

# HOCKEY PARENT HANDBOOK



**Nanaimo  
Minor Hockey  
Association**

## **WELCOME TO NANAIMO MINOR HOCKEY**

Herb Brooks told us “great moments are born from great opportunities”. Being a part of this great game is certainly one of those great opportunities. Whether it’s competing for a gold medal, skating with your friends or volunteering at the rink, hockey can provide a lifetime of great moments and fun for you and your child.

As your local hockey association, Nanaimo MHA is here to help you make the most of it.

### **OUR MISSION**

To promote sportsmanship, fair competition, development, and safety for all skill levels.

At Nanaimo MHA, we emphasize the support and development of grassroots hockey programs, and we are dedicated to you and to making hockey a great experience for every player.

Thank you for joining us on this exciting journey. We are truly yours in hockey. We have developed this handbook to share information that will help you and your child to enjoy the great game we all love – hockey!



## **ABOUT NANAIMO MINOR HOCKEY**

Hockey began in Nanaimo in the late 1930s, the Civic Arena was the first arena built in Nanaimo in 1939 and hosted the first team called the Nanaimo Clippers, which was in today's standards a U21-Juvenile team.

Since the onset of hockey in Nanaimo, many new levels of hockey have been created.

Nanaimo MHA now hosts players from ages 5 to 20 years old, with female only teams and coed teams in recreational(house), as well as competitive(rep) teams.

Nanaimo MHA has hosted BC Hockey Provincial Championships, from all levels with the most recent being the U15 Tier 2 March 2025.

If kids truly want to excel, they need less emphasis on win/loss and more focus on skill development, especially in the younger age groups. They need more skill training and more puck touches. Physical and mental skills are learned during practices time. By practicing the right way, kids will unlock their true potential. NMHA combines age-appropriate training and practice techniques with an introduction to skills and athleticism. Allowing players to have more fun while learning the game of hockey.

Reminder, referees are players too, usually young officials who are just learning how to officiate the game of hockey, we all need to support them just as much as our players.

Coaches are usually hockey parents themselves, who are taking time away from their families and sometimes work to be there for your child. The best thing we as hockey parents can do is support them, communicate with them and let them be the coach.



## WHAT TO EXPECT AS A HOCKEY PARENT

Your child's hockey experience will be influenced by many factors, but nothing will influence them more than you. As a parent, you are the most influential person in your child's development. Embrace that opportunity.

- Praise your child's efforts
- Let kids be kids, fun is paramount
- Always be supportive
- Manage your emotions and set a good example
- Enjoy your hockey experience as a hockey parent, it moves fast and passes way to quickly, these are moments to enjoy
- Keep a healthy balance of hockey and non-hockey activities
- Your coach will most likely be a volunteer, and often is a parent too, donating their time to help your child, **be supportive and positive**
- **Be respectful**, especially in situations of disagreement or conflict, it does happen!
- Do not bully or harass other volunteers, parents or players, **especially not the referees** (they are mostly kids too)

**The youth hockey environment should be open and transparent. As a parent, you have the right to be involved and aware. Please do not hesitate to ask questions.**

### Nanaimo Minor Hockey Board

Nanaimo MHA Board of Directors are volunteers who are voted in at an Annual General Meeting, held in May of each year. Your Board of Directors supply guidance and oversight of the organization, ensuring appropriate mechanisms such as financial control, policies and procedures are being implemented.

Please visit [hockeynanaimo.com](http://hockeynanaimo.com) to find the current list of Directors

Board meetings are held monthly, Members are allowed to attend these meetings, please send your request to attend to the office. If you wish to be placed on the agenda as a delegate, please contact [administrator@hockeynanaimo.com](mailto:administrator@hockeynanaimo.com) regarding the business you wish to speak on, you will receive a date and time to attend.

The Board is readily available to discuss hockey matters with you, if you are uncertain who to speak with, please contact the office.



## MINOR HOCKEY LEVELS

Age as of Dec. 31	Age Division	LEVELS
5 yrs	Under 6 (U7)	Recreational – C
6 yrs	Under 7 (U7)	Recreational - C
7 yrs	Under 8 (U8)	Recreational - C
8 yrs	Under 9 (U9)	Recreational - C
9 & 10 yrs	Under 11 (U11)	Recreational C/Female/Competitive Tier 1 or 2
11 & 12 yrs	Under 13 (U13)	Recreational C/Female/Competitive Tier 1 or 2
13 & 14 yrs	Under 15 (U15)	Recreational C/Female/Competitive Tier 1 or 2
15, 16 & 17 yrs	Under 18 (U18)	Recreational C/Female/Competitive Tier 1 or 2
18, 19 & 20 yrs	Under 21 (U21)	Recreational – C

### RECREATIONAL - C

U6/U7 = Fun • Introduction of basic skills • Reviewing of basic skills • Refining of basic skills

U8/U9 = Fun • Reviewing of basic skills • Refining of basic skills

U11 = Fun • Refining of basic skills • Introduction to team tactics

U13 = Fun • Refining of individual tactics • Introduction to team play

U15 = Fun • Refining team play • Introduction to team strategy

U18 = Fun • Refining team play and strategy

### FEMALE

The game of female hockey has been played for more than 100 years and has been growing exponentially since 1990, the year of the first official women's world championship. Today, it is one of the fastest-growing sports in the world. Nanaimo Minor Hockey Association is proud to support a recreational female division. Currently, the Female teams have players in U11, U13, U15 and U18. Here is your opportunity to play a great sport with your peers where you will develop your skills, play competitive hockey, make friends for life, and have fun!

### COMPETITIVE

Competitive hockey is the highest caliber of hockey available in any given association.

Competitive (Rep) teams are formed of players who are typically the most skilled and talented players in their age group. Competitive hockey is a fast-paced, highly competitive level of hockey that offers exceptional players a challenge.



## THE HOW, WHERE AND WHEN

The minor hockey season runs from early September to mid-March.

**Recreational** – the season will begin with your player attending an evaluation process, for the first 2-3 weekends your player will be scheduled to attend at minimum 2 of these ice times. These evaluations take place so your player can be selected for teams which are equal in playing levels.

Your player will take part in one to two practice sessions per week or one practice session and one game per week, when ice is available. Teams U11 through U21, play in the VIAHA Mid Island League with teams from Port Alberni, Parksville, Nanaimo, Cowichan Valley and Lake Cowichan. Teams will travel to all of these communities to play.

**Female** – the season **may** begin with your player attending an evaluation process, for the first 2-3 weeks.

Your player will take part in one to two practice sessions per week or one practice session and one game per week when ice is available. Teams U11 through U18, play in the VIAHA Female League with teams from Victoria to Tri-Port. Teams may travel to all of these communities to play, depending on the league.

**Competitive** – the season will begin with a tryout process, usually late August, your player will attend all tryouts listed on our website, to be evaluated to find the best suited team for their playing ability.

If selected to a competitive team, your player will attend a minimum of two practice sessions per week and one to two games per week. Your players will play in the VIAHA Island League with teams from the whole Island, teams will travel to the selected communities to play.

## ICE

Nanaimo Minor Hockey does not own or build arenas; the City of Nanaimo does.

NMHA shares ice with many other user groups, we are very short of weekday ice times, therefore recreational practice and game ice times are on weekends. Most development ice will be early mornings on weekdays, as this is when ice is available.



We are currently working with all arena users and interested people to look for ways to have new arenas built in our city. If you are interested in helping please contact the office to point you in the right direction.

## GETTING INVOLVED

**Teams** can only be as successful as the **parents that get involved**. Whether you sign up as a team manager, coach, safety person, team treasurer, clock and game sheet person, or maybe fundraising is your strength, your team needs you! **It takes a village to run a hockey team.**

**Tournaments** are only successful if everyone gets involved, please ask your team manager when your player's home tournament is, as **each family must volunteer** sometime at the tournament.

There are many positions within the minor hockey association to get involved. Joining our association can be a rewarding experience. Everyone has different strengths and skills that they can bring to a team, and every contribution helps. Our association is 100% powered by the extraordinary efforts of volunteers. Even parents who never played hockey can make a huge contribution, so do not be reluctant.

If you have any ideas for new ways you can help, do not hesitate to voice it.

***Jump in and join the team; your player did!***

Please visit our website, [www.hockeynanaimo.com](http://www.hockeynanaimo.com) for more information on each position and what Hockey Canada courses are needed. Nanaimo MHA will reimburse team staff for the cost of clinics.

## Board of Directors:

[Nanaimo Minor Hockey contacts](#)

## STAFF

Vicky Long – Administrator [administrator@hockeynanaimo.com](mailto:administrator@hockeynanaimo.com)

Matt Hughes – Director of Hockey Operations [nmahockeyops@gmail.com](mailto:nmahockeyops@gmail.com)

Cody Gessner – Referee in Chief [codygessner@gmail.com](mailto:codygessner@gmail.com)



**NMHA Policies & Procedures, Guidelines** and more, can be found on our website, please review each page so you can be familiar with where to find information. It is the family's responsibility to know the NMHA Policies, if you have trouble understanding any of them, please reach out to the office.

- [NMHA Policies Revised November 2025](#)
- [NMHA Bylaws NMHA 2025](#)
- [NMHA Communication Guidelines](#)
- [Understanding Bullying, Harassment & Abuse](#)
- [Nanaimo Minor Hockey Social Media Policy](#)
- [Locker Room Policy](#)
- [Dressing Room Policy](#)

What is covered in my HC Insurance fee? CLICK THIS [LINK](#)

[Hockey Canada Injury Report](#), form must be filled in completion and sent by parent to BC Hockey (6671 Oldfield Rd, Saanichton, BC V8M 2A1) within 90 days of injury, with a copy given to your team manager or safety person, and the Nanaimo MHA office.

If your player has not been able to attend practices and/or games due to an injury during hockey or outside of hockey, the [Return to Play Form](#) must be completed in full and given to your team manager or safety person to allow your player to return to practices and games.

