



LIFESAVING SOCIETY®
The Lifeguarding Experts

Ontario's Roadmap to Reopen – Aquatic Facilities

Updated July 16, 2021

[Ontario's Roadmap to Reopen](#) is a three-step plan to safely and gradually lift public health measures based on the ongoing progress of province-wide vaccination rates and improvements in key public health and health system indicators.

Public health and workplace safety measures continue to apply across all steps, including maintaining physical distance, limiting capacity, practicing hand hygiene, and wearing masks in indoor spaces and whenever physical distancing is a challenge.

The Roadmap to Reopen follows the existing regulations under the Reopening Ontario Act:

- Ontario [Regulation 82/20](#) applies to Step 1
- Ontario [Regulation 263/20](#) applies to Step 2
- Ontario [Regulation 364/20](#) applies to Step 3
- Emergency Order Amendments are first posted here:
www.ontario.ca/page/emergency-information

The remaining steps of the Roadmap to Reopen for aquatic facilities, which are applied provincially, are as follows:

Step 3 – as of July 16, 2021

- Indoor and outdoor pools, splash pads, spray pads, whirlpools, wading pools and waterslides may open in accordance with [Ontario Regulation 565](#) and with capacity limited to ensure 2 m physical distancing.
 - Indoor pools are limited to 50% capacity. Occupancy limits must be posted on signage.
 - Lane and recreational swims are permitted both indoors and outdoors.
 - Wave pools may operate indoors and outdoors.
 - Indoor saunas, steam rooms, fitness centres and bathhouses may open with restrictions. Oxygen bars are not permitted.
- Indoor and outdoor community centres and multi-purpose facilities may open.
 - Indoor facilities are limited to 50% capacity. Occupancy limits must be posted on signage.

- Indoor and outdoor waterparks may open with capacity limited to ensure 2 m physical distancing.
 - Indoor waterparks or indoor areas of outdoor parks are limited to 50% capacity.
 - Outdoor waterparks, attractions and areas are limited to 75% capacity.
 - Occupancy limits must be posted on signage.
 - Rides/attractions must be modified to ensure 2 m physical distancing.
 - Masks are required indoors and on rides, except on water rides, waterslides or in pools.
 - Outdoor seated events and any indoor activities require reservation/appointment.
- Camps open
 - Day camps open based on guidance from the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health.
 - Overnight camps open in accordance with Ontario Regulation 503/17 and based on guidance from the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health.
- Aquatic sports
 - Outdoor sports leagues and aquatic sports are permitted. Team sports or games should be modified to avoid personal contact and maintain physical distancing as much as possible.
 - Training for Olympic athletes and identified professional/elite amateur athletes is permitted.
 - Operators must ensure that any aquatic sports league or event has prepared a safety plan, prior to allowing any participants to practice or play the sport in the facility.
- Training and instruction
 - Indoor and outdoor aqua fitness classes are permitted, with restrictions including 2 m physical distancing.
 - Indoor aqua fitness classes are limited to 50% capacity.
 - Swimming lessons are permitted, both indoors and outdoors.
 - Indoor lessons are limited to 50% capacity.
 - Outdoor lessons are limited to 75% capacity.
 - The space for any in-person teaching or instruction must be operated to enable students to maintain a physical distance of at least 2 m from every other person in the space, except where necessary for teaching and instruction that cannot be effectively provided if physical distancing is maintained.

- Lifeguard training and certifications: health and safety training is permitted both indoors and outdoors and is exempt from the % capacity limits.
 - The space for any in-person teaching or instruction must be operated to enable students to maintain a physical distance of at least 2 m from every other person in the space, except where necessary for teaching and instruction that cannot be effectively provided if physical distancing is maintained.
- Spectators are permitted. Spectator areas must be modified to ensure 2 m physical distancing and spectators must wear masks in indoor areas or outdoors if unable to maintain physical distancing.
 - Occupancy limits must be posted on signage.
 - 50% spectator/seating capacity indoors up to a max of 1,000 persons.
 - 75% spectator/seating capacity outdoors up to a max of 5,000 persons (or 15,000 in the case of a designated seating area).
 - Children/Youth should be permitted at least one parent/guardian.

After Step 3 – approximately August 6, 2021

- The province will remain in Step 3 of the Roadmap for at least 21 days and until 80% of the eligible population age 12 and over have received one dose of a Covid-19 vaccine and 75% have received their second, with no public health unit having less than 70% of their eligible population age 12 and over fully vaccinated. Other key public health and healthcare indicators must also continue to remain stable.
- Upon meeting these thresholds, the vast majority of public health and workplace safety measures (including capacity limits for indoor and outdoor settings and limits for social gatherings) will be lifted.
- In Ontario aquatic facilities as of approximately August 6, 2021:
 - Admission bather screening and safety plans will continue to be required, including hand hygiene and sanitization practices.
 - Masking for patrons and employees may no longer be required by provincial regulation (but may be required by local jurisdictions).
 - The Lifesaving Society continues to recommend personal protective equipment for lifeguards and staff performing first aid, including wearing a mask, protective eyewear and gloves.
 - Aquatic facilities will no longer be required to adjust their capacity, nor ensure that patrons practice physical distancing.

Key recommendations for operators

- All owners and operators of recreational water facilities have a responsibility to assess risks associated with their facility and operations and ensure that they mitigate these risks for their employees, volunteers, and attendees. Specific to Covid-19, owners and operators are responsible for implementing measures to reduce the risk of infection among all those who attend their facilities.
- Operators should consult their local municipality, public health unit and relevant sport or industry organizations for guidance on any further restrictions for their facilities or activities.
- The Lifesaving Society has published the [Guide to Reopening Pools and Waterfronts](#) and [other guidance documents](#). Please continue to check the Lifesaving Society website and local health units frequently for updates.
- Operators should review and adhere to provincial gathering limit sizes and adjust their operations to ensure physical distancing within recreational and instructional spaces.
- Viewing areas should have their capacity reduced allow for proper physical distancing.
- Reservations/appointments should be required for entry; one reservation required for teams.
- Locker rooms, changerooms and showers should be modified to account for physical distancing.

Safety plan

- A [workplace safety plan](#) must be developed and implemented. The safety plan must be in writing and available on request. A copy of the safety plan must be posted in a conspicuous location where it can be viewed by staff and patrons.

Admission screening

- Businesses must set up line management to ensure physical distancing of 2 m between patrons. Patrons in lineups should wear masks at all times.
- All individuals who enter aquatic facilities must be actively screened in accordance with instructions from the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health. This includes patrons and workers.
- Screening can be completed by telephone, app, questionnaire, interview, etc. Staff should reinforce basic safety protocols: distancing, masking, handwashing, etc.
- Staff or patrons are to stay home if they are sick or fail the screening.
- Contact information must be recorded (including a first name and telephone number/email address) and log records must be maintained for one month and only disclosed to a medical officer of health or a public health inspector.

Personal protective equipment (PPE):

- Everyone must wear a mask that covers mouth, nose and chin inside any place or business, including lineups, reception areas, hallways, washrooms, change rooms, indoor pool decks, etc.
- Masks are not required while using a pool, whirlpool, waterslide, splash/spray pad or wading pool. Masks should be removed when entering the water. Masks should be reapplied once bathers exit the water, and be worn on the indoor pool deck and inside change rooms.
- Workers, such as lifeguards and other staff, must wear PPE including a mask and protective eyewear, unless they can maintain a physical distance of 2 m at all times and/or are separated by plexiglass or another impermeable barrier. Masks are not required while performing a rescue in the water.
- Lifeguards performing first aid are required to wear a mask, protective eyewear and gloves; optional wear includes an isolation gown.

Capacity limits and distancing

- Aquatic facilities must adjust their capacity to meet regulatory requirements and ensure that patrons can maintain the appropriate physical distance (e.g., 2 or 3 m).
- Where required by regulation, signage must be posted to indicate the capacity limit of an area or activity.
- Activities should be modified to ensure physical distancing. Operators may consider a range of options including having an attendant monitor for physical distancing, posting signage, posting capacity limits, etc.
- There is no legislation in Ontario that requires lifeguards to maintain physical distancing while performing their lifeguard duties or while training. Lifeguards should ensure physical distancing precautions are followed to the best extent possible.

Operations

- According to the U.S. Centre for Disease Control, proper operation and maintenance of pools, hot tubs, whirlpools and water play areas will prevent waterborne transmission of the virus responsible for Covid-19, specifically disinfection with chlorine and bromine will inactivate the virus. Pool operators who are subject to the requirements of Ontario Regulation 565 made under the HPPA are required to maintain proper operation and maintenance of the pool, including water quality requirements in accordance with the regulation.
- Factors that may increase the risk of transmission include inadequate levels of disinfectant, malfunctioning equipment, overcrowding, person to person transmission (through contact with droplets), and large organic loading (e.g., feces or vomit).

- Post signs promoting wearing face coverings, handwashing and physical distancing, and make them visible to staff and customers.

Cleaning and disinfection

- Aquatic facilities should establish hand hygiene or hand washing stations that are easily accessible.
- Operators must ensure that any equipment, washrooms, locker rooms, change rooms, showers and similar amenities that are accessible to the public are cleaned and disinfected as frequently as is necessary to maintain a sanitary condition.

Training

- Staff should be adequately trained on all measures to keep themselves and the public safe. Operational and emergency procedures should be practiced frequently as part of pre-season and in-service training.
- Operators should ensure that as procedures are updated, this information is effectively communicated to staff and patrons.

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