



## *FIRST* robotics activities resumption protocol

September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020



In order to resume safe robotics activities that comply with current public health recommendations and standards, several criteria must be met, and preventive measures must be put in place.

Robotics activities, involving to some extent collaboration and teamwork as well as the handling of equipment, may represent a contamination risk from COVID-19. Concerned about the situation, Robotique *FIRST* Québec wants to offer its community guidelines for safe activities resumption and risk minimization. A safe restart of activities is everyone's responsibility.

Although general, the following guidelines and recommendations relate mainly to activities taking place outside the regular classroom, in extracurricular contexts. Classroom activities are specifically and otherwise regulated. Robotics events (e.g. tournaments) will be the subject of a specific guide published later in the season.

## R

### COVID-19 symptoms\*

- Loss of taste or smell
- Fever
- Coughing or difficulty breathing
- Significant fatigue

\* For any additional information, see the Government of Québec website.  
If in doubt about any symptoms, stay home.

### COVID-19 prevention

- Avoid contact with infected people.
- Wash your hands frequently.
- Keep a distance of at least two meters whenever possible.
- Cough and sneeze into the elbow.
- Do not share personal equipment (such as bottles and goggles).
- Disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Self-isolate if symptoms appear.
- Notify those responsible for the activity of any changes to your state of health related to COVID-19.

## Context

- As of September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the Quebec government authorizes, under conditions, optional courses, extracurricular activities, condensed programs, and specific projects in schools. "This deployment is authorized in accordance with applicable health requirements as well as with the [regional alert system and gradual response for COVID-19](#). Thus, students in the green and yellow alert level regions will be able to attend up to two stable groups other than their main class group, as part of specific educational projects or extracurricular activities. Schools will have to make changes to the way they operate their services and impose return to closed stable groups if their home region were to move to an amber alert level. Ref. <https://www.quebec.ca/en/education/back-to-school-plan-fall-covid-19/>
- Gatherings of more than 250 in one single hall or room are not permitted.
- Access to sanitary facilities is not recommended. The decision to maintain restricted access, however, rests with the venue manager.
- A two-meter physical distance (one meter between students aged 16 and under) must be respected while in static situation such as during a demonstration or a discussion between two team members (or anyone) or more.
- Tool sharing among several participants working on a mechanism is permitted if the tools are used within the same group only and they are disinfected before and after usage by different groups.
- Momentary proximity and accidental or sporadic contacts during a group activity are tolerable. Cumulative total interaction time in which physical distancing cannot be observed should not exceed 10 minutes per meeting.
- To avoid gatherings, participants should be encouraged to arrive on time and ready to engage into the activity; and they should leave as soon as possible when the activity is over.
- Teams must comply with measures put in place by their hosts (e.g. schools), specifically regarding venue access guidelines.

## General guidelines for all

- *If I have COVID-19 symptoms, I stay home.*
- *If, in the past 14 days, I have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, I will stay at home.*
- *If I have had or have chronic health problems, I stay home.*
- *If I am over 70 years old, my health should be assessed as I am at higher risk. My participation in a meeting is not recommended.*

If a coach, mentor or participant shows symptoms or is infected with the virus or has tested positive at screening, they must inform the person in charge of the activity and must isolate themselves and follow the doctor's recommendations as well as the provincial instructions. Their return can only be made with medical approval or a negative COVID-19 test.

## Specific guidelines

### Wearing a mask

Since August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020, wearing of a facemask is compulsory for all persons aged 10 years and over\* in indoor spaces where group activities are offered. The facemask in these places must always be worn (on arrival, when traveling, etc.), except for the followings:

- during a team activity involving only the regular participants \*\*.
- when the person is seated (during a presentation, for example) AND the minimum physical distance of 1.5 meter is respected.
- when the person is seated as a spectator AND the minimum physical distance of 1.5 meters is respected.

\*For children 2 to 9 years old, wearing a facemask is strongly recommended, but not mandatory.

\*\* It is recommended to wear a mask during activities where physical distancing cannot be maintained. It is also recommended for coaches and mentors to wear a facemask if they cannot always respect physical distancing.

### Logistics

- Plan a precise schedule for in-person and remote activities in accordance with public health instructions and this guide. You will certainly need to plan for more activities involving fewer people at a time. Send this schedule and any update to participants and their parents.
- The start and end times must be established and must be respected by all.
- Clearly identify who to contact in case of emergency and how to contact them if they or other participants are not feeling well or showing symptoms of COVID-19.
- Identify contact details for health facilities designated to manage patients infected with COVID-19 in your region.
- Identify a way to quickly notify all participants of possible exposure to COVID-19.
- Educate all participants with public health advices on COVID-19 clinical characteristics, preventive measures, especially respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene practices and physical distancing.
- Make participants aware of vulnerable populations risks so that they can make an informed decision about their presence based on their personal situation.
- Teams internal organization and management are the responsibility of the teams themselves. See the Robotique *FIRST* Québec webpage about [Health and Safety](#) for recommendations.

### Space management and group organization

- To avoid large gatherings and to respect social distancing, participants should be divided into small groups according to available workspace by calculating a minimum of four-square meters per participant (including mentors).
- Mentors must adhere to social distancing guidelines.
- Unnecessary contacts between participants (example: handshakes, etc.) are to be avoided.
- The presence of spectators is not recommended. If spectators are present, they too must respect social distancing and therefore be part of the count for the maximum number of participants.
- Prepare the workspaces in order to respect distancing. This includes the arrangement of machine tools and computers.
- Hand sanitizer should be available near each stationary machine tool.
- Ensure adequate ventilation of workspaces.

### Managing meetings

- Inform parents and participants about mandatory procedures.
- Participants must respect social distancing when going to and from activities.
- Health checks should be done in the form of two verbal questions verifying that the person does not have symptoms of COVID-19 and that they have not been in contact with a person tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 days. The answers to these questions should be recorded on an attendance sheet.
- During the working sessions, the sub-groups should be separated from each other.
- Personal equipment (water bottles, safety glasses, etc.) cannot be shared.
- Organize the activities of the subgroups alternately.
- Participants must be involved in the regular cleaning and disinfection operations of spaces and equipment.

### Equipment management

- Authorized personal equipment during meetings will be limited to a bottle of water (identified), a bottle of disinfectant, a pair of gloves and safety glasses. Except for robotics equipment (tools, parts, etc.), sharing personal equipment between individuals is prohibited.
- Participants should wash their hands with soap and water or disinfect them with a hand sanitizer before and immediately after attending a meeting. Personal equipment should also be washed / disinfected in this way.
- Frequent hand washing or disinfection should be encouraged.
- Participants should avoid touching their face. Safety glasses should therefore always be worn near robotics equipment.
- Furniture, tools, and other robotics equipment as well as common surfaces must be disinfected before and after meetings. Alcohol disinfectant in the form of a light spray is currently suggested for electronic tools and equipment.

### Role of " Health Captain "

- The role of “Health Captain” is to manage the mandatory procedures between meetings.
- This person (mentor or volunteer) should be informed of their role, the procedures and sanitary measures presented here.
- This person should understand COVID-19 risks and transmission modes, what should participants do to limit the spread, the recognized best practices (including respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, social distancing, etc.).
- Main tasks:
  - Ensure that participants (students and adults) attending the activity have provided their contact information in case of emergency
  - Welcome the participants and complete the attendance list by asking and noting the answers to two questions about COVID-19:
    - ❖ *Have you been in contact in the past 14 days with someone who contracted COVID-19? (if so, the participant must go home)*
    - ❖ *Are you showing symptoms of COVID-19? (if so, the participant must go home)*
  - Ensure that social distancing is always respected, except for momentary proximity.
  - Ensure safe management of sub-groups.

## Sanitary measures and rules (checklists)

### Managers

- Coaches should read, understand, and apply these guidelines and share them with all participants.
- All participants must be duly registered with *FIRSTinspires.org*.
- Coaches must ensure that the *FIRST* Consent and Release is completed (numerically or otherwise) for each student and adult participant.
- Coaches must obtain emergency contact details for all participants (insure the protection of personal information).
- The team rules should be communicated to all participants.
- Contact the school management, if necessary, to coordinate the use of the premises.
- Coaches must keep records of meeting attendance.
- Hygiene rules must be clearly displayed in the room.
- A hand washing or disinfection station must be made available to participants at the entrance
- Coaches should identify "Health Captains" and provide them with all the information relevant to their role.
- If it is difficult to avoid physical crossing to access the facilities, provide circulation corridors.
- A first aid kit must be available on site.
- Teams must create a **safety action plan** adapted to COVID-19 situations.
- Common tools and equipment must be disinfected before and after the meetings.

### Coaches and mentors

- Understand the rules affecting participants, as they must be applied throughout the meetings.
- If you have COVID-19 symptoms, stay home.
- If you have been in contact with anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19, stay home.
- All participants must be duly registered with *FIRSTinspires.org*.
- Consult the regulations and mandatory hygiene measures.
- Always comply with team rules.
- Always keep a distance of at least two meters.
- Disinfect the equipment before the next meeting.
- Wash your hands as soon as the meeting is over.
- Wash your personal equipment when you get home.

## Health Captain

- Get a clear role description and responsibilities from coaches or organizers.
- Read and understand the measures presented in this guide.
- Understand COVID-19 risks and transmission modes, what participants should do to limit the spread, the recognized best practices (including respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, social distancing, etc.)
- Obtain from coaches or organizers a list of participants (students and adults) confirming that they are duly registered with *FIRSTinspires.org*, have provided consent for attending activities and provided their contact information in case of emergency.
- Welcome the participants and complete the attendance list by asking and noting the answers to two questions about COVID-19.
  - Have you been in contact, in the past 14 days, with someone who contracted COVID-19? (if so, the participant must go home)
  - Are you showing symptoms of COVID-19? (if so, the participant must go home)
- Enforce social distancing at all times, except for momentary proximity.
- Ensure the safe management of sub-groups, including verification of equipment cleaning.

## Attendants

- If you have COVID-19 symptoms, stay home.
- If you have been in contact with anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19, stay home.
- All participants must be duly registered with *FIRSTinspires.org*.
- Consult the regulations and mandatory hygiene measures.
- Allow a few minutes upon your arrival to answer two questions from the “Health Captain”. However, avoid arriving too early so as not to run into other groups.
- Arrive with your personal equipment (safety glasses, etc.) and ready to participate.
- No physical contact allowed with other participants.
- No sharing of personal equipment (safety glasses, gloves, bottle, etc.)
- Respect social distancing regulations.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Cough and sneeze into your elbow.
- Wash your hands as soon as the meeting is over.
- Wash your personal equipment when you get home.

## Parents

- If your child is showing COVID-19 symptoms, keep them at home and let the coaches know.
- If your child has been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, keep them at home and let the coaches know.
- Make sure your child is properly registered with *FIRSTinspires.org*.
- Always respect the team rules.
- Make your child aware of the rules and compulsory hygiene measures.
- To attend a meeting, the coach responsible for the meeting must be notified. No surprise attendance!
- If in doubt about COVID-19 symptoms, it is best not to attend the activity and to stay at home.
- To avoid large gatherings, allow your child to attend the activity alone.
- The spectators and observers count towards the imposed limits per room. Always keep a distance of at least two meters from participants and other parents.
- Stay available to intervene with your child if necessary.
- If necessary, pick up your child as soon as the activity is over.
- Disinfect your child's personal equipment as soon as possible.

Membership Checklist Template (for use by coaches and organizers only)

First, last name	Mentor/ Student/ Else	Name of legal guardian, if minor	Emergency phone number (that of a parent, if minor participant)	Email address (that of a parent, if minor participant)	Registered <i>FIRSTinspires.org</i> Y/N	Consent (that of a parent, if minor participant) Y/N

Attendance Template (for use by Health Captains)

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Room:** \_\_\_\_\_

First, last name	Registered <i>FIRSTinspires.org</i> Y/N	Contact information Y/N	Time of arrival	Time of departure	"No" to both health questions Y/N	Comments
<i>Prepopulated</i>	<i>Prepopulated</i>	<i>Prepopulated</i>				
<i>Prepopulated</i>	<i>Prepopulated</i>	<i>Prepopulated</i>				
<i>Prepopulated</i>	<i>Prepopulated</i>	<i>Prepopulated</i>				
<i>Prepopulated</i>	<i>Prepopulated</i>	<i>Prepopulated</i>				

**Health Captain (name and signature):** \_\_\_\_\_

*Handout to team coaches at the end of each meeting.*

**Questions:**

- *Have you been in contact in the past 14 days with someone who contracted COVID-19? (if so, the participant must go home)*
- *Are you showing symptoms of COVID-19? (if so, the participant must go home)*

## References

- [Coronavirus in Québec](#) – Santé Québec
- [The ABCs of a safe, successful start of the year](#) – Québec
- [Safety Guidance for FIRST Robotics Competition Teams for COVID-19](#) Ref. <https://www.firstinspires.org/robotics/frc/safety>
- [FIRST communication](#) - *FIRSTinspires.org*
- [FIRST Canada update August 2020](#) – *FIRST Canada*
- [Directives hygiene](#) – LEGO Education
- [Guide de reprise des activités](#) – Volleyball Québec
- [Plan de relance du basketball en temps de pandémie](#) – Basketball Québec
- Request for in-person meeting & Proposed Safety Measures, FRC 1902, Exploding Bacon

Contact us for any concerns:

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