

COVID-19 Response FAQ

Drafted July 28, 2020 *Subject to change



Guiding Philosophy:

“The Avonair Curling Club is committed to the positive well-being of all members of our community. The Avonair will be aligning its COVID-19 Response Plan with updated Alberta Health Services Guidelines and recommendations from our sport organisations, Curling Canada and Curling Alberta. We agree that “it is entirely possible for people to continue to curl in a manner that is physical distant and low-risk, while still enjoying the positive social and physical benefits of the sport.””

Will there be any rule changes for the sport of curling because of COVID-19 safety concerns?

Yes, following Curling Canada’s recommendations, the “Single-Sweeper Rule” will be obeyed during all games at the Avonair Curling Club during the 2020/21 season:

- The “Single-Sweeper Rule” means that:
 - Only one (1) sweeper maximum is permitted at all times
 - No “relaying” (no sweeper taking over for another sweeper at any time)
 - No sweeping an opponent’s stone after it passes the T-Line
 - No one, except the dedicated sweeper for a shot, can sweep any stone (including ticks, bumps, and raises)

Will there be any other changes to the on-ice experience this season?

Yes, following Curling Canada’s recommendations, there will be a number of changes to the on-ice curling experience. Some of these on-ice changes will include:

- No coin-flips (consider “rock-paper-scissor” instead)
- No handshakes (consider a “raise-of-the-broom” instead)
- No touching other curler’s stones with your hand (use your broom or foot instead)
- No “bare-hand” cleaning of the bottom of your stone (use your glove or broom instead)
- No benches
- No group congregating on the backboards (this will also speed up play)
- ***Standing locations:*** all players should obey physical distancing recommendations during play, which means:
 - Stand between hoglines on the dedicated physical distancing circles
 - Only the “delivering team” is permitted access to the house during their turn (the opposing skip should stand behind the hack and await their turn to reclaim access to the house)

There will likely be other changes to your on-ice experience as well (eg. The method of scorekeeping and measuring, the manner of entering the ice area, loaner equipment availability, doubles board handling, etc.). These changes will be determined and announced prior to the opening of the curling season.

Is the Avonair Curling Club permitted to use all 8 sheets of ice at the same time during the 2020/21 curling season?

Yes, according to Phase 2 of the AHS Guidelines, a facility like the Avonair is permitted to use all 8 sheets of ice at the same time to normal capacity because curling is considered a non-contact activity that can be enjoyed so long as physical distancing is maintained.

Will playing at the Avonair mean that I belong to an “AvonairCurling Club cohort”?

No. Although AHS recommends that one be mindful of the scope of their associations, since curling is a non-contact activity that can be enjoyed while maintaining physical distancing it need not be considered as a part of a circumscribed cohort. This is unlike a contact sport such as basketball or hockey that requires close contact as a necessary feature of its activity. This means that one can curl at other curling facilities as well (just as one can shop at multiple Costcos), provided that those curling facilities likewise maintain physical distancing guidelines (eg. The “Single-Sweeper Rule”). This does mean however that you may not be able to play curling and another sport that involves close contact. It may be helpful to recognize here that the “Single-Sweeper Rule” is what enables the sport of curling to maintain physical distancing requirements, and thus allows curling to be a low-risk activity that can be enjoyed under public health restrictions.

What if members of my team are from the same household? Can we use two sweepers?

No. Whether one is from the same household or not, the “Single-Sweeper Rule” will be maintained for all Avonair leagues.

Will all Avonair leagues be playing during the 2020/21 season?

Yes, all leagues will be operating at normal capacity during the 2020/21 season.

Will leagues start and end at the same time as last season?

We expect the start and end times of leagues to change for the 2020/21 season. The time between leagues will increase to allow curlers coming off the ice to make their way upstairs before curlers from the next league enter the facility. Draws will run for a maximum of 2 hours and 10 minutes. You may play one more end if there are more than 10 minutes before your designated end-time. This will increase speed-of-play. We will explore staggered start times as well.

Will league fee refunds be issued if AHS reverts back toward Phase 1 or if the Avonair is required to shut down for public health reasons?

Yes, a modified pro-rated league fee refund will be offered if AHS requires curling clubs like the Avonair to shut down during our 2020/21 season. The Avonair Curling Club’s refund policy is currently being developed and will be released as soon as possible. We will not be taking payment at the time registration opens.

With respect to the Avonair Curling Club’s refund policy, it may be important to point out that our refund policy will be crafted in such a way to both protect our curler’s financial interests and to ensure that the Avonair is sufficiently viable to offer its curlers a facility in subsequent seasons.

What is the Avonair Curling Club's protocol should a COVID-19 case emerge at the Avonair?

We are currently developing a COVID-19 Response Plan that will include an Incident Report Form for any known or reported cases. Following AHS Guidelines, any COVID-19 related incidents at the Avonair will be reported immediately to AHS for next-step guidance, including guidance on reporting to our curlers and our cleaning protocols.

Will Waivers and Declarations of Compliance be required?

Yes. Users of the Avonair Curling Club facility will be expected to complete Waivers and Declarations of Compliance. The Declaration of Compliance will declare that one will not knowingly enter the facility if they are experiencing any COVID-19 related symptoms. Further information on Waivers and Declarations of Compliance forms will be forthcoming including the method of administering these forms and how often (eg. one-time declaration, or every time you curl).

Will masks be required?

The Avonair Curling Club's policy regarding the use of masks remains to be determined. At this point in time, we are leaning toward recommending the use of masks in the following situations:

- Entering the building
- Waiting in the main lobby for their draw time
- Heading out onto the sheet of ice to curl
- Skip and third discussions when closer than 6 feet

Further details will be forthcoming.

Will locker rooms be open?

The availability of locker rooms remains to be determined. If locker rooms are made available then both locker rooms and washrooms will be subject to a maximum occupancy such as only 2 people permitted at a time, and proper sanitization protocols will be in place. This option may be viable if start times are staggered. The Avonair will strongly encourage curlers to arrive for curling in their curling gear.

What about changing my shoes?

Chairs will be placed 6 feet apart in the lobby allowing members to put on their curling shoes. We may expect curlers to remove their outdoor footwear at the entrance to the lobby, however that remains to be determined.

Will loaner equipment (eg. brooms, sliders) still be available?

The availability of loaner equipment at the Avonair remains to be determined. If loaner equipment is made available then proper sanitizing protocols will be in place to ensure a low-risk, responsible use. There is a possibility that brooms and sliders could be "signed-out" for the entire season with a refundable deposit of an undetermined amount given to the club. We encourage curlers to purchase their own equipment and/or put their names or clear identifiers on their equipment.

Will Curbside by A Cappella Catering be open? If so, under what conditions?

At this time, it is unknown whether Curbside by A Cappella Catering will return for the 2020/21 season. If they are open, they will operate under conditions aligned with AHS Guidelines for [“Restaurants, Cafes, Pubs, and Bars.”](#)

Will the lounge be open? If so, under what conditions?

Yes, the Avonair’s lounge will be open for service during similar operating hours as in recent seasons. The conditions under which the lounge will be open remains to be determined, but those conditions will be aligned with AHS Guidelines for [“Restaurants, Cafes, Pubs, and Bars.”](#) It is likely that the table and seating arrangements will be re-arranged, but our priority will be to ensure a low-risk setting so that our curlers can still enjoy some of the important “social virtues” of curling.

Will the water fountains be available?

The use of the water fountains remains to be determined. Curlers will be encouraged to bring their own water bottle with water in it to the Avonair Curling Club. (Note that we were required to shut off water fountains at the end of last season.)

Will there be 50/50 draws or prize draws throughout the 2020/21 season?

Draws (other than our raffle) have yet to be discussed on how they will be operated if we proceed with 50/50s or other prizes this season.

Will non-curling guests / spectators be permitted at the Avonair? What about just in the lounge?

At this time, no decision has been made whether spectators will be allowed for the 2020/21 season. If spectators are permitted, they must abide by the Avonair Curling Club’s policies that curlers adhere to when entering the building and sitting in common areas. Any decisions we make will be in alignment with AHS Guidelines and with the best interests of our Avonair community in mind.

Will the Avonair be providing “make-up games” for playoffs that were missed by teams at the end of last season?

The Avonair Curling Club Board of Directors will make a decision very soon regarding how to deal with the end of last season whether it be playoffs in September to make-up these games or offering a refund for any missed games. We want to remind curlers that playoffs are not included in league fees; they are an added bonus. We will inform curlers as soon as a decision is made.

What about Avonair Curling Club’s bonspiels?

We hope to be able to run events such as our bonspiels. As curling is a non-contact sport, we could run these at full capacity with staggered start times. As above, we cannot confirm if spectators will be allowed to attend these events. Further details will be provided as they become available.

What about funspiels that are not run by the Beaumont Curling Club?

Groups will be expected to adhere to the Avonair Curling Club's policies and procedures. They will be responsible for their own group's well-being.

Will sanitizer and disinfecting wipes be made available at the Avonair?

Yes, sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, and possibly disinfecting spray will be made available throughout the Avonair facility, including entrance/exit, and high-touch point areas such as on the ice for cleaning rocks.

Will there be proper signage and directional traffic within the facility?

Yes, there will be proper signage and directional traffic within the facility. We will use signage provided by AHS and create our own to be specific to the Avonair. You can expect to see signage and floor marking at entrances/exits, lobby and lounge, locker rooms and washrooms, and on the ice. You can trust that your experience at the Avonair Curling Club will be structured accordingly.

Please keep in mind that there will be changes regarding the atmosphere of the pandemic which will ultimately cause changes to our policies and procedures. The Avonair Curling Club Board of Directors will approve a Policy and Protocols Document that is subject to change before or during the 2020/21 season.

We thank all of our curlers for their survey responses. They have helped us to create this FAQ document for you. We hope this information gives you a better and clearer understanding of the upcoming season.

Stay tuned for information about our registration date of August 31st.

