



## **Ringette Canada Female Coach on the Bench Action Plan**

### **Introduction**

---

Ringette Canada's Female Coach on the Bench Policy is designed to increase the number and quality of engagement of certified female coaches on ringette team benches. The Policy is a current progressive revision to the original initiative to increase the number of qualified female coaches on ringette team benches. The purpose of this document is to provide a set of recommendations and associated actions to support members in implementing the Policy.

Recommendations and actions were developed through consultation with provincial office staff, and coaches in all provinces who provided input via surveys, in-depth comments, and feedback during a webinar. In addition, Ringette Canada collaborated with the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS) and the Coaching Association of Canada (CAC) in the development of the policy and action plan.

Recommendations and actions are provided relating to ten themes:

1. Implementation and enforcement of policy requirement
2. Mentorship
3. Apprenticeship programs
4. Female-only training
5. Modify coach training formats and schedules
6. Develop female coach developers
7. Financial support
8. Network for female experts and role models
9. Coach contracts and agreements
10. Marketing and procedural resources

The information presented in this document is for any ringette club, local and provincial association interested in finding ways to increase the active involvement of women as certified coaches.



## Recommendations and actions

---

### 1. Implementation and Enforcement of Policy Requirements

Feedback across Ringette Canada's membership clearly supports the use of requirements to encourage and increase active engagement of female certified coaches. Requirements cannot effect change on their own; enforcement of the requirements is key. A collaborative effort by the national and provincial offices as well as club administrators to enforce the requirements will best serve members.

#### **Practical Implementation:**

Ringette Canada:

- Enforce the [Female Coach on the Bench Policy](#).
- Implement elements of the Ringette Canada Female Coach on the Bench Action Plan.
- Provide support to provincial and local associations in implementing and enforcing the Policy.

Provincial Associations:

- Compliance to the Ringette Canada coaching requirements as stated in the Coaching Certification Policy.
- Development, implementation and enforcement of the Female Coach on the Bench Policy at the provincial level that reflects the national policy.

Local Associations:

- Compliance to Ringette Canada coaching requirements as stated in the Coaching Policy.
- Compliance to Provincial association policy.

### 2. Mentorship

Formal mentorship programs can help recruit, train, support and retain female coaches.

Formal mentorship happens over a set period of time (e.g. 1-2 years), requires regular communication, and is based on clear roles and expectations of both mentors and mentees to support the mentee in achieving set goals. Mentor coaches can be male or female. The mentor's role is to provide guidance and support to the mentee through consultation and collaboration.

Two new initiatives will help members implement successful mentorship programs:



CAAWS and the CAC, have developed a Female Coach Mentorship Model – a free, turnkey tool in the form of guide books, designed to increase the retention and advancement of female coaches. Targeted resources for mentors, mentees and administrators can support the development and implementation of mentorship program and effective and sustainable mentor-mentee relationships. These guides can be downloaded [here](#).

The CAC has recently launched an NCCP [Mentorship module](#) aimed at training mentors. The workshop assists in understanding mentorship, the cognitive coaching model, developing communication skills, and preparing for the mentorship relationship through goal-setting and planning meeting, observing and debriefing with the mentee – to build their confidence and skills. To access the Mentorship module in your province, contact your local Provincial/Territorial Coaching Representative (P/TCR), or click [here](#) to find the Provincial Coaching body in your province. You can also access upcoming training opportunities on the Locker Calendar [here](#).

Skill development and training amongst mentees, mentors and support organizations, along with an identification strategy, can increase the number of female coaches, and increase the ability for Associations to meet the requirement to have a certified female coach on the bench. **Practical Implementation:**

Ringette Canada:

- Formalize and implement mentorship opportunities for coaches in High Performance programs.

Provincial Associations:

- Provide mentorship opportunities in their Provincial Competitive programs, including the female apprenticeship coach program at the Canada Winter Games.

Local Associations:

- Identify mentor coaches to work with female coaches.

### 3. Apprenticeship Programs

Apprenticeship programs are a type of formalized mentorship program. These target identified coaches for a specific skill development opportunity within a formal process and program. They may be offered by external partners, like the Canada Games Council or the Coaching Association of Canada.



Identified apprentice coaches gain experience, observe and engage in an event in a learning capacity for next generation coaches. An apprenticeship program may provide individual or group professional development, coach education, mentors, development of learning plans and practical exposures to games and competitions in an apprentice or observer role.

#### **Practical Implementation:**

Ringette Canada:

- Promote and support available external apprenticeship programs.
- Nominate and sponsor female coaches to participate in external programs.
- Provide formal apprenticeship opportunities connected to High Performance programs.

Provincial Associations:

- Promote and support available external apprenticeship programs.
- Nominate and sponsor female coaches to participate in external programs.
- Provide formal apprenticeship opportunities connected to provincial programs.
- Encourage coaches to apply to external or Ringette Canada apprenticeship programs.

Local Associations:

- Promote and support available external apprenticeship programs.
- Nominate and sponsor female coaches to participate in external programs.
- Encourage local coaches to apply for apprenticeship programs offered by Ringette Canada or provincial association as well as external apprenticeship programs.

#### **4. Female-only training**

Female-only training provides a safe and welcoming environment where women can share personal experiences, ask questions, and learn from other women. Feedback from Ringette Canada's membership indicates that some women are intimidated by more assertive male coaches, negatively impacting their learning experience.

Provincial associations are encouraged to offer at least one (1) female-only training opportunity for women in their province or region(s) every season. It is strongly recommended that female-only training be facilitated by female coach developers.

Pairing a training course with a keynote speaker, or meet and greet opportunity with a female role model, or high-level, recognized, credible coach can further build skills and help women build a network of female coaches in the area.

One option for complementary professional development for female leaders are [CAAWS' Women and Leadership workshops](#). This program consists of a series of five workshops that blend theory with



practical applications, and provide an opportunity for women working or volunteering in sport to share experiences, reflect on ideas and apply specific techniques. The sessions also allow for networking opportunities among participants. Workshop topics include effective communication, conflict management, influencing change, effective networking, and life balance. A targeted leadership workshop is also available for university and college-aged young women. CAAWS Women and Leadership workshops are eligible for NCCP PD points.

### **Practical Implementation:**

Ringette Canada:

- Support Female-only NCCP courses.
- Identify and train sufficient female Coach Developers.

Provincial Associations:

- Provide female-only CI and CSI workshops annually.
- Identify and train sufficient female Coach Developers.

Local Associations:

- Identify potential female Coach Developers and communicate with their provincial associations.
- Request female-only workshops from their provincial association.

## **5. Modify coach training formats and schedules**

Women interested in transitioning to coaching often have many other roles, including; player, mother, administrator, volunteer, student and student-athlete. The potential coach's schedule can cause conflicts or scheduling issues when trying to complete coach training or evaluation. Our sport needs to find ways to offer flexible training and evaluation opportunities that enables coaches to complete the requirement.

It is also important for associations to be aware of conflicting schedules for players and coaches. In order to encourage players to coach, league, game, tournament, and bigger event schedules must be considered so the individual is not asked to make a choice between coaching and playing. For example, if a coach is playing at the NRL level and coaching U14, associations and leagues may consider not scheduling games at the same time.

Another option is to offer training during the off-season to decrease the potential for schedule conflicts.

### **Practical Implementation:**

Ringette Canada:



- Offer Competition-Development courses where the format and/or schedule is adjusted.

Provincial Associations:

- Offer CI and CSI workshops with adjusted schedules and/or formats.

Local Associations:

- Request or suggest coaching workshops with adjusted format and/or schedule from their provincial association.

## 6. Develop Female Coach Developers

Ringette is encouraged to identify and train more female Coach Developers. These role models can support the network of female coaches.

### **Practical Implementation:**

Ringette Canada:

- Actively identify female Coach Developers for the Competition- Development context
- Actively identify, train and certify female Master Coach Developers.
- Provide mentorship to new female Coach Developers and Master Coach Developers
- Create a network of support for female Coach Developers through regular conference calls, forums, email communication, and face to face meetings.

Provincial Associations:

- Actively identify female Coach Developers for the CSI and CI contexts.
- Actively train and certify female Coach Developers.
- Provide mentorship to new female Coach Developers by experienced Coach Developers.
- Develop opportunities for female Coach Developers in the province to meet, and communicate.
- Encourage female Coach Developers to engage with Ringette Canada's initiatives.

Local Associations:

- Identify potential female Coach Developers to their provincial association.
- Request female Coach Developers for workshops in their area.

## 7. Financial Support



Incentives can help support some women transitioning to coaching by reducing barriers and providing support to complete training, evaluation and professional development. Incentives can include bursaries, scholarships, or other financial support.

Recognition awards or identification strategies for coaches can provide a way to recognize accomplishments, or identify and encourage coaches with potential to advance their training, certification and experience to achieve high performance team coaching positions.

### **Practical Implementation:**

Ringette Canada:

- Provide financial incentives for female coaches attending the Competition – Development training course.
- Provide financial incentives for female coaches to complete the Advanced Coaching Diploma.
- Provide networking for female coaches with experienced and certified coaches in these contexts.

Provincial Associations:

- Provide financial incentives to potential female coaches to attend courses in specific areas or regions.
- Create recognition awards for female coaches.

Local Associations:

- Provide financial incentives for potential female coaches to attend courses and complete certification.
- Provide opportunities for female coaches to meet and greet other female coaches; create a local network of female coaches.

## **8. Network of female experts**

At each level of Ringette in Canada, associations can build a network of identified female experts that can provide expertise in specific areas such as technical/tactical, team management, or leadership. Associations would have the opportunity to request support from these experts to work with team staff, a team, or a specific coach.



Actively engaging women leaders across all levels of Ringette in Canada will recognize and utilize the expertise of our athletes, coaches and officials, enhance the game, and provide valuable female role models. It will also support women in transitioning to other leadership roles within our sport.

### **Practical Implementation:**

#### Ringette Canada:

- Engage female experts to present at AGM sessions.
- Engage female experts to attend and speak at lunch during coach training courses.
- Host monthly webinars featuring female leaders from across the country to share their expertise and experience.
- Create a female-only forum on coaching site.
- Offer female-only session, meet and greet, or networking lunch at CRC, during Canada Winter Games, or national team camp.

#### Provincial Associations:

- Engage female experts to present at AGM sessions.
- Engage female experts to attend and speak at lunch during coach training courses.
- Offer session, meet and greet, or networking lunch during tournaments.

#### Local Associations:

- Engage local female expert to attend a team practice.
- Engage local female expert for a meet and greet.
- Engage female expert for parent information/orientation.
- Offer female-only session, meet and greet, or networking lunch during tournaments.

## **9. Coach Contracts and agreements**

Coaching contracts and agreements must include clearly defined roles and responsibilities. All coaches want to feel that they are contributing to the training of the players, not just opening doors during games.

As part of the [Responsible Coaching Movement](#) associations will be required to provide contracts to coaches, thereby clearly defining each role. This can provide the needed support to take action should a head coach not “allow” other coaches to engage in the agreed roles and responsibilities.

### **Practical Implementation:**





Ringette Canada:

- Develop and provide links to templates for contracts and roles and responsibilities.
- Provide links and access to best, emerging or promising practices.

Provincial Associations:

- Use formalized contracts and transparent roles and responsibilities for own programs.
- Encourage use of identified templates and roles and responsibilities.

Local Associations:

- Use and customize templates for contracts and roles and responsibilities.

## 10. Marketing and Procedural Resources

To successfully recruit and retain female leaders, associations must ensure a safe and welcoming environment. Resources like this action plan can help associations be proactive in developing and implementing strategies to attract, identify and certify female coaches for their teams.

In addition, the CAC's Canadian Journal for Women in Coaching can help to inform associations and coaches about best practices, recruitment and retention strategies, and recognition of female coaches and role models. CAAWS also has a number of practical resources in this area, including the publications "[Actively Engaging Women and Girls: Addressing the Psycho-Social Factors](#)" and "[The Three Rs of Leadership Development for Women in Sport](#)".

The CAC has a free photo banks of images of female coaches to include in marketing and promotional materials.

Click [here](#) to access the CAC photo bank.

Password: CAC!2010

### **Practical Implementation:**

Ringette Canada:

- Develop and provide links to templates and samples.
- Communicate own documents for adoption or customization.
- Provide links and access to best, emerging or promising practices.



Provincial Associations:

- Develop and provide links to templates and samples.
- Encourage use of identified templates and samples.
- Adoption of Ringette Canada documents.
- Customize Ringette Canada documents.

Local Associations:

- Adopt and use templates and samples.

Adopt or customize Ringette Canada or provincial documents.