

2024-2026 Hockey Canada Rule Changes

Rule 2.2(a)

New rule:

Teams may have a maximum of 20 players in uniform for any game (up to 18 skaters and 2 goaltenders).

What changed?:

Previously, only Junior, Senior, and U18AAA teams could have 20 players in uniform. All other teams were restricted to 19 players. Now, this rule is consistent across all divisions.

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.

What changed?:

Addition of skate blade to this rule.

The purpose of this rule is to ensure the safety of goaltenders

Rule 6.3(e)(i)

New rule:

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 changed?:

When the puck goes out of play or becomes unplayable in the end-zone, the face-off will remain in the end-zone.

The purpose of this rule is to eliminate debate about correct face-off locations.

Rule 7.1(a)

New rule:

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:

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

What changed?:

All actions must be penalized with a minimum double Minor penalty.

The purpose of this rule is to have consistency with the Head Contact rule.

Rule 8.7

New rule :

Clipping, also known as a "low hit", is where a player uses their body to make contact at or 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 changed?:

Clarification that a player who makes contact with an opponent anywhere below the hips should be penalized for Clipping.

The purpose of this rule is to simplify the judgement officials must make for a clipping infraction.

Rule 8.8 (c)

New rule:

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-footed an opponent.

What changed?:

Addition of the goal or boards as considerations for assessing a Match penalty.

The purpose of this rule is to highlight dangerous outcomes and provide officials with additional guidance on slew-footing infractions.

Rule 10.2 (a)

New rule:

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 changed?:

Clarification that a hand pass infraction must be the result of a deliberate action by the

offending player, and that this rule applies even if the puck does not go in the direction intended by the player.

Rule 10.5(a)

New rule:

A minor penalty will be assessed to any player who throws, shoots, or kicks a stick or any other object, anywhere on the ice.

What changed?:

Addition of kicking a stick or any other object as a criteria under this rule.

The purpose of this rule is to ensure that players cannot use their sticks or other objects to interfere or threaten to interfere with opposing players.