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## 2024-2025 AHAI RULES & REGULATIONS

The Rules and Regulations governing amateur hockey in Illinois are covered in the USA Hockey Annual Guide, USA Hockey Rule Book, and the AHAI Annual Guide.

Additional rules which may be required to be enacted by the AHAI Board of Directors that are “in the best interests of hockey” may not be included in this publication. Please consult the AHAI web site for the most current version of these Rules and Regulations.

AHAI Rules and Regulations are available at [www.ahai.org](http://www.ahai.org)

### ARTICLE 1 MEMBERSHIP & GENERAL PRINCIPLES

#### 1.0 MEMBERSHIP and ACTIVITIES

1.0.1 The membership of AHAI shall be comprised of all Amateur Players, Coaches, Volunteers, Officers (registered as volunteers), Directors, and Officials meeting the definition stated in the Amateur Hockey Association of Illinois, Inc. By-Law 4.0. All capitalized terms used but not defined herein shall have the meaning ascribed to such term in the Amended and Restated By-Laws of AHAI.

1.0.2 Associate Members shall be comprised of recognized Affiliate Organizations, Leagues, Ice Rinks, Manufacturers Representatives, Officials Association and those AHAI has deemed as having significant interest in amateur hockey such as applicants for Association Membership or Affiliate Organization membership, those engaged in the Dispute Resolution Procedure regarding Associate Membership or Affiliate Organization applications, and those approved to submit proposed changes to the AHAI By-Laws, Rules & Regulations, and Policies.

1.0.3 Associate Members shall not be entitled to a vote in the Corporation. No individual players, coaches, volunteers, or teams may register as Associate Members.

#### 1.2 PERMITTED AID

Scholarships, grants, or financial aid, administered by an Affiliate Organization are permitted pursuant to a written policy of the Affiliate Organization under the following conditions:

- a. Which grants assistance to players based upon the written evidence of financial need of the player
- b. Based upon the player's family's ability to pay
- c. Is made available to all players that meet the criteria
- d. Is administered consistent with the directives of AHAI
- e. Is permitted and will not be considered pay in any form

#### 1.3 PERMITTED BENEFITS

1.3.1 Funds raised by an Affiliate Organization or any of its subdivisions, including individual teams, to defray the expenses of organizational activities or of team activities is permitted.

*(Exception: Those funds raised or earmarked for a specific player are prohibited.)*

1.3.2 The benefits which inure to the team as a whole may be expended to reduce the expenses of each and every team member/participant equally provided the benefit is available to all who meet the criteria within the participating group.

1.3.3 Permitted expenses are limited to actual and necessary coaching, travel and per diem, equipment, team equipment, including but not limited to, wearables, jerseys, and expenses for practice and competition.

1.3.4 Funds raised and being used for expenses other than those listed must be submitted to AHAI in writing for approval. Further, any player's parent or other adults may make donations directly to the Affiliate Organization.

1.3.5 The decision as to how the money is used rests exclusively with the Affiliate Organization.

1.3.6 Donations may not be earmarked by the donator for a specific individual within the Affiliate Organization.

#### **1.4 WAIVER**

An Affiliate Organization may waive the player fees provided the individual qualifies for the waiver under the Affiliate Organization's established waiver policy and the athletic ability of the participant is not a part of the criteria under such a policy.

#### **1.5 NCAA PROVISIONS ON AMATEURISM**

1.5.1 Commencing with the first game played in the 9th grade, current NCAA regulations apply to all college-bound athletes. NCAA restrictions regarding amateurism may disqualify players from further participating at the collegiate level.

Specific information is located on the NCAA Eligibility Center website:

<https://www.ncaa.org/student-athletes/future/amateurism>

Specifically, the sport of Ice Hockey:

[http://fs.ncaa.org/Docs/eligibility\\_center/ECMIP/Amateurism\\_Certification/Amat\\_DI\\_Ice\\_Hockey.pdf](http://fs.ncaa.org/Docs/eligibility_center/ECMIP/Amateurism_Certification/Amat_DI_Ice_Hockey.pdf)

This pdf document may be updated from time to time.

1.5.2 NCAA Amateurism Rules may not allow for an arrangement where an athlete is sponsored or is provided money to cover player fees either directly to the player who cannot pay the fee or specifically to cover that player's fees.

## **ARTICLE 2 AFFILIATE AGREEMENT**

#### **2.1 AFFILIATE ORGANIZATION DEFINITION**

A group of Participants/Members as defined in AHAI By- Law Article 4 that comprise at least three (except High School which may have one team) teams in an Organization that is authorized on a nonexclusive basis as an "Affiliate Organization" under AHAI.

#### **2.2 AUTHORITY – JURISDICTION**

Affiliate Organization Status/Authority: An Affiliate Organization is to develop players and teams in Illinois and is encouraged to do so primarily of Illinois players as well as conduct the affairs of the Affiliate Organization in accordance with the By-Laws, Rules & Regulations of AHAI and USA Hockey and within the level authorized by AHAI.

#### **2.3 AUTHORIZED SERVICES**

The Affiliate Organization is authorized to perform and/or provide other services or functions to promote and regulate the play of the sport of amateur hockey as an Affiliate Organization of AHAI in the Affiliate Organization's Authorized Level.

#### **2.4 AUTHORITY**

2.4.1 Separate Organization:

The Affiliate Organization is and shall be a separate Organization/Entity from AHAI.

2.4.2 Conduct Its Affairs and Programs:

The Affiliate Organization is the Organization who shall have initial authority to conduct its affairs and programs. The Affiliate Organization shall be responsible for the conduct

of its affairs and programs, including, but not limited to, the conduct of its Directors, Officers, Officials, Players, Parents, Coaches, Administrators, Fans, and Participants in accordance with the By-Laws, Rules & Regulations of AHAI and USA Hockey.

**2.4.3 Annual Basis:**

The Affiliate Organization's authorization shall be on a year-to-year basis, but at all times shall be subject to disciplinary action including suspension or termination for failure to comply with the By-Laws, Rules and Regulations, and decisions of AHAI, including its Committees, and USA Hockey.

**2.4.4 Subject to AHAI and USA Hockey:**

Affiliate Organizations must comply with the By-Laws, Rules and Regulations, and decisions of AHAI, including its Committees and USA Hockey. This includes conduct that is not detrimental to hockey whether within the State of Illinois or anywhere in the world. The By-Laws, Rules and Regulations of AHAI and USA Hockey and their decisions shall take precedence over, and supersede all similar governing documents, authority, and/or decisions of the Affiliate Organization.

**2.5 FEES/FUNDRAISING THE AFFILIATE ORGANIZATION IS AUTHORIZED TO PERFORM**

**2.5.1 Fees:** The Affiliate Organization shall assess and charge reasonable fees for its players/participants within its Authorized Level for participation in the Affiliate Organization's program(s), in addition to the annual AHAI and USA Hockey fees. The

amount of any charge shall be communicated in writing to each player/participant prior to evaluations and/or tryouts along with the obligation of the participant/member.

**2.5.2 Fund-Raising:** The Affiliate Organization may operate fund-raising programs to support its functions as an Affiliate Organization of AHAI, including special charge on paid gate tournaments for games or events sponsored by the Affiliate Organization but at no time on events sponsored by AHAI; nor may such events conflict with AHAI events, unless specifically authorized by AHAI.

**2.6 COOPERATION**

Each Affiliate Organization must cooperate fully with AHAI in any inquiry made by AHAI with regard to the USA Hockey Playing Rules, AHAI By-Laws, Rules and Regulations.

**2.7 RESPONSIBILITY**

Every Affiliate Organization shall be fully responsible to AHAI for including, but not limited to, the actions and/or infractions of its teams, players, coaches, managers, parents and personnel. This responsibility shall include, but not be limited to, debts incurred by or in the name of the Affiliate Organization or any team of said Affiliate Organization.

**2.8 AHAI RECOGNITION / COOPERATION / NAME**

**2.8.1 AHAI Recognition of Teams:**

**2.8.1.1** AHAI will accept and recognize only those individuals and teams within an Affiliate Organization's Authorized Level which hold and continue membership in good standing with an Affiliate Organization or those that are authorized in an AHAI sanctioned league, all of which must be in good standing with AHAI and USA Hockey.

**2.8.2 Cooperation**

**2.8.2.1** AHAI and the Affiliate Organization will cooperate with each other in the administration of the sport of amateur hockey within Affiliate Organization's Authorized Level. It is understood, however, that the initial responsibility is with the Affiliate Organization.

**2.8.3 AHAI Name:**

2.8.3.1 The Affiliate Organization has no right to the name Amateur Hockey Association of Illinois, AHAI, or their logos ("AHAI Names") and shall not use AHAI Names or any affiliation with AHAI except as approved, in writing, by AHAI. Use of the words "Sanctioned Affiliate Organization of AHAI" is approved for use.

## **2.9 BY-LAWS and/or POLICIES THAT MUST BE ADOPTED BY THE AFFILIATE ORGANIZATION**

By-Laws or General Guidelines: The Affiliate Organization shall have written By- Laws or General Guidelines of the governance and authority of the Affiliate Organization. It is recommended that they be By-Laws or a Constitution.

## **2.10 OPERATING POLICIES, RULES, and REGULATIONS**

2.10.1 The Affiliate Organization shall have written Operating Policies, Rules, and Regulations that will inform the players/participants and their families, which in most instances when those terms are used shall include any potential players/participants of the Affiliate Organization, of its day to day operational procedures, including any concept that the Affiliate Organization wishes to enforce and shall make them reasonably available to its players/participants prior to the earlier of evaluations/tryouts or the selection of any team.

2.10.2 "Reasonably available" shall mean at any the following occurrences:

- a. Requests or inquiries are made
- b. At the time of registration
- c. Conditioning clinics and/or evaluations/tryouts.

2.10.3 The fact that an Operating Policy, Rule, or Regulation is not in writing will not necessarily deem it unenforceable, but rather will be taken into consideration.

## **2.11 ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE OF AFFILAITE ORGANIZATION**

2.11.1 The Affiliate Organization shall agree to electronically approve & abide to the terms detailed in the agreement each year prior to the Regular Season (Fall/Winter).

2.11.2 This agreement will be in place for the entire season, September 1st to August 31st.

## **2.12 CORPORATION 501(c)(3) STATUS**

2.12.1 Except as set out in the AHAI By- Laws, Rules and Regulations it is highly recommended each Affiliate Organization have a corporate structure and at all times maintain a tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or other acceptable and comparable IRS category and/or have a good faith application for IRS 501(c)(3) pending that shall be approved by the IRS within 180 days of submission of the application or other comparable IRS category status.

2.12.2 It is recognized that High School Affiliate Organizations may have some difficulty obtaining 501(c)(3) status. It is recommended High School Affiliates be an Illinois Not-For-Profit corporation. The High School Affiliates shall use reasonable efforts to become a 501(c)(3) corporation.

2.12.3 It is recognized that House League or Adult Affiliate Organization structures may vary between governmental, not for profit and for-profit Organizations. If any House League Affiliate Organizations or Adult Affiliate Organization, because of its structure, believes the governance requirements do not fit with their structure, the Affiliate Organization should contact the appropriate AHAI Committee to resolve the matter prior to any issue being raised.

AHAI highly recommends all teams compete in Leagues which are IRS defined as 501(c)(3) Corporations.

## **2.13 PROTECTING AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS**

2.13.1 Based upon the special skills, expertise and background in hockey and sports administration of the AHAI Board of Directors, it is determined that it is vital to maintain the independence of 501(c)(3) and Not-For-Profit Affiliate Organizations from undue influence, potential conflicts of interest, inappropriate financial dealings, undermining of their IRS status or adversely influencing the Affiliate Organization's compliance with the AHAI and/or USAH By-Laws, Rules, Regulations and Policies. The intent of this Rule set forth in this Article 2, shall govern and control over any specific language set out as restrictions. Therefore, except as set out in the AHAI By-Laws, Rules and Regulations, no Affiliate Organization shall suffer, submit to or tolerate, or permit an officer, director, coach, hockey director or similar position, or team manager, directly or indirectly, by attribution or otherwise, to have any relationship as, nor shall such person or entity be, an officer, director, elected official, landlord, ice provider, an interest holder, or have a financial interest, investor or loan or debt holder relationship of another Affiliate Organization nor in any business entity of whatsoever nature that interacts with the Affiliate Organization's operations other than an arm's length business relationship or adversely influences or attempts to influence or control the Affiliate Organization.

2.13.2 An Affiliate Organization with any existing such relationship shall immediately advise AHAI in writing, identifying the person(s) or entity(ies) and the relationship. The Affiliate Organization is required to comply with this Rule within 90 days from the effective date of this Rule.

*(Exception: Tier II or Tier II Girls Affiliate Organizations may be affiliated with a Learn to Skate or House League Affiliate Organization, which affiliation shall be reported to AHAI in writing prior to implementing any such affiliation.)*

2.13.3 The operation by the Affiliate Organization of the Affiliate Organization's rink owned by the Affiliate Organization, or the Affiliate Organization's rink in joint rink-ownership with other Affiliate Organizations who own the rink, each as approved in writing by the AHAI Board of Director

2.13.4 AHAI may from time to time set out specific examples or clarifications of prohibited conduct under this Section 2.13 and publish them on the AHAI web site and those are incorporated by reference in this Rule. However, if there is any question to the application or compliance with this Rule, the Affiliate Organization and/or the person interacting with the Affiliate Organization has the affirmative duty to inquire in writing from the AHAI Board of Directors prior to entering into any such relationship.

## **2.14 GOVERNANCE and RESPONSIBILITY**

2.14.1 The government and authority of the Affiliate Organization, other than an official governmental entity, shall be vested in a Board of Directors composed of at least five (5) representatives, as determined by the Affiliate Organization, who shall be representative of the Affiliate Organization, its programs and be fundamentally fair to all the participants/members of the Affiliate Organization.

2.14.2 Tier I, Tier II, Girls, and High School Affiliate Organizations, the Board of Directors shall be composed predominantly of parents who currently have or have had a child in the program, except for High School, which may have a representative(s) who are employed by the High School as set out in the Affiliate Organization's By-Laws, Rules and Regulations.

2.14.3 It is recommended that there be multiple representatives for each level of the Affiliate Organization's program.

2.14.4 The burden of proving fundamental fairness lies on the Affiliate Organization.

2.14.5 It is recommended that the terms of directors and officers be staggered.

2.14.6 It is required there be one person ultimately responsible for the Affiliate Organization

as an Officer, and that there be a Treasurer who is responsible for the financial aspect of the Affiliate Organization; a Registrar who is responsible for the registration of the Affiliate Organization's players and teams and other similar activities; a Coaching Manager who is responsible for all coaching aspects of the Affiliate Organization, and a Referee Coordinator who is responsible for coordinating and scheduling Officials.

## **2.15 ANNUAL MEETINGS**

The Affiliate Organization shall hold an annual meeting of its players/participants with reasonable notice of such a meeting being given.

## **2.16 COMMUNICATION**

The Affiliate shall establish reasonable methods of communication with its participants/members.

## **2.17 MINIMUM PRINCIPLES**

The Affiliate Organization's structure, policy, By-Laws and/or any other operation of the Affiliate Organization shall reflect, and shall not violate, the following principles

## **2.18 PARTICIPANTS / MEMBERS / TEAMS**

All registered teams, players, coaches, and administrators of the Affiliate Organization, as a consideration of membership in good standing or participation with said Affiliate Organization, shall be required to be "registered with USA Hockey and in good standing with AHAI and USA Hockey.

## **2.19 OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM**

2.19.1 The Affiliate Organization shall prepare and distribute to its players/participants an overview of its program, including but not limited to, its philosophies and associations (*i.e., Learn to Skate Programs or Park Districts*), ice times, team selection, individual/team fees, how individual/team fees are calculated, and a grievance procedure.

2.19.2 This Overview shall be available and provided to players/participants prior to the earlier of evaluations/tryouts or the selection of any team.

## **2.20 FINANCIAL REPORTS / DUES and ASSESSMENTS**

2.20.1 Financial Stability:

2.20.1.1 The Affiliate Organization shall be able to prove financial stability.

2.20.2 Financial Overview:

2.20.2.1 Each player/participant must be provided in writing, and prior to any participation or obligation, a description of what will be provided to the player/participant including the total cost to the player/participant and any payment deadlines or rules.

2.20.3 Fees, Dues and Assessments:

2.20.3.1 All fees, costs, dues, and assessments by the Affiliate Organization shall be reasonable in relation to the programs the Affiliate Organization offers to its players/participants.

## **2.21 PUBLICATION OF CONSTITUTION, BY-LAWS, RULES and REGULATIONS**

Affiliate Organizations shall make its Constitution, By-Laws, and other governing documents, including all amendments, available to its players/participants. Copies shall also be available upon reasonable request.

## **2.22 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / DISCRIMINATION**

Advise AHAI of any allegation of discrimination. Affiliate Organizations shall notify the AHAI Rules & Ethics Committee in writing immediately upon knowledge of any allegation and keep the AHAI Rules & Ethics Committee advised in writing including but not limited to, any investigation, action taken or recommended.

## **2.23 ABUSE**

*(Adherence to the Safe Sport Policy in Article 7)*

Advise AHAI of any allegation of abuse or potential abuse, including but not limited to, ethnic, racial, sexual, physical, or mental abuse. Affiliate Organizations shall notify the AHAI Rules & Ethics Committee in writing immediately upon knowledge of any allegation and keep the AHAI Rules & Ethics Committee advised, in writing including but not limited to, any investigation, action taken or recommended.

## **2.24 MOOD ALTERING SUBSTANCES**

Advise AHAI of any allegation of consumption, use, sale, gift, or abuse of mood- altering substances. Affiliate Organizations shall notify the AHAI Rules & Ethics Committee in writing immediately upon knowledge of any allegation and keep the AHAI Rules & Ethics Committee advised in writing, including but not limited to, any investigation, action taken or recommended.

## **2.25 GRIEVANCE/SUSPENSION PROCEDURE**

Affiliate Organizations shall provide a written grievance procedure for the prompt and equitable resolution of grievances of its players/participants. This procedure shall be in accordance with the Rules of AHAI and USA Hockey and provide for a fair notice of an opportunity to be heard.

## **2.26 TURNOVER FILES**

Affiliate Organizations shall use reasonable efforts to prepare and have available "turnover" files for each of its operations with the intent of smooth transitions of personnel.

## **2.27 AVAILABILITY OF ICE**

Affiliate Organizations shall be able to show sufficient availability of ice to support its program and promote that program in accordance with the By-Laws, Rules and Regulations of AHAI and USA Hockey.

## **2.28 ICE CONTRACTORS**

Affiliate Organizations shall have each ice contract it anticipates entering into or enters into reviewed by the USA Hockey Risk Manager for Illinois prior to entering into each contract.

## **2.29 GENERAL LIABILITY INSURANCE**

Affiliate Organizations shall, at all times, obtain and be covered by the general liability insurance policy maintained by USA Hockey. The limit of that policy may be made by USA Hockey at its sole prerogative. The Affiliate Organization may also obtain whatever additional insurance coverage it may desire, at its own expense, but agrees to name AHAI as an additional insured of any such policy. By purchasing and maintaining the USA Hockey general liability insurance policy, USA Hockey and AHAI do not assume, and indeed disclaims, any liability for any actions or omissions of the Affiliate Organization.

## **2.30 DIRECTORS and OFFICERS LIABILITY**

*(Reference USA Hockey Affiliate Agreement 3H)*

Affiliate Organizations shall use reasonable efforts to purchase, acquire or provide, and maintain, in full force and effect at all times, Directors' and Officers' liability insurance, and to the extent such insurance is not obtained through USA Hockey, USA Hockey and AHAI shall be named as an additional insured under any such policy.

## **2.31 CRIME INSURANCE**

*(Reference USA Hockey Affiliate Agreement 3H)*

Affiliate Organizations shall use reasonable efforts to purchase, acquire or provide, and maintain, in full force and effect at all times, crime insurance, and to the extent such insurance is not obtained through USA Hockey, USA Hockey and AHAI shall be named as an



additional insured under any such policy.

## **2.32 COOPERATION IN ANY LITIGATION**

AHAI and the Affiliate Organization shall reasonably cooperate with each other in any litigation and provide reasonable support in connection with that cooperation, including but not limited to, advice and testimony upon reasonable request. Provided, however, that such cooperation shall not require AHAI to incur any out-of-pocket expense not reimbursed by the Affiliate Organization.

# **ARTICLE 3 AFFILIATE APPLICATION PROCESS**

## **3.1 PROPOSED NEW AFFILIATE ORGANIZATION APPLICATION PROCESS**

3.1.1 The "Applicant" is defined as a rink, park district or any other organization recognized by USA Hockey and/or AHAI as having the qualifications to operate an Affiliate Organization. A proposed Affiliate Organization is required to begin their program at the lowest level of play, 8U or 10U, or the grassroots level (*learn to skate programs following the USA Hockey ADM-American Development Model*).

## **3.2 APPLICATION VERIFICATION and ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

3.2.1 Every Applicant for a proposed new Affiliate Organization must submit a signed "**Application Verification and Acknowledgement**" form along with their other required information. This form may be obtained from the Committee Chairperson having jurisdiction or by clicking on the link above.

## **3.3 PROPOSED NEW AFFILIATE ORGANIZATION AGREEMENT**

3.3.1 All entities submitting an application for a proposed new Affiliate Organization must include within their by-laws the following statement: "The \_\_\_\_\_ Affiliate Organization of the Amateur Hockey Association of Illinois shall adhere to all By-laws, Rules, Regulations, and Policies of USA Hockey and AHAI, including Article 1 of AHAI's Rules & Regulations and Article 10 of USA Hockey's By-Laws.

## **3.4 APPLICATION**

3.4.1 An Applicant for a Proposed New Affiliate Organization is required to submit a formal application to the Committee Chairperson having jurisdiction. The application must include but is not limited to the following:

- a. Brief description of the parties involved in submitting the application
- b. Proposed Affiliate Organization's By-Laws
- c. Identification of Board positions and job descriptions – including Individual Names, if known
- d. Location/name of the rink the proposed Affiliate Organization will use as its "home rink" (*defined as 51% or more of Applicant's total ice utilization*)
- e. "Financial" solvency data on the proposed Affiliate Organization which demonstrates its financial ability to commence operations and to maintain the Affiliate Organization's operations year after year (*i.e. player fees, ice costs, coach's expenses, etc. – proposed budget*)
- f. Proof of adequate ice contracts to sustain teams year after year based on average total per team hours per season.
- g. Identification of the existence of a viable feeder system such as Learn to Skate or Learn to Play programs.

3.4.2 The Committee having jurisdiction and or the AHAI Board of Directors at their discretion may adopt any other requirements appropriate to the best interests of amateur hockey in Illinois.

Youth Hockey [application](#)

Tier I Girls – Refer to Article 17 & Article 18 of the AHAI Rules & Regulations for criteria specific to Tier I Girls' Hockey [application](#)

Tier II Youth - Refer to Article 16 of the AHAI Rules & Regulations for criteria specific to Tier II Youth Hockey [application](#)

Girls Tier II – Refer to Article 17 of the AHAI Rules & Regulations for criteria specific to Girls Tier II Hockey [application](#)

House League – Refer to Article 15 of the AHAI Rules & Regulations for criteria specific to House/Rec Hockey [application](#)

High School – Refer to Article 19 of the AHAI Rules & Regulations for criteria specific to High School Hockey [application](#)

### **3.5 DEADLINE FOR NEW APPLICATION SUBMITTAL**

An Applicant for a new Affiliate Organization must submit their application and related materials to the appropriate Committee no later than January 15th of the current playing season in order to be considered for beginning operations in the next year's Regular playing season (*Fall/Winter*).

- a. Proposed Applicants for Tier III, Girls Tier II, and High School may submit a new application each season.
- b. Tier I Youth & Girls, and Tier II Youth applications. Applications will only be considered based on a repeated three (3) year application cycle.
  - 2024/25 season: no new applications
  - 2025/26 season: limited to Youth Tier II
  - 2026/27 season: no new applications
  - 2027/28 season: limited to Youth & Girls Tier I

### **3.6 DETERMINATION**

3.6.1 The Committee having jurisdiction is responsible to review the application, request & additional information as said Committee deems necessary, undertake an in-person interview with the proposed Affiliate Organization's representatives as deemed warranted, and to conduct all other actions needed to complete a thorough review of the submitted documents.

3.6.2 The Committee having jurisdiction will submit its recommendations on the application to the AHAI Board of Directors, which will make the final decision on the application.

3.6.3 The Committee having jurisdiction will complete its work on all timely-submitted applications so that the AHAI Board of Directors may make its decision by April 15th of the season in which the application was submitted (or a later date in April after the Board's April meeting). Written notification of the Board's decision on the application will be sent to the Applicant.

3.6.4 Decisions of the AHAI Board of Directors under this Article shall be final unless a notice of appeal therefrom is filed as provided in the AHAI By-Laws, Policies & Rules & Regulations governing appeals of Board decisions.

### **3.7 PLAYER RECRUITING RESTRICTIONS**

3.7.1 A new Affiliate Organization may NOT obtain players that were rostered with an AHAI Affiliate Organization the previous regular season at the same Tier level of the new Affiliate Organization for the first (*1st*) regular season of play (*Fall/Winter*).

3.7.2 A proposed Affiliate Organization is required to begin their program at the lowest level of play, 8U or 10U, or the grassroots level (*learn to skate programs following the USA Hockey*

ADM-American Development Model).

### **3.8 AFFILIATE ORGANIZATION TEAMS' ELIGIBILITY to PLAY**

3.8.1 The purpose of this rule is to introduce more young athletes to the sport in a given area while supporting the integrity of existing Affiliate Organizations.

3.8.2 Tier I Youth and Girls:

AHAI applies the same Standards and Criteria to the State Tournament as stated in Article III F and G of the USA Hockey Annual Guide – In order for any team to be eligible for National Tournament play, the program/association must have been in existence and registered with the applicable Affiliate for a minimum of three (3) prior consecutive seasons.

3.8.3 Tier II Youth:

An approved new Affiliate Organization will not be eligible for participation in the State Tournament until the new Affiliate Organization's 2<sup>nd</sup> full regular (*fall*) season in existence. In the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) year, the new Affiliate Organization may have only 8 & Under, 10 & Under, and 12 & Under teams participate in the State Tournament. In the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) year of existence the new Affiliate Organization may have all age classifications participate in the State Tournament.

3.8.4 Tier II Girls:

An approved new Affiliate Organization will not be eligible for participation in the State Tournament until the new Affiliate Organization's 2<sup>nd</sup> full regular (*fall*) season in existence. In the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) year, the new Affiliate organization may only have 10 & Under and 12 & Under teams participate in the State Tournament. In the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) year of existence the new Affiliate Organization may have all age classifications participate in the State Tournament.

3.8.5 High School:

A new High School Affiliate Organization may participate in the High School State Tournament their first (1<sup>st</sup>) season in existence with the approval of the AHAI High School Committee.

### **3.9 PLAYER REGISTRATION**

3.9.1 All players of a newly approved Affiliate Organization will be required to be registered with USA Hockey through the USA Hockey portal.

## **ARTICLE 4 COMMITTEES**

### **4.1 STANDING COMMITTEES**

- a. The President shall designate and appoint membership to the Girls, High School, Nominating, Rules & Ethics, Suspension, Tier I, Tier II Committees, and other such committees deemed necessary or appropriate to the efficient conduct of AHAI's affairs. Provided, however, the Chairperson of the seven (7) standing committees named above must be members of the Board of Directors of AHAI.

### **4.2 FINANCE COMMITTEE**

- a. There shall be established a permanent committee named the "Finance Committee" chaired by the Treasurer of AHAI with at least two (2) current Board Members appointed by the President of AHAI. This committee will be charged with the review of financial statements, investment policy, and all other financially related subjects as determined from time to time by the Board. This committee will make recommendations to the Board on such matters as required.

### **4.3 GIRLS' COMMITTEE**

- a. Shall be responsible for the development and growth of Girls' Hockey. The members of the Girls' Committee are from different hockey backgrounds offering varied insight and perspective to ensure ALL girls playing hockey are represented. This committee will oversee all girls' events including but not limited to the State Tournament, the Girls Showcase Team, Girls Player Development & Growth as well as the Girls' Tier II Choice substitutions and will work closely with all other Committees regarding specific situations that may arise during the course of the hockey season. Additionally, this committee will be responsible for the acceptance, review & forwarding of recommendations for all new Girls' Affiliate Organizations.
- b. The mission: To provide a strong foundation for the growth of Girls' Hockey through designing innovative programs that increase participation and developing the skills of female players following the USA Hockey ADM guidelines and committed to providing a safe and encouraging environment.

#### **4.4 HIGH SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

Shall be responsible to:

- a. Encourage and improve the standards and conduct of High School hockey in the State of Illinois.
- b. Coordinate the AHAI High School Division State Championship Tournaments.
- c. Establish a code of ethics for AHAI High School coaches.
- d. Establish an AHAI High School Board of Governors (*Committee*) composed of at least ten (10) members.

#### **4.5 NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

4.5.1 Shall include at least two (2) members of the AHAI Board of Directors whose seats are not up for re-election.

4.5.2 The duties of the Committee shall consist of:

- a. Soliciting and collecting the names and qualifications of individuals who wish to be considered on an individual basis for election to the AHAI Board of Directors.
- b. Within 60 days of the Annual Meeting, shall inform the Affiliate Organizations of AHAI by mail of the requirements and deadlines for becoming a candidate for election.
- c. At least forty-two (42) days in advance, or six (6) weeks of the Annual Meeting, any adult individual who wishes to run for election for the AHAI Board of Directors shall submit his or her name as well as a written biography to the AHAI Nominating Committee.
- d. No later than twenty-one (21) days, three (3) weeks, before the Annual Meeting, the AHAI Nominating Committee shall disseminate to all Affiliate Organizations of AHAI, by electronic-mail and by publication on AHAI's website, a list of all names submitted accompanied by their respective biographies.
- e. The AHAI Board of Directors or any AHAI participant/member may issue an endorsement of or opposition to any candidate so long as said endorsement or opposition does not disparage or demean any candidate.
- f. The AHAI Board of Directors may issue a position paper on any candidate or group of candidates in the mailing to the Affiliate Organizations. If an individual AHAI member wishes to submit an endorsement of or opposition to any candidate(s), AHAI agrees to include said position statement with the Initial AHAI electronic mailing only.
- g. The individual member who submits a position paper agrees to pay his or her proportionate share for the expenses of creating and mailing the position paper. Any position paper submitted by the AHAI Board or any AHAI individual member shall be limited to one communication to AHAI Affiliate Organizations.
- h. All of the above may be submitted electronically.

At the AHAI Annual Meeting, present Affiliate Organizations shall vote for up to five (5) individuals from the list of nominations. The vote may be an individual vote for each candidate or a "slate" vote at the discretion of the AHAI Board of Directors. The votes shall be counted by members of the Nominating Committee and overseen by an AHAI Officer. The top five (5) individuals garnering the most votes shall be elected as Directors to the AHAI Board.

#### **Board Member Recommended Qualifications**

Each Director must be a member in good standing of USA Hockey and must be in complete compliance with all USA Hockey mandates currently in effect: these include SafeSport, Background Screen. Each Director must be free of financial obligations to any AHAI Affiliate Organization.

To submit your name for consideration as an AHAI Director, an individual should ideally:

1. Be in good standing with the affiliate they are currently a member of (if applicable).
2. Have previously held a leadership position within an AHAI Affiliate/League/Officiating (i.e., president, board member, registrar, hockey director, etc. or been a member of a AHAI Standing Committee).
3. Have been in this role for a minimum of 2 years.
4. Provide at least two references to the nominating committee.
5. Not have any past disciplinary action against them from AHAI, their Affiliate Organization, IHOA, or USA Hockey.

**Submit your nomination along with a brief biography to: AHAI Nominating Committee Chairperson**

#### **4.6 RULES AND ETHICS COMMITTEE**

4.6.1 Shall have original jurisdiction over the administration and enforcement of the By-Laws, Rules, and Regulations of AHAI in respect to all matters other than infractions of the By-Laws, Rules and Regulations which arise out of on-ice violations.

4.6.2 In accordance with procedures established by the AHAI Board of Directors, the AHAI Rules and Ethics Committee shall have authority to suspend, place on probation, or impose other disciplinary sanctions against any person, team, League, USA Hockey applicant or registered Affiliate Organization determined to have violated the AHAI By-Laws or Rules and Regulations, or for conduct deemed by the Committee to not be in the best interests of amateur hockey.

4.6.3 All decisions of the Rules and Ethics Committee shall be final. Any person, team, or Affiliate Organization affected by a decision of the Rules and Ethics Committee may appeal such decision in accordance with the By-Laws, Rules and Regulations of AHAI, by filing a written notice of appeal and submitting said written notice to the President of AHAI within ten (10) days of the final decision. The appeal shall be acted upon by the Board of Directors whose decision shall be final.

#### **4.7 SUSPENSION REVIEW COMMITTEE**

4.7.1 Shall have jurisdiction to conduct hearings and determine the proper disciplinary actions resulting from complaints or incidents that come to the attention of the committee of infractions of the AHAI By-Laws, Rules and Regulations or conduct not in the best interest of amateur hockey which arise out of competitive play on the ice and suspending any Affiliate Organizations, teams or individuals for such infraction in accordance with procedures established by the Board of Directors.

4.7.2 The duration of any imposed suspension will be determined by the AHAI Suspension Review Committee. During regular season play, a majority of the members of this Committee shall constitute a quorum for the purposes of making a determination.

4.7.3 A vote by the majority of the members of the AHAI Suspension Review Committee present and in accordance with the procedures established by the AHAI Board of Directors shall be required for a suspension.

4.7.4 All decisions of the Suspension Review Committee shall be final.

4.7.5 Any person, team, or Affiliate Organization affected by a decision of the Suspension Review Committee may appeal such decision in accordance with the AHAI By-Laws, Rules, and Regulations, by filling a written notice of appeal and submitting said written notice to the President of AHAI within ten (10) days of the final decision. The appeal shall be acted upon by the Board of Directors whose decision shall be final.

#### **4.8 TIER I YOUTH & GIRLS COMMITTEE**

4.8.1 Shall be responsible to:

- a. Refer matters regarding the status or conduct of Tier I Affiliate Organizations to the Rules & Ethics Committee and/or the Suspension Review Committee.
- b. Review and make recommendations to the AHAI Board of Directors regarding the status of a Current Tier I or Applicant Affiliate Organization under the terms established by the AHAI By-Laws, Rules, and Regulations.

4.8.2 This Committee shall, review, postpone, condition, or recommend action on an application by a proposed group to become a Tier I Affiliate Organization to the AHAI Board of Directors based upon the submittal of the required Affiliate Organization Application Process and supporting documentation. This action includes but is not limited to recommendation of approval of any eligible group to become a Tier I Affiliate Organization.

#### **4.9 TIER II YOUTH COMMITTEE**

4.9.1 Shall be responsible to:

- a. Refer matters regarding the status or conduct of Tier II Affiliate Organizations to the Rules & Ethics Committee and or the Suspension Review Committee.
- b. Review and make recommendations to the AHAI Board of Directors regarding the status of a Current Tier II or Applicant Affiliate Organization under the terms established by the AHAI By-Laws, Rules, and Regulations.

4.9.2 This Committee shall, review, postpone, condition, or recommend action on an application by a proposed group to become a Tier II Affiliate Organization to the AHAI Board of Directors based upon the submittal of the required Affiliate Organization Application Process and supporting documentation. This action includes but is not limited to recommendation of approval of any eligible group to become a Tier II Affiliate Organization.

4.9.3 This Committee will hear and review questions regarding player movement from one Tier II Affiliate Organization to another, or any other issues that may arise concerning player movement and take such other actions as may be directed by the AHAI Board of Directors regarding current AHAI By-Laws, Rules and Regulations.

#### **4.10 TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE**

The AHAI State Tournament Committees shall have the sole authority to conduct all State Tournaments respectively with the assistance of the AHAI Board of Directors.

#### **4.11 YOUTH COMMITTEE**

Shall be responsible to develop hockey programs in the AHAI youth divisions (*pre-mite through midgets*), provide program consultation to all Affiliate Organizations, coordinate any and all activities designed to develop amateur hockey at the youth level in accordance with the principals of the (*ADM*) American Development Model.

## **ARTICLE 5 REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

### **5.1 SEASONS**

5.1.1 Fall/Regular Season - Fall/Regular active roster dates are September 1st to March 31st of each year for Tier II Youth, Tier II Girls, House League, Adult, Women's, and Disabled Teams. Fall/Regular season active roster dates for Tier I Youth and Tier I Girls is May 15 through March 31st of each year. Teams registered for the Fall season are designated in the USAH Registry Portal as Regular Season.

5.1.2 Spring/Summer Season - Spring /Summer active roster dates are April 1st through August 31st of each year. Teams registered for the Spring/Summer season are designated in the USAH Registry Portal as Pre/Post Season.

## **5.2 INDIVIDUAL MEMBER REGISTRATION**

5.2.1 All players, volunteers and coaches participating on or with USA Hockey registered teams must be registered with USA Hockey by completing their individual member registration. Registration is required once each year September 1st through August 31st. <https://membership.usahockey.com/>

5.2.2 A player or coach shall not participate in any hockey related activity (*including tryouts*), until they have registered with USA Hockey, the appropriate fee has been paid, and the AHAI Affiliate Organization has processed their USA Hockey Registration Confirmation Number in their USA Hockey Registry portal.

5.2.3 Affiliate Organization Officers and Staff must register annually with USA Hockey by completing their individual member registration with USA Hockey. Registration is required once each year (*September 1st through August 31st*). If they are players or coaches, they only need to register once. They do not need to register again as a volunteer. If they are not coaches, or staff, they may register as a volunteer at no charge. <https://membership.usahockey.com/>

5.2.4 The USA Hockey Confirmation numbers for participants (*players, coaches, managers, volunteers, and affiliate officers*) must be processed annually through the Affiliate Organization's USA Hockey Registry Portal.

5.2.5 The confirmation number of Affiliate Officers must also be entered by the Affiliate Organization's Registrar into the AHAI Webtool on the Organization Page.

## **5.3 TEAM REGISTRATION AND ROSTERS DEADLINES**

5.3.1 All Tier I Youth and Girls, Tier II Youth and Girls, House League, Adult, Women's, and Disabled Teams must have an Official USA Hockey Certified Roster before their first on ice activity. An Official USA Hockey Certified Roster is one that has been properly filed and approved by the AHAI Registrar. This is done by completing the registration process in the USA Hockey Registry Portal and then submitting the team to AHAI in the AHAI webtool. The roster is not officially certified until it is approved by the AHAI Registrar.

5.3.2 October 15th is the last date to file a team roster for a new Tier I Youth and Girls, Tier II Youth and Girls, House League, Girls High School or High School team.

5.3.3 December 26th is the last date to add a player to a Tier I Youth or Girls, Tier II Youth or Girls, Girls High School or High School team.

5.3.4 House League, Disabled, Adult and Women's teams may create new teams or add/drop players to a roster at any time during the Playing Season.

## **5.4 CLASSIFICATIONS AND DIVISIONS**

5.4.1 Age Classifications are defined by USA Hockey each playing season.

*Youth Age/Team Classifications*

<b>DATE OF BIRTH</b>	<b>AGE CATEGORY</b>	<b>AGE DIVISION</b>
2006	18 Years	18 & Under
2007	17 Years	18 & Under
2008	16 Years	16 & Under
2009	15 Years	16 & Under
2010	14 Years	14 & Under
2011	13 Years	14 & Under
2012	12 Years	12 & Under
2013	11 Years	12 & Under
2014	10 Years	10 & Under
2015	9 Years	10 & Under
2016	8 Years	8 & Under
2017	7 Years	8 & Under
2018	6 Years	8 & Under

*Girls' Age/Team Classifications*

<b>DATE OF BIRTH</b>	<b>AGE CATEGORY</b>	<b>AGE DIVISION</b>
2005	19 Years	19 & Under
2006	18 Years	19 & Under
2007	17 Years	19 & Under
2008	16 Years	16 & Under
2009	15 Years	16 & Under
2010	14 Years	14 & Under
2011	13 Years	14 & Under
2012	12 Years	12 & Under
2013	11 Years	12 & Under
2014	10 Years	10 & Under
2015	9 Years	10 & Under
2016	8 Years	8 & Under
2017	7 Years	8 & Under
2018	6 Years	6 & Under

5.4.2 The 10 & Under age classification players may play up on a 12 & Under team.

5.4.3 At the 14 & Under, 16 & Under, and 18/19 & Under age classifications, a player may play up one (1) age level.

5.4.4 High School Teams

5.4.4.1 High School Teams are restricted to amateurs who are full time students (*grades 9-12*), and under 20 years old on December 31st of the Playing Season, not to exceed eight (8) consecutive semesters starting with their freshman year, who are enrolled and attending the school designated on the team's and player's registration form.

*(Clarification: Those High School students graduating mid-year are no longer full-time students and therefore, are not eligible to play on the High School hockey team, effective on their last day of attending classes full time as defined by the school).*

5.4.4.2 Pure High School Teams

Pure HS are defined as teams with students that attend one school. They are registered in the USA Hockey Registry Portal as High School / Division I.

5.4.4.3 Combined High School Teams



Defined as teams with students from an approved combination of schools. They are registered in the USA Hockey Registry Portal as High School / Division II.

5.4.5 Home Schooling follows the IHSA Guidelines

[https://www.ihsa.org/documents/forms/2012-13/Home\\_School\\_Fact\\_Sheet.pdf](https://www.ihsa.org/documents/forms/2012-13/Home_School_Fact_Sheet.pdf)

5.4.6 Adult Teams

Limited to amateurs 18 years of age or older.

5.4.7 Juniors

All players wishing to play Juniors must contact the AHAI Registrar **BEFORE** they are rostered or play on a Junior team to determine eligibility. No player may actively participate on a Junior team and be simultaneously on a Youth Team in Illinois. Any player leaving his Youth hockey team must be stricken from his Youth roster and may only return to Youth hockey in Illinois with the approval of the AHAI Board of Directors.

## 5.5 USA HOCKEY / AHAI PLAY DOWN RULE

5.5.1 AHAI Affiliate Organizations may not petition AHAI to allow a player to play down an age classification to play with any Tier I Youth or Girls, or Tier II Youth or Girls team.

5.5.2 An AHAI Affiliate Organization may petition for a player to play down on a Tier III B or House League C team provided that they submit the following:

5.5.3 The parents or guardians of the player submit their request in writing stating the reason for the petition.

5.5.4 Written notice by the child's physician that it is medically necessary for the child to play down.

5.5.5 The Hockey Director for the AHAI Affiliate Organization provides in writing their agreement of the request.

5.5.6 Simply being "small for their age" or "not very skilled" are not considered to be adequate reasons for granting a 'play down' exception, since they do not rise to the level of a disability under definitions and current court decisions about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

5.5.7 Petitions granted in spring will apply to the following Fall/Regular Season under the same conditions stated above.

## 5.6 RESIDENCY

5.6.1 General Intent of Residency Rule:

- a. No player may have more than one residence for the purposes of hockey.
- b. It is the general intent of the Rules that no player may create a residence for hockey purposes.
- c. No player shall attempt to "play games" with residence, nor benefit from multiple residences or a question on residence, especially for purposes of or affecting hockey.
- d. If a player's residence is not with parent(s) and would benefit the player for purposes of hockey, the presumption is that the player does not reside at the non- parent residence for hockey purposes.

5.6.2 The player shall have the burden of proving residence, and AHAI Section 5.6.1 of this Article is especially important in this context.

5.6.3 There are several general statements that can be made regarding residence and how

AHAI will look at residency for the purpose of hockey in Illinois. In an effort to reduce the potential of any problem regarding where a Player resides for any purposes the following Rules apply:

- a. If the address on the roster is not the one where the Player "lives" with both parents, you must bring the matter affirmatively to the attention of the AHAI Registrar, in writing, and obtain a ruling as to where the Player resides prior to the Roster being submitted to AHAI. "Lives" for this purpose means: "eats, sleeps, attends school and performs normal daily activities from that address". This is not the definition of "reside" for Tier II purposes but is the definition AHAI uses to bring this matter to AHAI's attention. Failure to comply with this Rule may result in suspension of the Player and/or Team and/or Organization.
- b. The general rule is that AHAI looks to the residency of the players' parents as the players' residency. There may be exceptions to this rule, but they must be reviewed by AHAI prior to the submission of a roster to AHAI or any League or participation in any game.
- c. Divorce may pose additional considerations as to determining residence. Divorce situations should be brought to the attention of and clarified by AHAI prior to the submission of a roster to AHAI or any League or participation in any game.

5.6.4 In addition, and especially where there is a question or multiple residences are involved, AHAI will also look at other facts among which is where the player actually resides for normal day to day activities.

## **5.7 UNREGISTERED ORGANIZATIONS, EVENTS, TEAMS, AND OFFICIATING**

5.7.1 The Amateur Hockey Association of Illinois, Inc. (AHAI) is authorized by USA Hockey (USAH) as the sole governing body for all USA Hockey registered players, teams, coaches, and officials in Illinois. AHAI is authorized to act as it deems fit in the best interests of its members to promote the sport of ice hockey within the bylaws and rules and regulations as promulgated by USAH.

5.7.2 AHAI does not support any AHAI Member or Member Association's participation in any association or organization not registered with USAH and AHAI (Unregistered Organization), unregistered teams (Unregistered Teams) or any non USAH or AHAI sanctioned event (Non-Sanctioned Event). Unregistered Organizations and Non-Sanctioned Events do not provide USAH governance or insurance benefits to any participant. The following guidelines shall outline AHAI's policy.

### **5.7.2.1 Organizations / Tournaments**

- a. AHAI Member Organizations may not host any Unregistered Teams or Non-Sanctioned Events. Any Official assigned to any Member Association, Organization, or Tournament games must be a properly registered USAH Official.
- b. AHAI Member Association Teams may only participate in games hosted by properly registered USAH Organizations, Tournaments, or Teams.
- c. Any Member Association who knowingly allows a Member Team to participate in any unregistered event shall not be eligible to participate in the AHAI State Tournament.
- d. Any Member Team who participates in any unregistered event shall not be eligible to participate in the AHAI State Tournament.
- e. Member Organization Officiating Schedulers must be certified by AHAI. Officiating Schedulers who circumvent this policy shall lose AHAI certification and shall be replaced by their Member Association.

### **5.7.2.2 Officials**

- a. Youth games include all age classifications except USAH Adult and USAH Women.
- b. Any USA Hockey Official wearing the USA Hockey Officials crest in a

- non-sanctioned event may lose their USA Hockey Officials status and certification.
- c. All Officials are independent contractors, and the assigning process is not a guarantee of any assignment(s).
  - d. Any Officiating Schedulers who assign an Official to any Unregistered Youth Team shall be brought before the AHAI Rules & Ethics Committee.

## ARTICLE 6 FEE SCHEDULE

Individual Membership Registration	USAH fee	AHA! fee	Total
Youth/Girls Players 2017 & Younger	\$15		\$15
Youth/Girls Players 2016-2015	\$50	\$25	\$75
Youth/Girls Players 2014-2011	\$61	\$25	\$86
Youth/Girls Players 2010-2005	\$70	\$25	\$95
Youth/Girls Players 2004 & Older (Adults)	\$46	\$25	\$71
Coaches Registration	\$46	\$25	\$71
Volunteer registration	No Charge		
Team Membership Registration	None		
Travel Permits per Team: USA Travel Only	\$50		
Travel Permits per Team: USA and Canada	\$100		
Screening Application	\$35 per Application		
Tournament/Showcase Fees	\$300/Tournament		

Included in the USA Hockey portion of your registration fees is a mandatory liability and catastrophic injury insurance premium. For Youth, Girls, and High School teams and younger, this fee includes excess medical insurance.

## ARTICLE 7

### FALL/WINTER SEASON TOURNAMENT, JAMBOREE, & SHOWCASE TEAMS

#### **7.1 FALL/WINTER SEASON TOURNAMENT/JAMBOREE/SHOWCASE TEAMS**

7.1.1 A Tournament/Showcase Team may be formed during the Fall/Regular playing season to participate in an AHAI/USAH/Canada Hockey sanctioned tournament/showcase in or out of the State of Illinois is subject to the rules set out in this Article.

7.1.2 When an AHAI Affiliate Organization has an Official USA Hockey Certified Roster for the Fall/Winter season ("Original Team") does not have sufficient players available from the Original Team because of absences ("Absent Players") due to illness, injury or vacation conflicts, to attend a specific AHAI/ USAH/Canada Hockey Sanctioned Event (Tournament/Showcase) during the Fall/Winter season they may substitute other players for the absent player to enable the team to attend a specific event.

7.1.3 The following rules and restrictions will apply:

- a. The Registrar of the AHAI/USAH AHAI Affiliate Organization must register the team using the USA Hockey Registration portal and electronically upload the team to the AHAI webtool.
- b. The team must be identified as a "Tournament Team" using the name of the Original Team and registered as an Invitational Tournament in the season on the USA Hockey Registration portal.
- c. If a team is participating in a tournament/showcase outside of Illinois, the team must register and pay for a Travel Permit for the tournament team.
- d. The electronic roster must be approved by the AHAI State Registrar before the team departs for the tournament.
- e. The original players who will not be on the Tournament Team must be indicated together with the reason they will not attend the Tournament. This information must be submitted via email, and approval given by the AHAI Registrar to enable the roster to be approved.
- f. The Tournament Team shall be comprised of the Original Team, less the Absent Players,

plus, the substitute players who will take the place of the Absent Players. The Tournament Team may add substitute players up to the allowed number of players according to the USAH Rules.

g. The "Tournament Team" Roster, and Travel Permit are valid only for the weekend dates of and for the AHAI/USAH/Canada Hockey sanctioned event listed on the travel permit. It is not good for any other event. This information must be submitted, and approved given by the AHAI State Registrar before the team departs for the tournament.

h. Officially "rostered players" on the Original Team may not be left home or removed from the official team roster in order to make room for other players on a "Tournament Team".

i. Only players from within the AHAI/USAH member association of the Original Team may participate. All documentation must be submitted before a "Tournament Team" application can be approved.

j. Substitute players must come from the same Affiliate Organization and at the same Tier level and a playing level the same or below. For example- Tier I Youth Teams may only roster players from other Tier I Youth teams within their own AHAI/USAH Affiliate Organization. Tier II Youth teams may only roster players from other Tier II Youth teams within their own AHAI/USAH Affiliate Organization. Girl's teams may only roster players from within their own AHAI/USAH Girls Affiliate Organization. House League teams may only roster players from within their own AHAI/USAH Affiliate Organization. Tier I Major players may not be rostered on Tier I Minor teams for "Tournament Team" purposes. Tier II "AA".

k. High School teams ("Pure" or "Combined") may not register tournament teams.

l. AHAI shall have complete jurisdiction over AHAI/USAH registered teams when they play inside Illinois or travel outside Illinois.

m. No team leaving or playing outside the State of Illinois shall use any Player not on its official USAH or "Tournament Team" roster and all teams, players, coaches, and Organizations registered with AHAI USAH shall comply with all AHAI By-Laws, Rules, and Regulations and Policies whether they play in Illinois or out of State.

n. This "Tournament Team" will not be eligible for the AHAI State Tournament or any District/Regional National Championship play.

o. A "Tournament Team" will not have the voting rights of a regular season team.

p. Any "Tournament Teams" formed for play in the Spring, from April 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup>, are governed by the rules found in the AHAI Guide, Spring/Summer Season.

q. Jamboree Teams may be formed by an AHAI Affiliate Organization for participation in sanctioned Jamboree Events (refer to Article 10). They may form groups for participation in two of the following ways:

i. Flex Teams may be formed with players from within the same affiliate organization at the same tier level. The title of the team should be the name of the affiliate organization with the word "Jamboree" added to the team's name. The teams are limited to the approved division and class for the organization (youth, girls, or disabled discipline). They are not limited by age classification.

ii. In lieu of a certified roster, a group of players from the within the same affiliate organization may participate in a USAH sanctioned Jamboree representative of their organization provided they provide to the Jamboree Event Director proof of current USAH Registration which has been processed by the affiliate organization and the players have been added to one of the affiliate's team. The affiliate is restricted to forming teams allowed by their affiliate approved category (youth, girls or disabled) meaning Youth organizations may have a combined group of youth and girls' players from their organization participate in the sanctioned event. Youth organizations may not send a group limited to females to the event. Girl's organizations are limited to sending a group of female players to participate as representative of their organization. They may not include male participants.

## ARTICLE 8 TRAVEL PERMITS

### 8.1 U.S. / CANADIEN TRAVEL PERMIT

The possession of a current season Travel Permit is necessary for any member team leaving the State of Illinois to play games. All teams requiring a Travel Permit shall contact their Affiliate Organization

Registrar to apply to the AHAI State Registrar. Travel Permits are not required for league games.

8.1.1 Any team that does not obtain the proper travel permit from the AHAI Registrar will be referred to the AHAI Rules & Ethics Committee for appropriate disciplinary action.

8.1.2 All Travel Permits are ordered in the AHAI Webtool by the Affiliate Organization Registrar in the AHAI Webtool on behalf of the teams.

8.1.3 AHAI shall have complete jurisdiction over AHAI/USAH registered teams when they travel outside the State of Illinois any form of team activity, including competition.

8.1.4 A special Hockey Canada and USA Hockey Travel Permit is required for Affiliate Organization teams traveling to Canada to play games.

8.1.5 No team leaving or playing outside the State of Illinois shall use any Player not on said team's official USA Hockey roster and all teams, players and Organizations registered with AHAI/USA Hockey shall comply with all AHAI By-Laws, Rules and Regulations and Policies whether they play or are in Illinois or out of state.

## **8.2 INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL PERMIT**

8.2.1 All teams, Organizations, and individuals planning to travel to a foreign country other than Canada or planning to host foreign teams other than Hockey Canada Members shall apply to the AHAI State Registrar, in writing, for an International Travel Permit. Upon satisfactory completion of said application, an International Travel Permit may be granted upon receipt of international fees as established by AHAI and USA Hockey.

8.2.2 International matches involving USA Hockey member teams will be played under the jurisdiction of the International Ice Hockey Federation and USA Hockey. IIHF Playing Rules shall be used.

## **ARTICLE 9 SPRING/SUMMER HOCKEY**

### **9.1 SPRING / SUMMER HOCKEY**

The period from April 1 of the calendar year through August 31 of the same calendar year is considered the Spring/Summer hockey season. All applicable AHAI By-Laws, Rules and Regulations and Committee findings are in effect with the following exceptions:

9.1.1 Teams registered for the Spring/Summer Season will register using the Pre/Post season in the USA Hockey Registry Portal.

9.1.2 A team specifically established for this period must register through an existing AHAI Affiliate Organization. A team may not register as an independent team.

9.1.3 A registered AHAI Player may skate with any AHAI Affiliate Organization who registers Spring/Summer teams with AHAI.

9.1.4 Players may be registered with multiple AHAI Affiliate Organizations and on multiple teams within AHAI Affiliate Organizations. Sanctioned Leagues may be more restrictive.

9.1.5 A Player skating on a Spring/Summer team shall not be required to pay any fees in excess of actual ice costs and expenses.

9.1.6 Spring/Summer teams have no voting rights.

9.1.7 For the Spring/Summer season, the age classifications for the following fall season apply. The definition of the age classification for the following season can be found in the

USA Hockey Registry Portal under USAH Forms, Age Chart (*Next Season*). AHAI Affiliate Organizations may not register players on spring teams that do not comply with the age classifications for the following fall season. Spring Leagues may not waive this requirement and allow players that do not comply with the above age classifications.

9.1.8 Any House, Tier I or Tier II teams or leagues that do not comply with these rules will be considered non-sanctioned by USAH and AHAI. If an AHAI Affiliate Organization does not follow the rules for age classification, the AHAI Rules and Ethics Committee may require a hearing with that Affiliate Organization's Board of Directors.

9.1.9 Organizations that are registered with AHAI as a House League, Tier I or Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization may not register High School (*Varsity or Junior Varsity*) Teams.

9.1.10 High School Organizations may only register Varsity and Junior Varsity teams. They may not register Youth or Girls teams.

9.1.11 The rules that govern the registration of High School teams in the Fall/Winter (*Regular Season*) also applies to Spring teams.

a. Pure High School Organizations may only register players that are currently enrolled in their school. They may not use players that are not students at their respective school.

b. Combined Organizations must adhere to the combinations approved by the High School Committee for the previous Fall season. Any exceptions to the combinations from the previous Fall must be pre-approved by the High School Chair.

c. Current seniors are not eligible to participate on a Spring High School team. Incoming freshmen (*current 8th graders*) may participate on a high school team on the condition that they are eligible to attend that school and have indicated their intent to attend the school in the Fall. Current 7th graders are not eligible to participate on a Spring High School team. Players may only participate on high school teams from one organization each season.

d. Girls may be on a girls' high school team and a Varsity or Junior Varsity team within the same organization.

e. Spring/Summer Leagues may not waive these requirements and allow players that do not comply with the above age classifications and rules. Any teams or leagues that do not comply will be considered non-sanctioned by USAH and AHAI.

9.1.12 If an AHAI Affiliate Organization does not follow the rules for Spring/Summer Hockey, the AHAI Rules and Ethics Committee may require a hearing with the Affiliate Organization's Board.

## ARTICLE 10

### PERMITS FOR SANCTIONED EVENTS – TOURNAMENTS, SHOWCASES, OR A SERIES OF GAMES

#### 10.1 PERMITS FOR SANCTIONED EVENTS

Any sanctioned amateur hockey event such as a tournament, showcase or series of games being played in Illinois must obtain a Tournament Event Permit.

**All Sanctioned Tournaments must adhere to the *USA Hockey Sanctioned Tournament Safe Sport Program Protocol* detailing tournament staff requirements.**

[https://secure.ahai2.org/pdf/Sanctioned\\_Tournament\\_Protocol.pdf](https://secure.ahai2.org/pdf/Sanctioned_Tournament_Protocol.pdf)

The event host must agree to the USA Hockey Rules and Regulations stated in the USAH Annual Guide in Article VIII – GAMES, EXHIBITION GAMES, INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENTS, JAMBOREES, AND SANCTIONED EVENTS.

The event host must agree to the terms stated in the AHAI Webtool permit registration.

10.1.1 No tournament may be held within the jurisdiction of AHAI, without the procurement of a Tournament Permit for each age level participating in the tournament.

10.1.2 A tournament or showcases or other series of games is designated as:

- a. Any number of games played with teams outside of your normal league competition and/or teams from outside of Illinois.
- b. An entry fee is required.
- c. Playdown games may be required to determine a final winner in any division.
- d. All Players participating in such tournaments must be on their respective AHAI or other State's Affiliate's USA Hockey roster and the Tournament Chairperson must submit rosters of all teams in the tournament to the AHAI Registrar ten (10) days prior to the commencement of the tournament.
- e. Registration must be completed by the Affiliate Registrar or Tournament Vendor President or Registrar in the AHAI Webtool. All tournaments must be approved by the AHAI State Registrar and USA Hockey District Registrar.
- f. The Tournament Director is responsible for providing to the AHAI State Registrar a copy of the following: a listing of participating teams by division, where the games are to be played and a copy of all rules and procedures of the tournament. This information is due to the AHAI State Registrar a minimum of seven (7) days before the start of the event.
- g. The Tournament Director or site administrator does not have the authority to allow mixed or additional players on rosters. This practice will jeopardize a team's registration. All participating teams must have an official USA Hockey certified roster. Only members approved on the specific team roster may participate.
- h. Once sanctioning has been approved, the Tournament provider may NOT change the status of the event to be non-sanctioned without the written permission of the AHAI State Registrar and AHAI Affiliates. AHAI Sanctioned Leagues may not host non-sanctioned events.
- i. Sanctioned Jamborees may be hosted by an AHAI Affiliate Organization. The Affiliate Organization must notify the AHAI Registrar via email of the event including the date, location, and participating Affiliate Organizations. This notification must be made a minimum of seven (7) days before the event. All participants (*players and coaches*) must have a current USAH registration.

*There are two (2) options for registering teams. The host may capture all players in their USAH Registry Portal program and create teams, or the host may require participating teams to provide a certified roster. The host may configure players from multiple USAH/AHA! Affiliate Organizations on a "team" for balanced play. The host may not configure a team of solely female players unless the event is limited to female players in which case only AHAI Affiliate Girls Organizations may host the event.*

## ARTICLE 11 ROSTERS

### 11.1 ROSTERS

No AHAI team shall practice or play any game unless it is properly registered and has an approved Official USA Hockey Certified Roster.

11.2 During the Regular (Fall) Season, a player is limited to be rostered on:

- a. One (1) USA Hockey Tier I Youth, Tier II Youth or House League roster
- b. One (1) USA Hockey Tier I or Tier II Girl's roster
- c. A player may only be rostered with one (1) High School Affiliate Organization

- d. A player may not be rostered on both, a Girls High School team, and a Youth High School team except as stated in Article 19 Section 19.9.11 specific to Girls High School Goaltenders

11.3 All Affiliate Organizations including Tier I Youth, Tier I Girls, Tier II Youth, Tier II Girls, and High School Teams must register their teams by the date of the playing season set out in these Rules and regulations.

11.4 All Learn to Skate, Learn to Play, House League Teams, Women's Teams, and Adult Teams must comply with these Rules and Regulations.

11.5 It is the responsibility of each Affiliate Organization/AHAI team and member to submit a correct roster which complies with the AHAI By-Laws, Rules, and Regulations. It is important to clarify, clear up, and obtain a ruling on any roster question or fact that may cause someone to question a roster prior to submitting a roster to AHAI or any League or participation in any game, even if it is believed to have been resolved.

11.6 If there is any question about a roster, or there is information that may cause anyone to doubt or question the residence or any matter concerning the roster, the Affiliate Organization/team and member has an affirmative obligation to bring the matter to the attention of the AHAI Registrar, and obtain a ruling in writing, prior to submitting a roster but in no event later than immediately after the question or fact is known to the Affiliate Organization, AHAI team and/or member. It is not the responsibility of AHAI to initiate the review of nor initially review rosters but rather the responsibility of the Affiliate Organization/team and member to submit a true and correct roster.

11.7 AHAI will review any roster question brought to its attention in accordance with the AHAI By-Laws, Rules, and Regulations. It is also the responsibility of each Affiliate Organization/team and player to be familiar with, and comply with all AHAI By-Laws, and these Rules and Regulations.

11.8 After a Member is certified to a roster they cannot be removed from that roster. Any modification to an approved roster must be approved by the AHAI Registrar prior to removal of the member.

11.9 Any AHAI team whose roster is found to be improper for failure to comply with the requirements of the AHAI By-Laws, or these Rules and Regulations shall be declared to be an "Improper Team" by the AHAI Registrar and referred to the Rules and Ethics Committee for other appropriate action.

The AHAI Rules and Ethics Committee shall consider, but is not limited to considering, the following sanctions where appropriate:

- a. All previous games played against other AHAI teams shall be forfeited and the improper AHAI Team shall not be eligible to play in any AHAI League end-of- season or State Playdown which may or may not lead to the USA Hockey Districts or Nationals Championship for the current Playing Season and no player appearing on an Improper Team roster may be added to any AHAI Team roster the following Playing Season except on appeal to the AHAI Board of Directors.

#### **11.10 Roster Maximums**

11.10.1 A limit of twenty (20) players at any one time may be registered per team except for High School, College teams and Women's College who may roster thirty (30) players and may play twenty (20) players, and Adult and Women's teams who may roster twenty- five (25) players and may play twenty (20) players.

11.10.2 A Member may be registered in only one (1) National Ice Hockey Federation.



### 11.11 Roster Minimums

11.11.1 Youth and Girls teams must consist of a minimum of at least twelve (12) players including goaltenders.

11.11.2 High School teams must have a minimum of fourteen (14) skaters and one (1) goaltender.

An Exception to this rule (*Roster Minimums*) may be considered by the respective Committee Chair.

### 11.12 Goaltenders

11.12.1 Any player on the team's Official Certified Roster may play as the goaltender provided, they are approved on the Official USAH Certified roster in any position other than a Back-Up Goaltender (*BUG*). Goaltenders, except for a *BUG*, may be skaters on the team.

11.12.2 All AHAI Youth and Girls teams must register with two (2) designated goaltenders for their roster to be certified by the AHAI Registrar.

11.12.3 The regular goaltender(s) on the team must be identified on the Official USA Hockey Roster. This is done in the USAH Registry Portal. On the team's Official Certified roster, they will be designated with "G" for goaltender.

11.12.4 The second goaltender may be an active member of the team that will not regularly play as the goaltender. They should be identified on the roster with "IG" for Identified Goaltender.

11.12.5 In the case where the position of goaltender will rotate among the players, two (2) players should be selected and identified as the Identified Goaltenders (*IG*) for the team.

11.12.6 In addition to player(s) on the Official USAH Certified Roster being identified as the goaltenders, a Back Up Goaltender (*BUG*) may be registered on the team as the second required Goaltender. The *BUG* must be a player from within the Affiliate Organization at the same Tier level and at the same playing level or below.

*(Example: The goalie on a 10U A team may be the BUG on the 10U AA team. The BUG on the 10U A team may not be a 10U AA goalie since they are from a playing level above the 10U A team.)*

11.12.7 AHAI House teams are balanced so the Back Up Goalie (*BUG*) on an AHAI House B or C level team may be any house player from the same playing level or from a playing level beneath the team.

*(Example: A 12U House goalie may be the BUG for any 12U House team within the same organization. They may also be the BUG for any 14U House team within the Affiliate Organization.)*

11.12.8 AHAI House players (*B or C*) may not serve as the Back Up Goalie (*BUG*) for a Tier II or Tier I team. Tier II goalies may not serve as the *BUG* on a House or Tier I team. Tier I goalies may not serve on a Tier II or House team.

11.12.9 Back up Goalies (*BUGs*) may only participate with the team in the event that the regular goalie(s) are injured or unavailable. The team must notify the AHAI Registrar or President if they will be using the *BUG* in a game before they play. The notification should be made by phone.

11.12.10 The AHAI registrar may allow an exception for goaltenders. This request must be documented and sent to the AHAI Registrar, in writing, before an exception is considered.

11.12.11 High School Goalie Exception

(See High School Rules and Regulations)

11.12.12 For House League *only*, a goaltender may be rostered on multiple teams at the House League level within the same Affiliate Organization. It is the intent of this rule to provide goalies for each team while respecting the House League philosophy of equal playing time for both games and practices.

11.12.13 In an emergency situation, goalies within Tier III/House League Organizations can be rostered as Back Up Goalies (*BUGs*) on Tier II programs it is affiliated with. This is for clubs with either the same ILH numbers for both Tier II and Tier III or if the Tier III Affiliate Organization is in the same affiliation park district. This is determined by the Tier III Affiliate Organization only. The AHAI Registrar and Tier III Chair must be notified via email when a Tier III Goalie is being added to a Tier II team as a Back Up Goalie (*BUG*). The Back Up Goalie (*BUG*) may only play when the Tier II Affiliate Organization does not have a goalie available to play, and the Tier III team must take precedence for all conflicts. A Back Up Goalie (*BUG*) can play at the same level or up one (1) age level. The AHAI Registrar and the Tier III Chair must be notified when a team is using their Tier III Back Up Goalie (*BUG*) in a game.

### 11.13 TEAM AND PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

No players may be rostered or play on more than one Youth or Girls Tier I or Tier II team during the same playing season, except as specifically allowed in these AHAI Rules and Regulations.

11.13.1 AHAI registered teams shall NOT:

- a. Play any Illinois team that is not a member of AHAI and USA Hockey.
- b. Participate in any game, practice, event, or other activity with which a person or entity suspended by AHAI and/or USA Hockey is participating or otherwise involved.
- c. Use any player not properly rostered to its team and may not play any team using a player not properly rostered to the team it plays.
- d. Participate in any event (*game, tournament, showcase, or other series of games*) that is not sanctioned by either AHAI or USA Hockey.

### 11.14 GAMES

Definition of a game: For the purposes of this rule, the definition of what constitutes a "game" shall include the definition of that term as found in Section VIII-A of the USA Hockey Rules & Regulations, and shall also mean the following, whichever is more expansive: A contest between two separate, rostered, teams that uses one or more Officials, is played under the applicable USA Hockey Official Rules of Ice Hockey, and a time clock is used regardless of the length of the periods.

### 11.15 GAME LIMITS

11.15.1 The intent of this rule is to increase the practice to game ratio of all AHAI affiliate teams and to emulate the introduction of the USA Hockey American Development Model (*ADM*).

11.15.2 The AHAI team game limits shall be mandatory for High School, Tier II Youth and Girls, Tier III B / House League C teams and recommended for Tier I Youth and Girls teams.

11.15.3 Game limits will be as follows.

8U	Girls 8U	12 half ice games
15 full ice games starting December 1st of each calendar year		
Youth 10U	Girls 10U	40 games maximum
Youth 12U	Girls 12U	45 games maximum

Youth 14U	Girls 14U	50 games maximum
15 O		50 games maximum
Youth 16U	Girls 16U	60 games maximum
Youth 18U		60 games maximum
	Girls 19U	60 games maximum
High School		60 games maximum

11.15.4 It is recommended all 8U games should be 50 minutes in duration and wins and losses will not be kept along with league standings, etc.

11.15.5 Game limits include all leagues, tournaments, showcases and practice games. All tournaments, both in the State and outside of Illinois, will count as no more than three (3) games towards the team's game limit. Every showcase game will count towards the team's game limit regardless of the number of games the team plays during the specific Showcase. All playoff games for USA Hockey and AHA! registered Leagues, State, Districts, and Nationals competition do not count toward the team game limit.

11.15.6 Any team violating the AHA! mandatory team game limits will be subject to disciplinary action at the AHA! Rules & Ethics Committee. Penalties may include suspension of the offending team from State tournament play, suspension of the coach and possible forfeiture of an Affiliate Organization's membership or its Tier I, Tier II or House status.

## 11.16 OUT OF TIER GAME LIMITS

AHA! Tier II Youth, Tier II Girls and Tier III B or House League C teams are limited in the number of games for the current playing season, which they may participate against teams registered at a higher tier level regardless of whether those games are in Showcases, Tournaments, or otherwise.

11.16.1 Explanation of out of tier limits - this rule establishes a 50% limit on the number of games Affiliate Organizations may play against higher tier Affiliate Organizations in a season. Prior to the commencement of the Illinois State Playoffs, no team is to have MORE than 50% of their games against higher Tier Affiliate Organizations. (Example: A 10U Tier II Team that played thirty-six (36) games prior to the State Playoffs cannot exceed eighteen (18) games against Tier I Opponents.)

11.16.2 Every game played in Showcases or Tournaments against a team at a higher Tier level as defined under Section 11.16 counts against the limits, regardless of how either team is registered in the Showcase or Tournament.

11.16.3 No Tier II or House team may participate in any Tier I or Tier II League, respectively. League Playoffs and State Tournament games are NOT included in determining maximum game counts.

11.16.4 Definition of a team's Tier level: A team's tier level is determined by the Division and Category designated on their USA Hockey Certified Roster.

## 11.16 PENALTIES

Enforcement of this rule shall be the responsibility of the AHA! State Tournament Committee. The Committee having jurisdiction, or its chairperson, acting alone if required by the circumstances, shall decide a claim that a team has violated the rule. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 21 (*Disciplinary Action*) of AHA!'s Rules & Regulations, the Committee or its chairperson is empowered

to take action without holding a hearing if the time between AHAI's awareness of the alleged violation and the start of the State Tournament does not reasonably allow a hearing to be held. Violation of this rule shall disqualify the team from participating in the AHAI State Tournament. In addition, the Team's Affiliate Organization along with the Team's coaches and managers may be referred to AHAI Rules and Ethics Committee for possible further discipline.

## ARTICLE 12 SAFETY

### 12.1 SAFE SPORT PROGRAM

The safety of its participants is of paramount importance to USA Hockey. USA Hockey SafeSport is the Organization's program related to off-ice safety. AHAI adheres to the USA Hockey Safe Sport Program. USA Hockey has long had systems in place to protect its participants from physical, sexual, emotional, and other types of abuse, and misconduct that can be harmful to youth hockey players and other participants.

12.1.1 These include without limitation Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Screening, Locker Room Supervision, and Hazing Policies, in addition to Codes of Conduct applicable to administrators, coaches, officials, parents, players and spectators. The USA Hockey SafeSport Handbook is intended to update and collect USA Hockey's various policies to protect its participants from all types of misconduct and abuse. Information and Training can be found at USA Hockey: <https://www.usahockey.com/safesporttraining>

12.1.2 The USA Hockey Safe Sport Handbook addresses the following:

Policies prohibiting:

- Emotional abuse
- Bullying
- Threats and Harassment
- Hazing

12.1.3 Other policies included address areas where misconduct can occur and are Intended to reduce the risk of potential abuse, including the following:

- Locker Room Policy
- Electronic Communications Policy
- Travel Policy
- Billeting Policy
- Education and Awareness Training Policy
- Screening and Background Check Program
- Reporting of concerns of abuse
- Responding to abuse and other misconduct
- Monitoring and supervision of the SafeSport Program

#### 12.1.4 Billeting

It is recognized that some youth and junior hockey players do leave home to play hockey in a location away from their parents. In those circumstances, the organization or team typically arranges for the player to live with a host or billet family. Having youth players live outside their homes increases the risk for abuse and misconduct to occur. All organizations and teams that arrange for players to live with billet families shall have written policies and procedures in place to govern the arrangement. All billeting policies and procedures shall be provided to the player's parents in advance of placing the player with the billet and shall meet the following requirements:

- a. Billet families and the player and player's parents shall all sign an agreement with the Member Program and/or team that they will comply with the terms and conditions of the Billet Policy, the USCSS Code and the USA Hockey SafeSport Handbook.
- b. As required by the jurisdiction where the player is billeted, the player's

parents shall sign and provide a power of attorney and/or guardianship (as necessary by applicable state law) to the billet family adults to allow for them to make emergency medical and schooling decisions.

- c. Each Member Program or team shall have a billet coordinator who shall be responsible for overseeing compliance with the Billeting Policy, the USCSS Code and all USA Hockey SafeSport Policies.
- d. No more than two players may be housed with any one billet family (at the Junior level, there may be exceptions to the number of players permitted in one billet home if approved by the USA Hockey Junior Council).
- e. Owners, coaches, team/program management and staff are not allowed to host or billet players.
- f. Minors must be placed with a billet family and may not reside in an apartment or home solely with other players.
- g. All adults living in the household of the billet family must be registered with USA Hockey, screened in accordance with the USA Hockey Screening Policy, and must complete the SafeSport Training in compliance with Section II. Proof that these requirements have been met must be received by the team's billet coordinator prior to the player moving in with the family.
- h. It is strongly recommended that all billet families be two-parent homes. However, single parent billet families may be acceptable, but the organization or team shall take additional reasonable steps to regularly monitor the billeting arrangement and its compliance with the USA Hockey SafeSport Policies.
- i. The Member Program or team shall have a mandatory curfew for all billeted players. The host family may have an earlier curfew.
- j. Players must agree to comply with the house rules of the billet families, including curfews, chores/ cleaning, telephone usage, etc. Complaints about unusual rules shall be addressed with the Member Program/team billet coordinator.
- k. Players shall not stay overnight at any other home except with the permission of the player's parents and advance notification to the billet family and Member Program or team billet coordinator.
- l. Players are not to drive billet family vehicles without automobile liability insurance as required by applicable state law, and documentation and approval of the billet family.
- m. The Member Program's/team's billeting policy shall include requirements that the billet family maintain appropriate homeowners/renters' insurance.
- n. Players living with a billet family shall be permitted to make regular check-in phone calls to parents. Team personnel and billets shall allow for any unscheduled check-in phone calls between the player and parents.

12.1.5 A USA Hockey member or parent of any member who violates any of the Safe Sport Policies or if required fails to consent to and pass a screening and background check in compliance with the Screening and Background Check Program, will be denied eligibility within any USA Hockey program and is subject to appropriate disciplinary action including, but not limited to, suspension, permanent suspension, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities.

12.1.6 Mandatory Reporting law requires that:

- a. ALL adult members of a National Governing Body (NGB) or a facility under the jurisdiction of an NGB or at any event sanctioned by an NGB, and
- b. ALL adults authorized by such members to interact with an amateur athlete, immediately report an allegation of child abuse of an amateur athlete who is a minor to: The Center for Safe Sport, and to Law Enforcement.

## **12.2 SCREENING**

AHAI adheres to the USA Hockey National Background Screening Policy.

USA Hockey Screening information link:

<https://www.usahockey.com/backgroundscreen>

In compliance with new requirements from the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC), USA Hockey has a national level background screening program.

12.2.1 All adult coaches, officials, board members, employees, volunteers, and anyone else who will have regular contact with, or authority over, athletes under the age of 18 are required to submit to a background screen before any such contact with those athletes.

12.2.2 USA Hockey has had a background screening policy in place since the 1993-94 season. The responsibility to ensure background screening took place was handled through the appropriate USA Hockey Affiliate. That will no longer be the process and instead the background screening program will be handled at the national level using NCSI. This will provide consistency, enhance USA Hockey's world-leading SafeSport program, and comply with the requirements given to USA Hockey by the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee.

12.2.3 For members who were last screened through their Affiliate after April 1, 2019, for the 2019-20 season, their screens will be valid for the 2020-21 season, and will not need to be screened under the new system until prior to the 2021-22 season. If a member's most recent screen is from prior to April 1, 2019, the member, if in a position that requires a background screen, will need to be screened using the USAH National Screening Program in order to participate in the upcoming 2021-22 season.

12.2.4 All new screens submitted through the NCSI national screening program after April 1, 2020, will be valid for two seasons. For example, a screen submitted and approved on April 15, 2020, will be valid through the end of the 2021-22 season, which is August 31, 2022.

## **12.3 CONCUSSION PROTOCOL and PLAYER RETURN TO PLAY POLICY**

AHAI follows the USA Hockey protocol for concussion management found at [www.USAHockey.com/safety-concussion](http://www.USAHockey.com/safety-concussion)

In the event of a concussion of a player, the Head Coach must adhere to the USAH Concussion Policy.

12.3.1 The USA Hockey Concussion Management Protocol and most state statutes require that an athlete be removed from any training, practice, or game if they exhibit any signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion or are suspected of sustaining a concussion. The player should not return to physical activity until he or she has been evaluated by a qualified medical provider who has provided written clearance to return to sports.

12.3.2 Any athlete held out for concussion evaluation or who has been diagnosed with a concussion must provide a written Return to Play Form from a qualified medical provider allowing them to return to any training, practice, or game activity with no restrictions. The parent(s) must sign the form and the coach must also sign the form acknowledging that they received it.

12.3.3 The form must be completed and signed by a qualified medical provider. The parent(s) and coach must then sign the form. The completed should be kept with the team coach or manager.

Information and forms can be found at <https://www.usahockey.com/playersafety>

## **12.4 NECK LACERATION PROTECTION**

USA Hockey approved legislation requiring the use of neck laceration protection for players in all age

classifications, other than adults, in games and practices, as well as for on-ice officials under the age of 18, effective August 1, 2024. For clarity, the requirement includes players in the youth, girls, and junior age classifications.

*(Arm bands, head bands, plain turtlenecks and mock turtlenecks are not neck laceration protectors.)*

USA Hockey has long recommended the use of cut-resistant socks, sleeves or undergarments. USA Hockey strongly recommends the use of neck laceration protection by adult players.

*Not all protective equipment is mandatory in all age classifications. However, if not mandated by USA Hockey rule, USA Hockey strongly recommends that all skaters and goalkeepers in all age classifications properly wear an internal mouthpiece, a HECC approved helmet and a HECC approved full facemask for all games and practices.*

## **12.5 CO-ED LOCKER ROOM POLICY**

It is not acceptable under USA Hockey/AHAI By-Laws, Policies on Physical and Sexual Abuse for members to be observing the opposite gender while they dress/undress. In order to provide an enjoyable and safe experience for all players, please make certain that proper adult supervision is present in locker room settings at all times, including the provision for more having than one adult supervisor present in the locker room, and arrange to provide supervisors who are of the same sex as the children they are to protect. *(In the locker room means actually being inside the locker room and/or standing right outside, not at the concession stand or somewhere nearby in the lobby area).*

Please follow these Coaching Ethics Guidelines:

- a. Where possible, have the male and female players undress/dress in separate locker rooms; then convene in a single dressing room to hold the coach's pre-game meeting.
- b. Once the game is finished, hold the coach's post-game meeting; then have the male and female players proceed to their separate dressing rooms to undress and shower.  
In those cases where separate facilities are not available, have one gender enter the locker room and change into their uniforms. That gender would then leave the locker room, while the other gender enters the locker room and gets dressed. Both genders would then assemble in the locker room and hold the coach's pre-game meeting.
- c. Following the game and the coach's post-game meeting, where separate facilities are not available, the second gender group enters the locker room and undresses/showers, while the first group waits outside until they have undressed/shower and left the room. Once the second group leaves, the first group enters the locker room and undresses/showers. This should be done on a rotating basis *(taking turns)* so neither gender is always last to dress/undress and shower. Taking turns is a means of reasonable accommodation so neither gender group is favored. Reinforce to all players, coaches, officials, volunteers, and parents at the beginning of each season at your Member Organization's parents' meetings that your Member Organization takes this issue seriously and has adopted a fair locker room policy.

## **12.6 LOCKER ROOM SUPERVISION - POLICY**

Under USA Hockey's current Locker Room Policy "all USA Hockey Member Programs are required to have at least one responsible [NCSI screened and SafeSport trained] adult (which may include coaches, managers or other volunteers) present at all times and monitoring the locker room during all team events to assure that only Participants (coaches and players), approved team personnel and family members are permitted in the locker room and to supervise the conduct in the locker room." While USA Hockey expressly prefers that locker room monitors remain inside the locker room while Participants are present, if the monitor is "in the immediate vicinity outside the locker room (near the door within arm's length and so that the monitor can sufficiently hear inside the locker room) who also regularly and frequently enters the locker room to monitor activity inside," the Member Program is in compliance.

Despite this policy, however, **more than half of all SafeSport incidents reported each year occur in locker rooms.** In all but a few cases, there was no locker room monitor present.

AHAI believes that the presence of adults inside the locker rooms is critical to maintaining a safe and positive environment for our players. For this reason, Illinois is joining the many states that have imposed stricter locker room monitoring requirements than those required by USA Hockey.

**Effective immediately, the following conditions are REQUIRED of all AHAI Affiliates for locker room use at all team events including conditioning clinics, tryouts, practices, games, and any event that a locker room is being utilized:**

- No players shall be allowed access to the locker room unless a NCSI background screened/Safe Sport trained locker room monitor is present in the locker room.
- If a single player is present, the locker room should be monitored by at least two adults until additional players arrive.
- If there is only one adult present, whether a coach or volunteer parent, they should wait for multiple players to arrive before allowing access to the locker room.
- The same strategies should be applied after practice with a monitor staying until the last player leaves, and at no time should one adult be alone in the locker room with one player, unless the player is their own child.

This policy applies to all minor USA Hockey Participants up through the youth 18U level and through girls 19U level. It should be noted that an Affiliate may at its discretion adopt stricter policies than those defined by USA Hockey or AHAI, but in no case may said policy be less strict.

*Affiliates found in violation of this policy will be sanctioned automatically, under Zero Tolerance, in the following manner starting December 1, 2023.*

**1<sup>st</sup> team offense: \$500 fine to the Affiliate and one game suspension to the head coach**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> team Offense: \$1000 fine to the Affiliate and 3 game suspension to the head coach**

Any additional offenses will require the Affiliate president and coaches of the noncompliant team to appear before AHAI's Rules and Ethics Committee to determine appropriate discipline, which may include exclusion from participation in the Illinois State Tournament.

As a reminder, all Affiliates are required to publish locker room policies to the parents of all minor participants that are specific to the facilities they regularly use. The Affiliate's policies shall include the program's (a) practices for supervising and monitoring locker rooms and changing areas; (b) permission or lack of permission for parents to be in the locker rooms; (c) prohibited conduct, including at least all forms of abuse and misconduct prohibited by USA Hockey; and (d) specific policies regarding the use of mobile electronic devices and phones and prohibiting the use of a device's recording capabilities.

In addition to publishing these changes to AHAI's locker room policy, AHAI strongly encourages all Affiliates to go over its locker room policy with parents and players at a team meeting. At that time, the Affiliate should:

- Clearly explain the rules and expectations for players with respect to locker room activity.
- Clearly explain the rules and expectations of the locker room monitor....including the corrective action that will be taken if necessary (player could be benched or suspended, for example.).
- Ensure players and parents understand the locker room monitor is there to help ensure there is a safe environment for all members of the team.

AHAI is confident that this policy change will reduce incidents of hazing, bullying, harassment, or other inappropriate behaviors caused by an unsupervised locker room. The safety and well-being of every player is and will continue to be AHAI's top priority.

## **12.7 LOCKER BOXING POLICY**

USA Hockey is concerned with the activity known as "Locker Boxing" (*aka Helmet & Gloves*) that produces head trauma in children and young adults. USA Hockey is opposed to that activity and recommends that our Member Associations take action to prevent this activity through awareness, education, and supervision.

# **ARTICLE 13 STATE TOURNAMENT COMMITTEES**

## **13.1 AHAI STATE TOURNAMENTS**

All state tournament competitions shall be under the respective control and supervision of:



13.1.1 AHAI Youth Tournament Committee - responsible for all tournaments 10U through and including 18U. This group is further sub-divided into a Tournament Committee for Tier I Youth and a Tournament Committee for Tier Youth II State Tournaments.

13.1.2 AHAI High School Tournament Committee - responsible for all High School related tournaments, including Boys High School teams and Girls High School teams.

13.1.3 AHAI Girl's Tournament Committee - responsible for all Girls' State Tournaments, except for Girls High School State Tournament.

13.1.4 AHAI Adult Women's Tournament Committee- responsible for the Women's State Tournament.

13.1.5 AHAI Adult Tournament Committee - responsible for all Adult Men's State Tournaments.

State Tournament Official as used hereafter means a member of the respective Tournament Committees, or a person appointed by the Chairperson of the respective Tournament Committee or any other AHAI Officer or Director.

## **13.2 GENERAL STATE TOURNAMENT REQUIREMENTS**

13.2.1 Notification: Complete state tournament bulletins containing fee schedules, playoff structures, methods of pairings, qualifications and deadlines shall be prepared by the appropriate tournament committee and distributed to all member teams as early as possible.

13.2.2 Player Eligibility: Each Affiliate Organization team may dress a maximum of twenty (20) players including goalkeepers for each state tournament game. To qualify in the State Tournament, a player must play in 75% of the total amount of games that the Affiliate Organization team played from the last date that the player was certified to the team by the AHAI Registrar; and also played in a minimum of ten (10) games with the Affiliate Organization team. The deadline for a player to be added to a roster and be eligible to participate in the State Tournament is December 26th.

13.2.3 Team Eligibility: Means a group of amateur hockey players, coaches, and volunteers that, having complied with all of the By-Laws and these Rules and Regulations, have an Official USA Hockey Certified Roster, and must have played at least twenty (20) USAH and AHAI sanctioned games during the season as a unit.

13.2.4 Each Affiliate Organization team may select its players in any manner it sees fit, provided it conforms to all of the AHAI By-Laws, Rules and Regulations.

13.2.5 The playing of an ineligible player automatically forfeits the game he/she participated in AND disqualifies the Affiliate Organization team on which he/she played from state tournament or USA Hockey competition and makes the player, team, coach, manager, and sponsoring organization (*any or all*) subject to possible suspension.

## **13.3 GENERAL TOURNAMENT RULES**

USA Hockey Rules shall prevail at all state tournament games with any exceptions to be detailed by the State Tournament Committee.

13.3.1 The length of periods, both stop time and running time, shall be determined by the State Tournament Committee for each classification and category.

13.3.2 It is required that all teams entering the State Tournament competition be properly uniformed, (*i.e., each player in the same-colored jersey with each jersey numbered*).

13.3.3 An Affiliate Organization team may participate in only one division in the State Tournament and must declare which division it will participate in at the time the team files its tournament registration.

13.3.4 Any team that enters the State Tournament shall fully participate. Any team not fully participating shall be referred to the Tournament Protest Committee and the AHAI Rules and Ethics Committee for appropriate action.

13.3.5 Any school which "boards" students is not eligible for State Tournament play. "Boards" for the purpose of this rule is defined as rooming and living on the campus of the school or housing provided by the school of which the student is attending.

*In the event there is no tournament at any age level, there will be no Affiliate Organization representative from Illinois in the USA Hockey Districts and Nationals Tournaments unless otherwise approved by the AHAI Board of Directors.*

#### **13.4 STATE TOURNAMENT DIVISIONS**

##### **13.4.1 Tier I/AAA Youth and Girls Division**

To compete in the State Tournament, a Tier I Team must be from an Affiliate Organization having at least three Tier I /AAA Teams playing at two different levels, 10U Major thru 18/19U.

13.4.1.1 Tier I Youth playing levels include: 10U Major, 12U Major, 12U Minor, 14U Major, 14U Minor, Fifteen Only, 16U, 18U.

13.4.1.2 No 12U aged youth players may participate on any National Bound Affiliate Organization 14U team.

13.4.1.3 Tier I Girls playing levels include: 12U, 14U, 16U, 19U

##### **13.4.1.4 Tier I Girls Declaration of National Bound Team:**

In the event a player is registered on more than one team that participates in games leading towards a USA Hockey Nationals Championships Tournament, the player must declare, in writing, by December 31st to the Central District Registrar, the AHAI Registrar and the Girls Committee Chairperson for which National level bound team the player wishes to be eligible to advance with. If the player does not indicate which team she wishes to advance with by such deadline, the Central District Registrar shall have the final authority to certify the eligibility of any such player solely based on the effective date of the receipt of the earliest Team's Roster Registration.

##### **13.4.2 Tier II/AA Youth Division**

To compete in the State Tournament, a Tier II Team must be from an Affiliate Organization having at least three Affiliate Organization Tier II Teams playing at three different age levels, 10U through 18U.

13.4.2.1 No 12U aged youth players may participate on any National Bound Affiliate Organization's 14U team.

##### **13.4.3 Tier II "AA" Division:**

This tournament shall be for an Affiliate Organization's Top Tier II Team which is registered as "AA" and Affiliate Organization's teams that are registered as "A" who wish to participate in this level of the state tournament.

This division includes teams qualifying for the USA Hockey Districts/Nationals Championships Tournament. Champions of this bracket must represent Illinois in the USA Hockey Districts and Nationals Championships Tournaments. Any Affiliate Organization whose team registers for the

“AA” Division tournament and fails to fully participate therein or which qualified for the subsequent USA Hockey Districts and/or Nationals Championships Tournaments and fails to fully participate therein will not be permitted to enter ANY team in the State Tournament at any age level in the succeeding Playing Season and shall be referred to the Rules and Ethics Committee for appropriate action.

#### 13.4.4 Tier II “A” Division

This tournament shall be for all Affiliate Organization Tier II Teams which are registered “AA” or “A” who meet the requirements set out in these rules and regulations and wish to participate in this tournament.

#### 13.4.5 Tier II “B” (*Non-National Bound*) “B” Division

This tournament shall be for all Affiliate Organization Tier II Teams which are registered “A” and meet the requirements set out in these rules and regulations who wish to participate in this tournament.

### 13.5 TEAM PLACEMENT

All Affiliate Organizations which have the following number of teams at a given age division will be placed in the following divisions:

#### Three Teams

- 1st Team will play in the “AA” Division
- 2nd Team will play in the “A” Division
- 3rd Team will play in the “B” Division

#### Four Teams

- 1st Team will play in the “AA” Division
- 2nd & 3rd Teams will play in the “A” Division
- 4th Team will play in the “B” Division

#### Five or more Teams

- 1st Team will play in the “AA” Division
- 2nd & 3rd Teams will play in the “A” Division
- 4th & 5th and additional Teams will play in the “B” Division

#### 13.5.1 “B Level” Exemption

Affiliate Organizations may apply for an exemption to play in the “B” Division if the Organization has formed only two (2) teams at a level (10U, 12U, 14U) and the team is the 2nd team.

#### 13.5.2 “AA” Requesting to Play “A”

Affiliate Organizations are qualified to apply for an exemption to play in the “A” Division if the team is the only team formed at a level by the organization (10U, 12U, 14U).

13.5.3 The judging criteria for all exemption requests will be developed solely by the Tier II Youth State Tournament Sub-Committee.

13.5.4 The Tier II Sub-Committee of the Youth Tournament Committee shall have the final say as to the placement of teams in the divisions.

### 13.6 HIGH SCHOOL DIVISION

The High School Tournament Committee shall have the final say as to the placement of teams in the “Red”, “Blue”, and Combined divisions.

13.6.1 Red Division – Varsity State Championship. Open to all registered Affiliate Organization High School Division 1 Pure Teams as defined in these rules and regulations.

13.6.2 Combined Division – Open to all Affiliate Organization Division 2 Combined Teams as defined in these rules and regulations. Affiliates with more than six (6) schools are not

permitted to participate in the State Tournament.

13.6.3 Blue Division - Junior Varsity State Championship. Open to all registered Affiliate Organization Division 1 Pure Junior Varsity Teams.

13.6.4 Combined Junior Varsity – Affiliate Organization Division 2 Combined Junior Varsity Teams who have played 75% of their games against other Junior Varsity Teams, meet the definition of "COMBINED" teams defined in these rules and regulations and have been approved for participation in the State Tournament after submission of their application to participate. Affiliates with more than six (6) or more schools are not permitted to participate in the State Tournament.

### **13.7 HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS' DIVISION**

The State Tournament is open to those Affiliate Organization Girls High School Varsity and High School Junior Varsity teams approved by the AHAJ High School Committee. Affiliate Organization Girls High School Pure Teams and Combined Teams may be in one State Tournament Division. Girls High Schools with six (6) or more schools are not permitted to participate in the State Tournament.

13.7.1 Affiliate Organization Teams will be ranked for placement in the Tournament by the High School Committee at the scheduled ranking meeting.

### **13.8 HIGH SCHOOL PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

For High School Only: Players must participate in seventy-five percent (75%) of the High School Affiliate Organization Team's Regular Season League games (*as a part of the team that is rostered and plays in the State Tournament*), except for Girls High School which shall be sixty percent (60%) of the team's league games. High School players approved to join the High School Affiliate Organization team before December 26<sup>th</sup> must participate in 75% of the High School Affiliate Organization team's remaining league games from the time the player is approved on the roster. They must meet the player minimum game requirements stated below for them to be eligible to participate in the State Tournament.

### **13.9 HIGH SCHOOL TEAM ELIGIBILITY**

High School Affiliate Organization Teams must have played at least twenty (20) league games as a high school team. Only Regular season league games count towards a team's eligibility to participate in the State Tournament.

*A High School Affiliate Organization should strive to field the best possible varsity team. If a Dual Rostered JV player is of sufficient talent to play on the Varsity team, the High School Affiliate Organization may petition the High School Committee to lock the player to the Varsity roster.*

### **13.10 GIRLS TIER II DIVISION**

Girls - Open to all Girls' Affiliate Organizations with teams at the 19U to 10U age levels.

#### **13.10.1 Non-National Bound Levels**

The following age levels are considered non-National bound and therefore are not required to submit a declaration and may play in both State Tournaments.

- a. Girls' 10U
- b. Girls' 12U

Girls may play in two (2) State Tournaments, one for Girls and one for Youth, so long as neither is a National Bound level.

#### **13.10.2 National Bound Levels**

Beginning with the 2021-2022 Regular Playing Season, 12U aged players will no longer be eligible to be rostered on a 14U or above National Bound age level team.

The following age levels are considered National bound and therefore are required to submit a declaration by the deadline date and to the persons listed above:

- a. Girls' 14U

- b. Girls' 16U
- c. Girls' 19U

All teams entering the State Tournament at the National Bound level do so with the intent of advancing to USA Hockey's Districts and Nationals Championships Tournaments including but not limited to the State Championship Team.

*(At-Large Bids are a possibility at all National Bound classifications and divisions of Girls Hockey).*

### **13.11 DECLARATIONS OF NATIONAL BOUND TEAM**

In the event a player is registered on more than one team that participates in games leading towards a USA Hockey Nationals Championships Tournament, the player must declare, in writing, by December 31st to the Central District Registrar, the AHA! Registrar and the Girls Committee Chairperson for which National level bound team the player wishes to be eligible to advance with. If the player does not indicate which team she wishes to advance with by such deadline, the Central District Registrar shall have the final authority to certify the eligibility of any such player solely based on the effective date of the receipt of the earliest Team's Roster Registration.

- 13.11.1 Player Restrictions: Once a declaration is announced, the player will be bound to that team for the State Tournament and possible advancement and becomes ineligible to play with the player's other team in the State Tournament or possible advancement even if the declared team does not participate beyond the play-in or round robin games.

### **13.12 GIRLS' PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

Only players on the certified USAH/AHA! roster are eligible to participate in the State Tournament. All players are required to have played in a minimum of 75% of the team's scheduled season games.

- a. Scheduled tournaments will count for a maximum of three (3) games provided the tournament is a 3-game guarantee.
- b. Injured players who are noted as such on the score sheet shall be allowed to count the missed game as a game played.

### **13.13 GIRLS' TEAM ELIGIBILITY**

Each team may dress a maximum of twenty (20) players, including goal keepers for each State Tournament game with a maximum of eighteen (18) skaters.

- a. The deadline for teams to add players to the roster and be eligible is December 31<sup>st</sup>.
- b. Team seeding will be determined by the Girls' State Tournament Committee after all teams have registered and completed their rankings of the participating teams in their respective age divisions.  
*(This is not applicable for Tier I Girls' Teams)*
- c. All information will be distributed and posted by the Girls' State Tournament Committee with the aid of the Girls Committee.

**National Bound Divisions (*Tier 1 Girls and Tier II Girls*) are 14U, 16U, 19U.**

### **13.14 ADULT WOMEN' DIVISIONS**

Open to all adult women classifications.

### **13.15 ADULT MEN'S DIVISIONS**

- 13.15.1 Red - Open USA Hockey National Qualifying Tournament. Champion may represent AHA! in USA Hockey National Adult Open Tournament. All USA Hockey registered Open Adult teams must enter this tournament. Each team must have played at least twenty (20) games during the season as a unit and each rostered Player must have participated in at least fifteen (15) of those games.

13.15.2 White House League - Open to all USA Hockey registered House League teams. Each team must have played at least fifteen (15) games as a unit during the season and each rostered Player must have participated in at least ten (10) of those games.

13.15.3 Blue Old Timers - Open to all USA Hockey registered "Old Timers" League teams. Each team must have played at least fifteen (15) games during the current season as a unit under "Old Timers" rules of No-Check-No-Slapshot hockey and each rostered Player must have participated in at least ten (10) of those games.

### **13.16 NON-ILLINOIS RESIDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN THE AHAI STATE TOURNAMENTS**

It is the intent of the Amateur Hockey Association of Illinois (AHAII) to focus on the development of the players and participants who are residents of and living in Illinois with their parents or guardians. (*"Illinois Resident Players"*) AHAII's intent is the development of "our own" players. To that end, AHAII will not permit players who are not Illinois Residents to participate in the AHAII State Tournament, without an exception approved by the respective Tournament Committee and AHAII Board of Directors.

Some types of potential exceptions to this Rule, not absolute, and require approval:

- a. For Non-Illinois resident players from the states of Indiana, Wisconsin, Iowa, Missouri, and Kentucky that are actually in closer proximity to Rinks and Affiliate Organizations in Illinois than they are to a Rink or Affiliate Organization in their own State.
- b. Potentially eligible players must play for that Rink and Affiliate Organization in closer proximity.
- c. Potentially eligible players who just recently moved into the State of Illinois with their parent or guardian, and who have not had the time to become a resident after reasonable efforts.
- d. Foreign Exchange Students on a student exchange program attending school full time will be permitted to participate under USA Hockey Rules and Regulations, Article 3 Classifications, Sections - Youth, Girls, Women.

### **13.17 PROTESTS**

Protests during tournaments must be made immediately and as soon as practical. Hearings and appeals must be conducted as soon as practical.

13.17.1 Protests of Player Eligibility must be filed in writing to the respective Tournament Committee Chairperson immediately upon knowledge of the protesting party.

13.17.2 Protests on an event occurring during a game must be made in writing by noting the protest on the scoresheet of that game prior to signing the scoresheet at the end of the game with the protesting party providing the respective Tournament Committee Chairperson with a copy immediately.

13.17.3 Protests on other matters must be filed in writing with the respective Tournament Committee Chairperson immediately but no later than twenty-four (24) hours after completion of the game or incident under dispute.

13.17.4 All protests must be accompanied by a \$125.00 protest fee that will be returned only if the protest is upheld.

13.17.5 No protests of judgments, rulings by referees or linesmen shall be permitted.

All protests will be decided by the respective Tournament Protest Committee appointed by the respective Tournament Committee Chairperson and the decision of the respective Tournament Protest Committee shall be final unless a notice of appeal is filed as set out below. Due to time constraints and the need to have an efficient tournament, decisions of the respective Tournament Protest Committee are final.

*(Exception: Appeals may be filed only if the grounds are.)*

- a. There is new evidence not known to the appealing party prior to the original hearing with the respective Tournament Protest Committee.
- b. There is no rational basis for the decision of the respective Tournament Protest Committee and there is sufficient time to hear the protest prior to the completion of the tournament without postponement or undue disruption of the tournament

## ARTICLE 14 6U & 8U OR UNDER YOUTH & GIRLS' POLICY

### **14.1 6U and 8U YOUTH & GIRLS**

Following the concepts of USA Hockey Long Term Athletic Development (*LTAD*) and American Development Models (*ADM*), AHAI strongly encourages the skill level development of all players, especially at the entry level.

14.1.1 Cross-ice, 1/2 ice and small area games are recommended for 8U and 6U to increase ice time, puck touches and skill development.

14.1.2 Tier II Youth 8U players may not "play up" to the 10 & Under Youth team or higher level without approval of the AHAI Tier II Youth Committee.

14.1.3 8-year old's playing Tier II Girls may "play up" on a 10 & Under team provided that the number does not exceed 50% of the total players rostered.

14.1.4 6U players may not play up to the 8U or higher level without approval of the appropriate AHAI Committee.

### **14.2 AHAI DOES NOT RECOMMEND FULL ICE 8U TOURNAMENTS**

It is recommended that 6U and 8U teams do not participate in out-of-state tournaments.

14.2.1 AHAI recommends geographical play (*within a local area*) for all 8U players.

14.2.2 8U teams will be limited to one (1) out of state tournament travel permit per season.

14.2.3 All 6U games will be Cross Ice or 1/2 ice hockey in accordance with the American Development Models (*ADM*).

House League C (*complete in-house programs*) do not need to meet these requirements.

*The above policies will be monitored by each local Affiliate Organization and AHAI.*

## ARTICLE 15 HOUSE LEAGUE

### **15.1 HOUSE LEAGUE**

House League teams are USA Hockey teams registered by an AHAI Affiliate Organization meeting House League standards. House League may be referred to as Tier III B or House League C.

15.1.1 Tier III "B" Level Teams mean AHAI Affiliate Teams that play against other USA Hockey Registered teams at a House League level outside of their home rink in a league or other competitive format.

15.1.2 House League "C" Level Teams means AHAI Affiliate Teams that play exclusively in one rink, or facility or under the auspices of a single hockey club, association, organization

or government entity (e.g., *Park Districts*) against other teams who play exclusively in the same rink, or facility or under the auspices of a single hockey club, association, organization or government entity (e.g., *Park Districts*).

*Exceptions to such designation may be made pursuant to exhibition games and/or tournaments as approved by the AHA! House Committee, a committee established by the AHA! Board of Directors to govern House League Affiliate Organizations.*

## **15.2 STANDARDS FOR TIER III “B” AND HOUSE LEAGUE “C” TEAMS**

The following are the standards for Tier III "B" and House League "C" teams.

15.2.1 To qualify as a House League team, except as set out under House “Plus” Team, the program must follow the following standards for Tier III House League “B” level Teams, and Tier III House League “C” level Teams (*collectively, the House League Teams*).

- a. House League Teams participate in an Affiliate Organization that has a no cut policy, and has a first come, first serve registration procedure that may give preference to returning players and their family members. Governmental entities (e.g., *Park Districts*) may give preference to residents.
- b. House teams will have no tryouts. Member evaluations are used to determine draft levels. The draft procedure must be used to achieve balanced teams.
- c. The philosophy of house teams will adhere to equal playing time for both games and practices.
- d. Players are not limited by AHA! Tier II requirements.
- e. House Team games are to be played for recreational enjoyment, fitness, and sportsmanship.
- f. House teams will apply equal emphasis on skill development, team concepts, fair play.
- g. Please refer to Article 11.12.12 for rules pertaining to House League Goaltenders.

15.2.2 House "Plus" Team: The “house plus” team is defined by the following criteria:

- a. The team(s) and all players on such team(s) must currently be on a team which is part of a single Affiliate Organization/Cub/Government entity House League program which is registering the team.
- b. The program must be fully described (*x practices, x games/tournaments and x dollars cost*) prior to becoming a member of the team.
- c. The program must be openly publicized within the Affiliate Organization/Club/Government entity.
- d. A maximum of two (2) teams are allowed per age level per Affiliate Organization/Club provided said Affiliate Organization/Club has a minimum of four (4) teams registered at the specific age level.
- e. If there is to be more than one team at an age level, teams may be selected by talent.
- f. A specified number of positions must be noted (*x players maximum per age classification*).
- g. The program has a specific sign-up date.
- h. Teams may be formed on a tryout basis if Affiliate Organization/Club so chooses.
- i. Players may be cut due to numbers on enrollment or player skill level.

### **Proposed House League Pilot Program**

AHA! Affiliate Organizations who are Tier III House League programs only may form House Pilot Teams which may play in a Tier II League. The players on these teams may not be rostered on any other Youth team during the fall (*regular*) season. Out of Tier game limits only apply to non-league games. These teams are NOT eligible to play in the AHA! Tier II Youth State Tournament. This program is in effect for the 2024/25 Fall (*Regular*) Season and will be reviewed at the conclusion of that season.



### **15.3 APPLICATION PROCESS HOUSE TEAMS**

All proposed House Affiliate Organizations shall follow the application process in Article 3 of the AHAI Rules & Regulations.

15.3.1 The following are specific to House Affiliate Organizations:

- a. The proposed Affiliate Organization shall demonstrate the ability to field and sustain teams in at least three (3) youth age divisions 8U through 18U.
- b. The proposed Affiliate Organization shall register all 8U teams with USA Hockey and AHAI each and every season.
- c. The proposed Affiliate Organization must meet the AHAI definition of 'Community-Based Tier III Youth Hockey'. Community-based means supporting a geographical area either underserved or not served by an existing Tier III Affiliate Organization.

### **15.4 DESIGNATED HOME RINK**

All House Teams shall have a designated home rink location based on the location of the charter for such organization. All AHAI teams emanating from the Tier II and Tier III organizations must be formed at the location and community where such Tier II and Tier III organization received its charter for play, and no satellite or expansion teams shall be permitted.

15.4.1 With respect to the prohibition of satellite/expansion teams this means that no teams shall be formed by an organization if that geographical area is already served by existing House clubs. No AHAI House Team Affiliate organizations shall form satellite/expansion teams to expand the charter previously granted.

15.4.2 The need of additional ice may be purchased at other facilities that are within a fifteen (15) mile driving distance of designated home rink. Rinks outside the designated area must be approved by a committee established by the board of Directors of AHAI to govern House League before the season of play is allowed.

## **ARTICLE 16 TIER II YOUTH**

### **16.1 TIER II YOUTH TEAMS**

A Tier II Youth Team shall consist of a group of players that have complied with the Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of AHAI, USA Hockey and any other provisions adopted by the AHAI Board of Directors for Tier II Youth Affiliate Organizations.

16.1.1 Tier II Youth Teams must play at least twenty (20) games during the season as a unit.

16.1.2 Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization must demonstrate an ability to field no less than one AHAI rostered team in at least three of the following youth age classifications: 10U,12U, 14U,16U, 18U.

16.1.3 The Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization shall register all teams including 8U teams with USA Hockey and AHAI each season.

16.1.4 An AHAI Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization must properly registers its teams using the USA Hockey Registry Portal and submitting the teams electronically to the AHAI Webtool. They must comply with the Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of AHAI,

16.1.5 The first team established in any age division shall be deemed to be the AA team. Any subsequent team in any age division may be deemed by the Affiliate Organization as either AA or A. The Tier II Youth Committee may establish the maximum number of teams that any Tier II Affiliate Organization may field in a youth age division. It is an AHAI requirement and the obligation of every Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization to place its best players on its AA (*first*) team. If an Affiliate Organization has a single Tier II Team at a particular age level 8U

through 14U it must be registered as AA. All 16U and 18U teams are registered as AA.

16.1.6 The deadline for registering a new Tier II Youth team roster is October 15th.

16.1.7 A Tier II Youth player shall not participate on or with an AHAI team until that player is added to the team in the USA Hockey Registry portal, transmitted to AHAI using the AHAI webtool and is approved by the AHAI Registrar.

16.1.8 Once a Tier II youth player has been approved on the Official USAH Hockey Certified Roster, that player may not be removed from the roster without the approval of the AHAI Registrar.

16.1.9 A Tier II youth player may move from one team to another team within a single Tier II Affiliate Organization in accordance with the policies and procedures of that Tier II Affiliate Organization with approval from the AHAI Registrar. This change may be made up to the deadline for adding players to a roster.

16.1.10 The deadline for adding a player to a Tier II youth roster is December 26th.

## **16.2 PLAYER RECORDS**

It shall be the responsibility of the Tier II Youth Member Affiliate Organization to verify and maintain records of all players who are playing or have played for the Tier II Affiliate Organization for the current and prior seven (7) playing seasons.

## **16.3 HOME RINK**

All Tier II Youth Affiliate Organizations shall have a designated home rink location based on the location of the charter for such Affiliate Organization (*defined as 51% or more of Applicant's total ice utilization*).

16.3.1 All AHAI Affiliate Organizations emanating from the Tier II Youth Affiliate Organizations must be formed at the location and community where such Tier II Youth Affiliate Organizations received its charter for play, and no satellite or expansion Affiliate Organization shall be permitted.

16.3.2 With respect to the prohibition of satellite/expansion Affiliate Organization, this means no Affiliate Organization shall be formed by an Affiliate Organization if that geographical area is already served by another existing Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization.

16.3.3 No Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization shall form satellite/expansion Affiliate Organization to expand the charter previously granted.

16.3.4 Need of additional ice may be bought at other facilities that are within a fifteen (15) mile driving distance of the designated home rink. Rinks outside the designated area must be approved by the Tier II committees before season play is allowed.

## **16.4 TIER II YOUTH APPLICATION PROCESS**

All proposed Tier II Youth Affiliate Organizations shall follow the application process in Article 3 of the AHAI Rules & Regulations.

16.4.1 The AHAI Board of Directors shall establish the requirements that an organization must achieve to become a new or re-admitted AHAI Tier II Youth Member Affiliate Organization. Such requirements include, but are not limited to, the following, and the Board may in its discretion adopt any other requirements it deems appropriate in the best interests of youth hockey in Illinois.

16.4.2 The following are specific to Tier II Affiliate Organizations:

- a. The proposed Affiliate Organization shall demonstrate the ability to field and sustain teams in at least three (3) youth age divisions 8U through 18U.
- b. The proposed Affiliate Organization shall register all 8U teams with USA Hockey and AHAI each and every season.
- c. The proposed Affiliate Organization must meet the AHAI definition of 'Community-Based Youth Hockey'. Community-based means supporting a geographical area either underserved or not served by an existing Tier II Affiliate Organization.

16.4.3 The Tier II Committee shall have sole authority to review Applications, to hold meetings it deems necessary on Applications, to seek further information about the Applicant from the Applicant or from other sources, and to take any other actions it deems warranted in processing the Application, in order to make its recommendation to the AHAI Board of Directors on the merits of the Application.

16.4.4 After receiving the Committee's recommendation, the AHAI Board of Directors shall have the sole authority to decide the application, consistent with the AHAI Rules and Regulations as then in effect, take any other actions it deems warranted, including whether the Application meets the overall goals of Tier II Youth and whether it is in the best interests of amateur hockey in Illinois.

16.4.5 The Tier II Youth Applicant Affiliate Organization shall at all times comply with all USA Hockey, AHAI and its own applicable Bylaws and Rules.

16.4.6 The Tier II Youth Applicant Affiliate Organization shall use its best efforts to field Tier II youth teams made up of players drawn from within its own Affiliate Organization or its feeder organization. A feeder program is described as an existing Affiliate Organization Tier III B / House League C and/or a Learn to Play program that has a history of fielding USAH registered team for a minimum of three (3) years. An Applicant program cannot draw Tier II youth players from any other current Affiliate Organization (*except as outlined in these rules and regulations*).

16.4.7 The Applicant Tier II Affiliate Organization cannot advertise or state that they are an AHAI Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization until the Application has been approved by the AHAI Board of Directors.

16.4.8 Once the Tier II Membership has been granted to the new Tier II Affiliate Organization, the authority to field Tier II Youth Teams may be terminated by the Tier II Committee upon reasonable notice to the Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization and an opportunity for the Tier II Affiliate Organization to be heard by the Tier II Youth Committee.

16.4.9 Decisions of the AHAI Board of Directors under this Rule shall be final unless a notice of appeal therefrom is filed as provided in the AHAI Bylaws governing appeals of Board decisions.

16.4.10 AHAI Board of Directors may require certain, or any and all Affiliate Organizations to re-apply for Tier II status annually.

## **16.5 YOUTH TIER II CHOICES**

The purpose of this rule is to emulate the concept of community-based hockey in the State of Illinois.

16.5.1 Every Player in the State of Illinois may choose between two (2) Tier II Youth Affiliate Organizations in good standing as to where to play amateur Tier II Youth hockey. If one of those choices ceases to be a viable choice due to cessation of operations of the entire Affiliate Organization, that Player shall apply for a substitute choice online through the Tier II Youth Committee Choice Application process. Tier II Youth Affiliate Organizations are defined as an Organization that has obtained AHAI Youth Tier II or Youth Tier II Applicant

status.

16.5.1 A Player's choice or choices are defined as any Tier II Affiliate Organizations team that the player has played with up until the beginning of the current Regular (*Fall*) Season. This does not include any spring or summer participation.

16.5.2 A Players Youth Tier II choice is defined as in these Rules and Regulations. Each Youth Player playing Tier II hockey is restricted to two (2) Youth Tier II Affiliate Organizations beginning their 10U playing season, through the Players 14U year playing season.

16.5.3 Players 16U (*fifteen and sixteen birthyears*) and 18U (*seventeen and eighteen birthyears*) aged will be allowed one (1) choice in addition to their current choices with Tier II Youth Affiliate Organizations. A Player does not automatically receive an additional choice at the 16U/18U level. If a Player has received a 3rd choice approval from the AHAI Tier II Committee before the Player reaches their 16U/18U level, the Player will not receive an additional choice.

16.5.4 Players aged 8U or younger will not be assessed with a choice.

16.5.5 AHAI 8U Two Choice Clarifications.

To clarify the AHAI Tier II Choice Rule as it applies to 8U, ANY USA Hockey registered 8U Players for the playing seasons (*beginning in the 2014/15 season*) will not be assessed with a choice exception toward the AHAI Youth Two Choice rule.

16.5.6 Players that were previously rostered on a Tier I, Tier III, House League, or High School (*past or current*) team do not count as a Choice.

## **16.6 COUNSELING**

Every Player and the family of that Player first entering an Amateur Tier II Youth Hockey Program offered by a Tier II Affiliate Organization shall be counseled by the Affiliate Organization as to their opportunities, special considerations, and choices of Amateur Tier II travel hockey, but it remains the responsibility of the Player and his/her guardian(s) to obtain information and be fully informed as to all regulations and obligations that may apply.

The Board of Directors of AHAI shall promulgate rules, regulations, and guidelines for Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization so that all players and families are apprised of these opportunities, special considerations, and choices.

## **16.7 TIER II AFFILIATE ORGANIZATION TRY-OUTS**

Tryouts and team selection process for levels 8U through 14U may not begin more than eight (8) days prior to the date of the nationally recognized Labor Day holiday of the playing season. Tryouts and team selection process for levels 16U and 18U may not begin prior to August 15 of the playing season.

## **16.8 YOUTH TIER II CHOICE DECLARATION**

When a player is added to a Tier II Affiliate Organization's Youth Tier II Team Official USAH Certified Roster at the 10U playing level and above, and has participated in two (2) team events or practices and or one (1) game (*defined in AHAI Rule 11.14*) they may receive an email from AHAI to address the following:

16.8.1 The AHAI Youth Tier II Choice Rules.

16.8.2 The player's playing history. If the playing history is not correct, they will be asked to reply with the correct playing history for the AHAI Registrar to review, confirm or reply to the player with the history documented in the AHAI Player Database.

16.8.3 If a player does not have a Youth Tier II Choice available, they will be sent an email

detailing the information listed above along with the link to the Youth Tier II Choice Substitution Application Process.

Notification from AHAI is to assist in the player's and their family's Choice rule knowledge. It is the responsibility of the player and family to understand and adhere to the AHAI Rules & Processes.

## **16.9 TIER II CHOICE SUBSTITUTION PROCESS**

The online Tier II Youth Choice Substitution Application process shall begin on July 15th of each year. There shall be a minimum of three (3) hearings on this matter held each season. The Tier II Choice Application process shall close on September 15th of each year. Specific hearing dates will be published each year by the Tier II Choice Committee.

16.9.1 A Request for a Tier II Youth Choice substitution shall be submitted electronically to the Tier II Youth Committee Chairperson. The Chair will provide a link to the application form to be filled out online.

16.9.2 The Board of Directors is empowered to set criteria for a substitution of a choice and/or grant a Tier II Youth Player a substitution of a choice of a Tier II Youth Affiliate Organizations with another Tier II Youth Affiliate Organizations and may delegate that responsibility to the Tier II Committee with a limited right of appeal to the Board of Directors or the AHAI Appeals Committee under such terms as set out in advance by the Board of Directors. Each Player requesting the granting of a substitution shall clearly present the facts supporting the substitutions set out by the Board of Directors.

16.9.3 Decisions of the Tier II Youth Committee shall be final unless a notice of appeal form is filed as herein provided. Any person, Player, member, team, or Affiliate Organizations affected by the decision of the Committee may appeal such decision in accordance with the By Laws, and these Rules and Regulations of AHAI by filing a written notice of appeal to the President of AHAI within ten (10) days after the date that the decision appealed from has been rendered, which appeal shall be acted upon by the Appeal Committee whose decision shall be final.

The Board of Directors of AHAI shall promulgate such rules and regulations as necessary to implement the provisions of these Rules and Regulations. Such Rules and Regulations shall be in keeping with the missions and purposes of USA Hockey and the AHAI.

## **16.10 PLAYER SUBSTITUTION CRITERIA**

The following provisions must be met for a player's Youth Tier II Choice Substitution to apply to a new Tier II Youth Affiliate organization and removed the player's choice from one of their previous Tier II Youth Affiliate Organizations.

16.10.1 A Player playing at the Tier II level may not substitute a choice of one Tier II Affiliate Organizations with another Tier II Affiliate Organizations, except in cases where there are practical difficulties or particular hardships in carrying out the strict application stated above. These exceptions shall apply only at each age-appropriate level. An "age-appropriate level" is the age level of the youngest age level that the Player is permitted to play.

16.10.2 The predicament of the Player is due to unique circumstances that were not created by the Player; If a Substitution is based on an Affiliates Rules and Ethics or any other issue, the petition must be accompanied by the Affiliates Organizations Rules and Ethics findings and supporting documents.

16.10.3 The purpose in requesting the substitution shall not be based exclusively upon a desire to be rostered on a team or Affiliate Organization that is perceived to be more competitive than the current AHAI Team or Affiliate Organization to which a player belongs.

16.10.4 The granting of the substitution furthers the goals, objectives and policies of the Amateur Hockey Association of Illinois, Inc.

16.10.5 The granting of the substitution must not be detrimental to Tier II travel hockey or undermining the "community-based principles" of Tier II hockey.

16.10.6 If a Player requests a substitution, such Player must remove a current Affiliate Organization from such Player's current Two-Choices and the choice that the Player gives up then becomes the automatic 3rd choice at the 16U level.

16.10.7 "Financial Hardship" is not a basis for substitution.

16.10.8 It is not intended that every Player must have two (2) viable options at any given time. The rule states two (2) Choices, not two (2) viable options will be had by all Players.

16.10.9 No additional 3rd choice or substitution shall be given to any Player in the 8U or 10U playing level without the approval of the Board of Directors or its designated representative.

16.10.10 If the Player and family move from the rink of the first choice which is within ten (10) mile of the home and the new residence is at twenty (20) miles or more from the prior choice, they may petition the Tier II Committee for a second choice. The two choices then become permanent until the Player reaches the 16U level.

16.10.11 Players staying within their two Affiliate Organization choices can relocate between those two Affiliate Organizations.

At the discretion of the Board of Directors, the substitute choice granted by the Board of Directors may be permanent or for a specific playing season.

## **16.11 GAME LIMITS**

Refer to Article 11

## **16.12 OUT OF TIER GAME LIMITS**

Refer to Article 11

## **16.13 DEFINITION OF A GAME**

Refer to Article 11

## **16.14 TAMPERING:**

No Player/Participant, Coach, Manager shall be solicited nor shall the possibility of playing Tier II Youth Hockey be discussed with any Player/Participant, Coach, or Manager of a National Bound Team at any Tier Classification until 48 hours after the last game on the last day of the Tier I & Tier II Youth National Championships Tournament.

*(Exception - An existing Tier II Girls' Player/Participant, Coach, or Manager for the particular Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization for which that Player, Coach, or Manager played for during the existing season and then only by that Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization.)*

Players, Coaches, and Managers of Non-National Bound age divisions may hold discussions at the conclusion of the Illinois State Tournament.

If a Tier II Player initiates contact with another Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization, the Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization must advise said Player it cannot discuss the matter and will advise the individual(s) of the date after which contact is permitted.

## **16.15 COACH(ES) MOVEMENT**

AHAI Coaches who move from one Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization to another Tier II Youth Affiliate

Organization cannot coach any of the same players from the previous season's AHAI/USAH rostered team for a period of one season with the new Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization.

16.15.1 Classification: Coach is any rostered Head or Assistant Coach for a Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization during the USA Hockey playing season. This includes a coach that is not rostered but coaches the team or is on the bench for more than 33% of the season.

16.15.2 Classification: Player is any player who was rostered on the same Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization's roster as the Coach.

*(Exception: family member or relative of the coach)*

16.15.3 Classification: Hockey Director of an AHAI/USAH registered Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization shall not count as a Coach if listed on all of the Youth Affiliate Organization's rosters as an Assistant Coach. If a Hockey Director is listed as the Head Coach of a team, the rules of sub-section 16.16.1 of this Article then apply. If there are unique circumstances that a Hockey Director becomes a Head Coach of a team during the season, the new Youth Affiliate Organization may petition the Tier II Youth Committee for a ruling on the eligibility of the coach before the next season.

Coaches coaching players from a prior Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization will be considered in violation of these AHAI Rules & Regulations

## **16.16 PLAYER MOVEMENT RULE**

Player movement between AHAI Tier II Youth Affiliate Organizations is limited by age classification. In addition to the restrictions listed below, players must comply with the Youth Tier II Choice Article in these rules and regulations.

16.16.1 10U - The limit is two (2) players per Tier II Team at the 10U Squirt level who played Tier II the previous year for another Affiliate Organization Tier II program as a Squirt.

16.16.2 12U - The limit is three (3) players per Tier II Team at the 12U Pee Wee level who played Tier II the previous year for another Affiliate Organization Tier II program.

16.16.3 14U - The limit is four (4) players per Tier II Team at the 14U Bantam level who played Tier II the previous year for another Affiliate Organization Tier II program.

16.16.4 There is no limit on Tier II Youth Player movement at the 16U and 18U playing level.

16.16.5 There are two exceptions to the Player Movement limit:

- a. Players who previously played with a Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization, as one of their Two Choices, will not count against the maximum, regardless of their club affiliation the previous Regular Season.
- b. Players who played for a Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization that does not field a team at a level will not count against the maximum for the Tier II Youth Affiliate Organization to which the Player moves.

## **16.17 PENALTIES**

Affiliate Organizations violating the Youth Tier II Player Movement Rule will be referred to the AHAI Rules & Ethics Committee along with the coach from the team violating the 2/4/6/8 Youth Tier II Rule. The recommended consequences include disqualification from the state tournament and referral to their Tier II league for further penalties as well as AHAI Rules & Ethics for possible further sanctions.

## **ARTICLE 17 GIRLS**

## 17.1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

AHAI'S Philosophy on Girls/Women's hockey is as defined by USA Hockey in the USAH Annual Guide: To provide an innovative grassroots foundation for the growth and development of USA Hockey, designing programs aimed at increasing participation, improved skills, and a responsible environment for the conduct of youth and girls' hockey.

17.1.1 All Girls' Affiliate Organizations are required to adhere to AHAI Rules & Regulations Article 2 – Affiliate Agreement.

17.1.2 All Girls' Affiliate Organizations are required to adhere to all AHAI's Policies, By-Laws, Rules & Regulations unless otherwise specified herein.

17.1.3 All girls' teams within an existing Affiliate Organization (*Tier I, II & III*) as of January 10, 2021, are required to be under a separate USA Hockey/AHAI identification number for the purposes of rostering, administration, and distribution of communications. The existing Affiliate Organization is not required to change its name except to add the word 'GIRLS' (*i.e., AHAI & AHAI Girls*). The Affiliate Organization's By-Laws and Board may remain the same except whereas the Affiliate Organization must identify a designated Girls Representative within their Affiliate Organization's Board structure (*Director of Girls Hockey*).

17.1.3.1 For purposes of clarity

Girls' classifications will be designated as follows:

- a. Tier I (1) & Tier II (2)
- b. All Girls teams will now be classified as Tier I or Tier II. There is no longer a Tier III level in Girls Hockey as all girls' teams are now registered under separate ILH identification numbers.

## 17.2 NEW AFFILIATE ORGANIZATION APPLICATION PROCESS

New Affiliate Organization Application Process - The "Applicant" is defined as a rink, park district or any other organization recognized by USA Hockey and/or AHAI as having the qualifications to operate an affiliate organization. A proposed Girls Affiliate Organization is required to begin their program at the lowest level of play (*8U OR 10U*) or the grassroots level - Learn to skate / Learn to play programs following the USA Hockey American Development Model (*ADM*).

17.2.1 Girls Tier I Refer to Article 3 – New Affiliate Organization Application Process

17.2.2 Girls Tier II Refer to Article 3 – New Affiliate Organization Application Process except as noted below regarding the proposed combining of existing Girls Affiliate Organizations

## 17.3 COMBINING GIRLS' PROGRAMS

Existing Girls' Affiliate Organizations that cannot consistently sustain girls' teams' season to season may consider joining with another Girls' Affiliate Organization in close geographic proximity to create a new Girls Affiliate Organization, but only under the approval, supervision, and guidance of the AHAI Girls Committee. The proposed combined Girls Affiliate Organization under this rule cannot adversely affect any already established Girls' Affiliate Organizations with sustained Girls programs/teams.

17.3.1 No more than two (2) Girls' Affiliate Organizations may be on the formal application except through specific exemption by the AHAI Girls Committee.

17.3.2 Both Girls' Affiliate Organizations must jointly submit the application.

Items listed herein must be included as part of the complete application submittal and in conjunction with the requirements in Article 3:

- a. Reason for the proposed combination
- b. What types of hockey programming have been offered at both Affiliate



- Organizations to attract and retain girls for the past five (5) seasons.
- c. Historical information on the number of female players within their respective Affiliate Organizations for the past five (5) seasons

17.3.3 The proposed combined Girls' Affiliate Organization must show proof that they will be able to roster a minimum of one (1) 10U and one (1) 12U team from within the combined Girls' Affiliate Organization.

NO players already playing for another Girls' Affiliate Organization will be allowed to be added to the proposed newly combined Girls' Affiliate Organization at any age level the first (1st) regular playing season. (Spring/Summer are not considered part of the regular playing season) The purpose is to create more opportunities for new players to join Girls Affiliate Organizations in a geographic area where otherwise they would play on a youth team or would cause a player to travel a further distance.

#### **17.4 GIRLS AGE CLASSIFICATIONS**

Refer to Article 5 of the AHAI Rules & Regulations

#### **17.5 GAME LIMITS**

Refer to Article 11 of the AHAI Rules & Regulations

#### **17.6 DEFINITION OF A GAME**

Refer to Article 11 of the AHAI Rules & Regulations

17.6.1 Non-Compliance: Affiliate Organizations violating the Maximum Game Limits and/or the 20% Rule will be referred to the AHAI Rules & Ethics Committee along with the coach from the team violating this rule. The recommended consequence includes but is not limited to disqualification from the State Tournament, notification to the league the team plays in, and possible forfeiture of an Affiliate's current membership status.

#### **17.7 GIRLS' TIER I**

The Girls Committee will work closely with the Tier I Committee on all matters pertaining to Girls Tier I hockey.

17.7.1 Authority: The Tier I Committee shall have responsibility for all matters pertaining to Girls' Hockey within Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organizations, Tier I Teams, and Tier I Hockey, subject to the AHAI Board of Directors review, direction, change and approval. For all other applicable Rules & Regulations, refer to Article 18, Tier I (*Open or AAA Teams*) of these Rules and Regulations and USA Hockey Team Memberships & Registrations subsection "F" Girls' Tier I Standards & Criteria.

17.7.2 Re- Authorization: A Tier I Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organization who has been granted a charter may rely upon maintaining that charter for three years so long as it continues to comply with all AHAI and USA Hockey By-Laws, Rules and Regulations and Policies. Each third (3<sup>rd</sup>) year a chartered Tier 1 Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organization must submit the required documents indicating compliance to this Article to the AHAI Tier I Committee Chairperson.

**17.7.2.1 Annually, each Tier I Youth and Tier I Girls Affiliate Organization's Teams must submit a player fact sheet with every player card being submitted.**

17.7.3 Girls Tier I Tryouts

Any approved Girls Affiliate Organization fielding Tier I teams will be eligible to hold tryouts beginning May 15<sup>th</sup> and ending May 31<sup>st</sup>.

17.7.4 Any Tier I Girls' team from a Girls' Affiliate Organization wishing to tryout in this window of time must submit in writing their intent to do so no later than April 1st. Letters of intent will be emailed to the Tier I Committee Chairperson. Confirmation of receipt will be

sent within 24 hours.

17.7.5 Tier I Girls Affiliate Organizations wishing to tryout in the early time window may not field more than one team per age level per Affiliate Organization.

17.7.6 All approved Girls' Affiliate Organization's teams requesting to tryout early in this window of time will be scheduled in a grid so as to avoid conflict. This tryout window will apply to the following age groups: 12U, 14U, 16U and 19U. Age groups younger than 12U are not eligible for early tryouts.

17.7.7 Each team shall furnish each player and her parent(s), in writing, before any tryout and prior to signing a player card, a fact sheet, providing full disclosure about the team indicating all costs, number of games and practices, amount of travel, any "rules" of the team.

17.7.8 Signed player cards must be delivered to the AHA Executive Director no later than June 2nd and will be binding to those players for the ensuing hockey season.

17.7.9 These player cards will commit all signed players to play for that team that season. Players may not "opt out" once a player card has been signed. Any player who signs a qualified player card is committed to that Tier I Girls' team.

17.7.10 A team will be qualified by a minimum of twelve (12) players and one (1) goaltender. Any Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization not fielding twelve (12) players and one (1) goaltender on a team by June 2nd, (*as evidenced by 13 players signature cards*), will not be allowed to field a team at that age level for the coming season. The team will be disbanded, and those players' names may be submitted to the Girls' Committee Chairperson for distribution amongst other Tier II Affiliate Organizations.

17.7.11 Player additions to a qualified Tier I girls' team roster (*supplemental roster*) may take place from June 2 – June 16. Those rosters will be frozen from June 16 – September 15. Thereafter teams may add players to their early tryout roster. A player may not be cut from a team after signing the player card without AHA Board approval.

17.7.12 No player shall be required to pay monies in excess of actual ice time cost or participate in mandatory team activities prior to August 15th of the ensuing playing season. The season shall commence on August 15th of each year and end on the last day of the USA Hockey Nationals Tournament but not prior to 48 hours after the last game for National Bound age levels. 12U teams' season will end with the completion of the Illinois State Tournament.

17.7.13 Players who are cut from the early tryouts from a Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization may choose to have their names submitted to the Girls' Committee Chairperson for release to other Affiliate Organizations who may need players. This is an optional program for players. Player information is submitted to other Affiliate Organizations upon request only.

## **17.8 GIRLS TIER II**

The general intent of Tier II Girls' Hockey in Illinois is to provide an opportunity for female players to develop and compete at the travel level within a Community-Based Affiliate Organization while being guided by the fundamentals and principals set forth in USA Hockey's American Development Model (ADM).

17.8.1 General: A Girls' Tier II Affiliate Organization is a Girls' Affiliate Organization duly organized and operating in accordance with the By-Laws, Rules, Regulations and Policies of AHA and USA Hockey.

17.8.2 Limitation: Girls' Tier II Affiliate Organizations MUST be an entirely separate and distinct entity and operation apart from a Girls' Tier I Affiliate Organization.

17.8.3 Responsibility: Each Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization shall govern, control and be fully responsible for its Affiliate Organization's actions, inactions and/or infraction of its teams, players, coaches, managers, parents, and personnel. This responsibility shall include debts incurred by or in the name of the Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization or any of its teams.

## **17.9 GIRLS' TIER II SEASON**

The season shall begin on August 15th of each year and end on the last day of the Nationals Tournaments of each year unless otherwise approved by the Girls Committee.

17.9.1 Affiliate Organizations' Growth: It is NOT the intent of Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organizations, their personnel, coaches, or players to solicit, recruit, steal players from other Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organizations but rather to maintain a Community-Based environment where geographically possible.

17.9.2 Tryouts may begin August 15th of each year.

17.9.3 All Girls' Affiliate Organizations must publicly announce their tryout dates. This announcement must be in place at least thirty (30) days in advance of the first date but under no circumstances prior to forty-eight hours after the last game of the last day of the Women's and Girls' USA Hockey Nationals Tournaments.

17.9.3.1 Announcement of tryouts must include the following:

- a. Girls' Affiliate Organization name
- b. Levels of tryouts and Coaches names, if known
- c. Contacts with phone numbers
- d. Brief statement about the program,
- e. Dates, times, and location(s) of tryouts
- f. Costs

17.9.4 Player cuts should be sent to the Girls' Committee Chairperson for assistance in placement within another Girls' Affiliate Organization.

## **17.10 GIRLS TIER II TRYOUTS**

Any team from an approved Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization may begin tryouts on June 15<sup>th</sup> & end on June 22<sup>nd</sup> of each year for National Bound levels only (14U, 16U, 19U).

17.10.1 Tryouts for all non-National Bound age levels (8U, 10U, and 12U) will remain at the already established August 15<sup>th</sup> tryout date.

17.10.2 These teams will be designated at the Tier II Level of play for the State Tournament.

17.10.3 These teams will be responsible for continuing to the Tier II Girls' Districts and/or USA Hockey Nationals Tournaments should they win the State Tournament.

17.10.4 Players who are cut at early tryouts or from any of these Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organizations may choose to have their names submitted to the Girls' Committee Chairperson for release to other Girls Affiliate Organizations who may need players. This is an optional program for players. Player's information is submitted to other Girls Affiliate Organizations upon request only.

17.10.5 Any Tier II Girls' team from a Girls Affiliate Organization within these age categories must conduct tryouts beginning June 15<sup>th</sup> and should submit in writing their intent to do so no later than May 1<sup>st</sup>. Letters of intent to be emailed to the Girls Committee Chairperson.

Confirmation of receipt will be sent within 24 hours.

17.10.6 Tier II Girls Affiliate Organizations wishing to conduct tryouts beginning June 15<sup>th</sup> within these age categories may not field more than one team per age level per Girls Affiliate Organization.

*If registration numbers allow for a second (2<sup>nd</sup>) team at a specific age level within these age categories, the Girls Affiliate Organization must submit a request in writing to the Girls Committee Chairperson and for review by the AHAI Girls Committee.*

17.10.6.1 The written request must include but is not limited to the following details:

- Total number of returning players who played for the Girls Affiliate Organization the previous season (include players moving up)
- Number of players for the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) team.
- Geographic location from where these players are being obtained.

17.10.7 Girls Affiliate Organizations conducting tryouts beginning on June 15<sup>th</sup> for the National Bound age levels may not open these tryouts to any player in the 8U, 10U, or 12U age levels. 12U players may not be added to a 14U roster for any Girls Affiliate Organization who stated their intent is to be National Bound.

17.10.8 Each team shall furnish each player and her parent(s), in writing, before any tryout and prior to signing a player card, a fact sheet, providing full disclosure about the team indicating all costs, number of games and practices, amount of travel, any “rules” of the team.

17.10.9 Signed player cards must be delivered to the Girls Committee Chairperson no later than July 2<sup>nd</sup> and will be binding to those players for the ensuing hockey season.

17.10.10 These player cards will commit all signed players to play for that team for the ensuing playing season. Players may not “opt out” once a player card has been signed. Any player who signs a qualified player card is committed to that Tier II Girls’ team.

17.10.11 A team will be qualified by a minimum of twelve (12) players including a goaltender. Any Tier II Girls’ Affiliate Organization not fielding twelve (12) players including a goaltender at the specific age level by July 2<sup>nd</sup>, (as evidenced by twelve (12) players signature cards), will not be allowed to field a team at the specific age level for the ensuing season. The team will be disbanded, and those players’ names may be submitted to the Girls Committee Chairperson for distribution amongst other Tier II Girls Affiliate Organizations.

17.10.12 Player additions to a qualified Tier II Girls’ team roster (supplemental roster) may take place from July 2<sup>nd</sup> – July 16<sup>th</sup>. Rosters will then be frozen from July 16<sup>th</sup> – September 1<sup>st</sup>. Thereafter, teams may add players to their certified roster. A player may not be cut from a team after signing the player card without AHAI Board approval.

17.10.13 No player shall be required to pay monies in excess of actual ice time cost or participate in mandatory team activities prior to August 15<sup>th</sup> of the ensuing playing season. The season shall commence on August 15<sup>th</sup> of each year and end on the last day of the USA Hockey Nationals Tournament but not prior to 48 hours after the last game for National Bound age levels.

8U, 10U, and 12U teams’ season will end with the completion of the Illinois State Tournament.

17.10.14 Players who are cut from the early tryouts from a Tier II Girls’ Affiliate Organization may choose to have their names submitted to the Girls’ Committee Chairperson for release to other Tier II Girls Affiliate Organizations who may need players. This is an optional program for players. Player information is submitted to other Tier II Girls Affiliate Organizations

upon request only.

17.10.15 Any team from an approved Girls' Affiliate Organization not participating in the June 15th tryout window may begin tryouts on August 15th.

### **17.11 TEAM AND PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

Refer to Article 11 of the AHAI By-Laws, Rules & Regulations

*(Note: The Player Movement Rule and the Two-Choice Rule both apply to Girls' Hockey – refer to 17.16 & 17.17 respectively in this Article).*

### **17.12 TEAM REGISTRATION AND ROSTERS**

Refer to Article 5 & Article 11 respectively in the AHAI Rules & Regulations.

### **17.13 GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL**

The Girls' Committee will work closely with the High School Committee on all matters pertaining to Girls High School Hockey. *Refer to Article 19*

### **17.14 TAMPERING:**

No Player/Participant, Coach, Manager shall be solicited nor shall the possibility of playing Tier II Girls' Hockey be discussed with any Player/Participant, Coach, or Manager of a National Bound Team at any Tier Classification until 48 hours after the last game on the last day of the Tier I & Tier II Girls' National Championships Tournament.

*(Exception - An existing Tier II Girls' Player/Participant, Coach, or Manager for the particular Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization for which that Player, Coach, or Manager played for during the existing season and then only by that Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization.)*

Players, Coaches, and Managers of Non-National Bound age divisions may hold discussions at the conclusion of the Illinois State Tournament.

No Girls' Affiliate Organization may advertise Spring clinics or teams to players in other Girls' Affiliate Organizations at the National Bound age levels until 48 hours after the last game on the last day of Tier I & Tier III Girls' National Championships Tournament.

No Girls' Affiliate Organization may advertise Spring clinics or teams to players in other Girls' Affiliate Organizations at the Non-National Bound age levels until the conclusion of the Illinois State Tournament.

If a Tier II Player initiates contact with another Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization, the Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization must advise said Player it cannot discuss the matter and will advise the individual(s) of the date after which contact is permitted.

### **17.15 COACH(ES) MOVEMENT**

AHAH Coaches who move from one Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization to another Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization cannot coach any of the same players from the previous season's AHAI/USAH rostered team for a period of one season with the new Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization.

17.15.1 Classification: Coach is any rostered Head or Assistant Coach for a Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization during the USA Hockey playing season. This includes a coach that is not rostered but coaches the team or is on the bench for more than 33% of the season.

17.15.2 Classification: Player is any player who was rostered on the same Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization's roster as the Coach.

*(Exception: family member or relative of the coach)*

17.15.3 Classification: Hockey Director of an AHAI/USAH registered Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization shall not count as a Coach if listed on all of the Girls' Affiliate Organization's

rosters as an Assistant Coach. If a Hockey Director is listed as the Head Coach of a team, the rules of sub-section 17.16.1 of this Article then apply. If there are unique circumstances that a Hockey Director becomes a Head Coach of a team during the season, the new Girls' Affiliate Organization may petition the Girls' Committee for a ruling on the eligibility of the coach before the next season.

Coaches coaching players from a prior Girls' Affiliate Organization will be considered in violation of these AHAI Rules & Regulations

### **17.16 PLAYER MOVEMENT**

Player movement between AHAI Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organizations is limited by age classification.

In addition to the restrictions listed below, players must comply with the Girls' Tier II Choice Section in these Rules and Regulations.

17.16.1 All 8U & 10U Tier II Girls' Teams are limited to a maximum of two (2) NEWLY added players to an organization at the 8U and 10U age **levels**, who played for another Girls' Tier II Affiliate Organization during the previous regular season.

17.16.2 All 12U Tier II Girls' Teams are limited to a maximum of four (4) NEWLY added players to an organization at the 12U age **level**, who played for another Girls' Tier II Affiliate Organization during the previous regular season.

17.16.3 At the 14U and 16U age **levels** - any Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization adding players from another Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization from the previous Fall (*Regular*) Season are limited to a maximum of four (4) NEWLY added players at the age **level** from said Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization. EXAMPLE: If a Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization has more than one (1) team at an age level, they may not add more than four (4) players at the **age level**.

17.16.4 At the 19U age level – any Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization adding players from another Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization from the previous Fall (*Regular*) Season are limited to a maximum of four (4) players from said Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization. EXAMPLE: If a Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization has more than one (1) team at an age level, they may not add more than four (4) players at the **age level**.

Exceptions to the Player Movement Rule:

- Players who previously played with a Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization, as one of their Two Choices, will not count against the maximum, regardless of their Affiliate Organization the previous regular season.
- Players who played for a Tier II Girls' Affiliate Organization that does not field a team at a specific age level will not count against the maximum for the Tier II Girls' Affiliate organization to which the Player moves.

Non-Compliance: Any Girls' Affiliate Organization's Team(s) in violation of the Player Movement Section of this Article will be ineligible to participate in that season's State Tournament. In addition, if the Team(s) is at the National-Bound age level, the Team(s) will be ineligible for participation in Districts or Nationals for the same season. Further violations of the Player Movement Section will then be sent to the AHAI Rules and Ethics Committee for potentially additional disciplinary action.

### **17.17 GIRLS TWO-CHOICE**

Effective with the 2024/25 Fall (*Regular*) Season, the Girls' Two-Choice Rule/Section is no longer in existence & has been removed from the AHAI Rules and Regulations. This includes the Choice Declaration and the Girls' Tier II Choice Substitution and Process.

## **17.18 GIRLS DUAL/DOUBLE ROSTERING**

17.18.1 Dual Rostering: Defined as a female player that is rostered on more than one team within the same Affiliate Organization.

- A female player rostered on a Girls' team and a Youth team in the same Affiliate Organization.

17.18.2 Double Rostering: Defined as a female player that is on more than one team in two different Affiliate Organizations.

- A female player rostered on both a Youth team for one Affiliate Organization and a Girls' Team for another Affiliate Organization.

17.18.3 A female player may also play on a High School Team (*boys or girls*) if not prohibited by the High School Affiliate Organization.

17.18.4 Players may NOT roster on an Adult Men's or Women's Team and a Youth or Girls' Team except as otherwise permitted by the Girls Committee and the Women's Committee.

## **17.19 GIRLS' STATE TOURNAMENTS**

Refer to Article 13 of the AHA! Rules & Regulations

# **ARTICLE 18 TIER I / OPEN / AAA**

## **18.1 GENERAL INTENT**

The general intent of Tier I Youth & Girls' Hockey in Illinois is to provide an opportunity for Youth & Girls' players to develop and compete at the highest level of hockey available in the United States at Youth 10U minor, 10U major 12U minor, 12U major, 13 only (13O), 14U major, 15 only (15O), 16U and 18U age levels and Girls 12U, 14U, 16U and 19U age levels. Tier I Hockey in Illinois is limited to those players who have the ability to play at a higher level, can meet the higher competitive, practice, travel and financial demands of Tier 1 and wish to continue to develop as players by playing Tier I Hockey while being guided by the fundamentals and principals set forth in USA Hockey's American Development Model (*ADM*). Tier I Hockey is not intended to place pressure on any Player/Participant to play Tier I Hockey nor is it available to the 8U or 9U age levels.

## **18.2 TIER I, OPEN AND "AAA" TEAMS**

Any existing Youth Affiliate Organization or proposed new Affiliate Organization wishing to form Tier I, "Open" or "AAA" teams for any AHA! season must comply with the prescribed procedure as stated in the AHA! By-Laws, Rules & Regulations in addition to this Article and inform the Tier I Committee Chairman of said intention prior to taking any overt action to form a team or teams and do so on or before the deadline date of the current playing year set out in the these AHA! By-Laws, Rules & Regulations. Upon approval by the AHA! Board of Directors said Affiliate Organization and the teams of the Affiliate Organization may take overt action to form a team or teams and shall be considered as "Open" or "AAA" and shall be ineligible to play in any Tier II Tournament until such succeeding playing year that, the players as to players and Affiliate Organizations as to teams, notifies the Tier I Committee Chairman of its intention to play on or as a Tier II Team, requests and receives a Tier II Affiliate Organization status from the Tier II Committee Chairman, and meets all other requirements for Tier II Tournament play.

### 18.3 TIER 1 SEASON

The Tier I season shall commence on August 15th of each year and end 48 hours after the last game on the last day of the Nationals Championships Tournament of each year unless otherwise stated and announced by USA Hockey and the AHAI Board of Directors. Non-National Bound age divisions will end on the last day of the Illinois State Tournament.

#### 18.3.1 In-State Game Play:

This rule applies to ALL AHAI Approved Tier I Youth and Tier I Girls Affiliate Organizations and for ALL levels.

- a. Games must be scheduled prior to December 15<sup>th</sup> of the current playing season.
- b. Dates and times shall be agreed to at the Tier I Spring Committee Meeting.
- c. For all non-National Bound birth years, ALL Tier I Youth & Tier I Girls Affiliate Organizations must play each other one (1) home and one (1) away game per team per year.
- d. Games must be played prior to the commencement of the AHAI Tier I State Round Robin games with February 1<sup>st</sup> as the deadline.
- e. For all National Bound birth years, ALL Tier I Youth & Tier I Girls Affiliate Organizations must play each other once per season prior to the commencement of the AHAI Tier I State Round Robin games with February 1<sup>st</sup> as the deadline.
- f. Tournament, Showcase, and League games are eligible.

*Exception to this rule: If two (2) Affiliate Organizations feel a game is not appropriate at an age level(s), and the Hockey Directors of each Affiliate Organization in question mutually agree in writing, then the game(s) will not be required for that given season.*

Failure to comply with this rule shall constitute a full report be submitted to the AHAI Board of Directors and forwarded to the AHAI Rules & Ethics Committee for suspension(s) and or disqualification(s) from the State Tournament.

### 18.4 TIER I COMMITTEE

The AHAI President shall establish and appoint the Tier 1 Committee and Tier I Chairperson. Each member, and every authorized Tier 1 Affiliate Organization shall be entitled to recommend rule changes to the AHAI Board of Directors through the Tier I Committee.

#### 18.4.1 Authority:

The Tier I Committee, subject to the AHAI Board of Directors review, guidance, change, and approval, shall be responsible for matters pertaining to the Tier I Affiliate Organizations, their players/participants, and teams.

##### 18.4.1.1 These responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to:

- a. Establishing of a Tier 1 try out schedule for all Affiliate Organizations.
- b. Establishing of a Tier 1 AHAI State tournament format.
- c. Establishing a Tier 1 Spring and Summer program schedule.
- d. Establishing guidelines which shall be used to carry out the purposes of the Tier 1 Committee.

### 18.5 TIER I TEAM

A Tier I Team (*sometimes called "AAA" or Open*) is an AHAI registered team from a Tier I Affiliate Organization as defined in the AHAI Rules and Regulations, in which the Tier I Affiliate Organization having requested and received approval for "Tier I" status pursuant to these Rules and Regulations. A Tier I Team may NOT be classified or qualify as a House Team or a Tier II Team.



## 18.6 GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING THE NUMBER OF TIER I AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS AND TEAMS

Every three years, beginning in 2022, the USA Hockey Youth Council will determine the number of Tier 1 Affiliate Organizations and Tier I Teams in Illinois.

18.6.1 Determining the number of Tier I Youth and Girls' Affiliate Organizations and Teams in Illinois shall include, but is not limited to the following:

- a. In AHAI's discretion, changing the number of Tier 1 Teams will further the goals of providing Tier I hockey.
- b. The number of Illinois registered Players in a USA Hockey age division.
- c. The number of Illinois registered Players in the USA Hockey age division who will play Tier I youth hockey.
- d. Not more than 15% of the total registered Youth Players in Illinois at any age level should play Tier I youth hockey, per the USA Hockey Rule Section F. Paragraph 2.e Section F. Paragraph 2.
- e. No more than 20% of the total registered girls in Illinois per age divisions may play Tier I Girls hockey.
- f. No Tier I Youth Affiliate Organization will be granted Tier I authorization if they fail to field a 12U Minor Team.
- g. No Tier I Youth Affiliate Organization shall have more than one (1) team at an age level, except where the AHAI Rules and Regulations authorize Minor and Major levels in a specific age division and then, the Tier I Youth Affiliate Organization may have two teams at that age level (*i.e. one team at Minor and one team at Major*). A Minor player is a player that is at the first year of that age division (*i.e., no 17-year-old player may play on a Midget Minor team*). Additionally, each Tier I Youth Affiliate Organization may field one (1) 15year old Midget team (*all players on the team must be 15 years old only*).

18.6.2 Tier I Youth Affiliate Organizations only - The 16U age level will be a division limited to players with the major age birthyear of this age group and registered as sixteens (16s) in the USA Hockey Registry. 15-Only (15O) is limited to the minor age birthyear of this age group and registered as fifteens in the USA Hockey Registry.

***No 15-year-old shall be permitted to play on the 16U team, and no 15- or 16-year-old player shall be permitted to play on the 18U team.***

18.6.3 Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organizations shall ONLY be permitted to have one (1) team at each age division.

18.6.3.1 Refer to Article 17 for additional information specific to Tier I Girls'

18.6.4 8U aged players/participants are not permitted to play Tier I hockey. No players/participants are permitted to be rostered on any Tier I Youth or Tier I Girls' Team unless said player/participant is at least nine (9) years of age for Boys Youth Tier I and ten (10) years of age for Girls Tier I as per USA Hockey age divisions.

18.6.5 For the Youth 10u minor age levels, All AHAI Tier I Affiliate Organizations shall play each other AHAI Tier I Affiliate Organization a minimum of four (4) times per Fall/Winter Season; this shall be two (2) homes games against each Tier I Affiliate Organization of which AHAI currently has five (5). This constitutes a minimum of sixteen (16) in-state games for the 10u minor level.

18.6.5.1 For this game count, the following rules shall apply:

- a. Play fees to be set prior to each Fall/Winter Season by the Tier I Committee.

- b. For the 10u minor level, no Tier I Affiliate Organization may have more than three (3) players from any one (1) AHAI/USAH Tier II Affiliate Organization's roster from the prior Fall/Winter Season.

## **18.7 TIER I AFFILIATE ORGANIZATION LIMITATION**

Tier I Youth Affiliate Organizations and Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organizations must be an entirely separate and distinct entity and operation apart from any Tier II Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organization. A Tier I Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organization and their respective Tier I Teams must not be part of or associated with any Tier II Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organization or their respective Tier II Teams and no person shall be an Officer, Director, Hockey Director, Coach, Coaching Director, Manager, etc. of a Tier I Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organization and hold any of the above positions in a Tier II Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organization.

*(Exception - Any Tier I Youth or Girls' Coach may be an Assistant Coach on any AHAI Registered Team where as his/her Child is a registered player.)*

Nothing herein shall be interpreted to preclude an Independent Contractor who is offering his/her services to the public at large from offering and providing his/her services as a skating or skills instructor to any Tier I Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organization or Tier II Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organization. The Independent Contractor shall not be an employee, full-time instructor, or representative of either Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organizations nor participate in any manner, directly or indirectly, with the evaluation of Players /Participants, recruiting or offering Players/Participants the opportunity to play for the Tier 1 Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organizations which hire the Independent Contractor.

### **18.7.1 Responsibility:**

Each Tier I Youth Affiliate Organization and Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization shall govern, control and be fully responsible for its Organization, the actions, inactions and/ or infractions of its teams, players /participants, coaches, managers, parents, and personnel. This responsibility shall include all employees and debts incurred by or in the name of the Tier I Youth Affiliate Organization or Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization or any of its respective Tier I Teams.

## **18.8 TIER I AUTHORIZATION PROCEDURE**

Refer to Article 17 for additional information specific to Tier I Girls'

### **18.8.1 Re- Authorization:**

A Tier I Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organization who has been granted a charter may rely upon maintaining that charter for three years so long as it continues to comply with all AHAI and USA Hockey By-Laws, Rules and Regulations and Policies. Each third (3<sup>rd</sup>) year a chartered Tier 1 Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organization must submit the required documents indicating compliance to this Article to the AHAI Tier I Committee Chairperson.

**18.8.1.1 Annually, each year, Tier I Youth and Tier I Girls Affiliate Organization's Teams must submit a player fact sheet with every player card being submitted.**

18.8.2 Tier I Youth Affiliate Organizations and Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organizations shall complete and deliver to the Tier I Chairperson, no later than April 1st of each year, or as extended by the Tier I Chairperson, but not less than 30 days prior to any Tier I Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organization proposed Tier I Team tryout, the AHAI Tier I Affiliate Application form and the required application minimum requirements as stated in Article 3 and below along with an application fee determined by the AHAI Tier I Chairperson.

18.8.3 No proposed Tier I Youth Affiliate Organization or Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization shall have the authority to operate or otherwise participate in Tier I Hockey in any capacity unless it has received its authorization in writing. The Tier I Chairperson along with the Tier I Committee shall recommend to the AHAI Board of Directors the acceptance or denial of

the application. The recommendation shall be in writing and shall clearly state any and all reasons.

18.8.4 The AHAI Board of Directors shall establish the threshold requirements that a Tier 1 Youth Affiliate Organization or a Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization applicant must meet to be considered for admission as a Tier 1 Affiliate Organization. Information will be gathered from multiple sources to determine whether such admission will further the best interests of amateur hockey in Illinois and meet the intent of Tier I Hockey.

Every authorized new or existing Tier I Youth Affiliate Organization and Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization shall comply with the minimum requirements set forth in this Article, and the AHAI and USA Hockey By-Laws, Rules and Regulations and Policies.

These minimum requirements include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. A Tier I Youth Affiliate Organization must have at least one (1) 12U Minor (*eleven-year-old*) Youth Team and at least one additional Youth Team from one of the following divisions: 12U Major, 14U Minor, 14U Major, 15U, 16U, 18U.
- b. A Tier I Youth Affiliate Organization may NOT apply for or have more than one (1) Minor and one (1) Major team at any given age division. A Minor team must consist of all Minor age players.
- c. No authorization will be given for any 8U or 9U teams.
- d. Submittal of a list of Officers and Directors, the number of Tier I Youth Teams at each age division, and the names of the coaches for each team with written proof that EACH coach has obtained the appropriate USAH Coaching Certification level, complied with USA Hockey's Screening Policy, completed USA Hockey Safe Sport training requirements) or will obtain these mandates by the applicable deadline.
- e. Submittal of Financial and Historical information demonstrating that the Tier I Youth Affiliate Organization is financially solvent and stable with the ability to finance the next season. Documentation demonstrating that the Tier I Youth Affiliate Organization or the Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization can procure sufficient ice to support an appropriate number of home games and practices consistent with the size of its program, its season and this Article.
- f. It is strongly recommended to have Internal Revenue Service 501(c)(3) tax exemption status under the Internal Revenue Code.

18.8.5 Submittal of a Fact Sheet as written documentation setting out the structure, organization, and responsibilities of the Tier I Youth Affiliate Organization & Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization, and each Tier I Youth Team, its Coaches, Managers, and Administrators.

18.8.5.1 Fact Sheet:

Tier I Youth Affiliate Organizations and Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organizations along with their respective Tier I teams shall post on their website and furnish each player/participant and the players' parent(s), in writing, before any tryouts, and prior to signing a Player Card, a Fact Sheet providing full disclosure about Tier I Youth Hockey or Tier I Girls Hockey (*whichever is applicable*) by the Tier I Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organization indicating all costs, (*which shall, at a minimum, include coaches' salaries, fund raising requirements, any additional funds or monies due from the players/participants*) number of games and practices, amount of travel, any "rules" of the Tier I Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organization/Team, and the actual costs of playing for the Tier I Youth or Girls' Team and Tier I Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organization.

18.8.6 Each Tier I Youth Affiliate Organization and each Tier I Girls Affiliate Organization must provide a Fact Sheet to anyone who makes an inquiry.

18.8.7 Submittal of the Tier I Youth Affiliate Organization's and Tier I Girls' Affiliate

Organization's written By-Laws, Rules and Regulations accompanied by current compliance and a statement of future abilities, intents, and procedures to continue to comply with the AHAI and USA Hockey By-Laws, Rules and Regulations, and Policies as well as the Guidelines and Policies established by the Tier I Committee is required.

18.8.8 All Tier I games played in Illinois must have officials assigned through the AHAI Approved Assignment System authorized for Tier I Hockey.

18.8.9 All Tier I Youth Affiliate Organizations and Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organizations shall be committed to USA Hockey's American Development Model (ADM) which integrates training, competition, and recovery programming with relation to biological development and maturation. Tier I Youth & Girls' Affiliate Organizations and coaches promise to offer equal opportunity for recreation and competition as opposed to the "win" at all cost approach.

18.8.10 All Tier I Youth & Girls' Affiliate Organization coaches shall sign a code mandating principals and mandatory guidelines for coaching conduct promulgated by the Tier I Chairperson.

18.8.11 Coaches shall have the responsibility to develop equally all players/participants chosen for the team with a de-emphasis on winning.

18.8.12 All other information or requirements deemed necessary by the Tier I Chairperson and or the Tier I Committee, or his/ her designee. Failure to strictly comply with the requirements set forth in USA Hockey's American Development Model (ADM), especially as to ice practice hours and off-ice practice hours game counts or de-emphasis of winning at all costs at the 10U minor, 10U major, 12U minor and 12U major levels shall be the basis to DENY any Tier 1 Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organization's and 12U, 14U, 16U and 19U teams the right to participate in the Tier I State Championships Tournament and/or renewal of the Tier I Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organization's charter for the following season.

Existing Tier 1 Youth Affiliate Organizations and Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organizations will be notified in writing of the acceptance or denial of its application by May 5<sup>th</sup> of each year by the Tier 1 Chairperson or his/ her designee. New Tier 1 Youth Affiliate Organizations and New Tier 1 Girls' Affiliate Organizations will be notified in writing of the acceptance or denial of its application by June 1<sup>st</sup> by the Tier 1 Chairperson or his/ her designee. A new Tier 1 Youth Affiliate Organization or new Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization applicant may only accept 3 players per age division that played Tier 1 level hockey the previous year.

#### **18.9 TAMPERING:**

No Player/Participant, Coach, Manager shall be solicited nor shall the possibility of playing Tier I Youth or Tier I Girls' Hockey be discussed with any Player/Participant, Coach, or Manager of a National Bound Team at any Tier Classification until 48 hours after the last game on the last day of the Tier I Youth & the Tier I Girls' National Championships Tournament.

*(Exception - An existing Tier I Youth or Tier I Girls' Player/Participant, Coach, or Manager for the particular Tier I Youth or Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization for which that Player, Coach, or Manager played for during the existing season and then only by that Tier I Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organization.)*

Players, Coaches, and Managers of Non-National Bound age divisions may hold discussions at the conclusion of the Illinois State Tournament.

If a Tier I Player initiates contact with another Tier I Youth or Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization, the Tier I Youth or Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization must advise said Player it cannot discuss the matter and will advise the individual(s) of the date after which contact is permitted.

#### **18.10 TEAM SELECTION PROCESS PROCEDURES**

Each Tier I Youth Affiliate Organization and Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization shall institute procedures to select the best players available.

Guidelines for team selection process shall include, but are not limited to the following:

18.10.1 Each Tier I Youth Affiliate Organization and Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization shall hold open tryouts. Tryouts may not be announced or advertised until the tryouts schedule for ALL Tier I Youth & Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organizations has been approved by the Tier I Chairperson or his/her authorized designee and not less than 48 hours after the final game on the final day of the USA Hockey Nationals Championships Tournament. Spring/Summer announcements, in any form, cannot be made until January 15<sup>th</sup> of each year for the following spring.

18.10.2 Personal invitations for tryouts are permissible, however, tampering deadlines MUST be avoided. Tryouts are required to be announced publicly through a general publication or individual mailing to ALL players/participants at each age divisions and on the respective Tier I Youth Affiliate Organization's & Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization's websites. These invitations are afforded to any players wishing to try out. This announcement shall take place at least thirty (30) days prior to the first date & time of the first tryout.

18.10.3 The announcement must contain a minimum of at least the following information:

- a. Tier 1 Youth Affiliate Organization or Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization name
- b. Age Divisions of tryouts and Coaches name for each age division, if known Affiliate Organization's Contact Names with phone numbers
- c. Dates, Location(s), and Times of tryouts
- d. Brief statement about the respective Tier I Youth or Girls Affiliate Organization
- e. A Tier I Youth or Girls Affiliate Organization official invitation
- f. The date contact is permitted between the Tier I Youth or Girls Affiliate Organization and the player
- g. Costs

18.10.4 Tryouts may NOT be announced or advertised until the Tier I Chairperson & the Tier I Committee have approved all information, dates, locations, times, etc. for each Tier I Youth Affiliate Organization & for each Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization. However, under no circumstances may ANY announcements be made until 48 hours after the final game on the final day of the USA Hockey Nationals Championships Tournament.

18.10.5 Spring/Summer announcements, in any form, are prohibited until a minimum of 48 hours after the final game on the final day of the USA Hockey Nationals Championships Tournament.

18.10.6 Player Card:

Players must sign a "Player Card" and the Player's parent(s) must sign an "Acknowledgment Form" that they have received a Fact Sheet and have been fully informed of all terms and conditions, including financial responsibilities, required for play on the specific Tier I Youth or Girls' Team.

18.10.6.1 Number of Players Cards:

Each Tier I Youth Affiliate Organization and each Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization shall be permitted twenty (20) Player Cards per Tier 1 Youth or Girls' Team.

18.10.7 Issuance of Player Cards:

Tier I Youth Affiliate Organizations and Tier I Girls Affiliate Organizations are required to issue player cards on the last day of tryouts at each age division for the upcoming playing season.

18.10.8 Player Commitment:

Any Player who signs an AHAI Tier I Player Card is irrevocably committed to that Tier I Youth

or Girls' Affiliate Organization for the ensuing playing season and cannot play for another USAH Tier I team in Illinois. **A player could play on a Tier I team out of state if the player has met any obligations to the Affiliate Organization they are leaving and said Affiliate Organization has agreed to release the player.** This includes any other AHAI Tier I Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organizations or USAH National Bound AHAI Tier II Youth or Girls' Affiliate Organizations.

*(Exception – High School Hockey if the High School Affiliate Organization allows for double rostering.)*

18.10.9 Any Player who signs a Player Card for any Tier I Youth or Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization shall not be recruited by or on behalf of any other Tier I Youth or Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization including the individual teams of said Tier I Youth or Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organizations and cannot be removed from that Tier I Youth or Tier I Girls' Affiliate Organization's Team's roster without the prior approval of the AHAI Board of Directors.

18.10.10 Commitment Date:

Except for tryouts, no Tier I Youth or Tier I Girls' player shall be required to participate in or attend ANY Tier I Youth or Tier I Girls' activity prior to August 15th of the ensuing Playing Season.

18.10.11 Submission of Player Cards to the Tier I Chairperson:

The signed Player Card and Parental Acknowledgment Form for each player must be submitted to the Tier I Committee Chairperson by the dates set out in these Rules or a date designated by the Tier I Committee Chairperson.

18.10.12 All "Player Cards" and parental Acknowledgment Forms shall be submitted to the Tier I Committee Chairperson by September 1st (5:00 p.m.) or prior to the Tier I Youth Teams' first (1<sup>st</sup>) team activity of the current playing season for 10U minor, 10U major, 12U minor, 12U major, 14U minor, 14U major, 15U only, 16U, and 18U age divisions.

18.10.13 All "Player Cards" and parental Acknowledgment Forms shall be submitted to the AHAI Executive Director by June 2<sup>nd</sup> for all Tier I Girls' Teams.

Refer to Article 17 for additional information specific to Tier I Girls.

## **18.11 COACH(ES) MOVEMENT**

AHAH Coaches who move from one Tier I Youth or Tier I Girls Affiliate Organization to another Tier I Youth or Tier I Girls Affiliate Organization cannot coach any of the same players from the previous season's AHAI/USAH rostered team for a period of one season with the new Tier I Youth or Tier I Girls Affiliate Organization.

18.11.1 Classification: Coach is any rostered Head or Assistant Coach for a Tier I Youth or a Tier I Girls Affiliate Organization during the USA Hockey playing season. This includes a coach that is not rostered but coaches the team or is on the bench for more than 33% of the season.

18.11.2 Classification: Player is any player who was rostered on the same Tier I Youth or Tier I Girls Affiliate Organization's roster as the Coach.

*(Exception: family member or relative of the coach)*

18.11.3 Classification: Hockey Director of an AHAI/USAH registered Tier I Youth or Tier I Girls Affiliate Organization shall not count as a Coach if listed on all of the Tier I Youth or Tier I Girls Affiliate Organization's rosters as an Assistant Coach. If a Hockey Director is listed as the Head Coach of a team, the rules of sub-section 18.11.1 of this Article then apply. If there are unique circumstances that a Hockey Director becomes a Head Coach of a team during the season, the new Youth Affiliate Organization may petition the Tier I Committee for a ruling on the eligibility of the coach before the next season.

Coaches coaching players from a prior Tier I Youth or Tier I Girls Affiliate Organization will be considered in violation of these AHAI Rules & Regulations

#### **18.12 ROSTERS**

Refer to Article 11 of these AHAI Rules & Regulations

#### **18.13 GAME LIMITS**

Refer to Article 11 of these AHAI Rules & Regulations

### **ARTICLE 19 HIGH SCHOOL**

#### **19.1 GENERAL**

It is the general intent of the rules stated below to follow the annually published IHSA Rules pertaining to transfer students, recruiting of high school athletes and high school foreign exchange student eligibility. It is the responsibility of the student, parent(s) of the student, coach, and high school organization to raise any issues which may be in question and bring them to the High School Committee for resolution before the playing season begins.

High School Season - The start of the high school season is equal to the start of the IHSA High School Fall Sports Season.

It is strongly recommended for ALL High School Affiliate Organizations to have a pre-season meeting with all their players, parents, coaches, and administrators in attendance. Upon request, a representative of the High School Committee will be present at such a meeting. The attendance of a representative from IHOA is strongly encouraged.

#### **19.2 HIGH SCHOOL DEFINITIONS – PLAYER & TEAM**

##### **19.2.1 High School Player**

Restricted to amateurs who are full time students in good standing (*grades 9 through 12*), and under 20 years old on December 31<sup>st</sup> of the Playing Season, not to exceed eight (8) consecutive semesters starting with the freshman year, who are enrolled and attending the school designated on the team's and player's registration.

19.2.2 Those students graduating mid-year are no longer full-time students and therefore are not eligible to play on the high school hockey team. This is effective on their last day of attending classes as a full-time student, even if the team's season is not over.

19.2.3 Transferring students - Any student that transfers from any one school to any other after the start of the school year will:

- a. Have a thirty (30) day waiting period if the student had not tried out or played on the hockey High School Team of the first school the same year or
- b. Have a one year waiting period if the student had tried out or played on the hockey High School Team of the first school in the same year. This applies to transfers between any two schools whether they be public or private.

19.2.4 Home Schooled and Online High School student requirements for participation in a High School Affiliate Organization, either pure or combined, will require proof of enrollment in an accredited High School program as well as proof of residency within the public-school boundary based on their home address. This only applies to public schools with defined borders. Private Schools do not have defined boundaries and therefore are not considered to be home schooling or online education.

Players may stay eligible by carrying a full load of classes for four (4) consecutive years from their start date as a freshman with no breaks. If all criteria are met, they may be approved by the AHAI Registrar on the roster for the High School Affiliate Organization in which the public school is part of. Home-schooled and Online High School students who wish to be approved

to participate with a program must notify the High School Committee Chair of their request and provide the required information/documentation prior to being approved on a roster.

#### 19.2.5 High School Team

A group of players currently attending High School that, having complied with all the By- Laws and these Rules and Regulations and must have played at least twenty (20) games during the season as a unit. As of July 1, 2024, all Girls' High School Teams are required to be under a separate USA Hockey/AHAI Identification Number (*ILH*) for the purposes of rostering, administration, and distribution of communications. The existing High School Affiliate Organization is not required to change its name except to add the word 'GIRLS' (i.e. AHAI & AHAI Girls). The High School Affiliate Organization's By-Laws and Board may remain the same except whereas the High School Affiliate Organization must identify a designated Girls Representative within their High School Affiliate Organization's Board structure (Director of Girls Hockey).

19.2.6 Only players on the teams Official, USA Hockey Certified Roster may participate with the team.

19.2.7 The first team registered by a HS Affiliate Organization must be registered as varsity. Teams must be registered in the order in which they are selected, with the better teams registered first. Organizations with multiple teams may register the second and all teams that follow as either Varsity or Junior Varsity.

19.2.8 Each high school team is required to have a minimum of fourteen (14) distinct skaters and at least one (1) goaltender.

19.2.9 Each Girls High School Team must have a minimum of twelve (12) players including the goaltender. The first girls high school team registered by a HS Affiliate Organization must be registered as varsity. Teams must be registered in the order in which they are selected with the better teams registered first. Organizations with multiple teams may register the second and all teams that follow as either Varsity or Junior Varsity.

19.2.10 No team will be permitted to play as two (2) teams, at both Varsity and Junior Varsity levels, from a single roster. Each team, at each level, must have a separate and distinct USA Hockey Certified Roster.

19.2.11 Tier I Players may play for a High School Varsity team but cannot play for a High School Junior Varsity team. However, Tier I female players may double roster to either a High School Varsity or Junior Varsity team.

### 19.3 PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

A high school player may play for one (1) High School team except for the rules providing for dual rostered players. Girls may play for a Youth High School team OR a Girls' High School team but cannot play for both in the same season. Please refer to the exception for female goaltenders.

### 19.4 HIGH SCHOOL DIVISIONS

19.4.1 Pure High School Team - High School Teams made up solely of players in good standing attending one high school. These teams are registered as Division 1 in the USAH Registry Portal by an AHAI Affiliate Organization that has annually been reviewed and approved by the AHAI High School Committee.

19.4.2 Combined High School Team - High School Teams made up of players in good standing attending two or more high schools. These teams are registered as Division 2 in the USAH Registry Portal by an AHAI Affiliate Organization that has annually been reviewed and approved by the AHAI High School Committee.



19.4.3 The following rules apply to Combined High School Teams and Combined High School Affiliate Organizations.

19.4.3.1 The criteria for grouping players from multiple high schools together to form a Combined Organization will be as follows:

- a. Maximizes the “Essence of High School hockey” (*based on school district, community, and geographic proximity*). The priority of an AHAI Combined Affiliate Organization shall be to combine players representing High Schools within the same school district. Such schools should be within geographical proximity of one another. The High School Committee may elect to use other measures when approving combinations.
- b. Ensures the long-term viability of a Combined Organization based on a projection of an adequate number of players each year for the foreseeable future (*viability not to be confused with competitiveness*).
- c. All eligible players from all the Combined High Schools must be invited to participate with the teams organized by the Combined Organization. Any infractions of this rule will terminate Combined Organization status.
- d. There is no “cutting” of players that want to participate unless approved by the High School Committee.
- e. Combined Affiliate Organization should have a minimum of two (2) High School Teams: varsity and junior varsity. Additional High School Teams may be formed as needed.
- f. There is no maximum number of players in the Combined Affiliate Organization.

19.4.4 Combined High School Affiliate Organizations must annually submit to the High School Committee an online a “Combined Status Form” for approval no later than June 30<sup>th</sup> of the upcoming Playing Season.

19.4.5 Once approved by the High School Committee, the core high school designations may not be changed without the approval of the High School Committee. The designation of core schools shall remain the same from season to season unless a change is approved.

19.4.6 All Combined High School Affiliate Organization must have a Board of Directors with at least one (1) representative from each High School that has an active player on the Combined High School Team.

19.4.7 All Combined High School Teams must enter the AHAI State High School Tournament unless an exception is approved by the High School Committee. Central Illinois High School Combined High School Teams must enter the Central Illinois State High School Tournament unless an exception is approved by the High School Committee.

19.4.8 Combined High School Affiliate Organizations offering spring high school teams will be limited to the same school combinations as the preceding fall season.

19.4.9 Any deviations from Sections 19.2, 19.3, or 19.4 must be approved by the High School Committee.

A group representing players from a single High School within an existing Combined Affiliate Organization that seeks to become a separate Pure High School Affiliate Organization and Team must apply to the AHAI High School Committee for approval prior to January 15<sup>th</sup> of the current playing season for the upcoming playing season. The AHAI High School Committee will review, request additional documentation if warranted, and conduct interviews if deemed necessary. The AHAI High School Committee shall submit a recommendation to the AHAI Board of Directors which will determine final approval no later than April 15<sup>th</sup>.

Refer to Article 3 of the AHAI Rules & Regulations.

### **19.5 TRANSITION RULE**

The purpose of the transition rule is to provide a process to either divide a Combined High School program into separate Combined High School Affiliate Organizations or re-distribute the High Schools or players to improved or more logical combinations while allowing Junior and Senior players to finish their high school eligibility with their existing Combined High School Team.

When the High School Committee determines the need to alter the roster of schools in a Combined High School program, the High School Committee may at its discretion allow incoming Juniors and Seniors to opt for staying with their existing High School High School Team. It is a one-time option. Once they play for the choice of High School High School Team, they may not change High School High School Teams. This includes incoming Juniors; they are locked to that program for the remainder of their High School eligibility unless they transfer schools, in which case, they become subject to the restrictions published in these Rules and Regulations.

### **19.6 HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY PLAYER**

Players selected for the Varsity high school team will be designated by the High School Affiliate Organization's Registrar in the AHAI Webtool Program with a "V". If there are multiple Varsity teams, players will be designated with a "V1, V2, etc. respective of the order of the team selection. Varsity players are not permitted to be rostered on a Junior Varsity team. If there is more than one Varsity team, players may be on two (2) Varsity rosters within the same High School Affiliate Organization according to the player movement rules below.

19.6.1 Tier I Youth players may play for a High School Varsity team but cannot play for a High School Junior Varsity team. However, Tier I female players may double roster to any High School Varsity or a High School Junior Varsity team.

### **19.7 HIGH SCHOOL JUNIOR VARSITY PLAYER**

A High School Junior Varsity player will be designated by the High School Affiliate Organization's Registrar in the AHAI Webtool Program with a "JV". If there is more than one Junior Varsity team, players will be designated with a "JV1, JV2, etc. respective of the order of the team. Junior Varsity players may be on multiple rosters within the same High School Affiliate Organization according to the player movement rules below.

### **19.8 HIGH SCHOOL PLAYER MOVEMENT**

A High School player may be dual rostered meaning they appear on more than one roster within the same Affiliate Organization.

19.8.1 Dual rostered players must be on the team's official roster to participate with the team.

19.8.2 A player may only dual roster up to a team one level higher.

*(Example - They may allow a player to be dual rostered between two teams by rostering a player from a team 1 (one) level below such as JV2 to JV1, or Varsity 2 to Varsity 1, or JV to Varsity.)*

19.8.3 The player must carry the designation of their primary team on both Official USAH Rosters. When placed on a second roster, they must carry the same primary team designation on the team to which they are dual rostered.

19.8.4 The dual rostered players may play up in 9 league games on the non-primary team. Once they play in a tenth league game, it will lock that player to the non-primary roster for all games for the remainder of the season. They may not return to the lower-level team for ANY games, including all league and non-league, practice, scrimmage, or tournament/showcase games including the State Tournament.

19.8.5 If a team plays in more than 1 league, the combined number of league games played

count in the nine (9) allowed games before being locked to the upper team.

19.8.6 The player remains as a player on the primary team but is now locked to the non-primary team.

19.8.7 The player's V/JV designation does not change on the certified roster, and the player is not removed from the primary team's roster.

19.8.8 The primary team may not drop below the fourteen (14) players and one (1) goaltender minimum roster requirements by reason of moving players up and being locked on the upper team.

Games played by the upper team in violation of this rule will be forfeited and the player will be locked on the lower team.

19.8.9 It is recommended that there are two (2) goalies on each team. One goalie could be a goaltender dual rostered on the next upper team. If there is only one goalie on a team, and there is not a team registered below them, a dual rostered goalie from an upper team may only be on the lower roster as a Back Up Goalie, subject to Back-Up Goalie Rules.

19.8.10 No player may play down, except by petition if there is a crisis as determined by the HS Committee and the AHAI registrar.

**Individual leagues may be more restrictive but may not amend the rule to be less restrictive.**

## **19.9 HIGH SCHOOL GOALIE EXCEPTION**

High School Goalie Exception for Requesting a Goalkeeper from a Source Outside Their Own Affiliate High School Organization

19.9.1 All movement by goaltenders for a High School Team from other than the school or group of schools in the case of a combined High School Team must be:

The result of a High School Affiliate Organization claiming hardship, namely not having a goaltender for one of their High School Teams. A High School Affiliate Organization that has at least one goaltender for each High School Team will be deemed to be a lower priority than a high school team that has none. Petitions are made to the Chairman of the High School Committee or his/her designated coordinator. League presidents may help counsel a program in their league and advocate for them, however the final approval is the responsibility of the Chairman of the High School Committee.

19.9.2 A Combined Affiliate Program may not by definition cut any players, even when the program has more than two (2) goaltenders per high school team. They may council a goaltender that their playing time may be significantly less than the other goaltender. The goaltender then may elect to be placed into a pool of goaltenders to be placed on a high school team claiming hardship. If the goaltender rejects this proposal, the original Combined High School Affiliate Organization must accept and coach the goaltender even if they do not play. The goaltender must fulfill the High School Team's other requirements including school attendance and payment of fees.

19.9.3 A High School Affiliate Organization that cuts a goaltender or allows a goaltender to go into the pool may not claim hardship to obtain another goaltender from the pool.

19.9.4 A goaltender placed into the pool will be placed by the High School Committee Goalie Coordinator by priority:

19.9.5 First priority will be for High School Teams with no goaltender at all.

19.9.6 Second priority will be geographic proximity to the acquiring High School Team.

19.9.7 The High School Committee will attempt to place older more experienced goaltenders on Varsity High School Teams when the conditions above are met.

19.9.8 A goaltender who rejects their assignment will be removed from the pool and will be ineligible to be rostered on any High School Team other than his original High School Team to which he required no exception.

19.9.9 Goaltenders that are cut from Pure Programs may contact the High School Committee Goalie Coordinator to be placed in the Pool.

19.9.10 Individual Goaltenders and High School Affiliate Organizations may make no side arrangements to circumvent this process. If it is found that such an arrangement took place, the high school committee may impose sanctions including removal of the High School Team from the State Tournament and denial of access to future goalie pools.

19.9.11 Girls' High School goaltenders may apply for a special exemption whereby they would be allowed for a single season to double roster on both a girl's and co-ed High School Team if it is determined by the Chairperson of the High School Committee that there is a need. That exemption would only be valid for one season and that Player would not be allowed to "triple roster" on any other team including but not limited to a Tier 1 team.

#### **19.10 HIGH SCHOOL BACK-UP GOALIE RULE**

High School Back Up Goalie (*HS BUG*) - BUGs must be approved by the AHAI Registrar before they may be added to the High School Team's USA Hockey Certified Roster.

- a. High School Teams may register a HS BUG under specific circumstances. A HS BUG may only be registered on a High School Team if there is only one Goaltender on each of the High School teams. Dual rostering should always supersede the use of a HS BUG as the second goaltender on a team. A goaltender that is dual rostered to a High School Team is considered to be a second goaltender on the team, which is a case when a HS BUG may not be added to the team.
- b. A High School BUG may only be used in the case where the rostered Goalkeeper on the AHAI high school team is injured or ill. The High School team must notify the AHAI Registrar and Chairperson of the High School Committee if they request to use the High School BUG in a game. The notification can be made by phone but must be documented in writing in an email and sent to the AHAI Registrar and Chairperson of the High School Committee. The High School BUG cannot be used in a game until acknowledgement is received from the High School Committee Chairperson and/or the AHAI Registrar. This rule does not restrict any league from having rules that would require additional prior notification and approval. In that event the AHAI High School Team must also get approval from the league to play the High School BUG. The league may be more restrictive in the ability to play a High School BUG.

#### **19.11 HIGH SCHOOL BUG SCENARIOS**

*(not intended to be inclusive of all scenarios)*

The high school team has two teams and two goaltenders in their Affiliate Organization.

In this case, the Varsity Goaltender may be a HS BUG on the JV team. The JV goaltender should be dual rostered on the Varsity team.

A High School Affiliate Organization with 1 Varsity and 2 JV teams and 3 goaltenders may roster the JV 1 goaltender as a HS BUG on the JV2 team.

The JV 1 goaltender should be a dual rostered goaltender to the Varsity team, and the JV 2 goaltender dual rostered goaltender to the JV1 team.

A High School Affiliate Organization with 2 Varsity and 1 JV teams and 3 goaltenders may roster the V 2 goaltenders as a HS BUG on the JV1 team.

The V 2 goaltender should be rostered as the dual rostered goaltender to the Varsity 1 team, and the JV 1 goaltender as the dual rostered goaltender to the V2 team.

#### **19.12 7<sup>TH</sup> and 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE SKATES**

Pursuant to the Rules, players and/or students not attending a High School may not participate in any High School Team and/or High School Affiliate Organization's activities.

The following policy will allow High School Affiliate Organizations to provide 7th and 8th grade students the opportunity to participate in two (2) High School hockey programs on ice activities each year, subject to the following:

19.12.1 Each high school Affiliate Organizations is limited to two (2) events per season.  
(Season defined as September 1 through March 31)

19.12.2 Each High School Affiliate Organizations must provide written notice to the High School Committee Chairperson and the AHAI Registrar of any date(s) chosen for an on-ice 7th/8th grade event and receive approval from the High School Committee and the High School League.

19.12.3 Only 7th or 8th grade students are eligible to participate.

19.12.4 Each participant must provide a written consent form executed by a parent or guardian consenting to the student participating in the event.

19.12.5 Each participant in the event must have a current USA Hockey registration.

19.12.6 Each participant must always wear full equipment during all on ice activities.

19.12.7 Current High School Players/Participants and/or students are not allowed on the ice during these skates.

High School Affiliate Organizations will only allow proper U.S.A. Hockey Registered and/or Certified Coaches from that Affiliate Organization on the ice during the event.

### **ARTICLE 20 ADULTS & WOMEN'S**

#### **20.1 ADULTS & WOMEN'S**

20.1.1 Adults & Women's Teams may NOT actively recruit or solicit players under the age of eighteen (18).

20.1.2 ALL players must be eighteen (18) years of age or older to play on an Adult team. Youth players may NOT participate with an Adult team in any manner on the ice.

20.1.3 Participants on Adult teams must have a current USA Hockey Registration.

20.1.4 Teams must have an official USA Hockey Certified roster which is submitted to the league before any games are played.

20.1.5 Adults may roster with multiple Adult teams.

20.1.6 Adult teams must use USA Hockey Credentialed Officials.

## ARTICLE 21 COACHING

### 21.1 USA HOCKEY COACHING EDUCATION PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

21.1.1 Coach Registration: All Ice Hockey Coaches, as well as instructors of USA Hockey Programs, shall be registered annually as Individual Participants of USA Hockey for the current season (*before the start of the season*) in order to be eligible to coach/instruct in any regular-season activities (*practices, clinics, games, tournaments, try-outs, etc.*), State, District, Regional Playoff, Nationals Championships or in USA Hockey Player Development Programs. There is an annual fee to register as a coach (*head and assistants*) and or instructor. Coaches who also play on a USA Hockey registered team are required to pay this registration fee only once per year. Coaches may register as participants online at [www.usahockey.com](http://www.usahockey.com) or through a local Affiliate Organization.

*Exception 1:* All USA Hockey Coaching Education Program Instructors and Nationals Player Development Camp coaches are exempt from the annual participant registration fee. These individuals are still required to complete the participant registration process.

*Exception 2:* All coaches (*head and assistants*) of each Disabled Hockey Team must complete the required CEP registration and online age-specific module(s) for each level of play. Those volunteers or employees who assist with helping disabled hockey teams (*i.e. interpreters, pushers, on-ice mentors, etc.*) must be properly registered with USA Hockey (*including screening and SafeSport*) but are not required to attend a CEP clinic and otherwise comply with these Rules and Regulations.

For ALL USA Hockey Coaching certification requirements, guidelines, and criteria, refer to USA Hockey's website. <https://www.usahockey.com/coachingcertification>

### 21.2 SAFE SPORT AND SCREENING POLICY

ALL USA Hockey Coaches and Instructors will complete the USA Hockey SafeSport online training and background check in accordance with USA Hockey SafeSport and Screening Policies. Failure to comply with the SafeSport and Screening Policies will result in the forfeiture of coaching privileges in programs, at sites, or events under AHAI or USA Hockey's governance. Information on bit these programs can be found at:

<https://www.usahockey.com/safesporttraining>

<https://www.usahockey.com/backgroundscreen>

### 21.3 COACH/INSTRUCTOR HELMET REQUIREMENT

ALL Ice Hockey Coaches and Instructors of registered USA Hockey Youth 18U and below, High School, Girls/Women's 19U and below, and Disabled Programs must properly wear an approved ice hockey helmet during all on-ice sessions, including but not limited to practices, controlled scrimmages, and ALL Coaching Education Program clinics and/or workshops. Failure to comply WILL result in a 30-day suspension from all activities involving USA Hockey registered programs.

### 21.4 UNDER-AGE COACHES

A player aged 13 through 17 who is currently and properly registered with USA Hockey may serve as a Student Coach. For further requirements to be a Student Coach, refer to USA Hockey's website.

<https://www.usahockey.com/studentcoaches>

21.4.1 An Affiliate Organization that utilizes a STUDENT COACH must provide the proper documentation indicating on what team he/she is participating as a STUDENT COACH, and, if applicable, what team he/she is properly registered/rostered as a player. The documentation form may be found on the USA Hockey website.

<https://www.usahockey.com/studentcoaches>

21.4.2 The Student Coach candidate along with his/her Affiliate Organization, team, and parents must completely fill out the USA Hockey Student Coach form and mail the completed document to:

AHAI / Student Coach – P.O. Box 1636 – Warrenville, IL 60555

21.4.3 The Affiliate Organization for which the candidate will be a Student Coach must provide a copy of the USA Hockey completed Student Coach Form to the AHAI Registrar before said candidate may participate as a Student Coach. The approved document must be submitted annually and/or whenever there is a change of either team (*participation as a Student Coach or participation as a player*).

21.4.4 Only NEW candidates to become Student Coaches are required to attend a Student Coach Workshop. Any Student Coach that has already attended an AHAI Sponsored Student Coach Clinic or Level 1 Clinic as a Student Coach in the past need NOT attend again. However, every Student Coach MUST submit the USA Hockey Student Coach form to the AHAI Registrar as indicated above.

## **21.5 COACHING ETHICS**

ALL USA Hockey Ice Hockey Coaches (*head and assistant*) and Instructors must abide by the USA Hockey Coaching Ethics Code and understand that violations may result in full or partial forfeiture of coaching privileges in programs, at sites or events under AHAI or USA Hockey's governance. All coaches have an obligation and are required to be familiar with USA Hockey's Coaching Ethics Code. Lack of awareness or misunderstanding of an ethical standard is not in itself a defense to a charge of unethical conduct. Part of the Coach's Ethics Code is all coaches have the responsibility to develop equally all players chosen for the team with a de-emphasis on winning.

The USA Hockey Coaching Ethics Code can be found on USA Hockey's website.

<https://www.usahockey.com/coachingethics>

## **ARTICLE 22 DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

### **22.1 DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Violations of the By-Laws, Rules and Regulations, Guidelines, decisions and/or requests of AHAI (*including its' Committees*) and/or USA Hockey, and conduct deemed by the Rules & Ethics Committee of AHAI to not be in the best interests of amateur hockey, the purpose and/or intent of the By-Laws, Rules & Regulations. Guidelines, decisions and/or requests of AHAI (*including its Committees*) and/or USA Hockey constitutes conduct detrimental to and not in the best interests of hockey and makes the Player, Parent, Spectator, Coach, Manager, Team, League, Administrator, Minor Official, Referee and/or Linesman, Person, Affiliate Organization and/or Sponsoring Organization subject to disciplinary action with possible suspension(s) by the AHAI Board of Directors and/or its Committees so empowered.

22.1.1 Normally, sanctions (*other than playing rule sanctions*) may be imposed only upon notice and a hearing, which is interpreted to be a reasonable opportunity to be heard. However, under certain circumstances, sanctions may be imposed without a hearing.

22.1.2 The general procedure for imposition of sanctions:

Notice - A reasonable opportunity to be heard which may be formal or informal, including discussions in person, by telephone or in writing. They may also include the statements or attendance of factual witnesses and the production of documents; and a decision which normally will be in writing, setting forth the sanctions and time periods as appropriate.

22.1.3 Sanctions may, however, be imposed without hearing:

Where there is no factual dispute and the sanctioned party does not request a hearing, setting out facts supporting a factual dispute, in writing within seven (7) days of receipt of written or verbal notice of the sanctions.

22.1.4 Where the AHAI Rules & Ethics Committee and or the AHAI Suspension Committee determines that the conduct is such that immediate sanctions are necessary in the best interests of hockey.

Some examples of conduct that may require immediate sanctions:

- a. Physical, sexual, or mental abuse of a player or person.
- b. Physical striking of a player or person, fighting, causing a fight.
- c. Use, sell or giving of non-prescription mind-altering substance.
- d. Violation of USA Hockey Policies or AHAI Policies of a comparable nature or the allegation.
- e. Any of the above.

These are examples but they are not exhaustive nor limiting in any manner.

22.1.5 The sanctioned party shall be advised of the sanction or sanctions verbally or in writing. If verbally, it shall be confirmed in writing together with the right to request a hearing. The sanctioned party may request a hearing in writing, in accordance with this Rule within seven (7) days of receipt of written notice of the sanction or sanctions. The request for a hearing shall set out facts and reasons supporting the need for a hearing and why immediate sanction(s) are not appropriate and shall be sent to the Chairperson of the Committee imposing the sanction(s). If the sanctioned party provides this notice requesting a hearing in accordance with this Rule, a reasonable opportunity for a hearing shall be provided within thirty (30) days of receipt of the notice by the Committee Chairperson or the sanctions shall be suspended on the thirty-first (31st) day after receipt of the notice by the Committee Chairperson, until a reasonable opportunity to be heard is provided. Where a reasonable opportunity to be heard is provided, the sanction(s) shall remain in effect until the hearing is conducted and a decision by the Committee provided.

22.1.6 Receipt of written notice of sanctions will be presumed three (3) days after deposit of the written notice, pre-addressed and correctly stamped in the United States Mail.

22.1.7 A Coach who allows a Player who has been suspended by virtue of a gross or match misconduct penalty, to dress, play or participate in practice shall be suspended from any further games until his/her case has been dealt with by the AHAI Suspension Review Committee. A reasonable opportunity to be heard shall be provided within thirty (30) days of the incident the Coach shall be automatically reinstated.

**This rule applies to ALL AHAI Hockey levels.**

22.1.8 A graduated penalty for coaches receiving penalties for "Abuse of Officials" shall be the following:

- a. The first occurrence would receive the One (1) game suspension prescribed by USA Hockey.
- b. The second occurrence in the same season would require a three (3) game suspension.
- c. A third violation in one season would require an indefinite suspension pending a hearing before the Suspension and Review Committee.

22.1.9 Zero Tolerance — In an effort to make ice hockey a more desirable and rewarding experience for all participants, AHAI has a very simple definition of Zero Tolerance and any violation will not be tolerated.

The definition is: Any lack of respect or unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated and will be a violation of AHAI's Zero Tolerance Policy. This rule is designed to require all players, coaches, officials, team officials and administrators, parents, and spectators to comply with the Zero Tolerance Policy.

22.1.10 Each organization, player, coach, official, team officials and administrators, parents



and spectators are expected to enforce this Policy. In addition, AHAI has instructed the Officiating Program to adhere to certain points of interest to enforce this Policy in all USA Hockey sanctioned games.

Thus, the following points of emphasis must be implemented by all On-Ice Referees and Linesmen:

#### 22.1.11 PLAYERS

A minor, major or misconduct/game misconduct penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct (*Zero Tolerance*) shall be assessed whenever a player.

- a. Openly disputes or argues any decision by an official.
- b. Uses obscene or vulgar language at any time, including any swearing, even if it is not directed at a particular person.
- c. Visually demonstrates any sign of dissatisfaction with an official's decision. Any time that a player persists in any of these actions, they shall be assessed a misconduct penalty. A game misconduct shall result if the player continues such action.

#### 22.1.12 COACHES

A minor penalty or game misconduct penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct (*Zero Tolerance*) shall be assessed whenever a coach:

- a. Openly disputes or argues any decision by an official.
- b. Uses obscene or vulgar language in a boisterous manner to anyone at any time.
- c. Visually displays any sign of dissatisfaction with an official's decision including standing on the boards or standing in the bench doorway with the intent of inciting the officials, players, or spectators.
- d. Any time that a coach persists in any of these actions, they shall be assessed a game misconduct penalty.

#### 22.1.13 OFFICIALS

Officials are required to conduct themselves in a businesslike, sportsmanlike, impartial, and constructive manner at all times. The actions of an official must be above reproach. Actions such as "baiting" or inciting players or coaches are strictly prohibited.

*On-ice officials are ambassadors of the game and must always conduct themselves with this responsibility in mind.*

#### 22.1.14 PARENTS/SPECTATORS

In an effort to help control inappropriate spectator behavior, the following AHAI rule is effective immediately.

22.1.14.1 A game will be stopped by on-ice officials when the parents/spectators displaying inappropriate or disruptive behavior interfere with other parents/spectators or the game. The on-ice officials will identify violators to the coaches for the purpose of removing parents/spectators from the parents'/spectators' viewing and game area.

22.1.14.2 Once removed, play will resume. Lost time will not be replaced. Violators will incur a minimum mandatory 5-game suspension from that team's games and may be subject to further disciplinary action by the local governing body.

### ARTICLE 23 APPEALS

#### 23.1 APPEALS

Appeals of any AHAI Committee decision, except the Tournament Protest Committee which are covered in Article 13, may be made to the AHAI Board of Directors, or at the AHAI Board of Director's

discretion, an Appeals Committee of the AHAI Board of Directors' (*which for the purposes of this Article may be referred to as "Board of Directors" or "Board"*) or appeals of an AHAI Board of Directors decision will be heard by an independent appeal committee appointed by the AHAI President.

23.1.1 The appeal procedure is as follows:

Appeals for consideration by the AHAI Appeals Committee must be submitted in writing to the President of AHAI by the affected individual, Affiliate Organization's Teams' Officers and/or Directors. The appeal must state the reason and basis for the appeal. AHAI Appeal forms will be provided after notification.

23.1.2 Must be accompanied by a \$125.00 Filing Fee that shall be paid by "certified check" only.

23.1.3 Must be received by the President within ten (10) calendar days of the respective Committee's notice to defendant.  
(Forms can be found on [www.ahai.org](http://www.ahai.org)).

23.1.4 Must complete and submit to the President of AHAI an "Appeal Form" within ten (10) days of submitting the appeal. The form must include a written statement of why the decision should be modified or reversed together with any documents to be considered on appeal. The Appeal Form, including the written statement and documents, shall be delivered by the appealing party, to the original decision-making body Chairperson at the same time it is submitted to the AHAI President.

23.1.5 Only the evidence and theories explicitly presented to the initial decision-making body for consideration prior to the rendering of its decision and made part of the Appeal Form shall be presented or considered for appeal.

23.1.6 The AHAI Appeal Authority (*AHAI Board of Directors or the Appeals Committee*) may hold a hearing, at its option, or consider the appeal on the written submissions of the parties to the appeal. If the appeal is only based on written submissions, the Board shall provide the original decision-making body the opportunity to respond, in writing, to the appealing party's Appeal Form. Notice of a Hearing shall be given to all parties. In the event the AHAI Appeals Committee determines to hold a hearing, individual, member team officers, and/or directors and persons with knowledge, must appear before the AHAI Appeals Committee at the time and place specified by the Appeals Committee and present the appeal.

23.1.7 Decisions of the AHAI Board of Directors or the Appeals Committee will generally be given to the individual, Affiliate Organization's Team officer and/or its Directors within seven (7) calendar days after the hearing.

23.1.8 An appeal is not a rehearing of the facts. An appeal is limited to why the decision of the initial hearing body should be modified or reversed. The burden of proof shall be on the person or party attempting to have the decision modified or reversed. Any disciplinary action as a result of the initial or any other hearing or decision shall remain in full force and effect until it expires, or the appeal authority modifies it.

23.1.9 All decisions of the Board of Directors of AHAI are final.

23.1.10 USAH Rules regarding appeals can be found in their Annual Guide <https://www.usahockey.com/annualguide>

## ARTICLE 24 OFFICIATING

## **24.1 REGISTRATION**

An Ice Hockey Official who is properly registered with USA Hockey, AHAI, and the Illinois Hockey Officiating Association (*IHOA*) will be eligible to officiate any and all games played between USA Hockey/AHAI properly sanctioned and registered teams. Teams not properly sanctioned and or registered with USA Hockey/AHAI will not be allowed to use the services of the Illinois Hockey Officiating Association (*IHOA*).

## **24.2 PURPOSE**

The involvement of AHAI in officiating matters is solely for the purposes of promoting qualified officiating through which that Officials are properly trained; an equitable assignment system; and prompt compensation of Officials by those who retain their services. Through its involvement, AHAI seeks to foster a system which provides qualified officials the opportunity to officiate in a competitive hockey environment.

24.2.1 To carry out these purposes, AHAI offers:

- a. High quality education and instruction to improve the knowledge of officiating.
- b. A mentoring program to assist in officiating experience and skill development.
- c. Exposure to advanced competition through participation in high caliber games and tournaments.
- d. Evaluation to assist in growth potential and development. AHAI's involvement in officiating is specifically not intended to create an employer-employee or principal-agent relationship between AHAI and any official. Nothing in this Article should be interpreted as creating such a relationship.

## **24.3 AHAI OFFICIATING MANAGER**

The AHAI Officiating Manager shall be appointed by the AHAI Board of Directors to carry out the functions required. This person may either be an AHAI Volunteer, Employee, or an Independent Contractor. The AHAI Board of Directors reserves the right to annually review the status and continued service of the Officiating Manager.

24.3.1 The Officiating Manager shall be responsible for certification and training of all Officials eligible to officiate at USA Hockey sanctioned events in Illinois. This includes but is not limited to establishing Mentoring, Evaluation and Supervisory Programs.

24.3.2 The Officiating Manager shall be responsible for the approval of all "Officiating Assigners" who schedule Officials for USA Hockey sanctioned events in Illinois.

24.3.3 The Officiating Manager shall be responsible for all accounting and billing functions as described in this Article. This shall include but is not limited to issuing all required invoices to AHAI Affiliate Organizations, receiving the payments on those invoices, and dispersing funds due from the Affiliate Organizations to the Officials and Officiating Assigners.

## **24.4 AHAI DESIGNATED ASSIGNER**

The AHAI Board of Directors shall annually and by August 30th, designate and approve an Assigner of Officials. This person(s) or entity shall be the exclusive body approved by AHAI to provide assignment services for AHAI Affiliate Organizations for Officiating Services at all USA Hockey sanctioned events in Illinois. The Officiating Assigner is an independent contractor of AHAI and not an employee or agent of AHAI.

24.4.1 The Assigner of Officials shall promote, develop, and administer a competitive Officiating and Assignment program. The principal purpose of this program shall be to provide Officials the opportunity to officiate in a competitive hockey environment by offering:

- a. High quality education, instruction, and knowledge of officiating.

- b. Adequate mentoring via ice time and game assignments to gain experience and skill development.
- c. Exposure to advanced competition through participation in high caliber games and tournaments.
- d. Ongoing evaluation, supervision and reinforcement of growth potential and development consistent with the intent to provide every Official with games they are qualified to officiate. A monitoring tool will be used by the Assigner of Officials to evaluate the number of games Officials' request, the levels Officials request, and how many games are ultimately assigned to each registered Official.

## **24.5 QUALIFICATION OF OFFICIALS**

All Officials (*Referees and Linesmen*) must be registered with USA Hockey and AHAI through the designated process. All Officials working in any USA Hockey sanctioned event in Illinois must wear the current USA Hockey Officials crest as prescribed and required by USA Hockey.

## **24.6 RETENTION AND COMPENSATION OF OFFICIALS**

Except in circumstances where AHAI is itself operating a USA Hockey sanctioned event in Illinois, Officials are retained to provide officiating services for any USA Hockey sanctioned event in Illinois solely by one or more of the Affiliate Organizations and or properly Registered Teams participating in such event. Compensation due to Officials for providing such services is solely the responsibility of the retaining Affiliate Organization(s) AHAI has no obligation to provide compensation to any Officials for their services at such events.

## **24.7 AHAI BILLING AND FUND TRANSFER**

In order to promote accurate, fair, and timely compensation for Officials who provide officiating services for any AHAI/USA Hockey sanctioned event in Illinois, AHAI has established a billing and payment system that all AHAI Affiliate Organizations are required to use when they retain Officials services for sanctioned events.

### **24.7.1 The following describes this system:**

- a. **Billing System:** AHAI acts solely as an Independent Management entity for the benefit of its Affiliate Organizations and for the Officials and Officiating Assigners. The AHAI Officiating Manager will issue a monthly invoice to each Affiliate Organization for Officials and Assignment Services which that Affiliate Organization used in the prior month. The Officiating Manager will send the invoice during the last week of each month and will send a reminder if the account is not current by the 2nd day of the following month.
- b. **AHAI Service Fee in Invoice Amount:** An AHAI service fee will be set by the AHAI Board of Directors and billed to the Affiliate Organization for each event. This service fee includes compensation to the software platform Developer, AHAI operational expenses and the AHAI-approved training and development programs for Officials.
- c. **Banking:** AHAI has established a specific-purpose bank account to serve as a repository for all payments made by Affiliate Organizations on such invoices. Officials and Officiating Assigners are paid out of that account solely through the funds paid by the Affiliate Organizations. In so acting, neither AHAI nor the AHAI Officiating Manager can be deemed to have established an Employer-Employee or Principal-Agent relationship. AHAI has established this Billing System solely to centralize the payment system for Officials and to promote the timely payment to Officials of amounts due from the Affiliate Organizations for their services rendered.
- d. **Failure to Pay:** In the event any Affiliate Organization fails to timely pay the amounts due on an invoice, AHAI reserves the right to withhold payment to the

respective Officials and Officiating Assigners whose services have not been paid for by that Affiliate Organization. AHAI reserves the right to require prepayment for expected fees of any kind from any Affiliate Organization that has previously failed to pay invoices in a timely manner.

#### **24.8 SOFTWARE PROGRAM**

Unless otherwise decided by the AHAI Board of Directors, the accounting, billing, and assignment process shall be handled exclusively through the use of the AHAI Approved Software Platform.

#### **24.9 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS**

All AHAI Affiliate Organizations are subject to the following rules with respect to officials:

24.9.1 All USA Hockey sanctioned events must be reported through the AHAI Webtool database or by approved software tools provided to Officiating Assigners.

24.9.2 All game information including officiating fees, scheduling fees, and service fees must be posted correctly by the Officiating Assigner(s).

24.9.3 All USA Hockey sanctioned events played in the State of Illinois shall schedule Officials exclusively by using the AHAI Approved Assignment Software platform.

#### **24.10 OFFICIALS SUPERVISION**

It is the recommendation of AHAI that 5-10% of games be supervised by a local Assigner, AHAI or a USA Hockey Supervisor of Officials. Appropriate reporting of such supervision shall be maintained.

### **ARTICLE 25 PLAYING RULES**

The Amateur Hockey Association Illinois, Inc. shall follow the Official Playing Rules of USA Hockey. Any exceptions or additions to these Playing Rules must be approved by the AHAI Board of Directors.

#### **25.1 FIGHTING PENALTIES**

Refer to USA Hockey Rule 615(a)

#### **25.2 SLASHING PENALTIES**

The following rules have been implemented for all ice hockey games played in the State of Illinois. All USA Hockey registered teams (whether registered with AHAI or not) must abide by these additional penalties:

- a. Any Player who is assessed a penalty for slashing under USA Hockey Rule 634 above the waist shall be suspended for the next three (3) games of that team not including the game in which the penalty was assessed.
- b. Any Player, Coach, Team, Manager, Affiliate Organization, or individual violating this Rule shall be referred to the AHAI Rules and Ethics Committee and/or AHAI Suspension Committee for disciplinary action.
- c. Any Tier I Team, or any Team participating in a league based outside of Illinois, or any other Illinois team participating in a game outside the State of Illinois, shall follow regular USA Hockey Rules and/or the Rules of the Affiliate/Federation, and/or Tournament Rules they are playing that game within.

#### **USAH Rule 634 – Slashing**

(Note) Slashing is the act of a player swinging their stick at an opponent whether contact is made or not. Any forceful chop with the stick on an opponent's body or opponent's stick on or near the opponent's hands shall be considered slashing.

- a. A minor penalty shall be assessed for slashing an opponent.

- b. A major plus a game misconduct penalty shall be assessed to any player who recklessly endangers an opponent as a result of slashing.  
(Note) Referees are instructed to penalize any player who swings their stick at any opposing player (whether or not contact is made) or makes a wild swing at the puck with the intention of intimidating the opponent.
- c. A match penalty for reckless endangerment may also be assessed for slashing.
- d. Any player who swings their stick at another player in the course of an altercation shall be assessed a minor or major plus game misconduct or a match penalty. This is in addition to any other penalties that may be warranted under the fighting rule (Rule 615).
- e. A minor penalty shall be assessed to any player who makes stick contact with an opposing goalkeeper while they are in their goal crease and who has covered or caught the puck, regardless of whether or not the Referee has stopped play.

### **25.3 CHECKING FROM BEHIND PENALTIES**

The following rules have been implemented for all ice hockey games played in the State of Illinois. All USA Hockey registered teams (*whether registered with AHA! or not*) must abide by these additional penalties:

25.3.1 A minor plus a misconduct penalty, or a major plus a game misconduct penalty, shall be assessed to any player who body checks or pushes an opponent from behind.

25.3.2 A major penalty plus game misconduct penalty shall be assessed to any player who injures an opponent as a result of checking from behind or who body checks or pushes an opponent from behind causing them to go headfirst into the boards or goal frame.

25.3.3 A match penalty for attempt to injure or deliberate injury to an opponent may also be assessed for checking from behind.

25.3.4 Any player who receives a second major penalty for Checking from Behind with the same team during the same season shall receive a three (3) game suspension.

25.3.5 Any player who receives a third major penalty for Checking from Behind with the same team in the same season, the player shall be suspended until a hearing is conducted by the Authority Having Jurisdiction under USA Hockey Rule 410 - Supplementary Discipline.

### **25.4 PLAYER AND COACH SUSPENSION CLARIFICATION**

#### **25.4.1 RULE 401 - Penalties**

- a. For any Team Official or Player service a suspension for a prior game misconduct violation or disciplinary suspension, the suspension will commence 45 minutes prior to the start of each game and conclude 30 minutes following the conclusion of each game.

The Team Official or Player serving the suspension shall be prohibited from:

- Having any interaction, involvement, or communication "in person", electronically, or otherwise with the team.
- Being present in the locker room.
- Being on or near the bench of their team.

Any violation of the Rule may result in supplementary discipline and may subject such Team Official or Player to further disciplinary proceedings.

#### **25.4.2 RULE 404 – Misconduct Penalties**

- a. A "GAME MISCONDUCT" penalty involves the suspension of a Player or Team Official for the balance of the game with immediate substitution taking place on the ice. A Player

or Team Official incurring a game misconduct penalty shall also be suspended for the team's next game (the game already appearing on the schedule of that team at the time of the infraction), except that when such penalty is imposed under Rule 403(b) (Second Major in Game) there shall be a minimum two-game suspension.

(Note) In all cases where a game misconduct penalty is assessed, the incident shall be reported to the proper authorities who shall have full power to impose further suspensions.

(Note 2) For all game misconduct penalties regardless of when imposed, a total of ten (10) minutes shall be charged in the records against an offending player.

- b. Any Player or Team Official who is assessed a game misconduct penalty may not remain near the bench of their team, nor in any way attempt to direct the play of their team, for the balance of the game in which the game misconduct penalty has been issued.