

JUNIOR COACH PROGRAM

Lead the Next Generation



Fort McMurray Minor Hockey Association

2026/27 PROGRAM GUIDE

FMHA COACH DEVELOPMENT

THE PROGRAM

The FMHA Junior Coach Program gives U18 players a structured opportunity to begin their coaching journey while continuing to play within the association. Junior Coaches are paired with experienced mentors and integrated into a younger team environment to build leadership, communication and practical coaching skills through supervised experience.

U18

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Current FMHA players

1+

DIVISION BELOW

Minimum placement separation

50%

SEASON COMMITMENT

Eligible practices+games

WHAT THE PROGRAM IS BUILT TO DO

- Give back to the game: contribute to younger players and the FMHA community.
- Learn from experienced coaches: observe, ask questions and receive intentional mentorship.
- Build leadership: develop confidence, communication, responsibility and positive influence.
- Gain practical coaching experience: demonstrate skills, lead stations, support bench/game activities and learn team operations.
- Create a pathway: explore future Hockey Canada/Hockey Alberta coaching education and future FMHA coaching opportunities.

WHO CAN APPLY

- Currently registered FMHA player in U18.
- Demonstrates maturity, reliability and interest in leadership.
- Able to meet the program's attendance expectations.
- Provides at least one current or recent coach reference.
- Parent/guardian awareness and acknowledgement where applicable.
- Willing to complete a brief interview if shortlisted.
- Agrees to FMHA policies and expectations.

HOW SELECTION WORKS

- Application review - availability, background, leadership and program fit.
- Reference check - reliability, maturity, coachability, attitude and readiness.
- Short interview - motivation, communication and ability to work with younger athletes.
- Placement match - applicant readiness + suitable qualified Mentor Coach availability.
- No fixed program cap. Selection depends on quality of fit and mentor capacity.



JUNIOR COACHES ARE DEVELOPING COACHES.

They are not extra players, unsupervised coaches, or substitutes for required adult team officials.

JUNIOR COACH RESPONSIBILITIES

- Arrive prepared, on time and communicate absences in advance.
- Work under the direction and supervision of the assigned Mentor/Head Coach.
- Participate in pre-practice planning and appropriate team discussions.
- Set up equipment, demonstrate skills and lead assigned drills/stations.
- Provide age-appropriate instruction, encouragement and feedback.
- Support player development, practice flow and bench/game activities.
- Accept feedback and progressively take on more responsibility as readiness grows.
- Maintain appropriate coach-player boundaries and confidentiality.
- Model respect for players, officials, opponents, families and the game.
- Follow FMMHA policies, Code of Conduct and applicable Hockey Canada/Hockey Alberta rules.

MENTOR COACH RESPONSIBILITIES

- Intentionally welcome and integrate the Junior Coach into the staff.
- Set clear expectations for conduct, attendance and responsibilities.
- Include the Junior Coach in appropriate planning conversations.
- Provide meaningful coaching opportunities - not only setup tasks.
- Teach practice organization, communication, bench etiquette and feedback.
- Explain coaching decisions and model how to work with young athletes.
- Gradually increase responsibilities as competence and confidence develop.
- Provide regular, constructive feedback and a mid-season check-in.
- Maintain appropriate supervision and raise concerns with Coach Development early.
- Complete end-of-season feedback/evaluation when requested.

50% MINIMUM SEASON COMMITMENT

Junior Coaches are expected to attend at least **50%** of the combined practices and games they are eligible to attend with their assigned team. Attendance is tracked. Ongoing difficulty meeting the commitment will first trigger a development conversation with the Mentor Coach and Coach Development Director.

PRACTICES + GAMES

- Junior Coaches may assist with practices and games once all registration and eligibility requirements are met.
- Works under the mentorship and supervision of the team's Head Coach.
- Does not replace required qualified adult Team Officials or designated Safety personnel.

TEAM PLACEMENT

- Placement is at least one age division below the applicant's current playing division.
- Placement considers division preference, availability, experience and team fit.
- The goal is the right mentorship match - not simply filling every application.



FROM APPLICATION TO DEVELOPMENT



JUNIOR COACH TRAINING + ELIGIBILITY:

Successful applicants must complete all required Hockey Canada/Hockey Alberta eligibility requirements within 14 days of placement on their team. These include (but are not limited to):

**HCR PROFILE**

Must have a valid Hockey Canada Registry (HCR) profile and be rostered.

**HC SAFETY LEVEL 1**

Required before participating on the ice with the team.

**THE SHIFT FORWARD - COACH**

Required before participating, or hold a valide existing RIS Activity Leader certification.

**ORIENTATION + SUPERVISION**

Complete FMMHA Junior Coach orientation and work under direct mentor coach supervision at all times.

SAFETY & SUPERVISION

- CSA-approved hockey helmet with chin strap securely fastened whenever on the ice.
- Follow all FMMHA and Hockey Alberta safety/equipment requirements applicable to the role.
- Players must remain appropriately supervised; Junior Coaches do not independently assume adult supervision duties.
- Any age/role-specific FMMHA screening requirements must be satisfied before placement is finalized.

DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE SEASON

- Orientation: expectations, communication, safety, bench etiquette and positive role-model behaviours.
- 1-2 on-ice development sessions where practical.
- 2-3 off-ice development touchpoints where practical.
- Mid-season check-in: strengths, learning, next responsibilities.
- End-of-season review: reliability, communication, leadership, hockey instruction, initiative and growth.



SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM COMPLETION

Junior Coaches who meet attendance expectations, remain in good standing, complete required training, and demonstrate growth will be recognized as having successfully completed the program. Completion provides valuable volunteer, leadership, and coaching experience that may support future FMMHA coaching opportunities.



FMMHA | TARGET: Junior Coaches Active by October 15



READY TO REGISTER?

Visit the FMMHA website → Resources → Coaches
Click the link at the top of the page to register!

1	SEPT 1 - 4		PROGRAM LAUNCH Publish program, online application form, eligibility, and expectations.
2	SEPT 1 - 18		APPLICATIONS OPEN + COACH IDENTIFICATION Collect online program applications and identify qualified mentor coaches.
3	SEPT 19 - 22		APPLICATION SCREENING Review candidates for readiness, fit, and commitment.
4	SEPT 21 - OCT 1		REFERENCE CHECKS + CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS References are contacted and interviews for shortlisted applicants.
5	SEPT 21 - OCT 1		SELECTION + TEAM / MENTOR MATCHING Successful candidates confirmed and assigned to mentor coach/team.
6	OCT 1 - 12		TRAINING / COMPLIANCE Complete HCR, The Shift Forward / RIS status, and HC Safety Level 1.
7	OCT 8 - 13		ORIENTATION FMMHA Junior Coach orientation and mentor coach orientation.
8	OCT 15		GO-LIVE Junior Coaches officially begin with their assigned teams
9	NOV 9 - 15		30-DAY CHECK-IN Review attendance, fit, and development with mentors.
10	JANUARY		MIDSEASON REVIEW Evaluate progress and increase responsibility where earned.
11	MARCH		SEASON-END REVIEW Complete evaluation, reflection, and recognition.

