

OWATONNA YOUTH HOCKEY ASSOCIATION OPERATING GUIDE

July 2026

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VISION:

To create a respected association committed to developing the youth hockey players and leadership skills of all hockey players while maintaining an engaging and positive experience for members, spectators and the community.

MISSION STATEMENT

The commitment of OYHA is to foster a program where all youth players are developed to compete to the best of their abilities while ensuring hockey is fun and enjoyable for all.

IMPLEMENTATION

A successful program will be accomplished through the use of the following strategy:

- Each player will be provided the opportunity and encouragement to pursue his/her own individual level of excellence.
- The hockey program will be a coordinated effort that:
    - Teaches individual and team skills synchronized throughout the levels.
    - Builds skills, which ready the player for the next level of play.
- OYHA will provide specialized clinics to aid in the development of the players.
- The program will utilize best-practices from multiple sources to continuously improve.
- OYHA is committed to maintaining affordable costs to our membership through fundraising and sponsorship.
- A Board of Directors will govern the program through the establishment of policies and committees.
- Board Members will be expected to uphold their commitment to the association. Any Board Member who has more than two (2) unexcused absences in a program year may be replaced.
- The Administrative Director will carry out the daily business and work of OYHA with the support of the Board and its Committees.
- Committees will be assigned board members or OYHA members with the skills and knowledge necessary to assure positive results.

RESPONSIBILITIES and COMMITTEES

President:

- The President is the Chairman of the Board of Directors.
- When the position of Administrative Director is vacant, the President will appoint or implement the duties of the Administrative Director position.
- The President will plan and run effective Board of Directors Meetings and the Annual Member meeting.
- The President will keep the lines of communication open by maintaining regular contact with the Administrative Director and Board Members.
- Be knowledgeable in the operations of OYHA including the By-Laws and Operating Guide.
- The President will preside over all member and board meetings.
- The President will serve as an ex-officio member of all OYHA committees.

Board Members:

- Attend and actively participate in all OYHA Board meetings.
- Have access to and *knowledge of* the OYHA By-Laws, Operating Guide and current issues regarding OYHA.
- Show support of board decisions and the Administrative Director.
- Attend and participate in the activities and decisions of OYHA committees.
- Attend the OYHA Annual Meeting
- Maintain availability for Ad Hoc Committees.

Committee Chairperson(s):

- Leads committee meetings
- Delegate's activities equally among the committee members.
- Selects a member to take and distribute minutes for each meeting.
- Communicates with the Executive Committee and Administrative Director including getting them copies of committee minutes.
- Provides updates at monthly OYHA Board meetings when appropriate, including providing proposals to the Executive Committee for review.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- PRESIDENT, Chair
- FIRST VICE PRESIDENT
- SECOND VICE PRESIDENT
- SECRETARY
- TREASURER
- ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR (NON-VOTING)

The following committees are chaired by OYHA Board Members. OYHA Board of Directors will recruit members and positions will be established to carry out the committee's initiatives:

FUNDRAISING/SPONSORSHIP COMMITTEE

The objective of the FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE is to create the funds necessary to support the costs of growing and maintaining the program. Obtaining an estimated expense budget from the Treasurer for the coming year will identify the financial needs of the OYHA.

Based on the submitted annual budget, the COMMITTEE will generate the necessary funds to support the program from the following sources:

SPONSORSHIP:

- Team Sponsors
- Tournament Sponsors
- General Sponsorship (Donations)

NON-HOCKEY FUNDRAISERS:

- Gaming Program--Pull tabs, Bingo, Meat Raffles, Drawings etc.
- Merchandise Sales - (OYHA will provide a list of approved merchandise providers)
    - The OYHA logo is a registered trademark of OYHA and shall not be used without written consent of the OYHA Board of Directors (based on new logo)

HOCKEY REVENUE:

- Player Registration fees
- Tournament fees
- Clinic fees
- Advertising and Sponsorship fees

CONCESSION REVENUE:

- OYHA games including OYHA Tournaments
- High School events
- Junior Team Games and Events
- Fair-related events
- Four Season events

<u>SUBCOMMITTEES INCLUDE:</u>

MERCHANDISE AND WEARABLES COMMITTEE

The Merchandise and Wearables Committee will be charged with organizing the effective use of OYHA branded merchandise and wearables for OYHA.

CONCESSIONS COMMITTEE

The objective of the Concessions Committee is to assure successful operation of the concession stand at the Four Seasons. Key activities include:

- Determining hours for OYHA concessions
- Manage the staffing of the concession stand
- Annual budgeting
- Managing the cash flow from the sale of concessions.

GAMING COMMITTEE

The gaming committee will be chaired by the OYHA Gaming Manager. Responsibilities of the Gaming Committee include:

- Managing the financial performance of OYHA gaming activity
- Identify and secure gaming locations
- Submitting annual gaming budget

HOCKEY OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

The objective of the HOCKEY OPERATIONS COMMITTEE is to help develop and implement a hockey curriculum as well as oversee the operations of the OYHA hockey related activities. These activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Identifying, recruiting, and training coaches
- Determining what levels, number, and size of OYHA travel teams each season
- Advising the Hockey Director relative to team selection.
- Advising the Hockey Director relative to player movement requests.

The HOCKEY OPERATIONS COMMITTEE is also tasked with administering and adjusting policies on the following related topics:

COACHES SELECTION

The process of selecting a coach will be as follows:

- Application—Coaching candidates will submit a written application and background check. Application forms will be posted on the OYHA website and should be submitted prior to try-outs with the possibility of head coaches selected prior to tryouts.
- Recommendation/Approval—The Hockey Director will consult with the HOCKEY OPERATIONS COMMITTEE and hire candidates for the coaching positions of OYHA sponsored teams. The Hockey Director shall inform the OYHA Board of Directors of all coaching hires.
- Contract—Upon hiring a coach, a contract will be signed, and all coaches must abide by the contract. Variance from the contract could be grounds for dismissal from coaching duties. Contract must be signed BEFORE the season begins with USA Hockey/MN Hockey credentials completed and W-9 completed.
- Evaluation—The Hockey Director will be responsible for providing evaluation and feedback for coaches during the season and in a post-season report by May 15.

COACHES TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The committee will follow any guidelines instilled by Minnesota Hockey and/or USA Hockey for coaching qualifications. OYHA will pay for coach's certification training through Level 4. Once the coach successfully completes the training and provides the Administrative Director with proof of passing, OYHA shall reimburse the coach.

TEAM SELECTION and TRYOUTS

The Hockey Director and Hockey Operations Committee will appoint an Evaluation Subcommittee and will conduct tryouts. Teams will be posted on the OYHA website after final selections. Roster changes can take place up to the USA Hockey deadline. (December 31st of the current season)

The process of moving a player within their own age level after tryouts and before USA deadline is as follows: The coach confers with the Hockey Director, if the Hockey Director agrees, the Hockey Director notifies the player, parents and registrar of OYHA.

PLAYERS MOVING UP (petition only)

All players Squirts/U10s age and lower will not be allowed to move up to the next level unless parents petition the move using the Move Up Petition Form on the OYHA website (www.owatonnahockey.com). Girls may move to boys teams following USA Hockey guidelines. Once the player goes through tryouts, she is locked into the team and cannot move back to a girl's team without Hockey Director approval.

Peewees and Bantam aged players will be allowed to try out for the next level if ALL the following conditions are met:

i. There is approval/recommendation from the prior year's coach, the potential current year's coach, and the HOCKEY DIRECTOR for the player to move up.
ii. The player must make the decision to try out for the next level in advance of tryouts.
iii. Once the player goes through tryouts for the next youth level, (s)he is locked into the team and cannot move back down to his/her previous level without Hockey Director approval.

PLAYER MOVEMENT AFTER TRYOUTS

Until December 31st of the current season, the Hockey Director may approve movement of player(s) among teams within the same age grouping. In such a case the parents, coaches and Hockey Operations Committee will be consulted. All rosters will be final as of December 31st of the current season.

HIGH SCHOOL TRYOUTS

Any OYHA player invited by the OHS head coach to try out for the OHS team will be allowed a one-week BREAK from his or her OYHA team to attend high school tryouts. After one week, the player must either return to his or her OYHA team or forfeit OYHA eligibility. If an OYHA player is selected for a varsity/jr. varsity team, a prorated portion of their registration fee will be refunded as determined by the OYHA Board of Directors at the next board meeting following high school tryouts. If trying out for a high school team, the player may not practice with any OYHA team until high school tryouts are over and the player has been released by the high school team.

EQUIPMENT COORDINATOR

- Maintain control and management of all OYHA equipment and rental programs including "Distribution and Return" policy.
- Purchase new equipment as set forth by OYHA Operating Budget.
- Identify equipment needs for the upcoming season and submit a budget request by May 31 to the OYHA Executive Committee.
- Publish equipment policy to membership through annual letters and OYHA website.

TOURNAMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

- Coordinate tournament dates with the Four Seasons and register the tournaments with District 9, Minnesota Hockey, and USA Hockey as required.
- Register OYHA teams for away tournaments
- Coordinate worker sign-up with the team managers.
- Budget revenues and expenses for each tournament.
- Arrange for medical assistance, trophies, wearable sales and tournament programs.
- Establish criteria for advertising in the programs by working with the FUNDRAISING/SPONSORSHIP COMMITTEE.

COMMUNICATION and SOCIAL MEDIA COMMITTEE

The objective of the COMMUNICATION and SOCIAL MEDIA COMMITTEE is to establish communication between the Board of Directors and the OYHA memberships as well as the community regarding Owatonna Youth Hockey.

- Publish OYHA and Board of Directors information to the membership
- Inform the community, through the local media and social media of special OYHA events
- OYHA website and social media oversight
    - The Committee shall appoint a web-site coordinator with board approval

Website content should include, but is not limited to:

- OYHA By-Laws
- OYHA Operating Guide
- OYHA Parents Handbook
- OYHA Scholarship Form
- Agenda and Minutes for all Board meetings
- Coaches Information
- Teams and playing schedules

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The objective of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE is to evaluate and implement the strategic plan of OYHA. Responsibilities of the Executive Committee include:

- Resolve all Board Member disputes.
- Address parent concerns apart from parent/coach or referee issues, which is the responsibility of the Hockey Director, Hockey Operations Committee and Referees Coordinator respectively, unless the issue requires escalation.
- Responsible for board member and officer elections and replacement of board members leaving before their term is over.

On all matters requiring a vote, each member of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE will have one equal vote.

OYHA PRESIDENT

The duties of the President include:

- Coordinate the efforts of the OYHA Board of Directors and the Administrative Director to achieve the OYHA Mission.
- Maintain frequent contact with the Administrative Director, each Board Member and Committees so that all efforts have overall guidance.
- Chair of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE and is responsible for the process of obtaining nominations for Board openings.
- Chair and provide agenda for all board meetings; new business must be submitted to the PRESIDENT in writing at least two weeks prior to meeting, to be included at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

The PRESIDENT will be elected at the board meeting prior to the annual member meeting. The PRESIDENT can serve no more than 5 consecutive terms.

OYHA VICE-PRESIDENTS

The duties of the Vice-Presidents include:

- Assist the PRESIDENT in all his/her duties and backup the PRESIDENT whenever he/she cannot be present.
- Member of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE and be instrumental in carrying out the project assigned by the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.
- The VICE PRESIDENT will be elected by the Board during the first board meeting after the annual member meeting. A First and Second Vice President will be elected.

OYHA SECRETARY

The duties of the Secretary include:

- Take minutes at each OYHA Board meeting and distribute copies at the following meeting as well as post minutes to the OYHA website.
- Primary contact for agenda items and publish the next meeting agenda no later than one week prior to regularly scheduled board meetings.
- Makes arrangements for the time and location of Board Meetings.
- Update and maintain past and current editions of the Operating Guide as amended.

OYHA TREASURER

The OYHA Treasurer is potentially a two-year voluntary term and is part of the Executive committee. Responsibilities of the Treasurer include:

- Help the President and Administrative Director create a fiscally sound budget.
- Back-up Administrative Director in financial areas, as needed.
- Cosign checks, as needed.
- Maintain extra keys to concession stand to aid with money exchanges, as needed.

OYHA ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR

Mary Kelvie - oyha.adm.director@gmail.com

OYHA HOCKEY DIRECTOR

Eric Standke - standkeeric@gmail.com

COACH'S CODE OF ETHICS

COACHES WILL:

- Keep in mind that the player is the most important part of the program and that learning and developing is more important than winning.
- Understand the rules of the game and importance of teamwork and share that understanding with the players.
- Treat players fairly.
- Maintain a neat appearance.
- Be prompt.
- Display kindness, consideration, and understanding towards the players
- Share ideas and techniques with other coaches for the betterment of the program.
- Be considerate of other teams.
- Be well prepared for practices.
- Have a positive attitude at all times.
- Teach players to respect officials' decisions.
- Inform through a written report any violation of player conduct to the Hockey Director.
- Participate in all coaching/training sessions as offered through OYHA.
- All coaches must pass a USA Hockey/Minnesota Hockey background check and follow Minnesota Hockey rules and SafeSport guidelines.
- Be intentional that the betterment of the program and players take precedence over their own personal agenda or interests.
- Follow the USA Hockey/Minnesota Hockey concussion protocols.

COACHES WILL NOT:

- Solicit players for their own team.
- Physically or verbally abuse players.
- Use tobacco or alcohol or vaping products while supervising players during practice or games.

Any disciplinary action involving suspension of a player must be reported by the coach to the Hockey Director and Executive Committee.

Non-compliance with this code of ethics will result in a review of the coach by the Hockey Director who will have consultation with the Hockey Operations Committee to determine disciplinary action. A report will be made to the Executive Committee regarding the outcome.

In the event of questions or concerns, the procedure to follow is:

1. Take the concern directly to the party - coach, parent, player, official, etc.
2. Take the concern to the OYHA Grievance Committee by filing a grievance form found on the OYHA website under Documents.

COACH EXPENSE POLICY:

Travel Team Coach Expense Policy is as follows: (Effective July 1, 2024. This will be reviewed annually).

- OYHA will provide $600 per team with more allowed for teams with non-parent coaches for any approved away tournament more than 75 miles from Owatonna for the purposes of covering costs of hotels, meals and travel.
    - A receipt for these expenses must accompany the individual's expense reimbursement form.
    - Under no circumstances will a non-family member, non-parent coach, stay or house a team player during a team travel event.
    - Expense reports will be submitted on an OYHA Travel Expense Reimbursement form and will be submitted in a timely manner.
    - Coaches will be paid half pay on December 15th and the remainder on February 15th.
    - All coaches pay and reimbursements for travel will be processed as a check and mailed to their address of record. Coaches must have paperwork on file including W9 with the Administrative Director of OYHA to receive disbursements.

OFFICIAL'S CODE OF ETHICS

Officials are expected to:

- Know the rules of the game.
- Be professional.
- Be on time.
- Be courteous.
- Be consistent and impartial.
- Refrain from abusive or offensive language.
- Refrain from the use of tobacco or alcohol during games.
- Be properly attired as governed by MINNESOTA HOCKEY rules & SafeSport Guidelines.

PARENT'S CODE OF ETHICS:

Parents will…

- Remember that youth are involved in organized sports for their enjoyment, not mine.
- Encourage players to abide by the rules of the game.
- Communicate to children that an honest effort is more important than winning.
- Turn defeat into victory by helping my child work towards skill development and good sportsmanship.
- Remember that all players' experiences and development are important.
- Always conduct oneself in a positive manner by respecting other parents, players, coaches, and officials.
- Recognize that the coaches, not parents, are the primary source of instruction and authority in the game.
- Recognize the value, authority, and importance of our coaches and team interest.
- Adhere to the rules and enforce "the Player's Code of Ethics" of the association for their child. With the intent of assisting our players to become better citizens and aid in providing our youth with a set of safe and enjoyable experiences; each parent will recognize and participate in correcting their child's behavior and following through on agreements.
- Will not discuss any "negative" game situation with the coaching staff until at least 24 hours have passed from game completion and will abide by the OYHA Grievance Policy.
- Will abide by the USA Hockey/MN Hockey concussion guidelines.
- Will abide by all SafeSport Guidelines and Protocols.

Parents will not…

- Force an unwilling child to participate in OYHA.
- Publicly criticize or ridicule a coach, player, or official.
- Condone physical or verbal abuse of players.

Consequences:

- If any parent/guardian is disrespectful or obstructs/interferes with a coach during the instruction time (on or off the ice), the player may be immediately suspended until further review with the Hockey Director, coach, and parties involved. A report will be made to the Executive Committee regarding the outcome. SafeSport Protocol will be followed.
- If any parent/guardian is verbally or physically abusive to a coach, official, or player, the parent/guardian may be suspended from the program or other disciplinary action may be taken. The Hockey Director will make this decision after reviewing the situation: A report will be made to the Executive Committee regarding the outcome.

PLAYER'S CODE OF ETHICS:

As a representative of the City of Owatonna and the Owatonna Youth Hockey Association all players must:

- Follow Minnesota Hockey rules, SafeSport, and the Owatonna Youth Hockey Association Operating Guide.
- Learn the rules, regulations, and the necessary skills of the game.
- Always conduct themselves in a positive manner by respecting other players, coaches, and officials.
- Recognize the value, authority, and importance of our coaches and team interests.
- OYHA believes that the growth and development of players can best take place in an environment which promotes safety, fairness, courtesy, and respect for one another. Therefore, the following actions will not be tolerated:

- *Hazing*: Committing an act against a player or coercing a player into committing an act that creates a substantial risk of harm to a person or destruction of property in order for the player to be initiated into or affiliated with OYHA.
- *Disorderly Conduct:* Engaging in offensive, obscene, or abusive language or in boisterous and noisy conduct tending to arouse, alarm, anger, or bring resentment in others.
- *Harassment:* Participating in or conspiring with others to engage in harassing acts that injure, degrade, or disgrace other individuals. Harassment, whether willful or otherwise, includes disability, race, sexual orientation, and/or age.
- Any concern regarding the conduct of a player must be reported directly to the coach by the player or player's parents who the behavior is impacting.

- Any concern regarding the conduct of a player must be reported directly to the coach by the player or player's parents who the behavior is impacting
- Understand that any verbal or physical abuse to another player, official, or coach will result in suspension or other disciplinary action and that the Hockey Director will make this decision after reviewing the situation. A report will be made to the Executive Committee regarding the outcome.
- Understand the importance of teamwork and team concept.
- Recognize that the coaches, not parents, are the primary source of instruction and authority.
- Be prompt for all practices and games.
- No cell phones or cameras are allowed in the locker rooms.
- The use of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs will result in an immediate suspension. Minnesota Hockey rules will be followed which is a two-week suspension or four games, whichever is greater, and the Hockey Director may add additional penalties.
- A player removed from a game/practice for fighting/intentionally injurious conduct will be suspended for the next game and/or practice until reviewed with the Hockey Director and a correction plan is made. A coach has the discretion to suspend a player for fighting during practice or travel. SafeSport protocol will be followed.
- Chronic discipline problems will be brought by the Hockey Director to the Executive Committee for consideration of suspension for the remainder of the season. If Player is suspended, (s)he will not receive a refund of any registration funds.
- In the event a question or concern arises, the procedure to follow is:
  1. Take the concern directly to the party - coach, parent, etc.
  2. Take the concern to the Grievance Committee via the grievance form.
- Playing or practicing without required equipment will result in not playing that game or practice.

Equipment	**U6**	**U8**	**Squirt/10U**	**Peewee/12U**	**Bantam/15U**
Approved Helmet/Mask	R	R	R	R	R
Approved & Attached Mouth Guard	R	R	R	R	R
Shin pads	R	R	R	R	R
Elbow pads	R	R	R	R	R
Breezers/Girdle pads	R	R	R	R	R
Cup or Pelvic Protector	R	R	R	R	R
Shoulder pads	R	R	R	R	R
Hockey Gloves	R	R	R	R	R
Throat protector	R	R	R	R	R
R=REQUIRED					

- Throat protector collar is required for goalies.
- All standard goalie equipment when practicing or playing in the goal.
- All OYHA travel players are required to wear the base color of black for their gloves, helmet, and breezers when they are playing in a travel game.
- Players will wear the matching practice jerseys, game uniforms and socks as handed out by OYHA.
- Minnesota Hockey requires all Squirt/10U and older players, including goalkeepers, to wear a colored, tethered mouthguard during all games and practices.
- All helmets will be clear of any stickers with the exception of "warning" decals provided by the manufacturer of the helmet, numbers on the back to match your uniform distributed by OYHA, and team sponsor stickers distributed by OYHA.

U6 / U8 / MITES (In house teams)

LEVELS: The levels are determined by the age of the skater on or before May 31.

- U6 Program --- ages 4-6
- U8 Program --- ages 7-8

PLAYER MOVEMENT:

- No movement of players between age levels will be allowed, without the consent of the player, player's parents, and the Hockey Director.
- USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey, and OYHA age limits for playing levels change on June 1st of each year. Minnesota school age limits for grade change on September 1st of each year**.** A written request to have a player move to a higher level must be in the OYHA Hockey Director no later than registration of the playing year. After the Hockey Directors decision, a report will be made to the Executive Committee regarding the outcome. A letter or email will be sent to the player's parents with the decision.

TRAVELING TEAMS:

LEVELS

The levels are determined by age of the skater on or before May 31

1.	Squirt		ages 9 - 10
2	10U Girls		ages 9 - 10
3.	12U Girls		ages 11 - 12
4.	PeeWee		ages 11 - 12
5.	15U Girls		ages 13 - 15
6.	Bantam		ages 13 - 14
7.	Junior Gold		ages 15 - 17

TEAM SELECTION:

- The Hockey Operations Committee will determine the number of traveling teams at all levels.
- The Hockey Operations Committee will approve the number of players on traveling teams after consulting with the traveling team coaches and the Hockey Operations Committee.
- Players will be selected on their ability and attitude.
- Once a player (boy/girl) makes a commitment to tryout at a certain level/group, the player will not be allowed to move. Players are limited to tryouts for one level/group with discretion by the Hockey Operations Committee.

Once teams have been selected, the head coach will have a team meeting to discuss the season and team policy, discipline, philosophy, and expectations. Also included in this initial meeting could be the assignment of parental duties.

GAMES:

- Travel team game counts ***may*** be as follows:

§ Squirt/10U	35
§ Peewee/12U	45
§ Bantam/15U	50
§ Junior Gold	35

- Any games above a respective team's game maximum (excluding MN Hockey & MN VFW playoff postseason earned tournaments) must have approval of the Hockey Director.
- When scheduling Non-District/Non-League games, an attempt should be made to match teams of equal skill.
- PeeWee/12U and Squirts/10U may participate in 2 out of town tournaments with 1 further than 75 miles from Owatonna. Bantams/15U may participate in 3 out of town tournaments with 1(potentially 2) further than 75 miles from Owatonna. The 75 mile rule is in place to help keep the cost of travel low for all OYHA families. The association will not pay additional tournament fees or expenses with the exception of earned Minnesota Hockey District, Regional and State tournaments.
- The Hockey Operations Committee will determine which invitational tournaments to enter based upon the above guidelines.
- All Bantam, Peewee, 12U, and 15U coaches may play the players at their discretion with regard to ice time, number of shifts per game, etc. Coaches have the right to sit a player for disciplinary reasons.
- All traveling Squirt/10U coaches must play their players as equally as possible over the course of the year with each player's development being the primary guide for decisions. The exception to this guideline is in the closing minutes of a tournament game, league and playoff games and is within the discretion of the coach. Coaches have the right to sit a player for disciplinary reasons within a reasonable context and length of time.
- All teams will have one day per week in which no practice, dryland or game will be held, except during play-offs.
- OVERNIGHT SUPERVISION: On overnight trips, the players are under the supervision of their parents / guardians.
- Squirts, 10U Girls, 12U Girls, 15U Girls, Peewees, Bantams and Junior Gold players are to observe all MINNESOTA HOCKEY and Owatonna Youth Hockey rules for infractions.

LOCKER ROOM POLICY:

The Locker Room policy is set by the USA Hockey / MN Hockey SafeSport guidelines. Please see the locker room policy set forth on the website under FAQ/Documents.

JERSEY POLICY:

Only OYHA approved practice jerseys and game jerseys are to be worn during OYHA sponsored / approved activities. OYHA jerseys should not be worn to play in games / scrimmages that are not OYHA sponsored.

Owatonna Youth Hockey: Ice Touch Guidelines

A simple guide for families on practices, games, and tournaments by age level

July 2026

This is meant to help parents understand how Owatonna Youth Hockey Association plans ice time, games, and tournaments for each age level. The goal is simple: to give players enough time on the ice to improve, while keeping hockey fun, healthy, and balanced with school, family time, and other activities.

What Counts as an Ice Touch?

An ice touch is any organized hockey activity on the ice, such as practice, game, scrimmage, goalie session, or skills session.

8U / Mites

Category	8U / Mites Guideline	Parent-Friendly Note
Annual ice touches	50–60	Fun, basic skating, puck touches, and learning to love the game
Typical weekly touches	2–3 per week	Focus on fun, skating, puck touches, and small-area games.
Games	Cross-ice/half-ice; up to 10 full-ice events after Jan. 15 w/ approval	Full-ice events should be limited.
Tournament support	3 jamborees: 1 home, 2 away	Keep jamborees fun and drivable.

10U / Squirt

Category	10U / Squirt Guideline	Parent-Friendly Note
Annual ice touches	95–100	Build skills, confidence, and teamwork while keeping hockey fun.
Typical weekly touches	3–4 per week	Practice time builds skating and puck skills.
Games	35-game season limit	Practice time should still be the focus.
Tournament support	3 tournaments: 1 home, 2 away	At least one away tournament must be drivable.

12U / Peewee

Category	12U / Peewee Guideline	Parent-Friendly Note
Annual ice touches	105–120	More skill work, team play, and competing the right way.
Typical weekly touches	4–5 per week	Balance practice, games, and rest.
Games	District and Minnesota Hockey limits	Keep enough practice time in the schedule.

Tournament support	3 tournaments: 1 home, 2 away	At least one away tournament must be drivable.

14U / Bantam

Category	14U / Bantam Guideline	Parent-Friendly Note
Annual ice touches	160	Serious training, stronger competition, and development.
Typical weekly touches	5–6 per week	Recovery and school balance matter.
Games	District and Minnesota Hockey limits	Keep games, practice, and rest in balance.
Tournament support	4 tournaments: 1 home, 3 away	At least one away tournament must be drivable.

Why This Matters for Families

- **Kids improve with practice:** Practices give players more chances to skate, handle the puck, and learn.
- **Fun still matters:** Especially at younger ages, players should enjoy coming to the rink.
- **Balance helps families:** Good planning helps manage travel, school, rest, and other activities.
- **Healthy players stay in the game longer:** Balanced schedules can help reduce burnout and keep kids excited about hockey.

Bottom Line

OYHA's goal is to give players the right amount of hockey for their age level. Younger players need fun, movement, and skill-building. Older youth players can handle more structure and competition but still need rest and balance. The best season is one where players improve, families understand the plan, and kids want to keep coming back to the rink.

Open Hockey Policy (Stick & Puck)

Please review and familiarize yourself with this Policy

OYHA does an outstanding job maintaining a strong emphasis on skill development during the season. It comes as no surprise that most of the successful past and current OYHA players spent countless hours on the outdoor rinks or at open hockey with their friends honing their skating, shooting, and stickhandling skills. Researchers Frank L. Smoll and Ronald E. Smith found that "at all ages the variable that determined the skilled players from the lesser skilled players was the amount of time spent practicing/playing with a friend(s) a player spent outside of the organized practice and game sessions. In fact, the skilled players reported nearly **twice** as much time practicing with a friend than the non-skilled players."

Throughout the year, OYHA provides scheduled "Open Hockey" for our players to further develop their skills and understanding of the game in an unstructured setting with friends and teammates. The Hockey Operations Committee continues to identify ways to offer more "Open Hockey" during the year for our players to further their enjoyment and love of the game. It is important that players and parents understand and follow OYHA's "Open Hockey" guidelines:

- WE WANT TO DISCOURAGE ADULTS/PARENT/COACHES ON THE ICE AND ORGANIZING THE ACTIVITIES FOR THE PLAYERS. ADULTS/PARENTS CAN BE PRESENT TO MONITOR PLAYER BEHAVIOR, BUT WE DO NOT WANT THEM TO DICTATE THE TYPE OF GAME OR ACTIVITIES THAT ARE GOING ON DURING OPEN HOCKEY. WE WANT TO CREATE A BACKYARD ATMOSPHERE WHERE PLAYERS CREATE GAMES OF THEIR INTEREST IN AN UNSTRUCTURED SETTING. (WITH EXCEPTIONS OF ROOKIES) – PLAYERS ONLY
- Attend the scheduled time for your level.
- You (the player) must be a current member of OYHA to attend open hockey.
- Be respectful of others on the ice. Please divide the ice equally so all players have the opportunity to form a game or work on a skill set. Please include all players!
- No checking or contact.
- Make sure all doors are shut.
- All players need full equipment which includes a facemask.
- No hard slap shots.
- No food or drink on the ice.
- Report any dangerous situations or behavior to staff immediately.
- If players fail to follow the above guidelines, they will be asked to leave the ice.

Grievance Policy

If and when issues arise within a team the following procedures should be followed.

a. A parent should first request a meeting with a coach regarding an issue **after** a 24 hours cooling off period after the issue takes place. If a SafeSport-covered incident is involved the head coach should immediately inform the Hockey Director.
b. If the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of the coach and parent, the dispute is presented in writing to the Grievance Committee using the form found on the website under Resources / FAQ & Documents. The Grievance Committee will assess grievances and report findings / give feedback to proper parties. The Hockey Director should notify the SafeSport Coordinator immediately of any SafeSport-related matter.
c. Hockey Director and/or SafeSport Coordinator will review complaints, follow the SafeSport protocols, and respond according to SafeSport guidelines. The Executive Committee will be notified by the SafeSport coordinator of all SafeSport issues.

The players, parents, and coaches must follow the Code of Conduct and SafeSport Guidelines. If these guidelines are broken, disciplinary action will be taken.

Disciplinary action for a coach means reprimand, which is documented accordingly. The coach may be suspended or relieved of coaching duties permanently.

No Coach shall enter the Referee Locker Room at any time.

For players, suspension or dismissal from the team for the rest of the year may result.

For parent violation of code of conduct, the discipline is slightly different.

1. First, the parent will be asked by an OYHA Board member to control himself/herself.
2. Next, the parent(s) will not be allowed to attend games or practices for one week.
3. If the problem continues, the parent/guardian can be fined and/or suspended for a period of games or remainder of season.