



MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 20, 2016

TO: Minor Hockey Associations

FROM: Kendall Newell
Manager, Female Hockey

SUBJECT: **Alberta Female Elite Hockey League**

The new Female Hockey Alberta Development Model (ADM) has been adopted to create a unified development stream for Bantam and Midget players within the province. The system is designed to foster a player's advancement through the Elite stream and to ensure their ability to play at the highest level possible. Hockey Alberta strongly encourages all players to consider, and make informed decisions, on their program choices. The following areas have been identified as key pieces of information as players, families and member clubs navigate the new landscape of AAA and Elite Female Hockey.

Are the Teams within the new model true “Regional” Teams?

It is the expectation of Hockey Alberta that each MHA hosting a AAA and/or Elite Team will work in partnership with the LMHA's within their identified Recruitment Area or Draw Zone to gather feedback and ideas that will provide them with the best opportunity to achieve the optimal player, coach and club development within their area.

Can a player access a Midget or Bantam Elite try out elsewhere?

Midget Elite and Bantam Elite players are expected to access their first try out within the area that has been identified by the ADM for their Resident LMHA. However, if extenuating circumstances warrant a move, a player may use the Elite Player Movement Application process to move to access a program outside of their identified area. *Elite Player Movement Forms* must be completed and submitted by July 1st.

A coach or staff member of a “AAA” Member Club has made a verbal commitment to a player, does this guarantee the player a spot on the team for next season?

Each “AAA” Member Club can formally commit up to six players (five skaters and one goaltender) prior to August 15th through the completion of the *Player Agreement Form*, signed by both parties. Commitments made without a written agreement are considered “verbal” and can be viewed as non-binding by either party. Players who have not signed a *Player Agreement* are encouraged to attend multiple tryout camps in order to keep all of their options open.



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What if a player has already attended multiple “AAA” spring camps, does this count towards the maximum number of tryouts allotted?

No, spring identification camps are an opportunity for the player and the family to explore the development opportunities each club has to offer. A player could attend all six identification camps to aid in their decisions. Formal tryouts for “AAA” Member Clubs do not commence until August 15th. After that date, a player is only permitted to try out for a maximum of two “AAA” Member Clubs. Prior to the start of tryouts, a player must complete a *Notification to Tryout (NTO) Form* with their LMHA, including the name of both “AAA” Member Clubs they intend on trying out for. Players are not required to formally declare (using the NTO Form) which two teams they are trying out for until the first date that tryouts could begin (August 15th).

Who signs a *Player Agreement Form*?

A *Player Agreement Form* is for players selected to play for a Midget AAA, Midget Elite or Bantam Elite Team within the ADM. As highlighted above, only “AAA” Member Clubs can formally sign six players prior to August 15th, however ALL “AAA” and Elite players must sign a *Player Agreement Form* prior to the start of the regular season. Underage players are not eligible to sign a *Player Agreement Form* without gaining approval through the Player Acceleration Process.

By signing this document, the player is agreeing to register and play for that specific Member Club for the upcoming season. This document is viewed as binding and it is the expectation of both parties, the player and the Member Club, to uphold their portion of the agreement. For “AAA”, if a player wishes to pursue other available options at the conclusion of a season, the player may ask for a release from their current Club to begin speaking with other Member Clubs.

Some Elite and AAA programs are making it mandatory for players to attend specific high schools and sports academy’s, does Hockey Alberta and the new ADM support and encourage this practice?

The changes to the Elite Female Hockey Structure have been made to create the optimal development experience for the players and their families. The new Female ADM aims to create a structure that allows for players to access high performance resources in an environment that also promotes their academic and social well-being. Member Clubs have been granted autonomy to build the best structure for their program that follows the guiding principles of the Female ADM; creating healthy and balanced athletes.

Asking players to all attend one school or academy program is not a part of the new model and is not mandated by Hockey Alberta through the ADM. If a Host MHA wishes to utilize a structure such as this, the Female ADM committee encourages them to identify options for the players. Forcing a player that does not wish to move schools is not a realistic expectation and is not in the best interest of the player. MHA’s are asked to build flexibility into their programs in order to accommodate players that are selected to the teams.

If any teams or associations have further questions, please feel free to contact Kendall Newell at the Hockey Alberta office.