

## Hampton Roads Chess Association

### COVID-19 Protocol for Over-the-Board Chess Activities

**Effective 1 September 2020 until further notice**

This document outlines the protocol required to hold any Hampton Roads Chess Association (HRCA)-sponsored over-the-board chess activity. All participants are required to abide by these protocols.

1. **Advance registration and payment is required.** Number of allowed participants may fluctuate according to state and local mandates, but in order to stay within announced limits, all players must register in advance on the HRCA website.
  - a. Registration is required once for each event, whether it starts and finishes on a single night, or it is spread across a number of weeks. For events spread across more than one night, players are responsible for contacting the tournament director (TD) if they will NOT be in attendance any given week, in order to free up room for other participants. Absence of such advance notice implies you will be in attendance if you are registered for the event. Repeated failure to provide the TD advance notice of absences may result in a player being barred from registering for future events sponsored by HRCA.
  - b. In order to minimize contact on site, advance payment will be taken online at the time of registration. Players must be able to make electronic payments online. If you absolutely cannot do so, players are encouraged to arrange such advance registration and payment with a friend and handle their own reimbursements. HRCA will handle on-site payments only as a last resort.
  - c. Walk-ups are absolutely not guaranteed a spot in the night's event. If you do not register in advance and there are not any known openings, you may be turned away or asked to wait outside until just before the start of the event to see if there are no-shows.
  - d. All players must arrive and check-in no later than fifteen minutes prior to the start of the event or risk losing their spot to a walk-up.
  - e. US Chess memberships will not be processed on site. You are required to ensure your membership is current by joining or renewing directly on [uschess.org](http://uschess.org). If you preregister, pay, and show up but do not have a current membership, you risk being turned away. Check your membership ahead of time.
  - f. You may register in advance for casual chess only if you have pre-arranged to play one other casual player each week.
2. **Check-in Procedures.**
  - a. All players will maintain six feet of distance and wear a mask while waiting in line to check in.
  - b. Masks are required of all players, with absolutely no exception. Players attempting to enter the venue without a mask will be required to purchase a mask at the check-in desk or be turned away.
  - c. All players will first stop at the check-in desk, wearing a mask, answer questions about symptoms and potential exposure (available on the HRCA website), and have their temperature taken. Anybody registering a temperature above 99.5 degrees will be

turned away. It is critical for players to take personal responsibility and avoid attending HRCA events when they are sick.

- d. All players will then be checked off on the advance registration list. Per 1c above, walk-ups may be asked to wait outside or may be turned away. Per 1d above, registered players must check in no later than fifteen minutes prior to the start of the event or risk losing their spot or not being paired.
  - e. Only as a last resort, check-in volunteers will take payment for an event.
  - f. Players will only need to speak to the TD if they have any issues that cannot be handled by check-in volunteers. Fifteen minutes prior to the start of the event, the check-in volunteers will provide the list of arrived players to the TD for pairing.
  - g. **Only registered players are allowed inside the venue. No spectators or parents.** Parents dropping off children will remain outside in their cars or running errands in the vicinity. Parents are encouraged to ensure their children know how to get ahold of them. Children too young to be on the premises without a parent should not participate. Children under the age of 12 are discouraged from participating, as they may have difficulty following these protocols. Non-participants will not be able to use the bathrooms or any other facilities on site.
  - h. **All players must have a signed copy of this form on file, good for six months from date of signature. Compliance will be confirmed at check-in from an HRCA list.**
3. **Items allowable on the premises.**
    - a. Players will use only boards, sets, clocks, scoresheets, and writing utensils provided by the club to ensure proper sanitization procedures. Players attempting to enter with their own equipment will be asked to return the equipment to their vehicle. **All club equipment will be sanitized and set up prior to player arrival.**
    - b. Players are asked to limit other personal items they bring and to keep their belongings with them. Avoid placing personal items on unused tables in the playing venue.
    - c. **No food or drink is allowed**, with the exception of water bottles. Fountains may not be available on site to refill water, and players must step away from the board to drink water, as removing masks at the board is prohibited.
  4. **Procedures when not actively playing.**
    - a. After checking in and prior to the start of the first round, or between and after rounds, NO casual play is allowed on boards set up for the event. The only exception is registered players who have pre-arranged to play another registered player in casual chess for the night. Players are discouraged from sitting at tables, in order to avoid potential contamination and increase the burden on clean-up volunteers. Unless a disability dictates sitting, players should plan on standing and practicing proper six-foot distancing while waiting for rounds to start.
    - b. **If there is more than one round in a night, all equipment will be switched out and sanitized between rounds.** Players should vacate their boards immediately upon completion of a round to allow volunteers to replace equipment.
    - c. **Spectating games is not allowed.** Whether a player is still in their game or is waiting for another round to start, all players must maintain six-foot distancing and are not allowed to spectate other games in progress.

- d. Players who must leave the playing hall for any reason should avoid touching surfaces inside the facility whenever possible.
- e. Players will maintain social distancing of six feet when checking pairings and entering results for each round, and the club will provide sanitized writing utensils for player use.
- f. **Players will depart the site immediately upon completion of their final round for the night.**

5. **Procedures during rounds.**

- a. Per 3a above, only club equipment will be used. **Players will report to assigned board numbers** for each round.
- b. **All players are required to wash and/or sanitize their hands prior to the start of each round and avoid touching their face throughout the round.**
- c. **No handshakes before or after the round.** Players will not make physical contact with their opponents. A “non-contact greeting” such as a head nod, wave, brief comment, or other safe and appropriate gesture should be used to maintain good sportsmanship before and after games.
- d. **Players will absolutely not remove masks at the board.** This is a serious violation of protocol and may result in forfeiture of game. If a player needs a drink of water or simply a “mask break,” the player must step away from the board to an area far away from other players, and preferably outside, to do so.
- e. With the agreement of both players, additional precautions may be taken to avoid cross-contamination. Such procedures may include designating only white to start or pause the clock (or push any other shared button), or players quietly announcing a capture and having the opponent remove their own piece from the board (captured pieces would be kept to the side in plain view). HRCA understands such procedures are onerous and therefore does not require them. All players accept some risk in attending over-the-board events.

By signing below, I, \_\_\_\_\_ confirm that I have read the above protocols and agree to strictly abide by them. I understand that failure to do so may result in forfeiture of games and/or being barred from playing in future events. By signing below, I also confirm that I accept the inherent risk of playing over-the-board chess in close proximity to others during a global pandemic, and I will not hold HRCA liable should I become ill as a result of any HRCA-sponsored event held under these protocols.

Participant signature	Today’s date
For minors, parent/guardian signature	Today’s date