

Norfolk County Minor Hockey Association – Player Eligibility

With the creation of the Norfolk County Minor Hockey Association (“Norfolk Minor Hockey”), it is important to understand if Norfolk Minor Hockey is your “Home Centre” and, if not, whether you may still have the opportunity to play for Norfolk Minor Hockey.

Below, please find some information which will help determine a specific player’s options. This information is provided as a guideline only. Ontario Minor Hockey Association (“OMHA”) Rules and Regulations should be consulted for all final determinations.

Local League

Norfolk Minor Hockey will only manage representative hockey. It was created through an agreement between Port Dover, Simcoe, and Waterford minor hockey associations whereby the rep hockey rights of the three centres were transferred to Norfolk Minor Hockey.

The Port Dover, Simcoe, and Waterford minor hockey associations will continue to operate their local league hockey programs as per past practice. Local league players may register and play with any of these, or other, minor hockey associations. For local league hockey there are no geographical restrictions – players can play local league hockey with the association of their choice.

Representative Hockey

Determining a Player’s “Home Centre”

Under OMHA regulations, players may only register and play for the Centre (hockey association) in which they usually reside, subject to exceptions discussed below. A player’s residence is defined as the structure (not the property) in which the player is a permanent resident and any measurement therefrom shall always begin at the main entrance of such residence.

A player’s Home Centre will be the nearest Centre to his/her residence, by well-traveled road. Each centre has a defined “Centre Point” for such measurement purposes. Norfolk Minor Hockey’s centre point is 2559 Highway 24 North, Simcoe, ON N3Y 4K3 (i.e. the John Deere dealership near the Hwy #24 and Harmony Road intersection).

In addition, Norfolk Minor Hockey and surrounding minor hockey associations operate under the “8km Rule”. Under this rule, a player shall be given a choice of Home Centre where the difference in distance from or to his/her residence, over well-traveled roads, always measured by the shortest possible route to the closest two or more Centres does not exceed 8km. That said, you will not be permitted to bypass a Centre to play for another Centre in the same general direction.

By way of example, if a player lives between Simcoe and Delhi and wants to know their Home Centre or whether they have a choice of Home Centre, they would measure the distance from the end of their driveway to Norfolk Minor Hockey’s Centre Point (above) and Delhi’s Centre Point (Canada Post office at 94 Church St. W., Delhi – most centres have their local post office as their centre point). If the distance to Norfolk’s Centre Point is 12 km and the distance to Delhi’s Centre Point is 10km, the difference between these two distances would be 2km. As 2km is less than 8km the player is a “Right of Choice”

player and has the choice of registering and playing for Norfolk Minor Hockey or Delhi Minor Hockey. However, once the player makes their choice and plays rep hockey in that centre, that centre will be their permanent Home Centre.

As Norfolk Minor Hockey is a new Centre all current Port Dover/Simcoe/Waterford players living in the surrounding area who would be a Right of Choice player if they were starting rep hockey for the first time can make a new, refreshed "Right of Choice" selection. For example, if a player previously was a Right of Choice player between Simcoe Minor Hockey and Delhi Minor Hockey and selected to play in Simcoe and has been playing rep hockey in Simcoe, that player now has a refreshed Right of Choice and could elect to play for either Delhi or Norfolk starting in the 2020-2021 hockey season. Once this player has made their refreshed Right of Choice selection, that selected Centre will be their Home Centre going forward. However, if this same player had previously selected and played rep hockey in Delhi, that player remains a Delhi player and will need to obtain a release from Delhi to now select Norfolk Minor Hockey as their right of choice centre. If this release is not obtained they can only try out for Norfolk Minor Hockey as a Non-Resident Player (see below).

Grandfathering Rule – Current Port Dover, Simcoe and Waterford Players

Any current rostered Port Dover, Simcoe or Waterford hockey player who satisfies the existing residency rules will automatically have the grandfathered right to play for Norfolk Minor Hockey. This is the case even if a player's new natural "Home Centre", as per the above rules, would not be Norfolk Minor Hockey. This is a special case allowance with the transition to Norfolk Minor Hockey. In the future all new hockey players will use the above Home Centre rules to determine their Home Centre.

AAA, AA and A Opportunities

If Norfolk Minor Hockey is a player's Home Centre, either automatically or through their Right of Choice selection, they have the following player movement opportunities:

For novice in U9 (Novice):

- i) Players play in Norfolk Minor Hockey

For players in U10 (Minor Atom) and U11 (Major Atom):

- i) A player may try out for AAA hockey as per the current OMHA waiver system and Letter of Release regulations. Norfolk Minor Hockey remains an affiliate of Brantford's AAA program.
- ii) If a player is not offered a roster position on a AAA team or chooses not to play AAA hockey, the player plays for Norfolk Minor Hockey

For players in U12 (Peewee) and older:

- iii) A player may try out for AAA program as per the current OMHA waiver system and Letter of Release regulations. Norfolk Minor Hockey remains an affiliate of Brantford's AAA program.
- i) If a player is not offered a roster position on a AAA team or chooses not to play AAA hockey, they may try out for AA hockey. Note, however, that Brantford is an Alliance AA/A seeded Centre. This level of hockey is categorized as A for purposes of player movement for OMHA players from an A centre (such as Norfolk Minor Hockey). Therefore, Brantford AA/A teams will not qualify for this player movement option. (For greater clarity, with Norfolk Minor

- Hockey being an A centre, a player does not have the movement right to play on a Brantford A/AA team);
- ii) If a player is not offered a roster position on a AAA or AA team, or chooses not to play AAA or AA hockey, the player returns to Norfolk Minor Hockey.

Non-Resident Player Opportunities

If a player's Home Centre is NOT Norfolk Minor Hockey, they may still have an opportunity to play for a Norfolk Minor Hockey team as a non-resident player.

Under OMHA regulations, each Norfolk Minor Hockey team is permitted to roster three (3) non-resident players, being players whose Home Centre is NOT Norfolk Minor Hockey.

Players from other centres who are U12 (Minor Peewee) or older and from a BB base category Centre or below (e.g. Langton, Delhi, Norwich, Burford, Six Nations, Hagersville, Cayuga etc.) may choose to try out for a Norfolk Minor Hockey team as a "Non-Resident Player". **There are no geographical restrictions on this movement.** Such players have the following movement opportunities:

- i) Try out for AAA Zone teams as per current regulations;
- ii) Try out for one (1) AA team in a AAA or AA base category Centre **OR** one (1) A team in an A base category Centre (such as Norfolk Minor Hockey), and
- iii) Play in their Home Centre.