



2025-2026

ORHL League Manual

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MISSION STATEMENT

THE ORHL BRAND is about being ONE FAMILY OF HOCKEY PLAYERS, COACHES, AND PARENTS

- To maximize the abilities of all players through the development of skills in a positive environment.
- To instill sportsmanship and encourage fair play while developing a healthy competitive attitude in a fun and supportive environment.
- To advocate on behalf of players and families the ability to play hockey where they choose without boundary restrictions. To support, advocate and represent players as developing athletes aspiring to play hockey at the highest levels possible. To use hockey as a training tool to help players become better people, instilling upon them hard work, respect, cooperation and dedication.
- To encourage academic excellence, stressing to our players the importance of education and helping them to reach their highest potential.

MANDATE

**AIM HIGHER...GO FURTHER
REP HOCKEY THE BETTER WAY
NON-BODY CHECKING LEAGUE
SCHOOL FRIENDLY - ONLY WEEKEND AWAY GAMES
NO ADDRESS BOUNDARIES/BORDERS
NO RELEASES NECESSARY**

Welcome to the Ontario Rep Hockey League ("ORHL") which began independent hockey in 2011 using the model of a higher practice to game ratio combined with more training.

We strongly believe in our model and understand the importance of credibility and integrity. The ORHL model focusses on both hockey development and education. The scheduling of games will be done to minimize disruption to players' school studies. We recognize the vital importance of education and therefore no league games will be scheduled weekdays (Monday to Thursday) to ensure school homework is completed.

The ORHL takes great pride in allowing players to participate where they choose. There are no borders or geographic boundaries, and no releases required to participate.

REP HOCKEY – THE NEXT LEVEL – HOW WE ARRIVED HERE...

The **Ontario Rep Hockey League ("ORHL")**, established in 2011, is the #1 largest Independent Hockey League in Ontario with over 40 teams from U9 Novice – U18 Midget. We continue to grow year after year. Our priority is to provide a safe, well balanced, fair play atmosphere. We take great pride in developing your child into respectful players on and off the ice. We teach core values...respect your coaches, your teammates, your opponents, your game officials, your parents and respect the game of hockey we all love to play.

The ORHL is a partner with iPlayHockey/Lawrie Insurance Group headquartered in Ottawa, Ontario.



OPEN LETTER TO PARENTS OF ORHL PLAYERS AND THOSE INTERESTED IN OUR LEAGUE

We would like to thank the parents of our players currently playing in the ORHL. We would like to thank you for your continued support in giving your children the opportunity to play hockey where you choose. For parents thinking of joining a team for next season we welcome you and thank you for considering our hockey programming for your child.

Over the last years, there have been several negative letters written to local Hockey Canada associations by Hockey Canada about independent hockey leagues like the ORHL. At the ORHL we do not believe in commenting negatively about people who choose to see hockey in a different way. We will not engage in any propaganda campaigns. Many of you have received inaccurate and almost slanderous information about the rules regarding children playing in our League or ones like the ORHL, either from coaches or even associations.

We want to direct you to the Hockey Canada Rule: "Any individual who participates in a non-sanctioned league after the Hockey Canada Cut-Off Date of September 30th will lose all privileges with Hockey Canada only for the remainder of that season and, may only apply for the reinstatement of those privileges after the end of that season." Please understand that this a Hockey Canada rule and **not** an ORHL rule. In addition, since Hockey Canada introduced this rule in May 2009, the ORHL is not aware of any suspensions of players breaking this rule.

The ORHL is just another option to play hockey in Canada. Our league is a "right to choose" program. We are not affiliated with any other hockey organization. We do not place any restrictions on player movement between Hockey Canada and the ORHL. In fact, we allow our players to play in both ORHL and Hockey Canada if they so desire.

"No Boundaries/No Borders/No Releases Necessary".

Here is what you can expect from the ORHL:

- Over 35-40 teams in Ontario. In business since 2011, expanding every season,
- **NON** body checking rep hockey league.
- No address boundaries – families can play for the organization of choice,
- No releases necessary – a player does not need a release from Hockey Canada to join the ORHL.
- The ORHL is a school friendly league with all our away games played on weekends. We believe in the importance of your child's education and want to provide time during the week to focus on school studies.
- All participants are fully insured through iPlayHockey/Lawrie Insurance Group headquartered in Ottawa Ontario. www.iplayhockey.ca
- The ORHL Championship finishes off the season in late March/early April.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

HOCKEY WITHOUT BORDERS, BOUNDARIES AND RELEASES

The ORHL strongly believes players should play where they choose to play, no borders, no boundaries and no releases necessary! It is important for families to have a "say" of where they can and cannot play. The ORHL offers exactly this, you choose which organization is the best fit. The ORHL is simply another option for your child to create memories. Visit the League website at www.orhl.net for a listing current ORHL teams.

SAFETY AND ETHICS

The health, safety, enjoyment and well-being of every player is a primary objective. Listed below are some of the common practice standards that each parent can expect from the ORHL.

- Concussion and injury protocols – details on ORHL website <https://orhl.net/>
- Security checks for team personnel (coaches, trainers and managers)
- Two-deep rule in the changeroom
- Zero tolerance to bullying and profanity in any way (verbal, physical, social media)
- Zero tolerance of any abusive behavior on or off the ice (verbal, physical, social media)
- The Code of Conduct for Coaches, Parents and Players - mandates this and gives us recourse if anyone is not following.

SPORTSMANSHIP

- Good sportsmanship is expected and required of all players, coaches, parents, spectators and referees.
- ORHL core values – RESPECT coaches, teammates, opponents, game officials, parents and other spectators.

SCHEDULE

The ORHL has created a unique and fun hockey experience for your children. Based on feedback at season's end the ORHL staff will review the past schedule, adjust/create a schedule for the next season that maintains our objectives of minimizing travel and being school friendly. Significant dates are reviewed each year including the high school exam schedule, Christmas Holidays, March Break etc. These are dates which the League attempts to avoid when creating the schedule for the next season.

2025-2026 SCHEDULE

The ORHL season consists of 3 Showcases. A Showcase simply means teams will play 4 regular season games in a weekend. Teams will play either 2 games Friday and 2 games Saturday or 2 games Saturday and 2 games Sunday. This reduces travel during the week so that kids can continue to focus on schoolwork.

The ORHL also offers an 8 home and 8 away League Play schedule.

The points from the 28 regular season games (12 Showcase games and 16 League Play games) count towards team seedings for the ORHL Championship Weekend.

The U9 Novice Format – is an all-tournament format – 5 Tournaments in total. This Division will also play 6 home and 6 away games. The 12 League Play games count towards team seedings for the ORHL Championship.

In addition to the 28 regular season games (12 for U9 Novice), membership includes entry to VMF Cup and exclusive participation in the ORHL Championship weekend.

The combination of Showcases, League Play and the 2 (VMF Cup and ORHL Championship) Tournaments, **the ORHL offers a minimum of a 34-game season for U11 Atom, U13 Peewee, U15 Bantam, U16+ Minor Midget, U18 Midget. The ORHL offers the U9 Novice a minimum of a 30 game season.**

Over and above membership, the ORHL offers additional tournament weekends. 4 game minimum guaranteed.

Exhibition games can also be arranged.

ORHL Rules and Regulations shall be followed for all sanctioned games.

PLAYERS

All players must be registered with the ORHL for roster and insurance purposes.

The League provides:

- Insurance

- Showcases, Tournaments and League Play Games
- Scheduling of games, referees, and timekeepers at ORHL regular season events
- League manuals and follow up on rules, league policies, league discipline, and code of conduct

ORHL BIRTH YEAR AND DIVISIONS

For the 2025-2026 hockey season the ORHL Birth Year and Age Divisions are as follows:

U9 Novice	– 2017 - 2018
U11 Atom	– 2015 - 2016
U13 Peewee	– 2013 - 2014
U15 Bantam	– 2011 - 2012
U17 Minor Midget	– 2009-2010
U19 Midget	– 2007-2008

BE AN ORHL HEAD COACH, ASSISTANT COACH, TRAINER OR MANAGER

BE A MENTOR – BE INSPIRATIONAL – BE A LEADER
 DEVELOP YOUNG HOCKEY PLAYERS AND TEACH THE VALUES OF SPORTSMANSHIP, FAIR PLAY,
 RESPECTING COACHES, REFEREES, TEAMMATES, PARENTS AND LEAGUE OFFICIALS
 ENGAGE THE PLAYERS IN THE COMMUNITY AND BE UPSTANDING MEMBERS
 COACH IN YOUR LOCAL AREA OR ELSEWHERE; WE HAVE NO ADDRESS BOUNDARIES

If you are interested in being a Head Coach, Assistant Coach, Trainer or Manager, please contact the organization of your choice directly. All contact information is available on the ORHL website at <https://orhl.net/>.

REGISTRATION/CERTIFICATION – through Club or with League directly

All Head Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Trainers and Managers are required to:

1. Police Checks – all team personnel are required to have current police checks. Copies to be provided to Club Owners
2. Register with the ORHL
3. Sign a Code of Conduct – see Appendix 1
4. Acknowledge current Concussion Protocol
5. Trainers are encouraged to take a trainer certification course/first aid course.

POLICIES

CODE OF CONDUCT

All players, parents and coaching staff are required to acknowledge the ORHL Code of Conduct as part of the registration process. The ORHL will enforce the breach of Code of Conduct.

ROSTERS

- Teams can roster and dress up to 20 players (18 skaters and 2 goalies).
- **Players can only be rostered on one ORHL team.**
- A minimum of 8 skaters plus a goalie must be on the bench to start a game. For safety reasons teams must have a goalie in full equipment to start a game.

- If no goalie or the minimum roster is not met and it is time to start the game, the clock starts and the teams wait. If after the 1st period the minimum roster is not present, the game is a 1-default. The game can still be played with borrowed players as an exhibition.
 - If it is known that a team is not going to have the minimum roster prior to the start of the game, and the 2 coaches can mutually agree, the game can be recorded as a 1-0 default. At which time players/goalie may be borrowed and an exhibition game may commence at the game start time.
- **ROSTER FREEZE DATE – January 1, 2026.** New players will not be allowed to join a team after the Roster Freeze Date.
 - **ORHL Championship Eligibility -** To be eligible to participate in the ORHL Championships, players must have played a minimum of 10 ORHL League Play and Showcase games. Tournament and Exhibition games are **NOT** included.

AP PLAYERS

- A team can only AP a player within their own organization. Organization is defined as the group name (i.e. London Cobras or Oakville Oilers)
- AP players must come from a younger age division, regardless of their birth year
 - Example 1: Bantam U15 can ONLY pull up from Peewee U13 within the same Organization
- AP players can be used to create an additional roster spot, aside from player suspensions. AP players cannot replace suspended players.
 - Example: A maximum of 20 rostered players (18 skaters and 2 goalies) is permitted, however, a suspended player only allows 17 skaters and 2 goalies to dress.
 - If 2 players are suspended, then only 16 players and 2 goalies can dress. Therefore, suspended players cannot be replaced by AP players
- AP players are not allowed to leave a game early to join another game.
- AP players are not allowed to join a game already in progress.
- Penalties for use of an Ineligible Player:
 - If a team is found to have rostered an ineligible player by way of (a) improper use from within the same Organization, (b) improper use from the correct age division or (c) improper use from the roster spots available, then they shall be penalized as follows:
 - Default 5-0 loss for the game in question
 - Head Coach suspension for 1 game on a first offence. Head Coach will receive a 3-game suspension on a second offence. An indefinite suspension with hearing from the Commissioner on a third offence.

EQUIPMENT/ MOUTH GUARD/NECK GUARD POLICY

It is mandatory that all players in the ORHL are to wear approved CSA hockey equipment.

MANDATORY - All players and goalies must wear a neck guard.

All players are encouraged to properly wear a mouth guard. Goalies are encouraged to wear a mouth guard and dangler.

Failure to comply may result in a delay of game penalty.

Jerseys – Teams must carry home and away jerseys.

ORHL Logo – Both home and away jerseys must have the ORHL logo on the front top RIGHT.

BENCH STAFF

Teams can carry as many insured bench personnel as they choose (Coach, Assistant Coaches, Trainers, Managers etc). A maximum of 5 staff are permitted on the bench during games.

It is highly recommended that Coaches, Assistant Coaches and any on-ice staff wear helmets while on the ice during practices.

DRESSING ROOM GUIDELINES – 2 Coach Rule

A minimum of two coaches must be in or immediately outside the dressing room when players are present. Teams are responsible for leaving the dressing rooms clean. Any costs associated with damage to a dressing room will be the responsibility of the team.

GAME SHEETS – Gamesheet Inc.

For Regular Season and Exhibition Games the home team is required to provide an iPad with the Gamesheet Inc App downloaded. The home team will be responsible of providing a timekeeper to score the game on the iPad. Both teams' coaches or managers must approve their rosters and sign off on the game sheet prior to the start of the game.

At the conclusion of the game the timekeeper must have the referee sign the electronic game sheet.

The Home team MUST upload the game within 24 hours.

ICE RESURFACING

When the ice is being resurfaced no player shall step on the ice until the Zamboni doors are closed. Players are not allowed on the ice until a coach or game official is present.

START OF GAMES

Referees will be instructed to start the game on time following a three-minute warm up. For Regular Season or Game Exchanges, the home team is required to provide referees and timekeepers. For Event Games the referees and timekeepers are the responsibility of the ORHL.

BULLYING

The ORHL has zero tolerance for any form of bullying (i.e. verbal, physical, social media). Any accusation of bullying should be brought forward to the executive of the ORHL. If the accusation is found to have merit, a meeting will be convened with the party or parties involved, team officials and the representatives from the ORHL.

Consequences for bullying may include suspension and removal from the League.

COMMUNICATION WITH REFEREES

- Coaches must always be professional and respectful. Failure to do so may result in a penalty or ejection.
- No member of the coaching staff shall yell at, use offensive body language or abuse an on-ice official on or off the ice.
- If a coach would like to speak with an official regarding a call, they are asked to have the captain or assistant captain request the referee speak to their coach at the bench.
- The referees' decision is final.

PARENTS AND OTHER SPECTATORS

Parents or other spectators are prohibited from yelling obscenities or making disparaging remarks to players, coaches, officials, other parents and spectators. Any parent or spectator who is violating this policy may be

asked to leave the arena/facility by the referee, convenor, league official or arena staff. Such behavior and actions would be construed as a breach of the Code of Conduct.

GAME CANCELLATIONS/RESCHEDULING

If a game must be re-scheduled due to unforeseen circumstances, (ie. power outage, unplayable ice surface) the home team must notify the away team immediately. Both teams will then use “best efforts” to reschedule this game.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

The Ontario Rep Hockey League takes team safety seriously. In instances when the regional area of the ORHL is subjected to severe weather that requires consideration of the cancellation of League games the following procedure will be followed.

The ORHL requires teams to cancel games (or practices) under the following circumstances:

1. When the arena is closed
2. When roads to the arena are closed

The ORHL is not in a position to make the call on whether or not a game should be cancelled because it is not safe to drive. Everyone, and by extension each team, needs to take responsibility for making that call themselves.

With that in mind, ensure your decision is based on safety and not just convenience. Safety should always be a priority. Also, whether the ORHL or the team makes the decision to cancel a game or not, it is the right and responsibility of each individual family to make decisions regarding their own safety.

To assist with determining inclement weather decisions, the ORHL has established the following key guidelines with respect to cancellations:

- Resources such as MTO road conditions or The Weather Network should be used to determine severity of the weather. Travel advisories can serve as a “go” or “no go” indicator.
- If a team is considering this action, please contact your organization and the opposing team coach and/or manager as early as possible.
- Teams must be prepared to travel to each game until a game has been “officially” cancelled by their organization’s club owner.
- If mutually agreed between the host and guest club owners, a decision to postpone and reschedule the game to another date can be made as soon as possible.
- If not mutually agreed, games cannot be cancelled more than ninety (90) minutes prior to the expected departure of a team to their host destination.

If a Game is Cancelled

Only Club Owners can cancel games. Coaches must reach out to their Club Owner to do so. The Club Owner will notify the League immediately of any game cancellations. The game will be rescheduled as soon as the two affected organizations can work out a date. The host team shall provide the guest team a minimum of two (2) options for rescheduling.

In the event the two affected organizations are unable to agree on an acceptable date, the below shall be applicable:

- A. If the game was cancelled under (i) ORHL requirements (outlined above) or (ii) mutual agreement, the originally scheduled game shall be recorded as a 0-0 tie.
- B. If the game was cancelled under any other scenario, the team which initiated the cancellation shall be assessed a forfeit 1-0 loss for the originally scheduled game.

Most importantly, the ORHL encourages parents to leave enough travel time to arrive safely and drive according to the weather conditions.

FORFEITING A GAME

If a team forfeits a game, the following will apply:

- \$500.00 reimbursement fee payable to the League within 7 days of when the game was originally scheduled. Once collected the League will forward this fee to the other team. If not paid within 7 days this reimbursement fee will be added to the team's Accounts Receivable. In the event the Reimbursement Fee is not paid in full, the team will not be permitted to participate in the next Event.
- If a coaching staff or manager consciously decides for the team to disregard a scheduled game and choose not to attend, the head coach will be suspended for 4 games. A meeting with the Commissioner will be held before being permitted back on the bench.
- This ruling applies to forfeited games. Should a game be cancelled due to extenuating circumstances (i.e. weather), this policy does not apply.

TRANSFER OF PLAYERS

It is up to the two Clubs (i.e. Cobras and Oilers) to mutually agree to a transfer of a player and the terms under which a transfer can be made. For example, settling of outstanding fees, team jerseys, etc. NO movement is allowed after the Roster Freeze Date, January 1, 2026.

FINANCIAL ARREARS

Each ORHL Club is responsible for managing the financial affairs of their own individual families. Families will NOT be allowed to join another ORHL Club the following season if there are any arrears outstanding from the previous year and has been brought to the attention of the League.

APPENDIX 1



Ontario Rep Hockey League Code of Conduct

In furtherance of the Policies and Procedure of the Ontario Rep Hockey League (ORHL), the following Code of Conduct has been adopted by the League. This Code of Conduct applies to all ORHL Members (including without limitation players, parents/guardians and coaches/team management, officials, volunteers, officers, directors and employees) participating in ORHL activities.

The Members of the League are defined to include:

- All players registered with the ORHL
- The parent(s) or guardian(s) having signed the registration application form for each player under the age of 19 registered in the ORHL
- League officials, coaches, managers and trainers registered through the ORHL

Each Member agrees to act in accordance with the applicable provisions of this Code of Conduct and understands/accepts that any contravention may result in disciplinary action as determined by the ORHL Commissioner. This can include suspensions or revocation of membership and all associated rights and privileges. Members are being asked to acknowledge the applicable provisions of this Code of Conduct.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Members and participants of the ORHL shall conduct themselves at all times in a manner consistent with the Mission and Mandate of the ORHL. This includes integrity, sportsmanship, honesty, respect, compassion, and fairness. During the course of all ORHL activities and events, Members shall avoid behavior which brings the ORHL or the sport of hockey into disrepute both on and off the ice, including but not limited to:

- Use of abusive language
- Use of obscene gestures
- Objectionable conduct both verbal and physical
- Comments or behaviors which are abusive, disrespectful, offensive, racist or sexist
- Behavior which constitutes harassment, abuse or bullying, including but not limited to social media

Players will:

- Make a commitment to their team at all times by attending all practices, games, meetings, special events, and by playing to the best of their ability.
- Be responsible for their conduct at all times, on and off the ice.
- Respect Coaches at all times.
- Respect the safety of other players by playing the game within the rules.
- Respect the integrity of Officials, their judgement and accept their decisions at all times.
- Strive to act in accordance with the Mission and Mandate of the ORHL and the Code of Conduct
- Accept such disciplinary action as may be imposed if a player does not fulfill their obligations under this Code of Conduct

Parents/Guardians will:

- Pledge to provide positive support, instill fair play and good sportsmanship. Will encourage their child to be respectful to Coaches, Officials and other players at all times.
- Enroll their child for the pure enjoyment of the game and the opportunity to learn the skills of the sport;
- Recognize that at a hockey rink their child's development is in the hands of volunteers who are giving their time and energy for the sake of all participants.
- Respect and support the decisions of the Coaches whether at practice, special events, or during a game in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- Strive to conduct themselves in a manner consistent to the Code of Conduct applicable to all ORHL Members when attending games, practices and special events on or off the ice.
- Strive to be positive and encouraging to all players at all times.
- Encourage their child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility, profanity, verbal or physical violence.
- Never swear, make obscene gestures, verbally abuse, or engage in any inappropriate behavior or conducts at any time.
- Never verbally abuse ANY Coach, Assistant Coach, Manager or Trainer
- Never verbally abuse ANY Official. Will not undermine them by contradicting, interfering, or questioning their character, motivation, or judgment.
- An Officials' priority is to be responsible for ensuring that the game is played in a safe and fair manner for all participants. Understand they do not make the hockey rules, they only apply them.
- Acknowledge that parent(s)/guardian(s) must remain responsible for the safety of their child when they are participating in ORHL events.
- Instill both on and off the ice that their child treats players, coaches, spectators, parents and officials with dignity and respect.
- Communicate and attempt to resolve conflicts directly with the coaching staff. The coaching staff will then address issues with their Club Owner
- Accept any disciplinary action as may be imposed if a parent or their child does not fulfill their obligations under this Code of Conduct.

Coaches and Team Management will:

- Encourage transparency, fair and open communication with parents and players.
- Respect the Rules, Officials, opponents, teammates and spectators both on and off the ice.
- Teach players to respect the Rules, Officials, opponents, teammates and spectators both, on and off the ice.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that equipment and facilities are safe and appropriate for their players.
- Ensure that all players receive equal instruction and support in development.
- Often be considered a role model and should conduct themselves accordingly. Offer praise, encouragement and lead by example.
- Not ridicule, yell or use vulgar language directed at players for making mistakes or using poor judgement both on and off the ice.
- Not ridicule, yell or use vulgar language directed toward Officials, opponents, teammates and spectators both on and off the ice
- Refrain from engaging in any negative social media communication.
- Cooperate with Officials and Coaches of opposing teams in a respectful manner.
- Accept any disciplinary action as may be imposed if they do not fulfill their obligations under this Code of Conduct

Acknowledgement and Agreement to the ORHL Code of Conduct:

I have received the ORHL's Code of Conduct which identifies the terms and conditions for all Members to abide by. While participating in ORHL activities I will always use my best efforts to ensure that my conduct is consistent with the Mission & Mandate of the ORHL and fulfills the applicable requirements of the Code of Conduct.

I understand that failure to comply with the Code of Conduct could result in an indefinite membership suspension from the ORHL both present and future.