

Coaching Policies and Requirements

Coaching Information

Coach Recruitment and Selection

The Berkshire Youth Hockey recruits coaches through a variety of sources, including parents of registered players, social media outreach, local hockey organizations, and recommendations from within the hockey community.

The organization seeks individuals who demonstrate strong leadership, teaching ability, sportsmanship, integrity, emotional maturity, and a commitment to player development. Coaches should prioritize the welfare, growth, and enjoyment of every player while fostering a positive team environment.

Coaching Expectations

All coaches are expected to:

- Promote skill development, player growth, and a lifelong passion for hockey.
- Serve as positive role models for players and families.
- Emphasize sportsmanship, teamwork, and respect for all participants.
- Treat players, parents, coaches, officials, opponents, and spectators with dignity and respect.
- Use language and behavior appropriate for a youth sports environment.
- Create a safe, positive, and inclusive atmosphere for all participants.
- Teach hockey skills through age-appropriate instruction and progressive skill development.
- Conduct organized practices that reinforce skill development and teamwork.
- Build confidence and self-esteem through positive reinforcement and equal opportunities for participation.
- Recognize achievements appropriately and provide constructive feedback privately whenever possible.
- Establish and communicate team expectations and disciplinary procedures at the beginning of the season.
- Consistently enforce team rules and standards.
- Support fair player development opportunities and encourage growth at all levels of play.
- Attend required coaching meetings and organizational functions.
- Adhere to all Berkshire Youth Hockey policies, procedures, and USA Hockey requirements.

Parent Communication

Head Coaches are required to hold a preseason parent meeting to discuss team expectations, attendance, discipline, communication procedures, playing time philosophy, team goals, and other relevant information. Additional parent meetings are encouraged throughout the season to promote open communication.

Head Coach and Assistant Coach Selection

Head Coaches shall be selected in accordance with Berkshire Rattlers policies and procedures.

Assistant Coaches shall be selected by the Head Coach following final team formation.

The Board of Directors reserves the right to deny or remove any head coach or assistant coach candidate deemed unsuitable for the position.

Coaching Requirements

All Head Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Practice Coaches, and Student Coaches must comply with current USA Hockey requirements, including:

- USA Hockey registration.
- Required background screening.
- Current SafeSport certification.
- Completion of all required coaching education clinics.
- Completion of age-specific coaching modules applicable to the team being coached.

Coaches who fail to meet USA Hockey requirements may not participate in team activities, including tryouts, practices, games, clinics, or dryland training sessions.

Questions regarding coaching certifications or requirements should be directed to the Coaches Liaison and Registrar.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action by the Board of Directors.

Coaching Compensation and Reimbursement

Volunteer Coaching

All Berkshire Youth Hockey coaches serve on a volunteer basis and shall not receive compensation for coaching services.

Coaching Certification Reimbursement

The organization may reimburse the head coach from each level for approved coaching-related expenses, including:

- Background screening fees.
- USA Hockey coaching certification clinics.
- Required age-specific modules.
- USA Hockey Membership

All reimbursement requests must receive prior approval from the Treasurer and be submitted with appropriate documentation of receipts.

Travel, lodging, meals, and other incidental expenses associated with certification clinics are not eligible for reimbursement.

Injury and Accident Reporting

Concussion and Head Injury Reporting Requirement:

Any injury or accident occurring during an official Berkshire Youth Hockey activity, including practices, games, meetings, training sessions, tournaments, or team events, must be reported by a Coach to the parent/guardian and Board of directors as soon as possible. An official Berkshire Youth Hockey's Injury/Accident Report Form must be completed and submitted promptly. Forms are available through the organization's website.

Parents/guardians are required to immediately report to the a coach any concussion or suspected head injury sustained by the athlete, whether it occurred during a team activity (practice, game, tournament) or outside of team activities (e.g., at school, at home, or during other recreational events). The athlete will not be permitted to return to play until a formal medical clearance is provided.

THIS LINK NEEDS TO BE ADDED TO THE RESOURCE TAB!

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1uoY3dUkyOcKanVxB9DFNIZdgoSewCg52FxOlcOmflc0/edit?usp=drivesdk>

Failure to report an injury or accident may result in disciplinary review.

Student Coaches

Players ages 13 through 17 who are properly registered with USA Hockey may serve as Student Coaches under the following conditions:

- Student Coaches must remain under the direct supervision of a properly registered, screened, and certified adult coach at all times.
- Student Coaches may assist with practices, clinics, and tryouts only.
- Student Coaches may not serve as Head Coach or Assistant Coach.
- Student Coaches may not participate as players during activities in which they are serving as a coach.
- Student Coaches may be present on the bench during games when accompanied by an

adult coach and will count toward the maximum number of team officials permitted on the bench.

- All student coaches must wear a helmet while on the bench during games. Ensure the helmet fits properly and is securely fastened.
- Student Coaches must wear a HECC-approved helmet with full facial protection, gloves, and skates while on the ice.
- Student Coaches may only assist teams that are at least one age classification below their own playing level.
- If a Student Coach will turn 18 during the season, they must complete all applicable SafeSport requirements.
- Upon reaching age 18, Student Coaches must comply with all USA Hockey screening and coaching certification requirements before continuing in a coaching role.

Berkshire Youth Hockey shall maintain all required USA Hockey Student Coach documentation.

