

# NZIHf Associations and Club Coaches Selection Guidelines

The NZIHf appreciates volunteer roles are vital to ensure a positive ice hockey experience for our members. The guidelines listed below are to help clubs and associations implement a process that identifies the best individuals for the role, while ensuring a fair and transparent process.

## 1. THE ASSOCIATION MENTOR POSITION

The priority is to identify who will be responsible for coach selection. It is strongly recommended that every association have or create the position of association or club mentor. This position may be someone such as a general manager, and should include the following responsibilities:

- Recruit coaches
- All coaches must be NZ Police vetted
- Contact person for prospective coaches
- Distribute and collect applications
- Create and chair committees for screening
- Interviewing and final selection
- Contact successful and unsuccessful candidates
- Provide new coaches with their initial instructions
- Ongoing evaluation of coaches

## 2. COMMITTEE SELECTION

It is suggested that the association mentor forms a selection committee to ensure fairness in the screening interview and final selection of candidates. For simplicity and efficiency, the committee should consist of no more than five people.

Committee members should include a member of the board, a person with coaching experience, and possibly a neutral person unrelated to the association. Once the committee has been formed, it should meet to establish its structure and procedure. The association mentor should chair the committee. Obviously, any conflict of interest on this committee must be avoided.

## 3. APPLICATIONS

All coaches, new or returning, should be required to complete an application form.

**Initial Contact:** The association mentor should be available for all prospective coaches to contact. This person will be responsible for the distribution and collection of coaching applications.



**The Application Form:** Make sure that applications include all required information such as the applicant's name and contact details, a place for them to describe their suitability for the role and/or their ice hockey CV.

**Screening Applicants:** When many applicants are received, it may be necessary to screen applicants and establish a short list. Guidelines for screening applications should be established in writing, prior to the selection process.

**Sample Guidelines:** Examples of guidelines to consider (not in order of importance).

- Experience in your association or club
- Experience coaching hockey, do they attend NZIHF coaching and player development programs or will they?
- Experience working with children or adults
- Community involvement
- Certification, education, training
- References, including screening requirements

#### **4. THE INTERVIEW PROCESS**

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It is preferable that the person (or committee) who will make the final decision conducts the interview.

Before interviews take place, the interviewer(s) should be familiar with the qualities the association or club is looking for in a coach (i.e. good communicator, teacher, motivator, etc.).

What to ask will depend entirely on the qualities the association or club is seeking. It is advisable to have a set of written questions, but do not hesitate to ask "spontaneous" questions which may arise during the interview.

Ideally, you should allow at least half an hour for an interview and leave 15 minutes between interviews. This allows you enough time to discuss the qualities of the candidate and to properly evaluate them.

A written record of the interview should be retained by the Association or club. This should include the interviewers' evaluation of the candidate. Evaluation may take the form of written comments or involve some sort of numerical ranking and written comments. Again, the categories you use in evaluating should relate to the qualities the association is looking for.

#### **5. FINAL SELECTION**

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Once the interviews are completed, it is time to make the final selection. Final selection can be done in two ways:

- 1) Where the selection committee has been given power to appoint an individual to a role by the board of directors, they may do so on their own.



- 2) Where the selection committee has *not* been given the power to appoint an individual to a role, they shall instead supply a list of preferred candidates to the board of directors, who then ratify the appointments.

All candidates should be made aware of when decisions will be made and when all candidates will be contacted.

There should be set criteria for evaluating candidates. These criteria are based on the desirable qualities outlined by the association or club. Previous experience, success, and interview evaluation should all be considered.

Before making a decision, the committee must decide how the final selection will be made.

Some questions to ask:

- Who will vote?
- Will voting be open or by secret ballot?
- Is a majority decision required?
- How do you break a tie?

Always allow time for discussion before making a decision.

## 6. CONTACTING CANDIDATES

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All applicants, whether successful or not, should be contacted. The person contacting them should have been involved in the selection process ideally the association mentor. This will allow them to be prepared to answer questions unsuccessful candidates will have. Unsuccessful candidates, or coaches who were not given their first choice, should always be given reasons for the decision. It is also suggested that unsuccessful candidates be sent written “thank you” letters for their interest in your association or club.

Always contact successful applicants first. Only after they have accepted the team should you contact unsuccessful applicants.

## 7. FOLLOW UP

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The association mentor’s job is not done once all the coaches are selected.

**Initial Instructions:** Successful candidates should be told as soon as possible of the expectations of the association or club and their role in the association. This can be done on an individual basis or at a coaches meeting.



## 8. EVALUATION

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The evaluation of a coach's performance can be valuable for future selection. Information on the coach's performance can be gathered from the players' parents, coaches themselves, other coaches, the association or club coach mentor, or by a neutral observer. Evaluations should always be written. They may be ongoing, or may occur at certain times of the year (i.e. middle and end of season).

An association or club that has clearly defined expectations of their coaches, along with a process that is clear to all will ensure a fair process for selection. This will also contribute to ensuring the best candidates are placed in positions for success and growth, as well as the providing players the best possible experience and development opportunities.

