



# RETURN TO COMPETITION GUIDELINES

## Step 1 - Time Trials

*The information in this document is current to October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020*



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## INTRODUCTION

Safety is a key priority with all aspects of the return to competition. Clubs will need to adhere to Swim BC, provincial and municipal regulations regarding gatherings and events. This will impact the number of swimmers at a time trial and the officials and volunteers required. The environment you set up for a time trial, whether it be a Class I or Class II simulated race event, should be continually assessed to ensure precautions are taken to minimize risk to the swimmers, coaches, officials, volunteers. Initially, return to competition will be time trials only and will only take place within your own club.

This document outlines how strategies can be applied within the swim club environment across four key areas:

1. Facility Access and Use
2. Participants
3. Competition - Time Trials
4. Emergency Response

For the purpose of this document, reference to competition is for Class I and Class II time trials until such time as full competition sanctions are permitted.

## FACILITY ACCESS AND USE

The BC Government and public health officials have tasked the BC Recreation and Parks Association to develop a set of guidelines describing how the public recreation and parks sector can operate safely during the pandemic. [The Recreation and Parks Sector Guideline for Restarting Operations](#) provides a framework for government agencies to apply to the provision of recreation and parks services in the pandemic, and is to be used to develop policies, plans and procedures specific to each organization.

The BCRPA Guideline clearly states the steps a facility must take to determine strategies for reducing transmission of COVID-19. The facilities programming limitations are to be determined by three primary focus areas:

1. Physical distancing controls
2. Hand hygiene provisions
3. Touch point sanitation

## GATHERING LIMITS

An understanding as to how aquatic facilities address gathering limits is outlined by the BCRPA as follows:

*“The PHO order banning mass gatherings over 50 people, which is expected to be enforced through the BC Restart Plan’s Phase Three (which we are currently in), is specific to social gatherings that are singular, one-time events where people are engaged in one common activity.”*

The recreation sector application of the order is as follows:

- Gatherings of fewer than 50 people for a singular event may be hosted in recreation spaces indoor or outdoor, provided that strict physical distancing measures are in place.
- For facilities that may accommodate more than 50 people for activities that are not episodic, space calculations as applied by the facility administration will guide the number of people in a space that will adhere to the physical distancing requirement. It is understood that if a space or facility cannot adhere to physical distancing requirements for a desired number of people, the number has to be reduced to that which will ensure 2 metres between individuals. For example, when multiple programs are taking place resulting in more than 50 patrons in the facility, the facility must put controls in place to ensure each program space provides for adequate physical distancing. Ingress and egress to that space must be managed in order to avoid density in areas that do not permit adequate physical distancing.



The facility administration will be required to develop internal and external signage and communications on COVID-19 protocols related to the facility and its specific service areas. Clubs should work with facility administration to align your plan to acknowledge all ingress and egress plans to ensure club members are aware of and adhere to the facilities plan.

## PARTICIPANTS

When planning for time trials, clubs must consider who their participants are, the size of the group, expectations of participants and the communication and enforcement of those expectations.

### HEALTH OF ALL PARTICIPANTS

The following should be in place to protect the health of your swimmers, coaches and officials.

1. Re-confirmation of the club's Illness Policy that outlines procedures for swimmers, coaches and officials that may be experiencing symptoms;
2. Conduct day-of-time trial symptom screenings for swimmers, coaches and officials by having them complete the [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#);
3. Maintain a strict 'zero' tolerance stance for 'competing while sick' - ensure that swimmers / coaches / officials do not participate if they are symptomatic;
4. Implement enhanced hygiene protocols:
  - a. Frequent and proper handwashing
  - b. Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth
  - c. Cough in your sleeve
5. Ensure all participants (swimmers, coaches and officials) have signed the **Assumption of Risk Form** (through their online RTR registration).

### REMINDERS TO EVERYONE

Consider including in your plan the following reminders to all participants:

You should not participate or come to the facility if:

- You don't feel well or are displaying recognized symptoms of COVID-19;
- Someone in your household has COVID-19 or is showing symptoms of COVID-19;
- You have travelled outside of Canada within the last 14 days;
- Someone in your household has travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days.

**Consider your own risk – if you are at a higher risk of experiencing serious illness from COVID-19, consider limiting or avoiding participation in swimming or time trial activities for the time being. Masters swimmers and older adults in coaching and/or officiating roles will need to assess their risk of participation, particular consideration must be made to any underlying medical conditions.**

### PARTICIPANT GROUPS

Clubs should look at how you can support higher-risk populations, where possible. Individuals must be made aware of risks of participation but the decision to participate must be left to the individual. The exception is if the individual is displaying signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

Vulnerable populations may include:

- Older adults;
- Those with underlying medical conditions and/or compromised immune systems;
- Individuals that experience barriers such as communications, transportation, economic.



## COMPETITIONS - TIME TRIALS

The following section refers only to sanctioned time trials. For time trial sanction approval, Swim BC has made the following amendment to previous procedures.

Fully certified Level 3 officials with a completed Referee clinic, may:

1. Sign off time trial information for the purpose of sanction application.
2. Be the on-deck referee.

Regional Officials Directors will be asked to verify Level 3 officials.

Your club's Plan should include the following procedures, specific to your facilities or location. Working with the facility administration to define these procedures is imperative. These procedures must be clearly stated and provided to all members involved. A training session to review the plan's procedures is required prior to the onset of club time trials.

### FOR ALL TIME TRIALS:

- ✓ Ensure Club Plan has been circulated, posted and an education session has been conducted;
- ✓ Pre-registration for swimmers and officials prior to any time trial is recommended;
- ✓ Designate participant parking area or parent drop-off zone;
- ✓ Parent spectators are not recommended at this time;
- ✓ Schedule your arrival no earlier than 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start of your activity;
- ✓ [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) is to be completed for each participant (including coach):
  - Do you have any of the following symptoms: fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat and/or painful swallowing, stuffy or runny nose, loss of sense of smell, headache, muscle aches, fatigue or loss of appetite?
  - Have you been in contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19?
  - If any participant answers yes to any of the above, they must depart the time trial.
- ✓ Detailed attendance for all participants (swimmers, coaches, officials, volunteers) to be recorded by Meet Manager for every time trial and retained on file;
- ✓ Review personal hygiene habits: cough or sneeze into elbow, no spitting or nasal clearing, avoid touching gates, fences, benches, doors;
- ✓ Use personal equipment only, no sharing. Assign club owned equipment to individuals or limit use;
- ✓ Avoid water fountains, bring personal water bottle;
- ✓ Only coaches should touch or handle facility and club equipment (lane ropes, backstroke flags, pace clocks, etc.);
  - To reduce the frequency of touch and encroachment on swimmers' / officials' personal space, the use of backstroke ledges is not recommended at this time;
- ✓ Begin running time trials with mature athletes to ensure systems and procedures are well established, coaches and officials are clear on all processes, facility procedures are well understood and are in partnership with the club.

### PROCEDURAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Consider the following procedural considerations; adaptation to number of swimmers and lane usage will be required.

#### Pre-Time Trial:

- ✓ Meet Manager and coaching staff work together with facility to confirm all logistics and expectations;
- ✓ If Meet Referees are not attached the club, the club's Return to Competition Plan must be sent to them 2-weeks prior to the event – this is the sole responsibility of the club and the sanction is contingent on this being accomplished.



- ✓ Officials to be assigned and confirmed to positions prior to competition;
  - List of confirmed officials (and their assigned roles/duties) must be sent to the referee 48 hours prior to the event;
- ✓ No officials briefing done in person, this should be completed virtually, or information sent via email
- ✓ Provide direction/information regarding supplies each official will be required to bring (i.e. face mask, hand sanitizer, pencil, pre-filled water bottle, etc.);

#### Swimmers' Arrival:

- ✓ Designate participant parking area or parent drop-off zone;
- ✓ Enter facility only through pre-described access point (in consultation with facility plan);
- ✓ Swimmers to be met upon entry by coach and assisted with directions to pre-determined deck space:
  - It is recommended that swimmers should arrive in suits unless changeroom access permitted by facility;
  - Only essential gear and personal items (towel, swim bag etc.) are to be brought to the pool - place in a pre-designated area;
  - Minimize clothing worn to the time trial.
- ✓ Wash hands or use hand sanitizer upon entry;
- ✓ Consider providing directional signage on the pool deck to manage traffic flow – to be developed by or in conjunction with facility administration.

#### Officials' Arrival:

- ✓ Officials should arrive at the pool, to a pre-designated time and location, dressed appropriately, bringing their deck shoes - follow any directions provided;
- ✓ Enter facility only through pre-described access point (in consultation with facility plan);
- ✓ Wash hands or use hand sanitizer upon entry;
- ✓ Consider providing directional signage on the pool deck to manage traffic flow – to be developed by or in conjunction with facility administration;
- ✓ It is recommended that all officials wear personal protection equipment (e.g. masks) while on deck.

#### Swimmers' Activation and Pool Warm-up:

- ✓ Assign specific locations on the deck for each participant defined by grid or X (duct tape, etc.);
- ✓ Coaches to consider PPE if physical distancing is challenged;
- ✓ Warm-up scheduling should be planned to ensure physical distancing – this is particularly important if non-cohort swimmers are participating;
- ✓ Personal training equipment only - DO NOT SHARE.

#### Time Trial Conduct:

##### **Minimize number of officials:**

For a typical time trial or competition, the following roles would normally be required: Referee, Starter, 2 Inspector of Turns (at each end), 2 Judges of Stroke, 1 Timekeeper per lane, Chief Timekeeper, Chief Judge Electronics (if required), Chief Finish Judge, Recorder-Scorer, Clerk of Course, 2 Safety Marshals

##### **During this Competition Reintroduction period, officials should perform combined roles where the duties of each position are not in conflict with one another.**

- ✓ Use qualified Inspector of Turns (1 per lane) as Timekeepers for each lane - if Timekeepers are not qualified as Inspector of Turns, the Referee, Starter and/or Judge of Stroke can support;
- ✓ Chief Judge Electronics, Chief Finish Judge and Recorder-Scorer should be combined;
- ✓ If touchpads are being used a timekeeper may not be needed - this is a club decision and should be based on the known reliability of your timing system. In this scenario, if there is a soft or mistouch, the swimmer should be allowed to re-swim to receive an official time.
- ✓ Safety Marshals could be any official that already has a position/role during the competition.



### **Officials positioning on deck (see Appendix B for examples):**

The following recommendations will vary depending on the number of lanes being used:

- ✓ It is recommended that the Referee and Starter should be positioned on opposite sides of the pool deck;
- ✓ When using the full pool and to avoid unnecessary interactions, the use of radios should be considered when available for Referee, Starter, Inspectors of Turns and Judges of Stroke (radios must be wiped down before and after use; headsets are not to be shared);
- ✓ Referees may wish to consider using an electronic whistle instead of traditional whistles. E-whistle use facilitates the use of a PPE/mask on deck. (e.g. <https://www.fox40world.com/electronic-whistle>). Canadian Tire carries the [Fox 40 Electronic 3-Tone Whistle](#);
- ✓ Starters are encouraged to wear a PPE/mask at all times except when providing verbal commands to start a race;
- ✓ Communicate to all officials which side of the blocks all Timekeepers/Inspector of Turns will stand;
- ✓ If deck space permits, it is recommended that Timekeepers/Inspector of Turns stagger their positioning behind the blocks to maintain social distancing.

### **Race flow management:**

- ✓ Only one heat of swimmers behind the blocks at a time;
- ✓ Swimmers remain behind the Timekeepers until called behind the blocks for their heats:
  - If pool is being cleared after each race, the next swimmer remains behind the Timekeeper until called behind the blocks for their heat;
  - If fly-over starts are in-place, swimmers in the water should all be instructed to stay on the same side of the lanes by the lane rope until after the start of the next race;
  - Please be cognizant that para-swimmers may need more time to enter/exit the pool before and after their races.
- ✓ FINA tweets (short whistles) should be used to call swimmers behind the blocks;
- ✓ Referee would then use long whistle when heat is ready:
  - If fly-over starts are being used, swimmers in the water then exit the pool as instructed (i.e. to the side or at the end, as appropriate).

### **Swimmers before/after race:**

- ✓ Consider providing directional signage on the pool deck to manage traffic flow;
- ✓ If para-swimmers require specific equipment (i.e. mats to enter/exit the water) that equipment is not to be shared;
- ✓ Reinforce personal hygiene habits;
- ✓ Create areas/zones for swimmers to be waiting in between their events;
- ✓ If physical distancing while between events cannot be achieved, it is recommended that all swimmers should be wearing masks while on deck.

### **Time Trial Administration:**

- ✓ Minimize the handling of DQ Slips:
  - If available, radios should be used by Inspectors of Turns and Judges of Strokes:
    - DQ slips should not be used;
    - DQs or other issues should be recorded on a heat sheet and called into the Referee;
    - DQs should be processed once verbally approved by the Referee.
  - If radios are unavailable:
    - DQ slips should not be used;
    - DQs may be recorded by the Inspectors of Turns or Judges of Stroke on a heat sheet and then discussed with referee at the end of the race (maintaining physical distancing where possible and masks are worn);
    - DQs would be announced as best as possible and would be put into the meet database at the end of the meet, or when results are being compiled.



- If a coach has a question, the conversation with the referee will be available as long as parties involved are maintaining physical distancing and masks are worn.
- ✓ Chief Finish Judge should check the sweeps (order of finish) on every race as there might be only one time per swimmer;
- ✓ It may be necessary to complete results following the time trial (maintain physical distancing) - in this case results including a DQ report should be provided to coaches following the time trial.
  - If results are being completed after the time trial, the referee must receive a copy of the results and sign off via email prior to the results being sent to coaches or uploaded into the RTR.
  - If using Hy-Tek Meet Manager, when adding in the DQ in the database, add in the correct DQ Code in the "Run Menu" screen so a DQ Report can be created and sent to the coaches. (This will list the reason for the DQ.)

Heat 1 of 1 == Finals == Event 1 Girls 13 Year Old													
Age	Team	Seed Time	Finals Time	DQ	Exh	DQcode	Backup 1	Backup 2	Backup 3	HPL	PL	Pts	AdjStat
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>								
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>								
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>								
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>								
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>								

**EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

**OUTBREAK PLAN:**

Clubs must attend to the inclusion of an Outbreak Plan specific to your Return to Competition Plan (where an outbreak is considered to be identification of individuals with COVID symptoms). Early detection of symptoms will facilitate the immediate implementation of effective control measure.

An Outbreak Plan should:

1. Contain the club’s **Illness Policy** and a **Cancellation Policy**
2. Identify the roles and responsibilities of coaching staff and club volunteers should an outbreak occur. Who in the club has the authority to modify, restrict, postpone or cancel activities?
  - If an outbreak occurs, clubs must postpone or cancel competitions or activities (**Cancellation Policy**);
3. notify facility administration of any swimmer, coach or official reporting a confirmed COVID-19 case;
4. If a club member or coach contract COVID-19 symptoms, or family member/household occupant contract symptoms, implement the **Illness Policy** and advise individuals to:
  - Self-isolate;
  - Monitor symptoms daily, report respiratory illness and not return to activity for at least 10 days following the onset of COVID-19 symptoms;
  - Use the COVID-19 self-assessment tool ([BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#)) to determine if further assessment or testing is needed.
5. In the event any swimmer, coach or official has had to leave the competition, notify the facility administration immediately to permit proper disinfectant protocols to be followed;
6. In the event of a positive COVID-19 result immediately report and discuss the suspected outbreak with the Medical Health Officer (or delegate) at your local health authority. Implement your illness Policy and enhanced measures;
7. Should a medical health officer contact your club, cooperate in the contact tracing - ensure attendance sheets (swimmers, coaches and officials) are available.

**DISCLAIMER**





The Swim BC Return to Competition guidelines are intended to be used for the purposes set out in this document. While Swim BC aims to provide relevant and timely information, the known information about COVID-19 and the recommended health and safety measures can rapidly change. No guarantee can be given as to the accuracy or completeness of any information provided in the Swim BC Return to Competition guidelines.

It is important to note that the Swim BC Return to Competition guidelines is not a legal document and is to be used as a guide only, nor it is a substitute for actual legislation or orders of the Public Health Officer. In the event of an ambiguity or conflict between the Swim BC Return to Competition guidelines and the Public Health Act, regulations or orders thereunder, the Act, regulations and orders prevail. Swim BC member clubs should comply with the requirements of the provincial and local government and health officials in terms of public gatherings and events when determining when it is safe to return to activities. Nothing in this document is intended to provide legal advice. Do not rely on this document or treat it as legal advice.

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**Be advised that personal information must not be included in your club's Return to Competition Plan**

Personal information is any recorded information that uniquely identifies a person, such as name, address, telephone number, age, sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, fingerprints, or blood type. It includes information about a person's health care, educational, financial, criminal or employment history. Visit <https://www.oipc.bc.ca/about/legislation/> for more information.



## APPENDIX A - TIME TRIAL CHECKLIST

### A. FACILITY ACCESS AND USE

1. Obtain facility plan or if not available, meet with facility administration;
2. Determine and understand facility gathering limits;
3. Determine and understand facility congestion points (deck, entry / exits, pool entry, etc.) - address these points with specific strategies to accommodate physical distancing;
4. Identify areas or equipment that are considered "high-touch" (starting blocks, starting equipment, etc) - address these areas with specific strategies for disinfecting.

### B. PARTICIPANT SUPPORT

1. Health of swimmers, coaches and officials' protocols
  - a) Illness Policy;
  - b) Self-Assessments;
  - c) Pre-competition oral questionnaire;
  - d) Zero Tolerance for ill participants;
  - e) Personal Hygiene stations, location and use;
  - f) Personal Hygiene self-supported - personal or club supplied hand sanitizer where no hand washing station is provided
  - g) Coach PPE - where and when
  - h) Officials and volunteers PPE - where and when
  - i) Completion of required forms (Swimming Canada - assumption of risk);
2. Communication
  - a) Plan education process for all swimmers, coaches, officials and volunteers;
  - b) Ongoing reminders and risks;
3. Participant Group considerations
  - a) Maturity of swimmers
  - b) Ability to understand Return to Competition policies

### C. COMPETITION - Time Trials

1. Describe time trial procedures and participant expectations for all scenarios
2. Describe procedures:
  - a) Pre-time trial procedures
  - b) Arrival strategies (swimmers, coaches and officials)
  - c) Swimmer activation and pool warm-up
  - d) Time Trial procedures - explicit detail as to how physical distancing will be maintained
    - (1) Number of Officials required
    - (2) Officials positioning on deck
    - (3) Race flow management
    - (4) Swimmers before/after race
  - e) Time Trial Administration

### D. EMERGENCY RESPONSE STRATEGY

1. Outbreak Plan
  - a) In writing
  - b) All staff and required volunteers fully conversant



# APPENDIX B - OFFICIALS POSTIONING EXAMPLES

