

**—NPHA—**  
**COACHING**  
**—COMMITMENT—**  
*and*  
**AGREEMENT**



# NPHA Coaching Commitment & Agreement

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## Purpose

The New Prague Hockey Association ("NPHA") is committed to providing a positive, competitive, and development-focused hockey experience where every player has the opportunity to grow both on and off the ice. Coaches play a vital role in achieving that mission by serving as leaders, mentors, role models, and teachers for our players and families.

This Coaching Agreement & Expectations outlines the standards and responsibilities of serving as an NPHA coach. By accepting a coaching position, coaches acknowledge that coaching is a privilege and agree to uphold the Association's Mission, Vision, Core Values, player development philosophy, and policies throughout the season. This Agreement complements the NPHA Member Handbook and outlines the additional expectations associated with serving in a leadership role.

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## Our Commitment

At NPHA, we believe youth hockey is about far more than wins and losses. While competition is an important part of the game, our greatest responsibility is helping young athletes become confident, respectful, resilient, and accountable individuals. Every practice, game, conversation, and interaction provides an opportunity to positively influence a player's experience and love for the game.

Our coaches help establish the culture of our Association. The standards they set, the example they model, and the relationships they build shape not only their team, but the reputation and future of New Prague Hockey Association.

Our Mission is to create a positive and competitive hockey culture built on accountability, development, hard work, support, community, and a place where every player feels accepted and valued.

Our Vision is to be a youth hockey community recognized for strong player development, higher standards, meaningful support, and a culture where every player, family, coach, and volunteer feels connected and proud to be part of NPHA.

By accepting a coaching position, each coach agrees to support and model the Association's Core Values of Hard Work, Development, Community, Support, Accountability, and Belonging. These values should guide every coaching decision and every interaction with players, families, officials, volunteers, and fellow coaches.

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# Coaching Philosophy

NPHA believes that great coaches develop great people first and hockey players second. While teaching hockey skills is an important responsibility, coaches are equally responsible for helping players develop confidence, leadership, discipline, teamwork, resilience, sportsmanship, and respect.

Coaches are expected to create an environment that is positive, challenging, supportive, and accountable while encouraging players to compete, work hard, learn from mistakes, and enjoy the game. Every player deserves the opportunity to improve, regardless of current ability or experience.

Winning is valued and competition should be embraced; however, winning will never take priority over player development, sportsmanship, safety, or the overall experience of our athletes. Coaches are expected to make decisions that support the long-term development of every player while remaining consistent with the Mission, Vision, and Core Values of NPHA.

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## Appointment & Eligibility

All coaches are recommended annually by the Hockey Development Committee (HDC) and approved by the NPHA Board of Directors. Coaching appointments are made on a seasonal basis and are contingent upon meeting all USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey, District 6, and NPHA coaching requirements.

Coaches agree to maintain all required certifications, SafeSport training, background screening, and other eligibility requirements throughout the season, attend required coach meetings, support the Association's coaching philosophy and player development standards, and attend the annual Fortis Coach Training Clinic as part of their coaching commitment, unless excused by the Hockey Development Committee or NPHA Board of Directors.

Coaching appointments are reviewed annually and do not guarantee future coaching opportunities.

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## Coaching Staff Structure

Each team may roster one (1) Head Coach and up to three (3) Assistant Coaches. Additional Practice Coaches may be approved by the NPHA Board based on the developmental or operational needs of the team.

The Head Coach is responsible for the overall leadership of the team, including player development, practice planning, game management, coach coordination, and communication with families. Assistant Coaches support the Head Coach by assisting with practices, games, and player development. Practice Coaches provide additional on-ice instruction during practices and should not serve on the bench during games unless approved by the Head Coach or serving in place of an unavailable Assistant Coach.

To promote consistency and provide the best experience for players, coaches are encouraged to focus on a single rostered team. The Hockey Development Committee and Board of Directors may approve exceptions on a

case-by-case basis when a coach has demonstrated the commitment, availability, and ability to effectively fulfill multiple coaching assignments.

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## Coach Responsibilities

Coaching within NPHA is both a privilege and a responsibility. Coaches represent not only their team, but the entire Association, and are expected to model the Mission, Vision, Core Values, and player development philosophy of NPHA in every interaction.

Coaches agree to create a positive, safe, and development-focused environment by preparing organized, age-appropriate practices, communicating respectfully, and promoting teamwork, accountability, sportsmanship, and respect. Coaches are expected to support both the athletic and personal growth of every player while fostering confidence, resilience, and character.

At the Mite/8U and Squirt/10U levels, coaches will provide fair and equitable playing opportunities consistent with the NPHA Member Handbook, USA Hockey's American Development Model (ADM), Minnesota Hockey guidelines, and the Association's player development philosophy.

At the PeeWee/12U and Bantam/15U levels, coaches may exercise reasonable discretion regarding playing time and situational play while remaining consistent with the developmental philosophies and recommendations of USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey, District 6, and the NPHA Member Handbook. Coaches are expected to balance player development with competitive team play while acting in the best interest of both the individual player and the team.

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## Commitment to Team Participation & Player Attendance

Consistent attendance is essential to player development, team continuity, and the overall success of the team. Coaches agree to communicate attendance expectations with players and families, utilize Association-approved communication and attendance tools, and consistently apply the attendance guidelines outlined in the NPHA Member Handbook.

Coaches understand that communication of an absence does not automatically make it excused and agree to evaluate attendance concerns using a fair, consistent, and development-focused approach, considering the reason for the absence, communication from the family, attendance patterns, and the player's overall commitment to the team.

When attendance concerns require disciplinary action, coaches agree to follow the procedures outlined in the NPHA Member Handbook and consult with the Hockey Development Committee when appropriate. The goal of the attendance policy is to promote accountability, responsibility, and commitment while acting in the best interest of both the player and the team.

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# Commitment to Communication

Open, respectful, and timely communication is essential to building positive relationships with players, families, volunteers, and the Association. Coaches agree to establish clear team expectations at the beginning of the season, including communication, attendance, player development, and team expectations, and to keep families informed throughout the season in a professional and respectful manner.

Questions or concerns involving an individual player should be addressed privately and in accordance with the communication and grievance procedures outlined in the NPHA Member Handbook. Coaches agree to work collaboratively with Team Managers, the Hockey Development Committee, and the Board when appropriate to support positive, solution-focused communication.

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# Commitment to SafeSport & Player Safety

The safety and well-being of every participant is of the highest importance to the New Prague Hockey Association.

Each coach agrees to understand, support, and comply with all USA Hockey SafeSport requirements, Minnesota Hockey policies, District 6 requirements, and NPHA policies throughout the season. Coaches further agree to follow the NPHA Locker Room Policy and all supervision expectations established by the Association.

Coaches recognize that they play an important role in creating an environment where every player feels physically and emotionally safe, respected, and included. Coaches agree to foster a culture free from bullying, harassment, hazing, discrimination, retaliation, or abuse of any kind and understand their obligation to report concerns in accordance with SafeSport requirements and Association policies.

Player safety extends beyond the locker room and includes all practices, games, tournaments, travel, electronic communication, and Association-sponsored activities. Coaches agree to exercise sound judgment and place the safety and well-being of players above all other considerations.

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# Commitment to Professional Conduct

As leaders within the Association, coaches understand that their conduct establishes the standard for players, families, and the broader hockey community.

Each coach agrees to demonstrate professionalism, integrity, respect, and good sportsmanship in all interactions involving players, parents, officials, volunteers, opponents, and fellow coaches. Coaches understand that they are expected to lead by example and that their behavior should consistently reflect the Mission, Vision, and Core Values of the Association.

Coaches agree to communicate respectfully, provide constructive instruction, and create an environment that encourages confidence and continuous improvement. Public criticism, humiliation, intimidation, or abusive behavior toward any participant is inconsistent with the expectations of this Agreement and will not be tolerated.

Coaches further agree to support game officials and respect the role they play within youth hockey. Concerns regarding officiating should be addressed through appropriate Association procedures and never through public confrontation or criticism. Coaches shall not attempt to circumvent the spirit or intent of the playing rules and are expected to model the highest standards of sportsmanship regardless of the outcome of a contest.

During Association activities, coaches agree to refrain from the use of alcohol, illegal substances, tobacco, or nicotine products while in the presence of players and understand that they are expected to represent the Association professionally both on and off the ice.

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## **Commitment to Player Development**

Player development remains the foundation of the New Prague Hockey Association. Coaches accept the responsibility of providing every player with opportunities to improve while creating an environment that encourages confidence, accountability, teamwork, resilience, and enjoyment of the game.

Each coach agrees to prepare organized, age-appropriate practices that maximize repetitions, encourage creativity, and support the developmental model established by USA Hockey and the Association. Coaches understand that players develop at different rates and agree to provide instruction that is encouraging, challenging, and appropriate for each athlete.

While competition is an important aspect of hockey, coaches agree that decisions regarding practices, playing opportunities, and player development will remain consistent with the long-term interests of the player rather than solely focusing on short-term competitive success.

Coaches further agree to support fellow coaches by sharing ideas, collaborating when appropriate, and contributing to a unified player development philosophy throughout the Association. The success of NPHA is built upon coaches working together rather than operating independently.

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## **Training, Certification & Association Support**

Each coach agrees to maintain all coaching certifications required by USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey, District 6, and NPHA throughout the season.

To support coach development, NPHA will reimburse coaches for approved USA Hockey registration fees, required certification clinics, and background screening costs upon written request submitted to the Association Treasurer no later than March 31 of the current season. Requests received after this deadline will not be eligible for reimbursement.

The Association believes in investing in its coaches and will provide coach education opportunities, development resources, and organizational support throughout the season whenever practical. First-year NPHA coaches will receive one Association coach jacket in recognition of their commitment to the program.

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## Non-Parent Coaches

Coaches must complete the Association's coaching application process, meet all USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey, District 6, and NPHA coaching requirements, and are held to the same standards, responsibilities, and expectations outlined throughout this Agreement.

By accepting a coaching position, coaches acknowledge that compensation and player fee assessments are administered in accordance with policies established by the NPHA Board of Directors. Coaches further acknowledge receipt of and agreement with **Appendix A – Non-Parent Coach Compensation & Player Fees**.

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## Volunteer Credit & Coaching Incentives

New Prague Hockey Association recognizes the significant time and commitment required to serve as a coach. In appreciation of that commitment, each team may have one (1) Head Coach and up to three (3) Assistant Coaches receive full volunteer-hour credit in accordance with the Association's volunteer policy. Approved Practice Coaches are eligible to receive one-half of the required volunteer-hour credit.

Volunteer-hour credit is intended to recognize active participation and meaningful contribution throughout the season. Coaches understand that this credit is contingent upon fulfilling the responsibilities associated with their coaching role.

The Hockey Development Committee, with approval of the Board of Directors, reserves the right to revoke or adjust a coaching designation when a coach no longer fulfills the expectations outlined within this Agreement. Should a coaching designation be removed, the Board may determine, on a case-by-case basis, whether full, partial, or no volunteer-hour credit will be awarded.

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## Commitment to Accountability

NPHA believes accountability promotes growth, consistency, and continual improvement for coaches and the Association. By accepting a coaching position, coaches agree to uphold the standards outlined in this Agreement, the NPHA Member Handbook, and all applicable USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey, and District 6 policies.

When concerns arise, coaches agree to participate in respectful, solution-focused discussions with the Hockey Development Committee and Board of Directors. Whenever practical, concerns will be addressed through

communication, education, and collaboration before disciplinary action is considered. Repeated concerns or failure to meet expectations may result in further review by the Hockey Development Committee and Board.

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## Commitment to Continuous Improvement

NPHA is committed to developing coaches in the same way it develops players.

Coaches agree to remain open to feedback, seek opportunities to improve, and participate in coach education opportunities provided by the Association whenever practical. Constructive feedback from the Hockey Development Committee, fellow coaches, players, and families should be viewed as an opportunity for continued growth rather than criticism.

Likewise, the Association is committed to providing coaches with the resources, communication, mentorship, and support necessary to help them succeed. Coaching is a partnership between the individual coach and the Association, with both sharing responsibility for creating a positive experience for every participant.

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## Discipline

Coaching is a privilege, and coaches are expected to uphold the standards outlined in this Agreement, the NPHA Member Handbook, and the policies of USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey, and District 6.

When concerns arise, the Hockey Development Committee and Board of Directors will review each situation fairly and on a case-by-case basis. Depending on the nature and severity of the concern, disciplinary action may include verbal coaching, written expectations, suspension of coaching responsibilities, removal of volunteer-hour credit, suspension from team activities, or removal from a coaching position.

The Board reserves the right to immediately suspend a coach while an investigation is conducted when necessary to protect the safety of participants or the interests of the Association. Unless otherwise determined by the Board, Level I behavior violations may result in suspension from five (5) consecutive team activities. The Board reserves the right to impose additional disciplinary action when warranted.

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# NPHA = COACHING = COMMITMENT

As an NPHA Coach, I understand that coaching is more than teaching hockey. It is an opportunity to positively influence young athletes and help shape the culture of our Association.

## BY ACCEPTING THIS ROLE, I COMMIT TO:



Supporting the **Mission, Vision, and Core Values** of the New Prague Hockey Association.



Putting the **long-term development** and **well-being of players** first.



Creating a **safe, welcoming, positive, and inclusive environment** where every player feels accepted, valued, and challenged.



Leading with **integrity, accountability, professionalism, and respect**.



Teaching **character, teamwork, sportsmanship, and resilience** alongside hockey skills.



Communicating **honestly, respectfully, and professionally** with players, families, officials, volunteers, and fellow coaches.



Applying Association **policies** consistently, fairly, and with sound judgment.



**Representing New Prague Hockey Association** in a manner that reflects positively on the Association both on and off the ice.

I understand that my words, actions, and leadership directly influence the experience of every player and family.

I accept the responsibility of helping build a culture where every participant is **PROUD TO BE PART OF THE NEW PRAGUE HOCKEY ASSOCIATION.**



# Coach Acknowledgement

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the New Prague Hockey Association Coaching Agreement & Expectations. I agree to uphold the standards, responsibilities, and commitments outlined within this document and understand that it is intended to complement the NPHA Member Handbook.

I further acknowledge that I have read and agree to abide by all applicable Association, USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey, and District 6 policies, including but not limited to the NPHA Member Handbook, USA Hockey Code of Conduct, USA Hockey Zero Tolerance Policy, SafeSport requirements, and the NPHA Locker Room Policy.

I understand that coaching is a privilege and that I am expected to serve as a leader, mentor, teacher, and role model for every player and family I represent.

## Coach Information

Coach Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Coaching Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Team/Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Coach Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## New Prague Hockey Association

HDC Level Lead: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_