

RETURN TO KARATE TRAINING

Recommended Protocols for Karate club / dojo owners
and directors to reduce risk when returning to Karate
training during the COVID-19 pandemic.



May 26th 2020

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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POSITION STATEMENT ON RE-OPENING DURING COVID-19

This document was developed as a guideline to assist karate club / dojo owners in Canada to mitigate risk in the return to karate training during the COVID-19 pandemic. The strategies provided by Karate Canada follow the advice and recommendations from the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO) and [Health Canada](#). The guidelines set by Karate Canada do not supersede or replace any requirements or recommendation from government health authorities. As our knowledge of the virus is rapidly changing, this document may be updated to ensure that the information provided respects current medical advice. Ensure you are applying the most up-to-date version of this document.

As the local response to COVID-19 differs regionally throughout Canada, individual club / dojo owners and / or directors must ensure that they are in compliance with the guidelines set out by their municipal and provincial health authorities. This is particularly important with respect to rules for personal protective equipment, physical distancing and allowable gathering numbers in each community. Club / dojo owners and/or directors should stay vigilant for changes to legislation and policies implemented by local health authorities and should be prepared to align their operating procedures when conditions change. Club / dojo owners and directors should also ensure they are communicating operational changes with their insurance companies and their participants. Karate Canada has identified four key strategies to assist club / dojo owners and directors reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 while re-opening their clubs / dojos for training.

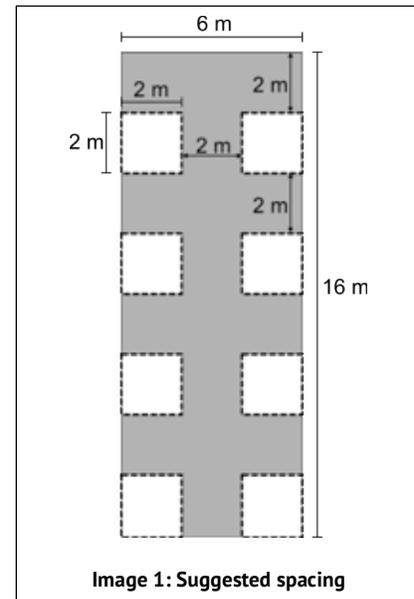
STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING RISK OF COVID-19 SPREAD DURING RE-OPENING OF KARATE CLUBS / DOJOS

PHASE 1 – Approval from provincial government to re-open, physical distancing in place, group gathering less than 50, no physical contact.

1. Physical distancing requirements

All participants, coaches and staff must keep a physical distance of 2m apart at all times. Physical contact of any kind is not permitted.

Athletes will need a *minimum* 2m x 2m exclusive training area. Each individual training area needs to be separated by an additional 2m to allow a safe distance for instructors to walk between training areas if required, and to ensure distance is maintained between athletes (see image 1). Therefore two training areas may not share the same boundary line. It is recommended that training areas be identified using tape when possible to provide a visual border (flipping tatami pieces (1 square meter puzzle mats) to a different colour may work well also).



It is imperative that attendees of different classes do not breach the physical distancing requirements and limits on gathering restrictions. Class schedules must include a defined 15min arrival period and defined 15 min departure period following each class. For example, if a class ends at 6:00 pm, all participants must exit the facility by 6:15 pm and participants scheduled for the 6:30 class may arrive no earlier than 6:15 pm. This additional time between classes will likely mean offering shorter classes and/or fewer classes, but it is vital to ensure both physical distancing as well as adherence to maximum gathering numbers. This time between classes also allows for the sanitization of the facility.

Greetings, exercises and training drills should be modified to comply with physical distancing and no physical contact. Systematic entry and dismissal are recommended. If applicable, use a separate entrance and exit, and directional markers on the floor to direct traffic.

2. Sanitation requirements

It is the club / dojo owner / director's responsibility to ensure the proper sanitation of all areas within their facility. All equipment used must be disinfected after each individual use. Products used for disinfection must be labelled as a virucide and should be used according to manufacturer's directions. In order to be effective, many disinfection products need a minimum amount of time to dry. This drying time should be incorporated in your time between classes. All high contact surfaces, such as doorknobs, counters and benches should be wiped before the start of every class. Gym mats and washrooms must be sanitized daily, and preferably after each session (class).

3. Personal hygiene requirements

Club / dojo owners / directors should ensure that everyone who visits the club / dojo is aware of personal hygiene requirements. Signage and emails to members are the best ways of conveying personal hygiene requirements and help members understand the actions you are taking to reduce risk.

Club / dojo members should perform a COVID-19 self-assessment [questionnaire](#) before they leave their home. To assist in compliance, club / dojo owners / directors are encouraged to email the link of their local self-assessment questionnaire to club / dojo members and visitors. Those who may have been exposed to COVID-19 should seek further medical attention instead of attending the club / dojo.

Basic hygiene rules such as handwashing and not touching one's face are widely publicized, but should still be reinforced in the club / dojo.

Hand sanitizer must be available upon entry into the club / dojo as well as within the training areas. Hand washing sinks should be readily available and soap supplies should be regularly monitored. Athletes should arrive already in uniform. If athletes use public transit to come to training, they should wear a tracksuit over their uniform to keep it clean. Use of changerooms and showers is not recommended. It is recommended that all members / athletes and instructors wear martial arts shoes or non-slip socks while inside the facility.

Water fountains should not be used. Athletes should bring their own water bottle, which will be stored in their own exclusive training area. It is recommended to have a periodic interruption in class for hand sanitizing depending on the level of contact between students and surfaces. Exercises that require the members to touch the mats with their hands (like push-ups) should be avoided. Members are encouraged to bring their own personal yoga mat for times when hand contact on the mat can not effectively be avoided. Members are responsible for the daily sanitation of their personal mat.

An instructor who teaches multiple classes may choose to wear a mask to limit exposure to the members. Members should not wear masks during training. A mask is not a replacement for physical distancing.

4. Public gathering requirements

Check your local health authority to ensure that you comply with maximum public gatherings limits. If your club has space to accommodate 12 individual training areas, but your local health authority allows public gatherings of 10 or less, then you may have 1 instructor and 9 athletes per class. Physical distancing requirements must be in place. It is recommended that all classes be drop-off and pick-up only in order to comply with the public gathering ratios. Parents should not be allowed to stay in the facility to observe class. In the special cases where parents would need to stay, they are recommended to wear a mask and stay 2m apart and they should be included in your total group size.

Accurate attendance tracking is essential. Keep good daily records of all persons who enter your club, with a focus on full names and times of entry. All members invited to training should live in the same city as the club.

It is recommended that a designated club / dojo administrator be given the role of handling the phased approach to re-opening. This includes keeping up to date with changes and recommendations from the provincial government, emailing members the self-assessment questionnaire before each class, collecting and monitoring attendance, and overseeing other COVID-19 related tasks.

Other Notes

- You are an example of behaviour – if you take this seriously, so will your members.
- Keep club / dojo members informed about what you are doing to reduce risk.
- Ensure that you consider hygiene in both your public and staff-only spaces.
- Maintain an adequate amount of hygienic supplies and ensure that you have a supplier who can reliably supply you.
- COVID-19 can be spread by aerosol transmission. Ensure that you have adequate air exchange and when possible open a window to encourage fresh air circulation. Doors should be propped open whenever possible to assist with air flow and reduce the risk of contamination from opening and closing doors.
- Should a student feel or appear unwell during class, the class will be ended immediately, the student will be asked to leave. Following this, the instructor should contact their public health authority for direction and no further classes should run that day.

PHASE 2 – Gathering numbers increase to 50+ for indoor spaces, physical distancing of keeping 2m apart remains, no physical contact.

1. Physical distancing requirements

All participants, coaches and staff must continue to keep a physical distance of 2m apart at all times. Physical contact of any kind is not permitted.

Exclusive training areas are no longer required to maintain physical distancing as long as the instructor has the space to arrange members within the facility in a way that ensures each participant is always 2m away from any other participant at any given time.

If the instructor chooses to no longer use the exclusive training areas, they may only use drills and exercises where all members are moving in the same direction at the same time to ensure that there is no compromise of physical distancing. Directional markers and separate entrances/exits where applicable should still be maintained.

It is still imperative that attendees of different classes do not breach the physical distancing requirements and limits on gathering restrictions. Schedules must continue to include a defined 15min arrival period and defined 15 min departure period following class.

2. Sanitation requirements

It is the club / dojo owner / director's responsibility to ensure the proper sanitation of all areas within their facility. All equipment used must be disinfected after each individual use. Products used for disinfection must be labelled as a virucide and should be used according to manufacture's directions. In order to be effective, many disinfection products need a minimum amount of time to dry. This drying time should be incorporated in your time between classes. All high contact surfaces, such as doorknobs, counters and benches and parent waiting area should be wiped before the start of every class. Gym mats and washrooms must be sanitized daily, and preferably after each session (class).

3. Personal hygiene requirements

Club / dojo owners / directors should continue to ensure that everyone who visits the club / dojo is aware of personal hygiene requirements.

Club / dojo members should continue to perform a COVID-19 self-assessment [questionnaire](#) before they leave their home. To assist in compliance, club / dojo owners / directors are encouraged to email the link of their local self-assessment questionnaire to

club / dojo members and visitors. Those who may have been exposed to COVID-19 should seek further medical attention instead of returning to the club / dojo.

Basic hygiene rules such as handwashing and not touching one's face are widely publicized, but should still be reinforced in the club / dojo.

Hand sanitizer must be available upon entry into the club / dojo as well as within the training areas. Hand washing sinks should be readily available and soap supplies should be regularly monitored.

Club / dojo members may now use changerooms and showers, however the use of water fountains will not be available. Athletes should continue to bring their own water bottle. It is recommended to have a periodic interruption in class for hand sanitizing, depending on the level of contact between students and surfaces. The use of a personal yoga mat for each member is still recommended as well as the use of martial arts shoes/non-slip socks.

4. Public gathering requirements

Phase 2 is when gathering numbers have been increased by your province to groups of over 50 for indoor spaces. This does not mean that a club / dojo has to have space for 50 people, it only means that the government has approved gathering of 50+ for indoor spaces which is a requirement before moving into phase 2.

You class size will still be limited by your physical distancing numbers but you may now permit as many athletes / participants as your club / dojo can provide the designated training spaces for. This also means that parents may also stay to watch class as long as they can do so while maintaining the physical distance requirements. Depending on your club / dojo size, you may have 12 athletes training, a head instructor, 1 assistant instructor, someone working in the office and as many parents viewing as your parent's gallery can accommodate under the physical distance guidelines.

Continue to keep good daily records and attendance of all persons who enter your club / dojo, with a focus on full names and times of entry.

Other Notes

- You are an example of behaviour – if you take this seriously, so will your members.
- Keep club / dojo members informed about what you are doing to reduce risk.
- Ensure that you consider hygiene in both your public and staff-only spaces.
- Maintain an adequate amount of hygienic supplies and ensure that you have a supplier who can reliably supply you.

- COVID-19 can be spread by aerosol transmission. Ensure that you have adequate air exchange and when possible open a window to encourage fresh air circulation. Doors should be propped open whenever possible to assist with air flow and reduce the risk of contamination from opening and closing doors.
- Should a student feel or appear unwell during class, the class will be ended immediately, the student will be asked to leave. Following this, the instructor should contact their public health authority for direction and no further classes should run that day.

PHASE 3 – Provincial government has relaxed physical distancing requirements and allows limited contact. No sparring, ground work, sweeping / takedowns or grappling permitted.

1. Physical distancing requirements

It is assumed, in this stage, that the provincial government has relaxed physical distancing rules and therefore exclusive training areas are no longer needed. Members should be encouraged to remain respectful of personal space.

Physical contact is limited and may include target holding and partner drills, however sparring is not permitted in this phase. Mouth guards are essential for the practice of safe sparring; however, they also increase the risk of spray from an athlete's mouth during exercise, especially during the kiai (yell). They also pose an increase risk as athletes often take them in and out of their mouths multiple times during training.

2. Sanitation requirements

It is the club / dojo owner / director's responsibility to ensure the proper sanitation of all areas within their facility. All equipment used must be disinfected after each individual use. Products used for disinfection must be labelled as a virucide and should be used according to manufacture's directions. In order to be effective, many disinfection products need a minimum amount of time to dry. This drying time should be incorporated in your time between classes. All high contact surfaces, such as doorknobs, counters and benches should be wiped before the start of every class. Gym mats and washrooms must be sanitized daily. Shared spaces, such as parents waiting area will also need to be sanitized at least daily.

3. Personal hygiene requirements

Club / dojo owners / directors should continue to ensure that everyone who visits the club / dojo is aware of personal hygiene requirements.

Club / dojo members should continue to perform a COVID-19 self-assessment [questionnaire](#) before they leave their home. To assist in compliance, club / dojo owners are encouraged to email the link of their local self-assessment questionnaire to club members and visitors. Those who may have been exposed to COVID-19 should seek further medical attention instead of returning to the club / dojo.

Basic hygiene rules such as handwashing and not touching one's face are widely publicized, but should still be reinforced in the club / dojo.

Hand sanitizer must be available upon entry into the club / dojo as well as within the training areas. Hand washing sinks should be readily available and soap supplies should be regularly monitored.

Athletes / participants should continue to bring their own water bottle. It is still recommended to have a periodic interruption in class for hand and foot sanitizing, depending on the level of contact between students and surfaces.

4. Public gathering requirements

If your provincial government still has a limit on social gatherings, you must continue to follow it.

Accurate attendance tracking is essential. Keep good daily records of all persons who enter your club / dojo, with a focus on full names and times of entry.

All club / dojo members invited to training should live in the same city as the club / dojo.

Other Notes

- You are an example of behaviour – if you take this seriously, so will your members.
- Keep club / dojo members informed about what you are doing to reduce risk.
- Ensure that you consider hygiene in both your public and staff-only spaces.
- Maintain an adequate amount of hygienic supplies and ensure that you have a supplier who can reliably supply you.
- COVID-19 can be spread by aerosol transmission. Ensure that you have adequate air exchange and when possible open a window to encourage fresh air circulation. Doors should be propped open whenever possible to assist with air flow and reduce the risk of contamination from opening and closing doors.
- Should a student feel or appear unwell during class, the class will be ended immediately, the student will be asked to leave. Following this, the instructor should contact their public health authority for direction and no further classes should run that day.

PHASE 4 – Return to contact sports has been approved by the provincial government.

1. Physical distancing requirements

Club / dojo members should be encouraged to remain respectful of personal space.

2. Sanitation requirements

It is the club / dojo owner / director's responsibility to ensure the proper sanitation of all areas within their facility. All equipment used must be disinfected after each individual use. Products used for disinfection must be labelled as a virucide and should be used according to manufacture's directions. In order to be effective, many disinfection products need a minimum amount of time to dry. This drying time should be budgeted in your time between classes. All high contact surfaces, such as doorknobs, counters and benches should be wiped before the start of every class. Gym mats and washrooms must be sanitized daily.

3. Personal hygiene requirements

Club / dojo owners should continue to ensure that everyone who visits the club / dojo is aware of personal hygiene requirements.

Club / dojo members should continue to perform a COVID-19 self-assessment [questionnaire](#) before they leave their home. To assist in compliance, club/ dojo owners are encouraged to email the link of their local self-assessment questionnaire to club / dojo members and visitors. Those who may have been exposed to COVID-19 should seek further medical attention instead of returning to the club / dojo.

Basic hygiene rules such as handwashing and not touching one's face are widely publicized, but should still be reinforced in the club / dojo.

Hand sanitizer must be available upon entry into the club / dojo as well as within the training areas. Hand washing sinks should be readily available and soap supplies should be regularly monitored.

Water fountains should not be used, members should continue to bring their own water bottle.

There is no sharing of sparring equipment.

4. Public gathering requiremen

If your provincial government still has a limit on social gatherings, you must continue to follow it.

Accurate attendance tracking is essential. Keep good daily records of all persons who enter your club / dojo, with a focus on full names and times of entry.

Other Notes

- You are an example of behaviour – if you take this seriously, so will your members.
- Keep club / dojo members informed about what you are doing to reduce risk.
- Ensure that you consider hygiene in both your public and staff-only spaces.
- Maintain an adequate amount of hygienic supplies and ensure that you have a supplier who can reliably supply you.
- COVID-19 can be spread by aerosol transmission. Ensure that you have adequate air exchange and when possible open a window to encourage fresh air circulation. Doors should be propped open whenever possible to assist with air flow and reduce the risk of contamination from opening and closing doors.
- Should a student feel or appear unwell during class, the class will be ended immediately, the student will be asked to leave. Following this, the instructor should contact their public health authority for direction and no further classes should run that day.

REFERENCES

World Health Organization:

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

Health Canada:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>

COVID-19 Self Assessment Questionnaire:

<https://ca.thrive.health/covid19/en>

RETURN TO TRAINING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC CHECK LIST

Read the *Recommended protocols for Karate club / dojo owners to reduce risk when returning to Karate training during the COVID-19 pandemic* document.

Complete this check list before starting a new phase. Refer to this document for recommendations and strategies specific to each phase.

- Identify your local government's current reopening phase. Refer to the most up-to-date version of this document as well as your provincial sport organization's reopening document (where applicable).
- Ensure all dojo staff review provincial guidelines for opening, the provincial sports organization guidelines (if applicable) and this document to identify all potential risk factors within the facility and develop a plan on how to re-open within the recommended guidelines.
- Ensure you have a detailed attendance system in place.
- Prepare the facility with signage and floor markings where applicable for that phase. Consider items such as door stops to prop doors open, tape to mark out training areas, locking changeroom doors when use is not permitted and any other physical modifications for the current phase.
- Create a training plan that can be implemented in your current phase while respecting the guidelines and restrictions. Refer to this document and your provincial sport organization's document for recommendations and guidelines. Ensure all instructors understand the training plan.
- Communicate with all club / dojo members regarding operational changes during each phase, explaining changes such as modified class schedules, physical distancing, personal hygiene requirements, advising which amenities are not available in the current phase (changerooms, showers, water fountains, parent viewing area, etc). Advise on what to expect with regards to training during the current phase (modified greeting, modified training, staying in exclusive training areas, bringing their own mat & water bottle, drop off / pick up). Refer to this document for recommendations in each stage.
- Class schedule allows a 15-minute arrival period that does not overlap with the previous class' departure period. Class schedule allows a 15-minute departure period that does not overlap with the next class' arrival period.

- Develop a sanitation plan specific to your club / dojo (what areas get sanitized with which product, how often and by who). Be specific to avoid confusion or areas getting overlooked. A check list for cleaning is recommended. Advise when any personal protective equipment should be used while cleaning.
- Ensure you have adequate inventory of cleaning supplies (which are labelled as effective against viruses). All cleaning chemicals should be properly labelled and stored. Staff who will be using the cleaning chemicals must be trained in the manufacturer's usage directions.
- Hand sanitizer must readily be available upon entry and within the dojo. Keep adequate inventory to avoid running out.
- Handwashing sinks are available, and soap supplies regularly monitored.