

Western Region Ringette  
Membership Services  
Release/2 Team Player/Contested Release  
Policies Interpretation  
**updated June 2, 2011**

A great deal of confusion and misinformation is circulating within Western Region dealing with player movement between associations, teams and levels. Fortunately for the region, the concerns involve a very low percentage of our membership both at the player level and at the association level.

The following is an attempt to detail the policies and procedures as they exist within the Ontario Ringette Association and how they will be interpreted and applied within Western region for the 2011/2012 season.

While the excerpts from the ORA Operating Guide Membership Services Section contained in this document are current as of this publication the definitive source is the ORA and the latest published version from ORA should always be available on the web site [click here](#)

The following document consists of the ORA manual, Membership Services section items 8, 9 and 10 interspersed with applicable Western Region additions, policies and in some cases A/AA league modifications. There are inserted explanations detailing how Western Region will be applying or interpreting conflict resolution.

Please understand that the first and preferred option is for each situation to be resolved through cooperation between all parties involved. If this happens, the region will work with all parties to insure the paperwork required matches the collaborative solution. If this approach does not work then the region is left with the reality of applying the rules as laid out within the documentation that follows. At no time will there be room for personal interpretations or preferences. The only choices are a mutual solution that fits within the rules or an imposed solution dictated by the rules.

As always, the ORA appeal processes are available to everyone once decisions have been put in place.

Finally, **until** a release has been signed on or off by all parties, forwarded to the region membership Services coordinator for review and signed off by the region, **the release is not approved**. Until that time the only document involving player movement is the tryout release form and this is only valid for published tryouts. Other than this no player, should be on the ice, for any team event in other than their home association. Further to this, once a release becomes a contested release, a player must not appear on the ice for any association until the tribunal decision is rendered.

## 1. PLAYER TRYOUT/RELEASE

**Note:** An Association has the right to defer the signing of a release until **SEPTEMBER 15<sup>th</sup>** of each year to assist in the formation of teams. All releases must be signed and provided to the receiving region by **NOVEMBER 15<sup>th</sup>** of each year, unless the Region establishes an earlier date.

Western Region supports the dates and timings established by the A/AA league and will sign releases created under this process once the originals are forwarded to the Membership Services Coordinator. The deadlines above do remain to manage the process of late registrants and relocations. In all cases, the original paperwork is requested with exceptions to allow faxes and emails only when timing concerns demand and then only on a individually approved basis.

Fax was never intended to be the method for gathering the proper signatures only for communicating the final document. During the tryout and release process the form, in its original state, is to accompany the process gathering the necessary signatures as it goes from Tryout to Release. The acceptability of the fax was only to be to communicate the final completely signed original to the Region. In simple steps a player wishing to try out for another association obtains a Tryout Release form which they sign and the association president signs to document communication about the players intent. The player takes this to the association hosting tryouts. The receiving association retains this document on file. If a position is offered to the player the receiving association gets a signature from the player/parent, their home president signs it as receiving association then forwards it to the region for final approval. In the case of a cross region release the releasing region also must sign the document before it is forwarded to the receiving region for signature. It is this document that Western Region is requesting be forwarded rather than faxed. Note, for Western Region we are also requiring that this document be accompanied by waivers from any closest associations per the current rules.

### a. Application:

A Player Tryout/Release Form (Appendix M-F-07) is required when a player, Belle age or under, requests permission to try out for a Registered member (Local Association) other than the Registered Member with whom they are presently registered. The Player Tryout/Release Form must be submitted to the Releasing Charter Member (Region) on or before the deadline of any given season.

i. A player may request permission to try out and subsequently be released for the following reasons:

- Level of play not available

Western Region allows level of play releases also when Level of Play is available but the home association agrees to release the player, provided the player attended at least one home tryout. Please note that movement to a higher age group is not considered level of play (i.e. For a U16 age player U16AA is the same level of play as U19AA)

- Age group not available

**Western Region allows age group not available releases but applies the closest association rule also to this category of release.**

- Other

**Western Region does not consider this a catchall category to avoid closest association movement but considers it a rarely available category based upon a documented request detailing extraordinary situations. For acceptance this must include agreement of all parties including any closest associations who could claim rights to the player involved.**

ii. The Player Tryout/Release Form (Appendix M-F-07) is to be signed in the following order of priority:

- Parent/Player
- Releasing Association
- Releasing Region (if different than Receiving Region)
- Receiving Region

**Western Region continues with its previously stated policy that out of region level of play releases will not be approved. There is the room under other for consideration of situations but the region does not support this and will not approve where suitable opportunities are available within reasonable situations within the region.**

iii. Process the Player Tryout/Release Form (Appendix M-F-07) as follows:

- The player must initially be a registered player and complete Part 1 of the Player Tryout/Release Form.
- The player must obtain the signature of the President of the Home Association on the Player Tryout/Release Form before being allowed to participate in another association's tryouts. The Home Association may not deny any request for tryout, however, signing the tryout portion (Part 1) of the Form does not mandate the Home Association to sign the release portion (Part II) of the Form. Faxed copies of signatures are acceptable. No players may be allowed to tryout ice of an association other than their local association without submitting a "Tryout/Release Form". Consequences for violation of this rule may include any or all of the following penalties:
  - release ultimately not granted
  - monetary fine up to \$1,000.00

The Region will determine the penalties appropriate for the circumstances.

**Western Region will incorporate into future years the fact that out of region tryout releases must be signed by the Membership Services coordinator to establish awareness. As with Presidents, the release cannot be denied at this point in time but this will insure full awareness of player movement.**

- Each Association President must supply the Regional Membership Services Coordinator with a Summary of all players who have attended a tryout held by the association and a list of all players for whom the association has authorized by way of Tryout Release Form M-F-07 to participate in a tryout with another association. The time line for providing these lists will be determined by the Regional Membership Services Coordinator.
- The Receiving Association will complete Part II of the Player Tryout/Release Form only after the player has been selected for one of its teams. (If the player is not selected, no further action will be taken and the form may be retained on file by the Receiving Association). O.R.A. Registration Fees must be submitted by the Receiving Association to the O.R.A. within the deadline.

**Within Western Region, for provincial Level play this is currently accomplished by the on line tryout release reporting structure and fully documented under the published spreadsheet. Associations must document any B&C player movement to Membership Services coordinator.**

**Western Region will this year be putting the responsibility for release processing on the Receiving Association as detailed here. Once a player is selected the receiving association must manage all paperwork from this point forward. This is not the responsibility of the player and/or their parent.**

- The Receiving Association will present the Player Tryout/Release Form for the necessary signatures:
  - i.e.: Home Association
  - Receiving Association
  - Charter Member (Region)
  - Releasing Charter Member (Region) if appropriate

**Western Region also requires that each release, where appropriate, includes documented proof of the sign off of any "closest association" which has allowed the pass though of the player involved. This proof may be in email or letter form. This will come to the Region Membership Services Coordinator as a package ready for signature.**

- The Charter Member shall list all completed and approved Player Tryout/Release Forms on a Player Tryout/Release Form Summary and submit it to the O.R.A. office by **DECEMBER 1<sup>st</sup>** of each playing season.
- iv. An Application for Player Release Form that is signed approved by the Home Association, Receiving Association and Charter Member shall deem that applicant as released, effective for one season. All appropriate O.R.A. fees and dues for that applicant will be recorded with the Receiving Association.
  - v. An Application for Player Release approved for the same individual from the same Releasing Association to the same Receiving Association for three (3) consecutive seasons shall constitute a permanent Registered Member change for that individual. All records held with the Corporation shall so change on the Registration expiry date of the third consecutive year.
  - vi. The approved release shall expire at the completion of the player's current playing season.
  - vii. If a player has been released to an A or AA team, for reason "Level of Play", that team will be committed to remain at the A or AA level for the remainder of the season and the team cannot retreat to any lower level of play.
  - viii. A Player Release granted on "Level of Play" will only be released to the closest association offering that level of play. This association is considered the player's "Current Association" and has first right to receive the players if released by the player's "Home Association" Closest association shall be governed by the player's Home Region Policy. **Western Region has established the policy that if a player is unsuccessful in being selected by the closest association, with sign off of that association they may move on to the next closest association and so forth through the region. Due to the realities of the tryout process the region allows players to attend tryouts at multiple associations with the understanding that any release will be to the closest association offering them an opportunity.**
  - ix. Each year a player's first loyalty must be to their home association. If the home association hosts tryouts for their level of play they must attend and if selected must remain with their home association. If released on level of play from their home association and their "Current Association" hosts tryouts for their level of play they must attend and if selected must remain with their "Current Association". If their "Current Association" does not offer or does not accept the player then the "Current Association" relationship is terminated and they must follow their regions closest association policies based upon their home association.

- x. In all cases any interruption of the “Current Association” relationship terminates the relationship of the player to the association and they return to the home association relationship. If they are released to a new association this then becomes their “Current Association”. **Western Region has established the policy that if a current association will commence in the 2012/13 season based upon the association a player plays with during the 2011/12 season**
- xi. For purposes of determining the closest association, the associations within the player’s home Region will have priority over associations in another Region regardless of proximity. The Executive of player’s home Region will resolve any disputed situations. **Western Region has a published and documented closest association matrix which will be applied in all situations.**
- xii. Where a release is approved by the player’s Home Region for release to another Region, a determination of closest association shall be governed by the Receiving Region’s policy. **As mentioned previously Western Region will only approve cross region releases under extreme situations. For consideration this must be supported by both region Membership Services Coordinators and have the support of the Western Region executive. The Western Region Director will seek concurrence from the receiving region director.**
- xiii. A Provincial U12 (Petite) player may be released for level of play if not offered a position on a provincial level team in their own association **Western Region currently supports U12 (Provincial Petite) releases for level of play not available and includes in this definition those cases where an association has filled its player roster for Provincial Petite and has players who wish to test their abilities with another association having been cut by their home association.**
- xiv. Where level of play is offered, a player must attend Provincial tryouts in their association. If the level of play is not offered in their home association, the player must attend Provincial tryouts at the next closest association. Any player not meeting this standard will not be allowed to play at the Provincial level for the current season. **If, in the spirit of cooperation, all parties in a release situation are supportive of signing off a player who did not attend their tryouts then the region will not interfere. If, however a closest association offers a player (with or without a tryout) a spot on their provincial team then the player is obligated to accept. Any dispute of this ruling can only be resolved through acceptance or through the contested release (tribunal) procedure. Please note that, as documented in the next section, it is up to the receiving or the potential receiving association to file any contested release.**

## CONTESTED APPLICATION FOR PLAYER RELEASE OR RELOCATION

Within Western Region, any request for a tribunal must come from the receiving association (see point c below), must be accompanied by a \$200 non-refundable certified cheque or money order, must be sent to the Western Region Secretary Wendy Allen Unit 8-75 Ansondale Road London ON N6C 5W2. All timings will start from when she physically receives the request (traditional tribunal periods often coincide with vacation periods and without full time staff sometimes the mail is not opened immediately). It is in the interest of the requesting/receiving association to send it in such a manner as to document the date of receipt. A courtesy call to the Region Director or the Membership Services coordinator is also advisable. All timings do not include weekends or holidays. Once received, the Membership Services Coordinator in conjunction with the executive will determine the validity and viability of the request. If it is determined that the request does not fully meet all required criteria the request and the certified cheque/money order will be returned with explanation and without prejudice. The filing association can then review the request and resubmit if appropriate once the problems have been resolved or corrected.

- a) The player **must not** appear on the ice for any Local Association who is involved in the contested Application for Player Release **or relocation** until the Charter Member (Region) Release Tribunal has rendered a decision.  
**Western Region insists that the contested player not participate with the team(s) involved as it leads to expectations which may be unrealistic in light of the reverting back to closest association policy.**
- b) Any player contesting an application for player release **or relocation** must be a registered member of their home association and provide proof thereof for the season in which the release is being requested. A formal written request for a release tribunal must be submitted to the Region within seven (7) days after the player has received written confirmation that the “application for player release” is denied. The request for tribunal must follow regional policy.  
**Western Region insists that registration requirements be upheld as a condition of hearing any contested release application. Western Region will accept reasonable proof of date of submission.**
- c) The Charter Member (Region) shall convene a Player Release **or Relocation** Tribunal Hearing within seven (7) days of receipt of the Contested Application for Player Release Form **or Player relocation Form** from the Receiving Association.  
**Western Region will endeavour to pick a neutral location convenient to all parties involved and will notify all parties. For purposes of notification email and/or phone messages will constitute valid notification. Every effort will be extended to insure all parties are informed. In this procedure 7 days is 7 business days and does not include holidays or weekends. The clock starts at midnight of the receipt of the request. Please note that there is not currently an ORA form for this application. The region requires that the request come from the receiving association, be in writing delivered to the region secretary and be accompanied by a \$200.00 non refundable certified cheque or money order payable to the region.**
- d) The Charter Member Release **or Relocation** Tribunal shall be chaired by the Regional Director or Designate and consist of three (3) persons as appointed by the Regional Director and the

Membership Services Co-ordinator of the Charter Member (Region). The Regional Director attends the Tribunal to ensure the procedures are followed and to Chair the meeting, not to influence the tribunal. The Regional Director does not participate in the discussion or vote on the decision. The Membership Services Co-ordinator must be present as a resource person and does not vote on the decision, but may answer questions.

**Western Region also provides a secretary for the event, usually the region secretary. While present for all presentations and discussions, including discussion by the tribunal in private, the secretary does not participate, provide input or vote on the decision. Western Region endeavours to pick knowledgeable members of the region Ringette community who have no apparent or perceived bias in the outcome of the decision. All tribunal members are briefed in the rules covering the conduction of the Tribunal Process but receive no briefing on the matter at hand. They may be informed of the parties and age groups involved only for purposes of insuring no conflict of interest. All tribunals within Western Region are instructed that their task is not to make new rules or set new precedence for the release process but only to see that the existing rules, as set out by the Ontario Ringette Association and Western Region, have been applied fairly and without prejudice. The intent is to keep emotion and interpretation out of the process.**

- e) The Tribunal shall ensure that the O.R.A. office, Releasing Association, Receiving Association and the Applicant are notified at least three (3) days in advance of the time and place of the Release Tribunal **or Relocation** Hearing.

**Western Region, through its secretary, will insure full communication to all parties concerned.**

**Tribunal procedures are public but only one representative from each of the receiving association, releasing association, the player/parent, and the contesting association/charter member is allowed to make verbal presentation and they must notify the Tribunal Chair of their intentions prior to the hearing. Any other interested party wishing to speak or provide input must apply in writing to the region prior to the tribunal and they will be notified if accepted.**

**The Tribunal Chair reserves the right to limit the number of attendees.**

**All presentations should be accompanied by written submissions.**

- f) When all speakers have been heard and all questions have been answered, the Tribunal Panel retires to discuss and render their decision. The Tribunal shall render a decision with rationale based on the evidence provided at the Release **or Relocation** Tribunal Hearing regardless of whether any of the Releasing Association, Receiving Association or Applicant is not in attendance.

**All parties are advised to remain until the tribunal determines if it has any further questions or needs clarification on any points. Once this has been determined then all parties are excused.**

**Western Region will inform all parties of the final decision, via e-mail, within 24**



hours of the end of the hearing. Past situations have negated allowing parties to remain and wait for a verbal verdict.

- g) Copies of the tribunal minutes and any submitted statements to be forwarded to the O.R.A. Office in a timely manner.  
**Western Region Secretary will prepare and submit a package once the tribunal decision is communicated.**
- h) Any appeal of this Player Release **or Relocation** Tribunal Hearing's decision will follow the O.R.A. Appeals Policy

## **“TWO TEAM PLAYER” PROCEDURES**

The intent of the Two-Team Player Agreement is to maintain the viability of smaller associations while allowing players to experience Provincial level play. It is not designed to allow all Provincial level players to participate at the Regional level as well. Regions must set their own policies regarding the number of two-team players on any given TRF in order to achieve the intent of the agreement.

**Western Region asks that everyone note that e) below has changed. A 2 player agreement now must define the priority team. If a situation occurs where the regional level team, through use of 2 team players, attains a seeding of a Provincial level then all of the players on two team player contract must revert to single team players and only for their defined priority team. This may mean that the regional level team loses these players and thus their level reverts back to regional level but they cannot re-institute any or all of the 2 team players. Please bear this in mind when establishing player priorities over two team contracts.**

- a) Any B or C player may play on a Provincial team and register on both T.R.F.'s. A player may only leave her home association if that level of play is not offered or player does not make the Provincial team. (Must attend tryouts).
- b) A Two-Team Player Agreement may be entered into when a player has been released to a Provincial level team back onto a Regional level team. The agreement must be reviewed and approved by both the Regional G&T and Membership Services Co-ordinators.
- c) The option for priority between the two teams is defined on the Two Team Playing Agreement Form. The general hierarchy is Championships before Tournaments; Tournaments before Games; Games before Practices; Practices before Meetings; Meetings before Social Activities. If there are points that cannot be agreed upon, the Regional G&T and Membership Services Co-ordinators will finalize any conflicts using these guidelines and with consideration of the importance of these events. If all concerned agree when the hierarchy is different in a given situation, the agreed to solution can be approved. Players having to cross regional boundaries must deal with both Coordinators. If there is a problem the G&T and Membership Services Chairs will make the final decision.
- d) Players who have been denied a release may not enter into a Two-Team Player Agreement with the team to which they were denied the release.
- e) Player must register with their B or C team and play with them all year, including Regional Championships and Sanctioned Events. If their calibre of play raises this team to a Provincial level, the player may play only for the Priority Team as noted on the Agreement.
- f) The Playing Agreement Form (Appendix M-F-02) must be signed by the player/parent/guardian, applicable coaches and Association Presidents/Designates and G&T Co-ordinator and Membership Services Co-ordinator.
- g) A player cannot play in more than one (1) sanctioned event on more than one (1) team or in the same sanctioned event on the same weekend.

**NOTE:** Does not apply to A.D.P. Players.