

APPENDIX “IV”



‘AAA’ HOCKEY MODEL





'AAA' HOCKEY MODEL

1. INTRODUCTION

The 'AAA' Hockey Model ensures that players across Alberta have an opportunity to access 'AAA' hockey, providing them with the ability to play at the highest level they can attain. It provides movement options to meet the needs of the player, as well as the 'AAA' teams. The model is designed around guiding principles that require all parents, coaches, and Minor Hockey Association's (MHAs) to always act in the best interest of the athlete to help them develop and progress through the hockey system.

This document outlines regulations that apply to the Leagues, MHA's, Teams, and Players that are operating and/ or participating in 'AAA' hockey. All Minor Hockey Regulations apply to 'AAA' hockey, unless specific regulations within this model alter the meaning for the purpose of 'AAA' Hockey.

2. LEAGUE STRUCTURE

- 2.1 Hockey Alberta has identified the Alberta Elite Hockey League (AEHL) as the sole league operating 'AAA' hockey (U18 AAA, U17 AAA and U15 AAA) in Alberta. Hockey Alberta has established the Elite Hockey Committee to implement and oversee AEHL operations. The committee implements and monitors the day-to-day operations of League play in accordance with the established Bylaws, Regulations, Policies and Procedures.
- 2.2 The AEHL may use conferences and/ or divisions to operate the 'AAA' Hockey Model across the Province. If an MHA or organization operates a conference or division, they will follow the 'AA' Hockey Model, as well as their own Bylaws, Regulations and Policies while operating the conference or division.
- 2.3 The member MHA's and/or Teams that have been assigned to each specific conference or division will have voting rights at league, conference and/ or division meetings.

3. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions for words and phrases are to be applied solely for the purposes of the 'AAA' hockey and may or may not be the same as those definitions as outlined in other sections of the Hockey Alberta and Hockey Canada Bylaws and Regulations.

- (a) **"AAA Hockey Model"** means the regulations established to govern 'AAA' hockey.
- (b) **"Draw Zone"** is the area of MHAs that makes up the feeder system from which each 'AAA' Team can recruit and/ or affiliate registered Players.
- (c) **"Import Player"** shall be defined in elite hockey as a 'AAA' registered player who accessed the Elite Player Movement process and/ or an additional tryout.
- (d) **"Tryout Roster"** is the official roster used by 'AAA' Teams during the formal tryout process to ensure players are eligible to participate in pre-season and/ or tournament game(s).

4. CRITICAL DATES

April 1	MHAs can begin operating spring player identification camps
May 1	'AAA' Player Movement Application process opens
July 1	Deadline for 'AAA' Player Movement Applications to be submitted
August 15	'AAA' Tryouts can start
September 1	Exhibition Games can start
September 15	Deadline for Players to declare to participate in tryouts
September 18	U18 'AAA' teams must cutdown to no more than 40 players



'AAA' HOCKEY MODEL

September 25	U18 'AAA' teams must cutdown to no more than 25 players
October 1	'AAA' Regular Season schedule can begin *
October 15	Tryout Rosters are complete* (Players participating in tryouts must be registered to a team or returned to a lower level)
January 10	Final date to Release a Player from a Team
January 15	Deadline for MHA's to file Affiliation by 5:00PM MST
December 1	Deadline to submit Applications to expand or contract the number of Teams
February 10	Final date to Register a Player to a Team
February	U18 'AAA' Regular Season ends *
	U18 'AAA' Playoffs begin *
March	U15 'AAA' & U17 AAA Regular Season ends *
	U15 'AAA' & U17 AAA Playoffs begin *
	U15 'AAA' Provincial Championship *
	U18 'AAA' Provincial Championships *
April	U17 'AAA' Provincial Championship *
	Pacific Regional Championship (U18 'AAA')
	Telus Cup (U18 'AAA')

* *These dates reflect the ideal state and actual dates may alter somewhat from these targets.*

5. DRAW ZONES

To establish a fair and equitable structure for all teams within the 'AAA' Hockey Model, *Draw Zones* have been established. The Draw Zones ensure there is an opportunity for all players that want to, and have the skill to, play 'AAA' hockey to access it. The Draw Zone's establish a consistent development system for players throughout the Province by structuring a feeder system from Minor Hockey up through 'AA' and into 'AAA'.

- 5.1 Draw Zone's for each Division and Category within the 'AAA' Hockey Model do not overlap.
- 5.2 MHA's are assigned to one specific Draw Zone and the players registered within those MHA's make up the feeder system for the team(s).
- 5.3 Hockey Edmonton and Hockey Calgary, as MHA's, may have structured smaller Draw Zones within their boundaries.
- 5.4 Each Draw Zone has a Host MHA identified within it and this Host MHA is responsible for operating the 'AAA' Team(s) identified for the area, in accordance with this 'AAA' Hockey Model.
- 5.5 Draw Zone's are based on registration numbers, geographic locations and travel time to the Host MHA.



'AAA' HOCKEY MODEL

Lethbridge U18 AAA		Okotoks U18 AAA	
<p>Bassano Bow Island Brooks Cardston Claresholm Coaldale Crownsnest Pass Duchess Foremost Fort MacLeod Irvine Kainai</p>	<p>Lethbridge Magrath Medicine Hat Oyen Picture Butte Piikani Nation Pincher Creek Raymond Redcliff Taber Vauxhall</p>	<p>Chestermere East Wheatland Foothills High Country Indus</p>	<p>Nanton Okotoks Rockyford Siksika Strathmore Vulcan</p>
Medicine Hat U17 AAA	Lethbridge U17 AAA	Okotoks U17 AAA	
<p>Bassano Bow Island Brooks Duchess Foremost Irvine Medicine Hat Oyen Redcliff</p>	<p>Cardston Claresholm Coaldale Crownsnest Pass Fort MacLeod Kainai Lethbridge Magrath Picture Butte Piikani Nation Pincher Creek Raymond Taber Vauxhall</p>	<p>Chestermere East Wheatland Foothills High Country Indus</p>	<p>Nanton Okotoks Rockyford Siksika Strathmore Vulcan</p>
Medicine Hat U15 AAA	Lethbridge U15 AAA	Okotoks U15 AAA	
<p>Bassano Bow Island Brooks Duchess Foremost Irvine Medicine Hat Oyen Redcliff</p>	<p>Cardston Claresholm Coaldale Crownsnest Pass Fort MacLeod Kainai Lethbridge Magrath Picture Butte Piikani Nation Pincher Creek Raymond Taber Vauxhall</p>	<p>Chestermere East Wheatland Foothills High Country Indus</p>	<p>Nanton Okotoks Rockyford Siksika Strathmore Vulcan</p>



'AAA' HOCKEY MODEL

Airdrie U18 AAA	Red Deer U18 AAA
<p>Airdrie Banff Beiseker Canmore Cochrane Cremona</p> <p>Drumheller Hanna Kneehill Morrin RMAA</p>	<p>Bashaw Big Valley Blackfalds Blindman Valley Bowden Caroline Clive Delburne Endmoor</p> <p>Innisfail Lacombe Olds Red Deer Rocky Mountain House Spruce View Stettler Sundre Sylvan Lake</p>
Airdrie U17 AAA	Red Deer U17 AAA
<p>Airdrie Banff Beiseker Canmore Cochrane Cremona</p> <p>Drumheller Hanna Kneehill Morrin RMAA</p>	<p>Bashaw Big Valley Blackfalds Blindman Valley Bowden Caroline Clive Delburne Endmoor</p> <p>Innisfail Lacombe Olds Red Deer Rocky Mountain House Spruce View Stettler Sundre Sylvan Lake</p>
Airdrie U15 AAA	Red Deer U15 AAA
<p>Airdrie Banff Beiseker Canmore Cochrane Cremona</p> <p>Drumheller Hanna Kneehill Morrin RMAA</p>	<p>Bashaw Big Valley Blackfalds Blindman Valley Bowden Caroline Clive Delburne Endmoor</p> <p>Innisfail Lacombe Olds Red Deer Rocky Mountain House Spruce View Stettler Sundre Sylvan Lake</p>



'AAA' HOCKEY MODEL

Leduc U18 AAA		Fort Saskatchewan U18 AAA	
Beaumont Camrose Devon Drayton Valley Leduc Maskwacis	Millet New Sarepta Pembina Ponoka West 39 Wetaskiwin	Athabasca Boyle CNN Elk Island Fort McMurray Fort Saskatchewan Goodfish Lake Lac La Biche Plamondon Redwater	Saddle Lake Smoky Lake St. Paul Sturgeon Thorhild Two Hills Vegreville Wabasca Westlock
Leduc U17 AAA		Fort Saskatchewan U17 AAA	
Beaumont Camrose Devon Drayton Valley Leduc Maskwacis	Millet New Sarepta Pembina Ponoka West 39 Wetaskiwin	Athabasca Boyle CNN Elk Island Fort McMurray Fort Saskatchewan Goodfish Lake Lac La Biche Plamondon Redwater	Saddle Lake Smoky Lake St. Paul Sturgeon Thorhild Two Hills Vegreville Wabasca Westlock
Leduc U15 AAA		Fort Saskatchewan U15 AAA	
Beaumont Camrose Devon Drayton Valley Leduc Maskwacis	Millet New Sarepta Pembina Ponoka West 39 Wetaskiwin	Athabasca Boyle CNN Elk Island Fort McMurray Fort Saskatchewan Goodfish Lake Lac La Biche Plamondon Redwater	Saddle Lake Smoky Lake St. Paul Sturgeon Thorhild Two Hills Vegreville Wabasca Westlock



'AAA' HOCKEY MODEL

Sherwood Park U18 AAA		St. Albert U18 AAA	
Battle River Holden Sherwood Park	Strathcona Thunderstars Tofield Viking	Barrhead CR Knights Edson Enoch Fox Creek Hinton Jasper Mayerthorpe	Spruce Grove Stony Plain St. Albert Swan Hills Whitecourt
Sherwood Park U17 AAA		St. Albert U17 AAA	Spruce Grove U17 AAA
Battle River Holden Sherwood Park	Strathcona Thunderstars Tofield Viking	Barrhead CR Knights St. Albert	Edson Enoch Fox Creek Hinton Jasper Mayerthorpe Spruce Grove Stony Plain Swan Hills Whitecourt
Sherwood Park U15 AAA		St. Albert U15 AAA	Spruce Grove U15 AAA
Battle River Holden Sherwood Park	Strathcona Thunderstars Tofield Viking	Barrhead CR Knights St. Albert	Edson Enoch Fox Creek Hinton Jasper Mayerthorpe Spruce Grove Stony Plain Swan Hills Whitecourt



'AAA' HOCKEY MODEL

Lloydminster U18 AAA	Grande Prairie U18 AAA
<p>3Cs Bonnyville Chauvin Cold Lake Edgerton Elk Point Frog Lake Glendon Hughenden Irma</p> <p>Kitscoty Lloydminster Mallaig Mannville Marwayne-Dewberry Onion Lake Paradise Valley Provost Vermilion Wainwright</p>	<p>Beaverlodge Clairmont East Smoky Fairview Grande Cache Grande Prairie Grimshaw Grovedale High Level High Prairie Horse Lake Hythe La Crete La Glace</p> <p>Loon River Manning Nampa Peace River Rainbow Lake Rycroft Savanna Sexsmith Slave Lake Smoky River Spirit River Valleyview Wembley</p>
Lloydminster U17 AAA	Grande Prairie U17 AAA
<p>3Cs Bonnyville Chauvin Cold Lake Edgerton Elk Point Frog Lake Glendon Hughenden Irma</p> <p>Kitscoty Lloydminster Mallaig Mannville Marwayne-Dewberry Onion Lake Paradise Valley Provost Vermilion Wainwright</p>	<p>Beaverlodge Clairmont East Smoky Fairview Grande Cache Grande Prairie Grimshaw Grovedale High Level High Prairie Horse Lake Hythe La Crete La Glace</p> <p>Loon River Manning Nampa Peace River Rainbow Lake Rycroft Savanna Sexsmith Slave Lake Smoky River Spirit River Valleyview Wembley</p>
Lloydminster U15 AAA	Grande Prairie U15 AAA
<p>3Cs Bonnyville Chauvin Cold Lake Edgerton Elk Point Frog Lake Glendon Hughenden Irma</p> <p>Kitscoty Lloydminster Mallaig Mannville Marwayne-Dewberry Onion Lake Paradise Valley Provost Vermilion Wainwright</p>	<p>Beaverlodge Clairmont East Smoky Fairview Grande Cache Grande Prairie Grimshaw Grovedale High Level High Prairie Horse Lake Hythe La Crete La Glace</p> <p>Loon River Manning Nampa Peace River Rainbow Lake Rycroft Savanna Sexsmith Slave Lake Smoky River Spirit River Valleyview Wembley</p>

**'AAA' HOCKEY MODEL**

Calgary U18 AAA	Edmonton U18 AAA
4 U18 AAA	2 U18 AAA
Calgary U17 AAA	Edmonton U17 AAA
4 U17 AAA	4 U17 AAA
Calgary U15 AAA	Edmonton U15 AAA
4 U15 AAA	4 U15 AAA



'AAA' HOCKEY MODEL

6. PROGRAM PROMOTION AND PLAYER RECRUITMENT

- 6.1 Teams are permitted to host "Spring ID" camps for prospective players **starting April 1**.
- 6.2 Players who are registered to a team that has not yet completed their season are not eligible to be recruited and/ or to participate in camps, practices, information days, etc. until their Team's season is complete.

7. PLAYER AGREEMENTS

- 7.1 To be eligible to play for a 'AAA' Team during the regular season, playoffs, and provincials, all players must sign a "Player Agreement".

8. TRYOUT PROCEDURES

The top, eligible, players should be selected for each team, regardless of where they reside within the Draw Zone. An objective of the 'AAA' Hockey Model is to provide opportunities for the best players to play at the highest level.

- 8.1 To align the different levels of hockey, supporting player pathways and the established feeder system within Alberta, 'AAA' Teams are not permitted to begin the player evaluation and selection process for the current season until *August 15*.
- 8.2 Players are expected to access their first tryout within the Draw Zone that draws from their Resident MHA.
- 8.3 If extenuating circumstances apply (i.e. considerably closer for travel, move without parent transfers), Players may apply to access their first tryout within a different Draw Zone.

Applications must be submitted using the Elite Player Movement form and supporting documentation must be included. Applications will be accepted from May 1 to July 1 and all decisions will be rendered by **July 15**.

- 8.4 Players are asked to declare, by September 15, whether they are electing to participate in 'AAA' tryouts within their Draw Zone (Players that do not notify their Draw Zone of their intent to tryout by this date may miss their opportunity to access the 'AAA' tryout process).
- 8.5 Any Player may tryout for a 'AAA' team provided they are eligible to be registered with that team.
- 8.6 Host MHAs operating Teams under the 'AAA' Hockey Model must allow Players to have the opportunity to tryout and register with a team they are eligible for.
- 8.7 MHA's hosting Draw Zone Teams must ensure that there are no restrictions on players from outside that respective MHA, but within the Draw Zone, from making the 'AAA' Team.
- 8.8 A Player may be afforded a second tryout opportunity, as an import Player, if the Host MHA accepts the player into their tryout process. Players on a second tryout must also be provided an equal opportunity to make the team.



'AAA' HOCKEY MODEL

8.9 U18 'AAA' Tryouts

- (a) A 16 or 17-year-old player may choose a maximum of two (2) U18 'AAA' teams to tryout for. The player must first tryout for the team in the Draw Zone in which the player resides (unless previous approval has been obtained through the Elite Player Movement process).
- (b) A 15-year-old Player is only permitted to tryout with one (1) U18 'AAA' Team.
- (c) 16 and 17-year-old Players that do not make the first team they are trying out for will be provided with an Elite Waiver from the team 'cutting' them. After receiving the Elite Waiver:
 - i. the Player has seven (7) days to contact and arrange a tryout with a second U18 'AAA' team (Players that cannot, or choose not to, arrange a second tryout within seven (7) days of being cut will be returned to their Resident MHA); or
 - ii. the Player can access tryouts with their Resident Elite Recruitment Area for a 'AA' program; or
 - iii. the Player can return to their Resident MHA to access other minor hockey programs.

8.10 U17 'AAA' Tryouts

- (a) A 15 or 16-year-old player may choose a maximum of two (2) U17 'AAA' teams to tryout for. The player must first tryout for the team in the Draw Zone in which the player resides (unless previous approval has been obtained through the Elite Player Movement process).
- (b) Players that do not make the first team they are trying out for will be provided with an Elite Waiver from the team 'cutting' them. After receiving the Elite Waiver:
 - i. the Player has seven (7) days to contact and arrange a tryout with a second U17 'AAA' team (Players that cannot, or choose not to, arrange a second tryout within seven (7) days of being cut will be returned to their Resident MHA); or
 - ii. the Player can access tryouts with their Resident Elite Recruitment Area for a 'AA' program; or
 - iii. the Player can return to their Resident MHA to access other minor hockey programs.

8.11 U15 'AAA' Tryouts

- (a) A 13 or 14-year-old player may choose a maximum of two (2) U15 'AAA' teams to tryout for. The player must first tryout for the team in the Draw Zone in which the player resides (unless previous approval has been obtained through the Elite Player Movement process).
- (b) Players that do not make the first team they are trying out for will be provided with an Elite Waiver from the team 'cutting' them. After receiving the Elite Waiver:
 - i. the Player has seven (7) days to contact and arrange a tryout with a second U15 'AAA' team (Players that cannot, or choose not to, arrange a second tryout within seven (7) days of being cut will be returned to their Resident MHA); or
 - ii. the Player can access tryouts with their Resident Elite Recruitment Area for a 'AA' program; or



'AAA' HOCKEY MODEL

iii. the Player can return to their Resident MHA to access other minor hockey programs.

- 8.12 Players will not be afforded the opportunity to access tryouts for more than two (2) teams within a specific category of hockey.
- 8.13 One week prior to an MHA's tryouts beginning, a list of the names of players trying out (noting their Resident MHA) must be sent to all MHAs in the Draw Zone for that specific age category, as well as all MHAs that have players participating at tryouts. An updated list must be sent for any players accepted on second tryouts.
- 8.14 Host MHAs must ensure they have a plan for accommodating players that are selected to their Teams. This includes living arrangements for players that need to be billeted, coordinating schedules with schools so players can maintain their academics, and scheduling tryouts to ensure out of town players can properly participate.

9. TRYOUT ROSTERS

In 'AAA' hockey, each Team is provided the opportunity to utilize Tryout Rosters (properly registered in the registry) during Exhibition and Pre-Season games for the purpose of Team roster declaration.

- 9.1 Host MHAs are required to obtain commitments, in writing, from all players prior to registering them as a tryout player (refer to the "Player Agreement" process).
- 9.2 U18 'AAA' Tryout Rosters
- (a) During the tryout portion of the season, U18 'AAA' teams will be required to register all players remaining in the formal tryout process onto a Tryout Roster no later than September 15 of each season.
 - (b) Each Team can list a maximum of 40 players on their Tryout Roster.
 - (c) Players listed on the Tryout Roster will be eligible to continue in the tryout process by participating in exhibition games and/ or preseason tournaments.
 - (d) Players that do not make the Tryout Roster will be provided an Elite Waiver by the Host MHA.
 - (e) U18 'AAA' teams who do not declare the maximum of 40 players for the Tryout Roster will be eligible to add players approved for second tryouts, or players returning from Junior Hockey to participate in exhibition games and/ or preseason tournaments.
 - (f) Teams who release players from their Tryout Roster will not be able to register additional players in their place.
 - (g) The AEHL U18 'AAA' division has declared five (5) games at the beginning of the season as "Pre-Season" for the purpose of Team roster declaration. This window enables Teams to accommodate the tryout processes of other levels of hockey by giving MHAs the option to keep tryout/ roster spots open for Players that may be returned from Junior. U18 'AAA' Teams will register as follows:
 - i. In advance of the five (5) "Pre-Season" games, by September 25, U18 'AAA' teams will have **no more than 25 players** remaining in the formal tryout process.
 - ii. By September 30, U18 'AAA' Teams will register a **maximum of 15 Players** to their official team roster in the registry.
 - iii. Beyond the 15 registered players, by September 30, teams will declare **an auxiliary list of 10 players** that will remain on tryout during the five (5) scheduled "Pre-Season" games.



'AAA' HOCKEY MODEL

- iv. Prior to a Team's 6th scheduled League game, tryouts will be complete and team rosters must be finalized with all players properly registered in the Registry.

Note: Players who return from Junior Tryouts after September 30 will be eligible to join the formal tryout process of their Draw Zone team and will not count against the 25-player requirement. These players must either be registered to the teams' official team roster or added as an addition on the teams auxiliary list of tryout players.

9.3 U17 'AAA' and U15 'AAA' Tryout Rosters

- (a) During the tryout portion of the season, U17 'AAA' and U15 'AAA' teams will be required to register all players remaining in the formal tryout process onto a Tryout Roster.
- (b) Each Team can list a maximum of 40 players on their Tryout Roster.
- (c) Players listed on the Tryout Roster will be eligible to continue in the tryout process by participating in exhibition games and/ or preseason tournaments.
- (d) Players that do not make the Tryout Roster will be provided an Elite Waiver by the Host MHA.
- (e) Teams who do not declare the maximum of 40 players for the Tryout Roster will be eligible to add players approved for second tryouts, or players returning from Junior Hockey to participate in exhibition games and/ or preseason tournaments.
- (f) Teams who release players from their Tryout Roster will not be able to register additional players in their place.

10. PLAYER ACCELERATION

One of the objectives of the 'AAA' Hockey Model is to develop players within their specific age group, and not to displace the players from their age Division by facilitating the movement of underage players.

10.1 Each 'AAA' Team is provided the ability to register a maximum of one (1) underage Player, at any one time during the season, provided the underage Player:

- (a) For U18, is a second-year U15 aged player (14-year-old);
For U15, is a second-year U13 aged player (12-year-old);
- (b) participated in the tryout process and is selected for the Team;
- (c) is otherwise eligible to be registered to the Team.

10.2 Underage Players are not eligible for a second tryout at the accelerated Division.

11. AFFILIATION

To facilitate athlete development under the 'AAA' Hockey Model, Affiliation is permitted within each Draw Zone.

11.1 'AAA' Teams are eligible to Affiliate players that are registered with an MHA within their specific Draw Zone.

11.2 To be approved as an affiliate player for a 'AAA' Team, players must be eligible in accordance with the Hockey Alberta and Hockey Canada Regulations.

11.3 Providing affiliation has been properly filed, an affiliated Player may play with the Hockey Team to which the Player is affiliated up to a maximum of ten (10) games, excluding exhibition and tournament games.



'AAA' HOCKEY MODEL

- 11.4 Should an affiliated Hockey Player play more than ten (10) games with the Hockey Team to which the player is affiliated, they shall be considered an "Ineligible Player".
- 11.5 However, if the player's registered team completes its regular season and playoffs before the player's affiliated team, the player may thereafter affiliate an unlimited number of times.
- 11.6 All Players must agree to register as an affiliate by completing a "Named Player Affiliation Agreement" with the 'AAA' Team. The Agreement must be uploaded to the request for affiliation in the registry.

12. PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

- 12.1 Provincial Championships for each Category within the 'AAA' Hockey Model will be operated by Hockey Alberta and teams participating in the Championship will be determined through League play.
- 12.2 Only Teams approved to participate within the 'AAA' Hockey Model will be eligible to play for the Provincial Championship.

13. EXPANSION AND CONTRACTION OF TEAMS

The 'AAA' Hockey Model defines the number of Teams at each Division and Category of 'AAA' within Alberta. Teams have been allotted based on registration statistics and historical data. The annual review process provides an opportunity to identify any need to expand or contract the number of teams within this model.

- 13.1 An MHA can apply to Hockey Alberta for expansion or contraction of the number of teams within their Draw Zone. **Applications must be submitted by December 1 to be considered for the following season.**
- 13.2 It is the responsibility of the Elite Hockey Committee to review requests made by Host MHA's for any expansion or contraction of teams within a Draw Zone, and/ or to develop recommendations for changes to a Draw Zone and submit them to Hockey Alberta's management for review and approval.
- 13.3 Applications for expansion or contraction will be assessed based on the following:
 - (a) Registration numbers, by Division, of the Host MHA and all MHAs within the Draw Zone.
 - (b) Historical statistics on how competitive the Draw Zone Team(s) have been within the Province.
 - (c) Potential impact to player development and/ or the player pathways and feeder system.
 - (d) Possible effects to other teams and programs in the area.