



## **HKHA Hockey Activities 2020/21: Guidelines and Special Arrangements on Prevention of COVID – 19**

In response to the further relaxation of Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation and the reopening of LCSD sports facilities, all participants of hockey activities organised or endorsed by the HKHA (including without limitation Men's Winter League, Women's Winter League, Youth League, Veteran's League, national squad trainings, hockey training courses and activities ("HKHA Hockey Activities") in 2020/21, including coaches, volunteers and officials are required to follow the guidelines as below.

### **A - General**

#### **1. Health Declaration**

- Participants who have any of the following symptoms in the 14 day period before their scheduled match/training/course are prohibited from joining any HKHA Hockey Activities:
  - i. Difficulty in breathing
  - ii. Sore throat
  - iii. Coughing
  - iv. Shortness of breath
  - v. Fever (i.e. temperature higher than 37.5<sup>0</sup>C)
  
- Participants who have been in contact with any person with any of the above symptoms or with a suspected or confirmed case of "COVID-19" 14 days before your scheduled match/training/course are prohibited from joining any HKHA Hockey Activities.

#### **2. Contact tracing**

*"Contact tracing is the process of identifying, assessing, and managing people who have been exposed to a disease to prevent onward transmission."* (World Health Organization, 2020).

To reduce the potential risks of virus transmission and enable contact tracing, (1) all players taking part in any match organized by the HKHA must be registered by a registered team with the HKHA in accordance with the relevant bye-laws and rules of the HKHA. (2) where applicable it is imperative

that match cards must be completed accurately by both team captains and umpires before the start of the match and submitted immediately thereafter in accordance with the relevant bye-laws (3) Team captains or club convenors are required to report to the HKHA immediately, if any one in your team is unwell with a suspected or confirmed case of "COVID-19" and (4) anyone participating in a course organized by the HKHA must enroll for the course in advance in accordance with relevant instructions from the HKHA and sign the attendance sheet at each session; if such course participant is unwell with a suspected or confirmed case of "COVID-19" they shall inform the HKHA immediately.

### **3. Actions tie in with the Government Regulation (e.g. Cap.599G)**

To comply with the Government regulations, the following rules must be followed at all times:

#### **Limits on number of participants**

Due to the prohibition on group gathering of more than a certain size in any public place that are expected to remain in place for the foreseeable future, each team will be requested to limit the number of participants per match, including but not limited to players, coaches, officials and spectators. For example if group gatherings in public are limited to:

- 50 persons or less, no team can have more than 20 participants
- 20 persons or less, no team can have more than 8 participants
- 12 persons or less, no team can have more than 5 participants

(in each case including players, coaches, officials and spectators).

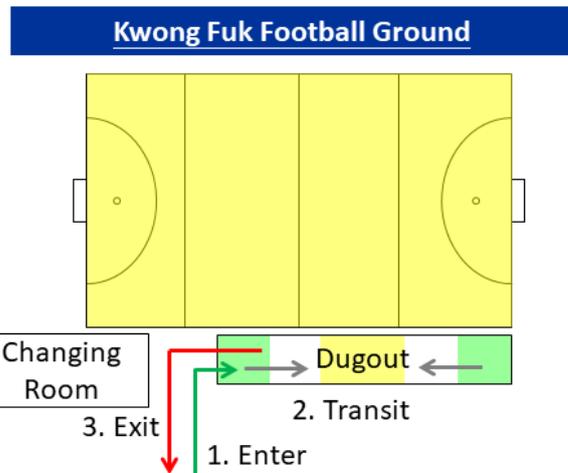
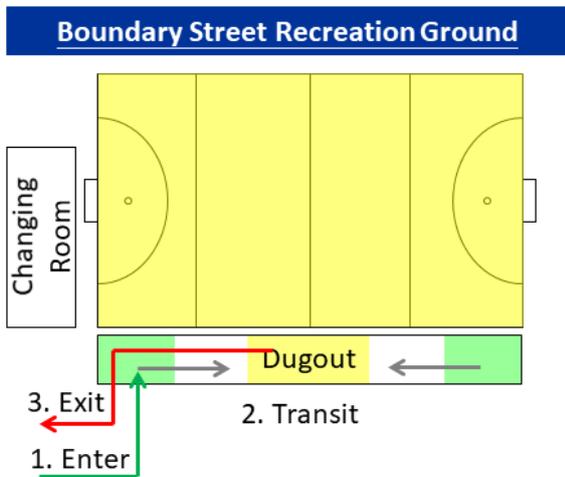
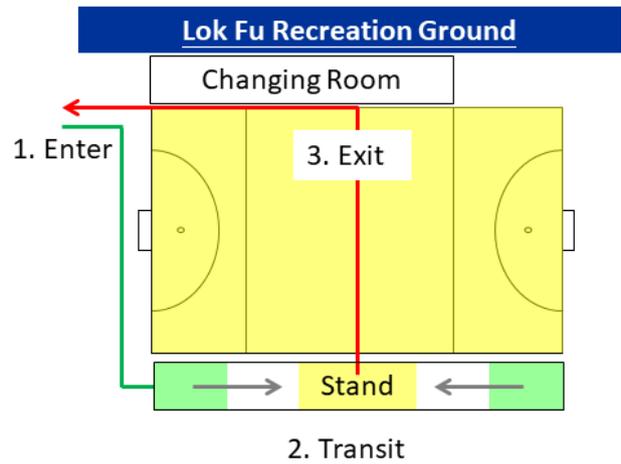
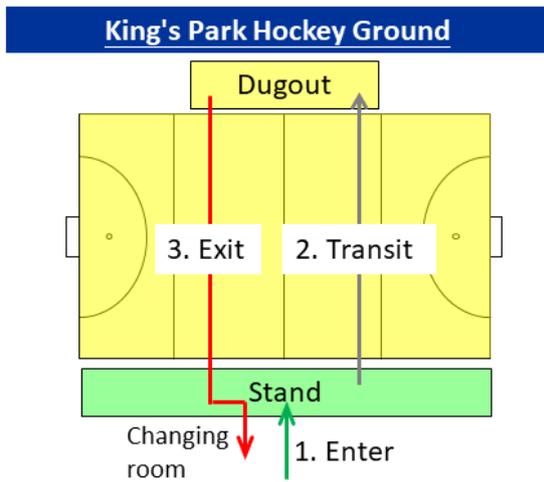
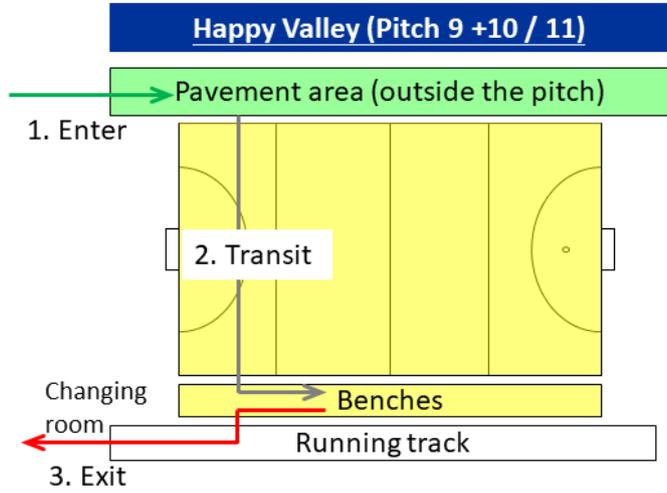
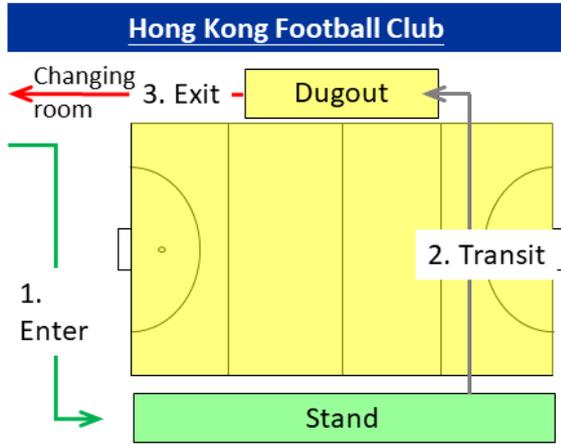
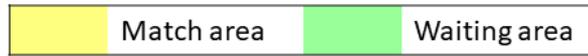
**However, the HKHA does not encourage teams to invite spectators to watch matches/training/courses during the global COVID-19 pandemic. The number of participants should be kept to a minimum to reduce the potential risks of virus transmission.**

#### **Arrangement for on/off the pitch**

Teams are required to follow the arrangement for entering and leaving the venues (see diagram). Each team must arrive no more than 15min before your scheduled match, and MUST wait in the waiting area until the team before you leave the premises. Teams are required to leave the pitch immediately after your match to ensure appropriate social distancing between the teams before and after your match.



## Arrangement for on/off the pitch



#### **4. General health and safety guidelines**

The following guideline was written based on the recommendations from the World Health Organization (WHO), Centre for Health Protection (CHP) and the International Hockey Federation (FIH):

##### **Going to & arriving at venues**

- Ensure you comply with the Health Declaration before leaving home for any hockey activity;
- Arrive as close as possible to when you need to be at venue;
- Allow others to leave before you enter the pitch - if you need to wait then do so away from the pitch and clear of the gates;
- Follow one-way systems where they are in place. Ensure you leave the pitch before the end of your allotted time so that the space is empty for the next players.
- Arrive changed and ready to play. Shower at home and follow the facility rules on using indoor spaces such as hospitality or toilets.
- Do not congregate after playing and stay in groups of 6 socially distanced outside of play.
- Where possible avoid touching gates/fences/goals unless absolutely necessary.

##### **Wearing of facemasks:**

- Facemasks should be worn in accordance with government guidelines.
- Facemasks must be worn arriving at and leaving from games, courses and training sessions.
- Spectators must wear facemasks at all times.
- In accordance with LCSD guidelines, all personnel must wear a facemask. The only exceptions are:
  - o Players playing on the pitch;
  - o Umpires doing duty on the pitch;
  - o Temporarily taking it off for drinking/eating in a socially distanced setting.
- **Note:** Coaches, substitutes and match officials must be in facemasks in the dugout.

##### **On the pitch**

- Do not shake hands, celebrate or “HIGH FIVE” with teammates and oppositions;
- Bring your own equipment (e.g. hockey stick, shin pads, mouthguard, water bottle, goalkeeping kit, etc.);
- Do not share personal belongings or drinks;
- Clean and disinfect your hands before and after your match;
- Clean and disinfect your hands before and after you touch your mouthguard;
- No spitting;
- Match ball to be cleaned prior to and at the end of every match;

- Do not touch the ball with your hands;
- If feeling unwell with respiratory symptoms, such as having fever, cough, sore throat or muscle ache, put on a surgical mask and seek medical advice immediately;
- Team captains and/or club convenors are required to report to the HKHA immediately if anyone in your team is unwell with a suspected or confirmed case of "COVID-19".

## **B – Umpires**

- The below is intended to offer support to individuals undertaking umpiring opportunities within the game during the current pandemic.

### **Pre-Match protocols**

- Be aware that the changing facilities at the venue you are umpiring at may have restrictions and one-way systems to help minimise the likelihood of transfer of COVID-19.
- We would recommend that you arrive at the venue changed, ready to umpire and maintain your social distancing during your pre-match Chat.
- If indoor facilities are available, ensure you wash or sanitise your hands at your earliest opportunity when arriving on site and do this regularly throughout your time at the venue.
- Kit taken pitch side should be kept to a minimum and left whenever possible within designated areas by the pitch provider.
- If a coin toss is required (e.g. starting a game, starting shootouts, etc) then the coin should be tossed by one umpire with a team captain/representative to call accordingly.

### **During Game:**

#### **Social distancing during breaks in play or Half Time**

- To minimise the risk of transfer of COVID-19 during the game, if the clock is stopped for treating injuries, retrieving of ball from outside of the playing area, etc, then all individuals are to resume social distancing measures until the game can recommence.
- Natural breaks in play (such as at penalty corners) do occur but umpires are encouraged to restart play promptly.

#### *Umpiring Tip*

- Whilst players will be educated on this, umpires are reminded to use their voice and low-level management skills for the safety of yourself and the players in the first instance and only to resort to stricter levels of management if absolutely required.

#### **Player Spitting & Nose Blowing**

- Spitting or nose blowing (where there is no handkerchief or tissue is used) is a practice that unfortunately occurs in our sport and must stop as it poses a significant risk to other participants.

#### ***New Guidance for the 2020/21 Season***

- A 2-minute suspension (Green Card) to be issued to any player or participant caught spitting or

nose blowing without a handkerchief or tissue or deliberately coughing towards another player.

- Repeat offenders (i.e. player(s) offending more than once) will be upgraded to a Yellow Card and subject to further personal penalties as prescribed in section 14 of the 2019 FIH Rules of Hockey.
- Consistent repeat offenders will be subject to due process under the relevant bye-laws and the HKHA Code of Conduct.

#### *Umpiring Tip*

- Apply this rule consistently to all participants. Safety is always a key consideration. Ensure players and team management are aware of new rule changes before starting a match. Proactive and preventative education to players is key in the enforcement of this guidance and ensure this has been covered within your pre-match conversation with colleagues and captains.

#### **Suspended Players**

- It is probable that in some cases technical benches, suspension seating (or similar) may not be in use. Accordingly, in these situations, suspended players should be allowed to serve their suspension in their respective team dugouts, in line with Social Distancing guidelines. If there are no dugouts present, then aligning suspended players to the 23m line would be advisable. All other existing suspension rules are to apply.

#### *Umpiring Tip*

- Agree what to do in your pre-match chat so you are clear when informing captains and players during the game.

#### **Interaction between Players and Officials**

- Whilst not a frequent occurrence within our game, situations do occur in matches where players surround or crowd umpires. Due to the importance of safety in these cases, umpires are advised to follow guidelines from the FIH to avoid crowding and offending players are to be given a 2 minute (Green Card) temporary suspension.
- Players using bad language towards, shouting towards or any other activity that is against the HKHA Code of Conduct towards an umpire will be liable to reporting and due process through the appropriate bye-laws.

#### *Umpiring Tip*

- Be proactive in your management and utilise your range of “low level” management by varying

your body language, whistle tone and voice giving decisions during the game. If it is clear that players are going to approach, advise them that you will only speak to one of them and to maintain social distancing.

- Also, try to avoid touching the ball or any other equipment with your hands to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

**Post-Match:**

- Players are being encouraged to say thank you by tapping their sticks whilst maintaining social distancing measures. For umpires, using gestures such as a thumb up or waving to say thank you would be appropriate.
- Any match paperwork that is required to be completed should be done using your own pen.
- Hospitality at clubs will vary due to the government guidelines concerning the use of indoor facilities, however, we would recommend you wash or sanitise your hands as soon as practical. Also, be aware that changing facilities may not be available.
- Ensure any kit or equipment you have used is either cleaned properly when you return home or left for a minimum of 72 hours in line with government advice.

## **C - Coaches**

This summary is aimed at helping individuals understand their responsibilities as a coach when getting back on a hockey pitch safely.

- Coaches must understand all the expectations placed upon players and play a role ensuring that protocols are followed.
- The maximum group size (including coaches) for competitive training or match play must comply with HKHA circulars and government guidelines. More than one group of the prescribed number can use a pitch but must remain separate from the other group. Coaches (that remain socially distanced) can move between groups.
- Small group coaching sessions continue to be allowed and we strongly recommend that parents / carers should be present for sessions involving young people at this time. This is mandatory for one to one coaching sessions. Parents should always remain in sight of young players whilst maintaining social distancing.

### **Preparation**

- Coaches should take all reasonable steps to ensure that sessions are as safe as possible.
- A risk assessment should be undertaken.
- Coaches must take a register of all attendees to ensure any track and trace requirements can be easily fulfilled. This must be shared with the club convenor.
- Think about how you divide the pitch if more than one group is using it to ensure there is sufficient space between groups. The aim should be to ensure groups have significant space at all times including at the start and end of sessions. Groups should not mix but coaches can move across groups.
- Social distancing, to a distance of at least 2m, must be maintained outside of competitive training or
- matches. Coaches should adapt sessions accordingly.
- Coaches should avoid delivering training exercises that involve overly repetitive close contact between players.
- There is an additional risk of infection in close proximity situations where people are shouting or conversing loudly. This particularly applies indoors and when face to face. If possible, players and coaches should therefore avoid shouting or raising their voices when facing each other during, before and after games.
- It is recommended that players bring their own personal equipment (sticks and personal protective equipment). Where this isn't possible, and the coach provides them:
  - o Fresh balls and sticks should be used for each session – balls and sticks should be stored

separately after use and disinfected or stored for at least 72 hours before being used again.

- Coaches should collect balls, or the player return them with their stick/feet, not hands.
- No contact between player and other coaching equipment – it is recommended that limited equipment is used if possible.

## **Communication**

- Coaches should regularly remind participants (and parents/guardians where appropriate) of the expectations and standards required.
- Coaches should ensure that the venue has the necessary standards in place before, during and after the activity before deciding to use the venue.
- When communicating with players, avoid regular removal of gum shields.

## **For latest information on COVID-19 and Health Tips**

Please visit:

<https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/>

## **References**

- Centre for Health Protection. (2020). *Guidelines on Prevention of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) for the General Public*. Hong Kong: Department of Health.
- International Hockey Federation. (2020). *Guidelines : Safely Returning to Hockey in view of the COVID-19 pandemic*. International Hockey Federation.
- World Health Organization. (2020). *Contact tracing in the context of COVID-19*. World Health Organization.

The Hong Kong Hockey Association

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