



# SKI WELL, BE WELL

SKI AREA OPERATING BEST PRACTICES

WINTER 2020-21

## FOUNDED IN 1977, THE CANADIAN SKI COUNCIL

is a national, not-for-profit ski and snowboard organization whose mandate is to increase participation in recreational skiing, snowboarding, and cross-country skiing in Canada.

## OUR COMMITMENT

The ski and snowboard industry values and prioritizes the health and safety of its guests, staff and local communities. We demonstrate this commitment to our stakeholders by implementing the following operating best practices for the 2020-21 winter season, or for as long as needed, scaled appropriately in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ski industry leaders from across North America established these foundational best practices according to scientific guidelines put forth by infectious disease experts, including public health authorities and the WHO. Ski areas will comply with additional federal, provincial and local regulations as they are implemented.

Snowsports are a way for people to play in wide-open spaces, and to take advantage of the mental and physical health benefits of outdoor recreation. For decades, ski area owners and operators have managed skier numbers and safety in daily operations, collaborating with fellow industry experts to offer safe and memorable experiences. The Canadian Ski Council, regional ski associations, and ski areas commit to providing outdoor recreation in ways that promote health and safety, and reduce the risk of infection.

“The ski industry led the business community last spring with our responses to the Covid outbreak and intends to lead again with providing responsible and safe outdoor winter recreation for millions of people this next winter.”

*Stephen Kircher, CEO/President,  
Boyne Resorts*

**Ski areas are committed to supporting healthy and thriving local communities. We will continue to partner with local agencies to maintain the success and character of the places in which we operate.**



### THE SNOWSPORTS INDUSTRY

generates \$4 billion annually toward the Canadian economy, and supports over 35,000 jobs nationwide. There are 236 ski areas across 10 provinces and 1 territory, many of which are the primary drivers of their rural economies. 89% of revenues are generated during the winter season; for the average ski area, that season is 114 days (81 days for small ski areas).

## BENEFITS AND ADVANTAGES OF SKI AREAS

Ski areas provide low-risk outdoor recreation opportunities for millions of Canadians. Here's what makes the ski industry uniquely positioned to do so:



### Space

Canada's 236 ski areas provide tens of thousands of acres of land for outdoor recreation. Ski area operators are experts at monitoring and managing the flow and volume of traffic in their outdoor spaces.

### Natural Outdoor Environment

The majority of time spent at a ski area is spent outside in the fresh air, cruising down runs.

### Standard Gear

Face coverings, including neck gaiters, goggles, gloves or mittens, and helmets are standard pieces of skiing or snowboarding gear.

### Slope Safety Etiquette

Long-standing skiing and snowboarding etiquette requires guests to respect one another and give space between themselves and other skiers and riders. Safe skiers leave space between other skiers.

“The ski industry plays an important part of the overall travel and tourism sector. Nationwide, alpine resorts provide a great opportunity for travelers to get outside and recreate in a mountain environment with wide open spaces.”

*Paul Pinchbeck, President and CEO CSC*

Healthy outdoor activities and the promotion of healthy lifestyles while engaging with family and community have always been the appeal of skiing, riding and sliding on snow, its what we do as Canadians we live it outdoors. These traditions and sport etiquettes lend themselves to physical distancing while being socially responsible.



## Health Benefits

Snowsports provide numerous proven health and wellness benefits to participants. According to the WHO, “regular physical activity benefits both the body and mind.” The organization says that physical activity increases strength and fitness, reduces the risk of cardiovascular and other physical ailments and improves mental health, specifically reducing the risk of depression.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>World Health Organization, Q&A: Be Active During COVID-19 (accessed August 2020)



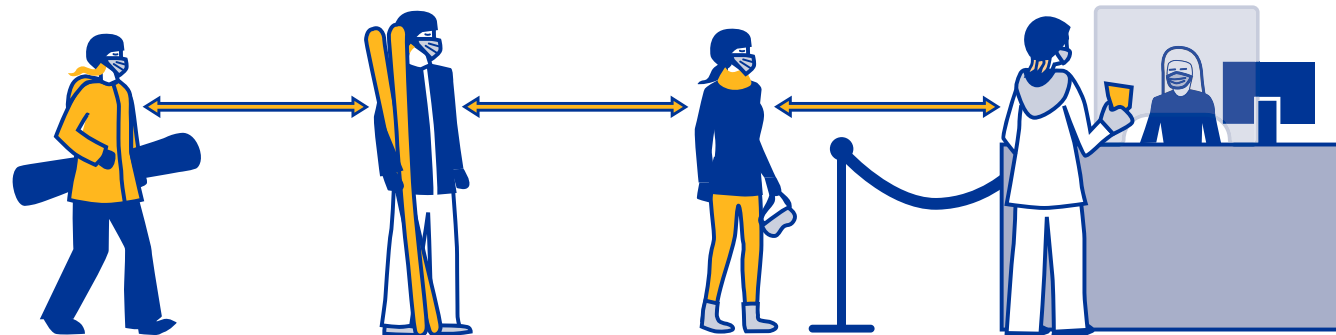
## Shared Responsibility for Safety

It is up to every individual, both ski area employee and guest, to do their part to help protect the health and safety of our skiing and snowboarding community. Following requirements to mitigate the risk of infection is part of the social contract between ski area operator and guest.



## Touchless Transactions

Many ski areas have adopted technologies to reduce personal contact between employees and guests. These include touchless payment and access technologies, such as advance online purchase and RF (radio frequency) scanning of tickets and passes.



# SAFE WORKING, SAFE RECREATING

Here is how ski areas are helping to keep their employees, guests and communities healthy:

## Face Coverings are Required

Ski areas will require face coverings that align with public health authorities recommendations whenever physical distancing cannot be achieved. This includes both indoor and outdoor spaces, except when eating or drinking.



## Physical Distancing

Ski areas will create operational plans that allow for appropriate spacing between parties. This includes but is not limited to the following parts of the operation: lift queues, ticket queues, ski and snowboard lessons, employee spaces, and food and beverage outlets.

## Cleaning and Disinfection

Ski areas will adopt cleaning and disinfection strategies for all areas of their operation, including high-touch areas such as restrooms, restaurants, dining facilities, ticket offices, and rental shops. All cleaning products used will follow public health authority’s guidance on agents which are effective against COVID-19.



## Operating Plans

Ski areas will review and amend both their overall and individual departmental operating plans to: comply with local regulations; maintain physical distancing requirements; and adhere to cleaning and disinfection best practices.

**INDOOR SPACES:** Ski areas will comply with local regulations regarding the management of indoor spaces.

**OUTDOOR SPACES:** Ski areas will create detailed, scalable operating plans for the management of outdoor spaces including base areas, lifts and ski terrain.

Mount St Louis Moonstone is committed to the safety of its Employees and Guests. The resort recognizes its role in preventing the spread of COVID-19 while in turn acknowledges the importance of sport; specifically skiing and snowboarding in supporting our Guest’s mental and physical health during the winter months.

*Robert Huter, Mount St. Louis Moonstone*



## Communication

Ski areas will communicate their plans and requirements to guests prior to their arrival at the ski area, stressing the shared responsibility in keeping our slopes safe. Guests will be made aware of their obligations, including the requirement to wear a face covering whenever physical distancing cannot be achieved. Ski areas will also post on-site signage notifying guests and employees of required best practices to help stop the spread.

## Reporting and Notification

Ski areas will comply with provincial and local public health orders and follow public health authority's best practices when reporting a positive case of COVID-19 at their resort. Employees will be trained in these practices by ski area leadership.



## OUR INDUSTRY'S GOAL IS TO KEEP OUR GUESTS SAFE AND HEALTHY WHILE SKIING AND SNOWBOARDING.

Skiing is a weather-based business requiring the daily scaling of operations to respond to current conditions. As such, our industry is uniquely prepared to pivot its operations.

We are confident in our expertise of managing outdoor recreation spaces. Skiing and snowboarding

offer low-risk, high-value recreation and it is our goal to provide that to our guests, even if some indoor or close-contact activities have to be scaled back or put on hold. The ski industry is committed to a collaborative relationship with provincial and local authorities to work together for solutions to keep ski areas open, and to keep guests and staff safe.

## Employee Training

Ski area employees will be trained in COVID-19 safety and disinfection protocols, consistent with recommendations from the public health authority.

## Employee Wellness Checks

Ski areas will perform daily wellness checks of all employees prior to the start of their shifts. Employees will be sent home or asked to stay home if they have come into contact with a positive COVID-19 case and/or exhibit relevant symptoms.



**Stay at home... if presenting symptoms as identified by health authorities**

View the most up-to-date list of COVID-19 symptoms at:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/symptoms.html>

## LIFTS

There are thousands of outdoor recreation options but what makes the ski industry different is its uphill transport: aerial ropeways like chairlifts, trams and gondolas, and surface lifts. Of these, chairlifts are the most common.

Canada's ski areas are governed by the Z98 code, which develops design requirements, specifications for training, and operation and maintenance requirements for passenger ropeways.

Our ski areas believe that lifts can be operated safely without additional risk of infection by setting forth these best practices.

## Face coverings will be mandatory on all lifts.

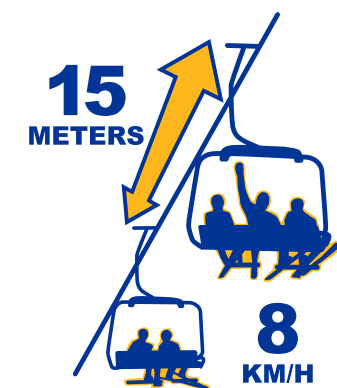


### Lift Queues

Physical distancing in lift queues occurs organically due to the length of skis and snowboards. Ski area employees have vast experience managing queues and the expertise to ensure a consistent flow of appropriately-spaced traffic.

### Loading the Chair

Guests will be asked to follow ski area protocols that direct guests how to load the lift. This will vary by lift type and capacity.



### Riding the Chair

The average chairlift ride is 7 minutes, considerably shorter than most transportation activities such as riding a bus or taking a trip in an airplane. The average chairlift travels at approximately 8 km/h, 2 meters every second, providing constant directional air flow. Chairs are spaced approximately 15 meters apart. Express lifts, found at many ski areas and resorts, travel at nearly 27 km/h, with chairs spaced over 30 meters apart.

### Unloading the Lift

Standard ski area safety rules and on-mountain signage require that people clear the unload area quickly after disembarking. Once clear of the chair, skiers and riders have wide open spaces on which to slide.



Skiing and Snowboarding brings vital physical activity and helps sustain healthy strong families. An active community is a healthy community and never has physical activity been more important. Skiing and snowboarding are intrinsically following COVID-19 prevention protocols: people participate in their natural familial bubble, spread across expansive areas of outdoor space that lead with ease to social distancing, and guests wear individual PPE, like face covering, balaclava, gloves, and goggles; enjoying skiing and snowboarding at a ski resort is an activity with a naturally low risk of infection.

## Open Air Chairlifts

The majority of our lifts are open air chairs where the rider experiences a constant flow of fresh, clean air. Closed cabins like those on a gondola or tram have windows and vents that allow for the exchange of air.



## Chairlifts check the boxes for low-risk transportation and recreation.

- ✓ Face coverings required
- ✓ Outdoor environment
- ✓ Skiers and snowboarders most often ride the lift with their traveling party
- ✓ Lift rides are generally 5-10 minutes, and almost always under 15 minutes
- ✓ Lifts travel between 8 and 27 km/h, creating constant one-way directional airflow
- ✓ Chairs are typically spaced 15 or more meters apart

**The ski industry is committed to providing outdoor recreation in ways that reduce the risk of infection.**

**Disclaimer:**

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