



RIVER FALLS YOUTH HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

Policy Handbook

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Table of Contents

Section 1. Mission Statement	3
Section 2. Organization and Affiliation	3
2.1 River Falls Youth Hockey Association (RFYHA).....	3
2.2 RFYHA Board of Directors.....	3
2.3 USA Hockey.....	4
2.4 Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association (WAHA) – Region 6.....	4
2.5 Minnesota Hockey – District 2.....	4
Section 3. Programs	4
3.1 Learn to Skate (in general, youth ages 4-7).....	4
3.2 8U (Mites) Youth or Girls (ages 4-8).....	5
3.3 10U Youth & Girls (ages 9-10).....	5
3.4 12U Youth & Girls (ages 11-12).....	5
3.5 14U Youth & Girls (ages 13-14).....	5
3.6 16 & 18U Youth & Girls (ages 15-18).....	6
Section 4. Hockey Policies	6
4.1 Games and Tournaments.....	6
4.2 Practices.....	7
4.3 Tryouts.....	7
4.3.1 Tryout Process.....	8
4.3.2 Special Circumstances.....	8
4.4 Player Movement.....	8
4.5 Managers.....	12
4.6 Locker rooms.....	12
Section 5. Codes of Conduct	13
5.1 Preamble and Core Values.....	13
5.2 Player Code of Conduct.....	14
5.3 RFYHA Member Code of Conduct.....	15
5.3.1 Penalties and Violations.....	16
5.3.1.4 Right to Appeal.....	17
5.4 Coach Code of Conduct.....	18

5.4.2.1 Class I Violations.....	19
5.4.2.2 Class II Violations.....	20
5.4.2.3 Class III Violations.....	20
5.5 RFYHA Board of Directors Code of Conduct.....	21
5.6 Spectator Code of Conduct.....	22
5.7 Whistle Blower Policy.....	22
Section 6. Financial and Service Hour Obligations	23
6.1 Registration Fees and Policies.....	23
6.1.1 Registration Fees.....	23
6.1.2 Registration Policies.....	23
6.1.3 Hardship Exemption Request.....	23
6.1.4 Registration Refunds.....	24
6.2 Fundraising Expectations.....	24
6.3 Service Hour Requirement.....	24
6.3.1 Service Hour Policies.....	24
6.4 Volunteer Positions and Duties.....	25
Section 7. Safety	25
Section 8. Appendix	25
8.1 RFYHA Board of Directors.....	25
8.2 Coaching and Player Development Committee.....	25
8.3 Finance Committee.....	25
8.4 Age Classification Table.....	25
8.5 Financial and Service Obligations.....	25
8.6 Team Schedules.....	25

Section 1. Mission Statement

Provide the opportunity for the youth of River Falls and the surrounding area to participate in an organized hockey program coordinated with the High School program and other community resources.

Section 2. Organization and Affiliation

2.1 River Falls Youth Hockey Association (RFYHA)

RFYHA is a Wisconsin non-profit, tax exempt corporation dedicated to promoting hockey for the youth in the community. RFYHA was organized in 1967 and is classified as a Division 2 association in the Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association (WAHA) Region 6, and a guest in Minnesota Hockey. River Falls is recognized as a leader in hockey in Western Wisconsin.

RFYHA was founded by Howie Nelson and Bob McCutcheon. They agreed to maintain the college ice in exchange for ice time for the youth organization. This later promoted the means to construct our first set of hockey boards.

In the fall of 2002, RFYHA members opened the Wildcat Center, our own indoor ice facility. The Wildcat Center is solely owned and operated by the RFYHA and 100% volunteer run.

The RFYHA Constitution, posted at RFhockey.com, serves as the Articles of Incorporation for this nonprofit organization.

2.2 RFYHA Board of Directors

The RFYHA is governed by a Board of Directors, which is elected from and by RFYHA members.

- Consists of 12 members, with three-year staggered terms, and four positions open each year. Officer positions include President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The board of directors selects the officers of the board.
- Positions are not paid and are on a volunteer basis.
- There are no volunteer service hours earned from simply being elected and serving on the board.
- Board Members are expected to serve on or chair an operations committee during their Board tenure.
- Board Members are expected to attend and participate in board meetings.

The RFYHA Board of Directors responsibilities include:

- Transact all business and affairs of the association.
- Establish procedures and rules of order for meetings.
- Arrange an annual meeting and publish a notice to all members of the time and place.
- Maintain a set of policies, list of committees with responsibilities, and codes of

- conduct for players, coaches, and parents.
- Set association league membership.

2.3 USA Hockey

USA Hockey, Inc. is the national governing body for the sport of ice hockey in the United States. USA Hockey's mission is to promote the growth of hockey in America and to provide the best possible experience for all participants.

2.4 Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association (WAHA) – Region 6

WAHA is the parent organization for Wisconsin Amateur Hockey. The purpose of WAHA is to:

- Encourage, improve and promote the standards and extent of hockey in the state of Wisconsin.
- Conduct ice hockey tournaments and to select representative teams for competition in regional and national tournaments.
- Encourage youth in the development of high school hockey.
- Do any and all acts necessary or desirable in the furtherance of the foregoing purposes.

The members of the WAHA are composed solely of organized amateur ice hockey teams and leagues, all, or a majority of which, are in Wisconsin. WAHA is a member of USA Hockey and adheres to its regulations. It is the sincere hope of the WAHA that ice hockey in Wisconsin will grow, and that our organization will not only be a good one, but that eventually, through hard work, it will be one of the best.

RFYHA is a WAHA Division 2 member. Divisions are decided by WAHA based on the number of players in the program, facility, number of trips to the state tournament, and the number of wins at the state tournament.

2.5 Minnesota Hockey – District 2

Minnesota Hockey is the governing body for the game of hockey in the state of Minnesota. RFYHA is considered a guest in this relationship and is granted membership on a yearly basis. RFYHA traveling teams may participate in Minnesota Hockey District 2 league play due to the proximity of games.

Section 3. Programs

RFYHA offers multiple programs for youth skaters. This includes Learn to Skate (LTS) as a precursor and progresses from 8U Youth (Mites) up through 18U, as available, as Youth & Girls programming. RFYHA programs follow the USA Hockey's American Development Model and offer opportunities for players to build skills and develop relationships that will help them grow as hockey players and individuals.

To enable equitable hockey opportunities, RFYHA may form coop teams, as appropriate, with neighboring associations. These are evaluated, organized and approved by WAHA on an annual basis.

3.1 Learn to Skate (in general, youth ages 4-7)

The purpose of the Learn to Skate (LTS) program is to introduce kids to the fundamentals of skating. RFYHA offers LTS to boys and girls that have not skated with RFYHA before and are located within the River Falls, Ellsworth, and Prescott school districts. Additionally, LTS provides all necessary equipment as no cost (as supplies last) and offers on-ice sessions that focus on:

- Standing on the ice with skates.
- Basic balance and movement.
- Basic skills of ice skating.
- Having fun on the ice.

3.2 8U (Mites) Youth or Girls (ages 4-8)

The primary focus at this level is developing player skills, following the USA Hockey American Development Model (ADM) program that emphasizes skating basics, puck skills and small area games. Players with similar abilities are grouped into levels based on skill, Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced.

Practices

Practices are organized by level and each level averages 2-3 days of ice per week.

Player Progression

Progression-criteria has been outlined and is posted on RFHockey.com. Skills assessments will be conducted at regular intervals in coordination with the Mite Coordinator, CPDC and Mites coaches. For any questions regarding player progression, contact the Mite Coordinator.

Jamborees and Tournaments

Mite Jamborees and tournaments are determined and scheduled during the season in coordination between the Mite Manager and Mite Coordinator, see tournament limits section for additional information.

3.3 10U Youth & Girls (ages 9-10)

10U Youth & Girls continue to learn and develop fundamental skill growth (edgework, passing stick handling, transitions, etc.) and introduce team play concepts (off-sides, icing, zone entry, zone coverage, etc.). Players do not need to know how to skate to join 10U Youth or Girls.

Tryouts or evaluations are held in the fall for team placement (see Hockey Policies section for further details), as applicable. The number of 10U Youth and Girls teams that RFYHA rosters depends on the number of players that enroll that year.

3.4 12U Youth & Girls (ages 11-12)

The 12U Youth & Girls follow the same development focus as the 10U Youth and Girls, but with a stronger emphasis on hockey skills and team play. There are players who first join the program at this level, but it takes significant effort and practice to comfortably participate on an equal level with existing players. Practices and tryouts follow the same approach as 10U Youth and Girls.

3.5 14U Youth & Girls (ages 13-14)

The 14U Youth & Girls program precedes high school JV and Varsity programs. Skill refinement and team play continue; for 14U Youth body checking is also introduced. Practices and tryouts follow the same approach as 10U Youth and 10U girls and 12U Youth and girls.

3.6 16 & 18U Youth & Girls (ages 15-18)

16U & 18U Youth & Girls are the highest level of play in the youth hockey program, when available. These teams may be available as needed and may be in cooperation with another association(s). The season timeline and other details may differ from the rest of RFYHA programming and program details will be outlined on the website including information on games, practices, tournaments, tryouts, team formation and code of conduct. 16U and 18U teams include high school eligible skaters and will be held accountable to the current River Falls High School Athletic Code of Conduct policy which is available online.

Section 4. Hockey Policies

4.1 Games and Tournaments

Co-op teams follow the higher maximum games allowed of the associations in the co-op. Tournament games are included in the season game max; each tournament is valued at 3 games regardless of the number of games played during the tournament. Youth and Girls teams may play up to three optional, away games without the need to request permission from CPDC.

Level	Maximum Games (per Season)	Tournament Maximum (per season)	Practice Minimum, 2:1 Ratio	Required Days Off (per week)
Mites/8U Youth:	NA	5	30	4
Squirt/10U Youth	28	3	54	2
10U Girls	28	3	54	2
PeeWee/12U Youth	32	4	64	2
12U Girls	32	4	64	2
Bantam/14U Youth	34	4	68	1
14U Girls	34	4	68	1
Game Breakdown by Level	MN Hockey Division 2	Tournament Games*	Manager Scheduled	Total
Squirt/10U Youth	16	9	3	28
10U Girls	16	9	3	28
PeeWee/12U Youth	16	12	4	32
12U Girls	16	12	4	32
Bantam/14U Youth	16	12	6	34
14U Girls	16	12	6	34

- Youth and Girls Program seasons begin with tryouts in the fall and ends at the state tournament.
- Mite season typically begins in November and ends at the end of February, see current Mite parent document for more information at rfhockey.com
- Teams may play in as many controlled-scrimmages as desired for player and team development.
A scrimmage, also known as a controlled scrimmage or “coaches-on-ice

scrimmage” and are allowed as a coaching tool for teaching position play and to address various game situations, subject to the following minimum criteria. All of the criteria must be met for the event to be considered a Coaches-On-Ice scrimmage, all else is to be considered a game

- a. At least one coach from each team must be on the ice for the purpose of instruction.
 - b. No official scorekeeper, timekeeper or “game clock” can be used.
 - c. Teams can switch ends at some point, if desired.
 - d. The event is conducted as a practice, with the coaches stopping play from time to time to make observations and provide instruction on player positioning, etc.
- Controlled scrimmages may also be used as a training opportunity for officials.
 - Any team not playing in Minnesota Hockey is still held to the game maximum and practice minimum specific to the level.
 - Tournament games are included in the season maximum number of games and each tournament is valued at 3 games regardless of the number of games played.
 - Regional playoff games and State Tournament games are the exception and do not count towards the maximum game limit.
 - Any additional tournaments must be approved by the CPDC.
 - All teams participate in their home tournaments.

4.2 Practices

- Teams are to maintain a minimum of 2:1 practice to game ratio and game limits that are listed in this policy handbook are intended to facilitate teams maintaining a 2:1 practice to game ratio.
 - All additional games must adhere to the 2:1 practice to game ratio.
 - For any additional games over the total, 2 practices must be scheduled for each game.
 - Any additional games must be approved by the CPDC.
- Additional ice resources, when available, are leveraged to support practice to game ratio goals.

4.3 Tryouts

At the beginning of the season, tryouts or evaluations are conducted for players who are members of the River Falls Youth Hockey Association skating at the Squirt/10U Youth/10U Girls level and above. Tryouts or evaluations are for team placement only as RFYHA does not cut players from the program.

Prior to tryouts or evaluations, RFYHA Coaching and Player Development Committee (CPDC), which is the vital link between RFYHA and USA Hockey’s coaching education program:

- Selects a group designated as the team placement decision-maker group, to include on-ice leads and off-ice evaluators to conduct and facilitate tryout or evaluation sessions.
 - These are individuals with extensive hockey backgrounds and without a family relationship to any skater in the tryout or evaluation.
- Approves drills used during tryouts.
- Approves the final tryout process including the process by which the team placement

decision-maker group will make final team placement decisions.

- Participation in team placement decisions will not include anyone with a family relationship to a player in the tryout or evaluation.

4.3.1 Tryout Process

- Each level has multiple scheduled, formal tryout sessions.
- Tryouts include age-appropriate skill drills and game situation activities (including scrimmage time).
- Players are evaluated on skating skills, puck control and general game play.
- Tryouts are closed to spectators. All non-participants must remain in the lobby.
- Following the final tryout session, the team placement decision-maker group will determine the final rankings and team rosters.

The basis for decision making includes data collected during tryouts and may include but not required to include for consideration any previous season coach feedback if it was collected prior to the beginning of tryouts.

4.3.2 Special Circumstances

- Position Specific Tryouts
 - if a player tries out as a goaltender, it is assumed a commitment is made to play goalie for the season.
- Injury and Illness Policy
 - Players unable to attend tryouts due to injury or illness are accommodated.
 - An injured or ill player must provide a medical report or physician's note that indicates any limitations.
 - If the player is unable to participate a member of the CPDC contacts the player's previous coach for their opinion. With this recommendation, the CPCD makes the team placement decision.
- Absences
 - Prior to the scheduled ice time, report any tryout absences to the on-ice hockey coordinator.
 - Unexcused absences affect the player's evaluation rating.

4.4 Player Movement

In all situations, the RFYHA Board reserves the right to balance the number of players per team, determine the number of teams at all age classifications and oversee the movement of players in the best interest of the association.

4.4.1 Transfer In and Out

Any player is welcome to play for RFYHA provided that their family resides within the school district of River Falls, Prescott or Ellsworth. If a player's family resides outside of the RFYHA boundaries, a written release from the neighboring association is required in alignment with the policies of the Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association (WAHA)

Any player that chooses to leave RFYHA and play for another association while still living within the RFYHA boundaries must request a letter of release from the RFYHA Board. The RFYHA reserves the right to deny such requests. All decisions of the RFYHA Board are final and not subject to appeal.

RFYHA adheres to WAHA rules and regulations which prevents tryouts, releases or acceptance of players (released or not) at any level.

4.4.2 Playing at a Higher Age Classification

While some players may be more skilled at a particular age than others, RFYHA agrees with USA Hockey that the overall makeup of a player, including emotional, social and physical development is best served by having them progress normally through the established age classifications. RFYHA recognizes situations may arise and may approve moving a player up. However, first and foremost, the player's physical safety and emotional well-being is considered, and any change will not compromise the make-up of the two age classifications involved.

4.4.2.1. Criteria for a Player to Roster to a Higher Age Classification

In all cases where the below criteria are met for the player to play at a higher age classification, the player move-up does not follow the career of the player. The criteria to play at a higher age classification must be met each year.

The move-up requests are categorized below as either a request to tryout and move-up to a higher level as an exceptionally talented skater or a request to the board to move-up skaters to fulfill a roster as further defined below.

Requests to tryout and move-up as an exceptionally talented skater will be evaluated based on the level criteria below, also taking into consideration how any move-ups would impact individuals and teams.

Requests made to move-up skaters to fulfill a roster, if granted, will be filled by RFYHA CPDC, with consideration made to the development of all skaters at both levels, and having a fair and transparent process..

In all cases where the player move is declined or the criteria is not met, there are no assumptions as to the level of play. The player must tryout at their current level.

All decisions of the RFYHA Board are final and not subject to appeal.

A. 8U Youth to 10U Youth or Girls

All 8U move-up requests are initiated by completing the appropriate move-up request form that is found online. **It must be aligned with RFYHA and WAHA 8U move-up policy and turned in to a member of the RFYHA Coaching and Player Development Committee (CPDC) by the due date below under the appropriate category:**

1. **Request to tryout and move-up as an exceptionally talented player (See WAHA current policy to ensure alignment)**
 - The player must have played at the highest level of play as a 8U Youth the previous year.
 - After player evaluations the player must be ranked in the top 1/3 of the players

on the top-level team and proof must be provided to the region directors as per WAHA 8U move-up policy. Alternatively, if there is not a specified top-level team, after player evaluations, the player must grade out high enough to be ranked in the top 4 players of all players at the Squirt/10U Youth/10U Girls level.

- If the player does not meet this criterion, the player will skate at the Mite/8U Youth level for the season.
- RF Request form must be turned in to a member of the CPDC by the deadline of July 15th for an Exceptionally Talented Player request to tryout
- If final board approval is granted, the CPDC is to submit the WAHA 8U move-up request. If WAHA regional approval is granted, the player is eligible to tryout at the Squirt/10U Youth/10U Girls level.
- The players are required to pay the registration fee for the higher level.
- If the player makes the higher level, they play at that level and the registration is paid in full.
- If the player does not make the higher level, they play at their age-appropriate level and any registration cost difference is retained by RFYHA and NOT refunded to the player.
- All 'Exceptional Player' requests to tryout and move-up must complete a tryout to do so in accordance with Tryout Special Circumstances Policy 4.3 and if fail to do so will be refunded the difference to then play at the age-appropriate level.

2. **Request to move-up for reasons other than stated above**, for example, reason(s) may include: the association needs skaters to fill a 14-player 10U roster to make a first, second or third team, an 8U goalie is needed at 10U level, an 8U girl wants to play on 10U Girls team or other. **Refer to current WAHA 8U move-up policy.**

- Per WAHA 8U move-up policy, Players moving up under their defined category #1 (bullets 1-3) must be placed on the lowest level team the association offers at the 10U level.
- Requests made by a RFYHA-Affiliated coaching group to move-up skaters to fulfill a roster, if granted, will be filled by RFYHA CPDC with consideration made to the development of all skaters at both levels, and having a fair and transparent process. That player(s) will be placed on the lowest level Squirt/10U Youth/10U Girls team.

- Once received, all requests to tryout and/or move-up will first be reviewed by the Coaching and Player Development Committee (CPDC) and through an evaluation process, a determination will be made if the request is aligned with WAHA and RFYHA policy.
- If appropriate, the CPDC will then bring the request approval to the Board for vote and approval or denial
- If Board approval is achieved, the WAHA Move-up request form will be completed and submitted to WAHA region director for final approval during the WAHA submission period, typically September-November.

B. 10U Youth or 10U Girls and older

All 10U and older move-up requests are initiated by completing the appropriate move-up request form that is found online. It must be aligned with RFYHA move-up policy and turned in to a member of the RFYHA Coaching and Player Development Committee (CPDC) by the due date below under the appropriate category:

1. Request to move-up as an exceptionally talented player

- The player must have played at the highest level of play on the previous season's level, i.e., A-team if there was one designated.
- After player evaluations, the player must grade out high enough to be ranked in the top 4 players of all players at that age level, i.e., 12U or 14U
- If the player does not meet the applicable criterion, the player will skate at the age-appropriate level for the season.
- Request form must be turned in to a member of the CPDC by the deadline of July 15th for an Exceptionally Talented Player request to tryout
- If final board approval is granted, the player is eligible to tryout at the level of play that is approved for the player. Additionally, the player also must tryout at their age-appropriate level as no assumptions to level of play are made prior to tryouts.
- The players are required to pay the registration fee for the higher level.
- If the player makes the higher level, they play at that level and the registration is paid in full.
- If the player does not make the higher level, they play at their age-appropriate level and any registration cost difference is retained by RFYHA and NOT refunded to the player.
- All 'Exceptional Player' requests to tryout and move-up must complete a tryout to do so in accordance with Tryout Special Circumstances Policy 4.3.3 and if a player requests to try out at a higher level and fails to attend the scheduled tryout, no refund will be issued.

2. Request to move-up skater(s) for the purposes of fulfilling a roster for a first, second or third team;

- The move-up request must be to fulfill an eleven-player roster at the designated level, i.e., 12U, 14U Youth or Girls.
- If the CPDC and RFYHA Board approval is granted, the roster requests will be filled by offering the roster position(s) to the next eligible skater from the age-appropriate level, in other words, starting with the first birthday in January, the oldest skater will be offered the position first continuing in order of age until the roster is fulfilled as appropriately requested.
- Note: decisions by the board to move-up skaters to roster an additional team will generally be occurring in the weeks preceding tryouts after registration is complete.
- All requests or needs for move-ups will first be reviewed by the Coaching and Player Development Committee (CPDC) and through an evaluation process, a determination will be made if the request is aligned with RFYHA policy.
- If appropriate, the CPDC will then bring the request approval to the board for vote and approval or denial by the September board meeting after registration is complete.

4.4.3 Playing at a Lower Age Classification

RFYHA must follow strict maximum age classifications at all levels of play for Youth and Girls programming, as per USA Hockey. Any request must be made through WAHA. The RFYHA Board has no control of any provisions that might be included in the WAHA approvals (such as a player may not be eligible to play in play downs, player cannot participate in any state tournaments, etc.).

4.4.3.1 Request by a Parent to Move Player to a Lower Age Classification

The parent must make the request in writing to the RFYHA Board President and CPDC no later than August 1st of the upcoming hockey season (that begins in Sept/Oct). The request must include the reason for moving the player and any comments from the player's prior year head coach and decisions for playing down will be made in accordance with current WAHA policy.

4.4.4 Player Movement in the Same Age Classification

The RFYHA Board does not accept requests for player movement between teams within the same age classification after teams have been determined. This is not allowed based on WAHA and Minnesota Hockey policies.

4.4.5 Double Rostering

RFYHA CPDC may approve, as appropriate, double roster requests per WAHA regulations for a goalie when that team has one designated goalie. However, Minnesota Hockey rules and regulations prohibit double rostering, and as such, RFYHA may deny any double rostering for teams with participation in Minnesota Hockey. The RFYHA Board decides which teams will and will not participant in Minnesota Hockey games.

The goalie has a primary team and makes attendance at that team's events a priority. The primary team is identified as the team that goalie performed tryouts for. These goalies are allowed to participate in practices and games of the double roster team (in leagues where double rostering is allowed), when invited by the team head coach, and provided it does not compromise the play with the primary team. There are no additional fees for double rostering players.

4.5 Managers

Each team must have a parent volunteer to act as the team manager. This position cannot be filled by a coach. All Managers must comply with the RFYHA mission statement and all policies. The Manager acts as a liaison between the coaches and the parents, and is expected to support, advocate, and positively promote RFYHA and association events.

When collecting funds (for tournaments, coach's gifts, end of year party, etc.), the manager can only collect the exact dollar amount at the time they are due. Any and all team expenditures must be communicated and cannot be collected in advance. Please reference the Team Manager job description in the RFYHA Job Descriptions document posted on RFHockey.com for more information.

4.6 Locker rooms

- RFYHA aligns and adheres to the policies and penalties of WAHA & USA Hockey Safe Sport Handbook as a means to help protect participants from physical abuse, sexual abuse and other types of misconduct, including emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing. The USA Hockey Safe Sport Handbook is available online www.usahockey.com.
- It is the policy of WAHA and USA Hockey that coaches are responsible for the supervision of the locker room at all times. All WAHA Member Programs must have at least one coach in the locker room monitoring locker room conduct during all team events to ensure the supervision and the proper conduct of the players. The coach must ensure that another

coach or a screened and SafeSport trained adult be present in the locker room at all times in case the coach must step out.

- Any player entering a locker room before the coach is in the locker room is subject to disciplinary action which includes loss of locker room privileges resulting in getting dressed before entering the rink for a minimum of 30 days. Cell phones are not allowed in the locker room, and it is the responsibility of the Association and coach to ensure that phones are secured outside the locker room.
- An Association will be fined \$500 for any SafeSport violation taking place in a locker room without adequate or proper locker room supervision and the coach will be held accountable and subject to disciplinary action.
- It is the practice of RFYHA that a coach or SafeSport certified, background checked, and USA Hockey-registered adult must be present in the locker room starting 20 minutes before through 10 minutes after all practices. Players are not supervised before or after this time. Parents must ensure their player does not arrive before or after the outlined timeframes, unless otherwise noted by the coach.
- In alignment with USA Hockey and WAHA, it is the practice of RFYHA that the coaches and specifically the head coach is ultimately responsible for team locker-room behaviors.
- Except for players at the younger age groups, RFYHA discourages parents from entering locker rooms unless it is truly necessary.
- Some of the teams may consist of both male and female players and it is important that the privacy rights of all players are given consideration and appropriate arrangements made. Where possible, RFYHA will have the male and female players dress/undress in separate locker rooms and convene in a single locker room before the game or team meeting. If separate locker rooms are not available, then the players will take turns using the locker room to change.
- Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras, are not permitted in the locker rooms.
- RFYHA 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 RFYHA may be subject to disciplinary action for violation of these locker room policies or for engaging in any misconduct or abuse or that violates the USA Hockey SafeSport Policies. Reports of any actual or suspected violation will result in the Association being fined \$500. Because locker room supervision is the responsibility of the coaches and specifically the head coach, disciplinary action can be taken against the coach.

Section 5. Codes of Conduct

5.1 Preamble and Core Values

It is the goal of the RFYHA to provide all members (players, coaches, and parents) with the best experience for your family. Please remember that as RFYHA players, parents, and coaches, we are representing our association and community both at home and away events. Always be on your best behavior and leave places better than you found them. Respect your opponents, your

teammates, the coaches, referees, arena staff, pick up your trash, and at all times refrain from using inappropriate language.

At the heart of the organization are the core values of USA Hockey. In addition to the RFYHA Codes of Conduct included in this policy handbook, RFYHA ascribes to the various codes of conduct of USA Hockey available at www.usahockey.com.

The intent of the following conduct and discipline policies are intended to complement and align with the governing bodies of WAHA and USA Hockey and intended to be implemented in accordance with stated governing body policies including but not limited to WAHA Article 9 and/or USA Hockey Bylaw 10.

- **SPORTSMANSHIP** Foremost of all values is to learn a sense of fair and equal play. Become humble in victory, gracious in defeat. We will foster friendship with teammates and opponents alike. We will not argue with a coach's or an official's decisions.
- **RESPECT FOR THE INDIVIDUAL** Treat all others as you expect to be treated. Get along with your teammates. Respect your coaches, teammates, parents, opponents, officials, and property.
- **INTEGRITY** We seek to foster honesty and fair and equal play beyond mere strict interpretation of the rules and regulations of the game. Learn the rules and play by them.
- **PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE AT THE INDIVIDUAL, TEAM, AND ORGANIZATIONAL LEVELS** Each member of RFYHA, whether player, volunteer, or staff, should seek to perform each aspect of the game to the highest level of his or her ability.
- **ENJOYMENT** It is important for the hockey experience to be fun, satisfying, and rewarding for all participants.
- **LOYALTY** We aspire to teach loyalty to the ideals and fellow members of the sport of hockey.
- **TEAMWORK** We value the strength of learning to work together. The use of teamwork is reinforced and rewarded by success in the hockey experience. Put the needs of the team first and foremost.
- **COMMITMENT** Understand the commitment to your teammates, coaches, and yourself. Work hard to improve your skills. Be on time for practices and games.

5.2 Player Code of Conduct

- Play for FUN.
- Work hard to improve your skills.
- Be a team player; get along with your teammates, on and off the ice.
- Learn teamwork, sportsmanship, and discipline.
- Be on time for practices and games.
- Learn the rules and play by them. Always be a good sport.
- Respect your coach, teammates, parents, opponents, officials, and the public and private spaces that our teams use.
- Never argue with an official's decision.

5.2.1 Discipline Issues

5.2.1.1 Discipline Violations

In the event of needed discipline, the head coach is the person recognized as having responsibility for the team. These rules are enforced equitably, without regard for the possible impact on the outcome of any game or tournament.

1. First Offense. Benching for less than one period or special chores. The head coach must notify the parent via email, with the team board member team-liaison copied on the email.
2. Second Offense. Benching for one period. The head coach must notify the parent via email, with the board member team-liaison copied on the email.
3. Third Offense. Benching for one game. The head coach must notify the parent via email, with the board member-team liaison copied on the email.
4. Fourth Offense. Refer parent to the RFYHA Player Conduct Committee.

5.2.1.2 Major or Continued Violations

Major or continued violations result in a meeting between the head coach, parents, and board member-team liaison to develop a correction plan. The action or correction plan may lead to suspension from all RFYHA activities and premises.

5.2.1.3 Player Conduct Committee

This three-member committee is created to review any and all game misconducts, match penalties, gross misconducts, and individual player behavior.

- Members of the committee include the head referee, a member of the Coaching and Player Development Committee, and one RFYHA Board officer.
- The RFYHA Board officer serving as a member on this committee must not have a player on the same team as the player whose conduct is in question.
- The order for the RFYHA Board officer conflict exclusion is President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary.
- Any discipline in consideration will be in accordance with USA Hockey Bylaw 10

5.3 RFYHA Member Code of Conduct

Each RFYHA member is expected to be familiar with these values and their place in the association.

RFYHA is dedicated to introducing the game of hockey to youth and their families. We expect the pursuit of hockey excellence is accompanied by appropriate sports behavior and respect for every individual as described in the various USA Hockey codes of conduct.

- Children participate in organized sports for their enjoyment. Make it fun and support them.
- Encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game, practice, or other youth sports event.

- Encourage your child to play by the rules. Remember, children learn best by example, so applaud good plays of both teams.
- Emphasize skill development and practices and how they benefit your young athlete. De-emphasize games and competition in the lower age groups.
- Know and study the rules of the game and support the officials on and off the ice. This approach will help in the development and support of the game. Any criticism of the officials only hurts the game.
- Recognize the importance of volunteer coaches. They are important to the development of your child and the sport. Communicate with them and support them.
- Remember the game is for the children, not the adults.
- Applaud a good effort in victory and in defeat and enforce the positive points of the game. Never yell or physically abuse your child after a game or practice – it is destructive. Work toward removing the physical and verbal abuse in youth sports.
- If you enjoy the game, learn all you can about the game, and volunteer.
- RFYHA, consistent with USA Hockey's Zero Tolerance Policy, requires all parents/spectators to maintain sportsmanlike behavior and preserve the educational atmosphere before, during and after all USA Hockey sanctioned games and RFYHA events (practices, meetings, etc.).

5.3.1 Penalties and Violations

In the event that any RFYHA member, spectator, coach, or on-ice official witnesses a violation of the above core values and expectation from a parent, we encourage the member, spectator, coach, or on-ice official to report in writing said violation to the team's board member-team liaison, or other board member within 10 days of the violation. The written report must describe in detail the witnessed offense.

A Member Conduct Committee will be created, consisting of the applicable board member-team liaison, and the top two RFYHA Board officers who do not have a player on the involved team. The Member Conduct Committee will immediately review the written report.

When a violation of the above values occurs, the violation is broken into 3 classes based on severity and carry commensurate consequences.

- Any discipline in consideration will be in accordance with USA Hockey Bylaw 10

5.3.1.1 Class I Violations

Class I violations carry a penalty of a one-week minimum suspension for the parents from all practices, games, and any team activity. The suspension begins when the Member Conduct Committee has reached a decision on the issue; however, the committee has the authority to immediately suspend the offender until the investigation is complete. This time counts towards the overall suspension period.

Class I violations include, but are not limited to:

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

- Taunting of players, coaches, officials or other spectators by means of baiting, ridiculing, threat of physical violence, or physical violence.
- Throwing of any object in the spectators viewing area, players' bench, penalty box or on ice surface, directed in any manner as to create a safety hazard.
- Addressing a coach, official, player or volunteer in an unsportsmanlike, discourteous, threatening, or confrontational manner.
- Approaching a referee immediately following a game. All referee complaints must be in writing and turned into the off-ice hockey operations director within 72 hours following the incident.

5.3.1.2 Class II Violations

Class II violations carry a penalty of a thirty-day minimum suspension for the parents from all practices, games, and/or any team activity. The suspension begins when the RFYHA Board or Member Conduct Committee has reached a decision on the issue; however, the committee has the authority to immediately suspend the offender until the investigation is complete. This time counts towards the overall suspension period. Class II violations include, but are not limited to:

- Public disparagement of other members (allegations which are found to be false).
- Second Class I violation of the same offense or third or subsequent Class I violation.

5.3.1.3 Class III Violations

Class III violations carry a penalty of a one-year minimum suspension for the parents from the program to permanent terminations from the RFYHA organization. The suspension begins when the RFYHA Board has reached a decision on the issue; however, the RFYHA Board has the authority to immediately suspend the offender until the investigation is complete. For Class III violations, penalties require ratification by a majority of the RFYHA Board, at a meeting where there is a quorum of the RFYHA Board. Class III violations include, but are not limited to:

- Threats of physical violence towards any player, coach, parent, official, RFYHA volunteer or spectator.
- Intentionally shoving or striking a player, coach or official during any RFYHA function, whether in the locker room, on the ice, or at any time the team is getting together.
- Physical abuse of a player, coach, parent, official, RFYHA volunteer, or spectator
- Use of alcohol or drugs at the arena or official team function (this does not apply to consumption of alcohol at a restaurant, hotel or home after scheduled games or practices or as allowed by the RFYHA Board of Directors).
- Activities that violate State or Federal Laws which create a safety risk to any member of the organization
- Second Class II violation of the same offense or third or subsequent Class II violations.

5.3.1.4 Right to Appeal

Any member has the right to appeal the decision of the committee or the RFYHA Board. The appeal must be made in writing to the RFYHA Board President within ten days of when the

committee or RFYHA Board made the decision. Once a decision regarding the appeal is made by the RFYHA Board, it is final.

5.4 Coach Code of Conduct

- Winning is a consideration, but not the only one, nor the most important one. Care more about the player than winning the game.
- a positive role model to your players, display emotional maturity and be alert to the physical safety of players.
- Be generous with your praise when it is deserved, be consistent, honest, fair and just. Do not criticize players publicly or yell at them; learn to be a more effective communicator and coach.
- Adjust to personal needs and problems of players, be a good listener, and never verbally or physically abuse a player or official.
- Give all players the opportunity to improve their skills, gain confidence and develop self-esteem.
- Provide fair and equitable playing time for players at games and practices.
- Organize practices that are fun and challenging for your players. Familiarize yourself with the rules, techniques, and strategies of hockey; encourage all your players to be team players.
- Maintain an open line of communication with your players' parents. Explain the goals and objectives of our association.
- Be concerned with the overall development of your players. Stress good health habits and clean living.
- To play the game is great; to love the game is greater.
- Failure to follow or enforce the player, coach, or parent code of conduct may result in loss of the ability to coach at RFYHA, as determined by recommendations from the CPDC and RFYHA Board oversight.
- The RFYHA Board supports the player's discipline policy and expects all coaches to enforce the policy.
- When deciding coaches, the RFYHA board always chooses a qualified, non-parent coach when possible.

5.4.1 Coaches Conduct Committee

This three-member committee is created to review any and all misconducts of coaching behavior.

- Members of the committee include one member of the Coaching and Player Development Committee, the board member-team liaison and one RFYHA Board officer.
- The RFYHA Board officer serving as a member on this committee must not have a player on the same team as the coach whose conduct is in question.
- The order for the RFYHA Board officer conflict exclusion is President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary.

The following actions are taken for each violation:

- For any team not following the game maximum guidelines:
 - Effective the first game over the limit, the Head Coach is immediately suspended

- for the remainder of the year.
 - All coaches for that team will serve a one-year suspension effective immediately following the team's last officially scheduled game.
- For any coach not following the player discipline policies:
 - If a violation is found, effective immediately after investigation by the Coaches Conduct Committee, the Head Coach is issued a formal warning.
 - For a second violation, the Head Coach and entire coaching staff is issued a final warning.
 - For a third violation, the Head Coach is immediately suspended for the balance of the year. In addition, all coaches for that team serve a one-year suspension effective immediately following the team's last officially scheduled game.
- Any discipline in consideration will be in accordance with USA Hockey Bylaw 10

5.4.2 Penalties and Violations

- In the event that any RFYHA member, spectator, coach, or on-ice official witnesses a violation of the above core values and expectation from a coach, we encourage the member, spectator, coach, or on-ice official to report in writing said violation to the board member-team's liaison, a board member, or the Coaching and Player Development Committee within 10 days of the violation. The written report must describe in detail the witnessed offense.
- A Coach Conduct Committee will be created, see above.
- When a violation of the above values occurs, the violation is broken into 3 classes based on severity and carry commensurate consequences.

5.4.2.1 Class I Violations

- Class I violations carry a penalty of a one-week minimum suspension for the coach from all practices, games, and any team activity. The suspension begins when the Coach Conduct Committee has reached a decision on the issue; however, the committee has the authority to immediately suspend the offender until the investigation is complete. This time counts towards the overall suspension period.
- Class I violations include, but are not limited to:
 - Use of obscene or vulgar language in a boisterous manner to anyone at any time.
 - Taunting of players, coaches, officials or other spectators by means of baiting, ridiculing, threat of physical violence, or physical violence.
 - Throwing of any object in the spectators viewing area, players' bench, penalty box or on ice surface, directed in any manner as to create a safety hazard.
 - Addressing a coach, official, player or volunteer in an unsportsmanlike, discourteous, threatening, or confrontational manner.
 - Approaching a referee immediately following a game. All referee complaints must be in writing and turned into the off-ice hockey operations director within 72 hours following the incident.

5.4.2.2 Class II Violations

- Class II violations carry a penalty of a thirty-day minimum suspension for the coach from all practices, games, and/or any team activity. The suspension begins when the RFYHA Board or Coach Conduct Committee has reached a decision on the issue; however, the committee has the authority to immediately suspend the offender until the investigation is complete. This time counts towards the overall suspension period. Class II violations include, but are not limited to:
 - Public disparagement of other members (allegations which are found to be false).
 - Second Class I violation of the same offense or third or subsequent Class I violation.

5.4.2.3 Class III Violations

- Class III violations carry a penalty of a one-year minimum suspension for the coach from the program to permanent termination from the RFYHA organization. The suspension begins when the RFYHA Board has reached a decision on the issue; however, the RFYHA Board has the authority to immediately suspend the offender until the investigation is complete. For Class III violations, penalties require ratification by a majority of the RFYHA Board, at a meeting where there is a quorum of the RFYHA Board. Class III violations include, but are not limited to:
 - Threats of physical violence towards any player, coach, parent, official, RFYHA volunteer or spectator.
 - Intentionally shoving or striking a player, coach or official during any RFYHA function, whether in the locker room, on the ice, or at any time the team is getting together.
 - Physical abuse of a player, coach, parent, official, RFYHA volunteer, or spectator
 - Use of alcohol or drugs at the arena or official team function (this does not apply to consumption of alcohol at a restaurant, hotel or home after scheduled games or practices or as allowed by the RFYHA Board of Directors).
 - Activities that violate State or Federal Laws which create a safety risk to any member of the organization
 - Second Class II violation of the same offense or third or subsequent Class II violations.

5.4.3 Coach's Handbook

All coaches are given, and required to understand and follow, their level's Coach's Handbook. This handbook contains the following for their specific level: foundational skills required, concepts, and suggested practices plans.

Coaches are encouraged to build on the foundational skills once the entire team has mastered those skills for their level. If the team has not mastered the foundational skills, and concepts outside of those skills are taught, this is viewed as a violation of the RFYHA policy and addressed in a similar nature as other violations.

5.4.4 Right to Appeal

Any coach has the right to appeal the decision of the committee or the RFYHA Board. The appeal must be made in writing to the RFYHA Board President within 10 days of when the committee or RFYHA Board made the decision. Once a decision regarding the appeal is made by the RFYHA Board, it is final.

5.5 RFYHA Board of Directors Code of Conduct

All members of the RFYHA Board, at all times, abide by and conform to the following Board Code of Conduct:

- Each member of the RFYHA Board must abide in all respects to the RFYHA Code of Conduct and all other rules, regulations and policies of the RFYHA (including, but not limited to RFYHA articles of incorporation, by laws, policy handbook and constitution) and ensure their membership with RFYHA remains in good standing at all times. Furthermore, each member of the RFYHA Board obeys at all times all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations, and provides or causes to provide the full cooperation of RFYHA when requested to do so by those institutions and their persons set in authority as are required to uphold the law, RFYHA, WAHA, Minnesota Hockey or USA Hockey.
- The RFYHA Board must act at all times in the best interests of RFYHA and not for personal or third-party gain or financial enrichment. When a RFYHA Board member encounters potential conflicts of interest, the RFYHA Board member, as required, removes themselves from all discussion and voting on the matter. Specifically, board members must follow these guidelines:
 - Avoid placing, and the appearance of placing, one's own self-interest or any third-party interest above that of RFYHA. While the receipt of incidental personal or third-party benefit may necessarily flow from certain RFYHA activities, such benefit must be merely incidental to the primary benefit to the RFYHA and its purposes.
 - Do not abuse board membership by improperly using board membership of the RFYHA volunteer's services, equipment, resources, or property for personal or third-party gain or pleasure. Board members must not represent to third parties that their authority as a board member extends any further than that which it extends pursuant to the RFYHA constitution and policy handbook.
 - Do not engage in any outside business, professional or other activities that would directly or indirectly adversely affect the RFYHA.
 - Do not engage in or facilitate any discriminatory or harassing behavior directed toward RFYHA volunteers, members, officers, directors, meeting attendees, exhibitors, advertisers, sponsors, suppliers, contractors, or others in the context of activities relation to RFYHA.
 - Do not solicit or accept gifts, gratuities, free trips, honoraria, personal property, or any other item of value from any person or entity as a direct or indirect inducement to provide special treatment to such donor with respect to matters pertaining to the RFYHA without fully disclosing such times to the RFYHA Board.
 - Provide goods or services to RFYHA as a paid vendor to RFYHA only after full disclosure to, and advance approval by, the RFYHA Board, and pursuant to any related procedures adopted by the RFYHA Board.
- RFYHA Board members conduct the business affairs of the RFYHA in good faith and , due diligence, and proficient and reasonable competence.
- Except as the RFYHA Board may otherwise require, or as otherwise required by law, no board member may share, copy, reproduce, transmit, divulge, or otherwise disclose any confidential information related to the affairs of the RFYHA. Each board member upholds strict confidentiality of all meetings designated as closed meetings, and other deliberations

and communications of the RFYHA Board, designated as confidential, for the purpose of carrying out the RFYHA Board's duties.

5.5.1 Suspension and/or Expulsion

Pursuant to the RFYHA Constitution, Article IV (5), Board members may be subject to suspension and/or expulsion if the RFYHA constitution, policies and rules are violated or the board member fails to meet their board obligations.

5.6 Spectator Code of Conduct

- Display good sportsmanship. Always respect players, coaches, and officials.
- Always act appropriately. Do not taunt or disturb other fans; enjoy the game together.
- Cheer good plays of all participants and avoid booing opponents.
- Profanity and objectionable cheers or gestures are offensive. Cheer in a positive manner and encourage fair play.
- Throwing any items on the ice surface can cause injury to players and officials; help provide a safe and fun environment.
- Do not lean over or pound on the glass surrounding the ice surface.
- Support the officials and coaches by trusting their judgment and integrity.
- Be responsible for your own safety. Be alert to prevent accidents from flying pucks and other avoidable situations.
- Respect locker rooms as private areas for players, coaches, and officials.
- Use of alcohol at or during youth events is strictly prohibited.
- For Minnesota Hockey Division 2 games, coaches are responsible for the spectator behavior. Escalation of penalties is bench minor, coach ejection, suspension for the next game, and forfeiture of the current game. Coaches have two minutes to get the spectators under control.

5.7 Whistle Blower Policy

If any RFYHA Board member or RFYHA member reasonably believes that some policy, RFYHA practice or activity is in violation of the law, a written complaint may be filed by that individual to the RFYHA President.

It is the intent of the RFYHA Board to adhere to all laws and regulations that apply to RFYHA, and the underlying purpose of this policy is to support the RFYHA goal of legal compliance. The support of all members is necessary to achieve compliance with various laws and regulations. A RFYHA Board member or RFYHA member is protected from retaliation, only if such person brings the alleged unlawful activity, policy, or practice to the attention of the RFYHA President and provides the RFYHA Board with a reasonable opportunity to investigate and correct the alleged unlawful activity. The protection described below is only available to RFYHA Board members or RFYHA members that comply with this requirement.

- The RFYHA President or other board members, will not retaliate against a RFYHA member who, in good faith, has made a protest or raised a complaint against some practices of the RFYHA Board, or of another individual or entity with whom the RFYHA Board had a business relationship, on the basis of a reasonable belief that the practice is in violation of

- law or a clear mandate of public policy.
- The RFYHA President or other board members, will not retaliate against a RFYHA member who discloses, or threaten to disclose to a public body any activity, policy, or practice of the RFYHA Board that the member reasonably believes is in violation of law, or a rule, regulation mandated pursuant to law, or is in violation of a clear mandate or public policy concerning health, safety, welfare or protection of the environment.

Section 6. Financial and Service Hour Obligations

6.1 Registration Fees and Policies

Registration fees by themselves do not cover all the RFYHA operating expenses. Various fundraising events are necessary to raise funds to supplement the registration fees. RFYHA operating expenses include but are not limited to: Wildcat Center building and operating expenses, various types of insurance, WAHA, Minnesota Hockey and USA Hockey registration fees, coaching and referee expenses, and replacement of equipment and jerseys as needed.

6.1.1 Registration Fees

An annual registration fee, which is established by the RFYHA Board, is charged for each player enrolled in the RFYHA program.

- Registration fees vary according to the player level. The player level is determined by the player's date of birth.
- Registration fees are based on several factors including but not limited to the amount of ice time used at the level for practices and games, costs for maintaining the Wildcat Center, referee fees, fees from governing bodies such as WAHA and MN Hockey, ice rental at the Hunt, insurance, mortgage, electricity, gas, stocking the concession stands, etc.

6.1.2 Registration Policies

- Registration deadline is communicated prior to tryouts. Any requested registrations after the deadline or after tryouts is permissible but at the discretion of RFYHA board and/or CPDC.
- Suspended players are expected to pay all fees in full,
- regardless if the player returns or not.
- The deadline for all registration fees is communicated at the time of registration. Players are not allowed to participate if fees are in arrears.
- Any skater who registers for the season and is placed on a team after tryouts are complete with RFYHA, they are not eligible for a refund if they choose to skate on another team thereafter

6.1.3 Hardship Exemption Request

In the event that a family cannot meet the annual financial obligations as an RFYHA member, a hardship exemption may be requested.

- The hardship exemption request must be submitted in writing to one of the RFYHA Board officers prior to registering for the season.
- Families that qualify for free or reduced lunch must provide the Board with the document that says they qualify and then they get the registration fees waived.
- If the hardship exemption request is approved, a RFYHA Board officer notifies the family that registration fees are waived.
- Fundraising and volunteer hour requirements still apply
- A hardship exemption applies for the entire season in which it is requested and approved and does not carry over year to year.

6.1.4 Registration Refunds

RFYHA members must make any formal refund of fees requested in writing to the RFYHA Board prior to December 1st. All requests received on or after December 1st will not be considered.

- Upon receipt, the RFYHA Board determines what expenses were incurred and calculate a prorated refund.
- Refunds are not given to players who have been suspended, for any reason.
- See section 6.1.2 regarding refunds for skaters placed on a team

6.2 Fundraising Expectations

To continue to keep registration costs low, each RFYHA family must participate in required fundraising events, communicated at the time of registration including deadlines and buyout options, if available. Players are not allowed to participate if fundraising obligations are not met.

6.3 Service Hour Requirement

RFYHA is a volunteer run, self-funded organization that owns and operates the Wildcat Center. Because of this, all RFYHA members are required to help support the activities of RFYHA by working a minimum required number of service hours.

- First-Year Mites: 15 service hours.
- Mite/8U Youth: 25 service hours.
- Squirt/10U Youth/10U Girls, PeeWee/12U Youth/12U Girls, and Bantam/14U Youth/14U Girls levels: 60 service hours.
- Additional Players: additional 10 service hours per player.
- Family Max: 75 hours

6.3.1 Service Hour Policies

- Service hours are not received when working in an off-ice official capacity at your player's regular season games. This includes working the penalty box, scoreboard operator, scorebook keeper, announcer, or music.
 - Service hours are received when working in an off-ice official capacity for tournaments (even for your player's team) and high school games.
 - There are no service hours earned for being elected and serving on the RFYHA board of directors.
- Workers must be at least 18 years old to work a high school game. In addition, workers

must be at least 18 years old to work in an off-ice official capacity.

- RFYHA members that do not satisfy their hours are assessed a fee of \$25 per hour not worked.
- To obtain credit for service hours, RFYHA members are required to log service hours through Dibs and log-in on the paper logbook in concessions at the time they are signed up and/or performed.
- Service hours cannot be carried over into the next season.
- If RFYHA families fulfill their service hours and wish to gift hours to another family, the request must be approved by the service hour coordinator.

6.4 Volunteer Positions and Duties

For current volunteer positions and committee directors and members, refer to the RFYHA website www.rfhockey.com.

Section 7. Safety

RFYHA follows all required safety and equipment procedures and requirements as required per our governing bodies, e.g., USA Hockey, Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association (WAHA). Please see those rules and regulations for details.

Section 8. Appendix

8.1 RFYHA Board of Directors

If you are interested in becoming a RFYHA Board member, please contact any of the current board members. Contact information can be found at www.rfhockey.com

8.2 Coaching and Player Development Committee

PURPOSE: The CPDC strives to provide transparency to the on-ice program by serving the mission of RFYHA. It is comprised of board president, representatives from the Youth, Girls, and Mites programs and with participation from high school varsity coaches.

The CPDC will oversee Coaching and Player Placement and Development Processes and Decisions for RFYHA members and is responsible for overseeing the On-Ice Operations ensuring representation, board alignment, oversight, and consistency.

VISION: Create a structure to ensure sustainability of coaching and player development for growth and excellence into the future.

8.3 Finance Committee

Purpose: The RFYHA Finance committee intends to evaluate and provide strategic financial expertise and recommendations to the board of directors. The committee is comprised of at least 4 individuals qualified and with expertise specific to the tasks outlined by the board of directors. The RFYHA Treasurer is committee chairperson.

8.4 Age Classification Table

Please visit USA Hockey website to see the annual season Age Classifications for teams and levels.

8.5 Financial and Service Obligations,

Please see www.RFHockey.com for annual financial and service obligations

8.6 Team Schedules

For current team schedules, refer to the RFYHA website, www.rfhockey.com, in the Calendar section.