



# NATIVE HOCKEY ALBERTA COUNCIL PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIPS U7 – U18 DIVISIONS

## RULES AND REGULATIONS 2026

### 1) NHAPC & INSURANCE:

- a. NATIVE HOCKEY ALBERTA PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIPS (NHAPC) shall be played under the official HOCKEY CANADA rules, with the exception of the NHAPC rules and regulations adopted by the Native Hockey Alberta Council (NHAC)
- b. Tournament will be insured through a private insurance company chosen by NHAC for all players, coaches and referees
- c. Certified Referees are used throughout the NHAPC. All participants (players, coaches & supporters) must respect their decision. There will be ZERO TOLERANCE for the abuse of referees.

### 2) TEAM OFFICIALS' REQUIREMENTS:

- a. It is MANDATORY that the head coach has the following certifications. NHAC Aboriginal Coaching Module.
- b. A Safety Person must be identified on the roster and must have Emergency First Aid.
- c. Failure to adhere will result in a team being asked to stop participation in the NHAPC.
- d. Teams with female players must have 1 female staff member on the bench and in the dressing room.
- e. Male coaches on a female team are not allowed in the dressing room without a female staff member present.

### 3) COMMUNITY:

- a. NHAC recognizes a community to be a First Nation, Metis Settlement, Town, or City.
- b. See the Player Release Section regarding access to protected players.
- c. ALL communities must be in good standing with NHAC to enter a team.

### 4) REGISTRATIONS

- a. All players and coaches must register through the RAMP website.
- b. All players must be of Aboriginal descent and must have a Certificate of Indian Status, a Metis card, or an Inuit enrollment.
  - i. If this year is the first year playing in the NHAPC, players can submit a letter from INAC, MNA, or Metis Settlement showing that they have Indian, Metis, or Inuit Status.
  - ii. If a player does not have any documentation proving Indian, Metis, or Inuit Status, the player can appeal to the NHAC Board using the NHAC Aboriginal Decent Form.
- c. All players must upload a Headshot of themselves, a Birth Certificate, and a Certificate of Indian Status, or a Metis Card, or an Inuit status to the ramp registration website.
- d. Players must meet one of the following criteria:
  - i. be a member of a First Nation or Metis Settlement located in Alberta or the Northwest Territories (NWT)
  - ii. born in Alberta or NWT
  - iii. registered on a team in Alberta or NWT.
- e. All players must pay a registration fee within RAMP.

### 5) ROSTERS

- a. All teams are allowed to roster a maximum of 20 PLAYERS (18 skaters and two goalies). See the Half Ice rules for U7 and U9 half ice.
- b. The NHAC team roster registration deadline is January 15<sup>th</sup>, and must include one goalie, 11 skaters and 2 Coaching staff.
  - i. Rosters will be frozen after the roster deadline, and roster movement will not be allowed. Only blank roster spots can be filled.
  - ii. Goalies may be added after the January 31<sup>st</sup> deadline, provided a medical note from the family doctor stating the goalie is injured.
  - iii. Blank roster spots can be filled with players on the players looking for a team list or those currently registered until March 15<sup>th</sup>
- c. The NHAPC roster sheet will act as the master sheet for player registration and be used to generate the score sheets.
- d. After the games, the score sheet will be verified against the master sheet to ensure nothing has been altered.

- e. Any discrepancies found will result in forfeiture of that game and any previous game. In addition, further disciplinary action will result, according to the NHAC discipline committee.
- f. Arena Directors will have the right to do random ID checks to ensure the proper player is playing under the name on the game sheet.
- g. Teams will be notified if a player is on two rosters.
  - i. If the player belongs to a community (See 6c for clarification) he or she will have to play for that community or require a release from that community in order to play for the other team.
  - ii. If the player does not belong to the community, the player may play on either team on which he or she was double-rostered.
  - iii. The team that lost the player due to rule 5gii can replace that player with a player who is currently registering and not on a team or on the looking-for team list.

## 6) PLAYER RELEASE:

Player release will be required when a player wants to participate for another community

- a. When the player lives in a community that is in good standing with NHAC.
- b. When the player is registered during regular-season play with a community that is in good standing with NHAC.
- c. When a player has played in two consecutive NHAPC tournaments with a community, that player is deemed to be from that community.
- d. The community representative must sign all release forms, and the parent or guardian.
- e. The manager of the team is responsible for obtaining player release form when a player is in question by NHAC or knowingly adding players to the roster from another community.
- f. The community that should have granted the player the release form must issue a formal written notice before NHAPC, at which time the player in question will be suspended until the NHAC board issues a ruling.

## 7) CATEGORIZATION:

- a. Players not registered for the regular season; their last year of play will determine the Elite/Non-Elite categorization level
- b. Players registered as AAA, AA are defined as “Elite” players for NHAPC.
- c. Players playing in Elite Leagues (see 7ci) are deemed as an “Elite” Player for U15 and U18 divisions.
  - i) These Leagues are recognized as Elite JPHL, HSL, PHL, NJHL, USPHL.
- d. If a U18B/U15B team plays an elite player, all games will be forfeited, and further discipline will be imposed, according to the NHAC Board.
- e. A player can move down from his league level of play to play in NHAPC, age permitting. However, the player will be classified as an Elite player.
- f. A player will be classified as Elite upon completion of 10 or more games at an elite level.

## 8) Divisions

- a) U7 and U9 are played on half-ice.
- b) U9 Full Ice is played on full ice.
- c) U11 is played on full ice and has mixed male/female U11M and female-only U11F categories.
- d) U13 has mixed male/female U13M and female-only U13F categories.
- e) U15 has four categories: Elite U15E, mixed male/female U15B, female-only U15F, and U15BF non-contact Buffalo, if numbers permit.
- f) U18 has four categories: Elite U18E, mixed male/female U18B, female only U18F, and U18BF non-contact Buffalo, if numbers permit.

## 9) GAME REGULATION:

- a. All teams must be at the arena at least 45 minutes prior to game time to review and sign score sheets.
- b. All games will start on time with six players and proper certified team officials.
- c. U9 Full Ice Division to U18 Division game play will consist of a 3-minute warm-up and 3 – 18-minute straight time periods.
- d. Any team unable to commence play 10 minutes after the game starts will forfeit the game, and the score will be 10 – 0.
- e. A goal will be awarded to the team after 1 minute, 1 goal for every minute thereafter. If the team is late up to 10 minutes, it will result in a 10-0 forfeit win.
- f. Teams will not be allowed in the dressing room or during warm-ups unless accompanied by a team official.
- g. A 10-goal differential exists; the game shall be called. And the score will be recorded as a plus 10
- h. Stop time will occur within a 2-goal differential for the last 5 minutes of regulation.
- i. **Timeouts will only be allowed during stop time.** Each team will be allowed one 30-second timeout.

- j. No ties in round robin play.
- k. Round Robin Point System: After round robin play is finished, the following point system will be used to determine team placements:
  - i. 3 points for a Regulation Win
  - ii. 2 points for an Overtime Win
  - iii. 1 point for an Overtime Loss
  - iv. 0 points for a Regulation Loss
- l. The finalized ice schedule will be posted at each arena. Managers must check game schedules with arena postings.
- m. NHAC reserves the right to adjust game times based on ice availability.
- n. IT IS THE COACHES RESPONSIBILITY TO VERIFY AND SIGN GAME SHEETS PRIOR TO GAME TIME AND GET A COPY OF THE GAME SHEET AFTER THE GAME.**

## **10) PENALTIES:**

All penalties assessed during straight times shall be:

- a. Minor penalty will be 3 minutes.
- b. Major penalty will be 7 minutes.
- c. Penalties assessed during straight time will not commence until the puck is dropped.
  - i) When a player's penalty expires during a stoppage of play, the player may not leave the penalty box until the puck is dropped.
- d. Stop time penalties shall be:
  - i. Minor penalty will be 2 minutes.
  - ii. Major penalty will be 5 minutes.

## **11) OVERTIME:**

- a. It will be a sudden victory, first goal wins.
- b. All play will be stop time.
- c. The clock will stop after each progression. So, players can be removed.
- d. If a penalty occurs during overtime, the opposing team will add an extra attacker
- e. If the player does not complete the penalty after overtime is complete, the player will not be eligible to shoot in the shootout.
- f. Overtime will run as follows:
  1. The goaltender may be pulled at any time for an extra attacker at the discretion of the coach
  2. Three minutes, 3 on 3, if no goal is scored
  3. Shootout will occur:
    - a. Three players will shoot alternately if no goal is scored.
    - b. One player from each team will shoot alternately until a winner is decided.
    - c. Players cannot shoot again until nine players from his/her team have shot.

## **12) TIE-BREAKING SYSTEM**

If a tie occurs in the standings after round robin play, the following steps will occur:

1. If two teams tie, the winner of the head competition will determine placement.
2. If three teams are tied, the plus/minus differential will determine the placement of all three.
3. If still tied, the fewest penalty minutes will determine placement.

## **13) DISCIPLINE:**

- a. All disciplinary rulings shall be final as handled by the Discipline Committee.
- b. The Discipline Committee will not review videos.
- c. All NHAC decisions are final and cannot be appealed.
- d. The only person eligible to approach the Discipline Committee is the Community Representative.
- e. Communication needs to happen in a non-threatening manner if the disciplinary committee feels threatened the team challenging will be removed from the Provincial Championships.
- f. Managers and coaches will be deemed responsible for the behavior of their teams and supporters.
- g. The NHAPC-minimum suspension guidelines will be used for suspensions, except the following:
  - i. Fighting instigator or aggressor will be suspended from the remainder of NHAPC. The NHAPC discipline committee will review these infractions, and further discipline may be issued.
  - ii. The retaliator will be suspended for the next game.
  - iii. Checking from behind with intent to injure will result in suspension for the remainder of NHAPC.

- h. Any player, coach, or manager who receives an 11.2 Gross, 11.3, 11.4, or 11.5 penalty will be suspended from the remainder of NHAPC and will be reviewed by NHAC for further disciplinary action.
- i. The NHAC discipline committee will assess any 7.5 checking from behind match penalty infractions and can be given additional games suspensions, or suspended from the remainder of the NHAPC.
- j. Any player, coach, or manager suspended from the NHAPC; games must be served-before they are eligible to participate in another NHAC event.
- k. Any NHAC suspensions not served before this year NHAPC, the player must be registered and, on a roster, and on a game sheet with record showing games served.
- l. The NHAC discipline committee will review all major infractions and discipline accordingly.
- m. It is the responsibility of coaches and managers to report and record any suspensions to NHAC.
- n. It is the coaches' responsibility to ensure that a player assessed a major penalty does not participate in the next game.
- o. Any player caught playing for two teams will jeopardize both teams' further participation at the NHAPC.
- p. Failure to comply with official rules could disqualify a player, coach, manager, or team from participating in future NHAC events.

## **RULES FOR HALF-ICE GAME PLAY**

The rules for half-ice gameplay have been designed to maximize player engagement by increasing opportunities to interact with the puck and other players. A simplified version of the game allows younger players to focus on the elements of the game they enjoy most.

### **U7 PLAYING RULES**

- a. 4 vs. 4 format – plus a goaltender
- b. U7 roster - 14 players, no designated goalies
- c. If a player aged three and older can skate without any device other than a hockey stick, he or she can play in the NHAPC.
- d. Three-minute warm-up
- e. 4 4-oz blue puck will be used
- f. Rink set-up:
  - A set of barriers along the red line.
- g. Game length – 52 minutes
- h. Two 24-minute halves
- i. Shift length – three minutes in duration with an automatic buzzer or whistle sounding to indicate players change. The clock continues to run throughout the 24-minute half.
- j. One coach from each team must be on the ice with skates and helmet to officiate and instruct players on the ice.
- k. On ice coaches must maintain control and have all players off the ice at end of games to maintain the schedule.
- l. Players change on three-minute buzzer.
- m. There will be two face-offs during the game:
- n. The first face-off will start the game.
- o. The second face-off will start the second half.
- p. Puck to be thrown into the corner after every goal and three-minute buzzers.

### **U9 HALF ICE PLAYING RULES**

- a. 4 vs. 4 format – plus a goaltender
- b. U9 roster - 14 players, no designated goalies
- c. Three-minute warm-up
- d. Rink set-up: A set of barriers along the red line.
- e. Two 24-minute halves
- f. 4 oz blue puck will be used
- g. Shift length – two minutes in duration with an automatic buzzer or whistle sounding to indicate players' change. The clock continues to run throughout the 24-minute half.
- h. Games on both sides of the ice are synchronized.
- i. One coach from each team must be on the ice with skates and a helmet to officiate the game.
- j. Players change on the fly.
- k. If there are fewer than four players on the bench, the active player designated to stay out for the following shift must tag up at the bench before continuing play.
- l. There will be two face-offs during the game:
- m. The first face-off will start the game.
- n. The second face-off will start in the second half.

## **SHIFTS**

- a. Player shifts are recommended to be 2 minutes long. A buzzer or whistle will sound to signal line changes.
- b. At the sound of the buzzer or whistle, players must relinquish control of the puck immediately and vacate the ice. The new players enter the ice immediately.
- c. Failure to immediately relinquish control of the puck, or for new players to enter the ice surface prematurely, may result in a penalty (see below) for the offending team.

## **CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

- a. Goaltender freezes the puck – the official blows the whistle, indicating that the attacking team backs off and the defending team gains possession.
- b. Puck shot out of play – the offending team backs off, and the official gives the non-offending team a new puck.

## **PENALTIES**

- a. Minor penalties are noted with the official briefly raising their arm to indicate a penalty will be assessed. At the conclusion of the shift, the official notifies the coach of the infraction and the offending player's number.
- b. If the offending team controls the puck after the infraction, the official blows the whistle and calls for a change of possession; the non-offending team is given room to play the puck (three-metre cushion).
- c. The offending player will sit out the next shift, but the team will play even strength.
- d. Should an infraction occur that would typically require a player to be ejected from the game (game misconduct, match penalty, or gross misconduct), the player will be removed from the remainder of that game. Even in these circumstances, teams will not play shorthanded, and no game incident report will be required.

**Have fun and show Good Sportsmanship!**

**Bad Sportsmanship by players, team officials can impact future participation in NHAC events**



**OFFICIAL RULES revised: Dec 20, 2025; Dec 30, 2025**