



Hockey Saskatchewan

Officiating Development Program

Getting Started Officiating Guide



PROVINCIAL LEADER IN SPORT EXCELLENCE.



This guide was created to help all those in new roles this season to understand the expectations as an official, official coach, and/or a local administrator. Hockey Saskatchewan wants to ensure that we do not take for granted someone's interest in the Officiating Development Program (ODP) as they are familiar with the role and expectations. If you have further questions, please contact Officiating Development Manager, Trent Cey, at TrentC@hockeysask.ca or Officiating Development Coordinator, Austin Penner, via AustinP@hockeysask.ca.

Index

• What Should New Officials Expect	Page 3
• Official's Equipment	Page 3
• Officiating Under-7 (U7)	Page 4
• Officiating Under-9 (U9)	Page 5
• Officiating Under-11 (U11)	Page 6
• Officiating Under-13 (U13)	Page 6
• How to Become a Certified Official	Page 7
• How to be Assigned Games	Page 7
• Important Tips	Page 8
• Officiating Rates	Page 8
• Official Coaches	Page 9
• Official Buddy System	Page 10
• Local Official Administrators	Page 10
• Resources	Page 11

One of the perks of officiating is the ability to tailor game assignments to fit your personal schedule, while also making some money, being involved in a great sport and meeting new people involved with the game.

Officials can officiate at levels of play one age group below the current level they would be playing. For instance, a 12-year-old official could referee games at the U7, U9, and U11 levels. Advancement opportunities are offered based on skill, proficiency, and maturity, assessed by local assignors, directors of officials and official coaches.

The minimum age for officials to get certified is 11 years old, as of December 31 of the hockey season; however, some associations' policies may be 10 or 12 years old based on the communities' demographic and need for officials.



What Should New Officials Expect

- Officials will be responsible for administering the rules of the game to ensure it is played in a fair and safe manner for all participants.
- New officials should develop an understanding of the basic rules and procedures used for the levels they are officiating. This will be done through annual training with clinics and online modules and resources provided.
- In many areas, there may be grassroots official coaches and mentors and officials early in their careers should be partnered with more experienced officials or possibly have an official coach or mentor at some of their first games.
- Make a good wage as an official while being active and making new friends.
- Develop confidence in managing a game and learn many personal skills that can be applied on and off the ice.
- Understand that assignors will try and do their best to balance out the number of games assigned, but it may not always work out to equal assignments. More experience and proficiency as an official should result in more game assignments and opportunities based on availability.
- All officials develop at different speeds and progress to new leagues and opportunities at different times during their careers.
- Continued development as an official and put in your best effort.
- You will make mistakes, we all do, officials are human and learning the game just like the players.
- Have fun, enjoy your role as an official, and want to come back next season.

Official's Equipment

Required Equipment

- Black helmet and visor
- Hockey skates (not goalie skates, figure skates or speed skates)
- Finger grip whistle
- Official's jersey with Hockey Saskatchewan and Hockey Canada Crests
- Black pants
- Green armband for officials 15 and under

Recommended/Optional Equipment

- Elbow pads
- Shin pads
- Shin tights
- Referee armbands
- Protective girdle
- Athletic cup



Most sports stores have some officiating equipment in stock, but other options like used equipment or online websites provide everything that would be required.

Officiating Under-7 (U7)

This is a valuable chance for new officials to get all their equipment and don their uniforms and step onto the ice in simulated game situations.

The U7 Cross-Ice officiating system provides a less formal, but positive environment where they can learn fundamental officiating skills.

What should you expect?

- Officials may work about 10-15 games a season depending on their association and number of games and officials available.
- Learn basic skills such as: dropping pucks, skating skills, foundational positioning, spatial awareness, establishing good sightlines, making decisions such as goals and when to blow the whistle.
- Start to build confidence and passion for officiating that will assist you in your future.
- Development resources are available through the Hockey Saskatchewan website and social media accounts throughout the season.
- Experienced officials and local mentors or assignors should be a support system for questions and clarification when needed.

U7 Cross-Ice Basic Rules

- Games will be 2 x 24-minute periods.
- Teams will switch ends after first period.
- Officials or coaches should draw a dot in the middle of the playing surface for all face-offs.
- Buzzer will sound every 2 minutes to signal a line change, and a face-off will take place at the start of every shift.
- Scores will not be kept, and officials do not need to record goals or penalties.
- After a goal, the official will point and blow their whistle to signal the goal. Then they will back the scoring team off to their own net, they will move the puck behind the net for the defending team to restart play.
- Frozen Pucks or pucks out of play will see the officials blow the whistle, back the attacking team off to half and put the puck beside the net to resume play.



Officiating Under-9 (U9)

This is a valuable chance for officials to up their game and step onto the ice in real game situations.

The U9 Half-Ice officiating systems provide a positive environment where officials can expand their knowledge and learn fundamental officiating skills while perhaps working with a partner on the ice.

What should you expect?

- Officials may work 15-20 games a season depending on their association and the number of games and officials available. As they continue to develop, they will likely receive more opportunities.
- Learn basic skills such as: dropping pucks, skating skills, foundational positioning, spatial awareness, establishing good sightlines, making decisions such as goals and minor infractions and working in the two-official system.
- Officials, in collaboration with their partners, are tasked with administering the rules of the game to guarantee fair and safe play for all participants.
- Start to build confidence and passion for officiating that will assist you in deciding whether to continue in this role for future seasons.
- Development resources are available through the Hockey Saskatchewan website and social media accounts throughout the season.
- Senior officials and local mentors or assignors should be a support system for questions and clarification when needed.

U9 Half-Ice Basic Rules

- Games will be 2 x 24-minute periods.
- Teams will switch ends after first period.
- Officials or coaches should draw a dot in the middle for all face-offs.
- Buzzer will sound every 2 minutes to signal a line change, and a face-off will take place at the start of every shift. The clock will continue to run.
- Scores will be kept, but officials do not need to record goals or penalties.
- Goalies may not be pulled at any time.
- Goal Procedure – Point, blow the whistle. Then back the scoring team off to their own net, move the puck behind the net for the defending team. To start play. With 1 or 2 officials.
- Frozen Pucks, Game Flow, Pucks out of Play Procedure – Blow whistle back the attacking team off to half, put the puck beside the net and resume play with 1 and/or 2 officials.
- Penalty Procedure – Officials will raise their non-whistle arm, record the player, colour, number and infraction. Blow the whistle when their team gains possession of the puck. Stop, lower arm and with an open handed and fingers together point at the player record the colour, number and infraction and make the signal. Escort that player to the skills area, their team bench or the penalty box depending on the rink setup. Gather the puck at centre ice and blow play in for the



non-penalized team to start play. Penalties will last as long as the rest of that player's shift or until the opposing team scores a goal.

- Signals – Ensure to have a straight arm and fingers together when make your signals.

Officiating Under-11 (U11)

Officials that work Full-Ice U11 games will likely be returning officials and will have some experience officiating before being assigned at this level.

What should you expect?

- Understanding your role as an official in 2-Official, Modified 3-Official system or possibly 4-Official System, in some centres.
- Officials may have the opportunity to be assigned as a referee or linesperson at this level.
- Officials, in collaboration with their partners, are tasked with administering the rules of the game to guarantee fair and safe play for all participants.
- Confidence in managing a game and developing as an official while developing a passion for the job.
- To use proper mechanics and procedures such as the faceoff procedure, goal procedure, penalty procedure, line change, and have a good understanding of the rules.
- Apply the icing and offside rules as well as the many of the penalties outlined in the Hockey Canada Playing Rules book.

U11 Full-Ice Basic Rules

- Games may be full length games of 3 20-minute stop time periods or may be modified in leagues and tournaments.
- The Hockey Canada Playing Rules book and Hockey Canada Officiating Procedures Manual will apply to all games played at this level.
- Goals and penalties will be recorded by the referee.
- Offsides and icings will be called by the linesperson.

Officiating Under-13 (U13)

Officials that work U13 games will likely be returning officials and will have some experience officiating before being assigned at this level. Officials may have opportunities to work "AA" level games as well as Hockey Saskatchewan Provincial Playoff games.

What should you expect?

- Understanding your role as an official in the Modified 3-Official System or 4-Official System.
- Officials may have the opportunity to be assigned as a referee or linesperson at this level.



- Officials, in collaboration with their partners, are tasked with administering the rules of the game to guarantee fair and safe play for all participants.
- Confidence in managing a game and developing as an official while developing a passion for the job.
- To use proper mechanics and procedures such as those listed at the previous levels as well as timeout procedure, scrums/altercation procedure, penalty shot procedure, cancelling penalty procedure and dealing with conflict, and have a good understanding of the rules.
- Apply icings, offsides and penalties as per the Hockey Canada Playing Rules book.

U13 Full-Ice Basic Rules

- Games may be full length games of 3 20-minute stop time periods or may be modified in leagues and tournaments.
- The Hockey Canada Playing Rules book and Hockey Canada Officiating Procedures Manual will apply to all games played at this level.
- Goals and penalties will be recorded by the referee.
- Offsides and icings will be called by the linesperson.

How to Become a Certified Official

- All new officials must complete the Hockey Canada Intro to Officiating course.
- Register and pay registration fee online.
- Sign up and attend a Level 1 Officials Clinic:
 - Level 1 clinics consist of classroom sessions and on-ice sessions. Bring your skates, helmet (with visor) and a whistle to your on-ice session as well as a pen to the classroom for your workbook and have someone drop you off with a cellphone to register at the camps.
 - Officials will need to recertify and register each season and are certified up until December 31 of the next year after taking the course.

How to be Assigned Games

- Once you are a certified official, contact your local Minor Hockey Association (MHA) and let them know you are a new official in the area.
- Ask if they require any information from you and how they assign games in your area, as each community may have a different program or structure for assigning and paying officials.



Important Tips

- Dress appropriately and try to avoid wearing team jackets to the rink to avoid the perception of favoritism and look professional for the job.
- Arrive a minimum of 30 minutes prior to the start of the game.
- Do not be afraid to ask for feedback from other officials, assignors or mentors.
- Watch other officials in other games and other levels and recognize what they do well and what doesn't work well on the ice and try to implement that into your game.

Official's Rates for 2026-27 Season

<u>Division</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>1 Official</u>	<u>2 Officials</u>	<u>2 Refs 1 Linesperson</u>	<u>4 Officials</u>
U7 Cross-Ice		\$20	N/A	N/A	N/A
U9 Half-Ice	75 Minute ice time or less	\$25	\$40 (20/20)	N/A	N/A
	76 Minute ice time or more	\$40	\$60 (30/30)	N/A	N/A
U11	75 Minute ice time or less	N/A	\$80 (40/40)	\$85 (30/30/25)	\$90 (25/25/20/20)
	76 Minute ice time or more	N/A	\$110 (55/55)	\$125 (45/45/35)	\$140 (40/40/30/30)
U13	Male & Female AA & all provincial games	N/A	N/A	\$180 (65/65/50)	\$190 (55/55/40/40)
	Non AA	N/A	\$140 (70/70)	\$165 (60/60/45)	\$170 (50/50/35/35)
U15	Male & Female AA & CSSHL & All provincial games	N/A	N/A	\$220 (80/80/60)	\$240 (70/70/50/50)
	Non AA	N/A	N/A	\$205 (75/75/55)	\$210 (60/60/45/45)

	Non-Contact (Rec)	N/A	\$160 (80/80)	\$180 (65/65/50)	\$190 (55/55/40/40)
U16	AA	N/A	N/A	\$250 (90/90/70)	\$260 (75/75/55/55)
U18	Male & Female AAA	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$340 (95/95/75/75)
	Male & Female AA & CSSHL & all provincial games	N/A	N/A	\$280 (100/100/80)	\$300 (85/85/65/65)
	Non AA	N/A	N/A	\$240 (85/85/70)	\$260 (75/75/55/55)
	Non-Contact (Rec)	N/A	\$180 (90/90)	\$205 (75/75/57)	\$220 (65/65/45/45)
Junior	A (SJHL)	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$430 (125/125/90/90)
	B (PJHL)	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$350 (100/100/75/75)
	C & Female	N/A	N/A	\$285 (100/100/85)	\$290 (85/85/60/60)
Senior	Provincials	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$410(120/120/85/85)
	League	N/A	N/A	\$335 (125/125/85)	\$350 (100/100/75/75)
U Sports		N/A	N/A	N/A	\$690 (215/215/130/130)
Alberta Colleges Athletic Conference (ACAC)		N/A	N/A	N/A	\$446 (127/127/96/96)
Para Hockey	75 Minute ice time or less	N/A	\$80(40/40)	\$85 (30/30/25)	\$90 (25/25/20/20)
	76 Minute ice time or more	N/A	\$110 (55/55)	\$125 (45/45/35)	\$140 (40/40/30/30)



Official Coaches

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Hockey Saskatchewan Official Coach. Coaching, support, education and communication are crucial parts to a successful officiating program for your local community and the Officiating Development Program.

What should you expect?

- An official coach must be prepared to spend time with each official evaluated and discuss each performance. The most important responsibility the official coach must realize is that they are there to assist officials to become better.
- Official coaches must realize their responsibility to not only evaluate performance, but to also coach and offer suggestions to improve areas of concern.
- Official coaches must realize the importance of complete and detailed reports. Once a report is submitted, it is also automatically sent to each official and a member of the Hockey Saskatchewan ODP to track reports and processes of you as an official coach and the officials.
- After the reports are submitted, expense forms should be submitted monthly for game fees and travel expenses for coaching and will be paid by Hockey Saskatchewan.
- Always show respect for my fellow official coaches, officials, the players, coaches and fans.

Additional Official Coach Information

- Official Coaching / Mentorship webpage: <https://hockeysask.ca/officials/programs/officials-coaching--mentorship>
- Attend official coaching seminars and view official coaching videos produced throughout the season.

Official Buddy System

Hockey Saskatchewan has asked high-performance and senior officials to offer up time to give back to the ODP and be an “Official Buddy.” Knowing that it is becoming more difficult for experienced officials to find time to get to the rink and provide coaching we wanted to create a program where these officials can be assigned a buddy and work with them remotely through communication with the youth official and their parent via email while observing some games at home and watching virtually.

Official buddies will be asked to check in from time to time throughout the season to communicate with their young buddy officials and provide guidance and support. They may be able to fill out online reports for their buddy and while watching online from the comfort of their own homes.



Local Official Administrators

These positions may be volunteer or paid positions within your local organization, but regardless of the description of the role, the administrative work to help support, educate and communicate with your officials is extremely important.

If we can provide positive experiences for officials within their local association there is a much higher chance of retention.

What should you expect?

- Communicate internally with all officials and members of your association throughout the season.
- Work closely with official coaches to evaluate and provide support for officials.
- Administer the game assignments as balanced and fairly as possible based on the official's on-ice ability, minimum age standards, attitude, availability, location, experience and league and association budgets.
- Understand the policies and procedures of the local association, leagues and Hockey Saskatchewan when it comes to officials and game assignments.
- Communicate with Hockey Saskatchewan about official clinics host locations or options to provide a place for your local officials to get certified each season.
- Monitor the certification and completion of the requirements for officials each season to ensure that no officials with expired credentials or incomplete requirements are working games.
- Have a community specific plan for recruitment and retention for officials for your MHA.
- Promote officials to applicable Hockey Saskatchewan programs and camps as well as provide feedback on local officials for league promotions and provincial assignments.

Additional Local Official Administrator Information:

- Attend or review the pre-season virtual information meeting.
- Review the MHA Official Consistency Standard Document.
- Communicate with the Hockey Saskatchewan ODP Regional [Grassroots Task Team](#) Coordinator assigned to your area.
- Complete the Level 9 (Inactive Official) certification to become part of the membership and learn the terminology and expectations for officials moving forward.

Resources

- [Hockey Canada Playing Rules Book](#)
- [Hockey Canada Officiating Program](#)
- [Western Canada Officiating Development Partnership](#)
- [Hockey Canada Officiating Procedures Manual](#)
- [Hockey Canada Officiating Duties for Referee and Linespersons](#)
- [Hockey Saskatchewan ODP on YouTube](#)