



TRI-COUNTY
minor hockey league



U7/U8 & U9 PROGRAMMING

Tri-County Minor Hockey League
2025/2026 Seasonal Structure MD

Revised October 1st , 2025



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U7/U8/U9 Program Overview

TCMHL will provide a tiered MD league for associations for U7, U8 & U9. The MD league is intended to operate in partnership with your associations commitment to opportunity-based programming. Associations may partner the MD league program with internal commitments to their additional development program.

- MD League will be divided into “pods” based on the following priorities:

- Geographic areas
- Tiering options/association entries
- Facility and partnering between associations

****Please note some exceptions may be required due to association/league needs***

- Rules for game play will be communicated annually and sent to associations by your OMHA Regional Director
- Hockey Canada Pathways and OHF/OMHA communicated Seasonal Structures and Objectives are the foundation for the TCMHL programming model.
- Program models will be reviewed annually and in consultation with associations



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U7 MD Season Summary- Cross Ice All Season

Prep/Evaluation & Development Phase

Sept 2nd to Oct 31st 2025

- Prep Skates (min 4)
- Evaluations (min 3 prior to tiering)
- Focus on Skills/Development
- Up to 4 Exhibition Games

Regular Season Phase

Nov 1 to Feb 16th 2026

- Cross ice games
- Seasonal break at Christmas
- **16 games** total divided as follows:
 - 12 games scheduled by TCMHL
 - 4 exhibition games may be used in reg season and end of season phase *provided game to practice ratios are maintained*

End of Season Phase

Feb 17th to March 31st 2026

- 8 games
- 6 game scheduled by TCMHL
- TCMHL U7 Showcase/Jamboree (one day event)

Notes:

- Tiering of players grouped by like skill (i.e. MD 1, MD 2) & placed in "Pods" for game play (Pod sizes pending association submissions)
- On-going monitoring of Pods for the purpose of tiering by like skill
- No scores/standings are kept
- Games are played cross ice
- **3 Jamborees**
- Seasonal Break –*Dec 22rd 2025 to Jan 2th 2026 & March 14th to March 20th*
- Year End TCMHL Wrap Up Weekend: *March 28th - 29th 2026 Date under Review*
Ice availability pending April 4th /5th alternative date
 - Interested hosts to email **Tri-County President and OMHA Regional Director by Oct 31st 2025**
 - Costing per team and event overview to be provided as part of host interest submission (Average cost approx. \$300-\$400 per team)
 - Each team to play 2 games (one day event)
 - Pizza Lunch
 - Team medallions provided by TCMHL for all participants



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Highlights

U7 Cross Ice Game Play and Scheduling

- Games played outside TCMHL scheduled regular/end of season require travel permits
- All Jamborees require travel permits (excluding TCMHL Kick off/Year End Wrap Up Jamboree)
- Pod's will be finalized based on association interest and may be adjusted prior or during the season to ensure tiering by like skill is optimized
- Flexibility built into game scheduling for additional exhibition games

Game Play:

- Foam dividers or boards to divide the ice at the blue lines (cross ice model)
- Small nets required for U7 (if association is unable to provide nets smaller than standard size than they must advise TCMHL & Regional Director in advance of program start date)
- 3 min warm up (option for 5 min if ice time permits)
- Max game time 60 mins, two 22 run time periods
- Face offs to start each half
- 4 on 4 hockey two game model (in the event of low numbers have the option to run 3 on 3 alternative or 1 half ice game model alternative)
- Visiting team switches ends at intermission
- Buzzers set to 2 mins (90 secs optional alternative if deemed developmentally appropriate for the group)
- Blue pucks required
- Tagging up is required when double shifting of players is needed as a result of low numbers (coaches must ensure all players have opportunity to double shift)
- On ice Officials (min 1 required, if association is unable to provide alternative option for supervision must be approved by TCMHL & OMHA Regional Director)
- Game flow and penalties to be implemented as per *page 18-19 of U7 Hockey Canada Pathway*
- Participation sheets must be used and submitted to Convenor by the following submission dates: **Under Review Request GSI**
 - December 15th 2025
 - February 28th 2026
 - March 31st 2026



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U8 MD Season Summary- Half Ice All Season

Prep/Evaluation & Development Phase
Sept 2nd to Oct 31st 2025

- Prep Skates (min 4)
- Evaluations (min 3 prior to tiering)
- Focus on Skills/Development
- Up to 6 Exhibition Games

Regular Season Phase
Nov 1 to Feb 16th 2025

- Half ice games
- Seasonal break at Christmas
- **16 games total composed as follows:**
 - 12 league games TCMHL Scheduled
 - 4 Exhibition games may be used in reg season/ end of season phase **provided game to practice ratios are maintained**

End of Season Phase
Feb 17th to March 31st 2026

- 8 games (6 league scheduled 2 Exhibition games)
- TCMHL U8 Showcase (one day event)

Notes:

- Tiering of players grouped by like skill (i.e. MD 1, MD 2) & placed in "Pods" for game play (Pod sizes pending association submissions)
- On-going monitoring of Pods for the purpose of tiering by like skill
- No scores/standings are kept
- Games are played at half ice
- **3 Jamborees**
- Seasonal Break –**Dec 22rd 2025 to Jan 2th 2026 & March 14th to March 20th**
- Year End TCMHL Showcase Weekend: **March 28th -29th 2025 or April 4th/5th ice availability pending**
 - Interested hosts to email **Tri-County President and OMHA Regional Director by Oct 31st 2025**
 - Costing per team and event overview to be provided as part of host interest submission (Average cost approx. \$300-\$400 per team)
 - Each team to play 2 games (one day event)
 - Pizza Lunch
 - Team medallions provided by TCMHL for all participants



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Highlights

U8 Half Ice Game Play and Scheduling

- Games played outside TCMHL scheduled regular/end of season require travel permits
- All Jamborees require travel permits (excluding TCMHL Year End Show Case)
- Pod's will be finalized based on association interest and may be adjusted prior or during the season to ensure tiering by like skill is optimized
- Flexibility built into game scheduling for additional exhibition games

Game Play:

- Foam dividers or boards to divide the ice at centre red line
- Small nets required for U8 (if association is unable to provide nets smaller than standard size than they must advise TCMHL & Regional Director in advance of program start date)
- 3 min warm up (option for 5 min if ice time permits)
- Max game time 60 mins, two 22 run time periods
- Face offs to start each half
- 4 on 4 hockey two game model (in the event of low numbers have the option to run 3 on 3 alternative or 1 half ice game model alternative)
- Visiting team switches ends at intermission
- Buzzers set to 90 sec
- Blue pucks required
- Tagging up is required when double shifting of players is needed as a result of low numbers (coaches must ensure all players have opportunity to double shift)
- On ice Officials (min 1 required, if association is unable to provide alternative option for supervision must be approved by TCMHL & OMHA Regional Director)
- Game flow and penalties to be implemented as per *page 21 of U9 Hockey Canada Pathway*
- Participation sheets must be used and submitted to Convenor by the following submission dates: **Under Review to Use GSI**
 - December 15th 2024
 - February 28th 2025
 - March 31st 2025



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U9 MD (MD1,MD2& MD3) Season Summary- Half Ice to Oct 31st 2025 & Transition to Full Ice Model Nov 1, 2025

Prep/Evaluation & Development Phase

Sept 2nd to Oct 31st 2025

- Prep Skates (min 4)
- Evaluations (min 3 prior to tiering)
- Focus on Skills/Development
- Up to 6 Half Ice Exhibition Games may be used in reg season/ end of season phase **optional and scheduled by team**
- **2 Half ice games scheduled by Associations Oct 25-26**
- **Note prep/evaluations are only required for those who did not host in the Spring 2025**

Regular Season Phase 1- Full Ice Nov 1 to Jan 9th 2025

- **10 Full Ice games- Starting Nov 1 2025**
- **Up to 2 Full Ice Exhibition Games**
- Seasonal break at Christmas

Regular Season Phase 2/End of Season Phase

Jan 9th to March 31st 2025

- Full Ice Games
- **14 games total** composed as follows:
- 12 games scheduled (plus up to 2 Ex games)
- TCMHL U9 Year End Wrap Up (March 27-29th) **date pending confirmation**

Notes:

- Tiering of players grouped by like skill & placed in “Pods” for game play to the best of our ability (based on association submissions)
- On-going monitoring of Pods for competition by like ability
- No Scores are kept/No Standings kept for half ice games
- iPad/Game Sheet Inc used for Full Ice Games, Scores & Standings kept
- **3 Jamborees (1 Jamboree 1/2 ice and 2 Tournaments Post Nov 1) or 3 tournaments after November 1 2025.**
- Seasonal Break –Dec 22nd 2025 to Jan 2nd 2026
- Year End TCMHL Championship Weekend: **March 27th-29th 2026 TBC or April 3-5th 2026 due to ice availability**
 - Interested hosts to email Tri-County President, Convenor and OMHA Regional Director by October 31st, 2025 (host sharing between associations option)
 - Costing per team and event overview to be provided as part of host interest submission
 - Each team to play min 3 games
 - Pizza Lunch and Team Beverages (Saturday of event)
 - Team medallions provided by TCMHL for all participants



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Highlights

U9 Half Ice & Full Ice Game Play and Scheduling

- Games played outside TCMHL scheduled regular/end of season require travel permits
- All Jamborees/tournaments require travel permits (excluding TCMHL Year End Wrap Up)
- Pod's will be finalized based on association interest and may be adjusted prior or during the season to ensure tiering by like skill is optimized
- Flexibility built into game scheduling for additional exhibition games

Half Ice Game Play:

- Smaller nets recommended for U9 half ice games (full size permitted)
- 3 min warm up (option for 5 min if ice time permits)
- Max game time 60 mins, two 22 run time periods for Half Ice Games
- Face offs to start each half
- 4 on 4 hockey two game model (in the event of low numbers direct option to run 3 on 3 alternative or 1 half ice game model alternative)
- Visiting team switches ends at intermission
- Buzzers set to 1 min
- Tagging up is required when double shifting of players is need as a result of low numbers (coaches to ensure all players have opportunity to double shift)
- On ice Officials required (min 1 required, if association is unable to provide alternative option for supervision must be approved by TCMHL & OMHA Regional Director)
- Game flow and penalties to be implemented as per **page 21 of U9 Hockey Canada Pathway**
- Participation sheets must be used and submitted to U9 Convenor by the following submission dates:
 - November 30th 2025



U9 Full Ice Game Play and Scheduling: OHF Pilot 2025/2026

Note: From Nov 1, 2025 to January 9, 2026: In addition to the program details listed in this document all OHF Pilot requirements must be implemented

Games will operate without special teams; penalties will be recorded, but teams will continue play at 5-on-5 to maximize player development and continuous play.

When a player is assessed a penalty they are to return to their bench for their shift and the face off will be taken as per traditional Hockey Canada rules

Note:

- When a penalty is assessed the player goes to the players bench and is ineligible to return until one-minute of playing time has passed.*
- Teams play even strength, the penalty is recorded, one-minute on penalty clock, player can be placed back in rotation after one-minute has been served.*
- No power plays or short handed play. No pulling of the goalie*

Full Ice Game Play:

- 4x6 nets required for U9 full ice games
- 3 min warm up (option for 5 min if ice time permits)
- 10-10-15 period lengths (no buzzers) or 10-10-10 period lengths (no buzzers)
- Traditional Hockey Canada full ice playing rules in effect (January 10th 2026- end of season)
- Black pucks used for full ice games
- Affiliation U9HL/LL to U9MD throughout the season (Full Ice Effective Jan 10th), U9 to U10/U11 permitted after Nov 1st for full ice phase only:
 - U9HL Teams can affiliate for Half Ice games up to Nov 1, 2025 and then again from January 10th once both tiers are eligible for full ice
 - MD affiliation permitted where applicable for tiered MD programming. For Example U9MD to U9 MD1
- Game Sheet Inc/iPads used for all full ice games



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Contact and Program Leads:

- Michelle Bridges, OMHA Regional Director (Region 3 Area C)
- Paul Allan, Vice President Central District
- Glen Davis & Paul Harvey, Tri County Minor Hockey League
- U7/U8/U9 Convenor: Peter Cabral Tri County Minor Hockey League

Decision Points Confirmed:

- Scheduling of games will be completed between ice-schedulers to support facility and association partnerships, One DB divisions/scheduling initial set up to be completed by Tri-County League Scheduler.
- March Break regular season games may be scheduled if mutually agreed to by both associations

Game Play PODS -Adjustments may be required in season to align groups by like skill

Decision Points Pending Confirmation:

- Year end participation in TCMHL Associations must communicate by Oct 31st 2025 of their participation.



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U7 Divisions

U7 Red	U7 White	U7 NDHL		Interlock wNDHL
Halton Hills	New Hamburg	Niagara Falls		Flam
Milton	Woolwich	West Niagara		Burlington
Oakville	Orangeville	Stoney Creek		Burlington 2
Oakville 2	Caledon	Thorold		Oakville
Burlington	Hespeler			Oakville 2
Burlington 2	Center Wellington			
Guelph	Halton Hills 2			
Brampton	Milton 2			
Flamborough				
9	8	4		
		Total	21	



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U8 Divisions

U8 Red	U8 White
Halton Hills	Halton Hills
Milton	Milton
Oakville	Oakville
Burlington	Burlington 3
Guelph	Burlington 2
Flamborough	Guelph
Brampton	Center Wellington 2
Glancaster	Center Wellington 3
Stoney Creek	Hespeler
Woolwich	Flamborough
Orangeville	Orangeville
11	11
Total	22



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U9 Divisions

U9 Red	U9 White
Halton Hills	Halton Hills 2
Milton	Halton Hills 3
Oakville	Milton 2
Oakville 2	Oakville 3
Burlington	Burlington 3
Burlington 2	Guelph 2
Guelph 1	Guelph 3
West Niagara	Center Wellington 2
Flamborough	Flamborough 2
Brampton	Center Wellington 3
Glancaster	Hespler
Stoney Creek	Erin Hillsburgh
Woolwich	Orangeville 2
Orangeville	
14	13
Total	27



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Resources and Support Links

HOCKEY CANADA PLAYER PATHWAY - RESOURCES

[U7 Player Pathway](#)

[U9 Player Pathway](#)

OMHA Manual of Operations & OMHA OHF Pilot Page:

[2025/2026 OMHA Manual of Operations](#)

OMHA U9 Pilot Website: <http://help.omha.net/u9pilot>

ASPEN INSTITUTE – PROJECT PLAY

[Sport for All, Play for Life: A Playbook to Get Every Kid in the Game](#)