



Stage 2 -- Alberta Safe Return to Play Protocol

In order to ensure consistency across Nordiq Alberta members and uninterrupted liability insurance, clubs are requested to submit their return to sport protocols and risk assessment to the Nordiq Alberta office for review. Nordiq Alberta Staff will review and provide any feedback or recommendations to Clubs for their inclusion and consideration.

Clubs must also ensure that their members have access to Nordiq Alberta's Return to Sport Guidelines to their membership.

Cross Country Skiing

Due to the individual nature of the sport of cross-country skiing, training throughout the summer and winter months is largely done in small groups where physical distancing measures can be implemented. Many of our dryland training sessions consist of running, biking, ski walking, and roller skiing -- all of which allow for group instruction without the need to congregate in close groupings. Further, many training sessions forego the use of communal equipment such as weights, balls, and other gym equipment that would contribute to the spread of COVID-19. For the winter months, training consists of a combination of long slow skis, shorter fast skis, and for younger age groups games. These games can be tailored to allow for physical distancing guidelines to be followed throughout lessons.

COVID-19

Symptoms of the novel COVID-19 virus are similar to many other illnesses including the cold and flu. If you are experiencing any symptoms related to cold, flu, or COVID-19, it is a legal requirement that you self-isolate and do not attend group training sessions for a minimum of 10 days. The Government of Alberta has helpful resources detailing [self-isolation protocols](#) and when to follow them.

If you have come into contact with a known case of COVID-19, you are legally required to self-isolate for a minimum of 14 days. With new testing protocols in place, individuals who have known contact or are experiencing symptoms should take the following [self-assessment tool](#) provided by Alberta Health Services. Once complete, further instructions for testing will be provided.

If you are at an increased risk of COVID-19 infection, you should take extra precautions to ensure you remain safe. It is also encouraged that coaches/leaders take extra precautions to ensure their training opportunities are inclusive and safe for individuals at an elevated risk. More information on who is at an increased risk can be found [here](#) under the 'Risks of Getting Coronavirus' heading.

What is this document for?

As provinces across Canada begin to look at easing restrictions, Nordiq Alberta is working with SPAR to best manage a safe return to training for athletes, coaches, and volunteers. The following information is Nordiq Alberta's Safe Return to Play protocol modelled after Stage Two of Alberta's reopening. As an organization, our goal is to provide guidance for our membership to ensure the safety of participants returning to training opportunities. While Nordiq Alberta can provide guidance, it is imperative that these protocols be followed at the club level to enable us to continue moving forward and keep members of our community safe. For additional



information, feel free to visit Alberta Biz Connect for a full list of relaunch documents. Of most value is the Guidance for Sport, Physical Activity, and Recreation.

The Canadian Sport Institute Network, OTP, and the Canadian Olympic Committee have also been working to develop a risk assessment tool for sport. It is a document that includes all factors from the general WHO risk assessment and mitigation for mass gatherings as well as additional factors that pertain to sporting events and training, allowing organizers to determine a more accurate risk score. Further, this tool has been modified to directly reflect the return to training planning in the context of Canada. If you choose to use this tool, it is important to recognize that it is NOT a permission tool, but rather a risk assessment tool. Should you want to use this document, feel free to contact Nordiq Alberta and we will pass it along.

Athletes, coaches, and clubs must follow Alberta Health Services requirements/restrictions in their particular area.

All clubs are encouraged to review their Emergency Action Plan (EAP) in light of COVID-19 restrictions. Should you require an EAP template, please contact Nordiq Alberta and we would be happy to help.

The following information provides guidance for Nordiq Alberta members to safely return to activity. This information will be updated as conditions and restrictions change.

For Everyone

Requirements for participation in group training activities

- **No signs or symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days. If an individual has had a case of documented COVID-19, confirmation indicating they are no longer positive for COVID-19 and are cleared for group training participation is required from a health professional.**
- **No close sustained contact with any sick individual within 14 days of beginning group training.**
- **In the event that a coach tests positive, all individuals within their training cohort will be required to isolate for 14 days and/or be tested for COVID-19.**

General Guidelines:

At this time, all group training for XC skiing should take place outdoors in settings that allow for physical distancing protocols to be met.

- Participants may only train with their primary training group/cohort. Athletes that train with a cohort in another location may continue to train with that cohort provided they do not train with any other groups. A cohort may consist of up to 50 athletes at this time. Where 2 metre physical distancing between individuals is maintained, travel is permitted.
- Coaches of groups where physical distancing measures can be adhered to are not prohibited from coaching more than one cohort. In the event that a coach is required interact with an athlete in a space closer than 2 meters, use of masks and proper sanitization measures are required.



- Albertans may find themselves in more than one cohort at a time. Consider limiting the number of core cohorts you interact with to keep one another safe. If an individual wishes to change cohorts, they should not participate in activities for 14 days.
- There must be no physical touching including high-fives, handshakes, sharing of equipment etc.
- Participants should avoid touching their face, particularly eyes, mouth, and nose
- Avoid contact with people who are sick
- Stay home if you are sick
- Avoid high-touch areas, where possible, and wash your hands after contact

Clubs and training groups should consider implementing policy that requires coaches and participants to disclose if they have been exposed to COVID-19. It is also recommended that clubs be aware if any individual has travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days, and if so direct individuals to self-isolation resources -- individuals who are within their 14-day isolation period will not be permitted to join training sessions. The use of COVID-19 screening surveys for EVERY training session will remain in place and Nordiq Alberta will share an online template to reduce the use of paper and alleviate clubs of storage logistics.

The use of masks:

Currently, Alberta Health Services recommend the use of masks/facial covering in the community when it is not possible to consistently maintain a 2-meter physical distance from others. This is especially important in highly populated public settings. For more information on mask use, visit the document following document: [Guidance for Wearing of Non-Medical Face Masks for the General Public](#)

Nordiq Alberta strongly recommends the use masks before and after training sessions as well as during zone 1 skis for older athletes when physical distancing may not be possible.

The Coaching Zone

The coaching zone is the immediate vicinity around the area where athletes and coaches congregate. This could be stadiums, parking lots, running tracks, or sections of road/trail used for repeated intervals. The following are recommendations for protocol within the coaching zone.

- In adherence with current group size regulations, Gatherings may not exceed 50 individuals (including coaches and chaperones). Athletes in the coaching zone must follow guidelines for physical distancing and should consider increasing distances between athletes as speed increases.
- Athletes outside the coaching zone must continue to adhere to physical distancing guidelines and may face repercussions such as removal from training opportunities should they repeatedly break physical distancing regulations.
- Use of masks is encouraged in the 'Coaching Zone' to limit spread of airborne particles

Physical Distancing

- Maintain a minimum of 2-meters between individuals for non-speed training
- Increase distance between participants when engaging in higher speed activities

Personal Hygiene



- Bring personal hand sanitizer to use before, during (if in contact with high-touch zones), and after training
- When leaving your house, wash your hands. Immediately shower after returning home from public gatherings
- Do not spit
- Sneeze or cough into your sleeve
- Use a tissue to blow your nose and discard tissues appropriately immediately after. Use hand sanitizer or wash your hands following the use of tissues
- Upon completion of training, limit contact with others until you have showered
- Wash your clothes immediately after returning home

Equipment

- Ensure you have your own water and snacks. Do not share drinks or snacks with fellow athletes and coaches.
- Do not share equipment (i.e. poles, boots, helmets etc.)
- Any shared equipment should be cleaned and sanitized at an increased frequency, and between uses
- Hands should be cleaned before and after using gloves, and gloves should be washed between uses
- Equipment that is in disrepair should not be used as proper sanitization is not possible

Transportation

- Avoid ride shares and only travel to/from practice with those in your immediate household or cohort. **If ridesharing is a must, ensure that physical distancing is observed as closely as possible and wear masks/face coverings.**
- When parking and where possible, leave a cars width between vehicles to allow for physical distancing guidelines to be followed
- Arrive ready to go and avoid mingling/hanging around with fellow athletes and coaches
- Once the activity is complete, avoid post-workout mingling and return home as quickly as possible

SafeSport

- Refamiliarize yourself with [Nordiq Alberta SafeSport policies](#) to ensure that training sessions are run in accordance with current rules and regulations.

Rapid Response Protocols

The following set of regulations should be used if an individual begins to feel ill during a training session or competition:

- Symptomatic individuals are asked to immediately follow hand sanitization practices, maintain a space of 2 meters (minimum) between other individuals, and put on a non-medical face covering.
- Participants must arrange (with the help of administrators, coaches, volunteers, etc. when applicable) transportation directly home to begin isolation. Public modes of transport (buses, taxis, ridesharing, etc.) are to be avoided at all costs.
- Once the individual has left, all high touch surfaces and other equipment/space the individual may have come in contact with must be sanitized.
- There is no need to cancel or postpone the session should this occur.

For Coaches



Location of Activities

- Training locations should be chosen based on both the type of activity being run and the ability for physical distancing guidelines to take place
- When choosing a location, always have an alternative location in mind should your first choice be too crowded. Use good judgment based on the type of activity and space needed when deciding whether the location needs to be changed
- Plan ahead and speak with other clubs in your area to avoid all congregating at the same location

General Training

- The rule of twos still applies both to physical and virtual training sessions. For more information on the online rule of twos protocols, click [here](#).
- Ensure that activities chosen allows for physical distancing to take place (i.e. relays are not an appropriate activity during this time)
- When possible, stagger athletes' arrival and departure times to limit the number of participants and to decrease the amount of pre and post-workout mingling
- Prepare training sessions ahead of time and always consider the abilities of your athletes to avoid congestion and passing (i.e. organize your groups by their relative speeds)
- Maintain constant communication of training plans and locations to ensure that athletes arrive ready to start
- On-site instructions should be brief and allow for physical distancing regulations to be maintained

Time Trials/ Competitions*

- Must be individual start and with seeding to avoid passing and congestion
- Must be self-timed or by coaches all with their own watches
- Bibs may not be used at this time

*Please note that Nordiq Alberta is currently developing protocols for sanctioned race events and will make these available when we can.

For athletes

General Training

- Increase the minimum distance between fellow athletes as speed increases
- Review instructions and directions provided by coaches before training to avoid long sessions of Q and A. Try to ask questions before arriving on site
- Arrive ready to go with all personal equipment for the given activity

Time Trial/Competition

- Self-time when instructed by your coach (use of personal watch is a must, no sharing with fellow athletes)
- Maintain a minimum distance of 2 meters between one another if passing is necessary

Facilities



All clubhouses and facilities should adhere to the following requirements:

- Clubhouses and facilities (including but not limited to wax rooms, changerooms, team rooms etc.) are to remain closed until proper sanitization practices can be implemented.
- Appropriate signage at all entrances outlining the physical distancing protocols in place
- Appropriate signage outlining good hand washing and respiratory health measures
- Indoor washrooms are to remain closed at this time

How to Handle an Injury

In the event of an injury that does not require immediate help from 911, first aid materials should be handed to the athlete for self-care. To minimize potential contamination of medical supplies, first aid kits should be organized with individual baggies filled with necessary bandages, swabs, and gauze for each athlete.



The following checklist **must** be completed by each athlete before **every in-person training opportunity**. If a participant answers 'yes' to any of the questions, kindly remind them to stay home and focus on their health. Children and youth will need a parent to assist them with completing this screening tool.

Participant name: _____

1.	Does the person attending the activity have any of the following symptoms:	Circle One	
	• Fever	YES	NO
	• Cough – new or changed	YES	NO
	• Shortness of Breath/ Difficulty Breathing – new or changed	YES	NO
	• Sore throat	YES	NO
	• Chills	YES	NO
	• Painful swallowing	YES	NO
	• Runny nose/ Nasal congestion – new or changed	YES	NO
	• Feeling unwell/ Fatigued	YES	NO
	• Nausea/ Vomiting/ Diarrhea	YES	NO
	• Unexplained loss of appetite	YES	NO
	• Loss of sense of taste or smell	YES	NO
	• Muscle/ Joint aches – unexplained and unrelated to physical activity	YES	NO
	• Headache	YES	NO
	• Conjunctivitis	YES	NO
2.	Have you travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days?	YES	NO
3.	Have you or your children attending the program had close <u>unprotected</u> contact (face-to-face contact within 2 meters/ 6 feet) with someone who is ill with cough and/or fever?	YES	NO
4.	Have you or anyone in your household been in close <u>unprotected</u> contact in the last 14 days with someone who is being investigated or confirmed to be a case of COVID-19?	YES	NO

Again, if you answer yes to any of the above, please stay home and use the AHS Online Assessment Tool to determine if testing is recommended.

Activity organizers: Please keep documentation of completed forms for a minimum of two weeks in a secure location for contact tracing purposes.