

To keep all games on schedule, efficiency is crucial this season. Last season, we saw significant success in this area, and I am confident that, with your continued cooperation, we can build on these accomplishments.

Please review the following NEOHA game procedures for the 2025/2026 season:

Start of Game Procedures

- **Officials' Arrival:** Officials should be on the ice prior to the teams. Once the ice resurfacing machine doors are closed, the clock should be set to **3 minutes** and started immediately, even if no teams are on the ice.
- **Warm-up and Bench Setup:** After **2 minutes**, a game official will blow the whistle to signal that the teams have **1 minute** to get to their benches and have their starting lineup ready for center ice.
- **Home Team Responsibilities:** The home team is generally responsible for supplying pucks for the warm-up. However, do bring your own in case.
- **Game Sheet & Fair Play Procedure:** During the 3-minute warm-up, officials should ensure the game sheet is complete and perform the Fair-Play Procedure.

End of Game Procedure / Handshake

- **Coaches' Role:** Coaches are to remain at their benches until instructed by the officials.
- **Team Lineup:** Teams will then line up at center ice, and upon the official's instruction, they will proceed to shake hands with their opponents.
- **Post-Handshake:** Teams are allowed to approach the opposing team's bench to shake hands with the coaching staff. Afterward, the **home team** will return to their bench, while the **visiting team** will proceed directly off the ice.
- **Officials' Responsibility:** Officials must remain on the ice during the entire handshake process and until all players have exited the playing surface.

1. Mercy Rule

- **7-Goal Differential:** If a **7-goal differential** is reached at any point during the 3rd period, the clock may be set to run **straight time** for the remainder of the game.
- **Coach's Decision:** This decision is to be made by the **coach of the losing team**, who can choose whether to allow the clock to run or finish the game with stop time.
- **Penalty Duration:**
 - Minor penalties: **3 minutes**
 - Major penalties: **7 minutes**

Game Lengths

- **U11:** 3 periods of **14 minutes** (stop time)

- **Peewee:** 3 periods of **15 minutes** (stop time)
- **Bantam:** 3 periods of **16 minutes** (stop time) with an optional flood between the 2nd and 3rd period at arenas that provide ample timeline to do so.
Note:
- There will **not** be a **5-minute break** between the 2nd and 3rd periods for **Novice, Atom,** and **Peewee** divisions. The game should continue after the usual between-period break.

Jerseys

- Generally all home teams shall wear white or light coloured jerseys, and the visiting team shall wear principally dark coloured jerseys.
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By adhering to these procedures, officials and coaches will significantly contribute to ensuring the timely completion of games and the continued credibility of the NEOHA league.

Thank you for your cooperation. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,
Scott Barron
NEOHA Administrator