



PLAYING RULES – 2024-25 SEASON

Rule 1: PURPOSE

The purpose of the League Playing Rules is to clearly define any additions or deviations from the official playing rules established by Hockey Canada or HNL which are unique to the League.

Rule 2: AMENDMENTS TO THE PLAYING RULES

All proposed amendments to the League's Playing Rules will require a greater than 50% majority vote of the Operating Committee. Notice is *not required* to be given in advance of a meeting where an amendment to the Playing Rules will be discussed and voted upon.

Rule 3: LEAGUE PLAY

The League will play both a regular season and a playoff in each division to select the Division Champion.

Each team will play a balanced schedule of approximately 24 regular season games per season. There may be some variation depending upon the number of teams per division, and the overall duration of the hockey season.

Rule 4: GAME DURATION

Game duration in all non-pooled divisions will be determined at the start of the season by the Operations Committee.

Games in the AA pooled minor divisions will be of 45 minutes duration with 3 periods of 15-minute stop time duration with an 80-minute provision of ice time. In back-to-back games, the ice will be resurfaced between the second and third period of the 1st game and between the first and second period of the 2nd game.

The referee may instruct the minor official to run the time clock in order to ensure the game will be concluded on schedule. However, there shall be no running of the clock for the last minute of the game. No additional time can be added to the game clock at the conclusion of the game.

Rule 5: DEFAULTS

As a minimum, teams must ice thirteen (13) skaters plus one (1) goalie in all levels of league play. The minimum number of players must be dressed and on the team bench before the start of the second period. Teams without the minimum number of players will forfeit two points to the opposing team. Games will be played to their conclusion with all penalties and suspensions applying as if the minimum number of players participated. A game will be halted if the Hockey Canada minimum player requirement as established in Playing Rule 2.2 is not met or if in the opinion of the referee it is unsafe for the players to proceed.

A default shall be recorded as a 7-0 result for team standing purposes.

Any Association based team that defaults three (3) games shall be reviewed by the Operations Committee to determine whether or not the team should stay in the League.

If the League experiences extraordinary community health challenges due to Covid-19, influenza, etc., the League Director can issue a directive allowing for reduced minimum roster sizes until further notice.

Rule 6: GAME RESULTS

The Operations Committee will establish a protocol for reporting of game results from association based play. Team Managers at all levels are expected to participate in this process. All game results are to be reported to the League the same evening as the games are played.

Rule 7: TOURNAMENTS AND TRAVEL PERMITS

Association based teams traveling for tournaments or exhibition games must follow HNL regulations with respect to travel permits. Association based teams are responsible for advising the League Director of any scheduling changes required to accommodate the team's travel plans. The maximum travel period must not exceed the actual days of tournament play and 1 travel day prior to and 1 travel day following the actual days of tournament play. The League Director is not obligated to accommodate travel requests. Teams are requested to provide as much notice as possible to improve the likelihood of their travel request being approved. Association based teams traveling without League approval may have missed games defaulted, or the team can be suspended from League play for the remainder of the season.

Pooled teams traveling to tournaments and exhibition games must follow HNL rules, with all travel requests signed by the League President. Similar notification to the League Director as discussed above for association based teams is also required.

Rule 8: SANCTIONING ADDITIONAL ON-ICE & OFF-ICE ACTIVITY

Teams in the pooled divisions can offer optional on-ice and off-ice activities that are in addition to the League scheduled activities. Teams must clearly advise players and parents that these activities are optional. Teams cannot make these additional activities mandatory and there can be no repercussions for players that chose not to attend. These activities include, but are not limited to, tournaments, exhibition games, extra practices, team building events, team meals, workouts, and dry land training. The League recognizes the value of these activities, and encourages team staff to be sensitive when approaching players and parents regarding these activities.

Rule 9: ICE TIME ALLOCATION

The League follows HNL's Ice Time Allocation guidelines. These guidelines are intended to provide every player an equal opportunity to develop their skills as a hockey player. In the spirit of player development, all players are to be treated fairly and given the opportunity to contribute to team success.

It is recognized that the DJHL only has direct authority over enforcing HNL ice time allocation policy at the pooled hockey level with respect to teams therein that it operates. Member associations have to enforce the HNL ice time allocation with respect to each of their club teams.

The only situation where a protest can only be filed with the League regarding fair play is in relation to the DJHL-Specific Goaltender guidelines that follow herein. Any game in which upon protest review that the Goaltender fair play rules have not been followed will be replayed.

Any coach who is found upon investigation not to be following the HNL-specific ice time allocation rules will be subject to disciplinary action as per HNL guidelines.

Further to HNL Ice Time Allocation guidelines, the DJHL adheres to several distinct ice time policies. They are as follows:

Pooled Minor Division Play (U15AA Only):

In the 1st and 2nd periods all games are to be coached based on the principle of ***equal opportunity*** for all players. Coaches are expected to roll their lines in all 5 on 5 situations and to continue to rotate players in all special teams (penalty kill and power play) situations. All players are to be given the opportunity to play in ***all*** game situations.

In the 3rd period, coaches have the ***discretion*** to play selected players in all special team situations and in the last **three** (3) minutes of the third period and throughout overtime. Prior to using special teams in games situations coaches must include special teams training for all players in their practices.

Goaltenders (All Divisions, Except AAA):

Coaches have the option of having Goaltenders change at the mid-way point of each game or play full games. Besides the overall season, throughout the course of any tournament, and during the play-offs, the team's 2 goaltenders must strive for equal game time, and never have a differential of more than one game played. The Championship Game in a provincial tournament is excluded from this equal ice time requirement and the Head Coach can choose in this case to play either goaltender.

When an AP goalie is called up for a second time and has not appeared for at least one full period in the first call-up game, then that goalie must play at least two full periods of the second call-up game, regardless whether it is a play-off game or not. The scoring of five goals on the AP goalie in the second call-up game is the only way the two period rule can be disregarded.

Rule 10: TIME OUTS

At all levels of League play, and time permitting at the discretion of the referee, each team will be entitled to one 30 second timeout per game.

Rule 11: SCHEDULES

The League Scheduler, in consultation with the League Director, will be responsible for creating, posting and changing all division schedules. League schedules will be completed in advance of the season and released in stages through the League web site.

All games are normally scheduled to start no earlier than 5:30pm weekdays, and must be concluded by 10:00pm, with the exception of the U11 divisions where games must be concluded by 9:00pm.

Changes to home game schedules require a minimum of 7 days notice with the exception of games being postponed due to adverse weather conditions or the unavailability of the host facility. Requests for schedule changes are to be made to the Scheduler **only** by the Operating Committee representative for association based teams or for the association providing the ice time for pooled league games and practices. ***Coaches and managers cannot directly request changes to League schedules.***

The Scheduler will determine if any schedule change request is bona fide and, if approved, will work with the two affected Associations to reschedule the game. Otherwise, the scheduled game must stand and if not played two points must be awarded to the opponent.

Postponed games must be added to the schedule as soon as possible after the original scheduled time.

Rule 12: PLAYOFFS

All teams make the playoffs. The format for play-offs in each League division must be approved in advance by the Operations Committee. The League playoffs are to start no later than two (2) weeks after the end of the regular schedule for a particular division.

Extending the season past Easter Sunday will require the approval of the Operations Committee.

The League will present gold, silver and bronze medals in all divisions with five or more teams. Only gold and silver medals will be awarded in divisions with four teams or less.

Rule 13: PLAYOFF SEEDING

Playoff seeding (if applicable) will be based upon the final standings at the end of the regular season.

Ties for seeding purposes will be decided by the following:

1. Record against each other
2. If still tied, most overall wins in regular season
3. If still tied, goals for and against percentage in games involving the tied teams as per HNL tie breaking rules
4. If still tied, a coin toss will occur.

Rule 14: OVERTIME & SHOOTOUTS

If teams are tied at the end of regulation time in a playoff game and a winner is required to determine the series outcome, the game will be decided by shootout.

The shootout procedure is as follows:

1. Initially each team identifies 3 players to participate in the shootout
2. Home team shoots first
3. The team with the most goals after each has taken 3 shots is the winner
4. If the score is tied after 3 shots, each team will proceed to alternate shots until a winner is declared
5. No player can shoot twice until every player has taken a shot
6. If a player was in the penalty box at the end of regulation time they will not be allowed to participate in the shootout

Rule 15: PLAYOFF SCHEDULE

Divisional play-offs will be done in a seeded bracket format.

The first two games of each playoff series will be scheduled according to the regular schedule of ice time used throughout the regular season. Therefore, the higher placed team may not always have the first game, but each team will host one game before either team hosts 2 games. If the higher placed team can provide ice time earlier in the week, before the regularly scheduled ice time for the lower placed team, then the first game will be held at the earlier time.

Typically, the odd numbered games in any series shall be played at the home rink and time slot provided by the higher placed team. The lower placed team will normally host the even numbered games in each series.

Forty-eight hours notice and the approval of the Scheduler will be required for any team requesting to reschedule any play-off game.

Rule 16: SUSPENSIONS

Players and coaches in the League are subject to the HNL Suspension Guidelines as the basis for suspensions. In addition to the HNL Suspension Guidelines, the League may add one additional game for suspensions given for fighting infractions.

Immediately following the completion of any game which included a suspension, gross misconduct or match penalty, the home team is responsible for sending a copy of the official game sheet to the League Director. A scanned copy of the official game sheet should be forwarded to the League Director' email account as cited on the League web site.

When a game includes a suspension that will carry over to future games, the home team is responsible for sending an email to the League Director immediately following the conclusion of the game advising of the nature of the suspension. This requirement is in addition to the transmission of the official game sheet to the League Director.

The Operating Committee, through the Executive Committee, reserves the right to increase the duration of HNL suspensions where the situation warrants this action.

Any suspension received in the DJHL must be served in the DJHL. House league, exhibition, tournament or high school games cannot be used to serve a suspension issued in a DJHL game. However, HNL sanctioned tournaments and exhibition games scheduled prior to the awarding of a suspension, in which the player's DJHL team is previously scheduled to participate can be used to serve a DJHL suspension.

Serving suspensions that carry beyond the end of the playoffs will be addressed by the Operating Committee.

The onus is on coaches to ensure that all players on the game sheet are participating in the game and are permitted to play and are not currently under suspension. Any coach who uses a suspended player will be subject to the following disciplinary measures:

1. Two (2) game suspension to the Head Coach for a first offence,
2. Suspension of the Head Coach for a duration to be determined by the Discipline Committee for subsequent offences, and
3. Games where a team uses a suspended player will be forfeited to the opposing team.

Rule 17: GAME EJECTION

Players receiving 3 penalties (separate infractions) in any League game will receive a game ejection for the remainder of the contest. There is no carryover from the game ejection to the player's next game.

Rule 18: CALL-UP PLAYERS

Teams must use call-up players to ensure the minimum number of players, as established in Rule 5 – Defaults, are available for each game. With exception, pooled teams must call-up from their respective pool of affiliated players. Association based teams will follow the rules established by their home association.

For further guidance please see Regulation 17 – Affiliates.

Rule 19: COMMITMENT

As part of the player's commitment to their team, all pooled program players are required to attend all practices, games and team functions unless excused in advance by the coaching staff. Players are required to advise the coaching staff of his/her absence in advance of team functions. Excessive demands on players' time and expense will be arbitrated by the Operating Committee.