

2022

ELITE FEMALE FRANCHISE APPLICATION

APPLICATION GUIDELINES





OVERVIEW

As a result of the Female Hockey Review that was completed in 2015, Hockey Alberta developed a new Female Hockey Model. The Franchise Model provides a more professional program for Elite Female Hockey and allows Minor Hockey Associations (MHAs) to build a comprehensive player development structure that starts with Grassroots programming in local communities and aligns the entire Female Hockey model to create support through the U15 and U18 AA programs, the U18 AAA program and finally into the Team Alberta program.

Within the Franchise Model each member MHA can apply to host an Alberta Female Hockey League (AFHL) franchise. Hockey Alberta reviews the applications and determines if the need for League expansion exists and if the MHA supports the player and coach development philosophy and principles of the Female Hockey Model.

This document provides MHAs and other stakeholders an overview of the application process and criteria that will be used by Hockey Alberta in assessing new franchise applications received from MHAs.

Hockey Alberta is accepting Applications for expansion at the U15 AA Division as well as the new U13 AA Division. Successful applicants will begin operations for the 2023-24 season. All and supporting documentation (as identified below) must be submitted to the Hockey Alberta office by **December 15, 2022**.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES AND PROCESS

1. For **EXISTING AFHL Program Applications**, the following items must be completed in full and submitted:
 - a. [Application Form](#) (Existing Franchise) on the Hockey Alberta website.
 - b. Application Letter, which must include Divisions, rationale, and information on how expansion will help the MHA's existing programming.

2. For **NEW Program Applications**, the following information is required: Detailed three (3) year business plan that includes a detailed outline of the following items
 - a. [Application Form](#) (New Franchise) on the Hockey Alberta website.
 - b. Application Letter which must include Divisions, rationale, and information on how expansion will help the MHA's existing programming.
 - c. Detailed three (3) year business plan that provides full details on the following items:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Overview of the Community • An Overview and History of the MHA • Objectives of the Program • Outline of the Organizational Structure • Outline of Team/ Program Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the Facilities • Outline of the Player Education Plan • Detailed Program Budget • Program Description and Marketing Plan • Athletic Delivery Model
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For additional details on information that should be included, please see Appendix A – New Franchise Guidelines.

 - d. Letters of support from the member Minor Hockey Associations in the surrounding area that show a willingness of the programs to work together to provide the best hockey environment possible for the players.

3. Upon receipt of an application, Hockey Alberta will review the submission and, if required, identify a date for a presentation (in-person or virtual) to be made by the applicant.



4. Hockey Alberta will evaluate the application and presentation (if required). Hockey Alberta may also consult any key stakeholders (MHAs, Leagues, Accredited Schools, etc.) to determine the possible impact to existing programs. Items taken into consideration are:
 - a. Does the application meet the application criteria and adhere to the operating mandate and philosophy established by Hockey Alberta?
 - b. Does the application demonstrate a sound business plan, outlining player development goals, school and athletic schedules, appropriate staffing, budget, etc?
 - c. Does the application show strong growth within the region and the ability to sustain the program(s) outlined in the application package?
 - d. Is the application consistent with the strategic direction of Hockey Alberta?
 - e. What is the impact on affected stakeholders?
 - (i) impact to Minor Hockey Associations in the area in which the program will operate;
 - (ii) impact to recognized leagues in the area in which the program will operate;
 - (iii) impact to existing AFHL and Accredited School programs in the province;
 - (iv) impact to other Members/ stakeholders in the province.
 - f. What is the historical record/ background of all parties involved in the partnership of the applicant?

NOTE: The impact to stakeholders can be determined by evaluating registration numbers, the size of leagues, the distance of travel for teams, etc. There is a threshold to the number of teams that can operate within Alberta at each level and age division; Hockey Alberta will not approve the addition of new programs if it has the potential to negatively affect existing programs.

5. The final decision of Hockey Alberta will be communicated to each applicant, via email, no later than **February 1, 2023**. Franchises will be awarded based on a multi-year agreement and are subject to review by Hockey Alberta annually.
6. All approved Elite Female franchises shall operate in accordance with Hockey Canada and Hockey Alberta Bylaws, Regulations, Policies and Procedures.
 - a. Franchises are able to submit regulation amendment proposals to Hockey Alberta annually;
 - b. An existing franchise hosting teams may apply to Hockey Alberta to add new team(s) to their existing program by completing by a new Franchise Application;
 - c. A franchise may terminate its affiliation with Hockey Alberta by not submitting a Renewal Application;
 - d. Hockey Alberta, in its sole and unfettered discretion, may terminate the affiliation and sanctioning of a franchise program at the end of a hosting agreement period, by notice in writing, if at any time the franchise is in default or otherwise fails to comply with the rules, regulations and policies of Hockey Alberta or Hockey Canada.



APPENDIX A: Additional Information for Applications for New AFHL Franchises

The following information is required for a new franchise (not a current Member Association of the AFHL) application. The information submitted by the MHA should contain the following components to allow in Hockey Alberta to make an accurate evaluation of the submitted applications. This Appendix provides details on the components to be addressed.

A) Community Overview

The application should contain an overview of the hosting community and region, including:

- Rationale supporting the application by potential host community and region, including the characteristics of the communities and surrounding areas that will be utilized in the program.
- Map of the host community indicating locations of key facilities (i.e. arena, hotels, medical services, etc.) with detailed listing of distances and travel times.
- An introduction to key personnel and how they will be utilized to support the objectives of the program.

B) Minor Hockey Association Overview

The application should contain an overview of the hosting MHA, including:

- Characteristics of the MHA that will be utilized in the program.
- An introduction to key personnel and how they will be utilized to support the objectives of the program.
- The MHA's governance model and volunteer structure as it pertains to Female Hockey.
- How this franchise will tie into the existing AFHL structure (i.e. if only applying for a U13 team, how will the MHA ensure athletes transition through the development system)?

C) Business Plan

I. Personnel

Provide a detailed outline of how you, as a hosting MHA, would structure the AFHL franchise.

- Using a chart, if necessary, provide an overview of the positions involved in the day-to-day operations of the program and the role of each position. Include details of each person's background/ hockey knowledge.

II. Facility/ Arena

Certain facility standards are required to host an Elite franchise. Provide a detailed outline of your facility plan.

- It is preferred that one dedicated arena is available to host the team's practices and games (different arenas can be used for different teams).
- Facilities should have hardwired internet to accommodate HockeyTV livestreaming requirements. (Only required for U15 and U18 Franchise Applications)
- Securing a permanent dressing room facility for the Team can add value for the players
- The main host arena must have adequate seating space for spectators

III. Billeting (only required U15 and U18 applications)

Each franchise must have a plan to provide living arrangements for players that do not reside within a reasonable commuting distance from the host community. Provide a detailed outline of your billeting plan.

- Outline the screening process (including background/ criminal record checks) you would implement for billet families.

IV. Transportation

Each franchise will be responsible for transporting the entire team (players and team officials) to and from any out-of-town practices, games or other activities. Provide a detailed outline of your plan for this transportation.

- Outline the risk management practices you would implement.

V. Academics

Each approved AFHL franchise is required to ensure the education of the players is a priority. Provide a detailed plan of how your program will implement educational standards and support for the players.

- Provide an outline of an information/ education plan that is focused on providing details about post-secondary education to players and parents.



VI. Medical / Emergency Services

The host MHA is required to provide a Risk Management/ Safety plan to deal with issues/ emergencies as they arise (mandatory). Provide a detailed outline of your plan.

D) Team Operations

1. Player Evaluation/ Selection

To host AA and AAA teams, the hosting MHA must implement protocols for player evaluation and selection. Provide details on how your program would complete this process to ensure you always build the best possible team. Specifically reference the following items:

- For AA teams with specific recruitment areas, players from anywhere within Alberta would be permitted to access your tryouts
- For AAA teams with no boundaries to restrict the recruitment area of each program, players from anywhere within Alberta would be permitted to access your tryouts
- Teams would be permitted to host tryout sessions, as well as play some exhibition games and pre-season games

2. Team Official Evaluation / Selection

Each franchise must have a plan in place to implement a team official evaluation and selection process. Provide details to outline how your program would recruit and develop your coaches to ensure you have the best possible resource people operating and working with your teams.

- Team manager
- Head coach and assistant coaches
- Support staff (video and goalie coaches)
- Therapists/ trainers

Outline your plan for ensuring the team officials have all required training and certifications.

Outline your plan for female coach recruitment and development within your association (especially as it pertains to your Elite programs).

3. Player Development

To host an AFHL franchise, the hosting MHA is responsible for building a consistent player development plan. Provide an outline of your player development plan, including the following:

- Ensuring a proper practice to game ratio by striving for 2-3 practices per game played.
- Establishing an annual coaching plan.
- Establishing a player fitness plan (partner with a third party).
- Establishing a player nutrition plan.
- Establishing a coach mentorship plan.

4. Development of Female Hockey

As part of the responsibilities of hosting an AFHL franchise, MHAs must be leaders for female hockey. Provide an outline of your plan for the following items:

- Disseminating information to MHAs within your Recruitment Area.
- Receiving feedback from MHAs within your Recruitment Area.
- Initiatives your MHA will undertake, utilizing your AFHL team(s), to grow and develop grassroots female hockey within your MHA and Recruitment Area.
- The MHA's long-term growth and development strategy for female hockey within the MHA and the Recruitment Area.

E) Finance/ Budget

1. Revenue

Provide a detailed outline of the projected revenue that the hosting MHA will apply to operating the AFHL franchise and each team.



- Proposed fees that each player will pay.
- Details of a sponsorship plan.
- Details of a fundraising plan.

2. Expenses

Provide a detailed outline of the projected annual expenses associated with operating an AFHL franchise.

- Ice/ facility rentals
- Transportation
- Team meals
- Training programs (on- and off-ice)
- Team official honorariums

AFHL NEW FRANCHISE APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- APPLICATION PACKAGE COVERING LETTER
 - Outlining the proposed program and why the applicant is interested)
- COMMUNITY OVERVIEW
- MHA OVERVIEW
- BUSINESS PLAN
 - Personnel
 - Facility
 - Billeting (if required)
 - Transportation
 - Academics (if required)
 - Emergency/ Medical Services
- TEAM OPERATIONS
 - Player Evaluation/ Selection
 - Team Official Evaluation/ Selection
 - Player Development Plan (Summary of the number of hours for on-ice, off-ice programming and classroom time)
 - Development of Female Hockey
- FINANCE/ BUDGET
- ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
 - Partnership with local school
 - Partnership with third party service providers
 - Other pertinent details
- MARKETING PLAN
 - Marketing strategy
 - Promotional plan for student-player program recruitment
- AGREEMENTS IN PLACE
 - Contracts/ Operating Partners (MOU)
 - Supporting documents from Minor Hockey Association(s)

Please submit documents to Hockey Alberta through the provided links by no later than December 15, 2022.