



COMMUNICATION

Issue: School Use of Playgrounds and Community Rinks

Under the Critical (Red) level of the Manitoba Pandemic Response System, current public health orders state the following:

- *Outdoor recreational facilities such as football and soccer fields, skateboard parks, playgrounds, hockey rinks, and toboggan slides must be closed while these orders are in effect.*
- *All sports are suspended while under the Critical (Red) response level. This includes school sports.*

Additionally, schools are currently operating under the Restricted (Orange) level, and the following statement refers to physical education programming:

- *Schools may continue to offer physical education, provided all public health measures are followed, including physical distancing. In addition, students in Grade 4 and higher must wear a mask while in the gym.*

In light of the above orders, public health officials have confirmed the following:

1. While under the Critical (Red) level, playgrounds are closed. Because schools remain in the Restricted (Orange) response level, school playgrounds can be used by schools during school hours, and after-hours use is not permitted.
2. While a community is under the Critical (Red) level and schools are under the Restricted (Orange) level, schools that access community playgrounds during the school day may continue to do so during the school day, and after-hours use is not permitted.
3. While a community is under the Critical (Red) level and schools are under the Restricted (Orange) level, child care centres, located in schools, can continue to access the playground during the times of operation, before and after school.
4. Order 11(3) specifically provides that the closure of sporting facilities does not prevent gyms with “volleyball or basketball courts in public or private schools from being used for physical education and practices during school hours.” Only gyms within schools may be open—no other sporting facilities are exempted from closure. It is implicit in Order 11(3) that Order 11(2) does prevent gyms, other than those in schools, or any other sporting facility from being used by a school.

RELEVANT WEB LINKS

Manitoba Public Health Orders: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/restartmb/prs/index.html#provinciallevel>
Pandemic Response System Schools: https://manitoba.ca/asset_library/en/covid/response-management-K-12-restricted.pdf

Please forward questions and inquiries to educovid19@gov.mb.ca.

Additional information is available on the Manitoba Education COVID-19 website at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/latest.html.