



## ACTION BULLETIN

Issue # 2026-005-A

**DATE:** February 19, 2026  
**TO:** VIAHA Membership  
**FROM:** Al McCulloch, VIAHA President  
**COPY:** VIAHA Officers  
**SUBJECT:** Minor Hockey Player Equal Ice Time

A reminder to all MHA Presidents of their commitment to an equal allocation of ice-time between minor hockey players on teams in all divisions within our District. Fair play rules are reviewed with MHA Presidents each year and supported by them.

While there has been some recent improvement, there continues to be a “**win at all costs**” attitude among some coaches resulting in the double shifting of stronger players or the shortening of benches. This is not acceptable regardless of the category or division, whether Island League or recreational, from U7 through to U21. While it may be necessary for a player to sit a shift for discipline, this should be the exception rather than the rule.

In minor hockey, we are in business to expose children to hockey and to help them learn valuable life skills that they will hopefully take with them into adulthood. The teams belong to the minor hockey associations, parents pay their fees to the association, the team officials are selected by the associations and as such, every MHA needs to hold these coaches accountable. If coaches refuse to practice treating every child equally, by affording them the opportunity to play, then associations need to replace these coaches.

Our sport does not win when we have adults that preach “win at all costs.” In the end, we all lose, as children who are not treated equally leave the sport due to not having fun. MHAs have the obligation when they accept a parent’s money and place their child on a team that the player is allowed to play and coaches that fail to follow this philosophy must be and will be dealt with.

Each MHA should ensure the coaches that it selects know and clearly understand their role in ensuring players are treated with dignity and fairness and that each child receive equal opportunity to play.

Thank you for your understanding and support with this matter.

Respectfully,

Al McCulloch  
VIAHA President