



Hockey Canada Educational Resource

Date: October 1, 2025

Subject: Wearing of Dāstars and Kirpans in Ice Hockey

Hockey Canada has consulted with the World Sikh Organization (WSO) to better understand how we can support participants who observe this practice. The wearing of a dāstar and a kirpan are of religious significance within the Sikh faith for individuals who have been "khande ki paahal" (roughly equivalent to being baptised).

Dāstar (Turban)

At Hockey Canada the safety of our participants is paramount. Given the nature of the sport, the playing surface and implements involved, the helmet and facial protection must fit securely, regardless of what an individual wears underneath their helmet. Organizations are encouraged to work directly with individuals and / or their parents / guardians as they may be able to alter the size and shape of the dāstar to satisfy the safety consideration, alongside the religious observation. If this is not possible, then a patka (a small cloth turban) is to be worn in lieu of the dāstar underneath the helmet.



Image 1: Traditional patka



Image 2: Sport patka



Kirpan

A kirpan is a stylized representation of a sword made from iron or steel, typically 6 – 9 inches in length and must be worn sheathed, wrapped in a cloth belt (gaatra) and swaddled next to the body so that it cannot swing. When worn, it must be encased and in a close fitting/protective covering. A kirpan is a mandatory Sikh article of faith and is carried by initiated (*Amritdhari*) Sikhs at all times. Participants who observe this religious practice are permitted to wear their kirpan while playing ice hockey, provided that it is next to their body, always encased in its protective covering and completely under their equipment. While it is treated like a part of their body, it can be removed, if necessary, in the event of an injury or medical emergency.



Image 3: Kirpan