



ZONE DIVISION GUIDELINES

Updated: July 2023

1. Introduction

Competitive ringette in the U14, U16 and U19 zone divisions offer athletes the ability to play competitive ringette, attend competitions within BC, as well as, outside BC. Athletes have the opportunity to participate with players that they have grown up with, meet new teammates, and to train and compete close to home.

Zone teams will participate in a sport context that aligns with the principles of Sport for Life and the [Long-Term Development \(LTD\) model](#). Athletes in these programs typically best align with the Train to Train and Train to Compete of the LTD pathway and prepare athletes for Ringette Canada National Development programs and National Teams.

1.1. Strategic Initiatives

The objective of the Zone system is to allow athletes to participate in the context of their preferred experience, and to allow athletes the opportunity to train, develop and participate on a team with athletes of not only a similar caliber, but also similar expectations for their individual experiences.

These objectives align with several strategic initiatives within the Ringette BC 2019 – 2023 Strategic Plan:

- the athlete pathway is clearly defined and accessible;
- female and male participation is encouraged and facilitated;
- there is stronger alignment with principles of long-term athlete development;
- there are designated pathways for male and female athletes;
- the program facilitates increased engagement with a goal to improve athlete retention and registration numbers; and
- athletes are provided with a pathway that promotes a daily training environment that is appropriate for the athletes, age, caliber and abilities.

1.2. Program Principles

Ringette BC, Leagues and Club Associations will be guided by the following principles in program delivery as stewards of the zone division:

- Athletes, Coaches and Administrators will be guided by the *True Sport Principles* and will be ambassadors of *True Sport* in Ringette;
- the program guidelines and policies will work to promote the principles of meaningful competition;
- the program guidelines and policies will work to promote the creation of a network of Coaches who will follow the competitive pathway; and
- the program guidelines and policies will build a competition structure that can evolve with increased participants and support a growing sport.

2. GOVERNANCE

Zone teams will require cooperation between Club Associations, Leagues and Ringette BC.

Ringette BC is responsible for providing policy and guidelines. The Club Associations will be responsible for general operation of the teams including but not limited to:

- Registration of all athletes from their Home Club Association based on residency
- Coordinating Evaluations within the Zone;
- Allocation of ice and resources proportionately based on the final team roster;
- Coach selection;
- Enforcement of Codes of Conduct for coaches, athletes, spectators and officials;
- Screening any persons from the Association that is involved in a capacity with the Team Staff; and
- Referee assignment and payment.

The Leagues will be responsible for participating in coach selection, ensuring that league play is facilitated as per the technical requirements of ringette (i.e. the Ringette Canada rules, game time, referee schedules) and ensuring that teams are participating in meaningful competition and adhering to the *True Sport Principles*.

Leagues will also be responsible for managing and overseeing athlete transfers between Zones, and will administrate all Zone transfer requests prior to submission of any requests to Ringette BC. Transfer requests must adhere to the Ringette BC Transfer Policy. Releases between Club Associations within the Zone boundaries are no longer necessary. To determine if athletes are eligible for a Zone transfer, please refer to Ringette BC Transfer Policy. If athletes are approved to transfer to a different Zone, they are to be evaluated to the same measure as any other athlete of the receiving Zone.

Teams should be hosted under a Club Association. The Club Association that will host the Zone team will be the Association that has the majority of rostered athletes on the team following team selection. However, a Club Association can choose to opt out of hosting, and allow the other Association or Associations within the “Zone” to host the team. Zones may also choose to host teams collaboratively, given that an MOU has been signed with clear responsibilities and accountability of each club. Zone team affiliations must be declared by November 1st of the playing season in alignment with the roster deadline. Athletes interested in Zone Team participation must attend Zone Team evaluations located within the geographical boundaries of the Zone. Athletes attending the evaluations must reside within the geographical boundaries of the Zones. Athletes cannot be released to participate in another Zone unless their Zone has declared that they are unable to field a Zone team for that playing season.

These guidelines provide further information on the zone divisions.

Teams will have standards and guidelines that outline the expectations of athletes, coaches, parents and volunteers. Program guidelines and program expectations will be produced annually by Ringette BC with assistance from the Leagues and Club Associations as necessary.

2.1. Roster Sizes

Teams are formed primarily by Zones using the BC Winter Games boundaries as a guide. To ensure scale-ability of the model, if a Club Association reaches the athlete pool threshold to

facilitate a Zone Division team within their own Club Association that Association may form a team or teams within their own Association. Flexibility will be considered to address participant registration numbers. Players will be required to declare, evaluate and participate in their geographic-representative zone, as confirmed by Ringette BC, and will be required to produce proof of address at evaluations.

Team formation will adhere to the Ringette BC Team Formation Policy. Roster sizes will be capped at 15 players for U16 and U19 and 14 players for U14. If a Zone wishes to exceed the roster limit, they must submit a formal request to Ringette BC no later than October 15 to ensure that a decision is reached prior to the roster deadline. It is recommended that when participant levels permit, Zones should select smaller rosters to facilitate the ability for multiple teams to be formed within the Zone.

Smaller rosters assist with the following player development initiatives:

- increased engagement of all players as they are more active during competitions and practices;
- increased opportunities to experience playing different positions;
- increased opportunities for skill development;
- increased opportunity for players to experience different game situations; and
- increased opportunities for Coaches to train and develop all of the athletes on their team while recognizing individual skill levels of players.

Each team will have a maximum of 15 players (14 players for U14) for any exhibition, League or tournament game. Teams electing to participate in games and tournaments with fewer players may do so, provided they have at least nine (9) players. Each roster will include one to two goalies to ensure development opportunities. A third goalie may be affiliated.

The following numbers reflect the minimum number of teams that should be formed within a zone depending on the number of athletes present at zone evaluations:

Number of athletes at Selection Camp	Minimum Number of Teams
11-38	1
38-54	2
54-69	3
70+	4

If a Zone is able to create more than one Zone Team, the teams will be created as equally as possible. This can be done via player draft between the Head Coaches, and supervised by a designate from the Club Associations that make up the Zone.

If a Zone does not have enough interested players to form a Zone team, any player wishing to attend evaluations in another Zone is eligible to obtain a transfer to attend evaluations in the

appropriate adjacent Zone (subject to any applicable Ringette BC Policy). Once transferred, the athlete is to be evaluated the same as any other athlete of the receiving Zone.

2.2. Team Zone Boundaries

There should be a minimum of seven Zones at any time within the province based on current zone boundaries. The number of teams formed throughout the province will be determined by the number of players within the Zones. The Zone system is scale-able to allow for multiple teams within each Zone. Zones will be formed based on the defined Zone boundaries, see Appendix 2. It is estimated that there will be three to five teams in the Lower Mainland, two teams in TORL and one to two teams in the Northern Ringette League. The number of teams formed each year will be guided by the number of players that register to participate in the Competitive Athlete Pathway.

Teams will be formed using the Zone boundaries as outlined in Appendix 2; however, the Zone boundaries can shift depending on registration numbers and the geographic diversity of participants. Ringette BC recognizes that the BC Winter Games Zones are not exact representations of ringette registration numbers within the local Club Associations and have developed ringette-specific Zones. Ringette BC reserves the right to realign the Zone boundaries as necessary.

2.3. Team Formation

All Zone team selection processes will be conducted during the same time period. Zone team selection should be completed no later than September 30th of each playing season, and final rosters must be submitted to Ringette BC by the roster deadline of November 1st. Selection processes will be organized by the individual Zones with assistance from the Club Associations within each Zone. It is expected that the Coaching Staff will run the evaluation of drills and organized scrimmage(s). Players must be evaluated on their skills according to the Ringette BC evaluation skill matrix and assigned a corresponding player ordinal.

Zones will determine if a player evaluation fee is needed to cover any costs for evaluations such as officiating fees for scrimmages, evaluator fees, etc.

The Head Coach, in consultation with their Team Staff, will make the final player selection decisions for each Zone team. Final player selection should reflect player ordinals with only minor variation; 70% of the roster will include the players with the highest ordinals while 30% of the roster, as well as any goalies and affiliate players, may be determined by the Head Coach. The roster may be formed by position at the discretion of the Head Coach. For example, the team may have 70% forwards and 70% defense provided through formal evaluations, and the Head Coach fills in the remaining spots. Or, the Coach can simply take the top 70% and then fill out the rest of the roster.

The Head Coach will submit the final roster to Ringette BC by the roster deadline with confirmed compliance to the 70% rule. The evaluators, Head Coach, Club Association, League, and Ringette BC must keep the individual player ordinals confidential.

Zone Team rosters must be submitted to Ringette BC by October 1st of each season. Roster changes after this date must be submitted directly to Ringette BC and no changes will be approved after the Ringette BC roster deadline of November 1st of the current playing season.

2.4. Affiliate Players

At the Head Coach's discretion, the Zone Team may pick-up players from the Club Division as replacement for injury, absence or relocation under a designated affiliate model.

Each team is permitted to name four (4) affiliate skaters and one (1) affiliate goalie to their roster. Affiliate goalies and players are able to participate with the team at practices and can be picked up for games and tournaments. However, affiliate players/goalie must make their Club Division Team their priority. Attending practices, games and tournaments as an affiliate is in addition to their participation on their Club team. The Coaches of the two teams should communicate in the event of a conflict to ensure that the affiliate players and goalie are being given opportunity to participate with the Zone team without disadvantaging their Club team.

Affiliate players are not eligible to participate at the Ringette BC Provincial Championships with the Zone team unless the player is replacing a season-ending injury, as per the current Ringette BC Technical Package and related Provincial Championship Policy. For the Western Canadian Ringette Championships, teams will adhere to the player pick-up rules specific to that competition, and the WCRC Technical Package and Policies.

Affiliate players/goalies are limited to participating in a maximum of 10 games in a season, not including participation in Provincial Championships and the Western Canadian Ringette Championships.

3. COACHING AND TEAM STAFF

3.1. Certification

Coaches for zone teams will follow the Competitive Coaching Pathway. Teams are permitted to have one (1) Coach-In-Training on their bench. The Coach In-Training must be registered and an active member of the Team Staff.

The minimum certification requirements for zone teams are as below:

Position	Coaching Level Required	Concussion Training	Respect in Sport (or equivalent)	Safe Sport: Direct Athlete Contact
Head Coach	CI Certified	Required	Required	Required
Assistant Coach	CI Certified	Required	Required	Required
Coach in Training	CI Trained	Optional	Required	Required
Specialist/On Ice Helper	Specialty Dependent	Optional	Required	Required

A specialist/On Ice Helper may include a goaltending specialist. Individuals in these roles must be working with program coaches and are not to be solely responsible for programming, and are only permitted on the ice during practices (i.e., may not be on the bench during games).

Other Team Staff such as Managers and Trainers must meet the standards outlined by Ringette BC under the Coaching Development Policy.

All Team Staff must have completed a criminal record check, and participated in a screening process as per Ringette BC Policy. Each team must follow the Female Coach on the Bench requirements as set out by Ringette Canada. This includes having a certified female Coach on the bench for all games.

Teams may have four bench staff, in addition to their listed Head Coach. Ringette BC suggests teams select two or three Assistant Coaches and one Coach in Training OR a Trainer.

3.2. Team Staff Selection

Head Coaches must be selected by July 31st of each season and adhere to Ringette BC's Coach and Team Staff Selection policy. For the Zone teams, the Coach and Team Staff Selection Committee will include one representative designated by each Club Association in the Zone, one representative designated by the League, and up to one additional individual who has expertise in coaching and/or ringette.

Coaching staff who reside within the geographical zone/district of the team will be given priority for selection. This is to assist with developing coaches under the Competitive Athlete Pathway from different areas of the province.

All applicants will be required to submit an Application Form, with references, to express their interest. The Selection Committee may choose to contact references (i.e., the coach is new to the

associations, there are several strong candidates and the selection committee needs additional information to make a decision). Selection committees will submit their recommendations to BC Ringette for approval, and can offer coaching positions after approval is confirmed.

Additional Team Staff will be recommended by the selected Head Coach, and approved by the Selection Committee prior to the start of player evaluations. The Zone Coordinator will provide a list of all assistant coaches selected to Ringette BC prior to the start of the season; BC Ringette will notify the Zone Coordination if there are issues or additional considerations.

Head coach candidates with full certification at the time of applications should be prioritized. Coaches who are CI trained and who intend on becoming certified at the start of the season may be considered; coaches must be fully CI certified by February 15.

4. COMPETITION

4.1. Provincial Competition

All zone teams will participate in Provincial Championships. U16 and U19 zones teams will compete for the opportunity to attend the Western Canadian Ringette Championships.

Teams that have players that are rostered to the Canadian Ringette Championship (CRC) roster are still eligible to attend Western Canadian Ringette Championships, but those rostered CRC athletes are not eligible for WCRC.

The Ringette BC Provincial Championships will take place in February or March of each year. Western Canadian Ringette Championships typically occur in March. Ringette BC will send one (1) team in the U16 and U19 divisions, and two (2) teams in the u14 division.

The U14 teams (2) representing the province will be selected from the U14 Train to Excel Program. See the [U14 Train to Excel Program Guidelines](#) for more details.

4.2. Season Competition (Divisional Play)

Zone teams will compete against each other throughout the season. All zone teams must attend a minimum of one tournament in each of the three leagues (i.e., Thompson-Okanagan Ringette League, Lower Mainland Ringette League, Northern Ringette League) within the Province that are located outside of their home league each season. Athletes and their families should be aware that there is an obligation to travel as a zone athlete.

Teams should expect to compete against each other frequently. Each team should play no less than 20 inter-divisional games and no more than 30 inter-divisional games in a season. The Leagues may schedule games for the Zone teams within their League. These games will follow League rules for competition. Leagues will be responsible for ensuring that teams follow the rules governing League play, such as player pick-up rules, additional sanctions for committing major

Ringette BC sanctioned tournament games and organized play weekends will also count as inter-divisional games. Organized play weekends must be played with the knowledge and consent of the Leagues to which each team belongs, and the League is responsible for enforcement of the rules governing League play. Any tournament sanctioned by Ringette BC may choose to offer zone divisions.

Teams are able to participate in exhibition games against other zone teams as part of training, and these non-League organized extended play weekends may be facilitated around the province.

4.3. Deposit

Each Zone team will provide a refundable deposit to Ringette BC by December 15th of each playing season. U14 teams will provide a deposit of \$2500, and U16 and U19 teams will provide a deposit of \$5000. The deposit will be returned once the teams have participated in the Ringette BC Provincial Championships and the Western Canadian Ringette Championships (if the team qualifies). If a team fails to attend a tournament or play weekend within each League (as outlined above) or the team does not attend Provincial or the Western Canadian Ringette Championships (if applicable), the deposit will be forfeited.

5. Other Considerations

5.1. Excellence Participation

Players on a U16 or U19 Zone team are eligible to participate in the Excellence Ringette Program in conjunction with their Zone team. Players interested in Excellence need to participate in the screening and registration process for the program and meet the required standards of the Excellence Ringette Program. U14 athletes may choose to participate in the Train to Excel program.

Participants within the Excellence Ringette Program are eligible to be selected to the Team BC CRC team for U16 and U19. The number of teams formed for CRC's will be determined by the registration numbers within the Excellence Ringette Program, and the caliber and stages demonstrated by all athletes within the Excellence Ringette Program.

Excellence Ringette Program participants and athletes that are selected to the CRC rosters for Team BC are required to participate on a Zone U16 or U19 team in addition to participating on the CRC roster. The CRC athletes will not be eligible to attend the Western Canadian Ringette Championships.

Athletes screened in the Excellence Ringette Program are not guaranteed a position on their local Zone teams. Participation at tryouts is expected where there is a team available.

5.2. Player Pick Ups

Teams may pick up designated affiliate players within their geographic representative zone in the event that they have an injury or are missing players for sanctioned events or league competition. The affiliates must be submitted to Ringette BC by November 1st as part of the official roster deadline.

5.3. Team Finances

Players wishing to participate on a zone team will register as a player with their Home Club Association. Registration fees will be used by the Club Associations to cover the cost of ice and other operating expenses.

The Zone Teams will also have team costs that are not covered by registration fees. A season budget must be prepared by the Team Staff, and provided for consideration of parents and guardians of players. The final budget will be submitted to a League-designated representative for approval prior to November 1st. The season budget should include items such as the cost of inter-league tournament registration, team apparel and a portion of the team deposit.

The budget may be altered throughout the season, though Team Staff must provide any changes to families for consideration. Information regarding Team Sponsorship and fundraising should also be clearly communicated.

Team bank accounts must require two signatures. These signatories should be the Head Coach

and Team Manager (provided they are not spouses). The budget and bank statements must be available for review throughout the season upon request.

5.4. Training

Zone teams will train at facilities that exist within their Zone. The Club Associations that make up the Zones will be responsible for contributing a proportional amount of ice to the Zone team for practices and games based on the number of players from within a Club Association participating on each team. For example, if 45% of players come from Club A and 55% from Club B, each Club Association would allocate ice for practices and games following these proportions.

U16 and U19 Zone teams are expected to have two (2) or three (3) team events per week, including games, and U14 should have one (1) or two (2) events per week. Exceptions are for tournaments or extended play weekends, which create additional ice time. Teams should work to reduce ice time following heavy competition to assist with recovery time.

Teams will follow the Long-Term Athlete Development standards for all athletes and will strive to achieve the required practice and '*training to competition*' ratios found in the Long-Term Player Development section of the Long-Term Ringette Development Framework.

6. Appendix 1 – Program Responsibilities

The general responsibilities and/or leadership for specific areas of responsibility are as in the table below:

	Ringette BC	League	Club Associations	Head Coach	Team Staff
Program Guidelines	X				
Coach Selection	X	X	X		
Coach Support and Evaluation		X	X		
Team Staff Selection	X		X	X	
Team Staff Approval	X		X		
Registration	X		X		
Player Evaluations			X	X	X
Team Formation		X		X	X
Team Roster	X			X	X
Team Budget		X		X	
Tournament Registration				X	X
Ice Allocation			X		
Extended Play Weekends	X	X		X	
Affiliate Player Tracking		X		X	X
Discipline	X		X		
Scoresheets		X		X	
Standings/Provincials	X	X			
Referee Scheduling		X	X		
Referee Payment		X	X		

7. Appendix 2: Competitive Zones & Designated Colours

Lower Mainland Ringette League:

Zone 1: Coquitlam-Moody Ringette Association, Port Coquitlam Ridge Meadows Ringette Association - Yellow with Royal Blue and White

Zone 2: Richmond Ringette Association, Delta Ringette Association, Vancouver Ringette Association – Grey with Blue and Green

Zone 3: Burnaby New Westminster Ringette Association, North West Vancouver Ringette Association – Black with Red and Yellow

Zone 4: Surrey White Rock Ringette Association, Chilliwack Ringette Association, Fraser Valley Ringette Association – White with Red and Royal Blue

Thompson Okanagan Ringette League:

Zone 5: Greater Vernon Ringette Association, Shuswap Ringette Association – Red with white (to be confirmed)

Zone 6: Kelowna Ringette Association, Westside Ringette Association – Red with white

Northern Ringette League:

Zone 7: Terrace Ringette Association, Houston Ringette Association - TBD

Zone 8: Prince George Ringette Association, Quesnel Ringette Association – Navy Blue with Green and White

Island Ringette League:

Zone 9: Comox Valley Ringette Association, Greater Victoria Ringette Association, Port Alberni Ringette Association - TBD