



River Lakes Hockey, Inc.

2026-2027 Handbook

Mission:

River Lakes Hockey creates positive lifelong experiences in a safe & fair environment that allows each participant to do their best.

Vision:

To be the area's leading youth-centered sports organization by creating as many opportunities for play as possible and building athletes for life, guided by the developmentally appropriate framework of the American Development Model (ADM).

Values:

Fun: *Enjoyment, Participation and Friendship.*

Sportsmanship: *Respecting teammates, competitors, coaches, officials and parents.*

Teamwork: *Working together to achieve the desired goal by putting the needs of the team before self.*

Skill Development: *Allowing each player to grow their hockey skills by using the best teaching and coaching the association is capable of providing.*

Open Communication: *Transparency and collaboration emphasizing participation by all.*

Youth Centered: *Every action is focused on the best interests of all players.*

Social Media

www.riverlakeshockey.com

@RLStarsHockey on Facebook

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Welcome and Season Overview

Welcome to the River Lakes Stars hockey season! We are looking forward to another opportunity to have fun, demonstrate sportsmanship and develop. We look forward to continuing to provide a place to grow hockey in Central Minnesota. Please continue to be Ambassadors for hockey, and promote participation to your friends, neighbors, and relatives! Any new hockey players interested in our association are encouraged to attend one of our recruiting events. Check out our website for additional information on Learn to Skate and Beginner Hockey Camps programs that will take place this fall.

Registration for all returning skaters is done through the River Lakes Hockey website. Registration will open July 1st and late fees will be assessed starting July 14th. Early registration helps provide the most accurate numbers for declaring team designations to District 5.

Player evaluations for squirt/10U, peewees/12U, and bantams will take place **October 10th-11th**. There will be opportunities for skaters to get on the ice ahead of evaluations at our pre-evaluation camps which are open to all registered skaters.

The board is continuing its efforts to evolve the association to provide equitable and many opportunities for everyone to pitch in and support River Lakes Hockey. **Remember, we are a non-profit volunteer run organization that functions on the efforts of all members doing their part where help is needed.** We do a variety of fundraising to keep costs down. We welcome any other fundraising ideas anyone may want to bring forward.

2026-2027 Fundraising Fee Collection Update: In past years, fundraising fees were collected upon registration. Starting in the 2026-2027 season the fundraising money will be collected during the fundraising activities throughout the season.

As part of your membership in the River Lakes Hockey Association, you are required to participate in a committee. Committee membership terms run for a full year. There are no set hours associated with committee membership; rather, committee membership is focused on task completion. Some committee positions are appointed by the Board, others are available via preference during registration. Read more about Committee Service on page 21 in the handbook.

We will continue to require participation in volunteer hours (formally known as DIBS). There will not be separate volunteer categories and all volunteer opportunities will be lumped in one area so families can pick and choose which volunteer opportunities that suit them best throughout the season.

The following document is designed to help inform our members of the operations of our organization and expectations of our members. The information herein may require additional work as we move forward through our season. The River Lakes Stars Board is always open to suggestions and help from our members. We need your help, please be willing to step up and take on some of the leadership positions within the Association.

Governance & Organization

River Lakes Hockey is a member of USA Hockey, being a member of District 5, Minnesota. The hierarchy is outlined in the following paragraphs.

USA Hockey

USA Hockey, Inc. is the National Governing Body for the sport of hockey in the United States, with the mission to promote the growth of hockey and provide the best possible experience for all participants by encouraging, developing, advancing, and administering the sport.

USA Hockey's primary emphasis is on the support and development of grassroots hockey programs. While youth hockey is a focus, USA Hockey also has vibrant junior and adult hockey programs that provide opportunities for players of all ability levels. The organization also supports a growing disabled hockey program.

Beyond serving those who play the game at the amateur level, USA Hockey has certification programs for coaches and officials to ensure education standards are met that coincide with the level of play. As the National Governing Body for the sport of ice hockey in the United States, USA Hockey is the official representative to the United States Olympic Committee and the International Ice Hockey Federation.

USA Hockey is divided into 12 geographical districts throughout the United States. Each district has a registrar to register teams; a referee-in-chief to register officials and organize clinics; a coach-in-chief to administer education programs for coaches; a risk manager to oversee liability and safety programs; and a skill development program administrator to facilitate learn-to-play programs for youth players and their parents.

For more information on USA Hockey programs, visit: usahockey.com

Minnesota Hockey published the following statement to provide guidance to Minnesota Hockey associations regarding non-sanctioned events and competing against teams not sanctioned with USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey.

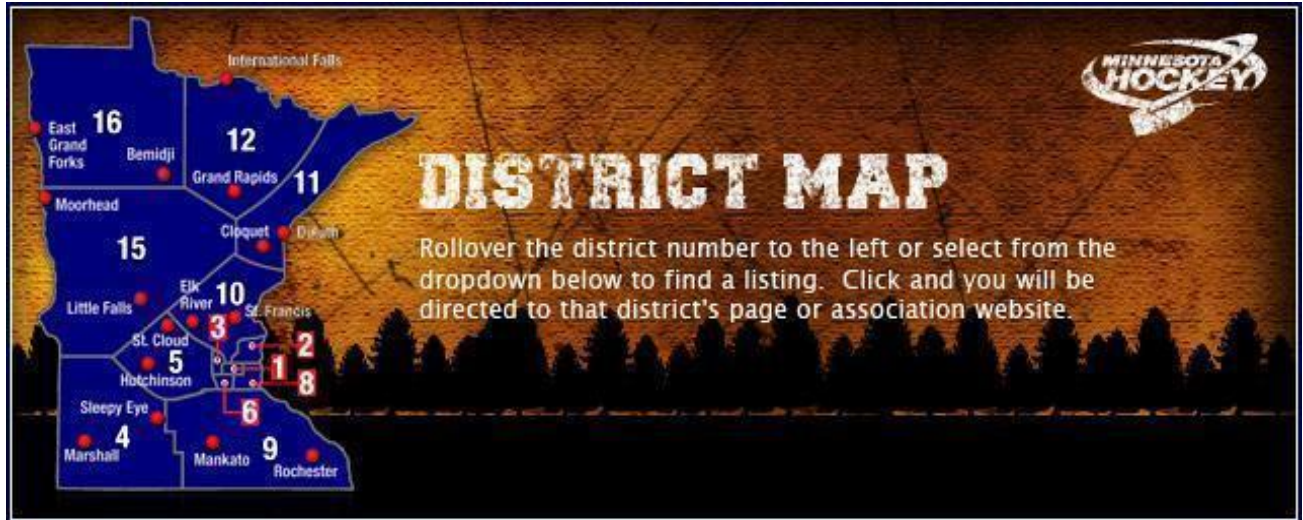
USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey rules prohibit Minnesota Hockey association teams from participating in a non-sanctioned event and/or participating in a game or practice with a team not sanctioned by USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey unless the event is granted Special Event status from the Minnesota Hockey District Director and Minnesota District Registrar. Unless sanctioned as a Special Event, USA Hockey's insurance policies are not available to cover the arena, the association, team or individual participants involved in a game or practice with a team not sanctioned by USA Hockey/Minnesota Hockey. Parents who register their youth player with USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey and the local association have an expectation of receiving certain benefits; including training and certification of coaches and officials, background screening, disciplinary process, playing rules and tournament standards. Parents should not be put into the position of being uninformed should an injury occur at a non-sanctioned event or should other anticipated benefits be unavailable.

Although teams which represent a Minnesota Hockey association may not participate in non-sanctioned play, individuals (players, parents and coaches) may participate in non-sanctioned events and may form a team and seek affiliation with another sanctioning body other than USA Hockey/Minnesota Hockey. To avoid confusion and potential liability, it is mandatory that such a team be totally separate from your association. That team should not use assets from your association or ice contracted by your association. They should have a different identity and not wear your association uniforms. They must have separate financial accounts and all arena and vendor contracts must be under a separate entity.

Minnesota Hockey

The Minnesota District, more commonly called Minnesota Hockey, is one of the 13 districts within USA Hockey, and is the governing body of youth and amateur hockey in Minnesota and the premier developer of hockey players in the state. Minnesota Hockey (has provided volunteer services for the development and promotion of hockey in Minnesota since 1947. To learn more about Minnesota Hockey, please visit <http://minnesotahockey.org/>.

Minnesota Hockey is subdivided into 13 districts.



District 5

Within the state, the individual districts organize and govern hockey in accordance with USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey guidelines. Districts are composed of member associations as organized by MN Hockey, and a Board of Directors. [District 5](#) is operated entirely by volunteers. Districts organize league play and playoffs. Every team participates in the district playoffs at the end of the year. PeeWee/12U and Bantam/15U teams have the opportunity to advance to Region and State playoffs. Squirt/10U teams participate in the District playoffs only. Member associations of D5 include:

[Buffalo/Annandale](#)

[Litchfield/Dassel/Cokato](#)

[River Lakes](#)

[Sauk Rapids](#)

[STMA](#) (St. Michael/Albertville)

[Hutchinson](#)

[MML](#) (Monticello/Maple Lake)

[Sartell](#)

[St. Cloud](#)

[Willmar](#)

River Lake Stars

River Lakes Hockey creates positive lifelong experiences in a safe and fair environment that allows each participant to do their best. Our goal is to help youth who participate become better citizens, better sportspersons, and educated in the sport of hockey and the art of skating. We strive to promote their physical, mental and social development while teaching them self-control, patience, and courage.

A volunteer association organized, managed, and funded by its member families, we provide our children an opportunity to play organized hockey in the belief that participation in meaningful, physically challenging, team sports significantly contributes to their overall development and well-being. Organized by school

district boundaries, we serve the following communities: Albany, Avon, Belgrade, Brooten, Cold Spring, Eden Valley, Elrosa, New London, Paynesville, Richmond, Spicer, St. John's Prep, and Watkins.

Communication Methods

River Lakes Hockey will communicate to members via the email address associated with the Crossbar account your child(ren) are registered under. All financial communications and invoicing will be managed exclusively through Crossbar. Families are responsible for maintaining an accurate and up-to-date email address within their Crossbar profile to ensure receipt of all billing-related information. These communications will happen by emails and Weekly Updates. Weekly Updates are sent on Thursdays each week. During the off season, you may not receive an update each week, but it will still be sent out on Thursdays. If you would like to add a second email to the account you can do that one of two ways:

To create a Crossbar account please visit: <https://www.accounts.crossbar.org/signup>

You will be sent a verification email (this takes 1-3 minutes to send). Please check your Spam or Promotions folders if you do not see it in your inbox after 3 minutes. Once you verify your account, you can log into your Crossbar account. Once you are in your account you should hopefully see your skaters from this past season as your participants.

To utilize your account, please visit riverlakeshockey.com and log into your account on our webpage to view your specific account information.

Your team manager and/or coach will also communicate via email or Crossbar.

Registration Info and Key Dates

Please refer to the website for the most updated information regarding registration.

The website will also list specific times for Pre-evaluation Camps and Evaluations.

Families who have previously registered with River Lakes Hockey will also receive detailed communications regarding registration, pre-evaluations camps, and player evaluations via email and Weekly Updates.

Once registration is completed, you will have until evaluations to cancel your registration and reimbursement will be prorated. No refunds will be given after evaluations. After evaluations, you will be responsible for the full registration fee, volunteer requirements (including volunteer hours and team support hours) and fundraising which will need to be completed or paid in full at the end of the season.

By registering, you give your permission for River Lakes Hockey to use your child's name and/or picture on social media and in articles representing our association.

Equipment Requirements & Rental Equipment Opportunities

Required Equipment

Rule 304 of the USA Hockey handbook always requires all players to wear the following equipment at games and practices:

Hockey skates	Gloves
Shin pads	Shoulder pads
Elbow pads	Padded Hockey pants (breezers)
Protective cup	Helmet with facemask
Neck guard	Mouth guard

- HECC approved helmet with full face mask (must always be worn on ice and on the bench , in uniform or not).
- Mouth Guard - All players, including goalkeepers, are required to wear a colored (non-clear) internal mouthpiece, which covers all remaining teeth of one jaw, customarily the upper.
- Jewelry shall not be worn except for religious or medical needs. Medals shall be taped to the body under the uniform so as not to remain visible.

Rental Equipment

Equipment, excluding a protective cup and mouth guards are provided to first year skaters at no cost, subject to availability. Skates and sticks are in limited supply and subject to availability.

For first year skaters (Instructional Program which is all kids 8 and under), equipment will be issued at the first night of practice. We will also have equipment available for those who join the association after our Learn to Skate and Beginner Hockey programs.

Second year players in the Lil' Stars Hockey Program can rent equipment for \$50.

Note: all rentals are subject to availability.

Special Programs

First Year Skater Program

First Year Skaters at the Lil Stars Hockey level (mini-mites and mites) are free and pay no RLH registration fees. They must register with and pay USA Hockey registration fees. All first year families are required to complete four (4) volunteer hours, committee services, and team support hours.

Girls Recruitment Program

River Lakes Stars is committed to fielding a Girls team at all levels. To achieve this, we need a concerted effort to continue to recruit girls. Recruiting efforts currently include the beginner camps, learn to skate, open houses, parades and Girl's Hockey Day. Please support River Lakes Hockey by promoting the many positive aspects of hockey to prospective new members. It is encouraged that you become involved in promoting hockey by getting involved in one of the many recruiting tools available.

River Lakes “Lil Stars Hockey” Program (Mite, or players 8 year old and under)

Purpose: The Future of River Lakes Hockey depends on young hockey players joining our association. A fun and challenging environment needs to be established to encourage players to continue in youth hockey and develop fundamental hockey skills at this critical time in a child’s youth hockey career.

Goals: The Lil Stars Hockey Program’s main goal is to teach the fundamental skills of hockey, in a competitive and FUN atmosphere.

Lil Stars Hockey Coordinator: This position will be appointed by the Player Development Committee and approved by the River Lakes Board or Directors. This person will coordinate the whole Lil Stars Hockey program. They may or may not be a coach at the level, but should be a person that has a strong hockey background and knowledge of the importance of skill development at this critical time for our young hockey players. This person will need to have strong communication skills, as a major part of the position will be to educate new families on the importance of skill development and the program and methods our association uses to ensure that this skill development takes place. The Lil Stars Hockey Program coordinator will report to the PDC chair.

The Paynesville arena Mite Coordinator and the Richmond arena Mite coordinator will handle the majority of the day-to-day activities of the Lil Stars Hockey program.

Lil Stars Hockey Program Guidelines from Minnesota Hockey: MN Hockey strongly encourages skill development for all players. This is particularly critical at the Mite level so that players are provided with the foundation to enjoy and have success in the game.

To read the full mite hockey guidelines from MN Hockey please visit:
<https://www.minnesotahockey.org/handbook> and refer to pages 25-26.

River Lakes Association Lil Stars Hockey Guidelines:

- River Lakes Hockey will follow all guidelines set by Minnesota Hockey.
- There will be a goal of 3 practices to every game ratio
- There will be a designated gameday where cross ice and half ice games will be played throughout the whole season typically every other Sunday
- After January 15th age eligible mites may play additional half ice and full ice games with other teams in our district.

Players will be classified as

- 6U/Mini-mites: 6 years old or under on May 31st (typically 1st grade and under)
- 8U/Mites: 7 or 8 year olds on May 31st (typically 2nd & 3rd graders)

Gameday: The goal of gameday is to create a competitive and fun atmosphere for players to showcase their talents and for parents and family members to come and watch what the players have learned. Gameday will alternate between the Koronis and Richmond arenas.

- Gameday will be back-to-back ice sessions at each rink alternating rinks on Sundays. For example, all mini-mites from Richmond and Paynesville will play at the Richmond arena from 1pm-2pm, and all of the mites from Richmond and Paynesville will play at the Richmond Arena from 2pm-3pm. The following gameday would be held at the Koronis Arena.
- Gameday will be half ice games. There will be no exceptions for mites to play full ice games.
- All players in the program will be given black hockey socks to be worn on game day. Jerseys will be provided ahead of time to skaters to use for Gameday, games, and jamborees. All River Lakes teams will be required to wear jerseys supplied or approved by the River Lakes Board. No exceptions.

- Teams will be made to ensure appropriate developmental growth of all players.

Season Schedules: Please check the calendar on the website for the most updated schedules.

Mini-mites- (target 50-55 ice sessions a season)

- Saturday Morning (Shared ice with Mites)
- Wednesday Evening (alone)
- Every other Sunday afternoon (Gameday)

Mites- (target 50-55 ice sessions)

- Saturday Morning (Shared ice with Mini-Mites)
- Monday Evening (Skills night with the Mites rotating between the two arenas)
- Every other Sunday afternoon (GAMEDAY)
- Additional full ice games will be added after January 15th
- After December 1st mites may have additional practices added that are specific to their mite team (e.g. Travel Mites, 8U etc)

Mini-mites will participate in two jamborees (one home and one in the St.Cloud/Sauk Rapids area. These are usually held the first week of February & March. Mites will participate in three jamborees (one home, one in Sartell, and one in the St. Cloud/Sauk Rapids area. These are usually held the first week of February & March.

Mite Full Ice Games: Mites playing full ice games will be **age eligible Mite players who are advancing to Squirts in the following season.** For the 8U (girls) team, this team may include first year mites in order to complete the team. The team(s) playing in full ice games will be a combination of Richmond Mites and Paynesville Mites. If there is a shortage of players in that age group there will be exceptions made for younger players to fill the open space if approved by the Lil' Stars Hockey Program coordinator. Minimum size of team will be 10 skaters and a goalie. The Player Development Committee prior to December 31st will determine the coach of the full ice teams (referred to as travel mites and 8U for girls).

Concussion Information

River Lakes Hockey is aware of the importance of teaching our skaters on how to safely avoid concussions while playing. Our coaches are trained each year in concussion safety and conduct various practice drills throughout the season to teach skaters the importance of keeping their head up.

We encourage you to speak with your medical provider if you are interested in baseline concussion testing for your skater.

Please visit the following resources from MN Hockey and USA hockey to learn more about the prevention and treatment of concussions.

<https://www.usahockey.com/safety-concussions>

<https://www.minnesotahockey.org/page/show/3700170--concussion-information>

Insurance

USA Hockey provides \$25,000 of insurance to registered skaters when participating in sanctioned activities only. Important exclusions apply. Visit <https://www.usahockey.com/insurancemanagement> for details.

Board of Directors

The River Lakes Board consists of sixteen (16) members. Of these 16 directors, there shall be no more than 5 residing within any single school district within the River Lakes Hockey, Inc. geographical area. The current board members and their terms are as follows. Note that elections are held for board members, and the Board of Directors will appoint positions of President, Vice President, etc. on an annual basis. If you have any questions, please direct them to any board member.

2026-2027 River Lakes Hockey Board of Directors				
Position	Name	Email Address	Phone #	Term Expires
President	Adam Luckhardt	president@riverlakeshockey.com	507-398-4827	2028
Vice President	Becca Sauerer	bbsauerer@gmail.com	320-224-0721	2029
Treasurer	Malissa Mauricio	treasurer@riverlakeshockey.com	512-619-4401	2028
Secretary	Ali Beedy	alison_thomes@yahoo.com	623-866-2968	2027
Director	Alex Brixus	brixiusalex@gmail.com	320-290-4555	2029
Director	Amanda Peterson	amandabrey@gmail.com	320-894-1626	2027
Director	Amber Poganski	apoganski15@gmail.com	320-249-2160	2028
Director	Barry Belknap	barryb@harvestbank.com	320.250.3982	2029
Director	Geoff Hedberg	geoffhedberg@gmail.com	320-894-6118	2028
Director	Jason Teig	teigjason@gmail.com	763-219-7860	2027
Director	Lisa Thielke	lisa.thielke3@gmail.com	320-894-3669	2029
Director	Michelle Miller	gambling@riverlakeshockey.com	320-293-9647	Appointed
Director	Michelle Weisbrich	michelle.weisbrich@gmail.com	320-224-5343	2029
Director	Mike Carlson	mnmike85@gmail.com	320-241-5560	2027
Director	Paula Salmella	paulasikkila@gmail.com	320-291-6010	2027
Director	TBD	TBD	TBD	2028
Mailing address: PO Box 82, Paynesville, MN 56362				

The board has an executive committee which consists of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. These four positions are for one year, and voted on at each May meeting by the Board of Directors. The executive committee responds to scholarship requests, payment plan requests, sets the initial budget, and is part of the decision making group when there is inclement weather.

Board meetings are held the fourth Monday of every month at 6:30 pm, at the Koronis arena unless falling on or near holidays. Updates can be found on the association's calendar. During the summer months (off-season) the meetings may be held at various locations to show our support of the local communities. Please check the calendar for these changes.

All Board of Directors are required to sign a code of conduct. Please see pages 47-48 in this handbook to see the Board of Directors Code of Conduct.

Please contact the President to get an item put on the agenda a minimum of one week prior to the meeting. Check the website to confirm the location, date, and time of the meeting. All members are encouraged to attend. Please review the River Lakes Hockey Board of Directors Meetings Observers Rules & Expectations prior to attending a Board of Directors meeting.

Committee and Director Positions:

District 5 Representative Steve Barten

Directors of Hockey Ali Beedy, Lisa Thielke & Barry Belknap

Buddy Program: Jason Teig & Paula Salmella

Tournament Directors: Michelle Weisbrich

Ice Schedulers: Paynesville Arena: icescheduler@riverlakeshockey.com

Richmond Arena: riverlakesarena@ci.richmond.mn.us

Team Manager Directors: Michelle Weisbrich

Registration: Amanda Peterson & Lisa Thielke

Fundraising Directors: Becca Sauerer & Paula Salmella

Advertising & Sponsorship: Malissa Mauricio, Barry Belknap & Ali Beedy

Concessions Directors: Amber Poganski (Paynesville Arena)

Volunteer Hours: Laura Schreifels: volunteer@riverlakeshockey.com and Becca Sauerer

Clothing: Amber Poganski & Alex Brixius

Koronis Arena Operations: Geoff Hedberg, Alex Brixius & Mike Carlson

Equipment: Mike Carlson & Alex Brixius

Gambling: Michelle Miller

Recruitment Coordinator: Jason Teig & Ali Beedy

Player Development Committee (PDC) Members

The Player Development Committee (PDC) is a standing committee of volunteers consisting of eleven (11) members, each serving two year terms. Interested members are to apply to the President and the PDC Chair on an annual basis. Applications are due at the end of February; new members or re-elected members will be recommended from the PDC each year in March and submitted to the Board of Directors for a vote at the March meeting, and take office in April. This committee will be overseen by the Director(s) of Hockey for the association.

The Player Development Committee's mission is to provide oversight of the hockey program. It is committed to improving the skills of each and every player within the River Lakes Hockey Association. The PDC must devote equal time, attention and effort to provide the best possible learning environment for each skater and each level of play. The PDC orchestrates player development, selection of coaches, on-ice instruction, and execution of evaluations/player placement.

To ensure the committee represents the whole of the association, the following criteria apply to all selections:

- The committee shall emphasize diversity, representing a variety of school districts within the River Lakes Hockey, Inc. geographical area. These areas are defined as Albany Avon; Belgrade-Brooten-Elrosa; Eden Valley Watkins; New London Spicer; Paynesville, and ROCORl.
- It shall be the goal of the PDC that each gender-based competitive level of play (Bantam, Peewee, Squirt, 15U, 12U and 10U) be represented by at least one committee member. Based on their children's association enrollment, a member may represent two levels of play. It is the preference of the Board of Directors that no more than three members represent the same level of play.
- Term length shall be two years. Members may serve consecutive terms.
- The PDC chair is selected by the PDC committee who then recommends their selection to the Board of Directors for a vote of approval. The PDC chair must have been a member of the PDC for at least one year before serving as the PDC chair.
- The members of this committee shall have a strong hockey background and meet the requirements of Minnesota Hockey and USA Hockey.

PDC Chair: Chuck Andrews

Vice Chair: Mike Stang

Secretary: Mark Peterson

Lil' Stars Hockey Coordinators: TJ Poganski & Nate Moyer

Bantam Coordinator: Dan Selander & Mike Stang

Squirt Coordinator: Scott Mauricio

Peewee Coordinator: Shannon Olmschied & Mark Peterson

Girls Coordinator: Kris Fay & Steve Barten

Goalie Coordinator: Mark Peterson & Kris Fay

Contact information for the Player Development Committee members can be found on our website.

The Player Development Committee Meetings are open to the membership and are held the third Wednesday of each month.

RLH Arenas

The association operates out of two arenas: Koronis Civic Arena in Paynesville and the River Lakes Civic Arena in Richmond.

Richmond Civic Arena: The association rents use of the arena by the season for a base rate with a base number of hours from the City of Richmond. The City of Richmond is responsible for all maintenance and operations of the building.

Koronis Civic Arena: The association is in a master lease agreement with the Paynesville Township for the use of the Koronis Arena. The association assumes all responsibility of running and maintaining the equipment therein, and hiring all management of all employees.

The Arena Operations Board of Director(s) oversees the operations of the Koronis Arena and the Koronis Rink Manager. RLH hires a Koronis Arena Rink Manager who is charged with the task of managing the day to day operations of the Koronis Arena and outdoor rink. The Koronis Arena Rink Manager reports to Arena Operations Board of Director(s).

Season Budget & Financial Plan

The following is a summation of our budget.

2026-2027 Budget Summary		
Income		\$547,900
	Registration	108,200
	Raffle Ticket	130,000
	Gambling	40,000
	Other Fundraiser	28,000
	Program Income	235,700
	Investment Income	6,000
Expense		541,900
	Fundraising Expense	54,100
	Gambling Expense	14,000
	Koronis Arena	172,950
	Richmond Arena	98,000
	General Expense	202,850
Net Income		\$6,000

Membership Requirements

A member of River Lakes Hockey is defined as a parent or legal guardian of a child who has paid in full, required dues and fees for registering a child to play youth hockey. The term of the membership is one year and renews upon registration for the coming season. Members are entitled to vote and have equal rights and preferences in matters not reserved to the board. Each **family** is entitled to have up to two voting parents or legal guardian(s).

Hockey Fee & Payment Schedule

All fees are charged in advance and then paid according to the payment schedule below. USA Hockey registration fees are also required and are not included in the RLH fee schedule.

Payment: All registration fees must be paid online through Crossbar. A convenience fee will be charged and collected by Crossbar for this service. If you selected a payment plan your card will be debited on the dates specified on the payment schedule.

Important Reminders:

1. If first payment isn't made by the end of evaluations, the skater(s) name will not appear on the team lists when posted after evaluations. This also includes if you have a past due balance from the prior season as well.
2. If other payments are late, or returned due to NSF, your skater(s) will not be allowed on the ice unless prior arrangements are made.
3. If any checks returned for NSF, the fee associated with that will be added to your bill to be repaid to the association
4. If your balance is not paid in full by December 1st, your skater cannot participate in any team activities unless prior arrangements have been made.
5. Families with an outstanding balance from a prior season will be ineligible to register for the upcoming season unless prior written authorization is provided by both the President and Treasurer.

Registration Fee & Payment Schedule

New for 2026-2027:

- No multi-skater discount: All skaters within a multi-skater family will pay the same rate.
- Fundraising Fees will not be collected as part of registration, but rather throughout the season as part of the fundraising activities.

Payment Plans:

Two payment plan options are available. Payment Plan 2 requires to pay an upfront non-refundable fee of \$200 per skater. **This registration fee is counted towards your season dues (it is not an extra expense).**

- Payment Plan 1: Pay in Full at the time of Registration
- Payment Plan 2: 25% of remaining balance (net of initial deposit) spread over 4 months
- Pay 25% on each September 1st, October 1st, November 1st and December 1st

Jersey Set Fee:

For skaters playing Squirt/10U, Peewee/12U and Bantam/15U if you have not already purchased your jersey set or if you need a new one due to sizing, you will need to purchase a jersey set for \$130. This is an additional fee and is not included in your registration fees and payment is due for any jersey sets at the time of registration.

2026-2027 Fee and Payment Plan Options:

Full Payment Option

Level	Birth Range	Registration Fee	Due At Registration	Due Sept 1	Due Oct 1	Due Nov 1	Due Dec 1
Mini Mite	June 1, 2019 - May 21, 2021	\$250	\$250	--	--	-	-
Mite	June 1, 2017 - May 31, 2019	\$250	\$250	--	--	--	--
Squirt/10U	June 1, 2015 - May 31, 2017	\$630	\$630	--	--	--	--
PeeWee/12U	June 1, 2013 - May 31, 2015	\$700	\$700	--	--	--	--
Bantam/15U	June 1, 2011 - May 31, 2013	\$840	\$840	--	--	--	--
Junior Gold	June 1, 2009 - May 31, 2011	\$840	\$840	--	--	--	--

Payment Plan Option

Level	Birth Range	Registration Fee	Due At Registration	Due Sept 1	Due Oct 1	Due Nov 1	Due Dec 1
Mini Mite	June 1, 2019 - May 21, 2021	\$250	\$200	\$13	\$13	\$13	\$13
Mite	June 1, 2017 - May 31, 2019	\$250	\$200	\$13	\$13	\$13	\$13
Squirt/10U	June 1, 2015 - May 31, 2017	\$630	\$200	\$108	\$108	\$108	\$108
PeeWee/12U	June 1, 2013 - May 31, 2015	\$700	\$200	\$125	\$125	\$125	\$125
Bantam/15U	June 1, 2011 - May 31, 2013	\$840	\$200	\$160	\$160	\$160	\$160
Junior Gold	June 1, 2009 - May 31, 2011	\$840	\$200	\$160	\$160	\$160	\$160

Notes:

- If you require a jersey set, you will receive an additional \$130 charge per jersey set
- Crossbar processing fees are an additional fee and not included above

Late Fees:

Late fees will be assessed if registration is not completed by July 14th.

- Flat late fees per skater:
 - July 14th - July 31st: \$100
 - August 1st - August 31st: \$150
 - September 1st and later: \$200

Late fees are added to an installment payment amount if the payment is charged after a grace period of 30 days from when payment was due which is \$50. For example, if your installment payment amount due is \$250 and the late fee is \$50 after 30 days, the card will be charged \$300 on the 31st day after the installment payment was originally scheduled.

Fundraising Participation

All families are required to participate in the annual fundraising program. For the 2026–2027 season, each family is responsible for raising \$800, which will be fulfilled through a single raffle held over the course of the year. Each family will receive an allotted number of raffle tickets equal to the fundraising requirement. Families may choose to sell their tickets to others or purchase the tickets themselves to meet the obligation.

MEMBERSHIP SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

To ensure the financial stability of the Association and maintain fairness among all member families, all registration fees, fundraising obligations, and volunteer hour requirements must be fulfilled according to the established timelines. Families with outstanding financial obligations or unfulfilled volunteer hour requirements may be subject to the following actions:

1. Players may participate in preseason evaluations/tryouts.
2. Players will not be rostered on a team until all outstanding obligations are satisfied or an approved payment arrangement is in place.
3. Players may be deemed ineligible to participate in district, regional, state, or postseason competition until all outstanding obligations are fulfilled.
4. Families with unresolved balances or volunteer obligations may be prohibited from registering players for future seasons.

The Board of Directors reserves the right to determine eligibility and participation status for any family with outstanding obligations. Additionally, the Association understands that financial hardships may occur. Families experiencing difficulty meeting their obligations are encouraged to contact the Association before deadlines are missed. Confidential payment plans or alternative arrangements may be available. Families who proactively communicate and enter into an approved payment arrangement will remain in good standing as long as the agreed-upon terms are being met.

For assistance, please contact:

- President: president@riverlakeshockey.com
- Treasurer: treasurer@riverlakeshockey.com

Committee Service:

Each family unit registering for hockey (**including First Year Skaters**) are required to participate on a committee. Committee membership terms run for a full year. There are no set hours associated with committee membership; rather, committee membership is focused on task completion. While minimal, please recognize that some committees have responsibilities outside the hockey season.

Some committee positions are appointed by the Board, others are available via preference during registration.

Failure to fulfill the Committee Service will result in an additional (6) hours of Association Service.
List of Committees:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • 4-on-4 | • Koronis Operations/Cleaning |
| • Advertising & Sponsorship | • Koronis Outdoor Rink |
| • Board of Directors | • Marketing & Branding |
| • Buddy Program | • Mite Jamboree |
| • Clothing | • Player Development Committee |
| • Coaching | • Recruitment & Retention |
| • Concessions | • River Lakes Hockey Weekend |
| • Volunteer Coordinator | • Safety Committee |
| • Fall Fundraiser | • SCORE Coordinator |

- Gambling
- Golf Fundraiser
- Grant Writer
- Teals Receipt Processor
- Team Manager
- Tournament

The following individual positions are aligned under and report directly to the BOD, but receive credit for committee service:

- Volunteer Coordinator
- Grant Writer
- Ice Schedulers
- SCORE Coordinator

Process

During registration, each family unit will state three preferences for their committee assignment. If you liked the committee you served on last year and want to remain, please indicate so during registration. When assigning committees, an effort will be made to match assignments with stated preferences but will not be possible in all cases.

Individuals who want to coach (all levels) or serve as team managers should select those committees as their first choice. Initial committee assignments will be made by early November.

Volunteer Hours

All families are required to participate in Volunteer Hours. It is an excellent means to learn how the system works and meet the other wonderful people within the River Lakes Association. Volunteer hours can be filled by anyone 18 years of age or older. **Volunteer hours not worked will be billed at \$60 per hour.**

First Year Free Program: The First Year Free Program is available to first-time Mini Mite and Mite skaters who are new to River Lakes Hockey. Eligible families receive complimentary registration and a reduced volunteer commitment of four (4) hours during their first season.

New Family Welcome Program: The New Family Welcome Program is available to families whose skater is joining River Lakes Hockey for the first time at the Squirt/10U level or above. Standard registration fees apply; however, the family will receive a reduced volunteer commitment of four (4) hours during their first season to help ease the transition into the association.

Returning Family Program: Families with returning skaters are subject to standard registration fees and the association's volunteer commitment requirement of twelve (12) hours per family.

Notes:

1. Families are eligible for either the First Year Free Program or the New Family Welcome Program only during their first season with River Lakes Hockey. Subsequent seasons will fall under the Returning Family Program requirements.
2. A maximum of 2 hours credit will be issued per family for parades

Program	Eligible Players	Registration Fee	Volunteer Requirement
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First Year Free Program	First-time Mini Mite and Mite skaters who are new to River Lakes Hockey	Free	4 hours
New Family Welcome Program	First-year Squirt/10U, Peewee/12U, Bantam/15U, and 12U/15U girls skaters who are new to River Lakes Hockey	Standard registration fees apply	4 hours
Returning Family Program	All returning River Lakes Hockey families	Standard registration fees apply	12 hours

While not anticipated, the number of hours may change based on need.

These are the following volunteer credits you receive depending on your role in the association:

- Squirt Level & Up Head Coaches: 12 volunteer hours
- Squirt Level & Up Assistant Coaches & Team Managers: 10 volunteer hours
- Lil' Stars Hockey Level Coaches: 4 volunteer hours
- Lil' Stars Hockey Level Team Managers: 6 volunteer hours
- Lil' Stars Hockey Coordinators: 8 volunteer hours
- Board of Directors: 12 volunteer hours as long as you attend 8 board meetings in a calendar year

How to Work the Concession Stand

We will be staffing the concession stand in the Paynesville Arena. Members can work the concession stand as part of their volunteer hours. Hours can be signed up through the RLH website under your account.

It is highly encouraged that you attend a training session with the concession stand director prior to fulfilling any shifts. Please see the concession stand manual on the homepage of the website for detailed instructions on how to work the concession stand.

Team Support

Each team is responsible for working your team's games and tournament games (penalty box, time clock, locker room monitor, etc.) and for away games (penalty box and score book). **Team Support is not covered by the buyout option.**

Buyouts

If you have more money than time and wish to buyout the volunteer hours and committee services that are required, please reach out to the Treasurer by August 15th and you will be billed an additional \$1500.

IMPORTANT POLICY REMINDERS

1. If for any reason you have a balance (money or service hours) remaining on your account from the prior season, you will need to pay for that balance before the new season starts (the start of camp) – this includes service hours. **Players will not be allowed to play until all overdue balances are paid in full.**
2. A player registering for the first time with the association must present proof of age by providing a copy of the player's birth certificate issued by a governmental body or a passport. (Not a hospital or baptismal certificate)

3. If a waiver request to a higher level is granted, the family will be responsible for the balance of the registration and association requirements for the team the player has been placed on.

1. Peer and acceleration waiver requests are due to the registrar by September 1st
2. Please see detailed waiver policy on our website and in the current handbook for details

4. Traveling Team fees include the cost of two away tournaments, minus the portion that RLH covers for away tournaments (see page 24). **Players will have additional costs on top of their registration fees for away tournaments known as team fees.** Any team choosing to use more ice than the River Lakes Association allocates will be charged for the ice time used. See list of Association allocated ice touches, games and scrimmages found on page 21.

5. By registering, you give your permission for River Lakes Hockey to use your child's name and/or picture in articles representing our association and on social media.

Association Operations

Ice Touches Per Level

River Lakes Allocated Ice Touches	Suggested Ice Touches Per Week	Total Games Per Season
Mini Mite	2	6
8U/Mite	2	up to 7 full ice per D5
10U / Squirt	4	35
12U / Peewee	4	50
15U / Bantam	5	55

- Skills night is included in the weekly practice count
- Jamborees are included in the Total Season Game Count
- Split Ice practices count for each team on the ice for time scheduled
- Lil' Stars Hockey Gamedays are not included in the game counts
- A week is considered Monday – Sunday

Teams choosing to use more ice than allocated in a week will be billed for the ice at a rate of \$150 per hour. \$75 per hour for split ice practices. Team managers will be responsible for collecting each team's ice fees if they have any.

Team Management

The most important part of this task is to keep the parents of your team informed of details regarding not only the association in general, but your team. You must check and double check that they are receiving information from the association. You are the mediator between coaches and parents. If parents have an issue with a coach and don't feel comfortable approaching them, you are the link between them. As the liaison between the board (association) and the team, you could be asked to collect things from parents such as money, fundraising materials, and any other items from time to time during the season.

A mandatory meeting needs to be held at your first team practice to inform your team of the away tournaments that the association has set up for your team. You will receive a detailed invoice from the tournament director of your teams financial responsibility for your teams tournaments. You will need to collect money from each family and turn it into the Treasurer.

In the event that your home tournament does not fill, teams will be given permission to register at the team's expense for an additional tournament with the intent that this tournament is drivable and hotel stays are not necessary. A team vote is not necessary for replacing a home tournament as long as the tournament is within a drivable distance. A drivable distance is determined as less than 90 minutes away from the Koronis Arena as it is the central location of our association.

The first team practice of each month is designated for team meetings:

- This is the time to ask any questions you have of the coaches. Teams can resolve any issues and get clarification on communications. If a team would like to have a board member present at the meeting to clarify policies that can be arranged
- These meetings should not be more than 30 minutes unless you have a special agenda such as tournament planning.
- The first team meeting is a great time to introduce yourself to each other and offer to help with team activities, identify both your team manager and team tournament coordinator, and to establish carpools.

Coaches

Our association depends on volunteer coaches to operate the teams of River Lakes Stars Youth Hockey. Typically, these coaches are parents. The Player Development Committee (PDC) will select coaches for the various teams. All coaches are required to be registered with USA Hockey and have current certifications for the level they are coaching. Coaches must attend the mandatory coaches meeting. Coaches are required to pay their USA Hockey registration fee. In return, coaches receive credit for various volunteer hours based on the level of play they coach. Please see page 19 in the handbook for details. Additional information for coaches is found on the Resources tab on the RLH website under "For Coaches".

River Lakes Hockey's goal is to have non-parent coaches for the top boy's/girl's teams. If there is a non-parent coach, the Association will pay a reimbursement for head coaches and assistant coaches, with a recommendation given by the PDC Chair, which is then voted on by the RLH Board of Directors. The dollar amount is dependent on their commitment during the season as determined by the PDC Chair. The association will pay for non-parent coaches' overnight accommodations (not applicable for those with a sibling on the team) for all away tournaments and playoffs hotel expenses.

Parent Roles

Parents are members of the River Lakes Hockey Association and are expected to represent our association as hosts in our arenas, and be a respectful guest in other arenas. Parents, along with their child(ren), should review the Parent and Player Code of Conduct presented at the end of this handbook.

Parents are expected to keep abreast of the requirements and expectations of being a member of this association. Certain financial and volunteer requirements must be met. These are outlined in this handbook. In addition, sales of various raffle tickets are also required. Please review emails and the RLS website to keep up to date on these items.

It is also imperative that parents take leadership roles in the various boards and committees required to keep the association going. We are a volunteer run organization. Our strength will come from our volunteers.

Jersey Ordering, Number Selection and Care:

Purchasing Jerseys for Squirts/10U, Peewee/12U, Bantams/15U, and Junior Gold

Each family of travel skaters will be responsible for purchasing one home and one away jersey for each of their players. The jerseys will be personalized with your skater's last name and number of choice. They will get to keep these jerseys as a keepsake, and they will not be turned back into the association.

Based on expected wear and tear of the jerseys, we will order new jerseys every two years. The cost of these jerseys is on top of your registration fees. This year the total for the two jerseys is \$130. Ordering the correct jersey size will be each family's responsibility. The association is not responsible for inaccurate orders.

Number Selection:

As an incentive to register on time, you will not be able to select your skater's number until you have completed your online registration on the River Lakes website. Once completed, you will receive an email confirmation of your registration, and a link to the online number selection process. Please click on the appropriate age level link and you will be able to choose from the numbers that are still available.

The number you select this year will be your skater's number all the way through association (youth) hockey, unless they choose to change it when new jerseys are ordered. If your skater would like to change numbers at that point, we will help guide you to the link of remaining available numbers for them to choose from.

Only 1st year Squirts and 1st year 10u skaters will be required to choose a new number. Odd numbers will be assigned for 1st years in an odd calendar year and even numbers will be assigned for 1st year skaters during even calendar years. The entire 10U/12U/15U programs will select from numbers 1-99

Jersey Number Conflict Policy: In any instances where a number conflict on a team arises due to a player waiving or choosing to not peer waiver one year, they are responsible for selecting a new jersey number and the financial costs of the jersey sets.

Jersey Care

Jersey Care for the Mini-Mite & Mite Programs

Jerseys are supplied by the association for the mini-mite and mite levels. **ONLY** association provided jerseys can be worn by teams during games. Jerseys supplied are the property of the association, and members are responsible for proper care and safekeeping of the jerseys. Accordingly:

- Members will keep jerseys clean and washed on a regular basis. Wash in cold water only and line dry or tumble dry on low heat.
- Jerseys will be stored on a hanger. Jerseys may not be stored in hockey bags due to the risk of cuts from skates.
- Jerseys are for game wear only and may not be worn to practices. Jersey can be worn on game days to school and in support of other association teams (High School teams included) during District, Regional, or State tournament games.
- At the end of the season, members are responsible to turn jerseys in a timely manner. Lost jerseys or those damaged through negligence or improper care will result in a charge to the member for the cost of the jersey plus the cost of the replacement jersey.

Jersey Care for Squirts/10U, Peewee/12U, Bantam/15U, and Junior Gold Skaters

Jerseys are purchased by individual families. **ONLY** the association approved jerseys can be worn by teams during games. Members are responsible for proper care and safekeeping of the jerseys. Accordingly:

- Teams desiring to identify captains and alternate captains may do so if no permanent damage is done to the jersey when it is removed from the jersey at the end of the season or at the head coach's discretion.
- Members will keep jerseys clean and washed on a regular basis. Wash in cold water only and line dry or tumble dry on low heat.
- Jerseys will be stored on a hanger. Jerseys may not be stored in hockey bags due to the risk of cuts from skates.
- Jerseys are for game wear only and may not be worn to practices. Jersey can be worn on game days to school and in support of other association teams (High School teams included) during District, Regional, or State tournament games.

Tournaments

River Lakes Association has paid for two away tournaments for each team at the Squirt/10U level. The association will cover the following amount in tournament registration fees per Squirt/10U team for away tournaments: \$2,100. Any registration fees over \$2,100 are to be split equally among each skater (known as team fees). Squirt/10U teams are allowed to participate in one additional away tournament. A team vote must be held if participation is wanted, and all expenses of any additional tournaments are at the team's expense. If 75% ($\frac{3}{4}$) of the team votes in support of the tournament, then the team can participate in the tournament.

At the Peewee/12U and Bantam/15U level the association has registered for a minimum of two away tournaments with a max of four away tournaments. The association will cover the following amount in tournament registration fees per Peewee/12U team for away tournament registrations: \$2,250 and \$2,700 for Bantam/15U/Junior Gold teams. All away tournament fees over the association coverage amount are to be split equally among each skater (known as team fees)

The association does **not** cover gate fees, if charged. If gate fees are included in the tournament fee for the association paid tournaments, a bill will be provided to each team manager. Your team is responsible for covering these fees. Team fees are due to the treasurer by November 1st.

In the event that your home tournament does not fill, teams will be given permission to register at the team's expense for an additional tournament with the intent that this tournament is drivable and hotel stays are not necessary. A team vote is not necessary for replacing a home tournament as long as the tournament is within a drivable distance. A drivable distance is determined as less than 90 minutes away from the Koronis Arena as it is the central location of our association.

Home Tournaments:

Parents are expected to fill the hours required to have a successful home tournament (these are considered team support hours) so please keep Friday, Saturday, and Sunday open to be available to your team. Your team manager will divide the number of hours needed by the number of players on your team and determine how many hours each family needs to work. Please visit the [tournament page](#) on our website for the dates of our home tournaments.

Play-Offs

Play-offs are held for Bantam, Peewee, and Girls 12U leagues. All teams are seeded into a double elimination playoff format. Regional tournament entry awards for Bantam A/AA, Bantam B, Peewee A/AA,

Peewee B, Girls 12UA, and Girls 12UB district playoff teams are identified in the posted brackets. Minnesota Hockey does not hold regional tournaments at the C level. A district play-off tournament will also be held for Squirts and 10U. District 5 will count the entire play-off tournament as one game towards the season game maximum.

River Lakes Hockey Association will pay for all district playoff games for all teams. Furthermore, teams advancing beyond Districts will have their fees paid by the Association.

“SCORE” Program

Skaters Cannot Overlook Responsible Education

Qualifying student skaters can win CASH!!!

The goal of the SCORE program is to help promote education through responsible behavior while involved in River Lakes Hockey. Therefore, skaters are encouraged to study hard and are asked to try and obtain and maintain a GRADE “B” AVERAGE or a GRADE “A” AVERAGE for two consecutive grading periods during the current hockey season. This will essentially be the sole criteria needed to qualify for a share of the CASH prizes of \$500.00.

Enrollment/Qualification process:

- **All River Lakes Hockey players will be automatically enrolled in the SCORE program after successfully completing their hockey registration.**
- Parents /Skaters should email the students report card, outlining two current school year grading periods, to the SCORE program coordinator for “B” average and/or “A” average verification by mid March to Kate Zimmer, kate.zimmer@yahoo.com. (All grades will be kept confidential). Those who absolutely do not have access to e-mail can contact their coach or team manager and request they email the report card for them. It would be beneficial in many ways to have your skater take on the responsibility for turning in their own grades, as it will help them take responsibility and ownership in the SCORE program.
- Again, your skater will need to achieve and maintain the Grade “B” or “A” average for two consecutive grading periods during the current hockey season in order to be eligible for a portion of the cash prize money. Squirt Level and Higher skaters maintaining a “B” average will be eligible for a portion of \$300.00 in cash and prizes. Skaters maintaining an “A” average will be eligible for a portion of \$450.00 in cash and prizes. Lil’ Stars Hockey Program skaters are eligible for a \$50.00 prize. The Drawing is held at the River Lakes Hockey Year End Meeting.
- In cases of younger skaters’ grades often time other letters are used to represent levels of achievement such as “S” for satisfactory or “N” for needs improvement, etc. In these cases, a “B” average can still be computed by the SCORE coordinator given the grading scale key used by each individual school that is often located on the report card itself. The SCORE coordinator will use his/her best judgment when figuring out if a child earned a “B” average or not. (For example: some schools use O, S+, S, and N. This grading scale would be converted to O=A, S+=B, S=C, and N= D for SCORE purposes.
- In cases of home-schooled skaters. The skater's parents will be responsible to notify the Coordinator via email if their skater has obtained and maintained the equivalent of a Grade “B” or Grade “A” average as outlined above.

The Grade A and B average will be strictly enforced as well as the deadline to turn the report cards in. Any parental concerns or grievances over your child’s grade calculations should be directed first to the SCORE program coordinator and if unresolved, the matter will then be directed to the River Lakes Board for a final decision.

Send grades to SCORE Program Coordinator- Kate Zimmer, kate.zimmer@yahoo.com.

Sportsmanship Awards

Dan Boerner, Matt Olson, and Scott Wenner Sportsmanship Award

Dan Boerner, Matt Olson, and Scott Wenner were three coaches in our association that passed on early in their lives. To commemorate the contributions these individuals made to our association, a sportsmanship award has been named in their honor. This award goes to the players whose qualities of being a good sport is conducted both “on” and “off” the ice by their example of abiding by the rules and accepting victory or defeat graciously and showing respect for all that were involved. The winner of the award is decided between coaches.

The winner will receive a certificate, have their name displayed on the Sportsmanship Award page on the website, and have their name engraved on the sportsmanship plaque which is displayed at the Richmond arena. Each River Lakes Stars team Squirts/10U and older will have one player chosen for this award.

Clothing

River Lakes will be using Rambow and various vendors as our clothing vendors for the hockey season. More information regarding the ordering periods will be sent out as they are determined via Weekly Update communications or emails from the association.

Inclement Weather Policy

River Lakes Hockey has the following Inclement Weather Policy: If any school district in our area closes school, or schools are released early, this will trigger conversations with the Executive Committee, the Koronis Arena Manager, and the Richmond Arena Manager. These individuals will look at factors such as the projected forecast, road conditions, and projected conditions as practices start and end throughout the evening.

If a decision is made to close the arenas, this information will be communicated to the Head Coaches via email and text message. Team managers will be alerted via email and whichever communication platform (e.g. Group Me or Team Reach) the Board of Director overseeing the team managers uses to communicate urgent matters to team managers.

Any closures of either Arena will be made no later than within 3 hours to the start of a scheduled practice start time unless conditions drastically worsen

As a reminder, coaches have the discretion to cancel practice at any time they see fit (this includes inclement weather). Coaches need to communicate to the ice schedulers no later than three hours before the scheduled practice if they wish to cancel.

In the event of inclement weather, we also leave travel at the discretion of the parents with no consequences if any attendance policies are in place with your team.

Grievance Procedure

If at any time, a party within the association has questions or concerns about any action taken towards themselves or their skater that they'd like to address with another party, they shall first attempt to have a conversation with that person. It is recommended that these conversations take place 24 hours after an incident to avoid an emotional or heated discussion. In the event that a parent and/or guardian has a concern about a coach, they are asked not to approach a coach in any arena on game day and to do so only in an appropriate setting and at a reasonable time. It is our belief that as adult members of the association, we have a responsibility to model conflict resolution in a manner that exhibits professionalism and a calm demeanor.

Our goal is to resolve the issue with a personal conversation between the two parties first. If this conversation does not resolve the issue, any of the parties involved may move the issue towards a formal grievance. The party not satisfied with the conversation will need to complete the [online Grievance Form](#) (hereafter referred to as the filer). The filer needs to address the concern in writing via the [online Grievance Form](#). This form is automatically sent to the Grievance Committee which consists of the Directors of Hockey, President, and PDC Chair. The grievance form will be shared with the party the grievance is being filed against (hereafter referred to as the respondent).

The respondent shall respond to the Grievance Form within three (3) days of being filed. The filer is asked not to approach the respondent in any way about the situation.

After the written response to the Grievance Form, if either the filer or respondent are not satisfied, then the Grievance Committee will meet with all parties to mediate and rule on the matter. The Board of Directors empowers this committee to rule on disciplinary actions and any other circumstances brought forth by the Grievance Form. The committee's decision shall stand as a final resolution to the Grievance Form.

Steps in Grievance Policy

1. Verbal communication with the two involved parties to work through the grievance
2. *Grievances will not move forward until Step 1 has been exhausted
3. Complete the [online Grievance Form](#)
4. Wait 3 days for the respondent to respond to the Grievance Form
5. Meeting with the Grievance Committee to convene and rule on the issue.
 - a. This step is only necessary if the parties are not satisfied after step 2

Policies

Fair Ice Policy

The River Lakes Hockey Association supports fair ice time for all players. Coaches are encouraged to use their best efforts to give ice time fairly to all players on their team.

“Fair Ice” does not mean “Equal Ice” in each game. The flow of the game may occasionally result in unequal playing times in a game. In addition, some teams may carry numbers of players that do not evenly divide up into lines which makes it more difficult to equally rotate lines.

“Fair Ice” does not mean that all players are entitled to play every position or the position that they prefer. Position decisions, including goaltending, are the responsibility of the coaches. Coaches will balance the needs and abilities of individual players and the team as a whole with a focus on maximizing long-term development.

In addition, at all levels except mites/8U, coaches are given discretion during power plays, penalty kills, and at the end of close games. Coaches should attempt to balance these playing time decisions over the course of the season to the extent possible (e.g. if a player has reduced playing time during one game to increase playing time in a future game where possible).

At Bantams and the highest level offered by RLH for Peewees and 12U, playing time is earned and not necessarily equal. Coaches will allocate playing time according to ability, effort, and game situations. At this level “fair” is a reflection of the playing time earned by a player, preparation for higher levels of hockey, and fairness to the team.

In summary:

Level of Play	Coach's discretion allowed
Mini-Mites, Mites, 8U	Never
Squirt, 10U, Levels other than the top level of Pee wee/12U	End of a close game, powerplay and penalty kill
Junior Gold, Bantams, Highest level of Pee wee/12U	At all times because playing time at this level is earned and not necessarily equal

Goalie Playing Time:

In cases with more than one full-time goalie (as determined by the coaches) on a team, goalie playing time should be rotated and we expect the full-time goalies to play approximately the same amount of time over the course of a season. Coaches should communicate their goalie rotation plans clearly to the goalies on their team. In any given multi-game weekend or tournament, all full-time goalies should be given the opportunity to play, barring injury or suspension.

On teams with one or more players who both play goalie and skate out, the specific circumstances will guide playing time decisions. Coaches are encouraged to consult with the Goalie Coordinator and the PDC, particularly in unique or complicated situations. However, coaches are given broad discretion to maximize the long-term development of the players on their team.

Coaches at all levels can adjust goaltender playing plans, including removing a goaltender from a game, in cases where a goaltender is not at their normal level of performance. It is the responsibility of the coach(s) to ensure reasonable, positive communication is given to the goalie pulled as to why the action was taken.

As with other positions, coaches have the discretion to allow skaters to play goalie whether they went through evaluations at that position or not and to ask goalies to skate out. In both cases, clear communication to all affected players is expected as well as providing practice opportunities to prepare players before inserting them in a game.

Special Circumstances:

At all levels, coaches are allowed to use a reduction of playing time as a consequence for violation of team policies (e.g., attendance or participation in team activities), violation of expectations (e.g., misbehavior or attitude), or in-game concerns (e.g. player injury, preventing a penalty-based suspension, keeping a player out to cool off, etc.). In all cases, the coach should clearly communicate the consequence to the player and to the family if they request it.

At Squirrels/10U, Peewees/12U, Bantams and Junior Gold, when a skater's ability is far below the lowest level

of play offered by RLH, the coach has discretion to deviate from these expectations, or at any time when the coach has concerns for the player's safety. Examples of when this could arise include when there is a new player to hockey or a player switches to a new position (goalie to defense). The coach should clearly communicate these plans to the skater and family and provide opportunities for improvement (e.g., allow practice time for that player to develop to an acceptable level). The coach should set milestones and expectations for the player that will lead to changes in playing time (e.g., specific skill sets). If the parents of the player disputes the coach's assessment and plan, the Directors of Hockey and members of the PDC will be asked to work with the coach to evaluate the player and help develop a plan for the player. These situations will be addressed on a case-by-case basis with no standard procedure set by the Board, Directors of Hockey, or PDC.

Locker Room Supervision and Code of Conduct Policy

Purpose:

This policy integrates the USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey locker room supervision policies with a participant Code of Conduct so all members may participate in association activities in a safe and respectful environment. This policy applies to locker room activities and on and off ice in our Association, District 5, and Minnesota Hockey venues involving minor players; minor players and adult players; adults being alone with individual minor players in locker rooms; and with non-official or non-related adults having unsupervised access to minor participants at sanctioned team events.

Policy:

1. A "responsible adult" is defined as an Association gender-specific member parent or registered coach who has completed a background check and is Safesport certified.
2. At least one responsible adult must be physically present in and directly monitoring the locker room before, during, and after all team events to assure that only participants (coaches and players), approved team personnel and family members (Lil' Stars Hockey only) are permitted in the locker room and to supervise the conduct in the locker room. The responsible adult is present in the locker room to prevent hazing, rough-housing, inappropriate behaviors, verbal abuse, and vandalism.
3. Individual meetings with a minor player and a coach or other adult in a locker room are not allowed. A responsible adult must be present, as a third party, during any meeting or other circumstance when a coach or other adult is in a locker room with a single player.
4. Responsible (gender appropriate) adults must always personally monitor the locker room environment while participants are present and also make sure the locker room is locked during times when minor participants are on the ice.
5. All responsible adults serving as locker room monitors should be gender correct and the co-ed locker room policy must be followed as described in the current USA Hockey Annual Guide. Monitors must be screened and meet all USA Hockey screening standards.
6. Cell phones, recordable devices, cameras or devices with photographic capabilities are not allowed in a locker room.
7. Locker room behaviors of all participants shall conform to the Code of Conduct. Each registered player and a parent must read and attest by signature to the Code of Conduct. A signed copy of the Code of Conduct is a required component of registration, and players may not participate in association activities until the Code of Conduct has been signed.

Procedures and Responsibilities:

1. Team Managers will ensure this policy is implemented and enforced for each team. All adults and coaches are responsible for actively enforcing this policy.

2. A variety of techniques may be employed to support this policy. In many cases, particularly at the travel team level, coaches may elect to fulfill the responsible adult role. In other cases, it may be necessary to assign and rotate the duties among parents.
3. Parents serving in the responsible adult role are present in the locker room for locker room supervision. Coaching should be left to the coaching staff.
4. Association Directors shall periodically spot check compliance with this policy.
5. Teams who demonstrate inappropriate locker room behaviors, in violation of this policy or the code of conduct, may receive sanctions in the form of loss of locker room privileges or other disciplinary action. Individuals in violation of this policy or the code of conduct may be subjected to disciplinary action, and risk loss of Association membership privileges. Violations of the laws of the State of Minnesota will be handed over to appropriate legal authorities.

Co-Ed Locker Room Policy

Where possible, the male and female players should undress/dress in separate locker rooms and then convene in a single dressing room prior to the game or team meeting. Once the game is finished, the players may come to one locker room and then the male and female players proceed to their separate dressing rooms to undress and shower (separately), if available. If separate locker rooms are not available, then the genders may take turns using the locker room to change and then leave while the other gender changes.

Where possible, when both male and female players are together in the locker room, there should be at least two adults in the locker room that have been properly screened in compliance with USA Hockey Screening Policy.

If separate locker rooms are not available at either our home rink or at away rinks, the following options are acceptable:

- The player may come dressed to the rink
- The genders take turns using the locker room to change. We understand that these arrangements may require that players arrive earlier or leave later to dress, but believe that this is the most reasonable way to accommodate and respect all of our players.

Peer, Numbers, and Acceleration Waiver Policy

It is the policy of River Lakes Hockey that players should play on teams as defined by Minnesota Hockey age groups and classifications. While some players may be more advanced at a particular age than others, RLH agrees with MN Hockey and USA Hockey that overall development of the player emotionally and physically is best served by having him or her progress normally through age levels and team classifications. RLH does recognize exceptions could arise beyond the normal scope of this policy.

1. **Peer Waiver:** A waiver requested to keep a skater with his/her grade in school
2. **Numbers Waiver:** Players are needed to complete a team.
 - Only the PDC can request skaters for a numbers waiver.
3. **Acceleration:** (Based on player skills and abilities) In rare instances, if a player cannot find comparable competition at his or her age level and the move would not adversely affect the numbers of either team involved.
 - The following criterion must be met in order to apply for an acceleration waiver.
 - The player must have played at the highest level of their age-appropriate group in the season prior to the acceleration request.
 - No player may accelerate more than one year beyond their age-appropriate level. For example, a first-year Peewee cannot accelerate to play Bantams.

Recommendation for team sizes is no larger than 15 skaters and no smaller than 10 skaters per team.

Waiver requests will be discussed at the September Player Development Committee meeting. All requests will be reviewed with one of the following responses: Denied, Granted, or Approved for an evaluation.

All players will begin the season playing with their age-eligible team until notified by the Player Development Committee on the status of their waiver.

If the waiver is granted by River Lakes Hockey, a formal waiver request will need to be completed and presented to the D5 Director for approval (with the exception of Peer Waivers).

If a waiver request to a higher level is granted, the family will be responsible for the balance of the registration and association requirements for the team the player has been placed on.

Peer Waiver Process:

1. Complete waiver form and turn into the Registrar prior to September 1st.

Numbers Waiver Process:

1. PDC determines a need for players to complete a team.
2. Player readiness for the next level will be assessed by the Player Development Committee in consultation with previous coaches, discussions with parents, and/or informal observations (e.g., 4 on 4 or camps).
3. In the event that more players apply and are deemed ready than are needed, an evaluation process will be followed.
 - a. If this happens before player evaluations, the applying skaters may be asked to skate at evaluations. If this happens after evaluations or evaluations are determined not to be the preferred method of assessment, the Player Development Committee will arrange an alternative evaluation period.
4. If numbers waivers are granted prior to evaluations, families will be given the option to skate at evaluations. Even if skating at evaluations, waived skaters will be placed on the lowest team. However, in cases where a player's abilities do not fit at the lowest level to such an extent that their development, the development of other players, and/or the competitive balance of play against other teams would be negatively affected, the player may be placed on a higher level team.

Acceleration Waiver Process:

1. Complete waiver form and turn into the Registrar prior to September 1st.
 - a. No acceleration waivers will be granted from Mites/8U to Squirrels/10U.
2. Player Development Committee will review the waiver at their September meeting.
 - a. Input may be sought from previous seasons' coaches or other individuals that can provide information relevant to the decision-making process
 - b. If an acceleration waiver is approved, the player will be notified that an evaluation is approved within 48 hours after the July Player Development Committee meeting.
3. If an acceleration waiver is approved for an evaluation, the player may play at either their age-appropriate level or the level they wish to accelerate to until the evaluation process is complete.
4. The player must participate in both evaluation sessions, their age-appropriate level as well as the level they wish to accelerate to.

- a. For levels without an evaluation process, 4-on-4 or other less formal evaluation settings may be used instead.
- b. Must pay a \$50 non-refundable evaluation fee and must be current on all association fees.
- c. The player must finish in the top 3 overall skater rankings at the level they wish to accelerate to. Goalies must finish as the top goalie in the level they wish to accelerate to.
 - i. If the player does not meet this requirement, they will return to their age-appropriate level and be placed on a team based on the evaluation process they participated in at that level.
 - ii. If the player meets this requirement, they will be placed on the highest-level team.
- d. This process will repeat if the player wants to accelerate to a higher level again in the future. A player is not forced to advance to a higher level if they have been granted an acceleration waiver in the past (e.g. a player can play 3-years at one level).

Waiver request forms can be [found here](#), or on the RLH website under the “Players Evaluations Tab”

Discretionary Waiver Policy

It is the policy of River Lakes Hockey that we will not grant any Discretionary Waivers.

Per MN Hockey Section IV Participation:

5. Players denied a waiver or given a waiver with conditions by their Home Association may appeal in writing to the Home Association's District Director Committee. The Committee's decision is final.

Evaluations

Mission Statement

The goal of the Evaluation Procedure is to ensure that each skater in River Lakes Hockey is placed on a team of similar skill level to theirs to promote player development.

Objectives for the Evaluation Procedure

- A. Provide a fair and impartial assessment of a player's total hockey skills during the evaluation process using ALL knowledge available to evaluators.
- B. Provide uniformity and consistency in the evaluation process.
- C. To have player and parent expectations consistent from year to year as players move through the various levels of the association's program.
- D. To place players on teams where they can develop and participate equitably and have fun playing hockey during the season.
- E. Make the evaluation process as efficient as possible for everyone involved in the process including skaters, families, evaluators, PDC members and board members.

General Information

- A. Parents may not go beyond the lobby area during the evaluation sessions; lobby windows will be blocked.
- B. Any parent that does not want their skater participating on an “A” team can request an exemption (requests must be made prior to evaluations).

- C. Parents that prefer siblings on the same team may result in placement at the lower skill level team (requests must be made prior to evaluations).
- D. Players may be exempt from further evaluation sessions after the first evaluation scrimmage session if their final team placement has been determined.

Player Selection Process

Attendance

- A. Skaters are required to check in with a RLH Board Member at the beginning of each evaluation scrimmage session.
- B. If a skater cannot attend an evaluation session or sessions due to illness or injury, a physician's statement/slip is required for an excused absence. In the event of a conflict for a non-injured player, excused absences will be determined by the PDC Chair, Director(s) of Hockey, and the President. These absences will be treated in the same way an injured player is treated.
- C. Players excused from Evaluations due to injury, illness, or other excused absences will be preliminarily placed on a team by the PDC based on knowledge gained from people who know the player's abilities. After a 1 week trial period, the player's position will be considered permanent if approved by the coaches of the team and the PDC. If the coaches and the PDC do not believe the player belongs where they are placed for the 1 week trial period, further discussion with the PDC will be necessary to find the appropriate team for the player.

Measurement and Assessment

- A. Multiple PDC members (PDC members cannot evaluate the level in which they have a child) will evaluate each level and the goal is to also have outside evaluators (if possible, those who do not have kids in RLH). In addition, at least one (1) goalie specific evaluator will assist in evaluating the goalies.
- B. A board member will be assigned to each level to ensure transparency in the evaluation process. The board member can only be involved at levels in which their child is not participating.
- C. The evaluation process will begin with the Pre-Evaluation Camps; however, attendance is optional.
- D. At the conclusion of the Pre-Evaluations Camp, information may be compiled by the PDC from camp staff and previous coaches to provide a base structure leading into the evaluation scrimmage weekend that will guide team formation, group decision and other evaluation elements.
- E. The evaluation structure will be reviewed by the PDC on an annual basis.
- F. The Evaluation Scrimmage sessions will be a scrimmage format that will give the evaluators the opportunity to rate players in game conditions; some important factors that will be looked for in the scrimmage will include, but are not limited to:

- A. Fore-checking; ability-hustle, proper angling
- B. Back-checking; coming back hard and picking up the open player
- C. Quickness/speed
- D. Team play; make passes when necessary
- E. Positioning; player join the offensive play and cover for each other
- F. Skating ability and agility
- G. Players' ability to use hockey IQ when on and off the puck both defensively and offensively

Skill Sets to be Evaluated for goalies:

- A. Movement (lateral, in/out, agility)
- B. Save selection/execution
- C. Rebound control
- D. Mental focus/competitiveness
- E. Angles/square to puck

Adjusting evaluation groups - if multiple groups are required

- A. Groups will be reorganized based on the evaluation of the previous sessions.
- B. This will allow assessment of skills and scrimmages within each skill level and facilitate the assessment for the remaining sessions.

Conclusion of Player Selection Process

- a. Evaluators for each level will meet after the last evaluation session at each level and finalize team decisions.
- b. After all the evaluation sessions, the PDC meets to go over final team decisions including the number of players on each team and final roster decisions. The RLH President and Directors of Hockey will be in attendance.
- c. Coach's selection: the PDC will have open discussion on who they feel is the best candidate to coach each team.
- d. Evaluation results will be available to parents shortly after final decisions are completed. Results will be posted on the RLH website.

High School Program Opportunities

River Lakes Youth Hockey has established the following policy for players that are interested in exploring their opportunities with the High School Hockey Program. If a player would like to maintain their opportunity to play youth hockey, they must register and pay the initial registration fee. This will allow the player to skate at all preseason camp opportunities, attend evaluations, and skate with the appropriate team and attend skills nights until the High School season starts.

If after skating with the High School team, the player then chooses to stay at the high school level, the player will be refunded the balance of their registration fee less the \$200 non-refundable fee and \$25 per hour of scheduled ice time that was available to the player up until the time notice was given that they would not be returning.

Bantam Eligible Player Requesting to Play for High School

If an eligible bantam player has requested to play with the high school team instead of their designated bantam team, the head coach for the River Lakes Stars hockey team can accept or deny that player's request after a tryout process. The tryout process would occur during the first week of high school practices.

There are two scenarios in which the request would be granted:

1. The player in question has shown the ability to be a consistent VARSITY contributor.
2. The JV and Varsity numbers are lower than the desired number skaters (determined by coaches during that given season) and the player in question would add to the depth of the roster.

Goalie decisions will be based on the number of goalies rostered on the JV and Varsity.

Please reach out to the High School Varsity Coach if you have any questions.

Background Screening

Minnesota Hockey has adopted a policy to reduce the risk of young players becoming a victim of sexual or physical abuse. To carry out this policy, all adult coaches, officials, board members, employees, volunteers, and anyone else who will have regular contact with, or authority over, athletes under the age of 18 are required to submit to a background screen before any such contact with those athletes.

Please visit: <https://www.usahockey.com/backgroundscreen> to complete the background screening.

SafeSport

SafeSport is an USAH initiative aimed at creating the safest possible environment for all participants in USAH and Minnesota Hockey programs, particularly related to off-ice safety, by creating a mechanism that creates and centralizes policies prohibiting abuse, managing hockey environments, mandates education and awareness training, enhances screening protocols, and establishes reporting, investigation and response to violations which may occur. The policy applies not just to players, but all participants in any of our programs all the way down to spectators at our events. USAH has given this initiative the very highest priority and views it as one of the most important programs it has undertaken, and Minnesota Hockey agrees. Scott Gray sgray@metrolegal.com, 612-685-0406, is Minnesota Hockey's SafeSport Coordinator.

*The complete SafeSport Program Handbook is available at <https://www.usahockey.com/safesporttraining>, and <https://www.minnesotahockey.org/safesport>

Overview: The program provides for structure, education, reporting, investigation, and response to issues related to sexual and emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment, hazing, locker room supervision, travel, and billeting.

1. Each association names a volunteer to act as SafeSport Coordinator.
2. The association coordinator has several responsibilities including oversight of mandated training, ensuring that association establishes and enforces all related safety policies, coordination with teams/coaches on such policies, communicating SafeSport information to parents, receiving SafeSport complaints, working with Minnesota SafeSport Coordinator to investigate and respond to complaints.
3. Online training occurs prior to the start of each season.
4. Certification of training is reported to Minnesota Hockey SafeSport Coordinator.
5. Participants are made aware of the SafeSport Program and how to make reports.
6. Safety policies are monitored and enforced.
7. Reports are received and acted upon.

TRAINING: Your association SafeSport Coordinator should immediately complete the free on-line training aimed at identifying characteristics of various forms of abuse provided by USAH. To do so, they must register with USAH as a volunteer (free) and obtain a registration number, which they then can use to complete the training videos that are available at above referenced USAH website. USAH has also mandated that at least one representative from each team also complete the training program prior to the end of the season. Although training will likely be required in some format for the coaches, the final determination of what that will entail is yet to be decided, so although your coaches may certainly complete the available training in its current format, it is suggested that the team manager be the “representative” that completes the training. Obviously, issues will occur related to dates of team formation and identifying volunteers for these roles, but generally this is the intended path currently. Then, throughout the season the SafeSport Coordinator will work with all members of the association including your board to ensure that everyone completes the training program prior to the end of the season. A census of those completing the registration shall be compiled and reported to the Minnesota SafeSport Coordinator.

SCREENING: The screening requirements have now changed. USAH is now mandating a more thorough screen for any volunteers who have “regular, routine, and frequent access” to the players. We have identified those persons as primarily coaches and managers. Another possibility would be a regularly scheduled locker room monitor however some one person filling that role on a frequent or consistent basis is unlikely. For those persons who do not have regular, routine, and frequent contact with players, such as random locker room monitors, other volunteers, and board members, we will continue use of our existing screening method. In either case, although the on-line-screening form will be somewhat different in appearance, the process to accomplish the screen will be the same as it has been by visiting Minnesotahockey.org and click on the SafeSport tab. Although the local SafeSport Coordinator will not be involved with the screening aspects of the program, it is essential for them to work with the association and the teams to ensure that enough locker room monitors are screened and available when needed.

LOCKER ROOM MONITORING POLICY: A key component to the SafeSport initiative is to ensure that our locker rooms are always monitored and the players are present whether for practices or games. The policy always requires that a screened gender appropriate adult be present in the locker room where there are more than one player present, and two screened adults when there is only one player present. At no time shall one adult be alone in the room with one player. It cannot be stressed enough how critical it is for each association, and each team, to abide by this policy. Over half of the SafeSport violations of abuse I received the previous season related to incidents that occurred in unsupervised locker rooms- several which were quite serious in nature. In all cases, the associations/teams reported that although they were aware of the policy, they didn’t take it that seriously and had difficulty finding people to monitor the locker room. Although we acknowledge that it may not be the most desirable assignment, and is often difficult to find volunteers, it is crucial that the locker rooms be monitored. The SafeSport Coordinator should work with each team manager to identify and screen an adequate number of parents to fill this role, and at the

minimum ensure that the coaches are cognizant of this requirement sans the presence of a screened parent to fill the role.

REPORTING: People reporting SafeSport violations can contact USA Hockey SafeSport, the Minnesota Hockey SafeSport Coordinator, or the association SafeSport Coordinator. Violation reports received by anyone else should be immediately forwarded to the SafeSport Coordinator. Once the report is received, Minnesota Hockey will work with the local coordinator to investigate the allegations. It is important to note that one of the goals of SafeSport is to ensure that participants can feel comfortable with reporting abuses without fear of retribution. The reporting process allows for transparency, investigation, and action intended to be objective and neutral with the conclusion being reasonable, proportional, and fair. No reporting party should ever experience negative ramifications for bringing a report of abuse to our attention.

Website Privacy Statement

RLH Inc., as an association of families, cares deeply about protecting the children involved in our hockey program. It is necessary for the efficient conduct of business to run a website containing information about the hockey program, and to a certain extent, the names and contact information of certain participants. The names of minor children appearing on the website will only include first name and last name initial, and, for team rosters, the jersey number.

Parents who want to prevent disclosure of individually identifying information about their minor children can make their request to the respective team manager. Those requests will, in all cases, be honored.

River Lakes Hockey Coaches Code of Conduct & Responsibilities

A. Coaches Will:

- a. Follow Minnesota Hockey rules and guidelines.
- b. Follow the River Lakes Hockey Handbook.
- c. Learn the rules/regulations of the game.
- d. Have a parent meeting prior to the season, and monthly afterwards
- e. Keep in mind the player is the most important part of the program and that learning, developing, and effort are more important than winning
- f. Know and understand the rules of the game and share that understanding with the players
- g. Treat players fairly and honestly
- h. Be prompt and well prepared for practice – ice time is valuable
- i. Display consideration and understanding towards the players
- j. Share ideas and techniques with other coaches for the betterment of the entire program
- k. Be considerate of other teams
- l. Have a positive attitude at all times
- m. Teach players to respect game officials' decisions
- n. Be in the locker room at all times prior to/after games/practices or have a designated locker room monitor
- o. Lead by example and set a standard of conduct so high that coaches, players, parents, and fans will be proud
- p. Inform Hockey Directors of any conduct violations made by players, parents, or fellow leaders
- q. Participate in coaches meetings
- r. Follow the River Lakes Hockey player development plan/program
- s. Obtain necessary certification and ongoing training requirements as directed by USA Hockey

B. Coaches Will NOT:

- a. Use offensive language
- b. Show favoritism to players or families
- c. Physically or verbally abuse players
- d. Use tobacco or alcohol while before supervising players during practice, games, in-between games or in locker rooms
 - i. 1st Violation – verbal warning
 - ii. 2nd Violation – 1 month suspension
 - iii. 3rd Violation – season suspension

C. Any disciplinary action involving a game suspension of a player or coach must be reported by the head coach to the Directors of Hockey and the President.

By signing my name below, I certify that I have read, understand, and am in agreement with this code of conduct.

Signed Coach's Name: _____ Date: _____

Printed Coach's Name: _____

River Lakes Hockey Player Code of Conduct & Responsibilities

The River Lakes Stars Youth Hockey Program believes strongly in the values of teamwork, sportsmanship and leadership through example. As a player in the RLH organization, my actions reflect not only on me, but also on my teammates, my coaches, my parents, my community, and the River Lakes Hockey program. I agree to abide by and follow the rules and guidelines below.

A. ALL PLAYERS WILL:

- a. Follow Minnesota Hockey rules and guidelines.
- b. Follow River Lakes Hockey Handbook.
- c. Learn the rules/regulations of the game.
- d. Respect other players, coaches, and officials.
 - i. Will not complain about penalties or calls made by the officials, and understand that they oversee enforcing the rules of ice hockey, and will respect their decisions at all times. When called for a penalty, I will skate directly to the penalty box.
- e. Be on my best behavior at games, practices, hotels, and other team events.
- f. Be committed to developing as a hockey player and always give their best effort. Be a team player by working as hard for the team as you work for yourself; your team will benefit and so will you.
- g. Show good sportsmanship both when winning and losing, and congratulate the other team and wish them good luck.
- h. Recognize that coaches are the primary source of instruction.
- i. Be prompt and prepared for all practices and games. It is the players responsibility to be fully equipped. If a player is habitually late, the coach may discipline the player as appropriate.
- j. Use social media appropriately without the use of negative or derogatory remarks associated with players, coaches, officials,, a player's family members or board members.
- k. Behave in such a manner that shall bring positive credit to the River Lake Association and all participants.

B. The following actions by players will not be tolerated:

- a. 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 in order for the player to be initiated into or affiliated with any River Lakes team.
- b. Disorderly Conduct: engaging in offensive, obscene, or abusive language or in boisterous, noisy or offensive conduct tending to arouse alarm, anger, or resentment in others.
- c. Bullying: participating in or conspiring with others to engage in bullying acts of a teammate or opponent, either verbally or physically. I understand that bullying includes taunting and excessive teasing, threats, cruel, demeaning, and derogatory remarks, physical violence, vandalism of property, intimidation, and starting rumors, either verbally or electronically.
- d. 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 offensive behavior relating to gender, ability, religion, culture, disability, race, and/or age.
- e. Absolutely NO picture taking technology is allowed in the locker rooms! Phones, iPods, etc. This is a Minnesota Hockey/USA Hockey rule and pertains to both practices and games.
- f. Physical Harm: Fighting of any kind or aggressive behavior with intent to injure another.
- g. Illicit items: be in possession of drugs, alcohol, or weapons of any kind to RLH games, practices, trips, or other events.

Any concerns regarding the conduct of players relating to the above must be reported directly to the coach and Hockey Directors by the player or by the parent witnessing the behavior.

Any unlawful behavior by a player may result in a suspension of the player. Chronic discipline problems will be brought before the River Lakes Board for consideration of suspension for the remainder of the season.

I understand by signing this agreement I promise to uphold the RLH Players Code of Conduct. I understand if I do not abide by the above, consequences may include but are not limited to: parent meetings, loss of ice time, partial or full game suspension and/or dismissal from the team and the RLH program.

Signed Player Name: _____ Date: _____

Printed Player Name: _____

River Lakes Hockey Locker Room Code of Conduct

All players of River Lakes Hockey agree to abide by and follow the rules and guidelines below:

I will not:

- Be in a locker room alone with an adult (except my own parent(s)) EVER.
- Enter the locker/dressing room of an opposing team or the officials or obstruct their access.
- Deface or destroy property belonging to any individual, team, association, or arena.
- Wrestle, box, shove, push or engage in physical contact of any manner.
- Throw items around the locker room.
- Yell, scream or shout. Conversation is to be kept at a comfortable level
- Bring any camera, cell phone or other photographic device into a locker room.
- Touch any equipment or clothing that is not mine.
- Be disrespectful to anyone.
- Bring a puck into or play with a puck in a locker room.

I will:

- Listen to and follow the instructions of designated locker room supervisors.
- Avoid situations where I am the only player in the locker room. If I am one of the last two players in the locker room, I will stay and depart with the other player so that no player is left alone in the locker room.
- Always leave the locker room clean and in good condition, both at my home rink and away.

I understand by signing this agreement I promise to uphold the RLH Players Code of Conduct. I understand if I do not abide by the above, consequences may include but are not limited to: parent meetings, loss of ice time, partial or full game suspension and/or dismissal from the team and the RLH program..

Player Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Player Name: _____

Parent/Legal Guardian: _____ Date: _____

River Lakes Hockey Parents Code of Conduct & Responsibilities

Parents are the heart and soul of our program and parental involvement is vital to the players, coaches, arenas and the community. We offer the following in the spirit of good community.

A. Parents Will:

- a. Ensure players are on time to practice/games – ice time is valuable.
- b. Remember and appreciate that our program depends on volunteers, at all levels. Parents will fulfill all volunteer and fundraising requirements outlined in the handbook.
- c. Promptly report any behavior that violates any River Lakes Code of Conduct.
- d. Remember that youth are involved in organized sports for their enjoyment.
- e. Encourage players to abide by the rules of the game.
- f. Teach children that honest effort is as important as winning.
- g. Try to turn defeat into victory by helping your child work towards skill development and sportsmanship.
- h. Recognize the value and importance of our volunteer coaches by finding constructive ways to support them.
- i. Lead by example and hold fellow parents/spectators to this code of conduct.
- j. Use social media appropriately without the use of negative or derogatory remarks associated with players, coaches, officials,, a player's family members or board members.
- k. Behave in such a manner that shall bring positive credit to the River Lake Association and all participants.

B. Parents Will NOT:

- a. Conduct or question a coach during a game, publicly or for 24 hours following a game.
- b. Publicly question a game official's judgment or honesty.
- c. Use alcohol in excess prior to attending your child's sporting events.
- d. Ridicule or criticize a player – on either team.
- e. Condone physical or verbal abuse of players.
- f. Conduct themselves in a manner that embarrasses the River Lakes Hockey Association.
- g. Be in the locker room during or after a game (unless specifically invited by the coach).

C. If any parent/guardian is verbally or physically abusive to a coach, game official, or player, the parent can receive up to but not limited to a 2-week suspension, the parent or the child may be suspended from the program, or future discipline may be taken. Parents must respect all officials and their decisions, demonstrate respect, encourage sportsmanship, and maintain self-control at all times. Final decisions will be made by the River Lakes Disciplinary and Grievance committee.

Let the players play, let the coaches coach, let the officials officiate, and let the fans cheer enthusiastically.

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Print Parent Name _____

Player(s) Name(s) _____



River Lakes Hockey Board of Directors Code of Conduct

The River Lakes Hockey (RLH) Board of Directors, elected by the membership or appointed and approved by the Board, are expected to comply with the following set of rules in relation to the use of information and decisions made at the Board of Directors meetings, the implementation of policies and business, and their conduct within the association.

1. No member of the board shall knowingly withhold, conceal, or furnish misleading information to any person(s) in the association regarding issues discussed, voted on, or passed by the Board in a regularly scheduled, special, or committee meeting.
2. No member of the board shall directly or indirectly use RLH funds, equipment, supplies or other resources or their position as a member of the board for personal benefit.
3. On behalf of RLH, no member of the board will directly or indirectly offer to pay, promise to pay or make a payment from RLH funds to any supplier without compliance to pre-approved board expenditures.
4. No member of the board will use RLH funds or assets for any unlawful or improper purchases or establish undisclosed or unrecorded funds or assets.
5. No member of the board shall offer or grant preferential treatment to any member, member's child or their own child during traveling tryouts, or any time during their term on the board. No board member shall use their standing or influence to benefit the position or play of their own child during tryouts or the season. Board members will be held to the same code of conduct as the parents/spectators in regard to their behavior before, during and after a game.
6. In any situation where there is a possibility of conflict of interest, unethical conduct or the appearance of such, the board member is expected to immediately disclose the facts to the President of the board in the presence of at least one other board member.
7. In any situation where the possibility of a conflict of interest, of the appearance of such the board member is expected to recuse themselves from the discussion and vote on the issue.
8. No member of the board will discuss confidential information regarding a player, parent or coach-their conduct, financial standing, evaluation status, or history with the association, past grievances, or issues with anyone outside of the board. This would include any family members of the board member, who may inadvertently be privy to such information.

9. Issues and concerns addressed to board members, outside of their area of responsibility will be directed or redirected to the appropriate board member or procedure in place for that issue.
10. Board members will be courteous and conduct themselves in a respectful manner to all when participating or representing River Lakes Hockey in any sanctioned or organized event, game, meeting, tournament, fundraiser, etc.; be it home or away.
11. Board members are not to use, share, or discuss any information communicated within the board of directors, such as information shared and gleaned at a meeting, or via any other communication method, for any purposes than to meet board approved agendas or approved matters that need to be acted on by a board member.
12. All communication to association and non-members must be approved and follow communication processes and protocols.
13. Board members are to follow all documented processes and policies as noted and published. EX: RLH Handbook, Bylaws, BOD Operations Handbook. If a process warrants a change, the change must first be approved, and all corresponding documentation must be updated, only then should the process in place be changed.
14. **Board members Will NOT:**
 - a. Use offensive language
 - b. Show favoritism to players or families
 - c. Physically or verbally abuse players, coaches, or other board members
 - d. Post on social media negative comments about the association, players, coaches or other board members
 - i. 1st Violation – verbal warning
 - ii. 2nd Violation – 1 month suspension from the board, includes meetings and correspondence
 - iii. 3rd Violation – removal from the board
15. Each board of directors needs to attend 8 meetings in order to receive credit for their volunteer hours. If a board of director attends less than 6 meetings in a 12 month period (beginning at the start of the new term in April through March), that BOD will be removed from the board.

I agree to treat my fellow board members, RLH coaches, RLH players and other association members with respect in my participation on the RLH Board of Directors by following this Code of Conduct.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Please sign and turn this form in to the Board President at the beginning of each year on the board.



River Lakes Hockey Board of Directors Meetings Observers Rules & Expectations

Meetings of the River Lakes Hockey Board of Directors are open to the membership. However, it is important to note that meetings are open for observation — not for participation. In order to facilitate orderly meetings, attendees may only participate or present at board meetings when placed on the agenda ahead of time, or are recognized by the meeting facilitator. We ask that all observers sign in so we know who is in attendance at the meeting. This policy outlines the general rules and expectations for observers at board of directors' meetings.

Observer Expectations

When not addressing the board:

- Do not speak or otherwise interrupt those that are speaking
- Remain respectful towards all board members and other attendees
- Recognize that some discussions at board meetings will include potentially sensitive information. Refrain from spreading rumors or revealing personal information that does not need to be widely disseminated.

If you are not on the agenda and wish to address the board:

- Raise your hand and get the attention of the meeting facilitator
- Wait patiently to be called on. Note that the meeting facilitator may choose not to recognize you or allow you to address the board.

If you are on the agenda or called upon to speak:

- Keep your comments focused on the topic at hand
- Refrain from personal attacks, rude behavior, or sharing information that should not be shared publicly
- When your turn to speak is over, you must be recognized again before addressing the board

Sensitive Topics

The Board of Directors often must address sensitive topics including financial situations, family status, incidents, punishments, behavior, and more. Sometimes, these sensitive topics are referenced in open meetings because they impact a policy or action of the association. In these cases, observer discretion is expected. Please do not share such sensitive information with others.

When sensitive topics need to be addressed openly, the Board of Directors may close the meeting to observers. We appreciate the understanding and support of observers for this necessity. When possible, the general topic to be discussed will be included on the agenda and an overview of the discussion will be presented when returning from the closed session. Note that the Board of Directors is not bound by Open Meeting Law, so the closure of meetings is at the discretion of the board.



River Lakes Hockey Board of Directors Meeting Observer Sign In

For the meeting on _____

To maintain a record of attendance at Board of Directors' meetings, all observers are expected to sign in. All attendees are expected to follow the rules and expectations laid out in the Board of Directors Meetings Observers Rules & Expectations Policy. A copy is available at each meeting and posted on the website. Meeting observers who fail to follow these guidelines may be asked to leave. Please note that observers are not permitted to participate in the meeting unless added to the agenda or recognized by the meeting facilitator.

Name

Appendix Handbook Updates:

Updates to the 2026-2027 Season Handbook

- Various typical administrative updates aligning with new board and PDC members as well as their respective roles.
- Updates in multiple locations recognizing a change in the implementation of the association fundraising raffle.
- Updates in multiple locations recognizing a change in fee structure and amount for the current season
- Removing references to the historical timing (2023) for skaters obtaining their own Jerseys

Updates to the 2025-2026 Season Handbook

- All mentions of DIBS were removed and switched with Volunteer Hours
- Added Junior Gold as a team we could have to various parts of the handbook
- Page X: Removed that equipment can only be rented by second year skaters and later in the Lil' Stars Hockey program after Try Hockey for Free has ended. Players can rent gear at any time.
- Page 9: Updated Lil' Stars Hockey Gameday information to include jersey will be provided ahead of time. Teams will be made to ensure appropriate growth of all players
- Page 10: Added Sartell Mite Jamboree for mite skaters to attend
- Page 18: Updated the dates when late fees occur for registration
- Page 25: Updated the amount of away tournament fees the association pays for, and the number we will register for ahead of time for the Pee wee/12U and Bantam/15U levels
- Page 26: Added Matt Olson to the Sportsmanship Award
- Page 38: Added monthly team meetings, must have a designated locker room monitor, and inform the Hockey Directors in writing (email or text) of any conduct violations made by players, parents, or fellow leaders. Any disciplinary action involving a game suspension of a player or coach must be reported by the head coach to the Directors of Hockey and President.
- Page 39: Players must use social media appropriately without the use of negative or derogatory remarks associated with players, coaches, officials, a player's family members or board members. Behave in such a manner that shall bring positive credit to the River Lake Association and all participants.

Updates to the 2024-2025 Season Handbook

- Page 4: Updated to reflect this season's payment plans
- Page 10: Mites and squirts will skate at separate arenas for Monday night skills.
- Page 15-17: Payment options changed to reflect this year's payment structure and payment plan options. All online payments for fees, with the exception of one night we will collect checks for payments made in full before the registration window closes. Payment windows were updated and reflect new fees for the 2024-2025 season (\$50 increase per skater).
- Page 20: New DIBS hours requirements and credits for those in varying positions in the association
- Page 21: Due date for waivers changed to September 1st
- Page 24-25: Jersey ordering wording updated to what will happen going forward and removed any language referring specifically to the 2023-2024 process.
- Page 25: Tournament fee amount paid by the association increased by \$500 per level.
- Page 28: Fair Ice Policy Updates
 - "Fair Ice" does not mean that all players are entitled to play every position or the position that they prefer.

- Position decisions, including goaltending, are the responsibility of the coaches.
- Coaches will balance the needs and abilities of individual players and the team as a whole with a focus on maximizing long-term development.
- Page 29: Goalie Playing Time
 - In cases with more than one full-time goalie (as determined by the coaches) on a team, goalie playing time should be rotated and we expect the full-time goalies to play approximately the same amount of time over the course of a season.
 - On teams with one or more players who both play goalie and skate out, the specific circumstances will guide playing time decisions. Coaches are encouraged to consult with the Goalie Coordinator and the PDC, particularly in unique or complicated situations. However, coaches are given broad discretion to maximize the long-term development of the players on their team.
- Page 32-33 Number Waivers
 - All age eligible skaters will not be reached out to. Player readiness for the next level will be assessed by the Player Development Committee in consultation with previous coaches, discussions with parents, and/or informal observations (e.g., 4 on 4 or camps).
 - If numbers waivers are granted prior to evaluations, families will be given the option to skate at evaluations. Even if skating at evaluations, waived skaters will be placed on the lowest team. However, in cases where a player's abilities do not fit at the lowest level to such an extent that their development, the development of other players, and/or the competitive balance of play against other teams would be negatively affected, the player may be placed on a higher level team.
- Page 34-36 Player Evaluations
 - Evaluations no longer blind
 - Provide a fair and impartial assessment of a player's total hockey skills during the evaluation process using ALL knowledge available to the evaluators
 - Make the evaluation process as efficient as possible for everyone involved in the process including skaters, families, evaluators, PDC members and board members.
 - Players may be exempt from further evaluation sessions after the first evaluation scrimmage session if their final team placement has been determined.
 - Skaters are required to check in with a RLH Board Member at the beginning of each evaluation scrimmage session.
 - Players excused from Evaluations due to injury, illness, or other excused absences will be preliminarily placed on a team by the PDC based on knowledge gained from people who know the player's abilities. After a 1 week trial period, the player's position will be considered permanent if approved by the coaches of the team and the PDC. If the coaches and the PDC do not believe the player belongs where they are placed for the 1 week trial period, further discussion with the PDC will be necessary to find the appropriate team for the player.
 - Updated factors that skaters will be evaluated:
 - Fore-checking; ability-hustle, proper angling
 - Back-checking; coming back hard and picking up the open player
 - Quickness/speed
 - Team play; make passes when necessary
 - Positioning; player join the offensive play and cover for each other

- Skating ability and agility
- Players' ability to use hockey IQ when on and off the puck both defensively and offensively
- Groups will be reorganized based on the evaluation of the previous sessions.