



NORTHERN TIER STARS

CO-OP AGREEMENT

EFFECTIVE:

2026/2027 • 2027/2028 • 2028/2029 Seasons

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NORTHERN TIER STARS — CO-OP AGREEMENT

The Northern Tier Stars (NTS) proudly stand as a collaborative girls hockey program uniting the Cambridge-Isanti, North Branch, and St. Francis youth hockey associations. As a vital feeder to the NTS high school girls cooperative, we are devoted to growing the game by fostering a competitive and empowering environment that allows every athlete to develop her skills, confidence, and love for hockey.

Our mission goes far beyond the ice. We emphasize character building, leadership, and team-first values that help our players thrive not only as athletes, but as individuals. Through supportive coaching, mutual respect, and an unwavering commitment to positive play, we shape strong teammates and stronger leaders on the rink and in the community.

Together, we play with heart, grow with purpose, and lead with integrity. We are the Northern Tier Stars.

“This agreement is valid for 3 seasons: 2026/27, 2027/28, and 2028/29.”

1 OVERVIEW

1.1 Mission

1.1.1 The mission: create a high-quality girls' hockey program and grow and encourage girls' participation in hockey within all participating associations.

1.2 Duration

1.2.1 This agreement is valid for 3 seasons: 2026/27, 2027/28, and 2028/29.

1.3 Participating Associations

- Cambridge-Isanti Hockey Association (CIHA)
- St. Francis Youth Hockey Association (SFYHA)
- North Branch Area Hockey Association (NBAHA)

1.4 Identity

1.4.1 The co-op shall be named Northern Tier Stars (NTS) and shall register for all events under this name.

1.5 Governing Rules & Regulations

1.5.1 All participating associations agree to follow USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey, and MN Hockey District 10 Rules & Regulations.

1.5.2 Refer to USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey, and MN Hockey District 10 for Rules & Regulations not covered within this agreement.

2 CO-OP COMMITTEE

2.1 Committee Members

2.1.1 Two members from each participating association: the President and Girls Director.

2.1.2 Minimum term for each Girls Director is one year.

2.1.3 Each participating association determines its method for identifying the Girls Director; if none exists, the association will appoint an alternate committee member.

2.2 Committee Voting Requirements

2.2.1 A committee quorum is required for votes.

2.2.2 A quorum = at least one committee member from each participating association.

2.2.3 A majority vote is required for decisions to pass.

2.2.4 If a committee vote is split 50/50, the topic is brought to each participating association for a final decision; each association receives one vote.

2.3 Committee Communication with Home Association

2.3.1 Will share important information with their own association board

2.3.2 Will make sure the home associations website is up to date and correct information on the NTS program.

2.3.3 Communications will be reviewed by Co-op Committee and agreed upon prior to sending to ensure equal communication between all associations when topics are NTS specific.

2.4 District Meetings

2.4.1 Any Co-Op Committee member can represent NTS at District 10 meetings (or a designated committee member may attend)

2.4.2 Communicates pertinent information to the committee, coaches, members, and managers.

3 Parent Advisory Committee (Non Voting)

3.1 Parent Advisory Committee Purpose

3.1.1 The purpose of the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) is to represent the parent group within the co-op to the Co-op Committee and to help run the NTS program with specific tasks.

3.1.2 The PAC can bring suggestions, issues, concerns, and most importantly, solutions to be approved through the Co-op Committee.

3.2 Parent Advisory Committee Volunteers

3.2.1 The PAC is intended to represent the parent group, of all associations within the co-op.

3.2.2 The committee members are made up of volunteers from the participating associations that have a girl in the NTS program.

3.2.3 Members will be approved by the Co-op Committee.

3.2.5 Key Roles and terms defined by the NTS Co-op Committee.

3.2.6 Examples can be but are not limited:

Website and Social Media

Scheduling

Player Development

6U and 8U Coordinator

High School Coordinator

Register

Tournaments

Equipment and Uniforms

Sponsorship and Volunteer

Manager Coordinator

Training

3.3 Parent Advisory Committee Authority

3.3.1 The PAC is authorized to bring any issue, suggestion, concern or solution to the Co-op Committee for final approval.

3.3.2 The committee is not authorized to act on their own and finalize any decisions on their own. The Coop Committee has the final say in all actions.

4. Co-op Committee Assignments

4.1 Saint Francis Youth Hockey Associations and/or Committee Members

4.1.1 Co-op Committee Organizer Duties

- Schedule and coordinate Co-op Committee meetings
- Overseeing agendas and documenting minutes.
- Sending minutes prior to next meeting.
- Next Co-op meeting vote for approval
- Oversee approved minutes are posted to the NTS website.

4.1.2 Ordering Uniforms

- Official NTS uniforms will be selected and approved by the co-op committee.
- All participating associations shall be represented equally on jerseys.
- Teams wear co-op jerseys (not home association jerseys) for all games and scrimmages.
- Costs for jerseys/socks are split by association based on percentage of girls from each association on each team.
- Jersey numbers are determined by NTS membership seniority.

4.1.3 Team and Individual Photos

- Associations may use their preferred photography vendor; however, NTS will strive for consistent branding across all age levels.
- Photo purchase is optional for families.

4.1.4 Pre-Tryout Skates

- SFYHA will coordinate and host all pre-tryout skate sessions for the duration of this agreement.
- Pre-tryout skates are optional but strongly encouraged for player development and evaluation readiness.

4.2 North Branch Hockey Associations Girl Director and President Co-op Committee Assignment

4.2.1 Website Admin responsibilities

- Keep information current
- Notify members of changes
- Initiate communications via the website.
- The website shall list current active co-op committee members

4.2.2 Tournament Registration

- NBAHA will schedule tournaments and playoffs for U10–U15 teams.
- All tournaments must be sanctioned by Minnesota Hockey.
- Ideally, one out of town and two in the metro area.
- Any tournaments above and beyond 3 will be covered by the individual team and approved by coaching staff.
- Teams will be registered as Northern Tier Stars.
- Tournament costs are the responsibility of teams and are split among associations based on percentage of players from each association on each team.
- Regional/State tournament costs are split similarly.

4.2.3 Registrar Duties

- Documentation responsibilities
- Roster creation within the official USA Hockey registration
- Provision of official roster links to the co-op committee remain unchanged.

4.3 Cambridge-Isanti Hockey Association Girl Director and President Co-op Committee Assignment

4.3.1 Ice scheduler

- Coordinates ice scheduling for the co-op.
- Practice and game scheduling follows District 10, Minnesota Hockey, and USA Hockey guidelines.
- Efforts should be made to utilize outdoor ice when weather permits.
- Ice times will be scheduled with the best attempt possible to maintain a balance between East Bethel and Isanti Ice Arenas.
- Ice scheduling is not guaranteed to be equal among associations due to facility availability, seasonal constraints, and program needs. However, the co-op will make every reasonable effort to distribute ice time fairly and transparently.

4.3.2 Tryout Host

- If CIHA cannot host, the co-op committee will vote on an alternate host per voting rules.

5 MEMBERSHIP

5.1 Player Eligibility

5.1.1 Players must be eligible to participate in a participating association and be in good standing with their home association.

5.2 NTS Player Registration

5.2.1 Players register with their home association and make payments to their home association.

5.2.2 After players register with their home association, they need to register with NTS.

5.2.3 Registration is monitored by each association and shared with the Co-op Committee.

6 Age Classifications & Divisions

6.1 Age Classifications

6.1.1 Supported age classifications: 6U (Mini Stars), 8U, 10U, 12U, 15U (Girls).

6.1.2 Age definitions follow Minnesota Hockey rules.

6.2 Divisions supported

6.2.1 6U level for Mite D

6.2.2 8U level A, B

6.2.3 10U and 12U A, B1, B2

6.2.4 15U A, B

7 Team Declarations

7.1.1 NTS intends to field teams annually at the listed age classifications and place teams in divisions appropriate to skill level.

7.1.2 Teams will be balanced to be as equally competitive as possible, if there are two or more teams at the same age and level.

8.Specialized Training

8.1.1 The co-op supports specialized training opportunities such as Cal Miska, MEGA, Body Contact, and other approved third-party development programs that.

8.1.2 Specialized training offered by participating associations will be reviewed and approved by a majority vote of the co-op committee.

8.1.3 Full participation in specialized training is an expectation.

8.1.4 Costs are split among associations based on percentage of players from each association on each team.

8.1.5 Any specialized training promoted or endorsed by NTS must be reviewed and approved by a majority vote of the co-op committee.

8.1.6 Off-ice training decisions and costs are determined by the co-op committee and split by association based on percentage of players on each roster.

9 Locker Room Policy

9.1.1 All locker room use must follow USA Hockey SafeSport, MN Hockey, and District 10 policies.

9.1.2 Each team must ensure at least one SafeSport-certified adult is present and monitoring locker rooms before and after practices and games.

9.1.3 No recording devices (phones, tablets, cameras) may be used inside locker rooms at any time.

9.1.4 Associations are responsible for communicating locker room expectations to parents and players annually.

9.1.5 Associations agree to enforce the NTS Locker Room Policy

10.1 Apparel

10.1.1 Official NTS apparel (warm-ups, hats, spirit wear, etc.) will be offered through all associations apparel vendors.

10.1.2 Co-op Committee members will communicate with the committee when there is an available apparel order open.

10.1.3 Apparel designs must be approved by a majority vote of the co-op committee.

10.1.4 Apparel purchases are optional unless designated as required team gear by the co-op committee.

11.1 Equipment

11.1.1 All players receive equipment support through their home association, following that association's policies.

11.1.2 Any co-op-wide equipment purchases must be approved by the co-op committee and cost-shared based on roster percentages.

12.1 Association Support for Teams

12.1.1 All members of each NTS team are required to provide operational support throughout the season. Duties include, but are not limited to, clock and scoreboard operation, penalty box coverage, locker room supervision, and other game-day volunteer roles. The team manager will assign responsibilities equitably among all families, excluding those serving on the coaching staff. Families unable to fulfill an assigned duty are responsible for securing their own replacement.

13 PLAYER MOVE-UPS

13.1 General

All Minnesota Hockey, USA Hockey, and District 10 rules apply for grade move-ups. Players and home associations are responsible for providing required documentation.

13.2 Grade Move-Up

Players may move up to play with their school grade; NTS Co-op committee review and approve grade move-up requests.

13.3 Need Move-Up

Need move-ups (to complete a roster) are reviewed by the co-op committee. Identified players are invited to tryouts and placement is based on tryout process.

13.4 Skill Move-Up

Skill move-ups (players significantly above their age classification) require a co-op committee review. When possible, a tryout invitation and final committee review after tryouts. Skill move-up approval is valid for one season.

14 TRYOUTS

14.1 Tryout Policy

Tryouts are conducted under the current NTS Tryout Policy.

14.2 High School Eligible Players

Players who try out for high school teams are not guaranteed a spot on an NTS team if they return to youth hockey and are encouraged to attend NTS tryouts for proper placement.

14.3 Youth Tryouts

Players who attend youth hockey tryouts with a participating association are not eligible to attend NTS girls' tryouts.

14.4 Sibling Placement Requests

Sibling placement requests must be submitted prior to tryouts and will be honored if siblings are in the same age level. Placement is based on the lowest tryout score of the siblings.

15 COACHES and Team Staff

15.1 Coach Selection Committee

15.1.1 10U-15U Consists of the Girl Directors and Coaching Director from each association (or designee).

15.1.2 6U and 8U Consists of the Girl Directors and Mite Director from each association (or designee).

15.2 Coaching Application Procedure

15.2.1 Applications submitted via NTS Website.

15.2.2 Coach Selection Committee reviews applications

15.2.3 Coach Selection Committee conducts interviews for head coach candidates.

15.2.4 Coach Selection Committee forwards recommendations to the co-op committee for final decision.

15.2.5 Coaches must obtain required USA Hockey certifications and clear background checks.

15.2.6 Head coach and team manager must attend required District 10 functions.

15.2.7 The co-op committee will strive to have coaches from each association on every team.

15.3 Coaching Requirements

15.3.1 Coaches must follow USA Hockey, MN Hockey, and District 10 policies.

15.3.2 A coach may be a Head Coach of only one team and may serve as Assistant Coach for additional teams.

15.3.3 Head coach roles must be prioritized for the appointed team.

15.4 Non-Parent Coaches

15.4.1 The co-op committee encourages the recruitment and development of non-parent coaches to support program consistency and competitive development.

15.4.2 Priority for non-parent coaching assignments will be given to teams with higher competitive needs or limited parent-coach availability.

15.4.3 Salary structure is determined by Co-op Committee

15.4.4 The salary and reimbursement will be covered by the based association of origin and split evenly by each association.

15.5 Team Staff

15.5.1 All staff must meet USAH requirements.

15.5.2 Each team must have a team manager. Per D10 rules- No spouse of a team coach is allowed to be the team manager.

15.5.3 Teams will consist of a minimum of 1 Head Coach and 1 assistant coach.

15.5.4 Additional staff can include Team Treasurer and/or Scrimmage Coordinator.

15.5.5 Representation from all associations is recommended.

16 Development

16.1 The co-op will focus on age and skill level development and provide equitable development resources.

17 Complaints and Disciplinary Actions

17.1.1 The co-op committee handles complaints and disciplinary actions in accordance with the NTS Parent/Player Code of Conduct.

18 Mite Level 6U and 8U

18.1 6U and 8U Jamboree

18.1.1 All Participating Associations Mite Directors and/or the specific team head coach will coordinate up to 3 jamborees for 6U and 8U teams. With two (2) of those being the St. Francis Mite Jamboree and the Cambridge-Isanti Mite Jamboree, unless scheduling prevents participation.

18.1.2 No out-of-state tournaments except approved cross/half-ice jamborees.

18.1.3 Jamborees must be non-competitive (no scores, standings, or stats).

18.2 Divisions Levels

18.2.1 6U level for Mite D

18.2.2 8U level A, B

18.3 Mite Progress Benchmark

18.3.1 6U and 8U are invited to SFYHA and CIYHA progress benchmarks

18.3.2a Association coaches run stations (Figure 8, Puck control weave, Stop and Start, Forward/backward)

18.4 8U Game Rules

18.4.1 Game rules should be agreed on by both coaches before the game starts

- Players 8 years old and under.
- A minimum of one coach, maximum of four coaches, will be allowed on the bench during games.
- The scoreboard will be used for time keeping only. No scores or penalties will be posted.
- Ice time available for each game is one hour.
- Ice will be resurfaced at the beginning of each game. There will be no resurface between periods.
- Penalties will only be called for teaching purposes. If a penalty is called, that player will be escorted by the coach (play will not be stopped) to their respective player bench for the remainder of their shift. Coach(es) of that player are encouraged to explain the reason for the penalty and how to avoid it.
- Faceoffs will occur at the beginning of each period, stop in play, and after a goal is scored. They will always be at the "Center ice" faceoff position.
- Game time breakdown:
 - a. 5-minute warm-up
 - b. Two 24-minute, run-time periods
 - c. Horn will blow every two minutes for line changes
 - d. 2-minute rest between periods
 - e. No timeouts will be allowed.
- Cross-ice or half-ice play is the standard. Boards or Foam rink dividers will be used to divide the ice.
 - Two teams will share each player's box and use one door per team. so, players will be required to enter/exit the same door.
 - After **January 15**, may play up to **7 full-ice games** (4 league + 3 optional).
- No regular goalies
 - mandatory goalie rotation
- Play with black Pucks
- Game Limits: Mite B Maximum 25 games/events per season.
- Play only within District 10 unless approved by the District Director.
- Focus is on skill development (skating, passing, shooting, puck handling).
- No standings, no stats, no competitive focus.
- Use the intermediate Nets
- 3 vs 3, 4 vs 4, or 5 vs 5
- Coach on Ice if no officials scheduled
- 18 and up volunteers needed for time clock and ice setup each game.

18.5 6U D Game Rules

18.5.1 Game rules should be agreed on by both coaches before the game starts

- Players 6 years old and under.
 - Classified as Mini-Mites within the Mite program.
 - Games are cross-ice or half-ice only.
 - Designed for beginners and less experienced players.
 - Games use blue pucks
 - Dedicated goalies will not be allowed (i.e., no players dressed in goalie equipment).
 - On ice coaches are to act as Referees. Prefer one coach from each team must be on skates on the ice for each game.
 - No penalties will be called. If a "Coach" sees a player misconducting themselves, that player will be removed from the ice.
 - Faceoffs will only occur at the beginning of each period.
 - When a goal is scored, players are required to "tag up" back to their own half of the playing area prior to resuming offensive play.
 - Game time breakdown:
 - a. 5-minute warm-up
 - b. Two 24-minute, run-time periods
 - c. Horn will blow every two minutes for line changes
 - d. 2-minute rest between periods
 - e. No timeouts will be allowed.
 - No standings, no stats, no competitive focus.
 - 3 vs 3, 4 vs 4, or 5 vs 5
 - Use the mini nets (no goalies)
 - May play up to 4 half/cross-ice games of 45 minutes or less per day.
 - Rest between activities can be reduced to 1¼ hours for 60-minute sessions or 45 minutes for 45-minute sessions.
 - 18 and up volunteers needed for time clock and ice setup each game.
-

19 FEES & BILLING

19.1 Hockey Fees

19.1.1 Up-front co-op costs should be split as equally as possible.

19.1.2 Registration fees (ice, billing, operational fees) are collected by each home association.

19.1.3 Team costs (ice, tournaments, District 10 fees, uniforms, etc.) will be reconciled and reimbursed to the funding association based on true cost per skater and final team makeup.

19.1.4 Budget reconciliations occur March 31 each season.

19.1.5 The NTS Finance Committee (Treasurers from each association) will prepare reconciliations and itemized invoices; payment due within 30 days.

19.2 Refunds

Refunds follow home association policies.

20 HEALTH & SAFETY

20.1.1 All participants must follow USA Hockey, MN Hockey, and District 10 health and safety policies.

20.1.2 Violations are reported to the co-op committee and reviewed for disciplinary action.

21 ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY & APPEALS

21.1 Member Eligibility

21.1.1 The co-op committee may suspend or revoke membership for code-of-conduct violations or for members not in good standing.

21.1.2 Suspension/revocation may be by private hearing and super-majority vote (5/6).

21.1.3 Reinstatement requires a majority vote.

21.2 Appeals

21.2.1 Suspensions may be appealed to participating association presidents.

21.2.2 Presidents may reinstate with a 2/3 vote; their decisions are final.

21.2.3 Coaches and girls directors are responsible for informing affected parties.

21.2.4 Severe incidents may be escalated to the full co-op committee and District 10 Board.

22 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

- 22.1.1 Grievance procedures for disputes between team/association members, co-op committee members, and team officials
- 22.1.2 Initial calm discussion,
- 22.1.3 24-hour cooling-off period
- 22.1.4 Signed grievance letter
- 22.1.5 meetings with girls director and appointed mediators
- 22.1.6 Documentation.
- 22.1.7 The process aims to resolve grievances within 15 days and keep records on file with the NTS co-op.

23 CODE OF CONDUCT

23.1 Code of Conduct

- 23.1.1 Conduct, sportsmanship expectations, and progressive disciplinary steps for player, team official, and parent/spectator misconduct remain in force as written in NTS Policies.
- 23.1.2 Including zero-tolerance enforcement and progressive suspensions for repeat offenses.

24 Volunteer Requirements and Fundraising

24.1 VOLUNTEER / DIBS HOURS

- 24.1.1 Refer to home association rules.

24.2 Fundraising

- 24.2.1 Teams may plan additional fundraising to apply to team specific season costs.
- 24.2.2 Co-op specific fundraisers will be managed through association treasurers.

25 AMENDMENTS / YEARLY REVIEW

- 25.1.1 A yearly review of this agreement shall take place between each season.
- 25.1.2 All amendments must be reviewed and approved by each association's Board of Directors before August 1 of the applicable season.

26 OPT-OUT CLAUSE

26.1.1 A majority vote by the Board of Directors of CIHA, SFYHA, or NBAHA required to opt out.

26.1.2 Written opt-out notification must be delivered to the other two associations' Boards.

26.1.3 Opt-out must occur after completion of the current season but no later than June 1 of that year.

Administrative Duties and Dates (Summary)

- Committee Coordinator: SFYHA
 - Uniforms: SFYHA
 - Photo/Pictures: SFYHA
 - Tryout Host: CIHA
 - Website Admin: NBAHA
 - Tournament: NBAHA
 - Registrar: NBAHA
 - Ice Scheduler: CIHA
 - Pre-skates Host: SFYHA
 - Budget reconciliations: March 31 each season.
 - Amendment approval deadline: August 1 each season.
 - Opt-out deadline: June 1 (after season completion).
-

Signatures

Cambridge-Isanti Hockey Association President:

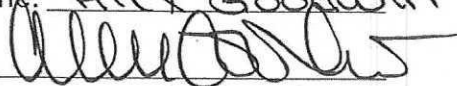
Printed Name: Lucas Armstrong

Signature: 

Date: 7/26/26

St. Francis Youth Hockey Association President:

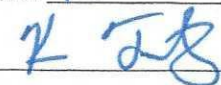
Printed Name: Alex Goodwin

Signature: 

Date: 7/26/2026

North Branch Area Hockey Association President:

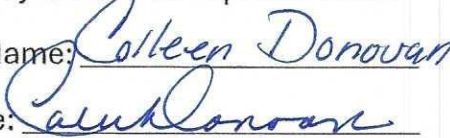
Printed Name: KEW FRATE

Signature: 

Date: 7/26/2026

MN Hockey District 10 Representative:

Printed Name: Colleen Donovan

Signature: 

Date: 7-30-2026