



DCHL Rules Page

I. Definitions

II. General Information

1. League Setup
2. Expectations for Respectful Behavior and Activity
3. Conflicts
4. League Calendar and Schedule

III. Roster Regulations

1. Roster Requirements
2. One Way Contracts and ELCs
3. Rookies and Prospects
4. Retaining the Rights of Non-NHL Players
5. Pro Roster Size and Injured Reserve
6. Waivers
7. Injury Reserve
8. Player Categories

IV. Line Maintenance

1. Line Up Expectations
2. Double Shifting
3. Switching Positions
4. Line Submissions
5. Simulation Schedule

V. Trades

1. Making Trades
2. Commish Approval
3. Trading Draft Picks
4. Trading UFAs
5. Trade Deadline

VI. Coaches

1. Rated Coaches
2. Coaching Contracts

VII. Entry Draft

1. Draft Eligible Players
2. Draft Order

VIII. Salary Cap and DCHL Finances

1. Cap Violations and Punishments
2. Financial Expectations for DCHL Cash
3. Roster Buyouts

IX. Restricted Free Agents

1. RFA Ages
2. Re-signing RFAs
3. RFA Compensation
- X. Unrestricted Free Agents
 1. UFA Qualification
 2. Role of the Free Agent Moderator and Commish
 3. Signing UFAs
 4. Miscellaneous UFA Rules
- XI. DCHL Season Ticket Percentages
 1. Season Ticket Percentages Start at Fifty (50%) Percent
 2. How Season Ticket Percentages Change
 3. Miscellaneous
- XII. League Fees & Payouts
 1. League Fees
 2. Payout Percentages
- XIII. League Expansion
 1. Protected Players
 2. Player Exposure Requirements
 3. Regulations for Expansion Franchise
 4. Expansion Draft Selections

I. DEFINITIONS

1. "Bidding Window" means the twelve (12) hour period of time following a Live Bid during which any GM may bid on an UFA.
2. "Coach Ratings" means the ratings given to a coach by the ratings provider.
3. "Commish" means collectively the seven (7) administrators of the league, as set out in Clause II-1-c.
4. "Draft Pick" means any player eligible for the NHL draft.
5. "ELC" means Entry Level Contract, as specified in Clause III.
6. "Future Considerations" means any consideration as part of a trade that has not yet been assigned but has been approved by the Commish per Clause V-2-c.
7. "GM" means the General Manager of each Team, either as individuals or as partners.
8. "DCHL Cash" means all simulated dollars related to Team revenue, Salary Cap, etc., which can be purchased with Real-world Dollars, as needed, per Clause VIII-2-c.
9. "DCHL Draft" means the annual entry draft for the DCHL.
10. "DCHL Finance Manager" means the person outlined in Clause II-1-c-i.
11. "DCHL Playoffs" means the playoffs of the DCHL.
12. "DCHL Regular Season" means the regular season of the DCHL.
13. "DCHL" means the league as comprised of thirty-two (32) Teams and their related GMs.
14. "Farm Team" means the list of rated players who belong to a Team but who are not on a Pro Roster.
15. "Hometown UFA" means any UFA that belonged to a certain Team at the end of the previous DCHL Regular Season.
16. "Injured Player" means any player who cannot play in a Simulation due to injury.
17. "IR" means the Injured Reserve list.
18. "League Fee" means the annual cost to each GM to participate in the DCHL, as specified in Clause XIV-1-a.

19. "Line-up" means the configurations of a Team's roster for a given Simulation, as set by the GM of the Team or as configured automatically by STHS.
20. "Live Bids" means the highest active bid on an UFA, which will become the winning bid if that player is not offered a higher bid during the Bidding Window.
21. "Maximum Allowable Bid" means the highest bid that a GM may make on an UFA based off of current Cap Space and DCHL Cash available, as determined by the Commish.
22. "Message Board" means the part of the Website where GMs can discuss topics publicly.
23. "Older Drafted Player" means any player drafted at such an age that an ELC would take said player into UFA.
24. "One Way Contract" means the meaning given to it in Clause III-2-a.
25. "Overall Rating" means the summarized rating of each player's estimated value, as determined by the Commish, which is used to determine the minimum bid during the UFA Period.
26. "Payment Deadline" means the date by which all GMs must pay the required League Fees.
27. "Player Position" means the position of a given player as listed on nhl.com or tsn.ca.
28. "Priority List" means the list of which Teams have the first chance to claim a player off of waivers as specified in Clause III-6-b.
29. "Pro Coach" means a coach for the Pro League.
30. "Pro League" means the STHS equivalent to the NHL.
31. "Pro Roster" means the roster set to play in the Pro League.
32. "Prospect List" means the list of Prospects that belong to a Team, as may or may not be on the Farm Team.
33. "Prospect" means any player for whom Clause III-3-a applies.
34. "Rated Player," means any player with a rating given by the STHS ratings provider.
35. "Real-world Cash" means all real dollars (Canadian Dollars (CAD)) paid by each GM to the Commish via PayPal to participate in the DCHL, which shall be used to cover League Fees, Payouts, and any other fee that shall arise from time to time, as specified through the Rules.
36. "RFA" means Restricted Free Agency or Restricted Free Agent, as specified in Clause XI.
37. "RFA Period" means the period of time when GMs can submit contract offers, as calculated by the RFA spreadsheet, for extending RFAs as specified by the Commish, or notify the Commish to allow the RFA to test the RFA Market.
38. "Rookie Status" means that a player is eligible for the Calder Trophy, as more specifically laid out in Clause III-3-c.
39. "Roster Buyout" means any termination of a contract under the terms of Clause VIII-3.
40. "Roster Player" means any player whose rights belong to a certain Team, whether on the Pro Roster, the Farm Team, or the Prospect List.
41. "Rules" means this document, as periodically amended by the Commish.
42. "Salary Cap" means the DCHL Salary Cap as specified in Clause VIII-1.
43. "Salary Cap Floor" means the minimum Pro Roster payroll as specified in Clause VIII-1-c.
44. "Season Ticket Percentage" means the percentage of season tickets a Team sells in order to generate DCHL Cash revenue, which can increase or decrease as specified by Clause XIII.
45. "Signing Bonus" means the DCHL Cash bonus paid to a RFA/UFA to reduce the overall Salary Cap hit on the given RFA/UFA's contract.
46. "Simulation" means any game simulated on STHS
47. "STHS" means the Simon T Hockey Simulator
48. "Team" means any DCHL Team.
49. "THN Top 50 Prospect" means any prospect listed on the The Hockey News Top 50 Prospect publication for the given year.

50. "Trade Deadline" means the date during the season after which trades are no longer permitted, as specified in Clause V-5.
51. "Two Way Contract" means a contract for any player who earns less than \$1,500,000 per year, such that said player's contract shall only count against the Team's Salary Cap if the player is on the Pro Roster, at the discretion of the GM.
52. "UFA" means Unrestricted Free Agency or Unrestricted Free Agent, as specified in Clause XII.
53. "UFA Age" means that age specified by Clause XI-1-b.
54. "UFA Period" means the period of time when GMs can bid for UFAs as specified by the Commish.
55. "UFA Rules" means the rules specifically pertaining to the process of bidding for and acquiring UFAs during the UFA Period.
56. "Website" means DCHL.ca, as is accessible by permission from the Commish.
57. "KHL" means the Kontinental Hockey League
58. "Euro" means any professional hockey league operating in Europe/Asia that is not the Kontinental Hockey League

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. League Setup

- a) The DCHL operates on the STHS, which simulates the results for each Simulation.
- b) The DCHL web site is www.DCHL.ca.
- c) The Commish have structured the DCHL and currently have seven (7) administrative positions also known as the Board of Governors (BOG):
 - i. Dan Pregent (Chief Financial Officer – non-voting member)
 - ii. Ian Thornton (Chief Technological Officer – voting member)
 - iii. Josh Guertler (Consultant – non-voting member)
 - iv. Cory Lavalette (voting member)
 - v. Mike Giletto (voting member)
 - vi. Marc Gaudreault (voting member - elected seat with two-year term expiring on even numbered years)
 - vii. Nathan Bon-Bernard (voting member - elected seat with two-year term expiring on odd numbered years)
- d) There will be an annual election for one of the BOG seats; the election will be done anonymously through a 3rd party website with one vote per elected seat for every team in the DCHL, for a total of thirty-two (32) votes.
- e) The DCHL is a cash league. See Clause XIV for detailed information.

2. Expectations for Respectful Behavior and Activity

- a. It is understood by all participants prior to joining the DCHL that:
 - i. Due to the competitive nature of the DCHL, the Commish will consult with disputing parties when necessary, and the Commish will provide final, non-disputable decisions to resolve conflicts.
 - ii. Any attempt to circumvent the Rules will result in disciplinary action handed out by the Commish, which may include fines, penalties, or termination of GM status, as determined by the Commish.
 - iii. Disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated, both when dealing with other GMs and the Commish.
 - iv. Professionalism is required. GMs are expected to remain active or announce any extended period of inactivity.

3. Conflicts

- a) The Commish works collaboratively to determine the Rules for the DCHL and to work out the enforcement of the Rules.
- b) Rules changes must be proposed to and voted on by the Commish, and any queries regarding rulings must be directed to the Commish.

4. League Calendar and Schedule

- a) The DCHL shall adhere to the following annual schedule of events:
 - i. Draft Lottery – Same style as NHL
 - a. DCHL Draft Lottery results are applied to the DCHL standings.
 - ii. Payment Deadline – 11:59:59pm EST on the eve of the DCHL Entry Draft.
 - a. GMs who have not paid prior to the Payment Deadline will not be allowed to make selections in the DCHL Draft, make trades or participate in any other league/GM activity.
 - b. Unpaid teams will be automatically drafted based off of Best Pick Available (BPA) based on the NHL Entry Draft results.
 - iii. DCHL Entry Draft – fourteen (14) days after the NHL Entry Draft or earlier if decided by BoG
 - a. First (1st) round of the DCHL Draft will be held via live stream (suggested at 2pm EST), and GMs will have 3 minutes per pick.
 - b. Second (2nd) and Third (3rd) rounds will be held on Facebook (suggested from 11am-11pm EST) with thirty (30) minute windows assigned to each GM.
 - c. Fourth (4th) through seventh (7th) rounds will be held via email using GM submitted lists.
 - d. BoG reserves right to change format of DCHL Entry Draft and will post all changes accordingly.
 - iv. UFA Period – open from start of UFA Frenzy until the Trade Deadline for all unowned players with ratings eligible for that year's playoffs, all players signed after the Trade Deadline are eligible for that year's regular season only. Clause X applies for all UFA signings.
 - v. Pre-Season – schedule made for games to occur before NHL Regular Season
 - vi. DCHL Regular Season – synchronized with the NHL Regular Season
 - vii. RFA Period – open from announcement of start in January to Trade Deadline
 - viii. Trade Deadline – synchronized with NHL Trade Deadline
 - ix. DCHL Playoffs – starts at the same time as the NHL Playoffs

III. ROSTER REGULATIONS AND LINE MAINTENANCE

1. Roster Requirements

- a) A Team may have a maximum number of sixty (60) Roster Players and Prospects combined. This is enforced on the eve of the start of the Regular Season and again at the Trade Deadline.
- b) As a minimum, all Teams must have 15 rated forwards, 8 rated defense, and 3 rated goalies.
- c) Players/prospects are considered released the moment they are posted on the dedicated "Released Players" Facebook thread and will be processed in the next simulation accordingly.
- d) Failure to achieve the roster requirements will result in DCHL Cash fines as determined by the Commish. The Commish will also make the necessary moves to meet roster requirements to allow the sim to run daily.

2. One Way Contracts and ELCs

- a) All One Way Contracts count against the Salary Cap of the Team who signed the contract, even if the player is not on the Team's Pro Roster.
- b) One Way Contract consists of any player who earns \$1,500,000 per year or more. Such player must either count towards his Team's Salary Cap or be bought out by his GM. Any retained salary counts towards this total. Signing bonus money does not count towards this total.
- c) ELCs and contracts less than \$1,500,000 are Two Way Contracts, and the restrictions on One Way Contracts do not apply to either.

3. Rookies and Prospects

- a) Any player who is eligible for an ELC slide will count as a Prospect and be included on a Team's Prospect List.
- b) A player's Rookie Status is determined by their Rookie Status in the previous NHL season that was used to generate the player's ratings.
- c) When a player is moved from the Prospect List to the Pro Roster in the off-season, said player will be assigned an ELC or the same NHL AAV and term for non-ELC players by the Commish.
- d) ELCs will be for three (3) or less years as determined based on player age, and valued at the current maximum NHL ELC (currently \$950K), with the exception of an Older Drafted Player. At that time the Older Drafted Player's term and value will be equal to the term and value of his existing NHL contract.
- e) ELCs are manually done by the Commish at the beginning of each season. Should a GM have an assigned ELC, the GM may want to dispute by emailing the Commish.
- f) Only players who qualified as NHL rookies in the previous NHL season are eligible for the Calder Trophy.
- g) All GMs are expected to update their prospect ratings using the website <http://www.dobberprospects.com> and failure to do so may result in a DCHL cash fine.

4. Retaining the Rights of Non-NHL Players

- a) If a Team holds the rights to a player who leaves the NHL, to play in Europe, to retire, because of injury, or because of suspension, the GM of that Team may hold the rights to said player and place the player on the Prospect List.
- b) If a player returns to being rated from being a prospect due to missed NHL seasons, management of that player is dictated depending on their RFA/UFA status:
 - i. IF UFA:
 - a. The DCHL contract year continues to burn for the year the player is on the prospect list.
 - b. While on the prospect list, the GM has the ability to drop the player without penalty (similar to all other prospects) should they not want the contract/player upon return.
 - c. If the burned year of the contract is not the last year, the contract picks up for the remaining year(s) of the previously signed contract after burning the "prospect year."
 - d. If this burned year is the last year of the DCHL contract, when the player becomes rated again, the player is moved off the GMs prospect list and becomes a UFA.

- e. If this burned year is the last year of the DCHL contract, the GM who “loses” the player to UFA retains the benefits of hometown discount and extra bids (and these can of course be traded) for the UFA frenzy.
- ii. If RFA:
 - a. The DCHL contract year continues to burn for the year the player is on the prospect list.
 - b. While on the prospect list, the GM has the ability to drop the player without penalty (similar to all other prospects) should they not want the contract/player upon return.
 - c. If the burned year of the contract is not the last year, the contract picks up for the remaining year(s) of the previously signed contract after burning the “prospect year” and eventually, the normal RFA process can occur when this contract expires.
 - d. If this burned year is the last year of the DCHL contract, while the player is still on the prospect list, this player can be signed to an RFA extension before the RFA deadline of that "prospect" season.
- c) If this burned year is the last year of the DCHL contract, when signing this player to an extension, only the current NHL contract (or most recent NHL contract if a current one doesn't exist) will be used for Cap Hit in the RFA calculator and there will not be any term restrictions to the contract other than the already normal documented RFA restrictions (number of 4 – 5-year deals per season and if the NHL contract is an ELC).

5. Pro Roster Size and Injured Reserve

- a) Pro Roster size maximum is twenty-three (23) players; the minimum is twenty (20) players including at least two goaltenders.
- b) If a GM has an Injured Player on the Pro Roster, call-ups are allowed from the Farm Team and the GM does not have to place the injured player on Injured Reserve. However, once the Injured Player is healthy, the GM cannot have more than three (3) healthy scratches (“healthy scratch limit”) in their Line-up for a Simulation. Failure to comply will prevent the simulation from taking place and the Commish will make roster moves to their discretion to allow the sim to occur.
- c) If a GM has an Injured Player on the Pro Roster, the GM must message the Commish to place the injured player on Injured Reserve where the player’s salary will no longer count against the salary cap. When the injured player’s Condition returns to a value of 95, they will automatically be deemed healthy and the salary will again begin to count against the cap. Failure to make roster moves when this occurs could prevent the simulation from taking place and the Commish will make roster moves to their discretion to allow the sim to occur.

6. Waivers

- a) All players on One Way Contracts (salary of more than 1.5 million) must clear waivers prior to being demoted to the Farm Team.
- b) If a player is put on waivers by a GM in the DCHL, the currently lowest ranked Team in the DCHL standings will be first on the Priority List to claim the said player, and this method of ordering of the Priority List will carry through the off-season based on the previous DCHL season.
- c) If a player is put on waiver because said player is from outside of the DCHL, the Priority List will not apply, and GMs can make claims on a first-come, first-served basis.

- d) There is no DCHL Cash penalty for Teams claiming a player from waivers. There is no DCHL Cash compensation for Teams losing a player to waivers.
- e) Any Team successfully claiming a player off of waivers must make themselves cap compliant before the subsequent simulation.
- f) Once a player is placed on waivers, he cannot be placed on waivers again for a period of 30 days from the previous date of waivers.

7. Injured Reserve

- a) No healthy players may be placed on the IR.
- b) While a player is on IR, his salary does not count towards the Team's Salary Cap but the player's salary will still be paid by the Team.
- c) The IR term must fit the expected recovery time for the injury.
- d) GMs may not pick up a replacement player, unless the Team cannot fill its Pro Roster due to injury.

8. Player Categories

- a) Category 1 – KHL or Euro players coming to the NHL can be released to free agency, but only prior to the start of the regular season, at no expense and signed by any team.
- b) Category 2 – Any player who is eligible for an ELC-slide in the NHL. These players will automatically be returned to a team's prospect pool or have their DCHL contract adjusted accordingly.
- c) Category 3 – Veterans with Two Way Contracts can be released to free agency at no expense and signed by any team.
- d) Category 4 – Goalies with Two Way Contracts can be released to free agency at no expense and signed by any team.
- e) Category 5 – any player that does not fall under the aforementioned category.

IV. LINE MAINTENANCE

1. Line-up Expectations

- a) Although it is not mandatory, GMs are expected to set their Line-up prior to the simulation. If a GM fails to do so, it will result in a Line-up set automatically by STHS for that simulation and/or the Commish making necessary roster moves to allow a simulation to occur.

2. Double Shifting

- a) A GM may double shift ("double shift rule") one (1) forward on the fourth line; double shifting a forward on any combination of lines one, two, and three will default that Line-up to automatic for that Simulation.
- b) Six (6) defensemen must play on the top three defensive pairings and double shifting a defenseman on any of the top three defensive pairings is illegal. A GM may dress a seventh defenseman to play on the fourth pairing.

3. Switching Positions

- a) GMs may not change Player Position, unless it is revised on nhl.com or tsn.ca.
- b) GMs may not play players out of position at even strength. However, GMs are allowed to coordinate the Line-ups for special Teams in whatever way they wish.
- c) Forwards may play in any forward position without penalty.

4. Line Submissions

- a) All Line-up changes must be made on the STHS system.
- b) All Line-ups and trades are processed prior to the simulation. It is the GMs responsibility to get details correct.
- c) The STHS system tracks Line-ups, double shifting, transactions, etc.

5. Simulation Schedule

- a) Games will be Simulated as regularly as possible, but there is not a set schedule for Simulations.
- b) There will be approximately twenty-four (24) hours in between Simulations, and GMs are expected to pay attention so that they can keep the line ups updated. Any interruption to this schedule will be announced by the Commish.

6. Goalie appearances

- a) No goalie may appear in more than sixty-five (65) games during any given Regular Season, regardless of how many teams played for. Failure to adhere to this maximum will result of a fine to the offending team and that goalie being placed on IR (with the salary counting) for the remainder of the regular season.

V. TRADES

1. Making Trades

- a) GMs may trade with other GMs for Roster Players, Draft Picks, Prospects, Pro Coaches, DCHL Cash (minimum amount 250K), and/or BoG approved Future Considerations.
- b) In any trade, a tangible asset as listed above must be received by each team (i.e. a GM cannot "give away" an asset for nothing).
- c) Trades are not official until all of the trading GMs have sent their trade confirmation in through the Website and the Commish has completed its review. GMs are responsible to ensure the details of each transaction are correct.
- d) A team must have the available DCHL funds on the specific day that the trade is posted and is to be processed in the sim.
- e) All trades are processed before the simulation for that day.

2. Commish Approval

- a) The BoG has the right to review all trades to prevent cheating and has the authority to reject trades, if necessary.
- b) New GMs will have a probationary period where all trades are subject to additional scrutiny from the BoG to ensure the new GM understands the impact of each trade.
- c) Any side agreement to trade a player back to the original Team after a certain period of time ("rental agreement") is strictly prohibited and is subject to disciplinary action as determined by the Commish. This also applies if a 3rd team is used to attempt to circumvent this rule.
- d) Future Considerations must be described to the Commish and approved by the Commish.

3. Trading Draft Picks

- a) GMs may not trade Draft Picks for drafts more than one year into the future, unless they have paid their dues in advance for that season. For example, during the 2024-2025 DCHL season, only Draft Picks for the 2025 DCHL Draft are eligible for trade.

- b) The trading of future Draft picks for drafts more than one year into the future only applies to that particular team's draft picks and not any draft picks from other teams that might have been additionally acquired.

4. Trading UFAs

- a) GMs may trade UFAs negotiating rights at the end of the season prior to the UFA Period but no Hometown financial Discount is given to the recipient of said UFA. However, the recipient will benefit from a maximum of 5 total bids for said UFA.

5. Trade Deadline

- a) The Trade Deadline is the same as the current NHL Regular Season, after which time GMs will not be allowed to make trades for the remainder of that DCHL Regular Season until Playoffs are complete and GMs have paid their dues for the following year.

6. Team Swaps

- a) Currently not compatible with the website but if it were to become compatible, the following rules would apply:
 - i. GMs may swap Teams within their current division. A Team swap includes a full exchange of Roster, Finances, Coach, etc.
 - ii. A team swap is intended for GMs who are fans of the NHL counterpart of the DCHL team for which they would like to swap for.
 - iii. Team swaps requested inside of the current division are approved automatically.
 - iv. Team swaps requested outside of the current division of the Team are subject to approval from the Commish and cannot be granted where it is deemed as a competitive gain.
 - v. GMs may swap franchises only once per lifetime per initiator, and it is subject to a \$10 Real-world Cash fee and 10M DCHL cash.

7. Retaining Salary

- a) GMs may retain up to 50% of the cap and salary commitment to a player. The GM retaining salary must pay his league dues for the duration of the contract.
- b) Once a GM has traded a player and retained salary, the GM may not reacquire the player for a period of one (1) year from the time they were traded away from that team prior to the actual trade involving retention. Furthermore, a team actually retaining salary cannot reacquire that player for a year from the date of retention. Only exception is if the player's contract expires.
- c) Any single player contract cannot be used in a retained salary situation more than once (1).
- d) A GM is only able to retain salary on up to three (3) players at any given time. If a GM is retaining the salary of three (3) players, the GM must wait until a contract expires in order to be eligible to retain another player's salary.
- e) Any GM retaining salary may not commit more than fifteen (15) percent of the salary cap's upper limit to retained salary.
- f) When a GM retains salary in a transaction, that GM must pay the retention equivalent in DCHL Cash (or can elect to pay real world cash) as the "special cap" on the Finance Page is not paid daily as part of the daily salary cap expenses and this payment represents the actual costs.
- g) Retained salary cannot be traded and remains with the team that agreed to the retention. Should the player be subsequently bought out by the new GM, the GM with retention shall have the option to buy out the salary retention as per the "buy out rules/conditions."

- h) Any RFAs with retained salary will have their full non-retained DCHL salary inputted into the spreadsheet for calculation purposes.

VI. COACHES

1. Rated Coaches

- a) GMs must pick a rated Pro Coach. All NHL and AHL Head Coaches are rated by STHS, as are all NHL Assistant Coaches (except for Goalie Coaches).
- b) GMs can only sign a Pro Coach who is displayed with ratings.
- c) To sign a new coach, a GM must post in the message board the intention to sign the new coach by bidding on said coach after firing your previous coach. The minimum bid is 250k DCHL cash. The minimum increment in counter bids is 250k. To win a coach, you must hold the highest bid for 12 hours. Once you have won the bid, you must immediately pay the bid in DCHL cash in order to buy the coach's services. A GM may not use more than three (3) bids to win a coach auction.

2. Coaching Contracts

- a) Pro Coaches do not have contracts and will remain with the Team for however long the GM decides.
- b) All Pro Coach transactions must be done through the Message Board and be approved by the Commish.

VII. ENTRY DRAFT

1. Draft Eligible Players

- a) All DCHL Drafts will consist of seven (7) rounds and will run the same year as the NHL entry draft.
- b) Any player eligible for the NHL Draft can be drafted, or
- c) Any player, older than 20 on July 1st and who will not be rated for the following DCHL season, can be drafted, unless their rights are owned by another Team.

2. Draft Order

- a) The DCHL Draft order will be determined by the NHL Draft Lottery results for the first 16 teams.
- b) The final 16 teams will be seeded based on Playoff results. Teams are re-seeded as follows: Cup Champions – 32nd; Cup Finalists – 31st; the Conference Finalists – 30th (highest) and 29th (lowest) based on Regular Season points; the teams who won their divisions in the Regular Season but did not play in the Conference Finals – potentially 25-28th; the teams who didn't win their division or play in the Conference Finals – 17-24th (up to 28th).

VIII. SALARY CAP AND DCHL FINANCES

1. Cap Violations and Punishments

- a) The Salary Cap is the maximum Pro Roster payroll, and the Salary Cap will change yearly to mirror the NHL Salary Cap. The DCHL Salary Cap runs one (1) year behind the NHL Salary Cap.
- b) The Salary Cap for the 2024-2025 DCHL season is \$83,500,000.
- c) The Salary Cap Floor will always be set \$25,000,000 in DCHL Cash below the Salary Cap.

- d) Each Team's Pro Roster payroll must be Salary Cap compliant at all times throughout the season. Failure to remain Salary Cap compliant will result in penalties to be determined by the Commish.
- e) If a GM makes a trade that puts his Team in violation of the Salary Cap, the GM must reduce his Pro Roster salary by trades, line juggling, waivers, or Roster Buyouts to become Salary Cap compliant prior to the next Simulation.
- f) Punishment for the violation of the Salary Cap will result in escalating, unspecified fines determined by the Commish.

2. Financial Expectations for DCHL Cash

- a) All Teams must be profitable in terms of DCHL Cash by the end of the DCHL Regular Season and must not rely on DCHL Playoff revenue to cover any financial losses.
- b) DCHL cash can be purchased up to 25% of the salary cap rounded up or down to the nearest million at a cost of \$1M DCHL Cash for \$5 Real-world Cash. Any GM may purchase up to this amount (would be currently \$21M) once per DCHL season (with the exception of during the UFA period)
- c) GMs can earn DCHL Cash by selling tickets and merchandise at home games, making DCHL Cash deals with richer GMs, writing articles for the front page, or assisting the Commish with administrative tasks, as needed.
- d) At the end of the DCHL season, all franchises may participate in "revenue sharing" and will be given a DCHL cash amount yearly as fairly determined by the BoG if it is to occur. Any franchise who remains in a negative cash flow balance following the revenue sharing **MUST** purchase DCHL cash at the aforementioned cost to become profitable. If DCHL cash is not purchased, that team will not be permitted to participate in the UFA Frenzy and/or will forfeit draft picks.
- e) Beginning in the first season, the DCHL will use the Season Ticket Percentage model. See Clause XI for more information.

3. Roster Buyouts

- a) Roster Buyouts are paid for with Real-world Cash and DCHL Cash and are based on the years left on the player's contract:
 - i. 1 year left = \$10
 - ii. 2 years left = \$20
 - iii. 3 years left = \$30
 - iv. 4 years left = \$40
 - v. 5 years left = \$50
 - vi. Fifty (50%) percent of the player's remaining contract must be paid out in DCHL Cash at the time of the Roster Buyout.
- b) If a GM resigns and leaves the Team in a poor spot, the BoG, at its sole discretion, may either elect to Roster Buyout the contracts for free to make the Team more desirable for take-over or offer an incoming GM one free compliance buyout of an existing contract (again, this is not absolute and is at the discretion of the BoG). Any player whose contract is bought out will become a Free Agent.
- c) If a GM resigns and leaves the Team in a poor spot, the BoG may further offer the incoming GM further benefits (DCHL cash, compensatory draft picks) on a case-by-case basis.
- d) If a player being bought out has salary being retained, the team that is retaining salary has the option to buy out the remaining salary retention by paying 50% of remaining retained money in DCHL cash or leave the retention in place for the duration of the original retention period. The decision must be made by the team's next game (in season) or 48 hours (off

season). There will be no \$10.00 charge to the team that is retaining salary. The decision is final and cannot be reversed.

IX. RESTRICTED FREE AGENCY

1. RFA Ages

- a) Restricted Free Agents (RFA) are those players who are twenty-eight (28) years of age or younger in the DCHL on July 1 following the Playoffs of a given season.
- b) UFA Age is reached when players turn twenty-nine (29) with no contract left or twenty-eight (28) with one (1) contract year left as of July 1 of that year.

2. Re-signing RFAs

- a) All RFA signings are to be done using the excel spreadsheet
 - i. Please input the player's age and the cap hit from the latest NHL contract from www.capwages.com (i.e., the most recent NHL extension cap hit may or may not be the player's cap hit from the current NHL season, if the player has extended for the following NHL season then that cap hit will now apply)
 - ii. If an RFA is earning 1.5M in the DCHL or more, the highest of the DCHL AAV and NHL Cap Hit is to be used for the extension.
 - iii. If an NHL contract has a deferred money clause, the NHL AAV will be used instead of the NHL Cap Hit.
 - iv. Email all RFA re-signings to the Commish at DCHLcommish@gmail.com or other specified email.
- b) Each season GMs will only have two (2) four (4) year deals, and two (2) five (5) year deals with which to re-sign players, but GMs may sign as many one (1) to three (3) year RFA contracts as they want. GM is responsible to specify which term applies to each player.
- c) Players on NHL ELC contracts can only be signed to 2-year DCHL contracts
- d) Current prospects who previously had DCHL contracts will have those contract years continue to burn while on the prospect list and are still eligible to be signed to RFA extensions during the RFA period in the last year of the previous contract using the following guidelines:
 - i. It is the responsibility of each GM to identify their prospects who fall into this category.
 - ii. The Commish will try to post a spreadsheet listing all these potential players but the onus of responsibility still falls on the individual GM.
 - iii. The current NHL contract (or most recent NHL contract if a current one doesn't exist) will be used for Cap Hit in the RFA calculator and there will not be any term restrictions to the contract other than those listed above.
 - iv. Any prospects not signed to RFA extensions will be either become, in the off-season, a UFA (if the player will have ratings) or draft eligible prospect (if the player will not have ratings).
 - v. If the player remains on the prospect list, the years of this new contract will continue to burn accordingly.
- e) In all other individual player unique RFA situations, the Cap Hit of the most recent NHL contract will be used in the RFA calculator.
- f) If a GM chooses not to sign a RFA to the amount determined by the spreadsheet during the RFA period, that player's rights are released to UFA. This player can be resigned by the same team during the subsequent UFA period but no hometown benefits (extra bids or salary discount) will be afforded.

- g) There is no penalty for trading recently signed RFAs.

X. UNRESTRICTED FREE AGENCY

1. UFA Qualification

- a) A player becomes an UFA when he reaches the UFA Age and his contract expires.
- b) The Commish will post a list of all eligible UFAs prior to the UFA Period.

2. Role of the Free Agent Moderator and Commish

- a) The top UFAs, as determined by the Overall Rating will be the first players put up in the Free Agent Frenzy.
- b) The minimum initial amount of any auction is the same as the NHL minimum salary.
- c) The Free Agent Moderator will keep track of the current Live Bids, notify GMs when the Bidding Window closes on any given UFA, and open Bidding Windows on other UFAs once the bidding closes on the initial UFAs.
- d) Trading is permitted during the Free Agent Frenzy so it is imperative that all GMs, the Commish and the Free Agent Moderator are in communication to ensure all Live Bids are legal bids.

3. Signing UFAs

- a) GMs are not able to re-sign UFAs prior to the UFA Period.
- b) UFA will work on a highest bidder format.
 - i. Each bid is on a one year contract. The GM who offers the most money to a UFA will win the contract, calculated as the yearly salary plus the Signing Bonus.
 - ii. To place a bid on a player, GMs must increase the bid of the previous offer by no less than two hundred and fifty thousand (\$250k) dollars.
 - iii. A GM can make a maximum of three (3) bids on any given UFA, unless the UFA is a Hometown UFA. A GM can make up to five (5) bids on a Hometown UFA.
 - iv. A GM has a maximum of five (5) Live Bids at any given point in time. When the Bidding Window expires, the GM with the current Live Bid will acquire the UFA contract. Failure to comply with the Live Bid maximum will result in a fine to be determined by the Commish, and the penalized GM will not be allowed to bid on any more UFAs until compliant with this rule by having a UFA sign or by having another GM out-bid one of that GM's Live Bids.
 - v. Incorrect bids will result in an unspecified fine to be determined by the Commish.
 - vi. Edited bids (referring to the financial aspect of the bid only) will result in an unspecified fine to be determined by the Commish.
 - vii. GMs must not bid more than the Maximum Allowable Bid, which factors in the \$3,000,000 Cap Space overage allowed during the offseason. Failure to comply with the Maximum Allowable Bid will result in a fine, as determined by the Commish.
 - viii. A GM can only bid over the max for a player on a max term and max SB contract and any "luxury tax" overage will be paid in DCHL cash at a rate of 2 X the overage.
- c) After winning a bid, the GM may offer the UFA a contract in the following manner:
 - i. Signing Bonuses may not exceed thirty-three and a third (33.333%) percent of the total value of the contract and must be spread out over the term of the contract.
 - ii. UFAs cannot be signed to contracts longer than six (6) years, calculated with the following discounts for contract term:
 - a. 1 year – 100%
 - b. 2 years – 90%

- c. 3 years – 84%
 - d. 4 years – 79%
 - e. 5 years – 75%
 - f. 6 years – 72%
- iii. Once a GM determines the length of the term of the contract, the GM may apply the Signing Bonus, up to the Signing Bonus maximum, provided the GM has sufficient DCHL Cash available at that time. DCHL Cash can be acquired pursuant to Clause VIII-2-b.
- iv. Luxury tax paid in DCHL cash at 2 X overage on a max deal whose bidding went beyond the maximum normal salary/SB.
- v. The maximum term for any UFA between the ages of thirty-five and thirty-nine (35-39) is two (2) years. The maximum term for any UFA between the age of forty (40) is one (1) year.
- vi. The maximum term for a contract with a cap hit under \$1,500,000 (annual average value) is one (1) year.
- vii. A player is only considered retired if the player themselves have formally announced their retirement and/or filed their NHL retirement paperwork (not LTIR or speculative reports). As such, any limits on contract length for an UFA player remains as a result only of the age of the player and/or the DCHL AAV of the contract.
- viii. A GM may not bid on any UFA who was a player/prospect cut by that team during the preceding season or during the current off-season.
- d) A GM that currently has a Hometown UFA will get a discount of five (5%) percent if the said player has been on the Team for two (2) or fewer seasons prior to becoming a UFA, up to a maximum of ten (10%) percent if the said player has been on the Team for three (3) or more years prior to becoming a UFA.

4. Miscellaneous UFA Rules

- a) Teams may not release players during the UFA Period. The only transactions allowed during the UFA Period are trades between GMs. A buy out period will open and close the UFA Period.
- b) Teams may exceed the salary cap by three million dollar (\$3M) during the off-season, including during the UFA Period.
- c) A GM may not trade a recently signed UFA until the beginning of the DCHL Regular Season.
- d) Once the UFA period starts, no GM can purchase DCHL cash until the period of “putting up your own UFA players” begins.

XI. DCHL SEASON TICKET PERCENTAGE

1. Season Ticket Percentages are fixed:

- a) Set based on performance and there will be three tiers of pricing:
 - i. Premiere (teams 1 – 11)
 - ii. Middle (teams 12 – 22)
 - iii. Bottom (teams 23 – 32)
- b) Every team will be set to 100% of season ticket sales and the prices of the tickets will be adjusted by the CTO to reflect the appropriate tier (all teams within the tier will have the same ticket pricing structure).

- c) The target for Premiere is the salary cap ceiling plus no more than 8%; the target for Bottom is no more than 8% less than the salary cap ceiling; the target for the Middle will be the salary cap.
- d) The season will be broken up into 4 quarters and the ticket prices will be adjusted accordingly based on the teams point percentage at the end of that quarter. Please note the seeding is in aggregate and is not standalone quarter seeding.
- e) All teams in quarter 1 and all teams in the playoffs will receive Premiere pricing.
- f) In the event two or more teams have the exact same point percentage, the following tiebreakers are applied to determine which team receives the higher seeding:
 - i. The fewer number of games played (i.e., superior points percentage).
 - ii. The greater number of games won in regulation (not including games won in overtime or a shootout).
 - iii. The greater number of games won in regulation and overtime (not including games won via shootout).
 - iv. The greater number of games won in any fashion.
 - v. The greater number of points earned in games between the tied clubs. If two clubs are tied, and have not played an equal number of home games against each other, points earned in the first game played in the city that had the extra game shall not be included. If more than two clubs are tied, the higher percentage of available points earned in games among those clubs, and not including any "odd" games, shall be used to determine the standing.
 - vi. Goal differential.
 - vii. Goals scored.

XII. LEAGUE FEE

1. League Fees

- a) League Fees are fifty (\$60) Canadian dollars of Real-world Cash and are due annually before the Payment Deadline.
- b) If a GM fails to pay the required League Fees for his/her Team prior to the Payment Deadline, the Commish has the right to make said Team available for purchase by a new GM and to auto-draft for the Team based off NHL Entry Draft results.
- c) Any GM's earnings fifty (\$60) dollars or under from the previous year will go towards the next season's League Fee for that GM.
- d) If a GM decides to leave before the end of the season, the Commish will not refund the League Fee.
- e) Should a GM give up control of a Team, the Commish has the right to manage the Team and keep any winnings.
- f) Should a GM's right to participate be terminated in the middle of a season with legitimate cause, said GM will not be refunded the League Fee, and the Commish will take control of the Team. Any winnings earned during the season will not be paid to the GM who was dismissed or the replacement GM.
- g) A GM will be allowed to pre-pay their league dues up to 3 years in advance.

2. Payout Percentages

- a) The Chief Financial Officer will payout the GMs according to the following charts on Schedule 'A'.

XIII. LEAGUE EXPANSION

1. Protected Players

- a) Each team will be allowed to protect either
 - i. Seven (7) forwards, three (3) defenders, and one (1) goalie or
 - ii. Eight (8) skaters and one (1) goalie
- b) All players who are UFA at the end of the season preceding expansion are exempt from the expansion draft.
- c) All players under the aged 22 or under before July 1st and all players considered prospects in the year of expansion will be exempt from the expansion draft.
- d) Any player aged 24 or younger with one (1) or more years remaining on their entry-level contract will be exempt from the expansion draft.
- e) Any RFA who has remained unsigned by the expansion draft submission deadline is exempt from expansion draft and cannot be protected. The player will be considered a UFA and cannot be signed by any club until free agency period begins. The team with rights to the player forfeits any compensation for the loss of that player.

2. Player Exposure Requirements

- a) Each team must leave unprotected at least
 - i. One (1) defenseman who has played 40 NHL games in the season preceding expansion.
 - ii. Two (2) forwards who have played 40 NHL games in the season preceding expansion.
 - iii. One (1) goaltender under contract for the season following expansion
- b) Players who may not meet these standards may be allowed to count as exposed players if approval of the BOG is given

3. Regulations for the Expansion Franchise

- a) The expansion franchise must select one (1) player from every team
- b) The expansion franchise must exceed the salary cap floor in salary for their Pro Team roster after the required number of players are selected.
- c) The expansion franchise must not exceed the salary cap ceiling in salary for their Pro Team roster after the required number of players are selected.
- d) The expansion franchise must select at least sixteen (16) forwards, nine (9) defensemen, and three (3) goalies.
- e) The expansion franchise must select at least twenty (20) players who have played at least one (1) game in the NHL.
- f) The expansion franchise cannot buy out any player selected in the expansion draft until after their first season has completed. If the player is traded during the season, the team acquiring said player must adhere to the same regulation.
- g) The expansion franchise will be given seven (7) days to complete their expansion selections once they receive all protected player lists.

4. Expansion Draft Selections

- a) The expansion franchise will be given the same odds in the draft preceding the expansion season as the team finishing with the third-fewest points during the preceding season.
- b) The expansion franchise's first round selection will be determined in accordance with the NHL draft lottery and, as a result, the expansion franchise will be guaranteed no lower than the sixth (6th) overall selection.
 - i. The expansion franchise will then own the third selection in each subsequent round

Schedule 'A' – Payout

1. Team Winnings

PLAYOFFS	# of Winners	Individual Payout	Total Payout
Cup Champions	1	\$280	\$280
Cup Finalist	1	\$140	\$140
Conference Finalists	2	\$70	\$140
Semi-Finalists	4	\$35	\$140
Quarter-Finalists	8	\$17.50	\$140
Total	16	\$542.50	\$840

REGULAR SEASON	# of Winners	Individual Payout	Total Payout
President's Trophy	1	\$70	\$70
Other Conference Champion	1	\$35	\$35
Other Division Winners	2	\$17.50	\$35
Total	4	\$122.50	\$140

2. Individual Winnings

PLAYOFFS	# of Winners	Individual Payout	Total Payout
Conn Smythe Winner *	1	\$21	\$21
1 – 4 Playoff Scoring	4	\$7	\$28
Total	5	\$28	\$49

ALL-STAR GAME	# of Winners	Individual Payout	Total Payout
1 st Star	1	\$15	\$15
2 nd Star	1	\$10	\$10
3 rd Star	1	\$5	\$5
Total	3	\$30	\$30

REGULAR SEASON	# of Winners	Individual Payout	Total Payout
Art Ross Winner	1	\$21	\$21
2 – 5 Season Scoring	4	\$10.50	\$42
Vezina Winner *	1	\$21	\$21
Jennings Winner	1	\$21	\$21
Norris Winner *	1	\$21	\$21
Rocket Richard Winner	1	\$21	\$21
Hart Winner *	1	\$21	\$21
Calder Winner *	1	\$21	\$21
Total	11	\$157.50	\$189

3. GM Winnings

REGULAR SEASON	# of Winners	Individual Payout	Total Payout
Top 3 Trades * ~	6	\$14	\$84
Top Deadline Week Trade * ~	2	\$28	\$56
Best Participation	4	\$20.50	\$82
Total	12	\$62.50	\$222

GRAND TOTAL	48	\$943	\$1470
--------------------	-----------	--------------	---------------

* as voted by all GMs ~ awarded to both GMs in the trades			
--	--	--	--

TEAM WINNINGS	PLAYOFFS	# winners	ind payout	total payout			
	Cup champions	1	\$280.00	\$280.00			
	Cup finalist	1	\$140.00	\$140.00		Yearly Revenues	
	Conference finalists	2	\$70.00	\$140.00		Fee	\$50.00
	Semi-finalists	4	\$35.00	\$140.00		Total	\$1,550.00
	Quarter-finalists	8	\$17.50	\$140.00		Expenses	\$180.00
	TOTAL	16	\$542.50	\$840.00		Surplus	\$30.00
	REGULAR SEASON						
	Presidents Trophy	1	\$70.00	\$70.00		Balance	\$1,400.00
	Other conference champion	1	\$35.00	\$35.00			
Other division winners	2	\$17.50	\$35.00		Yearly Expenses		
TOTAL	4	\$122.50	\$140.00		Domain	\$17.00	
PLAYER WINNINGS	PLAYOFFS						
	Conn Smythe ^o	1	\$21.00	\$21.00	<i>mvp</i>	Hosting	\$103.00
	1-4 scoring	4	\$7.00	\$28.00		Sim license	\$15.00
	TOTAL	5	\$28.00	\$49.00		Ratings	\$0.00
						Trophy	\$45.00
						Total	\$180.00
	ALL STAR GAME						
	1st Star	1	\$15.00	\$15.00			
	2nd Star	1	\$10.00	\$10.00			
	3rd Star	1	\$5.00	\$5.00			
	TOTAL	3	\$30.00	\$30.00			
	REGULAR SEASON						
	Art Ross	1	\$21.00	\$21.00	<i>most points</i>		
	2-5 scoring	4	\$10.50	\$42.00			
	Vezina ^o	1	\$21.00	\$21.00	<i>best goalie (GAA, SV%, GP)</i>		
	Jennings	1	\$21.00	\$21.00	<i>team min ga</i>		
	Norris ^o	1	\$21.00	\$21.00	<i>best defenseman</i>		
Rocket Richard	1	\$21.00	\$21.00	<i>most goals</i>			
Hart ^o	1	\$21.00	\$21.00	<i>mvp</i>			
Calder ^o	1	\$21.00	\$21.00	<i>best rookie</i>			
TOTAL	11	\$157.50	\$189.00				
GM	REGULAR SEASON						
	Top 3 trades** ^o	6	\$14.00	\$84.00			
	Top deadline week trade** ^o	2	\$28.00	\$56.00			
	1-3 most articles	3	\$14.00	\$42.00			
TOTAL	11	\$56.00	\$182.00				
GRAND TOTAL	47	\$936.50	\$1,430.00				
BONUS							
Most active GMs per division	4	\$5,000,000	DCHL cash				
^o winner is voted for by DCHL GMs							
*awarded to both gms involved in the trade							