



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MR# 2020055

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RE: Amherst Stadium to reopen

AMHERST, Nova Scotia – The Town of Amherst plans to reopen the Amherst Stadium on Sept. 9, 2020, but it won't be business as usual because of the ongoing state of emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Our opening plan was developed to adhere to the rules established by the Nova Scotia Medical Officer of Health, Nova Scotia State of Emergency and the various user groups’ governing associations, specifically Hockey Nova Scotia, Skate Canada and the Maritime Hockey League,” Jason MacDonald, the town’s operation director and deputy-CAO, said on Friday, Aug. 21, 2020.

“The plan also takes into consideration the human and financial resources available to the town during the pandemic. As this is an evolving situation, our plan may be altered at any



The Amherst Stadium, pictured here in a December 2019 photo, will reopen on Sept. 9, 2020, though it won't be business as usual because of the COVID-19 pandemic (Tom McCoag / Town of Amherst)



time and will be updated as the protocols are updated or changed.”

The stadium was closed in March as the pandemic hit.

The reopening plan calls for the ice surface to be ready for use on opening day. However, because of the provincially mandated pandemic protocols the stadium will only be utilized for practices and tryouts at this time. Games, tournaments and competitions are not permitted under the existing protocols.

While the stadium will be open for ice rentals, it will not be open for the general public. The stadium’s heated room, community room, walking track and canteen will remain closed as it would be impossible to ensure the protocols, such as social distancing, are followed. The main lobby will also be off limits.

The renter of the facility will be responsible for ensuring all the requirements of the state of emergency, Health Protection Act orders and sport governing bodies are adhered to. This includes social distancing, wearing of masks and gathering limits.

A maximum of 50 people will be allowed in the stadium for practices. This includes players, coaches, parents and town staff. Those attending practices will be required to vacate the ice surface immediately upon expiration of their rental and all people, excluding town staff, must exit the stadium within 15 minutes of the conclusion of the practice.

To ensure safety, only the dressing rooms on one side of the stadium will be used during each scheduled rental. As an example, if a practice was scheduled for 6 p.m., the on-ice participants and off-ice participants would enter the stadium via the north-side doors 15 minutes before the practice started.

The on-ice participants would be assigned enough dressing rooms on the north side of the building to ensure social distancing.

Non-ice participants will have to wear masks at all times and can only sit, while ensuring social distancing via clearly marked seating, on the north side of the stadium.

Continuing with the example, the next practice would be at 7:15 p.m. Participants would be assigned dressing rooms on the south side and could only enter via the south-side doors 15 minutes before the practice began. Off-ice participants would be required to sit, while ensuring social distancing, on the south side of the building.

Alternating sides will ensure sanitization protocols can be followed.

It will also be the responsibility of the renter to have a “COVID Team Officer” in attendance who will be responsible to ensure all protocols established under the state of emergency and Health Protection Act are followed. This includes recording the names and phone numbers of all people who enter the building for the practice.



While competitions are not allowed at this point, the town is anticipating they will be allowed in the future. As a result, staff have also developed a usage plan for when competition resumes. It details how teams and game officials will enter the building, the use of dressing rooms to ensure social distancing and how spectators will be allowed into the facility.

The number of people able to enter the stadium during a competition will be limited to 200. This includes participants, officials, spectators and town staff.

It should be noted, there will be no game-day purchasing of tickets at the stadium and spectators will have to sit in a marked seat. Spectators will need to provide personal information to allow tracking and will have to vacate the facility as soon as the game ends.

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