



Manitoba
Horse Council

MHC Covid Update for Equestrian Facility Operators

February 27, 2021

On February 27 a change of classification was confirmed, in that indoor equestrian facilities are now classed as indoor **recreation** facilities rather than indoor **sporting** facilities. This wording affects the legalities of which operations are allowed to operate under the Provincial Health Orders (PHOs).

Throughout this help sheet, “coach” comments also apply to “trainers” who are working with riders.

From February 23, 2021 until further notice

Indoor recreation facilities such as rinks, gymnastic clubs and martial arts (and horse riding facilities) may reopen at 25 per cent capacity of the arena capacity (including both staff and patrons) for individual, one-on-one instruction only.

The Schedule of businesses permitted to open still includes stables as #73 so boarders may still provide those essential services including exercise riding, but must be counted within the capacity of the facility.

One person may accompany the rider with their coach during the lesson. It would be the facility owners' responsibility to decide their total capacity before making the decision as to what their safe 25% building maximum is. Owners may still set their own safe indoor arena limits of horses and riders/coaches which may be less than the capacity number quoted.

All persons must wear masks at all times apart from when mounted, except if another person comes within 6' of the horse and rider (for instance, for a tack check etc.)

Examples:

- a. Non-boarders (the public) may book one-on-one lessons on school horses within the facility's decided capacity number;
- b. Boarders may ride their horses for condition in a non-lesson situation as long as they are included in the capacity number; and
- c. If at any time the facility does not have lesson horse bookings/boarders to fulfil the owner's capacity number, the owner may choose to book non-boarded horses to be hauled in for one-on-one lessons.
- d. Regarding c. above, horses cannot be hauled in for recreation riding or conditioning, only one-on-one lessons.

The above examples are situations which operate within the provincial requirements such as no indoor group lessons even if it is family members (or bubble), 25% capacity of the facility, booking calendar, contact tracing, mask wearing while unmounted, hand and equipment washing and sanitizing, social distancing etc. So if the owner decides the 25% capacity of the facility is 6 people at one time, that could be made up of 1 student with coach and a parent, 1 boarder riding for condition and 1 haul-in with

coach, just as an example. There are many permutations, as numbers could also include people not in the arena.

Outdoor sport facilities may be open for casual sports as well as organized practices and games, with multi-team tournaments not permitted.

MHC understands “organized practices and games” could mean group lessons. Multi-team tournaments translate to competitions (therefore not permitted yet). Indoor washroom facilities at outdoor sporting or recreational venues can reopen to those participating in the associated activities., however, those using outdoor arenas should not be able to tack up or otherwise use the indoor facilities apart from the washrooms. However, as with indoor activities, the Covid requisites of booking calendar, contact tracing, mask wearing while unmounted, hand and equipment washing and sanitizing, social distancing etc. etc., should be in place.

The new orders don't give any recommendations for time slots/calendars such as came with the last PHO, but in order to accommodate everyone who wishes to have lessons and conditioning rides, it's recommended that time slots are still maintained to everyone chance to ride. Good business practice would give the regular boarders and students time slot priority over haul-ins.

Those who operate a facility which does not include boarders may allow haul-ins for indoor coaching but not conditioning, and should follow all the provincial Covid-prevention requirements, as usual.

Moving on

Manitoba Horse Council will continue to work on behalf of its members to provide safe and appropriate recommendations for the equestrian community as the Province moves us towards a more open daily life.

Signage, waivers, contract tracing forms etc continue to be available on Manitoba Horse Council's Competitions web page.

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