

# INNISFAIL MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION



## HANDBOOK

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this handbook is to give players, parents and coaches a reference guide to the operation of the Innisfail Minor Hockey Association (IMHA). This handbook outlines the common operational issues and often asked questions. It does not cover all the bylaws, policies, rules or guidelines used by IMHA.

## PLAYER EVALUATIONS

Since the Evaluation process is very important, IMHA has developed a Player Evaluation and Team Selection Process consisting of the guidelines to be used in the evaluation process. The purpose of the evaluation process is to provide a fair and impartial assessment of a player's total hockey skills during the skating (conditioning) and scrimmage sessions.

Evaluations assess such things as skating, puck control, hockey sense, knowledge of the game, drive, and sportsmanship to various degrees depending on the division being evaluated. However, coaches also take into account factors like size and coach-ability (attitude, desire, commitment, etc.) in their selections. The selection process overwhelmingly reflects on-ice performance during the evaluation period. The Evaluation Process document also outlines the guidelines for evaluation of goalies for the divisions Atom and up. Goalies are not evaluated at Novice and Dynamite levels as it is expected all players will be encouraged to try the position of goal at these age levels. The complete Evaluation Process document is available on the IMHA website, or through the Vice-president.

## UNDERAGE PLAYERS

Players in the divisions Novice and above may be permitted to tryout for the division immediately above their age group as an underage player. To remain in the higher division, the player must make the top team in that division and must be ranked in the top 5 (skaters) or top goalie from the evaluators picks. If the player does not make the top team in that division, they must return to their appropriate age division.

All players wishing to play up must make a written request to the Board prior to the tryouts commencing.

The IMHA Board will make the final decision if the player is eligible based on the above criteria as well as any other factors that may affect the association.

## OVERAGE PLAYERS

Players may request to play in a lower Division with the approval of the Board, approval of the League and is subject to proper action by Hockey Alberta.

## TEAM DRAFTS

In Novice and Dynamite Divisions, coaches will pick teams under the supervision of their Director. All evaluation information will be tabulated and the ranking of each player will be made available to the coaches prior to the draft to ensure all teams are balanced at the start of the season.

Parent requests should be made in writing to the Director prior to team selection being completed. Only those that are deemed reasonable and do not affect the draft or any team's balance may be honored. There are no guarantees.

## DUTIES OF COACHING STAFF

Coaches and team management are expected to operate the team within established policy and guidelines set forth by local, provincial and national hockey associations. Delegation of responsibilities to assistant coaches, managers and parents is necessary, desirable and encouraged.

All teams shall hold a meeting of the parents and coaching staff prior to October 31<sup>st</sup> of each season. Items to be covered include but are not limited to:

- 1) Coaching philosophy;
- 2) Financial commitment including tournaments, additional ice costs, other team purchases (jackets, track suits, hats, etc) and team fundraising;
- 3) Time commitment including number of games, practices and off-ice activities planned;
- 4) Discipline procedures should problems or conflicts occur should follow the established protocol; develop a set of team rules or boundaries in which the team should adhere to;
- 5) It is recommended (but optional) to Elect a 'parent liaison' to address conflict and serve as a coach-parent liaison;
- 6) The team must have a Team Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for incidents. The team can assign team roles to individuals for this;

- 7) Elect two (2) individuals to set up and have signing authority on a team bank account to run team funds through. A year-end report outlining the income and expenses must be available to Parents and Coaching personnel.

Coaching personnel will be reasonable in their demands on the young player's time, energy and enthusiasm. Remember that hockey is not their only activity and that family and educational responsibilities come first. Remember that kids play hockey for the fun and enjoyment of the game and that winning is only part of it. It is important that the players feel accepted as a member of the team and feel good about themselves and their contribution to the team. All players bring different elements to the team and should be encouraged to share their strengths with the team. Deal fairly with players at all times.

Coaching personnel must recognize their responsibilities as **leaders, educators and ROLE MODELS** for young players. Players need a coach they can respect and look up to. Do not lower yourself to the level of fans, parents or other coaches who throw tantrums, use profanity and make a spectacle of themselves by abusing game officials and in general degrade themselves and the game.

Coaching personnel must ensure proper supervision of the team before, during and after all games, practices and other team functions and accept reasonable responsibility for the conduct, safety and well-being of their players. Coaching personnel must make a personal commitment to keep informed on sound coaching principles and the principles of growth and development of the children. Coaching personnel must attain the appropriate certification for the level they wish to coach.

The use of illegal drugs or alcohol before and/or during a sanctioned Minor Hockey function will result in disciplinary action when coaching personnel are solely responsible for all players and no other parents are present.

Coaching personnel must abide by the Coaches Code of Conduct signed at the beginning of the year. Failure to do so will result in appropriate disciplinary action by the disciplinary committee.

### PARENT & FAN RESPONSIBILITIES

Parent responsibilities are centered on commitment and support to the player, the sport of hockey, the association and the community. You as a parent, have not only made a commitment to your child, but have made a commitment to the coaching staff and the other players on a team that are counting on your child's commitment to the team. It is difficult for a coach to develop a team when some players are continually missing practices and/or games. Remember hockey is a TEAM sport; each player is a valuable member and contributes to the team and to the development and enjoyment of each player on the team. The team also relies

on parents to assist the team throughout the season in various roles and to serve as positive support and encouragement to players before and after games and practices. Remember the IMHA Will Not Tolerate Loud, Obscene or Obnoxious Parents or Fans. Such individuals will be subject to disciplinary action.

Parents are expected to follow the guidelines, policies and procedures set out by IMHA. Hockey is a privilege, not a right. Policies, procedures, program guidelines are all boundaries set by IMHA in which to operate, these processes are put in place to provide consistency to the system or program, which is essential, for providing the foundation to a successful association.

Individuals that refuse to participate or follow the directives of the programs, policies or procedures set by IMHA may result in disciplinary actions which could lead to suspension from all IMHA activities. Disciplinary actions will be determined by the IMHA Board of Directors.

Parents must abide by the Parents Code of Conduct signed at the beginning of the year. Failure to do so will result in appropriate disciplinary action by the disciplinary committee.

### PLAYER'S EXPECTATIONS

Players are expected to:

- 1) Comply and obey all reasonable directions of the coach and team officials providing such directions are within the expected moral, ethical or religious standards;
- 2) Comply with all Association, League, Hockey Alberta, and CHA rules;
- 3) Arrive for games, practices, and other team functions at the time designated by the team;
- 4) Advise the appropriate team official if unable to attend a game or practice due to illness, injury or other commitment well in advance of the activity;
- 5) Demonstrate respect for the game officials, teammates and opposing players by refraining from use of profanity, verbal, physical and other abuse at all times;
- 6) Maintain dressing rooms in a clean and orderly fashion. Vandalism of any kind will not be tolerated.
- 7) Dress cleanly and neatly for all team activities, recognizing that teams may specify a dress code;
- 8) The use of alcohol, tobacco, or other banned or illegal substances is strictly prohibited at any Minor hockey sanctioned event;

- 9) Recognize that road trips are a team activity and behavior in hotels, restaurants, and other arena's is to be consistent with the above expectations.
- 10) Player's must abide by the Players Code of Conduct signed at the beginning of the year. Failure to do so will result in appropriate disciplinary action by the disciplinary committee.

#### OFF-ICE OFFICIALS (Timekeepers / Scorekeepers)

Various off-ice officials are required for all scheduled hockey games throughout the season. These are volunteer positions that include:

- 1) Scorekeeper: responsible for completing the game sheet; recording goals, assists, penalties, shots on goal, goaltending changes and timeouts. Scorekeepers may only record the information provided by the referee on each goal. As well, they are responsible for the conduct of the players while in the penalty box.
- 2) Timekeeper: responsible for operation of the clock and the conduct of the players while in the penalty box.
- 3) Penalty Gate Personnel: depending on the age group of players, it is recommended to have 1-2 people to open and close the penalty box doors.

The above noted positions are considered an extension to the officiating crew. Therefore, it is their responsibility to report all inappropriate behavior while in the penalty box to the on ice officials. Off- ice officials are not permitted to discipline, argue, threaten or attempt to manipulate a player at any time. Should this occur, the off-ice official may face disciplinary action by IMHA.

As part of the officiating team, the off-ice officials are to always respect and abide by the decisions of the on-ice officials (referee/linesmen). Off-ice officials are to record all information as requested by the on-ice officials; altering of the score sheets are not permitted. Refusal to comply, follow direction, or document the required information may result in disciplinary action by IMHA.

No one under 16 years of age is allowed in the penalty/timers box as an off-ice official or visitor. Only those serving a penalty are permitted.

## CODE OF CONDUCT- ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

Zero tolerance is a policy developed by the Canadian Hockey Association and endorsed by the IMHA. It deals with players and coaches who show disrespect to all on ice officials.

Any verbal abuse or physical gestures designed to intimidate or embarrass officials will be penalized. To curb abuse, officials will penalize team officials and players who, through words or gestures, made an obvious attempt to:

- intimidate an official
- challenge the authority or competence of an official
- incite abuse or disrespect of an official by others
- embarrass an official
- direct personal comments or gestures at an official

Penalty will be a “game” or “gross” misconduct and a review by the Division Coordinator or Zone Disciplinary person for further action if necessary.

## PLAYER AFFILIATION

A team may use affiliated players ONLY if the following rules are complied with:

- 1) The player is to be used only for replacement of sick, injured, absent or suspended players. (Novice)
- 2) The coach must submit their desired list to the Division director before Affiliation lists can be submitted.
- 3) The Coach wishing to use an “affiliated player” must then speak to the player’s regular Coach and the players head coach will obtain permission from the players parents.
- 4) Hockey Alberta and IMHA Hockey Rules and Regulations concerning Affiliated players must be strictly observed.
- 5) The said player must be added to the game sheet and marked as “affiliate player” (AP).
- 6) Affiliated players may be used for a maximum of ten (10) games throughout the season (excluding tournament and exhibition). Any Player playing the 11<sup>th</sup> game will be considered an ineligible player for the remainder of the season. If an affiliate player’s

regular team has completed its season, but the affiliate team is still playing, the affiliated player may play unrestricted with his affiliate team for the remainder of the season.

- 7) Teams in Novice may only use affiliate players to fill their roster to a maximum of 12 players. (Novice teams with rosters of more than 12 players must drop below 12 before they may use any affiliates). Novice players may play 5 games with their affiliate team throughout the season (excluding tournament and exhibition). Any Novice player playing a sixth game with the affiliate team will be considered an ineligible player and is not permitted to play anywhere for the remainder of the season.
- 8) If an Affiliated player receives a suspension with the affiliated team, the suspension affects all games that he would play with his assigned team.

## DISCIPLINE & DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

### General Policy

The IMHA expects team officials, players and parents to exhibit qualities of leadership which promotes in players sportsmanship and decorum, considered within acceptable levels of propriety-towards opponents, game officials, and spectators.

As such, standards of behavior should be clearly defined and maintained throughout the season, within a climate of mutual respect. It is recognized, however, that from time to time, sanctions may be necessary, from an external source, for behavior which transgresses acceptable standards. Such sanctions may be applied to any player, team official, team follower, parent, or member, and may take the form of:

- 1) A verbal reprimand
- 2) A written reprimand
- 3) A suspension
- 4) An expulsion
- 5) A combination of the above

The IMHA through its elected or appointed officials, have the authority to discipline any player, team official, team follower, parent or member. The President shall ensure that written policy



or regulations exist with respect to the application of discipline which ensures that each disciplinary incident is dealt with consistent with the process provided for below:

Three different stages are possible, namely:

Stage 1 – The Informal Process

Stage 2 – The Formal Process

Stage 3 – The Appeal Process

Some incidents which may warrant disciplinary action are as follows:

- 1) Profanity by players, parents, team officials or club representatives;
- 2) A player who receives a game misconduct, gross or match penalty;
- 3) A team assessed two or more bench minors in one game;
- 4) A coach, team official or parent who is ejected from a game;
- 5) A team, who in the opinion of the Chairman, is being assessed too many penalties of a serious nature;
- 6) A team member or team follower who repeatedly brings discredit to the team and IMHA, through violent, abusive, or gross behavior, on or off the ice;
- 7) Use of alcohol or other illegal substances while representing Innisfail Minor Hockey Association through participation in a team activity;
- 8) A parent or guardian who exhibits conduct unbecoming to the integrity of the IMHA hockey program;
- 9) Any team that fails to utilize ice time without prior notification.

Two IMHA Executive situations which will warrant disciplinary action are:

- 1) Any elected or appointed member of the IMHA Executive who does not attend three consecutive meetings shall be relieved of his or her duties.
- 2) Any elected or appointed member of the IMHA Executive who, by a vote of the Executive, is deemed to be doing an unsatisfactory job, shall be a 66% majority vote be relieved of his or her duties.

## Stage 1 - The Informal Process

### *Standard Suspensions*

Where the CHA current Rule Book dictates a suspension for a player for a rule transgression, and game officials determine, by write-up, that such a transgression took place, the suspension will be implemented by the coach in consultation with Category officials as a matter of routine.

### *Non Standard Suspensions*

When incidents occur which may warrant disciplinary action the coach(s) shall report the incident as quickly as possible, and at least prior to the next game, for action.

The Category Director, Hockey Director, and coach(s) shall meet, investigate the incident, and determine the sanction to be applied. In investigating the incident they may consult such game officials, players, parents, or other observers that they may deem necessary to gain the relevant facts of the incident.

The coach implements the sanctions with the player(s). The Category Director reports the situation and sanctions to the Hockey Director.

### *Appeal*

Now withstanding the above, should a team official, player, or parent feel that Stage 1 has not satisfactorily resolved the issue, it may be appealed to Stage 2 in writing, within 72 hours of the sanction being placed. However, Stage 1 sanctions remain in effect until Stage 2 is complete.

## Stage 2 – The Formal Process

The Hockey Director, on receiving a written appeal or request from a Category Director, shall convene a Discipline Committee meeting.

The Discipline Committee shall consist of the appropriate Board Members as outlined in the IMHA Bylaws.

The Discipline Committee shall establish a hearing and invite such persons as they deem necessary to provide information to the Committee.

The Discipline Committee shall, with all dispatch, render a decision and communicate that decision to the offending party(s). Such communication may be verbal at the outset but shall be confirmed in writing with copies logged with IMHA files.

### *Appeal*

Notwithstanding the above, should a team official, player, or parent feel that Stage 2 has not satisfactorily resolved the issue, it may be appealed to Stage 3 by writing to the IMHA Secretary, within 72 hours, requesting an appeal to the decision.

### Stage 3 – The Appeal Process

The IMHA Secretary on receiving a written request for an appeal shall place the item on the agenda for a Special General meeting of the Executive, and inform the President, Hockey Director and respective Category Director of its receipt.

The IMHA Executive shall provide up to thirty (30) minutes of meeting time for the person making the appeal to state their case.

The discussion of the case shall take place in the presence of the entire Board of Directors.

The IMHA Executive shall render its decision by motion, and a simple majority of those Directors in attendance shall suffice.

The decision of the IMHA Executive shall be final and binding on all parties, except for those avenues of recourse provided by Hockey Alberta and Canadian Hockey.

Without restricting the foregoing, the following general guidelines apply:

- 1) First infractions by players will normally be satisfactorily concluded at Stage 1.
- 2) Second infractions by players will normally proceed directly to Stage 2.
- 3) Infractions which involve coaches, managers, team followers, or parents will normally proceed directly to Stage 2.

4) Suspensions, when applied to players, shall specify:

- The number of games to which the suspension applies, both league and exhibition, or
- The time period for which the suspension applies.

5) Suspension includes no activity in the dressing room or bench area prior to or after the specified games or during the specified time period.

6) Suspension, when applied to parents, coaches, managers or team followers, shall specify the numbers of games and/or time period for which the suspension applies. Suspensions normally restrict the access of those persons to dressing rooms, bench areas, and possibly spectator areas of arenas. Suspensions may also include loss of privileges within IMHA.

#### PROTESTS AND APPEALS

Any person, player or team who disagrees with a decision of the IMHA or Governing Body may lodge a written appeal to the President in accordance with the by-laws of IMHA, with the exception of the evaluation process.

#### ANTI-BULLYING POLICY:

Any person found to be participating in bullying of any kind will face disciplinary action. Persons who have engaged in cyber bullying (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) will face a 3 game suspension after the first offence and an indefinite suspension if a second incident occurs. This includes any photos taken by cameras, cell phones, I-pod's, etc.

**Special Note:** IMHA has a **NO cell phones** allowed in the dressing room Policy that is strictly adhered to.

#### EQUIPMENT

All coaches are responsible for ensuring that every player taking part in any game or practice is dressed in required equipment as outlined by AHA and CHA.

All coaches are required to wear CSA approved helmets for on ice activities.

IMHA Equipment Director will provide an Inventory List with details of equipment given to the Team prior to the season starting. Then the Coach will meet with the IMHA Equipment Director after the season ends to return all items on the Inventory List by the Year End player Banquet.

## TEAM JERSEYS

All teams are given a complete set of home and away jerseys with garment bags. All players Peewee and up are required to provide a \$100 jersey deposit. All name bars must be hand sewn, ABSOLUTELY no sewing machines!! The team coach and manager are ultimately responsible for the care of the jerseys ensuring proper washing instructions are followed. It is a good idea to have a specific Jersey Parent Volunteer. Please ensure they understand the responsibility associated with caring for the jerseys. Jersey's are not to go home with the players. The team manager is responsible for the return of the jerseys at the completion of the season. Jerseys should be returned and washed with name bars removed. IMHA will provide standardized C's and A's for each set of jerseys. Name Bars are optional and at the teams own expense.

## TRYOUTS, RELEASES & DEADLINES

- 1) All players must have completed all registration requirements prior to their first ice session.
- 2) Each player is entitled to any conditioning skates plus one evaluation skate prior to release. Coaches may release players after the first evaluation skate.
- 3) Players will be notified of first and subsequent ice times via the IMHA website.
- 4) If an IMHA player wishes to tryout for a higher ranked team externally, the player must request permission from IMHA prior to registering for tryouts with new association.
- 5) Any players trying out for a team outside of the association, must file their registration forms with IMHA in order to guarantee a place to play within our association.
- 6) In the event a player MOVES into town after the date for finalizing team rosters, the participant is to try out with the team that he/she is most capable of playing with. The player will be added to the roster of the appropriate level. Based on approval of the Board.

**Innisfail Minor Hockey Association is an organization run by volunteers and your assistance is always welcomed and appreciated.**

**Innisfail Minor Hockey has many Sponsors and your support of these businesses is much appreciated. We have listed them on our Webiste's Home page for your reference.**

**Remember this is a game for the players! Let them have fun!!**