



## **Upper Island Soccer Association Return to Play Plan.**

### ***Who we are.***

The Upper Island Soccer Association (UISA) is a vital organization within the larger regional soccer framework that helps structure, support and govern youth soccer on northern Vancouver Island.

UISA is a member of BC Soccer; itself a member of Canada Soccer, and as a member of BC Soccer UISA has a responsibility to follow the policies and rules established by BC Soccer, Canada Soccer and ultimately FIFA. This is accomplished via the administration of rules and regulations of youth soccer (players aged 18 and under) for its 8 Member Club Associations and provides the league infrastructure within which youth soccer is played. UISA also plays a leadership role with its members and with adult leagues in the delivery of soccer programs and the governance, facilities, officiating and scheduling necessary to play the beautiful game at all levels.

UISA has a volunteer Board of Directors composed of 7 individuals holding specific roles of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Risk Management Officer as well as other Directors at large.

### ***What we do.***

UISA currently works with 8-Member Soccer Clubs from Nanaimo to Port Hardy to Powell River and helps create positive soccer programs, tournaments, clinics and experiences for both Boys and Girls of all ages, from U4 through to U17-18 levels. Our member clubs currently include: Campbell River, Comox Valley, Gabriola, Mid Isle, Nanaimo, Oceanside Youth, Port Alberni, and Powell River.

UISA also collaboratively administers the Vancouver Island Premier League (VIPL) with the Lower Island Soccer Association. Together we ensure youth players from the entire Island have an opportunity to participate in soccer at a higher level.

### ***The Plan Aim.***

On June 2, 2020, BC Soccer provided its Return to Play Phase 1 Plan to its members and affiliated clubs which allows for modified training programming to occur. Based on this, UISA has drafted a return to play plan that can be used as a template for its Member Clubs and volunteers as they prepare for a safe return to the game.

## COVID – 19 plan

The Following five principles from BC's Restart Plan have been used to guide this document.

Personal Hygiene:	Stay Home if You Are Sick:	Environmental Hygiene:	Safe Social Interactions:	Physical Modifications:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Frequent handwashing</li><li>• Cough into your sleeve</li><li>• Wear a non-medical mask</li><li>• No handshaking</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Routine daily screening</li><li>• Anyone with any symptoms must stay away from others</li><li>• Returning travellers must self-isolate</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More frequent cleaning</li><li>• Enhance surface sanitation in high touch areas</li><li>• Touch-less technology</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meet with small numbers of people</li><li>• Maintain distance between you and people</li><li>• Size of room: the bigger the better</li><li>• Outdoor over indoor</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Spacing within rooms or in transit</li><li>• Room design</li><li>• Plexiglass barriers</li><li>• Movement of people within spaces</li></ul>

BC'S RESTART PLAN

UISA has followed the Guidelines based on the VIASPORT return to Sport Guidelines to develop this plan.

### According to VIASPORT:

Sport and physical activity play an important role in the physical, psychological and emotional well-being of citizens in British Columbia. For this and other economic and social reasons we are all eager to resume sport activities. However, the health and safety of all participants and citizens for British Columbia must remain the number one priority.

For the purposes of this document "Sport" is defined as *any organized sport activity that involves a number of people doing a physical activity together in a structured way and is facilitated by a Provincial Sport Organization or Local Sport Organization.*

*"Recreation" as defined by the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association is the experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community wellbeing." Physical activities would include those undertaken as leisure, fitness training and sport-related activities that are done at the discretion of the individual (e.g. – use of parks, hiking trails, public recreation facilities), either self-led or facilitated by recreation leaders and are not included within the context of this document*

*UISA will follow the same guidelines with regards to "Sport" and "Recreation". These two definitions along with the safety of our participants, staff, and most of all the community will steer us in the planning and implementation of our "Back to Play Plan."*

## **Risk Management**

In order to achieve a safe return to soccer under the supervision of appropriate Health Officials and UISA, it is important for clubs to assess the potential risks involved with a return. We have a plan to identify the risks, manage the risks and then mitigate any areas we see could cause a problem. Our sport specific plan will be based on assessing any risk and taking precautions to any individual being exposed to or infected with the Covid-19 virus.

Our Return to Sport Plan will consider the risks presented to playing soccer in the upper Island area specifically. Further, our franchise understands that our activity will be limited to practice and training only until further notice from the Province. We have identified the specific risks associated with soccer, from the close proximity of participants, to the use and cleanliness of the equipment to the procedures based on check-in and reporting of training activities. All of these will be in the return to play plan in the following pages.

Our return to Play Plan will be made available to all staff, participants, city officials, spectators by email, posted on the website, as well as a summarized version posted at the location of activity. This plan will be monitored and updated as necessary when circumstances or provincial guidance changes.

All active UISA club members will be asked to sign a participant agreement acknowledging their acceptance of risk (appendix A).

The following four areas will highlight the potential risk and the ways in which UISA Member clubs will mitigate those risks.

## **Facility Access**

The ability to be outside and have a large field facility helps mitigate some of the risks associated with soccer. The field locations being used will have the ability to space our participants and parents. Public health officials have indicated that the use of outdoor facilities are generally safer as there is greater ventilation and the ability to physically distance.

In order to mitigate risks associated with the use of the fields, we have identified a number of areas to modify.

- 1) **Restricted Access** – Only registered participants, staff and city or school employees would be approved in the areas of play/practice during the practice times. All parents, family and spectators would be encouraged not to come and if so would be required to remain on the other side of the fence and stay off the fields. They will also be reminded of the requirement to maintain physical distancing.
- 2) **Points of Access** – The area itself allows for controlled access and ability to physically distance. All participants will check in using their cell phones and scheduling will be posted on the website before and after the training sessions to mitigate the congestion at the site.
- 3) **Pre-Registration** - All participants will be required to register 1 week prior to the start of training. There will be absolutely no drop-in members. Only registered participants will be allowed to participate. The staff (including trained volunteers) will circulate the fields to make sure that only registered participants are participating.

- 4) **Arrival and Departure** – Every field area includes large parking areas that allow for distancing at the time of arrival and departure. Training sessions are for player groups of up to 20 people. All participants (players and staff) will sanitize their hands and their personal equipment (ball) upon arrival and personal items such as gloves will not be shared. The responsible staff person on site will have a pre-registration list so as to confirm who was present. All participants will be required to sanitize their hands and personal equipment prior to their departure from the site.

## **Facility Operations**

The safety and well-being of our staff will be forefront in the return to play plan for UISA. Not only is the well-being a priority but also mitigating any spread of the virus from our staff to participants will be critical.

- 1) Our entire staff will receive training on how to implement our Return to Play plan and will also be educated with respect to the guidelines put forth from the Province Health Authorities, and VIASPORT.
- 2) We will have a zero-tolerance illness policy for both staff and participants. We will do a self assessment health screen prior to commencing training via a mobile/telephone check-in system. At this time all participants checking in will be asked a series of health screening question (Appendix C).
- 3) We will have hand sanitizer attached at every net and at the player bench. Participants and staff will be reminded to sanitize hands between training activities.
- 4) To minimize shared use of equipment, the use of individual practice balls for participants will instated. We will require that shared balls to be wiped clean using a sanitizer spray and disinfectant wipes at regular intervals.
- 5) Regular announcements about proper hand washing, the touching of your face and physical distancing will be repeated at regular intervals. We will have information posted at the field as well as a regular reminder on our website and emails going out to participants.
- 6) Each participant and staff member will be required to sanitize upon arrival and just prior to departing the field facility.
- 7) Before each practice activity all balls and equipment will be sanitized with an alcohol-based solution.

## **Participants**

The safety and well-being of our participants will be forefront in the return to play plan for UISA. Not only is the well-being a priority but also mitigating any spread of the virus to our community from our staff and participants.

- 1) We will have a zero-tolerance illness policy for both staff and participants. We will complete a self assessment health screen prior to league via a online or telephone check-in system. At this time all participants checking in will be asked a series of health screening question (Appendix B).
- 2) As mentioned earlier we will repeatedly make announcements to remind participants to wash their hands, avoid touching eyes, nose and mouths and to cough into their sleeve.
- 3) Participants will be required to sign a Participant Waiver/Agreement (Appendix A)
- 4) We will be using duplicate field zones with additional cones, nets and ladders. This will allow for more physical distancing.

- 5) All registration will be done online. Payment will happen online or at prescheduled times.
- 6) Every practice night the participants will be reminded of their responsibility to complete a health screen prior to coming to the field and our staff will know exactly who has been on the field facility if there was ever a member that was infected and so we could immediately identify who was present.
- 7) All participants will be sent information about our new processes, a participation agreement/waiver and a copy of our return to play plan. All of this information will also be posted on our website and will be available to view on site. (Appendix C)
- 8) It will be very clear to participants that if they fail to abide by the rules put in place by the UISA staff that they will be removed immediately.

## **Sport Programming**

We are fortunate that our sport, soccer, is played outside and has limited participants for training at any given time. Our sport consists of approximately 18 players on a team. We have looked at the risks of our sport specifically and have found the best ways to mitigate the risk of any transmission of a virus.

- 1) Players will do their best to refrain from being closer than 2 meters apart. Practice will ensure exercises that have no contact and we will not allow high fives, handshakes or fist pumps.
- 2) Goal tending will only take place with a controlled number of regularly sanitized balls and goal tending equipment will not be shared.
- 3) There will no throw-ins or heading of the ball permitted. All ball contact will be below the waist and play will be with feet only.
- 4) Participants will be required to bring their own water bottles. We will supply individual practice balls and they will be cleaned between practices.
- 5) All of our participants will be registered UISA members only. There will be no competition between other organizations.

## **Emergency Response**

**First Aid** - In the event that first aid is required, UISA staff will assess the injured participant while wearing gloves and a mask and recommend next steps (medical clinic, hospital – transport by individual where safe or ambulance would be called)

**Outbreak Plan** – Participants who display any symptoms or answer yes to any of our pre-participation screening questions will not be permitted to participate. If a positive COVID-19 test is reported to us, UISA staff will report this finding to the local Health Authority and will follow orders from the local Health Authority. At that point, we will require teammates of the COVID-19 positive participant to self-isolate as well as any other team that they shared the field with. We will take direction from our local health authorities and if that requires a full shut down, we will do so. Our check in system will allow for us to have detailed contact tracing.

Resources used (BCRPA, ViaSport, Island Health)

ViaSport: <https://www.viasport.ca/sites/default/files/ReturntoSportGuidelines.pdf>

BCRPA: <https://www.bcrpa.bc.ca/media/242766/bcrpa-restarting-guidelines-final.pdf>

Island Health: <https://www.islandhealth.ca/>

## **APPENDIX A**

### **PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT**

All Participants of agree to abide by the following points when participating in UISA activities under the COVID-19 Response plan and RTP Protocol:

- I agree to symptom screening checks, and will let the organizers know if I have experienced any of the symptoms in the last 14 days.
- I agree to stay home if feeling sick, and remain home for 14 days if experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
- I agree to sanitize my hands upon entering and exiting the playing area, with soap or sanitizer.
- I agree to continue to follow social distancing protocols of staying at least 2m away from others.
- I agree to not share any equipment during practice times.
- I agree to abide by all of the UISA COVID-19 Policies and Guidelines.
- I understand that if I do not abide by the aforementioned policies/guidelines, that I may be asked to leave for up to 14 days to help protect myself and others around me.
- I acknowledge that continued abuse of the policies and/or guidelines may result in suspension of my UISA membership temporarily.
- I acknowledge that there are risks associated with entering field facilities and/or participating in UISA activities, and that the measures taken by the organization and participants, including those set out above and under the COVID-19 Response Plan and Return to Sport Protocols, will not entirely eliminate those risks.

Date:

Signature:

**APPENDIX B**

**DAILY HEALTH SCREENING QUESTIONS**

	<i>Yes/ No</i>
Have you traveled outside of the country in the last 14 days?	
Have you been on a plane in the last 14 days?	
Have you been in contact or taken care of any with COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms or a person that has been in close contact with COVID-19 in the last 14 days?	
Are you experiencing cold, flu or COVID-19-like symptoms, even mild ones? <i>Symptoms include: fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat and painful swallowing, stuffy or runny nose, loss of sense of smell, loss of sense of taste, headache, muscle aches, fatigue or loss of appetite.</i>	

## **APPENDIX C**

### **MEMBER COMMUNICATION EXAMPLE**

Dear <>

As British Columbia public health authorities develop guidelines to lift some restrictions on gathering in a responsible way, UISA has been working with VIASPORT and the Province of British Columbia to understand the recommendations our Chief Provincial Health Officer and how they best apply within our sport.

The attached Return to Sport Plan has been developed for our sport in order to ensure:

- health and safety of all individuals is a priority
- activities are in alignment with provincial health recommendations
- modifications to activities are in place in order to reduce the risks to each sport organization and its participants
- our sport is united and aligned on a plan to reopen throughout the province

While we do hope things will return to normal in the not too distant future, currently this Return to Sport Plan will be the new normal until we are advised otherwise by public health authorities.

If you choose to participate, you must follow these rules:

- If you don't feel well or are displaying symptoms of COVID-19, you must stay home.
- If you have traveled outside of Canada, you are not permitted at the facility until you have self-isolated for a minimum of 14 days.
- If you live in a household with someone who has COVID-19 or is showing symptoms of COVID19, please stay home.
- Wash your hands before participating
- Bring your own equipment, water bottle and hand sanitizer
- Comply with physical distancing measures at all time
- Avoid physical contact with others, including shaking hands, high fives, etc.
- Leave the field of play as quickly as possible after you finish

Our Return to Sport Plan is based on current public health guidance. While we are all doing our best to minimize the risk of exposure to COVID-19, while the virus circulates in our communities it is impossible to completely eliminate the risk. Each participant must make their own decision as to whether it is in their best interest to resume participation at this time. You must take into account your own circumstances and make the decision that is right for you. Should you choose to join us, we require your full cooperation with our Return to Sport Plan.

Sincerely,

## ***APPENDIX D***

### ***CHECK IN AND HEALTH SCREEN TRACKING***

This would need to be a simple spreadsheet with names that participants confirm they are not ill on the dates of activities. This could be done in a number of ways and I would like to see how we can do this online by checking and agree box as part of the sign-in procedure.