

General guide for hockey officials

All Divisions

October 27, 2024

All participants are expected to participate in a safe and respectful manner. As referees, we facilitate this understanding – and to this end, there are a few special rules and procedures:

Special Rules and interpretations:

Icing: blue line is the reference point for icing - not red, and if any defender was in a position where they could reasonably have played the puck, then wave it off.

Offside: one onside skate must be in contact with ice; remember that a delayed offside requires that all attacking players be simultaneously on-side before it is negated. Call “offside” out loudly for all to hear.

“Blue ice” (goal crease encroachment. This only applies to attacking team players and should be called strictly). Whistle play dead and face off back in the offending team’s end.

- Typically use the position of attackers’ skates to determine this (not a defender’s), but the crease technically extends upward to crossbar height and includes the red line outlining the blue ice area. Call "Blue Ice" if any incidental contact is made to a goaltender in their crease or if intimidation may exist by virtue of aerial crease presence. Note that a goaltender is considered in their crease if any part of their body is touching the zone. **Any significant contact on a goaltender in their crease is a penalty plus a misconduct (3 + 13 min for a minor, 7 + game for a major). If a defender forces such contact, they are assessed an appropriate penalty. A 13 min misconduct should be assessed where no significant impact resulted, but the risk was clear.**
- **Blue ice should not be called if the defending team has the puck and is immediately moving it out of their end to advantage (we do not want to penalize the offended team).**
- This is a live play infraction only – if the puck crosses the goal line prior to a blue ice infraction, then there is no infraction & the goal is scored. A penalty could still be called (e.g. if threat/contact with the goaltender occurred), but this would not necessarily negate the goal.
- A stick in the crease does not constitute a violation unless it interferes with the goaltender (and that would be a *Goaltender Interference* penalty, not a “blue ice” call).
- Goaltenders who feel their safety is being compromised have been encouraged to skate to the benches and meet with the Captains of both teams in order to reach a satisfactory resolution. If no penalty had been observed by the officials ... but both Captains agree that a penalty may have been warranted, then an appropriate penalty could be assessed by the referees after considering details from eyewitnesses, at the referee’s discretion. Also, Captains may bench (i.e. send to the dressing room) players at their discretion to achieve a satisfactory resolution for all parties to resume play.

Goalie Mask: Stop play if a goaltender has lost their mask or has been hit on the mask.

Potential Injury: Stop play where there has been a potential injury to any player. If a player falls, but appears to be OK, play need not be stopped - but if play is proximate & any safety concern exists at all, then blow it dead anyway. Note that any skater for whom the whistle has been blown must leave the ice at least until play resumes.

Penalties:

Minor Penalties (3 min straight time)

- The penalty begins when the puck is dropped to resume play (not when the penalty was called), and the puck should be dropped in the offending teams end in the face-off circle furthest from the penalty box. The official who is not dropping the puck should call out the penalty **END TIME** (= current time plus 3 minutes) loudly for all to hear as soon as the puck is dropped.
- The penalty ends and the player may leave the box when:
 - a) the penalty time has expired.
 - b) the other team scores while having the man advantage.
- **Three penalties in one game** for a player requires they also be assessed a **game misconduct**. Another player must serve the minor penalty. If a player's penalty is delayed and the other team scores before play is stopped, that penalty is not served **but still registers as a penalty to that player**.
- **Hooking, tripping, slashing, cross-checking, elbowing, high sticking, roughing and the like** should be strictly enforced. Note that an attempt is a penalty even if failed.
- **High stick contact with a puck:** the stick must contact the puck for a penalty to be called, though there would be a penalty for any high stick which was proximate/ intimidating to an opposing player, regardless. Crossbar height is the gauge for any actual puck contact with a stick.
- **Interference, incidental body contact, too-many-men, unsportsmanlike conduct, delaying the game* and the like** are judgment calls - consistency is the important thing. When interpreting **body contact** note that any player has the right to the ice on which they stand - thus any player running into another player is *by definition* initiating the contact and should be penalized accordingly. Riding a player with any impact into the boards would still be a penalty.
 - *you may give a single warning for this unsportsmanlike activity. Note that if teams "stall" during a penalty ... and you have the option to add a minute (or more) to the time as appropriate.
- **Slap-shot:** if blade reaches knee-height during wind up (for passes or shots), this is a minor penalty. Note that it is also a penalty for *faked* slap-shots where the stick is clearly above knee height (and thus intimidating). **Where the wind up is between ankle height and knee height and/or a wind-up exceeds a 15" span, judgment is expected – if the shot is threatening or unsafe, then a penalty should be called in any case.**

- **Risky Play:** From our Policies and Procedures: “A penalty (minor or major) shall be assessed when, in the judgement of the referee, a player has failed to restrain an action that may cause or has caused injury.” Basically, any action which puts a player at risk of injury is a minor penalty – which is why going down to block a shot is a penalty. Most of such infractions are covered under the rules in force, but not all. Judgment is required, for example, where an attacking player rushes the net in an aggressive and threatening manner - this includes a puck carrier who attempts to skate around a defender and, by so doing, cuts through any part of the goal crease (whether or not contact with the goaltender occurs), **OR** compels the defender to back off so as to avoid forcing a collision. Any threat to the well-being of a goaltender should be reported to the RIC and the applicable division convenor. Team Captains are encouraged to report such incidents (remember to name the perpetrator when you report this).

Major penalties (7 min straight time) are mandatory for: ***kicking, slew-footing*, fighting/ roughing or trying to instigate a fight*** (or any deliberate activity where injury either results or was intended).

- An offending player will automatically be ejected (game misconduct) and cannot play again until a league hearing clears him/her for play.
- The violating team is required to play short-handed for all 7 minutes *but the team does not have to actually make a player serve that time in the penalty box* - the officials should go to both benches and make it clear that a major was called & the offending team must accordingly play shorthanded for all of the designated seven minutes, regardless of goals scored, but without a player serving in the box.
- **Note that a game report should be completed if any major penalty/game misconduct is assessed.**
- ***a slew foot occurs when a player trips, or attempts to trip, a player from behind either with a kicking motion or by dragging their leg.**

Misconduct penalties

Significant “chirping”, or official abuse of any sort, should be assessed a 13-minute misconduct (a game misconduct if it persists or gets personal).

Positional play for officials:

We recommend that the first official on the ice pick an end (their “zone” for the game) and drop the puck for the opening face-off. Each official will then stick to their zone for the duration of the game, dropping the puck for face-offs in their zone (or at centre ice when a goal has been scored in their zone). If both officials agree otherwise, they are free to do it another way as long as the following parameters are met:

- Officials should always face one another - if your partner is dropping the puck, then you take position on the opposite side of the rink, facing your partner. If the face-off is in your partners end, position yourself on that blue line. If the face-off is at centre ice, then be in direct line with your partner as they drop the puck and prepared to cover either blue line as necessary;
- Your back should be to the nearest boards when you drop the puck;
- At no time should both officials be inside the same blue line during play;
- It is not recommended that officials position themselves too close to the net - keep a safe distance & stay out of the line of fire.

SHORT NOTES

Puck drops after a penalty is called go inside the offending teams end, to the face off circle furthest from the penalty box. Note that for offsetting penalties **only the players are affected – the teams do not play short handed as a result**, and the face off would be at centre ice.

DON'T BE SHY WITH THE WHISTLE. When you make a call, let the players know what/why/who as applicable. Communicate clearly and concisely. TALK IT UP so players know what is going on.

SAFETY FIRST: any unsafe action is inappropriate and should be penalized as such.