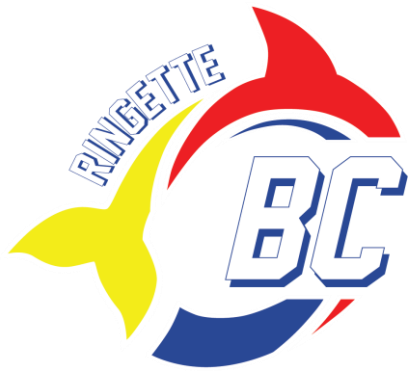




RINGETTE BC

Zone Division Guidelines

U14, U16 and U19

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1. INTRODUCTION

Zone 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.

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 key initiatives 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;
- 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 Fair Play Principles and will be ambassadors of Fair Play 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 Zone 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 League and 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.

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. These guidelines provide further information on the zone divisions.

2.1 DEPOSIT

Each Zone team will provide a refundable deposit to Ringette BC by December 1st 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 applicable) and have met their travel requirements for tournament attendance. If a team fails to attend required competitions (as outlined in Section 5.2) or the team does not attend Provincial or the Western Canadian Ringette Championships as required, the deposit will be forfeited.

3. ZONE TEAM FORMATION AND REGISTRATION PROCESSES

3.1 ZONE BOUNDARIES

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 in each division. The number of teams formed each year will be guided by the number of players that register to participate in the Zone Athlete Pathway.

Zone boundaries will be set each year by the league based on registration numbers, facility availability and resources such as coaches and administrative support. To facilitate this decision making, Leagues will collect Zone registration for all divisions, following the timeline noted in Section 7 below. Leagues are encouraged to continue to use the BC Winter Games boundaries as a guide, but may make adjustments as needed each season. Adjustments may be made differently in each division to support with forming the appropriate number of teams and avoiding the need for releases and folding of teams. Should a single club have enough athletes to facilitate a Zone division team on their own, the league and club may collaborate on the decision-making surrounding team formation in that division.

Should a league be unable to form a Zone team in a given division, any athletes interested in participating in Zone may apply for a release using Ringette BC’s Player Release policy. Once released, the athlete is to be evaluated the same as any other athlete of the receiving Zone.

Leagues concerned about the viability of forming both a zone and club team in a single division should seek out flexible roster options with Ringette BC.

3.2 TEAM DECLARATION

Leagues will declare their Zone teams, with boundaries, to Ringette BC no later than July 1st of the current playing season. Before declaring their teams to Ringette BC, leagues will coordinate and collaborate with their association members. Athletes should not be notified of the boundaries until confirmation is received from Ringette BC.

It is recommended that when participant levels permit, Leagues should declare more teams, with smaller rosters. 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.
- Increased variety of teams to play against throughout the season

After collecting registration, Leagues will determine how many teams to form in each division using the table below. It is recommended that Leagues opt to form more teams when they reach the higher end of athletes registered in any of the lines below.

Number of athletes registered for tryouts	Minimum number of teams
11-30	1
31-45	2
46-65	3
65+	4+

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

3.3 TRYOUTS

Tryouts for the Zone Division may occur between August 1st and September 15th of the current playing season. Tryouts dates, or a 14 day range, must be provided at the time of registration to all athletes. Leagues may opt to allow Zones to organize their own tryouts, or host centralized tryouts. Evaluations will utilize Ringette BC's standard evaluation criteria, and should have no more than 1:8 ratio of evaluators to athletes.

Athletes must attend at least two tryout sessions, one of which should be a game or scrimmage. Should an athlete be unable to attend tryouts due to an absence or injury, they must notify their Zone Coordinator, in writing. A committee will be formed consisting of the Zone Coordinator, Head Coach, and a League

representative, to review the athlete's absence and make a recommendation on whether the athlete will be provided an alternative tryout date.

Upon request, Zones and/or leagues must be able to provide athletes with their evaluation data. The athlete should receive their own average ordinals, as well as the average ordinal from their group. Athletes should not receive all raw evaluation data.

3.1. ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY

Athletes interested in participating in the Zone Division must be members in good standing with Ringette BC and their local association, registered for tryouts as per the Leagues registration process, and attend tryouts as noted above. Athletes must register for tryouts in their respective age divisions. Should an athlete wish to evaluate for the division above, they must submit a Player Movement request and attend tryouts for both divisions. Leagues may have their own policies or processes surrounding Player Movement Requests.

3.2. ROSTER SIZES

All Zone teams (U14, U16 and U19) will be permitted to a maximum of 16 players (14-15 skaters, 1-2 goalies). Teams may opt for smaller rosters, provided they have no less than 11 players on their roster. Leagues may enforce smaller rosters to facilitate forming more teams in a division. All Player Pick-up within the Zone division will follow the Ringette BC Player Pick Up Policy.

3.3. TEAM FORMATION

In the Zone Division, teams will be formed in the categories of Female Zone or Male Zone. Registration and Team formation will follow Ringette Canada's Inclusion Policy, in which Transgender and nonbinary may choose to participate in the category of participation of their sex assigned at birth, or the category in which they identify. All Zone team selection processes will be conducted during the same time period, with tryouts beginning as early as August 1st, and no later than September 15th. Zone team selection should be completed no later than September 30th of each playing season, at which time the Zone Coordinator or designate will provide Ringette BC with a copy of each team's roster. There will be no changes permitted to Zone rosters past the Ringette BC roster deadline of November 1st.

Selection processes will be organized by the individual Zones with assistance from the Club Associations within each Zone as well as the league. 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
- 30% of the roster, as well as any goalies, 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 select by position, with the top 70% forwards and 70% defense provided through formal evaluations, and the Head Coach fills in the remaining spots. The Coach can simply take the top 70% and then complete the rest of the roster.

4. COACHING AND TEAM STAFF

4.1. CERTIFICATION

Team Staff for all Zone teams (U14, U16 and U19) must meet the requirements as outlined in Ringette BC's Team Leadership Qualifications Policy.

4.2. 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. Selection will follow the Ringette BC Coach and Team Staff Selection Policy.

All applicants will be required to submit an Application Form to express their interest. Head Coach applicants are also required to submit references with their application. 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 no later than September 1st. BC Ringette will notify the Zone Coordinator if there are issues or additional considerations.

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

Head coach candidates with full certification at the time of application 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 January 15.

5. COMPETITION

Teams should expect to compete against each other frequently. Each team should play no more than 30 inter-divisional games in a season. 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. Ringette BC should be notified of any scheduled play weekends that include teams from more than one league.

5.1. LEAGUE PLAY

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 infractions, etc. League games should only be scheduled between teams of the same category. Ringette BC Player Pick Up policies and procedures for the Zone Division will apply to league games. To support with meaningful competition, Leagues may schedule inter-division exhibition games within their schedule, provided the games do not contravene any existing Ringette BC Policies.

5.2. TOURNAMENTS

All zone teams must attend, at minimum, one local (if applicable) and one out of region (within BC) tournament each season. Athletes and their families should be aware that there is an obligation to travel as a zone athlete. To provide equitable opportunities for meaningful competition and ensure that all teams are able to fulfill their travel requirements, Zone teams will adhere to a Zone Competition Calendar. This calendar will designate the required Zone tournaments each season. The designated tournaments each year will be required to admit all Zone teams in each division, as well as work with Ringette BC to schedule games to ensure teams play each team approximately the same number of times. Tournaments not designated as the Zone Tournament in their region may still host a Zone division, but participation will be optional. The Zone Competition Calendar will be released every two years with the schedule for two upcoming seasons and may not follow the previous pattern. The schedule for 2028/2029 and 2029/2030 will be released in the spring of 2028. Should a region not form a team in any division, teams in that division will not be required to travel to that region for the designated tournament.

ZONE DIVISION COMPETITION CALENDAR				
Region	2026/2027		2027/2028	
LMRL	Fraser Valley Spirit of Winter	December	Richmond West Coast Classic	January
TORL	Kelowna Sweetheart	February	Vernon Okanagan Autumn Blast	October
Northern BC	Not applicable		TBD	

5.3. PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

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. The Ringette BC Provincial Championships will take place in February or March of each year.

Ringette BC may coordinate game play between zones within a division, as needed, and utilize these as seeding games for the Provincial Championships. Where there are more than five teams in a division, seeding will be determined by tournament games, using Ringette BC's standard tie breaking procedures to determine standings.

5.4. WESTERN CANADIAN RINGETTE CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Western Canadian Ringette Championships typically occur in March. The Provincial Champions in U16 and U19 Zone will attend the Western Canadian Ringette Championships as Team BC. 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 Team BC athletes are not eligible for WCRC.

6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

6.1. EXCELLENCE PARTICIPATION

Players on U14, 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. Excellence athletes are not guaranteed positions on a Zone team, but are required to register and tryout for Zone teams, should there be one offered in their league.

Rostered Team BC athletes in U14 are required to double card. All U14 Team athletes should tryout for a Zone team in their area. If one is not available to them, families should reach out to Ringette BC to determine the best option to support their development.

Rostered Team BC athletes in U16 and U19 may choose to double card in the Zone Program. In the event of a conflict, priority would go to Team BC, except for the Zone Provincial Championships. If an athlete wishes to double card and there is no Zone team available to them, they should reach out to Ringette BC to determine potential options. Team BC will be formed by the end of August, and athletes will be required to notify their designated zone representative of their choice to participate in zone no more than 7 days after accepting their position on Team BC.

6.2. 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.

6.3. 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.

Zone teams should have no more than (2) or three (3) team events per week, including games. 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.

APPENDIX 1: ZONE DIVISION SEASON TIMELINE

May 1st	Athlete Registration Opens Head & Assistant Coach Applications Open
June 1st	Head Coach Applications Close
July 1st	Zone Team Declaration Deadline Assistant Coach Applications Close
July 31st	Head Coaches Selected
August 1st	Zone Tryouts may begin
September 15th	Zone tryouts must be completed
September 30th	Zone Rosters due to Leagues and Ringette BC
November 1st	Roster Deadline – no changes to athletes or coaches beyond this date
December 1st	Deposits and Commitment to Attend Forms Due

APPENDIX 2: 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 & Evaluation		X	X		
Team Staff Selection			X	X	
Team Staff Approval	X		X		
Registration		X	X		
Player Evaluations			X	X	X
Team Formation		X	X	X	X
Team Roster		X	X	X	X
Team Budget		X	X	X	
Tournament Registration				X	X
Ice Allocation			X		
Extended Play Weekends	X	X		X	
Discipline	X	X	X	X	
Scoresheets		X		X	
Standings/Provincials	X	X			
Referee Scheduling		X	X		
Referee Payment		X	X		

APPENDIX 3: ZONES & DESIGNATED COLOURS

While there are no designated zones for team formation, the following colours have been assigned to each league to utilize for the teams formed within their regions. Ringette BC will provide additional options should a League be able to form more than the number of teams below and another colour is required.

Lower Mainland Ringette League:

- Yellow with Royal Blue and White
- Grey with Blue and Green
- Black with Red and Yellow
- White with Red and Royal Blue

Thompson Okanagan Ringette League:

- Purple with Blue and Yellow
- Red with white

Northern Ringette League:

- Navy Blue with Green and White

Island Ringette League:

- TBD