



# MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** February 22, 2018

**TO:** Minor Hockey Associations  
Minor Hockey Leagues

**FROM:** Justin Fesyk, Senior Manager - Hockey Development  
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**SUBJECT: Novice Hockey – Changes and Timelines for Transition and Implementation**

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At Hockey Canada's Spring Congress in May 2017, a new national policy was approved that mandates all Novice-aged players receive age-appropriate programming on cross-ice or half-ice surfaces for the 2019-20 season. Hockey Alberta began the transition process by holding an *Intro to Hockey* session as part of the Annual General Meeting and Hockey Conference in September 2017.

Hockey Canada is finalizing a Novice Program Resource Guide that will be provided to Hockey Alberta and other member branches in early March. The Novice Program Resource Guide will provide the framework for the rules and regulations for Novice hockey in Alberta and consist of the following sections:

1. Introduction to Novice Hockey
2. Rationale for Novice Programming
3. Novice Game Play Guidelines and Rules of Play
4. Novice Game Play Officiating Guidelines
5. Frequently Asked Questions

## **Timelines for Sharing Information**

Hockey Alberta is committed to keeping you updated as we move forward in the creation and delivery of the Alberta Novice Program. Provincial branch implementation plans vary across the country, but in efforts to ensure accuracy in Alberta, we ask you to adhere to the timeline outlined below.

- March – Hockey Alberta reviews the requirements of the National Novice Program Resource Guide and finalizes the Provincial direction for the 2018-19 transition season.
- April – Spring Regional Members Meetings  
Hockey Alberta will present the Alberta Novice Program Resource Guide and all expectations for the 2018-19 transition season as well as the requirements for the 2019-20 season.



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## The Transition Plan: 2018-19

For MHAs who are prepared to put the framework for the transition season in place for 2018-19, Hockey Alberta recommends one of the following options. These options will be incorporated as part of the transition season expectations outlined at the Spring Regional Member meetings.

### Option One

- **Minor Novice (7 years old as of Dec. 31):** Full transition to the new Alberta Novice Program playing on the modified (half or cross) ice surface.
- **Major Novice (8 years old as of Dec. 31):** Status quo - practice and play on full ice.

### Option Two

- **Combined Novice (7 and 8 years old as of Dec. 31):** Full transition to the new Alberta Novice Program playing on the modified (half or cross) ice surface.

The following chart outlines the foundations of the new Alberta Novice Program and is to be included in any transitional plan implemented in the 2018-19 season.

Novice Seasonal Structure		
<b>Months</b>	September - October	November - March
<b>Phase</b>	Development	Regular
<b>Approx. Dates</b>	Sept. 15 – Oct. 31	Nov. 1 – Mar. 22
<b>Ice Sessions (Maximum)</b>	<b>Development Season</b>	<b>Regular Season</b>
26 Weeks	6 Weeks	20 Weeks
50 Practices	12 Practices	38 Practices
25 Games	2 Games	23 Games
3 Tournaments	0 Tournaments	3 Tournaments
Practice to Game Ratio:	2:1	
Ice Sessions per Week:	2 or 3	
Ideal Ice Sessions:	Weekdays, no earlier than 5:00 pm Weekends, no earlier than 9:00 am	

### **Novice Practice Structure**

- Half Ice Practice: 1-2 teams on ice
- Full-Ice Practice: 2-4 teams on ice

### **Game Structure and Playing Rules**

Complete transitional game format and rules will be communicated in April at the Spring Regional Members meetings (see Information Timelines above).

### **Officials**

Complete transitional game format and rules will be communicated in April at the Spring Regional Members meetings (see Information Timelines above).

Should you have any questions please feel free to contact myself at 403-342-6777.