



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – RETURN TO HOCKEY PLAN

The following questions were compiled from the ALLIANCE Hockey Member Associations and answers were provided based upon the information available as of August 11, 2020. Information is subject to change as more information is received. It is recommended that the [ALLIANCE Hockey Return to Play Plan](#) and the [OHF Return to Hockey Framework](#) are referenced where necessary.

▪ GENERAL

A team member(s) tests positive for COVID during the season and the team requires a 14-day isolation as per their local PHU.

Q: What happens to the schedule (if there is one)? Are the games made up later or are they lost?

What happens if the positive tests continue and require an additional 14 days of isolation? (i.e. a team cannot play any games for approximately 28 days)

A: These questions represent the rationale of returning to hockey safely and slowly. A League is small (50 participants in a League) and is not conducive to re-scheduling games. This would become even more of a problem if we were scheduling games for an end of the year event that teams had to qualify for.

▪ REGISTRATION

Q: Is it an option for a participant to register for the season or just for the first two months?

A: Individual Associations determine how they offer registration. Keep in mind that the Ministry will be making announcements every 4 weeks, which may change the level of programming that can be offered.

Note: Registering participants for large blocks may add to the risk of having to provide refunds i.e. refunding for programs that didn't happen or a participant didn't participate in.

Q: Is there an ALLIANCE/OHF policy for COVID-related refunds?

A: The OHF is developing a general refund policy which will be used as a template/guide for individual Associations to develop their own refund policy.

Q: Can a player who didn't play for our MHA last year register for our MHA this year or do they have to return to the team they played with last year?

A: Currently, the rule is that players must return to their 2019-2020 teams.

Q: If a player moves into our MHA area, can they register with our MHA (they did not play with us last year)?

A: Yes, there are provisions for this scenario. Registrars are to work with Sue in the ALLIANCE Hockey Office to formulate a residential transfer.

Q: If a player has an F1 waiver from an OMHA MHA, can we register them to our roster?

A: Players who played on a F1 waiver last year have the option to stay with same team or return to their home centre.

Players who played on a Zone team have the option to stay with last year's team or return to their home centre. ALLIANCE Hockey is working with OHF to get consideration for Zone teams to establish enough players to form a cohort.

There are no new waivers being issued for the 2020-21 season.





Q: If a player participates with a ‘tournament team’ for non sanctioned/private fall hockey, can they also play with our MHA?

A: Participants may play in non-sanctioned events and leagues up to September 30, 2020. If they participate past September 30, 2020, they are NOT eligible for Hockey Canada programming for the remainder of the 2020-2021 season.

Q: Can we sign new players from non-sanctioned leagues?

A: Yes

Q: What happens to first-year IP registrants, can they register for the 2020-2021 season?

A: Yes

Q: Without tryouts in September, may Associations begin programming for all categories?

A: Yes, this is a local Association decision based upon ice availability, distribution of ice, etc.

Q: Without tryouts, how do you recommend determining Tier 1, 2, etc.?

A: Associations should evaluate and place players/teams into Tiers.

Example: Evaluate existing 2019-20 registered participants and any new (move-in and non-sanction) players in tiers for participation in cohorts and league play. Placing participants in tiers would take place in the first two weeks of season, must be based skill-oriented practices. Games 3v3, 4v4 can take place following the two weeks.

Q: We had Novice MD (2012) aged players playing up with (2011) aged players last season who want to move up again, what is the process - will it be the same as usual i.e. provide a request to play up

A: ALLIANCE Hockey is currently reviewing the existing Policy and will provide follow up information.

Q: We have not yet selected our MD coaches, should we be selecting them now or hold off a bit longer?

A: This depends upon ice-availability and Association registration results. Coaches could be *tentatively* selected based on registration numbers for the equivalent skill level Tiers.

Q: Will there be any Coaching Clinics and if so, how will they be operated?

A: There will be further information provided on this as Hockey Canada released some information regarding minimum coaching requirements for the 2020-2021 season and the OHF is finalizing a plan to provide consistency among the Member Partners.

Q: What is the process if an MHA or Zone is still in Stage 2?

A: Zones/Associations must adhere to their PHU Stage requirements and progress accordingly.

Q: Can we AP a player who was not an AP player last year?

A: No. As of now, we are only registering players from 2019-2020 season, but it will be discussed this further with the OHF.

Q: Will there be U10 (minor atom) AAA, AA/A? If yes, how are those teams selected?

A: Further follow up with the OHF is required. The current rule is that players are to stay in their home centre as we are not taking away programming that they had last year. We are looking to provide an avenue for discussions between Zone and Home Centres on development opportunities.



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Q: We have participants already registered with us who played in a non-sanctioned League last season (i.e. Red Circle, Cobras, etc.), do those kids have to return to where they played last season?

A: No, they may participate with your Association.

Q: Are we restricted to registering only last year's players or can we accept anyone who wants to play with us?

A: Associations are restricted to last year's players. Participants who did not play in Hockey Canada programming last year may register to play for the 2020-2021 season.

Q: Can we register players who played in our Association last season who have decided they no longer want to play at the level they played in the 2019-2020 season?

A: A player may opt to play in the tier at or below where they are assessed.

Q: Minor Midget and Midget players do not want to practice; can they join if/when games start?

A: This scenario makes sense for House League players, and perhaps MD level Tiers.

Q: If we put a coach in place for this season's U16 team who did not coach with us in the 2019-2020 season, can they still coach? (Their son was on the team last season as an NRP player)

A: This scenario was identified at the OHF level and this will be relevant across many Associations. We do have to accommodate the Coach and player in this situation.

Q: We have selected a Zone coach for our Minor Bantam (U13) age A/AA team. His son did not play with us last season as an NRP player. Can he register with us and participate with a Passport, if needed?

A: Yes, we need to accommodate this player. The Coach and player should have option to return home.

Q: The OHF plan defines a "League" as 50, why has the ALLIANCE come up with the number 20?

A: For clarity, Alliance Recommends as a way of efficiently utilizing ice during development, and will use the following terminology during Return to Hockey programming:

- "Team" = 9 + 1 players. A suggested unit for practice and game play that allows for provincial guidelines for physical distancing. A smaller Team (8+1) is also acceptable but slightly lessens the development opportunities for players.

- "Cohort" = 2 'Teams' from same tier, creating a (suggested) 18+2 group on-ice (perhaps that would normally be a full-sized team in other seasons). A Cohort would share ice for practice purposes, for ice cost efficiency. 4-5 others on ice for coaching and/or officiating.

- "League" is the group of Teams for game play, subject to the Stage 3x restrictions in the OHF Return to Play

▪ STAGE 3c

Q: For MHA's who do not have any other ALLIANCE MHA's within their PHU, may competition be set up with an adjacent PHU?

A: As the Ministry provides their monthly announcements, we will review this. The main goal now is to get 20 players in a cohort and when PHU and the Ministry allow us to adjust for competition

ALLIANCE Hockey will re-visit this for areas that require a cross-PHU playing field.

The 20-player Cohort is a recommendation where it makes sense.

ALLIANCE Hockey has requested participation in adjacent PHU's for participation in a league of 50.





Q: Can ALLIANCE Hockey Associations work together to register and tier players within their PHU to provide some options for competition? i.e. HPL & Stratford MHA / Sun County & Windsor / Lambton & Sarnia HA

A: Yes. We will be talking about this at the OHF. We may have to maximize development across typical 'borders'.

Q: Will we use game sheets for our "games"?

A: Any time there is a game scheduled for a full hour or more, yes. We are still working on the requirements surrounding e-game sheets.

Q: Will rules for modified games (3v3, 4v4) be provided?

A: Yes, they are on the [ALLIANCE Hockey website](#).

Similar rules may apply at 5v5 until the return of 'normal' hockey.

Q: Will standard Minor Hockey penalties and suspensions still apply?

A: Suspensions and penalties will apply as per the OHF Minimum Suspension list.

Q: Can we play 5v5 hockey/scrimmages if we are able to comply with Public Health Unit rules?

A: We must comply with what the OHF has identified in the Return to Play Document and progress once we are able to.

Will re-visit this with the OHF.

5v5 doesn't mean full team, but if you can play 5v5 with 9+1, go for it. A larger team may not comply with the facility limit guidelines.

Q: Can a player skate with a non-Hockey Canada Licensed Skills Development Coach?

A: Yes.

▪ STAGE 3d/e

Q: Can we hold tryouts in November or December (if there are no COVID setbacks) for a January-April season?

A: This is to be determined. We have had discussions on the potential of 5 on 5 when we get to Stage 3d and 3e in the OHF Return to Play Framework. There have been no discussions on try-outs or if we should just stay with paper teams if we were to return to some form of normalcy.

Q: Will suggestions for structure/league be considered if/when the limit of 50 per league is increased by the province?

A: Yes. We want to look at how we can maximize development, allow for more game play, and offer variety of competition as the Ministry and Public Health allows us to.

▪ U18 (MIDGET)

Q: Will ALLIANCE Hockey still have open borders for U18 hockey?

A: We are currently working with the OHF to determine this. Alliance Hockey is exploring the opportunity for 2019-20 participants to participant in freedom of movement for U18.



Q: Can players register with a MHA that they didn't play for last season if their MHA does not have a U18 team? If so, when?

A: Chatham Kent, Sun County and Cambridge} do not have teams. Players from those Associations may register with one of the 9 teams identified that are offering U18 programming.

Q: How will it work for registering a team from previous year? With U16 kids we could have too many players. Can we roster 3 teams of 10 for a cohort of 30 or 4 teams of 10 for a cohort of 40?

A: Recommendation of 20 in a cohort; two 20's make sense and is cost effective with 9+1 on a team, 4 teams in a league this works for large associations, i.e. Kitchener, London, etc. For Zones, we are discussing how to get them to 20 in a Cohort for participation in a league.

Q: Are we able to register players to U18 before Aug 23rd now that registration is open and there are no tryouts?

A: No, we need to adhere to the August 23rd date.

If Jr C and Junior B don't offer programs, we may have many more players interested in U18 hockey this year.

Q: How will we manage this?

A: If this happens, we will review it with the OHF to formulate a plan to provide players a place to play.

▪ ZONES

Q: We have players who do not join Zone AAA for various reasons. Can we allow these 'Tier 1' players the opportunity to join our organization if they wish to play here now?

A: No, based on the OHF Return to Play Framework of no try-outs and only being able to roster 2019-20 participants. We will be working with our Zone teams to help them get to 20 in a cohort.

Q: If a player is not deemed 'Tier 1' in their Home Centre but would be considered 'Tier 1' in a Zone, can they join our MHA?

A: Participants must register where they played last season.

Q: Can a player who played AAA last year for a different Zone/Centre, return and play 'Tier 1' for their Home Centre?

A: A player may always return to their Home Centre.

Q: Can Zones be granted a registration (tiered on paper tryout) with new participants to line up more with what the Home Centre's can do?

A: We are looking at evaluation for tiering players and getting a full Cohort if possible.

Q: Can this year's coach choose to not allow a player to register for their cohort if they do not want them on their team and send them back to their Home Centre?

A: There is a possibility the player will not return but we would have to look at how we fill our cohorts.

Q: How do we fill our cohorts with 20 players if we only had 17 players last year? Can affiliated players from last year's team register with us? Can we ask a player considered 'Tier 1' to register?

A: No, not until the discussion has been had within the OHF. As mentioned, 20 is the suggested size of a Cohort

but a slightly smaller size (such as 16-18) may be required.

Q: Are coaches able to fill spots on their roster with players they watched and liked, who played in a feeder centre last season? (i.e. EMC with a player from Ilderton or Mount Brydges).

A: No. If things change, we will further review.

Q: We had a player's father tell one of our coaches at the end of last season, that his son will not be returning next season, how do we fill that spot? We also have a goalie not returning due to concussions, need to fill that spot.

A: We will need to find a way to build up to a full Cohort

Q: Is billeting allowed to move a player into a different Zone/Centre?

A: Billeting is not allowed in Minor Hockey (it would require an appeal to Hockey Canada).

Q: If a player enrolls in a hockey academy in a different Zone/Centre can they be considered 'Tier 1' and play in the new Centre?

A: Yes, provided all the paperwork is completed and approved.

Q: How many times are players to be on the ice in a week?

A: This is to be determined by the local Association/Zone.

Q: What is the predicted start date of the season?

A: This is to be determined by the local Association/Zone based upon their return to play plan.

Based on the OHF Return to Play, the evaluation of tiering players may start September 1st therefore, game competition (3v3, 4v4) could start September 15th. This scenario would be dependent on ice availability, etc.

Q: When and how are dressing rooms to be utilized?

A: Associations are required to work with their local PHU and Facility Management to determine and/or adhere to the safety plan.

Q: Are spectators allowed?

A: Spectators are included in the Public Health rule of 50 in a facility, subject to PHU direction. This may change with announcements from Public Health. MHA's need to work with their facility and PHU on what numbers are acceptable in the facility.

▪ BENCH STAFF

Q: How many "Staff" can be approved on a roster for Sept./Oct.?

A: There needs to be one coaching staff (maximum of 4 coaches, 1 Trainer) per every Cohort

No more than 2 coaches and one Trainer may be on the bench at any one time → for a 'game' and a maximum of 4 coaches on the ice at any one time → practice

Q: Can teams rotate Assistant Coaches in & out?

A: Yes, but with adherence to the above. i.e. only using the team staff assigned to the specific cohort

Q: Is a Trainer mandatory on the Sept./Oct. roster?

A: Yes.



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Q: What if an Association used one Trainer per night, for all sessions?

A: Associations must have a certified Trainer on each staff / 1 Trainer per cohort.

