



August 29, 2017

The following FAQs are offered to help members and registered participants understand the implications of the new [Residency Policy](#) approved by the Ringette Alberta Board on August 26, 2017.

Residency Policy FAQs

1. Does the new policy give players the right to play wherever they want?

No.

It gives players the right to ask to register in a different association from their current one but the player's existing association can say no if team viability is at risk and the desired association can also say no (see #5 below for possible reasons).

2. Are associations allowed to deny a release request?

Yes, but...

only if losing that player makes the team she would have been on no longer viable. Viability is a major concern expressed by the members previously so viability is reflected in the policy.

3. Are associations obligated to accept players from outside their community?

No.

An association can say no for any reason but points two and three in #5 below are likely the main reasons an association would say no.

4. Are associations allowed to deny a release request for reasons other than team viability?

No.

5. Won't giving players the option to seek registration elsewhere mean that there will be a large departure of players from some associations and those associations will fold?

No.

First, most players prefer to play in close proximity to where they live. The change in policy isn't likely to change that desire among enough players to jeopardize associations' existence.

Second, associations are accountable to their existing members and would have to justify displacing their own players to absorb other associations' players.

Third, most associations in Alberta are subject to ice user agreements in their municipality. These agreements place limits on the number of participants from outside the community who may access municipal (subsidized) ice. As a result, associations can't throw open their doors and absorb other associations' players without risking access to subsidized ice for their own residents.

6. Won't this create attempts to "stack teams"?

Difficult to say, but probably not. Regardless, it will be managed.

The valid fear that some members and participants have is that there could be coaches and associations that will attempt to recruit players onto one team to dominate their competition. While there may be people that try this, there is little to be gained in doing so because of other policies Ringette Alberta has in effect.

The Tiering Policy, Team Advance / Retreat Policy, and, in extreme cases, the Code of Conduct Policy will work in consort to deal with this scenario. The Residency Policy is not designed to manage these behaviours.

If the team in question is dominating its competition, the team will be advanced to the next level thereby negating the team's competitive advantage. Knowing this, it is difficult to say how many coaches and their associations would bother attempting it.

7. If a player leaves an association this season to join another association but wants to return to the original association next season, can she?

Maybe.

But only once she is granted a release from the association she has joined (subject to the viability conditions of the policy) AND the original association she had left accepts her as a new player.

Her home association is the last association where she was registered with RAB. And the original association is under no obligation to accept any released player.

While players may seek the opportunity to register in a different association, they need to be aware there is no guarantee of returning to the original association in the future.

8. If an association accepts the registration of a player from another community this season, is that association obligated to accept that player's registration next season?

Yes.

Once the association accepts her, she is entitled to all the rights and responsibilities that any member of that association has, regardless of where she lives.

9. Am I required to attend evaluations/tryouts in my current association as a condition of obtaining a release?

No.

Ringette Alberta policies supersede local association policies. There is no requirement in the Residency Policy that athletes must attend evaluations/tryouts in their current association as a condition of obtaining a release.

10. If an athlete played AA last season in an association that does not offer any other levels of play but she wishes to play A this season in another association, is the AA association required to release her?

Yes.

Because the AA association doesn't offer an A program there is no team to assess for viability. Because no team viability is at risk, the release must be granted. Associations can't keep a player but provide no opportunity for her to play.

11. If an athlete played AA in Association 'X' then played A in Association 'Y' does she need a release to play AA in Association 'Y' in the subsequent season?

No.

Residency is determined by where the player was last registered with Ringette Alberta regardless of level.