



# NORTHERN ONTARIO HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

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## FACT SHEET

### MOUTHGUARDS

Since 2004, the use of intra-oral mouthguards has been mandatory within the NOHA. At the 2017 NOHA Annual General Meeting in North Bay, the membership approved a motion to make mouthguards **optional** moving forward.

To that end, the Regulation now reads as follows:

**Each player registering with the NOHA shall have the option to wear an intra-oral mouthguard during all on-ice activities as long as a full-face mask is worn. Should the player elect to wear an intra-oral mouthguard, it must conform to the specifications set out by the NOHA and is approved as suitable for use by the team's trainer.**

**IF** a player decides to wear a mouthguard, it must meet the following specifications:

#### *An Intra-oral Mouthguard will:*

- *Be of any colour,*
- *Not be clear or translucent in colour;*
- *Be of one-piece (1) construction;*
- *Be easily sized by the participant or the participant's parents;*
- *Be of an even thickness from the front to the back of the device;*
- *Engage the biting surface of all of the teeth of the upper jaw and the lower jaw;*
- *Maintain alignment of the upper and lower jaw in a neutral position;*
- *Be able to be attached externally to the face mask or shield, or be form fitted or custom fitted to the teeth, and*
- *In the case of non-contact play will provide not less than one (1) millimeter of shock absorbent thickness between the teeth of the upper and lower jaw of a player, and*
- *In the case of contact play will provide not less than two (2) millimeters of shock absorbent thickness between the teeth of the upper and lower jaw of a player.*



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As well, if a player decides to wear a mouthguard, **it must be worn properly.** Failure to wear a mouthguard properly may result in penalty(ies) in accordance with Hockey Canada Rule 3.6 (g). See situation 23 for further information.

### Rule 3.6., Situation 23

Where a player is wearing the mouth guard in a manner that is careless or clearly not within intended guidelines, the team shall receive one warning and any subsequent infractions by the same team will be penalized immediately under Rule 3.6 (g). Referees are encouraged to deliver this warning to the coach.

### **What The Standard Means**

#### **Be of any colour:**

The mouthguard may be of any colour.

#### **Not be clear or translucent in colour:**

An intra-oral mouthguard must be easily seen when the mouth of a player is opened. This is essential in order that on-ice officials can enforce the policy and for emergency medical services personnel to be able to rapidly determine if an injured player has a mouthguard in place.

#### **Be of one-piece (1) construction:**

The finished product must be a single object. Acceptable intra-oral mouthguards may be constructed of laminated materials, however the materials used in the construction of a mouthguard will not de-laminate or separate while in normal use.

#### **Be easily sized by the participant or the participant's parents:**

The instructions provided by a manufacturer or supplier of intra-oral mouthguards will provide players/parents with easily understandable instructions on how to size and fit a mouthguard to a player.

#### **Be of an even thickness from the front to the back of the device:**

The thickness of the mouthguard between the upper and lower teeth shall be consistent from the back to the front of the device.

#### **Engage the biting surface of all teeth of the upper jaw and the lower jaw:**

An approved mouthguard will come into contact with the biting surface of all of the teeth of both the upper and lower jaw when the mouthguard is properly inserted into the



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mouth. When fitting a mouthguard, special attention needs to be taken to ensure that the biting surface of all teeth from the front to the rear most teeth are in contact with the biting surface of the mouthguard.

### **Maintain alignment of the upper and lower jaw in a neutral position:**

A mouthguard will, when fitted, hold the lower jaw in a natural or neutral position in relation to the upper jaw for the individual player. An approved mouthguard will not cause the lower jaw to be forced either forward or backward from its normal position.

### **Be able to be attached externally to the facemask or shield, or be form fitted or custom fitted to the teeth:**

If an approved mouthguard has not been custom fitted by a dentist, denturist, or dental hygienist, the mouthguard must have a means by which it can be attached to the cage or visor that is attached to the player's helmet. Mouthguards that are custom fitted by a dentist, denturist, or dental hygienist do not require an external attachment or lanyard to connect them to the facemask or shield.

**In the case of non-contact play will provide not less than one (1) millimeter of shock absorbent thickness between the teeth of the upper and lower jaw of a player.**

### **In the case of contact play will provide not less than two (2) millimeters of shock absorbent thickness between the teeth of the upper and lower jaw of a player:**

A mouthguard is considered to be compliant with the NOHA standard when there is respectively one (1) or two (2) millimeters of thickness remaining between the teeth of the upper and lower jaw. Any mouthguard where the thickness is less than one (1) or two (2) millimeters respectively between the teeth of the upper and lower jaw is no longer compliant with the standard. Also, any mouthguard that has been chewed through or has cracks or breaks in its surface is no longer compliant and must be replaced.