



ONTARIO WOMEN'S HOCKEY
ASSOCIATION

OWHL 2023 – 2024

REGULAR SEASON – MEMO

Updated August 23rd, 2023



ONTARIO WOMEN'S HOCKEY
ASSOCIATION

1. League games for the OWHL 2023-2024 regular season may start any time after October 1st, 2023, and are to be completed February 19th, 2024.
2. The season will consist of approximately 22 scheduled regular season games, followed by a series of playoff rounds and then a championship weekend. Playoffs will start February 20th and end March 27th, 2024.
3. U9 and U11 divisions will consist of approximately 20 scheduled regular season games starting October 14th, 2023. Playoffs will start February 20th and end March 27th, 2024. U9 and U11 must follow their respective Pathways ([U9 Pathway](#) & [U11 Pathway](#)). REMINDER: U9 teams must play half- ice games until January 15th.
4. Once all the loops have been finalized a playoff format will be released.
5. The League Championship weekend is tentatively scheduled for April 5th – 7th, 2024.
6. Provincial Playdowns games will be held between February 1st and March 10th. Teams are to ensure that their calendar is clear to make room for enough playdown games. All teams that have applied for and meet provincial championship eligibility will assume they will have playdowns. Provincials are tentatively scheduled for April 12th – 14th, 2024.
7. Teams may NOT re-categorize for league play after September 25th, 2023. Exhibition games should be played to determine the correct category prior to the deadline. The category MUST be reflected on the team Intent to Register (ITR) on RAMP. Any category changes must be requested by the Association Registrar on RAMP. U9 and U11 teams will have until October 10th to re-categorize.
8. You will be notified of your scheduling dates once the loops have been assigned. It will be a virtual meeting with all teams prior to the start of the season. We expect virtual meetings to happen between the dates of September 26th – September 30th.
9. Teams must play in the same category for league games as the category they are registered on RAMP.
10. Home teams are expected to enter their home games within 48hrs after completion of the scheduling meeting. RAMP Electronic Game sheets must be used for ALL League and Portal games. Please see the link with the protocol on how to enter games via RAMP: [Creating Games on RAMP](#)
11. 2023-2024 Regular Season League fees will be \$300.00 per team for league play only. Payments are to be made payable to the OWHA and mailed to the OWHA office: 225 Watline Avenue, Mississauga, ON L4Z 1P3. Payments must be paid no later than October 1st, 2023. Teams are responsible for the costs of officials.
12. All questions or inquiries pertaining to leagues should be emailed to leagues@owha.on.ca



**ONTARIO WOMEN'S HOCKEY
ASSOCIATION**

**ONTARIO WOMEN'S
HOCKEY LEAGUE (OWHL)
RULES and REGULATIONS
2023-2024**

(Updated – August 23rd, 2023)

Ontario Women's Hockey League Rules & Regulations Policy

Section 1 – League Liaisons

Each Association/Independent team shall designate one person as the main contact for the League. This designated person shall be called the **League Liaison**. The responsibilities of the League Liaison are to maintain communication between the League and all teams and participants within its Association/Independent team.

Follow the steps below to register as League Liaison:

1. Log into RAMP registration via the registration link provided to you by your association.
2. Under Position Type, please select Association Executive from the drop down.
3. Under Staff Position, Select League Liaison from the drop down. (Do not select League Admin)
4. Follow through and complete registration
5. Once completed you will be assigned the role as League Liaison for your association.

The duties of the League Liaison include the following:

- a. Communication between a team in the Association/Independent team and the League on all matters other than immediate scheduling/ immediate game portal access.
- b. All discipline matters regarding any team in the Association. NOTE: All on-ice discipline MUST be reported to the OWHA immediately and OWHA renders decisions on suspensions. OWHA manages all League discipline and discipline when more than one Association or Independent Team is involved. All disciplinary matters must also be reported to the OWHA immediately.
- c. Notifying the League about teams the Association wishes to enter in the league for the next season of play by the date set out in Section 5 a);
- d. Registering the contact information for each team in the manner prescribed by the League by the required date as set annually by the League.
- e. Monitoring and ensuring that each team is properly registered with the OWHA before its first league game.

The League Liaison must have a full e-mail service and must inform the League of any changes in contact information immediately. The League Liaison must have the authority to always speak for the Association. The League will only deal with individual teams through the League Liaison.

It is the policy of the OWHL to respond only to concerns and issues raised by each association's League Liaison. Any comments other than operational questions sent directly to the OWHA will be forwarded back to the association's League Liaison in adherence to the policy.

Section 2 – Player Eligibility

- a. All players must be properly registered on their team's OWHA team registration form as per OWHA by-laws, rules, regulations, and policies.
- b. An eligible player must be registered within the League. House league players will be eligible when picked up from within their own association.
- c. To be eligible a player must be rostered with the team on or before December 31st, 2023. They must play at least 5 games before January 15th to be eligible for league playoffs and championship weekend.

Section 3 – Team Rosters

OWHA approved rosters will be recognized as the official roster. Players and team staff must be registered on their team roster to be eligible to play/participate in the OWHL.

All teams must have an approved OWHA roster prior to the first time the team goes on ice.

- a) Each team is permitted to dress 19 players (including skaters and goaltenders) for each game.

Section 4 – Association and Team Responsibility

- a. As a reminder, in order to be eligible each Association and Independent teams must be registered in RAMP. Teams must have an approved roster. The registrar must select the League that the team wishes to participate in. (Example: OWHL Southern, OWHL Eastern, etc.)
- b. By October 1st, 2023, each team must supply a cheque or money order payable to the OWHA to cover the entry fees for the forthcoming season. The entry fees are non-refundable, unless the team provides written notice to the OWHA, on or prior to September 18th, 2023, of its decision to withdraw from the League.
- c. U9 and U11 teams are required to play two (2) mandatory OWHA sanctioned games against two (2) different teams at their own OWHA registered level or higher to place their team in the most appropriate category. All other divisions are highly recommended to also play two (2) OWHA sanctioned games to best categorize their respective teams. At the completion of each game, the game sheet must be submitted via RAMP for verification.
- d. Each team must enter online game sheet data, and submit game sheets, in accordance with Section 15.

Section 5 – Scheduling for 2023-2024 Season

- a. Scheduling will provide flexibility to accommodate OWHA provincial playdowns and championships. Each team must undertake to have sufficient ice time to meet regular season requirements by the set completion date annually.
- b. All changes to game times, dates or locations of games must be reported to leagues@owha.on.ca at least forty-eight (48) hours before actual game time so the online system may be properly updated, and referees informed. Failure to do so can result in a \$50.00 fine payable by the HOME team.

Regular Season: One (1) team representative will schedule all required games by the scheduling date. Games will be scheduled to reflect a balanced schedule. Any changes throughout the season will be handled by the League Liaison. If changes to the game are to be made, the team must notify the other team in writing and include OWHA of this change via an email to leagues@owha.on.ca. It will be each team's responsibility to ensure on an ongoing basis that the dates, locations, and times for all games are correct in the schedule posted on the website. The League website will be the sole source of official schedules.

Section 6 – Pick-up Players

- a. Pick-Ups are not permitted for suspended players.
- b. All Pickup Player requests must be completed via RAMP Games Portal. To submit and approve a request please use the link that will take you to the OWHA website: [PICKUP PLAYER REQUEST](#)
- c. For Regular Season League games, a team may pick up any eligible player, to a maximum of three (3) pick up players, from a lower category to bring the total team strength to, but not exceed, the number of officially registered players on the team. The OWHA may authorize the movement of a goaltender for emergency situations only, identified as being situations in which the team would have no roster goalie available to play.
- d. Pick Up players are not eligible for Championship Weekend. (Exception for Goalies with League approval). NOTE: Pick up players are NOT permitted for OWHA provincial playdowns or championships.
- e. A Pick-Up Player is defined as EITHER from:
 - a lower age level and the same classification or lower.
 - the same age level and lower classification:
 - (E.g.): 1 – U15 A team can call from U13 A team.
 - (E.g.): 2 – U15 A team can call from U13 BB team.
 - (E.g.): 3 - U15 A team can call from U15 BB team.
 - (E.g.): 4 – U15 A team can NOT call from U13 AA team.
- f. Any team found to have violated the Pick-Up Players rule by virtue of not having complied with any of the requirements or limits specified in Rule 7, subsections a) through e) will forfeit the game in which the violation(s) was found to have occurred and by a score that is in accordance with subsection 9) of the Forfeiture Policy listed in the OWHA Handbook. Teams violating Rule 7, as above, will be considered by the League to have used an ineligible or illegal player and the violation will be reported to the OWHA as a suspendable offence.
- g. Pick up players must meet OWHA requirements including but not limited to prior written approval from the pickup players team/association.

Section 7 – Suspensions

In the event of any suspendable offences, the OWHA Discipline Policy must be followed in its entirety. The OWHA manages discipline.

- a) ALL penalties must be recorded on the electronic game sheet.
- b) For any suspendable offence occurring in a League game, the OWHA must be notified by the offending team within 24 hours via email at stats@owha.on.ca, or before their next game, whichever comes first.

Section 8 – Protests & Appeals

- a. Members can only protest a game regarding an interpretation or violation of a OWHL rule – e.g., not adhering to the agreed curfew, or if there is an improperly registered, unregistered, ineligible, or suspended player participating.
- b. Notification that a game is being protested MUST be communicated to leagues@owha.on.ca within twenty-four (24) hours of the infraction(s).
- c. If you the decision is to protest a game, the following must be completed and submitted to the OWHA office within 48 hours of the start time of the game that is being protested.
 - The OWHA protest form must be completed in full.

- Protest payment of \$200 payable to the OWHA (cheque or money order)
 - NOTE: Applications will only be accepted when both the form and payment have been sent via registered mail and have been received in the OWHA office within 48 hours of the start time of the game that is being protested.**
- d. To Protest, a team must:
 - i. Notify the referee verbally of the protest before, during, or at the end of the game, before they leave the ice,
 - OR
 - ii. Notify the OWHA Office within forty-eight (48) hours of the start of the game that is being protested.

NOTE: These are the only situations which are eligible to be protested to the League.

- e. Within seven (7) days of the protest being filed, the OWHA shall set a date for the hearing of the protest. The hearing may be virtual or in person, at the discretion of the OWHA, and the date will be no more than fifteen (15) days after the filing date. Teams attending a Protest Hearing must be represented by a rostered staff member.
- f. Decisions are final and binding and not subject to appeal.
- g. Refunded fees for protests will be at the discretion of the committee.

Section 9 – Officials

- a. It is recognized that there is currently a critical shortage of certified officials in Ontario and in Canada. As such, games may proceed with fewer than the ideal number of on-ice officials. Some games normally officiated by 3 officials will be officiated by 2 officials. At certain levels, a 1 official system may be utilized with prior OWHA approval. At all times, associations and coaches are to be in control of themselves and their teams and support fair play for all involved.
- b. It is the responsibility of every association, team, and participant to always treat officials with respect. If there are concerns, there is a process to address these concerns after the completion of the game.
- c. Officials must be currently certified and provide their ref number or certification number along with their name to the timekeeper so that it can be entered into the Game sheet App.
- d. In U15 AA, U15 A, U18 AA, U18 A, U18 BB, U22 A, a three-official system is desirable. In all other divisions, a two-referee system is desirable. Failure to comply (schedule the appropriate number of officials) may result in a fine of \$100 against the offending team.
- e. A game may proceed with one official less than the number required provided that the official(s) and both teams agree before the game commences. Once started the game may not be stopped or protested unless an injury occurs to the referee that prevents the official from completing the game. If the game does not proceed it is considered un-played and must be rescheduled within seven (7) days. A single on-ice official may not officiate a scheduled three-official game without prior approval from the OWHA. Any game officiated in a manner that is not compliant with this section will be considered not played and must be rescheduled within seven (7) days and will result in a fine of \$200 against each team; in addition, the coach of each team will be assessed a suspension.
- f. All games will use the fast face-off protocol. The puck shall be put into play at the indicated start time of the game regardless of whether both teams are lined up in face off position.
- g. Officials are to be at ice level at game time and are to order the clock to start for three (3) minutes warm up period as soon as both nets are pegged and available for the teams to begin

their warmup. When two minutes have elapsed, a game official will blow the whistle to let the teams know they have one minute to get to their benches and get their starting line up to center ice. If teams fail to be ready a delay of game penalty is to be assessed.

- h. OWHA highly recommends games be officiated by OWHA on-ice officials.

Section 10 – Cancellation and Rescheduling Rules

- a. After scheduling day(s), teams will be allowed a period of three (3) calendar days to change times and/or locations of games on the originally submitted schedule, after which time the team's schedule will be marked Final and entered the League's on-line game system. Any changes made during the 3-day grace period must be made known to the team's opponent as well as the OWHA. After a team's regular season schedule is marked final, each team will be allowed to rearrange a maximum of three (3) games during the season.
- b. Cancellation of a regular season, playoff (if conducted) game by a team may be done without cancellation penalty up to two weeks (14 days) prior to the day a game is scheduled. Any cancelled game must be rescheduled as provided below.
- c. Ice costs for a game cancelled less than two weeks before the game day becomes the responsibility of the team which gives notice of cancellation unless the ice is used by the non-cancelling team, or some other team. This does not include weather related cancellations.
- d. The OWHA reserves the right to issue an additional \$500.00 fine, payable to the OWHA, to any team who either fails to show for a scheduled league game without just cause; cancels a scheduled league game within twenty-four (24) hours of its playing time without just cause; or refuses to reschedule a cancelled game. In addition, the OWHA shall have the right to suspend all or any member of the team staff of the offending team for up to one (1) year and to refuse the admission of teams from the offending association for the next season.
- e. If a game must be cancelled because one or both teams cannot travel due to inclement weather or as a result of a health-related issue. The following policy is in effect:
 - 1. The team cancelling the game must DIRECTLY contact by PHONE and speak to a designated team representative before this game is officially considered cancelled. Note: E-mail and voice messages will not be considered as proper notification
 - 2. The League Designate (league@owha.on.ca) is to be notified by both teams that the game has been cancelled.
 - 3. The cancelled game is to be rescheduled (within 7 days) for a future date within seven (7) days.
 - 4. Games cancelled because of bad weather conditions or because of a health-related issue are not included in the three (3) allowed cancellations.

Section 11 – Starting Games Times

The following guidelines for Regular Season and Playoff game start times must be followed unless alternate arrangements are mutually agreed upon by both teams:

- Monday to Friday games start no earlier than 5:00 p.m.
- Sunday to Thursday scheduled games end by:
 - U9/U11 – 8:00 p.m.
 - U13 - 9:30 p.m.
 - U15 – 10:30 p.m.
 - U18/U22 – 11:00 p.m.

Section 12 – Game Lengths (for 2023/2024)

Teams in the OWHL-SOUTHERN Divisions and Categories to follow:

- The following divisions will play 10-12-12:
 - All U9
 - All U11
 - U13 A, BB, B, C
 - U15 BB, B, C
 - U18 B, C
- The following divisions will play 15-15-15:
 - All U22
 - U18 AA, A, BB
 - U15 AA, A
 - U13 AA

Teams in the OWHL-EASTERN Divisions and Categories to follow:

- The following divisions will play 15-15-20:
 - U18AA, A & BB
 - U15AA, A & BB
 - U13AA
- The following divisions will play 10-12-12:
 - All other teams.

- a. All League games are STOP TIME. Running time is not allowed and, if used, the game will be replayed at the cost of the home team.
- b. No time outs are allowed in regular season games.
- c. Prior to the start of the game, the home team will communicate with the visiting team if there is a curfew to be put in place or not.
- d. If curfews are to be placed, it must be approved by both teams prior to the start of the game.

Section 13 – Online RAMP Game Sheets

- a. Please ensure you have a timekeeper in place who is familiar with the RAMP system. Game codes will be required to automatically generate the game sheet. These codes can be accessed through team RAMP login and will be available once a game has been scheduled on the RAMP system. Click here for: [OWHA RAMP Gamesheet App Tutorial Video](#)
- b. The timekeeper must check the game as “FINISHED” via the App for the game stats and details to populate on the website and the electronic game sheet. [Timekeeper App Instructions](#)
- c. Electronic game sheet data is collected for insurance purposes. Any falsification of data may make it invalid for insurance claims. It is important that the game sheet data be entered accurately both during and as soon as the game has been completed. The officials must review the data entered into the electronic game sheet via the code they have been provided and sign off on the game as soon as possible following the end of the game.
- d. It is the responsibility of the home team to provide the game codes to other parties (visiting team, officials, and timekeeper). Both the home and visiting team must access the electronic game sheet, via their respective code, to select the players and staff for that particular game at least fifteen minutes prior to the scheduled game time.
- e. All teams must use the RAMP Game sheet App for all League games. Failure to do so is a \$25 fine per game payable to the OWHA.
- f. If any players on your team have different sweater numbers for home and away, then please modify the appropriate numbers via the game sheet app. To change or update jersey number(s), tap on the jersey number, and make the changes, via the app. You DO NOT have to name your starting line-up. The option to identify your C’s and A’s is available through the game sheet app by selecting the player’s name and choosing their role.

Section 14 – Notification of Game Results

- a. All league games must be created and entered in RAMP at least 5 days prior to the start of the game. Failure to do so in the regular season will result in a fine of \$100 per day to the offending association until the game sheet data is entered. It is the responsibility of the visiting team to confirm the stats of the game and work with the home team in correcting any discrepancies.
- b. In the case of a suspendable offence, whether in the regular season or in the playoffs, the offending team must notify the OWHA via email at stats@owha.on.ca with suspension information immediately after the game or before the next game.
- c. Failure to report suspensions, will result in the head coach of the team, receiving a two game suspension.

Section 15 – Tie-Breakers – Regular Season

- a. If teams are tied at the end of the Regular Season the following criteria will be followed: (same as OWHA Playdowns)
 - i. Number of wins against all divisional opponents, including crossover games.
 - ii. Record against other tied teams
 - iii. Goals scored minus goals against all divisional opponents.
 - iv. Fewest goals allowed against all divisional opponents.
 - v. Most periods won against all divisional opponents.
 - vi. First goal scored during regular season.

- vii. Most goals scored against all divisional opponents.
- viii. Flip of coin by a neutral party agreed to by the OWHA Designate.

Section 16 – Curfews

1. All League games must start at their designated starting times. Curfews will be allowed for all regular season games.
2. Prior to the start of the game, the home team will communicate with the visiting team if there is a curfew to be put in place or not.
3. If curfews are to be placed, it must be approved by both teams prior to the start of the game.
4. All League games shall consist of three (3) stop time periods as designated for that division. (Refer to Section 12 – Game Lengths)
5. A two (2) minute warm up will start each game.
6. All games are STOP time. Running time is not allowed and, if used, will result in the game being replayed if the visiting team loses the game.
7. All Regular season games played under OWHL jurisdiction must have a curfew notice if in effect. When a team creates a game through the RAMP Game Portal, after all the game details are entered, in the NOTES box, please enter the Curfew information. This information will show on the RAMP Gamesheet APP.

in the game details just above the game codes.

- a) If the game is played in an arena with no curfew, the notification will read “NO CURFEW”. The game must be played in its entirety.
 - b) In arenas where there is a curfew, the notification will state “CURFEW and a specified time of day” (e.g., CURFEW 10:20 p.m.). The game must stop at the specified time.
 - c) The curfew notice must have either a NO CURFEW notation or a specified curfew time. Whether the curfew notice reads NO CURFEW or has a specified time, a rostered member of the Coaching Staff of both teams is required to be notified prior to the start of the game.
 - d) All game officials (referee(s) & timekeepers) must be notified of the curfew as well. They will be able to see this information via the RAMP Game sheet app on the game details page.
 - e) Failure to follow any of Rule 5, subsections a) through d) could result in a forfeit of the game by the home team should the game be protested. If, in the sole judgement of the OWHA and its Protest Committee, the result of the game was not affected by the breaking of Curfew rule, the protest can be dismissed. The league does retain the right to fine the home team a maximum of \$200 in the event the home team does not follow the provisions of Section 17.
 - f) The actual start time of the game is to be recorded on the game sheet by the timekeeper. For the purpose of the time of day, the arena clock will be the official time piece. In the case of no time-of-day clock being present, the referee(s) will designate, prior to the start of the game, what the official time piece will be and advise both coaches of such a decision.
 - g) It will be the responsibility of the timekeeper to sound the end of game horn when the official time piece reaches the designated curfew time, and the game will be considered over at that point. Under no circumstances is the game to continue past the designated curfew time.
8. Games that must be curfewed due to a serious injury that requires medical assistance to be called or due to a serious mechanical equipment failure in the arena that makes playing dangerous or impossible are permitted to be ended even if the game sheet says no curfew.

9. Any regular season game curfewed after the start of the third period will be considered a complete game at the point of curfew. Any regular season game curfewed before the start of the third period will be considered to have been cancelled within the rules and without penalty and will be required to be rescheduled.

All questions or inquiries pertaining to leagues should be emailed to leagues@owha.on.ca.

The OWHA reserves the right to make changes and/or interpretations based on its judgement.