

# KNOXVILLE ADULT HOCKEY LEAGUE OFFICIAL RULES & REGULATIONS

August 2025 Edition



## 1.0 **PURPOSE**

**1.1** The intent of the following policies is to encourage a safe, enjoyable, and fair environment for the participants, staff and officials of the Knoxville Adult Hockey League, or KAHL.

## 2.0 **ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE**

**2.1** The Knoxville Adult Hockey League (KAHL) is run under the auspices of AKHL, Inc. a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Corporation. While not a USA Hockey-sanctioned league, the KAHL references the USA Hockey rulebook regulations for on-ice play.

**2.2** The KAHL is the league operator, run by a Players Committee of volunteers and headed by a Board of Directors as required of State of Tennessee 501(c)(3) Corporations.

**2.2.1** The KAHL organization serves to handle all business dealings necessary to operate an efficient adult league, including but not limited to facilitating ice rental for league play and compensating officials and scorekeeping staff.

**2.2.2** The KAHL organization also is responsible for and has authority over all on-ice and off-ice hockey related matters necessary to manage adult league play. This includes but is not limited to registrations, roster management, competition, scheduling, discipline and formatting for regular season and playoff play.

**2.3** The KAHL Players Committee is comprised of a representative number of volunteer adult league players who are charged with both managing the league and representing the interests of all players in fulfilling the mission of the KAHL to provide a fun, safe and fair hockey experience for all.

**2.4** For purposes of this document, “the KAHL” and “league management” refer to the Adult Knoxville Hockey League legal entity non-profit organization, its Players Committee members, Board of Directors and/or sub-committees.

## 3.0 **SKILL LEVEL AND FAIR PLAY**

**3.1** KAHL players and their teams will be divided by the following skill levels:

<b>“A”</b> (Previously “B”)	<b>“B”</b> (Previously “C1”)	<b>“C”</b> (Previously “C2”)	<b>“D”</b> (Previously “C3”)	<b>ROOKIE</b>
ELITE DIVISION	ADVANCED DIVISION	INTERMEDIATE DIVISION	LOWER INTERMEDIATE DIVISION	BEGINNER/ INEXPERIENCED DIVISION

**3.2** All new players to KAHL play will be required to undergo either an evaluation try-out skate or be evaluated over his/her first few games by the KAHL Competition Committee before they are officially rostered on any team.

**3.3** For the KAHL to thrive, improve the skill of the players and provide an enjoyable experience, teams and players should feel that they have a fair chance to win a game against any of the other teams in their division. Structuring teams and placement of players to achieve team parity within divisions is a priority of the KAHL league.

**3.4** If a team is dominating a division due to the presence of one or more dominating players, the team will be directed by league management to either release the player(s) from their roster or the team may choose to play up to the next division.

**3.4.1** If such a player(s) is released from a team, the player(s) may be placed by K AHL management onto either another team in the same division or onto the roster of a higher division team for the rest of the season.

**3.5** If any team is dominating divisional play and/or has multiple players, who in K AHL management's eyes are able at will to dominate play, the team will be asked to move to the next higher division as soon as the schedule and ice availability allows it.

**3.6** K AHL leadership has the right and authority to move any player to another team in the same or a higher division at any time it becomes evident that such player is dominating play and individually undermining divisional parity.

**3.7** K AHL management must review and approve all rosters prior to the beginning of the season, at which point certain players may not be allowed depending on skill level and/or considerations of divisional team parity. Disallowed players may be re-assigned by K AHL management to another team in that division or one in their appropriate skill level division.

#### **4.0 TEAM REPRESENTATION AND CAPTAIN RESPONSIBILITIES**

**4.1** Each team must have a team captain or "representative" approved by K AHL management, and at least one alternate, to represent their team in all league activities both on and off the ice.

**4.2** Provide K AHL management with a complete and accurate roster before the beginning of a season.

**4.3** Inform teammates of the K AHL Rules & Regulations and rink/building policies.

**4.4** Inform teammates of any changes in game schedule, before and during the season.

**4.5** Ensure that suspended players do not play the required number of suspended games. Failure to do so will cause the team to forfeit each game the suspended player participated.

**4.6** Maintain awareness during games of their players' infractions resulting in an ejection, such as three (3) penalties, a Match or Game Misconduct and assist the officials in removing from the ice and bench area any of their players who are ejected from a game.

**4.7** Review for the timekeeper, before the start of every game, the official scoresheet to specify which players are in attendance and to confirm jersey numbers. Any substitute and/or substitute players must be listed and noted as such.

**4.7.1** Captains are required to sign the scoresheet prior to the start of play to acknowledge their review and approval of their line-up for that game.

**4.8** Inform the opposing team captain, and the timekeeper by way of the scoresheet, before the game if any substitute players or goaltender will be playing. The team captain or alternative must provide the player's name, jersey number, and affiliated team if the player is recruited as a substitute from another team.

## 5.0 TEAM ROSTERS AND PLAYERS

**5.1 Participation in adult rec-league ice-hockey play through the KAHL is a privilege offered to individuals at the full and complete discretion of league management. All players are to be held to a high standard of sportsmanship and a safe style of play consistent with a fun, friendly, non-checking league. Failure to abide by such will be cause for expulsion.**

**5.2** A FULL-TIME player is one that is registered with the league, is approved for assignment to a team roster and has fully paid the designated individual fee for full-time players for the season, at the time they are due.

**5.2.1** A full-time player who has paid their league fees in full, and remains in good standing with the league, is eligible to play in all their team's scheduled games in the season, including playoffs, unless specifically suspended by the KAHL from league play.

**5.3** A PART-TIME player, if the KAHL offers that option in the registration process, is one that is registered with the league, is approved for assignment to a team roster and has paid the designated individual fee for part-time players for the season.

**5.3.1** A part-time player who has paid their league fees in full, and remains in good standing with the league, is eligible to play in no more than one-half of that team's regular season games for a given season.

**5.4** A player cannot be rostered on a team that competes in a division below the player's skill level.

**5.5 Any individual seeking to play in two divisions ("dual rostered") must get pre-approval from KAHL management and must be deemed by the Competition Committee to be not too highly skilled for the lower division sought, and must be registered as a Full-Time player in both divisions.**

**5.5.1** Any approved "dual rostered" players must only play on teams that are one division – not two or more--- apart. ie; "A" players cannot be also rostered on a "C" or "D" division team, and a "B" player cannot be rostered on a "D" division team.

**5.6 When seeking to add a new player, the team captain or alternate must submit a request to KAHL management. KAHL league management will approve or deny the addition of the new player to the requesting team after the player undergoes the requisite skill-level evaluation by the Competition Committee.**

**5.7** When dropping a player, the team captain or alternate must notify KAHL management so the player can be officially removed from their active roster and, if applicable, to try to be re-assigned to another team.

**5.8** A roster must contain a minimum of twelve full-time "skater" players, plus a full-time goaltender for a total of at least 13 fulltime players. Any requested exceptions must be approved by KAHL management`.

**5.8.1** Part-time players, if the KAHL offers that option in the registration process for that season, may also be included on a submitted roster, provided the number of full-time players has been met.

**5.9** Each team must provide an approved roster to league management before the beginning of any play each season, at the risk of forfeiting games until done so. The roster must contain the player's name, jersey number, full-time or part-time status, and if they are the team goalie, captain or alternate(s). A team can have a maximum of two alternate representatives designated on the roster. This is required to confirm eligibility and to facilitate accurate scoresheets.

**5.10** If for any reason a player is delinquent in their fees, KAHL management will inform that player, and their captain, that they are immediately suspended from all KAHL play. KAHL management has the right and authority to drop that individual from all KAHL participation or can choose to make special accommodations to remedy the delinquency, if warranted, and approved by the KAHL Treasurer.

**5.11** KAHL management can move a player or players from one roster to another within the same division, or to a different division for purposes of achieving balance across the league. This can also be facilitated with more than one player in a “trade” of sorts if all parties (players involved, team captains and league management) agree.

**5.12** KAHL management can assign to a team, at its discretion, any new players to the league provided they have been registered and have paid their required individual fee.

**5.13** New players assigned to a team that have not been rated, will be evaluated by league management at a try-out and/or for a few games to determine their skill level. If it is determined that the player’s skill level is not appropriate for the division, the player will be moved to a team in a division that best matches the player’s skill level.

## **6.0      SUBSTITUTE PLAYERS**

**6.1** A SUBSTITUTE player is one registered in the league as a full-time player, or part-time if that is an option that season, has paid their required fees and is filling in for rostered players when sufficient rostered players are not available.

**6.2** A substitute player can only substitute in the division in which they are rostered, or in a higher skill level division. Captains are asked to keep sportsmanship and fair play in mind when adding substitute players. i.e., not “game changers.”

**6.3** Any goaltender being used as a substitute must also be at an equal or lower skill level to the league he is filling in, unless otherwise pre-approved by the opposing captain before the game.

**6.4** If a team has less than 9 rostered, full- and part-time players (excluding the goaltender) present for a scheduled game, that team may use substitute players to get up to a maximum of 9 skaters; however, no more than two (2) substitute players can be used by a team in any one game.

**6.5** No substitute players will be allowed to participate in regular season shootouts or play during playoff games regardless of how many rostered or substitute players are available, excluding goalies.

**6.7** If a captain has not consented and objects to an opposing team’s use of subs in violation of the above rules, he/she must file a formal protest by the completion of the game by way of informing the scorekeeper to record the objection.

**6.8** Formal protests of violations of any substitute player policies are subject to review by the KAHL Disciplinary Panel and can result in a forfeiture of the game.

## **7.0 ILLEGAL PLAYERS**

**7.1** An illegal player is a person that takes the ice and is not rostered in the K AHL within the division or division below or is otherwise not in good standing with the league. Team rosters will be provided at the scorekeeper's table to allow team captains to verify a player's status.

**7.2** If a team captain becomes aware before a game that the opposing team is fielding illegal player(s), the team captains should meet before the completion of the game to discuss the issue and choose from the following remedies. Once a decision is made, it is the responsibility of the team captains to inform the referees and the scorekeeper of their decision.

**7.2.1.** Allow the illegal player(s) to participate in the game. The game will count as a normally played game and will be recorded in the league statistics as such. If the illegal player(s) have been approved by the opposing captain to play, the game cannot subsequently be ruled a forfeit due to the illegal player.

**7.2.2.** Ask the opposing team to remove the illegal player(s) from the bench. If the opposing team does not comply, the game will be ruled a forfeit after review by the K AHL Competition Committee and/or Board.

**7.3** If a team captain becomes aware before a game that the opposing team is fielding too many SUBSTITUTE players without prior approval by that captain, the team captains should meet before the game to discuss the issue and choose from the following remedies. Once a decision is made, it is the responsibility of the team captains to inform the referees of their decision.

**7.3.1.** Allow the SUBSTITUTES to participate in the game. The game will count as a normally played game and will be recorded in the league statistics as such. If the team is allowed to play, the game cannot be ruled a forfeit.

**7.3.2.** Ask the opposing team to remove the enough SUBSTITUTE players from the bench to meet the maximum number of SUBSTITUTES allowed on a team. If the opposing team does not comply, the game can be ruled a forfeit upon review by K AHL management.

**7.4** If a team captain becomes aware only after a game that the opposing team was fielding illegal player(s), the team captain should immediately inform a K AHL Players Committee member to register an objection. If it is determined by the K AHL Competition Committee and/or Board that the opposing team knowingly fielded illegal player(s), the game will be ruled a forfeit and recorded in the leagues statistics as such.

**7.5** If any team fields a player that is currently under suspension, the team will incur a forfeit. The game will not count toward the player's suspension game count, and an additional game(s) may be added to the player's suspension.

## **8.0 TEAM UNIFORMS**

**8.1** All rostered and substitute players on a team must wear a jersey that are approximately the same color and must have a number on the back of the jersey. Scorekeepers are directed to ask team captains before the game to clarify any unknown names as well as lacking or duplicate numbers for scoresheet recording.

**8.2** Each player must have a unique number. Duplicate numbers are not allowed.

**8.3** If two teams are scheduled to play that have the same primary color, it is the responsibility of the home team to provide different color jerseys for their players or make arrangements with the away team to wear a different color.

**8.4** The on-ice officials have the authority to not allow a player(s) to participate in a game until the uniform policy and USA Hockey rules regarding protective equipment are met (eg; properly secured helmets with face protection.).

## **9.0 GAME STATISTICS**

**9.1** The following statistics will be recorded for each game:

**9.1.2** Number of goals scored by each team.

**9.1.3** Number of shots on goal.

**9.1.4** The player who scores a goal and players who assist.

**9.1.5** The player that scores the 'go ahead' goal during a shootout.

**9.1.6** Penalties imposed by the on-ice officials including the names and jersey number of the player(s) penalized, the infraction(s) assessed, the duration of each penalty and the time each penalty was imposed.

**9.1.6.a** Any major, game misconduct or match penalties are to be specifically noted as such on the scoresheet.

**9.2** During the season, a team will be awarded two points for a win, one point for a tie or shoot-out loss and zero points for a loss in regulation time for the purpose of seeding the playoff brackets at the end of a season.

**9.3** Scorekeepers will make all attempts to provide accurate and timely game and player statistics through posting on designated online sites. All scoresheets are to be filed and retained until completion of the season.

## **10.0 TIE GAMES AT THE END OF REGULATION TIME**

**10.1** In the last two (2) minutes of any game that is tied or has a one (1) goal differential, "stop time" will be used by the officials and timekeeper, stopping the clock for any whistle that stops play.

**10.2** In the event of a tie game at the end of regulation play, the winner of the game will be determined by a shoot-out.

**10.2.1** The winner of the shoot-out will be awarded a win (2 points) in the game statistics for the league standings. The losing team will be awarded a shoot-out loss (1 point) in the standings.

**10.3** Any player still in the penalty box at the end of regulation is not allowed to participate in the ensuing shootout.

**10.4** Substitute players are not allowed to participate in the shoot-out.

**10.5** The shoot-out will utilize the following format:

**10.5.1** Three rostered full-time (or part-time, if applicable that season) players from each team will be allowed to take a shot on goal, excluding goaltenders.

**10.5.2** Substitute (or "fill-in") players are not allowed to participate in shootouts.

**10.5.3** The home team will be awarded the choice to either shoot first or allow the visiting team to shoot first. The rotation will continue until all three players of each team have taken a shot on goal.

**10.5.4** The team that has more goals will be declared the winner of the match.

**10.5.5** However, if the game is still tied after the first three rounds, then the shoot-out will continue until after one pairing of players, one team has scored a goal where the other has not scored a goal.

**10.5.6** Teams must use all rostered players in attendance in a shoot-out before starting over with the same original sequence of shooters.

**10.6** The scorekeeper will record the final score of the game by adding one goal to the winning team's score as it existed at the end of regulation. If the score at the end of regulation was 3 to 3, then the final score will be 4 - 3.

## **11.0 PLAYOFFS**

**11.1** If a playoff is scheduled during a session, the seeding will follow a 'First vs. Worst' format. Seeding will be determined by the following criteria in the order it is presented (as necessary):

**11.1.1** Overall points; number of wins; best head-to-head record; goal differential; coin toss

**11.2** Full-time players (and part-time players, if applicable) that season are eligible for their rostered team's playoff games.

**11.2.1** Players cannot play in the playoffs for more than one team in a division.

**11.2.2** Substitute players, with the exception of goaltenders pre-approved by the opposing captain, are not allowed to play in playoff games

**11.3** The playoff tie-breaker format in games up to the semi-final round will utilize the same format as regular season (see section 10.1).

**11.4** Tie-breaker format in semi-final and championship games will consist of twenty (20) minute running-time periods of 5-versus-5 sudden-death overtime play. Multiple twenty (20) minute periods will be played until a goal is scored.

## **12.0 PENALTIES AND GAME SUSPENSIONS**

**12.1** Under USA Hockey rules, every game misconduct assessed to a player requires an automatic one-game suspension.

**12.1.1** All game misconduct penalty calls are subject to additional game suspensions by K AHL management undertaking a Disciplinary Review by a PC panel of league player peers.

**12.2** Any player receiving a game misconduct will be removed from the game and suspended from playing in his team's next scheduled game (i.e. the game already appearing on the schedule of that team at the time of the infraction) (*USA Hockey - Rule 404b*).

**12.3** Any player receiving an ejection, a game misconduct, or a match penalty must immediately proceed to their team's locker room/changing area, remove his equipment and not return to the bench or scorekeeper's box.

**12.3.1** All captains and alternates must insist that their players understand and comply with this rule.

**12.3.2** If an ejected player fails to comply with leaving the ice and going to the locker room, and/or continues to disrupt the continuation of the game, the officials at their discretion can for safety reasons declare a forfeit for the offending player's team.

**12.4** For the following infractions, the league will add the following minimum additional game suspensions:

**12.4.1** Fighting Major (USA Hockey – Rule 615A). The K AHL will assess an additional suspension of two (2) games.

**12.4.2** First to intervene during an altercation for the purpose of or intent to escalate the altercation the K AHL will assess an additional suspension of two (2) games.

**12.4.3** Two major penalties during a game (USA Hockey – Rule 403b). The K AHL will assess an additional suspension of two (2) games at a minimum and has the authority to impose more severe discipline.



**12.5** If a player receives two (2) game misconducts during a season, the player will be suspended from playing any league games until the K AHL Disciplinary Review Panel has made a decision on disciplinary actions to be taken against the player.

**12.6** A player receiving a match penalty will be suspended from playing any K AHL games until the K AHL Disciplinary Review Panel has decided on any disciplinary actions to be taken against the player (USA Hockey - Rule 405c), up to and including being banned from K AHL play.

**12.7** Any player receiving three (3) penalties during a game will be ejected from the remainder of that game. The player will be eligible to return for the team's next scheduled game, provided the player has not committed an otherwise suspendable offense that warrants a review by the K AHL Disciplinary Review Panel.

**12.7.1** The scorekeeper will inform both the officials and captains that a player has received a 3rd penalty. The player's captain or representative is responsible for seeing that the player then leaves the ice and bench area.

**12.8** Any player receiving two major penalties assessed under USA Hockey rule 615a (Fighting) in a 365-day period, will be suspended from play for one calendar year at a minimum, or can be banned permanently from K AHL play.

**12.9** Any part-time player, if part-time play is a registration option that season, who receives a suspension, will lose that amount of their allotted game total consistent with the number of games for which they are suspended.

**12.10** K AHL management has the authority to add or remove games from any suspension and can, at its discretion, impose any such additional suspensions up to and including banishment from all league play.

***\* Any penalized infraction or any action deemed to be overly aggressive or dangerous that is committed during the course of an K AHL game can be ruled suspension-worthy by K AHL league management.***

## **13.0 ZERO TOLERANCE**

**13.1** The K AHL, like USA Hockey, stresses that all players, coaches, referee and team officials, parents, spectators, and administrators maintain a sportsmanlike atmosphere before, during and after all games.

**13.2** A minor penalty will be assessed for unsportsmanlike conduct when a player:

**13.2.1** Openly disputes or argues any decision by an official.

**13.2.2** Uses obscene or vulgar language at any time, including any swearing even if it not directed at a particular person.

**13.2.3** Visually demonstrates any sign of dissatisfaction with an official's decision

**13.3** Any time a player persists in any of these actions, they shall be assessed a misconduct penalty. A game misconduct shall result if the player continues such action and they are ejected from the game as well as being subject to suspension.

## **14.0 OFFICIALS**

**14.1** Officials are required to conduct themselves in a businesslike, sportsmanlike, impartial, and constructive manner at all times. The actions of an official must be above reproach. Actions such as "*baiting*" or inciting players or coaches are strictly prohibited.

**14.2** Officials are ambassadors of the game and must always conduct themselves with this responsibility in mind.

**14.3** Officials are supervised by a USA Hockey regional director of officials, and are specifically not employees of nor under management by the K AHL.

## **15.0 SPECTATORS**

**15.1** The game will be stopped by a game official when spectators displaying inappropriate and disruptive behavior interfere with other spectators or the game. The game officials will identify violators to the team representative for the purpose of removing the spectators from the viewing and game area. Once removed, the play will continue. Lost time will not be replaced, and violators may be subject to further disciplinary action by K AHL management. This inappropriate and disruptive behavior shall include:

**15.1.1** Use of obscene or vulgar language in a boisterous manner to anyone at any time.

**15.1.2** Taunting of players, officials, or other spectators by means of baiting, ridiculing, threat of physical violence or physical violence.

**15.1.3** Throwing of any object in the viewing area, players bench, penalty box, or on ice surface, directed in any manner as to create a safety hazard.

## **16.0 GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION**

**16.1** In the event that an individual feels that a concern or problem has not been corrected to their satisfaction or handled fairly, they may file a grievance for review.

**16.2** To file a grievance, the team captain must write and present a written report to the K AHL Board.

**16.3** The report should contain the following:

**16.3.1** The team's captain name and contact information.

**16.3.2** A list of the individuals involved in the event(s) and contact information if available.

**16.3.3** A detailed description leading to the current state of event(s).

**16.3.4** A description of and rationale for of the specific grievance being filed as an appeal.

**16.4** After a grievance has been received by K AHL management, they will strive to review and resolve and respond to the grievance in a timely manner. The board may interview affected parties if necessary and either schedule a special meeting to resolve the issue or provide a written report of the resolution.

**16.5** Once resolved by K AHL management, the issue is considered closed and there is no further course for an appeal.

## **17.0 SOCIAL MEDIA**

**17.1** Any player that uses defamatory, harassing, or threatening language towards anyone involved in the Knoxville Adult Hockey League through the use of social media outlets is grounds for a possible suspension from the league.

## **18.0 LEAGUE OFFICIALS**

**18.1** The K AHL Board or its designated director or committee has the authority to overrule or make alterations to any regulation listed in this document at their judgement and will be enacted only after approval by the K AHL Board.