



MEMORANDUM

Date: August 21, 2024

To: Alberta Elite Hockey League AAA Clubs
Aaron Rawlake – Elite Hockey Commissioner
Richard Doerksen – WHL
Ryan Bartoshyk – AJHL

From: Kendall Newell, Senior Manager – Competition

RE: Junior Hockey Recruitment and Tryout Protocols

Hockey Alberta's Elite Hockey Model outlines '*Development*' as one of two key principles. The principle states that everyone will always act in the best interest of the athlete, working to help them develop their skills so they can move up and play at the highest level they can attain. Hockey Alberta expects that the Alberta Elite Hockey League (AEHL), our Member MHAs, the Alberta Junior Hockey League (AJHL) and AJHL Teams, and the Western Hockey League (WHL) and WHL Teams communicate and collaborate with each other to abide by the principle of '*Development*' and to provide opportunities and experiences to our Alberta athletes.

Player Recruitment / Tryouts

The AAA Hockey Model is designed to foster a player's development, helping them advance into Junior Hockey. Hockey Alberta expects that MHA's structure their AAA tryout process to enable and support players in attending Junior camps.

- Players must have the ability and support to attend tryouts and development camps at higher levels of hockey without facing negative consequences from their MHA and/ or the AAA tryout process.
- Players may not be refused the opportunity to attend a Major Junior or Junior A tryout or training camp.
- MHA's cannot deny an athlete the opportunity to tryout for a AAA team upon returning from a Major Junior or Junior A camp.
- Players must be provided with the ability to register, practice and play as an affiliate with a higher-level team.

In-Season Communication

To ensure a positive experience for the Teams and the Player, and to ensure the Player can experience higher level practices and games, communication between AAA Teams and Junior Teams is paramount throughout the season.

- Throughout the season, under circumstances outlined by Hockey Alberta, the WHL and the AJHL, Junior Teams have the to ability to call up a Specially Affiliated Player (SAP).
- At any time during the season, a Junior Team must first contact the AAA player's Manager or Coach prior to communicating directly with a player, or the player's parents.
- 15 and 16-year-old Affiliated Players will be permitted to play a maximum of 10 games with their WHL Club, prior to the conclusion of the current season.



MEMORANDUM

- Games played during National Junior, Under 17 and Canada Winter Games events are not included in the maximum of 10 games.
- Games played when a WHL Team has been granted special permission to use an affiliate player because of being unable to dress the normal 20 player roster also will not be included in the maximum of 10 games.
- WHL Clubs are permitted to name a maximum of nine (9) 15-year-old affiliate players
- If a WHL Club cannot dress a full roster of 20 players for a game, the team is eligible to dress two 15-year-old affiliate players at the same time.
- WHL Clubs can designate one 16-year-old player, who upon being returned to a Junior A, Accredited School or U18 team, will be allowed to play up to 15 games in the WHL.
- Any such player deemed by Hockey Alberta to have 'special player status' in their 14-year-old season may qualify to be eligible to play up to 34 games in the WHL as a 15 year old.

WHL training camps open on Wednesday, August 28 and many 15- and 16-year-old players will be returned to their Elite Teams the week following September 2.

Any Team or MHA within Hockey Alberta that does not comply with the allowance for players to tryout for a Junior team, or denies an athlete a tryout after attending a Junior tryout or camp will be subject to sanction. Any incident reported to the Hockey Alberta office will be investigated. Sanctions may include, but not be limited to, a financial penalty, suspension, removal as a AAA host, or other sanctions as determined by Hockey Alberta.

Should you have any questions please feel free to contact Hockey Alberta.