



# Return to Volleyball – Referees

## 1. Overview

Volleyball Canada has prepared the following guidelines for referees to assist in their planning for a safe return to a competitive sporting environment during the COVID-19 Pandemic. While the focus of this document is aimed at referees, organizations planning to host a volleyball competition may find this information beneficial to ensure that referee safety is equally considered in their planning. For additional information, all participants are strongly encouraged to review the following supporting documentation:

- A Safe Return to Volleyball – General guidelines for participant to consider when returning to volleyball
- Return to Volleyball – Indoor Event Hosting
- COVID-19 Competition Regulations – potential alternations to the Rules of the Game to help mitigate COVID-19 transmission
- Specific Provincial and/or Territorial Association Regulations for return to volleyball

## 2. Considerations for When it is Safe to Return to Competition

- Has Local/Provincial government authorized the hosting of events and is there a maximum number of participants?
- Has Local/Provincial government authorized indoor events and team sport activities?
- Does the host organization have a return to sport plan, inclusive of referees?
- Has the facility implemented a safety plan and standards that adhere to the minimum safety guidelines released by the local/provincial government regulations?
- Has the facility established a comprehensive ingress and egress plan?

## 3. General Event Considerations

- Does the host organization require a daily attestation or self-assessment check for all participants prior to their arrival to the venue and a validation process for confirming the results at arrival?
- Has the host organization established a clear policy regarding the use of face masks, hand sanitation and physical distancing for participants?
- Has the host organization established a clear protocol for the cleaning and sanitation of all contacted surfaces and equipment?
- Does the event schedule offer an appropriate amount of time to ensure the formulation of courtside crowds does not occur if a match requires all sets to be played?
- Does the event schedule offer an appropriate amount of time to ensure cleaning and sanitation of all contacted surfaces can effectively occur between the conclusion of one match and the arrival of new teams/participants?
- Does the formulation of referee nominations account for the needs of the host organization plus the needs of the referee?

## 4. Referee Nominations

In formulating referee nominations, the assignor:

- must be fully versed in the host organization's policies
- must be fully versed in the host organization's competition schedule
- must take into account that referees will likely exist outside of a sport cohort concept and minimization of cross-over should be considered where possible
- should strive to maintain a balance of inclusion across all participating referees
- should not compromise on the necessity of adequate breaks for the referees



## 5. Competition Preparation

- The referee should be prepared to arrive at the sport hall fully dressed in their uniform
- The referee should be prepared to safely store all non-essential equipment in one clearly identifiable bag or container as a means of minimizing courtside belongings
- The referee should ensure that they have a face mask
- In order to minimize communal points of contact, the referee should ensure that they have their own equipment strictly for their own personal use
- While the host organization is required to provide the sanitizing materials for equipment, the referee should ensure they have a personal supply of hand sanitizer as part of their equipment

## 6. Pre-Match Guidelines

- The referee should try to maintain as much normalcy to their pre-match requirements where possible, while prioritizing the health and safety of themselves and all participants
- The referee should wear a mask while completing all pre-match requirements
- The referee should be familiar with any modifications to protocols and/or Rules of the Game as per the host organizer
- When conducting the toss of the coin with the team captains, the referee must ensure no physical contact occurs and that physical distancing requirements of the participants is established
- When performing any pre-match meetings with the referee corps (Scorer/Assistant Scorer, Line Judges, etc.), where possible physical distancing requirements should be maintained, and all members of the referee corps should be wearing masks

## 7. Guidelines During the Match

- The referee should try to maintain as much normalcy to their requirements during the match while prioritizing the health and safety of themselves and all participants
- The referee must fully understand and apply any/all specific modifications to rules and guidelines as requested by the host organization for their specific competition
- The referee may be permitted to perform their required functions with either an aspirated whistle or an electronic whistle
  - i. Local health authority and event specific guidelines may require the use of masks. In such cases, an electronic whistle may be required
- In the case where a captain would like to ask a question regarding the application and/or interpretation of a rule:
  - i. The captain should request to approach the referee stand by raising their hand
  - ii. The referee must honour such request
  - iii. The referee should put on their mask prior to the captain arriving at the referee stand
  - iv. While at the referee stand, the captain must be very conscientious about not touching the equipment
  - v. While at the referee stand, the captain must be very conscientious about maintaining physical distancing requirements from both the referee and opposition team members
  - vi. The process should take no more time than is required for the captain to raise their concern and for the referee to answer the concern
- In the case where the referee must call a participant to the referee stand for sanctioning:
  - i. The referee should request the participant in question to approach the referee stand
  - ii. The referee should put on their mask prior to the participant arriving at the referee stand
  - iii. While at the referee stand, the participant must be very conscientious about maintaining physical distancing requirements from both the referee and opposition team members
  - iv. The referee should administer the corresponding sanction
  - v. The participant must acknowledge the applied sanction



- vi. The process should take no more time than is required for the referee to complete the sanctioning process

## **8. Post-Match Guidelines**

- At the conclusion of the match, the referees should move to the sideline nearest the positioning of the first referee
- To ensure physical distancing is maintained, the first referee should position themselves on the A side of the court and the second referee should position themselves on the B side of the court
- To ensure physical distancing is maintained, the line judges should position themselves behind their respective referee
- At the conclusion of the match, the teams should move to their respective attack line and acknowledge the opposition team and the referees

## **9. Whistle Choice and Usage**

- Referees are permitted to use an aspirated whistle during a match if hosting guidelines, that comply with regional health authority guidelines permit their use
- Considering the first bullet, Volleyball Canada also recognizes that many referees will want to use an electronic whistle, to which there is no concern
- The referee must know if the specific host organization has any additional mandates regarding electronic whistle usage
- If using an electronic whistle, the referee must ensure that the lanyard is securely fastened to the wrist
- If using an electronic whistle, the referee should let the whistle hang from their wrist while executing the corresponding signal sequence for a concluded rally
- If using an electronic whistle, the referee should wear a mask for the entire duration of the match

## **10. Referee Development Team**

- The Referee Development Team can continue to function with additional care and consideration of the event
- The members of the Referee Development Team must fully understand and ensure referees apply any/all specific modifications to rules and guidelines as requested by the host organization for their specific competition
- The members of the Referee Development Team should wear a mask at all times
- The members of the Referee Development Team should adhere to physical distancing requirements at all times

## **11. Potential Rule, Guideline and Protocol Variations**

- The referee must understand any specific variations to protocols, guidelines and/or rules as determined by the host organization
- Any variation to the protocols, guidelines and/or rules does not permit other rules to be ignored or not to be applied