Montana Amateur Hockey Association (MAHA)

Treasure State League (TSL)

ANNUAL GUIDE 2026-2028

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MONTANA HOCKEY

The Montana Amateur Hockey Association (MAHA) is the Governing Body for the sport of hockey in Montana. As a sanctioned member of USA Hockey (USAH), MAHA subscribes to the rules, regulations and philosophy of USAH. As such, its mission is to promote the growth of hockey in Montana and provide the best possible experience for all participants by encouraging, developing, advancing and administering the sport. With a growing membership of ice hockey players, coaches, and volunteers, the Montana Amateur Hockey Association's primary emphasis is on the support and development of community-based programs throughout the state of Montana.

This Annual Guide outlines policies, guidelines and rules MAHA will follow in support of USA Hockey sanctioned hockey in Montana.

MONTANA HOCKEY CORE VALUES

The following core values of USA Hockey are adopted to guide the association's members in their planning, programming and play, both now and in the future.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Foremost of all values is to learn a sense of fair play. Become humble in victory, gracious in defeat. We will foster friendship with teammates and opponents alike.

RESPECT FOR THE INDIVIDUAL

Treat all others as you would expect to be treated.

INTEGRITY

We seek to foster honesty and fair play beyond mere strict interpretation of the rules and regulations of the game.

PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE AT THE INDIVIDUAL, TEAM AND ORGANIZATIONAL LEVELS

Each member of the organization, whether player, volunteer or staff, should seek to perform each aspect of the game to the highest level of his or her ability.

ENJOYMENT

It is important for the hockey experience to be fun, satisfying and rewarding for all participants.

LOYALTY

We aspire to teach loyalty to the ideals and fellow members of the sport of hockey.

TEAMWORK

We value the strength of learning to work together. The use of teamwork is reinforced and rewarded by success in the hockey experience.

INCLUSION STATEMENT

MAHA is committed to fostering a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion and is committed to the USAH inclusion statement: Building A Welcoming Community

PROGRAMS & PHILOSOPHIES

YOUTH & GIRLS HOCKEY

The USA Hockey mission statement for its youth and girls' programs is as follows:
To provide an improved grassroots foundation for the growth and development of USAH, designing programs aimed at increased participation, improved skills and a responsible environment for the conduct of youth hockey.

USA Hockey Model Program Recommended Guidelines:
A safe and healthy environment for all. An opportunity for all new players who wish to play hockey. Fair and equal opportunity for all to participate in our sport. An opportunity to learn the basic skills without an over-emphasis on winning. A philosophy which attempts to reduce the number who become disenchanted and drop out. An opportunity for those who wish to advance in a more
USAH recommends scoring records should be de-emphasized at the age of 11 and under.
Awards should be inexpensive and based on significant achievement. The most gratifying award any player can receive is the joy that comes from skill development that contributes to team success.
The recruitment of players on a widespread geographical basis for the establishment of Youth Division Select Teams may be pursued under the guidelines established by USAH's Model Program.
It is recommended that adult volunteers place a primary emphasis on the formal education of players, and a de-emphasis on excessive competition and a win-at-all-costs attitude in the youth age classifications.
Sportsmanship at all times should be emphasized.

MAHA MEETINGS

Each association will elect a MAHA Representative to sit on the MAHA Board of Directors. The MAHA Representative will act as the voice for their association membership and will vote on any motions presented to the MAHA Board. MAHA Representatives will be responsible for distributing all information and Montana Hockey news, rules, regulations and meeting minutes to their association.

PROBATIONARY ASSOCIATIONS

All new associations will operate under a three-year probationary period. On completion of the three-year probationary period MAHA will review the probationary member's status and participation in MAHA and then make a determination on full MAHA membership, an extended probationary period or revocation of membership. If prior to the end of the three-year probationary period the association does not meet all the requirements and follow all MAHA rules and regulations their affiliation can be revoked.
Probationary MAHA Associations will be nonvoting and will be required to:

- Follow all MAHA and USAH rules and regulations.
- Register all their players and coaches with MAHA and USAH.
- Participate in MAHA meetings.

Probationary MAHA Associations will be allowed to participate in all MAHA Player Development Camps and activities.

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

The MAHA Player Development Camps (MTPDC) are held each year following the conclusion of the MAHA hockey season. The applicable youth or girls camp is open to all players, boys and girls, ages 11 to 17. The objective of the Player Development Camp is to provide players across the state an affordable post-season hockey camp with the best available coaches both on and off the ice. The camp will focus on building and continuing to develop the fundamental hockey skills (skating, passing, shooting, etc.) There are no limitations on skill ability and all players registered with USAH are encouraged to attend.
At the conclusion of the camp, some players may be chosen to advance to a Northern Plains Player Development Camp or another USAH Development Camp opportunity. If this is the case, players will be selected at the MT PDC and notified post-camp by a representative of the district camp.
For more information about the Montana Player Development Camps, please visit www.mthockey.com

MTPDC WAIVER APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Players seeking a waiver for MTPDC-related eligibility requirements must follow the policy defined and maintained by the HP Committee.

MTPDC PARENT EVALUATOR / COACH POLICY

The Montana Player Development Camp (MTPDC) policy regarding parent evaluators and coaches is defined and maintained by the HP Committee.
Violations shall be reported to the Camp Director or MAHA Executive Director and may result in removal from the evaluation or coaching role.

TIER REQUIREMENTS

Tier II team administrative fees are due by November 1 of each season. Fees received after the due date shall be assessed a $50 per week late fee until paid.

Please refer to the Tier policy at www.mthockey.com.

MAHA POLICIES

As a sanctioned affiliate of USAH, MAHA adopts and enforces all USAH rules, regulations, policies, and programs in their entirety. Where this Annual Guide does not address a specific matter, USAH current Annual Guide, Official Playing Rules, and program-specific policies govern. The current USAH Annual Guide and all program materials are available at usahockey.com.

COMMUNICATION CHAIN OF COMMAND

To ensure efficient responses and effective fulfillment of all roles, communication within MAHA is to follow this chain of command:

1. Player / Parent — raises concern to the team manager.
2. Team Manager — addresses with the local association representative or commissioner.

3. Local Association Representative / Local Commissioner — escalates to the Age Division Commissioner if unresolved.
4. Age Division Commissioner — first formal TSL authority; first point of contact for all game-level issues.
5. TSL Commissioner — appeals from the Age Division Commissioner. Final authority on all rule implementation. The League Commissioner has final say on all TSL rule implementation.
6. MAHA Discipline Committee — reviews all suspension matters, misconduct incidents, and forfeit appeals.
7. MAHA President/Executive Director — hears appeals from the Discipline Committee. Decision is final.

TOURNAMENT SANCTIONS

- As per USAH Rules and Regulations, all tournaments held in the state of Montana must be sanctioned through the MT Affiliate Registrar. Tournament sanction requests must be done online.
- Definition of a Tournament: Ice hockey competition, other than normally scheduled league, jamboree, or exhibition games, where three or more legally registered teams compete within a specified time frame for the purpose of declaring a champion.
- Tournament rules must be in accordance with USAH playing rules. On submission and approval of tournament playing rules, these rules cannot supersede USAH playing rules and any violation of USAH playing rules shall be enforced. Rules that are approved for sanction must be followed during the course of play of the tournament. Tournament directors or members associated with the tournament do not have the authority to overturn these rules or USAH playing rules.
- All Local Tournament Directors are required to inspect and verify every team roster prior to letting that team play any games in that local tournament, once they have received an official sanction from the MT Affiliate Registrar for their local tournament. (Note: sanctioning rules do not apply to State TSL Tournaments).

COACHING EDUCATION PROGRAM (CEP)

MAHA follows the USAH (CEP) in full, including all certification requirements, credential levels, on-ice helmet mandates, enforcement procedures, and disciplinary sanctions.

Full CEP requirements, certification pathways, and enforcement procedures are available at: **USA Hockey**

All Local Associations must assign someone in the organization to make sure every coach has the proper level of coaching education for the players they are coaching and have been properly screened prior to having any contact with underage players.

MAHA may sanction any local association that fails to enforce USAH coaching credential and certification requirements.

COACHING CREDENTIAL/SCREENING

- All Montana coaches participating on the bench during a game MUST HAVE the appropriate level coaching credential for the age division he/she is coaching and be listed on the official USAH team roster.
- Coaches must have Safe Sport training; background screenings and appropriate modules must be completed before being on the ice. This includes practices, games, tournaments.

- All volunteer parents participating during any on-ice team function MUST HAVE appropriate level coaching credential for the age division s/he is coaching/assisting.
- All USAH registered/rostered coach/manager personnel and additional persons selected by associations must have the appropriate level coaching credential for the age division he/she is coaching, be background screened, be safe sport certified and be listed on the official USAH team roster prior to any personal contact with any under age (under 18) players including in the locker room, on- ice practices, off-ice practices or games.
- All Team Membership Applications submitted to MT Affiliate Registrar must contain only coaches and team managers that have been screened and verified.

MAHA BACKGROUND CHECK SCREENING POLICY

As a sanctioned affiliate of USAH, MAHA adopts and enforces the USAH Background Check Program in full. All screening requirements, processes, eligibility standards, and compliance obligations are governed by USAH policy, as updated annually.

All coaches, officials, volunteers, board members, locker room monitors, team managers, and any other adult with regular access to youth participants must complete a background screening through USAH's approved program before having any contact with players.

Full background check requirements, the screening portal, status checks, and appeal procedures are available at: USA Hockey Safe Sport Program

MAHA may sanction any local association that fails to enforce USAH background screening requirements.

SAFE SPORT POLICY

As an Affiliate to USAH, MAHA follows all Safe Sport Policies outlined in the USAH Safe Sport Handbook: USA Hockey Safe Sport Program

MAHA-SPECIFIC SAFE SPORT PROVISIONS
In addition to the USAH SafeSport Handbook, MAHA enforces the following provisions locally.

1. Zero Tolerance Policy: Obscene or vulgar language, taunting of officials, and any form of verbal or physical abuse toward officials, players, or spectators will result in immediate removal and potential suspension per the MAHA Officiating Abuse Sanctions in the Policies section of this guide.
2. Anonymous Reporting: Any member of the hockey community may report suspected abuse, misconduct, or policy violations to the MAHA SafeSport Coordinator confidentially. Reports may also be made directly to USAH or to appropriate law enforcement.
3. Local Safe Sport Coordinators: Each association must designate a Local SafeSport Coordinator and submit their name to the MAHA SafeSport Director by October 1 each year. The coordinator receives reports of suspected misconduct and follows the appropriate reporting steps.

MAHA Safe Sport Director:

The MAHA Safe Sport Director is the Affiliate's gatekeeper for all Safe Sport issues, responsible for receiving all reports of suspected misconduct or abuse and following the appropriate steps for reporting and responding. The Safe Sport Director ensures that Safe Sport Training and background screening requirements are met by the Affiliate and provides guidance to Associations on how to handle disciplinary matters.

Local Safe Sport Coordinators:
The coordinator is responsible for receiving reports of suspected misconduct or abuse, following the appropriate reporting steps, and reporting to the MAHA Safe Sport Director on a monthly basis.

Safe Sport Training Program:
All USAH registered coaches, officials, locker room monitors, employees and volunteers (including association board members) are required to take the educational program every season. Training can be found at: http://www.usahockey.com/SafeSporttraining

SAFE SPORT VIOLATIONS

A USAH/MAHA member or parent of any member who violates any of the Safe Sport policies or fails to consent to, and pass a screening and background check, may be denied eligibility within any USAH/MAHA program and is subject to appropriate disciplinary action including but not limited to suspension, permanent suspension, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities.

Safe Sport violations may result in a fine of up to $500 per violation, as determined by the Disciplinary Committee and imposed by the MAHA President.

LOCKER ROOM POLICIES

All MAHA associations will comply with the USAH Locker Room Policy in the Safe Sport Handbook: USA Hockey Safe Sport Program

A form with a sample locker room policy may be found at
https://www.usahockey.com/resourcesanddownloads

Co-Ed Locker Rooms
Refer to the Co-Ed Locker Room section of the Safe Sport Handbook: USA Hockey Safe Sport Program

SOCIAL MEDIA, MOBILE AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Full policy requirements — including rules governing coach-to-player communications, locker room device restrictions, group chat supervision, parental copy requirements, and opt-out procedures — are available in the USAH Safe Sport Handbook: USA Hockey Safe Sport Program

CONCUSSION POLICY

On May 4, 2017, Governor Bullock signed House Bill 487 into law, requiring all youth sports coaches, employees, and volunteers to participate in a concussion awareness program and provide educational materials to athletes. MAHA complies with this legislation by formally adopting the USAH Concussion Management Program as its concussion management program.

All coaches, parents, guardians, and players are required to review USAH's concussion educational materials each season. Players and parents must acknowledge receipt of these materials before the season begins. Full concussion management materials, educational resources, and forms are available at: **usahockey.com/page/show/879747-concussion-awareness** and at **mthockey.**

Montana law and USAH policy require that any youth athlete suspected of having sustained a concussion must be removed from all hockey activities immediately. The athlete may only return to practice or competition upon receipt of written authorization from a licensed healthcare provider. Associations must retain that release for the entire time the athlete is registered, or until the athlete reaches age 18.

MAHA may sanction any local association, coach, or administrator that fails to enforce these concussion management requirements.

TRAVEL POLICY

Travel to games and tournaments is a significant part of youth hockey participation, and it is also an event that places players in potential situations for abuse and misconduct - particularly during overnight stays. USAH requires that all local programs shall have a travel policy applicable to youth teams that is published and provided to all players, parents, coaches, and other adults traveling with the team. The policy should apply to both local travel as well as out of town events and should have different policies for each. These travel policies shall include, but not be limited to:

Local:

1. Make parents responsible for local travel arrangements.
2. Non-parent drivers shall not drive alone with an unrelated minor.
3. Non-parent drivers shall not be alone at any time with an unrelated minor. Drop offs and pick-ups should be coordinated in groups.

Out of town:

1. Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a room with a single player unless the coach is a parent or guardian.
2. Anyone providing team travel assistance must be screened and verified, and possess valid driver's licenses and insurance.
3. Adequate adult chaperone supervision should be provided at all times (recommend one adult for five to eight players).
4. Room monitoring and curfew checks should be made by at least two screened and verified adults.
5. No individual meetings shall take place in players' rooms.
6. Players shall be allowed to make "check in" calls to their parents.
7. Travel itineraries including a list of all adult personnel and contact information shall be provided to parents.
8. Parents will be contacted first, prior to any disciplinary action be taken against a player.
9. No coach or chaperone shall be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while performing their chaperone/coaching duties.
10. Parents have the right to transport their child and stay with them in their hotel room.
11. Players under the age of 18 years old cannot travel to out-of-town games/tournaments without adult supervision.

BILLETING POLICY

Please see USAH Safe Sport Handbook found at https://www.usahockey.com/safesportprogram

CONSUMPTION/USE/ABUSE OF MOOD ALTERING SUBSTANCES

Refer to the policy in the USAH Hockey Annual Guide: https://www.usahockey.com/annualguide

ALCOHOL SALES POLICY

MAHA does not endorse or condone the sale of alcoholic beverages at youth hockey events in Montana; however MAHA understands that some associations choose to sell alcoholic beverages to attract fans to the games, fundraise, and build community support for their programs.
MAHA will allow the sale of alcoholic beverages under the following circumstances:

- The association choosing to sell the alcoholic beverages complies with all local ordinances regarding the sales of alcoholic beverages.
- The association choosing to sell alcoholic beverages will comply with all State of Montana regulations regarding the sale of alcoholic beverages.
- Any alcohol service must be conducted only by a properly licensed entity and in full compliance with all state and local alcohol control requirements, including age verification, service hours, and permitted service areas.
- Alcohol service must not interfere with game operations, officiating, scorekeeping, or the safety and experience of participants and spectators.

The sole responsibility and liability for alcohol sales, service, compliance, and enforcement rests with the facility or local association holding the alcohol license. MAHA does not assume responsibility for alcohol service operations or compliance. At any time, alcoholic beverage sales cause disciplinary issues amongst fans, or lead to undue harassment of players, officials or coaches, MAHA has the right to restrict all alcoholic beverage sales for all MAHA events at the association where alcohol-related incidents have become an issue. MAHA reserves the right to restrict or prohibit alcohol sales at any MAHA-sanctioned event if deemed necessary for player safety, spectator conduct, or event management.

OFFICIATING ABUSE - ZERO TOLERANCE

MAHA abides by the USAH Zero Tolerance rules and may also further enforce the policy in situations of:

- Verbal abuse of official(s).
- Harassing comments, behavior or threats directed or inferred towards on-ice and off-ice official(s).
- Physical abuse of official(s)
- Any issue concerning crowd control which results in summoning of the police.

MAHA OFFICIATING ABUSE SANCTIONS FOR NON-PARTICIPANTS

(Spectators and all those not on an approved USAH Roster)
MAHA maintains a strict Zero Tolerance Policy with NO appeal available to non-participant(s) removed from an event.

- If the non-participant is removed from a sanctioned youth hockey event by an on-ice or off-ice Official (i.e. Referee, League or MAHA Administrator or Arena personnel),or is otherwise reported for abusive behavior by any person(s) in attendance at the sanctioned event

(and substantiated by preponderance of proof), the involved parties and events are to be included in a USAH hockey report and GameSheet when possible.

- Suspension will be issued for those offenses investigated and adjudicated by MAHA (notwithstanding any other sanctions imposed by local associations or sanctioned Leagues) as listed below.

First Offense:

- Two-week suspension from All "Team Activities and $150.00 fine payable to MAHA, with the fine issued to the local association of the offending non-participant's team. Individuals will be placed on probation for one year, which commences at the end of the suspension period.

Second Offense (i.e. while on probation from first offense):

- Four-week suspension for ALL "Team Activities and a $300.00 fine payable to MAHA, with the fine issued to the local association of the offending non-participant's team. Individual will be placed on probation for two years, which commences at the end of the suspension period.

Third Offense (i.e. while on probation from second offense):

- Suspended from ALL "Team Activities" indefinitely until individual completes a certified anger management class and provides MAHA a certificate of completion or other documentation satisfactory to MAHA. Individual will be placed on probation for three years, which commences at the end of the suspension period.

"Team Activities" are defined as games (whether League, non-League or tournament), practices (dry land and ice), and any other team activity that may be considered a part of the usual team experience.
usual team experience.

MAHA OFFICIATING ABUSE SANCTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

(Club Administrators, Players & Coaches)
Playing Rule 601, addresses "Abuse of Officials and Other Misconduct. " Coaches, in conjunction with their Club, prior to the start of their season, shall conduct a meeting with their players and parents to set appropriate expectations, guidelines and penalties to discourage officiating abuse. Such a policy shall be in writing and issued to all players and parents.
Team personnel (coaches and players) collectively receiving three or more penalties under the Playing Rule 601, which specifically identify as physical or verbal abuse of a game official, shall be subject to MAHA Disciplinary Review, as provided in Rule 410, including:

- Suspension of coach(s) not to exceed 180 days
- Suspension of player(s) not to exceed 180 days
- Team declared ineligible for post-season play (State and or Nationals)

6U/8U PROGRAMS

- All associations in Montana must incorporate (if numbers allow) into their local program the American Development Module for 8U and 6U age divisions. MAHA strongly encourages skill development for all players. This is particularly critical at the 8U and 6U level so that players are provided with the foundation to enjoy and have success in the game.
- 8U are generally organized into levels based on age, skill and number of players. As a guideline, 8U should be divided into two levels: 6U - the younger, beginner and less skilled players; and 8 & Under - the older, experienced, more skilled players.

- The focus for 8U and 6U is to teach and develop the basic skills of skating, puck handling, shooting and passing. Cross-ice, half-ice and small area games are the standard of play to maximize ice utilization, increase puck touches and increase the competition and fun. The American Development Model (ADM) provides blueprints for player development.
- All games shall be played cross or half ice.
- Local hockey associations are in the best position to design programs so their players can develop and have fun. This should be based on the principles of the ADM, the number of players in their program, the skill of their players, the availability of ice and their coaching staff.
- Jamborees may be conducted and are recommended at the 8U and 6U level. A jamboree is defined as a low-key full participation event where players have an enjoyable and learning experience in a non-competitive environment with no champion declared as follows:

1. Approval to conduct a Jamboree must be obtained from the TSL Commisioner at least thirty (30) days in advance.
2. Information referring to the event must state "Jamboree", not tournament.
3. Team fees can cover only costs for ice time, officials, medical attendants and participant awards.
4. There can be no gate fee.
5. No score may be kept, no winners, no losers, no standings. This will generally require a predetermined round-robin format to be followed.
6. No statistics may be kept, such as shots, saves, goals, assists, time of possession, etc.
7. The use of blue pucks is required.
8. Participation awards, if given, shall be the same for all participants. No team awards or trophies.
9. Shall be played cross ice or half ice.

Players
ALL players must have submitted the following documents to the local association Registrar or team manager prior to any game or on ice practice:

- USAH current player membership number
- Certified Birth certificate for new players

Team Managers
All Team Managers must submit to the Local Registrar the following for all teams before they participate in any games:

- All players and their USAH membership number
- Age Division they will be playing
- Proof of applicable background screening and safe sport training for every coach and manager
- Team Manager must be listed on the official team roster

Local Registrars
All Local Registrars will use the USAH Portal to enter all the data required for players, coaches and team managers and send that data to the MT Affiliate Registrar. When approved rosters are received back from the MT Affiliate Registrar, the local registrar will make sure each team manager has access to the approved roster available for inspection. Team rosters are required to be entered into the Portal no less than 10 days before league game play begins. Any adult who is on the ice or bench with youth players must be registered as a coach. ALL youth, girls, high school and disabled teams are required to have approved rosters.

VOLUNTEER EXPENSES & REIMBURSEMENT

MAHA volunteers who are not otherwise reimbursed from either local associations or through USAH, shall be reimbursed for expenses for incurred for travel attend meetings as necessary for the promotion of hockey in the state of Montana and at various events as authorized by the provisions of this Annual Guide, the Bylaws and the approval of the Board of Directors.

Volunteer Position	**Reimbursed for Attending**
President	Board Meetings; USAH Meetings; other Official MAHA Business Travel
Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer	Board Meetings; Official MAHA Business Travel
TSL Commissioner	Board Meetings; Official TSL Travel
Age Group Commissioners[1]	Age Division State Tournament **
MT Affiliate Registrar	Board Meetings
ADM Director	Board Meetings; Official MAHA ADM travel
Safe Sport Coordinator/Risk Manager	Board Meetings; other official MAHA Travel
Safety Director	Board Meetings
Player Development Coordinators	Board Meetings; Official MAHA Development travel
Goalie Development Coordinators	Board Meetings; Official MAHA Development travel
Adult Rep	Board Meetings
DEI/Disabled Rep	Board Meetings

- Reimbursement shall be allowed for actual expenses incurred for hotel, airfare, ground transportation and other necessary expenses. For the purposes of MAHA events and functions a hotel rate will be established by MAHA. If individuals choose to stay at a hotel or other lodging accommodation that has a lodging rate higher than that of the MAHA established rate the individual will only be reimbursed for the MAHA rate, all other expenses will be at the individuals' expense. Detailed receipts will be required.
- Meals are reimbursed at $15 for Breakfast, $15 for Lunch, $20 for Dinner. Meal receipts are not needed.
- Use of personal vehicles will be reimbursed per mile at 50% of the current IRS allowed rate, the standard rate paid by Non-Profits. Miles are calculated from city to city by Google Maps, not door to door.
- All requests for reimbursement shall be submitted within 10 days of the event closing, on an official MAHA expense reimbursement form together with copies of receipts or other detailed verification of the expense.
- Expense requests shall be directed to the Treasurer for MAHA and are subject to final approval by the MAHA President/Executive Director if necessary.
- The expense reimbursement form can be found at https://www.mthockey.com/

[1] Or approved delegate.

Reimbursement under this section does not apply to volunteers who are not affiliated with or representing MAHA and who assist MAHA or the TSL in other capacities, for example, evaluators or other personnel appearing or attending for player development camps or for referees and coaches representing MAHA at state tournaments or with respect to select teams and player development programs.

TREASURE STATE LEAGUE

MAHA sponsors the Treasure State League made up of 10U, 12U, 14U Girls, 14U, High School (MTHS and BSHS) and 19U Girls teams. The number of regular season games by age division will be communicated by MAHA prior to any season scheduling.

Montana associations wanting to host state tournaments must apply. Applications are compiled by the MAHA TSL Tournament Director and selections approved by the MAHA Board. Team tournament entry fees are based on association estimates of expenses incurred to facilitate the tournament. Refer to the MAHA State Tournament Guide for more details.

Teams must play through the TSL and be in good standing (all fees fully paid) with MAHA to participate in a MAHA TSL State Tournament. Teams from outside of Montana may participate in any age division.

MONTANA FIRST LEAGUE

TSL is the primary league for all MAHA associations. Participation in out-of-state leagues is only permitted if the team is in full TSL good standing. Non-compliance can result in forfeitures and loss of State Tournament eligibility.

LEAGUE BOND AND LATE FEE

Team league bond is due to MAHA October 1. Annual bond payments due consist of: $400 for tournament bond, $100 for Gamesheet, $100 for MAHA Administration, and $100 if the team is from out of state. Bond payments received after October 1st will incur a $100 late fee. Bonds not submitted by the first scheduled game date will result in the team being ineligible to play until the bond and all accumulated late fees are paid in full.

GAME RESCHEDULE POLICY

All teams have until October 31st to make changes to the schedule. Changes are made by mutual agreement of both head coaches/managers, with written notification to the Age Division Commissioner within 72 hours of agreement. On November 1st, the schedule is set unless approved by the Age Division Commissioner.

- Failure to notify the commissioner of a reschedule within 72 hours of agreement: $50 fine per team per rescheduled game.
- Should one team reschedule without agreement of the other team the game will be considered a forfeit by the rescheduling team.

ADMINISTRATIVE FEES

- Players added to a roster after December 31 require written approval from the Age Division Commissioner and are subject to a $100 per-player administrative fee.
- Schedule/game time changes requested for reasons other than act of God (e.g. weather, rink equipment failure) on or after November 1st incur a $100 administrative fee per team per change. Changes requested within 14 days of the scheduled game incur an additional $50 fee per team per change. Both head coaches and the Age Division Commissioner must be notified of a schedule change in writing.

TEAM DECLARATIONS

1. Team commitments (MAHA Declaration Form) must be received by the TSL Commissioner by September 10th.
2. Any withdrawals or changes after September 10th will result in loss of the team bond and a $100 administrative fee will be imposed.
3. Any teams added after September 10th will have a non-refundable late fee of $200.
4. Teams who have not submitted the commitment form and paid the bond will not be eligible to participate in league games until the commitment form and bond payment are turned in.
5. Associations with 2 teams in an age division are required to declare at least 1 team in the highest level (e.g. A). Any desire to declare no team in the highest level (e.g. no A and 2 B teams) requires a waiver application to the TSL Commissioner, whose decision is final.

INADEQUATE REFEREE FEES

Applicable when a home association fails to provide the minimum required number of officials for a scheduled TSL game per the Officials Guide table in this Guide.

- 1st game violation: written warning issued by TSL Commissioner.
- 2nd game violation (same season): $100 fine to home association.
- 3rd+ game violation: $200 fine and possible loss of hosting privileges.

ROSTER REQUIREMENTS

To participate in MAHA TSL teams must have:

- An exclusive roster capable to field a team for play (i.e. 6 skaters, 1 goalie)
- Approved roster by Affiliate Registrar
- All coaching staff, team manager, and minimum 1 locker room monitor listed on roster
- HS ONLY - enrollment verification for each of 1st and 2nd Semester (if a player graduates early, or drops out, they are not eligible to play)

CROSS ROSTERING IN TSL -- does not include Tiered or State Elite teams

- No more than 1 line of cross-rostered players per team (i.e. 5 skaters and 1 goalie)
- Players can only cross roster or play up one age division (players cannot play down an age division)
- Players can only be on 2 rosters in the TSL only if those rosters are in different age divisions

TSL START DATE & ROSTER DUE DATE

The TSL season shall begin on or after October 15 of each year.

GAME SLOT ICE TIME REQUIRED PER AGE DIVISION

Minimum ice slot lengths required per division (pre and post-game ice cuts not included):

- 10U 1 hour slot
- 12U with ice cut between 2nd and 3rd: 1.5 hour slot | Without ice cut: 1.25 hour slot
- 14U Youth: 1.75 hour slot
- 14U Girls with ice cut between 2nd and 3rd: 1.5 hour slot | Without ice cut: 1.25 hour
- MTHS / BSHS: 2.25 hour slot
- 19U Girls 2.25 hour slot

LIVE SCORING

All TSL games at 10U and above are required to score the game live using GameSheet electronic scoring.

1. Associations failing to use GameSheet for scheduled league games will be subject to a $100 fine per game.
2. Games shall be closed out within 1 hour of game completion. If extenuating circumstances prevent game completion, the Age Division Commissioner shall be notified within 1 hour of game completion.
3. Associations must ensure that volunteer scorekeepers are properly trained and that systems are functioning prior to game time. If technology is unavailable at a facility, the association must notify the Age Division Commissioner in advance.
4. Repeat offenses may result in loss of eligibility for hosting state tournaments or other sanctions.
5. No stats will be tracked for 10U.

LEAGUE STANDING & TIE BREAKER RULES

1. Most points (2 for win, 1 for OT loss, 0 for loss)
2. Head-to-head record between tied teams
3. Goals against (fewest goals allowed in all regular season games)
4. Penalty minutes (lower cumulative PIM = higher standing)
5. Coin flip, conducted by the TSL Commissioner only

HOME TEAM SCOREKEEPING RESPONSIBILITY

The home team is required to provide trained scoreboard and GameSheet operators for all TSL games. At festival events where the home team is not from the hosting association, the hosting association must provide scorekeeping personnel and ensuring scoreboard training has been completed.

SCOREKEEPER PRE-SEASON TRAINING

All associations are required to provide scorekeeper training to scorekeepers prior to the start of the TSL season. Training must cover GameSheet operation, proper entry of penalties and goals, how to close out a game within 1 hour, scoreboard procedures, the MAHA TSL Officials Guide (at the end of this guide) and who to contact if technology fails.
The MAHA TSL Officials Guide must be physically present in the scorekeeper's box at every rink during all TSL games.

10U PROVISIONS

The following provisions apply to all 10U half-ice TSL games:

1. Half-ice games
2. 4v4 players
3. Black pucks
4. Intermediate nets
5. Five faceoff locations: center-ice used at period starts and following goals; two in each zone on existing dots used for all other faceoffs.
6. Penalties are served by the penalized player in their own bench.
7. Penalty time starts at the drop of the puck.
8. First penalty: short one player (4v3)
9. Second penalty: short two players (5v3)
10. Third penalty: stacked and starts at the conclusion of the first penalty.
11. Dual clock is recommended: separate clocks for each half-ice game running simultaneously
12. Clock usage must be communicated to both teams before the game.
13. Teams switch sides at the start of each period.
14. One timeout is allowed per game only if dual clocks are being used. If only one clock is being used to facilitate two games, no time outs are allowed.
15. No more than 3 coaches per team on the shared bench.

INELIGIBLE PLAYERS

All TSL players must play for their designated Local Association (primary residential address). Non-home participation requires a TSL Player Waiver Request Form with dual local association president approvals. Non-home state participation requires a TSL player Waiver Request Form with dual state association president approvals. Refer to USAH Affiliate Transfer Process.

Any player who, after December 31: dresses for, sits on the bench of, or otherwise participates in a Junior game is not eligible for TSL play for the remainder of the season including the state tournament.

Any TSL game in which an ineligible player participates shall be deemed forfeited. Such a forfeit does not prevent remaining eligible players from participating in post-season TSL tournaments. Refer to the Forfeiture Fine section of this guide.

14U GIRLS REST PERIOD

Minimum rest time for 14U Girls: 2 hours from finish of MAHA league game until start of next MAHA league game on same day; 12 hours on consecutive days.

WEATHER CALL FOR TRAVEL

Suspension of travel to TSL games will be based on Information from the Montana Department of Transportation Travel Condition website roadreport.mdt.mt.gov. If a road is declared "Closed" or "Emergency Travel Only" along the primary route to the host location the game will

be officially "postponed", unless there is an alternate route that is open, an attempt can be made to travel.

If there is a postponement, EVERY attempt will need to be made to make up the game(s) using every possible venue (date, time, location changes). If the games are not made up refer to the "UNPLAYABLE GAMES" section. League Commissioners have the authority to issue a "forfeit" if one team makes no effort to make up the postponed game(s).

A weather-related postponement or forfeit caused by an MDT road closure shall not, on its own, place an association in bad standing with MAHA. Bad standing may result only from failure to pay the applicable weather forfeit fine within 30 days or failure to make a good-faith effort to reschedule a postponed game.

WEATHER CALL FOR OUTDOOR RINKS
If the temperature at an outdoor rink is forecast to be 0^{O}F or colder (windchill should be considered) at the start of the game, the game will be postponed and every effort made to reschedule or relocate to an indoor facility. This decision will be made as soon as possible to prevent unnecessary travel or hardship. No team will be penalized for a rink condition cancellation.

FORFEITURE FINE

Unless otherwise specified, forfeit of a game for any reason will result in the team forfeiting their league tournament bond and disqualify the team from the MAHA TSL State Tournament. The forfeiting team's association will be fined $500 ($250 payable to MAHA $250 to the non-forfeiting team), payable within 30 days. Failure to pay within 30 days results in the association being ineligible for TSL play until all fines are paid. Eligibility for the state tournament can be reinstated by payment to MAHA of the forfeited tournament bond (i.e. rebonding).

The TSL Commissioner shall make rulings on any TSL forfeiture. In the event of an appeal of said ruling, the appeal shall be filed with the MAHA Discipline Committee within 10 days of the ruling.

Games are counted as a 1-0 win to the non-forfeiting team.

Any TSL game in which an ineligible player participates shall be deemed forfeited and subject to fine. Such a forfeit does not prevent remaining eligible players from participating in post-season TSL tournaments.

Additional reasons for forfeiture include but are not limited to: team not rostered, suspended player on bench or playing, non verified roster player, player rostered on 2 teams in same division, team no-show, refusing to travel to host, not traveling when MDOT has roads open, not enough players to field team, not enough players to finish game (ejections), inadequate on and off ice officials (score/time keepers, referees).

UNPLAYABLE GAMES "PERCENTAGE RULE"

If ALL avenues to reschedule have been exhausted, including different locations, and games cannot be rescheduled team standing/seeding will be determined by: Full season points = points earned divided by games played multiplied by number of total season games.
Examples (16 total game seasons):

Team	Record	Points Earned	Total Points
Butte	10-0-4 (2 games unplayable)	24 (24/14=1.71/game)	16*1.71=27.3
Helena	10-2-0 (2 games unplayable)	22 (22/14=1.57/game)	16*1.57=25.12

TREASURE STATE LEAGUE DISCIPLINE

Age Division Commissioners are authorized to impose forfeits, fines and suspensions within the guidelines of the MAHA and USAH Annual Guides and the Official Rules of Hockey. The League Commissioner has final say on all TSL rule implementation. If a decision by an Age Division Commissioner is appealed, it is first appealed to the TSL Commissioner. For all other appeals, if further appeal is sought beyond the TSL Commissioner, it will be forwarded to the MAHA President. His/her decision is final.

DISCIPLINARY/DISPUTE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

MAHA has Discipline Committee to hear disciplinary actions and proceedings pursuant to USAH Bylaw 10 as well as for miscellaneous disciplinary actions that are required for disputes arising within the state that do not involve playing rules issues. The MAHA Discipline Committee shall operate under the rules of USAH Refer to the USAH Annual Guide for Bylaw 10.

DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE PROCESS

Step-by-step process for reviewing suspensions and discipline matters in the TSL:

1. Incident occurs before, during or after a TSL game.
2. Referee files a game report within 24 hours of the incident.
3. Age Division Commissioner reviews the report and determines if Discipline Committee review is desired.
4. Age Division Commissioner provides written report of the event(s) and recommended actions for review by TSL Commissioner, Executive Director and MAHA President.
5. If escalated, the Discipline Committee is convened within 5 business days.
6. Parties are notified and given the opportunity to submit a written statement.
7. The Discipline Committee issues a written decision. The TSL Commissioner or MAHA Referee-in-Chief reviews and approves the recommendation before it becomes effective.
8. The affected party may appeal to the MAHA President/Executive Director within 10 days of the written decision. That decision is final.

PENALTIES MINUTES AND SUSPENSIONS

To help protect the safety of all players, MAHA uses a progressive penalty minutes suspension policy:

1. Any player who has accumulated ≥75 penalty minutes in a TSL division will be suspended for the team's first state tournament game.
2. Any player who accumulates an additional 25 penalty minutes (≥100 total) in a TSL division will be suspended for an additional state tournament game in that division.
3. If player reaches either the ≥75 or ≥100 penalty minutes threshold in the last game of the season, or is to be suspended for any other reason (e.g. match penalty, or 4 penalties a game, etc.) the suspension(s) will be served in the first league games in the next season.

4. If a player to be suspended for the ≥75 or ≥100 penalty minutes threshold plays as ineligible the game will be forfeited.

SUSPENSION PRIOR TO HEARING

In nearly all cases a suspension should not be imposed until after a party has been afforded a right to a hearing pursuant to Bylaw 10.c. However, a suspension may be imposed prior to a hearing only where permitted by USAH Bylaw 10 and applicable procedures.

APPEALS

Appeals shall be handled in accordance with USAH Bylaw 10 and applicable MAHA procedures. A party seeking appeal must follow the required appeal process and timelines stated in the governing rules.

AGE DIVISION COMMISSIONER DUTIES

1. Work with the associations (MAHA Representative) to ensure teams are selected and committed in a timely manner.
2. Participate in league management meetings as required.
3. After associations have committed teams to the TSL, work with the TSL Commissioner to formulate game pairings.
4. Attend Commissioner townhall pre-ice scheduling meeting.
5. Prepare game pairing sheets to be provided at the ice scheduling meeting.
6. Attend Ice Scheduling meeting and oversee scheduling of games in division.
7. Mediate any problems/issues that arise in division.
8. Make sure the games are played according to schedule, any rescheduling is done promptly and properly and any missed games are made up in a timely manner.
9. Consult the TSL Commissioner for direction as needed.
10. Prepare final league standings and submit to TSL Commissioner for approval and MAHA Tournament Director for tournament seeding.
11. Confirm eligibility of all teams participating in the TSL division tournaments.
12. Timely review and process any player waiver requests. Maintain the completed waivers for reference at division State Tournaments.
13. Attend Age division tournament or provide a designated and approved person to do so.
    A. If division has split tournaments, Age Division Commissioner will collaborate with the TSL Commissioner to appoint a person to fulfill these duties.

STATE TOURNAMENTS

State tournament rules and guidance is contained in the MAHA State Tournament Guide.

CARBON MONOXIDE RECOMMENDATION

It is the recommendation from the MAHA Board that all local associations look to put policies and procedures in place for the monitoring of Carbon Monoxide within their rinks. The MAHA Board recommends that the rules found in the Minnesota Department of Health Summary of Ice Arena Rules be a guideline for Montana ice rinks to follow.

Treasure State League (TSL) Officials Guide 2026-2028

Division	Clock & Timeouts[1]	Warm Ups	Periods & Length	Break	Minor Penalty	Major Penalty	Misconduct	Regular Season OT	Ice Cut between 2/3 period	Referees System Required
10U	Run	4 min	2 @ 25 min	2 min	2:00	5:00	10:00	No	No	1[2] required
12U	Stop[3]	5 min	3 @ 15 min	1 min	1:30 stop 2:00 run	4:00 stop 5:00 run	10:00	No	Host Choice[4]	2 required 3 preferred
14U Girls	Stop[3]	5 min	3 @ 16 min	1 min	1:30 stop 2:00 run	4:00 stop 5:00 run	10:00	No	Host Choice[5]	2 required 3 preferred
14U Youth	Stop[3]	5 min	3 @ 16 min	1 min	1:30 stop 2:00 run	4:00 stop 5:00 run	10:00	No	Yes	3 required 4 preferred
19U Girls Big Sky High School (BSHS) Montana High School (MTHS)	Stop[3]	5 min	3 @17 min	2 min	2.00 stop 3:00 run	5:00 stop 5:00 run	10:00	Yes[6]	Yes	3 required 4 preferred

The home team must wear light-colored jerseys. In the event of a conflict, it is the home team's responsibility to change jerseys or supply alternate options.

[1] One 60-second time out per team per game. 10U will only be eligible if each game has a dedicated clock (i.e. dual clock for 2 simultaneous half-ice games).
[2] Each half-ice game requires a dedicated referee
[3] Run time anytime a goal differential of 7 or more exists (clocked may be stopped for player injury)
[4] Determined by the host facility and communicated to both teams before the start of the game
[5] Determined by the host facility and communicated to both teams before the start of the game. Strongly recommended no ice cut for festivals to maximize possible number of games.
[6] Five min stop time 3v3 sudden death overtime, no end change, if needed: 3 player shoot out, home team chooses who shoots first, no end change, if needed: sudden death shoot out (players may not repeat until all players shoot)