

U8/U9 Divisional Update

Hello families,

We want to provide clarity on how our U8 and U9 divisions will operate for the 2026/27 season. We've heard your questions and appreciate your patience as we've worked through this process.

As many of you know, 2 years ago we piloted a different approach to team formation. While there were positives, continuing with that model required VIAHA policy changes.

Since then, we have carefully explored other options. However, under the current VIAHA regulations, those alternatives are not feasible. Therefore, we are required to follow VIAHA's team balancing process this season.

Here's what this means for our divisions:

- NMHA will operate both a U8 division and a U9 division.
- Teams will be balanced.
- At the start of the season, we will monitor players. If any adjustments between U8 and U9 are necessary for reasons of skill or safety, they will be requested and approved through VIAHA.

We also have some exciting news: within the U8 division, NMHA will be introducing a female U8/U9 team again this season. This is an important step in supporting the growth of female hockey in our community and creating more opportunities for our players. We will work with U8/U9 females who would like to play on this team by applying for the appropriate exemptions, and the team will be placed in the U8 division.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support. We're looking forward to another great season of hockey development, teamwork, and fun for our players.