

Indianapolis Rowing Center - Return to Rowing Plan

3/4/2021

Purpose: Outline plans for Indianapolis Rowing Center to return to on the water practice in a safe, controlled manner. The plan has many phases/tollgates which will need to be met in order to move to the next phase. This plan is intended to complement and be in alignment with the State of Indiana and USRowing requirements for COVID-19 Response.

Scope: All teams that row out of the Indianapolis Rowing Center: Juniors, Competitive Masters, Technical Masters, Learn-to-Row Masters, Butler, Adaptive, and IUPUI.

Recognition: It is important to remember that like most organized sports teams, a rowing team, and especially the individual classes of athletes within it, can be considered a semi-contained group. This activity is not like a public gym or a general sporting event where athletes interact with different people every day. Most teams have a roster of 100 athletes or less, who typically engage with each other for 4-5 years, 6 days a week, 2 hours or more a day. While not directly family, or always from the same household, rowing groups are tight-knit and in a normal circumstance have already spent hundreds – if not well over a thousand – hours together in close proximity to many of their fellow athletes on the team.

This plan will be continually updated as state and local guidelines evolve and should be considered a living document. Changes in the Local Infection Rate trends and other factors such as state, county, and USRowing guidelines will be used to inform how the teams move forward in phases or when they should revert back to more restrictive conditions (including direction from USRowing or any other government authorities with jurisdiction).

Best Practices to be followed while under State or other Government related COVID-19 Restrictions:

1. Organizations and athletes must follow state and local rules and regulations set forth by the public health authorities including group gathering size limits.
2. Training should focus on a “get in, train, get out” approach, minimizing unnecessary contact.
3. Individuals should strive to maintain physical/social distancing of at least six (6) feet in all areas when physical/social distancing is required. This includes coaches, athletes, and staff. If possible, separate entrances and exits should be created to optimize physical/social distancing. Teams will follow state guidelines on gathering limits (still socially distanced even when gathering).
4. Masks should always be worn in the boathouse. Rowers are required to wear masks during all land phases of the practice time. After launching on the water, athletes may remove masks. The only time rowers may remove their masks is when on the water and while erging, running, or doing a land workout with 6-feet of separation from the nearest teammate. Coxswains in stern-coxed shells must wear a mask (or may wear a face shield in lieu of a mask).
5. Coaches will use the same launch each day and will socially distance in all situations except an athlete rescue. A mask will be put on/pulled up anytime a coach must come within the social distance limit of an athlete for any reason except a life-threatening emergency where it might not be possible.
6. Athletes will be in groups where the same group is rowing together each session to limit the possibility of disease spread. This practice will get as close to possible as creating a “household” like group of athletes and should greatly reduce the chance of exposure and transmission between the athletes and other groups/families etc.
7. All shells and oars will be sanitized regularly in alignment with current CDC and USRA guidelines.
8. Athletes should use their own equipment or the same pieces of equipment daily if unable to have their own – oars, boats, coxboxes, etc. NO COMMUNAL EQUIPMENT WILL BE SHARED DURING A COMPLETE TRAINING PERIOD.
9. When launching/landing, social distancing should be maintained. Multiple boats on the dock should be allowed only if proper social distancing requirements can be met.
10. Practice sessions will be structured in regards to timing, and other considerations so as to minimize large athlete groupings and to follow current Marion County Department of Health Public order mandates.
11. Ergs will be spaced out in accordance with current Marion County Department of Health Public Order mandates.
12. Daily logs will be maintained of the roster of rowers in each boat for contact tracing purposes.

Plan Phases

No Rowing - This phase aligns to Level 4 of the Indiana COVID-19 Risk Level Guidance. Should Marion County move to a Level 4 (Purple) and if the infection rate is above 100 cases/100,000 over the last 5 days of the 7-day average (as measured by USRA standards) all organized rowing activities will cease. Rowing would also be stopped immediately if any governmental order was in place requiring stay at home, restricted non-contact sports practices, or only allowed limited activity outside of the household.

Rowing Phase 1 - Restrictions enforced if Marion County mandated 6 foot social distancing regulations are still in place and if contact sports are currently prohibited. Rowing maintaining strict social distancing before, during, and after activity. Training should be allowed in singles (1x). Individuals living in the same residence (spouse/partner, siblings, parent/child) may take out a double/pair (2-/2x). All best practices listed above apply.

Rowing Phase 2 - In order to be in Phase 2, Marion County guidelines need to allow non-contact and contact sports to be practicing. Rowing maintaining strict social distancing before and after activity. Social distancing not in effect "during" activity with the below restrictions (1x-4's). Rowing allowed in any boat classes within Phase 1. Controlled use of bow-coxed 4's or quads 4-/4X (these shells have the rower at the front of the shell where they are not in a location where they can be affected by other rowers' exhalation/breath). All best practices listed above apply.

Rowing Phase 3 - In order to be in Phase 3, the team must have been practicing at a Phase 2 level for three consecutive weeks with no uncontrolled spikes in COVID cases within the team. Rowing maintaining strict social distancing before and after activity. Social distancing not in effect "during" activity with the below restrictions (1x – 8+'s). Rowing allowed in any boat classes within Phase 1 or 2. Controlled use of bow- or stern-coxed fours 4+, quads 4x, and eights 8+'s is allowed. All best practices listed above apply.

Rowing Phase 4 - Return to unrestricted rowing. In order to be in Phase 4, Marion County must have eliminated any requirements to maintain social distancing OR have provided approval or direct guidance to allow for unrestricted rowing to occur.

When starting a new season of rowing (eg, rowing hasn't been happening for the previous three or more weeks due to off-season), the team may enter the appropriate Phase of Rowing as above based on Marion County's guidelines and the level of SARS-CoV2 in the community and does not need to start at Phase 1 or 2 if it's appropriate to start at a later Phase.

COVID Exposure Response within the rowing community (as of 3/4/2021)

We ask that any individual known to have tested positive (regardless of symptoms or no symptoms), who has been exposed to a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, or who has a COVID-19 test pending must self-report to the team's coach and Executive Director immediately. As protocols are changing rapidly, teams will follow current CDC guidelines regarding self-quarantine, contact tracing, and other recommendations.

Those with close contact of a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 are also required to quarantine for 10 days with no COVID-19 test and 7 days with a negative PCR test for COVID-19. Close contact is defined as those who were less than 6 feet apart for more than 15 minutes. Officers will attempt to notify anyone who may have been at the boathouse at the same time as a positive testing individual and the general membership will also be notified.

The impacted team will have a limited shutdown after a COVID-19 positive (or compromised) individual was at the premises as necessary to clean any equipment or areas which may have been compromised. At that point, the team site will resume normal operations.

Key Definitions and Excerpts from References:

CDC Guidelines on Close Contact: For COVID-19, a close contact is defined as any individual who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.

USRowing Guidance (as of 11/6/2020): Local teams will continue to work with USRowing and monitor any published best practices. Those guidelines will be reviewed and used to update this plan as necessary.

References:

USRowing Re-opening the Boathouse/Return to Training Considerations Post-COVID-19 Version 7, 11/6/2020

Marion County Public Health Order 7-2021 3/1/2021 https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uS-nhEsu4ztreHWQtcnNXEO_c51Rvcde/view

CDC Contact Tracing Guidelines

CDC Quarantine Guidelines (2/11/2021) <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.htm>