

January 29, 2020

Re: Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

To all Badminton Ontario members and associates,

Badminton Ontario has been monitoring the Novel Coronavirus outbreak and its rapid evolution closely.

The health and well-being of Ontarians, including and especially our members, volunteers, and staff, is our top priority. Members of the badminton community should rest assured that the province is working together in close cooperation with its partners in both the education and health care sectors to ensure the continued safety and well-being of all.

At this time there are no health advisories for Canada and we continue to work on hosting upcoming badminton tournaments in Ontario. At this point we have decided not to make any change in status to these events, but will closely monitor the situation. We will of course communicate immediately if we decide to make any changes in status of the events.

These presumptive confirmed cases were not unexpected and the health system's response has ensured that the risk to the general public from these cases has been minimized. These presumptive positive cases do not change the overall risk to Ontario, which is still considered low. While this issue continues to emerge, we anticipate in the coming weeks that there may be additional cases identified in Ontario, other parts of Canada, and other countries who have individuals with travel history to the impacted area or other significant epidemiological links.

Human coronaviruses are common throughout the world and include a range of illnesses from the common cold to Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). They can cause mild, moderate or severe respiratory illness in some people. Symptoms of the 2019-nCoV include fever, cough and difficulty breathing and studies are underway to try and understand this virus better. As of today, cases of this new disease have been identified in other areas of China, Thailand, Macau, Hong Kong, the Republic of Korea, Japan, Taiwan and in the United States, among others. We continue to monitor this situation closely along with our local and federal public health colleagues.

The 2019-nCoV virus has been identified at the same time that influenza (also known as the flu) and many other respiratory viruses are circulating in Ontario, which is common at this time of the year. The precautions to protect yourself against common respiratory ailments can also be used to help protect against coronaviruses, including 2019-nCoV.

Members of the public are advised to take the usual measures to reduce the risk of transmission of the flu and respiratory illness, which include:

- get a yearly influenza vaccination, available from clinics and pharmacies (for flu only);
- wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer;
- cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze;
- if you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough into your sleeve or arm; and
- if you or your family members are ill, stay home.

We ask that if you or somebody you know has visited affected areas or have come in contact with somebody who may have, to seriously consider self-isolation for several days. Finally we urge anyone who feels they are coming down with acute flu symptoms to please contact their family physician and to consider staying home.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

*Jean Wong*

Technical Director  
Badminton Ontario