



Return to Play FAQ

FAQ About Return to Play Plan and CBA Extension



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Arenas

Which arenas will be used during the Stanley Cup Qualifiers and Stanley Cup Playoffs?

Five facilities – and 10 ice sheets – will be used for games and practices across the two hub cities. In Edmonton, Rogers Place, Downtown Community Arena and Terwillegar Community Recreation Centre (4 rinks) will be used; the facilities in Toronto are Scotiabank Arena and Ford Performance Centre (3 rinks).

Will arena employees be subject to Secure Zone Protocol?

Yes. Arena employees are included in the [Groups](#) outlined on Page 6 of the [Protocol](#).

Awards

When will finalists and winners be announced for the 2020 NHL Awards?

The NHL will reveal finalists for the 2020 NHL Awards beginning July 14. The complete schedule, which is subject to change, is listed below:

- July 14: Ted Lindsay Award
- July 15: Calder Memorial Trophy and Jack Adams Award
- July 16: Bill Masterton Memorial Trophy and Lady Byng Memorial Trophy
- July 17: Vezina Trophy and Willie O'Ree Community Hero Award
- July 20: Frank J. Selke Trophy and James Norris Memorial Trophy
- July 21: Hart Memorial Trophy

Finalists for the Jim Gregory General Manager of the Year Award and King Clancy Memorial Trophy will be announced at a later date. Only a winner will be named for this season's Mark Messier NHL Leadership Award.

The winners of the 2020 NHL Awards will be revealed during the Conference Finals, with exact dates, format and times to be determined.

Border

How will the Canada-U.S. border regulations impact NHL plans to play in Edmonton and Toronto?

All participants entering the [Secure Zone](#) in a hub city will be required to observe the policies detailed in the [Phase 4 Protocol](#) and summarized in the [Travel Guidelines](#) section of this document.

The [Secure Zone](#) in each hub city will allow those traveling via charter from the U.S. to Canada to forego a 14-day self-isolation period because they will have met other required medical mandates established by local and federal authorities. More information is available on Page 3 of the [Protocol](#).

Broadcasts

How will broadcast work?

NBC will produce a world feed from Toronto, while Sportsnet will produce a world feed from Edmonton. A complete broadcast schedule will be released in the coming days.

Will announcers call games on-site?

National rightsholders talent will be permitted on-site for select games.

Will player and coach interviews occur pre-game, in-game and post-game?

Yes, interviews will happen virtually.

What can fans expect to see and hear on broadcasts?

Specifics regarding the "look and feel" of television broadcasts will be unveiled at a later date.

Will exhibition games be broadcast?

Yes. The League will make all exhibition games available for broadcast, with specific details to be provided in the near future.

Cleaning & Disinfecting

What are the cleaning, disinfecting and hygiene requirements for game and practice facilities?

Detailed cleaning, disinfecting and hygiene requirements are described in the [Phase 4 Game Arena and Practice Facility Cleaning, Disinfecting, and Hygiene Requirements](#). At a minimum, this disinfection must be completed:

1. on shared circuit-based training equipment between Player usage (e.g., disinfectant wipe-down);
2. between training sessions on all areas and equipment that are touched; and
3. at the end of each day.

What are the cleaning, disinfecting and hygiene requirements for other Secure Zone areas?

All venues within the [Secure Zone](#) will be required to adhere to cleaning and disinfecting guidelines consistent with CDC and/or Health Canada guidelines, as well as Phase 4 Game Arena and Practice Facility Cleaning, Disinfecting, and Hygiene Requirements.

Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)

How long is CBA extension?

The National Hockey League Players' Association (NHLPA) and NHL ratified a four-year extension to the Collective Bargaining Agreement (through 2025-26) and a Return to Play Plan. Details of this agreement are included in the [Memorandum of Understanding](#), described below and [included in its entirety online](#).

Compliance

How will the League monitor compliance of Phase 4 Secure Zone Protocol?

The NHL will appoint an [NHL Hygiene Officer](#) in each hub city to assess and enforce compliance with the facility related requirements in the [Protocol](#) related to the [Secure Zone](#). In addition, each [Club Traveling Party](#) will include a [Compliance Officer](#).

How will the League manage noncompliance?

Individuals, including Players, who refuse to follow their [testing](#) and [monitoring](#) requirements will be prohibited from participating in their job functions in Phase 4. Such individuals will be prohibited from participation in any Club activity, and may be subject to permanent removal from the [Secure Zone](#) if they persist in their refusal.

What are the penalties for noncompliance?

Individuals leaving the [Secure Zone](#) without permission may be subject to consequences up to and including the removal from Phase 4, or in other cases, strict quarantines of up to 10-14 days as well as enhanced [testing](#) and [monitoring](#) upon return.

In addition, established violations of the rules set forth in the [Protocol](#) will result in:

- For Clubs, significant penalties, potentially including fines and/or loss of draft choices.
- For third party vendors, potential contract termination.
- For NHL staff, potential dismissal from the [Secure Zone](#).

Contact Tracing

How will the NHL handle contact tracing?

Contact tracing will be one of the steps taken if anyone from [Groups 1-5](#) in the Secure Zone [tests positive](#) in the course of PCR testing and/or develops symptoms of COVID-19. More details are available under the "Persons with Close Contact" section on Page 14 of the [Protocol](#).

Contracts

What happens to players whose contracts expired June 30, 2020?

Upon agreement of an adjusted Critical Dates Calendar for the remainder of the 2019-20 League Year and subject to the paragraph immediately below [on Page 57 of the [MOU](#)], all Standard Player's Contracts (SPCs) which were scheduled to expire on June 30, 2020 shall be hereby extended, and such expiring SPCs shall remain valid and effective until the day before the opening of Free Agency as set out in the adjusted Critical Dates Calendar or such other date as mutually agreed upon by the NHL and NHLPA.

Can players with expired contracts sign with other teams?

For Players whose SPCs would otherwise have expired on June 30, 2020, such Player may sign a 2020-21 contract with a team outside North America as long as:

1. his Club is not participating in the resumption of the 2019-20 Season (“Non-Participating Player”),
2. his Club has ceased participating in the resumption of the 2019-20 Season (“Eliminated Club Player”), or
3. he has opted out of participating in the resumption of the 2019-20 Season under this agreement (“Opting Out Player”).

A Non-Participating Player and an Opting Out Player may not sign such a 2020-21 contract until seven days following the effective date of this agreement. An Eliminated Club Player may not sign such a 2020-21 contract until two days following their Club’s elimination from competition in the 2019-20 Season. Additionally, an Opting Out Player who signs such a 2020-21 contract with a team outside North America will be ineligible to play or contract in the NHL for the 2020-21 Season. The NHL Club shall retain all rights pursuant to the CBA regarding any pending Restricted Free Agent who signs such contract – e.g., Qualifying Offers, salary arbitration, etc.

No other Players with an NHL SPC that has been extended as set forth above shall be permitted to enter into a 2020-21 contract outside the NHL prior to the expiration of their NHL SPC, provided, however, in the event of such an impermissible contract signing, such a Player would be ineligible to play or contract in the NHL for the 2020-21 Season.

Critical Dates

What are the critical dates for the rest of 2020?

A selection of upcoming and updated critical dates is included below:

July 13 – Training Camps Open

July 26 – Travel to Hub City

July 28-30 – Exhibition Games

August 1 – Stanley Cup Qualifiers Begin

August 10 – Phase 2 of NHL Draft Lottery (tentative)

August 11 – First Round Begins

August 25 – Second Round Begins (tentative)

September 8 – Conference Finals Begin (tentative)

September 22 – Stanley Cup Final Begins (tentative)

October 4 – Last Possible Day of Stanley Cup Final (tentative)

October 9-10 – 2020 NHL Draft (tentative)

Dining

Which dining options are available to participants in the Secure Zone?

Individuals who are staying at the [Secure Zone](#) hotels ([Groups 1 & 2](#)) will have several dining options, and will be permitted to eat at any of the following, while sitting in a physically distanced manner:

- Secure Zone hotel restaurants and bars
- Club dedicated meeting/conference rooms, with meals prepared by hotel catering staff
- Contactless room service delivery
- Delivery from local restaurants

Each Club also will be provided with designated conference space and physical meeting space within the [Secure Zone](#) hotels. Modified-buffet style meals will be permitted during Phase 4, subject to plexiglass barriers being set up between servers and individuals to maintain distancing and contactless service.

More specifics will be released before the start of Phase 4.

Distancing

Will Phase 4 participants be required to observe physical distancing?

All individuals ([Groups 1-5](#)) shall maintain physical distancing (a minimum of 6-foot distance) throughout Phase 4, to the extent possible.

Physical distancing will be required in all circumstances in which it is feasible, including, but not limited to, while traveling (e.g., on a plane, or bus), while performing essential work functions, while eating meals in restaurants or conference areas (whether in an indoor or outdoor setting), while exercising, and in all other social situations and circumstances.

It is particularly important that physical distancing be maintained when [face coverings](#) may not be worn, such as during meals or when exercising.

Draft & Draft Lottery

When will the NHL hold Phase 2 of the 2020 NHL Draft Lottery?

[Phase 2 of the 2020 NHL Draft Lottery](#), which will be used to determine the first overall selection, will be held between the Stanley Cup Qualifiers and start of the First Round.

When is the 2020 NHL Draft?

The 2020 NHL Draft is tentatively scheduled for Oct. 9 and 10.

Educational Sessions

How will players, staff and third parties receive information about Phase 4 protocol?

Information will be provided to all individuals who will be in the [Secure Zone](#), including NHL staff, arena/hotel staff, and vendors.

In addition, prior to the start of Phase 4, each Club's Medical Director and Head Athletic Trainer shall conduct a remote educational meeting for all members of the [Club's Traveling Party](#) to provide education regarding the [Phase 4 Protocol](#), the potential risks associated with involvement in Phase 4, and the obligations of Players and Club personnel to comply with the provisions of the Protocol. The League will provide Clubs with a template PowerPoint to be used during these education sessions. The above educational content will be developed in consultation with the NHLPA.

Opportunities for continuing education will be available as well throughout the duration of Phase 4. Signs providing reminders of health and safety protocols will be posted throughout the [Secure Zone](#).

Escrow

Has the player escrow calculation been modified for 2020-21 and beyond?

The schedule below lists the maximum Escrow Percentages for a given League Year ("Maximum Escrow Percentages"):

- 2020-21: 20%
- 2021-22: 14% if Preliminary HRR for the 2020-21 League Year equals or exceeds \$3.3 Billion; 18% if Preliminary HRR for the 2020-21 League Year equals or is below \$1.8 Billion; pro-rata rate in between \$1.8 Billion and \$3.3 Billion (e.g. Escrow Percentage of 16% if HRR is \$2.55 Billion)
- 2022-23: 10%
- 2023-24: 6%
- 2024-25: 6%
- 2025-26: 6%

To the extent that the 2024-25 Escrow Balance is either: (i) less than \$125 million, or (ii) greater than \$250 million, the CBA will terminate in the normal course as of its original date of expiry (i.e., September 15, 2026). Absent agreement to the contrary, the full amount of the remaining Escrow Balance at the Page 2 of 71 conclusion of the CBA shall be due and payable to the NHL on terms to be negotiated as part of any new CBA.

Exhibition Games

Will teams play exhibition games before the Stanley Cup Qualifiers?

Each team will play one exhibition game upon arrival in the hub city, with matchups, times and broadcast information to be announced in the coming days.

Face Coverings

Will face coverings be mandatory in the Secure Zone?

In addition to maintaining [physical distancing](#) at all possible times, face coverings (cloth or surgical-type mask) shall always be worn when individuals ([Groups 1-5](#)) are outside of their rooms, within the [Secure Zone](#). Face coverings will be made available to all individuals by the League (individuals are also welcome to bring their own). The exceptions to this requirement are as set forth below:

- Players are not required to wear face coverings when they are exercising or on the ice
- Coaches are not required to wear face coverings when on the bench
- Broadcasters are not required to wear face coverings when they are on the air
- On-Ice Officials are not required to wear face coverings during games
- Individuals may remove face coverings when performing essential work where physical distancing can be maintained (e.g., working at socially distanced desks/tables in hotel conference rooms or in the arena(s))
- Players and staff may remove face coverings during interviews performed with appropriate distancing
- Individuals are not required to wear a mask while exercising (so long as appropriate social distancing is always maintained), including a physically distanced run or walk. Individuals are instructed to bring a mask with them in case they encounter situations where physical distancing is not possible.
- When eating and/or drinking (so long as appropriate physical distancing is always maintained)

Families

Will guests and player families be allowed in the Secure Zone or at games?

Guests will not be permitted in the [Secure Zone](#) for the duration of Phase 4.

Player families are not permitted in the [Secure Zone](#) until the Conference Finals and the Stanley Cup Final, at which time the Players will be permitted to invite their immediate family members to stay in the [Secure Zone](#). Immediate family members include a Player's spouse or partner, and his children. Player families will be provided with separate hotel rooms for the duration of their stay in the [Secure Zone](#). Player families, however, may choose to reside with the Player they are visiting upon satisfying their testing and quarantine requirements and subject to the [Secure Zone](#) hotel's standard occupancy rules and guidelines.

More information on this matter can be found on Page 25 of the [Protocol](#).

Format (Stanley Cup Qualifiers & Stanley Cup Playoffs)

What is the format for the NHL's Return to Play?

[As announced May 26](#), the modified competitive format features 24 teams, the top 12 in each Conference based on points percentage at the pause (through games of March 11).

Series during the Stanley Cup Qualifiers will be best-of-five. All other rounds (First Round, Second Round, Conference Finals, Stanley Cup Final) will include best-of-seven series.

Official names are in **bold** below, along with explanations of each round:

Stanley Cup Qualifiers

- 24 teams, with eight competing in round-robin play and 16 competing in best-of-five series
- In each conference:
 - **Round Robin**: The top four teams play for First Round seeding (regular-season overtime rules in effect)
 - **Qualifying Round**: The remaining eight teams play best-of-five series to advance to the First Round (playoff overtime rules in effect)

Stanley Cup Playoffs

- 16 teams, with matchups in each round as follows: the highest remaining seed in each conference will face the lowest remaining seed, the second-highest remaining seed in each conference will face the second-lowest remaining seed, etc.
- The names of each round are consistent with those introduced in 2013-14:
 - **First Round**
 - **Second Round**
 - **Conference Finals (Eastern Conference Final & Western Conference Final)**
 - **Stanley Cup Final**

A history of the NHL's prior playoff formats can be found on [Records.NHL.com](https://www.nhl.com/records).

Free Agency

When will 2020 free agency begin?

The Restricted Free Agent and Unrestricted Free Agent Signing Period is tentatively scheduled to begin on the later of Oct. 9, or seven days following the Stanley Cup Final, at 12 p.m., ET.

Hockey Operations Department

Will the Situation Room be fully operational during the 2019-20 return?

The Situation Room at the NHL's office in Toronto will be fully operational for the duration of the 2019-20 return, with Colin Campbell, Mike Murphy, Kris King, Shane Doan and Stephen Walkom on site.

Will NHL Hockey Operations be part of the Secure Zone in either hub city?

In Edmonton, Rod Pasma will serve as the Hockey Operations Supervisor, with Bill McCreary and Don Van Massenhoven as Officiating Managers.

In Toronto, Kay Whitmore will serve as the Hockey Operations Supervisor, with Paul Devorski and Rob Shick as Officiating Managers.

How many officials will be in each hub city?

There will be 20 On-Ice Officials within the [Secure Zone](#) in each hub city to start the Stanley Cup Qualifiers. Assignments for each hub city are noted in the table of the [Officials](#) section below.

Hotels (Amenities)

Which hotels are part of the Secure Zone in each hub city?

The Stanley Cup Qualifiers will begin with the following hotel assignments for Clubs:

- In Edmonton:
 - JW Marriott ICE District: St. Louis Blues, Colorado Avalanche, Vegas Golden Knights, Dallas Stars, Edmonton Oilers, Nashville Predators
 - Sutton Place Hotel: Vancouver Canucks, Calgary Flames, Winnipeg Jets, Minnesota Wild, Arizona Coyotes, Chicago Blackhawks
- In Toronto:
 - Hotel X: Boston Bruins, Tampa Bay Lightning, Washington Capitals, Philadelphia Flyers, Pittsburgh Penguins
 - Fairmont Royal York: Carolina Hurricanes, New York Islanders, Toronto Maple Leafs, Columbus Blue Jackets, Florida Panthers, New York Rangers, Montreal Canadiens

In addition, the Delta Suites and Matrix Hotel will be used in Edmonton.

Who will be permitted into hotels in the Secure Zone in each hub city?

Access to host hotels within the [Secure Zone](#) in each hub city will be restricted to [Groups 1-4](#). This will be strictly enforced.

Are individuals staying at a hotel in the Secure Zone allowed to leave the Secure Zone?

It is the expectation that all participants staying at a [Secure Zone](#) hotel will remain on-site at all times throughout Phase 4. Exceptions for medical and extenuating circumstances are outlined on Page 7 of the [Protocol](#).

Will hotel employees be subject to Secure Zone Protocol?

Yes. Hotel employees are included in the [Groups](#) outlined on Page 6 of the [Protocol](#).

Which amenities will be available to players in each hub city?

The hotel pools, if open, are permitted for use by all individuals at the [Secure Zone](#) hotels, so long as individuals can socially distance, both in and out of the pools.

The hotel spas, steam rooms and saunas will be closed to everyone.

A daily schedule for the use of the hotel fitness centers by individuals staying in the [Secure Zone](#) will be established by the League. The schedules will allocate appropriate and sufficient time for Players to work out, and for NHL staff and for other [Phase 4 personnel](#) to work out, respectively and separately, and for all equipment to be disinfected by staff before and after each use.

More details can be found on Page 18 of the [Protocol](#).

Hub Cities

How will games be divided between the two hub cities?

Toronto and Edmonton will serve as hub cities for the Eastern Conference and Western Conference, respectively. Each city will host exhibition games, Stanley Cup Qualifiers, First Round and Second Round games for their respective conference. Edmonton will host the Conference Finals and Stanley Cup Final.

Will the Maple Leafs and Oilers be the home team for their games?

The home team for each game will be pre-determined [as outlined by the NHL on June 4](#). Locker room assignments will be selected by NHL Hockey Operations and will change daily.

What are the requirements for hub city residents entering the Secure Zone?

Anyone living in Edmonton or Toronto who will be part of [Groups 1-4](#), as outlined on Page 6 of the [Protocol](#), must adhere to certain steps before transitioning to the [Secure Zone](#). Those requirements are listed on Page 4 of the [Protocol](#).

Isolation

When will isolation be required?

If an individual from [Groups 1-5](#) tests positive and/or develops symptoms of COVID-19, the person will [isolate](#) immediately pending confirmation and [contact tracing](#) will begin. Further information can be found in the [Positive Tests](#) section of this FAQ document.

Media Access

How will media access be conducted during the Stanley Cup Qualifiers and Stanley Cup Playoffs?

During Phase 4, all media access to Players and Club personnel inside the [Secure Zone](#) will be conducted through virtual means. NHL staff will assist all Clubs in facilitating this media access. More details can be found in the Phase 4 Media Policy starting on Page 27 of the [Phase 4 Protocol](#).

Will media have access to the arena?

A limited number of media will be granted access to watch Phase 4 games in person. Only media who are granted permission to attend the [Secure Zone](#) will be given access to the [Secure Zone](#), and allowed to enter the arena to watch Phase 4 games in person.

What type of access will media have to players and coaches?

There will be no direct access to coaches or players (or team management). All coach and player availability in Phase 4 will be virtual and coordinated by the NHL. A daily schedule of these availabilities will be posted to the League's media site, with links available only to registered users.

Media who attend the Phase 4 games in person will have no greater access to Players and Club personnel than media who remain in Club's home markets and connect to NHL virtual interviews and press conferences. Media in the [Secure Zone](#) will have no personal access to Players and Club personnel away from the host arenas and will not be permitted to be present in the [Secure Zone](#) other than to attend games.

How do media apply for access to the Phase 4 Secure Zone?

Media will be required to apply for admission to the Phase 4 Secure Zone, and shall submit their request for admission to the NHL. Details of this process will be released in the coming days.

Will the Phase 4 Protocol apply to media within the Secure Zone?

Media who are granted admission to the [Secure Zone](#) will be required to comply with all requirements in the [Phase 4 Protocol](#), with further details noted on Page 27.

Will there be post-game press conferences?

Coaches and select players from each team will be available via Zoom after each game, with video and audio links posted to the [League's media site](#) upon completion. Links to Zoom calls also will be posted to the [League's media site](#) for registered users only.

Will coaches and players be available on off-days and practice days?

Yes. Coaches and select players from each team will be available via Zoom.

Will media have access to the host hotels?

Media, including those with [Secure Zone](#) access for games, will not be permitted to be on the property of the host hotels. More information about access to areas within the Secure Zone is noted on Page 27 of the [Protocol](#).

Will the League arrange transportation and hotels for media?

The League will not be providing transportation to/from games or practices. Designated pick-up and drop-off areas at the perimeter of the [Secure Zone](#) will be identified for purposes of media coordinating with car transportation services.

The League will not be designating media hotels. Media will need to make their own arrangements for hotel reservations, outside of the [Secure Zone](#).

Medical Care

Who will provide medical care for NHL staff, NHL Officials and others within the Secure Zone?

The NHL will appoint an NHL Event Medical Director in each hub city whose duties will include the provision of medical care for NHL staff, including Officials, and other individuals living or working in the [Secure Zone](#).

Alternatively, individuals may choose to see physicians of their choosing. However, if an individual elects to be evaluated by a physician of his or her own choice and such evaluation requires leaving the [Secure Zone](#), they will be subject to the procedure for returning described on Page 8 of the [Protocol](#).

More information is available on Page 22 of the [Protocol](#).

Memorandum of Understanding

What is the Memorandum of Understanding?

The [Memorandum of Understanding \("MOU"\)](#) is a document by and between the National Hockey League ("NHL" or "League") and the National Hockey League Players' Association ("NHLPA" or "Union") that the collective bargaining agreement entered into Feb. 15, 2013, and set to expire on Sept. 15, 2022, ("CBA") is hereby extended to and including Sept. 15, 2026, except to the extent expressly modified by or inconsistent with this MOU, including the Attachments.

Monitoring

How will the NHL monitor and enforce the Phase 4 Protocol?

The League will appoint an NHL Hygiene Officer in each hub city to assess and enforce compliance with the facility related requirements in the [Protocol](#) related to the [Secure Zone](#).

The NHL Hygiene Officer must be a nurse, occupational health and safety professional or infection prevention and control (IPAC) professional. More information is available on Page 23 of the [Protocol](#).

Each participant will play a critical role in promoting his or her own health and safety, as well as that of all others in the [Secure Zones](#). Adherence to all aspects of the [Protocol](#) are essential to the maintenance of the [Secure Zone](#) environment, and to furthering the safety of all participants in Phase 4.

Will Clubs be required to monitor compliance for their Traveling Parties?

Each [Club's Traveling Party](#) must include a Compliance Officer, who will be required to certify daily the Club's compliance with the certain aspects of the [Protocol](#) as detailed on Page 24. This representative must be a senior member of the [Club's Traveling Party](#) with compliance experience but is not required to have medical training.

How will the NHL monitor the health of participants in the Secure Zone?

Daily temperature and symptom checks for all participants in the [Secure Zone](#) and [RT-PCR testing](#) under varying schedules are among the monitoring requirements in place for Phase 4.

Officials

How many On-Ice Officials will be in each hub city?

The NHL will have 40 On-Ice Officials across the two hub cities, with 10 referees and 10 linesmen in both Toronto and Edmonton. Phase 4 will begin with the following assignments in each hub city:

- In Edmonton:
 - *Referees*: Marc Joannette, Steve Kozari, TJ Luxmore, Jon McIsaac, Brad Meier, Brian Pochmara, Dan O'Rourke, Chris Rooney, Francois St. Laurent, Kelly Sutherland
 - *Linesmen*: Scott Cherrey, Ryan Gibbons, Brad Kovachik, Kiel Murchison, Jonny Murray, Pierre Racicot, Mark Shewchyk, Andrew Smith, Tony Sericolo, Libor Suchanek
- In Toronto:
 - *Referees*: Francis Charron, Gord Dwyer, Eric Furlatt, Trevor Hanson, Jean Hebert, Frederick L'Ecuyer, Chris Lee, Wes McCauley, Kevin Pollock, Kyle Rehman
 - *Linesmen*: Shandor Alphonso, Derek Amell, Steve Barton, Devin Berg, David Brisebois, Michel Cormier, Greg Devorski, Matt MacPherson, Derek Nansen, Bryan Pancich

Will Off-Ice Officials be on-site in each hub city?

Off-Ice Officials will perform their functions as usual from in-arena.

Olympics

Does the extended CBA address NHL player participation in the Olympic Winter Games?

The NHL and the NHLPA commit to participate in the 2022 and 2026 Winter Olympics, subject to negotiation of terms acceptable to each of the NHL, NHLPA, and IIHF (and/or IOC).

Opting Out

Can players opt out with impunity?

As described in the [Phase 3 Protocol](#), any Player may individually choose not to participate in Phases 3 and 4 without discipline or penalty. This decision must be made within 72 hours of the completion of the ratification process.

Personnel

Who will be allowed in the Secure Zone?

In Phase 4, all participants will be assigned to "Groups" based on their roles and responsibilities, the level of their required access to Arena Zones and other applicable Access Restrictions, as well as permissible close contact with other individuals and groups.

Rules regarding hotel accommodations, testing frequency, and other measures applicable to each group begin on Page 6 of the [Protocol](#). Adherence to the restrictions and permissions set out are mandatory.

Player Safety Department

How will the NHL's Player Safety Department operate during the 2019-20 return?

The NHL's Player Safety Department will continue to operate as usual from the League office in New York. Every game, including exhibition, Stanley Cup Qualifiers and four rounds of the Stanley Cup Playoffs will be monitored from the League's Player Safety Video Room in New York.

The Department will have two teams of staff working alternate days while adhering to the League's return to work policy. These "teams" will be made up of game-watchers, video loggers, Central Concussion Spotters and a Senior member of the Department of Player Safety, who will serve as the Supervisor. All Department procedures, policies and standards will remain the same as previously established.

Playoff Fund

Will players be paid during the 2019-20 resumption of competition?

For the 2019-20 season, the Playoff Fund will be increased from \$16 Million to \$32 Million. The parties agree to split the \$16 Million increase (i.e. include \$24 Million in Player Benefits).

For the remaining CBA term, this section was amended to increase the annual amount of the Playoff Fund as follows:

- 2020-21: \$20 million
- 2021-22: \$20 million
- 2022-23: \$21 million
- 2023-24: \$22 million
- 2024-25: \$23 million
- 2025-26: \$24 million

Starting with the 2021-22, the Playoff Fund shall be removed from Player Benefits, and will instead be deducted from HRR as a Direct Cost (same treatment as the All-Star Game prize pool).

Positive Tests

How will the League handle positive tests within the Secure Zone?

Protocol for symptomatic individuals or a positive test result is described in detail beginning on Page 12 of the [Protocol](#). A summary of that information is below:

If an individual from [Groups 1-5](#) tests positive and/or develops symptoms of COVID-19, the person will [isolate](#) immediately pending confirmation and [contact tracing](#) will begin. Next steps will be as follows:

- *Asymptomatic persons*
 - Confirmatory nasopharyngeal RT-PCR test by an independent health care provider;
 - If the confirmatory test is **positive**, the case will be considered confirmed positive and the person shall be required to isolate until medical clearance is obtained.
 - If the confirmatory test is **negative**, the person shall remain in isolation and be retested after 24 hours with a nasopharyngeal RT-PCR test by an independent health care provider. If such test results remain negative, the person shall be permitted to exit isolation and may return to full participation in activities once cleared.
- *Symptomatic persons*
 - A positive test of a person who exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 shall not be subject to further confirmatory testing and their COVID-19 positive status will be confirmed if, in the opinion of the physician(s), there is no basis to doubt the COVID-19 positive status.

A person whose COVID-19 positive status has been confirmed shall remain in isolation, shall not exercise, and shall not participate in any Club/business activity or have any contact (other than remotely) with any other personnel for the duration of their isolation. During such period, the person shall be in daily contact with and receive remote care as considered appropriate.

If a Player is diagnosed with a confirmed positive test for COVID-19, he will be designated as "unfit to play" and his condition shall be treated as a hockey related injury for the purposes of the CBA unless otherwise categorized on Page 14 of the [Protocol](#).

The isolation period will remain in effect until conditions have been satisfied as outlined on Page 13 of the [Protocol](#).

Upon completion of the isolation period, Players shall receive cardiac testing as described on Page 14 of the [Protocol](#). All Players must be cleared as “fit to play” by a cardiologist and team physician before returning to game activity.

Will individuals who test positive for COVID-19 be further tested after isolation is complete?

If an individual has a confirmed positive finding for COVID-19 and thereafter has been cleared to return to play/work, ongoing screening with [PCR testing](#) is unnecessary, as PCR-based testing results may remain positive for a prolonged period after resolution of symptoms, with unknown significance. More information on this matter is found on Page 15 of the [Protocol](#).

When is isolation deemed complete for those who test positive for COVID-19?

A person who has been confirmed positive for COVID-19 shall remain in isolation until the conditions have been satisfied as outlined on Page 13 of the [Protocol](#).

How often will the League announce test results?

The NHL is in discussion with the NHLPA on this matter and will provide more information prior to the start of Phase 4.

Will games be postponed, delayed, moved or canceled due to COVID-19 test results?

A decision to postpone, delay, move or cancel any game shall be made by the Commissioner after consultation with the Executive Director of the NHLPA, as described on Page 26 of the [Protocol](#).

Practice

Where will practices be held?

In Edmonton, practices will be held at Downtown Community Arena and Terwillegar Community Recreation Centre (4 rinks).

In Toronto, practices will be held at Ford Performance Centre, using its three NHL-sized ice sheets.

The League will provide maps of club entrances, locker rooms, workout areas, etc., in the practice facilities prior to the start of Phase 4.

How often will teams practice?

A schedule will be provided for Phase 4 practice times for each club and location.

Will practices be open to media or fans?

Given the current conditions related to COVID-19 and because the health and safety of our fans, players, staff and media are paramount, no media or fans will be permitted to attend practices.

Precautions

What measures are in place to maintain a safe, clean environment?

In addition to protocol for [distancing](#), [face coverings](#), [cleaning/disinfecting](#), [testing](#) and [daily temperature/symptom checks](#), the following additional safety precautions shall be followed by all individuals in the [Secure Zone](#) for the duration of Phase 4:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (sing “Happy Birthday” twice), or, if soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based sanitizer, as follows:
 - Wash or disinfect hands before and after eating or drinking.
 - Wash or disinfect hands and face after touching possibly contaminated surfaces (such as high-touch areas like elevator buttons, countertops, door handles, water coolers).
- Use disinfectant wipes on items that may have been touched by others (such as pieces of luggage, chairs, office equipment, menus, etc.)
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, including adjusting your mask/face covering while wearing it.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick or appear symptomatic.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands with soap or use alcohol-based sanitizer. If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hands, and then wash your hands with soap or use alcohol-based sanitizer.
- Avoid handshakes, high fives and fist bumps.

Hand sanitizer and disinfectant will be readily available throughout the [Secure Zone](#) facilities.

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Protocol

What protocol will be in place during training camp and resumption of play?

The [Phase 3](#) and [Phase 4](#) Protocols are available in their entirety on the [League's media site](#).

Quarantine

What quarantine requirements will be in place in each hub city?

For individuals traveling to hub cities via charter, no quarantine will be required. During the initial five days following arrival, individuals may perform their essential work functions and engage in social interactions only with individuals from their own [Club's Traveling Party](#), and otherwise, shall remain in their respective hotel room.

Individuals traveling via commercial airline must adhere to a four-day quarantine in their hotel room until four negative test results in the hub city are confirmed. After quarantine has concluded, for an additional three-day period following arrival, individuals may perform their essential work functions, and otherwise, shall remain in their respective hotel room.

More information on quarantine can be found on Pages 3, 4 and 8 of the [Protocol](#).

Rosters

How many players will be permitted on each roster?

For Phase 3 (training camp), Clubs will be limited to no more than 30 skaters and an unlimited number of goaltenders. All players must be eligible for the 2019-20 resumption of competition. Players may only travel to hub cities/participate in Phase 4 if they are recalled by the end of Phase 3.

For Phase 4 (resumption of competition), Clubs will be limited to a roster of no more than 31 players, with no more than 28 skaters and unlimited number of goaltenders. All players must be eligible for the 2019-20 resumption of completion.

Salary Cap

What is the salary cap for the 2020-21 season?

The Salary Cap's Upper Limit will be set at \$81.5 million for the 2020-21 season (Midpoint = \$70.9 Million; Lower Limit = \$60.2 Million).

Salary Deferral

What changes will be made to players' salaries for the 2020-21 season?

An amount equal to 10 percent of each Player's 2020-21 Paragraph 1 NHL Salary plus Signing Bonus (but, for clarity, not including Roster, Reporting and Performance Bonuses) shall be "deferred" (subject to conformance with applicable 409A Regulations) from the 2020-21 League Year without interest and paid in three equal payments on October 15 of each of the 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 League Years. Only Players with 2020-21 SPCs shall be included in this process.

Secure Zone (a.k.a. Bubble)

What is the Phase 4 Secure Zone and how does it work?

In order to maintain the safety of all individuals participating in Phase 4 and to mitigate the incremental risk associated with the introduction of persons not essential to its execution, the NHL has created a Phase 4 Secure Zone, consisting of defined boundaries within which are hotel(s), dining destinations, the arena, the practice facility(ies), and other demarcated areas (indoor and outdoor).

Individuals who are neither working within the Secure Zone, nor staying at a hotel within the Secure Zone, will not be permitted to enter the Secure Zone, except in the limited circumstances specified in the [Protocol](#). Details about the Secure Zone in each hub city begin on Page 7 of the [Protocol](#).

The League will provide Phase 4 Secure Zone boundary maps prior to start of Phase 4.

Will participants be allowed to leave the Phase 4 Secure Zone?

It is the expectation that all participants staying at a Secure Zone hotel will remain on-site at all times throughout Phase 4. Exceptions for medical and extenuating circumstances are outlined on Page 7 of the [Protocol](#).

Can a participant return to the Secure Zone?

Individuals who are staying at a Secure Zone hotel and who leave the Secure Zone may be subject to consequences, including nasopharyngeal swab testing, strict quarantine for up to 14 days, refusal of access and, in the most serious cases, dismissal from responsibilities during Phase 4. More information on this matter is available on Page 8 of the [Protocol](#).

Will individuals residing outside the Secure Zone be allowed entry?

During Phase 4, certain individuals, including hotel and arena personnel (i.e., [Groups 3, 4, & 5](#)), will be working within the Secure Zone but not staying at a Secure Zone hotel. For the safety of those who will be within the Secure Zone, those individuals will have limited access rights to [Groups 1 and 2](#). These individuals must meet certain conditions of entry described on Page 8 of the [Protocol](#).

Schedule

What is the schedule for the Stanley Cup Qualifiers and Stanley Cup Playoffs?

The [schedule for the Stanley Cup Qualifiers](#) was announced. A complete broadcast schedule will be released in the coming days. The schedule will have flexibility to maximize the viewing experience for fans. More information is available in [Start Times](#) below.

Stanley Cup Final

Which hub city will host the Stanley Cup Final?

Edmonton will host the Conference Finals and Stanley Cup Final.

What is the latest date that the Stanley Cup will be awarded?

The latest date for Game 7 of the 2020 Stanley Cup Final is Oct. 4. More [Critical Dates](#) are noted above.

Start Times

What time will games begin in each hub city?

Games have been scheduled on a staggered basis, providing hours of continuous action. The start times for the 10 days of Stanley Cup Qualifiers in Toronto (Eastern Conference games) will be: Noon, 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. ET. In order to maximize the viewing experience for fans across North America, the start times for the three game windows in Edmonton (Western Conference games) – 2 p.m. ET, 6:30 p.m. ET and 10:30 p.m. ET – may fluctuate by up to 30 minutes during the qualifying round.

Statistics

How will statistics be categorized for the Stanley Cup Qualifiers?

For statistical purposes, all games from the 2020 Stanley Cup Qualifiers (round robin and qualifying rounds) are considered part of the 2020 postseason. Accordingly, all skater/goalie/team statistics accumulated in these games will be included in the 2020 player and team postseason stats. Achievements from these games and series will be included on [Records.NHL.com](#).

Teams participating in a best-of-five series during the Stanley Cup Qualifiers are considered to have made the postseason and participated in a postseason series.

References to statistics in this FAQ document pertain to record-keeping. Many provisions related to statistics are detailed in the [CBA](#) (i.e. Salary Arbitration, Performance Bonuses, etc.).

How will statistics and information be distributed upon resumption of play?

The Morning Skate will return daily by July 31, with additional resources available to registered media at [media.nhl.com](#).

Fans and media also can get #NHLStats from @PR_NHL on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

The following #NHLStats preview documents already are available:

- Eastern Conference
 - [Round Robin](#) | [PIT vs. MTL](#) | [CAR vs. NYR](#) | [NYI vs. FLA](#) | [TOR vs. CBJ](#)
- Western Conference
 - [Round Robin](#) | [EDM vs. CHI](#) | [NSH vs. ARI](#) | [VAN vs. MIN](#) | [CGY vs. WPG](#)

Testing

How often will coaches and players be tested during Phase 4?

Coaches and players – along with all other participants in [Groups 1-4](#) – will be tested daily during Phase 4. Schedules for testing (for [Groups 1-4](#)) will be completed closer to arrival in the [Secure Zone](#).

How often will the League announce test results?

The NHL is in discussion with the NHLPA on this matter and will provide more information prior to the start of Phase 4.

What type of testing will be used during Phase 4?

Individuals will be subject to RT-PCR testing at the frequency set forth for each [Group](#). Testing will be conducted using RT-PCR testing, with nasal swab (anterior nares) collection, except as otherwise indicated in the [Protocol](#).

Which company will be handling the testing for Phase 4?

The company selected for RT-PCR testing of participants in each Phase 4 city will be announced closer to the date of commencing Phase 4.

Tiebreakers

Which overtime format will be used?

Regular-season overtime rules will apply to the round-robin games during the Stanley Cup Qualifiers, featuring the top four teams from each conference. All other games will use playoff overtime rules.

Which tiebreaker will be used to determine seeding in the round robin?

Ties in the round robin portion of the Stanley Cup Qualifiers – featuring the top four teams from each conference – will be broken by regular season points percentage. The seeding order for these teams then will remain the same throughout the 2020 Stanley Cup Playoffs.

Timeline

What is the expected timeline from the start of Phase 3 to the end of Phase 4?

Training camps begin July 13, with the last possible day of the Stanley Cup Final scheduled for Oct. 4 – a span of 84 days. More [Critical Dates](#) are noted above.

Training Camp

When will training camps begin this summer?

Training camps in each Club's home city will begin July 13, with teams set to travel to hub cities on July 26. The [Phase 3 Protocol](#) will govern Players and Clubs during this time.

Transportation

How will players and staff get around in each hub city?

The League will provide all transportation in the [Secure Zone](#). Persons in the [Secure Zone](#) are not permitted to take any other transportation during their participation in Phase 4, unless expressly approved by the [NHL Event Medical Director](#).

Travel Guidelines

What are the travel guidelines for participants in the Secure Zone?

Travel guidelines for all participants entering the [Secure Zone](#) are outlined on Page 3 of the [Protocol](#).

Traveling Party

How many people from each Club will be on site in the hub city?

Each Club will be permitted to bring a maximum of 51 persons to the [Secure Zone](#) in its “Traveling Party,” inclusive of Club ownership, Players, Coaches, Club executives, Club staff, and all other Club personnel (52 if a security representative is included). Clubs are not permitted to have more than 51 individuals onsite in the [Secure Zone](#) (52 with security).

Who will be part of the Club Traveling Party?

The Club Traveling Party must include *at least* the following individuals:

- A roster of no more than 31 Players;
- Three Coaches;
- Two Club Athletic Trainers;
- One Equipment Manager;
- One Massage Therapist;
- One ART Therapist/Chiropractor;
- One Communications/PR individual;
- One Content Creator/Social Media individual;
- One representative to serve as the [Club Compliance Officer](#).

Can anyone join the Club after the start of Phase 4?

Each Club will be required to submit its list of individuals in the Traveling Party no later than July 13. All individuals will be subject to the pre-departure testing requirement set forth in the [Protocol](#).