



# **COVID-19 PHASE THREE – Recreation Facility Changeroom Use Guideline (Non-Aquatic)**

VERSION 1.0

ISSUE DATE: AUGUST 2020

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## Introduction

The August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020 update from the Ontario Government regarding the continued re-opening of Ontario recreation facilities significantly changed the operations landscape with respect to facility gatherings and how it applies to multi-use recreation facilities. The Ministry guideline now allows facility owners the opportunity to increase attendance levels – but only if safe to do so. [More](#)



ORFA member facilities are diverse, and at times, have complicated designs that were already a challenge to maintain before the arrival of COVID-19. Although the Province of Ontario allows recreation providers additional opportunity to increase user traffic, it did not reduce the responsibility to provide safe work and play environments. Before increasing user loads, it is essential that facility management conduct a “risk analysis” of all operations. This resource will focus on changeroom use as part of a “reentry, reopening, and return to play” plan.

Changerooms have always presented unique operational issues. Users often adopt these environments as an extension of their rental, with most failing to accept that changeroom use, is in fact a privilege, not a right of use. Finding a balance in this new way of conducting business will require facility managers to have both authoritative and diplomatic skills. This should be viewed as an opportunity to correct, what may have been poor historical operational practices, that can assist in improving the industry as we move forward.

Regulations 364/20 does not speak specifically to changeroom use, but it does speak to general responsibilities and guidelines that apply accounting for facility design when setting operational policies.

## EXCERPTS of: Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020

### ONTARIO REGULATION 364/20

#### FORMERLY UNDER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND CIVIL PROTECTION ACT

#### RULES FOR AREAS IN STAGE 3

Consolidation Period: From August 15, 2020 to the [e-Laws currency date](#).

Last amendment: [453/20](#).

*This is the English version of a bilingual regulation.*

#### General compliance

2. (1) The person responsible for a business or organization that is open shall ensure that the business or organization operates in accordance with all applicable laws, including the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the regulations made under it.

(2) The person responsible for a business or organization that is open shall operate the business or organization in compliance with the advice, recommendations, and instructions of public health officials, including any advice, recommendations or instructions on physical distancing, cleaning, or disinfecting.

#### Capacity limits for businesses or facilities open to the public

3. (1) The person responsible for a place of business or facility that is open to the public shall limit the number of persons in the place of business or facility so that every member of the public is able to maintain a physical distance of at least two metres from every other person in the business or facility, except where Schedule 2 allows persons to be closer together.

(2) For greater certainty, subsection (1) does not require persons who are in compliance with public health guidance on households and social circles to maintain a physical distance of at least two metres from each other while in a place of business or facility.

#### Cleaning requirements

6. (1) The person responsible for a business or place that is open shall ensure that,

(a) any washrooms, locker rooms, change rooms, showers or similar amenities made available to the

public are cleaned and disinfected as frequently as is necessary to maintain a sanitary condition; and

(b) any equipment that is rented to, provided to, or provided for the use of members of the public must be cleaned and disinfected as frequently as is necessary to maintain a sanitary condition.

**Key Excerpts from:**  
**Guidance for facilities for sports and recreational fitness activities during COVID-19**

**Introduction Section**

For clarity, the limit of 50 persons per room does not apply to amenities that are not subject to gathering limits, such as swimming pools. Swimming pool changerooms are therefore not included in this resource.

**Health & Safety Section**

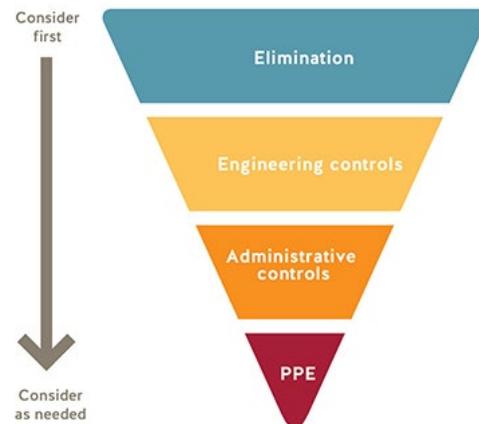
- Providing alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) or hand washing stations and ensuring they are readily available in all key areas of the facility, including in high-traffic areas such as the lobby area, patron services, change rooms, washrooms, and throughout the various workout and class areas.
- Increasing the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces and common or shared spaces, such as washrooms, lobbies, change rooms, areas for workouts and classes, and workout equipment.
- Work out areas with weights and equipment, studios, classes, and rooms, courts, change rooms, and spectator areas should be cleaned and disinfected as is necessary to maintain a sanitary condition after each session or timeslot.
- Removing or putting out of service hand dryers in washrooms or change rooms.
- Limiting the use of water fountains to be used only to re-fill water bottles, not for individuals to drink directly from them.
- Consider limiting spectators if there is not sufficient space in common areas such as washrooms, hallways, and other areas or amenities.
- Encouraging patrons to arrive prepared and appropriately attired to begin their activity

and limit exposure to others in common areas, such as change rooms before or after their activity.

- Arranging change rooms and washrooms to facilitate physical distancing while in use, including blocking of alternating lockers, showers, sinks, stalls, urinals, and other amenities.
- Patrons should use a face covering inside common areas including the lobby, washrooms, and change rooms while entering and exiting the facility or at any time not engaging in intense physical activity, where not otherwise required by local public health officials or municipal by-laws.
- Facility ventilation systems should be both operational and appropriate for the activities practiced within. Avoiding stagnant air conditions. Bring in fresh air by maximizing the outdoor air ratio of the heating, venting and air conditioning (HVAC) system settings or by opening windows. If this is not possible or practical for the whole facility, focus them in places where crowding may be an issue or areas used for group exercise classes.

**Recommendations for Screening Section**

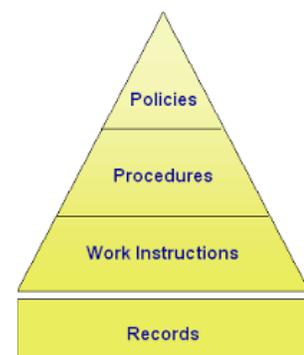
- All individuals (workers, patrons, spectators, contractors, etc.) entering the facility should be actively screened.



**Risk Assessment Considerations**

- Determine if changerooms are to be used and if not, design a control system that will ensure there is no access. If they are to be used consider:

- Ventilation system – many older buildings lack adequate air exchange ability. This must form an early part of the changeroom use risk assessment and if deemed inadequate, changeroom use should be avoided for the early part of Phase 3.
- Calculate each dressing rooms square footage. Proactive facility managers will already have this information catalogued in their [Recreation Facility Asset Management](#) (RFAM) portfolio. This will assist in setting capacity levels for each area based on the 2m spacing requirement. Once calculated, post each room with the “maximum” occupancy which should include players, parents, coaches, and volunteers.
  - Use of “masks” may allow for increased occupancy loads however, facility management must confirm that strict use of mask policy and procedures are in place that include safe storage of each players mask when not in use outside of the changeroom. [More](#)
- Consider removing any items that are not considered essential to room function.
- Request that users pack out their own waste (hockey tape, drink bottles, etc.).
- Determine how people should move through these locations to maintain the physical distancing requirement. Tape can be used on the floor to designate walking and changing areas and may also identify one-way walkways if this will help keep people separate.
- Consider blocking off some lockers so that people do not need to stand close together to access their items.
- Consider if washrooms or showers are permitted to be used by the rental. If not, determine what control measures are required to guarantee non-use.
  - Will hand basins be used? If not, how will users wash their hands which is a key defense to virus transmission reduction.
  - Will there be supplied hand sanitizer in each room or just at the entrance and exit points.
- Consider the benefit of a changeroom monitor to ensure set policies are complied with.
- Consider a “zero tolerance” policy that cancels any future use of any changeroom for breaches. Setting the right tone from the beginning is essential.
- Evaluate construction materials and assess required cleaning and disinfection timetables based on the existing materials, the condition and age of the materials.
- Design the cleaning disinfection and sanitization program based on this information as well as user schedule.
- Facility managers must consider the benefits of having several deep cleaning, disinfection and sanitizing schedules that are supported by more focused cleaning, disinfection, and sanitization sessions between deep cleaning. Tracking these activities is considered diligent.
- If changerooms are not be used, facility managers must consider where users might best prepare for their rental.



## SAMPLE COVID-19 Changeroom Use Protocols

*The following information is offered as a template to assist facility management in designing site specific policies and procedures. It should not be considered complete.*

- Maintain physical distancing and wear masks when possible. Masks should not be worn when conducting intense physical activities.
- Wash your hands with soap and water before, during and after your activity
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, mouth and face.
- Cover coughs and sneezes in a tissue or your elbow.
- Carry and use your own hand sanitizer
- Players should come dressed in gear as much as possible.
- Bring and clean your own equipment. Avoid sharing equipment unless you are in the same household or cohort. Do not share water bottles and towels.
- Arrive no more than 15 minutes before the booking time.
- Do not gather or loiter in dressing rooms, parking areas or public areas before, during or after your activity.
- Practice physical distancing in spectator areas; spectator stands will not be disinfected and cleaned in between bookings.
- Spectators should stay away from dressing rooms and play surfaces unless required to support players; physical distancing guidelines should still be followed.
- Leave the location as soon as your activities end to reduce overlap of bookings.
  - Maximum \_\_\_ skaters on the ice with proper physical distancing.  
EXAMPLE: If a youth group, a ratio of 6 to 1 ratio of adults to youth is recommended.
  - 2 dressing rooms available per user group with a third available for mixed gender groups upon request.
- Ice Sheet “B” changerrooms = 8 people  
Changeroom keys will not be used.
  - Arrival at the arena should not be more than 30 minutes prior to the ice time.
  - Ice users must park in the \_\_\_\_\_ parking lot.
  - Enter the facility through the main arena lobby doors (either side). Exit the facility through the designated door in the respective arena (please see the attached map).
  - Shower facilities are not available.
  - Touchless water bottle filler are available in the \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Vending machines will be available with enhanced cleaning.
  - All ice activities must include safely-spaced activities and may not include hockey games or activities that include contact between individuals.
  - Enhanced cleaning of touch points in dressing rooms will be completed between user groups by facility staff.
  - Hand sanitizer station in the lobby and \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Enhanced cleaning of touch surfaces in main lobby, Ice Sheet “B” and washrooms ( \_\_\_ times daily).
  - Cleaning of dressing room touch surfaces between user groups.

## Conclusion

Getting users safely to and from play is a critical component to virus risk reduction. Only by having and following a critical path that is site specific can the industry expect to successfully return to play.

### Maximum change room space:

- Ice Sheet “A” changerrooms = 6 people.
- Ice Sheet “A” female changerroom = 2 people.