

## RULES POLICY

### PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIPS AND PLAYDOWNS POLICY

*MISSION STATEMENT: The OWHHA Provincial Championship is an annual competition to determine a Champion in each Division and Category and to provide an opportunity for each Region in the province to have representation.*

#### **(A) Team and Player Entry and Eligibility for Regional Playdowns and Provincial Championships**

- (1) (a) Competitive teams wishing to qualify for Regional Playdowns and Provincial Championships must submit a performance bond of \$200.00 which must accompany their completed registration forms which are due October 1<sup>st</sup>.
- (b) The Provincial Championship estimated fees will be set at the OWHHA Annual Members Meeting. All teams advancing to Provincials must submit the set fee (minus the \$200.00 bond) within 7 days of being notified of advancing to the Provincial Championships.
- (2) The OWHHA office will forward to each team a list in writing, of all teams in Ontario eligible for Regional Playdowns in their category. All eligible teams must have enough ice and ensure their calendar is clear to make room for enough playdown games to be held between February 1<sup>st</sup> and the second Sunday in March. All teams should assume they will have playdowns. The OWHHA President or designate shall have the authority to resolve any and all conflicts, to ensure all requirements are met. If a team is unable to provide the required amount of reasonable ice time, the team will be ineligible for Regional Playdowns.
- (3) Participating teams will be notified no later than February 1<sup>st</sup> of the eligible teams.
- (4) Any team that has been re-categorized will have up to 7 days from the date it is notified of its re-categorization to request a refund of its Provincial performance bond. (Refer to OWHHA Categorization Policy).
- (5) Any teams withdrawing from the Regional Playdowns after the playdown notification date, February 1<sup>st</sup>, will lose their bond money. Any team withdrawing from the Provincial Championships after the closing date of Regional Playdowns will be assessed a \$500.00 fine.
- (6) To be eligible for Regional Playdowns and/or Provincial Championships, all teams must have played five (5) OWHHA sanctioned games and all players must have played a minimum of 5 of their OWHHA sanctioned games with their team against other teams in their registered category, or a minimum of five OWHHA sanctioned games with their team with one or two of them being against teams one category higher and the rest being against other teams in their registered category prior to January 15<sup>th</sup>. Exemptions may be granted at the discretion of the OWHHA designate. The team must have participated in at least one OWHHA sanctioned tournament or play in a recognized competitive league with teams in their registered category prior to January 15<sup>th</sup>. All "AA" teams are exempt from the tournament participation requirement. Teams unable to meet criteria, must apply in writing to the OWHHA Office prior to January 15<sup>th</sup>.
- (7) Eligibility for Provincial Championships: A Player must have participated in the Regional Playdowns in order to be eligible for the Provincial Championship. If a player is unable to meet this criteria, the designated team official must apply in writing to the OWHHA Office for exception.
- (8) Pickup players are not eligible for Regional Playdowns or Provincial Championships. However, in certain circumstances, a team may be permitted to pick up a goaltender. If a team's goaltender is injured or unavailable for a legitimate reason, that team must apply, with proper documentation, to the OWHHA Office for permission to pick up a goaltender. The OWHHA Registrar will decide whether to grant such permission. If permission is granted, the team's designated goaltenders will be ineligible to play. The pickup goaltender must be currently registered with an OWHHA team, either in the same category or a lower one.
- (9) The Midget "AA" OWHHA Provincial Championship winner will be eligible to represent Ontario in the Esso Cup, National Female Midget Hockey Championship. In the event the winner of the OWHHA Midget "AA" Provincial Championship cannot attend the Esso Cup, National Female Midget Championship, the second place team at the OWHHA Midget "AA" Provincials will represent Ontario.
- (10) A team wishing to lodge a protest must have the protest lodged by a registered team official of that team to the referee before the teams leave the ice after the game in question. A \$200.00 fee must be issued to a member of the protest committee immediately following the game. The protest will be dealt with by the OWHHA. The fee will be returned if the protest is upheld.

- (11) If re-categorization results in an association having more than one team eligible for playdowns at the same category, the teams will be treated as any teams playing down in the same region. One of the teams may choose to request a re-categorization upwards, if they would prefer not to compete against another team from the same association.

**(B) Playing Rules and Regulations for Regional Playdowns**

- (1) Teams, local associations, or groups of associations may submit bids to host a “tournament-style” Regional Playdown in one or more categories. Bids should be submitted to the OWHA Office by February 1<sup>st</sup> of the playing season. The OWHA designate will either approve a bid or announce that Regional Playdowns for a specific category and region will be determined per the rules. Regional Playdowns may be held as part of a sanctioned tournament, but must follow all rules governing Regional Playdowns.
- (2) Regional Playdown game(s) will be allowed to be played during regularly scheduled and playoff league association games(s) if mutually agreed upon by both participating teams and the OWHA designate and all playing Rules and Regulations for Regional Playdowns are followed.
- (3) The OWHA office is responsible for coordinating Regional Playdowns, held for the purpose of determining a Regional Champion in each division and category. Period lengths in each series will be of the same duration for ALL games. If unanimous agreement on period length cannot be reached, the final and binding decision for period lengths will be determined by the OWHA designate. The minimum period/game length is 10/10/10, with no overtime except for RULE THREE (B)(9)(b). There will be no curfew.
- (4) It is mandatory to use minimum Level II HCOP currently registered referees.
- (5) Gate fees shall not be charged for OWHA Regional Playdown games.
- (6) Commencing at Bantam, all categories A and higher (Bantam A, Bantam AA, Midget A, Midget AA, Intermediate A, Intermediate AA, Senior A, Senior AA,) must use the three official system in Regional Playdowns. Referees in a three official system must be a minimum Level III. Under exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the OWHA designate(s), other arrangements may be made.
- (7) One 30 second timeout will be permitted per team/per game in all categories of OWHA Regional Playdowns.
- (8) Games that must be ended due to a serious injury that requires an ambulance to be called or due to a serious mechanical equipment failure in the arena that makes playing dangerous or impossible are permitted to be ended despite there being no curfew. Any Playdown games ended after the start of the third period due to the previously noted reasons will be considered a complete game at the point of curfew. Games ended prior to the end of the Second Period will be null and void and must be rescheduled and replayed in their entirety.

**(9) FOR TWO TEAMS:**

Upon mutual agreement, two teams involved in a regional playdown may select either a three game format with the first team to reach 4 points advancing or a five game format with the first team to reach 6 points advancing.

If agreement cannot be reached then the three game format will be used. Prior to the series beginning, the home ice advantage for the third game may be determined by a coin toss or ice availability.

Win	-	2 points
Tie	-	1 point
Loss	-	0 points

Prior to the series starting, the decision will be made by the OWHA designate and the teams involved whether they will follow RULE THREE (B)(9)(a) or RULE THREE (B)(9)(b) format. If the teams cannot agree with the format, RULE THREE (B) (9) (a) will be used.

- (a) If the series is tied in points after three (or five) games, the following tie-breakers will be used:
  - i. Goals scored minus goals against in three (or five) games;
  - ii. Fewest goals allowed in three (or five) games;
  - iii. Most periods won in three (or five) games;

- iv. Fewest penalty minutes in three (or five) games;
- v. First goal scored in series;
- vi. Flip of a coin.

**OR**

**Prior to the series starting, teams will pick either (i) or (ii) below**

- (b) (i) If the series is tied in points after three (or five) games, there is a provision of two 10 minute stop time sudden victory overtime periods. If still tied in points, after regulation time and overtime, then a shoot out will take place using three shooters on each team, alternating with the home team having the option to shoot first. If still tied, the remaining players will shoot until the same numbered shooter has scored and the other has not.

**OR**

- (ii) There is a provision for a fourth (or sixth) game may be played, with provision of two 10 minute stop time sudden victory periods. If still tied in points, after regulation time and overtime, then a shoot-out will take place using three shooters on each team, alternating with the home team having the option to shoot first. If still tied, the remaining players will shoot until the same numbered shooter has scored and the other has not.

**(10) FOR THREE, FOUR AND FIVE TEAMS:**

- (a) Prior to start of round-robin series, a decision will be made by the and the teams involved whether they will follow RULE THREE (B)(10)(b) or RULE THREE (B)(10)(c) and must be approved by the OWHA designate.
- (b) A single round robin will be completed. The winner will be the team with the most points. If tied in points, the following tie-breakers will be followed:
  - i. Number of wins;
  - ii. Record against other tied teams;
  - iii. Goals scored minus the goals against in round robin games;
  - iv. Fewest goals allowed in round robin play;
  - v. Most periods won in round robin play;
  - vi. Fewest penalty minutes in round robin play;
  - vii. First goal scored in series;
  - viii. Flip of a coin.
- (c) A double (home and home) round robin will be completed, if all participating teams have the required ice and agree to this format unanimously. If tied in points, the tie-breakers in RULE THREE (B)(10)(b) will be followed.

In case of more than two teams, tie-breakers will follow the numerical order until all ties are broken.

**(11) FOR SIX OR MORE TEAMS:**

- (a) The OWHA designate will approve the Playdown format to be used.
- (b) If tied in points, the following tie-breakers will be used:
  - i. Number of wins;
  - ii. Record against other tied teams;
  - iii. Goals scored minus the goals against in round robin games;
  - iv. Fewest goals allowed in round robin play;
  - v. Most periods won in round robin play;
  - vi. Fewest penalty minutes in round robin play;
  - vii. First goal scored in series;
  - viii. Flip of a coin.

In case of more than two teams, tie-breakers will follow the numerical order until all ties are broken.

- (12) In all divisions, Regional Playdowns must be completed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in March, using the current criteria, otherwise the OWHA designate shall have the authority to declare a Regional Champion. The Provincial Championship shall be a competition among the declared representatives of each region.
- (13) Home team must submit the score to the OWHA within 24 hours of the game. Game sheet must be e-mailed within 48 hours of the game to the OWHA office.

- (14) Teams are required to bring two sets of sweaters (light and dark) to Regional Playdown games. The home team will wear their light-coloured sweaters. Goalies must dress in the same colour sweater as the team is wearing. Any conflict in sweater colour will result in the home team having to change.
- (15) All players of each team must wear the same identically coloured hockey socks on both legs, goalies excepted.
- (16) A team wishing to lodge a protest must have the protest lodged by a registered team official of that team to the referee before the teams leave the ice after the game in question. A \$200.00 fee must be issued to a member of the protest committee immediately following the game. The protest will be dealt with by OWHA. The fee will be returned if the protest is upheld.
- (17) Protests dealing with judgments or dealing with calls that do not deal directly with the outcome of the game will not be heard.
- (18) Any violation of (12), (13), and (14) above will result in a \$200.00 fine per occurrence.

**(C) Playing Rules and Regulations for Provincial Championships**

- (1) It is mandatory to use minimum Level II HCOP currently registered referees.
- (2) Commencing at Bantam, all categories A and higher must use the three official system in Provincial Championships. Under exceptional circumstances and with the approval of OWHA designate, other arrangements may be made.
- (3) The Provincial Championship shall be a competition among the declared representatives of each region.
- (4) All games except the championship will consist of a minimum of three (3), ten (10) minute stop time periods. Period lengths will be determined annually by the OWHA designate.
- (5) There will be no overtime played in round robin series, unless designated by the OWHA.. Points will be awarded as follows: two (2) points for a win, one (1) point for a tie and no points for a loss. In quarter finals, semi-finals, and championship games, if the game is tied at the end of regulation play then teams will play ten (10) minute stop time sudden victory periods until a goal is scored. Teams will not switch ends for the first overtime period but will switch ends after each successive period until a winner is declared.
- (6) If there is a tie in points after round robin games, the following tie-breakers will be used to break the tie:
  - i. Number of wins;
  - ii. Record against other tied teams;
  - iii. Goals scored minus the goals against in round robin play;
  - iv. Fewest goals allowed in round robin play;
  - v. Most periods won in round robin play;
  - vi. Fewest penalty minutes in round robin play;
  - vii. First goal scored in series;
  - viii. Flip of a coin.

In case of more than two teams, tie-breakers will follow the numerical order until all ties are broken.

- (7) One 30 second timeout will be permitted per team/per game in all categories of OWHA Provincial Championships.
- (8) All disciplinary matters will be dealt with by the Disciplinary Board of the OWHA.
- (9) There will be a three (3) minute warm up prior to each game, starting as soon as the ice resurfacers gates are closed, but no earlier than thirty (30) minutes prior to the scheduled start time.
- (10) Floods (addition or deletion) will be at the discretion of the OWHA and/or the referee on the ice if the need arises (i.e. overtime, weather conditions, etc.).
- (11) Teams are required to bring two sets of sweaters (light and dark) to the Provincial Championships. The home team will wear their light-coloured sweaters. Goalies must dress in the same sweater colour as the team is wearing. Any conflict in sweater colour will result in the home team having to change.
- (12) All players of each team must wear the same identically coloured hockey socks on both legs, goalies excepted.
- (13) Any violation of (11) and (12) above will result in a warning for the first offence and forfeit of the game for a second offence.

## RULES POLICY

### SUSPENSION POLICY

- (A) All OWHA members must follow the OWHA Discipline Policy and Procedures .
- (B) The OWHA Chairperson or designate shall have the power to suspend summarily any player, coach, manager, person, team, member or individual for any breach or violation of any of the provisions of the OWHA, By-laws, Regulations, Rules, Policies Values, Code of Conduct, playing rules or any decision or ruling of the OWHA, or for unsportsmanlike conduct on or off the ice, or for abusive language to any of the officials, or for the alleged infraction of the amateur definition, provided that the Chairperson is satisfied that such player, coach, manager, person, team, member or individual as the case may be has committed such breach or violation, such suspension to be automatically and continuously effective until dealt with by the OWHA who shall deal with such suspension within fifteen days thereof.
- (C)
  - (1) Any suspendible offense which occurs in any OWHA game (league, tournament, exhibition and/or Regional Playdown or Provincial Championship in or outside of Ontario) during the current season must be reported to the OWHA office within twenty-four (24) hours of the infraction(s) by the coach or other team official OR prior to the player or team's next game, whichever is less.
  - (2) Additional suspensions will be imposed wherever conditions and circumstances warrant.
  - (3) Leagues, local associations, individual teams and the OWHA may assess additional suspensions if warranted.
  - (4) Player/Team official may also be required to appear before an OWHA disciplinary board.
  - (5) Once a player or team official has been suspended/ejected from a game, she/he cannot return to the ice to participate in any post-game ceremonies (hand shaking, medal presentations, etc.). If the suspended person does return to the ice, further suspensions will be issued.
  - (6) It is the responsibility of each team manager and/or coach to ensure his/her players and/or team staff sit out their minimum suspensions. If a team plays twenty (20) games or less during the season, the person will sit out the minimum suspension or three weeks, whichever is less. When in doubt as to the relevant suspensions, contact the OWHA office. If you are unable to reach an OWHA designate, sit player(s) and/or team officials in question until clarification can be obtained.
  - (7) Any player or team official currently under suspension is not eligible to participate in any OWHA games until his or her suspension has been completed. The OWHA may extend the suspension to include all OWHA activities if warranted. Note that suspensions are valid in all branches of Hockey Canada.
  - (8) Minimum Suspensions cannot be appealed and any individual suspension of seven (7) games or less may not be appealed.
  - (9) The OWHA will uphold additional suspensions issued by teams, leagues and/or associations upon written notification to the OWHA Office.
  - (10) The coach or team official of a team whose member commits a suspendible offence must send a copy of the game sheet to the OWHA office ([stats@owha.on.ca](mailto:stats@owha.on.ca)) within twenty-four (24) hours of the infraction OR prior to the player or team's next game, whichever is less. Game sheets must be submitted electronically. Faxes will not be accepted.
  - (11) Copies of game sheets confirming suspensions have been served, must be forwarded within twenty-four (24) hours of the game, by the coach or other team official, OR prior to the player or team's next game, whichever occurs first, to the OWHA Office ([stats@owha.on.ca](mailto:stats@owha.on.ca)) Game sheets must be electronically submitted. Faxes will not be accepted.

## RULES POLICY

### PROTEST POLICY

- (A) OWHA member teams may file a protest on any OWHA sanctioned game.
- (B) Matters that may be protested are:
  - (1) a game official's interpretation of a rule which in the opinion of the aggrieved team may have given the opposition team a distinct advantage.
  - (2) an improperly registered, an unregistered, ineligible or a suspended player or team official participating in a game or being on the player's bench during a game.
- (C) Time allowed for filing a protest:  
A protest must be filed within 48 hours of the starting time of the game in question.
- (D) To protest a team must:
  - (1) (a) with respect to protest relating to the interpretation of a rule, notify the referee verbally of the protest before, during, or at the end of the game, before they leave the ice,  
**OR**
    - (b) with respect to an improperly registered, unregistered, ineligible, or suspended player or team official, notify the OWHA office within 48 hours of the start of the game.
  - (2) prepare the protest in writing.
  - (3) file the protest with the OWHA Office.
  - (4) accompany the protest with a \$200.00 protest fee, refundable if protest is upheld.
  - (5) deliver or send by email a copy of the protest to the protested team and notify the OWHA at [protests@owha.on.ca](mailto:protests@owha.on.ca) within 48 hours.
- (E) Within 5 business days of a protest being filed, the OWHA Chairperson shall set a date for hearing the protest. The hearing date will be no more than 10 business days after the filing date.
- (F) The OWHA Chairperson shall notify all parties to the protest as soon as the hearing date is set. This notice shall inform the parties of the time, place and date of the hearing.
- (G) To defend against a protest a team must:
  - (1) prepare a rebuttal in writing.
  - (2) file the rebuttal with the OWHA Chairperson within 48 hours of receiving the protest.
- (H) If the protest is based on a game official's interpretation of the rules, the team against whom the protest is filed need not defend against the protest. The protest committee will hear the matter on the strength of the protest submission, with both teams and the game officials present.
- (I) Protests at Provincial Championships must be dealt with at the time of the protest.

## **RULES POLICY**

### **APPEALS POLICY**

- (A) Matters that may be appealed:
  - (1) for a player's release.
  - (2) supplementary game(s) above the minimum suspension added by the OWHA that takes the suspension to 8 games or more.
  - (3) a decision by a League, Team or association.
  - (4) any issue dealing with Harassment and Abuse shall be handled in accordance with Hockey Canada policies and procedures and, as such, any application for appeal to the OWHA may or may not be heard in accordance with policies and procedures established by the OWHA
- (B) To appeal, an individual, team, league, or association must submit written documentation stating the reasons for the appeal and facts supporting the appeal to the OWHA Office.
- (C) Time allowed for filing an appeal:
  - (1) for a player's release an appeal may be filed at any time
  - (2) for a suspension of more than 7 (seven) games, except for a minimum suspension which cannot be appealed, an appeal must be filed within 48 hours of receipt of the suspension.
  - (3) All other appeals must be filed within 7 business days of receipt of notice of a decision.
- (D) A \$200.00 Appeal Fee must accompany the appeal. The \$200.00 Appeal Fee may be refundable at the discretion of the Appeal Committee. The fee does not apply to an appeal by a player for her release.
- (E) Within 5 business days of the appeal being filed the OWHA Chairperson or her/his designate shall set a date for hearing the appeal. The hearing date will be no more than fifteen (15) business days after the filing date. The OWHA Chairperson or her/his designate shall notify all parties 24 hours in advance of the appeal as soon as the hearing is set.
- (F) The OWHA Chairperson or her/his designate shall notify all parties to the appeal as soon as the hearing date is set. His/her notice shall inform the parties of the time, place and date of the hearing.
- (G) The appeal tribunal has the authority to uphold, increase, or decrease a suspension.
- (H) The Appeal Tribunal shall render its decision not more than 5 (five) business days after the hearing.

## GLOSSARY

**THE ASSOCIATION:** In this document, “the Association” refers to the Ontario Women’s Hockey Association.

**AN ASSOCIATION:** For purposes of this document, “an association” refers to a local association which provides OWHA registered teams and/or a FUNdamentals program for girls and/or women.

**CATEGORY:** Each OWHA registered team has a category. The category includes the age division and the distinction between house league and competitive, and for competitive teams also includes the competitive level expressed as a group of letters between AA and C.

**COMPETITIVE TEAM:** A competitive team is registered as one of the age group or senior competitive categories.

**HOCKEY FUNDAMENTALS PROGRAM:** A hockey FUNdamentals program is an instructional program following a curriculum developed by Hockey Canada. This program is not considered a team or teams.

**HOUSE LEAGUE TEAM:** A house league team is registered with the OWHA as one of the House League categories, including DS. This category includes Senior House League Open Age, Senior House League 20 & Over, and Masters, as well as the various age group divisions listed.

**INDEPENDENT TEAM:** An independent team is an OWHA registered team that is not part of a local association.

**PICKUP PLAYER:** Pickup player refers to a player used in a tournament under Rule Two (K).

**TEAM:** A team is a group of players and staff properly registered and approved by the OWHA.