

# **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES**

---

## **Purpose**

1. The purpose of these Guidelines is to describe how individuals of all gender identities, and those who do not wish to gender identify or do not gender identify, are able to participate in the sport of ringette.

## **Application of this Policy**

2. These Guidelines apply to Ringette Canada, provincial ringette organizations (PROs), ringette associations, and ringette clubs that are registered or affiliated with a PRO, and ringette leagues that are sanctioned by Ringette Canada, a PRO or ringette association(s).

## **Observations**

3. Ringette Canada recognizes the following:
  - a) Ringette has long been a female-centric sport;
  - b) Individuals who identify as male have traditionally been able to participate on co-ed teams in younger age groups and at all ages in recreational settings; and
  - c) Male participation in ringette is increasing and PROs and associations are seeking guidance from Ringette Canada with respect to the integration of individuals who identify as males within the sport of ringette.

## **Participation Opportunities**

4. All activities at U12 and younger should be organized as co-ed.
5. At the time of registration, ringette clubs, ringette leagues and ringette associations sanctioned by Ringette Canada or PRO's should reasonably strive to offer programming for the following competition categories:
  - Female only ringette
  - Male only ringette
  - Co-Ed ringette
6. When it is not logistically possible to offer the above competition categories because registration numbers do not permit appropriate formation of teams, alternative solutions which focus on providing opportunities for meaningful participation and competition in a safe and welcoming environment should be considered, such as:
  - Allowing co-ed teams to play in female only ringette leagues within the same age group/division or in a different age group/division based on a comparable competitive level of play of the team;
  - Allowing male only teams to play in co-ed or female only leagues within the same age group/division or in a different age group/division based on a comparable competitive level of play of the team; or
  - Allowing nonbinary and genderfluid athletes to choose the division that they feel fits their identity at the time of registrations.

## **Championship Play – Participation Opportunities**

7. For the purposes of National and Provincial Championships, the governing organization (e.g., Ringette Canada or the PRO) will offer Championships for male, female and co-ed competition streams. For Regional Competitions, Ringette Canada recommends that the same competition streams be offered.
8. A minimum of two teams is required to designate an event as a Championship and four teams of similar levels is preferable to promote meaningful competition.
9. Should more than one (1) and fewer than (4) teams register in a designated stream, the championship organizer will consult with the teams to determine if they wish to participate in their own division, or as part of a co-ed division.
10. In making this determination, the organizer may consider the following options:
  - a) Combining age divisions so that gender specific streams can be offered; or
  - b) Entering the co-ed or gender specific team in a division based on their level of play rather than solely basing it on age;

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

---

### Competition Category Differences

11. An organization may have different minimum requirements and/or regulations for each competition category and may include variables for different age groups as necessary; provided that these requirements or variables do not discriminate based on human rights protected grounds (i.e. gender identify, gender expression, etc.).
12. When an organization is not able to offer both competition categories and instead must offer a Co-Ed competition category, the Co-Ed competition category may include the following features:
  - a) Athlete placement policies based on skill or other factors (but not based on gender identity)
  - b) Must avoid discriminatory practices (e.g., cannot force male players to participate only as goalies)

These Guidelines are subject to review at any time.

**Date of last review: March 2020**