



## **Metro Mudcats Covid-19 Operational Plan Return-to-Play Guidelines**

### **Preamble**

The purpose of this document is to outline the Metro Mudcats Covid-19 Operational Plan. The plan will be used as a guiding principle for Metro Mudcats to return to operations during the pandemic. This plan is put in place in order to adhere to all regulations put in place by the Province of New Brunswick in the recovery stage. Please keep in mind, Baseball New Brunswick is the governing organization for all amateur baseball in this province. Creating these guidelines was done so in the best interest of all Metro Mudcats members. It is the responsibility of Metro Mudcats to provide the safest possible procedure for participation.

These Return to Play Guidelines are required to be in place and executed in full in order to start up any organized baseball activities by order of the Province of New Brunswick and must be followed as outlined. Non-compliance can lead to removal of facility access through the municipality in which you offer baseball programming, by-law fines or even provincial health officer order to cease activity.

This plan was approved by the Board of Directors of Metro Mudcats on June 4, 2020.

All participants, volunteers, and parents must always adhere to all municipal Covid-19 Operational plans when using fields and facilities operated by the municipality. Guidelines are subject to change due to order of the Provincial Department of Health, Sport and Recreation Branch, Sport New Brunswick, and other provincial or federal agencies. Metro Mudcats reserves the right to suspend all sanctioned activities if deemed necessary as per the Board of Directors.

### **Personal Hygiene Guidelines/Cleaning and Disinfection**

#### **Personal Health and Hygiene**

##### **FOUNDATIONAL**

- All requirements will be applied to all age categories and playing divisions.
- No activities will be sanctioned unless the province is in the YELLOW or GREEN phase of the recovery plan.
- Prior to arriving at the field, all participants must answer all questions in *Appendix B: Screening Questionnaire for COVID-19*.
- No sharing of water bottles.
- No sharing of food of any kind.
- No spitting.
- No chewing gum.
- No sunflower seeds.
- No sharing of personal helmets.
- No sharing of catchers masks unless disinfected between personal uses.
- No sharing of any other equipment unless disinfected between personal uses.

- No high fives or physical contact between players.
- Sanitizer, wipes and gloves and face masks (if required) to be provided by the local association (or club or team) at every scheduled event.
- If possible, or if required by the facility operator, hand sanitizer should be available for all players and coaches during practice/games.
- Players and Coaches should sanitize hands at all reasonable opportunities. (During water breaks, between innings)
- All participants to disinfect their equipment after each event.
- All uniforms or clothing to be washed after each event.
- All participants to shower at first opportunity after each event.
- No sharing of personal items like phones, wallets, etc.
- Ride sharing to be discouraged whenever possible. [Click here](#) to consult provincial guidelines for ridesharing.

### Facility Guidelines

- No indoor events (practice, cage, meeting, other) permitted. Outdoor chain link cages can be used permitting providing social distancing requirements are adhered to. Unless physical distancing guidelines can be met, and it falls within the public health guidelines.
- No changing or dressing rooms permitted.
- Washrooms use to be in conjunction with the operational plan of the facility operator.
- Modified dugout use. Athletes must be set up outside of the dugout with physical distancing requirements adhered to. A maximum of 3 people allowed in the dugout at one time.
- Field allotments will need to be modified to allow for all events to stay under the 50-person social gathering limits. In all instances, a 30-minute window will be allowed between the end of one session and the beginning of the next.
- Only 1 parent or guardian per player can be present at the field in order to adhere to the 50-person social gathering limit. Parent or guardian must always adhere to physical distancing guidelines.
- No use of bleachers. Parents/Guardians wishing to sit, and watch must bring their own chair and have it placed a minimum of 6 feet from other spectators.
- No gathering around the park until your scheduled start time (please wait in your car). Athletes must leave the park immediately after the practice or game.
- Groups using Lakeburn fields and the batting cage shall park in the designated parking area and proceed directly to their assigned field. (See Appendix D)
- All participants should return directly to their cars at the conclusion of their event using the same path followed upon arrival.
- Participants should avoid wandering the site during their session and should remain at their assigned field as much as possible (i.e. except to use washrooms)

## Practice and Training Guidelines

- All Foundational and Facility requirements to be met as outlined above.
- Team huddles must be conducted using physical distancing. Players and coaches must not come within 6 feet of each other during huddles.
- All drills to be created and implemented ensuring social distancing requirements are met.
- No dugout use permitted.

## General Recommendations

- Attendance must be taken at every event for all people in attendance including parents (drivers). Total attendance must never exceed 50 people including players, coaches, umpires, game officials, parents, and spectators. This will be done using a form on the Metro Mudcats Official Website.
- No operation of canteen, food, or beverage services.
- No tournaments permitted.
- Protocols to disinfect, after every use, team and personal gear (catchers and umpires) need to be in place. Bats, balls, masks, can be wiped with disinfectant wipes or sprayed with disinfectant cleaning solution. It is Metro Mudcats recommendation that in order to minimize the sharing of equipment, teams in levels without “live” pitching not dress a catcher, and a coach be stationed behind home plate to retrieve balls from the pitching machine.
- All discussion or coaching through any means to include reminders to players regarding social distancing, no spitting, no face touching, no contact between the athletes.
- Players, coaches, and umpires will be permitted to wear a mask if they choose to.

## Parents/Guardians

- Complete screening questionnaire prior to leaving home for participation (Appendix A)
- Parents are asked to constantly remind players of the importance of physical distancing, no spitting, no face touching, and no contact between athletes such as high fives or handshakes
- Parents are to arrive at the field with the athletes at the designated start time and wait for the field to be clear before allowing the athlete to leave the car
- Carpooling should be discouraged whenever possible. If required, please consult provincial guidelines ([Click here](#))

## Coaches

- Make sure all players have completed the screening questionnaire prior to participation each day
- Ensure all procedures as set in place by the municipality are followed
- Always maintain physical distance from players and remind players to adhere to physical distancing guidelines
- Conduct team huddles and teaching moments in a setting that adheres to physical distancing
- Remind players not to spit, chew gum, eat seeds
- Remind players not to make physical contact

- Coaches must keep a record of all people at the field within their baseball group, as per workplace NB Guidelines. This will be done using the Teamsnap app as noted above.
- Responsible for game balls
- Retrieve bats and sanitize grips

## **Umpires**

- Modified positioning
- Remind coaches to make pitching changes using physical distancing
- Work with coaches to ensure they cover all above requirements
- TBD with input from officials

## **Gameplay Guidelines**

- All Foundational and Facility requirements to be met as outlined above.
- No plate meeting to exchange lineup cards.
- Physical distancing must be maintained during mound visits by catcher and/or coach.
- A coach will not be required to go to the mound to make a pitching change. Change can be made by calling time and signaling a pitching change to the umpire.
- No leaving the dugout to argue a call or ruling by an umpire. Leaving the dugout to address an umpire will result in immediate ejection from the game. Coaches would also be subject to suspension. More information on these guidelines to come. □ No postgame handshakes.
- Umpires are positioned behind the pitchers mound in order to call balls and strikes.
- Umpires will not be responsible to touch or handle a baseball at any point during the game.
- Each team will provide 3-5 game balls and be responsible for their own baseballs during the game. The team in the field will provide one coach who will be responsible to throw a ball into the pitcher if a ball is hit out of play. The team in the field will be responsible for sending someone to retrieve the ball that was hit out of play. Spectators are to be discouraged from touching the baseball when it is out of play. The ball should only be retrieved by designated player or team personnel from the team on defence.
- Baseballs should be disinfected between innings.
- If bats are shared, the batter will hand the bat to the coach/person responsible for disinfection, holding it by the grip. The coach will take the bat, holding it by the barrel and sanitize the handle before placing it against the fence or passing it to the next batter.
- The coach/person responsible for sanitization will be required to retrieve the bat if the batter reaches base. The bat is to be picked up by the barrel and wiped down or sprayed before being placed against the fence or being used by another player.
- A maximum of 3 people allowed in the dugout at any time. This does not include the ondeck batter. The purpose of allowing athletes in the dugout is to promote pace of play. Athletes should cycle through the dugout in conjunction with the batting order to keep the game moving. People inside dugout must always maintain 6 feet of separation.

## **Four Phases of returning to the NEW NORMAL.**

Metro Mudcats will take a 4 phased approach to reintroducing baseball to our members and eventually returning to the New Normal. Phases and details are outlined bellow. Phases are subject to change based on new information, direction, or recommendations from the Provincial Department of Health, Sport and Recreation Branch, Sport New Brunswick, and other provincial or federal agencies.

### **Phase 1**

*Start date of June 8<sup>th</sup>.*

The purpose of phase 1 is to gradually introduce the new Metro Mudcats guidelines to its membership while still offering development opportunities. Phase 1 will be the first opportunity to put into practice the Covid-19 Operational Plan. This stage will serve as an opportunity for athletes to return to the field and begin participating in the 2020 season.

The Association may begin to hold training sessions, tryouts, and development camps. Throughout these programs, coaches are encouraged to inform their players of the Foundational Guidelines to participate in for this season. It will be an opportunity to develop the habits that will be required under the Covid19 guidelines. Coaches are asked to constantly remind players of the behavioural changes that will be required for this season.

#### **Key Components to Phase 1:**

- Tryouts and development camps may begin.
- Associations must adhere to all guidelines and physical distancing procedures as outlined above.
- Rally Cap, Grand Slam/9U programs are all eligible to begin.
- No games are to be played during this phase.
- Limit 50 people per gathering

### **Phase 2**

*Evaluation will be made 2-4 weeks after Phase 1. Possible start date of July 1.*

The purpose of Phase 2 is to introduce competition back into the Baseball New Brunswick system. Associations will be able to form teams to compete regionally, within their association or with neighbouring associations. (See Appendix C for Zone descriptions) Phase 2 will help adjust players, coaches, officials, and volunteers to the Covid-19 Guidelines around gameplay and competition.

By limiting play to specific zones, Baseball New Brunswick will limit possible exposure of the Covid-19 virus to more confined areas. In conjunction with the Department of Health, this will allow us to monitor any possible cases and track any baseball related contact. A positive Covid-19 case under these stipulations will allow Baseball New Brunswick to evaluate the case and not force the shut down of all baseball activities throughout the province. Possible shutdowns would be limited to the affected association or zone.



### **Key Components to Phase 2**

- Practices and developments camps
- Regional games may be played. Teams may only play within the areas as outlined in appendix C
- No overnight trips or tournaments are permitted
- Teams should be balanced in order to provide circuits of 4 or more teams in any tier per zone where possible
- Recommended two (2) tier system that would consist of Competitive and Recreational stream
- Limit of 50 people per gathering

### **Phase 3**

*Evaluation will be made 2-4 weeks after phase 2 begins. Possible start date of August 1<sup>st</sup>.*

The purpose of phase 3 is to allow teams to travel outside of their designated zones for a wider variety of competition. Graduation to phase 3 also creates the possibility of a shortened AAA season and modified provincial championships.

### **Key Components to Phase 3**

- Ability to travel outside of designated zones for competition
- Possibility of modified provincial championships
- Possible creation of AAA or All-Star teams for provincial competition
- Not guaranteed in 2020 due to Covid-19 limitations □ Limit 50 people per gathering

### **Phase 4**

*Return to New Normal.*

Phase 4 will be a return to new normal. This phase will come when the province of New Brunswick moves to the GREEN stage of the recovery plan. This phase will likely not be reached until a vaccine or herd immunization has been developed.

### **Key Components to Phase 4**

- Return to provincial based leagues
- Tournaments
- Provincial Championships

### **Rally Cap/Grand Slam/9U**

All intro to baseball programs are eligible to begin in Phase 1 of the Operation Plan. Please keep in mind that all Foundational, Facility, and Practice/Training guidelines apply to these age categories. Baseball New Brunswick will provide ongoing guidance for associations wishing to offer these programs. We will continue to develop guidelines and recommendations for the continued operation of introductory programs.



## **Appendix A**

### **Government of New Brunswick Guiding Documents**

#### **Low-Contact Team Sport**

<https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/corporate/promo/covid-19/recovery.html>

#### **Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health:**

<https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/ocmoh.html>

#### **Worksafe NB:**

<https://www.worksafenb.ca/>

<https://www.worksafenb.ca/safety-topics/covid-19/new-covid-19-prevention-tool-forworkplaces/>

#### **NB's Recovery Plan:**

<https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/corporate/promo/covid-19/recovery.html>

#### **Guidance Document of General Public Health Measures During COVID-19 Recovery:**

<https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/eco-bce/Promo/covid-19/guidance-ph-measures.pdf>

#### **Personal Hand Hygiene:**

[https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/h-s/pdf/WASH\\_LAVEZ.pdf](https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/h-s/pdf/WASH_LAVEZ.pdf)

#### **Cleaning and Disinfection:**

[https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/h-s/pdf/Cleaning\\_DisinfectingE.pdf](https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/h-s/pdf/Cleaning_DisinfectingE.pdf)

#### **Community Mask:**

<https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/h-s/pdf/MASK.pdf>

## **Appendix B**

### **Screening Questionnaire**

#### **YOU SHOULD NOT ATTEND A METRO MUDCATS EVENT OR ACTIVITY IF YOU FEEL SICK**

If you have 2 or more of the following symptoms, stay home, self-isolate and call 811:

- Fever or signs of a fever (such as chills)
- New cough or worsening of a chronic cough
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Runny nose
- New onset of fatigue
- New onset of muscle pain
- Diarrhea
- Loss of taste or smell
- Purple discoloration of the fingers or toes

If you answer YES to any of the following, then you must stay home and self-isolate for 14 days. If you develop symptoms, please refer to the self-assessment link on the Government of New Brunswick webpage.

[https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/ocmoh/cdc/content/respiratory\\_diseases/coronaviruses.html](https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/ocmoh/cdc/content/respiratory_diseases/coronaviruses.html)

- Have you had close contact within the last 14 days with a confirmed case of COVID-19?
- Have you been diagnosed with COVID-19?
- Have you returned from travel outside of New Brunswick within the last 14 days?
- Have you been told by public health that you may have been exposed to COVID-19?
- Follow public health advice if you are waiting for testing results for COVID-19?



## Appendix C

### Zones for Competition



<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Zone 1</b></p> <p>Association de Baseball d'Edmundston Grand Falls Minor Baseball</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Zone 2</b></p> <p>Fredericton Minor Baseball New Maryland Minor Baseball Oromocto Minor Baseball Western Valley Minor Baseball</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Zone 3</b></p> <p>Fundy Minor Baseball Grand Manan Minor Baseball Hampton Minor Baseball Kennebecasis Valley Minor Baseball Port City Pirates Baseball Organization St. Stephen Minor Baseball Sussex Minor Baseball Upham Minor Baseball</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Zone 4</b></p> <p>Association de Baseball Beaubassin Dieppe Minor Baseball Metro Mudcats Baseball Association Moncton Minor Baseball Riverview Minor Baseball Sackville Minor Baseball Salisbury Minor Baseball</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Zone 5</b></p> <p>Atholville Royals Bathurst Minor Baseball Association de Baseball Beresford Blackville Minor Baseball Association de Baseball Caraquet Chatham Head Baseball Club Association de Baseball Lameque Miramichi Minor Baseball Association de Baseball Neguac Penninsule Accadienne Est. Association de Baseball Petit-Rocher</p>	

## Appendix D Lakeburn Field Map

