MILLWOODS HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

PLAYER AFFILIATION POLICY | U9–U13

1. Purpose & Scope

Affiliation is intended to address legitimate roster shortages caused by illness, injury or absence while providing appropriate player-development opportunities. It is not a means of recruiting players away from their registered teams. Affiliation is a privilege, not a guaranteed opportunity. All affiliations and uses of affiliated players are subject to current Hockey Alberta, league, tournament and event regulations.

2. Guiding Principles & Internal Priority

MWHA will assess the current and reasonably anticipated affiliation needs of its own teams before considering requests from another organization. Internal affiliation requirements receive priority. An external affiliation request may be declined where approval could compromise a registered team's roster, schedule, competitive commitments, player well-being or development needs. Approval of an affiliation does not guarantee that a player will be released for a particular game, practice, tournament or other activity. Each use requires separate authorization under Section 6.

3. Roles & Responsibilities

- **Category Director:** Identifies or reviews eligible players; considers internal program needs; consults the Head Coach where appropriate; and resolves routine conflicts.
- **Operations Manager/Registrar:** Verifies approvals and documentation; confirms governing-rule requirements; coordinates Hockey Canada Registry (HCR) registration; and maintains the official affiliation record.
- **Head Coach or Association-Designated Contact:** Confirms the player's primary-team commitments, availability and readiness for each proposed use. The Head Coach authorizes individual activities under Section 6.
- **Player and Parent/Guardian:** Must complete all required acknowledgements and consent forms. Players and their parents/guardians may decline an affiliation opportunity without retaliation or adverse treatment.

4. Internal Affiliation Process

- The Category Director assigns eligible affiliated players based on MWHA team needs using the Hockey Alberta Affiliation Tool, taking into account applicable tiering requirements.
- The Operations Manager/Registrar verifies eligibility, approvals and consent, then coordinates HCR registration and confirms the player on the official Hockey Canada team sheet or roster.
- Affiliation becomes active only when the player appears on the official Hockey Canada team sheet or roster. No participation is permitted before confirmation.

5. External Association Requests

- The Director of the requesting outside association must submit the initial affiliation request to both the MWHA Operations Manager/Registrar and appropriate Category Director. Initial requests must not be directed to MWHA teams, Head Coaches, players or parents.
- A complete request should be submitted at least five business days before the first proposed activity. Late requests may be declined if there is insufficient time for review.
- MWHA first assesses internal team requirements and applicable Hockey Alberta tiering and affiliation rules, together with required consents, approvals and HCR registration.
- MWHA will normally respond within three business days of receiving a complete request. This is a service target, not a guarantee. The requesting association will receive written notice of initial approval, refusal or outstanding requirements.
- Following initial MWHA approval, the requesting association must contact the affiliated player's Head Coach for approval before contacting the player or family. Initial approval does not authorize participation in any particular activity. Individual activities follow Section 6.

6. Authorization for Each Activity

- **Head Coach authorization:** Once an affiliation is officially approved and active, each proposed use of an affiliated player must first be requested through the player's Head Coach. The requesting team must obtain the Head Coach's approval before contacting the player or parent/guardian. Routine activity requests do not require separate approval from the Category Director or Operations Manager/Registrar.
- Requests should be made at least 48 hours before a scheduled practice or game and, where reasonably possible, five calendar days before a multi-day tournament.
- The request should include the date, time, location, activity type, opponent or event, expected role and any transportation or additional consent requirements.
- **Primary-team priority:** An affiliated player is required to attend their own team's scheduled practices and games. They may not miss these activities for an affiliated team unless MWHA approves an exception, subject to governing rules. Any exception must be reviewed by the Head Coach, Category Director and Operations Manager/Registrar.
- The Head Coach must consider team commitments, scheduling, player readiness and development needs. Approval must not be unreasonably withheld; a refusal must have legitimate and justifiable grounds.
- **Disagreements:** If the Head Coach's decision is disputed, the matter must be referred to the appropriate Category Director and Operations Manager/Registrar for review and resolution before participation. Silence or lack of response is not approval. Players and families may decline without retaliation.

7. Player Well-Being & Conduct

Decisions must consider the player's readiness, physical and emotional safety, development, attendance, conduct, workload and primary-team commitments. Affiliation must not be used to penalize a player, pressure a family, bypass a team, influence future registration decisions or create an informal transfer. Concerns about safety, conduct or retaliation must be reported promptly to the Category Director and Operations Manager/Registrar.

8. Compliance, Review & Interpretation

The Operations Manager/Registrar administers approved affiliations in consultation with the Category Director and MWHA Executive where necessary. MWHA may decline, condition, suspend or withdraw authorization where permitted by governing rules, including when information is incomplete, circumstances change or the affiliation is used inconsistently with this policy. Current Hockey Alberta, league, tournament and event requirements take precedence in the event of conflict. Questions must be resolved before participation. This policy will be reviewed annually before registration opens or sooner if governing rules materially change.

9. Game Limits & Special Competitions

Affiliation game limits and treatment of exhibition games, tournaments, playoffs, provincial competition, Minor Hockey Week and maximum game-sheet rosters are determined by current Hockey Alberta and applicable league or event regulations. Team officials must verify requirements before each use; numerical limits are not reproduced because they may change.