



INFORMATION BULLETIN

Bulletin No: 15/35

Date: February 22, 2016
To: Minor Hockey Associations
From: Kevin Macrae, Senior Manager, Hockey Operations
SUBJECT: Alternate Season Hockey

Hockey Alberta, along with BC Hockey, the Saskatchewan Hockey Association and Hockey Manitoba have announced the implementation of standardized alternate season programming for Western Canada.

The four Provincial Branch organizations of Hockey Canada have adopted programming and policy for alternate season hockey in their respective areas, standardizing the registration of alternate season or spring hockey teams across Western Canada. Alternate season hockey activities are those that occur from April 1-July 15.

Participation in structured hockey, other than the traditional winter season that runs from September to March, continues to grow. For the most part, hockey which takes place outside of this traditional season has taken place outside of the minor hockey association system and therefore lies outside the realm of the governing bodies in each province.

This new alternate season programming model addresses questions and concerns from participants as to why the non-traditional season programming does not operate under the governance of Hockey Canada and its member Branches.

The Western alternate season model will differ from traditional season hockey. Local Minor Hockey Associations will be able to operate an alternate season, or there will be the opportunity for other groups to register directly with a Branch for the alternate season only. Other features of the alternate season will include:

- Registration through Branch and Insurance through Hockey Canada.
- No boundaries or registration regulations pertaining to where players may play, including open boundaries between provinces.
- Tournament registration with flexible rosters for each tournament
- Guidelines for the tryout procedures, with strict violation standards which could impact mainstream eligibility if not adhered to for coaches and players.

Hockey Canada and its branches support the Long Term Player Development (LTPD) model which encourages athletes to participate in other sports. However, for participants looking for alternate hockey activities, the goal is to make this experience as valuable, safe and fair as possible through



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programming support from the governing bodies. This alternate season model is a window for those who wish to continue hockey but ideally not in pure games competitive model. Developing skills remains the intended focus for any organization offering alternate season programming.

Alternate season team activities may not interfere with any tradition season team functions of any participant. As well, minimum suspension guidelines for each Branch and Hockey Canada will apply, with alternate season suspensions carried over between the traditional and alternate seasons.

Teams that register for the program will provide participants with access to insurance and certification programs for players, coaches and officials. Standard registration fees will apply. Although preparations are underway for the upcoming spring season, registration and sanctioning is still available to teams and tournaments that are already formed for 2016.

For more information, please contact the Hockey Alberta office at 403-342-6777 or by email at info@hockeyalberta.ca.