

Notice - Thursday March 12, 2020

Gay Ottawa Volleyball's precautionary measures for its upcoming Tournament and Gala, taking place March 14-15, 2020, to help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus.

In light of the announcement of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on 11 March 2020, as well as the announcement of the first case of coronavirus in Ottawa on the same day, please carefully review the following information regarding the precautions we are taking to ensure a safe and healthy tournament and gala weekend:

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General

- The 29th Annual Gay Ottawa Volleyball Tournament and Gala, planned for the weekend of March 14-15, 2020, is expected to continue.
- We are implementing a variety of risk mitigation strategies as laid out below and we continue to complete a systematic review of risk to inform decision-making in relation to the entire event.
- We strongly recommend that all participants take extra care to practice good hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, based on [Public Health Agency of Canada](#) and [Ottawa Public Health Guidelines](#):
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer.
 - You are encouraged to bring your own supply of hand sanitizer if you have some, as hand sanitizers at venues may run out.
 - As much as possible, avoid touching surfaces with your hands.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth unless you have just washed your hands.
 - Cough/sneeze into a tissue or the bend of your arm, not your hand.
 - If you use a tissue, discard the tissue in a waste bin immediately, and then wash your hands.
- Stay home if you are sick, especially if you have recently traveled abroad, or if you have been in contact with a sick person who has traveled within the past two weeks.
- If you believe you may have symptoms of COVID-19 while in Ottawa, please contact your doctor or nurse practitioner (if you live in the Ottawa area) or contact Ottawa Public Health at 613-580-6744. DO NOT present yourself at the hospital unless your life is in danger or if you need emergency care.
- For people living with HIV, our understanding is that provided they are taking their medications as normally directed by their doctor, their risk is similar to those who are HIV negative.



Tournament-specific precautions

- We are working to ensure that there is hand sanitizer available at the University of Ottawa Montpetit Hall and at the Rideau Sports Centre, in reception areas and at gymnasium entry-exit points.
- There will be **no shaking hands** at the beginning and end of each match. Instead, we recommend finding creative ways to practice team spirit and good sportsmanship by doing a cheer for the opposing team at the end of your match.
- We also encourage fist-bumps and elbow-bumps as alternatives to high-fives and hand-shaking.
- If you have a sick player on your team, they should stay home. You can take advantage of the Spare Players List (accessible to team captains) and have them join your team.
- Our player eligibility policy will also be relaxed. If you have to change your roster on the fly, please inform the Site Coordinator and make sure every player has completed their [liability waiver](#). However, a player may still compete for **one team only** at semi-final and final matches on Sunday.
- The format this year of having two tournament venues, with morning and afternoon waves, works in our favour by reducing the overall size of our gathering, in alignment with guidance we are following on mass gatherings.
- At any given time, we expect there to be no more than approximately 125 individuals (participants, referees, spectators and volunteers) at either gym on Saturday, and no more than approximately 200 individuals (participants, referees, spectators and volunteers) at either gym on Sunday.



Gala-specific precautions

- We are working to ensure that there is hand sanitizer available at the Canadian Museum of Nature throughout the building.
- All catering and bartending staff will be wearing gloves.
- Catering staff will be serving the buffet. They will be the only ones handling serving utensils. Guests will not serve themselves.
- Hand wipes will be available throughout the building, including at every bar.
- This year, given our nature-related theme, we were already making a number of efforts to be more environmentally conscious, one of which is having all dinner and drink ware made of compostable materials, which will preserve water and minimize waste.
- We strongly discourage reusing or sharing plates, utensils, and cups.
- The Canadian Museum of Nature may have up to 500 individuals on the premises (350 tournament guests, plus guests who purchased tickets for 930pm entry, plus staff and volunteers) during the event. We do not expect to cancel the gala, and as a volunteer-run not-for-profit organization, we are not currently in a financial position to issue refunds. Individuals should make their own decisions about whether to attend the gala, based on their own health needs.

Stay informed: Links to Official Information

Ottawa Public Health

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

Government of Canada

Risk-informed decision-making for mass gatherings during COVID-19 global outbreak

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/mass-gatherings-risk-assesment.html>

University of Ottawa Coronavirus Updates

<https://www.uottawa.ca/coronavirus>

