



INDOOR VOLLEYBALL

RETURN TO PLAY/TRAINING PROTOCOLS

APPLICABLE TO ONTARIO COMMUNITIES IN
THE GREEN (PREVENT) TO ORANGE (RESTRICT) ZONES.

VERSION 3.0 – NOVEMBER 13, 2020

ANY MAJOR EDITS FROM VERSION TO 2.1 TO 3.0 ARE NOTED IN GREEN.



Ontario Volleyball Association (OVA)

Indoor Volleyball Return to Play Protocols

Updated November 13, 2020

These Return to Play/Training Protocols (Protocols) are OVA's rules and policies intended to enable a safe return to the sport. These Protocols are based on current Ontario statutes and regulations, current public health requirements and directives, and OVA's desire to make our sport safe for all.

These Protocols may be updated at any time; please be sure that you are referring to the most recent Version which will be posted from time to time on Ontario Volleyball's website at <https://www.ontariovolleyball.org/ova-return-to-play>.

These **OVA Return to Play Version 3.0 protocols** are only applicable to communities in the **Green (Prevent)** to **Orange (Restrict)** Zones of the Government of Ontario's Re-opening framework.

Framework: Adjusting and Tightening Public Health Measures



OVA Indoor Volleyball Return To Play Protocols: **Prevent, Protect, Restrict**



Process of OVA Return to Play Protocols/Activity Approval

1. Alignment with Volleyball Canada's guidelines and Ontario law.
2. OVA Protocols vetted by OVA's external legal counsel, OVA's insurance broker and Public Health.
3. Approval by OVA's Board of Directors.

ASSUMPTION OF RISK

Without a vaccine or cure for COVID-19 there will always be a risk of contracting the virus when participating in any public activity. OVA does not carry insurance that covers pandemic diseases or contagions including COVID-19. Athletes and their parents are asked to review OVA's "ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, RELEASE, INDEMNITY, AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK REGARDING COVID-19" form thoroughly and complete it [online during the registration process in the Membership Registration System \(MRS\)](#).

In addition, all athletes, parents/guardians and club members should satisfy themselves that the indoor facility they are using is operating in compliance with all applicable laws (which laws may differ depending on where the facility is located). OVA will not review such compliance and takes no responsibility for it.

Legal Disclaimer

The information included in this protocol is current for the time of publishing and is aligned with the current recommendations from provincial, national and international bodies including the World Health Organization (WHO) and Public Health Ontario. However, recommendations may change depending on daily provincial, local and global COVID-19 situation reports; local [Public Health Units](#) should also be consulted for up-to-date information.

This protocol and the Appendices are meant to provide general guidelines and educational awareness training and are not an all-encompassing return to play plan for all. This document is to supplement and not replace applicable law and the information provided by public health authorities. Each person should consider this protocol and the Appendices considering their specific situation, local laws, regulations, by-laws and ordinances as well as local health authority orders, directives, guidelines and recommendations. Each person should consult other sources and experts in order to customize their own plans [at the community Club level](#). No legal or medical advice is being provided in this protocol or the Appendices.





The purpose of this protocol and the Appendices is to reduce the risk of liability. This protocol and the Appendices are not a safety program and do not guarantee the safety of staff, participants, parents/guardians, spectators, household members or other third parties. The information and recommendations outlined within this protocol and the Appendices [are a base level that Clubs](#) should be using to develop individual plans that evaluate the unique risks that each training environment presents.

Individuals, in consultation with a medical professional, should also assess and evaluate their own personal risks [when deciding to take part in volleyball activities during the pandemic](#).

[All of recommendations in these protocols and Appendices are taken from the Government of Ontario's new COVID-19 Framework for Sport and Recreational purposes. All communities within the Prevent \(Green\) to Restrict \(Orange\) tiers follow the Ontario Governments Stage 3 protocols and the Control \(Red Zone\) tier follows the Government Modified Stage 2 protocols.](#)



Measures for Sports and Recreational Fitness

	 PREVENT (Standard Measures)	 PROTECT (Strengthened Measures)	 RESTRICT (Intermediate Measures)	 CONTROL (Stringent Measures)
Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 people indoors (classes) • 100 people outdoors (classes) • 50 people indoors (area with weights or exercise equipment) • Spectators allowed (50 indoors and 100 outdoors) • Limit of 50 people per room basis if operating in compliance with a plan approved by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health (Guidance for Facilities for Sport and Recreational Fitness Activities During COVID-19) • Team or individual sports must be modified to avoid physical contact; 50 people per league • Exemption for high performance athletes and parasports • Limit volume of music to conversation level and prevent shouting by both instructors and members of the public • Face coverings required except when exercising. 	<p>Measures from previous levels and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase spacing between patrons to 3m for areas of a sport or recreational facility where there are weights/weight machines and exercise/fitness classes • Recreational programs limited to 10 people per room indoors and 25 outdoors • Require contact information for all patrons and attendance for team sports • Require reservation for entry; one reservation for teams • Safety plan available upon request 	<p>Measures from previous levels and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum 50 people per facility (revoke OCMOH approved plan) in all combined recreational fitness spaces or programs (not pools, rinks at arenas, community centres, and multi-purpose facilities) • Require screening of members of the public, including spectators (e.g., questionnaire) • Limit duration of stay to 90 minutes except if engaging in sport • No spectators permitted (exemption for parent/guardian supervision of children) 	<p>Measures from previous levels and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gyms and fitness studios permitted to be open: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 people indoors (classes) • 25 people outdoors (classes) • 10 people indoors (areas with weights or exercise equipment) • All sports and recreational programs in other facilities (arenas and multiplexes) limited to 10 people per room indoors and 25 outdoors. • Team sports must not be practiced or played except for training (no games or scrimmage) • No contact permitted for team or individual sports

LOCKDOWN
Stage 1 / Pre-Stage 1



OPERATIONS

Compliance with Regulations

All indoor volleyball activities must adhere to all federal, provincial, and municipal laws, regulations, by-laws and orders as they may exist from time to time. This includes but is not limited to compliance with:

- Physical distancing measures
- Health and safety regulations
- Size of permitted gatherings
- Team Sport regulations
- Volleyball Canada rules, policies and procedures
- OVA rules, policies and procedures
- All Safe Sport policies and procedures
- Applicable occupational health and safety requirements



Club Risk Assessment and Mitigation Checklist Tool

Each Club and Coach conducting any training and volleyball activities must complete the Club Risk Assessment and Mitigation tool <https://www.ontariovolleyball.org/ova-return-to-play> and is required to:

- Keep their results on file as they may be requested from the PSO, NSO or Public Health Unit.
- Achieve a score defined as “Moderate Risk (low-moderate)” to proceed with activity.

See Appendix B for Sample Club Risk Assessment and Mitigation Tool.



Compliance with these Protocols

Each Club, Coach, and Athlete conducting training (whether or not on rented courts) must implement and comply with the current and any updated Version of these Protocols. The OVA Return to Play Acknowledgement Form must be completed and returned to info@ontariovolleyball.org, before any volleyball activity commences. Here is the link to the Form:
<https://www.ontariovolleyball.org/ova-return-to-play>.

The Acknowledgement, Release, Indemnity, and Assumption of Risk regarding COVID-19 form provided as part of these Protocols must be completed by each participant of indoor volleyball activities (including staff, athletes, coaches and volunteers). This form is signed off by the individual member upon registration with the Ontario Volleyball Association through the Membership Registration System (MRS) and they do not need to be collected by the Club. It is not necessary to submit a hard copy of the document.

See Appendix C for waiver.

Any non-implementation or non-compliance with these Protocols may have serious consequences including, but not limited to a lack of insurance coverage. Club leaders and/or coaches can be held personally liable in the event of a lawsuit. Any organizer/club/coach may remove a participant or spectator from the facility or from participation in the activities, programs or services at any time and for any reason if the organizer believes, in its sole discretion, that the participant is no longer in compliance with any of the standards described in this protocol.

COVID-19 Education

Each Club and/or Coach must ensure that staff, coaches, athletes, parents, members and volunteers receive education on new safety and hygiene protocols within the club as well as Government approved information on ways to limit the spread of COVID-19 including:

- Respiratory etiquette
- Hand hygiene
- Physical distancing
- Use of Personal Protective Equipment (e.g. face masks, gloves)

Note: Please see Appendix D for samples of these education tools.



COVID-19 Response Plan

Each Club must develop a COVID-19 Response Plan which must include the following provisions:

1. Designating groups of individuals to oversee the implementation of health and safety guidelines.
2. Establishing a protocol to address situations where individuals become unwell or show signs of COVID-19 symptoms during indoor volleyball activities, including but not limited to:
 - developing and making all staff aware of the procedure for athletes/ staff to clearly identify whom to contact, and how to do so, if they or other participants feel unwell or show symptoms of COVID-19.
 - designating an isolation area to place individuals that start to feel unwell or show symptoms of COVID-19 and provide a list of phone numbers of who to notify if this happens.
 - developing a transportation protocol for individuals exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.
 - developing protocols regarding whom club staff/coach should contact to report suspected cases and request testing and epidemiological investigations.
 - **determining who the contact person will be to communicate with the local Public Health Unit (PHU) to ask for direction on next steps for any COVID-19 situation within the club.**
3. Establishing a protocol for individuals to report to Club and external stakeholders (i.e. OVA, facility management) if they have developed, or been exposed to someone with COVID-19 symptoms.
4. Establishing a protocol for the club to inform staff, coaches, athletes, parents, members and volunteers if there has been an exposure to COVID-19 within the club or training group.
5. Establishing procedures to modify, restrict, postpone or cancel training sessions or other activities based on the evolving COVID-19 pandemic
6. Establishing a communication plan to keep staff, coaches, athletes, parents, members and volunteers informed during Return to Play phases.
7. Establishing a protocol for staff, coaches, athletes, parents, members and volunteers after a COVID-19 diagnosis.

OVA Indoor Volleyball Return To Play
Protocols: **Prevent, Protect, Restrict**



Club Offices

All club administrative activities should be conducted on-line and virtually whenever possible.

Scheduling

Scheduling of training session should be done on-line. Schedules must ensure staggered time between each session to allow for requisite cleaning and sanitizing of equipment/facility between different user groups.

Multiple Facilities

Coaching and training at multiple locations is strongly discouraged. Clubs may ask athletes or coaches to inform them if they are attending training sessions in multiple locations. Individuals should consider the following:

- Use new face mask at each location.
- Manage schedules to avoid entering different facilities on the same day.
- Ensure coach has Session Participation and Health Screening Tracking Template and Daily Health Screening Questionnaire for each facility visited in the same day.
- Teams from Red (Control) zones can train in facilities in Green (Prevent) to Orange (Restrict) zones.



Facility Coordination

Each club/coach must coordinate with the relevant facility to ensure compliance with these Protocols. This includes at minimum:



Implementing effective measures to manage the flow of traffic in and out of the training area.



Ensuring that any person who enters or uses the training area maintains a physical distance of at least 2m from any other person **when off the court**.



Scheduling and implementing cleaning between each training group.



Wiping down / sanitizing high touch areas such as entry / exit doors, etc.



Any equipment that is rented to, provided to or provided for the use of users of the facility must be cleaned and disinfected between each use or, where used in a game or practice, at the end of play, such as at the completion of a game or practice.



Activities must not be practised or played within the facility if they require the use of fixed structures that cannot be cleaned and disinfected between each use or, where used in a game or practice, at the end of play.



Ensuring closure of dressing rooms, locker rooms, change rooms, showers and clubhouses in the facility, except to the extent they provide access to a washroom or a portion of the facility that is used to provide first aid.



Ensuring that team sports or other sports or games that are likely to result in individuals deliberately physically contacting each other are not practiced or played within the facility.



Facilitating compliance by the facility operator with the advice, recommendations and instructions of public health officials, including any advice, recommendations or instructions on physical distancing, cleaning or disinfecting.



The facility is responsible for creating and sharing a safety plan with the Club which describes the measures and procedures which has been implemented or will be implemented in the venue to reduce the transmission risk of COVID-19. The safety plan shall describe how the requirements of the government regulations will be implemented in their venue including screening, physical distancing, masks or face coverings, cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces and objects, and the wearing of personal protective equipment.



Facility Coordination (continued)



In the Yellow Zone and the Orange Zone, no member of the public may enter the facility unless they have made a reservation to do so. In the case of members of the public participating in a team sport, only one reservation per team is required.

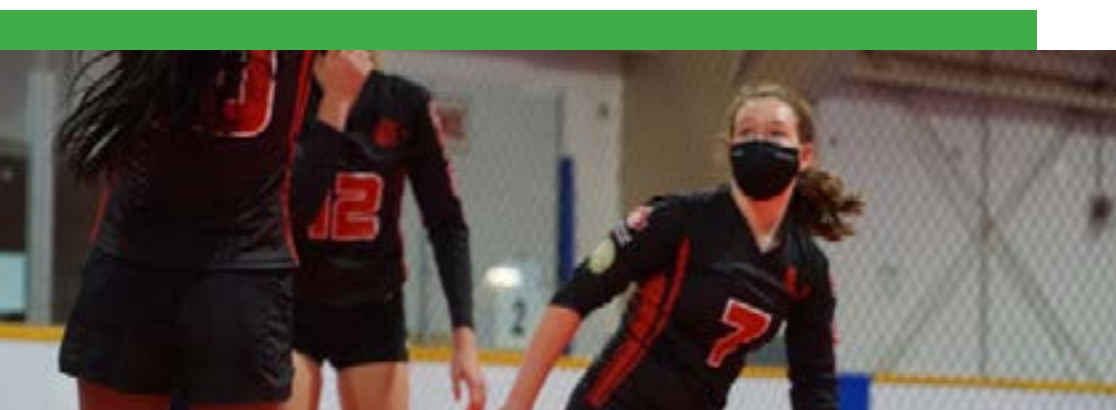


In the Orange Zone, no member of the public may be indoors at the facility for longer than 90 minutes at a time unless the member of the public is in the facility to engage in a sport.



Confirm with the facility if coaches and spectators are included in the total gathering size count.

See Appendix J - Back to Operations – Questions for Facilities.



OVA Indoor Volleyball Return To Play
Protocols: **Prevent, Protect, Restrict**



Self-Screening Measures

All individuals taking part in any indoor volleyball activities must self-screen in accordance with current public health guidelines before each training session. Individuals must not attend any training sessions or club activities if they:

- Exhibit any COVID-19 symptoms, such as a fever, cough, difficulty breathing, or other symptoms identified by health experts.
- Have been in close physical contact with someone with COVID-19 in the past 14 days and have been told to self-isolate by a Public Health Unit and/or have been told to obtain a screening test.
- Have returned from travel outside of Canada in the last 14 days (This does not include essential workers who cross the Canada/US border regularly).
- In the last 14 days, have been in close physical contact with someone who returned from outside of Canada in the last 2 weeks and is not an essential worker with exemption from mandatory quarantine and do not have approval from your local public health unit to return to volleyball activities.
- Are considered a vulnerable or at-risk individual (individuals over 70 years, weakened immune system or medical conditions such as heart disease, lung disease, cancer etc.).
- In the last 14 days, have received a COVID Alert exposure notification on your cell phone and have been told to self-isolate or obtain a COVID screening test.
- Have had a doctor, health care provider, or public health unit told them/you that they should currently be isolating (staying at home)

See Appendix F for the full Daily Health Screening Questionnaire.

Health Screening of Individuals

Conduct a screening protocol whereby individuals are screened on-site daily before participation in any club or volleyball activities. This screening may be conducted verbally or submitted prior to the Club or OVA activity via an online format which is verbally checked at check in. See Appendix F. When training is taking place on courts in a non-club setting, the coach is responsible for ensuring this screening is taking place.

Tracking of Participants in Club and Training Groups

Track all athlete / coach / volunteer participation in club or volleyball activities daily. Participant tracking information must be recorded and kept on file to assist with contact tracing in the event of any positive COVID-19 cases within the club or training group. When indoor volleyball activities are taking place on any courts even outside of a club setting, the coach is responsible for ensuring this logging and tracking is taking place.

See Appendix G for Participant Tracking Form.



PROGRAMMING

Clubs and volleyball groups shall limit programs as follows:

Green (Protect) to Orange (Restrict) Zones Indoor Team Sports -Training and Game Play

- See recommended training/game play session guidelines in Appendix H.
- Applies to competitive and recreational volleyball activities/ training and game play.
- Scrimmages, game play and limited duration competition sessions are allowed.
- When training and playing volleyball, 2 metres physical distancing is not required, but deliberate physical contact is not allowed and must be avoided at all times (i.e. no high-fives, no celebratory huddles, etc).
- Physical distancing must be maintained when off of the court.
- At all times, effort must be made to minimize incidental physical contact.
- Frequent breaks must be taken for participants to clean and sanitize their hands, guideline every 30 minutes.
- Up to 7 active participants per side on the court for training and game play played on 9 Metre x 18 Metre courts (9m x 9m side)
- A libero may switch in and out per regular volleyball rules, but the libero must respect physical distancing when off the court.
- Therefore 14 athletes can be active on the court in the training/game play session o Athletes must wear a mask at all times, including during training, game play and off court activity.

OVA Indoor Volleyball Return To Play
Protocols: **Prevent**, **Protect**, **Restrict**



Note: Facility rules and protocols may have further restrictions and requirements that must be adhered to.

Green (Protect) to Orange (Restrict) Zones In addition, for Indoor Team Sports - Leagues

- Maximum 50 participants per league division.
- No interplay between league divisions.



Limitations on Size of Groups

All training and game play sessions must follow provincial and local public health as well as facility/permit guidelines with respect to the size of gatherings.

Follow current Ontario Provincial guidelines regarding gathering restrictions. Currently, from **November 7, 2020** to the current e-currency law date, no more than 50 people are permitted for indoor **organized gathering sizes**. Please confirm with each facility if they have different government approved size of group gatherings.

In the **Orange Zone**, the total number of members of the public permitted to be indoors at the facility in all classes, organized programs or organized activities together with the total number of members of the public in all areas containing weights or exercise machines cannot exceed 50 people. Please confirm with each facility if they have different government approved size of group gatherings and what you are allowed to have at each court.

Note: Subject to facility/permit guidelines, the club/coach/organizer cannot gather more than **the government approved group size limitations**.

The OVA will communicate in subsequent Versions of these Protocols updated **Green (Prevent)** to **Orange (Restrict)** zone information as it becomes available.



Shared Equipment and Volleyball Cleaning Guidelines

Volleyballs must be cleaned between each game or training session group and at minimum each hour.

- Volleyballs should be assigned to each group and not shared with other groups. If a ball from another court comes over, participants should use their feet to kick it back.
- Allow transition time for groups to move in and out and for volleyballs/equipment to be sanitized.

See Appendix I for Mikasa recommended cleaning protocols.



Physical Distancing

Every person at a facility must maintain a physical distance of at least two metres from every other person unless they are engaged in a sport.

Athletes should follow the guidelines below in resuming training and game play:

- Athletes are not permitted to deliberately physically contact each other on the court.
- Athletes may breach physical distancing barriers while on-court in training or in game play situations, however, must maintain physical distancing when off of the court.
- Off the court, athletes must respect physical distancing guidelines within all parts of the site/facility by staying at least 2m apart at all times.
- All off-court warm-ups and training should comply with current physical distancing requirements.
- Utilize visual cues (i.e. placing pylons, skipping ropes) to remind participants of 2m spacing.
- Limit each 9m x 18m court to 14 active athletes.
- Ensure ample space between each court to respect physical distancing and to keep volleyballs from co-mingling with other training groups (e.g. set up nets on every other court).
- Establish volleyball specific physical distancing protocols including the elimination of handshakes, high fives, huddles and participants switching sides.

OFF COURT ACTIVITIES

Facility Access and Traffic Flow

Individuals shall follow facility guidelines by using designated entry and exit doors in the facility and any guidelines to manage the flow of people within the facility.

Ensure all participants leave the courts and venue immediately after the last match or training session.

Abide by all facility rules in addition to the Organizer/Club protocols.

Spectators

The total number of spectators permitted to be at the facility at any one time must be limited to the number that can maintain a physical distance of at least two metres from every other person in the facility, and in any event cannot exceed:

1. 50 spectators, if the spectators will be indoors, or
2. 100 spectators, if the spectators will be outdoors.

In the Orange Zone, no spectators are permitted to be in the facility, but each person under the age of 18 years who is engaged in activities in the facility may be accompanied by one parent or guardian. Please confirm with your facility if they include the parent/guardian is included in their maximum gathering size limitations.

Please note: each facility may have their own rules in place that supersede the government of Ontario's spectator rules.



Personal Hygiene

Individuals must follow the appropriate personal hygiene guidelines as recommended by public health agencies.

Individuals should wash / sanitize hands upon entry to site/facility or training area and at completion of training. All athletes and coaches must carry disinfectant wipes, hand sanitizer and/or pump soap in their equipment bags.

All participants must have closed containers (e.g. Ziploc bags) to allow for the safe disposal or storing of all hygienic materials (Kleenex, towels, etc.).

Discourage hand slapping, high fiving, and any other practices that do not adhere to physical distancing requirements.



Warm-Up/Cool-Down

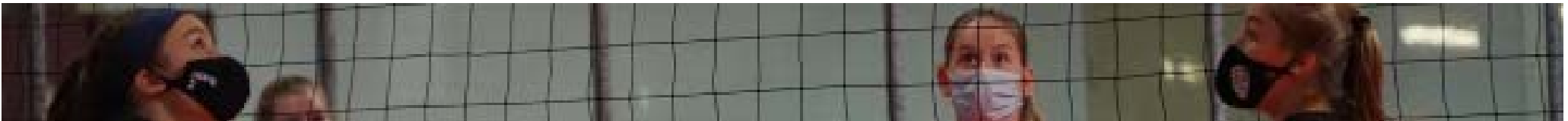
Warm-ups and cool downs completed off-court must respect physical distancing protocols and all participants must remain at least 2m apart.

Personal Protective Equipment

All Individuals must wear a non-medical face mask/covering when at a site/facility.

Locker/Change Rooms

Athletes must arrive at the site/facility in their training clothes. Based on government regulations, dressing rooms, locker rooms, change rooms, showers and clubhouses at the site/facility should not be used except to the extent they provide access to a washroom or a portion of the site/facility that is used to provide first aid.



Personal Hygiene

Personal items like gym bags, if possible, should be left in the relevant individual's vehicle (in a safe and secure location) and not be brought to the courts. Athletes and coaches may carry their own water bottle, towel, etc. to the court.

Consider bringing enough water before leaving the house to avoid having to touch a tap or water fountain handle while at the venue or in cases where water is not available.

Coaches should consider using hand whistles as opposed to regular whistles when possible.

Site/Facility

Athletes must follow physical distancing protocols and remain at least 2m apart from any other individual at all times, except when on the court participating in the training or game play.

ON COURT ACTIVITIES

Personal Protective Equipment

Coaches

Must wear a non-medical face mask while coaching and during off court activity.



Athletes

Must wear a non-medical face mask while training, in game play and off court activity.



Referees

Must wear a non-medical face mask while working a match and at all times while in the facility.

Electronic hand-held whistles are required.



Based on the province of Ontario's Face coverings and face masks regulations, exemptions from mandatory face mask usage is in effect for multiple reasons. Examples include:

- Those who have a medical condition that inhibits their ability to wear a face covering.
- Those whom are unable to put on or remove their face covering without help from someone else.
- People that receive accommodations according to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 or the Human Rights Code.

Please remember - no proof is required for the exemptions.

Physical Distancing and Physical Contact

Athletes are required to maintain a physical distance of at least 2m from any other athletes and coaches during the session, when not engaged in on-court volleyball activities. When an athlete is engaged in on-court volleyball activities, 2 metres physical distancing and incidental brief physical contact is allowed.



Personal Items

Athletes must use individual water bottles, tissue boxes etc. during training sessions. No sharing of these items is permitted. Athletes must have their own closed containers (i.e. Ziploc bag) for disposing of used personal items such as tissues. These must be disposed of at home or in a lidded garbage container in the facility.

On-Court Coaching

Coaches, and athletes must remain at least 2m apart from each other.

All coaching should be done using verbal cues.

Coaches should limit their contact with the ball. Athletes should introduce the volleyball into the drill, whenever possible (i.e. hitting or serving volleyballs).

If handling the ball, coaches should use hand sanitizer when they move between different individuals or groups.

APPENDICES

Appendix A	Volleyball Canada Return to Play Guidelines
Appendix B	Club Assessment Risk and Mitigation Tool
Appendix C	OVA Waiver
Appendix D	Educational Resources
Appendix E	Club Response Plan
Appendix F	Daily Health Screening Questionnaire (adult) Daily Health Screening Questionnaire (Children/Youth up to 18)
Appendix G	Session Participation and Health Screening Tracking
Appendix H	Return to Play Drills
Appendix I	Mikasa Volleyball Cleaning Guidelines
Appendix J	Back to Operations - Questions for Facilities
Appendix K	Event Hosting Guidelines

Hover over the Appendix to access the documents.

All appendix items can be found at ontariovolleyball.org/ova-return-to-play

