



FENB Return-to-Play Protocol:

January 2021

Under the guidance of national sport organizations such as the Canadian Fencing Federation, [Sport Canada](#) (SC), and [Own The Podium](#) (OTP), Fencing-Escrima NB (FENB) has developed return-to-play protocol that is considerate of the health circumstances we are currently facing in order to protect our members, families and communities. The document is designed to allow safe participation in sport while following provincial and federal health guidelines.

All member clubs must follow these protocols, although the restriction and required practices of national, provincial, and municipal public health directives always take precedence.

This is a working document and these protocols are subject to change as understanding of best practices evolves and the situation in the province changes.

Reference Documents

GNB: [Coronavirus Information Page](#)

WorkSafe NB: [Embracing the New Normal](#)

Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health (Public Health): [Prevention Recommendations](#)

CFF: [Return to Play Protocol](#)

Own the Podium: [Risk Assessment and Mitigating Checklist Tool](#)

January 2021 Update to Guidelines

FENB has updated our Return-to-Play protocol to reflect the most up-to-date recommendations from the Government of New Brunswick and the Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture—Sport and Recreation Branch. This document will be updated regularly as conditions change and government recommendations adapt to the state of the virus in our province. **The latest changes are highlighted in yellow.**

FOUNDATIONAL

These protocols must be followed by all clubs and members regardless of health zone phase designation.

Club Expectations

- Clubs must complete an operational plan and have a copy of it in the club. Each club must also submit their operational plan to FENB.
- **Regularly hosted club events like open bouts must be included in a club's operational plan. Singular events like tournaments must have their own operational plan.**
- Clubs must limit their class sizes to be able to accommodate a maximum of 1 fencer per 15 square metres.
- Classes must be separated by a 30-minute window and the practice space must be cleaned and disinfected between classes.
- Clubs must complete the Own the Podium Club Risk Assessment and Mitigation Checklist tool.
- Clubs must score "very low" or "low" in the COVID-19 Risk Assessment Tool for Sports.
- Clubs should consider updating their waivers/assumption of risk forms to include COVID-19.
- Clubs must ensure proper handwashing posters are posted in washrooms; where possible (private facilities), physical distancing, hand sanitizing, and self-screening posters should also be posted.
- Where possible, clubs should clearly display floor marking to demarcate proper physical distancing in hallways and other traffic areas.
- Clubs should demarcate an area within the training space designated to keep individual bags/equipment to facilitate physical distancing.
- Install hand-sanitizing stations at every club entry and exit.
- Clubs should continually communicate to their members their new protocols.

- Clubs and athletes must not share fencing masks, gloves, jackets, breeches, or any other equipment. In the absence of personal equipment, clubs should assign club equipment to a specific fencer for individual use. Every fencer should bring their own equipment to and from training rather than leaving it at the club.
- There should be a person designated as responsible for recording all relevant information for contact tracing, including recording first name, last name, email address, and phone number of each person at each training session, as well as date/time/duration of the training session, and declarations of NO responses to the self-assessment.
- There should be a person designated as responsible for handling all COVID-19 correspondence for the club, including those to fencers, parents, club members, Public Health, FENB, other governmental bodies, and the media at large.
- Clubs should update their active and passive screening questionnaires regularly to ensure they include the most up-to-date recommendations as outlined by the Province of New Brunswick.
- Coaches, parents, fencers, and family members over 65 years old or those with chronic health issues (including but not limited to immunosuppression, lung disease, hypertension, heart disease, asthma, diabetes) should consider staying at home until further guidance by public health officials.

Cleaning Terminology

- **Cleaning:** Refers to the removal of visible soil, dirt or debris. Cleaning does not kill germs but is effective at removing them from a surface.
- **Sanitizing:** Refers to reducing the number of germs on a surface to a safe level, as determined by public health standards, usually in about 30 seconds. Sanitizing efforts are primarily focused on personal hygiene.
- **Disinfecting:** Disinfecting refers to using a chemical/product to kill germs on a surface. Disinfecting is only effective after surfaces have been cleaned. Disinfecting times vary by product, so be sure to review product instructions.
- Hard surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers details can be found on the Health Canada website:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/COVID-19/list.html>.

Class Schedule

- The practice space must be cleaned and disinfected after every class. The entire space must be empty of people for a minimum of 30 minutes to allow droplets to clear the air and the space to be thoroughly disinfected.
- Private lessons cannot be run during 30-minute airing-out/cleaning time.
- The coach and fencer participating in a private lesson should be part of the class immediately before or immediate after the private lesson; or the entire practice area needs to be cleaned and disinfected before and after use. If private lesson times are scheduled unattached to regular class time, up to 6 consecutive private lessons can be given before needing to clean and disinfect the practice space.

Day-to-Day Operations

- A daily log of all people who enter the club (along with their contact information) must be kept by the club for at least eight weeks.
- If possible, open doors/windows of the facility to allow fresh air to enter the training area. Consider doing training outdoors if possible. If using fans, they should be pointed out of the training space, rather into it, to avoid spreading droplets in the training area.
- Clean and disinfect floors, door handles, light switches, doors, doorways, and bathrooms (including faucets, soap dispensers, and toilet handles) before and after every class. (See notes below about cleaning and disinfecting.) Scoring machines and reel boxes should also be cleaned and disinfected after class use.
- Food and meals must be eaten outside of the practice area in a location that can accommodate 2 metre distancing. Communal water fountains/sinks should not be used to fill water bottles.
- Individuals should sanitize their hands prior to using club exercise equipment, such as exercise mats, medicine balls, balance boards and weights. Equipment must be cleaned and sanitized after every use and should be disinfected on a regular basis.
- Reel clips and the last part of the cable should be sanitized after each match. Push the buttons on the fencing machine with your glove-hand or sword tip. Consider using personal phones with scoring apps instead of a communal remote for matches; otherwise sanitize the remote after each use.

Coach Expectations

- Coaches and fencers must always maintain physical distancing when not actively fencing/doing drills.
- Coaches and fencers must always take steps to minimize duration and intensity of contact.
- Will wash their equipment in hot water after every day, including jacket, arm/leg protector, and pants. Will clean and disinfect their fencing mask, glove, and weapon after each class/private lesson.
- Should bring their own equipment, along with a face towel and full water bottle to practice. Water bottles that don't require touching the mouthpiece (i.e., those without a cap) are recommended. Water bottles are not to be shared.
- Will monitor themselves for symptoms and complete the self-assessment prior to entering the club every time. Coaches also will check in/out of the club every time.
- It is recommended that the coaches wear a face mask any time they are instructing.
- Must wear a face mask when moving through communal areas of the club (exits, entrances, hallways, stairways, washrooms, etc.).

Athlete Expectations

- Fencers must always maintain physical distancing when not actively fencing/doing drills.
- Coaches and fencers must always take steps to minimize duration and intensity of contact.
- Will bring their own hand sanitizer/wipes with them.
- Will monitor themselves for symptoms and complete the self-assessment prior to entering the club every time. Athletes will sign in/out of the club every time.
- Fencers should bring their own equipment, along with a face towel and full water bottle to practice. Water bottles that don't require touching the mouthpiece (i.e., those without a cap) are recommended. Water bottles are not to be shared.
- All washable equipment should be machine-washed in hot water after every single use. Equipment such as weapons and masks, which cannot be machine-washed, should be cleaned and disinfected after each session.

- Maintain physical distance as much as possible during training.
- Do not shake hands, fist bump, or high-five. Saluting is now sufficient.
- Will wear a face mask when moving through communal areas of the club (exits, entrances, hallways, stairways, washrooms, etc.).
- Proper [hand hygiene](#) must be performed immediately before putting on a face mask, as well as immediately after removing the face mask. Any face-mask adjustments must be followed immediately by proper hand hygiene without cross-contamination to another surface (e.g., do *not* use the same hand to adjust the mask and open the bathroom door).
- Face masks should be changed if they become soiled or wet to maintain proper function. Reusable masks must be placed immediately in a sealable container to launder at home. Disposable masks must be immediately discarded directly into a covered receptacle after removal.
- Cough, and sneeze into your elbow! Remember transmission occurs via droplet which means through sneezing, coughing or spitting while talking.
- Change into your sports attire at home, prior to coming to the club.
- Do not breathe heavily next to someone, even if they are 2 metres away in proximity.
- Disinfect your phones frequently. Consider keeping your phone inside a sealable bag while at practice to keep it clean.
- Wash your hands with soap and water or disinfect with alcohol-based sanitizers, regularly.
- Keep your belongings close by your bag. Only bring the equipment you require for practice/competition into the facility. Leave other belongings at home or in your car.
- Keep your bag/equipment in designated club areas only to maintain physical distancing.
- If you start to feel unwell while you are fencing, you should stop training immediately and leave the facility. Let your coach know that you are feeling unwell.

Parent Expectations

- Should drop off/pick their athlete outside the club facility.
- Will sign in/out if it is necessary to enter the club.
- Remind your kids about good hygiene etiquette.
- Encourage and remind your kids to clean and disinfect their fencing equipment after each use.
- Refrain from entering the club unless absolutely necessary, or unless your child is a minor and/or needs assistance. Parents should not expect to stay in the club unless their presence is necessary for the Rule of Two (during a private lesson, for instance). Adhere to proper PPE wear and physical distancing measures at all times.
- Will wear a face mask at all times when at the club.

Travel and Participation in Sport

- An athlete or coach who travels outside of New Brunswick may not participate or enter a fencing facility for 14 days.
- An athlete or coach who **resides** in an orange/red/lockdown designated health zone may not travel to a different health zone to participate in sport.
- An athlete or coach who **visits** a red or lockdown health zone may not participate for 14 days.

PHASES OF RETURN TO PLAY

The phases of play align with the Government of New Brunswick's health zone designation colours. As different regions of our province move from one phase to another, clubs may operate within the same phase as their designated health zone colour. In the event that a club is closed for longer than four weeks, it is recommended that they work through all phases of restrictions, up to and including their current health zone designation to allow for a phased approach for return to practice.

Phase	Club Status	Activities Permitted	Activities Not Permitted	Interclub Activities	Screening
RED	All fencing clubs closed	Online strength and conditioning or footwork sessions	No in-person training permitted	No interclub activities permitted	NA
ORANGE	Clubs may operate under restrictions Designated training groups will be maintained All coaches must wear a face mask at all times All athletes must wear a face mask at all times New groups/classes may be formed/started Locker/change rooms must be closed	Two-metre distancing is required between people Strength training, conditioning, footwork Private lessons permitted if both fencer and coach are wearing face masks. Coach and fencer must be from the same club. Dedicated partner drills Line drills are allowed	No bouting No mixed partner drills Athletes may only participate in one designated training group per club.	No interclub activities permitted Athletes/Coaches who reside in an ORANGE zone may not travel to another zone to participate in sport	Active screening *See <i>Screening</i> section below
YELLOW	Fencing clubs may operate Masks should be worn in public areas of the fencing building but are not necessary while actively training New groups/classes may be started	Partner drills allowed Private lessons allowed Bouting allowed	Continue fundamental guidelines	Designated training groups not required Limited interclub activities permitted Interclub tournaments must submit an event-specific operational plan.	Passive screening *See <i>Screening</i> section below
GREEN	Fencing clubs may operate at normal	All fencing activities allowed	NA	All interclub activities permitted	TBA

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Designated Training Groups: ORANGE PHASE

- Fencers must be separated into Designated Training Groups.
- Fencers must be allotted to only one specific group per club and should remain in that group until health zone designation reaches YELLOW.
- A coach may instruct more than one designated training group but can only coach at one club.
- Coaches and athletes must wear a face mask at all times.
- A new individual can be introduced to a designated training group, but then must remain part of that new group and cannot revert back to an old group.
- Fencers may belong to more than one fencing club within their health zone of residence but must be assigned to only one designated training group per club.

Dedicated Partners: ORANGE PHASE

- Fencers are allowed to participate in partner drills if they are assigned a single dedicated partner for the duration of the orange phase.
- Dedicated partners are set at the beginning of the orange phase and cannot be switched.
- Fencers and parents of minor fencers must give consent to participate in a dedicated partner group, as the risk for COVID-19 transmission is heightened.
- If one partner is not present at a class, the present partner may not participate in partner drills.
- Face masks must be worn when doing partner drills with a dedicated partner.

PASSIVE SCREENING (YELLOW PHASE):

Passive screening is required upon arrival to practice. Passive screening means the screening questionnaire must be conducted at home prior to leaving. Upon arrival at the fencing venue, a volunteer or coach must ask each athlete if they have conducted the self-screening prior to arrival and if they have any COVID-19 symptoms. If self-screening was not completed, then the volunteer or coach should conduct the ACTIVE screening questionnaire. In addition, the person screening each participant must request all patrons to sanitize their hands upon entrance to the premises.

Self-Assessment: Before going to their club, all athletes and coaches must complete a health self-assessment by answering the following questions:

1. Have you been advised by Public Health, a health-care provider or a peace officer that you are currently required to self-isolate?
2. Are you waiting for a COVID-19 test or COVID-19 test result and have been told you need to self-isolate?
3. Have you travelled outside of New Brunswick or to an orange, red, or lockdown health zone in the past 14 days?
4. Has an individual in your household returned from outside New Brunswick or to an orange, red, or lockdown health zone AND now someone within the household has developed one or more symptoms of COVID-19 as listed below?
5. Do you have any **two or more** of the following symptoms:
 - Fever over 38 degrees Celsius
 - A new cough, or worsening chronic cough
 - Runny nose
 - Sore throat
 - Headache (unexplained)
 - Diarrhea
 - Trouble breathing
 - New onset of fatigue
 - New onset of muscle pain (unexplained)
 - Loss of sense of taste
 - Loss of sense of smell
 - Purple markings on fingers or toes

A fever of 38 degrees Celsius requires a person to leave the premises, even if the individual has no other symptoms.

An athlete may not go to training if they answer YES to any of the above questions.

All athletes must inform their coach/club leader if they answer YES to any of the above questions. Clubs are responsible for documenting this information and must follow the instructions of Public Health.

Athletes who have answered YES to any of questions 1 – 4 need to refrain from going to practice for at least 14 days or as directed by Public Health. They also must symptom-free for 48 hours prior to attending practice.

ACTIVE SCREENING (ORANGE PHASE):

Active screening is required upon arrival to practice. Active screening means that a designated person from the club must ask all the questions from the below active screening questionnaire to everyone entering the venue. As an enhanced precaution, temperature checks can be requested at home or at the facility. In addition, the person screening each participant must request all patrons to sanitize their hands upon entrance to the premises.

Active Assessment Questionnaire

1. Have you been advised by Public Health, a health-care provider or a peace officer that you are currently required to self-isolate?
2. Are you waiting for a COVID-19 test or COVID-19 test result and have been told you need to self-isolate?
3. Have you travelled outside of New Brunswick or to an orange, red, **or lockdown** health zone in the past 14 days?
4. Has an individual in your household returned from outside New Brunswick or to an orange, red, **or lockdown** health zone AND now someone within the household has developed one or more symptoms of COVID-19 as listed below?
5. Do you have any **two or more** of the following symptoms:
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Athletes who have answered YES to any of questions 1 – 4 need to refrain from going to practice for at least 14 days or as directed by Public Health. They also must symptom-free for 48 hours prior to attending practice.

COVID-19 EXPOSURE

If, at any point, an individual in a training group is diagnosed with COVID-19, club leaders, coaches, and athletes should follow the instructions of Public Health.

1. Club attendance information must be given to the proper authorities for the purposes of contact tracing.
2. All communication about possible cases and/or exposures should respect the privacy of all individuals involved.