

FIH Regulations on Sanctioned and Unsanctioned Events – Frequently Asked Questions

Why have the Regulations?

The FIH Regulations on Sanctioned and Unsanctioned Events were introduced in order to allow FIH to manage an increasingly busy and crowded calendar of events.

The governance of the sport of Hockey, like most other sports, is organised in a pyramid structure, with FIH as the sole and exclusive international governing body, one Continental Federation recognised as the sole and exclusive governing body for each continent, and one National Association recognised and admitted into membership of FIH as the sole and exclusive national governing body for each country where the sport is played.

The pyramid governance structure of FIH is also vital to the proper organisation and conduct of the sporting calendar, and to the primacy of national representative competition within that calendar as the showcase for and the main driver of development of the sport. FIH, Continental Federations and National Associations have the right and the responsibility to maintain and control the sporting calendar so as to ensure that events are organised and staged in a coordinated fashion that does not undermine but rather promotes and furthers the development of the sport as a whole.

What do the Regulations cover?

The Regulations define any hockey match or tournament as an event. Therefore, all matches must be sanctioned, except for:

- i. Invitational festival type Events, whether played in 11 a side or shorter formats, whether Outdoor or Indoor, where National Representative Teams are not playing or there is no prize money involved;
- ii. Touring matches involving university, schools or other educational establishments;
- iii. Any practice matches before an FIH or Continental Federation competition between two teams playing in that competition. All other matches involving National Teams must be sanctioned;
- iv. Any matches or Events involving under 18 teams that are not national U18 teams.

Who sanctions a Match or Tournament?

If the teams playing in a match or tournament are from the same country, it falls to that National Association to sanction. However, if the event is organised by the National Association, for example a National League or National Cup competition (for any age limit), the event is deemed sanctioned.

If the teams are from the same continent, it falls to the relevant CF to sanction it. An event organised by a Continental Federation, such as a continental championship, is likewise deemed sanctioned.

If the teams are from different continents, the event must be sanctioned by FIH. Events organised by FIH, such as World Cups, are also deemed sanctioned.

Should FIH require, it will sanction an event that otherwise would be sanctioned by a National Association or Continental Federation.

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How do National Associations have to deal with Sanctioned and Unsanctioned Events?

It is a requirement for all National Associations and Continental Federations to incorporate into their Statutes, Constitution, Articles of Incorporation etc the requirements of the FIH Regulations on Sanctioned and Unsanctioned Events.

It is a breach of FIH's Statutes for a National Association or a player to participate in an Unsanctioned Event.

How do I get a sanction for a match or tournament?

An organiser of an event should write to the appropriate body for sanctioning, ie the National Association where the event is taking place: or if there are teams from two or more countries from the same continent to the appropriate Continental Federation; or if there are two or more teams from different continents, to FIH. Applications for sanction should include as much information as is necessary to determine whether the event should be sanctioned, for example the dates of the event, the venue, the teams taking part, umpires etc. An application to organise an event by a third party and / or co-organised by a third party and a National Association and / or an event containing any novelty in format must be submitted by a National Association or third parties in writing with all available supportive documentation to FIH at least six months prior to the intended starting date of the event.

How do we know if a match or event has been sanctioned?

All tournaments that are sanctioned are included in the FIH calendar of events that is published on the FIH web site. All official inter-nations events, including inter-nations test matches and inter-nations test series, are shown on FIH's Tournament Management System. All unofficial matches are kept in a register by FIH.

Are there ways of limiting the types of matches to be sanctioned?

To minimise administrative burden, FIH, a Continental Federation and / or a National Association (as applicable) may grant advance sanction to categories of Events meeting relevant criteria. The type of events that do not need to be sanctioned are referred above.

What is a No Objection Certificate?

A No Objection Certificate (NOC) allows players from one country to play in another country with the permission of their home National Association.

Why is a NOC needed?

One of the principles of the FIH Regulations on Sanctioned and Unsanctioned Events is the primacy of international and domestic competition. It is through the issue of NOCs that a National Association can manage the amount of Hockey that its players take part. This is particularly relevant for those that play in national teams.

How do I get a NOC?

There is a standard form on the FIH web site at <http://www.fih.ch/inside-fih/our-official-documents/event-resources/> Otherwise a straightforward letter of application a player's home National Association stating the country and competition to be played in and the dates of competition.

What do I do if my application for a NOC is refused?

National Associations are expected to act reasonably when considering applications for NOCs and should not put unnecessary impediments in the way of an application.

If an NOC is refused the player has the right to appeal to FIH to consider the application, the reasons for refusal and to determine whether or not the refusal is reasonable or otherwise.

Are there ways of limiting the players who require NOCs?

The Regulations permit National Associations to specify the players or level of competition for which NOCs are required. Such limitations must be published on the National Association's web site.

However, for all national competitions (national leagues or national cups) NOCs must be obtained.

Do NOCs apply to all foreign players in a national competition?

Yes, unless the home National Association has specified a list of players who do require NOCs or the away National Association has specified the level of competition for which NOCs are required.