



To: GTHL Board of Directors, GTHL Development Staff, GTHL Members, GTHL Officials, GTHL Referee-In-Chiefs, GTHL Staff
From: Stephanie Coratti, Senior Manager, Communications and Marketing
Date: September 19, 2024
Re: 2024 Hockey Canada Rule Updates
Bulletin ID: 24-GTHL-003

The Greater Toronto Hockey League - through the support of the Officiating Development Committee (ODC) - has detailed several Hockey Canada rule updates for the 2024-25 season. Please review the following Hockey Canada rules for a breakdown on specific updates.

To further explain the Hockey Canada rule updates, the GTHL's ODC has broken down the rule updates in an information video.

[**CLICK HERE TO WATCH - GTHL Officiating Development Information Video: Hockey Canada Rule Updates**](#)

2024 HOCKEY CANADA RULE UPDATES

Rule 2.2 (a)

Each team is entitled to a maximum of **20** players in uniform (up to **18** skaters and 2 goaltenders) for any game or pre-game warm-up, ...

What this means for you: Previously, teams were only permitted 17 skaters and 2 goalies, except at U18 AAA and Junior. Now, teams in all categories are allowed 18 skaters and 2 goalies.

Rule 3.6 (d)

When a goaltender loses their helmet, facial protector, blocker or trapper, **or skate blade**, play will be stopped immediately, unless there is an imminent scoring chance that does not pose a safety risk to the goaltender. If the goaltender deliberately removes their protective equipment to gain a stoppage of play, they will be penalized under Rule 10.1 (a) – Delay of Game.

What this means for you: If a goaltender's skate blade falls out during play, it will be treated the same as if they lost their helmet, facial protector, blocker, or trapper – play will be stopped immediately unless there is an imminent scoring chance that does not pose a safety risk to the goaltender.

Rule 4.11

The coach/captain of the non-offending team may designate any **eligible** player, other than the goaltender, to take the Penalty Shot. In the event that the coach/captain declines to select a player, the Referee will designate a player. **For the purposes of this rule, any player serving a penalty or who has been removed from the game at the time the Penalty Shot is awarded will be deemed ineligible.**

What this means for you: This clears up a significant loophole. A coach cannot select a player who is serving a penalty or has been removed from the game to take a Penalty Shot.

Rule 4.11 (a) xi

If an 'unnatural event' causes a stoppage of play when a player is on a breakaway in the neutral or attacking zone and, in the opinion of the referee, there was sufficient playing time for the breakaway to be completed. This includes, but is not limited to, the buzzer accidentally sounding, interference by a spectator, or any other situation not otherwise covered under the rules.

What this means for you: This acts as a catch-all for unnatural occurrences that can result in a Penalty Shot.

Rule 4.11 (e)

Should the player designated to take a Penalty Shot commit a foul in connection with the same play or circumstances after the Penalty Shot has been awarded, they will NOT be permitted to take the Penalty Shot before being sent to the Penalty Bench to serve the penalty or removed from the game.

What this means for you: Previously if a player was assessed a Minor penalty, they could take the Penalty Shot before going to serve their Minor penalty.

Rule 6.3 (e)

Any stoppage of play occurring in the end-zone as the result of the puck going out of play or being unplayable will result in the ensuing face-off taking place in that end-zone at the face-off spot nearest to where the puck was last legally played, regardless of whether the defending or attacking team causes the stoppage.

What this means for you: If the play is in the end-zone and an attacking player causes the puck to go out of play or become unplayable, the stoppage of play will remain in the attacking zone, except when the attacking team is assessed a penalty or commits another infringement of the rules.

This rule applies where the puck is already legally in the attacking zone prior to going out of play or becoming unplayable. This rule does not apply to situations where a player shoots the puck from their neutral or defending zone, and the puck goes out of play in their attacking zone.

Rule 6.6 (e)

If a goal is scored as the result of a puck deflecting directly into the goal off an Official, the goal will not be allowed. **After striking an official, the puck must be propelled into the goal.**

What this means for you: If the referee gets hit by the puck and it then deflects into the goal, the goal will not count.

Rule 7.1 (a)

A **double** Minor penalty will be assessed to a player who commits any of the following acts with a minimal degree of violence and without using such an action to gain an advantage or inflict punishment or injury:

- i. pulls an opponent's hair,
- ii. grabs the facial protector, helmet, chin strap, or throat protector of an opponent,
- iii. head-butts or attempts to head-butt an opponent.

Note 1: If the offender is a team official, then a Gross Misconduct must also be assessed. Such infractions must be reported as Rule 7.1 (f).

What this means for you: This was previously listed as a Minor penalty.

Rule 8.7

Clipping, also known as a “low hit”, is where a player uses their body to make contact **below** an opponent’s **hips**. This may take the form of a player lowering their body prior to making a check or being checked. Players may not crouch down to avoid being bodychecked.

What this means for you: Clipping is now a hit below an opponent’s hips rather than at their knees.

Rule 8.8

A Match penalty, at the discretion of the referee, based on the degree of violence of impact (including the impact with the ice, **goal or boards**) may be assessed to any player who slew-foots an opponent.

What this means for you: There are now additional ways a slew-foot can result in a Match penalty.

Rule 10.2 (a)

A hand pass occurs when a player **makes a deliberate attempt to** stop, knock down, or push the puck with their hand, **and** a teammate in the neutral or attacking zone gains **control of the puck**. This includes when a hand pass occurs and the puck deflects off any person or object, prior to the teammate gaining possession and control of the puck.

What this means for you: This provides enhanced clarity on determining when a hand pass occurs.

Rule 10.5 (a)

10.5 (a) A Minor penalty will be assessed to any player who:

i. Throws, shoots, or **kicks** a stick or any other object, anywhere on the ice.

Note 1: Discarding a broken stick, as per Rule 3.2 (a), will not be penalized unless it interferes with the play or is done in such a way that poses a risk to other participants.

A Penalty Shot will be awarded to the non-offending team, in lieu of a Minor Penalty, when a player:

ii. Throws, shoots, or **kicks** a stick or any other object **at the puck or puck carrier in the defending zone**.

iii. Throws, shoots, or **kicks** a stick or any other object at an opposing player, who is on a breakaway in the neutral or attacking zone.

What this means for you: Kicking a stick is now always a penalty.

Throwing, shooting, or kicking a stick or any other object in the defending zone is now only a Penalty Shot if it is at the puck or puck carrier. If it is not, it is a Minor penalty.

Rule 6.7 (d)

In categories of U18 AAA, Junior and at the option of the Member in Senior, **the ‘no-change on icing’ rule supplement will apply**.

What this means for you: This was previously at the option of the Hockey Canada Member; now, it is not optional.

Rule 6.7 (e)

In categories of U18 AAA, Junior and at the option of the Member in Senior, the 'Hybrid-Icing' rule supplement will apply.

What this means for you: This was previously at the option of the Hockey Canada Member; now, it is not optional.