

Coach's Guidelines

We recognize and value that everyone brings their own personal style, interests and skill sets to coaching. At the same time, we have found that certain approaches to coaching have gone a long way in supporting RHC's philosophy. We therefore ask that you support the **spirit and intent** of the following guidelines:

- **Encourage and support players to do their best, have a good time and to look forward to the next opportunity.**
- **Be a positive role model by using positive talk and positive gestures in the dressing room, on the ice and on the bench.**
- **Foster a sense of respect by showing it to the hockey players, their opponents, referees, parents and other coaches. Expect your team to do the same.**
- **Exhibit principles of fair play. All players need to receive equal ice time, irrespective of their ability. Please roll your lines. Use of power plays, penalty killing units, shortening the bench, or offering rewards to players to run up the score are not in the true spirit of the league and send a bad message to all players.**
- **Develop a sense of team by recognizing that there will be players of varying abilities and they can support each other.**
- **Support skill development by offering constructive suggestions, commenting on a play you liked and seizing "teaching moments" as they arise.**

The Value of Your Coaching:

Did you know that coaches can have a profound impact on young players in how they look at themselves, their confidence level and how long they stay in hockey? 83% of kids are out of hockey by age 15. 68% of players say that the coach is the most important element.

The feedback we received from the players in the Recreational Leagues last year indicated the number one "fun" factor was the lack of pressure they felt from teammates, coaches and their parents.

Coach's Operational Responsibilities & Expectations of RHC

There are a number of team organizational tasks that need to be completed as well as responsibilities that go with coaching.

Coaches/Assistant Coaches are asked to make every effort to support and implement the following. We believe this support will go a long way in making sure the players have a good time, help to minimize conflicts and injuries and encourage positive relations amongst the players, coaches, referees and parents.

1. At the beginning of the season (October):

- Distribute the team uniforms and organize the volunteers you feel necessary for the team to function efficiently.
- Contact players to introduce yourself and to let them know what team they will be on and their schedule.

Have a team meeting before your first game. This will help to "break the ice" and provide an opportunity for you to express **your expectations** and set the tone for the season.

Team conduct, volunteers, hockey rules and communication will need to be covered.

Contact and co-ordinate volunteers. The parental involvement will be limited in this league. However, it will still be **your** responsibility to ensure you have a score and timekeeper throughout the season. If you have other parents who help out on the bench on a regular basis, please let the Coordinator know and they will ensure they are registered on the team sheet so they qualify for Hockey Canada insurance as well as CPS security check.

2.Establish and Maintain Appropriate Team Conduct:

- The players need to be informed at the beginning of the season what conduct is expected of them in the dressing room, on the bench and on the ice. They may need to be reminded as is needed throughout the season.
- Conduct must be in keeping with RHC's philosophy: excessive physical play will not be tolerated...hockey should be played in the spirit of good sportsmanship, fair play, friendship and respect. Trash talking during and after games is therefore not acceptable.

Behavior deemed to be inappropriate or in contravention of the rules, needs to be dealt with quickly. The Coach should speak to the player; speak to the player and parents; or speak to the co-coordinator. Also you can have the player sit out the next shift, period or game. The Coaches choice will be a judgment call based on the nature of the infraction. If it is a game, please inform the coordinator. In addition, should a Coach see an infraction on the ice that is blatant and intentional and is not called by the referee, he should speak to his player about it being unacceptable. The coach also has the option of having the player miss his next shift as a "penalty".

3. Be cognizant of and inform your players of RHC's Discipline Policy:

- There is a zero tolerance for unacceptable behavior.

4. Ensure that your players are properly dressed for the game, including mouth guards & CSA Approved hockey helmets securely affixed & fastened to their head.

5. Maintain Supervision in the dressing rooms.

Although the atmosphere in the dressing room tends to be a little more relaxed than in mainstream hockey, the players must still be supervised in the dressing room and on the bench before and after the games. This not only ensures the players are treating each other with respect but it helps to protect RHC's interests in the event of a claim of damage.

If you have any **female players** on your team — Hockey Canada prohibits co-ed dressing for players aged 10 and older for risk management reasons. Please understand most arenas do not have a separate dressing room available for female players but alternative arrangements must be found. The coach should call all the arenas they will use and ask what arrangements may be made for your female players and advice what, if any, alternative dressing area are available. Please invite your female players into the dressing room for the pre-game talk 5 minutes prior to the start of the game. Any male player not completely dressed by this time must make other arrangements.

6. Work with your Referees:

All referees will be assigned by the Central Zone Referee Committee - the same referees that are assigned to mainstream hockey in Calgary. During the pre-game introductions, we would encourage you to "gently" remind the referees this is a Recreational League game and that body checking is not permitted. We do

expect some incidental contact and bumping along the boards, however excessive physical play and body checks should be called. This does not mean telling the referees how to call the game; it just means reminding them it is a Recreational League game. As always, different referees will have their own discretion when calling penalties and you should encourage your parents and players to respect their calls. Please note that we are working closely with the Central Zone Referee Committee in order to identify Referees who seem to enjoy this style of hockey.

If a Referee did an exceptional job and seemed to have the spirit of this league at heart, please send an email to RHC.

Similarly, if a Referee seems bored or disinterested, he/she may be better suited to Community hockey and your assistance in identifying them would be appreciated. Referees are not perfect...they're learning just like our players....most of them do their best and want to call a good game.

Do not engage them during or after the game! If you do, regardless of the issues, you will be disciplined by RHC because of our zero tolerance policy with "on- ice officials' abuse.

Do document your concerns in writing and do try to get the opposing team management to provide written support of the issue. If you're seeing a poor game being called, they are likely noticing the same thing. If they're not, you need to question your own view of what has transpired. The key point is it helps to get collaboration to substantiate your concerns. Documentation should then be forwarded to the RHC President (and in parallel, by the other team to the President) who will then look at the issue. Then, and only then, will further action be taken. We have seen the above process work very well. If you fail to follow it, please do not expect your concerns to be dealt with effectively.

7. Communicate with your Divisional Coordinator:

Make sure you understand how your Coordinator will handle communication between yourself and him/her. Provide completed game sheets to your Coordinator, complying with his/her suggested process and timing — 12-24 hour.

Provide necessary information, including contact information and e-mail addresses.

Report all suspensions and major penalties to him/her.

Contact your Coordinator when problems arise implementing our philosophy or rules.

8. Handle complaints in a professional respectful manner:

There are bound to be some disagreements between coaches, parents and players throughout the course of the hockey season. Problems may also arise in implementing RHC's philosophy or rules. RHC encourages open dialogue and an attempt will be made to reach a positive solution to the problem before it becomes serious. We are prepared to handle fair criticism when justified and intend to work hard to rectify problems within our power. However, it is paramount that each and every player and parent accept the responsibility that goes along with the privilege of playing in this organization. In addition, we need to ensure that there is positive support for our coaches from the players and from their parents, especially at times when things are not going well. Some parents often forget their role and resort to open criticism of the coaches, players or team, destroying much of what our program is trying to accomplish. Only with mutual cooperation, respect and open communication between the coaches, players, parents and the Council can our program be a success. Don't let problems simmer! It is in your best interest to respond to a problem as soon as you are aware of it. Should minor player issues arise, they should be worked out between the player and the coach. We believe that the relationship between a player and the coach is the responsibility of those two individuals. Encourage parents not to complain by making discouraging or disparaging remarks about coaches, referees, opponents, other parents or teammates at any time — especially in the presence of players. Realize that despite all your best efforts, you can't please everyone, but you can be calm and open with all parents. Contact your coordinator if you feel the need for assistance due to the scope of the problem or if you are not able to resolve it. Should the problem still remain, it can be referred to the RHC President.

9. At the end of the season:

Submit numbered player evaluation forms to your coordinator as requested.

Return your teams' equipment at the end of season on the requested drop-off date & at the specified location.

Ensure that all jerseys are washed, hung on individual hangers, and placed in sequential order from the smallest number to the largest number in the jersey bag. Your co-operation on this matter will help to expedite collection and the next season's delivery to the coaches.

Submit completed equipment forms along with the equipment to the Equipment Coordinator. This will expedite next years order.