

requirements and guidelines 

Return to Swimming Plan
swim nova scotia 

100+ years of swimming in nova scotia

Version 9 – January 22, 2021

- Version 8 – December 17, 2020*
- Version 7 – September 28, 2020*
- Version 6 – August 14, 2020*
- Version 5 – August 6, 2020*
- Version 4 – July 6, 2020*
- Version 3 – June 24, 2020*
- Version 2 – June 5, 2020*
- Version 1 – May 28, 2020*

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Chief Medical Officer of Health
Dr. Robert Strang
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REVISIONS:

June 24, 2020 –

- Page 10: Added ‘See Modifications Phase 1 Appendix V p. 15-18’
- Page 11: Added ‘Will Be Modified’
- Page 14: Added Appendix III for Canadian Swim Coaches Association
- Pages 15-18: Added Appendix V Phase 1 Modifications

July 6, 2020 –

- Pages 12-14: Updated Phase 2

August 6, 2020 –

- Swimmers may utilize the facility changerooms/washrooms before and after training, provided the facility has established cleaning protocols that meet or exceed the minimum Nova Scotia Provincial Government requirements
- Pages 12-13: Phase 2 Modifications to Pool Training

August 14, 2020 –

- Page 9: Anticipated timelines updated
- Pages 14-15: Updated Swim NS Return to Competition

September 28, 2020 –

- Page 9: Anticipated timelines updated
- Pages 15: Updated Phase 3

December 17, 2020 –

- Page 15: Updated Phase 3

January 22, 2021 –

- Page 15: Updated Phase 3

LEGAL DISCLAIMER

The return to swimming guidelines included in this document are intended to be used for the purposes outlined in this document. Swim Nova Scotia strives to provide relevant and timely information; however, information known about COVID-19, “coronavirus”, and recommended health and safety measures can rapidly change, and no guarantee can be given at this time to the accuracy of the document. This information is accepted on the condition that errors or omissions shall not be made the basis for any claim, demand or cause for action.

This is not a substitute for actual legislation or orders of the Provincial Health Officers throughout Canada. In the event of ambiguity or conflict between the Return to Swimming Guidelines and the *Public Health Act* of Nova Scotia, regulations and orders within that *Act* and Government direction will prevail.

A reminder that all organizations must comply with the requirements of the Government of Nova Scotia and health officials.

INTRODUCTION

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, we as the collective swimming community have had to significantly adapt our normal routines and activities to prioritize the health and well-being of our community. While it has been difficult to step away from the pool, our efforts have played an important part in combatting the pandemic.

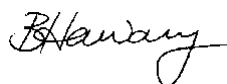
As the conversation turns towards re-opening elements of society, we are pleased to share the Return to Swimming plan with the Provincial swimming community. We are all keen to get back in the water to train and compete and we hope that this resource will provide clubs, coaches, swimmers, volunteers, facilities, etc. at all levels the information they need to develop strong plans to make a safe and timely return to the pool.

First and foremost, our return to the pool must be done in a safe manner. It is imperative that all return plans adhere to the municipal, provincial and national health guidelines and restrictions that are in place.

Swimming Canada has published a National Return to Swimming Resource document that has been key in the development of Swim Nova Scotia’s Return to Swimming Plan. The National Resource document was created by a Working Group comprised of representatives from key stakeholders in our sport. Included on the Working Group are representatives from swimmers, coaches (via the Canadian Swim Coaches Association), officials (via the National Officials Committee), provincial sections, science and medicine experts and Swimming Canada staff. The mandate of the Working Group was to develop a resource document and a framework to inform the resumption of competitive swimming in Canada. Swim Nova Scotia was pleased to have our Provincial Coach, Lance Cansdale as a member of the National Working Group.

The Return to Swimming Plan in Nova Scotia is laid out in five phases based on the best information from the Province of Nova Scotia available to date. As restrictions are gradually lifted, guidance documents prepared by the Province of Nova Scotia and our Aquatic Facilities will prevail as the ultimate guide for time required in each phase. We will continue to monitor the situation very closely and will update this document accordingly.

All of us as members of the swimming community have a responsibility to ensure we are doing everything we can to keep not only our community safe but our communities at large safe as well.



Bette El-Hawary,
Executive Director
Swim Nova Scotia

NOVA SCOTIA CORE PERSONAL PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES

All Nova Scotia Core Personal Public Health Measures to remain in place through all phases

	Ensuring physical distancing when outside the home
	Practicing good hygiene (hand washing, avoid touching face, respiratory etiquette, disinfect frequently touched surfaces)
	Staying informed, being prepared and following public health advice
	Limit non-essential travel
	Increasing environmental cleaning & ventilation of public spaces & worksites
	Staying at home (not going to school/work) and away from others when symptomatic and following public health advice
	Considering use of non-medical mask or face covering in situations where physical distance cannot be maintained
	Wearing medical mask if symptomatic and when in close contact with others or going out to access medical care. If not available, non-medical mask or face covering

OVERARCHING HEALTH, MEDICAL AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT COVID-19 AND SWIMMING

COVID-19 is a type of coronavirus mostly found in animals, but when humans become infected, symptoms can range from mild to severe depending on many variables. The World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic on March 11, 2020. Tragic consequences of this virus are being experienced around the world, including within Canada. There are many ongoing challenges for all of us to manage, and for our Canadian aquatics community, a safe and responsible return to swimming is paramount. The intent of the following information is not to provide permission to return to sport, but rather to supply the reader with a guide to current medical recommendations in an attempt to mitigate risks related to COVID-19. The goal is to avoid becoming infected and spreading to other people in the community. This document is meant to complement not replace local public health and recreation facility advice.

COVID-19 has a fragile lipid outer membrane, and is therefore highly susceptible to soaps and oxidants, such as chlorine. According to the Centre for Disease Control, there is no evidence that COVID-19 can be spread to humans through the use of pools, hot tubs or spas. Proper operation maintenance, disinfection with chlorine or bromine of pools should inactivate the virus (CDC 2020). A related coronavirus which caused the SARS epidemic in 2003, was found to be inactivated by UV treatment and disinfectors.

The following health, medical, and safety information are applicable to all Phases of the Return to Swimming Framework until such time that public health information and guidelines change. In addition, this information is generally applicable to all training environments including indoor pools, outdoor pools, open water, gym and outdoor land training. Provincial and Municipal Public Health information and guidelines must be respected always and supersede the information below.

HEALTH MONITORING

- Athletes, coaches, and staff must answer 'NO' to all the following questions prior to attending any training session (before arrival at the training session):
 - Do I have any of the symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, chest pain, difficult breathing, fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, abnormal muscle pain, headache, sore throat, painful swallowing, runny nose, new loss of taste or smell, gastrointestinal illness?
 - Have I been in contact with or cared for someone with COVID-19 within the last 2 weeks?
 - Have I returned from a trip outside the country within the last 2 weeks?
 - Stay home when sick, even with mild symptoms
- Any athlete or staff member that is required to leave a training session because of experiencing signs or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 is required to contact their physician to consider the appropriateness of further investigations. Further investigations may include a test for COVID-19, which then may lead to the notification of appropriate Public Health Officials regarding a positive test result. Public Health Officials will determine any requirements related to facility and/or group operations, as well as any requirements around contact tracing as it relates to managing the spread of the virus. The athlete or staff member may not return until receiving clearance from the physician, and if a test for COVID-19 was completed, a negative test result will be required before further training is permitted. If home isolation is required, guidelines have been provided in a subsequent section below
- Staff or athletes at risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are recommended to review their specific health concerns with their primary care provider prior to attending training sessions
 - Common underlying health conditions which may place an individual at higher risk would include hypertension, heart disease, diabetes, obesity, chronic respiratory diseases such as asthma and those who are otherwise immunocompromised

TRAINING GROUP PROTOCOL FOR POSITIVE TEST

If any athlete or staff test positive for COVID-19, the following steps must be taken:

- The athlete is removed from the training group immediately
- Team training for that training group will be suspended and all team members are placed in self-isolation for 14 days
- The local public health authority will provide further management recommendations which may include further testing, and arrange for contact tracing
- Any further team members who develop symptoms will be referred to the appropriate public health authority or helpline for guidance on testing and appropriate management
- Team training could resume if:
 - All team members undergo self-isolation for 14 days and no other member has developed symptoms
 - All team members are cleared to return to group training by their physician in accordance with Provincial guidelines

HOME ISOLATION RECOMMENDATIONS

If you find yourself ill with symptoms suggestive of COVID-19:

- Remain at home except to get urgent medical care
- Do not go to work, school, pool or other public places
- Cancel non-urgent appointments
- Do not use public transport
- Notify your doctor or local health department by phone, as testing may be required
- Monitor your symptoms and seek medical attention if you are having difficulty breathing, are unable to drink fluids, or if your illness is significantly worsening
- Wear a face mask when around others, particularly when physical distancing cannot be maintained
- Separate from household members, at least 2 meters always
- Do not have visitors
- Stay in a well-ventilated room (open windows) and use your own bathroom if possible
- Sanitize common use surfaces frequently
- If close contacts are vulnerable in terms of their health, consider alternative accommodations
- Avoid sharing household items
- Maintain excellent hand hygiene
- Follow any other local health regulations

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- Avoid being exposed to COVID-19 by physical distancing (minimum 2 meters). Keep a safe distance always. **This is critical as COVID-19 can be spread prior to symptom onset**
- Avoid crowded places
- Avoid greetings with handshakes, hugging, high fives, etc....
- Athletes and staff must respect physical distancing during all aspects of training
- Athletes, coaches and staff may consider the use of protective masks. Masks should be considered when physical distancing isn't always possible such as on public transit on the way to training, crowded areas, and for those with chronic medical conditions. Remember that using a mask is not enough alone and should be combined with other preventative measures such as frequent hand washing and consistent physical distancing
- Provide facility access with one entry point and a separate exit point
 - If both entry and exit points are located at the same place, put in place measures that provide physical distancing of at least 2 meters
 - Install signage to direct athletes, coaches, and staff to enter one at a time
 - Provide floor markings to guide athletes, coaches, and staff movements through and out of the facility

- Install physical markers on the floor or walls (cones, lines, stickers, wooden structures, etc.) that indicate appropriate two meters spacing distances for athletes, coaches, and staff working on deck or in dryland areas
- Coaches and staff must maintain appropriate distance from each other and facility staff members throughout the entire duration of time spent in the facility
- Athletes should arrive in their training suit
- Showers should be mandatory only if a shower is available near the pool deck (without the need to enter the changing room)
 - Athletes should encourage good pool hygiene by showering at home before and after swimming
- To maintain physical distancing of 2 meters during lane/laps swimming, the number of swimmers must be modified depending on the activities programmed in the aquatic facility
- To maintain physical distancing of 2 meters, swimmers should swim in the middle of the lane only during phase 1
- Keep the same group of athletes for each training session
 - Athletes looking to relocate to train with a resident group (e.g. University Team) must follow all provincial and municipal regulations related to travel along with all guidelines that may be in place. Registration policies and procedures must be adhered to
 - Athletes should only participate in one training group and should not move between multiple training groups
- Do not perform dry land training at the pool. Any dryland or pre-pool should be performed before entering the facility
- Do not arrive any earlier than necessary for receiving the training session and entering the pool
- At this time, physical therapy treatments (which includes hands-on services provided by massage therapists, physiotherapists, chiropractors, athletic therapists and strength and conditioning practitioners) are higher risk and such support services are not recommended. Other virtual and non-contact means of providing feedback and therapy advice should be considered as alternatives to physical treatment
- Spectators/parents to follow facility rules and are expected to adhere to the physical distancing rules
- Athletes, Coaches and Clubs are encouraged to act responsibly and promote appropriate behavior on social media with their peers

HAND AND PERSONAL HYGIENE

- Clean/wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitizer (>60% alcohol). Coaches and swimmers are encouraged to carry a personal supply of hand sanitizer for use as needed before, during and after training
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- On arrival, athletes, coaches, and staff must wash their hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer for at least 20 seconds
- Cover your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue or the crease of your elbow when you sneeze or cough
- Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces
- Do not share food and drinks

USE OF EQUIPMENT

- Clean equipment thoroughly with a disinfectant pre-and post-training session. Remember that COVID-19 can last between two hours and nine days on surfaces depending on many factors. Simple cleaning measures can inactivate the virus
- Athletes are not to leave equipment or mesh bags at the facility/site. All equipment needs to be brought home and thoroughly cleaned after each training session
- Personal items and clothing (backpacks, jackets, shoes, etc.) brought in by athletes, coaches, and staff should be kept to a minimum. Where bags must be brought in, they should be stored separately, with adequate space between each member's items (re: backpacks left 2 meters apart along pool deck)

- Limit the amount of equipment to be brought into the pool throughout the return to sport process. The coach is required to communicate necessary swim training equipment prior to each session
 - Athletes are not permitted to share any training equipment
- There is no permitted sharing of water bottles. Athletes, coaches, and staff are required to fill their personal water bottles at home, prior to leaving for the facility
- Coaches are not permitted to share hand-held equipment such as stopwatches, clipboards or pens, with colleagues or others. Reminder to clean this equipment with disinfecting wipes pre-and post-training session
- In general, pool set-up such as putting in lane lines and backstroke flags should be left to the facility to complete. Where this is not possible, specific protocols should be developed and hand washing should occur before and after setting up the equipment

SAFE SPORT

- All efforts should be made to ensure that Open and Observable environments are maintained at all times. Open and observable environments mean making meaningful and concerted efforts to avoid situations where a coach, official or other representative might be alone with an athlete and/or vulnerable individual. All interactions between an athlete and an individual who is in a position of trust should normally, and wherever possible, be in an environment or space that is both “open” and “observable” to others
- Open and Observable environments also apply to online communication. All forms of electronic communication (email, text, Zoom, Skype, etc.) should never be in the form of a one-on-one interaction and should always be done in a group setting
- Training sessions should include a minimum of 3 people
- Athletes are reminded to limit “deck changing” and change in the privacy and safety of their own home

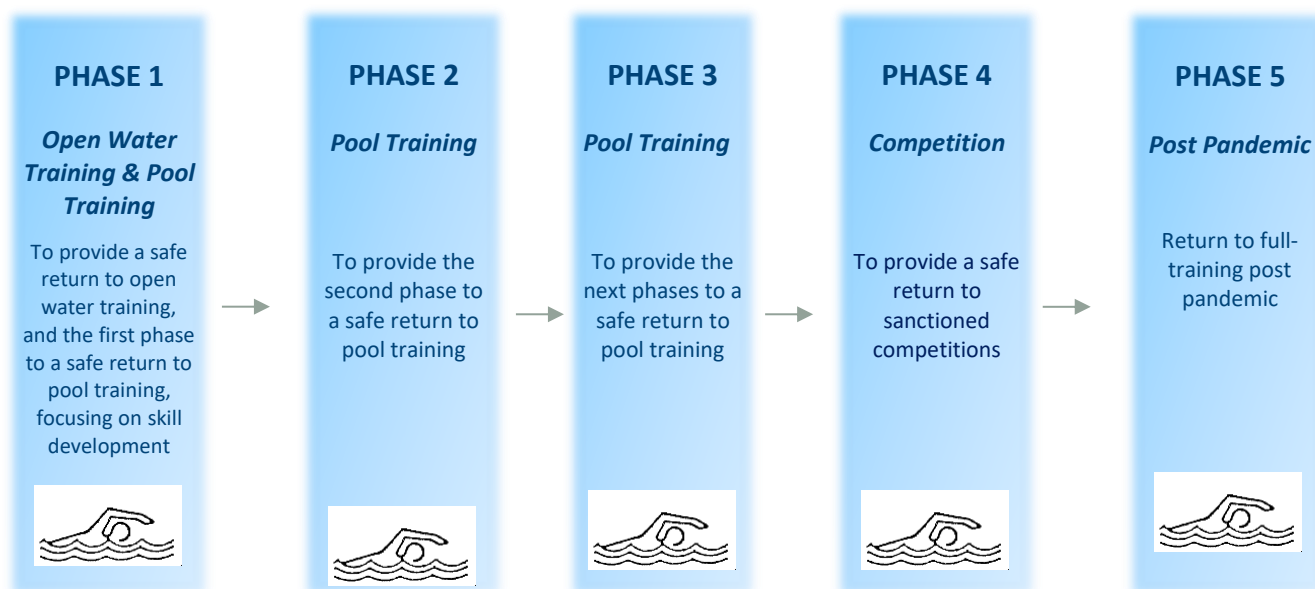
RETURN TO SWIMMING FRAMEWORK

All programs should initiate their return to swimming in a phased approach. It is recognized that each situation will vary from location to location, but the principles included in the framework below should be applied when developing a program plan.

The return to swimming should begin with a small controlled group in Phase 1 focusing on open water swimming and initial pool training. All programs should select groups based on the listed parameters and focus on skill development. An outline of phases 2-4 are included but may be adjusted based on the results of Phase 1, facility access and guidance documents becoming available from the Province of Nova Scotia and Swimming Canada.

As restrictions are gradually lifted, documents prepared by Nova Scotia's Health Authority will prevail as the ultimate guide for time required in each phase.

PHASES	ANTICIPATED TIMELINE
Phase 1 Return to Training - Open Water & Pool <i>(Skill Development)</i>	June 22, 2020 <i>Minimum 10-days post Provincial announcement that swimming activity can resume</i>
Phase 2 Return to Training - Pool	August 6, 2020
Phase 3 Return to Training - Pool	October 1, 2020
Phase 4 Return to Competition	August 14, 2020
Phase 5 Post Pandemic	TBD



Phase 1: Return to Training - Open Water & Pool - SEE MODIFICATIONS PHASE 1 APPENDIX V p.18-21

Overview:

To provide a safe return to open water and the first phase to pool training, focusing on skill development.

All programs should initiate their return to swimming in a phased in approach. It is recognized that each situation will vary from Club to Club based on their facility, among other things. The principles in this framework must be applied when returning to swimming and must adhere to local public health information and guidelines, including facility procedures. A registered Coach must be present and overseeing all training sessions.

The return to swimming in this phase begins with small controlled group sizes. Head Coaches should designate specific training groups that remain consistent throughout Phase 1. An outline of Phases 2 and 3 are included but could be adjusted based on the results from Phase 1 and new information from public health officials and facilities.

Everyone must familiarize themselves with all aspects of the Overarching Health, Medical and Safety Information and Considerations along with Nova Scotia's Personal Public Health Measures sections of this plan.

Head Coaches, on behalf of their Club must submit a COVID-19 Return to Training Club Plan Form and required documents to Swim Nova Scotia to be eligible to begin training.

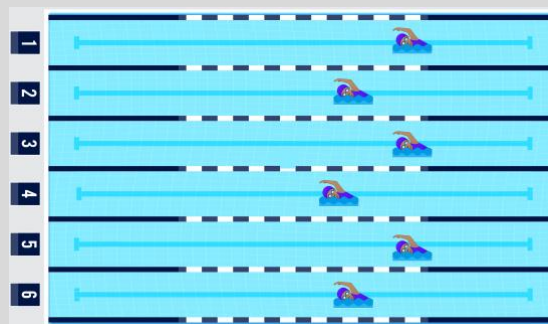
Group Size:

- Group size must not exceed Provincial social gathering limits
- Physical distancing for swimmers must always be maintained (currently 6 feet or 2 meters) for the entirety of the scheduled training session
- To ensure proper physical distancing there should only be one swimmer per lane in Phase 1 if training in a pool. Therefore, group size will be limited by the number of available lanes if conducting pool training as well as public health restrictions. If your facility does not have lane ropes, swimmers should maintain a minimum distance of 2m per swimmer. Swim Nova Scotia will work one on one with those facilities and Coaches to ensure physical distancing requirements are adhered to.



Example: Swimmers, staggered, maintaining the current physical distancing requirements, with safety personnel/coach nearby. Clearly designated entry and exit points.

Example: One (1) swimmer per lane, swimming up and down the middle of the pool. Swimmers start/finish from opposite ends of the pool, or from the middle of the pool maintaining the current physical distancing requirements.



Swimmer Requirements:

- Swimmers must be capable of independently adhering to strict guidelines
- Swimmers must bring and utilize their own hand sanitizer, and practice proper hand hygiene
- Swimmers are required to bring and leave with their own equipment (no sharing)
- Swimmers are required to bring and leave with their own water bottle (no sharing)
- Swimmers are encouraged to wear their bathing suits to training and not access public change rooms/washrooms
- Swimmers should get dropped off and picked up outside of the facility/site
- Swimmer age and ability restrictions may be implemented, refer to Swimming Canada's Return to Swim Document
- Swimmers must be **11 years of age or older** and be experienced/comfortable with open water swimming if participating in open water training (at ease in an open water environment)
- Swimmers must adhere to all facility guidelines such as directions to enter/exit the facility, etc.

Coach & Safety Personnel Requirements:

- Coaches and swimmers should recognize the potential health implications of reduced training volumes experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many swimmers will have experienced diminished strength, conditioning, and endurance capacity during their prolonged time away from swimming. To reduce the risk of over training injuries, it is advisable to begin with a gradual resumption of training, with the initial focus on low intensity and technique
- Coaches should make it clear that there is no penalty for missing practice and that if a swimmer, or any member of their family is feeling symptomatic they should remain at home. The Coach should be notified immediately
- Coaches must keep a detailed attendance sheet
- Coaches and staff must ensure they maintain appropriate distance from everyone (i.e. lifeguards, safety personnel, swimmers, etc.); if coaching at a facility, create visible markers on the floor indicating appropriate distancing on the deck
- Coaches should consider how they will educate their athletes on the importance of physical distancing and how they will reinforce this message during training
- Workout presentation should not be in groups
- Coaches should not share handheld equipment such as stopwatches, etc.
- Ensure Safe Sport Policies are being adhered to
- Coaches should develop a flexible workout plan, refer to suggested workout content in Swimming Canada's Return to Swim Document

If participating in Open Water Training, in addition to the above:

- Safety Personnel - The primary function should be safety and supervision of swimmers. Safety personnel should be able to reach a swimmer in the event of an emergency and should be placed in zones throughout the course. There should be a minimum of two safety personnel, one on the shoreline and one on the water kayaking/boating alongside or near the training group available to aid if required. Clubs should maintain an appropriate ratio of safety personnel/coach to swimmer based on the current social gathering restrictions. At the time of publication, the group gathering restriction is 10.

Overview:

To provide the next phases to training for all swimmers. Phase 1 (Pool OR Open Water) must be successfully implemented for a minimum of three weeks prior to moving to Phase 2. An updated Plan must be reviewed and approved by Swim Nova Scotia prior to moving to Phase 2.

Overarching health requirements outlined in Phase 1 must still be adhered to.

If desired, the group introduced in Phase 1 can add multiple daily training sessions.

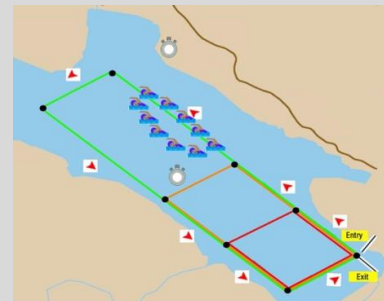
Open Water Training:

Option 1 – Expanded Group Training - Allow for up to 20 swimmers at one time while maintaining physical distancing of at least 2m (or 6 feet). The maximum group size can be up to 25, which may include coaches and/or safety personnel. There must be at least one coach/safety personnel in the water and one onshore.



Example: Expanded Training Group

This example (left diagram), demonstrates 13 swimmers in the water with one Coach/Safety Personnel in the water and one Coach/Safety Personnel on shore.



Group Size:

- Group size must not exceed 25
- Physical distancing for swimmers must always be maintained (currently 6 feet or 2 meters) for the entirety of the scheduled training session if more than 10 participants are in the training group

Option 2 – Bubble Training - A training bubble is a group of up to 10 swimmers that is exempt from social distancing, provided they stay together as a single training group for the day. This applies to water and dryland training.

If coaches can maintain physical distancing from training bubbles at all times, they would not be considered part of the training bubble and could coach multiple training bubbles at different times of the day. It is encouraged that Coaches stay with their designated training bubble for the duration of the session.

Example: Bubble Training

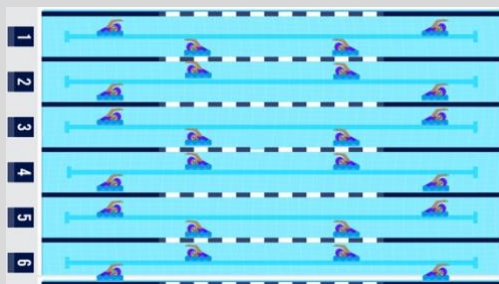
This example (right diagram) demonstrates a training bubble 10 swimmers in the water with one Coach/Safety Personnel in the water and one Coach/Safety Personnel on shore.

Group Size:

- Group size must not exceed 25 (no more than 10 swimmers)
- Physical distancing for coaches must always be maintained (currently 6 feet or 2 meters) for the entirety of the scheduled training session if there are 10 swimmers in the training bubble

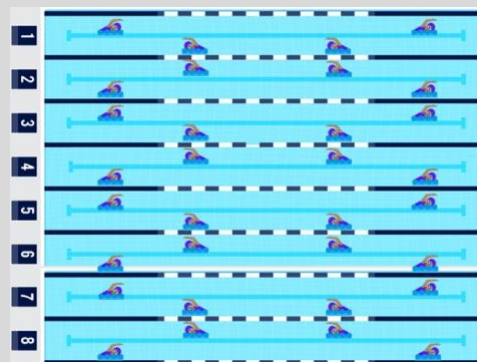
Pool Training:

Option 1 – Expanded Group Training – Allow for a maximum of 4 swimmers per lane at one time while maintaining physical distancing of at least 2m (or 6 feet). The maximum group size can be up to 50, which may include coaches.



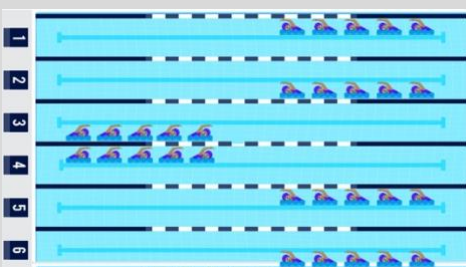
Example 1: Expanded Training Group This example (left diagram) allows for a total of 24 swimmers in the water - 4 swimmers per lane in a 6-lane pool.

Example 2: Expanded Training Group This example (right diagram) allows for a total of 32 swimmers in the water - 4 swimmers per lane in an 8-lane pool.



Option 2 - Bubble Training - A training bubble is a group of up to 10 swimmers that is exempt from social distancing, provided they stay together. This applies to water and dryland training. The maximum group size can be up to 50, which may include coaches.

If coaches can maintain physical distancing from training bubbles at all times, they would not be considered part of the training bubble and could coach multiple training bubbles at different times of the day. It is encouraged that Coaches stay with their designated training bubble for the duration of the session.

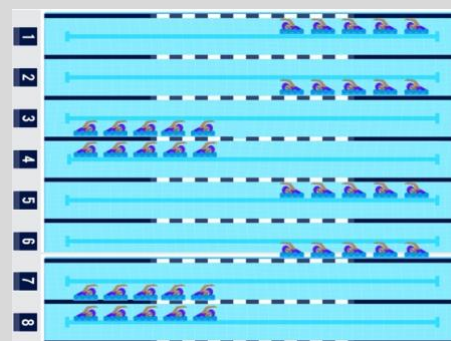


Example 1: Bubble Training

This example (left diagram) allows for a training bubble of 10 swimmers in 2 lanes in a 6-lane pool. Training bubbles would start from opposite ends of the pool and maintain physical distancing between each training bubble. Incidental, brief, unavoidable contact is acceptable between the training bubbles.

Example 2: Bubble Training

This example (right diagram) allows for a training bubble of 10 swimmers in 2 lanes in an 8-lane pool. Training bubbles would start from opposite ends of the pool and maintain physical distancing between each training bubble. Incidental, brief, unavoidable contact is acceptable between the training bubbles.



Group Size:

- Group size must not exceed 50 (no more than 10 swimmers per training bubble)

Physical distancing for coaches must always be maintained (currently 6 feet or 2 meters) for the entirety of the scheduled training session if there are 10 swimmers in the training bubble

Dryland Training:

Option 1 - Expanded Training Group – Allow for up to 50 swimmers at one time while maintaining physical distancing of at least 2m (or 6 feet). The maximum group size can be up to 50, which may include coaches.

Option 2 – Bubble Training - A training bubble is a group of up to 10 swimmers that is exempt from social distancing, provided they stay together as a single training group for the day. This applies to water and dryland training.

If coaches can maintain physical distancing from training bubbles at all times, they would not be considered part of the training bubble and could coach multiple training bubbles at different times of the day. It is encouraged that Coaches stay with their designated training bubble for the duration of the session.

Group Size:

- Group size must not exceed 50

Physical distancing for swimmers must always be maintained (currently 6 feet or 2 meters) for the entirety of the scheduled training session if more than 10 participants are in the training group

Swimmer Requirements:

- Swimmers must be capable of independently adhering to strict guidelines
- Swimmers must bring and utilize their own hand sanitizer, and practice proper hand hygiene
- Swimmers are required to bring and leave with their own equipment (no sharing)
- Swimmers are required to bring and leave with their own water bottle (no sharing)
- Swimmers are encouraged to wear their bathing suits to training and not access public change rooms/washrooms
- Swimmers should get dropped off and picked up outside of the facility/site
- Swimmer age and ability restrictions may be implemented, refer to Swimming Canada’s Return to Swim Document
- Swimmers must be 11 years of age or older and be experienced/comfortable with open water swimming if participating in open water training (at ease in an open water environment)
- Swimmers must adhere to all facility guidelines such as directions to enter/exit the facility, etc.

Coach & Safety Personnel Requirements:

- Coaches and swimmers should recognize the potential health implications of reduced training volumes experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many swimmers will have experienced diminished strength, conditioning, and endurance capacity during their prolonged time away from swimming. To reduce the risk of over training injuries, it is advisable to begin with a gradual resumption of training, with the initial focus on low intensity and technique
- Coaches should make it clear that there is no penalty for missing practice and that if a swimmer, or any member of their family is feeling symptomatic they should remain at home. The Coach should be notified immediately
- Coaches must keep a detailed attendance sheet
 - Coaches and staff must ensure they maintain appropriate distance from everyone (i.e. lifeguards, safety personnel, swimmers, etc.); if coaching at a facility, create visible markers on the floor indicating appropriate distancing on the deck
 - Coaches should consider how they will educate their athletes on the importance of physical distancing and how they will reinforce this message during training
- Workout presentation should not be in groups
- Coaches should not share handheld equipment such as stopwatches, etc.
- Ensure Safe Sport Policies are being adhered to
- Coaches should develop a flexible workout plan, refer to suggested workout content in Swimming Canada’s Return to Swim Document

If participating in Open Water Training, in addition to the above:

- **Safety Personnel** - The primary function should be safety and supervision of swimmers. Safety personnel should be able to reach a swimmer in the event of an emergency and should be placed in zones throughout the course. There should be a minimum of two safety personnel, one on the shoreline and one on the water kayaking/boating alongside or near the training group available to aid if required. Clubs should maintain an appropriate ratio of safety personnel/coach to swimmer based on the current social gathering restrictions.

Phase 3: Return to Training – Pool – *version 7 September 28, 2020* *version 8, December 17, 2020* *version 9, January 22, 2021*

Overview:

To continue to provide a safe return to pool training for all swimmers increase the number of swimmers in a training group and gradually their training volume. This phase allows a training group of up to 50 swimmers and coaches with no physical distancing in a given field of play and will **come into effect January 25, 2021.**

Group Size:

- Group size must not exceed 50 in a given field of play (this includes swimmers and coaches)
- Spectators are **NOT** permitted to attend practices, pending facility access and regulations. Each facility has its own guidelines and capacity limits which must be respected at all times. Spectators must be physically distanced from the field of play. Masks must be worn at all times by all spectators in an indoor space.

Swimmer Recommendations:

- Swimmers must be capable of independently adhering to strict guidelines and take direction from Coaches and facility staff
- Swimmers must bring and utilize their own hand sanitizer, and practice proper hand hygiene
- Swimmers are required to bring and leave with their own equipment (no sharing)
- Swimmers are required to bring and leave with their own water bottle (no sharing)
- Swimmers are encouraged to wear their bathing suits to training if access to public change rooms/washrooms is not available at the facility
- Swimmers should get dropped off and picked up outside of the facility/site if access to the facility is restricted to spectators
- Swimmers must wear a mask upon entry/exit to the facility
- Swimmers must adhere to all facility guidelines such as directions to enter/exit the facility, etc.

Coaching Recommendations:

- Coaches must use Swim Nova Scotia’s online health monitoring platform (through Kinduct)
- Ensure Safe Sport Policies are being adhered to

Phase 4: Return to Competition *version 6 August 14, 2020* *version 8, December 17, 2020* *version 9, January 22, 2021*

Overview:

Safety is the key priority with all aspects of return to training and competition. Safety with regards to COVID-19, but also injuries related to an increase in activity and/or training need to be considered carefully when adding competitive opportunities. Clubs must adhere to Municipal, Provincial Health Mandates and all Facility Regulations. All restrictions outlined by Swim Nova Scotia must be adhered to including social gathering limits, physical distancing and other requirements related to the Swim Nova Scotia Return to Swimming Plan.

Description:

~~Sanctioned competitions will be suspended December 21, 2020 – January 11, 2021.~~

The competitive environment (training and competition venues) should be continually assessed to ensure precautions are taken to minimize risk to the swimmers, volunteers/officials and others in attendance.

Effective immediately, Swim Nova Scotia has lifted the suspension on sanctioning competitions. The resumption of competitions will be a multi-phased approach. Clubs may apply to host sanctioned In-House Competitions (Time Trials). Swim Nova Scotia will begin a Virtual Swim Meet Series through the Fall of 2020. **Preliminary information is outlined below and is subject to change.**

As restrictions are gradually lifted, guidance documents prepared by the Province of Nova Scotia and Swimming Canada will help in **advancing** the safe return to competition plan.

PHASE 1 – AUGUST 2020 – IN-HOUSE COMPETITIONS

At this time, Clubs may begin to organize short course meters in-house competitions (Time Trials). *Long course meters in-house competitions will be introduced at a later date.* These are single Club events; multiple teams cannot compete against each other at this time; multiple teams may be introduced at a later date.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all in-house competitions (Time Trials) will be run as Class One Sanctioned Time Trials and allow for Provincial record attempts and swimmers to attempt to achieve a time which may qualify them for entry into future meets.

Note: No advertising is required for Class One Sanctioned Time Trials during Phase 1 of the Swim NS Return to Competition.

Clubs must do the following:

- Complete the attached In-House (Time Trial) application form and submit to Swim NS seven (7) days in advance of the proposed start date
- The In House (Time Trial) must take place in an approved Facility
- SNC Rules must be adhered to
- Ensure only registered competitive members are participating
- Results must be sent to Swim NS 48 hours following the conclusion
- Social-gathering limits as outlined by Swim Nova Scotia must be adhered to at all times
- Physical distancing restrictions as outlined by Swim Nova Scotia must be adhered to at all times
- Swim Nova Scotia's Return to Swimming Overarching Health Considerations must be adhered to at all times

A minimum number of officials are required and must adhere to Swimming Canada Rule, CSW 1.2.1. See Swim Nova Scotia's Officials Return to Competition document.

PHASE 2 – FALL 2020 – VIRTUAL SANCTIONED SWIM MEETS

There will be two virtual sanctioned swim meets for each Nova Tech, Age Group and Masters swimming programs in Nova Scotia. Competition details will be available in the Fall, which will include the order of events, event limits and competition timeframes.

Clubs will also receive detailed instructions on how to run a Virtual Swim Meet.

PHASE 3 – TBD – SANCTIONED SWIM MEETS

As Provincial gathering limits increase, Swim Nova Scotia will publish Phase 3 of the Return to Competition Plan.

Phase 5: Post Pandemic

Overview:

Return to full-training post pandemic

STAKEHOLDERS ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Swim Nova Scotia has many key stakeholders to ensure a safe & successful return to swimming

Stakeholder	Role & Responsibilities
Swimming Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead in the development and updating of the Return to Swimming Plan • Publish Plan and Support Documents • Promote plan nationally • Educate Provincial Sections & CSCA, SC Staff and Coaches, HPC athletes
Swim Nova Scotia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt and promote provincial plan with provincial stakeholders (clubs, provincial funders, key facilities, etc.) with guidance from National Framework • Promote and follow all Provincial guidelines • Educate clubs (head coaches/presidents) • Monitor club implementation and offer ongoing club support • Feedback to Swimming Canada, CSCA and facilities
Canadian Swim Coaches Association (CSCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote National and Provincial plans • Provide education opportunities for coaches nationally • Feedback to Swimming Canada and Provinces
Clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to all Provincial, Municipal and Facility specific guidelines • Adhere to Swim Nova Scotia Return to Swimming Plan • Promote plan with facility and stakeholders and establish a Club plan with facility if required • Ensure Coaches, Swimmers and Parents are educated • Ensure Return to Swimming Agreements are signed • Ensure Acknowledgement of Risk & COVID-19 Declaration forms are signed • Monitor implementation and adjust plans as needed • Feedback to Swim Nova Scotia and Facility Managers
Head Coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to all Provincial, Municipal and Facility specific guidelines • Adhere to Swim Nova Scotia Return to Swimming Plan • Educate staff coaches on the plan and expectations • Educate swimmers on the plan and expectations • Monitor implementation and adjust plans as needed • Lead by example • Feedback to Club President, Facility Managers and Swim Nova Scotia
Staff Coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to all Provincial, Municipal and Facility specific guidelines • Adhere to Swim Nova Scotia Return to Swimming Plan • Educate swimmers on the plan and expectations • Monitor implementation and adjust plans as needed • Lead by example • Feedback to Head Coach
Swimmers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to all Provincial, Municipal and Facility specific guidelines • Adhere to Swim Nova Scotia Return to Swimming Plan • Lead by example • Feedback to Coaches, including notification if they have a negative response to the Health Monitoring questions • Ensure Return to Swimming Agreements are signed • Ensure Acknowledgement of Risk forms are signed
Support Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to all provincial, municipal and facility specific guidelines outlined in plans • Lead by example • Feedback to Coaches

APPENDICES

- I. [SWIMMING CANADA RETURN TO SWIMMING RESOURCE DOCUMENT](#)
- II. [SWIMMING CANADA OPEN WATER TRAINING FOR INDIVIDUALS](#)
- III. [CANADIAN SWIM COACHES ASSOCIATION](#)
- IV. COVID-19 RESOURCE PAGES
 - [Swim Nova Scotia COVID-19 Resources](#)
 - [Swimming Canada COVID-19 Resources](#)
 - [Nova Scotia Provincial Government COVID-19 Resources](#)
 - [Public Health Agency of Canada COVID-19 Resources](#)

V. MODIFICATIONS PHASE 1

Phase 1: Return to Training - Open Water & Pool & Dryland **version 3 June 24, 2020**

Overview:

To provide a safe return to open water and the first phase to pool training, focusing on skill development based on June 18th announcements by the Province of Nova Scotia.

All programs should initiate their return to swimming in a phased in approach. It is recognized that each situation will vary from Club to Club based on their facility, among other things. The principles in this framework must be applied when returning to swimming and must adhere to local public health information and guidelines, including facility procedures. A registered Coach must be present and overseeing all training sessions.

The return to swimming in this phase begins with small controlled group sizes. Head Coaches should designate specific training groups that remain consistent throughout Phase 1 for one week if applicable. An outline of Phases 2 and 3 are included but could be adjusted based on the results from Phase 1 and new information from public health officials and facilities.

Everyone must familiarize themselves with all aspects of the Overarching Health, Medical and Safety Information and Considerations along with Nova Scotia's Personal Public Health Measures sections of this plan.

Head Coaches, on behalf of their Club must submit a COVID-19 Return to Training Club Plan Form and required documents to Swim Nova Scotia to be eligible to begin training.

Open Water Training:

Option 1 – Expanded Group Training - Allow for up to 15 swimmers at one time while maintaining physical distancing of at least 2m (or 6 feet). The maximum group size can be up to 20, which may include coaches and/or safety personnel. There must be at least one coach/safety personnel in the water and one onshore.



Example: Expanded Training Group

This example (left diagram), demonstrates 13 swimmers in the water with one Coach/Safety Personnel in the water and one Coach/Safety Personnel on shore.

Group Size:

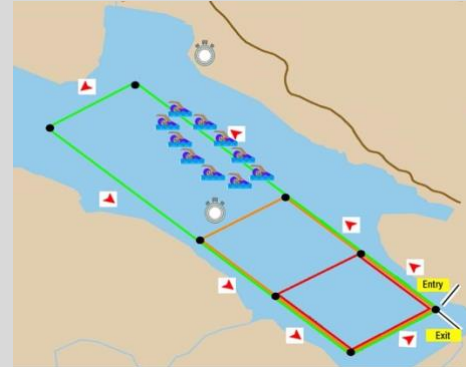
- Group size must not exceed 20
- Physical distancing for swimmers must always be maintained (currently 6 feet or 2 meters) for the entirety of the scheduled training session if more than 10 participants are in the training group

Option 2 – Bubble Training - A training bubble is a group of up to 10 swimmers that is exempt from social distancing, provided they stay together as a single training group for the week. This applies to water and dryland training.

If coaches can maintain physical distancing from training bubbles at all times, they would not be considered part of the training bubble and could coach multiple training bubbles at different times of the day. It is encouraged that Coaches stay with their designated training bubble for the duration of the session.

Example: Bubble Training

This example (right diagram) demonstrates a training bubble 10 swimmers in the water with one Coach/Safety Personnel in the water and one Coach/Safety Personnel on shore.

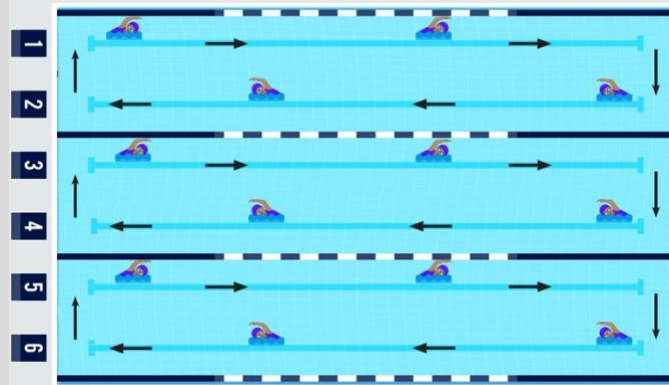


Group Size:

- Group size must not exceed 20 (no more than 10 swimmers)
- Physical distancing for coaches must always be maintained (currently 6 feet or 2 meters) for the entirety of the scheduled training session if there are 10 swimmers in the training bubble

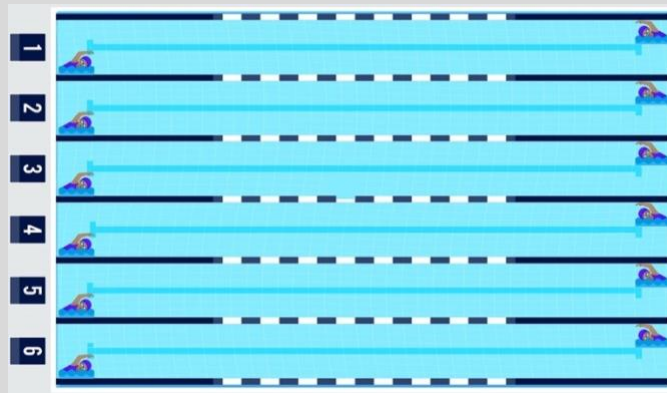
Pool Training:

Option 1 – Expanded Group Training – Allow for up to 15 swimmers at one time while maintaining physical distancing of at least 2m (or 6 feet). The maximum group size can be up to 20, which may include coaches.



Example 1: Expanded Training Group This example (left diagram) allows for a total of 12 swimmers in the water - 4 swimmers per 2 lanes.

Example 2: Expanded Training Group This example (right diagram) allows for a total of 12 swimmers in the water - 2 swimmers per single lane.

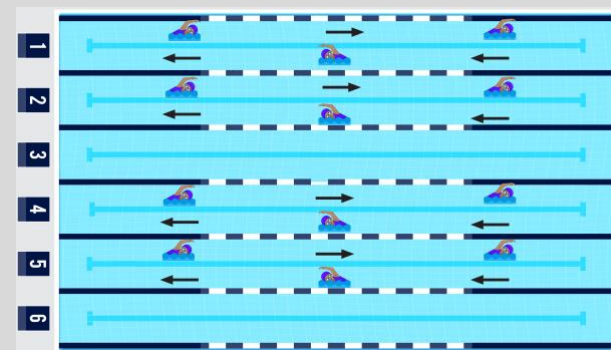


Group Size:

- Group size must not exceed 20
- Physical distancing for swimmers must always be maintained (currently 6 feet or 2 meters) for the entirety of the scheduled training session if more than 10 participants are in the training group

Option 2 - Bubble Training A training bubble is a group of up to 10 swimmers that is exempt from social distancing, provided they stay together as a single training group for the week. This applies to water and dryland training.

If coaches can maintain physical distancing from training bubbles at all times, they would not be considered part of the training bubble and could coach multiple training bubbles at different times of the day. It is encouraged that Coaches stay with their designated training bubble for the duration of the session.



Example: Bubble Training

This example (left diagram) allows for a training bubble of 6 swimmers in 2 lanes with one coach. One empty lane in between with another training bubble of 6 swimmers with one coach.

Group Size:

- Group size must not exceed 20 (no more than 10 swimmers)
- Physical distancing for coaches must always be maintained (currently 6 feet or 2 meters) for the entirety of the scheduled training session if there are 10 swimmers in the training bubble

Dryland Training:

Option 1 - Expanded Training Group – Allow for up to 50 swimmers at one time while maintaining physical distancing of at least 2m (or 6 feet). The maximum group size can be up to 50, which may include coaches.

Option 2 – Bubble Training - A training bubble is a group of up to 10 swimmers that is exempt from social distancing, provided they stay together as a single training group for the week. This applies to water and dryland training.

If coaches can maintain physical distancing from training bubbles at all times, they would not be considered part of the training bubble and could coach multiple training bubbles at different times of the day. It is encouraged that Coaches stay with their designated training bubble for the duration of the session.

Group Size:

- Group size must not exceed 50
- Physical distancing for swimmers must always be maintained (currently 6 feet or 2 meters) for the entirety of the scheduled training session if more than 10 participants are in the training group

Swimmer Requirements:

- Swimmers must be capable of independently adhering to strict guidelines
- Swimmers must bring and utilize their own hand sanitizer, and practice proper hand hygiene
- Swimmers are required to bring and leave with their own equipment (no sharing)
- Swimmers are required to bring and leave with their own water bottle (no sharing)
- Swimmers are encouraged to wear their bathing suits to training and not access public change rooms/washrooms
- Swimmers should get dropped off and picked up outside of the facility/site
- Swimmer age and ability restrictions may be implemented, refer to Swimming Canada's Return to Swim Document
- Swimmers must be **11 years of age or older** and be experienced/comfortable with open water swimming if participating in open water training (at ease in an open water environment)
- Swimmers must adhere to all facility guidelines such as directions to enter/exit the facility, etc.

Coach & Safety Personnel Requirements:

- Coaches and swimmers should recognize the potential health implications of reduced training volumes experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many swimmers will have experienced diminished strength, conditioning, and endurance capacity during their prolonged time away from swimming. To reduce the risk of over training injuries, it is advisable to begin with a gradual resumption of training, with the initial focus on low intensity and technique
- Coaches should make it clear that there is no penalty for missing practice and that if a swimmer, or any member of their family is feeling symptomatic they should remain at home. The Coach should be notified immediately
- Coaches must keep a detailed attendance sheet
- Coaches and staff must ensure they maintain appropriate distance from everyone (i.e. lifeguards, safety personnel, swimmers, etc.); if coaching at a facility, create visible markers on the floor indicating appropriate distancing on the deck
- Coaches should consider how they will educate their athletes on the importance of physical distancing and how they will reinforce this message during training
- Workout presentation should not be in groups
- Coaches should not share handheld equipment such as stopwatches, etc.
- Ensure Safe Sport Policies are being adhered to
- Coaches should develop a flexible workout plan, refer to suggested workout content in Swimming Canada's Return to Swim Document

If participating in Open Water Training, in addition to the above:

- Safety Personnel - The primary function should be safety and supervision of swimmers. Safety personnel should be able to reach a swimmer in the event of an emergency and should be placed in zones throughout the course. There should be a minimum of two safety personnel, one on the shoreline and one on the water kayaking/boating alongside or near the training group available to aid if required. Clubs should maintain an appropriate ratio of safety personnel/coach to swimmer based on the current social gathering restrictions. At the time of publication, the group gathering restriction is 10.