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Ontario soccer announces new return-to-play guidelines

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?If you are not comfortable with returning to play, DON'T.'

That's the message being delivered by Ontario Soccer when it comes to getting players back on the soccer pitches this summer.

As some sports are slowing moving ahead, some people are still a little nervous about getting too close to others during this COVID-19 pandemic.

Ontario Soccer is quite blunt about the message when it comes to getting players on the field.

Soccer does require close proximity between players and physical contact will occur. That's an inherent part of the game.

Ontario Soccer has issued a Return to Play guide, which details protocols and recommendations when teams start getting back together.

They have put together a three stage plan to get players back in the sport.

Phase 1 of the plan includes a return to training, however there will be no contact, no league play, no exhibition games, and no festivals or tournaments.

Phase 2 of the plan includes enhanced training and modified games. League play, exhibition games, and tournaments will not be allowed.

Phase 3, which may or may not happen this year, is a return to normal soccer including league play, games, and regular training.

This phase of the plan will get underway only when social distancing restrictions have been lifted.

The Return to Play Guide and Plan has been approved by Canada Soccer the Ontario Soccer Board of Directors, and can now be implemented by Ontario Soccer affiliated clubs and academies where it is regionally permitted to do so.

Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health has approved plans to move into the next phase of re-opening some sporting activities, however, there still restrictions in place regarding numbers of people and other conditions that should be followed to keep physical distancing protocols in place.