



OPERATIONAL POLICY: NON-SANCTIONED HOCKEY
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OVERVIEW

Working with Hockey Canada and our colleagues within the other Provincial Amateur Hockey organizations, Hockey Alberta is committed to offering the best development programs in the world. Collectively we have invested significant resources into the development of officials, coaches, administrators and players countrywide. We have a committed strategy toward a cohesive long-term athlete development model and we feel our programs are second to none in sport.

Despite, or perhaps because of, our success in delivering quality programming, other organizations operating outside our structure form leagues, tournaments and games from time to time that offer various levels of amateur hockey programming. These “non-sanctioned” organizations do not support the development of Hockey Alberta or the programs of our Members. Further, they operate with limited, or no consideration to the impact of their programs on our sanctioned minor, minor female, junior, or senior hockey, and our officiating, coaching or administrator development. These Non-Sanctioned Leagues choose instead, in many instances, to utilize resources already developed by Hockey Canada and its Members.

Because Non-Sanctioned Games operate outside of our structure, Hockey Alberta has no way of ensuring that those Leagues implement many of the fundamental safeguards inherent in Hockey Canada sanctioned programs. As a result, those Leagues may not be using the same Playing Rules that Hockey Canada has implemented to protect player safety and may not provide adequate insurance for their participants. We also cannot ensure that the quality of play in these Leagues matches the level advertised.

Hockey Alberta respects the right of every individual to choose between participating in a Hockey Alberta sanctioned program or a Non-Sanctioned league at the beginning of each hockey season. Every individual who makes the choice to participate in a Non-Sanctioned league, however, must understand the ramifications of that choice, as described in greater detail in Section III of this policy.

DEFINITIONS

- “**Cut-Off Date**” means September 30.
- “**Member Organization**” means any Minor Hockey Association (MHA), Recreational Hockey Program, Accredited School, Para Hockey Program, Junior/ Senior Hockey League, etc. that is approved and registered with Hockey Alberta.
- “**Non-Sanctioned League**” includes any amateur hockey league that operates in Canada outside the auspices/sanctioning of Hockey Canada. This currently does not include summer hockey leagues/teams, adult recreational hockey leagues/teams, high school hockey, and/or hockey schools.

- **“Participate”** means to engage, knowingly or otherwise, in an activity. Such activity includes, without limitation, playing, managing, coaching, officiating, or acting as a trainer.
- **“Participation”** in a Non-Sanctioned Game will be considered to have occurred if the individual takes part in one game (including an exhibition, tournament, league or playoff game) after the Cut-Off Date.

PARTICIPATING IN A NON-SANCTIONED LEAGUE

- Hockey Alberta will implement the Hockey Canada Non-Sanctioned League Policy and in addition has strengthened the application of that policy as set out below.
 - Any individual who Participates in a Non-Sanctioned league after the Cut-Off Date will have their registration privileges with Hockey Alberta Member Organizations suspended for the remainder of the current season.
 - After the end of the current season, individuals may return to register with a Hockey Alberta Member Organization for the next season.
 - Notwithstanding the requirements above, anyone who participates in a Non-Sanctioned League game after the Cut-Off Date is entitled to seek early reinstatement of their registration privileges with Hockey Alberta Member Organizations by applying to Hockey Alberta for reinstatement.
 - These processes will remain in effect even if the Non-Sanctioned League or team folds, or the Participant is released, suspended or fired from that League or team.

SUPPORTING A NON-SANCTIONED LEAGUE

- Hockey Alberta will implement the Hockey Canada Non-Sanctioned League Policy and in addition has strengthened the application of that policy as set out below.
- Any Member organization which supports a Non-Sanctioned League, is subject to the following:
 - Hockey Alberta Member Organizations (MHA’s, Recreational Hockey Programs, Accredited Schools, Para Hockey Programs, Junior/ Senior Hockey Leagues, etc.) must make every effort to ensure that they and their representatives are not supporting Non-Sanctioned Leagues.
 - For greater certainty, “supporting” includes, but is not limited to, formal partnerships, assisting a Non-Sanctioned League or Team through advertisement, promotion, ticket sales, volunteer activities, assigning Officials, sharing resources or enabling Teams to participate in Hockey Canada sanctioned activities.
 - For violation of this policy, Hockey Alberta may withhold sanctions, permits and/ or the eligibility of a Member Organization or Team to host events, precluding them from benefitting from Hockey Alberta sanctioning while they are in violation of the policy.

HIGH PERFORMANCE PROGRAMS

- Hockey Alberta will only accept players who are registered with a member MHA or Accredited School into our High-Performance Programs and Development Camps (ie: Prospects Cup, Alberta Challenge, Alberta Winter Games, Alberta Cup, Arctic Winter Games, National Aboriginal Hockey Championships, etc.).
- Access to these programs is a privilege that is offered to and reserved for the member participants of Hockey Alberta.

TEAM OFFICIALS

- Hockey Alberta will only accept team officials who are registered with a Member Organization, or sanctioned partner program (ie: WHL) into our High-Performance Programs and Development Camps (ie: Prospects Cup, Alberta Challenge, Alberta Winter Games, Alberta Cup, Arctic Winter Games, National Aboriginal Hockey Championships, etc.).
- Access to these programs is a privilege that is offered to and reserved for the member participants of Hockey Alberta.
- Hockey Alberta reserves the right to make choices regarding the coaches that we deem to be the best fit within our high-performance and grassroots development programs. Those participating in and/or supporting non-sanctioned programs could be perceived to pose a conflict and therefore may not be considered for Hockey Alberta programs or committees.

OFFICIALS

- An Official who works in a non-sanctioned league will not:
 - have access to the Hockey Canada insurance program for any injuries that may occur as a result of that participation;
 - have access to the Hockey Alberta Match Penalty on Official process for any infractions that may occur during the non-sanctioned activity.
- Any Official who works in a non-sanctioned league may not:
 - be eligible to be selected by Hockey Alberta or Hockey Canada for any Regional, National or International assignments;
 - be eligible to participate as an official in Hockey Alberta's Officiating Development Programs such as the Alberta Cup and Development Camp(s);
 - be eligible to act in the capacity of an Officiating Committee member and/or a Clinic Instructor.
- Hockey Alberta reserves the right to make choices regarding the officials and/or officials administrators that we deem to be the best fit for our programs. Those participating in and/or supporting non-sanctioned programs could be perceived to pose a conflict and therefore may not be considered for assignments within sanctioned programs, events or committees.