

WAHA Region 4 Pod #1

2020-21 Season / COVID-19 Guidelines for Games

(Draft #3)

In an effort to limit the amount of exposure to COVID-19, the youth hockey programs in Beloit, Janesville, McFarland, Oregon, and Stoughton have formed a "Pod". The purpose is to limit games played to just these clubs in November and December to reduce possible exposure to the virus. The second half of the season will be evaluated as the season progresses based on the information available at that time. Our goal is that each travel team (squirr on up) will play 10 games between November 7th and December 19th) and the 6u and 8U levels will play approximately 4 games. As part of this Pod approach, these associations have agreed to the following COVID-19 guidelines.

Overview:

These guidelines were created in consultation with the Centers for Disease Control, the State Health Department, and Public Health Madison-Dane County, along with WAHA and USA Hockey guidance.

The goals:

- 1) To minimize rink access to essential personal (rink employees, coaches, players, team reps, on and off ice officials)
- 2) To minimize the amount of contact between these essential personal
- 3) To limit the amount of time spent in the facility
- 4) To use protective measures such as masks and social distancing
- 5) To provide the safest environment possible for our skaters to play games

Team Make Up

To minimize the amount of contact and potential exposure, there shall be no dual or double rostering of players. Players shall not fill in or participate on more than one team. The plan shall be effective for 10u-14u, and will include 6u and 8u for associations wishing to participate in a travel program. If high school sports are cancelled, the committee will consider offering 16u/18u teams as well.

The best estimate on the number of teams by association at this time is:

Beloit: 1B, 2P, 1S, 2R,
Janesville: 2B, 2-3p, 4s, 4R, 2-3 6u, 12uG
McFarland: 1B, 2p, 3s, 4R, 1-2 6u
Oregon: 2b, 2p, 3S, 3r, 1 6u
Stoughton: 1p, 2s, 2-3r, 2-3 6u
Total: 7b, 10p, 13s, 16 rwb, 9 6u, 12uG

Final numbers will not be known until registration closes for each association which will likely be late September to early October. As the number of teams are known, the committee will meet to review the best way to construct teams within each association. This could be the traditional A, B, C format but

depending on the number of teams it will consider “balanced” teams where an association with 2+ teams does not have an A team and B team, but two evenly split teams to create more competition.

Scheduling

Each team shall only play against one other team for an entire weekend (Friday through Sunday) to minimize the potential spread across multiple teams. Teams from within the pod shall only play other teams from within the pod unless approved by all 5 Association Presidents. Games will follow traditional game lengths, but it is recommended that Bantam games remove the resurfacing during the game. If scheduling becomes increasingly difficult, the committee may consider shortened game lengths in order to fit more games in.

Before You Leave for the rink / Health Checks

Parents should check their health and the health of their players before leaving home for a game.

STAY HOME if your skater or an immediate family member are experiencing any of the following symptoms:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever of greater than 100.4°F
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste or smell

Each association in this Pod must have protocols for reporting and dealing with illnesses including COVID-19. At a minimum, players directly exposed to a positive Covid case should sit out of games for 14 days, be symptom free. If a player tests positive while in direct contact with teammates, the entire team shall follow the same protocols. If a player tests positive and they may have been infectious at a game, the Association President shall reach out to the Association President of the teams that may have been exposed to begin the process of notification to the opposing teams. Please see your team rep or other association officials for more information.

Before You Leave for the rink / Dressing instructions

All players need to dress at home as much as possible and put on final pieces of gear either in the parking lot, outside the rink, in the staging areas or designated locker rooms. The availability of locker rooms may differ due to local rink rules. We strongly recommend the purchase of skate guards so players can walk from their vehicle into the rink when possible. These procedures will help limit the amount of time players spend in the staging area or locker room which will help minimize possible spread of the virus.

Other Pre-Game Issues:

Warm-ups: Players will not be allowed to warm-up inside the rink before games. Each player is expected to warm-up at home. Players may also warm-up outside the rink with proper social distancing from teammates and others. Consult your head coach for more information.

Pre-game Communication: Coaches may arrange to meet with their team before a game to discuss strategy. We recommend that communication happen outside the rink with face coverings/ masks and proper social distancing or via electronic communication well before departure for the rink (via email, Zoom, etc.) as the weather turns cold.

Arrival: When you arrive at any of the Pod rinks, parents should stay in the vehicles or remain outside until 5 minutes before the scheduled game time (if spectators are allowed based on rink rules). When entering the rink everyone must have a face mask on and use proper social distancing.

Entering the rink: All parents and skaters will enter each Pod rink with a face covering / mask on. Most skaters will only be allowed inside each rink 10 minutes before the start of the game. Goalies are allowed to go inside the rink 20 minutes before the start of the game. Each team will have a designated team representative, who can also enter 20 minutes before the game.

Game Check-in / Health checks: Everyone entering a Pod rink will immediately check-in with a representative from their team. That team rep will use a no-touch Body Infrared Thermometer to check each person's temperature. Anyone with a temperature of 100.4 or higher will not be allowed to enter the rink.

Proceed to staging area, locker rooms, or bleachers: Players will follow the signs posted around the rink to their designated staging area or locker room. Skaters will take the ice when instructed by coaches. Parents will proceed to the bleachers with face coverings/masks on and social distancing of six feet or more in place.

Masks on Ice: Players will follow local guidance and rink rules regarding the use of masks while on the ice. Currently, face masks are required per State Order and shall be worn unless the order expires or new guidance is provided.

Spectators: In order to minimize the spread of the virus, all associations in this Pod are limiting spectators to one adult per player. No other spectators will be allowed entry to the rink including siblings, grandparents, etc. Those adults need to wear a face covering / mask and maintain social distancing at all times. It is up to each association to follow-up with parents who do not follow these guidelines.

Exceptions:

- 1) As mentioned earlier, a designated Team Rep will be allowed inside the rink during games to help monitor players and parents. That team rep will also wear a face covering and maintain social distancing. This designated representative will help check-in players and parents for the team, maintain a copy of all individuals that entered the rink during the game for that association. This list shall be kept by the team representative or the association for a minimum of 14 days in case contact tracing is needed due to a positive Covid case. A second adult from that family will be allowed in the rink to watch the game.

- 2) Coaches and team managers do not count as spectators as they designated team officials.
- 3) Off Ice officials- When playing at home, the home team will designate two adult off ice officials. One will be station in the home penalty box. That person will also mark the scoresheet for that game. The second person will run the game clock. The visiting team will designate one adult to be stationed in the visitor's penalty box. When playing on neutral ice (example- McFarland vs. Beloit playing in Janesville) there will be designated Home and Visitors teams which will follow the guidelines above. There is no exception for a second adult to attend. All must wear face masks while performing their duties.
- 4) Parents fulfilling service hours are allowed in the rink. They must be wearing a face covering and maintain social distancing.

During the game: Everyone (Coaches, Officials, Players, etc.) must wear a face covering/ mask during the game per the Governor's Executive Order unless an exemption is provided or new guidance is issued.

After Game: Parents will immediately leave the bleachers and proceed out of the rink via the designated exit to wait for their players in their vehicles. Skaters will line up on the blue lines to due a stick salute and then leave the ice and either take off their skates or put on skate guards, and leave the rink via the marked exits within 5 minutes. Please do not congregate in the lobby, hallways, etc. This will help reduce possible virus spread and allow the cleaning of areas between games.

Exceptions:

- 1) An adult with a U6 or U8 player and/or other players who need assistance can stay in the rink to help that player get his/her skates off. We ask that you leave the rink as soon as possible.
- 2) The designated team representative may also stay to collect the scoresheet and deal with any post-game issues.

Other Details:

Water Bottles: Players need to bring and label their own water bottles, no sharing of water. Bottles left behind will be disposed of.

Sharing other stuff: Players should not share tape, sticks, or other equipment. Also, players must wear their own jerseys and not share jerseys with others. Parents are strongly recommended to double check that his or her player packed all of their equipment before leaving the house.

Bathrooms: Whenever possible, players should use the restroom at home prior to leaving for the rink in an effort to limit bathroom use at the facility.

When you get home: We recommend that you wash clothes (jerseys, pant shells, socks, etc.). Players should also disinfect helmets, sticks and skates after each session.

Thank you for your cooperation! By following these guidelines, you are doing your part to help protect the safety of our kids and make these games possible.