



Hotel Association of Nova Scotia  
PO Box 473, Station M  
Halifax, NS B3J 2P8

Thursday May 21, 2020

Dr. Robert Strang MD, MHSc, FRCPC  
Chief Medical Officer of Health  
PO Box 488  
Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3J 2R8

Dear Dr. Strang,

Please allow this document and the enclosed framework to serve as our application to open pools and fitness centres operated and situated in hotels in Nova Scotia.

We submit this proposal independent of public pools and sporting complexes as we are dealing with minimal traffic and have the ability to put reservation style measures in place that would control usage of these facilities. The Hotel Association of Nova Scotia would communicate this framework and expectation to all of our members.

Note that our plan places the health and safety of Nova Scotians above all else and demonstrates principals of excellent sanitation/sterilization, safe social distancing and uses tools that are available and in place within our establishments already. The plans and actions are scaled against our various sizes and configurations and ensures effective and consistent tracking and information collection. We believe we have addressed all areas of concern and look forward to your assistance and approval.

- **Physical Distancing Measures:**
  - To maintain physical distancing, the use of pool and fitness centers will be by reservation / scheduling only.
  - Hotels will organize reservation start / end times to allow for essential cleaning and disinfecting to take place between bookings and to ensure no overlap of guest activity. As an example, a hotel may book their pool to a guest for 45 minutes and then allow 15 minutes of cleaning before the next booking.
  - Hotels will need to determine their booking capacity based on square footage of their facility to ensure the 2m / 6ft distancing can be maintained. We suggest a base ratio of 15 people per square feet as a general guideline in order to maintain the appropriate physical distancing.

- Bookings must include the physical count of all guests who will be in the pool / fitness area. IE: An observing parent needs to be factored in the reservation count even if they will not be using the pool or equipment.
  - Hotel staff should be scheduled to monitor the area.
  - Depending on size and set up of facilities, each hotel may choose to run a separate reservation system for their pool and fitness center or they may combine the two providing they are able to maintain the provision for physical distancing and cleaning protocols.
- **Maintaining data of pool / fitness room usage:**
    - The booking protocol for pool / fitness room usage must ensure that full contact information of the guest is recorded. This should include guest's full name, phone number, and email address. Another option may be to establish a formal sign in process at the pool / fitness room area.
    - Individual hotels can establish the system that best works for them, as long as they are able to maintain the appropriate contact data and keep the records for a given period of time should a public health situation arise and a customer needs to be contacted later. (IE: 30 to 60 days).
- **Cleaning Measures:**
    - Appropriate time must be allotted between each booking to allow hotel staff to thoroughly clean and disinfect all fitness center equipment, pool handrails, waterslide stair rails, furnishings, door handles, and light fixtures.
    - Cleaning measures require particular emphasis on hard, non-porous surfaces in all hotel public areas.
    - Cleaning products and protocols shall include disinfectants that have proven effective against viruses, bacteria and other airborne and bloodborne pathogens as per PHAC recommendations. <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19.html>
    - Empty and remove garbage / recycling bins after use.
    - The amount of time required for cleaning will be dependent on the square footage of each hotel's pool or fitness center. Hotels will determine the amount of time required to complete the cleaning protocols for their facility and will allot this required time between each booking.
    - Hotels may want to post their cleaning schedule for display in the pool / fitness areas.
    - Operators should ensure chlorine levels in pools and spas are kept between 1-3mg/l with the pH between 6.8-7.4. These levels should be verified at least 4 times a day for an automated pool chemical system and 5 times a day for a manual check.
    - Hand sanitizing stations should be available in the pool / fitness areas and should be maintained regularly.
    - If TV's or sound equipment are in fitness rooms, hotels may want to consider removing the remote controls from guest access due to the difficulties in keeping these sanitized. Signage may need to be posted to explain and / or provide instruction for guests should they want a channel changed or volume adjusted.
    - Remove magazines or newspapers from public use in this area.



- **Signage for Hotel Guests:**
  - Appropriate guest signage should be displayed with the following reminders:
    - Unless part of the same family, guests must maintain physical distancing of 2m or 6 feet apart. (Note: Signage should include a display of what that looks like – IE: use pool noodles, or markings on the floor to help demonstrate.)
    - Young children must be supervised and assisted at all times to ensure physical distancing measures outside the family bubble are maintained.
    - Encourage frequent hand washing or use of sanitizer when sink is not available.
    - Remind guests that if they are not feeling well or have a temperature of 100.4 F or 38 C, they should not enter the pool or fitness area. They need to stay in their hotel room until they are able to check out and return home.
    - When coughing or sneezing: cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of your arm, not your hand.
    - Use a tissue and dispose of any used tissues as soon as possible in a lined waste basket and wash your hands afterwards.
  - Hotels with waterslides will need to consider any specific signage relating to maintaining distance or timing between uses.
  - Copies of the “Provincial State of Emergency” poster, and the “Proper Handwashing” posters should be on display in pool and fitness center areas.
  
- **Use of and layout of Fitness Equipment:**
  - To maintain physical distancing, fitness areas may need to be revamped to ensure each piece of equipment is at least 2m / 6 ft apart.
  - In the event this is not possible due to space limitations, protocol needs to be set to ensure that only every second piece of equipment is used at one time. Signage will need to be present to clarify this as well as communication and monitoring by staff.
  - In addition to cleaning measures by hotel staff, appropriate sanitizers and wipes / rags should be available for guests to wipe down equipment after each use. Signage should be present to explain this to hotel guests and hotel staff should be regularly maintaining the supply of sanitizers and clean rags.
  
- **Pool Use:**
  - If pool size permits, hotels may want to consider setting up “lanes” in the pools and isolate each lane to a single family or family bubble.
  - Where this is not possible, hotels are reminded to ensure that signage and regular monitoring are used to ensure physical distancing within the pool.
  
- **Ventilation:**
  - Ventilation systems must be working properly and kept cleaned and maintained.
  - Hotels should review current processes and increase measures to clean and maintain filters as well as:
    - Increase ventilation rates for makeup air, supply air, and exhaust systems.
    - Increase the percentage of fresh clean air that circulates into the system.



- **Use of towels:**
  - Clean towels for the pool area should be issued directly to the guests – either made available in the guest room or issued when they arrive at the pool. (IE: not in an open rack in pool / fitness area for guests to help themselves)
  - A proper closed bin needs to be available in the pool / fitness area for used towels – or direct guests to take towels back to their hotel rooms.
  
- **Seating Areas:**
  - Seating areas around pools may be required for parents watching children, but it may need to be limited / restructured at this time.
  - Seating areas around pool should be set up to allow for physical distancing.
  - Makers on floor and / or signage requesting the seating not be moved should be considered.
  - Don't forget: observing parents in seating areas are part of the count when scheduling pool / fitness time.
  - If the size of the facility permits, a seating area could be assigned to each family / booking.
  
- **Hot Tubs / Saunas:**
  - Due to the complexities of maintaining physical distancing and cleaning measures, we acknowledge that hot tubs and saunas will need to remain closed with re-opening measures to be reviewed at a later date.
  - Appropriate safety measures need to be in place to block access to hot tubs and saunas.
  
- **Water Coolers:**
  - If water coolers are present in pool / fitness areas, hotels should switch to use of disposable (preferably recyclable or organic) cups if they are not already using them.
  
- **Employee Training:**
  - Hotel employees who are dealing directly with guests and / or the cleaning of pool and fitness areas should receive COVID-19 safety and sanitation protocols guidance in accordance with PHAC recommendations.
  - Personal protective equipment should be worn by / made available to employees as required and should follow PHAC recommendations.
  - Copies of the “Provincial State of Emergency” poster, and the “Proper Handwashing” posters should be on display in employee back of house areas

\*Disclaimer: The guidelines and recommendations in this document are not legal or medical advice. Given the extremely fluid environment of COVID-19, all guidelines and recommendations are subject to change.



Dr. Strang, we truly appreciate the time and attention your office will be giving to our recommendations. Furthermore, we would also like to take this opportunity to thank you and your team for all the incredible work that has been done during this pandemic.

To discuss our proposal in further detail or to set up a virtual meeting with myself and a few other key members, you can reach me directly either via email at [dclark@atlanticalifax.com](mailto:dclark@atlanticalifax.com) or by phone at 902-497-4277.

Kind Regards,



David Clark  
President, Hotel Association of Nova Scotia

