



To: Local Coordinators and Local Committee members

Date: November 20, 2020

Topic: Return to Sport update

Special Olympics BC is consulting community members and provincial experts in order to react to the November 19 orders from the Provincial Health Officer. We want to do our due diligence and seek the course of action that is most appropriate at this time. The safety of our community members remains our absolute priority.

At this time, all in-person Special Olympics BC programs in Regions 3, 4, and 5 will remain paused until our next announcement, which will come **mid-next week**. Programs in Regions 1, 2, 6, 7, and 8 can continue, but must follow the new Provincial Health Officer order requiring mask wearing in all indoor public spaces. And everyone must continue to rigorously follow all the SOBC Return to Sport safety protocols.

Out of an abundance of caution, all meetings must be conducted virtually until further notice, and there should be no Local-led participation in any community holiday gatherings or events (if any are going ahead).

At this time it seems important to clarify the difference between social gatherings (which provincial health guidance is trying to limit) and sport programs. Sport programs are currently still permitted to operate, under viaSport British Columbia's current guidelines. SOBC's safety protocols are stronger than the current viaSport levels, because we are being extra careful out of concern for protecting the health of our members and those with underlying conditions. For example, SOBC requires physical distancing in all programs, mask wearing in all indoor spaces, no team play or games in any of our currently open sports, and caps on program sizes that are much smaller than what viaSport is currently permitting. And SOBC protocols always required no spectators at any sport programs; the Provincial Health Officer this week made it mandatory for all sport organizations to require the same.

Everyone is asked to regularly check the Return to Sport resources on our website to ensure they are following all current protocols: <https://www.specialolympics.ca/british-columbia/return-sport>

SOBC chose to pause all in-person programs in Regions 3, 4, and 5 ten days ago out of an abundance of caution and following the Provincial Health Officer's recommendation for those Regions. We are doing our best to hear the feedback of members and seek the right balance for everyone, respecting those who strongly need in-person Special Olympics programs and who have worked so hard to restart them safely, as well as the spirit of the Provincial Health Officer's guidance to limit social interactions to only what is necessary.

Special Olympics BC will continue monitoring the provincial guidance and will continue providing updates.

If you have any questions or feedback, please don't hesitate to email covid@specialolympics.bc.ca. Again, please watch the SOBC website and social media for an update mid-next week.

Thank you all so much for your time and efforts.

Upcoming virtual opportunities include:

- Monthly calendars of daily at-home workouts and wellness activities – [please click here](#)



- SOBC Virtual Athlete Personal Health Series, Virtual Yoga Club, Virtual Fit Families & Friends, Virtual Club Fit – [learn more](#)
- SOBC Virtual Anniversary Ceremony and Dance Party on November 24 from 6 to 7 p.m. PT – [register here](#)
- More resources for staying active, connected, positive, and informed – [please click here](#)

Provincial Health Officer orders now in effect include:

- Mask wearing in all indoor public and retail spaces, and in workplace common areas.
- No events or social gatherings with anyone outside your household, or (if you live alone) outside your core bubble.
- Essential travel only.
- [More info on provincial restrictions](#)