



December 18, 2020

To the Members of our Michigan Hockey Community:

On the afternoon of Friday, December 18, 2020, Governor Gretchen Whitmer announced a [new extension of the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services \(MDHHS\) Epidemic Order](#), in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The extended pause will take place from Monday, December 21st through Friday, January 15th.

There are some notable revisions that directly impact our hockey activity. Although the updated order continues to allow for limited activities in open ice rinks in Michigan, Section 4(e) of the December 18th, 2020 Epidemic Order includes a notable clarification regarding on-ice capacity restrictions:

“Gatherings and indoor ice and roller rinks are prohibited, except for individual exercise or one-on-one instruction, where occupancy is limited to 2 persons per 1,000 square feet (approximately 34 people on the ice at once), including within the exercise space. Gatherings at outdoor ice and roller rinks are permitted, except for organized contact sports, provided that occupancy is limited to 2 persons per 1,000 square feet, including within the exercise space. Gatherings for the purpose of non-contact sports and open skating are permitted only at outdoor rinks.”

Given the parameters summarized in this order, the Michigan Amateur Hockey Association (MAHA) gives the following guidance to our local program members:

- 1) Ice may be purchased to conduct limited on-ice activities for the duration of the extended MDHHS Epidemic Order (Monday, December 21st – Friday, January 15th). The on-ice focus should be limited to individual, one-on-one instruction to provide exercise, individual skills and non-contact activities for local program participants, within the Epidemic Order’s occupancy limitations (no spectators). Facial coverings are required at all times in the rink, both on-ice and off-ice. (NOTE: Local governments may impose more stringent restrictions, based on local conditions)
- 2) Organized sports gatherings (i.e. practices and games) remain prohibited for the duration of the December 18th, 2020 Epidemic Order. As a result, games, scrimmages and tournaments will not be sanctioned in Michigan during this time period. (This includes two MAHA teams traveling out-of-state in order to fulfill a game or scrimmage.) Please note that any local associations or teams, that are discovered to be engaging in unsanctioned activity during the pause, will be in violation of its organization’s Affiliate Agreement and subject to disciplinary action.
- 3) The MAHA does not encourage, or recommend, out-of-state travel during this period. As a “sports organizer,” as defined under the Epidemic Order, the MAHA is not able to participate in any such gatherings in any matter. During the extended pause in activity, as required under the December 18th, 2020 Epidemic Order, our Interstate Travel Notification Form will be suspended for use.

- a. The MAHA continues to caution local associations and teams that they may be defined as a “sports organizer,” and subject to penalties under this Epidemic Order, should they organize gatherings of any kind during this period. Association Boards, Coaches & Managers are also potentially increasing their liability, if they continue to organize participation during this time.
- b. The MAHA does realize that certain teams may have committed to travel out-of-state, prior to these Epidemic Orders, and that certain commitments may be non-refundable. The MAHA encourages all teams with out-of-state travel plans to explore cancellation and potential refunding options, in an effort to support the ongoing suppression of COVID-19.

If these options are unavailable, the MAHA implores you to proceed with caution and heightened awareness in carrying out your travel commitments. Specifically:

- i. Teams are expected to maintain heightened awareness of the evolving circumstances, pertaining to local and state government guidelines and restrictions, in any market they intend to travel to. Based on evolving risk mitigation strategies across the country, out-of-state activities are subject to change.
- ii. Teams are required to adhere to all local and state government guidelines, imposed upon their travel destination. It is the responsibility of the team to identify those guidelines and proceeding accordingly. Furthermore, please continue to be mindful of group gatherings outside of the rink, and practice risk mitigation strategies out-of-state, as well as in-state.
- iii. As previously noted, the State of Michigan’s ongoing navigation of the COVID-19 pandemic may cause varying degrees of discomfort for families in your organization. We expect that all teams and associations respect the wishes of any families who choose not to follow through with scheduled team activities, and/or travel accommodations. Given the evolving circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, participants and families should not be subject to undue influence.

It should be noted that the December 18th update, from the State of Michigan, suggests that continued suppression of COVID-19 may result in additional restrictions being lifted (prior to the current January 15th expiration date for this Epidemic Order). With this in mind, The Michigan Amateur Hockey Association remains optimistic that the efforts made during the activity pause will lead to a return to hockey activity. As always, we appreciate your patience and support!

Sincerely,

George Atkinson

George Atkinson
President
Michigan Amateur Hockey Association

Jason Reynolds

Jason Reynolds
Director of Operations & Marketing
Michigan Amateur Hockey Association