-sanitizing station must be set up at the entry point to the gym.
 - o Ensure there are no congregation points (e.g. keep traffic flowing through the lobby), and break up all gatherings. **This is possibly the biggest single risk factor.**
 - o Limit access points in and out of the area/facility to control numbers in the space.

- Determine what areas will be open and available to patrons and what will be closed off.
- Consider closing all common areas including wash rooms, change rooms, water fountains, meeting spaces, and team benches.
- All common contact surfaces within the facility should be cleaned and disinfected between different groups utilizing the facility, including door handles, chairs and tables.
- Put in place signage to educate and direct patrons about handwashing, personal hygiene, directional flow through the facility and other safety considerations.
- Communicate all new safety protocols and measures to your parents/guardians ahead of time.
- Sanitation should be available for the official to sanitize the referee stand after it is set up
- At match end, teams may acknowledge one another at a distance, but there will be no coming together or shaking of hands.
- Game Play:
 - Teams will not switch sides during the match.
 - Players must refrain from all physical contact when celebrating a point or a victory etc.
 - When serving, consider having your front row players start near the attack line to facilitate physical distancing during game when the receiving team has players at the net.
- COVID-19 questionnaire
 - Coaches are now required to ask, attain answers to, and record from:
 - Every coach and player prior to participation at every practice and every game
 - Any spectators prior to entering a Horizon facility
 - Any parent/caregivers transporting student-athletes, prior to their trip
 - These two questions:
 1. Are you experiencing any of the symptoms associated with COVID-19? (Refer to the current symptom list available on the [saskatchewan.ca Self Assessment Tool](https://saskatchewan.ca/Self-Assessment-Tool))
 2. Have you been in contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 within the past 14 days?

If answering “yes” to either of these questions, athletes or coaches/staff will not be permitted to participate in the activity (coach/athlete), enter the facility (spectators), transport students (drivers).
 - The school principal will ensure that coaches document their answers and are prepared to provide this documentation (any format that works for you is acceptable) to the school or school division, when requested.

Game Ball Protocol

Three (or more) volleyballs should be set aside as games balls. Prior to the match, these three (or more) balls must be sanitized thoroughly, and kept from being touched by anyone prior to the game’s first serve.

During a match, the ball in play should be switched out for sanitizing and a newly sanitized one put into the game:

- Every time a substitute enters the games
- During a time out
- When the first team reaches 5, 10, 15, and 20 points IF there have been no substitutes or time-outs during that phase

Sanitizing of the volleyballs coming off the court during the match shall be done using either:

- a) a bleach and water solution in the following manner, as per the Government of Saskatchewan's [COVID-19 Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Facilities](#) document:
 - Always read product labels and follow the manufacturer's directions. Do not use expired products.
 - According to Health Canada, a disinfecting solution can be made by mixing one part of bleach into 50 parts of water. For example, 1 teaspoon (5 mL) bleach into 1 cup (250 mL) water. These directions are based on bleach that is 5% sodium hypochlorite.
 - Do not mix soap or other cleaners into the bleach and water solution.
 - Apply the disinfecting solution using a spray bottle or a clean wiping cloth.
 - Clearly mark the spray bottle ("bleach solution 50:1 for volleyball sanitizing") so everyone is aware of the contents and the intended use.
 - Always use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including protective gloves.
 - Do not get this bleach solution on your clothing as it may stain.
- b) Vanguard (or similar product)
 - WHMIS certification is required for any person sanitizing the volleyballs with this type of commercial product during matches
- c) Liquid hand sanitizer
 - This is the liquid, not gel, hand sanitizer that all school have been provided with

The Horizon School Division Facilities department will cover the cost of all product required for sanitizing and disinfecting purposes. Speak to your principal about how to attain.

The home team is responsible for assigning one adult volunteer to be in charge of sanitizing the game balls.

Why do we need to spend so much time and effort developing and following protocols?

“We love our sports here. We are not going to let someone ruin it for us.”

- Horizon School Division Coach