



6.16.4 U15 Player Pathway Policy

Effective Date: July 13, 2023

Rev: July 2025

Seasonal Structure

Phase One: Preparation / Tryout

1. HEO has received Special Dispensation for U10 to U16 A/AA/AAA teams to start [tryouts in the Spring](#) for the 25-26 season. See the attached link for details.
2. Non A/AA/AAA teams shall not run tryouts from April through August.
3. Following Labour Day, players must have a minimum of (having these sessions following labour day is strongly recommended:
 - A. **Community/ Recreation Levels:** 1. (2) two practices/skill sessions prior to evaluation/selection/tryouts. These can be one-hour sessions.
2. Following the practices / skill sessions, teams must conduct a minimum of (3) three evaluation/selection/tryout sessions. ** Where teams are compiled for balanced rosters, formal tryouts are not required.
 - B. **Competitive Levels:** 1. (4) practice/skill sessions prior to the start of formal evaluations. These can be four one-hour sessions, or three 1.5-hour sessions, each on a separate day. Players are required to attend one set of these practice/skills sessions.
2. Following the practices / skill sessions, Non A/AA/AAA teams must conduct a minimum of three (3) formal tryout / evaluation sessions — one skills session, one small area games session, one game are recommended.
4. Teams must select players based on skill. Coaches should not limit a player's opportunity to tryout at any given position.

Phase Two: Development

5. Following tryouts/evaluations, teams must run a development period consisting of practices focused on skill development.
 - A. **Community/ Recreation Levels:** teams are required to run four (4) practices in this period.
 - B. **Competitive Levels:** teams are required eight (8) practices. Tournaments and exhibition games can also be scheduled in the development period. All games played in the Development phase count towards the team's total games played for the season.

Phase Three: Regular Season

6. In the regular season:
 - A. **Community/ Recreation Levels:** teams will play up to 24 games in their respective Leagues. Teams must run a minimum 1:1 ratio of practices to games during the regular season.



- B. **Competitive teams:** will play 28 games in their respective leagues. Teams must run a minimum 2:1 ratio of practices to games during the regular season.
- C. Tournaments and exhibition games can also be scheduled in the regular season.

Phase Four: Playoffs

- 7. During the playoff phase, Community/Recreational and Competitive teams will participate in a tournament style playoff structure, with a maximum of (8) playoff games for Community/Recreational Leagues and (10) for Competitive Leagues. The playoff phase should include one team practice per week.

Tournaments

- 8. Community and competitive teams may participate in a maximum of five (5) tournaments. As an alternative to tournaments, teams may play an equivalent number of exhibition games during the season. For the purposes of counting games, tournaments are considered to be three (3) games regardless of the number of games actually played.

Maximum Number of Games Per Season

- 9. Teams can play up to (51) Games at the Community/Recreation Levels and (57) at the Competitive Levels, which include exhibition, league regular season and playoff games. Additionally, teams are permitted to participate in Sanctioned tournaments. Community and Competitive teams can enter up to five (5) tournaments. Individual tournament games do not count towards the total games – each tournament is considered three (3) games regardless (** Teams can substitute a tournament entry for added Exhibition games. Each Tournament subtracted would allow a team to play an extra three (3) Exhibition games). Exhibition and Tournament Games played in the Development phase count towards the Total number of games allowed

Exhibition Games

- 10. Games involving two different teams must be Sanctioned and officiated. Intrasquad scrimmages that are not officiated are fine (one team split in two groups to play each other). Teams are not permitted to play non-Sanctioned exhibition games or Intersquad games (Intersquad meaning two different teams) without officials. Coaches who engage in such activity will be subject to sanctions up to and including suspension.

Affiliation

- 11. Affiliation for U13 and U15 players falls under the usual affiliation rules for minor hockey. Individual players affiliated to higher division/age categories may therefore exceed the game limit as a result of playing with their rostered and their affiliate teams.

Seasonal Break(s)

- 11. March Break shall be considered as a seasonal break (minimum five days without scheduled games or mandatory practice sessions). HEO teams may schedule a 2nd seasonal break by identifying it as a blackout period to their League at the beginning of the season.



U15	Recreational	Competitive
Practices (Practice to Reg Games)	1:1 Ratio	2:1 Ratio
Regular Season Games	24	28
Exhibition Games	4	4
Tournaments Games	15	15
Playoffs Games	8	10
Total Games	51	57

Game/Team Structure and Approach

1. Throughout the season, all players must receive fair and as close to equal ice time as possible (no bench shortening or preferential playing time; players to have opportunities to start games, end periods and play end of game, power play and penalty kill).
2. Throughout the season, goalies must rotate for an equal number of games/playing time (goalies must split game time and have equal opportunities to play the final game in tournaments).

Practice Sessions

U15

1. Practices should consist of small area games/station based/skill focussed drills. A minimum of 55% of practice sessions must be spent on skills and tactics.
2. 45% of practice time can be used to focus on Team Play and Strategy.
3. Athlete development should remain the focus during practice sessions.