



INFORMATION BULLETIN 23-05

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Three U18 teams being added in Elite Female Hockey

The highest levels of elite female hockey in Alberta are increasing by three teams for the 2024-25 season.

The Alberta Female Hockey League (AFHL) U18 AAA division is expanding to eight teams with the addition of teams within Hockey Calgary and Sherwood Park Minor Hockey Association.

There will also be a U18 Female Accredited School team operated by OHA Edmonton.

The new teams are the result of work over the past two years where Hockey Alberta has engaged several parties to help measure the successes of the Elite Female Hockey Model and where the model can be improved. Remaining focused on the principles of the model, the recent growth of female hockey has been evaluated, along with the opportunities available for players to progress within Alberta's female hockey system.

The Elite Female Hockey Model was implemented in the 2016-17 season, after a three-year independent review commissioned by Hockey Alberta in 2013. The model established provincial criteria for the number of teams permitted at each level within the Elite system. The U18 AAA division was reduced from 11 teams to six; Accredited School expansion of female hockey programs was put on hold; and the AA system was created to help players develop their skills at the right level for their age, and to help them progress to the next level of hockey.

Since 2016 and the implementation of the new model, registration numbers for female players in Alberta have increased by 22 per cent overall. This includes a 28 per cent increase in registration at the U15 level, 38 per cent at U13, and 41 per cent at U11.

The first portion of the current review of elite female hockey saw two changes to the AFHL implemented for this season (2023-24):

- creation of a U13 AA division to provide a competitive all-female entry point for female athletes to access elite hockey.
- expansion to 14 teams within the U15 AA division to provide more opportunities for the increased numbers of female players in the system.