



Affton Americans Hockey

Safe Sport Program Policies and Procedures

Keeping our Kids Safe with Safe Sport

The first step in providing a great youth sports experience is establishing a safe environment for kids to participate in. USA Hockey had systems in place to protect players from abuse long before Safe Sport was launched in 2012, but by uniting all of the policies and procedures into one policy, USA Hockey once again displayed the type of paramount importance it places on player safety. With the comprehensive Safe Sport Program implemented by USA Hockey and Affton Hockey, the sport of hockey has never been safer.

Today, the Safe Sport program utilizes a six-pronged approach to ensure all USA Hockey Member Programs are guarded against abuse and misconduct:

- The Safe Sport Handbook includes policies that apply to all USA Hockey member programs.
- Coaches, board members, volunteers, and parents are provided with training on how to recognize and reduce circumstances in which potential abuse may occur.
- USA Hockey and Affton Hockey require background screening for anyone who will have regular or routine interaction with players.
- Reporting mechanisms have been instituted at the local, state, and national levels for suspected abuse or misconduct (including protections from any retaliation or repercussions for such reporting).
- Procedures are in place to respond to allegations of abuse and misconduct.
- USA Hockey and its member programs will monitor and supervise the Safe Sport program to help ensure its effectiveness.

While USA Hockey and Affton Hockey consistently work to implement and uphold this framework of the Safe Sport Program, volunteers, coaches, parents, and players have a critical role in recognizing incidents at the local level and reporting them. It is believed that Safe Sport violations are under-reported, and the Affton Hockey Safe Sport Manager emphasizes the importance of people understanding what types of incidents need to be reported.

Below are the seven primary types of abuse and misconduct addressed by Safe Sport policies. For official definitions of these violations, reference the [USA Hockey Safe Sport Handbook](#).

- Sexual Abuse
- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Bullying
- Threats
- Harassment
- Hazing

Conduct that is prohibited or regulated by the USA Hockey Playing Rules (e.g., rough play, punching an opponent, "intent to injure" incidents, yelling at a referee or opponent, etc.), and complaints related to officiating, are not intended to be covered by the Safe Sport Program policies and is instead to be addressed and/or penalized under the Playing Rules.

Through the USA Hockey Safe Sport Program, USA Hockey and Affton Hockey are committed to creating the safest possible environment for participation in hockey. We hope you will join us in that effort this season by familiarizing yourself with Safe Sport policies and watching for signs in your community.

Board Member, Coach, Coordinator, Other Screening and Training Policy

In addition to the development of our hockey players and enjoyment of the sport of hockey, the safety and protection of our participants is central to the goals of the Affton Americans Hockey Association. Affton Hockey adheres to USA Hockey's Safe Sport Program as a means to help protect its participants from physical abuse, sexual abuse and other types of misconduct, including emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing. All board members, coaches, coordinators, locker room monitors, and all volunteers and employees that have regular contact with, or authority over minor athletes will be required to take the USA Hockey Safe Sport training available at **www.usahockey.com** and maintain a clear background screening through Missouri Hockey.

We encourage everyone in our organization to become Safe Sport trained, however this is not required.

Note: USA Hockey does not consider persons serving solely in the following roles to have regular contact with, or authority over minor athletes (not an exhaustive list): scorekeepers, penalty box operators, concession stand workers, arena entry/ticket takers, or persons contracted through outside entities for the purpose of performing services (e.g., security, photographers, medical or training persons, etc.) for specific events.

Electronic Communication Policy

If the player is under the age of 18, any email, text, social media, or similar communication must also copy or include the player's parents. Coaches are prohibited from having players joined to or connected through their personal Facebook page or any other similar social media application. To facilitate communication, an official organization or team page may be set up and players and parents join (i.e., "friend") the official organization or team page and coaches can communicate to players through that site. All electronic communication of any kind between coach and player, including use of social media, must be non-personal in nature and be for the purpose of communicating information about team activities or team oriented motivational purposes.

Affton American Hockey Locker Room Policy

To help prevent abuse or misconduct from occurring in our locker rooms, Affton Hockey has adopted the following locker room policy. This policy is designed to maintain personal privacy as well as to reduce the risk of misconduct in locker rooms.

At each of our facilities locker rooms are available for our programs. Many of these locker rooms share a restroom and shower area. Some teams in our program may also occasionally or regularly travel to play games at other arenas, and those locker rooms, rest rooms and shower facilities will vary from location to location. At arenas for which you are unfamiliar, parents should plan to have extra time and some flexibility in making arrangements for their child to dress, undress and shower if desired.

Locker rooms should be cleaned and locked after every use. Coaches are responsible to ensure this is done each time the locker rooms are used. Per USA Hockey Safe Sport, supervision is required when players are in the locker room. The volunteer must have a background check and Safe Sport training before being allowed to supervise.

Locker Room Monitoring

Affton Hockey has predictable and limited use of locker rooms and changing areas (e.g., generally 30-60 minutes before and following practices and games). This allows for direct and regular monitoring of locker room areas. While constant monitoring inside of locker rooms and changing areas might be the most effective way to prevent problems, we understand that this would likely make some players uncomfortable and may even place our staff at risk for unwarranted suspicion.

We conduct a sweep of the locker rooms and changing areas before players arrive. If the coaches are not inside the locker rooms, a team responsible adult (which has been screened) will be posted directly outside of the locker rooms and changing areas during periods of use, and leave the doors open only when adequate privacy is still possible, so that only participants (coaches and players), approved team personnel and family members are permitted in the locker room. It is the policy of Affton Hockey that any individual meetings with a minor participant and a coach or other adult in a locker room, shall require that a second screened adult is present. Team personnel will also secure the locker room appropriately during times when the team is on the ice.

If more than one locker room is used by the team each locker room must be monitored. For example, if you coach a youth team that has both male and female participants the locker room for each *must* be monitored by a properly screened adult.

Parents in Locker Rooms

Except for players at the younger age groups (8U and under), parents who have not been screened by USA Hockey and cleared by the organization, are not allowed in locker rooms. If a player needs assistance with his or her uniform or gear, if the player is or may be injured, or a player's disability warrants assistance, then we ask that parents let the coach know beforehand that he or she will be helping the player.

Naturally, with our youngest age groups (8U and under), it is necessary for parents to assist the players getting dressed. We encourage parents to teach their players as young as possible how to get dressed so that players will learn as early as possible how to get dressed independently. In circumstances where parents are permitted in the locker room, coaches are permitted to ask that the parents leave for a short time before the game and for a short time after the game so that the coaches may address the players. As players get older, the coach may at his or her discretion prohibit parents from a locker room.

Minimum Attire Policy

In order to accommodate both female and male privacy rights in the locker rooms Affton Hockey have adopted a minimum attire policy **at all times**.

Players should arrive at the rink wearing their base layer (e.g., shorts and t-shirt, compression shorts and shirt or sports bra) and then all players *can* dress in the same locker room without any player seeing another player in a state of undress. A player not wearing their "base layer" shall use a restroom to change into the base layer and then enter the locker room with the other players. Use of showers (especially when showers are not separate from the locker room) shall be permitted in a manner respecting all players' privacy.

Mixed Gender Teams

It is important that the privacy rights of all our players are given consideration and appropriate arrangements made. Where possible, Affton Hockey will have the male and female players have access to dress/undress in separate locker rooms and then convene in a single locker room before the game or team meeting. Once the game or practice is finished the players may come to one locker room for a team meeting and then the male and female players can proceed to their separate locker rooms to undress and shower, if available. If separate locker rooms are not available, refer to base layer policy above. We understand that these arrangements may require that players arrive earlier or leave later to dress but believe that it is the most reasonable way to accommodate and respect all of our players.

Cell Phones and Other Mobile Recording Devices

Cell phones etc and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras, are not permitted to be used in the locker rooms. If phones or other mobile devices must be used, they should be taken outside of the locker room.

The following "zero tolerance" steps will be followed if players are found to be in violation of the above policy:

1. If a player conceals his/her cell phone (i.e. does not surrender this to a coach upon entry to the locker room) and is found via social media posts, or otherwise, to have taken photos or video of the locker room, the first violation will be a 2 game suspension.
2. Second violation will be grounds for removal from the team based on Affton Hockey Board review and decision.

Affton Americans Hockey Travel Policy

Affton Hockey has some teams that travel regularly to play individual games, two or three games at a time, or in tournaments. We also have some teams where travel is limited to only a few events per year, and some teams where there is no travel other than local travel to and from our own arena. Affton Hockey has established policies to guide travel, minimize one-on-one interactions and reduce the risk of abuse or misconduct. Adherence to these travel guidelines will increase player safety and improve the player's experience while keeping travel a fun and enjoyable activity.

We distinguish between travel to training, practice and local games or practices ("local travel"), and team travel involving a coordinated overnight stay ("team travel").

Local Travel

Local travel occurs when Affton Hockey or one of its teams does not sponsor, coordinate, or arrange for travel.

- Players and/or their parents/guardians are responsible for making all arrangements for local travel. The team and its coaches, managers or administrators should avoid responsibility for arranging or coordinating local travel. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure the person transporting the minor player maintains the proper safety and legal requirements, including, but not limited to, a valid driver's license, automobile liability insurance, a vehicle in safe working order, and compliance with applicable state laws.
- The employees, coaches, and/or volunteers of Affton Hockey or one of its teams, who are not also acting as a parent, should not drive alone with an unrelated minor player and should only drive with at least two players or another adult at all times, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the minor player's parent.
- Where an employee, coach and/or volunteer is involved in an unrelated minor player's local

travel, efforts should be made to ensure that the adult personnel are not alone with the unrelated player, by, e.g., picking up or dropping off the players in groups. In any case where an employee, coach and/or volunteer is involved in the player's local travel, a parental release should be obtained in advance.

- Employees, coaches, and volunteers who are also a player's parent or guardian may provide shared transportation for any player(s) if they pick up their player first and drop off their player last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement.
- It is recognized that in some limited instances it will be unavoidable for an employee, coach or volunteer of Affton Hockey or one of its teams to drive alone with an unrelated minor player. However, efforts should be made to minimize these occurrences and to mitigate any circumstances that could lead to allegations of abuse or misconduct.

Team Travel

Team travel is overnight travel that occurs when Affton Hockey or one of its teams sponsors, coordinates or arranges for travel so that our teams can compete locally, regionally, nationally or internationally. Because of the greater distances, coaches, staff, volunteers, and chaperones will often travel with the players.

- Travel notice will also include designated team hotels for overnight stays as well as a contact person within the team. This individual will be the point of contact to confirm your intention to travel and to help with travel details.
- Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with a minor player (unless the coach is the parent, guardian, or sibling of the player).
- Because of the greater distances, coaches, staff, volunteers, and chaperones will often travel with the players. No employee, coach, or volunteer will engage in team travel without the proper safety requirements in place and on record, including valid drivers' licenses, automobile liability insurance as required by applicable state law, a vehicle in safe working order, and compliance with all state laws. All chaperones shall have been screened in compliance with the USA Hockey Screening Policy and all team drivers shall have been screened and the screen shall include a check of appropriate Department of Motor Vehicle records. A parent that has not been screened may participate in team activities and assist with supervision/monitoring of the players with another coach or approved and screened adult. They will not be permitted to have any one-on-one interactions with players.
- Players may share rooms with other players of the same gender, with the appropriate number of players assigned per room depending on accommodations.
- The coach will establish a curfew by when all players must be in their hotel rooms or in a supervised location.
- Individual meetings between a player and coach may not occur in hotel sleeping rooms and must be held in public settings or with additional adults present.
- All players will be permitted to make regular check-in phone calls to parents. Team personnel shall allow for any unscheduled check in phone calls initiated by either the player or parents.
- Family members who wish to stay in the team hotel are permitted and encouraged to do so.
- The team will make every effort to accommodate reasonable parental requests when a child is away from home without a parent. If any special arrangements are necessary for your child, please contact the team personnel who can either make or assist with making those arrangements.
- Meetings do not occur in hotel rooms, but the team may reserve a separate space for adults and athletes to socialize.
- If disciplinary action against a player is required while the player is traveling without

his/her parents, then except where immediate action is necessary, parents will be notified before any action is taken or immediately after the action. This should include a coach along with a minimum of one other team responsible adult parent being present.

- No coach or chaperone shall at any time be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing their coaching and/or chaperoning duties.
- In all cases involving travel, parents have the right to transport their minor player and have the minor player stay in their hotel room.
- During team travel, coaches, team personnel and chaperones will help players, fellow coaches and team personnel adhere to policy guidelines, including, without limitation, the Travel Policy, Locker Room Policy, and Reporting Policy.
- Prior to any travel, coaches will endeavor to make players and parents aware of all expectations and rules. Coaches will also support chaperones and/or participate in the monitoring of the players for adherence to curfew restrictions and other travel rules.

Prohibited Conduct and Reporting

USA Hockey's Reporting Policy is a key part of its Safe Sport Program, and an effective reporting policy is crucial to preventing abuse. Section IV of the Safe Sport Handbook contains specifics on the Reporting Policy.

The Policy requires that every employee or volunteer of any USA Hockey Member Program must report (1) actual or perceived violations of the USA Hockey Safe Sport Program Handbook, (2) any violations of the policies prohibiting Sexual Abuse, Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Bullying, Threats and Harassment, and Hazing, and (3) suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse to the appropriate USA Hockey representatives.

Additionally, in all cases involving suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse, every employee or volunteer of USA Hockey Member Programs must also report to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Affton Americans Hockey Association prohibits all types of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing, all as described in the USA Hockey Safe Sport Handbook. Participants, employees, or volunteers in Affton Americans Hockey Association may be subject to disciplinary action for violation of the Safe Sport Policies or for engaging in any misconduct or abuse that violates the USA Hockey Safe Sport Policies.

Reports of any actual or perceived violations must be reported through the following links:

1. clicking on **Report to USA Hockey** and completing the Reporting Form from the USA Hockey website,
2. emailing to **usahockeySafe Sport@usahockey.org**,
3. calling USA Hockey at 800-888-4656,
4. reporting to your Affiliate Safe Sport Coordinator, please click on the link for the contact information for each USA Hockey **Affiliate Safe Sport Coordinator**.

If a parent feels it is necessary, law enforcement should be contacted at the parents' discretion.

The Center accepts all reports of sexual abuse and child abuse within the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement. **Report here** if you have reasonable suspicion of sexual misconduct or

harassment, child abuse (including child sexual abuse), or intimate relationships involving an imbalance of power.

The Center also accepts reports of emotional and physical misconduct (including but not limited to bullying, hazing, stalking, and harassment) within the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement. Reports of emotional and physical misconduct can also be reported directly to your sport's national governing body (NGB).

Reports may be made anonymously to USA Hockey or The Center, with no cost or fee associated with reporting.

Please refer to the **USA Hockey Safe Sport Handbook Reporting Procedure** of the handbook for more information.

Officiating Complaints

Complaints related to officiating are not intended to be covered by the Safe Sport Program policies. Please contact your Local, State or District Supervisor Ice Hockey Official Supervisor.

Contact Information

The Affton Americans Hockey Compliance / Safe Sport Manager can be reached via the email listed on the website: <https://afftonhockey.org/board-staff/>

Additional Resources

USA Hockey provides resources and downloads including quick reference guides, information & policies, Safe Sport Code, Reporting Form, Consent Forms, etc. These are able to be viewed and downloaded from their website at <https://www.usahockey.com/resourcesanddownloads>.