



## Appleton Area Hockey Association (AAHA)

### Policy

### Conduct

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Approved by: AAHA Board of Directors 2/18/2025

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This document describes the Appleton Area Hockey Association (AAHA) Code of Conduct Committee Guidance Policy. There is a separate FORM to document conduct and behavior complaints. The following sections are part of this guidance policy:

- I. Purpose
- II. Code of Conduct Committee Members
- III. Confidentiality Requirement
- IV. Responsibilities
- V. Complaint Procedures
- VI. Investigation of Complaint
- VII. Incident Guidelines
- VIII. Penalties and Violations

- I. **Purpose** – The Appleton Area Hockey Association promotes good sportsmanship by all participants; this includes, but is not limited to coaches, players, volunteers, parents and officials. This policy governs ALL participants before, during, and after all AAHA sponsored events (i.e. home and away games, social functions, and overnight stays at hotels). When situations and circumstances arise that are not covered specifically by this policy, the Code of Conduct (CoC) Committee will decide, based upon the best interest of the Association, and in accordance with its general principals.

The purpose for implementing this program is as follows:

- A. AAHA members must display good sportsmanship on and off the ice while visiting other associations, when hosting home events, or while participating in community activities while representing AAHA.
- B. The CoC Committee wants to ensure all AAHA members are proud of their association while enjoying a program that promotes player growth in the sport of hockey and character development both on and off ice.
- C. AAHA will abide by and enforce all of USA Hockey's and Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association's (WAHA) Code of Conduct Policies and Procedures as well as USA Hockey's Zero Tolerance Policy.

II. **Committee Members:**

The CoC Committee members will be appointed by the President of the AAHA Board of Directors with a majority approval by the Board of Directors at the beginning of the AAHA season. All members on the committee will have an equal vote on any issue brought to the committee for resolution. The committee will be comprised of 5 members with active registered player(s) for the current season. Attempts will be made on behalf of the organization to ensure equal representation in the following manner:



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CoC Committee from each:

- 14U / 12U
- 12U / 10U
- 10U / 8U
- 8U / 6U
- One coach appointed to the committee via the Coaches Committee

Code of Conduct Committee Chairperson: This position will be held by an active CoC Committee member and will be appointed by the President of AAHA.

Code of Conduct Committee Liaison: This position is held by an active member of the AAHA Board of Directors and will be appointed by the President of AAHA. The CoC Committee Liaison will be the deciding vote if an incident resolution results in a split decision.

Any committee member who has a conflict of interest in a conduct situation or investigation or has an alleged conflict of interest in a conduct situation or investigation due to personal relationships or otherwise, will have their situation reviewed by the chairperson of the committee. The chairperson will determine whether the committee member can or should remain involved with the situation or investigation. If necessary, the result of this review can be challenged by bringing the situation to the President of the association for further review. Any conflict of interest involving the committee chairperson will be reviewed by the remaining members of the committee and the result should be brought to the President of the association for final determination.

### III. Confidentiality Requirement:

- A. Each member of the committee will exercise care not to disclose confidential information acquired in connection to their status as a member of the Code of Conduct Committee as the disclosure may be averse to the interest of USA Hockey, WAHA or AAHA.
- B. Information received by a Code of Conduct Committee Member in the performance of his/her responsibilities as a committee member will be treated as confidential unless otherwise determined by the Board of Directors.
- C. The CoC may seek assistance from outside the association to investigate incidents which the committee believes need an objective third party to document and report back to the CoC for review. The CoC will use this report to determine resolution of the incident.
- D. Any breach of confidentiality or allegation of a breach of confidentiality can result in an immediate suspension and/or a Code of Conduct investigation. The CoC Committee will have the opportunity to appoint an interim member during any suspension and investigation if the chairperson of the committee deems this necessary. The interim member, in this instance, would need to be approved by a Board of Directors majority vote.

### IV. Responsibilities:

- A. Head Coach (per team)
  - 1. Resolve minor incidents.
  - 2. Authority to suspend a player for a maximum of ONE game.



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3. Submit in writing, to the Chairperson of the Conduct Committee, by use of a Conduct Complaint Form, within five (5) days of any player receiving a coach's suspension or major incident. With any Conduct Complaint Form submitted, the coach should document their disciplinary action or make a recommendation for what disciplinary action he/she thinks would be appropriate.
4. Enforce the USA Hockey Official Rules of Ice Hockey, WAHA Guidebook, and AAHA Policies and Procedures.

#### B. Code of Conduct Committee

1. Initiate a CoC investigation if informal mediation has failed to resolve the issue.
2. Authority to increase or decrease any and all individual or team suspensions, if the minimum standards of WAHA and USA Hockey are enforced.
3. Enforce the Official Playing Rules, Policies and Procedures of USA Hockey, WAHA and AAHA.
4. Report to the Board of Directors the issue and action taken through the Code of Conduct Committee minutes given by the Chairperson of the CoC Committee at the AAHA Board of Directors meeting.
5. Keep all personal information confidential.
6. Maintain overall authority for any conduct violations.
7. Keep on record all Conduct Committee meeting minutes, all submitted Conduct Complaint Forms (resolved or unresolved), WAHA or USA Hockey Disciplinary letters, and any other pertinent information regarding disciplinary actions. The Chairperson of the Code of Conduct Committee will be responsible for the safe and confidential keeping of this file.

#### V. Complaint Procedure:

##### A. Step One

1. Contact the person or persons involved. This can be done via email, or in person, preferable with a non-bias third party present. When making contact stick to the topic and only discuss facts. Should this involve a minor, no attempt shall be made to make contact in any way. Contact shall be made with a coaching staff member.
2. Once first contact has been made all parties involved shall document date, time, and topic of discussion.

##### B. Step Two

1. If the issue cannot be resolved between the two members concerned, approach the team's head coach. The head coach will meet with all parties and assist in resolving the issue. If the head coach is unable to achieve an agreement between the parties, a representative of the CoC Committee should be contacted. The CoC member will assist the parties in coming to a mutual resolution of the complaint. If it cannot be resolved at this level, proceed to step three. If the complaint is resolved at this level, a Conduct Complaint Form should be filled out by the committee member and submitted to the Chairperson of the CoC Committee to place in a file for safe keeping.
2. If the issue involves a coach and after meeting with the coach, an agreement is not reached, discuss the situation with the CoC Committee coach's representative to see if a



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resolution can be achieved. If it cannot, proceed to step three. The coaches' representative on the CoC Committee will fill out a complaint form and submit it to the Chairperson of the CoC.

#### C. Step Three

1. If a complaint cannot be resolved, submit in writing, to the Chairperson of the CoC or a member of the board, a Conduct Complaint Form (marked "unresolved"), detailing the issue including the steps taken in trying to resolve the concern. Conduct Complaint Forms may be obtained via the AAHA website.
2. The Conduct Committee will review the issue and meet with all parties (according to the Conduct Committee Hearing Procedure) and come to a decision that is final for the resolution of the complaint, pending the next AAHA Board of Directors meeting at which the CoC Committee's actions will be presented by the Chairperson of the Conduct Committee. There is no appeal process after the AAHA Board of Directors have heard the committee's actions and resolution(s) to the complaint.

#### VI. Investigation of Complaint

The submission of a complaint form to the Conduct Committee will initiate a formal investigation. Contact will be made with the parties involved and a complaint number will be assigned to the investigation. The Chairperson will determine the scope of the complaint, and the number of Conduct Committee members needed for the investigation, taking into consideration personal relationships with the parties involved to avoid conflicts of interest. A minimum of two CoC Committee members will be assigned to each complaint. The CoC chairperson reserves the right to have individuals outside of AAHA complete the investigative portion of the complaint. An assigned member of the CoC or outside investigators will conduct a thorough investigation. The investigation will include speaking with and interviewing all parties involved or alleged to be involved in the incident to include potential witnesses. Members conducting the interviews may take notes as to capture details of the interview for later completion of an investigation memo that will be submitted to members of the AAHA Board of Directors. Completed investigations will be submitted to the Chairperson of the CoC. The Chairperson will then call a meeting with members of the CoC Committee. The Chairperson will discuss the findings with the Conduct Committee members who completed the investigation. As a committee, the CoC will determine their recommendation for further action by majority rule of CoC members. The Code of Conduct Committee will prepare a written decision to the person(s) within five (5) days following the CoC review hearing of the investigation. The written decision shall contain finding of the material facts, conclusions and the recommendation for disciplinary action or non-action taken. The official written summary will be attached to the original Conduct Complaint Form. All CoC Committee actions will be provided to the AAHA Board of Directors by the Chairperson of the CoC Committee, the CoC Liaison, or their appointed substitute at the next scheduled AAHA Board of Directors meeting. The AAHA Board of Directors will serve as the final appeal process.

#### VII. Incident Guidelines:

A. *Class I Incidents* – non-serious incidents that involve, but are not limited to: unruly behavior, inappropriate language, poor sportsmanship or not being a good teammate. The following are not



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considered “conduct” related incidents: playing time, coaching philosophy, practice utilization, or playing position. Concerns over these matters should be discussed with the team’s head coach.

B. *Class II Incidents* – incidents, serious in nature, that involve but are not limited to: repeat violations of a Class I incident, bullying, hazing, sexual or physical assault, abuse of alcohol or controlled substances, stealing or vandalism of property.

C. *Suspension* – AAHA does not have an automatic suspension for non-playing rules violations. Each incident will be reviewed, and the appropriate action or non-action will be taken. Player rules violation, while on the ice, will be enforced per the current USA Hockey and WAHA rules and guidelines.

D. *Non-hockey related suspension* – AAHA encourages all its members to be good citizens and students. In the event of a community or school infraction (i.e. school suspension), AAHA, its board, and its coaches, will support a parent or guardian’s decision to remove a player from practice or games as they determine necessary. As soon as a parent or guardian-imposed suspension has been lifted, the player will return to the team in good standing.

E. *Alcohol, Drug, and Tobacco Use* – Coach, Players, and the Association understand and agree that the best interests of the Coach, Players, and Association are vitally dependent upon the elimination of any and all use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco by a Player; use of alcohol and any and all use of illicit or inappropriately utilized prescription drugs by a Coach during an AAHA sanctioned event. AAHA sanctioned events include games, practices, off-ice sessions, and any other athletic event deemed to be under the AAHA supervision. Players therefore warrant that at no time during the term of the season will he or she use alcohol, illicit or inappropriately utilized prescription drugs and tobacco. Coaches therefore warrant that at no time during an AAHA sanctioned event, including the time that occurs between multiple games in a single day will he or she use alcohol, illicit or inappropriately utilized prescription drugs or tobacco. Coaches attending team parties, banquets or other get-togethers that do not occur between games on a single day or between other AAHA sanctioned events may responsibly use alcohol.

## VIII. Penalties and Violations

A. Class I violations carry a penalty of up to one (1) week suspension from all practices, games, and/or any team activity. The suspension begins when the CoC has reached a decision on the issue; however, the CoC has the authority to immediately suspend the offender until the investigation is complete. This time will count towards the overall suspension period.

Class I violations include, but are not limited to:

1. Use of obscene or vulgar language or gestures to anyone at anytime
2. Abusive language (toward players, coaches, parents, officials, other players, and spectators)
3. Taunting of players, coaches, officials, or spectators by means of baiting, or ridiculing
4. Addressing a coach, official, player or volunteer in an unsportsmanlike, discourteous, or threatening manner
5. Questioning the authority of the coach(s) coaching during or after practices or games
6. Questioning the authority of the referee(s) during or after games
7. Approaching a coach or referee immediately (less 24 hours) following a game to voice a complaint



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B. Class II violations carry a penalty of up to thirty (30) day suspension from all practices, games, and/or any team activity. The suspension begins when the CoC has reached a decision on the issue; however, the CoC has the authority to immediately suspend the offender until the investigation is complete. This time will count towards the overall suspension period.

Class II violations include, but are not limited to:

1. Threats of physical violence towards any player, coach, parent, official, AAHA volunteer, or spectator
2. Throwing of any object in the spectators viewing area, players bench, penalty box, in the locker room, or on the ice surface, that in any manner creates a safety hazard
3. Intentionally shoving or striking a player, coach, or official during any AAHA function, whether in the locker room, on the ice, or at any time the team is getting together
4. Public disparagement of other members
5. Three or more Class I violations of the same offense
6. A Coach's failure to comply with a Code of Conduct Committee investigation
  - Per USA Hockey's Screening Policy: *Coaches cooperate in ethics investigations, proceedings, and resulting requirements of USA Hockey and any of its member organizations. Failure to cooperate is itself an ethics violation.*
7. Failure of any parent, member, player, or coach to cooperate in a conduct investigation in which they are named or in a conduct reporting activity in which they are named

C. Class III violations carry a penalty of a one (1) year minimum suspension from the program up to permanent termination from the AAHA organization. The suspension begins when the CoC has reached a decision on the issue; however, the CoC has the authority to immediately suspend the offender until the investigation is complete. For Class III violations penalties will require ratification by a 2/3 majority of the Board of Directors, at a meeting where there is a quorum of the Board.

Class III violations include, but are not limited to:

1. Use of alcohol or drugs at the arena or official team function (this does not apply to consumption of alcohol at a restaurant, hotel, or home after scheduled games or practices if the member is of legal age).
2. Physical abuse of a player, coach, parent, official, AAHA volunteer, or spectator
3. Activities that violate State or Federal Laws which create a safety risk to any member of the organization.
  - 948.03 Physical abuse of a child
  - 948.02 Sexual assault of a child
  - 948.07 Child enticement
  - 948.11 Exposing a child to harmful material or harmful descriptions or narrations
  - Any alleged or open investigation involving violations of Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 948.
4. Subsequent Class II violations of the same offense or third offense of a Class I violation

#### D. Scope of Suspension:

Except as set forth in the Bylaws of USA Hockey or WAHA, any suspension invoked after the hearing shall be in effect only for the program governed by the suspending authority, subject to the applicable state association of Affiliate Association's authority to review, affirm, extend or modify the action taken. If the suspending authority wishes to extend any suspension it ordered beyond its program, it must notify WAHA as applicable.