Hockey (Ice Hockey Games)

SECONDARY - INTERSCHOOL 2026

- This activity includes additional safety standards specific to Qualifications and First Aid (previously designated High Risk).
- Consult **Risk Management**.

Equipment

- Determine that all equipment is safe (for example, no sharp corners, cracks, or splinters) and all assistive devices (e.g., a walker) are in good working condition and properly adjusted for the height and mobility needs of the student prior to participation.
- Protective equipment must not be altered (for example, cutting a portion off the back of mouth guards, adding padding to a protective helmet).
- Goalies must wear:
    - a properly fitted (as per manufacturer's guidelines) and properly-worn CSA approved hockey helmet with full face mask;
    - a throat protector;
    - a catcher, blocker, leg pads;
    - a chest and arm protector; and
    - a cup or pelvic protector.
- Players must wear:

    - a properly fitted (as per manufacturer's guidelines) and properly-worn CSA-approved hockey helmet with full face mask;
    - a throat protector;
    - shin pads (cracked shin pads must be replaced immediately);
    - pants;
    - shoulder and elbow pads;
    - hockey gloves; and
    - a cup or pelvic protector.
- Sticks:
    - Regulation hockey sticks must be used.
    - Butt end must be covered with tape or a commercially made butt end.
    - Cracked or splintered sticks must not be used.

*Refer to the **First Aid** section for first aid equipment requirements.*

Clothing/Footwear/Jewellery

- Appropriate clothing and footwear must be worn. Properly fitting ice hockey skates must be worn.
- The wearing of jewellery during practices and competitions must meet the rules of the governing body of the sport/activity, **OFSAA**, and local athletic association. Consult the **General Safety Standards for Clothing, Footwear, and Jewellery** when jewellery is not addressed by the governing body of the sport/activity, OFSAA or the local athletic association.
- When long hair poses a safety risk it must be secured. Devices (for example, hair pins, elastics and barrettes) used to tie back long hair must not present a safety concern.
- Students must not participate when the length of fingernails poses a safety risk to themselves or others.

Facilities

- Determine that all facilities are safe and accessible for the students participating. Students must be encouraged to report facility problems to the coach.
- The ice surface must be free from debris and deep ruts.
- Break away net mandatory.
- For outside facilities (for example, ponds, lakes), prior to activity, check with local authorities to determine whether ice is safe for skating and that there are no hazards.
- When walking, running, or wheeling takes place off school site for a warm-up, conditioning and/or is an integral part of the activity:
    - Coaches must do a safety check in order to identify potential problems prior to initial use of route or course.
    - Coaches must outline to the students the route or course (for example, notice of areas to approach with caution) before the start of the activity.
    - Coaches must determine that students are not crossing busy intersections unless directly supervised.

Natural Ice Locations (Lakes, Ponds, Rivers)

- Only school board/school approved natural ice locations are to be used.
- An approved natural ice location is one that is monitored and tested by a recognized organization (for example, local municipality, police, and snowmobile clubs) and/or a recognized knowledgeable individual (for example, winter camp supervisor) that measures ice thickness for activity safety.
- Prior to an activity on natural ice surface the Teacher must contact local authorities to determine with absolute certainty that the ice surface is thick enough to be safe. The ice thickness must be a minimum of 15cm (6") and must be measured in several places.
- The use of natural ice involves some risk. Here are safety criteria to minimize the risks:
    - Stay off the ice of any natural ice surface where conditions cannot be measured.
    - Stay away from unfamiliar paths or unknown ice, avoid traveling on ice at night unless necessary.

- Obey all ice warning signs.
- The Teacher/Monitors must be in close proximity to students on the ice surface.
- The Teacher/Monitors must be knowledgeable of the procedures to follow for rescuing an individual who has fallen through the ice.
- Students must be informed on ice safety and ice rescue procedures prior to the activity (for example, not to go on the ice surface alone).

Environmental Considerations

- When environmental conditions may pose a risk to student safety (for example, thunderstorms [lightning] or student(s) with asthma, triggered by air quality), Coaches must take into consideration their school board/school's protocols and procedures related to:
  - environmental conditions (consult **Weather**); and
  - snow conditions (for example, snow/ice storms) and visibility.
- Students must receive instruction on safety procedures related to environmental conditions and be made aware of ways to protect themselves (for example, frostbite, hypothermia).
- The school board's weather procedures are the minimum standards at all times.

Special Rules/Instructions

- Be aware of students whose medical condition (for example, asthma, anaphylaxis, casts, previous concussion, orthopaedic device) may affect participation. Consult **Medical Conditions**.
- Prior to participation students must receive concussion information through the appropriate Ministry of Education's Concussion Awareness Resource or the school board approved concussion resources. Students must also receive information on:
  - the Concussion Code of Conduct;
  - concussion prevention strategies specific to the activity and inherent risks of the activity (that is, outline possible risks and ways to minimize the risks);
  - procedures and rules for safe play; and
  - the importance of reporting symptoms related to a suspected concussion.

- Students must confirm their review of the concussion awareness resource and Concussion Code of Conduct prior to participation.
- Refer to school board policies and procedures (i.e., transportation, excursion/field trip) for communication with parents/guardians, the location of an off-site activity, means of transportation, supervision ratios, and parent/guardian permission.
- Previous training, fitness level, and the length of time and intensity of physical activity must be taken into consideration.
- Activities must be based on skills that are taught.
- Skills must be taught in proper progression.
- A warm-up and cool-down must be included.
- Emphasize controlled movement when requiring students to walk or run backwards. Backward-running races are not permitted.
- When involved in practice drills, students must not be required to close their eyes or be blindfolded.
- Fair play and rules of the sport must be taught and strictly enforced.
- Adequate liquid replacement (personal water bottles, water fountains) must be accessible for students before, during, and after physical activity to prevent dehydration.
- Students must be informed that they are not to share water bottles.
- No more than three games can be played in one day, as per **Ontario Hockey Federation (OHF)** rules.
- The number of games and skill competitions (for example, agility, racing) in any one day must not present a safety concern.
- Prior to the first game, multiple practices on ice must have occurred.
- Parents/guardians must be informed of the school board's policy related to initiation/hazing activities.
- The presence and location of spectators must not present a safety concern. A school is responsible for supervising its own spectators. The ratio of supervisor to spectators must address safety concerns.
- Students must be informed that the use of equipment and the gymnasium are prohibited without supervision. In addition to verbal communication, the doors must be locked or signs must be posted indicating that students are not allowed to use the gym unless appropriately supervised.

Supervision

- All activities must be supervised.
- The type of supervision must be commensurate with the inherent risk of the activity. The level of risk is related to the number of participants, the skill level of the participants, the type of equipment used, and environmental conditions.
- Direct Supervision is required during the safety and initial skill instruction.
- Direct Supervision is required during the initial practice of contact skills.
- On-Site Supervision is required after students' demonstration of proficiency.
- On-Site Supervision is required for the duration of all other components of the activity (e.g., equipment setup and take down, warm-ups/cool downs, application of the skills and games).
- The Community Coach Liaison must be accessible to the Community Coach and students (at practices and competitions). The level of support will be commensurate with the expertise and qualifications of the Community Coach as determined by the Principal/Designate.
- As a minimum the Community Coach Liaison will provide In-the-Area supervision for all practices and competitions. Direct Supervision is required if a Community Coach is under the age of 18.
- When students are competing outside their school district (e.g., travel tournaments, regional/ provincial competitions) a Community Coach Liaison from the same school board must be accessible to the Community Coach.
- Where a Qualified Instructor is used, the Qualified Instructor must provide safety and initial skill instruction and monitoring for the safe application of skills and student behaviour for the duration of the activity.
- A Volunteer, under the direction of a Coach, can monitor students during practices and competitions. Refer to your school board’s policy on volunteers assisting with students' physical activities.
- Responsibilities must be clearly outlined for additional Coaches and Volunteers who are monitoring the activity.

Qualifications

- Game/match official(s) must be certified and/or experienced in officiating the sport.
- The Head Coach must demonstrate knowledge of the sport, skills, and strategies to the Principal or Designate.
- All Coaches must be familiar with and implement, where applicable, the criteria outlined in **Coaches Expectations**.

- At least one Coach?must have attained one of the following qualifications within the last three years:
    - Documentation of attendance at a clinic or workshop provided by an instructor who is knowledgeable of the activity (for example, appropriate skills and progressions), and where safety is addressed as outlined in the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education.
    - Documentation of past experience as a coach having knowledge of the activity (for example, appropriate skills and progressions) and current safety practices as outlined in the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education.
    - Completion of a full-season mentorship, (for example, present at practices, games, competitions) under the guidance of an experienced coach, as approved by the principal/designate, who is knowledgeable about skills and progressions, and who models and adheres to the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education.
    - Completion of a recognized, sport specific coach education course, (for example, National Sport Organization, or Provincial/Territorial Sport Organization, school board, local athletic association) that includes how to teach the specific skills and safety procedures that will minimize the inherent risk of participation. Coaches are responsible for maintaining any applicable certification requirements.

First Aid

- A fully stocked first aid kit must be readily accessible. (Consult **Sample First Aid Kit**)
- A working communication device (for example, cell phone) must be accessible.
- The designated individual who takes responsibility for providing first aid to injured students must: ??
    - as a minimum, have a current first aid certification from a recognized first aid provider (for example, St. John Ambulance, Red Cross) that includes CPR B or C and training in head, neck and spinal injury management;??
    - be in the area and readily accessible during the entire practice/competition;??
    - be aware of the school's first aid emergency action plan and follow their first aid emergency response (consult First Aid Plan and First Aid Emergency Response) including specific direction

for participants with accessibility needs, and use of assistive devices or medications; ??

- follow their school board's concussion protocol for a suspected concussion;
- and not be a participant in the activity. ?

Definitions

- **Coach** (i.e. Teacher Coach/Community Coach):
  - An individual who volunteers to coach a school team and is approved by the Principal/Designate.
- **Community Coach:**
  - An individual approved by the principal who volunteers to coach a school team. An individual acting in the role of a Community Coach must be assigned a Community Coach Liaison.
  - Examples of a Community Coach are:
    - teachers not under contract by the board;
    - retired teachers;
    - early childhood educators, teacher candidates, educational assistants;
    - co-op students, other secondary students;
    - parent/guardian;
    - individuals/coaches from the community.
- **Community Coach Liaison**:
  - A Teacher, Principal, or Vice Principal with a current certification from the Ontario College of Teachers and under contract by the school board who is responsible for carrying out all the duties required of a Teacher pursuant to the Education Act and the safety standards. The level of support will be commensurate with the expertise and qualifications of the Community Coach and will be determined by the Principal or Designate.
- **Monitor**:
  - A Volunteer and/or Qualified Instructor who assists the Teacher Coach with a group of students and has a responsibility to monitor student behaviors for the duration of the activity.
  - A Community Coach who has a responsibility to coach and monitor student behaviors for the duration of the athletic season and/or a Qualified Instructor(s)/Volunteer(s) who assists the

Community Coach during practices and competitions.

- **Monitoring**:
    - The role of monitoring is to observe, identify, act, and report:
        - Observe: Observe with attention to detail the actions of the students.
        - Identify: Identify the student and the unsafe behaviour.
        - Act: Take appropriate actions to safeguard students and others (e.g., stop the activity).
        - Report: Provide the name of the student and the unsafe behaviour to the Coach for management and direction.
- **Qualified Instructor:**
    - An individual who provides safety and skill instruction, and monitoring for an activity, and possesses the required qualifications (e.g., experience, certifications). This role could be fulfilled by a teacher, volunteer, or an employee of an outside provider. An instructor does not have the authority to supervise.
- **Supervision:**
    - The vigilant overseeing of an activity for management or direction. Activities, facilities, and equipment have inherent risks, but the more effectively they are supervised, the safer they become.
    - The Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education includes three Types of supervision, Direct Supervision, On-Site Supervision, and In-the-Area Supervision. These types of supervision take into consideration the level of risk, which is related to the number of participants, the skill level of the participants, the type of equipment used, the environmental conditions, the age, and developmental stage.
    - The three types of supervision described are not hierarchical but represent the type of supervision that activities require and the type of supervision that is inherently possible.
    - Some activities in OPASSE transition from one type of supervision to another type of supervision (e.g., Direct Supervision to On-Site Supervision OR On-Site Supervision to In-the-Area Supervision).
- **Teacher Coach:**
    - A Teacher Coach is a teacher, principal, or vice principal with a current certification from the Ontario College of Teachers and under contract by the school board.
- **Types of Supervision**:

- **Direct Supervision**:
    - Direct Supervision requires that the Coach is physically present at the activity, providing visual and verbal oversight for management and direction of both the activity and student safety.
        - Provisos:
            - No other activity can occur when part of the activity or the entire activity is under Direct Supervision when there is only one Coach supervising.
            - The Supervision section of the relevant activity safety standards page in the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education describes when parts of an activity are under Direct Supervision.
            - Where a Community Coach is providing the safety and initial skill instruction and monitoring, a Community Coach Liaison is accessible for management and direction as determined by the Principal/Designate.
        - An activity may be under Direct Supervision:
            - During the entire duration of the activity;
            - During the set up and take down of equipment;
            - During the safety and initial skill instruction;
            - During the performance/practice of the activity skill; and
            - When the activities transition from Direct Supervision to On-Site Supervision.
- **In-the-Area Supervision**:
    - The Coach is located in proximity to a combination of locations where the student activities take place, is circulating, and is accessible for providing management and direction of the physical activity and student safety.
        - Provisos:
            - The Coach is circulating between the activities, occurring at separate locations, and is readily accessible, or the location of the coach is communicated to the student.
            - Where a Community Coach is providing the safety and initial skill instruction and is monitoring, a Community Coach Liaison is accessible for management and direction as determined by the Principal/Designate.

        - Students may be out of sight for periods of time.
    - An activity or a component of the activity is under In-the-Area Supervision:
        - Where the same activity is located in separate locations. (e.g., Track and Field, Cross Country Running, Skiing (Alpine));
        - Where two or more activities under In-the-Area Supervision occur in separate locations (e.g., Badminton, Table Tennis, Handball (Wall));
        - Where the skill application of the activity takes place at a different location from the Coach (e.g., Cross Country Running, Skiing (Alpine), Cycling);
        - Where activities occur in double or triple gymnasiums; and
        - Where more than one Qualified Instructor is providing activities at a combination of locations.

- **On-Site Supervision**:
    - The Coach is present at one location where the student activity takes place (e.g., gymnasium, sports field, tennis courts at an Outside Activity Provider's facility) and is accessible for providing management and direction of the physical activity and student safety.
        - Provisos:
            - Where more than one activity occurs in one location, the Coach is circulating between the activities and is accessible for management and direction.
            - Momentary presence in adjoining rooms (e.g., equipment room, outside storage shed, boathouse) is considered to be On-Site Supervision.
            - Where a Community Coach is providing the safety and initial skill instruction and monitoring, a Community Coach Liaison is accessible for management and direction as determined by the Principal/Designate.
        - An activity may be under On-Site Supervision:
            - During the entire duration of the activity;
            - During the safety and initial skill instruction;
            - With activities using multiple stations while the Coach is circulating;
            - When combining two or more activities at one location while the Coach is circulating; and

        - When activities transition from On-Site Supervision to In-the-Area Supervision.

- **Volunteer**:
    - A responsible adult (e.g., Educational Assistants, Retired Teachers, Co-op Students, Parents/Guardians, Teacher Candidates) approved by the Principal/Designate who is under the direction of a Coach and has been instructed on their monitoring responsibilities. Refer to your school board's policy on volunteers assisting with students' physical activities.

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