



6.16 U7 Program Policy

Effective Date

Rev. 1 February 2017

Rev 14 April 2020

Rev 29 January 2021

A. GENERAL

1. Each association within HEO shall ensure that its Constitution, Bylaws, and/or Rules and Regulations include clauses covering the U7 Program, in accordance with Hockey Canada's (HC) direction.
2. All on-ice Coaches/Assistant Coaches (see Section D, Article 2) involved in U7 must have attended and completed the HU- Online Coach 1-2 course, the Coach 1 – Intro Coach in class Clinic, the On-Line Shift Forward Course, and the On-Line Gender Identity and Expression Course.
There must be at minimum a 1:6 Qualified Coach to Player ratio on-ice at all times.
3. U7 Program On-Ice Volunteers (see Section D, Article 3) (older than 16 years of age) must have completed the Shift Forward On line Course, Gender Identity, & Background Check (VSC & Declaration).
4. Each HEO member Association shall appoint an U7 Program Coordinator and shall submit this individual's name and contact information to the HEO U7 Coordinator as soon as the position has been appointed.
5. The Association U7 Coordinator must submit the list of their next month's U7 ice times to their District U7 Program Coordinator no later than the 15th of the previous month.
6. All U7 participants MUST wear proper hockey equipment in accordance with Hockey Canada's Rules and Regulations governing the outfitting of players.
7. The U7 Program is predominantly for players aged 5 & 6 as of December 31st of the current hockey season. 4 Year olds are permitted.
8. Players under the age of 7 as of December 31st of the current hockey season are **NOT** permitted under any circumstance to play U9 hockey.
9. As per HC and HEO Rules and Regulations, for all U7 events there must be a registered Trainer present and available (this includes all on and off ice events).
10. Each HEO member Association shall develop its own infrastructure for the delivery mechanism based on the number of participants, the HEO Rules and Regulations, and the HEO U7 Program Policy, however, it is required that all Associations use and follow HC's Initiation Program Skills Development Manuals and/or Network App to ensure players receive the best instruction. It should take a full season to properly complete the program:
11. Each District, in coordination with HEO, shall appoint an U7 Coordinator. The HEO District U7 Coordinator will be monitoring, within their District, each Association's U7 Program over the season. The U7 District coordinators will be required to report back to the HEO U7 Coordinator on their findings.



B. POLICY GOVERNING U7 PRACTICE SESSIONS AND CROSS ICE GAMES

1. A normal practice session shall consist of a minimum of 40 minutes skill development and **10 minutes of cross ice or small area games** (for example; freeze tag, red light/green light). After 15 practice sessions the minimum time for skill development may be decreased to no less than 25 minutes.
2. No U7 player/participant may play the entire season as a goalie. All players are to be given the opportunity to participate as a goalie should they so desire to do so.
3. U7 groups are permitted **to play cross ice** matchups against other Associations within HEO commencing no earlier than November 30th. U7 groups are not permitted to play against groups outside of the HEO jurisdiction (see Section D)
4. 4-ounce (blue) pucks are to be used for all U7 activities. Smaller age appropriate nets (where available) should be used for all IU7 activities.
5. All U7 fun game match-ups must be played in **cross ice** format.
6. One Coach/Assistant Coach, per group, is to be on the ice at all times during **cross ice** match-ups.
13. During fun game match-ups, all players are to be given **EQUAL** ice time during **EACH** cross ice game

C. POLICY GOVERNING HOSTING AND PARTICIPATING IN U7 FUN DAYS

FUN GAME MATCH-UPS are fun games between groups from the same or different Associations/District. They are played **in a cross ice** format only. When played the following apply; a) Each team shall have 3-5 skaters on the ice for each shift; b) Scores are NOT to be kept or recorded; c) the use of Goalies shall be in accordance with Section B-2; d) to commence only after meeting the requirements in Section B-3.

1. No U7 Fun Day shall be held prior to the end of November 30.
2. Any Association or Organization wishing to host an U7 Fun Day must apply to HEO for an U7 Fun Day Sanction Permit (no charge) only the **cross ice/Half ice game** format is to be used for Fun Days.
3. No U7 group may participate in more than 3 Fun Day events in a season (excluding Timbits Jamboree).
4. Referees and game sheets are not permitted during U7 Fun Days.
5. One U7 Coach/Assistant Coach per group must be on the ice at all times at all levels.
7. During Fun Days, all players are to be given EQUAL ice time. U7 teams may dress a player as a goalie in accordance with Section B-2. An U7 player participating in a fun game match-up as a goaltender may be dressed in full and proper goalie equipment.

8. Group relay races, agility skill events, individual races (front and backwards skating), puck control events, and shooting and passing events are strongly encouraged in lieu of (or in addition to) fun game match-ups during Fun Day events.

9. Only group awards may be distributed for U7 Fun Day activities (ribbons, pins, mementos, etc.) for such events as relay races, agility skills, etc. Under no circumstances are individual recognition awards (for example; most valuable player) to be presented.

D. DEFINITIONS

1. ASSOCIATION refers to those local Minor Hockey Associations that are duly registered and recognized by HEO.
2. A Coach/Assistant Coach for the purposes of this policy item is defined as an on ice person(s) leading, coaching or teaching any part of the program, a minimum 1:6 Qualified Coach to Player Ratio must be adhered to at all times. (See Section A, Article 2)
3. U7 Program On-Ice Volunteers are Coach/Assistant Coach aides and are not to be involved in Coaching/Teaching/Instructing in any manner. Their role is to assist the coaches with player and equipment movement and other related duties. (See Section A, Article 3)
4. U7 PLAYER/PARTICIPANT refers to a child that is properly registered and completely equipped in accordance with HOCKEY CANADA and HEO Rules and Regulations.

The following U7 Guideline is to be used as a companion to the HEO U7 Policy Document.

1. It is highly recommended that the U7 Program be made available as an option (or in addition to) for those players who are less skilled or just starting (entry level), ages 7 to 10 as of December 31st, on the recommendation of the Association's U7 Coordinator.
2. Each Association is strongly encouraged to host a Parent Orientation meeting, prior to or at the start of the season, to ensure that the proper philosophy and implementation of the program is clearly outlined to everyone.
3. All on-ice instructional activities should be structured in such a manner that all participants can participate at the same time (e.g. use of stations).
4. Cross Ice Games where all players participate are strongly encouraged during the last 5 to 10 minutes of ice sessions as well as other types of activities (such as freeze tag, red light/green light, etc.)
5. An Association's U7 Program should allow for flexibility within the practice/fun game matchup format.