

Hockey Canada

Action Bulletin / Bulletin d'action

Bulletin No.: A1528

To: Directors
Member Presidents
Member Executive Directors
Council Chairs
Life Patrons
Hockey Canada Staff

Date: December 15, 2015

From: Joe Drago, Chair of the Board & Tom Renney, President

**SUBJECT: NON-SANCTIONED LEAGUES – LEAGUES OPERATING
OUTSIDE THE AUSPICES OF HOCKEY CANADA**

I. Overview

As the governing body of amateur hockey in Canada, Hockey Canada is committed to offering the best development programs in the world. Hockey Canada and our Member Branches have invested significant resources in the development of officials, coaches, administrators and players countrywide. We have a committed strategy toward a cohesive long term athlete development model and we feel our programs are second to none in sport.

Despite, or perhaps because of, our success in delivering quality programming throughout Canada, other organizations operating outside our structure form leagues from time to time that offer various levels of amateur hockey programming. These “non-sanctioned” organizations do not support the development of Hockey Canada or Branch programs. Further, they operate with limited, or no consideration to the impact of their programs on minor, junior, senior, adult



recreational hockey, officiating development, female hockey, coaching development or administrator development in Canada. These Non-Sanctioned Leagues choose instead, in many instances, to utilize resources already developed by Hockey Canada and its Member Branches.

Because these Non-Sanctioned Leagues operate outside of our structure, Hockey Canada has no way of ensuring that those Leagues implement many of the fundamental safeguards inherent in Hockey Canada programs. As a result, those Leagues may not be using the same Playing Rules that Hockey Canada has implemented to protect player safety, and may not provide adequate insurance for their participants. We also cannot ensure that the quality of play in these Leagues matches the level advertised.

Hockey Canada respects the right of every individual to choose between participating in a Hockey Canada sanctioned league or a Non-Sanctioned League at the beginning of each hockey season. Every individual who makes the choice to Participate in a Non-Sanctioned League, however, must understand the ramifications of that choice, as described in greater detail in Section III of this Bulletin.

II. Definitions

“Cut-Off Date” means September 30 of the hockey season in question.

“League” means a Non-Sanctioned League.

“Non-Sanctioned League” includes any amateur hockey league that operates in Canada outside the auspices/sanctioning of Hockey Canada. This currently does not include summer hockey leagues/teams, adult recreational hockey leagues/teams, high school hockey, and/or hockey schools.

“Participate” means to engage, knowingly or otherwise, in an activity within a Non-Sanctioned League that could only be engaged in within Hockey Canada if the participant was properly registered on the Hockey Canada Registry. Such activity includes, without limitation, playing, managing, coaching, officiating, or acting as a trainer.

“Participation” in a Non-Sanctioned League will be considered to have occurred if the individual takes part in one game (including an exhibition, tournament, league or playoff game) after the Cut-Off Date.

III. Consequences of Supporting or Participating in a Non-Sanctioned League

Any individual who Participates in a Non-Sanctioned League, or any minor

hockey association which supports such a League, is subject to the following consequences:

- 1) Any individual who Participates in a Non-Sanctioned League after the Cut-Off Date will lose all privileges with Hockey Canada for the remainder of that season, and, subject to paragraph (3) below, may only apply for the reinstatement of those privileges after the end of that season.
- 2) Hockey Canada and its Member Branches across the country will make every effort to ensure that local minor hockey associations in areas where Non-Sanctioned Leagues exist are not supporting these Leagues in any manner whatsoever. For greater certainty, “supporting” includes, but is not limited to, assisting a Non-Sanctioned League directly or indirectly through advertisement, promotion, ticket sales, volunteer activities, assigning Officials, sharing resources or enabling such a League to participate in Hockey Canada sanctioned activities. We will withhold tournament sanctions and will preclude such associations from benefitting from any Hockey Canada/Branch/CHL/CJHL sanctioned event by whatever means necessary, including the withdrawal of any such event from any community within the geographic boundaries of that association if need be to stress this point.
- 3) Notwithstanding the consequences listed in paragraph 1), anyone who Participates in a Non Sanctioned League after the Cut-Off Date is entitled to seek early reinstatement of their privileges within Hockey Canada by appealing to Hockey Canada’s Non-Sanctioned Hockey Reinstatement Committee, which may grant early reinstatement if it is satisfied that special circumstances exist. The consequences described in this section of this Bulletin will remain in effect even if the Non-Sanctioned League or team folds, or the Participant is released, suspended or fired from that League or team.