



---

**OPERATIONAL POLICY:      SUSPENSIONS FROM PLAYING RULE INFRACTIONS**  
**DATE ISSUED:             December 18, 2006**  
**LAST UPDATED:          October 21, 2021**

---

Hockey Alberta shall impose disciplinary sanctions on any Player or Team Official that is assessed a penalty for a violation of the Hockey Canada Playing Rules. After the reporting of an infraction, the CEO (or designate) will conduct any necessary investigations and impose such disciplinary measures and sanctions as may be deemed appropriate.

When suspensions are being assessed it is pertinent that the lines of communication are open and followed properly. There are numerous suspensions each season that overlap between League, Tournament, Provincial and Exhibition play and to properly monitor and administer these suspensions all relevant League, Member organization, Team and Hockey Alberta representatives must be aware of the infractions.

### **TYPES OF SUSPENSIONS FROM PLAYING RULE INFRACTIONS**

***Minimum Suspensions*** - Hockey Canada and Hockey Alberta have established minimum suspensions that will be assessed to all Players and Team Officials for a violation of certain Playing Rules. Infractions that carry a Minimum Suspension are automatic, based on the Referee's call, and are not subject to Appeal. Game Misconduct or Gross Misconduct infractions that occur within the last ten (10) minutes of a game will automatically have one (1) additional game added to the suspension.

***Indefinite Suspensions*** - Infractions that carry an 'Indefinite' suspension are those of a more severe nature and they result in an investigation of the incident taking place prior to Hockey Alberta rendering a decision on the length of suspension (specifying a number of games). Indefinite Suspension decisions can be subject to Appeal in accordance with Hockey Alberta's Appeals Policy.

Examples: Ineligible Players;  
Pre/ Post Game Altercations;  
Match Penalty for Deliberate Attempt to Injure;  
Refusing to Start Play;  
Maltreatment Infractions (Spitting, Discrimination, Physical Harassment of Officials);  
and Certain Accumulation Infractions.

### **NOTIFICATION OF SUSPENSIONS/ INVESTIGATIONS**

The assessment of any playing rule infraction that has a corresponding suspension associated with it will initiate a process where all relevant stakeholders are notified of the suspension via an official '*Notice of Suspension*'. The notice will indicate the length of suspension or that the suspension is an *Indefinite* and that there will be more steps taken to determine the length of suspension.



---

## **INVESTIGATING INFRACTIONS & DECISION-MAKING**

Investigations will adhere to all principles of natural justice, providing procedural and substantive due process for all parties to the investigation. All investigations must adhere to Hockey Alberta's Bylaws, Regulations, Policies, Procedures and Guidelines when gathering and reviewing information, conducting a hearing (if necessary) and rendering subsequent decisions.

In the interest of arriving at the most informed decision, the information gathering process may include any number of sources including but not restricted to officials' incident reports, personal interviews with parties directly involved in or witnesses to the event/ incident, as well as interviews with technical subject matter experts. There may be instances where video evidence may support the decision-making process, and as such, it may be considered in the decision-making process, where appropriate.

### ***Processes by Type of Game***

***Exhibition Games*** - game sheets and corresponding incident reports/ write-ups will be submitted to the respective Hockey Alberta designate and all Minimum Suspension and Indefinite Suspension notices and final decisions will be issued by Hockey Alberta (with the exception of teams within the ACAC, AJHL, AEHL and AFHL as these Provincial leagues control all exhibition and tournament play for the respective teams).

***League Games*** - for regular League play as well as League Playoffs all game sheets and corresponding incident reports/ write-ups will be submitted to the respective League. The League will issue a 'Notice of Suspension' to all relevant stakeholders. In the case of Indefinite Suspensions, the League will notify the respective Hockey Alberta designate and the investigation and issuing of the final decision on the suspension will be issued by Hockey Alberta.

***Tournament Games*** - suspensions may need to be issued during the Tournament and therefore may need to be issued directly by the Hosts' Tournament Committee. At the conclusion of the tournament, all game sheets, write-ups and suspension notices will be forwarded to the respective Hockey Alberta designate (to the respective League designate for teams within the ACAC, AJHL, AEHL and AFHL as these Provincial leagues control all exhibition and tournament play for the respective teams). Review of any incidents will then take place and a final decision on the length of suspension will be submitted to all relevant stakeholders by the Hockey Alberta or League designate.

***Provincial Games*** - game sheets and corresponding incident reports/ write-ups will be submitted to the respective Hockey Alberta designate and all Minimum Suspension and Indefinite Suspension notices, as well as the final decisions, will be issued by Hockey Alberta (with the exception of teams within the ACAC, AJHL, AEHL and AFHL as these Provincial leagues control all exhibition and tournament play for the respective teams).

***Out of Province Teams*** – all game sheets, write-ups and Notices of Suspension for infractions assessed to a Player or Team Official of an out of province team must be submitted to the Hockey Alberta office immediately following the game or tournament. The Hockey Alberta office will forward the documentation onto the team's branch so the appropriate disciplinary process can take place within their Branch. Any games served while participating in Alberta will also be reported as part of this package.



---

**Out of Province Games** - all game sheets, write-ups and Notices of Suspension for infractions assessed to a Hockey Alberta registered Player or Team Official, while playing a game in another Province or Country, must be submitted to the Hockey Alberta office immediately following the game or tournament. The Hockey Alberta office will forward the documentation onto the appropriate discipline representative, League and/ or Member organization to have the appropriate disciplinary process initiated. Any games served while participating out-of-Province will be considered in the final suspension decision.

**Alternative Discipline Options** - Any Player or Team Official that incurs an 'indefinite' suspension may be subject to alternative discipline as part of the decision rendered through investigation by Hockey Alberta. Hockey Alberta may issue alternative discipline, such as:

- Educational and/or sensitivity training;
- Completion of courses/ clinics (ie – coach, official, RIS, etc.);
- Submission of a written apology;
- Mandatory completion of Volunteer work;
- Etc.

## **SERVING OF SUSPENSIONS**

When a suspension is incurred in League, Exhibition, Tournament and Provincial play, the suspension must be served in the next consecutive League, Tournament or Provincial game(s). Exhibition games do not count as suspended games served and Players still cannot play in exhibition games while serving the suspension.

Any player that is suspended as a result of an infraction with either their registered team or their affiliated team is suspended from all sanctioned hockey games (League, Exhibition, Tournament & Provincial) until the suspension is served with the primary team they are registered with. If that Team is finished hockey for the season, the Player would be allowed to serve the remaining suspension with his/her affiliated team.

Any Team Official registered with more than one (1) Hockey Team, who incurs a suspension is not eligible to participate in any sanctioned hockey game (League, Exhibition, Tournament & Provincial) until the suspension has been served with the Team with which the suspension was incurred.

All Players and Team Officials are eligible to continue to participate in practices and off-ice Team activities while under suspension.

**Early Season End Suspensions** - If a Team has completed their season and is no longer playing League, Tournament or Provincial games, Players and Team Officials who have not completely served a suspension from the current playing season may request in writing (through their Member organization to the respective Hockey Alberta designate) to have the suspension served in an exhibition game(s).

**Carryover Suspensions** - A Player or Team Official with a suspension that was not completely served in the previous season will be required to carry that suspension over to the following season. Players with a carryover suspension will be eligible to participate in player evaluations while under suspension; however, they will not be eligible to participate in any Exhibition, Pre-Season, Tiering or Tournament



---

games prior to October 15<sup>th</sup> unless approved for a suspension deferral. Team Officials with a carryover suspension will not be eligible to participate in any type of game until after the suspension has been completely served in League, Tournament or Provincial games.

**Suspension Deferral** - Players may request a suspension deferral by having their Member organization submit a request in writing to the appropriate Hockey Alberta designate. If approved, the suspension may be deferred for any Exhibition, Pre-Season, Tiering or Tournament games (up to a maximum of three (3) games) with any one team prior to October 15<sup>th</sup>. Should a suspension deferral be granted, those games played do not count as games served. Once the deferred games are played, the player must serve their suspension in full. Team Officials are not eligible to be considered for a Suspension Deferral.

**Junior / Senior Teams** - Should a properly registered player of a Junior or Senior Team incur a suspension (of any length), that player may not be released from his/ her Team until the suspension has been completely served. Should the suspension carry over into the following season, that player must be registered to the same Team with which the suspension was incurred, or written consent must be granted by Hockey Alberta to allow the player to register with a different Team.

**Pre-Season Suspensions** - Players who received a suspension as a result of an infraction in a Pre-Season Game may have their Member organization submit a request in writing to the appropriate Hockey Alberta designate to be granted permission to serve the suspension during the next Pre-Season game(s).