



# Lord Selkirk Minor Hockey Association (LSMHA)

## Fair Play Policy

The Coach's Fair Play Policy for Players' Ice Time sets LSMHA's guidelines for coaches to manage players' ice time, and it will assist coaches in setting expectations to players and parents. Coaches are expected to administer this policy and communicate it and their intentions to their players and parents.

- 1) LSMHA mandates that all players receive balanced amounts of ice time and opportunity on a game-to-game basis (this includes key situations – power play, penalty kill, and final minutes of the game).
- 2) Players must be given opportunities to learn a variety of positions as per the guidelines established in each of the Hockey Canada Pathway documents.
- 3) Teams with 2 goalies must ensure that those goalies receive equitable ice time throughout the year. In the U9 age division, if there is no designated goalie on a given team, all players who express a desire to play goal must be given an equal opportunity to do so on a rotational (i.e. game to game) basis.
- 4) Outside of the caveats specifically mentioned in this document, coaches are not permitted to deny a player the opportunity to receive an equitable amount of playing time.
- 5) It is reasonable for coaches to provide guidance and discipline to players who engage in inappropriate behavior. It is therefore acceptable for a coach to use an age-appropriate reduction in playing time as a consequence of inappropriate behaviors.

A non-exhaustive list of inappropriate behaviors could include:

- Disrespect or profanity directed to the coaching staff or teammates.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct towards opponents.
- Behavior that is embarrassing to the team and/or association (i.e. slamming sticks or gates).
- Actions that cause or have the intention to cause harm to individuals.

When a reduction of playing time is used as a disciplinary measure for inappropriate player conduct, coaches are expected to communicate their reasoning and thought process to parents as soon as they are able (in advance, if possible).

- 6) Under some conditions, it may be necessary for a player to receive less ice time for health or safety considerations.
- 7) In elimination games and/or medal/championship games, there is an understanding from LSMHA that there may be variations in playing time. This understanding stems from the fact that it is beneficial to all players to have the opportunity to take part in an extra game, or to win a medal/championship.
  - This should not, under any circumstances, come as a surprise to players and their parents, rather, it must be clearly communicated by the coaching staff (told to players and shared with parents in written form) at the very beginning of the year, and reiterated at the beginning of tournaments and playoffs.
  - Coaches are required to provide additional opportunities in other games to players whose ice time is adversely affected in these situations. This must also be shared with players and

parents at the beginning of the year.

- 8) LSMHA recognizes the degree of difficulty in providing absolute equal playing time and opportunity on a game-to-game basis, however, to provide a clearer picture, the following situations will not be tolerated:
  - Double shifting certain player(s) on a consistent basis.
  - Consistently granting certain players or units longer shifts than other players or units.
  - Consistently restricting key situations to certain players (power play, penalty kill, and final minutes of the game).
  - Reducing a player's ice time due to a lack of confidence or inability to execute skills and/or tactics.
  - Providing a disproportionate amount of ice time to affiliate players over roster players.
  - Consistently and intentionally balancing forward and defensive units unfairly (10 forwards and 5 defense instead of 9 forwards and 6 defense, for example) to benefit certain players.
  - Consistently putting certain players on the ice first when changing on the fly, regardless of their position.
  - Reducing a player's playing time for something that is beyond their control (ex: benching a player who is late or absent from 1 or 2 practices and is too young to drive themselves).

**Note 1:** LSMHA encourages coaches to contact the Age Director or VP of Hockey Operations with respect to any situations or circumstances that are not specifically addressed in this policy. In such instances, LSMHA will act in good faith to help guide coaches towards a decision that balances the needs of both the player and the team.