



International  
Handball  
Federation

## III. Player Eligibility Code

Edition: 1 July 2011

## Table of contents

- I. Basic Principles
- II. Player Status
- III. Professional Players
- IV. Registration
- V. Eligibility to Play
- VI. National Players
- VII. Release of National Players
- VIII. Participation in Olympic Games
- IX. Suspensions
- X. Disputes



## ARTICLE 1

---

### I. Basic Principles

All handball players shall be subject to the Player Eligibility Code of the International Handball Federation (IHF).

Member federations may issue player eligibility regulations, provided these do not contradict IHF regulations.



## ARTICLE 2

---

### II. Player Status

**2.1.** Players participating in organised handball are either amateurs or professionals. A professional is a player who has a written contract with a club and is paid more for his handball activity than the expenses he effectively incurs. All other players are considered to be amateurs.

**2.2.** Definitions:

- a) A professional is a player who has a written employment contract with a club and is paid more than the expenses he effectively incurs in return for his handball activity. It is therefore compulsory to stipulate a written contract between the club and a player. Oral arrangements between a club and a player, although possibly admissible by and in conformity with local labour law, are not in line with these regulations. Players that have another regular working activity or employment besides their remunerated handball activity (so-called semi-professionals) shall also be considered as professionals if they comply with the first sentence of 2.2 a.)
- b) An amateur is a player who pursues sport just for fun or as a hobby, without any material gain, and who does not receive any remuneration other than for the actual expenses incurred. Furthermore, he basically has no written contract with the club with which he is registered. Expenses incurred through involvement in a match or in training (e.g. travel, sports equipment, insurance, etc.) and the costs of a player's equipment can be reimbursed to the player without jeopardising the amateur status of the player.



## ARTICLE 3

---

### III. Professional Players

- 3.1. The IHF or the Continental Confederation concerned has the right to determine the status of a player by itself. The respective request may be forwarded by the National Federation, a club or a player.
- 3.2. The agreement/contract between the player and the club shall include all details that rule the mutual rights and duties and shall be valid for a concrete period of time. The details mentioned in the specimen contract (see Regulations for Transfer between Federations (IV)) can be considered elements of an agreement/contract between the player and a club. The parties involved are free to rule further details in the respective agreement/contract which must not contravene the specimen contract.
- 3.3. In case of disputes, a copy of the contract shall be made available to the IHF or the Continental Confederation concerned, if required.
- 3.4. National Federations may add their own provisions to their player contracts, so long as they do not contradict this Player Eligibility Code.



## ARTICLE 4

---

### IV. Registration

Every club shall, for each playing season, report the players it has under contract to its National Federation by means of a form provided by the IHF by 30 September of each calendar year. Amateur players concluding a contract during the season shall be reported to the National Federation by the club within 7 days. National Federations shall generate a central register of professional players within their jurisdiction by 15 October of each year to be submitted to the Continental Confederation concerned. The Continental Confederation shall submit this register to the IHF by 15 November of each year. Players who are not registered in this list or who are not announced in due time according to Article 4, are considered amateur players.

National Federations concerned shall immediately register players who have achieved status as a professional player between the aforementioned entry dates to the Continental Confederation concerned, which shall submit this register to the IHF. Non-compliance with this rule shall be fined in line with the IHF Regulations concerning Penalties and Fines.



## ARTICLE 5

---

### V. Eligibility to Play

- 5.1 Only players eligible to play may take part in games and competitions announced by the National Federation concerned.
- 5.2 The National Federation must confirm eligibility:
- a) if, in the case of a transfer from one federation to another, once the player is in possession of an International Transfer Certificate approved by the IHF and/or the Continental Confederation concerned, releasing him from the previous federation where he was eligible to play.
  - b) if the player is under 16 at the moment of the request and has not yet played for any other federation.
- 5.3 The National Federation may confirm the eligibility to play in cases 5.2.a) and 5.2.b) only after receipt of the corresponding written approval from the IHF or the Continental Confederation concerned.
- a) if the player has refugee or asylum seeker status and a valid residence permit in the country of the National Federation concerned.
  - b) if the player has not played in any National Federation for the previous 24 months.
- 5.4 If 5.3b) applies, the federation for which the player has last been eligible to play shall confirm the date of the last game in writing. This confirmation shall be submitted within 15 days at the latest following the request. In case no confirmation is submitted in compliance with the deadline, the IHF or the Continental Confederation concerned will be able to grant player eligibility following the request by the new federation.



## ARTICLE 6

---

### VI. National Players

#### 6.1 National team players shall meet the following conditions:

- a) Citizenship of the country concerned.
- b) They shall not have played in any national team of another country in the three years preceding their first appearance in the national team in an official match. Official matches are considered to be: the qualifying matches for a continental

championship, matches in a continental championship, qualifying matches for IHF World Championships and Olympic Games, matches in IHF World Championships and Olympic Games

## **6.2 Player eligibility in case of multiple nationalities**

A player who holds more than one nationality and who complies with 6.1., is eligible to officially represent one of those countries if:

- a) he was born in the territory of the federation concerned or
- b) his biological mother or biological father were born in the territory of the federation concerned or
- c) he has been living in the territory of the federation concerned for more than 24 months in any period of his life.

## **6.3 Change eligibility to play for a National Federation**

It is only permitted to change the National Federation and thus to obtain eligibility to play for a new national team one time.

In case of dissolution of an existing federation or a constitution of a new one, the IHF shall create a separate body to examine the cases should disputes over eligibility arise.



## **ARTICLE 7**

---

## **VII. Release of Players to National Teams**

- 7.1. Players called to play in national teams shall meet the conditions set out in Article 6 of the IHF Player Eligibility Code.
- 7.1.2. A club having a foreign player under contract shall release such player to his National Federation if he is called up to take part in activities of that federation's national team.
- 7.1.3. A club shall release a player to his national team in accordance with 7.1.2. as follows:
  - 7.1.3.1 Olympic Games, World Championships, continental championships:  
Releases shall be limited to a period from 15 days prior to the beginning of the competition to 1 day after the end of the competition.
  - 7.1.3.2. Qualification matches/tournaments for competitions named in 7.1.3.1.:  
Releases shall be limited to a period from 2 days prior to the beginning of the playing period to 1 day after the end of the playing period.

- 7.1.3.3. Other activities of the national team.  
Releases shall be limited to 15 days per season (including day of arrival and departure) according to the international calendar of events.
- 7.1.3.4. With respect to 7.1.3., National Federations and the clubs concerned are free to agree otherwise in writing.
- 7.1.3.5. The dates of releases in accordance with 7.1.3. shall be communicated in writing to the clubs concerned and to the National Federations concerned not later than 30 days prior to the beginning of the national team's activity. In case a player is changing his club the request should be sent on the date that the International Transfer Certificate is issued.

A copy of such an invitation to a national team activity shall also be sent to the IHF and the Continental Confederation concerned.

- 7.2. A club releasing a national player in accordance with Article 7 shall not have any claim to compensation.

### **7.3.**

- 7.3.1 Provided that no other agreement has been made in writing, a federation calling up its player to national team activities shall bear that player's travel and accommodation costs.
- 7.3.2 The club for which the player is eligible to play shall take out insurance coverage for the player in the event of personal injury and resulting consequences for the period for which the player has been called to his federation's activities.

### **7.4.**

- 7.4.1. Should the federation so request, any player unable to follow his federation's call due to illness or injury may be examined by a physician selected by the inviting federation. If the medical advice of the physician chosen by the inviting federation is not the same as the medical advice of the physician of the club to which he belongs, the federation can ask the IHF to name another physician who will examine the player and will give a definitive opinion on his health. The federation concerned shall bear the costs thereof. In this case, the request of the federation must be met within a deadline not exceeding 72 hours.
- 7.4.2. If a player does not follow a call to an activity by his federation in accordance with 7.1. 3., he shall not be eligible to play for his club during a period from two days prior to five days after the relevant playing period.
- 7.4.3. If the player still plays for his club during such period, he shall, at the request of the National Federation concerned, be suspended by the IHF or by the Continental Confederation concerned, from playing in his club's matches for six months.

- 7.4.4. A club which, in violation of these Regulations, fails to release a player who is able to play and who is called up by his National Federation, or prevents such a release, shall be penalised in accordance with the IHF Regulations concerning Penalties and Fines and the disciplinary regulations of the Continental Confederation concerned.



## ARTICLE 8

---

### VIII. Participation in Olympic Games

Participation in the Olympic Games shall be subject to the IHF's and the International Olympic Committee's eligibility codes.

- 8.1. Players participating in the Olympic Games
- a) shall respect the spirit of fair play and inviolability and act accordingly,
  - b) shall use no illegal substances or make use of illegal applications as set forth by IOC and International Handball Federation regulations,
  - c) shall observe the stipulations of the IOC Medical Code and act accordingly.
- 8.2. For the duration of the Olympic Games, players taking part in the Olympic Games shall not permit their persons, names, visual representation or performance to be used for advertising purposes.
- 8.3. There shall be no connection to financial compensation of any kind regarding a player's registration or participation in the Olympic Games.



## ARTICLE 9

---

### IX. Suspensions

Suspensions imposed by the IHF or a Continental Confederation shall also apply to games within member federations during the period of the suspension.



## ARTICLE 10

---

### X. Disputes

In case of any disputes the IHF Head Office will decide. An appeal against the decision of the IHF Head Office may be made to the IHF Arbitration Commission.