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Like all OHF Members, ALLIANCE Hockey continues to adapt to the current environment created because of the COVID-19 pandemic and assist in leading our Associations through their Return to Hockey Plans.

On October 21, 2020, the ALLIANCE Hockey Executive Committee held an important meeting to review the current climate and the possibilities of providing external competition. Careful and deliberate examination lead to the decision that **as of Monday, October 26, 2020, Member Associations shall only engage in internal competition through to November 30, 2020, with the exception of previously scheduled games. Throughout this period, the ALLIANCE Hockey Executive Committee will closely monitor the hockey environment, take direction from Governing Bodies and Public Health Units, and meet again on November 18, 2020 to review the next steps in moving forward with external competition.**

It is our intention that this short-term action will extend the opportunity for our Member Associations to offer safe and enjoyable programming in the long-term by ensuring that all Members remain safe and healthy.

Numerous factors lead to this decision, including:

- The physical and mental well-being of participants is a priority.
- Safety must not be compromised.
- The OHF Return to Play remains in Stage 3b limiting play to within PHUs.
- Several MHA's within ALLIANCE hockey are limited by their PHUs/facilities to no games/scrimmages.
- Consistency across ALLIANCE Hockey is important.
- Consideration of the requests received from Members.
- Recognizing the extreme efforts and subsequent demands upon Volunteers.

This past weekend, an external competition pilot program was conducted from which there were several learnings. One of the main challenges was that Facility COVID-19 protocols are varied which presented several challenges. The positive takeaway from this pilot is that we can focus on these challenges over the next few weeks to ensure that we provide excellent communication and may adapt to the differing protocols.

Member Associations are encouraged to offer internal programming which will assist in further preparation for external programming. Alternative, internal programming variations may be offered, i.e. minor vs major play, Tier 1 vs Tier 2 play, etc. to ensure that the on-ice experience is beneficial.

Despite all the challenges this season has presented to date, our Member Associations continue to be committed to providing the best possible programming to their participants.

We will also continue to support the ALLIANCE Hockey Member Associations with their Return to Play Plans and look forward to reviewing the next steps for external competition.

