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INFORMATION BULLETIN

Bulletin #: I2020-057
Date: May 29, 2020
To: Ontario Soccer Membership; District Associations, Clubs, ORA and Associate Members
CC: Ontario Soccer Board of Directors, Staff
From: Peter Augruso, President/Chair of Board of Directors and Johnny Misley, Chief Executive Officer
Subject: Return to Play Planning and COVID-19 Update

Ontario Soccer have received a number of membership inquiries regarding our Return to Play planning and COVID-19 Management. We are providing the following update:

Return to Play Planning

The decision for Soccer's Return to Play, in what will be a phased-in approach, is both a national as well as provincial one. At the present time, each Provincial and Territorial Soccer Association is developing a specific Return to Play Guide (RTPG) for their membership that includes safety protocols and recommendations. The RTPG is designed for Clubs/Academies and covers key operational subject areas that must comply with both Canada Soccer technical and medical authorities as well as Provincial/Territorial public health agencies.

Ontario Soccer's RTPG is being finalized and will be submitted to Canada Soccer next week for review and sign off by a Panel made up of administrative, technical and medical experts. The review process takes approximately one week for review and sign off. This step is critical from a sport specific standpoint as it ensures that each Province and Territory meets the Return to Play Standards that are designed to ensure our primary objective - **the health and safety of our participants**.

Canada Soccer must sign off on the RTPG before a Provincial or Territorial Soccer Association can give the "green light" to lift their suspension order and permit soccer to return to play within their jurisdiction.

In addition to this verification process, and more importantly, is that Provincial or Territorial governments must first confirm that their sector, amateur (team) sport, is cleared and approved for



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Return to Play. It is imperative throughout the process that both sport, as well as regional governments, are in full alignment with the safety and health authorities.

At the present time in Ontario, there is no indication from the Province of Ontario regarding our Return to Play timelines. Ontario Soccer continue to work closely with our Sports Ministry officials and anticipate that in the month of June further details will be provided.

Our goal is to provide membership with as much advanced notice as we can regarding our Return to Play initiatives so that membership can prepare effectively. This is in reference to what we can control. As demonstrated, COVID-19 management is very fluid and NOT fully in our control. Ontario Soccer have seen examples of this already within sport in Ontario and across the country. Needless to say, we will be prepared as best we can and ready to get Players, Match Officials and Coaches back on the pitch doing what they love, **and most importantly in a safe and cautious way.**

Ongoing COVID-19 Management

Ontario Soccer senior staff continue to participate in daily, weekly and semi monthly online meetings and conference calls, all focused around COVID-19 management; Canada Soccer cross country administration meetings, Canada Soccer cross country technical meetings, Government of Ontario meetings and our own Crisis Management Team meetings. Rest assured we are in the middle of very fluid developments around this pandemic and Ontario Soccer is preparing and communicating as effectively as we can.

We ask for your continued patience and understanding as we navigate through this next period and we look forward to seeing our participants safely return to the pitch under the Return to Play plan. We fully understand that for some Clubs and/or Academies, decisions have already been made to shut down operations for the summer season, in various locations around the province. These are individual organizational choices and if choosing to do so, please ensure you notify your District Association.

Soccer will be back and even stronger. It's just a matter of time.

For further questions, please refer them to the latest bulletin, the COVID-19 Updates page, which has all the latest information from Ontario Soccer, as well as resources for your members. Please consider placing a dedicated link to the COVID-19 Updates on the homepage on your website.

If you have not subscribed to our weekly e-Newsletter, please do so here.

If you have any questions, please contact Patty Forbes, Director of Administration.