

# 2026/27 Grand River Ringette Partnership and Operating Agreement

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## OVERVIEW

This **Grand River Ringette Partnership and Operating Agreement** (“Agreement”) establishes a collaborative partnership among ringette associations within the Grand River region to support the development and operation of combined AA-level ringette teams for the **2026–2027 season** (the “Season”). This Agreement is entered into by the following associations (collectively referred to as the “**Partner Associations**”):

- Guelph Ringette Association (GRA)
- Kitchener Ringette Association (KRA)
- Waterloo Ringette Association (WRA)
- Elora Fergus Ringette Association (EFRA)

The Partner Associations agree to collaborate to provide **AA-level opportunities for athletes across Wellington and Waterloo Regions** in alignment with the policies of **Ringette Ontario (RO)** and the **Great Lakes Ringette League (GLRL)**. This Agreement governs:

- Coach selection
- Player evaluation and selection
- Player home association status
- Program administration and responsibilities
- Tryout and ice scheduling coordination

The purpose of this partnership is to:

- Provide **high-performance development opportunities** for athletes in the region
- Promote **fair and transparent processes** in team formation
- Ensure **equal opportunity for athletes from all Partner Associations** to compete for AA roster positions

While not all Partner Associations may host AA teams in each season, **all Partner Associations participate in the partnership to ensure inclusive access to AA opportunities for their athletes.**

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## APPLICABLE TEAMS

For the 2026–2027 season, the following AA teams will be combined and operated under the Grand River Ringette Partnership:

- **U14AA – Hosted by Guelph Ringette Association (GRA)**
- **U16AA – Hosted by Waterloo Ringette Association (WRA)**
- **U19AA – Hosted by Kitchener Ringette Association (KRA)**

Host responsibilities may be reviewed annually by the Partner Associations.

**NOTE: Elora Fergus Ringette Association (EFRA)** will not serve as a host association for AA teams during the Season; however:

- Athletes registered with EFRA are **fully eligible to try out for and participate on the combined AA teams** under this partnership.
  - Their inclusion in this Agreement demonstrates the commitment of all Partner Associations to **equitable regional access to AA competition.**
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## GRAND RIVER PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

A **Grand River Partnership Committee** (“the Committee”) shall be formed to oversee the implementation of this Agreement.

The Committee shall include **two representatives from each Partner Association**, typically consisting of but not limited to:

- A **Board member or Vice President**, and/or
- The **GLRL Representative/Provincial Convenor**

Each association shall appoint its representatives annually.

#### COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

The Committee is responsible for:

- Maintaining and updating this Agreement
- Ensuring compliance with RO and GLRL policies
- Coordinating coach selection and player evaluation processes
- Addressing disputes or procedural concerns
- Supporting host associations in the administration of combined AA teams

The Committee will remain available to provide guidance to host associations throughout the Season. It is recommended that the Committee plan to meet in November and January to share updates and provide support as needed.

## COACH SELECTION

The goal of the coach selection process is to select **qualified head coaches who align with the development goals of the Grand River Partnership and serve the best interests of athletes across the Partner Associations.**

#### COACH SELECTION COMMITTEE

A **Coach Selection Committee** shall be formed and will include two representatives from the Host Association, and one representative from each of the Partner Associations for the Season. If necessary, additional representatives from the Partner Associations may participate in an advisory capacity.

#### COACH SELECTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Association	Divisions	Name	Notes
EFRA	U14AA, U16AA, U19AA	June Perry	
GRA	U14AA, U16AA, U19AA	Rebecca Seguin	
GRA	U14AA	Freedom Warne	secondary
KRA	14AA	Meg Acton	
KRA	U14AA, U16AA	Abby Breckles	
KRA	U19AA	Brian Breckles	
WRA	U14AA, U16AA	Leah Chapman	
WRA	U16AA, U19AA	Laura Tunstall	

#### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All individuals involved in the coach selection process must disclose any **actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest**. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Family or close personal relationships with a candidate
- Financial or business relationships

- Direct employment or supervisory relationships
- Previous coaching relationships that may impair objectivity

Any member with a conflict of interest must disclose it immediately and may be required to **recuse themselves from discussion and voting** related to the affected candidate. Failure to disclose a conflict may result in removal from the selection process.

#### COACH APPOINTMENT PROCESS

The Coach Selection Committee will:

1. Design the application and interview process
2. Develop a scoring and evaluation framework
3. Conduct interviews
4. Recommend head coaches to the boards of the host associations

Each Partner Association board must approve the recommended coach. If an objection occurs, written justification must be submitted to the Committee.

Head coaches must share their bench staff with the Coach Selection Committee for review and an opportunity to share any relevant insights and feedback. Head coaches should be announced **no later than one week before tryouts**, unless otherwise approved by the Committee.

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#### PLAYER EVALUATION AND SELECTION

Player selection must prioritize **skill, development potential, and team competitiveness** while ensuring fairness and transparency.

#### PLAYER EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Each AA team shall have a **Player Evaluation Committee** consisting of:

- Appointed evaluators nominated by the Partner Associations
- The appointed Head Coach
- Up to two additional evaluators selected by the Head Coach

All evaluators must be **free of conflicts of interest**.

#### EVALUATION PRINCIPLES

- Selection decisions will prioritize **player ability and team competitiveness**, not equal representation by association.
- Evaluators must provide **clear, reasonable criteria** for player releases.
- Any escalated concerns must be reviewed by the Committee.

Host associations will determine their process for issuing “**Roster Spot Not Offered**” notifications. Feedback requests from players or families will be accommodated **no sooner than two weeks after team formation**.

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#### PLAYER STATUS AND HOME ASSOCIATION

The Host Association of the combined team becomes the home and/or current option for that level of play. Players from all applicable associations must try out at the Host Association for that level of play.

Participation on a Grand River combined AA team **does not change a player’s home association status unless the 26/27 season is the 3rd consecutive** season that a player will play with the Host Association which would constitute a permanent Registered Member change for that individual. Ringette Ontario policies regarding player movement and releases remain in effect and may supersede provisions of this Agreement.

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## POST-TEAM FORMATION RESPONSIBILITIES

While teams operate within the Grand River Partnership, **the designated host association retains administrative responsibility for each team.** Host association responsibilities include:

- Player registration and fees
- Ringette Ontario and GLRL compliance
- Insurance coverage
- Volunteer requirements
- Team operations and administration

Disciplinary matters will be handled according to the **host association's policies and by-laws**, in accordance with RO regulations.

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## ICE SCHEDULING AND TRYOUTS

Host associations will coordinate the scheduling of tryouts and ice time.

All Partner Associations will work cooperatively to:

- Ensure adequate and fair access to tryout ice
  - Minimize scheduling conflicts
  - Promote equitable access for players from all Partner Associations
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## TERM OF AGREEMENT

This Agreement applies to the **2026–2027 ringette season.** The Partner Associations may review and amend this Agreement annually to reflect evolving program needs. This Agreement will terminate at the conclusion of the Season, including any team participation in **Provincial, Eastern, or National Championships.**

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## SIGNATORIES

By signing below, the Partner Associations agree to the terms of the **Grand River Ringette Partnership and Operating Agreement for the 2026–2027 season.**

**President, Elora Fergus Ringette Association:**

**President, Guelph Ringette Association:**

**President, Kitchener Ringette Association:**

**President, Waterloo Ringette Association:**