

CONCUSSION POLICY

EFFECTIVE MAY 6, 2025



H O C K E Y C A N A D A

POLICY STATEMENT

Hockey Canada is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for its participants. Participation in sport includes an inherent risk of injury, including head injuries and concussions. Hockey Canada has adopted this Policy to assist in preventing, recognizing, and managing concussion injuries, with a view to mitigating the risks that the short-term and long-term consequences of concussions pose to public health.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a resource that will enable those in the sport of hockey to recognize and manage concussion injuries, and to provide prevention strategies to reduce the incidence of those injuries.

This Policy applies whenever and wherever a Hockey Canada activity takes place. This includes workplaces and external locations in Canada and abroad, and includes all events and activities sanctioned by Hockey Canada. This Policy document focuses primarily on prevention and surveillance of concussions, and supplements the Concussion Protocol, which covers the areas of Awareness (education), Detection (recognition), and Management.

This Policy applies to all players, coaches, officials, trainers, safety personnel, registered participants, parents/guardians, administrators, and decision makers of Hockey Canada.

Concussion Protocol

Hockey Canada has developed the Hockey Canada Concussion Protocol (the “Concussion Protocol”) to help guide the management of players and on-ice officials who may have a suspected concussion arising from their participation in Hockey Canada activities.

Adherence

Hockey Canada expects all Members to be dedicated to reducing concussions and their impact through commitment to education and enforcement of the Playing Rules.

Hockey Canada expects all Members to direct all team coaches, trainers, safety personnel, and staff to adhere to Hockey Canada’s Hockey-Specific Return to Sport Strategy and Return-to-School Strategy (if applicable) as a minimum standard in addressing concussion injuries. Those strategies are housed within the Concussion Protocol.

Each Member should determine appropriate discipline for any club, team or individual who knowingly disregards any aspect of the Concussion Protocol, especially relating to their responsibility to require a Medical Clearance Letter or traditional physician's note before permitting a player to return to sport following a concussion.

Concussion Prevention

The incidence of concussions can be mitigated by the proper implementation of prevention strategies. Hockey Canada encourages the use of sound education programs and enforcement of the Playing Rules as tools to prevent concussions.

Prevention strategies include, but are not limited to:

- The reduction of violence in the game.
- The reduction of head contact.
- The reduction of hitting from behind.
- Education of all participants on prevention and recognition of head injuries.
- Responsible concussion management and return to play.
- Encouraging respect and fair play.
- Ensuring that equipment fits well, is in good condition, is stored properly, and is replaced according to manufacturers' instructions.
- Ensuring fair play and respect for opponents are ethical values that are instilled in all sport, recreation and physical activities carried out by the organization.

Concussion Awareness

Hockey Canada recognizes that concussion awareness is fundamental to concussion prevention, recognition and management, and will make concussion resources available to Members, including this Policy and the Concussion Protocol.

Concussion Detection and Management

The Concussion Protocol will be implemented at all Hockey Canada sanctioned activities and events in case of a suspected or diagnosed concussion. Please refer to the Concussion Protocol document for more details, including the obligation to obtain a Medical Clearance documentation before returning to play following a concussion.

Concussion Surveillance

Hockey Canada, and the respective Member/association, will determine appropriate methods to collect and maintain data regarding suspected concussions, concussion diagnoses, and return to play. Data reporting will be in an aggregated format without personal identification of any individuals.

Data collected will be used to monitor changes in injuries over time, inform prevention strategies and assess the impact of Hockey Canada's Concussion Policy and Concussion Protocol.

POLICY REVIEW

Hockey Canada will review the Hockey Canada Concussion Policy annually.

Documents related to the policy:

Concussion Protocol

Return to School & Hockey-Specific Return to Sport Strategies

Medical Assessment Letter

Medical Clearance Letter



H O C K E Y C A N A D A