



## HOCKEY CANADA RELEASES INFORMATION ABOUT SANCTIONED PROGRAMS

### Document outlines differences for participants in sanctioned and non-sanctioned hockey

**CALGARY, AB** - In collaboration with its Members and partner leagues, Hockey Canada has released a document that clarifies significant differences for participants in sanctioned and non-sanctioned hockey programs, including player safety, insurance, eligibility, playing rules, high-performance opportunities and recognition by government.

The document outlines 20 benefits that are available to participants in Hockey Canada-sanctioned programs and are either not provided or not guaranteed with non-sanctioned programs, which all operate without being recognized by government in Canada and are not governed by the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF).

“With the beginning of the 2023-24 hockey season upon us, we felt it was important and frankly necessary to inform Canadians about the differences between participating in sanctioned and non-sanctioned hockey,” said Darren Cossar, senior vice-president of member engagement. “We hope this document will inform parents and participants of the benefits available to them with membership in sanctioned hockey, and the variance and risks should they choose to participate outside of it.

“For any parents and participants looking to confirm that they have registered for sanctioned hockey and have access to its benefits, we encourage you to reach out to your provincial Member, association or league and ask if they are a member of Hockey Canada.”

All participants in Hockey Canada-sanctioned programs are eligible to be affiliate players, compete in sanctioned hockey tournaments and against teams from other IIHF Member National Associations. They can also be selected for national and provincial/territorial high-performance teams, can compete in provincial and national championships, and are entitled to full, standardized insurance coverage. Sanctioned games are officiated by trained and certified officials within the Hockey Canada Officiating Pathway using a standardized rulebook.

In sanctioned hockey, it is a requirement that all coaches, bench staff, trainers and officials undergo a mandatory criminal record check and/or vulnerable sector check, and that all coaches, trainers and officials be trained and certified to perform their responsibilities. Coaches, officials and staff in sanctioned hockey may also be considered for additional assignments and opportunities, including participation in IIHF events, and Canadian Hockey League, Canadian Junior Hockey League and Junior A games.

Only participants in sanctioned hockey are eligible to submit confidential complaints of maltreatment, abuse or harassment to the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner or Hockey Canada’s Independent Third Party. Should a player, coach or staff member under suspension in sanctioned hockey move to a non-sanctioned league, it is not guaranteed the suspension would be recognized and upheld.

Any player rostered on a non-sanctioned hockey team after Sept. 30 is ineligible to be rostered in a Hockey Canada-sanctioned league for the remainder of the season, even if they are released by their non-sanctioned team at a later date.

Ultimately, Hockey Canada and its Members are tasked with ensuring participants of all ages and abilities can enjoy playing hockey in communities across the country, both recreationally and competitively. While we feel strongly that our model for delivering hockey is to the benefit, safety and wellness of players, coaches, officials, parents, administrators and volunteers, we recognize and respect that others remain free to participate in the game outside of sanctioned programs.

The entire document outlining differences in sanctioned and non-sanctioned hockey can be found [below](#) or [here](#).



## HOCKEY CANADA RELEASES INFORMATION ABOUT SANCTIONED PROGRAMS

### Document outlines differences for participants in sanctioned and non-sanctioned hockey

Benefit	Hockey Canada-sanctioned programs	Non-sanctioned programs
Recognized by the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF)	✔ Yes, which allows teams sanctioned by Hockey Canada to compete against teams from other IIHF Member National Associations	✘ No, as well as not guaranteed to be overseen by any governing body
Supported and recognized by government as the official system for hockey in Canada	✔ Yes	✘ No
Eligible to participate in sanctioned hockey tournaments	✔ Yes	✘ No
Partners with the NHL, CHL, CJHL, U SPORTS and others that operate under sanctioned hockey	✔ Yes	✘ No
Opportunity to be an affiliate player in a Hockey Canada-sanctioned league, including the CHL, CJHL and Junior A	✔ Yes	✘ No
Suspensions are tracked and upheld if a player, coach or staff member move between leagues	✔ Yes	✘ No, and any suspension from a Hockey Canada-sanctioned league is not guaranteed to be recognized in future non-sanctioned play
Eligible to submit confidential complaints of maltreatment, abuse or harassment to the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner or Hockey Canada's Independent Third Party	✔ Yes	✘ No
Opportunities to participate in low-cost entry-level introduction to hockey programs, such as NHL/NHLPA First Shift, Esso Fun Days and Dreams Come True	✔ Yes	✘ No
Eligible to be selected for national and provincial and territorial high-performance teams and programs	✔ Yes	✘ No
Coaches, officials and staff may be considered for additional sanctioned assignments and opportunities including participation in IIHF events, CHL, CJHL and Junior A games, Program of Excellence events and regional and national championships	✔ Yes	✘ No
Eligible to compete in provincial and national championships hosted by Hockey Canada and its Member branches	✔ Yes	✘ No
Opportunity to collaborate with Hockey Canada and its Member branches across the country, who have successful track records of organizational and financial stability	✔ Yes	✘ No
Eligible to be rostered in a Hockey Canada-sanctioned league for the remainder of the season, including CHL, CJHL and Junior A	✔ Yes	⚠ Ineligible if participating in non-sanctioned hockey after September 30
Officials have been trained and certified by Hockey Canada	✔ Yes	⚠ Not guaranteed
Proven model for hockey to be enjoyed recreationally and competitively	✔ Yes	⚠ Not guaranteed
Mandatory criminal record and/or vulnerable sector check for all coaches, bench staff, trainers and officials.	✔ Yes	⚠ Not guaranteed
Full, standardized insurance coverage, including Commercial General Liability, Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance and Directors and Officers Liability	✔ Yes	⚠ Not guaranteed
Standardized rulebook for all levels of hockey	✔ Yes	⚠ Not guaranteed
Mandatory education, certification and training required for coaches, trainers and officials	✔ Yes	⚠ Not guaranteed
Standardized age-appropriate hockey programs	✔ Yes	⚠ Not guaranteed



## HOCKEY CANADA RELEASES INFORMATION ABOUT SANCTIONED PROGRAMS

Document outlines differences for participants in sanctioned and non-sanctioned hockey

# WHAT IS HOCKEY?

Hockey is a fun team sport that fosters new friendships, healthy physical activity and life skills that go beyond the ice.

# SAFE

Athlete safety is our top priority. Hockey Canada governs minor hockey to best protect all of its participants.

# FRIENDSHIP

Through hockey, players will make lifelong friends and learn teamwork, dedication, determination, perseverance and commitment.

# FUN

When kids of all ages start to play hockey, it's all about having fun. As kids advance in skill, fun remains the foundation, through increased competition.

# FLEXIBLE

Does your child want to play recreationally or competitively? Once a week in your neighbourhood or more frequently? Minor hockey associations are increasingly offering scheduling options for families.

# WELCOMING

No matter your skill level or experience, there's a team for you.