



1A-1084 Kenaston Street
Ottawa, ON K1B 3P5

tel: (613) 748-5682
fax: (613) 748-5777

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NCL Rule 2.3.7 Exemption Request

On January 10th, 2019, Water Polo Canada received a request for an exemption to NCL Rule 2.3.7. which states "Athletes may only compete with the club with which they are registered as a primary, secondary, tertiary or fourth club member.:

Athletes in the NCL 14 and under, 16 and under and 19 and under categories may only compete for a club with which they are registered as a primary, secondary, tertiary or fourth club member. Athletes also can only be registered as a primary, secondary, tertiary or fourth club member for clubs that are in their province of registration. The result of these two rules is that for athletes to compete for a club in the 14U, 16U, or 19U NCL category, they must first be registered in the province of that club.

The above rules created a situation for two NCL athletes that resulted in an exemption request being filed on their behalf. The athletes in question played in the 16U NCL category for an NCL club in their home province; however, the athletes' NCL club did not enter a 19U team into the NCL, so if they wanted to play 19U NCL, they would have to play for a different team. The athletes were able to find another club to play for in the NCL at the 19U level, but this club was located in a different province. In order to be eligible to play for this new club at 19U, the athletes would need to transfer their membership to the new province in order to register as a primary, secondary, tertiary or fourth member of the new club; however, doing so would mean giving up their current membership with their 16 and under club, thus making them ineligible for that league. These circumstances lead to the exemption request to 2.3.7.

As rule 2.3.7 deals with athlete membership amongst the provinces, WPC conferred with the provincial sport organizations (PSO) to decide whether an exemption could be granted under these circumstances. After review, the PSOs and WPC agreed that an exemption under these circumstances was possible, BUT ONLY if it was not possible for an athlete to play for another club in their home province/province of registration.

If an athlete can not play for their own club in the NCL because their club has not entered a team, and they cannot play for any other club in their province of registration because those clubs have not entered teams, or their teams are full, then the only remaining option is to play for a club in a different province. Given that rule 2.3.7 currently bars that as an option, WPC has approved a new exemption process for the NCL that allows athletes to play as an out of province member for an NCL club in the 14U, 16U or 19U category. If each of the following conditions are met, and athlete can apply for this exemption:

1. The athlete is playing in either the 14 and under, 16 and under or 19 and under NCL category for their primary, secondary, tertiary or fourth club.
2. The athlete is unable to play in either the 14 and under, 16 and under or 19 and under NCL category for their primary, secondary, tertiary or fourth club because their club does not offer that team.



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3. There are no other clubs within their province of registration that have a team competing in the NCL category for which they are unable to play because their primary, secondary, tertiary or fourth

club does not offer that program, or because any of teams that are competing in one of those categories have no space available.

Once an athlete has proven they meet each of the above criteria, they can apply for an exemption. The exemption will be reviewed by both the PSO of the athlete and WPC to determine that the athlete does, in fact, meet all the required criteria, is in good standings with their club, province, and WPC, and that the overall basis of the request is legitimate.

In the matter of the original exemption request, dated January 10th, 2019, WPC and the PSO have determined that the request does meet all the above criteria and is therefore **APPROVED**.