

La Ronge Minor Hockey Association



September 27,2021

Coach & Manager Procedure Manual

Procedure Manual

La Ronge Minor Hockey

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1. La Ronge Minor Hockey Introduction

Welcome to La Ronge Minor Hockey. For those unfamiliar with us, we are a not-for-profit minor hockey association serving the Lac La Ronge area. We are committed to offering an enjoyable hockey experience wherein youth have fun, learn about the game, and grow through teamwork and sportsmanship. As an entirely volunteer organization, we recognize the valuable role our coaches and managers play in making this happen, so let's say it right here:

**We truly appreciate your commitment to our young people
and to the sport of hockey in our community.**

While we recognize the importance of healthy competition, the focus of our organization is on skill development, fair play, an active lifestyle, healthy attitudes, and most importantly, FUN! We expect this from our coaches and we strive to have these values remain with our players throughout their careers with us and into their adult lives.

2. Team Official Code of Conduct

It is the intention of this code of conduct to promote fair play and respect for all participants within La Ronge Minor Hockey. This document must be signed prior to any coach or manager assuming team responsibilities. The goal of the Team Officials' Code of Conduct is to guide and influence behaviour and to identify La Ronge Minor Hockey's expectations of acceptable conduct both on and off the ice.

- a) To be reasonable when scheduling games and practices remembering that young athletes have other interests and obligations.
- b) To teach athletes to play fairly and to respect the rules, officials, opponents and teammates.
- c) To ensure all athletes receive equal instruction and support, and appropriate and fair playing time.
- d) Not to ridicule or yell at any players, game officials or other team officials for making (perceived) mistakes or for poor performance.
- e) To remember that children play to have fun and to commit to creating an environment where they will develop self-confidence, trust, and respect.
- f) Not to question the game official's judgment or honesty in public.
- g) To make sure that equipment and facilities are safe and match the athletes' ages and abilities.
- h) To remember that children need a coach they can respect. I will be generous with praise and I will set a good example.
- i) To abide by the La Ronge Minor Hockey "24-Hour Rule" for any concerns I may have. See LRMH Conflict Resolution (page 5).
- j) To encourage players attend school on a regular basis. LRMH views school as an important role in player development.
- k) To participate in the Respect in Sport course, to attend required training courses and to continue to upgrade skills as required by the SHA.
- l) Will abide by SHA regulations.

3. Parent Code of Conduct

It is the intention of this code of conduct to promote fair play and respect for all participants within La Ronge Minor Hockey. The goal of the Parents' Code of Conduct is to educate parents, to positively influence parent behaviour and to identify La Ronge Minor Hockey's expectations of acceptable conduct both on and off the ice.

- a) I will not force my child to participate in hockey, remembering that my child plays hockey for his or her enjoyment, not mine.
- b) I will encourage my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflict without resorting to hostility or violence.
- c) I will teach my child that doing one's best is more important than winning so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of a game. With this in mind, I will make my child feel like a winner by consistently offering praise for competing fairly and hard.
- d) I will never ridicule or yell at my or any child, game officials, team officials, or other parents.
- e) I will remember that children learn by example. I will applaud good plays and performances by both my child's team and their opponents.
- f) I will never question the game official's judgment or honesty in public.
- g) I will support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from children's hockey.
- h) I will respect and show appreciation for all Minor Hockey volunteers.
- i) If my child is not attending school without valid reason, I will inform the coaching staff, understanding that this may mean my child may be asked not to participate until the issue is resolved. Failure to inform team officials regarding school attendance may result in my child being suspended from the Association without refund of registration fees.
- j) I will abide by the La Ronge Minor Hockey "24-Hour Rule" for any concerns I may have. Refer to Conflict Resolution (page 5).
- k) I will be responsible for my guests at my child's hockey games, encouraging them to respect and abide by the Parents' Code of Conduct.

4. Player Code of Conduct

It is the intention of this guideline to promote fair play and respect for all participants within La Ronge Minor Hockey. The intent of the Players' Pledge of Conduct is to positively influence players' behaviour and to identify La Ronge Minor Hockey's expectations of acceptable conduct both on and off the ice.

- a) I will play hockey because I want to, not because others or coaches want me to.
- b) I will play by the rules of hockey and in the spirit of the game.
- c) I will control my temper understanding that fighting or "mouthing-off" can spoil the activity for everyone.
- d) I will respect my opponents both on and off the ice.
- e) I will do my best to be a true team player.
- f) I will remember that having fun, improving skills, making friends and doing my best are more important than winning.
- g) I will acknowledge all good plays and performances - including those of my teammates and my opponents.
- h) I will remember that coaches and officials are there to help me. I will accept their decisions and show them respect.
- i) I will attend school regularly, understanding that if I miss school without a valid reason, I may be asked not to participate in hockey until my school issues are resolved.
- j) If I am having problems with any issues related to hockey including bullying or abuse, I will discuss these problems with my parents, my coaches or with another adult who will help me to address the problem.
- k) I will respect all facilities and represent La Ronge Minor Hockey in an appropriate and respectful manner.

5. Conflict Resolution

Step One: Adhere to the La Ronge Minor Hockey “24-Hour Rule”*.

Step Two: Attempt to resolve the issue at the team level. If no resolution, proceed to:

Step Three: Put concerns in writing and approach a La Ronge Minor Hockey (LRMH) board member where the Vice President (VP) will become involved.

Step Four: Vice President will assist in addressing the concerns (meeting with the coaching/manager staff, parent etc..) to discuss issues.
If no resolution, proceed to:

Step Five: Formal complaint to be dealt with at monthly La Ronge Minor Hockey Board Meeting

Step Six: Resolution.

*La Ronge Minor Hockey “24-Hour Rule” – If any person involved directly or indirectly with La Ronge Minor Hockey determines that concerns, events, methodologies, or conduct are required to be brought forward for attention, that person is to wait 24 hours after the event prior to initiating written or personal contact regarding the concern. This “24-Hour Rule” allows for emotions to be set aside, placing the event in perspective, and enabling an opportunity for an objective evaluation and approach.

If problems cannot be resolved at a team level, written or personal correspondence should be provided to the La Ronge Minor Hockey Board, where the Vice President will assist in addressing the concerns. If no resolution is found the issue will be brought formally to the LRMH monthly board meeting for resolution.

Any breach of La Ronge Minor Hockey’s Codes of Conduct, abusive language, violent conduct, disrespect of coaches, officials or peers will not be tolerated. Team officials will handle such problems with the players/parents directly, but if the problem continues, a meeting with the player/parents, team officials and Association representatives may take place. It is the intention of the La Ronge Minor Hockey Board to find amicable resolutions to all problems that may arise.

6. Role of the Coaching Staff

Head Coach

- Serve as the official spokesperson on behalf of the team
- Coordinate the delegation of responsibilities to the assistant coaches and manager
- Plan on and off-ice activities in consultation with the assistant coaches and manager
- Design the practice plans in consultation with the assistant coaches
- Establish rules for the team and oversee the supervision of the play
- Plan, implement and control pre-game preparation and communication with the team
- Assigning lines, ice time and roles for players during games
- Player evaluations and feedback throughout the season
- Providing leadership and discipline to players while on the ice and while in the dressing room.
- We encourage coaching staff to meet with parents (and players) prior to the season to learn each other's goals and expectations. We recommend a parent meeting within one month of the beginning of hockey season.
- Each coach will occasionally miss a practice, but the expectation is that at least one coach will always be available. This coach does not necessarily have to be on the ice surface, but during every practice, a team official – coach or manager – must be at the arena and supervising on-ice activity.
- Provide the board with an AP list

Assistant Coach

- Assist with planning, organizing and conducting practices
- Assist with pre-game preparation
- Assist with the operation of the team during the games
- Assist with the supervision of players on and off the ice
- Assist with the formulation of the game plan
- Report to the head coach

What qualifications are required to coach?

The SHA requires coaches to take a few different training courses for certification, but these are learning workshops, not exams.

Coaches do not need to have certification at the start of the season. SHA allows volunteers to coach at the start of the season on the understanding that they will seek certification later that year. Once certification has been completed, it is good for all following years.

Coaching certifications are as follows:

Welcome new minor hockey coaches! The following information will assist you in your first steps in becoming a hockey coach. Follow the steps to begin the process of completing your training and developing your own program.

WHAT TRAINING DO I NEED TO COACH

For Minor Hockey Male and Female: All coaches must obtain the appropriate coaching level, as defined by the SHA Regulations, by January 10th of the current season. Individuals must complete the online coach modules delivered through Hockey University (HU) then fully attend & participate at an in person coach clinic to achieve “Trained” status (formerly known as “certified”). The course you require to be “Trained” in is specific to the level you are currently coaching. Each course stream of training is designed to cover pertinent learning & skills content appropriate for the level of athlete which you’ll currently be coaching.

All coaches & team staff are required to complete Respect in Sport (RIS) online.

It is important that ALL team staff members understand what training is required for all levels of hockey

Please refer to SHA: https://sha.sk.ca/coaches/team_staff_requirements

Hockey Canada provides a very useful guide to player development with the certification courses offered. These manuals, along with practice plans for an entire season of hockey are available on the larongeminorhockey.com website in the Coach's Corner section. We encourage you to use these manuals to further your coaching skills and learn new techniques to help players grow in their abilities

That being said, every coach will be different. Two individuals, each very knowledgeable about hockey, may still have different approaches. There is no one "right" way. However, La Ronge Minor Hockey offers these very basic tips:

- Be prepared. Jot down a short list of drills you would like to run. Consider how much of the ice surface you will use, and whether (with enough coaching support) you can split players into two or more groups.
- Be flexible. Sometimes, the players just aren't going to "get it". Sometimes, you need two goalies when you have only one. Avoid the frustration for you and them, and move on to something else.
- Remember that skill levels will vary widely from player to player. 8 year-olds will not be able to shoot from the blue line! 16-year-olds will quickly be bored by static, standing-still passes.
- If possible, demonstrate the drill (for younger players), or draw the drill on a whiteboard (for older players).
- Vary the drills to include skating, passing and shooting (and in older groups, positional play). A variety also keeps the kids from getting bored or distracted. In a one-hour practice, you probably have time for only 5-8 drills on average.
- Use drills that "progress." For example, have players learn to skate circles before asking them to skate circles with pucks. Make sure they learn a one-pass drill before moving to a 3-pass drill.
- Speak clearly. A good rule to set early is that when the coach is talking, players are either kneeling or standing in position.
- Keep them engaged. Consider splitting the players into multiple groups to work on different skills simultaneously.
- Be creative. It is OK to introduce the occasional unexpected drill to your practice routine such as using a soccer ball without sticks, substituting a tennis ball for the puck, or introducing several pucks to the game.
- Have fun teaching. Encourage kids to have fun by having fun yourself!

Discipline

First, a common sense statement: abuse or threats towards others, bullying or the use of profanity by coaching officials or players will not be tolerated. Coaches have the authority to discipline players, sit them during drills and/or games, and send them off the ice if deemed appropriate. Coaches are encouraged to provide fair time and instruction for each player, but LRMH expects that players will be respectful of others and contribute their best effort. Tell the players your rules and expectations early on, and let them know they are accountable for their own behaviour. Each coach will have their own approach, but each team's coaching staff should be consistent.

The ice arena is large and noisy, and kids are anxious to get out there. Be prepared to keep them busy, but also to keep order. Bored kids can become mischievous kids. Sometimes, even in a busy practice, players will misbehave. This is often at another player's expense, and it is a distraction to everyone. A common rule of thumb - but by no means a regulation - is to provide a warning for a first offence, a cool-off on the bench for a second offence, and removal from the ice for a third offence. Be calm but firm. It may be a good idea to have a talk with the player and the parents afterwards to explain the issue. If a parent disagrees, the parent has the option of asking the LRMH board to intervene.

Off the ice or outside the dressing room, parents & guardians are responsible for discipline, although coaches and managers are often looked upon to provide leadership here as well. The LRMH board has the right to suspend any team member or coach for serious misconduct on or off the ice, in town or on the road.

Remember, the single greatest way to encourage good behaviour among your players is to role model it yourself!

Other tips:

- When critiquing a player, remember to BE SPECIFIC, and try to do it personally, rather than in front of the entire team. One method to consider when giving advice is to sandwich criticism between 2 positive comments. For example: "I liked the way you skated hard for the puck in the corner. On that last play when you picked up the puck on the boards you didn't take a look before you shot. Remember to keep your head up when you're making passes. And hey, good job getting the puck out of our end on your last shift."
- Be polite to the refs. Easier said than done for some of us, but remember that you're a role model. And if that doesn't work, imagine that your mother is standing right behind you.
- Carry a small bag of useful "stuff": screwdriver, helmet screws, tape, a towel, spare neckguard, skate lace, game sheet, pen, and the contact list provided by LRMH.
- If one of your players has been suspended by a ref or the SHA, make sure you mark the player as "serving a suspension" on the game sheet of your next game. Otherwise, SHA won't recognize the game(s) sat out.

Most of all, we hope that coaching our minor hockey players will offer you a chance to provide them with memories, values and goals they can apply to their lives outside of hockey and carry with them throughout their days.

The best way to learn is to talk to other coaches, watch other practices, and of course, learn to do by doing. And accept it from the start: not everything is going to go the way you plan it!

- Every player learns at a different level. Do not expect all players to be at the same. Sometimes it's nice to improvise teaching techniques.

What does LRMH provide?

Each team will be provided with a locker, pucks, water bottles, a first aid kit, pylons and goalie equipment (although older players often prefer their own). Please contact our Equipment Manager, if you're short. Game jerseys bearing the Ice Wolves logo are provided for games. "Keeper" items such as team jackets are not covered. Shooting targets are available upon request to LRMH's equipment manager. Coaches are expected to supply their own skates, stick, helmet and whistle.

LRMH will provide each team with regular practice times, game times when requested, and a list of referees for use at games. The board will also give each coach a list of the team's, and a list of board members, coaches and other useful contacts. LRMH, through the SHA, also provides each player and coach with insurance (as part of the registration fee). Finally, LRMH will help arrange training courses as necessary and pay the registration costs. SHA Handbooks are available or please ensure to have a pdf copy of the handbook on your phone. SHA Rule books are available at <https://sha.sk.ca/members/sha-handbook>

Team Budgets

Player expenses such as fuel, food and accommodations are the responsibility of the family. LRMH Board will notify managers of any grants that become available.

7. Role of the Team Manager

Procedure:

- Team manager applicants must submit a “Volunteer Application Form” at the time of registration.
- Team managers applications are reviewed by the LRMH Board and forwarded onto the Head Coach for Manager selection.

The Head Coach will:

- contact the Team Manager to confirm they are still interested in the volunteer position.
- define clear expectations of the roles and responsibilities of the Team Manager.
- provide the Team Manager with an opinion on what level the team is regarding skill level. This information will be used for tournament option research.
- The team manager will complete the ‘Respect in Sport’ online course as per SHA policy.
- The team manager will submit a ‘Criminal Record Check’ to the Secretary of the LRMH Board prior to the season.
- The team manager will read and abide by the Saskatchewan Hockey Association “Social Media Policy” online found at: sha.sk.ca

Role of the Board:

The Board provides a number of services:

- The Ice Scheduler sets and adjusts practice times, and books ice for games at your request (please give a week’s notice!). Notice to cancel ice times are forwarded to the Ice Scheduler, providing a minimum of 7 days’ notice.
- The Officials Coordinator assigns referees for home games. Please give as much notice as possible to the Officials Coordinator.
- The Equipment Official will provide reasonable equipment upon request.
- The Fundraising Coordinator and Treasurer will work with you ensuring that the fundraising process is understood and provide all information with respect to raffles, rallies, bingos etc. Monies required for tournaments will be distributed by the treasurer as well.
- The Board also works with the team to ensure that all players and coaches are registered with SHA prior to the first game of each season. Please approach the board with any questions or concerns throughout the season.

Roles and Responsibilities:

7.1. Parent Communication

- At the first practice compile email address and cell phone numbers from parents or guardians of the players.
- Send out an introduction email to the group that includes information on:
the coaching staff and their contact information;
- a team list;
- link to the website;
- link to the LRMH policies;
- request for tournament feedback;
- printable version of the Parent Code of Conduct; and conflict resolution processes.

Tip: ensure parents are aware that all concerns or complaints should be directed to the Head Coach and not funneled through the Team Manager.

7.2. Tournaments

- At the beginning of the season provide a list of possible tournaments to the Head Coach for his/her consideration.
- Coordinate with the second team's manager when there are 2 or more teams within a division.
- Tournament options can be found through:
 - existing contacts;
 - the SHA website;
 - contacting the previous Team Manager for that division.
- Considerations should include:
 - Team budget.
 - Tournament level of play. *Tip: discuss with the tournament coordinator how they would assess the skill level. Be sure to include information about your team.*
 - *Example: some city centres place all teams with second year players into the advanced pool – this isn't always desirable for La Ronge teams.*
 - Number of tournaments that parents and players are committed to attending.
 - *Tip: send out an email poll or attend the Coaches parent meeting to predetermine Parent interest.*

Reminder: team will need a minimum of 11 (or coaches determination) to attend the tournament, and as per SHA regulations the coach can only dress 19 on the bench.

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- Hotel accommodation: ensure there is a block of hotel rooms available in centres where team commitment is dependent on availability of accommodations. Do not register for the tournament unless accommodations are pre-booked, or all parents agree and understand that there is no hotel option.
- The Head Coach will provide the final list of what tournaments should be booked. Fill out the tournament registration form and contact the LRMH Treasurer to request payment.
- Send the tournament cheque and registration form to the appropriate tournament committee. *Tip: If the tournament is in Flin Flon, be sure to apply for the Travel Permit through the SHA website and bring this to the tournament.*
- For IP, Novice & Atom; Organize and facilitate name bars (optional) for jerseys. Name bars costs are the responsibility of the parent. Name bars should remain consistent throughout divisions and be black writing on white background for dark jerseys and white writing on black background for white jerseys.
- Ensure tournament committees have SHA approved rosters. Rosters will be supplied to the Team Manager and Head Coach by the LRMH Registrar.
- Ensure tournament committees have prior knowledge of any overage players or affiliated players.
- Communicate to the Head Coach any changes in attendance for tournaments. Finalize list of committed players and provide this list to the Head Coach.
- When draws are provided for the tournament, forward complete draw information to all parents and coaching staff.
- Update the website with game information.
- The day before the tournament confirm the Head Coach has jerseys, water bottles, First Aid kits, warm-up pucks and goalie equipment.
- Sending a picture and write up to The La Ronge Minor Hockey Board (lrmh.icewolves@gmail.com) at least once during the season.

7.3. Home Games

- The Head Coach will provide direction on availability of home games with out of town visiting teams or the JRMCC team.
- All games need to be sanctioned. Exhibition game permits need to be applied for (See SHA Website)
- Coordinate with the second team's manager when there are 2 or more teams within a division.
- Contact the away team coach or manager to coordinate dates, times and venue for home games.
- Contact the Officials Coordinator and Ice Scheduler on the game no less than 7 days before.
- Secure a timekeeper for the game - Send out information on the game to the parents.

7.4. Conflict Resolution

- Refer all concerns or problems to the Head Coach.
- Direct all parties to the La Ronge Minor Hockey Conflict Resolution Process.

7.5. Provincial Playdowns

- Refer to the SHA website to apply for provincials
- LRMH Policy manual will outline how the LRMH Board will assist you.

7.6. End of Year Banquet

- An end of year La Ronge Minor Hockey Association Banquet will be held. Further information is provided by the board towards the end of the season.

Manager tips:

- Review all games sheets
- Review team rosters
- Ensure you have an accurate game sheet
- Identify AP's & Overage Players of opposing roster
- Ensure all games are sanctioned

8. Tiering and Affiliated Players

With an influx of children joining Minor Hockey, one of the significant controversies we've faced has been the fact that we've often had too many players in a division to have a single team (the maximum allowable is 21 with a desired number around 16), but not enough players to create 2 stand-alone teams (with a desired minimum of about 11 fully committed players in the younger age divisions and 16 in the older age divisions). Even in situations where we've had enough players for 2 teams, player (and more importantly, parental) commitment to a long hockey season and the travel schedule for tournaments has created situations where teams were either forced to forego tournaments or to play short.

Our governing body, the Saskatchewan Hockey Association has specific rules regarding the splitting of teams within a division. Teams can be split evenly or based on skill level. Skill levels are divided into 3 tiers. Tier 1 (or AA) teams are made up of the highest skilled players, with tier 2 (or A) teams and tier 3 (also called B, house league or recreation) teams competing at lower skill levels. In La Ronge, player calibre is such that a split based on skill level would generally have teams classified into tier 2 and tier 3 levels, not tier 1. In order for LRMH to register a team with SHA, we must have a minimum of 6 players and a maximum of 21. La Ronge Minor Hockey is free to tier our teams based on skill if we wish and if we have enough kids in each age group. If we choose to tier teams in a specific age group, the higher tiered team or "first" team must have a minimum of 12 players registered on it (see SHA regulation 6.03.01 d)). So in this situation we would need to register 12 players on the tier 2 team and the remaining # of players on a tier 3 team. We could then affiliate all the remaining tier 3 players to the tier 2 team. Alternatively, the SHA does allow teams to be split evenly, in which case both teams would be registered with the SHA as tier 3 teams. However, there are rules regarding teams that are registered in the same age division and the same tier, the most important of which is that players from one team cannot compete with another team from within the same tier group. This means that if one tier 3 team is short, they cannot draw on players from the other tier 3 team for players. Players can be borrowed (or AP'ed) from teams from a lower division or tier however.

In the past with La Ronge Minor Hockey, when faced with teams larger than 21 players, half the players would play for one tier 3 team, and half would play for the other tier 3 team with an attempt to split teams fairly evenly. However, with small numbers of players on either team,

situations arose where there were insufficient numbers of players to field a team for tournaments. To make matters even more complicated, borrowing players from teams in the lower age division (or AP'ing), which is allowed by SHA rules, was not always easy as players can only be AP'ed to one team and there has historically not been great coordination of tournaments between divisions to ensure that players from a lower division would even be able to play with their affiliate team if needed.

To help address some of the issues with our increasing team size as well as player commitment throughout the hockey season, the concept of tiering was discussed by our Minor Hockey Board. Lengthy and often heated discussions that stretched over several seasons and included a few "pilot" projects culminated in our 2010 La Ronge Minor Hockey Annual General Meeting where the issue of tiering was discussed at length. In the end, the participants in this AGM voted to support tiering in La Ronge Minor Hockey, with the caveat that teams in a division could split evenly based on the mutual agreement of parents and coaches assuming that this decision did not affect teams in other age divisions who might be relying on the AP process to have enough players to attend tournaments.

Given the unpredictability of player numbers and an inability to create a policy for every situation, the Board has been reluctant to set hard and fast rules regarding the tiering process. However, given the concerns that have been raised, a general policy around the tiering and affiliate player process has been created and is as follows:

8.1. Tiering Policy

- The goal of tiering is to create opportunities within and between age divisions that allow for an appropriate number of players to compete in tournament and game play.
- All Atom through Midget La Ronge Minor hockey teams may encouraged to consider creating tiered teams only when the total number of committed players exceeds 21.
- When there are 28 or more players in a division, teams should be split evenly to ensure adequate volunteer commitment
- The focus of La Ronge Minor Hockey is twofold; 1) participation, having fun and learning the game & 2) player and skill development for all participants. Creating a more competitive team to the detriment of another team should not factor into the tiering process.
- For tiering, efforts should be made to bring in evaluators from outside the direct sphere of influence on the team. Ideally, this means that player evaluations should be

performed by individuals without children in the division. The Board reserves the right to appoint evaluators for each age division, but understands the extreme complexity of the evaluation process in a remote community such as ours. Practically speaking, the goal is to gather input from ALL evaluators prior to final tiering decisions, regardless of who performs the evaluation.

- In all cases, the lower-skilled tier 3 team should take first priority in terms of player and affiliate player commitment as historically these are the teams that have struggled most with player commitment throughout the season. In some cases, this may mean that teams will be split with uneven numbers with the larger number of players being placed on the tier 3 team.
- Volunteer commitment must be maintained across tiered teams. If situations arise where volunteer or player commitment is lacking in a division, the Board reserves the right to have teams forego the tiering process and split evenly to maintain a sufficient complement for both teams.
- When teams must split within an age division, every effort should be made to have the managers of both teams work in direct collaboration regarding tournament bookings to help avoid booking tournaments on the same weekend. This is especially important in divisions where there are 26 players or less. Alternatively a single manager may act for both teams. Efforts should be made to book tournaments that take into account players' skill levels in all cases.
- Within reason, a parent/guardian may choose to have their child play at a lower skill level in that child's age division if so desired.
- Late registrants, or those who do not participate in more than 75% of the evaluation process will automatically be placed on the tier III team. Application to have a player reevaluated or moved to a higher level team can be made to the Board where the views of the various parties involved will be taken into account.
- A healthy dose of common sense, empathy and mutual respect must be applied in all cases.
- When conflicts inevitably arise, decisions regarding the tiering process can be brought to the Board level (where we hope to apply the guideline above).

8.2. Affiliate Player (AP) Policy

- Decisions to AP players to play to a higher age division for the season must take into account: 1. Player skill level 2. The needs of ALL the various teams that may be affected within the La Ronge Minor Hockey system and 3. Coaching/parent preference. All of these conditions must be met if a lower division player is to be AP'ed.
- Decisions on the final registration of players with SHA for tier 3 teams should take into account both skill level as well as a player's age group, with players from the younger or "first year" age group of tier 2's being placed on the AP "bubble" list ahead of older, second year players unless there is a compelling case not to do so (e.g. a highly skilled first year player).
- Goaltenders may be AP'ed to more than one team if an SHA concession is granted.
- Attention should be paid to ensuring that players on the existing team receive adequate ice time. The goal of the affiliate process is NOT to create a more competitive team, but to prevent teams from having to play short.
- Under most circumstances, efforts should be made to bring in affiliate players from within a division (i.e. Novice players play with the other Novice team) before asking players from outside the division to participate.
- If affiliates are needed, efforts should be made to ensure that ALL skill-competent players that can be AP'ed are given the opportunity to play (i.e. if you call up one player for one tournament, make an effort to call a different player up for the next).
- Decisions to AP a player must be agreed upon by the coaches of both teams. In cases where there may be a conflict of interest (i.e. affiliate player is also coach's child), the decision to AP should be decided by mutual agreement among other coaches involved.
- Under no circumstance should a player forego attending games/tournaments with his/her "home" team in order to play with the affiliate team unless there are clear reasons for doing so (i.e. it will not negatively impact the player's home team).
- A healthy dose of common sense, empathy and mutual respect must be applied in all cases.
- When conflicts inevitably arise, decisions regarding AP'ing players can be brought to the Board level (where we hope to apply the guideline above).
- In circumstances where team volunteers are consistently not following this policy, the Board reserves the right to suspend and/or remove them from their duties with the team.

9. Social Media

SASKATCHEWAN HOCKEY ASSOCIATION SOCIAL MEDIA AND NETWORKING POLICY

For the purpose of this Social Media and Networking Policy, the policy will encompass public communications including posting pictures and videos through such internet platforms as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Google+, LinkedIn, Snapchat and any other social media network that allows users to communicate online as well as other forms of electronic communication, but not limited to, methods such as texting and instant messaging.

The policy will be applicable to all members of the SHA Community, including Directors, Teams, SHA members and staff, on-ice and off-ice officials, billets, players, players' family members and supporters.

The SHA recognizes and appreciates the value of social media and the importance of social networking to all of its stakeholders. The SHA also respects the right of all Teams and Association personnel to express their views publicly. At the same time we must be aware of the dangers social media and networking can present.

The purpose of this policy is to educate the SHA Community on the risks of social media and to ensure all Teams and Association personnel are aware that conduct deemed to be inappropriate may be subject to disciplinary action by the Team, the Minor Hockey Association, League and/or the SHA.

9.1 SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

- a)** The SHA holds the entire SHA Community who participates in social media and networking to the same standards as it does for all other forms of media including radio, television and print.
- b)** Comments or remarks of an inappropriate nature which are detrimental to a Team, the Association or an individual will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action.
- c)** It should be recognized that social media and comments such as 'texting and instant messaging' are on the record and can be instantly published and available to the public and media. Everyone including Association and/or Team personnel, players, corporate partners and the media can review social media communications. You should conduct yourself in an appropriate and professional manner at all times.
- d)** Refrain from divulging confidential information of a personal or team related nature. Avoid revealing business or game strategy that could provide another team or individual a competitive advantage. Furthermore, do not discuss injury information about any player. Only divulge information that is considered public.

e) Use your best judgment at all times – pause before posting or sending. Once your comments are posted or sent they cannot be retracted. Ultimately, you are solely responsible for your comments.

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f) If requested to participate in an online network, as a direct result of your affiliation with or participation in the SHA, the SHA recommends that you request approval from the Team or the Association.

g) Players or hockey operations staff are not permitted to participate in social media or networking two (2) hours prior to the start of a SHA game and at least one (1) hour following the completion of a SHA game.

9.2 SOCIAL MEDIA VIOLATIONS

The following are examples of conduct through social media and networking mediums that are considered violations of the SHA Social Media and Networking Policy and may be subject to disciplinary action by the Team, Minor Hockey Association, League and/or SHA.

- i. Any statement deemed to be publicly critical of Association officials or detrimental to the welfare of a member Team, the Association or an individual.
- ii. Divulging confidential information that may include, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. player injuries;
 - b. trades or other player movement; game strategies; or any other matter of a sensitive nature to a member Team, the Association or an individual.
- iii. Negative or derogatory comments about any of the Team, Minor Hockey Association, League and/or SHA staff, programs, stakeholders, players or any member of a SHA Team.
- iv. Any form of bullying, harassment, intimidation or threats against players or officials.
- v. Photographs, video or comments promoting negative influences or criminal behavior, including but not limited to: drug use, alcohol abuse, public intoxication, hazing, sexual exploitation, etc.
- vi. Online activity that contradicts the current policies of the SHA or any of its member Associations. Inappropriate, derogatory, racist, or sexist comments of any kind, in keeping with the SHA policies and regulations on these matters

9.3. Discipline

The Team, Minor Hockey Association, League and/or the SHA will investigate reported violation(s) of this policy in the manner set out in the SHA Handbook for other types of violations. If the investigation determines that a violation has occurred, the Team, Minor Hockey Association, League and/or the SHA Chairperson of the Division involved will impose an appropriate suspension. Any appeal of the suspension will be dealt with as set out in a Minor Hockey Association, League and/or SHA Handbook for other types of suspensions.

9.4. Summary

When using social media and networking mediums, the SHA community should assume at all times they are representing the SHA and/or its member Associations or Teams. All members of the SHA community should remember to use the same discretion with texting, instant messaging, using all social media platforms and networking as they do with other traditional forms of media.

Should the identity or image of any member of the SHA community be used in social media and networking without the Individual, Team or Association authorization, this is considered to be identity theft. Please notify your SHA Team Management or the SHA Office immediately.

10. Co-ed Dressing Room

From atom and down, mixed genders may change in the same room at the same time with the presence of two adults. Players Pee-wee and higher may not change in the same room at the same time and it is the responsibility of the coach to ensure all are involved in both the pregame and post-game activities.

In response to 2000 complaint in which Hockey Canada participated in a mediation session with the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

Results of the mediation session proved to be very positive and assisted in creating direction for our membership in working within the policy that currently exists. The following was agreed on by all parties involved with the mediation process, and was subsequently approved by the Commissioners Of Ontario Human Rights:

- a) When separate facilities exist for both male and female participants, males and females shall make use of these separate facilities.
- b) If the facility does not have separate changing areas available, players shall address the issue by dressing, undressing, and showering in shifts. It is the responsibility of the team to provide a plan that will ensure the safety of individual players when they are dressing, undressing and showering.
- c) The Canadian Hockey Association shall communicate with the Branches this agreement as a minimum method of resolving this issue.
- d) That individual teams shall be free to relax these rules/guidelines to best address the needs of all participants if the team agrees with an alternate plan.

The hope is that this will clarify the policy set by the Hockey Canada and assist Branches in giving direction to their membership in regards to this issue. It must be stressed that the intent of the policy is to create a safe, comfortable environment for all of our players.

12. Return to Play

Return to play guideline for sport is designed for the safety of the players. It must be remembered that a sport concussion is a form of a mild traumatic brain injury, which is a complex pathophysiological process affecting most brain functions. The Saskatchewan Hockey Association (SHA) is the sport governing body for ice hockey in Saskatchewan and follows the guidelines proposed by the Concussion in Sport Group. These guidelines are based on the most recent consensus statement which is cited in the scientific literature (McCroly et al., 2009).

The SHA proposes that all players that are suspected of having received a concussion should follow the following guidelines:

- a) If a player is suspected of having a concussion by the coach, trainer, or parent, they should be immediately removed from further play, and should not go back to play that day and only return on subsequent days after an assessment indicates readiness.
- b) The coach or trainer should perform a sideline assessment using the Sport Concussion Assessment Tool (SCAT1 or SCAT2) to determine symptoms and the potential of a concussion. The player should be medically evaluated on-site if a licensed health care professional (physician, nurse, and paramedic) is available.
- c) If the player has experienced unconsciousness assume a neck injury – call 911. If there is a significant loss of awareness and orientation take the player to the emergency room at the nearest hospital for required treatment and follow up by health care professionals. It is expected that a basic assessment would include assessment of vital signs (BP and heart rate), Glasgow coma scale assessment and basic cognitive (memory) function. Additional follow up may include neurological testing, and/or CT scan.
- d) All suspected concussions are referred to see a physician or nurse practitioner within 24 hours. A follow-up SCAT assessment should be repeated at that time to determine symptoms at rest.
 - During the next 24-72 hours complete mental and physical rest is needed. Most concussions resolve in 7-10 days, but every player will respond individually.
 - Remove the player from school or work and rest if symptoms persist. In addition to reduce school or work activities, the player should avoid T.V., video games, cell phone usage, reading, and other activities that require mental activity. A gradual return to school or work is suggested, but an emphasis on taking naps throughout the day is encouraged.
 - Coaches and parents should not pressure the player to return until medically cleared.

- Once the player is asymptomatic at rest, a gradual and progressive return to activity is encouraged, using the guidelines provided in table 1 (McCroly et al., 2009). This will include light aerobic exercise such as stationary cycling or treadmill walking, and progress to intense exercise to achieve maximal heart rate.
- The player should then be medically cleared to participate in game play. Health professionals at a university such as an exercise (sport) physiologist or sport neuropsychologist that have conducted research in concussion can also be approached to have objective testing undertaken.

Note: If symptoms arise during exercise, then the player should discontinue immediately and return to the previous level of activity.

Rehabilitation stage: No activity

Functional exercise: Complete physical and cognitive rest

Objective: Recovery

Rehabilitation stage: Light aerobic exercise

Functional exercise: Walking, swimming or stationary cycling keeping intensity <70% maximum predicted heart rate, no resistance training

Objective: Increase heart rate

Rehabilitation stage: Sport-specific exercise

Functional exercise: Skating drills in ice hockey, running drills in soccer. No head impact activities

Objective: Add movement

Rehabilitation stage: Non-contact training drills

Functional exercise: Progression to more complex training drills, eg passing drills in football and ice hockey, may start progressive resistance training.

Objective: Exercise, coordination, and cognitive load

Rehabilitation stage: Full contact practice

Functional exercise: Following medical clearance participate in normal training activities

Objective: Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff

Rehabilitation stage: Return to play

Functional exercise: Normal game play

13. Mouth Guard

The use of a mouth guard is highly recommended for each player participating in a La Ronge Minor Hockey Association game or practice at the Pee Wee, Bantam and Midget age levels. Players at the Atom, Novice and Initiation age levels may also use an intra-oral mouth guard during game play or practices provided that it fits properly in the mouth.

There is extensive evidence to support the use of mouthguards to prevent damage to the teeth. For blows to the head and jaw, especially direct impacts to the underside of the jaw, mouthguards can prevent concussion and shorten the time to participation following head trauma. Research on high quality mouthguards suggests that they may facilitate improved oxygen delivery to the lungs.

Both the Saskatchewan Hockey Association (www.sha.sk.ca) and Hockey Canada (www.hockeycanada.ca) recommend the use of intra-oral mouthguards. For more information, visit ThinkFirst Canada (www.thinkfirst.ca), the Pashby Sport Safety Concussion website (www.drpushby.ca), or Hockey Canada (www.hockeycanada.ca) or speak with your coaches, trainers, officials or association executive regarding the value of mouthguards.

13.1. Intra-oral Mouth Guard Recommendations:

- a) One-piece construction
- b) Easily sized by the participant or the participant's parents
- c) Even thickness from the front to the back of the device
- d) Engage the biting surface of all of the teeth of the upper and lower jaw
- e) Maintain alignment of the upper and lower jaw in a neutral position
- f) Be able to be attached externally to the face mask or shield, or be form fitted or custom fitted to the teeth. Mouth guards that are custom fitted by a dentist, denturist, or dental hygienist do not require an external attachment or lanyard to connect them to the facemask or shield.
- g) In the case of non-contact play, will provide not less than one (1) millimeter of shock absorbent thickness between the teeth of the upper and lower jaw of a player
- h) In the case of contact play will provide not less than two (2) millimeters of shock absorbent thickness between the teeth of the upper and lower jaw of a player
- i) "Boil and bite" style mouth guards can be used provided they have a bite bar that engages all of the player's teeth.