

METRO WEST FORCE EVALUATION POLICY

U11, U13, U15 and U18

WELCOME TO THE 2024/2025 SEASON!

The Metro West Force Female Hockey Association's ("MWF's") goal during the entire evaluation process is to create a positive experience for everyone involved. It can be a stressful time for players and families so please become familiar with the information below, as we hope, it will answer most of your questions.

MWF offers four levels of Hockey "AAA", "AA", "A" and "C". With four different levels of hockey, it is imperative for families to prepare for all possible outcomes. Building unrealistic expectations prior to the process can have undesirable effects and spoil what could be a positive year for the player.

It is MWF's objective during evaluations to provide a fair and unbiased process to assess a player's hockey skills and to ensure players are placed on a team that is appropriate to their skill levels as noted during the on-ice evaluations for the 2024/2025 season. It is important to remember that placement is not guaranteed from one season to another. Players grow, develop skills and develop new interests throughout the off-season. A player or parent should never assume placement prior to or during evaluations.

To ensure the process runs as smoothly as possible, the following procedures **MUST** be adhered to:

- Any inquiries during and after the evaluations must be addressed to the MWF VP of Hockey Standards at evaluations@metrowestforce.com.
- No other coach, evaluator, coordinator or Board member will entertain any issues relating to individual players.
- No phone calls or emails will be accepted until 24 hours have passed from the time of the placement posting. Should you call or email regarding placement of your child within the 24-hour period, your inquiry will not be heard.
- If the Evaluation Team feels a matter needs further review, the Metro West Force Executive Committee will be consulted. In extreme cases, the matter may be referred to members of Hockey Nova Scotia's Female Council for advice prior to the final decision by the MWF President. There are some situations where Hockey Nova Scotia's Female Council may make the final decision that MWF must implement.
- There will be no opportunity for individual player feedback on evaluation scores during or after the process.
- Harassing or threatening calls/emails will not be tolerated. They will be reported to the Metro West Force Executive Committee and action will be taken immediately. Hundreds of hours have been dedicated by volunteers and outside professionals to provide a fair process to place players on Metro West Force teams. Please respect their time and express gratitude for their efforts to ice competitive teams and develop young athletes.

Last updated: August 28, 2024

EXPECTATIONS FOR COMPETITIVE HOCKEY

We understand that many players are involved in other sports or activities, and we would like to encourage that whenever we can. However, hockey is a team sport, and coaches and teammates expect that all parents and players will be committed to their respective hockey team. Our coaches strive to deliver a fair play program that provides an opportunity for all players to develop. For this to happen, we expect players to attend all practices, development sessions with our Technical Director and all other team sanctioned events, such as dryland training and additional development sessions. Naturally, there will be situations that will lead to missed practices or events, but this should be minimal.

Please understand that players who regularly miss practices will also miss out on development opportunities which could lead to the potential for reduced playing time during games.

Understanding the difference between Rec (recreational) and Rep (representative) hockey is important when trying to determine the best fit for your daughter, and your family.

As per our Strategic Objectives and our commitment to Membership Growth:

- MWF is dedicated to creating a “Play to Compete” approach for competitive teams. The Play to Compete Approach is part of MWF’s strategic path and vision to becoming a premier female hockey association in Atlantic Canada.
- Competitive teams, no matter the level, require players and families who are committed to growth and development. This commitment is shown by attending team practices and additional development sessions (eg. off-ice conditioning, shooting skills, etc), and showing up prepared to work hard.
- Play to Compete does not mean winning every game. We expect teams will win and lose games. The premise behind Play to Compete is to create teams that can compete at the respective level of play and to place players on these teams who are prepared to put in the effort to develop and perform at their best.
- MWF is also committed to building a strong and sustainable recreation league with Metro East Inferno and other associations. We want to ensure that girls are placed appropriately and play at a level that they are comfortable in and that matches their skill and commitment level.

Please keep in mind the following:

- Competitive teams may have 1-2 practices per week, including a development session with the Technical Director every 3-4 weeks, plus the possibility of dry land training and/or other development sessions. At times, there may be 3 practices per week as teams prepare for tournaments or provincials. Practices and additional team sessions are not optional, and players are expected to be there.
- A, AA and AAA teams may have multiple games per week; the majority of games will be held on the weekends.
- Travel for games at all competitive levels should be expected! All MWF competitive teams are part of provincial leagues potentially playing associations from Cape Breton to Yarmouth.
- A, AA and AAA teams will have additional fund-raising requirements.
- Parents also need to form a team, and each do their part to ensure the success of the team. Any parent that does not contribute to the teams financially agreed upon objectives and / or fundraising efforts can have their child's playing privileges revoked.
- C Level hockey- will participate in 1-2 practices/ games per week.



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- Please be sure to read the rec vs rep document that was released with the registration information. You can also find this document on our website.
- If at any time during the evaluation process, you and/or your player determine you are not prepared to commit to the above, please advise the VP Hockey Standards immediately in order to allow another player the opportunity.

EVALUATION TEAM

1. The Evaluation Team will consist of MWF's Technical Director, Goalie Coordinator and the assigned evaluators.
2. The evaluators are qualified, non-parent, unbiased individuals hired by the Technical Director. Evaluators are trained individuals at the university level and higher.
3. If any Member of the Evaluation Team has a conflict of interest with a group of players, they will not participate in the Evaluation process for that group.
4. The President and VP of Hockey Standards will oversee the Evaluation Team and will ensure the processes and procedures stated within this document are followed.
5. All members of the Evaluation Team will be required to sign a Confidentiality and Privacy Acknowledgement.
6. Evaluators are not to be contacted to discuss your player or any other matters regarding the evaluation process.
7. Any concerns or questions must be directed to the VP Hockey Standards via email evaluations@metrowestforce.com

EVALUATOR GUIDELINES

1. Evaluators are responsible for ensuring data integrity and consistency throughout the evaluation process.
2. Evaluators will use a software system to record player scores during the evaluation process. All evaluators will be trained in how to properly use the designated scoring system.
3. Evaluators will have no parent or player interaction prior, during or following the evaluation session.
4. Each session will have a minimum of four (4) evaluators. Evaluators will remain for the entire ice session.
5. Goalies are being evaluated by the Evaluation Team that consists of the Technical Director, Goalie Coordinator and the evaluators. Goalies will be evaluated at all ice sessions.
6. All player ratings and scores are confidential within the Evaluation Team. There will be no disclosure of a player's rating, scores or placement.
7. Player groups, regroupings, or sorting will only be posted to the website after the Evaluation Team has approved the list to be posted.
8. Evaluators are observing and assessing players' skills and performance displayed during ALL the on-ice sessions.
9. Evaluators are not provided with players' names, are not to share opinions and are not provided with the other evaluators' scores. Major discrepancies between evaluators are rare but will be investigated, and if needed the player's history may be used.

EVALUATION OVERVIEW

1. Evaluators from our Evaluation Team will do the evaluation scoring.
2. Each session will be weighted equally.
3. These scores will be the determining factor to determine placements to AAA, AA, A or C and will be used for team balancing.
4. Players will be evaluated on a scale from 1-10 based on their performance and skills displayed during all sessions. The score is based on how well players can execute these skills within a game situation or a skills session (Session #1 for U11).

EVALUATION PROCESS

1. The evaluation process is designed to evaluate the fundamental skill set of a player and give each player an opportunity to display these skills in game situations.
2. The goal of the evaluation process is to determine the best level where each player should play with MWF. The MWF Evaluation Team reserves the right to change the format of the evaluation process at any time in order to gather further information that will aid in the selection process. E.g. changing a session from 4 vs 4 to 5 vs 5 or half ice versus full ice. Players will attend five (5) evaluation sessions.
3. The evaluation sessions for U13, U15 and U18 will consist of 5 intrasquad games and could be formatted as 3x3, 4x4 or 5x5. At times, the bench flow may be mixed up to give the evaluators a chance to see designated players in different matchups. All players will be given equal ice time.
4. The evaluation sessions for U11 will consist of 1 skills session (session #1) and 4 intersquad games. The Skills session for U11 will allow evaluators to create groupings based on similar skill sets moving forward into session #2. Players will have the opportunity to move groups based on their performance after each session.
5. For the U13, U15 and U18 first session, players will be placed in groups based on similar skill sets and observations noted throughout the 2023/2024 season. Players will have the opportunity to move groups based on their performance after each session. If players were placed in a group below or above their level of play, this will be recognized and adjustments will be made for the following session. Each player will be scored and placed accordingly following every session. MWF will do their best to release new groups in a timely manner and at a reasonable time. Players have potential to move up or down groups while some players may not see movement.
6. MWF reserves the right to add on additional evaluation sessions to gain further information on players for team selections, if necessary.
7. Players may be parked to the top level throughout the evaluation process and/or top players may be asked to sit for a game or two to assist with evaluating other players.
8. Goalies will attend all five (5) Intersquad Game evaluation sessions.
9. Goalies will have one 90-minute individual Goalie Skills evaluation session.
10. Goalies will be evaluated and scored during the whole process and will also have potential to move groups.



PLAYER AND PARENT GUIDELINES

1. For U13-U18 divisions, players will be required to declare a position prior to evaluations. After the initial session, MWF reserves the right to meet with players and their families and ask if they would like to be evaluated under a different position.
2. Parents cannot request a position change after the commencement of evaluations.
3. Evaluations are mandatory for all players hoping to play at the competitive level (A, AA and AAA).
4. Players are NOT permitted to wear private hockey program or team identifying socks, pant shells, gloves or helmets. If a player is sporting any such gear, they will be asked to leave the session.
5. Players are to register with MWF representatives when arriving at the session. At the first session, each player will be assigned a specific numbered jersey; this number belongs to your player for the duration of evaluations. Players must wear their assigned jersey at all tryouts. Evaluators identify players by number. Jerseys are to not be traded. At the end of evaluations, jerseys must be returned to MWF prior to leaving the rink.
6. Parents or Players are not permitted to engage with the evaluators or ask them questions, prior, during or after evaluation sessions.
7. Scores will not be released to Members or parents.
8. Parents are not permitted to contact Members of the Evaluation Team or the Board to discuss their player or any other matters regarding evaluations. All inquiries must be directed to the VP Hockey Standards via email at evaluations@metrowestforce.com
9. Players and parents are expected to show respect for all other players and parents, evaluators, MWF Board Members and other volunteers. MWF will not tolerate bullying or disrespectful behaviour of any kind towards others.
10. There will be no rink access to parents/family/friends during evaluations (this includes the ice surface level and the seating above the ice surface). Only players, evaluators and volunteers will be allowed in the rink area. Parents can watch evaluations, if they wish, from the seating area on the second floor, outside of the rink. MWF asks that parents respect this policy and it will be monitored during evaluations. This is in the best interest of our players to allow them the opportunity to shine on their own.
11. During evaluations, parents, siblings, guardians, friends or other interested parties are not permitted without special permission:
 - a. in the dressing room;
 - b. outside the door of the dressing room;
 - c. inside the doors (lower and upper) to the playing surface where evaluations are occurring; and
 - d. near evaluators wherever they are located during a session
12. Female Dressing Room Monitors will be required. A sign-up sheet will be released to Members when the tryout schedule is finalized. A new sign-up will be released following each round of sessions as there may be player movement.
13. **Only Females are permitted in the dressing rooms as monitors - there are to be no males entering the dressing rooms at any time or age level. If your daughter needs help tying her skates or putting on gear, the Dressing Room Monitors can assist.**
14. Groupings for session #1 will be released once registration is finalized and posted to the MWF website. Members will be notified via email that the groups are posted.
15. There will be player movement, up or down, after each evaluation session. Groups will be updated as soon as possible for the following session and posted to the MWF website. It is the responsibility of the player to

monitor the MWF website to review groups for the next session. Due to the evaluation schedule groupings may be released less than 24 hours prior to the next session. **Emails will not be** released after every session to notify members of new groupings.

16. It is imperative that players and parents do not assume team placements based on the group a player is currently in. Placements are not finalized until after the last session and all data has been collected, observations made, and feedback has been considered.
17. Players from other Female Hockey Associations may be permitted to tryout with MWF based on HNS's Female Council's decision or directive, that takes into account the availability of teams in an area among other criteria.
18. As per the Hockey Nova Scotia Regulations under the Tryout Process (Document #F2.21):
 - 1.0 Regulation: Female players choosing to play female hockey must attend the female tryout process from the beginning and will not be permitted to be part of both a minor tryout process and female tryout process at the same time. Exception U18 AAA Major - Female players who try out for U18 AAA Major Female will be permitted to be part of the Association female tryout process.
 - 2.0 Policy: The tryout process for U18 AAA Major Female hockey is usually completed prior to the beginning of the Association tryout processes. Should the Association tryout processes start prior to the completion of the U18 AAA Major Female tryouts being completed, those players who are cut from the U18 AAA Major Female tryouts will be permitted to join the Association tryouts in progress so long as they have at least one ice time remaining.

PLAYER PLACEMENTS

1. Once evaluation sessions have concluded, the Evaluation Team will meet to discuss assessments and placement of players. Many factors need to be considered to appoint players to their appropriate level including:
 - a. Scores
 - b. Number of players registered
 - c. Position of players
 - d. Feedback from 2023/2024 Coaches: Coaches were surveyed at the end of the season and were given the opportunity to provide feedback on players skill level, development, commitment, attitude and coachability. There may be circumstances that arise where coaches feedback is consulted to determine a player's placement.
2. Players will be placed to AAA, AA, A and C levels.
3. We will rely on the unbiased results produced from the Evaluations Team to create teams. Appointed coaches will not be part of the placement or team selection process, however, we may consult Coaches for feedback on players and balancing.
4. Determining the exact time and day of when placements are released is impossible. MWF assures Members that the association will do their best to release placements in a timely manner and at an appropriate time.
5. Final placements will be posted to the MWF website and an email will be released directing Members to the website.
6. Please note U15AAA placements and teams are generally released prior to other leagues as their season starts earlier as per the Hockey NS Seasonal Chart. This is a Hockey Nova Scotia directive.



7. U11 Team selection will be made based on overall skill and not whether a player has signed up for forward or defense. The top evaluated players from the process will play at the highest level, regardless of the position.
8. All other placements and teams will be released as evaluations conclude. Balancing of teams will be considered by the Evaluation Team. Once the teams are formed, head coaches and assistant coaches will be assigned. No team draft will occur but head coaches may be consulted about balancing and potential conflicts.

U11 / U13 RECREATION EVALUATIONS PROCESS

At the recreation level, our goal is to create equally balanced C teams where players have the opportunity for competitive play and skill development.

1. An evaluation process will be conducted to assess players who have registered directly for recreational hockey and for those who have been assigned to the Rec program following Rep Evaluations. The purpose of this process is to determine skill level and assist with the creation of balanced teams.
2. Players at the recreation levels will participate in two sessions – one skill session (skating and puck drills) and one intra-squad game. Players will be evaluated during each session and an overall score obtained for each player.
3. Following completion of the assessment process, players will be ranked based on their evaluation scores and this ranking will be used for a draft process with assigned recreational coaches to create balanced teams.
4. Rec players are allowed a maximum of two (2) friend requests. MWF does their best to accommodate requests unless it would create competitive imbalance. We will do our best to ensure players have at least one friend on their team but there is no guarantee.

ABSENCES AND INJURIES

The Evaluation process provides an opportunity to evaluate players in a common forum to ensure proper placement at the most appropriate level. It is our expectation that all players will attend all tryout sessions. There is recognition that there may be circumstances which preclude a player from attending sessions due to injury, bereavement, or other circumstances. Players who miss all or part of the tryout process will be handled based on the reason for their absence and the nature of their injury. At the assessment and discretion of the Evaluation Team, the missing player MAY be linked to a player in the tryout process who is deemed to be the closest in terms of ability/skill/score. Should a player be linked, this will form the basis for their on-ice scoring but will not necessarily result in the same placement as the player(s) they were linked to. The Evaluation Team will decide on a case-by-case basis how absenteeism is handled. Prior year's coach's feedback will also be utilized and consulted. If a player is linked and they are on the short list or bubble, their name will be included in the pre-vetted list provided for consideration for placement on the team. All injured player decisions will be documented by the Evaluation Team with rationale provided to the Executive for approval in advance.

We attempt to place the player at the appropriate level based on a number of qualitative factors:

- Where did the player play last season?
- How did she develop during that year in speaking with other coaches?
- How was the injured/ missing player's performance at the end of the previous season relative to the other players on his/her team?



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- The player may be compared to other undisclosed, like-skilled players so that a score can be given and used in tabulating a final score.
- Discussion with prior coaches for other qualitative factors.
- In all, a complete effort for fairness of all involved is the goal.
- Injured players must be able to return to play by Dec. 1st to be placed on a competitive team.

For this policy to apply, parents need to notify the Evaluations Team at evaluations@metrowestforce.com for any pre-existing injuries or expected absences. All such instances will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Missed Session Without Notification

If a player misses a scheduled session without prior approval from the MWF VP of Hockey Standards, they will be given a score of '0' for that session, which, in turn, will be used in the final scoring.

APPEALS PROCESS

Should a family wish to appeal the level their child has been assigned, they may do so by request through the president@metrowestforce.com email address. The only appeals that are acceptable are appeals based on the process described in this document not being followed. Appeals related to evaluation scores and comparison from one player to another will not be entertained. Upon submission of an appeal, it will be reviewed by the Executive Committee of the Board. The Executive Committee shall contact the Complainant with their decision/solution.

Investigative committee (IC) - the Technical Director consistently reviews scores and cross-references data through the evaluation process. If there is an apparent error in evaluation procedures, an investigation will take place and be resolved immediately. The IC will consist of the President, Technical Director and VP of Hockey Standards.

If there is any conflict of interest with the above individuals, the TD along with other board members who hold no conflict of interest, will sit on the committee.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Mike Almond, MWF VP Hockey Standards
evaluations@metrowestforce.com (evaluations specific inquiries)
vp-hockeystandards@metrowestforce.com (all other inquiries)

Jordan Burke, Technical Director, Metro West Force
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