



## AMATEUR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION ILLINOIS, Inc.

*"Dedicated to the development of today's youth  
through Athletic and Academic excellence."*

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# 2026 Illinois State High School Hockey Championships

## AHAI will host the following Tournament Divisions

Team Placement is only available to AHAI registered Illinois High School Teams and will be as follows:

- **Red Division – Varsity State Championship.** Open to all registered Affiliate Organization High School Division 1 Pure Teams as defined in AHAI rules and regulations.
- **Combined Division – Varsity State Championship.** Open to all Affiliate Organization Division 2 Combined Teams with a combination of six (6) schools or less as defined in AHAI rules and regulations.
- **Blue Division – Junior Varsity State Championship.** Open to all registered Affiliate Organization High School Pure Junior Varsity Teams as defined in AHAI rules and regulations.
- **Combined Junior Varsity Division – Junior Varsity State Championship.** Open to all registered Affiliate Organization Combined Junior Varsity Teams with a combination of six (6) schools or less as defined in AHAI rules and regulations.

## Tournament Eligibility

AHAI rules prevail over individual League rules. Teams are not eligible except in accordance with AHAI Rules and Regulations. It is the responsibility of AHAI and the AHAI Tournament Committee to investigate violations of the rules. Furthermore, the High School Committee reserves the right to withdraw an invitation under certain circumstances.

You are also reminded that only teams with an approved Official USA Hockey certified roster may participate in the Illinois State High School Hockey Championships Tournament. Please make certain that rosters have been approved by the AHAI Registrar and are correct in every regard and comply with all AHAI/USA Hockey Rules and Regulations.

Let us also remind you of the player eligibility requirements, especially pertaining to players playing for teams other than their High School team only. Additionally, players can only be on 1 roster Varsity or JV. There is no player movement of (dual rostered players) allowed during the State Tournament. It is the responsibility of AHAI and the AHAI Tournament Committee to investigate violations of the rules of eligibility. Your League Officials will be asked to verify the eligibility of your players. Please refer to the "AHAI 2025-26 Official Guide, By-Laws, Rules and Regulations" available on the AHAI website at [www.ahai.org](http://www.ahai.org).

This rule applies only to players double rostered on another team within the Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3, Girls or other recognized player division certified by AHAI outside of their high school organization. To be eligible for the State Tournament, players must participate in 75% of the High School Affiliate Organization Team's regular-season league games beginning from the point the skater was added to the roster, excluding injury absences with a doctor's note.

High School Affiliate Organization Teams must have played at least twenty (20) league games as a high school team. Only Regular season league games count towards a team's eligibility to participate in the State Tournament.

Any exceptions to the above eligibility must be approved by the High School committee prior to the start of the Tournament.

If there is a question of player eligibility, you, as the coach, must be able to prove eligibility beyond any doubt. The request as to a player's eligibility can come from any source. Any violation of the rule may result in penalties, from ruling a player ineligible for the remainder of the tournament, and up to forfeiture and removal from the current year's tournament play and the matter turned over to the Rules and Ethics Committee of AHAI for appropriate disciplinary action.

**High School:** It is the responsibility of the student, parent(s) of the student, coach and high school organization to raise any eligibility issues which may be in question and bring them to the High School Committee for resolution before the Playing Season begins. The AHAI High School Committee Chairperson, or in his/her absence, the individual so designated by the Chairperson. Failure to comply with these Rules may result in disciplinary action by the AHAI High School Committee, AHAI girls committee and the AHAI Rules & Ethics Committee.

**COACHES CERTIFICATION/PERSONS ON BENCH:** All Coaches must be certified by USA Hockey at the appropriate level. At least one certified coach must be on the bench for each game. No more than four (4) persons (must be on the certified roster & all credentials to be current), other than rostered players, in uniform, may be on the bench.

The Head coach on the Official USA Hockey Certified roster shall normally be on the bench, if not, then the assistant coach on the Official USA Hockey Certified roster. Any deviation shall be brought to the attention of the Tournament Coordinator prior to the team taking the ice for each Illinois State Tournament Game. When bringing the matter to the attention of the Tournament Coordinator, it should be done with as much factual information as possible and as much time as possible to permit the Tournament Coordinator to take appropriate action. Violation(s) of this rule shall be referred to the Tournament Rules/Protest Committee and the AHAI Rules & Ethics Committee for appropriate action, including, but not limited to, forfeiture, inability of your team to take the ice and suspension.

- **NOTE:** All players, including injured players, must wear a helmet and team jersey at all times, including warm-ups, when they are on the bench.

**A maximum of 20 players may dress for any state tournament game no exception.**

(No more than 18 skaters can dress and be on the bench)

**Any improper roster or player may constitute a forfeiture.**

All questions regarding player eligibility, goalkeepers, protests, advancing teams or team eligibility should be directed to the Illinois State High School Hockey Championships Tournament Chairperson before the start of the games.

For Varsity Red, Varsity Combined, JV Blue and JV Combined divisions contact AHAI High School Committee Chairperson Glenn Jauch 630-664-4675 or e-mail at [glenn.jauch@ahai.org](mailto:glenn.jauch@ahai.org)

## Tournament Format

All divisions of the high school state tournament shall be **Single Elimination**.

All brackets and scores will be posted on the AHAI site.

**PLEASE NOTE SOME TEAMS WILL HAVE 1-3 ELIMINATION PLAY DOWN GAMES. PLEASE MAKE SURE THEY ARE PLAYED BY DATES ON STATE BRACKETS SO THE NEXT ROUNDS CAN BE PLAYED ON TIME.**

**Elimination (Playdown) Games should begin no earlier than January 30, 2026, and must be concluded no later than February 24, 2025 for Varsity and March 1, 2026 for JV.** The Home Team will be the higher ranked team as determined by the rankings.

**Elimination (Playdown) scheduling must be done as follows:**

1. The **Home Team** will be the **higher ranked team** as determined by the rankings. The Home Team will schedule the ice for the playdown game based on the reasonable availability of the Visiting Team. All home teams must offer visiting teams a minimum of 3 time slots for the play-in rounds. ***No games may begin later than 10:00 p.m. unless approved by the Illinois State High School Hockey Championships Tournament Committee.*** Referees will be scheduled by AHAI and billed to the home team's account. **Please email the game information once confirmed between the teams to [glenn.jauch@ahai.org](mailto:glenn.jauch@ahai.org)**
2. A **minimum of five (5) days'** notice must be allowed for the scheduling of Officials. **No Officials other than those scheduled by AHAI** are to be used, or the game is subject to forfeiture.
3. Elimination (Playdown) game costs will be shared equally by both teams. The **Home Team** will pay the ice costs, referees, and trainers and the **Visiting Team** will reimburse the **Home Team** for one half of the total cost. Failure to comply may result in removal from the current year's tournament and/or entry withheld from future state tournaments.
4. For Elimination Games only, minor officials (*one scorekeeper and one timekeeper*) must be adults. The "Home Team" and the "Visiting Team" must each furnish one adult to divide these duties. All games will be loaded into Gamesheet.

**DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE:** The "Home Team" will have available the following at all times:

- iPad for Gamesheet Scoring and Operator
- Backup Paper Scoresheet

5. All games are to be played to a conclusion to establish a winner by goals scored, i.e. No Ties. It is the responsibility of the **Home Team** to ensure that there is sufficient time to allow for (sudden death) Overtime if the situation arises.
6. **RESULTS REPORTING:** Results of Elimination (Playdown) games **MUST** be uploaded to the Gamesheet site within 24 hours by the home team. In addition, if paper scoresheet was used the scoresheet must be e-mailed (*only scanned legible copy please*) in by a representative of the winning team within 24 hours to: executive.director@ahai.org and glenn.jauch@ahai.org

### **Quarterfinal/Semifinal and State Championship Game Information**

- Quarterfinal games for the **Red Division Varsity Division** shall be played at West Meadows Ice Arena in Rolling Meadows on Saturday February 28th with the Semi Final Games at West Meadows Ice Arena in Rolling Meadows on Sunday, March 1st, 2026. For teams advancing to the quarter-final round there will be an additional \$400 fee.
- Quarterfinal games for the **Combined Division Varsity Division** shall be played at Rosemont Ice Arena in Rosemont on Saturday February 28th with the Semi Final Games at West Meadows in Rolling Meadows on Sunday, March 1st, 2026. For teams advancing to the quarter-final round there will be an additional \$400 fee.
- Quarterfinal games for the **Blue Junior Varsity Division** shall be played on the higher seeds home ice with the Semi Final Games at Rosemont Ice Arena in Rosemont on March 7<sup>th</sup>. For teams advancing to the semifinal round there will be an additional \$200 fee.
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- Quarterfinal games for the **Combined Junior Varsity Division** shall be played on the higher seeds home ice with the Semi Final Games at Rosemont Ice Arena in Rosemont on March 7<sup>th</sup>. For teams advancing to the semifinal round there will be an additional \$200 fee.
- The Varsity State Championship games shall be played Friday, March 6th, 2025 at the Allstate arena.  
Combined Division Varsity – 6:00pm  
Red Division Varsity – 8:30pm
- The JV State Championship games will be played on March 13th at the Rosemont Ice Arena in Rosemont.  
Combined Junior Varsity – 6:30pm  
Blue Junior Varsity – 8:25pm

*Any controversies regarding either Scheduling or Game Settlement costs will be settled solely by the Illinois State High School Hockey Championships Tournament Committee Chairperson Glenn Jauch, at 630-664-4675 or e-mail at glenn.jauch@ahai.org*

## Tournament Rules

**All games are to begin on clean ice**

| Level            | Period Length | OT Period Length | Ice Cut                                   |
|------------------|---------------|------------------|---|
| Combined JV      | 15 minutes    | 15 minutes       | None *                                    |
| Blue JV          | 15 minutes    | 15 minutes       | None *                                    |
| Combined Varsity | 15 minutes    | 15 minutes       | Between 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> |
| Red Varsity      | 17 minutes    | 17 minutes       | Between 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> |

**Cut ice after the 1<sup>st</sup> OT and then after every additional 2 OT periods if needed.**

**(\*JV will have ice cut between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> only during State Championship games)**

1. All AHAI and USA Hockey Rules prevail.
2. Each team shall be allowed one 1-minute time out during all 2026 Illinois State High School Hockey Championships Tournament games inclusive of overtime.
3. Teams will switch ends at the start of all periods as well as the first (sudden death) overtime period and will continue to switch with any additional (sudden death) overtime period.
4. The Red Varsity Division and the Combined Varsity Division will utilize a four (4) person officiating system.
5. Penalties are Minor, two (2) minutes; Major, five (5) minutes; and Misconduct, ten (10) minutes.
6. **Slaughter Rule** - During the 2026 Illinois State High School Hockey Championships Tournament, if there is a five (5) goal differential at the start of or at any time during the third period, it will initiate a running clock. If the goal differential becomes 3 the game will return to stop-clock.
7. Home team wears dark colored jerseys. Away team wear white jerseys. If away team doesn't have a white jersey they must get approval from tournament chairman on alternate color. ALL teams need to have both jerseys with them for every game. Referees have the final say on jerseys.
8. Games may begin up to 10:00 minutes before scheduled ice time if all participants are ready as determined by the Tournament Supervisor.
9. All USA Hockey equipment requirements must be met.
10. Any appeal of a game issue must be recorded on the score sheet at the end of the game before the coaches leave the ice.
11. No mechanical noise makers or cow bells are permitted.
12. **\*Note** - Fans expelled for Zero Tolerance Violations from a State Tournament Game are banned from all subsequent 2026 Tournament Games.

13. The decisions of the Illinois State High School Hockey Championships Tournament Chairperson(s) and the Illinois State High School Hockey Championships Tournament Committee regarding all aspects of the 2026 Illinois State High School Hockey Championships Tournament are to be considered Final.
14. Tournament Awards will be as follows:
  - Individual awards for first and second place in the **Red Varsity Division, Combined Varsity Division, Blue Junior Varsity Division, Combined Junior Varsity.**
  - Team Banners for 1st, 2nd and Final Four in the **Red Division Varsity, Combined Division Varsity, Blue Junior Varsity Division, Combined Junior Varsity.**

Feel free to contact the Tournament Chairperson, Glenn Jauch, with any questions. We are looking forward to a great Illinois State High School Hockey Championships Tournament culminating with the Championship games. Thank you for your cooperation and good luck!

**Glenn Jauch**

*High School Tournament Chairperson* 630-664-4675 [glenn.jauch@ahai.org](mailto:glenn.jauch@ahai.org)