



GREAT FALLS AMATEUR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION (GFAHA)

POLICY MANUAL 2025 - 2026



MISSION:

To foster the growth of hockey in Great Falls by offering a program that emphasizes skill development, teamwork, integrity, and fair play, all within a safe and enjoyable environment for players and their families.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Title</i>	<i>Page #</i>
Registration	03
Fundraising	04
Volunteer Hours Policy	05
Board Meetings	06
Travel Expenses	06
Uniforms – Jerseys	07
Logo	07
Teams within a Division	07
House League Program	08
Names of Divisions	08
Travel Divisions Participation	08
Player Recruiting	09
Age Division Transfers	09
Level of Play	10
Permission for Unaccompanied Travel & Emergency Care	12
Equipment Requirements	12
Locker Room Policy	15
Season Duration	16
Referees	16
Coach Selection	17
Coach Reimbursement	18
GFAHA Tournament Requirements	20
GFAHA Tournament Guidelines	20
Communication Chain of Command	21
GFAHA Zero Tolerance Policy	22
Code of Conduct Pledge	24
Abuse – Harassment – Neglect	25
Grievance & Discipline Program	26



REGISTRATION POLICY

A. Right to Refuse Registration:

- The Great Falls Amateur Hockey Association (GFAHA) reserves the right to refuse registration and/or membership to any individual for any reason.

B. Annual Fee Establishment:

- Registration fees will be determined annually by the Registration Committee and approved by the Board of Directors.

C. Full Payment Preference:

- Full payment of registration fees is preferred at the first registration.

D. Payment Schedule:

- The Board may determine a payment plan annually, but the final due date of January 1st is strictly enforced. Players with outstanding balances after the first practice or as determined by the Board will not be allowed to skate. There will be a one-time Late Fee of \$100 assessed to all remaining payments.

E. Early Bird Registration:

- An Early Bird Registration will include a \$100 discount for those who register early per player. Dates of registration are determined annually by the Board of Directors.

F. Late Registration Fees:

- Players who register after the final registration date will incur a \$100 late registration fee, unless prior approval from the Board is received.
- This fee does not apply to players/families who relocate to Great Falls and were unable to register by the deadline.

G. Registration Forms and Payments:

- All registration forms ~~and fees~~ must be completed and submitted via Sports Engine.
- Payments can be made using credit or debit cards via the Sports Engine platform, or GFAHA will accept cash or check.
- If the check is returned from the bank for Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF), there will be an additional \$25 fee added to the total amount due, and checks will no longer be accepted as a form of payment.

H. Refund Policy:

- If a family/player terminates their participation with GFAHA, no refunds will be issued after the first attended practice of the current season, unless the request is made prior to the first practice.
- There will be a full refund if the family/player terminates their participation prior to first practice.
- Refund requests after the first practice must be submitted to the Board of Directors for consideration at the next monthly meeting.

I. Membership in Good Standing:

- To be eligible for any benefit GFAHA may offer (e.g., scholarships, discounts, drawings, etc.), families and players must be in good standing with:
 - GFAHA (Balances current, Volunteer Hours, etc.)
 - MAHA
 - USA Hockey

J. Registration Scholarship Applications:

- Players may apply for a scholarship by completing the scholarship application form found on gfaa.net under GFAHA – Scholarships. Eligibility subject to Board approval,



must be in good standing with GFAHA and in compliance with fundraising and volunteer obligations subject to Board approval. Form can be located at <https://www.gfaha.net/page/show/5617299-scholarships>

FUNDRAISING POLICY

A. Participation and Buyout Option:

- Fundraising participation is ***mandatory*** for all players on a travel team.
- Every family will have the option to "buyout" in the amount of \$300 per player, for their fundraising obligation at registration instead of participating in fundraising activities, (Not Applicable for House League Members).
- No goods (e.g., Cash Frenzy, Braided Bread, etc.) will be given for the buyout fee.
- Fundraising fees will be reduced by \$25 for each additional child registered on a travel league team.
- This discount ***does not*** apply to the House League program.

B. Fundraising Obligation and Buyout Amount:

- The fundraising obligation and the buyout amount for all levels of play will be established annually by the Registration Committee and approved by the Board of Directors.

C. Fundraising Coordinator:

- The Fundraising Coordinator will be responsible for organizing and coordinating fundraising activities to help players meet their mandatory fundraising obligations.

D. Tracking and Reporting:

- The Fundraising Coordinator will track each player's fundraising obligation and provide regular updates to the Association Treasurer.
- All funds collected through fundraising will be submitted to the Treasurer in a timely manner.

E. Fundraising Incentives:

- GFAHA may introduce fundraising incentive programs annually.
- The details of these programs will be determined by the Registration Committee, Fundraising Coordinator, and approved by the Board of Directors.

F. Event Coordinator:

- The Board of Directors reserves the right to "hire" an Event Coordinator to organize fundraising events for the Association.
- The Event Coordinator's duties will be assigned annually and will be separate from the responsibilities of the volunteer Fundraising Coordinator.
- This hired position will receive compensation in the form of a percentage of funds raised, after expenses, as approved by the Board of Directors.

G. Fund Collection:

- All funds collected on behalf of GFAHA must be made payable to GFAHA.
- Checks should not be made out to individuals when accepting funds for the organization.

H. Payment at Time of Sale:

- Funds must be collected at the time of sale (e.g., selling raffle tickets, cookie dough, etc.).
- All monies should be submitted to the Fundraising Coordinator when orders, ticket stubs, etc., are turned in.
- Orders without funds will not be accepted and will not be applied to the fundraising obligation.



I. Responsibility for Ticket Stubs:

- Families will be responsible for the ticket stubs (Cash Frenzy) issued to them.
- All unsold tickets must be accounted for and returned to the Fundraising Coordinator by the set deadline.
- No sold tickets can be turned in without the appropriate payment.
- Families are financially responsible for lost or stolen tickets.

J. Board Approval of Team-Specific Fundraising:

- No team or division may engage in fundraising or solicit donations for their own specific team without prior approval from the Board.
- Individual fundraising is not allowed. All fundraising must go through the Association Fundraising Coordinator.
- Sponsorship:
 - All sponsorships must benefit the program as a whole and are not intended to support specific teams, players, or families individually. The High School Casey Cup tournament is the only event in which sponsors are recognized independently. Allocation of sponsorship funds is determined by the Board of Directors and is subject to annual review and approval.

K. Tier II Team Fundraising:

- If GFAHA rosters a Tier II team, that team has the option to fundraise independently from the High School team.
- The Tier II team may manage its fundraising fund, but it must be handled by the Association Treasurer, and all income and expenses must be processed through the Association.

VOLUNTEER HOURS POLICY

A. Volunteer Time Requirement:

- Each family is required to complete **30 hours of volunteer time** throughout the season for one (1) registered player.
- Each family is required to complete **45 hours of volunteer time** throughout the season for two (2) or more registered player(s).
- Of the 30/45 hours, **10 hours** must be spent volunteering in **concessions** and **5 hours** in a **home tournament**.
- The remaining hours can be fulfilled through various other volunteer opportunities provided by GFAHA.
- All members regardless of position (ex. board members, team managers, coaches, tournament [co]directors, etc.) are subject to volunteer deposit and completion of minimum concessions (**10**) and tournament (**5**) **volunteer hours**, all other hours will be covered by position held within the Association.

B. Volunteer Deposit:

- A **\$500 deposit** is required prior to November 1st.
- A **\$750 deposit** is required prior to November 1st if you have two (2) or more registered players.
- Deposit checks will be securely held by Team Manager or Treasurer.
- This deposit will be returned at the end of the season if all volunteer hours are completed.
- If all or part of the required volunteer hours are not completed at the conclusion of the season, volunteer deposit checks will be cashed.



C. Annual Assessment:

- The required volunteer hours and the deposit amount are assessed annually by the Board of Directors.
- The goal is to ensure that the requirements are reasonable and do not become overly burdensome for families.

D. Tracking of Volunteer Hours:

- All volunteer hours are tracked through the DIBS system located at: https://www.gfaha.net/dib_sessions, which is a platform that allows families to sign up for and track their volunteer commitments.

BOARD MEETING POLICY

A. Monthly Board Meetings:

- Board meetings will generally take place monthly, usually on the second Tuesday of each month.
- The Secretary of the Association will notify all Division Representatives of the date, time, and location of each meeting in advance.

B. Special or Additional Meetings:

- The frequency, place, and time of any special meetings or additional Board meetings will be decided on an as-needed basis by the Board of Directors.

C. Meeting Minutes:

- Minutes from all Board meetings will be distributed at the next monthly meeting.
- The Secretary of the Association will keep the minutes on file for record-keeping.

D. Quorum Requirements:

- For a quorum (50%) to be valid during Board meetings, the percentage outlined in the GFAHA Bylaws must be met.

E. Tie-Breaking Votes:

- If a tie occurs during a Board vote and a quorum is present, the President will cast the tie-breaking vote.

F. Lack of Quorum:

- If a quorum (50%) is not present during a Board meeting, business should not be conducted.
- If the Board members present agree, a phone or email vote may be used to conduct voting, but all absent members must be polled to ensure a fair and unbiased vote.

G. Finality of Board Decisions:

- All decisions made by the Board are considered **final**.

TRAVEL EXPENSES POLICY

A. Request / Approval

- The Board of Directors may approve the payment of travel expenses incurred by members of the GFAHA Board when they are volunteering on behalf of the Association.
- Requests for reimbursement of travel expenses to attend approved meetings in which GFAHA participates should be presented to the Board of Directors.
- Each request will be evaluated and approved individually by the Board.



UNIFORMS / JERSEY POLICY

A. Uniform Colors:

- The official uniforms for the Great Falls Amateur Hockey Association will be red, white, and blue, as approved by the Board of Directors.

B. Travel Division Jerseys:

- Players in the Travel Divisions will be responsible for purchasing their own jerseys through the association and not a third party.
- Available jersey numbers will be available annually through the Registrar.
- Players will also be responsible for the care and maintenance of their jerseys.

C. 6U / 8U Division:

- There will be a \$75 deposit at the issuing of the jersey and the deposit will be returned at the end of the season when the jersey is turned in.

D. High School Level Uniform Requirements:

- Participation at the High School level may require players to purchase additional uniform apparel such as:
 - Red helmet
 - Red breezers (or breezer covers)
 - Warmups
 - Dress attire
 - Suit
- The specific apparel required will be determined annually by the coach.

LOGO POLICY

- The Board of Directors has approved an official logo for the Great Falls Amateur Hockey Association.



- Additional GFAHA logos may be presented and approved by the Board of Directors if deemed appropriate.

TEAMS WITHIN A DIVISION

A. Number of Teams & Levels of Play:

- The number of teams and the level of play within a division will be determined based on:
 - A. The number of registered players in that division.
 - B. Recommendations from the division representatives, coaches, and approval from the Board of Directors.

B. Compliance with Policies:

All teams rostered under the Great Falls Amateur Hockey Association (GFAHA) are required to adhere to:



- All procedures, policies, and bylaws currently adopted by the Association.

HOUSE LEAGUE HOCKEY PROGRAM

A. Purpose:

The House League Hockey Program is designed for players who are new to hockey or who prefer not to participate in travel based competition. It serves as an introduction to hockey, providing foundational skills and knowledge. This program offers a local, low-pressure environment that emphasizes skill development, teamwork, and enjoyment of the game without the time and financial commitments associated with travel hockey.

- **Skills Taught:**

- **Skating:**

- Starting and stopping
- Forward and backward skating

- **Hockey Skills:**

- Stick handling
- Passing
- Shooting

- **Travel Requirements:**

No travel is required for players, unless they are willing to travel in the House League Hockey Program. It is intended to be a local, introductory experience. There could be opportunities for optional scrimmages/games with other house league programs around the state.

NAMES OF DIVISIONS

A. Division Age Breakout (Ages as of December 31st of current year)

- **6U (Termites)**
 - Age: 6 years of age and under
- **8U (Mites):**
 - Age: 8 years of age and under
- **10U (Squirts):**
 - Age: 9-10 years of age and under
- **12U (PeeWees):**
 - Age: 11-12 years of age and under
- **14U (Bantams):**
 - Age: 13-14 years of age and under
- **High School/JV:**
 - Age: 14-18 years of age (must be presently enrolled in High School)
- **U19 Girls:**
 - Age: 13-19 years of age and younger
- **House League:**
 - Age: 4 years of age and older

TRAVEL DIVISION PARTICIPATION

A. Commitment to Away Games and Tournaments

At the time of registration, players must indicate if they are willing and able to participate in



away games and tournaments. Players who commit to playing on the road are expected to participate in League games and League playoffs.

B. Non-League Games and Tournaments

Participation in non-League games and tournaments is encouraged but not mandatory. Before committing the team to a non-League game or tournament, the Team Manager is responsible for ensuring that enough players are available and willing to participate in the event.

****NOTE** This can create extra expenses for the players**

PLAYER RECRUITING

A. Restrictions on Recruiting Players

It is prohibited for any representative of GFAHA (including Board members, coaches, parents, etc.) to recruit players for any team without receiving prior approval from the Board of Directors.

B. Adding Players After Registration

Players cannot be added to any team after the final registration date unless approved by the Board.

AGE DIVISION TRANSFERS

Petitioning Policy

It is the policy and recommendation of GFAHA for players to play within the appropriate USA Hockey defined age classification set forth above. GFAHA recognizes in some instances, there are exceptional players who would be better served by playing in the next higher age classification. There may be situations that arise where a player(s) may need to play in the next higher age classification to balance teams with enough players. There is **no guarantee** that a player will be placed in a higher division in the following season. In these rare cases, the following criteria shall be met:

A. Approval Requirement for Age Division Movement

Any player wishing to move to a division other than the one determined by USA Hockey, MAHA, or GFAHA based on their age must receive annual approval from the Board of Directors. Even if approved for a move in one season, the request must be reviewed and approved each year. There is **no guarantee** that a player will be placed in a higher division in the following season.

B. Parent's Request Letter

A letter of request must be written and submitted by the parent(s) of the player wishing to move up, addressed to the board along with the Player Petition/Cross Roster Form filled out completely.

C. Head Coaches Recommendations

The Head Coaches from both the current team ("giving" team) and the team the player wishes to move to ("receiving" team) will discuss the request and provide written recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding players eligible for division advancement.

D. Player's Skill/Ability

Players must demonstrate the skill, physical ability, and mental maturity required to play at next higher age classification.

E. Evaluation



An evaluation of the player shall be completed by Coach in Chief or other impartial Board approved coaches of GFAHA. Petitioning up will only be considered if the player performs in the top 25% of the gaining team.

F. No Skipping Divisions

Players are never allowed to skip an entire division. If there is no team available for a player to participate in, the Board of Directors will address the situation and decide on a case-by-case basis.

Dual/Cross Roster Players

Dual/Cross rostered players will need to consider schedule conflicts and coordinate with both team coaches regarding expectations. The primary division will be determined at approval of cross rostering for any games/tournaments.

G. Final Decision by the Board

The Board of Directors will make the final decision on whether a player is approved for the Play-Up or Dual/Cross Roster request. This decision is solely up to the Board.

- **Registration Fee Requirement**

Approved Play-Up player is required to pay the full registration of the division and the Dual/Cross Roster player is required to pay half of the 2nd division along with primary division registration fees. The fee must be paid in full before the player can begin participation.

LEVEL OF PLAY

This section outlines the procedures for determining team placements and level of play for different age divisions.

A. 6U/8U (Mites)

- **Team Distribution**

Players will be split equally into as many teams as possible. The goal is to ensure equal team distribution based on the number of available players.

- **Coaches' Role**

Coach-in- Chief, Board Approved impartial coaches, and Head Coaches within the division, will collaborate to evenly split the players amongst the teams. This process will create a fair and equal team distribution of players.

- **Tournament Rosters**

Each individual tournament will have a different roster based on the players who are registered and paid before the tournament. These rosters are not fixed and may change from one tournament to another throughout the season.

- **Tournament Fees**

In lieu of Treasure State League games, the association will cover up to \$ ____ per division.

B. 10U (Squirts)

- **Team Distribution**

Players will be divided, if applicable into an “A” or “B” division team.

- **Coaches' Role**

Coach-in- Chief, Board Approved impartial coaches, and Head Coaches within the division, will collaborate to evenly split the players amongst the teams. This process will create a fair and equal team distribution of players.

- **Player Evaluation for Team Placement**



- Players in unknown jerseys (i.e., players who are not yet assigned to a team) will undergo an evaluation process. This will assess five core skills:
 - **Skating** (both forward and backward)
 - **Stopping** (in both directions)
 - **Stick handling**
 - **Passing**
 - **Shooting**
 - The evaluation will take place over two days or less (not necessarily consecutively), and all players will be split into an “A” or “B” division teams based on their scores from the evaluation. Players will then be registered into either travel or house leagues depending on their performance and the division's structure.
- **12U – 14U – JV – High School – U19**
 - C. Team Distribution**

Players will be divided, if applicable into an “A” or “B” division team. If there is only sufficient numbers for a single team, coaches will make determination along with Coach-In-Chief’s recommendation.
 - D. Coaches' Role**

Coach-in- Chief, Board Approved impartial coaches, and Head Coaches within the division, will collaborate to evenly split the players amongst the teams. This process will create a fair and equal team distribution of players.
 - **Evaluation Skills**
 - All players in unknown jerseys (those not yet assigned to a team) will be evaluated on 6 core skills:
 - **Skating** (both forward and backward)
 - **Stopping** (in both directions)
 - **Stick handling**
 - **Passing**
 - **Shooting**
 - **Coachability**
 - The evaluation will take place over three days or less (not necessarily consecutively), and all players will be split into teams based on their performance from the evaluation.
 - **Deadline for High School and JV Evaluations**
 - Evaluations for High School and JV teams must be completed by December 31st. This ensures that team placements are made in a timely manner for the remainder of the season.
 - **Goalies Evaluation**
 - Goalies will be **evaluated separately** from skaters in each division. Goalies typically have different skill sets and needs, so evaluating them independently ensures they are placed appropriately according to their abilities.



PERMISSION FOR UNACCOMPANIED TRAVEL AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

When players travel for away games or tournaments without their parents, the following protocols are in place to ensure their safety and well-being:

A. Permission for Unaccompanied Travel

- If a player is traveling unaccompanied by a parent or guardian, the player must have written permission from their parents.
- The written permission must:
 - Identify the destination of the trip.
 - Name the adult responsible for accompanying and transporting the player to and from the event.

This ensures that parents are aware of and approve of the travel arrangements, and that the player is safely under the supervision of a responsible adult.

B. Emergency Medical Care

- A Consent to Treat / Medical Release Form must also be signed by the player's parent(s), authorizing emergency medical care in case of injury or illness during the event. Form can be found at:
 - <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnmnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://portal.usahockey.com/forms/consent-to-treat-national.pdf>
- The Team Manager or another responsible adult accompanying the team must carry this medical release form.
- The form should also include appropriate health insurance details to facilitate medical care if necessary.

This ensures that in the event of an emergency, the responsible adult can quickly and effectively manage the situation, including seeking medical attention if needed.

C. Two Deep Leadership

- Every effort will be made to adhere to the “Two Deep Leadership” strategy, which ensures there are always at least two responsible adults present during any team activities (practices, games, locker room, travel, meetings, etc.) or any physical or digital contact with minor player. This minimizes the risk of a one-on-one situation between a coach or adult volunteer and a minor player.
 - This policy is to protect both the players, and the adults involved, ensuring that all interactions are appropriate and that there are always multiple responsible parties present.

EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

All players within the Great Falls Amateur Hockey Association (GFAHA) must wear the required protective equipment as outlined by the organization and USA Hockey. This ensures player safety and compliance with the necessary playing standards. The following equipment is mandatory for all players in youth divisions during any type of practices, games, or tournaments:

A. Equipment Requirements

- **Skates**
 - **Approved HECC skates** of hockey design is required.
 - These skates must meet the standards set by the Hockey Equipment Certification Council (HECC) for safety and performance.



- **Shin Pads**
 - Players must wear shin pads to protect their lower legs during play.
- **Breezers (Pants)**
 - Protective hockey pants (also called breezers) are required to protect the hips and thighs.
- **Hockey Socks**
 - Players must wear hockey socks to cover the shin pads and help protect the lower legs.
- **Athletic Supporter with Cup or Pelvic Protector**
 - **Mandatory for both male and female players** to wear an athletic supporter with a cup or pelvic protector for groin protection.
- **Shoulder Pads with Chest Protector**
 - Shoulder pads, including a chest protector, must be worn for upper body protection against impacts.
- **Elbow Pads**
 - Elbow pads are required to protect the arms during play and falls.
- **Hockey Gloves**
 - Hockey gloves must be worn for hand and wrist protection.
- **Hockey Helmet with Full Protective Mask and Chin Protector**
 - A HECC-approved helmet with a full protective mask (including a chin strap) is mandatory for all players. It is compulsory for players to wear their helmets with the chin strap properly fastened during both game play and when on the bench.
 - Note: If a player violates this rule after receiving a warning from the referee, they will be assessed as a misconduct penalty.
- **Mouth Guard**
 - Mandatory for divisions 12U and higher but is highly encouraged by all age groups. The mouth guard helps prevent concussions, dental injuries and mouth trauma during play.
- **Neck Guard**
 - Neck guards are mandatory for all players in all divisions. This protective gear helps prevent neck injuries.
- **Hockey Sticks**
 - All sticks must conform to USA Hockey regulations, ensuring they meet safety and performance standards.
- **Hockey Jerseys**
 - It is recommended that game jerseys be worn only for actual game play, to maintain the condition and appearance of the uniform.

B. Rental Equipment

The Great Falls Amateur Hockey Association (GFAHA) offers rental equipment to assist families in equipping youth participants with appropriate protective gear necessary to participate in the hockey program. This policy outlines the terms, conditions, fees, and responsibilities associated with the rental and return of GFAHA equipment.

- **Eligibility**

Rental equipment is available for youth players registered with GFAHA for the current hockey season. Equipment rentals are subject to availability.



- **Rental Period**

The rental period shall coincide with the GFAHA hockey season, beginning upon issuance of the gear and ending at the conclusion of the season.

- **Equipment Available for Rent**

GFAHA offers a full set or individual pieces of rental equipment, which may include:

- Helmet
- Chest protector
- Elbow pads
- Gloves
- Pants (breezers)
- Shin guards
- Skates (subject to size availability)
- Hockey equipment bag (subject to availability)
- Hockey sticks (subject to availability)

- **Rental Fees and Deposits**

- First-Year Players: No rental fee. A refundable \$75 deposit is required.
- Returning Players: \$75 rental fee plus a refundable \$75 deposit.

- **Terms and Conditions**

1. The renter must inspect all equipment at the time of issuance and promptly report any excessive wear, damage, or missing components.
2. Equipment must only be used by the registered participant to whom it is issued.
3. Equipment may only be used for sanctioned ice hockey or on-ice training activities under the supervision of GFAHA-approved coaches.
4. Renters agree to release and hold harmless GFAHA from liability for any injury or property damage resulting from the use of rented equipment.
5. Equipment must be maintained in good condition throughout the rental period, except for normal wear and tear.
6. Equipment must be returned at the end of the season in a clean and serviceable condition.
7. Renters are financially responsible for any equipment not returned or returned in damaged or non-serviceable condition.

- **Replacement Costs**

In the event that equipment is not returned or is returned in an unacceptable condition, replacement costs will be assessed as follows:

<i>Equipment</i>	<i>Replacement Cost</i>
Bauer Complete Set (adjustable gear)	\$150 (charged if any piece is missing as it is issued as a set)
Helmet	\$45
Breezers (pants)	\$15
Elbow Pads	\$10
Shin Guards	\$10
Chest Protector	\$15
Skates	\$75
Gloves	\$10



- **Cleaning Requirements**
Families are responsible for laundering and cleaning all rented equipment prior to its return.
- **Additional Equipment Requirements**
Participants are responsible for providing additional protective items not included in the rental equipment, including but not limited to:
 - Mouth guard
 - Garter belt or jock/Jane
 - Pelvic protector
 - Neck guard

Acknowledgment

Parents/guardians must sign the rental agreement form acknowledging acceptance of the above terms, financial responsibility for lost or damaged equipment, and agreement to return equipment in acceptable condition.

LOCKER ROOM POLICY

The safety and protection of all participants are central to the goals of the Great Falls Amateur Hockey Association (GFAHA). This policy is designed to prevent abuse or misconduct within the locker rooms and follows USA Hockey's SafeSport Program to protect participants from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment, and hazing.

- **Locker Room Monitoring**
 - **Adult Supervision:** GFAHA requires direct and regular monitoring of locker room areas. Anytime youth players are present, prior to, during and at the end of practices and games, there must always be an adult presence in the locker room.
 - The head coach, assistant coach, and/or background/SafeSport qualified parent volunteer must be present before practices and games, as well as at the end of practices and games to supervise the locker room.
- **Two Deep Leadership**
 - Every effort will be made to adhere to the “Two Deep Leadership” strategy, which ensures there are always at least two responsible adults present during any team activities. This minimizes the risk of a one-on-one situation between a coach or adult volunteer and a minor player. This policy is to protect both the players, and the adults involved, ensuring that all interactions are appropriate and that there are always multiple responsible parties present.
- **Parents in Locker Rooms**
 - **General Policy:** Except for players in the younger age groups (8U and 10U), GFAHA discourages parents from entering locker rooms unless absolutely necessary.
 - If a player requires assistance with their gear or uniform, or if a player has been injured or needs assistance due to a disability, the parent may enter after notifying the coach.
 - For younger age groups, such as 8U and 10U, parent involvement in the locker room is expected to assist players in getting dressed and ready.
 - Encouragement for Independence: Parents are encouraged to teach their children how to get dressed independently as early as possible.
 - Coach's Discretion: In older age groups, coaches may choose to prohibit parents from entering the locker room at their discretion. However, if parents



must assist, the coach may ask the parents to leave briefly before and after games to allow the coach to meet with the team with exceptions to Locker Room Monitor requirements.

- **Co-ed Locker Rooms**
 - Minimum Attire Requirement: All players arrive at the rink wearing hockey base layers or shorts and T-shirts (in good condition, with no holes or tears) under their street clothes or warm-ups before entering the co-ed locker room. This ensures that no player of one gender will see a player of the opposite gender undressed.
 - This policy aims to balance the social interaction and camaraderie of team sports while maintaining a safe and respectful environment for all participants.
- **Cell Phones and Mobile Devices**
 - **No Devices in Locker Rooms:** Cell phones, mobile phones, or any devices with recording capabilities (voice recording, still cameras, video cameras, etc.) are prohibited in the locker rooms.
 - Coaches will remind players to turn off all devices before entering the locker room.
 - If any devices must be used, they should be used in public areas or outside the rink.
 - Consequences: Any violation of the cell phone policy may result in disciplinary actions, including potential suspension from hockey activities.
- **Prohibited Conduct and Reporting**
 - GFAHA prohibits all types of abuse and misconduct, including:
 - Physical abuse
 - Sexual abuse
 - Emotional abuse
 - Bullying
 - Threats
 - Harassment
 - Hazing
- **Disciplinary Actions:**
 - Any participant, employee, or volunteer found violating these locker room policies, or engaging in misconduct or abuse as defined in the USA Hockey SafeSport Handbook, will be subject to disciplinary action by the GFAHA Board.

SEASON DURATION

The duration of the ice hockey season for all divisions within GFAHA will be determined by the Ice Scheduler and must be approved by the GFAHA Board of Directors.

REFEREES

Appointment and Approval of Head Official

Purpose: To establish formal procedures for the appointment and Board approval of the Head Official position within the Great Falls Amateur Hockey Association (GFAHA).

Policy: The Head Official shall serve as a non-voting member of the GFAHA Board and act as the primary liaison for all officiating matters within the Association. To ensure transparency,



accountability, and alignment with organizational goals, the appointment of the Head Official must be reviewed and approved by a majority vote of the GFAHA Board of Directors.

Procedure:

- **Nomination and Review:**
 - Candidates for the Head Official position may be nominated by any member of the GFAHA Board or the Executive Committee.
 - The candidate's qualifications, officiating experience, and familiarity with USA Hockey and GFAHA policies shall be reviewed during the selection process.
- **Board Approval:**
 - A formal motion to approve the appointment must be presented at a scheduled Board meeting.
 - The appointment must be confirmed by a majority vote of the Board.
 - Once approved, the Head Official will begin their duties for the designated term or season.
- **Term and Renewal:**
 - The Head Official shall be appointed for a term of one season unless otherwise specified.
 - Reappointment is subject to annual review and Board approval.

A. Registration with USA Hockey

- All referees must register directly with USA Hockey online and pay the appropriate registration fee to be eligible to officiate games.

B. Proper Classification for Referees

- Referees may only officiate games for which they have the proper classifications according to USA Hockey policy. This ensures they are qualified for the level of play to which they are officiating.

C. Officials Code of Conduct & Payment Agreement

- All referees must sign the Officials Pledge of Code of Conduct and agree to the GFAHA payment schedule for officiating services before they can begin refereeing any GFAHA games.

D. Referee Coordinator Responsibilities

- The Referee Coordinator will be responsible for obtaining and scheduling all referees throughout the hockey season. This ensures a consistent and organized process for securing officials for all games.

E. Review of Referee Fees

- The Board of Directors will review the fee schedule for referees and linesmen on an annual basis before the start of each season.
 - Adjustments to the payment schedule can be made at any time based on need or changes decided by the Board of Directors.
 - No referee or linesman will be paid more than the amount approved by the Board, ensuring consistency and fairness in payment.

COACH SELECTION

A. Annual Selection of Coaches

- All coaches for every division within the GFAHA will be selected annually.

B. Coaching Application



- Anyone interested in coaching at any level (including Head Coach, Assistant Coach, etc.) must submit a Coaching Application by the specified due date.
- This application must be submitted to the Coaches Committee each year.

C. Coach Selection Process

- The Coaches Committee, appointed annually, will be consistent with GFAHA By-laws, Article IX, Section 2, Coaches Committee.
- The Coaches Committee will review all submitted and received applications and recommend a Head Coach for each team and division.
- The Board of Directors will then vote to approve the recommended Head Coaches for each division of play for the current season.

D. Assistant Coaches Selection

- Head Coaches will select their own Assistant Coaches and present them to the Coaching Committee and the Board of Directors for approval.
 - The number of assistant coaches chosen is at the discretion of the Head Coach.
 - GFAHA will only cover expenses for up to 2 non-parent assistant coaches.

E. Annual Reappointment of Coaches

- Coaches must be approved each year to coach. There is no guarantee of re-appointment for any coach from one season to the next.

F. Board Membership for Coaches

- A coach may hold a voting Board position during the season in which they are appointed to a coaching position.
 - However, if the coach is under disciplinary review by any committee directed by the Board or involved in a situation requiring Board intervention, the coach will be relieved of their Board duties until the issue is resolved, and the Board approves the return to their duties.

G. Coaching Credentials & Requirements

- All coaches on the ice or bench with players must:
 - Have the appropriate coaching credentials for the age division they are coaching completed no later than 31 December. If not completed, coach will be suspended until all requirements are met or can submit a waiver for additional time, must be approved prior to being on the bench.
 - Be registered with USA Hockey and Montana Amateur Hockey Association (MAHA).
 - Complete Safe Sport training.
 - Be officially rostered with the team they are coaching.

H. Background Screening

- The Montana Amateur Hockey Association (MAHA) will conduct background screenings on all rostered coaches.
 - All appointed coaches must consent to and pass this background screening before being permitted to coach at any level.

COACH REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

A. Non-Parent Coach Reimbursement

- Reimbursement is required for up to 2 non-parent coaches per team for all travel divisions.



- If there are no tournament profits or the profits are insufficient, parents of the team will be required to cover the non-parent coaches' travel expenses.
- **Mileage**
 - Mileage will be reimbursed at the annual IRS standard mileage rate.
(<https://www.irs.gov/tax-professionals/standard-mileage-rates>)
- **Meals**
 - Itemized food receipts (excluding alcohol) will be reimbursed for up to \$35/day.
 - Non-parent coaches and assistant coaches will be reimbursed for travel day meals with receipts.
- **Lodging:**
 - Reimbursement will be funded by the associated division's home tournament profits for one (1) room per night (refer to Tournament Profits in the GFAHA Tournament Requirements section).

C. Additional Non-Parent Coaches

- If a team has 2 or more non-parent coaches, the Head Coach must get prior approval from the Board to pay for the expenses of any additional coaches.
 - The Board can either approve or refuse to cover these extra expenses.
 - This decision must be made before the season begins.

D. Stipend for Non-Parent Coaches (All Divisions)

- All divisions, non-parent Head Coaches, will receive \$1,500 for the season, and Assistant Coaches will receive \$750.
 - To be eligible for this stipend, coaches must attend at least 80% of all practices and games.
 - Payments will be issued by May 31st after the completed season.
 - This stipend policy aims to attract knowledgeable coaches for older players/divisions.

E. Fundraising Obligation for Parent Coaches

- Parent coaches (those who have a child playing on a travel team) will be required to fulfill half of the Association's mandatory fundraising obligation for their family.
- Every Parent Coach will have the option to "buyout" in the amount of \$_____, for their fundraising obligation at registration instead of participating in fundraising activities.

F. Reimbursement for USA Hockey, MAHA Registration, and Certification Fees

- GFAHA will reimburse the annual USA Hockey fee, MAHA registration fee, and coach certification fee for 3 rostered coaches (Head Coach and 2 Assistants) per team in travel divisions.
 - Receipts must be submitted to the Association Treasurer by April 15th.
 - Reimbursement will be issued by May 31st.

G. House League Hockey Program Coaches

- GFAHA will also reimburse the annual USA Hockey fee, MAHA registration fee, and coach certification fee for 3 rostered coaches (Head Coach and 2 Assistants) per year in the House League Hockey Program.
 - Receipts must be submitted to the Association Treasurer by April 15th.
 - Reimbursement will be issued by May 31st.



GFAHA TOURNAMENTS REQUIREMENTS

A. Purpose and Fundraising

- Tournaments are a source of revenue (profit) for GFAHA and are considered part of the team/division's fundraising obligation.
- This also provides the ability to support the Non-Parent Travel Expenses and End-of-Year (EoY) celebration expenses.

Suggested Tournament Names:

- **6U/8U:** Mighty Mites Tournament
- **10U:** Hockey in The Rockies
- **12U:** Electric City Invitational
- **14U:** Wally Floen Memorial Tournament
- **High School:** Casey Cup
- **U19 Girls:** Lady Liberty Classic

B. League/State Playoff Tournaments

- League/State playoff tournaments must be self-supporting and prior Board approval is required 8 weeks before the event.
- These tournaments are subject to ice availability.
- Parent/Volunteer Home Tournament Requirements:
 - Volunteer, min. 5 hours
 - One (1) Basket Donation

GFAHA TOURNAMENTS GUIDELINES

A. Tournament Director

- All tournaments must be run through a Tournament Director.
- The Tournament Director is responsible for:
 - Agreeing to abide by all GFAHA policies on behalf of parents involved in the tournament.
 - Coordinating with the Treasurer regarding tournament expenses and revenue to prepare the final budget for Board approval.
 - The team's Co-Director will work in conjunction with the GFAHA Tournament Director.

B. Board Approval

- Board approval is required before:
 - Advertising or soliciting participation in any GFAHA-sponsored tournaments.

C. USA Hockey Sanctioning

- A USA Hockey Sanction Form must be completed and the required fee paid in accordance with USA Hockey guidelines.
- Tournament rules must be submitted with the sanction form and fee to USA Hockey.

D. Tournament Rules and Communication

- Tournament rules should:
 - Be provided to teams as part of the Tournament package.
 - Be given to on-ice officials.
 - Be listed in the tournament program.

E. Tournament Expenses

- The cost of ice and officials will be covered by each individual tournament.



- The Treasurer will cover expenses based on available funds under the direction of the Tournament Director.

F. Trophies and Giveaways

- Trophies or giveaways are optional for each tournament committee, subject to their budget constraints.
 - The budget must be able to support these expenses before they can be approved.

G. Donations

- Monetary donations without exchange for goods or advertising are the sole property of GFAHA.
 - Donations must be submitted in full to GFAHA.
 - Any donations received in support of a tournament must involve advertising or other exchanges or they will be treated as donations to GFAHA.
- All contributors must be formally thanked, and the Tax ID number should be provided if requested, within two weeks after the tournament.

COMMUNICATION CHAIN OF COMMAND

A. Player/Parent

- First point of contact for issues, questions, or feedback.
- Encouraged to follow the chain of command and avoid skipping steps unless urgent or unresolved.

B. Team Manager

- Handles administrative issues (schedules, team updates, tournaments, travel, etc.).
- Communicates with coaches and relays parent/player concerns.
- Acts as liaison between team and Division Reps and Coaches

C. Coach

- Addresses player development, game play, discipline, and team performance.
- Contacted about player-specific issues after informing the team manager (if appropriate).

D. Division Representative

- Oversee a division within an age category.
- Supports coaches and managers with league requirements and internal procedures.
- Acts as liaison between Team Manager and GFAHA Board

E. Vice President (or designated Board Member)

- Supports operations and deals with escalated issues if not resolved at lower levels.

F. President / Executive Director

- Final decision-maker for major issues.
- Represents the association in external matters (e.g., with the league, governing bodies).

G. GFAHA Board

- Provides governance, policy decisions, and long-term planning.
- Does not typically get involved in day-to-day team issues.

H. Best Practices

- Encouragement of the 24-Hour Rule Cool-Off Period before addressing concerns.
- Use of email or team applications to provide issues, questions, or feedback
 - Minimize verbal communication so language is not lost in translation
- Always promote respectful and professional communications through all levels.



- Sports Engine Application is designed for communication for scheduling/changing of games and practices. This is not a platform for personal communication for grievances.

GFAHA ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

The Great Falls Amateur Hockey Association (GFAHA) is committed to ensuring that hockey remains a positive experience for all participants in a sportsmanlike environment. As part of this commitment, GFAHA enforces a Zero Tolerance Policy for any individuals, players, coaches, team officials, parents, volunteers and spectators—who display disrespect toward officials, coaches, players, volunteers, and other spectators during any GFAHA activity, whether on or off ice, to include but not limited to: practices, games, team/association meetings, travel, locker rooms, electronic communications, etc.

A. Definition of a Participant:

A participant includes (but is not limited to) players, coaches, officials, parents, spectators, and volunteers.

○ **Legal Reminder:**

Per MCA 45-5-211, assault or intimidation of a sports official is a misdemeanor. A convicted person may be fined up to \$1,000 or imprisoned for up to six months in county jail.

○ **Player Behavior (Zero Tolerance)**

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

- Disputes or argues any decision by an official.
- Uses obscene, profane, or abusive language or gestures, even if not directed at a person.
- Makes gestures or visually demonstrates dissatisfaction with an official's decision.
- Challenges the authority or competence of an official.
- Attempts to incite abuse or disrespect of officials by others.
- Attempts to intimidate an official.
- Makes personal comments or gestures directed at an official.
- If a player persists in any of these behaviors, a misconduct penalty will be assessed. If the behavior continues, a game misconduct penalty will be given.

○ **Coach Behavior (Zero Tolerance)**

A minor penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct will be assessed to a coach who:

- Disputes or argues any decision by an official.
- Use obscene or vulgar language in a boisterous manner.
- Visually displays dissatisfaction with an official's decision, including standing on boards or in the bench doorway with the intent of inciting officials, players, or spectators.
- Attempts to intimidate an official.
- Makes personal comments or gestures directed at an official.
- If the coach persists in these actions, a game misconduct penalty will be assessed.

○ **Officials' Conduct**

- Officials are required to maintain businesslike, sportsmanlike, impartial, and constructive conduct always.
- Baiting or inciting players or coaches is strictly prohibited.
- Officials must always conduct themselves with the understanding that they are ambassadors of the game.

○ **Parents and Spectators (Zero Tolerance)**



- The game will be stopped if parents or spectators display inappropriate or disruptive behavior that interferes with the game or other spectators.
- On-ice officials will identify violators and instruct the coaches to remove the violators from the spectator area. Once removed, the game will resume.
- Lost time will not be replaced, and violators may face further disciplinary action from the GFAHA governing body.
- **Inappropriate and Disruptive Behavior Includes:**
 - Use of obscene or vulgar language in a boisterous manner.
 - Taunting or baiting players, coaches, officials, or other spectators through ridicule, threats of violence, or any physical violence.
 - Throwing objects onto the spectator viewing area, player's bench, penalty box, or ice surface, creating a safety hazard.
 - If any person violates the Zero Tolerance Policy, they can be removed from the premises by the President, Vice President, or any Board Member with prior approval from the President or Vice President. An incident report must be submitted to the GFAHA President within 24 hours.
- **Incident Reporting and Disciplinary Actions**
 - Parents or spectators who display disrespect or verbal abuse towards officials, coaches, players, or other spectators will be reported to the Board.
 - Incident report forms should be completed and submitted to the President within 72 hours of the incident.
 - The President will forward the report to the Grievance Committee, which will review the incident and forward it to the Disciplinary Committee.
 - The Disciplinary Committee will recommend the appropriate action, which the President will then impose.

C. Additional Reporting Process & Enforcement

- **Verbal, Physical, or Emotional Abuse:**
 - Any form of abuse directed at players, coaches, officials, volunteers, or spectators.
- **Bullying, Harassment, or Hazing:**
 - Including but not limited to cyberbullying, derogatory comments, or any behavior that creates a hostile environment.
- **Inappropriate Electronic Communication:**
 - Sending or sharing offensive, threatening, or harassing messages through any digital platform.
- **Locker Room Misconduct:**
 - Violations of privacy, inappropriate behavior, or failure to adhere to established locker room policies.
- **Substance Abuse:**
 - Use or possession of illegal substances or excessive alcohol during any GFAHA activity
- **Immediate Reporting:**
 - All incidents must be reported promptly (72 hours). Serious offenses should be submitted within 24 hours to SafeSport Coordinator and/or GFAHA President.
- **Incident Documentation:**



- An incident report form must be completed and submitted to SafeSport Coordinator and/or GFAHA President within 72 hours.
- **Review Process:**
 - GFAHA President will forward the report to the Grievance Committee for review. If necessary, the report will then be forwarded to the Discipline Committee for evaluation and recommendation.
- **Disciplinary Action:**
 - Consequences may include but are not limited to warnings, suspensions, mandatory training, or expulsion from GFAHA activities depending on the severity of the offense.

CODE OF CONDUCT PLEDGE

It is a requirement for all players, coaches, parents, and officials to read, sign, and submit a pledge to abide by the Code of Conduct as it pertains to their respective membership within the Great Falls Amateur Hockey Association (GFAHA). This pledge must be signed annually.

A. Hazing Policy:

- GFAHA has a zero-tolerance policy for hazing in any of its programs, including training camps, practices (on-ice and off-ice), games, tournaments, and other events. Hazing is defined as any conduct that is insulting, intimidating, humiliating, offensive, or physically harmful.
- Any player, coach, official, team official, executive member, or participant found involved in hazing or initiation rites shall face suspension from participation in any GFAHA activities.
- Individuals who witness hazing and fail to report it or take action will also be subject to suspension.

B. Consumption/Abuse of Mood-Altering Substances by Participants:

- GFAHA prohibits the use of mood-altering substances during active participation in its programs. This includes the use of alcohol, tobacco, performance-enhancing drugs, and recreational drugs. The goal is to ensure the mental, physical, and spiritual health of all participants.

C. Prohibited Substances:

- Intoxicating beverages (e.g., alcohol).
- Non-prescribed controlled substances.
- Prescribed controlled substances used in excess, or to produce intoxication.

D. Disciplinary Actions for Participants:

- 1st Offense: If a player self-reports within 24 hours, they will be suspended from the next 2 games. If they fail to self-report, the suspension will be for the next 4 games.
- 2nd Offense: The player will be suspended from the next 4 games.
- 3rd Offense: The player will be suspended for the remainder of the season from all practices, games, and GFAHA functions.

E. Additional Guidelines for Players:

- Players are required to attend home games and travel with their team to away games even during suspension. However, they will not dress out with the team and will attend as spectators(s).



- If a coach or team manager suspects a player is under the influence during practice or a game, the player will be removed from the ice immediately, and the coach will arrange for the player's safe transportation home.

F. Consumption/Abuse of Mood-Altering Substances by Coaches:

- It is also the policy of GFAHA that coaches must refrain from using mood-altering substances while acting in a coaching role. This applies at all times, including during GFAHA events, traveling, training sessions, and games.

G. Substances Covered Under This Policy:

- Intoxicating beverages (e.g., alcohol).
- Non-prescribed controlled substances.
- Excessive use of prescribed controlled substances, especially to produce intoxication.

H. Disciplinary Actions for Coaches:

- Coaches must self-report any violations of this policy to the League President or Vice President within 24 hours.
- Failure to report an offense will lead to the removal and replacement of the coach for the remainder of the season.
- An emergency Board of Directors meeting will be held to address the incident and decide on the appropriate course of action.

ABUSE – HARASSMENT – NEGLECT POLICY

A. Abuse and Neglect:

1. Reporting Requirement:

If any person involved in GFAHA activities has reasonable grounds to believe that a child is being abused or neglected during any business, event, or activity, they are required to report this belief to the child protection authorities and/or police immediately. The team's general manager must also be informed of the intent to report.

2. Interim Suspension:

GFAHA will take no further action until the authorities and/or police have concluded their investigation. However, if necessary, an immediate interim suspension for hockey activities may be enforced to protect the child from further harm until the investigation is complete.

3. Disciplinary Action:

Once the investigation has been concluded by the authorities, GFAHA will address the matter as a disciplinary issue. The findings from the investigation may be used to inform you of the actions taken by GFAHA in accordance with its policies.

B. Harassment:

1. Form of Harassment:

Harassment is a form of discrimination and is prohibited by law under human rights legislation. In its most severe forms, harassment may be considered a criminal offense under the Montana Code Annotated.

- Harassment is defined as conduct that is disrespectful, insulting, intimidating, humiliating, offensive, or physically harmful to an individual.
- Examples of behaviors that constitute harassment include (but are not limited to):
 - Unwelcome jokes, innuendo, or teasing about a person's appearance, body, attire, age, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation.



- Condescending, patronizing, threatening, or punishing actions that undermine an individual's self-esteem or diminish their performance.
- Practical jokes that cause embarrassment, awkwardness, endanger a person's safety, or negatively affect their performance.
- Unwanted physical contact, such as touching, patting, or pinching.
- Any form of hazing.
- Any form of physical assault or abuse.
- Sexual offenses.
- Behaviors that create a negative, hostile, or uncomfortable environment, even if not directed at a specific individual or group.

C. Sexual Harassment:

1. Form of Sexual Harassment

No player, coach, team official, or executive member of GFAHA is allowed to engage in any form of sexual harassment, which includes but is not limited to:

- Sexual solicitation.
- Unwelcome physical advances.
- Verbal or non-verbal conduct that is sexual in nature.

All individuals are expected to foster a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment within GFAHA activities, where harassment in any form is unacceptable and will be dealt with severely.

GRIEVANCE & DISCIPLINE PROGRAM

Grievance & Discipline Coordinator Overview

The Grievance & Discipline Coordinator is responsible for overseeing all matters related to conduct and behavioral complaints within the GFAHA. This individual serves as the central point of contact for reporting, investigating, and resolving incidents involving players, coaches, officials, parents, volunteers, and spectators. Acting with impartiality and confidentiality, the Coordinator manages the intake of incident reports, conducts or delegates investigations, facilitates committee review, and ensures that disciplinary actions are administered fairly and consistently in accordance with GFAHA policies. The role is essential to upholding the integrity, safety, and positive culture of the association.

Objectives of the Program

The GFAHA Discipline Program seeks to promote the following principles:

- Respect for person(s): All individuals should treat each other with dignity.
- Protection from harm: Ensuring all participants are safe from physical or emotional harm.
- Development of ethical conduct: Encouraging players, coaches, and participants to behave with integrity.
- Justice and fairness: Maintaining a fair and just environment for all.
- Caring attitudes: Promoting kindness and empathy in interactions.
- Freedom to enjoy and flourish: Allowing participants to enjoy the game and grow both personally and athletically.
- Respect for the game: Upholding the traditions and integrity of hockey.

It is expected that every participant in the Association, players, coaches, officials, parents, spectators, and volunteers will abide by these principles. This program is not intended to



address complaints related to officiating or hockey rules but rather to foster and ensure acceptable behavior within the game. Unacceptable behavior includes verbal or physical harassment or abuse directed at any participant.

A. Complaint Handling Procedures

- **Reporting Unacceptable Behavior:**

The complaint-handling process begins when a director, spectator, coach, player, official, parent, or volunteer reports unacceptable behavior. This report will trigger the formal complaint process.

- **Investigation Process:**

An incident report form will be completed and submitted to the Association President or any Board representative. This form will then be forwarded to the Grievance Committee for review.

- **Grievance Committee:**

- Composed of 3 to 5 members (not on the Discipline Committee).
- The committee will investigate the complaint by interviewing witnesses, the complainant, and the accused.
- The committee will submit a written report to the Disciplinary Committee for further action.

- **Disciplinary Committee:**

- Comprised of 3 to 5 members (not on the Grievance Committee), the Disciplinary Committee will review the report and recommend appropriate disciplinary action.
- The Disciplinary Committee will operate for 1 year/season and ensure consistent application of discipline.

B. Responsible Reporters

- **On/Off-Ice Officials:**

- Officials who witness or are made aware of unacceptable behavior must stop the game at a stoppage of play.
- The official will identify the offending individual and work with the coaches to resolve the issue.
- If the behavior persists, an incident report will be filed and forwarded to the Association President for further investigation.

- **Coaches, Players, Parents, Volunteers, and Spectators:**

- If any participant witnesses unacceptable behavior, they are required to fill out an incident report and submit it to the Association President or any Board representative to trigger the grievance process.

C. Enforcement of Discipline

- **Suspension Powers:**

- After an investigation, the President (or designated representative), with the approval of the Board, has the authority to suspend any participant (player, coach, trainer, manager, official, parent, volunteer, or spectator) for conduct deemed unbecoming or detrimental to the game.

- **Suspension of Spectators:**

- The President (or designated representative) can prevent a spectator from viewing games or activities at any facility if their conduct is harmful to the game or disruptive.

- **Team and Official Suspensions:**



- The President may suspend a player, coach, team official, or the entire team to which the spectator is affiliated based on the severity of the issue.
- **General Suspension Authority:**
 - The President or their representative has the authority to suspend any member (player, coach, trainer, manager, official) for any conduct deemed detrimental to the game or the association. The suspension remains in effect until the matter is reviewed by the Grievance and Discipline Committees.
- **Delegation of Authority:**
 - The President may delegate suspension authority to an Association Director or official as necessary.
- **Scope of Suspension:**
 - When an individual is suspended, they may be banned from attending any GFAHA activities, including games, practices, and other events.
 - Suspended referees may be prevented from officiating, and coaches may be barred from coaching.

D. Discipline Guidelines

- The discipline guidelines below are designed to ensure that all incidents of behavior are addressed fairly and consistently. These guidelines apply to behavior-related incidents, not those stemming from the consumption or abuse of mood-altering substances. Disciplinary actions for those offenses are covered separately. The key principle is that suspensions apply to all GFAHA activities, including attending games as a spectator, refereeing, or coaching, and should be consistent throughout the season.

E. Severity of Discipline

- Discipline severity is categorized based on the nature and frequency of the offense. The following outlines how different levels of severity will be handled:
- **Mild (One Game Suspension)**
 - When Applied: This is a first offense that is less severe in nature.
 - Conditions:
 - The individual shows genuine remorse for their actions.
 - The actions are deemed out of character.
 - There is a low likelihood of reoffending.
 - Disciplinary Action: A one-game suspension.
- **Moderate (Minimum Two Game Suspension)**
 - When Applied: This level of discipline is for offenses that are mild to moderate in severity.
 - Conditions:
 - This can apply for a second offense.
 - The individual has either not accepted responsibility for their actions, shows no remorse, or has a high likelihood of reoffending.
 - Disciplinary Action: A minimum two-game suspension.
- **Severe (Minimum Five Game Suspension)**
 - When Applied: This level is reserved for serious offenses, including, but not limited to, physical threats or assault against another individual.
 - Conditions:
 - This applies to individuals who have reoffended multiple times or who continue to show no remorse for their actions.



- Individuals at this level are likely to reoffend.
- Disciplinary Action: A minimum five-game suspension.

F. Delegated Authority to Assess Suspensions

- The following individuals or bodies have delegated authority to assess suspensions on behalf of GFAHA, subject to the approval of the GFAHA Board of Directors:
 - **Association President or Vice President:** They have authority to assess suspensions related to disciplinary matters.
 - **Individuals or Committees Charged with Program Enforcement:** These may include members of specific committees responsible for enforcing discipline, up to a one-year term.
 - **Any Board of Directors Member or Official:** Individuals specifically designated by the President have the authority to act in enforcing discipline as needed.

H. Consistency in Discipline

- It is essential that all disciplinary actions are reviewed by the same committee within a one-season timeframe to ensure consistency in the application of discipline. This helps maintain fairness and avoid discrepancies across different cases.