

**ALBERTA LACROSSE
ASSOCIATION**

GUIDE TO STARTING A NEW CLUB



WE ARE ALBERTA LACROSSE

The Alberta Lacrosse Association is a non-profit organization that acts as the recognized lacrosse authority throughout the province of Alberta.

OUR VISION

Inspire a vibrant experience at all levels of lacrosse, embraced by the community as a sport for life. We are cooperative and disciplined, respecting the traditions and heritage of the game.

OUR MISSION

Through responsive, effective leadership and by embracing positive change, Alberta Lacrosse provides innovative, quality programs and services to inspire participation while protecting the integrity of the sport.

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INTRODUCTION

This manual is designed to help you form a new club at the minor lacrosse level. In addition to the guide, the Alberta Lacrosse staff, website (www.albertalacrosse.com), and local governing bodies are available to assist you.

The above mentioned resources can provide assistance in several key areas including, but not limited to:

- A list of local resources and contacts that have experience in starting a new club
- Volunteer support
- Serve as experienced resources for advice and guidance
- Website promotion for your new club
- Support with fundraising efforts
- Potential local grant programs



WHERE TO START?

To help you most efficiently execute the process of forming a new club, you will first need to answer two important questions:

(1) What age level will your team(s) be?

(2) Are you looking to join an existing league with your own new club or are you looking to play exhibition games?

YOUR TO DO CHECKLIST

- Gauge interest level; identify a target group of potential participants.
- Create a budget and determine how the club will be financed.
- Recruit others (parents, volunteers, community support) to help you with the administration
- Secure playing space
- Connect with existing organizations
- Recruit committed coaches and officials and connect them with training opportunities.



GAUGE INTEREST LEVEL

Before you commit your time and effort to forming a new club, you should determine your target area and participants and ensure that there is enough interest. Consider the following questions; the answers will help you to shape your club's mission and will affect the appropriate steps for success.

Who do you want to serve?

- Age groups and gender(s)
- Single neighborhood vs. community-wide
- Urban/suburban/rural
- Recreational only vs. educational

What model will you use to implement your club?

- Competitive league
- Summer Camps
- Year-round
- Seasonal

Educational Component?

Decide how and when to integrate the life skills component and who will implement this component. If you are considering a life skills component.



CREATE A BUDGET

Starting a lacrosse club not only takes a large time investment but also requires a financial one too. Money is one of the quickest and most effective routes to club acceptance. Since community organizations may not have the start-up costs for new sports, you must be prepared to gather funds before making your pitch. Remember that long-term planning, for more than just one or two seasons, is critical for the club's success and sustainability.

Hidden Costs

Financing a new club overall can still be challenging. Hidden costs may include field or floor time, transportation, coaches, officials, practice equipment, tools, uniforms, marketing and promotional initiatives.

Equipment Costs

Many first-time players and parents are hesitant to invest in equipment before they determine whether or not they are going to continue to play. Use the soft-stick rules and equipment and to teach fundamentals to new players and parents. This is a great way to see who is interested in coming out to play on the “real” team. Parents like this as an initial step, before they buy all of the equipment for their kids.



RECRUIT! RECRUIT! RECRUIT!

Many clubs have been started by the efforts of a single individual, but the most successful long-term clubs have a strong support team. Surround yourself with helpers from the very beginning and think about partnering with other sports!

Parents

Parents of the players you are recruiting are your strongest allies. Their participation must go beyond fundraising and game attendance.

Parents need to be connected with the lacrosse club. They must agree to support the club's philosophy growth and standards of behavior and encourage participation. Find two or three key parents who are proven leaders and engage them. Get them to invite other interested parents to an informal gathering where you and the other volunteers can discuss lacrosse and how a club might be established. Have facts at hand, such as the cost of equipment, possible floors or fields, neighboring clubs, and how parents can help. Try to get as many people involved as possible and give them specific tasks. A parent's interest and their profession can often prove invaluable.

Parks and recreation departments may be able to provide floor and field space, a place to advertise for coaches and players, and/or hold fundraisers and meetings.

Local businesses, especially sports retailers, may be able to sponsor a club, provide uniforms and other equipment at a discounted cost and post advertisements for coaches and players.



RECRUIT! RECRUIT! RECRUIT!

Players

Post or hand out flyers in public places, in schools, at your local YMCA, parks and recreation departments, at sporting events, local businesses etc., or advertise in your local newspaper that you are starting a new club and include your contact information.

Approach educators within your local school district about including lacrosse as a component of their physical education program.

Advertise the start of your club on a website.

Hold an informal meeting one afternoon or evening. Demonstrate the sport, make your enthusiasm clear, and show promotional videos.

Gather a group of interested players together to go see a Junior or professional game to introduce them to the game and the highest levels of competition - they will immediately be hooked!

Hold an informal, free "lacrosse day" or a clinic and invite players and parents to try the sport. Provide equipment for them if they don't already have their own.

Talk to coaches and players who are involved in other sports and solicit them to participate in lacrosse if they are not already committed to a different spring sport. Lacrosse can be a great way to stay in shape for sports in other seasons.



SECURE PLAYING SPACE

Playing space is a crucial consideration in deciding whether or not to start a lacrosse club. Decide on the availability of such space, and how many spaces you'll need for the number of players and teams you intend to accommodate in your club.

Public facilities such as town fields (or field space belonging to local parks and recreation departments, YMCA's, and Boys' and Girls' clubs), joint-use arenas and local community clubs are all logical choices.

Keep in mind the costs associated with floor and field rentals.

INSURANCE

Insurance is important for the safety and liability of all players, coaches, officials and program administrators and it is often a prerequisite to using fields or facilities. Insurance is a benefit for each Coach, Official and Player member of Alberta Lacrosse for the term and category of their membership.



REQUIREMENTS FOR ALA MEMBERSHIP

- Executive Listing
- Bylaws
- Registered Corporate Body

**CONTACT THE ALBERTA LACROSSE ASSOCIATION FOR
ASSISTANCE IN BUILDING A NEW CLUB, TO
FACILITATE CLINICS, OR TO VISIT SCHOOLS**

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