

# HOCKEY PEI INTRODUCES GREEN ARMBAND INITIATIVE



Hockey PEI and its Officiating Committee are excited to introduce the **Green Armband Initiative** for young officials for the 2025-26 season.

Beginning this season, all on-ice officials under the age of 18 will wear a green armband as part of their officiating uniform. The initiative is designed to promote respect towards young officials and to discourage abuse by coaches, parents and players.

This province-wide initiative has been successful in other hockey branches across the country and in other provincial sports organizations.

The green armband represents the idea that these officials are new to the officiating world in terms of their age and are learning and developing. Ultimately, the goal is to highlight that these are young officials providing a service to the game of hockey in a public space and should be respected in that role.

## The Goal

This initiative will help support officials at the grassroots level, who, like the players on the ice, are learning their roles and developing a passion. Young officials should have the opportunity to work in a safe environment.

This new initiative aims to eliminate abuse of officials from players, coaches, and fans. This will be achieved by educating everyone involved in the game that it is just that—a game—and that

young officials are learning, developing and doing their best. Abuse and negative experiences for officials of all ages must stop.

## The Rollout

Starting this season, all officials under 18 years of age will be provided with a green armband after attending their in-person certification clinic. Once all clinics have concluded in December, all officials will be required to wear their green armband for all levels of hockey.

Officials will wear the green armband on the same arm as their whistle hand, between the elbow and shoulder. For those also reffing at this age, they will wear one green armband on their whistle arm and a traditional red armband on their non-whistle arm.

With more than 400 officials in Hockey PEI in this age category last season, the rollout and support within the minor hockey associations will be crucial to the education and success of the program and, ultimately, the experiences of the officials on the ice.

## Discipline

As there have always been penalties and discipline for abuse of officials, the penalty for reported 11.1 Unsportsmanlike Conduct, 11.2 Disrespectful and Abusive Behaviour, 11.4 Discrimination, and 11.5 Physical Harassment of Officials will **double** for players and coaches who are penalized and reported under these rules when a green armband official is targeted or part of any game in all leagues. If any official is wearing a green arm band and the player or coach is removed from the game, the penalty is doubled

To review the suspension guidelines, you can go here: [CLICK HERE](#)

## What Can I Do?

When at a hockey game, and you see officials wearing green armbands, it is important to understand that this does not indicate a level of qualification or experience for an official; it simply indicates the age of the official and helps advocate to the hockey community to recognize that the officials working that game are young officials—someone's child or sibling.

Educate others on the Green Armband Initiative and the meaning behind the symbol of the green armbands. Understand that although yelling at officials was often common practice, we need to change this mindset and the actions behind it. Recognize that there is a person wearing that jersey, someone who has been training to develop and keep the game as safe and fair as possible for all participants. Share the idea that we need the adults in the rinks to act like adults and let the kids enjoy the game they are playing and officiating.

As is often the case, young officials aren't comfortable or familiar with how to handle situations of abuse during a game. This is where you can help by reporting these situations to the local

minor hockey association or Hockey PEI, which will review the reports and may lead to supplemental discipline.

Take a photo of an official wearing their green armband and share it on social media using the hashtag **#SupportGreenArmbandsPEI** for a chance to win a monthly prize from Hockey PEI.

If we all commit and understand, we can continue to grow and develop officials and provide positive hockey experiences for those on the ice and those interested in starting in the future.

Developing an initiative that will help retain and recruit officials and reduce abuse will help keep referee numbers where they need to be so we can all experience the game of hockey as it should be played. There is no game without the on ice officials!

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## Frequently Asked Questions

**Are all officials below the age of 18 required to wear a green armband to identify them as minors?**

- Yes, the wearing of the armband is to highlight the age of the official, regardless of the level of hockey they are working.

**What if officials choose not to wear their green armband?**

- As part of this initiative, there will be increased sanctions against team officials and spectators penalized for abuse or harassment of green armband officials. This is part of their expected officiating equipment/uniform for all officials across the province. Those refusing to wear their green armbands should be reported to their local referee-in-chief and may receive supplemental discipline or a reduction in assignments, similar to other dress code or equipment violations.

**Why are we implementing this in PEI?**

- Although many players, coaches, and fans show respect for officials on the ice, there are still several situations that have led to officials refusing to continue officiating based on how they were treated, especially younger officials who are still familiarizing themselves with the rule book and procedures. We need to stop these situations from happening. It is anticipated that introducing the green armbands will highlight to participants that abuse of officials continues and needs to be addressed as a community effort. It is important that the hockey community works together to protect the physical and psychological well-being of these minors.

**When does the Green Armband Initiative officially take effect?**

- The initiative will officially begin at the start of the 2025-26 hockey season, with all impacted officials required to wear the green armband no later than December 15, 2025, or whenever they receive their green armband, whichever comes first.

#### **Will officials wear green armbands on both arms?**

- No. Officials will only wear one green armband.

#### **Do officials have to pay for the green armband?**

- No. The green armbands will be paid for by Hockey PEI and distributed by the clinic instructors.

#### **Is it only the referee who wears the green armband?**

- All officials on the ice who are under the age of 18 will wear the green armband, regardless of whether they are working as the referee or linesperson.

#### **Do officials still wear the red armband if they are working a game as a referee?**

- Yes, the official working as a referee will wear one red and one green armband for games. The green armband will be placed over the red armband, or in place of the red armband, on their whistle arm, and the red armband will be worn normally on the right arm.

#### **Do only new officials have to wear green armbands?**

- No, all officials under the age of 18 must wear a green armband beginning from the 2025-26 season.

#### **When does an official stop wearing the green armband?**

- Officials who are required to wear the green armband may stop doing so on the date of their 18th birthday.

#### **Will there be increased discipline for team officials and spectators who abuse or harass green armband officials?**

- Yes, team officials who abuse or harass officials wearing a green armband will face increased supplemental discipline compared to team officials who abuse or harass officials not wearing a green armband.

#### **Does this mean older officials not wearing green armbands will be the target of more abuse?**

- Hockey PEI strongly enforces the maltreatment rules and does not condone any abuse or harassment of officials. It is important to remember that abuse in the hockey rink will not be accepted or tolerated. There is an expectation that mature officials likely have a better understanding of how to communicate and handle abusive situations and apply the appropriate rules.

#### **Which penalties will result in increased sanctions?**

- Infractions impacted include:
  - Game Misconduct – Unsportsmanlike Conduct (11.1)
  - Game Misconduct – Disrespectful, Abusive, and Harassing Behaviour (11.2)
  - Gross Misconduct – Travesty of the Game (11.2F)
  - Gross Misconduct – Discrimination (11.4)
  - Match Penalty – Attempted Strike (11.5A)
  - Match Penalty – Deliberate Touch, Hold, Push (11.5B)
  - Match Penalty – Deliberate Strike, Trip, Body Check (11.5C)

Any game misconduct or gross misconduct penalty involving a green armband official will be doubled from the Hockey PEI minimum suspension list.

#### **What conditions must occur for increased supplementary discipline to be imposed against a team official?**

- Regardless of whether the actions are directed at a minor official or not, any of the penalties previously identified assessed in a game involving an official with a green armband will result in supplemental discipline.

#### **How will Hockey PEI know if a suspendable penalty was assessed during a game with a minor official?**

- Game incident reports will identify if there was an official wearing a green armband who worked the specific game where a penalty was assessed.

#### **How will Hockey PEI promote this initiative?**

- The minor hockey associations will be notified through emails and virtual meetings, information will be shared at league meetings. Information will also be shared on websites and social media.

#### **How will the success of the initiative be measured?**

- Over the next few seasons, Hockey PEI will compare the number and types of infractions given to team officials for abuse and harassment of officials before and after

the initiative. Surveys of officials and parents may also be conducted for feedback on the success of the initiative.

**Will this initiative eliminate all forms of abuse and harassment of officials?**

- We know that many officials leave the game due to abuse and harassment from team officials and spectators. This initiative is one step we are taking to help reduce this negative behaviour toward officials and increase the idea of shared respect.

**When/how will I receive my green armband?**

- All officials under the age of 18 will be provided with a green armband after attending their in-person certification clinic.

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**FOR QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT:**

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