

# QUEBEC MARITIMES JUNIOR HOCKEY LEAGUE



## BILLET FAMILY GUIDE

The QMJHL and its teams thank you for your interest in becoming a billet family for our players. Your role is important to us and to the players and their families.

The majority of players do not originate from the city where their team is based and they must live with a billet family. Since they are 16-20-year-old athletes, many are leaving the family nest for the first time and the possibility of a trade to another team means they need a welcoming billet family to offer them a great environment to reduce the stress and uncertainty that comes with living away from their loved ones and in a new city.

This guide was written to help you in your role and in order to clarify the applicable rules.

### **Billet family's mandate**

A billet family has to provide much more than a bed to sleep in. It must prepare nutritious meals, listen to the player, help him comply with rules and offer him support when needed. The player must feel comfortable, just as if he was at home, like a member of your family. Of course, this represents an investment of time, but it might also be a very positive experience for every member of your family.

### **Selection process**

Every billet family parent must go through an interview process and provide references. Criminal record checks will be made for any adult member of the family. A team's billet family manager will visit your home and provide all the required explanations. Every billet family must meet the QMJHL standards.

### **QMJHL's mission**

The Quebec Maritimes Junior Hockey League mission is to develop elite players for professional hockey by supporting them both academically and athletically within a safe and enriching environment in order to prepare them for their adult life.

The QMJHL, its managers and team personnel commit to support you in your role and optimize your experience.

### **Education**

Players' education is a priority for the league and its teams. Every player has the obligation to go to school (see Education policy for more details). They are all enrolled in classes according to their level, where they are from and the programs offered. Each team has an academic advisor whose job is to make sure the players comply with their studies. This is the resource person they can turn to if they have education-related questions. Any unmotivated absence from school must be reported to the team and could lead to sanctions.

### **Shared responsibilities**

Players, their parents and billet families each have responsibilities. If each commit to comply with rules and put in the necessary effort to adapt, everyone's experience will be enjoyable and very rewarding.

Players must behave in a responsible, respectful and ethical manner (see the Players' Code of Conduct for more details). They must comply with rules and adapt to their new environment, with the support of the responsible adults around them. Players must be cooperative and contribute to the harmony of their billet family.

Players' parents and billet families must also be respectful, considerate and cooperative, acknowledging the common objectives and working in the players' best interest. The necessary efforts will be made to ensure a good communication and relieve frustrations and hardships.

Teamwork is important to create a positive impact.

### **Billet family's responsibilities**

#### **Bedroom:**

The player must have his own room where he can enjoy some privacy. The room must be big enough to have a bed (double size if possible) as well as a closet/furniture to keep clothes. If you have kids, it is advisable to explain to them that the player sometimes needs to be alone in his room and to respect his privacy when required. In order to keep a family member from touching his belongings, the player is responsible for keeping his room tidy and in order. You can set a few rules with the player regarding your routines (laundry, room keeping, bathrooms, etc.).

#### **Meals:**

Good nutrition is very important for a player's performance. It is required to have balanced and varied meals. If you wish, you can have recipe suggestions from a nutritionist that works with teams or from the League. These meals are good for all the family and are affordable. Mealtimes can be discussed and are at the billet family's discretion. The player must respect mealtimes and tell his billet family if he is late or if he cannot be present. Players must become familiar with the kitchen, including the dishwasher. Some players are sufficiently autonomous to prepare certain meals, but in principle, they should have their meals prepared and ready for them in most instances. A player can have food preferences, allergies or intolerances and could have specific requests. It is important to talk about these at the beginning with them or their parents. You can adapt to the athlete's tastes, but he must also adapt to your tastes.

#### **During the meal:**

It is not allowed to wear a cap at the dinner table. Players cannot use their phones to speak or send messages when they are at the table with other family members for a meal. These times are often special moments to discuss and enjoy good family time.

**Communication:**

Good communication helps prevent problems. It is important to communicate some important relevant information such as:

- **Orienting the player in your house:** Explain how to use house appliances (washing machine, dryer, oven, electronic appliances, etc.), show him where food, kitchen tools, bedding, towels, etc. are stored.
- **Orienting the player in the city:** Show him how to get to the rink, to school, to the grocery store, to the movie theatre, etc.
- **Identification of a parking space**
- **House rules:** Takings off his shoes when entering the home, stow his clothes, do his dishes, communicate if there is a problematic situation, etc.
- **Rules regarding the Internet, television and the use of a cell phone:** Use must be limited to normal hours. Long-distance calls must be made on the player's personal cell phone or at his own expense. Late calls should not be tolerated. A reasonable time limit must be set for the personal use of the family's Internet , if necessary.
- **Bathroom rules:** Toilet seat, shower schedule, wet towels, where to put his dirty laundry, etc.
- **Game day routine**
- **Curfew and bedtime:** The team will inform you about the curfew imposed on players. Since they are training almost every day, go to school and have several games to play during the season, players must go to bed at a reasonable time. In order to properly rest, players must go to bed before 10:30 p.m. except on game nights and w a special permission from the team.

**Visitors / Lodging for the night**

Visit hours, the number of visitors, occupied rooms in the house, etc. are established with the billet family's approval. A visitor is not immediately allowed to stay overnight with the billet family.

Billet families do not have to offer lodging for persons from out of town who could come to visit players. They can do so, but this is at their sole discretion. Their decision is based on their position on the matter as well as the space available in the house for everyone involved to be at ease with the situation. The player's visitor should not be authorized to sleep in the player's room when he's living with a billet family. If a player wants to invite someone, he must follow these steps:

1. Ask permission to his team's management two (2) weeks in advance;
2. Wait for an answer before making the necessary arrangements;

The team's management will assess the request based on the following criteria:

- Billet family's consent
- Visits' length and frequency
- Player's attitude

Consequences could follow if these steps are not respected.

### **Transportation**

Players and the team are responsible for transportation. Players cannot leave their team's region without the authorization of that team's management.

### **Doctor / Dentist**

The team is responsible for medical or dental appointments.

### **Zero tolerance**

It is strictly forbidden to consume alcohol and drugs, even if a drug is legalized, such as marijuana. The QMJHL has an anti-doping policy and players can be selected for anti-doping tests. Several drugs, such as marijuana are on the list of forbidden substances of the World Anti-doping Agency (WADA) and their usage is a doping violation. Players must also be careful with medications, supplements, vitamins or minerals they consume which could contain forbidden substances. They must not be encouraged to consume such products, except when instructed by a health care professional or a nutritionist.

Other unhealthy behaviours such as smoking, chewing tobacco or unethical bets who could result in money losses are forbidden. They are incompatible with the QMJHL's values and can have a negative impact on the player.

Any inappropriate behaviour must be reported to team management.

The QMJHL has a support program and billet families are encouraged to communicate with the program lead and refer a player if necessary.

### **Relationship with the player**

Billet families benefit from a privileged relationship with the player and a bond of trust is often established. We encourage you to take time to speak to the player. However, refrain from interrogating him, but rather be a listening ear to what he wishes to share. If something important is happening to him, the team will be able to inform you if deemed necessary.

Discussions you will have with the player and his entourage must remain confidential. However, we trust in your judgment regarding some information the player may share that could compromise his safety and that of other people, the team's or the QMJHL's reputation. If such is the case and you are having some doubts, do not hesitate to contact the team or the QMJHL's support program.

Having a position of authority, you must have an exemplary behaviour with the player. The relationship between the family members and the player must be one of support or of a parental nature. You must keep from developing a more "intimate" relationship. This applies to all family members (parents and kids). No improper or inappropriate comment or behaviour will be tolerated.

Any inappropriate behaviour will lead to consequences. Team management will meet with the billet family and the league management will be noticed. The player will be immediately taken out of the billet family and the case will be referred to the police if necessary.

### **Behaviour with the team**

Since your role will create a relationship with the team and the QMJHL, your comments and attitude must be positive regarding both. You must not make derogatory comments on the team or the league in the presence of players and their entourage. The same applies to social media such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. However, if there is a problem or a situation in which you are not comfortable, we encourage you to contact the team or the league.

### **Player's responsibilities**

- The player's behaviour with his billet family must comply with the QMJHL players' code of conduct.
- The player must be courteous and have a respectful behaviour in the home, with billet family members and their entourage as well as with pets if applicable.
- The player must contribute to family life by involving himself with household chores, spending time with family members and respecting his billet family's traditions and set rules.
- The player must make sure his bedroom and any room he uses in the house (kitchen, bathroom, etc.) remains tidy and clean at all time.
- The player must comply with rules set by his billet family, his team and the QMJHL.
- The player must dress appropriately at his billet family's home. Wearing only underwear and being bare-chested will not be tolerated.
- The player must inform his billet family if there is a problem, if he's getting late or if he will miss a meal.
- The player must notice the team if there is an uneasiness with his billet family or if a problem does not settle after discussing it with the billet family.
- A player must put the necessary effort in the classroom and on the ice. He must be disciplined in his studies and have a healthy lifestyle.
- The player must comply with curfews.
- No player can sleep over out of his billet family house or out of town without first getting permission from his team management and noticing his billet family.
- The player must no longer use the phone, a cell phone or a computer after 11 p.m. Only emergency calls will be tolerated.
- Bars are forbidden, except if the player has a special permission from his team management.

### **Parents' responsibilities**

- Parents must trust billet families.
- Parents must not interfere with the billet family's decisions.
- Parents must continue to cover the costs of their son's expenses such as for clothing or personal items, social activities, etc.
- Parents must provide a cell phone to their son or a calling card for long-distance calls.
- Parent must communicate with courtesy and respect with the billet family.
- Parents must provide information on the player's medical history as well as every required document (health insurance card, birth certificate, etc.).
- Parents must provide emergency telephone numbers.
- Parents must inform the billet family if they come to visit.
- Parents still are responsible for their son and they must collaborate if a problem occurs.
- Parents must have an exemplary behaviour in every circumstance.
- Parents must provide all the information and necessary support to help the player adapt to his billet family and contribute to his happiness.

### **Benefits**

- Monetary compensation
- Precious memories of a very positive experience
- Incredible bond with players and their families
- The privilege of being in a relationship with a team and participate in a player's daily life
- Other privileges granted at the discretion of the team

### **Resources**

#### **Here is the list of persons you can contact:**

Team's billet families manager

Team's General manager or any other designated staff member

Team's Academic advisor

QMJHL's support program director:

Jean-Baptiste Bertrand

[jbertrand@lhjmq.qc.ca](mailto:jbertrand@lhjmq.qc.ca)

1-866-803-1969

#### **Here's a list of relevant websites:**

[QMJHL](#)

[Nutrition - Recipes](#)

#### **2 confidential frontline psychological support resources:**

- [Sport'Aide](#): online chat on the link / Phone: 1.833.245.4357 / Text: 1.833.211.2433
- [Kids Help Phone](#) (service available for 18y/o+ as well): online chat on the link  
Phone: 1.800.668.6868