

HOCKEY OPERATIONS



PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline various RMHA procedures associated with on-ice hockey operations including player evaluations and team selections, practices and player affiliations and coach selections.

SECTION 1 - PLAYER EVALUATIONS

- 1.1 The RMHA is committed to the establishment of an annual player evaluation process that is fair, safe, equitable, consistent, transparent and effective while being free from politics and external interference.
- 1.2 All U13, U15 and U18 players shall participate in the evaluation process at the beginning of each hockey season to demonstrate their individual skills and game play attributes through four (4) on-ice sessions.
- 1.3 All players must be registered and fees paid in full, or arrangements made for a payment plan, prior to a player participating in the evaluation process.
- 1.4 All players will be granted an opportunity to participate in two (2) on-ice sessions prior to evaluations to permit players to understand the drills that will be used for evaluations. Evaluation drills will be posted on the RMHA website prior to the start of evaluations.
- 1.5 All players are expected to participate in all four (4) on-ice sessions to ensure that evaluators have sufficient opportunity to evaluate all players effectively unless determined otherwise by the RMHA Board.
- 1.6 The number of teams within an age group and number of player spots available on each team shall be determined by the RMHA Board prior to evaluations.
- 1.7 The Player Development Coordinator, in collaboration with the RMHA Executive Directors, shall:
 - a) Establish the criteria, format and drills that will be used to undertake the evaluation process that align with Hockey Alberta guidelines and best practices.
 - b) Establish the evaluation scorecard;
 - c) Determining the on-ice personnel to demonstrate evaluation skills.
 - d) Determine the list of evaluators for each on-ice session.
 - e) Determine and approve any skill tracking programs or software needed for the evaluation process.

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- 1.8 Selected evaluators shall be chosen based on their hockey knowledge and experience and may include either Members and/or non-Members. Evaluators shall have no familial relationship to any player on the ice. For the purposes of this policy, familial relationship shall include: parent, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, grandparent, guardian or first cousin.
- 1.9 Evaluators shall:
- a) Remain separate from each other during the evaluation process and shall keep the players they are evaluating and any applicable rankings or comments confidential.
 - b) Not be distracted or influenced by any RMHA Executive Directors, spectators, or other individuals during the evaluation process.
 - c) Refer any questions or comments on the evaluation process to the Player Development Coordinator.
- 1.10 Each player in their respective age group shall be evaluated under the same criteria, using the same drills, against the same evaluation scorecard. Goaltenders shall be evaluated at all age levels (U13, U15, U18) and may be evaluated using different drills and evaluation scorecard than skaters.
- a) Age Groups may be split into multiple evaluation groups for efficiency purposes. The Player Development Coordinator shall attempt to balance these evaluation groups for an accurate representation of the range of skill within the age group.
- 1.11 After the evaluation process is complete, the Player Development Coordinator shall ensure that the results are posted on the RMHA website within forty eight (48) hours.
- 1.12 All evaluation scorecards and evaluator comments shall remain confidential throughout the evaluation process and shall be destroyed at the completion of the evaluation process.
- 1.13 Prior to the beginning of the evaluation process, Parents and Guardians may request that siblings be placed on the same team by contacting the Player Development Coordinator in writing. The following process shall be utilized in these circumstances:
- a) Siblings in the same age group: Both players will be placed on the team that the lower sibling is placed.
 - b) Siblings not in the same age group: Typically this arrangement will not be supported unless the higher age group requires additional players.
 - a. In the event that both siblings rank in the top five (5) players of the higher team, they shall be placed on the higher team.
 - b. In the event that one of the siblings ranks lower than the top five (5) players of the higher team, both players shall be placed on the lower team.

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- 1.14 Players that are absent from one (1) or more of the on-ice evaluation sessions shall be handled by one of the following options at the unfettered discretion of the Executive Directors:
- a) Averaging their rankings to determine an appropriate placement;
 - b) Identifying the appropriate placement through a mixture of current rankings, prior season level of play and prior coach reviews to determine an appropriate placement;
 - c) Being placed on the lowest team in the age group with the opportunity to advance to a higher team in the age group at the discretion of the Executive Directors and the Player Development Coordinator.
- 1.15 Any complaints surrounding the final rankings shall be directed to the Player Development Coordinator between twenty four (24) and forty eight (48) hours following the announcement of results. Any complaints filed before or after this period will not be entertained. The RMHA Board shall have the final determination of evaluation rankings.
- 1.17 Players shall only be permitted to participate in the evaluation process for their specific age division. Although expected to be significantly rare, the Board may consider permitting an exemplary player to participate in the evaluation process for a higher age division upon request prior to the commencement of the evaluation process. That player shall be required to evaluate within the top five (5) players of the higher division to remain within that age division.

SECTION 2 - COACH SELECTIONS

- 2.1 The RMHA is committed to an open and transparent process to recruit and appoint coaches for each team within the Association.
- 2.2 All individuals interested in coaching shall submit an application annually prior to the beginning of the evaluation process to the Coaching Coordinator. The application shall include:
- a) Age group the individual is interested in coaching;
 - b) Coaching qualifications;
 - c) Previous coaching experience;
 - d) Valid Criminal Record Check in accordance with RMHA Policy;
 - e) Position the individual is interested in (Head or Assistant Coach)
- 2.3 The Coach Coordinator shall at the conclusion of evaluations, provide a recommendation to the RMHA Board of which individuals they would recommend be appointed as Head Coach for each team. These recommendations should be based on the following criteria, that have no specific weighting associated to each category:

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- a) Qualifications: Applications will be reviewed to determine if they have the necessary qualifications to meet the minimum coaching standards as required by Hockey Alberta. Preference may be given to those that have higher coaching level qualifications.
 - b) Experience: Applications will be reviewed based on the number of years the applicant has coached and the levels previously coached.
 - c) Historical Evaluation: Applications will be reviewed based on evaluations received from previous coaching assignments.
- 2.4 The RMHA Board shall have the final discretion as to which applicants are appointed as Head Coaches for each team in the Association.
- 2.5 Following the appointment of Head Coaches, the Coaching Coordinator shall communicate with each Head Coach to inform them of the decision and to provide them a listing of applicants that submitted interest as an Assistant Coach. The Head Coach shall have the authority to select the individuals that they would like to assist them.
 - a) Notwithstanding the above, the RMHA Board reserves the right to recommend and/or refuse an inclusion on a team's coaching staff based on previous coaching experiences, historical evaluations and/or unalignment with the Association's goals and objectives.
- 2.6 The RMHA Board may permit for youth coaches to assist with younger age groups within the Association. In alignment with Hockey Canada's National Coaching Certification Program's Minimum Age Policy, the minimum age for youth coaches shall be fourteen (14) years of age.

SECTION 3 – PRACTICES

- 3.1 The RMHA is committed to providing ample and fair practice opportunities for each team in the Association.
- 3.2 The RMHA Board will determine the amount of regularly scheduled practice times each week for each team. The Board may choose to alter the amount of practices provided during a week based on statutory holidays, Christmas break, Provincial or Playoff game requirements and for any other reason the Board determines necessary.
 - a) Teams that lose a previously scheduled practice time will not be reimbursed for that respective practice time, nor will they receive a credit for an additional future practice time.
 - b) Teams that wish to schedule additional practices shall do so through the Ice Coordinator and shall be responsible for all associated costs unless determined otherwise by the Board.

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- 3.3 Players are required to practice with their own team with the exception of affiliated players participating in practices with their affiliated team.
- 3.4 The RMHA Board shall have the full authority to determine the day and time of each teams practices and if teams are required to share the ice surface with additional teams.
- 3.5 The RMHA may utilize established practice times for the delivery of enhanced player development opportunities such as Power Skating or Goalie Training.

SECTION 4 – EXHIBITION GAMES

- 4.1 The RMHA is committed to providing ample and fair opportunities for each team in the Association to host exhibition games.
- 4.2 Respecting that the RMHA is limited in available funding and available ice slots, the RMHA Board will budget annually for each team to receive exhibition game opportunities. This budget will include the expense of ice time and referees that would be required for that respective age group. For greater clarity, teams will not be provided with an ice slot or number of referees that would be inconsistent with their league requirements.
- 4.3 Any teams wishing to schedule an exhibition game shall contact the Ice Scheduler and Referee in Chief to make appropriate arrangements.
- 4.4 The Ice Scheduler shall be responsible for maintaining a record of which teams have utilized their block of Association funded game slots.
- 4.5 Teams seeking additional exhibition games from those provided in section 4.2 shall be responsible for funding these games at their own cost and shall only be permitted the opportunity in the event that there is ice time not required for any Association league games, other teams using their exhibition game opportunities permitted in Section 4.2 or for any other Association requirements.
- 4.6 No exhibition games shall be scheduled for the first weekend following the establishment of teams to permit for player and team registration processes to be completed.

SECTION 5 – PLAYER RELEASE PROCESS

- 5.1 The RMHA is committed to providing an opportunity for exceptional players to participate in elite hockey including AA and AAA programs. The RMHA will adhere to Hockey Alberta's processes as they relate to AA and AAA tryouts. Player releases for

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this purpose are not administered by this Policy and will solely follow Hockey Alberta's regulations.

- 5.2 Although the RMHA discourages player releases, the RMHA respects that there may be extenuating circumstances where a release may be requested. These scenarios may include:
 - a) There being insufficient spots for a player on a team within their age division;
 - b) There being no team within the player's age division;
 - c) Movement by Special Exception:
 - a. The player wishes to move to a different stream of hockey (female hockey, recreational hockey etc);
 - b. Movement to another association due to extenuating circumstances.
- 5.3 This Policy is subject to the rules and regulations surrounding Player Movement established by Hockey Alberta.
- 5.4 Parents that are seeking a release from Renegades Minor Hockey to allow for their player to tryout for a different association shall fill out the Hockey Alberta Player Movement Form, and submit it to the Player Development Coordinator prior to the first day of evaluations. Any Player Movement Forms submitted after the commencement of evaluations will be denied by the Board.
- 5.5 The Board shall consider the following factors in determining if a player release is due to extenuating circumstances as outline in Section 5.2:
 - a) Location of workplace of parents / guardians;
 - b) Location of the school of the players;
 - c) Distance of travel / accessibility to ice times;
 - d) Safety (Emotional/physical) concerns
 - e) Need for the player in the accepting association.
- 5.6 The Board shall deny any Player Movement requests based solely on dislike of a coach, teammate, other Member of the RMHA, or the Association.
- 5.7 Upon receipt of a Player Movement Form, the Player Development Coordinator shall present the form to the Board for consideration. In the event that the Board is not supportive of the player movement request, the Board shall provide a written decision with reasons for refusal to the parent.
- 5.8 The decision of the Board may be appealed to the Appeals Committee in accordance with RMHA Bylaw and Policies.
- 5.9 It shall be the responsibility of the Parent to follow all processes established by Hockey Alberta.

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- 5.10 Players seeking a release from the Rocky Mountain Athletic Association shall be required to follow the same process noted above with their respective request submitted to the Rocky Mountain Athletic Association. Upon approval of the RMAA, written correspondence shall be forward to the RMHA President for final authorization to be released.

SECTION 6 – PLAYER AFFILIATION PROCESS

- 6.1 The RMHA endeavors to ensure that players have opportunities for growth and development while minimizing the impact to teams by committing to a thoughtful affiliation process. The purpose of the affiliation process is to provide an opportunity for teams to replace players when their regular players are sick, injured or otherwise unavailable. Throughout the process, teams should ensure that communication is proactive, respectful and inclusive of the thoughts and positions of all parties to the affiliation, most notably the player.
- 6.2 Teams shall not be permitted to use affiliated players to fill the position of regular players that have been suspended, unless permitted through Hockey Alberta exceptions.
- 6.3 The following affiliation principles have been agreed to by the RMHA:
- a) At all times, the interest of the player shall be prioritized and the parent(s) of the player shall always have the final authority to approve or decline an affiliation request;
 - b) Players shall only be permitted the opportunity to participate in a maximum of ten (10) affiliations combined.
 - c) Affiliated players shall not be more skilled than the regular players on the affiliating team and/or provide the affiliating team a competitive advantage. The RMHA Executive reserves the right, after evaluating an affiliated players performance in an affiliation game, to prohibit a player from participating in future affiliations with that specific team. In this instance, players may be affiliated to the next higher categorized team for future affiliations.
 - d) Unique circumstances where affiliation is not ideal should be communicated between Team Managers in an effort to find a mutually agreed upon solution that takes into account the interests of both teams.
 - e) Any conflicts relating to the affiliation process shall be forwarded to the RMHA Executive that shall have final authority on any affiliation requests. The decision of a parent to refuse an affiliation request shall not be appealable.

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- 6.5 The RMHA has outlined the following affiliation process that must be followed by teams:
- a) Teams that have identified that an affiliation for future game(s) is required shall communicate that need between the Manager of the requesting team and the Manager of the player's team. Although it is required for teams to provide as much notice as possible, it is respected that at times affiliation is urgent.
 - b) The Manager of the player's team shall notify the Head Coach of the player's team that an affiliation has been requested.
 - c) The Manager of the player's team shall notify the parents of the player that an affiliation has been requested and seek their confirmation that the player is available and willing to affiliate for the chosen game.
 - d) The Manager of the player's team shall notify the Manager of the requesting team of the decision.
 - e) If the decision of the affiliating player is not to play, the Manager of the requesting team shall have the opportunity to request an alternate player on the affiliation listing by restarting the process outlined above.
- 6.6 Players from the RMHA may be permitted to affiliate with the Rocky Mountain Athletic Association. These affiliations will be managed by the RMAA's approved affiliation processes.