

92.5% of NHL officials chose to wear it. That's how you know it works.

The Outcome

NHL officials skate at the same speed as players and referee the fastest sport in professional athletics. Until now, they had to glance at arena scoreboards to track period and power play clocks - taking their eyes off a game that never slows down. Presidio built a custom Apple Watch app that delivers haptic alerts synchronized to the official NHL game clock. Adoption was voluntary. 92.5% of on-ice officials use it.

How They Got There

Presidio started by watching officials work - observing games up close and conducting one-on-one interviews to understand which notifications actually mattered on the ice. The answer was clear: only alerts that affect safety. The NHL Watch Comms app uses Apple Watch's haptic engine to deliver distinct tapping patterns for power play endings and period endings, synchronized in real time to the official arena clock.

Why It Worked

Presidio didn't design a feature-rich app. They identified two moments that create genuine safety risk, and built exactly what was needed for those two moments. A 92.5% voluntary adoption rate is the only proof of concept that matters.

The Situation

NHL officials skate at the same speeds as the players and must stay aware of the game clock, the penalty clock, and the on-ice action simultaneously. When a power play is ending, a player exiting the penalty box can collide with an official whose eyes are on the scoreboard. When a period is ending, the same frantic scramble creates the same risk. Officials can't have their eyes in two places at once.

The Approach

Presidio began by understanding the problem from the officials' perspective: observing games up close, watching how officials actually moved and tracked information, and conducting one-on-one interviews. Two situations were identified as creating genuine safety risk: power play endings and period endings. The NHL Watch Comms app was built to use Apple Watch's haptic engine, delivering distinct tapping patterns for each scenario, synchronized in real time to the official NHL arena clock. Several iterations were guided directly by official feedback.

The Result

The NHL Watch Comms app was made available to all on-ice officials on a voluntary basis - no league mandate. 92.5% chose to use it. Officials can keep their attention on the action at all times during the moments that previously created safety risk, without losing awareness of the game clock.

"Presidio learned quickly and delivered a best-in-class product that provides critical information to our on-ice officials." — Carol Dann, VP IT, NHL

92.5%

Voluntary adoption among on-ice officials - not mandated by the league

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Safety-critical alerts built into the app - period end and power play end

Zero

Screen glances required - haptic alerts keep eyes on the ice