ALPENA HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

ALPENA HOCKEY ASSOCIATION DISCIPLINE POLICY

1. Purpose, Scope, and Governing Authority

This policy establishes a consistent, developmentally appropriate response to routine player misconduct during AHA practices and games. Its purposes are safety, accountability, sportsmanship, fair treatment, and timely family communication.

This is an operating policy, not an amendment to the bylaws. It must be read together with the AHA Bylaws (revised March 2026), AHA Rules of Conduct, AHA Dispute Resolution Procedure, and applicable USA Hockey, MAHA, and league requirements. If a conflict exists, the controlling governing requirement applies. This policy does not replace the Conduct Committee process or mandatory external reporting.

2. Progressive Discipline for Routine Misconduct

For routine, non-dangerous misconduct, coaches must follow Steps 1, 2, and 3 in sequence during the incident. A new, unrelated incident ordinarily starts at Step 1, but Step 3 removals accumulate over the same AHA membership season (September 1–August 31).

STEP 1 — VERBAL WARNING

Coach identifies the behavior, explains what must change, and states that continued misconduct will lead to a 10-minute timeout. The player may continue participating.

STEP 2 — 10-MINUTE TIMEOUT

If behavior continues, the coach removes the player from participation for 10 minutes, with appropriate supervision. Before returning, the coach reviews expectations. During games, the timeout must be administered consistently with playing, bench, and roster rules; it is not an official game penalty.

STEP 3 — REMOVAL FROM REMAINDER OF PRACTICE OR GAME

If behavior continues after Step 2, the coach may remove the player from the remainder of that activity. The parent/guardian must be notified as soon as reasonably possible. The player must remain appropriately supervised until released to a parent/guardian or authorized adult. The coach promptly informs the head coach and submits an incident report to the Director of Hockey Operations within 24 hours.

STEP 4 — FORMAL PARENT MEETING AFTER SECOND REMOVAL

A second Step 3 removal during the same AHA membership season automatically triggers a meeting with the head coach, parent/guardian, and player when age-appropriate. The Director of Hockey Operations is notified and may attend or designate an appropriate representative. The meeting should occur before the next team activity where practicable; scheduling the meeting alone does not automatically suspend or make the player ineligible. Create a written behavior plan and review date.

STEP 5 — FORMAL DISCIPLINARY REVIEW AND PRESIDENT INVOLVEMENT

If misconduct continues following Step 4, the head coach refers the matter with documentation to the Director of Hockey Operations and the Conduct Committee chair. The Board President is notified and may convene or participate in a meeting with the family, coach, player when appropriate, and association representatives. The Conduct Committee addresses referred conduct matters under the AHA Rules of Conduct. Recommendations requiring Board action are submitted to the Board; the President does not independently impose a formal suspension or expulsion.

3. Safety Exception and Mandatory Reporting

For fighting, deliberate attempts to injure, serious threats, bullying, harassment, suspected abuse, or other immediate safety risks, coaches must intervene without waiting for Steps 1–3. Separate participants, provide appropriate supervision and medical attention when necessary, notify parents promptly, and promptly notify the Director of Hockey Operations and other required recipients. Follow applicable USA Hockey, MAHA, SafeSport, league, and legal reporting procedures. AHA internal review must not delay or substitute for required reporting or an investigation by the responsible authority.

4. Responsibilities and Referral Process

- Coach/head coach: apply immediate participation consequences, ensure supervision, notify parents, and document incidents. Coaches do not impose future-game or future-practice suspensions on their own.
- Director of Hockey Operations (Current: Jeremy and Caleb): receives Step 3 reports and performs or coordinates investigation of reported or observed conduct violations, consistent with Article VIII of the bylaws; refers matters to the Conduct Committee or other required authority as appropriate.
- Conduct Committee (formed when needed): addresses conduct issues referred to its chair under Article IX, Section 9.04 and follows the existing AHA Rules of Conduct whenever applicable. Committee recommendations have no independent effect as Board actions unless formally approved where required (Section 9.02).
- Board President: oversees coordination and may participate in Step 5, subject to Board direction and control under Section 8.03.
- Board of Directors: retains authority for membership suspension or expulsion by majority vote under Section 5.06 and approves association policies under Section 15.01.

5. Notice, Hearings, Appeals, and Limits of Coach Authority

Removal from the remainder of a single practice or game is an immediate participation-management measure, not automatically a membership suspension or expulsion. A formal sanction affecting future eligibility must follow the authority and procedures required by the AHA bylaws, applicable Rules of Conduct and Dispute Resolution Procedure, and MAHA/USA Hockey requirements.

Under AHA Bylaws Section 5.06, a membership suspension or expulsion requires a majority vote of the Board of Directors. The affected member has seven (7) calendar days after receipt of written notice of suspension or expulsion by certified mail to request an appeal hearing before the Board. Article XVI, Section 16.02(H) also requires fair notice and an opportunity for a hearing before an individual is declared ineligible to participate. The association shall preserve any additional or controlling procedural rights under governing-body rules.

6. Documentation, Fairness, and Player Protection

- At Step 3, Incident Report includes: record date, time, team, location, specific observed behavior, warnings and timeout, witnesses if relevant, parent contact, supervision/transfer arrangements, and follow-up. Submit to the Director of Hockey Operations within 24 hours. Serious incidents are reported promptly regardless of step.
- At Step 4, document the meeting, player expectations, reasonable supports, consequences of continued misconduct, and review date; share appropriately with the parent/guardian and Director of Hockey Operations.

- Do not humiliate, retaliate against, physically punish, or assign punitive conditioning to a player. Apply standards consistently, including when a coach's child is involved.
- If a coach or board participant has a personal conflict, involve an uninvolved representative and follow the bylaws' Board conflict-of-interest provisions when Board action is considered.
- Protect confidentiality and disclose information only to those with a legitimate role or reporting obligation.

7. Existing Team or Coach Discipline Procedures

Coaches may continue using their established disciplinary procedures, provided those procedures do not conflict with the AHA policy.

8. Registration Fees, Credits, and Refunds

Registration fees, team fees, and other participation fees are not refundable or eligible for prorated credits solely because a player receives disciplinary consequences under this policy, including a verbal warning, temporary timeout, or removal from a practice or game.

If a player is suspended from future participation or expelled from the association through the applicable disciplinary process, any request for a refund or credit shall be reviewed in accordance with the AHA Registration Policy, other applicable Board-approved policies, and governing legal requirements.

Disciplinary action does not entitle a player or family to reimbursement for missed practices, games, tournaments, or other team activities.

The AHA Board of Directors retains authority to consider refund requests or exceptions to the extent permitted by existing association policies and applicable law.

9. Adoption and Policy Review

The Board may approve this policy by majority vote under Article XV, Section 15.01. Before adoption, the Board and Conduct Committee should verify consistency with the separately maintained AHA Rules of Conduct and Dispute Resolution Procedure; those documents were not supplied for this drafting review. The Board should review this policy annually and provide it to coaches and families.
Proposed motion: To adopt the AHA Player Discipline Policy as an operating policy, effective on the date approved, subject to consistency with the existing Rules of Conduct, Dispute Resolution Procedure, AHA bylaws, and governing-body requirements.
Board meeting date: _11/18/2026_____ Motion by: __Caleb Montroy_____
Seconded by: _Andy Lappen_____ For: _7_____ Against: __0____ Absent: __3____
Effective date: ___11/19/2026_____

Bylaw Cross-References

AHA Bylaws, revised March 2026: Article II §2.01(c); Article V §§5.02, 5.06; Article VIII §8.03 (President; Director of Hockey Operations); Article IX §§9.02, 9.04; Article XIV §14.03; Article XV §15.01; Article XVI §§16.01(A), 16.02(H).