



HOCKEY CALGARY

COMMUNITY
HOCKEY
STREAM

RETURN TO HOCKEY

JULY 28 UPDATE



Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	3
2	PROGRAM OBJECTIVES	4
3	REQUIREMENTS (Alberta Gov't, HA, Hockey Canada)	5
4	PROTOCOLS AND SAFETY	7
5	FACILITIES	9
6	REFUNDS	10
7	RETURN TO HOCKEY	11
	HOCKEY CALGARY PHASES	12
	I SORTING/EVALUATIONS	13
	II DEVELOPMENT SEASON	15
	U7 TIMBITS	17
	U9 (formerly Novice)	18
	U11/U13 (formerly Atom and Peewee)	19
	U15/U18/U21 (formerly Bantam, Midget, and Junior)	20
	III REGULAR SEASON	21
	IV COMPETITION SEASON (if necessary)	22
	V REFEREES	24
	VI COACHES, TEAM OFFICIALS AND OFF-ICE OFFICIALS	24
8	FAQs	25
9	APPENDICIES	28
	APPENDIX I	28
	APPENDIX II	29
	APPENDIX III	30
	APPENDIX IV	31
	APPENDIX V	32
	APPENDIX VI	33

1 INTRODUCTION

Hockey Calgary has actively engaged with Hockey Canada, Hockey Alberta and our Member Associations in developing a 'Return to Hockey' plan that allows our young athletes to get back on the ice and enjoy the benefits of the great game of hockey. This plan will provide answers to many of the numerous questions that are being asked regarding how Hockey Calgary will operate under the current Alberta Health guidelines and restrictions. Unfortunately, each answer will likely elicit another 10 questions on how the program will run. In the current everchanging environment we are doing our best to keep up to date with government guidelines and keep our membership informed.

The Hockey Calgary - Return to Hockey Plan is current as of **July 28, 2020** and is based on the requirements of the Government of Alberta as of this date. As the situation evolves Hockey Calgary will update accordingly to remain in compliance with requirements.

As you read this document please note 'this is the new normal' in our current environment, this is not a typical hockey season, and it will look different. The plan has not been developed to stagnate player development, in fact we are hopeful that it will ensure our athletes continue to grow both on and off the ice. There are basically 4 Phases to the Hockey Calgary plan that will be outlined in this document:

1. Prep Phase – focus is on development and conditioning in preparation for the upcoming season, this phase will take place in August.
2. Sorting/Evaluation Phase– This phase will take place in September and will be for the sole purpose of creating like skilled 'Cohort Groups' of less than 50 players. This process will be done through 'Physically Distanced' skill-based evaluations.
3. Development Season Phase – Once players are sorted into 'Cohorts' they will now be able to practice and compete in 'Mini Games' with the other members of this Cohort. Players will not be permitted to play against teams or players outside of their cohort until government restrictions are lifted. This phase will begin when cohorts are formed in late September/early October.
4. Regular Season/Competition Season Phase – This is the final phase of our plan, and basically has 2 options, if all restrictions are lifted we will return to the 'traditional' Hockey Calgary program. If the restrictions are not removed, then following the winter holiday break (14-day isolation) Hockey Calgary will look at revising the cohorts and developing some inter-association play.

2 PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The guidelines in place have forced us to think differently on how we operate. While the program may look different it was developed to meet the needs of the players and focused on achieving the following key objectives:

1. **Safety!** Create a safe, healthy hockey environment for our players, coaches and volunteers
 - Safety is paramount, this plan was built in compliance with the Alberta Government Guidelines, and to minimize the risk of all participants
2. **FUN!** Maintain a culture of Fun!! Where participants can enjoy the game they love
 - Hockey Calgary is excited to resume operations that allows kids to be kids
3. **Development!** Create competitive hockey environment that allows players to develop and grow
 - Development is essential and can be accomplished in both the practice and game play environment
4. **Tiering!** Provide an environment where players are grouped in appropriate skill levels
 - Tiering ranges may look slightly different than in the past. However, they will be close, and we believe they will be within an appropriate range for skill development.
5. **Game-Play!** Create an environment where some 'Game Play' exists
 - Games may operate in a variety of creative formats (5v5, 4v4, 3v3, etc.)
6. **Flexible Transition!** Allow for flexible transition within our program between government phases/stages as information and protocols change

3 REQUIREMENTS (Alberta Gov't, HA, Hockey Canada)

1. Within the current Alberta Government Phase 2, there are 2 formats we can use to operate our programs. Hockey Calgary and our Member Associations will utilize both of these formats in achieving the goals of our program:
 - **With Physical Distancing** – all participants must remain 2 metres apart at all times, including coaches
 - Skill based programming, focus on development
 - **Using Cohort Groups** – up to 50 participants grouped together to participate in a program – no physical distancing required on the ice surface, however, it is required to maintain a 2-metre distance when on the bench & in dressing rooms.
 - Cohort Groups must remain together for duration of 'Stage 2' unless participants enter into a 2-week (14 day) isolation period, after which they can move to a new cohort group
 - ***Note: Per the Government of Alberta: "An individual is only to be part of one Sport Cohort at any time." This means that school-based cohorts will not restrict participation in minor hockey.***
 - Programs should operate within a specified, community, zone, region, where travel is limited
2. No competitions or other interactions with other teams/cohorts will be permitted during Alberta Government Phase 2. Only training camps, skill development and system implementations within the team/cohort will be permitted at Stage 2. Competitions will be allowed but only within the team/cohort (more details later in document).
3. Member Associations MUST track all participants & interactions, maintaining records in a secure location for 30 days from completion of activity. This is to be done as part of a daily check-in procedure for participants. (see Protocols section)
 - Hockey Calgary is currently analyzing various options that would allow for this to be tracked online or via an app for easy use and organization of data
 - Any participant who answers YES to any of the questions must NOT attend or participate in the program and may not return until after a minimum 14-day quarantine from the activity.

4. Ensure that Member Associations follow Facility Guidelines
 - Facilities MUST adopt standards as per the Government of Alberta, which may differ slightly depending on the facility
 - Associations must understand these standards and follow them, as owners and operators Facility Management will have the final say
 - Associations will work closely with 'home' arenas when developing protocols
 - Facilities not 'Hockey Associations' will determine spectator access, dressing room use and may have stronger requirements with regards to participation.
5. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
 - On August 1, 2020 the City of Calgary Face Coverings Bylaw will be in effect.
 - The Bylaw mandates that face coverings (masks) be worn in the following places that will impact minor hockey:
 - i. Public indoor spaces (malls, grocery stores, retail businesses, churches)
 - ii. City of Calgary facilities (Recreation centres, City Hall, City of Calgary buildings)
 - Coaches and players are required to follow the bylaw and wear face coverings in facilities prior to on-ice participation. We are in the process of clarifying if the bylaw includes the dressing room itself prior to on-ice participation.
 - Coaches are required to wear face coverings on the bench.
6. League Play (HA page 17)
 - Traditional league play is NOT permitted
 - Mini Games are only permitted within your Cohort
7. Tournaments & Travel Permits (HA page 16)
 - Tournaments are NOT permitted during Phase 2 of the Alberta Government relaunch (Development Season)
 - No travel permits or tournament sanctions will be approved during this phase

[Hockey Alberta – Return to Play](#)

4 PROTOCOLS AND SAFETY

We cannot stress enough that the safety and well-being of our players, coaches, volunteers, and families is of utmost importance. This section details several Hockey Canada, Hockey Alberta, and AHS guidelines and resources and should give confidence that Hockey Calgary will have a focused effort on working with all stakeholders to ensure a healthy and safe environment for hockey programming.

At this time, we cannot answer the question of “what will happen if there is a positive case?” AHS is treating every situation differently and are not providing concrete ‘what ifs’. We must simply follow reporting guidelines and take direction as it is given.

Contact Tracing and Symptom Screening

Hockey Calgary and its member associations must track all participants and interactions, maintaining records in a secure location for 30 days from completion of activity. This is to be done as part of a daily check-in procedure for participants. Hockey Calgary is analyzing options to track and organize this information online and/or via an app to allow for ease of compliance.

Anyone who is sick or has been in contact with someone who has COVID-19 is not permitted to attend practices or games. Familiarize yourself with the symptoms of COVID-19 and follow AHS and Government guidelines if you are not feeling well. **DO NOT ATTEND HOCKEY ACTIVITIES IF YOU ARE SICK.**

More detail will be available shortly.

[Government of Alberta - Symptoms](#)

Reporting

Members and sanctioned partners are to report any COVID-19 cases as required by Alberta Health Services, Member, hockey association, league and facility. Hockey Calgary must be notified immediately after Alberta Health has been notified.

[Hockey Canada - Reporting a Positive COVID-19 Case](#)

Hockey Canada Guidelines/Resources

Hockey Canada, Hockey Alberta and its 13 Member Branches have built a comprehensive Safety Guidelines document, along with an FAQ document, to provide direction and support as organizations (administrators, coaches, managers, safety staff, trainers), parents and players prepare to return to hockey. The information included in these documents should be reviewed regularly, as it provides a solid framework to follow for any organization (and its members) as Return to Hockey planning is undertaken.

[Hockey Canada Safety Guidelines.](#)

The Safety Guidelines provide guidance on a safe and positive return to hockey experience for our participants and stakeholders. Sections include:

- Insurance Coverage.
- Hygiene Requirements and Checklist.
- Recommended Return to Hockey Procedures.
- What to do if there is a positive COVID-19 test.
- Junior Hockey guidelines.
- Guidelines for Officials.

Responsibilities

Parents and players also play key roles in the Return to Hockey. Their responsibilities include:

- Stay at home if experiencing any symptoms.
- Become educated on the safety protocols and procedures prior to attending session and adhere to them while at the session.
- Ensure each player has his/her own water bottle which is sanitized prior to each session, and his/her own hand sanitizer (for use in dressing room).
- Ensure equipment is dried, cleaned and/or sanitized following each session.
- Arrange appropriate transportation to and from the session.
- Refrain from cheering and yelling as it presents a high risk of spreading droplets.
- Do not spit, blow nose freely or release any bodily fluid anywhere in any facility due to an extremely high risk of virus transfer.

A detailed outline of responsibilities of Administrators, Coaches and Managers, Safety Person and Trainer, Players and Parents can be found in the Hockey Canada Safety Guidelines – Roles and Responsibilities (Appendix 6).

[Hockey Canada Roles and Responsibilities.](#)

5 FACILITIES

Hockey Calgary does not own or manage any of the arena facilities within the Calgary area. The individual facilities have implemented protocols to meet the requirements of Alberta Health. They also have the ability to strengthen these guidelines if they feel it is important to the safe operations of the facility.

As user groups it is our responsibility to follow the requirements as outlined by each individual facility and ensure that we are respecting the premises. The facility management has the ability to cancel any and all bookings and stop the Hockey Calgary program from operating in their building. **Not respecting the facilities protocols and procedures jeopardizes the entire Hockey Calgary program.**

Please note that each facility may have slightly different protocols in place, therefore upon entering a facility for the first time families are encouraged to read the information posted at the entrance and follow the guidelines. Areas that may be different within each facility include the following:

Entrance & Exit time – generally this varies between 15-30 minutes before & after each session

Dressing Room Usage – some are permitting with limited #'s, some are not permitting at all

Showers – for the most part facilities are not offering this option

Fountains – most facilities have closed their fountains, so it is important that players fill their water bottles before arriving at the arena

Time between ice sessions – most are at 15 minutes, but a couple remain at 30 minutes

On Ice Capacity – some are allowing up to 50 (which is the maximum size), but some have limited on ice #'s to 25, this is an important one to understand before going to the rink

Spectators – some are permitting spectators, some are not, some are allowing 1 per participant, once again this is the decision of the facility and must be respected.

Please be aware that these guidelines can be modified or changed as we move through the season, we will do our best to provide updates.

6 REFUNDS

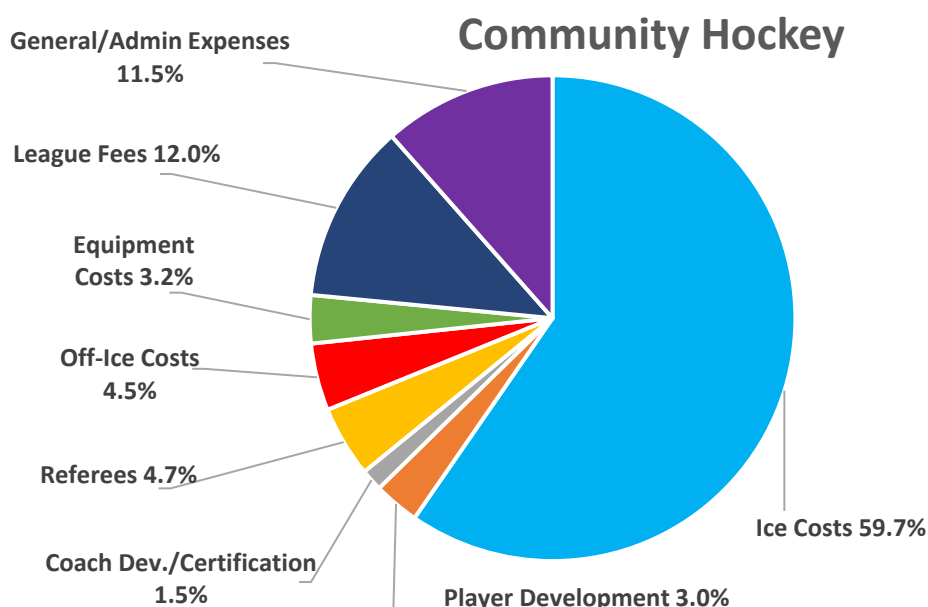
Hockey Calgary does not control member association hockey fees or refund policies. Each association will be in control over their own refund policies. However, it is very important that we understand the landscape we are current operating in for the 2020-21 season.

We are in very unprecedented times and unfortunately that makes predicting the future incredibly challenging. There is far too much uncertainty to have concrete refund policies in the event of a lockdown or quarantine that may affect the duration or length of the season.

In the event the season length is affected by a lockdown or a cohort is required to quarantine for a period, Associations will do everything in their power to be fair to their members. However, please understand that there are several considerations and factors that impact how registration dollars are spent.

Some expenses are fixed and will be difficult to recuperate in the event of a cancelled season, while other expenses may be easier to recuperate with enough notice. It is not possible to determine any of those details at this point, but please know that Hockey Calgary and its membered associations will do everything they can to ensure fair treatment of players and families and return as much of their registration fees as possible in the unfortunate event that the season length is negatively impacted.

As a reference, please see the average breakdown of how community hockey registration fees are spent:



7

RETURN TO HOCKEY

A safe return to hockey that meets the guidelines of Stage 2 of the Government of Alberta's Relaunch strategy is paramount. As mentioned earlier in this document there are two ways Hockey Calgary can operate programs, either **Physically Distanced** or using **Cohorts**. Hockey is a contact sport and while we can operate skill development sessions that keep players physical distanced, we understand that in order to meet all of the key objectives of our program, we will need to use a cohort model for various phases of our return to play.

Government of Alberta Cohorting Guidelines:

Cohorting has been identified as an option for Sports teams. If an athlete is participating in a camp or program not using physical distancing, that group is considered a Cohort. A Cohort is a closed, small group of no more than 50 individuals who participate in the same sport or activity and remain together for the duration of Stage 2 of the Government of Alberta's relaunch. If Cohorting is being used, this should be clearly communicated to participants/ parents prior to Cohort formation.

- Sports teams can play in region-only cohorts (mini-leagues) of up to 50 players and coaches.
- Cohorts include those individuals (participants, officials, coaches and trainers) who cannot maintain a 2-metre distance from others at all times.
- Sports cohort numbers do not include parents or spectators.
- **Instructors, Coaches and/or Team Officials can be part of one Cohort and remain with that group throughout the duration of this program, or they may maintain physical distancing from all other participants. If physical distancing is maintained, this not considered cohorting.** Individuals can only be part of one sport Cohort.
- Interacting with the same people and the same cohorts will be safer than constantly changing the people you interact with.
- Government of Alberta has indicated that: Cohorts are only to play within the same geographical region (for example, within a county, town or quadrant of a city). Activities should be restricted to local regional opportunities. Participants should not seek sport, physical activity and recreation opportunities in other regions, or out of province. Cross-jurisdictional, or inter-regional, play should not occur at this stage.
- **An individual is only to be part of one Sport Cohort at any time.** If an individual wishes to move to a new Sport Cohort, s/he is to complete a 14-day non-participation period prior to joining the new Cohort.
- **NOTE: Even while using cohorting, physical distancing must be maintained in all aspects of hockey activity except while participants are on the ice (for example, dressing rooms, benches, and in public areas).**
 - Options could include indicating physical distancing by using tape to mark areas on player benches or in dressing rooms.
 - When using Cohorting, it is recommended to try and utilize physical distancing on the ice whenever possible.

HOCKEY CALGARY PHASES

The primary concern for Hockey Calgary is that any programs offered focus on the health and safety of all participants. The intent is not to re-create the regular season structure, but to offer development, modified game play, and fun before proceeding to the regular season.

Phase	Timing	Activity
Prep	August 14-30, 2020	<p>Programs must be delivered using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical distancing <p>Types of Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Off-ice sessions Skills camps Development programs
Sorting/Evaluations	August 31, 2020	<p>Programs must be delivered using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical distancing <p>On-ice skills-based sorting sessions designed to group like skilled players into cohorts for the 'Development Season'</p>
Development Season	<p>After cohort/team formation</p> <p>Approximately End of Sept/Beginning of October</p>	<p>Programs must be delivered using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cohorting <p>Following the 'Sorting/Evaluations' component, players will be grouped into cohorts of 36-48 players (depending on the age category).</p> <p>Within these cohorts, 4 evenly balanced 'mini-teams' of 9-12 players will be created. Cohorts and 'Mini-Teams' can practice and play mini-games against each other.</p> <p>Types of Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-Ice Practices Off-Ice Training Regional' Game Play (3v3, 4v4 or 5v5)
Regular Season	TBD	<p>Programs will be delivered will limited or no group/cohort restrictions (return to normal).</p> <p>Transition from previous cohort 'Development Season' into traditional hockey team sizes.</p> <p>Types of Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-Ice Practices Off-Ice Training League Play
<p>OR</p> <p>'Competition Season' (if necessary- in place of the 'Regular Season' component)</p>	January 1, 2021	<p>Programs will be delivered using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cohorting <p>Transition from previous 'Development Season' will occur using a 2-week break over the winter holidays, allowing new Cohorts to be created across multiple associations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Mini-Teams' from 4 different associations will be grouped into a new cohort allowing for expanded 'game-play' <p>Types of Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-Ice Practices Off-Ice Training Semi-Regional' Game Play (3v3, 4v4 or 5v5)

NOTE: In the event that we are still in a restricted state and are not able to transition to the 'Regular Season Phase' by the new year, Hockey Calgary will transition into the 'Competition Season Phase' providing expanded competition across multiple associations.

SORTING/EVALUATIONS

The purpose of the Sorting/Evaluations phase is to group like skilled players. This process is like the evaluation and tiering process that occurs each year. The key difference is that to ensure the safety of the players and to help reduce the number of player to player contact, these sessions will be entirely Physically Distanced. Once in formal Hockey Calgary Cohorts, players are permitted to engage in drill where they will come into close contact with other players.

Tiering ranges may look slightly different than in the past. However, they will be close, and we believe they will be within an appropriate range for skill development. As always, coaches are encouraged to group players into similar skill abilities for different drills and station work to allow for regression and progression of drills.

Sorting Guidelines:

1. All Associations will follow a similar plan (not necessarily the same drills)
2. All Associations will use 'Physical Distancing', skill-based drills to Sort/Evaluate the players in the organization into cohorts
3. Evaluation Sub-Committee – currently being formed
 - Tasked with setting guidelines & protocols for sorting/evaluation as it pertains to:
 - Creating a 'drill bank' of physical distanced sorting/evaluation drills
 - Approving drills – all sorting drills must be approved to access appropriate distancing on the ice
 - Information Sharing - Associations will have the opportunity to submit drills for approval. Upon approval, drills will be added to the 'drill bank'
4. U7 – Minimum 2 sorting/evaluation sessions prior to assigning cohorts
5. U9 to U18 – Minimum 3 sorting/evaluation sessions prior to assigning cohorts
 - Associations are free to further evaluate players in scrimmages and close contact drills after they are placed in cohorts. However, once in cohorts, players cannot change cohorts without a 14-day isolation period

6. U11 Player Pathway

- Every effort should be made to offer all aspects of the U11 Player Pathway. However, Hockey Calgary and Hockey Alberta understand the complexities around hockey for the upcoming season. Associations should keep an open line of communication with Hockey Calgary as it pertains to any deviation from the Pathway.
- Minimum 2 pre-sort sessions (previously 4)
- Start dates indicated in the U11 Player Pathway should be followed
- Hybrid Goalie's – Minimum 2 sorting/evaluation sessions at each position (minimum 4 total)

7. Goalies – Associations will determine how many goalie-only sessions are offered, however, like the player sessions, a minimum of 3 sorting/evaluation sessions must be offered.

8. Once an age category has completed the 4 sessions

- Rank the players top to bottom based on skill
- Create the Cohorts of 30-48 players (age category and registration dependent)
 - Further clarification and guidelines will be communicated based on number of players registered at each association, per division

9. All coaches and evaluators must remain physically distanced during sorting/evaluation sessions

II DEVELOPMENT SEASON

Association Based Play

For each age category Associations create similar sized Cohorts of no more than 50 players based on rankings from the physically distanced sorting/evaluation sessions. These Cohorts will now be locked for the either the entirety of the Alberta Phase 2 relaunch, or until the new year where Hockey Calgary will have the opportunity after the 2-week winter holidays to create new cohorts.

Cohorts

- 36-48 players (depending on age category and registration breakdown)
- Players can now compete as a group (practice & play together as per any other season)
- Associations can choose to practice with the entire cohort on the ice (assuming they meet facility guidelines), or split them into smaller groups (likely 2 groups of 18-24, but may depend on age category)
- Within the Cohort the groups can change and move around
- Within the Cohort, 'Mini-Teams' will be created to facilitate game play

'Mini-Teams'

- Associations will create 3 or 4 evenly balanced 'Mini Teams' of 9-12 players (with goalies) within each cohort (NOTE: there are min. & max. sizes to mini teams based on division)
- Associations have the ability to rebalance 'Mini Teams' if they are not competitive
- Intro to Hockey may run U7/U9 cohorts as a 'program' and only split into teams for game play – rosters may vary often
- Coaches can be assigned to a 'Mini Team' or moved around to share resources and expertise
- Games will be scheduled by each Association in partnership with Hockey Calgary
 - Hockey Calgary will determine guidelines for number of games, length, use of officials, bench protocol, etc.

([See Appendix I](#) for visual of the Sorting/Evaluations → Development Season Cohorts process)

NOTE: As per the Government of Alberta and Hockey Alberta, Tournaments will not be permitted during this phase.

Benefits of the model

- Groups players into similar skill abilities
- Opportunity for players to develop
- Facilitates some game competition
- 3/4 'Mini Teams' provide variety in competition
- 'Mini Teams' size means more ice time for players
- 'Mini Teams' size helps with dressing room utilization & bench spacing when games are played – spacing in dressing rooms and on benches is mandatory as per Hockey Alberta, AHS, and the Government of Alberta
- Ease of scheduling within the association
- Reduced travel - meets the government recommendation of keeping kids more 'regionally based' during this stage of return to play
- Players are playing with and against their peer group (friends)
- Association cohorts are likely more in line with community and school programs, therefore confining the spread
- If an outbreak occurs it is easier to shut down a cohort in 1 Association, or a full Association as opposed to shutting down the entire program



U7 TIMBITS

Familiarity

- Maintaining Jr. and Sr. 1-year age groups in U7 Timbits
- Maintaining Cross-Ice Games
- No major changes to formal game start dates
 - Nov. 14 Senior Timbits
 - Nov. 28 Junior Timbits
- Game play will be 4v4 or 3v3 if short players
- No officials

Cohorts

- Use skills-based physical distancing sessions to sort players into groups (Cohorts)
- Player Cohort sizes for U7 are 34-40 (excluding coaches)
 - Cohorts will be made up of 2 regular sized U7 Timbit teams (17-20 players)
- Coaches will be a part of U7 Cohorts, which is why cohort numbers are smaller
- Allows coaches to be in contact with the younger players to better assist with their development, injuries, crying players, etc.
- Teams will not change upon transition to the 'Regular Season' (sizes remain the same)
- Create balanced Teams across & within Cohorts (as always done)
 - All cohorts are evenly balanced
- I.e. Jr./Sr. Timbits have 110 players, create **3 'Balanced Cohorts'** of 34-40 players (Recommended 36)
- In 'Development Phase' cohort can only play informal mini games during practices



U9 (formerly Novice)

Familiarity

- Maintaining 2-year age groups in U9
- Maintaining ½ Ice Games
- 4 'Tiers' in U9 (transition to 'Regular Season')
- Game play will be 4v4 or 3v3 if short players

Cohorts

- Use skills-based physical distancing sessions to sort players into groups (Cohorts)
- Player Cohort sizes for U9 are 30-40 (Recommended 36)
 - Hockey Calgary has set guidelines for cohort sizes depending on total registration in each age category. These guidelines are based on the current Tiering Grid and will help to ensure appropriate skill gap within each cohort ([See Appendix II](#))
- Coaches will be a part of U9 Cohorts, which is why player numbers are smaller
- Allows coaches to be in contact with the younger players to better assist with their development, injuries, crying players, etc.
- Easy to move to 2 teams once we transition to the 'Regular Season' (18-19 players)
- Create Cohorts based on sorting/evaluation ranking
- 'Mini-Teams'
 - Within each Cohort create balanced 'Mini Teams' of **9-10 players** (no goalies)
 - 3 or 4 'mini-teams' per cohort (depending on registration numbers)



U11/U13 (formerly Atom and Peewee)

Familiarity

- Maintaining 2-year age groups
- Maintaining full-ice games
- Tiering structure and grid will remain the same (transition to 'Regular Season')
- Game play will be 5v5, 4v4 or 3v3 during the 'Development Season Phase'. Opportunity to try new formats and have different themes

Cohorts

- Use skills-based physical distancing sessions to sort players into groups (Cohorts)
- Cohort sizes for U11/U13 are 36-48
 - Hockey Calgary has set guidelines for cohort sizes depending on total registration in each age category. These guidelines are loosely based on the current Alberta One Standardized Tiering Grid and will help to ensure appropriate skill gap within each cohort ([See Appendix III](#))
- Coaches will **not** be part of the Cohort and must physical distanced on and off the ice
- Easy to transition to 3 teams of 15-16 players for 'Regular Season'. Note: there may be room to move up a handful of players from the lower cohorts who have excelled to that point of the year
- Create Cohorts based on sorting/evaluation ranking
- 'Mini-Teams'
 - Within each Cohort create balanced 'Mini Teams' of **9-12 players** (with goalies)
 - 3 or 4 'mini teams' per cohort (depends on registration & association preference)
- Practice and play games within Cohort
 - Association can split the Cohort for practices and maintain the same split, or can change freely between sessions



U15/U18/U21 (formerly Bantam, Midget, and Junior)

Familiarity

- Maintaining current age categories
- Maintaining full-ice games
- Tiering structure and grid will remain the same (transition to 'Regular Season')
- Game play will be 5v5, 4v4 or 3v3 during the 'Development Season Phase'. Opportunity to try new formats and have different themes

Cohorts

- Use skills-based physical distancing sessions to sort players into groups (Cohorts)
- Cohort sizes for U15/U18 are 36-48
 - Hockey Calgary has set guidelines for cohort sizes depending on total registration in each age category. These guidelines are loosely based on the current Alberta One Standardized Tiering Grid and will help to ensure appropriate skill gap within each cohort ([See Appendix IV](#))
- Coaches will not be part of the Cohort and must physical distanced on and off the ice
- Easy to transition to 3 teams of 15-16 players for 'Regular Season'. Note: there may be room to move up a handful of players from the lower cohorts who have excelled to that point of the year
- Create Cohorts based on sorting/evaluation ranking
- 'Mini-Teams'
 - Within each Cohort create balanced 'Mini Team' of **9-12 players** (with goalies)
 - 3 or 4 'mini teams' per cohort (depends on registration & association preference)
- Practice and play games within Cohort
 - Association can split the Cohort for practices and maintain the same split, or can change freely between sessions
- U21 (Jr. C) may follow a different plan. To be determined.

Body Checking and Non-Body Checking

- There will be both body checking and non-body checking cohorts

III

REGULAR SEASON

Hockey Calgary will follow the lead of the Government of Alberta, Alberta Health, and Hockey Alberta to determine when it is appropriate to transition from the 'Development Season' to a return to normal 'Regular Season'. We are optimistic that we will be able to transition to a traditional 'Regular Season' in accordance with past season timelines. However, we will only do so when it is safe and when the approval has been given.

One of the key objectives of the Hockey Calgary Return to Play plan is to allow for flexible transition between our phases. Hockey Calgary's 'Sorting/Evaluations' and 'Development Season' phases are designed with the intent to transition easily to a traditional 'Regular Season'.

If and when we are able to transition cohorts will be split into formal teams and sizes. The plan as written does not require that 'full evaluations' need to be redone or completed again for this transition. Players have already been evaluated base on their skill during the 'Sorting/Evaluations' phase.

Furthermore, coaches and associations will be able to factor in hockey IQ, compete level, and improvement over the 'Development Season' prior to forming teams. Associations, in partnership with Hockey Calgary, will determine the process for forming teams.

There are many ways of transitioning and forming teams which do not require a full redo of evaluations. Associations can use coach feedback and evaluations from within the cohort as these coaches should have an in-depth knowledge of their cohort and mini-team. Alternatively, and/or in addition, associations will have the ability to organize more formal evaluation sessions within each cohort prior to creating final team placements if they so choose. As always the Association will have full oversight of this process, more details will be determined.

Therefore, formal teams will not be created based solely on skill-based evaluations and players will be able to advance on their previous ranking. With this scenario, teams should be more accurately sorted for the 'Regular Season' than they have been in the past.

([See Appendix V](#) for visual of the Development Season → Regular Season process)

IV COMPETITION SEASON (if necessary)

In the event that we are still in a restricted state at the conclusion of 2020 (Alberta Government and Alberta Health Services still requires a 'Cohort' model), Hockey Calgary will employ the following 'Competition Season'.

The intent of this component is to create a structure that emulates and somewhat replaces a traditional regular season while adhering strictly to the guidelines of the government and AHS.

In this component, cohorts will be created using 'Mini-Teams' from multiple associations. This model increases variety of competition and allows associations to play against each other after the 'Development Season'.

Following a 2-week break over the winter holidays where cohorts are not participating in hockey activities, Hockey Calgary will be able to create new Cohorts.

These cohorts will be tiered in a format similar to the HA Standardized Tiering Grid.

Cohorts

- Calgary will be divided into 3 Regions **(TBC, subject to change)**
 - South – Blackfoot, Bow Valley, Knights, Southwest
 - West – Glenlake, TW, Springbank, Bow River
 - North – Crowfoot, NWW, McKnight, SVHA, (Saints, U18 only)
 - GHC 'mini-teams' will be regional and may be a part of any of the 3 Regions
- Create Cohort Groups across the 4 Associations
- I.e. Cohort 1
 - Bow River 'Mini-Team' of 10-12 players
 - Springbank 'Mini-Team' of 10-12 players
 - Glenlake 'Mini-Team' of 10-12 players
 - Trails West 'Mini-Team' of 10-12 players
- Must practice & compete with 'mini-teams' from the same cohort

Benefits

- Increased competition at the optimal time of the season
- New opponents
- Will create similar game-play experience to the past (normalcy)

Challenges

- Coordination of ice for practicing – 4 Associations schedulers would have to work together to coordinate all practices for 4 Associations, or 2 Associations would pair up to practice with each other
- More travel – shared practices will be across associations which may increase travel. Additionally, if there is an outbreak it may cause a shutdown to expand across multiple associations and cohorts.
- Lose ability to share and group coaches

([See Appendix VI](#) for visual of the Development Season → Competition Season process)

NOTE: As per the Government of Alberta and Hockey Alberta, Tournaments will not be permitted during this phase.

V REFEREES

Decisions still needs to be made with regards to the use of referees. As always, Hockey Canada and Hockey Alberta will determine training and clinic protocols.

Hockey Calgary is waiting on further clarification from Hockey Alberta, who in turn is waiting on further clarification from AHS and Hockey Canada regarding several important clarifications regarding referees such as:

- Are referees part of the cohort?
- Can they effectively do their job while physically distancing (ex. breaking up a scrum)?

VI COACHES, TEAM OFFICIALS AND OFF-ICE OFFICIALS

Decisions still needs to be made with regards to coaches, team officials, and off-ice officials. As always, Hockey Canada and Hockey Alberta will determine training and clinic protocols for coaches.

Coaches are permitted to coach in multiple cohorts provided they are only a 'cohort coach' (contact with players) in one cohort. Ex. A coach can be a 'cohort coach' with a U7 team, and a 'physically distanced' coach with a U13 team.

Hockey Calgary will need to determine the proper usage for coaches, managers and other team officials such as:

- Will their roles and responsibilities change?
- Will they assist with contact tracking and symptom screening?
- Will they need to use PPE?

Hockey Calgary will work with facilities to determine the appropriate usage of off-ice officials (timekeepers and scorekeepers).

8 FAQs

General:

- Q. The Association based cohort model sounds a lot like House League. Why are the fees for community hockey similar to past seasons and not closer to House League fees?
- A. From a cost standpoint, the main difference between Community Hockey and House League is the amount of ice sessions players receive for their registration. Community Hockey teams receive significantly more ice times compared to House League.
- Q. Are players allowed to opt-out of the development/early phases and rejoin for the Regular/Competitive seasons?
- A. No, players must be registered with Hockey Calgary from the beginning.
- Q. Can my child be involved in multiple cohorts? For example, can they be in a school-based cohort as well as a hockey cohort?
- A. Cohorting guidelines state that “an individual is only to be part of one **Sport Cohort** at any time.” This means that they can be involved in a hockey cohort in addition to a school-based cohort. Technically they may also be part of another sport program that operates under the ‘physical distancing’ criteria. I.e. A power skating class or school based ‘skill based’ program that has limited #'s and operates under physical distancing criteria
- Q. Why is physical distancing mandatory on the bench and in the dressing rooms if they are within their cohort?
- A. This is a Government of Alberta guideline and a Hockey Alberta mandate. Technically, there should be no activities with any close contact. HOWEVER, if the activity must have close contact (hockey), then the contact should only take place when it is necessary (in the play itself). All other efforts to distance must be taken (bench and dressing rooms)
- Q. Why do we have to have mini-teams? Why can't we just do regular team sizes in the cohort?
- A. There is not enough room on the bench and in dressing rooms to distance safely with larger team sizes. As per the Government of Alberta “NOTE: Even while using cohorting, physical distancing must be maintained in all aspects of hockey activity except while participants are on the ice (for example, dressing rooms, benches, and in public areas).”

Sorting/Evaluations:

- Q. Why 3 skates for just skills-based sorting?
- A. More sessions mean a larger sample size for the evaluators. If a player has an abnormally poor or good skate, it will impact their overall ranking less, creating a more accurate score of a players' average ability. This was agreed to by the Association Presidents who were members of the sub-committee.
- Q. Do sessions need to be a certain length?
- A. No. Sessions can be shorter if the Association believes they can evaluate the players through all of the planned drills.
- Q. How will game play, hockey IQ, and compete level be evaluated?
- A. These factors will likely not be evaluated to their normal extent at the beginning of the year. However, players will likely be evaluated on these variables for a greater period prior to forming traditional teams for Phase 3 play. Players will play within their Cohort for an undetermined period where they can be evaluated on these variables. For example, the player with the #50 ranking after skills-based sorting could move up to #1 after evaluating these variables during Phase 2. Theoretically, teams will be more accurately sorted for Phase 3 that they ever have been in the past.
- Q. Why do evaluation drills need to be approved? Can't associations just do what they want?
- A. Hockey Calgary is committed to the safety and well-being of all participants. In order to mitigate the risk of a shutdown or quarantine of our program, we need to be sure we strictly adhere to the AHS and Hockey Alberta guidelines. By having a process of approval we can ensure we have completed a proper risk assessment of our on ice physical distancing sessions, which will give confidence to AHS and Hockey Alberta that we have done our due diligence and are running our program to their satisfaction.
- Q. Would elite releases need to isolate for 14 days prior to participating in community evaluations?
- A. No. Technically they would be going from a cohort, to physically distanced evaluations, which means they are not entering a new cohort. However, if evaluations take less than 14 days, they may need to sit out the balance before engaging with their assigned community hockey cohort.

Contact Tracing/Screening

- Q. How will Hockey Calgary handle contact tracing and symptom screening?

A. Hockey Alberta has set guidelines to follow to ensure we track all interactions and that symptomatic players do not participate. We are actively looking at ways to make this easy for families and coaches. However, regardless of the method, this will be a required step prior to participation at any session.

Q. What happens if a player answers yes to any of the symptom screening questions?

A. Any participant who answers YES to any of the questions may no longer participate in the camp/ program until a minimum 14-day quarantine period has elapsed.

COVID-19

Q. What happens if there is a positive test in a Cohort? If that participant gets tested and the result is negative, can they return to the activity?

A. There will be a formal reporting process if any participant contracts COVID-19. Hockey Calgary will take all direction from the Alberta Health Services. We do not have any more clarity at this time and may not have any more clarity as our programs begin. AHS is treating every situation differently and are not providing concrete 'what ifs'. We must simply follow reporting guidelines and take direction as it is given.

Coaches

Q. Are coaches part of the cohort number?

A. Coaches will not be part of cohorts at the U11 and up levels. Therefore they must physical distance and will not be included in the cohort number. U7 and U9 will have cohort coaches, who will be able to be in contact with players and will be part of the cohort number. U7 and U9 can also have additional coaches who are physical distance coaches and therefore are not part of the cohort and must physical distance.

Q. Can a coach be part of a U7 or U9 cohort and also coach (physically distanced) with a different cohort?

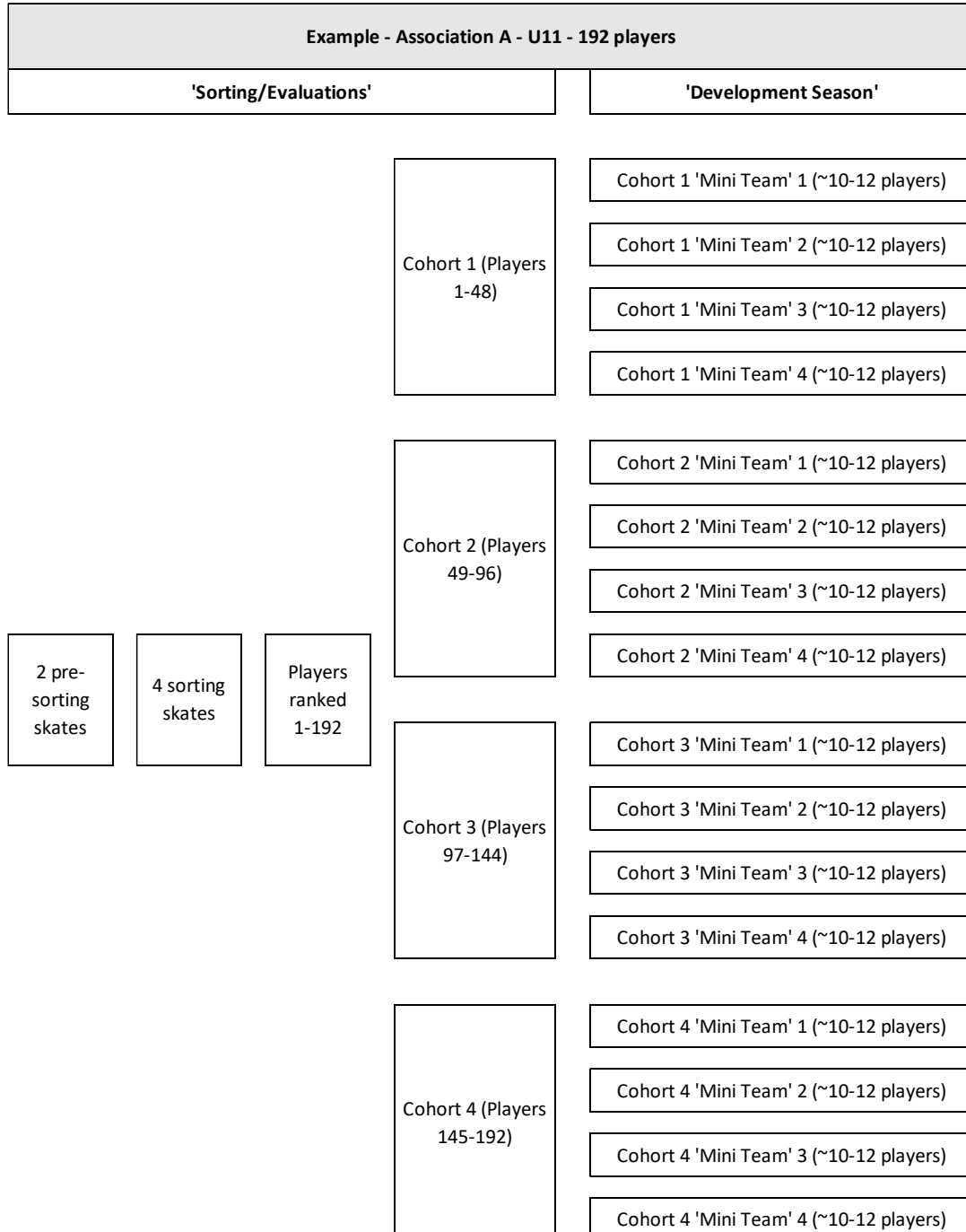
A. Yes

Q. What happens if a coach notices a player is showing symptoms before or during participation?

A. Like an injury, coaches will have full authority to deny a player participation if they believe the player is sick. Coaches will be given resources to help assist them. However, if parents and players are honest in their pre-participation symptom screening, we should avoid any situation where a coach must deny participation.

9 APPENDICIES

APPENDIX I



APPENDIX II

U9 Cohorts (3 and/or 4 mini-teams)

Mini Team Size Range 9-10

Players	Balanced Mini-Teams in each Cohort						TOTAL
	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4	Cohort 5	Cohort 6	
60-80	30 or 36-40	30 or 36-40					2
90-120	30 or 36-40	30 or 36-40	30 or 36-40				3
120-160	30 or 36-40	30 or 36-40	30 or 36-40	30 or 36-40			4
160-200	40	30 or 36-40	30 or 36-40	30 or 36-40	30 or 36-40		5
202-240	40	36-40	36-40	30 or 36-40	30 or 36-40	30 or 36-40	6

NOTE:

1. Cohorts can have either 3 or 4 mini-teams
2. Cohorts do not need to have the same number of players and mini-teams (ex. Cohort 2 has 4 mini-teams, Cohort 3 has 3 mini-teams)
3. Mini-Teams sizes MUST fall in a range of 9-10 players each
4. Cohorts with 3 mini-teams must be rostered at 10 players (30 total)
5. Cohorts with 4 mini-teams can be rostered between 9-10 players (36-40 players)
6. Mini-team roster sizes within each cohort must be within 1 player from each other
7. If numbers fall outside of the ranges above, consult with Hockey Calgary
8. Any deviation from this grid must be approved by Hockey Calgary
9. Associations with 3 and 4 mini-team cohorts in the same age category should have their 4 mini-team cohorts in their middle cohorts, followed by their top cohort, with their bottom cohort as the last place a 4th mini-team should be added. This is similar to the 'doubling' that occurs in the standard grid (ex. 146 players - C1 (36 players), C2 (40 players), C3 (40 players), C4 (30 players)).

Note: Cohorts can have 3 or 4 evenly balanced mini-teams. Please be aware that moving to 3 mini-teams reduces the amount of teams to compete against.

APPENDIX III

U11 and U13 Cohorts (3 and/or 4 mini-teams)

Mini Team Size Range 9-12

Players	Balanced Mini-Teams in each Cohort					TOTAL
	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4	Cohort 5	
72-96	36-48	36-48				2
108-144	36-48	36-48	36-48			3
144-182	36-48	36-48	36-48	36-48		4
180-240	36-48	36-48	36-48	36-48	36-48	5

NOTE:

1. Cohorts can have either 3 or 4 mini-teams
2. Cohorts do not need to have the same number of players and mini-teams (ex. Cohort 2 has 4 mini-teams, Cohort 3 has 3 mini-teams)
3. Mini-Teams sizes MUST fall in a range of 9-12 players each
4. Cohorts with 3 mini-teams must be rostered at 12 players including goalies (36 total)
5. Cohorts with 4 mini-teams can be rostered between 9-12 players including goalies (36-48 players)
6. Mini-team roster sizes within each cohort must be within 1 player from each other
7. If numbers fall outside of the ranges above, consult with Hockey Calgary
8. Any deviation from this grid must be approved by Hockey Calgary
9. Associations with 3 and 4 mini-team cohorts in the same age category should have their 4 mini-team cohorts in their middle cohorts, followed by their top cohort, with their bottom cohort as the last place a 4th mini-team should be added. This is similar to the 'doubling' that occurs in the standard grid (ex. 156 players - C1 (36 players), C2 (48 players), C3 (36 players), C4 (36 players)).

Note: Cohorts can have 3 or 4 evenly balanced mini-teams. Please be aware that moving to 3 mini-teams reduces the amount of teams to compete against.

APPENDIX IV

U15 and U18 Cohorts (3 and/or 4 mini-teams)

Mini Team Size Range 9-12

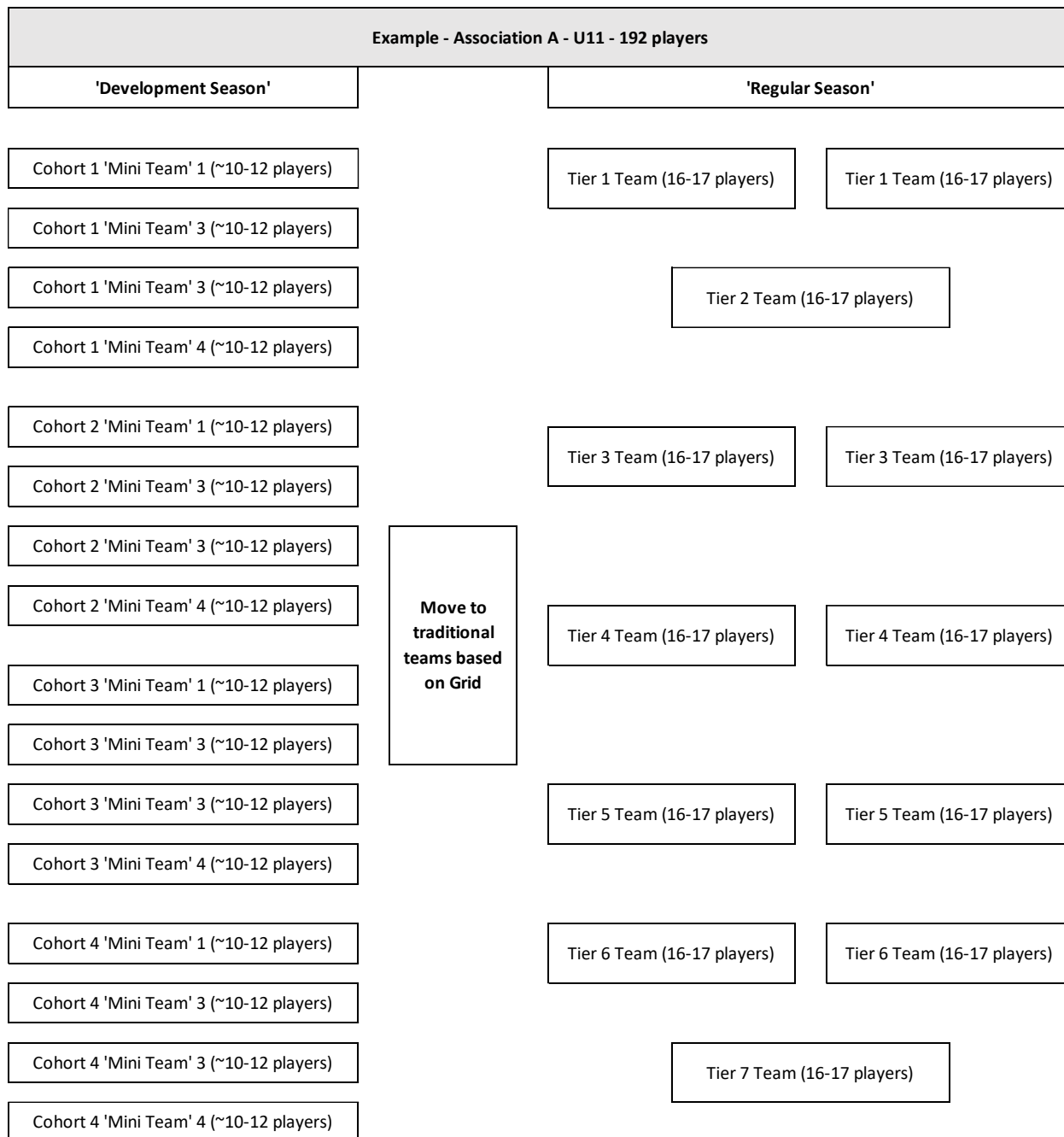
		Balanced Mini-Teams in each Cohort							
		Body Checking				Non-Body Checking			
Players		Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3		Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	TOTAL
0-71		Even Split				Even Split			2
72-96		36-48				36-48			2
108-120	Option 1	36-48				36	36		3
	Option 2	36	36			36-48			3
121-144	Option 1	48				36-48	36-48		3
	Option 2	36-48	36-48			48			3
144-192		36-48	36-48			36-48	36-48		4

NOTE:

1. Cohorts can have either 3 or 4 mini-teams
2. Cohorts do not need to have the same number of players and mini-teams (ex. Cohort 2 has 4 mini-teams, Cohort 3 has 3 mini-teams)
3. Mini-Teams sizes MUST fall in a range of 9-12 players each
4. Cohorts with 3 mini-teams must be rostered at 12 players including goalies (36 total)
5. Cohorts with 4 mini-teams can be rostered between 9-12 players including goalies (36-48 players)
6. Mini-team roster sizes within each cohort must be within 1 player from each other
7. If numbers fall outside of the ranges above, consult with Hockey Calgary
8. Any deviation from this grid must be approved by Hockey Calgary
9. Please be aware that when we move to the Regular Season, all body-checking cohorts will be required to play in body-checking divisions 1, 2, and 3.

Note: Cohorts can have 3 or 4 evenly balanced mini-teams. Please be aware that moving to 3 mini-teams reduces the amount of teams to compete against. Please be aware that having 4 mini-teams allows the association more flexibility to put more players on the ice (24) for practices.

APPENDIX V



APPENDIX VI

Example - Association A - U11 - 192 player		
'Development Season'		'Competition Phase' (if necessary)
Association X Cohort 1 'Mini Team' 1 (~10-12 players)		Association X Cohort 1 'Mini Team' 1 (~10-12 players)
Association X Cohort 1 'Mini Team' 2 (~10-12 players)		Association Y Cohort 1 'Mini Team' 1 (~10-12 players)
Association X Cohort 1 'Mini Team' 3 (~10-12 players)		Association Z Cohort 1 'Mini Team' 1 (~10-12 players)
Association X Cohort 1 'Mini Team' 4 (~10-12 players)		Association W Cohort 1 'Mini Team' 1 (~10-12 players)
Association Y Cohort 1 'Mini Team' 1 (~10-12 players)		Association X Cohort 2 'Mini Team' 1 (~10-12 players)
Association Y Cohort 1 'Mini Team' 2 (~10-12 players)		Association Y Cohort 2 'Mini Team' 1 (~10-12 players)
Association Y Cohort 1 'Mini Team' 3 (~10-12 players)		Association Z Cohort 2 'Mini Team' 1 (~10-12 players)
Association Y Cohort 1 'Mini Team' 4 (~10-12 players)		Association W Cohort 2 'Mini Team' 1 (~10-12 players)
Association Z Cohort 1 'Mini Team' 1 (~10-12 players)	Winter Break (reset for new Cohorts)	Association X Cohort 3 'Mini Team' 1 (~10-12 players)
Association Z Cohort 1 'Mini Team' 2 (~10-12 players)		Association Y Cohort 3 'Mini Team' 1 (~10-12 players)
Association Z Cohort 1 'Mini Team' 3 (~10-12 players)		Association Z Cohort 3 'Mini Team' 1 (~10-12 players)
Association Z Cohort 1 'Mini Team' 4 (~10-12 players)		Association W Cohort 3 'Mini Team' 1 (~10-12 players)
Association W Cohort 1 'Mini Team' 1 (~10-12 players)		Association X Cohort 4 'Mini Team' 1 (~10-12 players)
Association W Cohort 1 'Mini Team' 2 (~10-12 players)		Association Y Cohort 4 'Mini Team' 1 (~10-12 players)
Association W Cohort 1 'Mini Team' 3 (~10-12 players)		Association Z Cohort 4 'Mini Team' 1 (~10-12 players)
Association W Cohort 1 'Mini Team' 4 (~10-12 players)		Association W Cohort 4 'Mini Team' 1 (~10-12 players)