



## 2026 HL TOURNAMENT RULES AND REGULATIONS



### NGHA 44th Annual House League Hockey Tournament February 6th-8th, 2026

#### PLAYING RULES

1. Playing rules will be those recognized by the OWHA (Ontario Women's Hockey Association) and Hockey Canada, except as noted.
2. All teams must be ready to play **15 minutes before** their scheduled ice time. TEAMS NOT READY TO START THEIR GAMES ON TIME OR WITHIN THE 15-MINUTE WINDOW BEFORE, MAY FORFEIT SUCH GAMES AT THE DISCRETION OF THE TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE OR A DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE.
  - a) We ask teams to vacate their dressing rooms in a timely fashion once they are done changing after their game to allow the next team to be ready on time. Please be respectful of the teams playing on the rinks and **do not play music** during your team warm up **inside the rinks** as it is distracting to teams playing.
3. **Jersey Colours**: A white or light coloured jersey will be worn by the AWAY team, whereas a dark jersey will be worn by the HOME team. To keep within our theme of 'painting the rinks purple': Please note that ANY teams who have purchased DIFD special jerseys will take precedence and be allowed to wear them for their game. It will be up to a team representative to let their opponents know about their DIFD jerseys at least **30 mins** prior to game time. In cases where both teams have special DIFD jerseys then the **HOME** team will wear their purple jerseys and in the case that a team has DIFD white jerseys they will take the same precedence.

4. **Neck guards:** Players are required to wear neck guards for all tournament games.

5. **Mouth guards:** Players are required to wear mouth guards at all times during play if their **own** district requires that they do so in league play.

6. **Game Length:**

a) Games will consist of 2 x 10 stop-time periods and 1 x 12 stop-time period

b) If, at the beginning of the third period or at any time during the third period, a team is ahead by five or more goals, straight running time shall commence on the game clock. If the goal differential is seven goals at any time during the first or second period, running time shall also commence. If at any point the margin is reduced to two goals or less, stop-time play shall resume. This rule is in effect for all round robin games. Running time during the playoffs and championship games are at the discretion of the tournament committee.

c) **Warm-up will be 3 minutes** in length from the time the arena staff has left the ice.

Teams **MUST** be ready to go at that point. With 30 seconds left on the warm-up clock, a buzzer will sound to indicate that teams should finish their warm-up and be ready to go by the second buzzer at 0:00.

7. **Time-Outs:** One (1) thirty (30) second time out will be permitted in **playoffs and in championship games ONLY**.

6. **Overtime:** Overtime will only be played in playoff and championship games if regulation time produces a tie. Overtime shall consist of:

a) One sudden-victory 5-Minute stop time period with teams playing three (3) skaters plus a goaltender. Teams do not change ends for overtime or shootout.

b) If still tied after overtime, a shootout with 3 skaters from each team will take place. Each team must designate 3 shooters (S1, S2, S3). ***The coach of each team will provide the game officials with the list of these three players immediately following the final overtime period. All shooters must go to the penalty box once they have taken their shot.***

c) The team that scores the most goals with these three skaters will be declared the winner.

**Whichever team has had the fewest penalty minutes in the game, will have the option of shooting first or last. If the teams have the same number of penalty minutes in the game, the HOME team will shoot LAST.** Once the order is determined, it will remain the same for all future rounds of shootout. A player from one team will shoot, followed by a player from the other team, and so on until all 3 designated players have gone.

d) If still tied after 3 shooters a sudden-death shootout with one player from each team having a chance to shoot per round. Each shooter must not have participated in any prior round of the shootout. Whichever team shot first in the previous round, will once again shoot first.

e) Repeat step above until no skater remains that has not yet participated from either team.

In the event that one team runs out of players, they will work in reverse order selecting the player that has most recently shot to participate next, until the other team has also used every skater.

7. **Round Robin Standings:** Standings will be based on points: two (2) points for a win, one (1) point for a tie, no points for a loss.

8. **In the event of a tie**, the following criteria will be used to break the tie:

- a) Winner between the tied teams when they played head to head. (Applies to 2 way ties. Ties between 3 or more teams start with tie breaker 8b)
- b) Most Wins
- c) Percentage as calculated by dividing team's total "Goals For" by the SUM of the team's "Goals For and Goals Against".  $TGF / (GF+GA) = \%$
- d) Fewest Goals Against.
- e) Most Goals For.
- f) Fewest Penalty Minutes.
- g) Coin Toss.

Follow Tie breaking rules in Order. Once a Tie Breaking Rule has been used or is not applicable it cannot be used again.

**Note:**

- 1. *If three or more teams are tied, the tie-breaking process will not revert to previous steps once a seed is determined.*
- 2. *If, after applying a tiebreaker, two of the original three (or more) tied teams remain tied, those two teams will proceed through the remaining tiebreakers. The single untied team will be ranked accordingly:*
  - o *It will be eliminated (if its standing falls below the two remaining tied teams).*
  - o *It will be skipped above (if its standing is superior to the two remaining tied teams).*
- 3. *Furthermore, be aware that the highest ratio tiebreaker significantly favors fewer goals against over higher goals for."*

9. **Tournament format:**

**U9** Division: At the end of the round robin, the top four teams in each pool will advance to the quarter finals.

**U11** Division: At the end of the round robin, the top four teams in each pool will advance to the quarter finals.

**U13** division: At the end of the round robin, the top four teams in each pool will advance to the quarter finals.

**U15** division: At the end of the round robin, the top eight teams will advance to the quarter finals.

**U18** division: At the end of the round robin, the top four teams in each pool will advance to the quarter finals.

10. **Stick Measurements:** Teams are NOT allowed to request the measurement of any stick during tournament games. If teams have a concern with an opposing player's stick, they must request the measurement prior to the game.

11. **Penalties:** a) Penalties carry over into overtime and shoot-outs. If a penalty is assessed during overtime when both teams are at 3 skaters, play shall resume at 4 on 3. In the event of more than one penalty being assessed to the same team, play will resume at 5 on 3. If the penalty expires during play, the player shall return to the ice and teams will play 5 on 4 until the next stoppage of play when on-ice strength will be adjusted to 4 on 3. No less than three skaters plus a goalie and no more than five skaters plus a goalie per team shall be on the ice during overtime play. All suspensions will be enforced according to OWH rules and regulations. OWH minimum suspension rules will also be strictly enforced.

b) **Referee's Decisions:** All referee's decisions are final and may not be appealed. **No protests will be permitted.**

c) **ZERO Tolerance:** Taunting or berating of any players, officials, staff or volunteers will NOT be tolerated under any circumstances by parents, players, team officials or other spectators. *The tournament directors reserve the right to eject from the arena any person deemed to be acting in an improper manner.*

d) **Fighting Penalties:** Any player receiving a penalty for Fighting will automatically be suspended for the remainder of the tournament.

12. No “select” or “tournament teams” are permitted to compete in any OWHA sanctioned tournament. Eligible players must be registered members of the team, or affiliated players.

13. In the event of a suspended game by way of forfeiture or forfeit, the score shall be recorded as zero for the loser and three, or the greater margin of victory at the time of the forfeiture, for the winner.

a) Should a team who previously forfeited a game during the tournament be in contention for a playoff spot, that spot will be automatically forfeited should it come down to a tiebreaker whereby the goal ratio becomes the deciding factor.

14. ALL players MUST participate in at least one round-robin game in order to qualify for the playoff rounds (goaltenders exempted).

15. Team officials are responsible for the conduct and supervision of all of their team’s participants at all times. No shooting, stickhandling, or passing of any objects is permitted anywhere in the facility other than the ice surfaces!

16. A player of the game award will be awarded at the conclusion of each game. No player may win the award more than once during the round-robin portion of the tournament. **Players to be chosen by their own team’s coaching staff and presented in the dressing room.**

17. For playoff and championship games, the home team will be the team with the highest seeding after the round robin portion in the tournament.

18. **Player call ups:**

For OWHA sanctioned teams, affiliate players MUST be properly requested and approved through your teams RAMP admin portal. For non-OWHA teams, affiliate players MUST be listed on the Official Branch Issued Roster provided to the tournament committee prior to the start of a team first game.

**An OWHA Pick Up Consent for Tournament Form MUST be presented with your official team roster to headquarters at least one hour BEFORE your team’s first game.** Failure to do so may result in forfeiture of games. On this note, it is up to the team to have their PU player added to RAMP with the correct jersey number and not check in the player that they are replacing.

**PICK UP PLAYER FORM:**

[chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://cloud.rampinteractive.com/whaontario/files/Forms%20and%20Policies/Doc-14\\_PICKUP\\_CONSENT\\_FORM\\_for\\_SANCTIONED\\_TOURNAMENT.pdf](chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://cloud.rampinteractive.com/whaontario/files/Forms%20and%20Policies/Doc-14_PICKUP_CONSENT_FORM_for_SANCTIONED_TOURNAMENT.pdf)

OWHA rules are that teams can only use up to 3 call up players per game, and **cannot exceed the number of players officially rostered to their team.**

Players are not permitted to be rostered on or play on multiple teams participating in the tournament, regardless of division or the above-mentioned affiliation process.

19. Each team is responsible to have their RAMP game sheet filled out and signed by a team designated staff member prior to each game played.

20. **Tiered House League teams will NOT be accepted into the tournament.**

