

Fort Zumwalt South Bulldogs Hockey Club

2025-2026 Handbook

1. Mission and Philosophy

Mission: To foster a competitive, disciplined, and positive hockey environment for the Ft. Zumwalt South community that promotes **teamwork, sportsmanship, and personal growth** both on and off the rink.

Philosophy: We believe in putting the team first. Every player, coach, and family member is expected to contribute positively to the club's reputation and success through hard work, a positive attitude, respect for oneself and others, and discipline.

2. Governance and Club Leadership

The FZSBHC coaching staff and Board of Directors are committed to the mission of providing a quality hockey program for Ft. Zumwalt South students and their families.

- **Board of Directors:** Responsible for the overall operations of the club. This includes:
 - Selection of all head coaches and approval of assistant coaches submitted by the head coach
 - Creation of the tryout process and evaluation framework to be executed by the coaching staff
 - Determining extracurricular efforts to promote the club and where relevant, partnering with the coaching staff on execution
 - Decisions on player eligibility in terms of suspensions, academics, and failure to comply with the rules and/ or codes of conduct of the organization by coaches, players, parents and other participants in the club
- **Head Coaches:** Responsible for overall operations of their team. This includes:
 - Selection of their assistant coaches and submission to the Board for approval
 - Player roster placements, where they fit on the team and how much playing time each player receives.
 - Giving appropriate feedback to the players, pointing out areas a player may need to improve upon to attain the skills and competitiveness needed to make the top team.
 - Determining the timetable for players to arrive at the rinks and dress for coaches' instructions, both pre-game and post-game, as well as before practice sessions.

3. Communication Guidelines

Coaches will have an open-door policy and be available to discuss player concerns as effective communication is crucial for a smooth season.

- **Team Communication:** All official schedules, game changes, and important announcements will be distributed via Crossbar app. Players and parents are responsible for checking this platform daily. We encourage both players and parents to download the Crossbar app to their own devices and turn notifications on to help ensure communication is received in a timely fashion. All practices and games will have an availability submission and it is required for players (or parents) to mark attendance for each event at least three (3) days out from any scheduled event.
- **Coach/ Player Communication:** Any written communication between a coach and an individual player must include either a) one of the player's parents and/ or b) an FZSBHC Board member. Any written communication between a coach and multiple players and/ or the entire team that occurs outside of the Crossbar team chat must include either an assistant coach from that team or the Vice President of the FZSBHC Board.
- **Coach/Player/Parent Communication:** We are aiming to help develop young adults that learn to be proactive and able to communicate effectively.
 - For our players participating on a high school level team, it is the player's responsibility to talk to coaches about playing time or team issues.
(Developmental B team, JV, or Varsity)
 - For our players participating on a junior high level team, we encourage them to talk to coaches about playing time or team issues, but welcome these conversations with the support of a parent if the player wishes.
 - Parents and players should wait 24 hours after a game or incident to contact a coach or a Board member to discuss playing time, strategy, or other sensitive issues.
- **Board Escalation:** It is strongly recommended that parents take their concerns to the FZSBHC Board only after first contacting the coach. Once brought to the Board for discussion, the Board will determine if a parent/ coach meeting is warranted.

4. Attendance and Commitment

FZSBHC will not prohibit players from playing high school or other outside sports during the hockey season(s). Our goal is to have our players experience as much hockey as possible while balancing conflicts in the most fair and reasonable manner. To aid in this objective we believe the general approach should be: (a) games take precedence over other practices; (b) games for other teams take precedence over FZSBHC practices; (c) conflicts must be handled between the individual player and the coach with as much lead time as possible

- Any player who plays on two teams must show respect to FZSBHC, coaches and teammates as follows:
 - FZSBHC games take precedence over club team practices when possible. If there is a conflict, it needs to be discussed upfront with the FZSBHC head coach immediately.
 - Marking availability accordingly in Crossbar for all FZSBHC events at least three (3) days prior when possible to allow the coaching staff/ Board to alter plans if an attendance threshold for the team cannot be met.
 - Provide an updated practice/game schedule of the other team to the FZSBHC head coach as soon as possible.
 - Notify the coach by a phone call/ text (copying a parent) if there are any changes in marked availability for upcoming events two (2) days away or less.
 - If you cannot finish a game you start due to another conflict, you must discuss with the FZSBHC head coach ahead of time or you will not be allowed to play.
- **Practices:** You are expected to attend scheduled practices and mark your availability in Crossbar accordingly. If you must miss practice due to illness or an unavoidable academic conflict, you must notify the Head Coach **at least two (2) hours in advance** via text or phone call (copying a parent).
- **Games:** Players are expected to arrive at the rink in the communicated dress code and at the time designated by the coaching staff. If you must miss a game due to illness or unforeseen circumstances, you must notify the Head Coach **at least four (4) hours in advance** via text or phone call (copying a parent).
- **Consequences:**
 - **Practice No Show:** If a player has marked their availability for a practice as attending and they do not attend without notifying the Head Coach per the above statement it will be logged and will result in loss of playing time for the next game.
 - **Game No Show:** If a player has marked their availability for a game as not attending and they do not attend without notifying the Head Coach per the above statement it will be logged and will result in suspension from one or more game(s).

5. Uniforms, Equipment and Safety

Player safety is our highest priority.

- **Required Uniforms:** Players are responsible for purchasing the FZSBHC jersey package to participate in FZSBHC games.
 - Ice | Home & away jerseys, home & away game socks & pant shells are required for games. Black helmets and team coordinating gloves are preferred but not required.
 - Ice | FZS Bulldogs reversible practice jerseys are to be worn to all practices with the exception of the beginning of the season for new players that have not yet received them.
 - Inline | Home & away jerseys and solid black pants are required for games. Black helmets and team coordinating gloves are preferred but not required.
- **Required Equipment:** Players must wear all required, certified protective equipment for every practice and game.
 - Ice | Helmet, mouthguard, neck guard, shoulder pads, elbow pads, gloves, pants and shin guards. *Neck guards are required by USA Hockey beginning August 1, 2024.*
 - Ice | Goalies are required to wear long socks or pants under their pads. No bare skin can be exposed.
 - Inline | Helmet, elbow pads, gloves and shin guards.
 - Mouthguards and chinstraps attached to the helmet are required at every practice and game. All helmets are required to have ear guards and face masks.
- **Gear Check:** Coaches reserve the right to check equipment compliance before stepping onto the rink. Unsafe or non-compliant equipment or uniforms will prevent a player from participating.
- **Injuries:** No matter how minor, **ALL INJURIES must** be immediately reported to a coach. Players who sustain concussions or other serious injuries must be cleared by a medical doctor before returning to practice or competition.

6. Financial Commitment and Fundraising

Participation in the Ft. Zumwalt South Bulldogs Hockey Club involves various costs, including rink time, league fees, website maintenance, etc.

- **Club Fees:** Prior to registration, the Board will set fees based on expected season costs. The required club fees will be posted on the club website www.fzsbulldogshockeyclub.com. All payments must be completed in accordance with

the payment schedule posted on the website. If financial obligation is not met by your family, your player will be ineligible to participate in any organization games, practices or activities and will be reported to the appropriate member organization (MSCHA, MOIHA, Missouri Hockey and USA Hockey).

- **Fundraising:** All players are expected to participate actively in club wide or team specific fundraising efforts to help offset operating costs.

7. Club Code of Conduct

This club code of conduct is in place to help develop young men and women that are a part of the program and promote a positive image of the FZSBHC and the Ft. Zumwalt South High School.

All participants - coaches, players and parents - are expected to abide by this code of conduct and present themselves as upstanding members of the Ft. Zumwalt South Bulldogs Hockey Club, representing their school and community positively at all times. Failure to adhere to this code may result in disciplinary action, including fines, suspension or dismissal from the team.

Each Coach within the club is permitted to have additional guidelines and expectations that are team specific. These will be communicated in a separate Player Agreement.

Respect Treat all rinks, locker rooms and facilities with respect. Treat all coaches, teammates, opponents, officials, and facility staff with absolute respect, both in and out of the club. No bullying, harassing behavior, verbal abuse, derogatory language, or disrespect will be tolerated.

- Rinks, locker rooms and facilities should be respected at all times. All food/ drink containers, discarded tape, broken equipment, etc. should be cleaned up and be disposed of in the proper trash receptacle, leaving the locker rooms clean and presentable. Vandalism of any kind will not be tolerated. Teams found leaving locker rooms in disarray and/ or players found vandalizing will face disciplinary actions.
- Members who act in a way and/or make posts or comments on social media outlets that are vulgar, inflammatory, racist, discriminatory, harassing or in any way considered to be a violation of USA Hockey rules and guidelines will be subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including removal from the club.
- FZSBHC prohibits all types of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing as described in the USA Hockey SafeSport Handbook. Any FZSBHC member who engages

- in any misconduct or abuse or violates USA Hockey SafeSport will be subject to disciplinary actions.
- To report actual or suspected violations, email USA Hockey at SafeSport@usahockey.org or call 1-800-888-4656. More information on the SafeSport program is available on their website www.usahockey.com.

Sportsmanship	<p>Excellent sportsmanship must be displayed before, during, and after practices and games.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Backtalk to coaches, team and league officials, referees, and representatives from the other teams will not be tolerated.• There will be no stick throwing, stick banging, or profanity by the players or coaches during games.• Coaches will be allowed to dismiss from a game any player who:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Using foul or abusive language◦ Carelessly lashes out in an effort to injure another player, coach or official◦ Fragrantly violates rules of boarding, cross-checking, charging, high-sticking or any other rule at the discretion of the coaching staff◦ Any player that exceeds three (3) penalties per game or any penalties that the coaches deem to be deliberate and unsportsmanlike
Academics	<p>Maintain all school eligibility requirements. Your academic performance must be prioritized over hockey. Players and/ or parents should communicate with coaches about academic difficulties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Players must be currently enrolled in a Ft. Zumwalt South High School boundary school unless approved as an out-of-district player through the appropriate member organization.• Ice Players must be currently enrolled in courses that offer 3.0 units of credit per semester and must have earned 3.0 units of credit the preceding semester per Mid-States eligibility rules.• Ice All players must maintain a minimum GPA of 2.0 <u>each semester</u>. A copy of the previous semester report cards will be required at the time of registration and again after the end of the 1st semester.

- **Inline** | All players must maintain a minimum GPA of 2.0 *cumulatively*. A copy of the last grade card will be required at the time of registration.
- **All** | Coaches or the FZSBHC Board may conduct grade checks at any time throughout the season.
- **All** | Special academic eligibility may be obtained in the case of students with documented learning disorders. Players and/ or parents should communicate these circumstances to the Coach and the FZSBHC Registrar to ensure proper documentation is filed with the appropriate league.

Substance Use	<p>Zero tolerance for the possession, attempt to obtain, attempt to distribute or use of alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, narcotic drugs, amphetamine, marijuana, steroid or other illegal performance enhancing substances or any other illegal drugs of any kind. This policy pertains to substance abuse both on and off FZSBHC event premises during hockey season as well as FZSBHC event premises during the off-season. The hockey season is considered to include the first date of evaluations through the end of the season banquet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Players must not provide and/ or encourage such substance abuse to other players ● Players finding themselves in close proximity to someone violating this policy should remove themselves immediately from the area or else the association with the offensive conduct may be deemed a violation ● Coaches must not participate in FZSBHC practices or games while under the influence of alcohol, narcotic drugs, amphetamines, marijuana or any other illegal drugs of any kind. Coaches are not allowed to use tobacco or vaping products of any kind before, during or after a practice or game while inside the premises. Vaping in the presence of players and/ or in the locker rooms is strictly prohibited. ● Players or Coaches suspected of violating this policy may be required to produce a satisfactory drug test at the player's or coach's expense ● Players violating this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including fines and/ or suspension for all FZSBHC games, practices and activities for a period of one year. ● Coaches violating this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including fines, suspension or dismissal from the coaching staff.
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- Coaches dismissed due to violation of this policy will forfeit any remaining reimbursements/ stipends/ payments from the FZSBHC.
- Disciplinary action related to violation of this policy will be at the sole discretion of the FZSBHC Board of Directors and the FZSBHC coaching staff.

Locker Rooms FZSBHC abides by all USA Hockey policies regarding locker room behavior as outlined in their SafeSport program Handbook as a means to help protect its participants from physical abuse, sexual abuse and other types of misconduct, including emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing.

- While constant monitoring inside of locker rooms and changing areas might be the most effective way to prevent problems, we understand that this would likely make some players uncomfortable and may even place our staff at risk for unwarranted suspicion. We conduct a sweep of the locker rooms and changing areas before players arrive, and if the coaches are not inside the locker rooms, either a coach or voluntary locker room monitor will be posted directly outside of the locker rooms and changing areas during periods of use, and leave the doors open only when adequate privacy is still possible, so that only participants (coaches and players) and approved team personnel have access.
- Parents are not allowed in the locker room unless invited by a coach or team personnel due to player injury, equipment issue, etc.
- As some of our teams consist of both male and female players, it is important that the privacy rights of all of our players are given consideration and appropriate arrangements made. Where possible, FZSBHC will have the male and female players dress/ undress in separate locker rooms and then convene in a single locker room before the game or team meeting.
- Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras, and video cameras, are not permitted to be used in the locker rooms. If phones or other mobile devices must be used, they should be taken outside of the locker room. In some cases, coaches or team personnel may collect these devices during times when use may not be appropriate for return upon their exit from the locker room.
- Coaches will designate one (1) player per team that will be allowed to use their cell phone for the sole purpose of playing music in the locker

room. Should the use of the cell phone by the designated player be found to expand beyond this sole purpose, Coaches will revoke this privilege for the entire team and all music played will be solely at the discretion of the Coaches.

By signing below, the Player and Parent/Guardian acknowledge that they have read, understand, and agree to abide by the policies and expectations outlined in this Ft. Zumwalt South Bulldogs Hockey Club Handbook for the 2025-2026 Season.

Player Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____