



**COVID-19
GATHERINGS AND EVENTS
FACILITY RENTAL AND RETURN TO SPORT DIRECTIVE
July 2021**

GUIDING PUBLIC HEALTH PRINCIPLES

- ✓ A person infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus can infect other people with whom the infected person is in contact;
- ✓ Social interactions and close contact between people are associated with increases in the transmission of SARS-CoV-2, and increases in the number of people who develop COVID-19 and become seriously ill;
- ✓ People spending time together indoors increases the risk of the transmission of SARSCoV-2 in the population, thereby increasing the number of people who develop COVID19 and become seriously ill – gathering outdoors presents less risk of exposure and transmission;
- ✓ Gatherings and events which involve large numbers of people continue to pose a risk of promoting the transmission of SARS-CoV-2, and increasing the number of people who develop COVID-19 and become seriously ill;
- ✓ The Province continues to experience transmission of SARS-CoV-2, and to be at risk of cases of infection, and clusters and outbreaks which can increase the incidences of serious disease leading to hospitalizations, intensive care admissions and deaths;
- ✓ Virus variants of concern which are more transmissible and have the potential to cause more serious illness, including among younger populations, are present in Canada and the Province, and have heightened the risk to the population;
- ✓ There continues to be a need for public health measures to be in place for the purpose of reducing the risk of exposure and transmission of COVID-19 when people are gathered together; and
- ✓ A person must not permit a place to be used for, organize or be present at an event, except as provided for in the July 7, 2021 *Gatherings and Events Order* of the Provincial Health Officer for British Columbia, attached as Appendix 1.

BACKGROUND

On March 17, 2020 the Provincial Health Officer for British Columbia declared a public health emergency relating to the transmission of the infectious agent known as SARS-CoV-2 which was responsible for cases and outbreaks of a serious communicable disease known as COVID-19 among the population of the Province of British Columbia.

On March 18, 2020, a provincial state of emergency was declared in British Columbia to support the province-wide response to the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Since March of 2020, a series of *Gatherings and Events Orders* of the Provincial Health Officer and other Ministerial Orders and directives have been put in place to reduce the risk of exposure and transmission of COVID-19 in the work place and amongst the general population. These control measures included, but were not limited to, requirements for WorkSafeBC COVID-19 Safety Plans in workplaces; the wearing of face coverings [masks] in indoor public places; physical distancing; and working remotely, along with prohibitions and other restrictions with respect to travel, dining, sports, exercise, and personal and organized gatherings and events.

On May 25, 2021, the Province of British Columbia unveiled its *BC's Restart: A Plan to Bring Us Back Together*. This four-step plan is focused on protecting people from further exposure and transmission of COVID-19 and safety getting life back to normal in British Columbia.

Each step of *BC's Restart Plan* is dependent on:

- ✓ Declining COVID-19 case counts;
- ✓ Increasing vaccination rates in people 18 years of age and older;
- ✓ Declining COVID-19 hospitalizations, including critical care; and
- ✓ Declining COVID-19 deaths

STEP 3 – BC'S RESTART PLAN

On July 1, 2021, the Province of British Columbia moved to Step 3 of *BC's Restart Plan* due in large measure to the high COVID-19 vaccination rate in British Columbia.

Step 3 of *BC's Restart Plan* is a significant milestone:

- ✓ The provincial state of emergency has been lifted;
- ✓ Many former public health Orders have also been lifted or significantly modified and replaced with targeted restrictions and guidance; and
- ✓ The Provincial Health Officer and WorkSafeBC have transitioned away from COVID-19 Safety Plans in the workplace to *Communicable Disease Plans*.

Step 3 of BC's *Restart Plan* eases many former restrictions while placing limits on larger scale activities and events and also limits the capacity of seated events.

PURPOSE

The July 2021 *FVRD Facility Rental and Return to Sport Directive* set outs the current procedures and protocols for anyone wishing to rent a FVRD Park or Facility for an indoor or outdoor seated event as set out in the July 7, 2021 *Gathering and Events Order* of the Provincial Health Officer. This Directive also addresses return to sport in this context.

DEFINITIONS

Communicable Disease means an illness caused by an infectious agent or its toxic product that can be transmitted in a workplace from person to person including, but not limited to, COVID-19, seasonal influenza, norovirus and others.

Communicable Disease Prevention Plan means a plan that is put in place in accordance with WorkSafeBC Guidelines which focuses on risk reduction measures in order to reduce the risk of workplace transmission of any communicable disease, including appropriate handwashing and personal hygiene practices, appropriate ventilation, staying home when sick and other measures at times when the risk of communicable disease in the region or workplace is elevated.

Event means a seated in-person gathering in a place with seating as defined under the July 7, 2021 *Gatherings and Events Order* of the Provincial Health Officer.

Organizer means the person responsible for organizing an event

Participant means a person who attends an event, but does not include an organizer, event staff member, official, performer, player, athlete, officiant, or any other person who is acting in an official or service capacity

Program for children or youth means a structured educational program, including home education or distributed learning, music, art, drama, dance, recreational, exercise or social activity sponsored by an adult and provided for persons under 22 years of age.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. **STAY HOME IF SICK** - Persons who are sick or who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home and not attend any FVRD Workplace, Park, Facility or sanctioned sporting or other event.
2. Any person, organizer or organization who wishes to rent, organize or host a gathering or event at a FVRD facility must consult with facility staff to determine whether the rental or use constitutes an "event".

3. Any person, organizer or participant that rents or uses an FVRD facility must abide by all FVRD facility protocols and all public health directives of the day.
4. Gyms, Pools and recreation facilities can operate with normal capacity – no restrictions.
5. Indoor high and low intensity group exercise is allowed with normal capacity – no restrictions.
6. All outdoor and indoor group sports, for adults and youth are allowed, including games, competitions, practices and travel for sports – no restrictions unless the group sport constitutes an event. For greater certainty, physical distancing does not need to be maintained on or off the field of play and face coverings [masks] need not be worn subject to Provision 9 below.
7. If a facility rental or other facility use is not deemed to be an event, there are no COVID-19 restrictions, however there may be a requirement for a Rental Agreement or FVRD Permit.
8. If a facility rental, or other facility use, requires a Rental Agreement or FVRD Permit under the terms of a FVRD regulatory bylaw, the Permit must be in place prior to the rental or use of the facility.
9. Face Coverings [Masks] are no longer mandatory but are **still recommended** in indoor public spaces for all people 12 years of age and older who are not yet fully vaccinated. “Fully vaccinated” means 14-days after receiving a second dose of the COVID-19 vaccination.
10. Proof of vaccination is not required.
11. A Sport Organization who rents, uses, hosts or organizes an “event” at an FVRD facility are no longer required to have a COVID-19 Safety Plan in place but are encouraged to have a WorkSafeBC *Communicable Disease Prevention Plan* in place in accordance with WorkSafeBC Guidelines found at: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/covid-19/bcs-four-step-restart>
12. Indoor organized seated events can have a capacity of 50 people or 50% capacity, whichever is greater.
13. Outside organized seated events can have a capacity of 5,000 people or 50% capacity, whichever is greater.
14. Spectators – Indoor Sports activities can have 50 spectators or 50% seated capacity, whichever is greater.
15. Spectators – Outdoor Sports activities can have 5,000 spectators or 50% seated capacity, whichever is greater.
16. Fairs, festivals, trade shows and stand up receptions can return to normal operations with a Communicable Disease Plan in place – these are deemed to be “flow-through events”.

17. There are no capacity limits or restrictions on indoor or outdoor religious gatherings and worship services.

18. OUTSIDE EVENTS

For greater certainty, a person must not permit a place to be used for, organize or be present at an event, except as provided in accordance with the July 7, 2021 *Gatherings and Events Order* of the Provincial Health Officer, in particular Section B thereto.

INDOOR EVENTS

For greater certainty, a person must not permit a place to be used for, organize or be present at an event, except as provided in accordance with the July 7, 2021 *Gatherings and Events Order* of the Provincial Health Officer, in particular Section C thereto.

ENQUIRES

Questions with respect to this *COVID-19 Gatherings and Events, Facility Rental and Return to Sport Directive* should be directed to 604-702-5000 or toll-free at 1-800-528-0061 or to the operations listed below:

PARKS

parks@fvrd.ca

RECREATION

leisure@fvrd.ca

604-869-2304

Visit our website at:

www.fvrd.ca

<https://www.fvrd.ca/EN/meta/contact/contacts-directory.html>

<https://www.fvrd.ca/EN/meta/news/news-archives/2021/covid-19-coronavirus-information.html>

APPENDIX 1

July 7, 2021 *Gatherings and Events Order* of the Provincial Health Officer for British Columbia

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-pho-order-gatherings-events.pdf>

References

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/restart>

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-pho-order-gatherings-events.pdf>

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/restrictions>

https://www.viasport.ca/sites/default/files/FAQ_Restart_07-01-2021.pdf