

# Junior Slam Events Under COVID-19

With the current guidelines for curling return to play, taking into account the interpretation published by CurlON (the provincial sport organization for curling) it becomes possible to run Junior Curling Events. This document outlines the approach that the Junior Slam Series will use to run its events to ensure that the events are as safe as possible for all participants. These guidelines meet, or in many cases exceed the provincial regulations as it is our intention to not expose the athletes, coaches or convenors to any undue risks.

## Junior Curling & COVID-19

The Junior Slam Series exists to provide an avenue for junior curling teams to develop through world class curling events. With COVID-19 all but cancelling curling in 2020, we are faced with a difficult decision. It would be easy to take the year off, cancel all of our events and start planning for the fall of 2021, but we realize how much damage a missed year can have on any junior athlete's career. We have to balance the desire to schedule some events, even if scaled down, against safety and well-being of those that want to participate, as well as the safety and well-being of their communities. As we have already stated, this is a difficult decision.

In choosing to schedule events we have developed a plan that covers how we will run those events. Our plan is designed to take every necessary precaution to ensure the event minimizes the ability for COVID-19 to be transmitted at the event. It includes rules and restrictions that impact the athletes, coaches and convenors, and are not optional.

The rules we have put in place are not the best defence against spreading this disease. The best defence comes from the participants themselves. **COVID-19 cannot be spread at an event if it is not there in the first place, and that is up to the participants themselves.** If any participant, athlete, coach or convenor, believes they may be a risk for bringing COVID-19 to the event, they must stay away for the benefit of everyone. Only players who will follow all of these guidelines should register for our events.

Before deciding to hold events we put a lot of thought into how to do it safely. We discussed our ideas with a large number of people, coaches, club managers, convenors, medical professionals and also sought the advice of the Public Health Units in which our host clubs reside. All of this to help design the safest possible events for junior curlers. It is up to the participants themselves to ensure success.

## Changes for The Season

All Junior Slam Series events will focus on providing meaningful competition opportunities and not focus on event champions, prize payouts, etc. Events will be smaller than traditional in order to allow for the extra time needed between games in order to manage the facility.

Events will typically include 2 groups (i.e.: U18 Men, U18 Women) who will not share the same space at the same time. This means that we will either completely clear the building of all players in one group before allowing players from the next group to enter the building, **or**, where facility logistics permit, move an entire group to a separate space before allowing the other group to enter.

## The Convenor Has the Final Say

These guidelines have been established with the safety of all participants in mind. In the real world circumstances will arise that we did not consider. In these cases the event convenor has final authority on how to adapt these rules to the situation. Curling at a Junior Slam Series event is a privilege, not a right. Anyone not following any rules either in this document or as indicated by a convenor will first be warned, and if the infraction continues, penalized. Penalties may include, loss of game, removal from the facility and/or banning from future events.

## Event Size

Junior Slam Series events will be limited to 8 teams per group (for example 8 men's and 8 women's teams), and groups will not be in the same space at the same time. Each team will be allowed to have at most 6 people inside the facility. These are made up of the 4 declared members of the team, the coach, and either a fifth player or coaches assistant. This results in a cohort bubble of 48 people plus at least 2 event convenors.

## Age Categories

Events will have designated age groups (U15, U18, U21). Event registration will be held for teams in the designated age category first, and opened to teams who wish to play up after a specific date. Teams will not be allowed to play up by more than one age category. We reserve the right to give preference to teams that have not participated in a Junior Slam Series event earlier in the season.

## Format

Events will be run over 2 or 3 days depending on ice availability. Event schedules will be built around the available ice time taking into account the need to space out draws to ensure social distancing. Events will focus on providing a minimum number of meaningful games. A round robin format will be used for qualifying games with no more than 2 games per day (per group). Finals, will use an event format as follows:

**2 day event:** 3-game round robin followed by 4 event finals (1v2, 3v4, 5v6, 7v8). 4 game guarantee over 2 days.

**3 day event:** 4 game round robin followed by 2 event semi-finals (1v4, 2v3 & 5v8, 6v7). Semis lead to a final and consolation final. 6 game guarantee over 3 days.

## Sample Schedule

Actual schedules will depend on the venue the event is held in, however, a typical schedule might be:

Day	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2
1	8:30 am - 11:15 am	12:15 pm - 3:00 pm	4:00 pm - 6:30 pm	7:30 pm - 10:00 pm
2 & 3	8:00 am - 10:30 am	11:30 am - 2:00 pm	3:00 pm - 5:30 pm	6:30 pm - 9:00 pm

## Game Duration

All games will be scheduled for 2h 30m, including timeouts. There will be no extra ends. All games will be deemed to have started ON TIME, unless otherwise announced by the convenor. (Be on time, and play at a reasonable pace.) Teams will be reminded at 1h 30m, and at 2h 00m. Coaches may ask the convenor to hurry up teams at any time.

No new end may be started after 2h 10m. If the final stone has not been delivered at 2h 30m, the game will end. In such cases the team with hammer will be allowed to deliver the final stone (if they have not already) in normal throwing order before the score is determined. A game tied after 8 ends will be decided by a single draw to the pin with the top of scoreboard throwing first and the bottom throwing second. Any player may deliver the draw. The teams will each have 1 minute to deliver their draw.

***At the sole discretion of the convenor, and only as a last resort, if it becomes evident that a team is deliberately slowing down a game to create an advantage, the win may be awarded to the non-offending team. Any such decisions are final and cannot be appealed.***

## COVID Protocol

### Access to the Facility

Access to the facility will be limited. Each team will be permitted a coach, 4 team members and either an alternate (5th player) or coaches assistant. The 5-6 members of the team must be declared in advance of the event and may not change over the course of the weekend. The Junior Slams Series staff (2 or 3 team members) and club staff (ice technicians, cleaning crews, club manager) will be in the building.

***No fans will be permitted in the facility during the event.***

Access to the facility for games will be allowed no sooner than 30 minutes prior to the scheduled game, and will be controlled by the convenor. Each facility will have specific rules which will be communicated prior to the event. Teams waiting to enter the facility must maintain social distancing from other teams and wear masks at all times. Teams are not permitted into the facility until the convenor indicates that you may enter.

Players must arrive changed and ready to play, do not assume you will have access to the locker rooms in the facility. Shoes and jackets may be changed prior to the game and a dedicated area in the facility will be identified for each team / sheet.

All members of the team must exit the ice/viewing area with all belongings as quickly as possible and no later than 15 minutes after the scheduled end-time of their game. This may require exiting the facility entirely.

## Before the Event

In order to control the size of your social bubble it is highly recommended that teams not participate in any multi-club event the in the 7 days prior to the Junior Slam Series event. This includes another Junior Slam Series event. It is recommended that all teams have a declared alternate player. Playing with 3 players is acceptable. **Teams will not be permitted to draw spares from another team, or bring a non-declared alternate to the event.**

The Junior Slam Series will provide updated waivers to cover:

- COVID-19 assumption of risk
- Rowan's Law Compliance
- Code of Conduct (Fair Play and Anti-Bullying) & Media Release

***Waivers must be submitted electronically prior to arriving at the event.***

It is highly recommended that all participants use the Government of Canada COVID-19 tracking app on their mobile device.

## During The Event

All athletes, coaches and convenors must wear masks while in the facility, this includes while playing games. No exceptions. If you cannot wear a mask for medical or other reasons you should not register for the event. Masks must fully cover the nose and mouth. Masks are not provided by the Junior Slam Series. It is recommended that athletes have at least a fresh mask for each game. Should a team not have masks, a standard set of 12 masks (2 for each game) will be available for purchase. Convenors may also choose to wear face shields (which will be provided).

Designated seating areas for coaches, assistants and organizers will be indicated to ensure distancing (tape the floor). Additional signage will be posted around the club to remind people to socially distance.

### Masks and Hand Washing

The best defence against the spread of COVID-19 is through the proper use of masks and hand washing / sanitizing often and as needed. See the appendices for links to recommendations on the correct use of masks and hand washing.

#### Masks

- May be cloth (double layered), disposable, and/or medical grade, improvised masks (bandana style wraps, pulled up shirts, etc. are not acceptable)
- Must be worn at all times
- Wash / sanitize your hands before putting a mask on
- Avoid touching the main part of the mask, only touch the elastics / ties
- Must completely cover the nose and mouth with no gaps
- Masks may be briefly removed for a hydration break
- It is recommended that athletes, especially sweepers, have more than one mask available / game

#### Hand Washing / Sanitization

- Clean your hands by washing with soap for 20 seconds or using an alcohol based hand sanitizer on a regular basis.
- Wash hands before and after
  - Entering the facility
  - Using the washroom
  - Taking a hydration / food break
  - Touching any surface that you are not completely sure is sanitized

Do not use sanitizer on gloves, but do clean your hands after removing your gloves.

***Hand sanitizer stations will be available for athletes and coaches at every event.***

### Hydration

Do not expect clubs to provide a water cooler on the ice, nor water pitchers at the bar. All athletes should bring their own water bottles with them to the ice surface.

### **Arrival Screening**

Before each game, every participant must be screened before entering the building. Given the time that would be required to complete a screening of 48 people (4 players, 1 coach, 1 alternate/assistant), the Junior Slam Series is investigating technology to allow for arrival screening in a manner similar to scanning a boarding pass to board a plane.

Should electronic pre-screening be possible, then all coaches, athletes and alternates / coaches assistants will be required to install an app on their phone that performs the prescreening and present that phone (with out contact) to a convenor as they enter the building. Should electronic pre-screening not be possible, and in order to save time, each coach will be required to screen each member of their group (athletes, assistants and self) using the questions below, and declare to the convenor that no members of their group are showing symptoms.

The following questions will be asked as part of the screening:

1. Have you travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days?
2. In the past 14 days, have you had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 without wearing appropriate PPE?
3. Do you have **any** of the following symptoms?
  - Fever
  - New onset of cough, or a worsening chronic cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
  - Decrease or loss of sense of taste or smell
  - Chills
  - Headaches
  - Unexplained fatigue/malaise and/or muscle aches
  - Nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain
  - Pink eye (conjunctivitis)
  - Runny nose or nasal congestion without a specific known cause

### **Contact Tracing**

The Junior Slam Series will collect & retain the names and email addresses for all participants for contact tracing purposes only for a period of 30 days from the start of the event.

## Entering and Exiting the Ice Area

Unless otherwise specified, one door will be designated for entering the ice, and a different door will be designated for exiting ice area. In situations where the access to the ice is close to sheet 1, teams will enter the ice in reverse order of their assigned sheet (i.e. 4, 3, 2, 1). In addition, the game on the first and third in-use sheet will start at the “away” end of the club. In situations where the entrance to the ice is at the higher number sheet, the preceding is reversed.

When entering or exiting the ice during active play (washroom breaks, conceded game, timeouts, or an event convenor), the person entering the ice must ensure that they do so in a manner that:

- maintains social distancing
- does not interfere with a delivered or about to be delivered stone.

Teams that are currently playing are expected to make room on the backboards for a person entering exiting the ice even if that requires a slight game delay.

## Timeouts

Timeouts are included in game duration time, whether or not you use your timeout will not impact the scheduled game end time. All timeouts are to be taken at the near end of the ice. The coach for the team calling the timeout will visit the ice at the house. The coach for the other team may visit with their team at the hog line. Coaches must maintain social distancing from all other teams at all times.

## Pre-Game Warm Up

The team assigned with handle colour matching the top of the scoreboard with warm up first, prior to their on-ice practice. They must be careful to maintain social distancing from all other participants while warming up. The teams with second practice (bottom of scoreboard), can warm up while the first teams are practicing. If sufficient space permits, and at the discretion of the convenor, all teams may be allowed to warm-up at the same time.

## Pre-Game Practice

Each team will have a 5 minute practice followed by 1 minute to deliver a single draw to the pin to determine hammer. After the first practice a single member from each opposition team should enter the ice to observe the measurement. Once completed, the team that has completed their practice exits the ice before the opposition team can enter and prepare for their practice. After the second practice the first team enters the ice, one member observes the measurement - if required - and the game may begin.

## Clearing Stones from the House

The team in control of the house is responsible for returning any stones removed from play on their shot. Stones are to be moved using feet and brooms only (no hands / gloves). At the conclusion of an end, the vice and second of the team with hammer clear their stones from play, followed by the vice and second of the team without hammer. The lead who will be delivering the first stone of the next end will wait on the backboard and be ready to enter the hack once all stones have been cleared. The other lead will wait in the designated location between the hog lines.

***Never move a stone that is not your own with your hands. Use feet and broom heads only.***

## Scoreboards

Score markers will have been disinfected between games. The Vice for the team with the top of the scoreboard is responsible for indicating the score for both teams.

## Modifications to the Rules of Curling

Only the skip for the team in control of the house may be on the ice during their team's shot. Between shots they must stand on the backboards. Between shots, members of the non-delivering team must stand in designated areas for their sheet (these may be specific to the facility).

Teams may use two sweepers for all shots. This is being allowed because all athletes are masked at all times, and the sweepers are from the same team and are assumed to already be practicing together, etc. The skip may not sweep in the house. One of the two sweepers for the shot may sweep behind the tee line if needed. The opposition team may not sweep at any time during the shot.

## Shootout

After the first game, each team will deliver 4 stones (one by each player). In the case of a 3-player team, any one player may be chosen to deliver 2 stones. The opposition team will designate 1 player to observe and record the results of each draw shot. LiveScores will provide a method for recording shootout scores electronically (using a web browser on a mobile device) to eliminate the use of paper and pens.

## Curling Etiquette

### Pre & Post Game Salutations

- No handshakes, no elbow bumps, no contact!
- We encourage teams to wish their opponent's a good game verbally

### Reducing Touch Points & Cleaning

- All handles will be disinfected by the ice crew before the start of on-ice practice of each game
- If you wish to disinfect the stones yourself or between ends, please bring your own wipes, they will not be provided.
- Players should only handle the stones that they are designated to throw
- Do not set up stones for teammates or the other team
- Sanitize your hands before and after using any measurement devices (laser or tape measures)
- Hand washing is required before and after washroom use
- Hand sanitizing stations will be provided at the ice entrance / exit and at other locations

## After the Event

### Contact Tracing

Should a participant test positive for COVID-19 within 14 days of participating in an event they **are required** to inform the Junior Slam Series of this fact. We will notify all teams in the event that a player tested positive and what group (men / women) may have been effected. We will not reveal the name of the effected player or team.

## Appendix A: SOURCE DOCUMENTS

### Government of Ontario

1. Reopening Ontario:  
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/reopening-ontario>
2. Stop the Spread:  
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-stop-spread>
3. Screening Questions:  
[http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019\\_patient\\_screening\\_guidance.pdf](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_patient_screening_guidance.pdf)
4. Framework for Reopening Ontario:  
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/framework-reopening-our-province-stage-3>

### Curling Associations

1. Curling Canada Return to Play Recommendations:  
[https://www.curling.ca/files/2020/07/CC-Manual\\_Return-to-Play\\_CAN\\_EN.pdf](https://www.curling.ca/files/2020/07/CC-Manual_Return-to-Play_CAN_EN.pdf)
2. Ontario Curling Association Return to Play Recommendations:  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ryAy1T0\\_5DziK1I7w8wApDZEURoPVKX2/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ryAy1T0_5DziK1I7w8wApDZEURoPVKX2/view)
3. Ontario Curling Association CurlOn COVID-19 Re-opening Kit:  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/10ZOHkY4jR-z-DgY9gjVPe3yWn-HorC4f/view>

### Mask Wearing

1. <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-how-to-wear-mask.pdf?la=en>
2. <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/hc-sc/documents/services/publications/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-safely-use-non-medical-mask-face-covering/covid-19-safely-use-non-medical-mask-face-covering-en.pdf>
3. <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/8fdf-How-to-Safely-Wear-a-Cloth-or-Face-Covering-Banner.pdf>