



RETURN TO PLAY

2020-2021

Okotoks Minor Hockey Association | Okotoks Oilers Athletic Association



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1. Introduction

Okotoks Minor Hockey (OMHA) in collaboration with the Okotoks Oilers Athletic Association (OOAA) has developed a 'Return to Hockey' plan that allows our young athletes to get back on the ice and enjoy the benefits of the great game of hockey. This plan will provide answers to many of the numerous questions that are being asked regarding how OMHA/OOAA will operate under the current Alberta Health guidelines and restrictions. In the current ever-changing environment, we are doing our best to keep up to date with government guidelines and keep our membership informed.

The OMHA/OOAA Return to Hockey Plan is current as of **July 31, 2020**, and is based on the requirements of the Government of Alberta as of this date. As the situation evolves, OMHA/ OOAA will update accordingly to remain in compliance with requirements.

As you read this document please note 'this is the new normal' in our current environment, this is not a typical hockey season, and it will look different. The plan has not been developed to stagnate player development we are hopeful that it will ensure our athletes continue to grow both on and off the ice. There are four Phases to the OMHA/OOAA plan that will be outlined in this document:

1. Conditioning Phase – the focus is on development and conditioning in preparation for the upcoming season, this phase will take place in August/September.
2. Evaluation Phase – For the OMHA, this phase will consist of a 'Skill-based Evaluation' to create like skilled Cohort groups of up to 44 players. For the OOAA, this phase will have two components and take place in August & September. Part 1 will be 'Skill Based Evaluations' and will be for the sole purpose of creating like skilled 'Cohort Groups' of less than 50 players so a more detailed evaluation can take place. The 2nd part will be detailed evaluation within your cohort, which will allow coaches to properly evaluate and determine the teams for the upcoming season.
3. Development Phase – Once players are placed on/in their respective teams/cohorts, they will now be able to practice and compete in 'Mini-Games' with team members, and potentially a 'sister' team (only applies to OOAA teams) that could be designated to this cohort. Players will not be permitted to play against teams or players outside of their cohort until government restrictions are lifted. **Athletes cannot not belong to multiple sports mini-leagues; they should select one sports cohort for the duration of stage 2nd. Note: This affects kids who may want to play other sports!!**
4. Regular Season Phase – This is the final phase of the plan, and when all restrictions are lifted, we will return to the 'traditional' league play.



2. Programs & Objectives

The guidelines in place have forced us to think differently about how we operate. While the program may look different it was developed to meet the needs of the players and focused on achieving the following key objectives:

1. **Safety** - Create a safe, healthy hockey environment for our players, coaches, and volunteers.

Safety is paramount, this plan was built in compliance with the Alberta Government Guidelines, and to minimize the risk of all participants.

2. **FUN** - Maintain a culture of fun where participants can enjoy the game they love.

OMHA/OOAA are excited to resume operations that allow kids to be kids.

3. **Development** - Create a competitive hockey environment that allows players to develop and grow.

Development is essential and can be accomplished in both the practice and gameplay environment.

4. **Tiering** - Provide an environment where players are grouped in appropriate skill levels.

Tiering ranges may look slightly different than in the past. However, they will be close, and we believe they will be within an appropriate range for skill development.

5. **Game-Play** - Create an environment where some 'Game Play' exists.

Games may operate in a variety of creative formats (5v5, 4v4, 3v3, etc.).

6. **Flexible Transition** - Allow for flexible transition within our program between government phases as information and protocols change.



3. Requirements

1. Within the current Alberta Government Phase 2, there are two formats we can use to operate our programs. OMHA/OOAA will utilize both of these formats in achieving the goals of our program:

With Physical Distancing – all participants must always remain two meters apart, including coaches.

- Skill-based programming, focus on development.

Using Cohort Groups – up to 50 participants grouped to participate in a program – no physical distancing required on the ice surface, however, it is required to maintain a two-meter distance off the ice.

- Cohort Groups must remain together for the duration of ‘Stage 2’ unless participants enter a 14-day non-participation isolation period, after which they can move to a new cohort group.

NOTES:

- Programs should operate within a specified, community, zone, region, where travel is limited.
 - Hockey Alberta also highlights (page 10 section 6) the AHS Guidelines
 - Hockey Alberta also requires (page 11) that participants should not seek sport physical activity and recreational opportunities in other regions, out of province, etc. which brings in the requirement to quarantine for 14 days
2. No competitions or other interactions with other teams/cohorts will be permitted during Alberta Government Phase 2. Only training camps, skill development, and system implementations within the team/cohort will be permitted. Competitions will be allowed but only within the team/cohort (more details later in the document).
 3. OMHA/OOAA teams/cohorts **MUST** track all participants & interactions, maintaining records in a secure location for 30 days from completion of an activity. This is to be done as part of a daily check-in procedure for participants. (see Protocols section)
 - OMHA/OOAA is currently analyzing various options that would allow for this to be tracked.
 - Any participant who answers YES to any of the AB Government-Mandated Pre-Screening questions must NOT attend or participate in the program and may not return until after a minimum 14-day non-participation period from the activity.
 4. Ensure that all OMHA/OOAA teams/cohorts follow Facility Guidelines.
 - Facilities **MUST** adopt standards as per the Government of Alberta, which may differ slightly depending on the facility.
 - Teams/cohorts must understand these standards and follow them.
 - Facility protocols will determine spectator access, dressing room use and may have stronger requirements.
 5. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
 - Coaches and players will be required to wear face masks in facilities and dressing rooms before on-ice participation.



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- Coaching staff, including trainers, will be required to wear face masks on the bench.
 - Face masks will be mandatory for all personal in the building
 - OMHA/OOAA will make facemasks available to all coaching staff and Volunteers
6. League Play (HA page 17)
- Traditional league play is NOT permitted.
 - Mini Games are only permitted within your Cohort.
7. Tournaments & Travel Permits (HA page 16)
- Tournaments are NOT permitted during Phase 2 of the Alberta Government relaunch (Development Season).
 - No travel permits or tournament sanctions will be approved during this phase.

[Hockey Alberta – Return to Play](#)

4. Protocols & Safety

The health, safety, and well-being of our players, coaches, volunteers, and families are of the utmost importance to OMHA/OOAA. This section details several Hockey Canada, Hockey Alberta, and the AHS guidelines and resources and should give confidence that OMHA/OOAA has a focused effort on working with all stakeholders to ensure a healthy and safe environment for hockey programming.

Contact Tracing and Symptom Screening

OMHA/OOAA and its teams/cohorts must track all participants and interactions, maintaining records in a secure location for 30 days from completion of an activity. This is to be done as part of a daily check-in procedure for participants. OMHA/OOAA is analyzing options to track and organize this information to allow for ease of compliance.

Any participant who answers YES to any of the government-mandated pre-screening questions may no longer participate in the program until a minimum 14-day quarantine period has elapsed.

Reporting

Members within the OMHA/OOAA program are to report any COVID-19 cases as required by Alberta Health Services, Member, hockey association, league, and facility. The Divisional Director must also be notified immediately after Alberta Health has been notified.

[Hockey Canada - Reporting a Positive COVID-19 Case](#)

Hockey Canada Guidelines/Resources

Hockey Canada, Hockey Alberta, and its 13 Member Branches have built a comprehensive Safety Guidelines document, along with an FAQ document, to provide direction and support as organizations (administrators, coaches, managers, safety staff, trainers), parents and players prepare to return to hockey. The information included in these documents should be reviewed regularly, as it provides a solid framework to follow for any organization (and its members) as Return to Hockey planning is undertaken.



[Hockey Canada Safety Guidelines.](#)

The Safety Guidelines provide a safe and positive return to hockey experience for our participants and stakeholders. Sections include:

- Insurance Coverage.
- Hygiene Requirements and Checklist.
- Recommended Return to Hockey Procedures.
- What to do if there is a positive COVID-19 test.
- Junior Hockey guidelines.
- Guidelines for Officials.

Responsibilities

Parents and players also play an important role in the Return to Hockey. Their responsibilities include:

- Stay at home if experiencing any symptoms.
- Become educated on the safety protocols and procedures before attending sessions and adhere to them while at the session.
- Ensure each player has his/her own water bottle which is sanitized before each session, and his/her own hand sanitizer for use while on the ice.
- Ensure equipment is dried, cleaned, and/or sanitized following each session.
- Arrange appropriate transportation to and from the session.
- Refrain from cheering and yelling as it presents a high risk of spreading droplets.
- Do not spit, blow nose freely or release any bodily fluid anywhere in any facility due to an extremely high risk of virus transfer.

A detailed outline of responsibilities of Administrators, Coaches and Managers, Safety Person and trainers, Players, and Parents can be found in the Hockey Canada Safety Guidelines – Roles and Responsibilities (Appendix 6).

[Hockey Canada Roles and Responsibilities.](#)



5. Facilities

As the town deals with an ever-changing situation regarding the COVID-19 virus, below is a list of items they are implementing so we can start our Return to play model. Please note that at the end of each month, the town along with OMHA/OAAA input, will re-evaluate its protocols and amend if necessary.

August Protocols:

- The Town's main goal during the COVID pandemic will be the safety of patrons and staff while maximizing the usage of the facilities.
- Patrons to come dressed 10 minutes before and leave within 10 mins
- No showers - water has been turned off
- No spectators
- No walking track
- No mini rink
- No leisure ice
- No tournaments
- Water bottle fill stations are open for usage with enhanced cleaning protocols.
- If there are requests for separate dressing rooms we cannot accommodate at this time.
- OMHA office open to board members, coaches no players or children. OMHA is responsible to sanitize their office.
- Oilers office open to board members, coaches no players, Oilers to look after cleaning protocols
- Evaluators are welcome to use penalty boxes but not viewing areas.
- Dressing rooms, players boxes, penalty boxes will be sanitized after each usage
- Olympia to be sanitized after each user has completed their task
- Teams and referees maybe be asked to assist moving nets

6. Refunds

We are in unprecedented times and unfortunately, that makes predicting the future incredibly challenging. There is far too much uncertainty to have concrete refund policies in the event of a lockdown or quarantine that may affect the duration or length of the season.

In the event the season length is affected by a lockdown or a cohort is required to quarantine for a period, OMHA/OAAA will do everything in their power to be fair to their members. However, please understand that several considerations and factors impact how registration dollars are spent.

Some expenses are fixed and will be difficult to recuperate in the event of a canceled season, while other expenses may be easier to recuperate with enough notice. It is not possible to determine any of those details at this point, but please know that OMHA/OAAA will do everything they can to ensure fair treatment of players and families and return as much of their registration fees as possible in the unfortunate event that the season length is negatively impacted.



7. Return to Hockey

A safe return to hockey that meets the guidelines of Stage 2 of the Government of Alberta's Relaunch strategy is paramount. As mentioned earlier in this document there are two ways OMHA/OOAA can operate programs, either **Physically Distanced** or using **Cohorts**. Hockey is a contact sport and while we can operate skill development sessions that keep players physically distance, we understand that to meet all of the key objectives of our program, we will need to use a cohort model for various phases of our return to play.

Government of Alberta Cohorting Guidelines:

Cohorting has been identified as an option for sports teams. If an athlete is participating in a camp or program not using physical distancing, that group is considered a Cohort. A Cohort is a closed, small group of no more than 50 individuals who participate in the same sport or activity and remain together for the duration of Stage 2 of the Government of Alberta's relaunch. If cohorting is being used, this should be communicated to participants/ parents before Cohort formation.

- Sports teams can play in region-only cohorts (mini-leagues) of up to 50 players and coaches.
- Cohorts include those individuals (participants, officials, coaches, and trainers) who cannot maintain a 2-meter distance from others at all times.
- Sports cohort numbers do not include parents or spectators.
- **Instructors, Coaches, and/or Team Officials can be part of one Cohort and remain with that group throughout the duration of this program, or they may maintain physical distancing from all other participants. If physical distancing is maintained, this is not considered cohorting. Individuals can only be part of one sports Cohort. Athletes are only permitted to play in one sport.**
- Interacting with the same people and the same cohorts will be safer than constantly changing the people you interact with.
- The government of Alberta has indicated that: Cohorts are only to play within the same geographical region (for example, within a county, town, or quadrant of a city). Activities should be restricted to local regional opportunities. Participants should not seek sport, physical activity, and recreation opportunities in other regions, or out of province. Cross-jurisdictional, or inter-regional, play should not occur at this stage.
- **An individual is only to be part of one Sport Cohort at any time. If an individual wishes to move to a new Sport Cohort, s/he is to complete a 14-day non-participation isolation period before joining the new Cohort.**
- **NOTE: Even while using cohorting, physical distancing must be maintained in all aspects of hockey activity except while participants are on the ice.**
 - When using Cohorting, it is recommended to try and utilize physical distancing on the ice whenever possible.



8. Appendixes

Appendix A: OMHA Phases

The primary concern for OMHA is that any programs offered focus on the health and safety of all participants. The intent is not to re-create the regular-season structure, but to offer development, modified gameplay, and fun before proceeding to the regular season.

Phase	Timing	Activity
Conditioning	Sept 9 th – 14th, 2020	<p>Programs must be delivered using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical distancing <p>Types of Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conditioning Camps Tune-ups
Evaluations	Starting approximately on Sept 21, 2020	<p>The program must be delivered using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical distancing <p>On-ice skills-based sorting sessions designed to group like skilled players into cohorts for the start of development</p>
Development	<p>Cohort formation</p> <p>September 28th til the next phase opens</p>	<p>Programs must be delivered using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cohorts <p>Cohorts will consist of 30 to 40 players of the same level according to skills evaluations. No teams will be picked at this time.</p> <p>Types of Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-Ice Practices Off-Ice Training Regional' Game Play (3v3, 4v4 or 5v5)
Regular Season	Hoping for an October start but whenever the next phase opens	<p>Programs will be delivered with limited or no team/cohort restrictions (return to normal).</p> <p>The transition from previous cohort 'Development' into traditional hockey season.</p> <p>At this time teams will be picked out of the Cohort groups. The top group will pick 2 teams whether that be 2 equal teams or teams 1 and 2. Any excess players will be automatic on the next team</p> <p>Types of Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-Ice Practices Off-Ice Training League Play



Appendix B: OMHA Development Season

Cohort Based Play - OMHA

In OMHA, each Cohort will play within themselves. This means the coach(s) will divide the group up into teams as they see fit with the opportunity to modify the teams each week to maximize competition and game play development. Again, as the weeks role by, coaches will have the choice to play 5v5, 4v4, or 3v3 to keep the kids engages and motivated. The expectation is that we will be able to use the coaches from our OAAA association to help change a voice and help develop our coaches as well.

Benefits of the model

- Get to teams quickly to establish some form of normalcy.
- Opportunity for players to continue to develop.
- Facilitates some game competition.
- Reduced travel – meets the government recommendation of keeping kids more ‘regionally based’ during this stage of return to play.
- Players are playing with and against their peer group.
- If an outbreak occurs, it is easier to shut down a cohort as opposed to shutting down the entire program.



Appendix C: OMHA Evaluations / Cohorts Creation

A. Evaluating Players

- Sort based on skill development (Must be Physical Distanced)
- OMHA will determine the number of skill-based drills to evaluate players and they will be ranked accordingly.
- All players will have a minimum of 3 sessions to be assessed.
- Physical distancing allows movement between evaluation groups
- Players will be ranked in Cohorts, ie, top 35, top 40, etc. not an actual rank like previous years.
- OMHA will use independent evaluators for 'travel' to rank the players as the point above.

B. Creating Mixed Cohorts

- OMHA will create Cohorts in each division using the skills rankings
 - U7 Senior Cohort groups and Junior Cohort groups
 - U9 A, B and C Cohort groups
 - U11 Cohort group 1 will turn into the two U11 Tier 1 teams. Cohort group 2 will turn into U11 teams 2 and 3. Cohort group 3 will turn into U11 team 4. Every Cohort group will carry extra players that will be released and be automatics on the next team below. Players released from U11 team 4 will be placed in House A. There will also be House A and B U11 cohort groups.
 - U13 Cohort group 1 will turn into U13 teams 1 and 2. Cohort group 2 will turn into U13 teams 3 and 4. Every Cohort group will carry extra players that will be released and be automatics on the next team below. Players released from U13 team 4 will be placed in House A. There will also be House A and B U13 cohort groups. A U13 team 5 may be added
 - U15 Cohort group 1 will turn into U15 teams 1 and 2. Cohort group 2 will turn into U15 teams 3 and 4. Every Cohort group will carry extra players that will be released and be automatics on the next team below. A U15 team 5 may be added.
 - U18 Cohort group 1 will turn into U18 teams 1 and 2. Cohort group 2 will turn into U18 teams 3 and 4. Every Cohort group will carry extra players that will be released and be automatics on the next team below
 - U15 RHL A and B Cohort group
 - U18 RHL 2 Cohort groups

C. Creating Female Cohorts (numbers may vary depending in registration numbers)}

- OMHA will create Cohorts in each division using the skills rankings
 - U9 female team picked and added to a U9 mixed Cohort group
 - U11 female Cohort group 1 will turn into U11 female teams 1 and 2. U11 female Cohort group 2 will turn into two equal U11 female 3 teams
 - U13 female Cohort group 1 will turn into U13 female teams 1 and 2. U13 female Cohort group 2 will turn into two equal U13 female 3 teams



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- U15 Female Cohort group 1 will turn into U15 Team 1. This group will be smaller and may Cohort with Bantam Elite OAAA. U15 Cohort group 2 that will turn into our 2 equal U15 2 teams
 - U18 female may be one Cohort group that turns into teams 1 and 2 or 2 Cohort groups that ends up turning into Team 1 and 2 equal 2 teams.
- D. Coach Selection – Each Cohort group will be assigned a lead development coach and several assistants, and a Cohort manager will be chosen. These coaches will hopefully be the coaches that coach the teams in that Cohort when teams are finally chosen.
- E. Cohort activities – After Cohorts are established and coaches in place, this group can start the development stage without social distancing. It is expected that weekday ice is used for development just like practices during a normal season. Weekend ice can be used for development as well but also can be used for small area games 3 on 3, 4 on 4, etc. and be used for full ice games with referees.
- F. Team Selection- This will take place when Hockey Alberta and AHS allow us into the next stage which will bring back leagues. Hopefully, we have a 2-week warning and can use that to get the teams picked and registered in the leagues. No isolation will be needed then as this is when we return to regular hockey.

Appendix D: OMHA/OAAA Regular Season

OMHA/OAAA will follow the lead of the Government of Alberta, Alberta Health, and Hockey Alberta to determine when it is appropriate to transition from the Development Phase to the normal 'Regular Season'. We are optimistic that we will be able to transition to a traditional 'Regular Season' at some point this season, however, we will only do so when it is safe and when the approval has been given.

One of the key objectives of the OMHA/OAAA Return to Play plan is to allow for a flexible transition between our phases. OMHA/OAAA's Evaluation and Development phases are designed with the intent to transition easily to a traditional 'Regular Season'.

Decisions on the start-up of Provincial leagues will be at the discretion of Hockey Alberta.



Appendix E: OMHA/OOAA Referees

Decisions still need to be made with regard to the use of referees. As always, Hockey Canada and Hockey Alberta will determine training and clinic protocols.

OMHA/OOAA is waiting on further clarification from Hockey Alberta, who in turn is waiting on further clarification from AHS and Hockey Canada regarding several important clarifications regarding referees such as:

- Are referees' part of the cohort?
- Can they effectively do their job while physically distancing?

Appendix F: OMHA/OOAA Coaches, Team Officials, and Off-Ice Officials

Decisions still need to be made with regards to coaches, team officials, and off-ice officials. As always, Hockey Canada and Hockey Alberta will determine training and clinic protocols for coaches.

OMHA/OOAA will need to determine the proper usage for coaches, managers, and other team officials such as:

- Will their roles and responsibilities change?
- Will they assist with contact tracking and symptom screening?
- Will they need to use PPE? (Masks on the bench?)

OMHA/OOAA will work with facilities to determine the appropriate usage of off-ice officials.



Appendix G: OAAA Phases

The primary concern for OAAA is that any programs offered focus on the health and safety of all participants. The intent is not to re-create the regular-season structure, but to offer development, modified gameplay, and fun before proceeding to the regular season.

Phase	Timing	Activity
Conditioning	Aug 13–31, 2020	<p>Programs must be delivered using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical distancing <p>Types of Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Off-ice sessions Skills camps
Evaluations	Aug 18 – Sept 10, 2020	<p>Part 1 – Programs must be delivered using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical distancing skill-based analysis <p>On-ice skills-based sorting sessions designed to group like skilled players into cohorts for part 2 of evaluations</p> <p>Part 2 – Cohort based evaluation – groups of similar based skill level will be further evaluated to form teams to continue on to the ‘Developmental Stage’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This stage will be ‘Coach’ led and can utilize any form of competition other than exhibition games versus other Associations.
Development	<p>After cohort/teamformation</p> <p>Approximately mid-Sept</p>	<p>Programs must be delivered using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cohorts <p>Teams will be formed and may be combined with ‘sister’ teams to create a cohort</p> <p>Types of Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-ice Practices Off-ice Training Regional’ Game Play (3v3, 4v4 or 5v5) Modified gameplay
Regular Season	Currently planned for October start but subject to change	<p>Programs will be delivered with limited or no team/cohort restrictions (return to normal). The transition from previous cohort ‘Development’ into traditional hockey season.</p> <p>Types of Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-ice Practices Off-ice Training League Play



Appendix H: OAAA Evaluations

The purpose of the 'Evaluation' phase is to group like skilled players. This process is like the evaluation process that occurs each year. The key difference is that to ensure the safety of the players and to help reduce the number of player to player contact, these sessions will be entirely Physically Distanced. Once in OMHA/OAAA cohorts, players are permitted to engage in drills where they will come into close contact with other players.

For OAAA purposes, once inside these cohorts, players will be permitted to compete for a spot on an identified team through practice competition, fitness testing, team building, and any other means that the coaches identify as appropriate to determine their roster. The only difference is that exhibition games versus other organizations will not be permitted to determine final team placements.

Evaluation Guidelines:

As an overview, the fact that this will be a subjective evaluation and that parents are not going to be able to view the tryouts it is extremely important that we have a very transparent process that is consistent throughout every division as we state below. However, I note many inconsistencies which I will highlight.

1. All age groups will follow a similar plan.
2. All age groups will use physical distancing, skill-based drills to evaluate the players in the organization into the cohorts. In each age category, there will be cohorts designated for evaluating for the AAA teams and AA teams.
3. Return to Play Committee
 - Tasked with setting guidelines & protocols for evaluation as it pertains to:
 - Creating an inventory of physical distanced evaluation drills.
 - Approving drills – all evaluation drills must be approved to allow appropriate distancing on the ice.
 - Information Sharing – Coaches will have the opportunity to submit drills for approval. Upon approval, drills will be added to the drill inventory.
 - As in previous years, utilize independent evaluators to assist in ranking players during this process.
4. U13 to U18 – Minimum 3 evaluation sessions will be provided before assigning a player to a cohort or releasing them to the next tryout group or community hockey.
5. Once players have completed the 3 sessions
 - OAAA Coaches will rank the players and determine which players they wish to move on to the cohort stage of evaluations.
 - Create the cohorts of up to 50 players (the individual cohort size will depend on which team and age group you are competing in)
6. Cohort evaluations
 - Players are permitted to engage in drills where they will come into close contact with other players
 - These evaluations will take place approximately over two weeks.



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- At the end of this evaluation, released players will drop into the next tryout group and lock into that cohort or back to their home association.
 - The released players will be subject to a 14 non-participation isolation period.
7. All coaches and evaluators must remain physically distanced during evaluation sessions to meet Alberta Health guidelines of physical distancing.

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Appendix I: OAAA Mixed Evaluations

U13 AA (Formerly PWAA)

A. Evaluating Players

- Sort based on skill evaluations (Must be Physical Distanced)
- OAAA will determine a number of skill-based drills to evaluate players and they will be ranked accordingly.
- All players will have a minimum of 3 sessions to be assessed.

B. Coaches Create Cohort

- Coaches determine the players that will advance on. All other players are released to OMHA – August 29.
- A maximum of 40 players will move to the cohort group. Each team requires 17 players to fill their rosters. This allows the coaches to evaluate players before selecting or drafting their teams.
- The players of the cohort can compete without physical distancing for a spot on one of the 2 U-13 AA teams.
- The cohort will have 2 competitive games leading up to the draft. The coaches will draft players to their respective teams (as per OAAA draft guidelines) – September 2.
- After then draft, a series of practices and games will take place leading up to final selections.

C. Team Selection (September 12)

- On September 12, each of the AA Coaches will select the final team (17 players)
- All players from both teams are released on the same day, so they can move as a group to OMHA following a non-participation period. It is expected that the OMHA tryout schedule will accommodate the non-participation period.

D. Development (Sept. 13 onwards)

- This is 'NOT' a new cohort, players were only removed from this group
- This group can continue to practice without any physical distancing on the ice in preparation for the upcoming season
- Both U13 AA teams can work together to develop as a group if they see benefits

E. Sister Team Concept (Oct. 1 onwards)

- The two Okotoks U13AA teams will be sister teams and will cohort with each other.
- Teams practice 2 times per week and will play games as organized by the coaches.



U15 AAA (Formerly BAAA)

A. Evaluating Players – U15 AAA

- Sort based on skill evaluations (Must be Physical Distanced)
- OAAA will determine a number of skill-based drills to evaluate players and they will be ranked accordingly.
- All players will have a minimum of 3 sessions to be assessed.
- NOTE: Body Checking Clinics will not be run due to physical distancing requirements, they can be incorporated into the cohort stage

B. Coach Creates U15 AAA Cohort

- The coach determines the players that will advance on. All other players are released to their respective Associations – August 24.
- A maximum of 34 players will move to the cohort group. The team requires 19 players to fill their roster. This allows the coach to properly evaluate and make some decisions before selecting the team.
- This cohort can compete without physical distancing for a spot on the U15 AAA team.

C. U15 AAA Team Selection – September 6, 2020

- On September 6 the AAA Coach selects the team (19 players).
- All players from the cohort are released on the same day, so they can move as a group to new cohorts following a 14 day non-participation period.
- All players released from the U15 AAA cohort will be managed based on their home Associations' Return to Play procedures;
- Okotoks – released players will be locks on U15AA team
- Wheatland/Chestermere – U15AA tryout schedule is currently being reviewed, additional information will be provided when available.
- Foothills – U15AA tryouts will be scheduled to accommodate the 14-day non-participation period.
- Please refer to their Return to Play procedures for each Association.

D. Development (Sept. 7 onwards)

- This is 'NOT' a new cohort, players were only removed from this group
- This group can continue to practice without any physical distancing on the ice
- Practice as usual in preparation for the upcoming season

E. Sister Team Concept (Oct. 1 onwards)

- The sister team for U15AAA will be the Okotoks U15AA team
- Teams practice 2 times per week and will play games as organized by the coaches.



U15 AA (Formerly BAA)

A. Evaluating Players – U15 AA

- Sort based on skill evaluations (Must be Physical Distanced)
- OAAA will determine a number of skill-based drills to evaluate players and they will be ranked accordingly.
- All players will have a minimum of 3 sessions to be assessed.
- NOTE: Body Checking Clinics will not be run due to physical distancing requirements, they can be incorporated into the cohort stage

B. Coach Creates U15 AA Cohort

- The coach determines the players that will advance on. All other players are released to OMHA – August 29.
- A maximum of 25 players will move to the U15 AA cohort group. The team requires 19 players to fill their roster. This allows the coach to properly evaluate and make some decisions before selecting the team.
- This cohort can compete without physical distancing for a spot on the U15 AA team.
- There will be players being released from the U15 AAA cohort to this team on September 6. Released players will have to self-isolate before joining.

C. U15 AA Team Selection – September 11, 2020

- On September 11 the Coach selects the team (19 players).
- Any players released from the U15 AAA cohort on September 6 will be considered a LOCK for the U15 AA team. This is due to the required 14 non-participation period required when being released from a cohort.
- All players from the U15 AA cohort are released on the same day, so they can move as a group to OMHA following a non-participation period. It is expected that the OMHA tryout schedule will accommodate the non-participation period.

D. Development (Sept. 12 onwards)

- This is 'NOT' a new cohort for the players continuing from the U15 AA cohort.
- Players released from the U15 AAA cohort can join the U15 AA cohort after their 14 day non-participation period has concluded.
- This group can practice without any physical distancing on the ice.
- Practice as usual in preparation for the upcoming season.

E. Sister Team Concept (Oct. 1 onwards)

- The 'sister team', for U15AA will be the Okotoks U15 AAA team
- Teams practice for 2 times per weeks and will play games as organized by the coaches



U16 AAA (Formerly M15AAA)

A. Evaluating Players – U16 AAA

- Sort based on skill evaluations (Must be Physical Distanced)
- OAAA will determine a number of skill-based drills to evaluate players and they will be ranked accordingly.
- All players will have a minimum of 3 sessions to be assessed.

B. Coach Creates U16 AAA Cohort

- The coach determines the players that will advance on. All other players are released to their respective Associations – August 29.
- A maximum of 34 players will be selected for the U16 AAA cohort group.
- The U18 AAA coach will select a few of these 34 players to attend the U18 AAA evaluations. The remaining will join the U16 AAA cohort which begins on September 7. Players released from the U18 AAA skills evaluations will also join this cohort on this date.
- The team requires 19 players to fill their roster. This allows the coach to properly evaluate and make some decisions before selecting the team.
- There may be a player(s) being released from the U18 AAA cohort to this team on September 18.
- This cohort can compete without physical distancing for a spot on the U16 AAA team.

C. U16 AAA Team Selection – September 17

- On September 17 the Coach selects the team (19 players). There may be a player(s) being released from the U18 AAA cohort to this team on September 18. This needs to be accounted for when selecting the team.
- All players from the cohort are released on the same day, so they can move as a group to new cohorts following a 14 day non-participation period.
- All players released from the U16 AAA cohort will be managed based on whether they are registered for U16AA and their home association's Return to Play procedures;
- Okotoks – released players will be locks on U16AA team
- Wheatland/Chestermere – U16AA tryout schedule is currently being reviewed, additional information will be provided when available.
- Foothills – released players registered for Okotoks U16AA will be locks. All other Foothills tryouts will be scheduled to accommodate the 14-day non-participation period for those returning to Foothills.
- Please refer to their Return to Play procedures for each Association.

D. Development (Sept. 18 onwards)

- This is 'NOT' a new cohort for the players continuing from the U16 AAA cohort.
- This group can continue to practice without any physical distancing on the ice
- Practice as usual in preparation for the upcoming season



Okotoks Minor Hockey Association

Okotoks Oilers Athletic Association

Return to Play

2020-2021

-
- Players released from the U18 AAA cohort can join the U16 AAA cohort after their 14 day non-participation period has concluded.
- E. Sister Team Concept (Oct. 1 onwards)
- Sister Team Concept (Oct. 1 onwards)
The 'sister team' for U16AAA will be the Okotoks U16 AA team
 - Teams practice 2 times per week and will play games as organized by the coaches.

Aug 12 2020



U16 AA (Formerly M15AA)

A. Evaluating Players – U16 AA

- Sort based on skill evaluations (Must be Physical Distanced)
- OAAA will determine a number of skill-based drills to evaluate players and they will be ranked accordingly.
- All players will have a minimum of 3 sessions to be assessed.

B. Coach Creates U16 AA Cohort

- The coach determines the players that will advance on. All other players are released to OMHA – September 6.
- A maximum of 25 players will move to the U16 AA cohort group. The team requires 19 players to fill their roster. This allows the coach to properly evaluate and make some decisions before selecting the team.
- This cohort can compete without physical distancing for a spot on the U15 AA team.
- There will be players being released from the U16 AAA cohort to this team on September 17.

C. U16 AA Team Selection – September 19, 2020

- On September 19 the Coach selects the team (19 players).
- Any players released from the U16 AAA cohort on September 17 will be considered a lock for the U16 AA team. This is due to the required 14 non-participation period required when being released from a cohort.
- All players released from the U16 AA cohort will be managed based on their home association's Return to Play procedures;
 - Okotoks – All players from the U16AA cohort are released on the same day so they can move as a group to OMHA. It is expected that OMHA tryout schedule will accommodate the non-participation period for U16AA.
 - Wheatland/Chestermere – Wheatland and Chestermere tryout schedules are currently being reviewed; additional information will be provided when available.
 - Foothills – All Foothills tryouts will be scheduled to accommodate the 14-day non-participation period for those returning to Foothills.

D. Development (Sept. 20 onwards)

- This is 'NOT' a new cohort for the players continuing from the U16 AA cohort.
- Players released from the U16 AAA cohort can join the U16 AA cohort after their 14 day non-participation period has concluded.
- This group can continue to practice without any physical distancing on the ice.
- Practice as usual in preparation for the upcoming season.

E. Sister Team Concept (Oct. 1 onwards)

- The 'sister team' for U16AA will be the Okotoks U16AAA team
- Teams practice 2 times per week and will play games as organized by the coaches.



U18 AAA (Formerly Midget AAA)

A. Evaluating Players – U18 AAA

- Sort based on skill evaluations (Must be Physical Distanced)
- OAAA will determine a number of skill-based drills to evaluate players and they will be ranked accordingly.
- All players will have a minimum of 3 sessions to be assessed.
- Key reporting dates for veteran and non-veteran players will be adhered to throughout the U18AAA evaluation process.

B. Coach Creates U18 AAA Cohort

- The coach determines the players that will advance on. All other players are released to their respective Associations – September 3.
- A maximum of 34 players will move to the cohort group. The team requires 20 players to fill their roster. This allows the coach to properly evaluate and make some decisions before selecting the team.
- This cohort can compete without physical distancing for a spot on the U18 AAA team.

C. U18 AAA Team Selection – September 18, 2020

- On September 18 the AAA Coach selects the team (20 players).
- All players from the cohort are released on the same day, so they can move as a group to new cohorts following a 14 day non-participation period.
- Consideration may need to be taken for players participating in Junior camps respecting the key reporting dates for this team.
- All players released from the U18 AAA cohort will be managed based on their age and their home association's Return to Play procedures;
 - 15-year-old players (2005) released from U18AAA cohort will be locks for the U16AAA team.
 - Non-15-year-old Okotoks players – released players will be locks on U18AA team
 - Non-15-year-old Wheatland/Chestermere players – U18AA tryout schedule is currently being reviewed, additional information will be provided when available.
 - Non-15-year-old Foothills players –All Foothills tryouts will be scheduled to accommodate the 14-day non-participation period for those players returning to Foothills.

D. Development (Sept. 19 onwards)

- This is 'NOT' a new cohort for the players continuing from the U18 AAA cohort.
- This group can continue to practice, without any physical distancing on the ice, in preparation for the upcoming season.

E. Sister Team Concept (Oct. 1 onwards)

- The 'sister team' for U18AAA will be the Okotoks U18AA team
- Teams practice 2 times per week and will play games as organized by the coaches.



U18 AA (Formerly Midget AA)

- A. Evaluating Players – U18 AA
- Sort based on skill evaluations (Must be Physical Distanced)
 - OAAA will determine a number of skill-based drills to evaluate players and they will be ranked accordingly.
 - All players will have a minimum of 3 sessions to be assessed.
- B. Coach Creates U18 AA Cohort
- The coach determines the players that will advance on. All other players are released to OMHA – September 10.
 - A maximum of 25 players will move to the U18 AA cohort group. The team requires 19 players to fill their roster. This allows the coach to properly evaluate and make some decisions before selecting the team.
 - This cohort can compete without physical distancing for a spot on the U18 AA team.
 - There will be players being released from the U18 AAA cohort to this team on September 18.
- C. U18AA Team Selection – September 21, 2020
- On September 21 the Coach selects the team (19 players).
 - All players from the U18 AA cohort are released on the same day, so they can move as a group to OMHA. It is expected that the OMHA tryout schedule will accommodate the non-participation period for U18AA releases.
 - Any Okotoks based players released from the U18AAA cohort on September 18th will be considered a **lock** for the U18AA team. This is due to the required 14 non-participation period required when being released from a cohort.
- D. Development (Sept. 22 onwards)
- This is 'NOT' a new cohort for the players continuing from the U18 AA cohort.
 - Players released from the U18 AAA cohort can join the U18 AA cohort after their 14 day non-participation period has concluded.
 - This group can continue to practice without any physical distancing on the ice in preparation for the upcoming season.
- E. Sister Team Concept (Oct. 1 onwards)
- The 'sister team' for U18AA will be the Okotoks U18AAA team
 - Teams practice 2 times per week and will play games as organized by the coaches.



Appendix J: OAAA Female Evaluations

U18 AAA Female (Formerly Midget AAA Female)

- A. Evaluating Players – U18 AAA
- Sort based on skill evaluations (Must be Physical Distanced)
 - OAAA will determine a number of skill-based drills to evaluate players and they will be ranked accordingly.
 - All players will have a minimum of 3 sessions to be assessed.
- B. Coach Creates U18 AAA Cohort
- The coach determines the players that will advance on. All other players are released to their respective Associations – August 23.
 - A maximum of 25 players will move to the cohort group. The team requires 20 players to fill their roster. This allows the coach to properly evaluate and make some decisions before selecting the team.
 - This cohort can compete without physical distancing for a spot on the U18 AAA team.
- C. U18 AAA Female Team Selection – September 17, 2020
- On September 17 the AAA Coach selects the team (20 players).
 - All players from the cohort are released on the same day, so they can move as a group to new cohorts following a 14 day non-participation period.
 - Okotoks (AA boundary) based players released from the U18 AAA cohort will be locks for the Okotoks Oilers U18 AA team.
 - Non-Okotoks players released from the U18 AAA cohort will be released back to their home association and managed based on their home association's Return to Play procedures and tryout schedule
- D. Development (Sept. 19 onwards)
- This is 'NOT' a new cohort for the players continuing from the U18 AAA cohort.
 - This group can continue to practice, without any physical distancing on the ice, in preparation for the upcoming season.
- E. Sister Team Concept (Oct. 1 onwards)
- The 'sister team' for U18AAA will be the Okotoks U18AA team
 - Teams practice 2 times per week and will play games as organized by the coaches.



U18 AA Female (Formerly Midget Elite Female)

- A. Evaluating Players – U18 AA
- Sort based on skill evaluations (Must be Physical Distanced)
 - OAAA will determine a number of skill-based drills to evaluate players and they will be ranked accordingly.
 - All players will have a minimum of 3 sessions to be assessed.
- B. Coaches Create U18 AA Female Cohort
- The coach determines the players that will advance on. All other players are released to their respective Associations – September 8.
 - A maximum of 25 players will move to the cohort group. The team requires 19 players to fill their roster. This allows the coach to properly evaluate and make some decisions before selecting the team.
 - This cohort can compete without physical distancing for a spot on the U18 AA team.
- C. Team Selections – September 24, 2020
- On September 24, the U18 AA Coach selects the team (19 players).
 - All players from the U18 AA cohort are released on the same day, so they can move as a group to OMHA and our Feeder Associations. It is expected that the OMHA tryout schedule will accommodate the non-participation period for U18 AA releases.
 - Any Okotoks players released from the U18AAA cohort on September 17 will be considered a lock for the U18 AA team. This is due to the required 14 non-participation period required when being released from a cohort.
- D. Development (Sept. 18 onwards)
- This is 'NOT' a new cohort for the players continuing from the U18 AA tryout cohort.
 - This group can continue to practice without any physical distancing on the ice in preparation for the upcoming season.
 - Players released from the U18 AAA cohort can join the U18 AA cohort after their 14 day non-participation period has concluded.
- E. Sister Team Concept (Oct. 1 onwards)
- The 'sister team' for U18 AA will be the Okotoks U18 AAA team
 - Teams practice 2 times per week and will play games as organized by the coaches.



U15 AA Female (Formerly Bantam Elite Female)

- A. Evaluating Players – Female U15 AA
- Sort based on skill evaluations (Must be Physical Distanced)
 - OAAA will determine a number of skill-based drills to evaluate players and they will be ranked accordingly.
 - All players will have a minimum of 3 sessions to be assessed.
- B. Coaches Create Female U15 AA Cohort
- The coach determines the players that will advance on. All other players are released to OMHA or their home associations – September 6.
 - A maximum of 30 players will move to the Female U15 AA cohort group. The team requires 19 players to fill their roster. This allows the coaches to properly evaluate and make some decisions before selecting the teams.
 - This cohort can compete without physical distancing for a spot on the team.
- C. Team Selections – September 19, 2020
- On September 19, the U15 AA Coach selects the team (19 players).
 - All players from the U15 AA cohort are released on the same day, so they can move as a group to OMHA and our Feeder Associations. It is expected that the OMHA tryout schedule will accommodate the non-participation period for U18 AA releases.
- D. Development (Sept. 20 onwards)
- This is 'NOT' a new cohort for the players continuing from the U15 AA cohort.
 - This group can continue to practice without any physical distancing on the ice in preparation for the upcoming season.
- E. Sister Team Concept (Oct. 1 onwards)
- A 'sister team' concept and cohort for the U15 AA team will be created. OAAA will work with OMHA and it's tryout process to establish a cohort.
 - Teams practice for 2 times per weeks and will play games as organized by the coach



Appendix K: OAAA Development Season

Cohort Based Play - OAAA

For each age category and division of play, the OAAA will create teams as they would in a normal season. Following the evaluation process, these teams will operate and practice as they would in a typical season. Within the practice, they will focus on development and improvement to compete at higher levels. OAAA will work with each cohort to determine a 'sister cohort'. This 'sister cohort' will now be part of your 'NEW' cohort enabling teams to play 'Mini-Games' and have some form of competition throughout phase 2 of the Alberta Government Relaunch. These Cohorts will now be locked for the entirety of the Alberta Phase 2 relaunch unless a 14 day non-participation isolation period is adhered to and we can create further 'NEW Cohorts'.

Benefits of the model

- Get to teams quickly to establish some form of normalcy.
- Opportunity for players to continue to develop.
- Facilitates some game competition.
- Reduced travel – meets the government recommendation of keeping kids more 'regionally based' during this stage of return to play.
- Players are playing with and against their peer group.
- If an outbreak occurs, it is easier to shut down a cohort as opposed to shutting down the entire program.



Appendix L: FAQs

General:

Evaluations:

Q: Why 3 skates for just skills-based evaluations?

A: More sessions mean a larger sample size for the evaluators. If a player has an abnormally poor or good skate, it will impact their overall ranking less, creating a more accurate score of a players' average ability.

Q: How will gameplay, hockey IQ, and compete level be evaluated?

A: These factors will likely not be evaluated to their normal extent during the evaluation stage. However, coaches will have approximately 2 weeks with the players in specific cohorts. It is the responsibility of the coach to create meaningful practice drills and modified games to properly assess all facets of a player's overall game.

OMHA does not look at Hockey IQ as one of the evaluated skills to rank players. Based on the evaluators used, the top 35-40 kids will form a cohort #1, the next 35-40 kids will form cohort #2, and so on.

Q: Why do evaluation drills need to be approved?

A: Within OMHA, the drills used for the skill based evals will come from hockey development guys within the OMHA board. This is to keep it consistent from group to group and practice to practice to make sure that each player is given the equal opportunity to show case their skill set.

OAAA is committed to the safety and well-being of all participants. To mitigate the risk of a shutdown or quarantine of our program, we need to be sure we strictly adhere to the AHS and Hockey Alberta guidelines. By having a process of approval we can ensure we have completed a proper risk assessment of our on-ice physical distancing sessions, which will give confidence to AHS and Hockey Alberta that we have done our due diligence and are running our program to their satisfaction.

Contact Tracing/Screening

Q: How will OAAA handle contact tracing and symptom screening?

A: Hockey Alberta has set guidelines to follow to ensure we track all interactions and that symptomatic players do not participate. We are actively looking at ways to make this easy for families and coaches. However, regardless of the method, this will be a required step before participation at any session.

Q: What happens if a player answers yes to any of the symptom screening questions?

A: Any participant who answers YES to any of the questions may no longer participate in the camp/program until a minimum 14-day quarantine period has elapsed.



COVID-19

Q: What happens if there is a positive test in a Cohort?

A: There will be a formal reporting process if any participant contracts COVID-19. OAAA will take all direction from the Alberta Health Services. We do not have any more clarity at this time and may not have any more clarity as our programs begin. AHS is treating every situation differently and are not providing concrete 'What ifs'. We must simply follow reporting guidelines and take direction as it is given.

Coaches

Q: What happens if a coach notices a player is showing symptoms before or during participation?

A: Like an injury, coaches will have full authority to deny a player(s) participation if they believe the player is sick. Coaches will be given resources to help assist them. However, if parents and players are honest in their pre-participation symptom screening, we should avoid any situation where a coach must deny participation.

Aug 12 2020