



June 11, 2020

To: All Members of Softball BC, LSO Presidents, Coordinators, and District UICs  
Cc – Board of Directors, Staff of Softball BC

#### SOFTBALL BC RETURN TO PLAY PROCESS UNDER COVID-19

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, we released to LSO presidents and coordinators, the approved return to play guidelines for Softball BC, and on June 10<sup>th</sup>, we posted those same guidelines on our website for public view. Predictably, there have been a number of questions about the process, as well as some other pieces to our return to play.


We are updating the guidelines to include some more specific terms for some of the areas of return and also have pulled together the documents, other than R2P, which LSOs will need in order to meet the requirements and be in compliance with provincial guidelines.


#### KEY PRINCIPLE OF RETURNING TO PLAY SOFTBALL IN 2020

I felt it was necessary to begin by reminding everyone the overriding motivation in returning to play is to provide some form of softball activity in a safe and responsible environment. On March 16<sup>th</sup>, we felt that we would not see organized softball in BC until 2021, and the overwhelming feeling was if we could get out and throw a ball around with our teammates, we wouldn't ask for anything more than that.

Our message to the membership has consistently been "Take It Slow, Do It Right" and we are not about to abandon that message when we are so close to getting back.

#### PROCESS TO RETURN TO PLAY

A) Provincial Government sport sector guidelines are released, enabling provincial sport bodies to create a sport specific guideline for return to play. 

B) Softball BC creates a softball return to play guideline based on compliance with sport sector guidelines 

C) Each cub/association/league creates their own safety plan, based on the Softball BC guidelines which is approved by the LSO governing body, and the plan is posted on the LSO website and distributed to members

D) Signing officer for the LSO completes the Softball BC compliance agreement and the sanctioning approval request, and submits to the SBBC Executive Director for approval

E) Register members through the SBBC online registration database and have it approved by District Coordinator

F) Request certificate of insurance from SBBC office to be sent to the facility owner



**1<sup>st</sup> INNING - \*\* will require sanction approval from Softball BC to start and will begin no earlier than June 10th**

- First steps for clubs and members to take is through controlled practice with small groups in U10 and older. The intent is to put into use the protocols for COVID-19 softball activities, following physical distancing, sanitizing and limiting gatherings. This is done with smaller, controlled groups in order to have stakeholders get familiar with the steps everyone needs to follow in order to remain compliant. Every athlete/coach registered with the LSO should take part in several practices before considering moving to the next stage.

**2<sup>nd</sup> INNING - \*\* no additional sanction if 1<sup>st</sup> INNING has already been approved. Will begin no earlier than June 17<sup>th</sup> earliest**

- First steps for club and members to take for Tim Bits group (U6 & U8) with controlled skill development sessions developed by Softball Canada and Softball BC for COVID-19 softball activities. These sessions focus on fundamental movement and physical literacy skills while maintaining basic safety measures of physical distancing and sanitation by all participants. The modified Tim Bits programme is a complete season by itself, with no games or scrimmages whatsoever. This is designed to be run over a six week period, with sessions twice weekly. By the end of the sessions, the participants will be ready in U8 to move to a type of game activity next season, while those in U6 will be ready to learn more sport specific skills and strategy in U8

**3<sup>rd</sup> INNING - \*\* will require sanction approval from Softball BC prior to start and will begin no earlier than July 1<sup>st</sup>**

- Continue controlled practice while SLOWLY AND GRADUALLY introducing game play. Intent is to slowly introduce more people and activities into the programme to ensure a safe and controlled environment can be maintained. In club games can be carefully introduced where a larger group is now taking part, with more athletes and coaches, plus having umpires involved for the first time. In addition, more spectators will be at the field requiring careful and thorough protocols in place to minimize risk. Depending on provincial progress, we hope to add playing games against neighbouring clubs within the same district, again SLOWLY AND GRADUALLY. As no two districts are created equal, this will require some flexibility and support from member clubs as we create areas with neighbouring clubs who will be encouraged to play games against each other.

**4<sup>th</sup> INNING \*\* Timing is TBD based on provincial health authority**

- Having experienced play within your community and with neighbouring communities, the area teams may travel in to play games will be expanded to include within your Summer Games zone

**5<sup>th</sup> INNING \*\* Timing is TBD based on provincial health authority**

- Able to travel province wide, tournaments and Provincial Championships