

HOCKEY CANADA'S NEW HEAD CONTACT RULE

Approved at the Hockey Canada Annual General Meeting in Calgary, Alta., in May, Hockey Canada's new head contact rules are zero tolerance, implemented to cut down on the number of head injuries suffered in the game.



The new rule will be in effect immediately, beginning with the start of the 2011-12 season.

Below is the wording included in the Hockey Canada Rule Book, outlining when the penalty is to be called and what penalty is to be assessed.

Rule 6.5 – Head Contact

(a) In minor hockey and female hockey, a minor penalty shall be assessed to any player who accidentally contacts an opponent in the head, face or neck with his stick or any part of the player's body or equipment.

(b) In minor hockey and female hockey, a double minor penalty or a major and a game misconduct penalty, at the discretion of the referee and based on the degree of violence of impact shall be assessed to any player who intentionally contacts an opponent in the head, face or neck with her stick or any part of the player's body or equipment.

(c) In junior hockey and senior hockey, a minor and a misconduct penalty, or a major and a game misconduct penalty, at the discretion of the referee based on the degree of violence of impact, shall be assessed to any player who checks an opponent in the head in any manner.

(d) A major and a game misconduct penalty, or a match penalty shall be assessed any player who injures an opponent under this rule.

(e) A match penalty shall be assessed any player who deliberately attempts to injure or deliberately injures an opponent under this rule.

Note: All contact above the shoulders (neck, face and head) is to be called Head Contact under one of the above (In minor hockey and female hockey).

The OHF Minor Council has endorsed the following enhancements to the minimum suspensions for head contact penalties for each of the following penalties assessed in the newly approved Head Contact rule.

- The Major Penalty will also be assessed a GM72 (game misconduct: plus three (3) additional games for first offence; plus four (4) additional games for second offence; and an indefinite suspension for the third offence in the same season). ***The OMHA has recommended that the sanction assigned in the case of any player who is assessed a 3rd GM72 in a season (Rule 6.5) be a minimum of six (6) games. This will be administered per current OMHA Regulations/Policy governing Suspensions.***
- The Match Penalty will be assessed a Major Penalty and an MP72 (game misconduct: plus four (4) additional games for the first offence; and an indefinite suspension for the second offence in the same season).

Please note that the OHF Suspension List in the 2011-2012 OMHA Manual of Operations (page 247) includes M71 - Checking to the Head (Minor + 10 minutes) and GM71 – Head Contact (Double Minor + Game). Since the time of printing the manual, the OHF has removed these penalty codes and suspensions and they will not be in effect this season. These codes do not appear on the 2011-2012 OMHA game sheets.