

CONNECTICUT HOCKEY CONFERENCE



RULES AND POLICIES 2023-2024

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ARTICLE 1 GENERAL POLICIES

1.1 SEXUAL ABUSE

It is the policy of CHC that there shall be no sexual abuse of any minor participant involved in any of its sanctioned programs, its training camps, hockey clinics, coaches' clinics, referee clinics, regional and national tournaments or other CHC events by an employee, volunteer, or independent contractor. Sexual abuse of a minor participant occurs when an employee, volunteer or independent contractor touches a minor participant for the purpose of causing the sexual arousal or gratification of either the minor participant or the employee, volunteer or independent contractor. Sexual abuse of a minor participant also occurs when a minor player touches an employee, volunteer or independent contractor for the sexual arousal or sexual gratification of either the minor participant or the employee, volunteer or independent contractor, if the touching occurs at the request or with the consent of the employee, volunteer or independent contractor. Neither consent of the player to the sexual contact, mistake as to the participant's age, nor the fact that the sexual contact did not take place at a hockey function are defenses to a complaint of sexual abuse. Upon proof of violation of this policy, the violator will be permanently banned or suspended from CHC sanctioned programs and/or the programs of its affiliate associations.

1.2 PHYSICAL ABUSE

It is the policy of CHC that there shall be no physical abuse of any participant involved in any of its sanctioned programs, its training camps, hockey clinics, coaches CHC events by any employee, volunteer or independent contractor. Physical abuse means physical contact with a participant that intentionally causes the participant to sustain bodily harm or personal injury. Physical abuse also includes physical contact with a participant that intentionally creates a threat of immediate bodily harm or personal injury. Physical abuse does not include physical contact that is reasonably designed to coach, teach or demonstrate a hockey skill. Permitted physical conduct may include, but is not necessarily limited to, shooting pucks at a goaltender, demonstrating checking and other hockey skills, and communicating with or directing participants, during the course of a game or practice, by touching them in a non-threatening, non-sexual manner.

1.3 SCREENING POLICY

It is the policy of USA Hockey, and CHC that it will not authorize or sanction in its programs that it directly controls any volunteer or employee who has routine access to children (anyone under the age of majority) who refuses to consent to be screened by CHC before he/she is allowed to have routine access to children in CHC member programs.

A person may be disqualified and prohibited from serving as an employee or volunteer of CHC if the person has:

- 1.3.1 Been convicted (including crimes the record of which has been expunged and pleas of "no contest") of a crime of child abuse, sexual abuse of a minor, physical abuse, causing a child's death, neglect of a child, murder, manslaughter, felony assault, any assault against a minor, kidnapping, arson, criminal sexual conduct, prostitution related crimes or controlled substance crimes;
- 1.3.2 Been adjudged liable for civil penalties or damages involving sexual or physical abuse of children;
- 1.3.3 Been subject to any court order involving any sexual abuse or physical abuse of a minor, including but not limited to domestic order for protection;
- 1.3.4 Had their parental rights terminated;
- 1.3.5 A history with another organization (volunteer, employment, etc.) of complaints of sexual or physical abuse of minors;
- 1.3.6 Resigned, been terminated or been asked to resign from a position, whether paid or unpaid, due to complaint(s) of sexual or physical abuse of minors; or
- 1.3.7 Has a history of other behavior that indicates they may be a danger to children in USA Hockey.

ALL coaches, CHC program administrators, board members, team managers, locker room monitors, hired skating/hockey instructors, and any other members of your program that had routine access to your players must be screened. USA Hockey has adopted a policy of screening returning coaches, administrators, etc. every other year.

Coaches/volunteer personnel who refuse to be screened through this system will NOT be allowed to coach or serve in any capacity within your organization that gives them routine access to players.

USA Hockey has contracted with a national screening company, NCSI, and ALL persons required to be screened will go to the USA Hockey website directly to a secure website to enter their own information.

Direct your new administrators, coaches, team managers and other persons required to be screened or rescreened to USA Hockey Background Screening

Processing can take up to a week or more. Once processed, completion will show in the USA Hockey Registry and can be confirmed by your program's registrar.

ARTICLE 2 DEFINITIONS

Affiliate: The Connecticut Hockey Conference (CHC)

League: Participating Member Associations which register Member Teams organized together for the purpose of scheduling and playing games on regular basis as defined by CHC. The League recognized and sanctioned by the CHC is the Connecticut Hockey Conference, referring in this document as CHC.

USA Hockey: The national governing body for the sport of amateur hockey, pursuant to Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act Title 36, Chapter 17 S 91 United States Code, as amended and the duly authorized representative of the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) with exclusive jurisdiction over the conduct of play of the sport of amateur hockey as sanctioned by the IIHF within the United States of America.

“Travel” Team: A team that travel outside it’s home ice to play games

“House” Team: A team that only plays competition from within its own organization.

Tier 1: Tier 1 is the highest level of competition as defined by USA Hockey

Safe Sport: USA Hockey Safe Sport is the organization's program related to off-ice safety. USA Hockey has long had systems in place to protect its participants from physical abuse, sexual abuse and other types of abuse and misconduct that can be harmful to youth hockey players and other participants. For more information, go to usahockey.com/safesport.

ARTICLE 3 SAFE SPORT

The safety of its participants is of paramount importance to USA Hockey. This includes not only on-ice safety, but also off-ice safety in any part of USA Hockey's programs.

USA Hockey has ZERO TOLERANCE for abuse and misconduct.

USA Hockey Safe Sport is a program focused on the organization's off-ice safety efforts.

The USA Hockey Safe Sport Handbook addresses the following:

Policies prohibiting the following:

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

Other policies included address areas where misconduct can occur and are intended to reduce the risk of potential abuse, including:

- One-on-one interactions
- Locker rooms
- Athletic training modalities
- Social media and electronic communications
- Travel
- Billeting
- Education and awareness training
- Screening and background check program
- Reporting of concerns of abuse
- Responding to abuse and other misconduct
- Monitoring and supervision of the Safe Sport Program

A USA Hockey member or other person under the jurisdiction of USA Hockey who (1) violates any of the Safe Sport policies or (2) fails to consent to, and pass a screening and background check in compliance with the Screening and Background Check Program, may be denied eligibility within any USA Hockey program and is subject to appropriate disciplinary action including, but not limited to, suspension, permanent suspension, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities.

As the national governing body for ice hockey in the United States, USA Hockey has, as required by federal law, delegated the jurisdiction and authority to the U.S. Center for SafeSport ("USCSS") to (1) investigate all reports or allegations of sexual abuse or misconduct (as referenced in the USA Hockey Safe Sport Program Handbook and defined by the USSCS), (2) issue any interim suspension or measures pending conclusion of the investigation, (3) make recommendations of sanctions or disciplinary action as a result of such investigation, and (4) adjudicate such matter.

For the complete USA Hockey Safe Sport Handbook, visit usahockey.com/safesport.

ARTICLE 4 APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

To be updated once Bylaw revisions have been completed.

ARTICLE 5 PLAYER ELIGIBILITY & MOVEMENT

5.1 Registration fees for USA Hockey

USA Hockey registration fees for the current season will be announced to all programs no later than the Presidents' Meeting (August). All players, coaches, and team managers/locker room monitors/volunteers must register online with USA Hockey before participating in any CHC member program.

5.2 Players are eligible to register with any one program:

5.2.1 Provided they've satisfied any financial commitment from a previous program and not on the ODL.

5.2.2 No player may be registered or participate with more than one CHC affiliate program during the playing season.

5.3 Transfer & Release:

A player may transfer from his/her prior CHC program once they've met their financial commitments. A player that has failed to meet his/her financial commitments can be suspended from any future CHC team if the program has added the player to the CHC Outstanding Debt List (ODL). See [Article 10](#) for the ODL procedures.

For any player new to a program, it is recommended that program obtains a release from the player's prior program.

5.4 Commitment letters

To provide for financial and structural stability, all programs must obtain commitment letters from all team members prior to filing their USA Hockey team rosters. The commitment letters must include language expressly providing that players and their families who execute these letters agree to honor their financial and other team obligations, agree to remain with the program for the duration of the current season, and they agree to not move to any other member or non-member program unless, by mutual consent.

Any player who refuses to participate with their current program but who has not met their financial commitment may be suspended from participating with any other team by the affiliate until that financial commitment has been met per CHC's ODL process.

5.5 Recruiting

Any program which recruits or solicits any player registered with another CHC program will be subject to sanctions recommended by the Board of Directors. Solicitation is any contact with a player or player's parents by which a director, officer, coach, manager or any other adult connected with a program attempts to persuade a player to transfer to their program. Mailings to players last registered with CHC member programs, which attempt to persuade players to join a program or advertise tryouts or advertise open positions in a program are considered solicitations. Sanctions imposed may be the disqualification of one or more teams or suspension of a program from CHC membership. General information on tryouts posted on social media or emails sent to current members are not considered solicitations. Emails sent to non-members can be considered solicitations.

5.6 8U Play-up Rule

All members of the CHC affiliates shall be required to roster 8u skaters at the 8u level and below. Each program shall be allowed one skater to play at the 10u level provided that skater is rostered with the organization's top 10u team. MFYH shall be grandfathered in rostering one team composed of 8u pure players at the 10u T2 level. Rule passed at January 2024 meeting.

5.7 Senior Women

5.7.1 By-law provisions governing senior women's play will be drafted as deemed necessary by the Girls/Women's Director.

5.8 Secondary School Players

Once secondary school players join their secondary school teams, their eligibility to continue with a CHC Youth or Girls team (dual participation) shall be determined by their secondary school's athletic governing body.

5.9 Eligibility Committee – Requests for Exceptions

5.9.1 Exceptions – Recognizing that CHC participants and/or programs may want to request exceptions to the Eligibility rules, the following procedure must be followed:

- The receiving program shall submit their request in writing to the Eligibility Committee, appointed by the President and approved by the Board of Directors at the June meeting.
- Such requests shall be submitted at least two (2) weeks prior to a regularly scheduled meeting.
- It is that Committee's responsibility to review each case in question and apply CHC rules and guidelines fairly and uniformly for all member programs.
- The Committee will present its decision(s) to the Board of Directors at the next scheduled meeting.
- The Committee will consist of the District Commissioners, four other members (one from each district), and the Registrar or his delegate.
- No Committee member may vote on a request concerning (giving up or receiving) his own program.

ARTICLE 6 COACHES/STAFF

6.1 Coach Helmet Requirements

All ice hockey coaches and instructors of registered USA Hockey Youth 18U and below, high school, girls'/women's 19U and below, and disabled programs must properly wear an approved ice hockey helmet during all USA Hockey program on-ice sessions, including practices, controlled scrimmages and all Coaching Education Program clinics and/or workshops.

6.1.1 Enforcement is made through the punishment for each offense:

- 1st infraction = Warning.
- 2nd infraction = 1-game suspension.
- 3rd infraction = Match penalty.
- Sanctions may also be imposed upon the program for wanton disregard of this rule.

6.2 Coaching Development

It is recommended that each program establish a formal coach development program that takes fullest advantage of the available CHC and National sponsored program and teaching materials, and it's incumbent upon the program to encourage all of their coaches to achieve the highest level of certification possible.

All coaches (Head and all Assistants) of any split season travel teams, must obtain their required USA Hockey certification prior to the start of CHC State Tournament/New England District Regional or October 31st.

Any person with the team that is on the ice or on the bench is considered a Coach and must complete CEP requirements noted in 2.3 below.

All coaches (Head and all Assistants) of any full season travel teams, must obtain their required USA Hockey certification prior to the start of CHC State Tournament/New England District Regional or December 31st.

Any coach who has not successfully completed the USA Hockey coaching certification process by the dates above, shall be suspended from coaching for the remainder of the season. Any game played after December 31 with an ineligible coach shall not count for the CHC tournament standings for the offending team. **In addition, any coach that is redlined due to not completing the coaching certification process by the dates above will not be eligible to coach in a subsequent season until they've completed the entire coaching certification process.**

6.3 Coaching CEP Requirements

All coaches (Head and all Assistants) must be certified to the standards required by USA Hockey in the Annual Guide. A copy of current certification requirements follows.

USA Hockey Coaching Education Program Rules and Requirements – (Copied from USAH 2023-2024 Annual Guide)

A. Coach Registration

All ice hockey coaches as well as instructors of USA Hockey programs shall be registered annually as individual Participants of USA Hockey for the current season (before the start of the season) in order to be eligible to coach/instruct in any regular-season activities (practices, clinics, games, tournaments, try-outs, etc.), state, district, regional playoff, national championships or in the USA Hockey Player Development Programs. There will be an annual fee to register the coaches (head and assistants) and instructors. Coaches who also play on a USA Hockey registered team are required to pay this registration fee only once per year. Coaches may register as participants online at usahockey.com or through a local association/member program (refer to Section I Participant Registration).

Note 1: All USA Hockey Coaching Education Program Instructors and National Player Development Camp coaches will be exempt from the annual participant registration fee, but must complete the participant registration process.

Note 2: The head coach and all assistant coaches of each disabled hockey team must complete the required CEP registration and online age-specific module(s) for each level of play. Those volunteers or employees who assist with

helping disabled hockey teams (i.e. interpreters, pushers, on-ice mentors, etc.) must be properly registered with USA Hockey but are not required to attend a CEP clinic and otherwise comply with these rules and regulations.

All ice hockey coaches and instructors of registered USA Hockey Youth 18 & Under and below, high school, girls'/women's 19 & under and below, and disabled programs must properly wear an approved ice hockey helmet during all on-ice sessions, including practices, controlled scrimmages and all Coaching Education Program clinics and/or workshops.

B. Coaching Education Program Requirements

(1) Required Coaching Education Program Levels for Ice Hockey

USA Hockey requires that all affiliates and/or districts shall establish the following requirements without modifications for all coaches (head and assistant).

All coaches must have the required certification level by January 1 of the current season. (* must be completed by midnight December 31 to be in effect by January 1*)

(a) All coaches must enter USA Hockey's Coaching Education Program at Level 1, and must continue their education with a coaching clinic each year until, at a minimum, they achieve Level 3. EXCEPTION: Coaches of 8U or younger players may remain at Level 1 or their current level. A coach may attend only one (1) certification clinic per year (not including age-specific requirements). Coaches who do not coach in continuous years must re-enter the program at the next level when they resume coaching responsibilities. Once Level 3 is achieved, periodic renewal [as outlined in Paragraph (c) below] is required for coaches who have not achieved Level 4. Coaches of national tournament bound teams (Tier 1 14U, 16U and 18/19U and Tier 2 16U and 18/19U) must complete Level 4 in their fourth season of coaching. Coaches who attain Level 4 certification are not required to attend any further certification clinics but must adhere to the age-specific requirement as outlined in Paragraph (b) below.

(b) In addition to the training in paragraph (a) above, coaches must also complete online age-specific training modules specific to the level of play they are coaching, if they have not already taken that module. This requirement applies to all coaches at all levels, 1 through 5. Coaches may complete more than one age-specific module in any given season.

(c) Coaching certification at Level 3 is valid for two (2) seasons, as indicated by the expiration date.

A coach whose Level 3 is due to expire must take the online Level 3 Recertification Track 1 curriculum or they may move up to Level 4. Level 3 Track 1 Recertification is valid for two (2) seasons.

A coach whose Track 1 Level 3 recertification is due to expire must take the online Level 3 Recertification Track 2 curriculum or move up to Level 4. Level 3 Track 2 Recertification is valid for two (2) seasons.

Coaches whose Track 2 Level 3 Recertification is due to expire must attend a Level 4 clinic prior to the expiration of their Level 3 Recertification.

Coaches must complete the online recertification program in order to recertify their Level 3 certifications. Attending a clinic or workshop is no longer valid for recertifying any certification level.

(d) Grandfather Clause

For coaches who enrolled in the Coaching Education Program prior to May 1, 2011, their entry into the above program will be at their current certification level. Level 1 and 2 coaches must adhere to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, effective May 1, 2011. Current Level 3 coaches must adhere to paragraph (b) and (c) above; effective with the season their Level 3 expires.

This chart outlines the progression for a new coach. Coaches with pre-existing certifications will enter the new program at their current certification level and must adhere to paragraphs 1. (a) and (b) above.

YEARS OF COACHING	CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
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Year 1 (ex: 2011-12)	Level 1 clinic + age-specific component
Year 2 (ex: 2012-13)	Level 2 clinic + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level
Year 3 (ex: 2013-14)	Level 3 clinic (expires Dec. 31, 2015) + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level
Year 4 (ex: 2014-15)	No Level certification required but can attend a Level 4 clinic + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level
Year 5 (ex: 2015-16)	Complete the online Level 3 Recertification Track 1 (expires Dec. 31, 2017), or attend a Level 4 clinic + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level
Year 6 (ex: 2016-17)	No Level certification required but can attend a Level 4 clinic + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level
Year 7 (ex: 2017-18)	Complete the online Level 3 Recertification Track 2 (expires Dec. 31, 2019), or attend a Level 4 clinic + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level
Year 8 (ex: 2018-19)	No Level certification required but can attend a Level 4 clinic + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level
Year 9 (ex: 2019-20)	Must attend a Level 4 clinic + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level

Year 10 and beyond	No Level recertification required but must complete age specific component if not previously taken for current age level. Coaches are highly encouraged to attend a continuing education course every two years.
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(2) Evidence of Level

All USA Hockey coaches will possess a USA Hockey Coaching Education Program card with valid certification stickers (if certification was received prior to September 1, 2011), or a printout from the USA Hockey online certification list (if certification was received after September 1, 2011).

It is the responsibility of the local association to identify those coaches who do not meet the certification requirements. All coaches have until December 31 of the current season to attend a USA Hockey coaching clinic and complete the online age-specific playing level module to become properly certified.

Prior to the start of all games throughout the season all coaches are required to indicate their current certification status on the scoresheet, regardless of their certification level. All coaches (except for juniors) must legibly print their USA Hockey Coaching Education Program (CEP) card number, their CEP level (levels 1-5), their online age-specific playing level module and the year their CEP level was attained.

Beginning January 1 of the current season, prior to the start of each game, all coaches present are required to sign the designated area of the score sheet in order to verify the accuracy of the playing roster, as it appears on the score sheet, for that game.

(3) Penalty and Enforcement

All coaches must have current certification and online component verification beginning January 1 of the current playing season. Any coach not in possession of these requirements will be ineligible to coach for the remainder of the season. Districts and/or affiliates are required to uphold this penalty. It will be the responsibility of the local association registering the team to enforce the national policy.

C. Under-Age Coaches

(1) Student Coach

A player age 13 through 17 who is currently properly registered with USA Hockey may serve as a Student Coach.

(2) Qualifications

- o Must attend a training session conducted by the local hockey association or audit a Level 1 clinic (not required to pay nor will they receive certification credit).
- o Must always be under the supervision of a carded, screened adult coach during all practices, clinics, try-outs and in the locker room.
- o May help out at practices, clinics, try-outs only. (May not participate as a player in scrimmages or games when acting as a STUDENT COACH).
- o May not act as a head coach or an assistant coach during practices or games.
- o May be on the bench during games with an adult. The STUDENT COACH will count as one of the maximum of four Team Officials allowed on the bench.
- o Must wear a helmet with full face shield, gloves and skates while on the ice. Must wear helmet during games while on the bench.
- o May only work with players at least one full playing age level below the STUDENT COACH (e.g., a 14U age player may act as a STUDENT COACH at the 12U, 10U or 8U level).
- o The organization that is using the STUDENT COACH must provide a form indicating on the team on which he/she is participating as a STUDENT COACH, and, if applicable, what team he/she is properly registered/rostered as a player. A model form is available on the usahockey.com website.
- o Upon reaching the age of 18, the STUDENT COACH must comply with the USA Hockey Screening Program and meet the USA Hockey Coaching Education Program requirements which will qualify him/her to act as an assistant or head coach.

D. Screening Policy

All USA Hockey coaches and instructors will comply with the USA Hockey Screening Policy. Failure to comply with the policy will result in the forfeiture of coaching privileges in programs, at sites, or events under USA Hockey's governance.

E. Coaching Ethics Code

All USA Hockey ice hockey coaches (head and assistant) and instructors must abide by the USA Hockey Coaching Ethics Code, and understand that violations may result in full or partial forfeiture of coaching privileges in programs, at sites or events under USA Hockey's governance.

All coaches have an obligation to be familiar with USA Hockey's Coaching Ethics Code. Lack of awareness or misunderstanding of an ethical standard is not itself a defense to a charge of unethical conduct. The USA Hockey Coaching Ethics Code can be found online at usahockey.com under Coaches.

6.4 Other Team Staff Requirements

Anyone serving as a Team Manager and Locker Room Monitor should be added to the roster and must have completed a Background Screening and Safe Sport training before they can be rostered.

ARTICLE 7 PLAYING RULES (YOUTH & GIRLS)

The current edition of the official USA Hockey Playing Rules shall be used for all games played by all USA Hockey rostered teams. A USA Hockey sanctioned game is defined as:

A game is a match played against another team which is registered with USA Hockey or a member organization of the IIHF of the same competitive level and officiated by registered officials. A game shall consist of at least three (3) periods (or the equivalent, see USA Hockey rules & Regulations XII. Q. Time of Periods), except where the game is interrupted, (by some unforeseen event) after two (2) periods have been completed.

7.1 Protective Equipment

7.1.1 All players must wear all protective hockey equipment as required by Rule 304 of "USA Hockey Official Rules. In addition, all CHC players in all age classifications, 8Us through 16U/18Us, are required to wear "BNQ Certified" neck guards. It is the responsibility of all programs to inform their members that neck guards do not protect from blunt trauma caused by pucks or sticks. The penalty for not wearing a neck guard will be a warning for a player's first offense in a game; a misconduct penalty shall be assessed to the player for a subsequent offense during the same game.

7.2 Prohibited Equipment

7.2.1 All coaches (Head and Assistant) and managers or team parents are prohibited from using video tape and other electronic devices on the bench or penalty bench during the conduct of any USA Hockey game including State tournament games.

7.3 All games will be played under USA Hockey Rules.

7.3.1 All games will be played under USAH, affiliate league rules when applicable.

7.3.2 A player or team official who strikes a game official shall be indefinitely suspended from further CHC activity, and that team itself may be declared ineligible for State tournament participation.

7.4 Game Referees

7.4.1 All teams shall use USA Hockey registered officials.

7.5 Length of Periods:

7.5.1 For games between 10U and 12U tournament teams, the length of periods will not be less than 10 minutes, stop time, with the recommended length of periods being 12 minutes, stop time.

7.5.2 For games between 14U and older tournament teams, the length of periods shall be as set forth by USA Hockey Rules & Regulations Tournament Guidebook; except as provided in rule 2 below.

In all games where periods are less than 15 minutes, the following times for penalties will apply in all games between CHC registered tournament teams:

Age Class	Minor	Major	Misconduct
8U	1	3	5
10U	1	3	5
12U	1 ½	4	6

7.5.3 It is strongly recommended that all programs schedule ice time so that all games be played stop time at the maximum period lengths. However, when that becomes impossible, the following procedure will apply:

7.5.3.1 Before the game starts, the referee will determine the time available for completion of the game, will set the length of periods, stop time, and will inform both benches as well as the timekeeper of the period length and the time when the game must be completed.

7.5.3.2 At the end of the second period, the referee will again determine the remaining time available for completion of the game. He will then adjust the length of the final period as need be and inform both benches and the timekeeper. If the full period is not played stop time, the final 2 minutes must be stop time.

7.5.3.3 If the game cannot be completed under these conditions with time expiring on the clock, the losing team may request the referee to declare the game void and without a winner; the referee will note his ruling on the official game report. The voided game will be replayed at a future date.

7.5.3.4 Running time periods will be permitted only if the referee finds the timing device is unable to accurately track stop time, with the period lengths of 15 minutes for 8Us and 10Us, 22 minutes for 12Us, 24 minutes for 14Us, and 26 minutes for 16U/18Us.

7.6 Fighting Penalties:

Upon the first incidence of fisticuffs, as cited by the referee in a penalty assessment and a referee report filed, the offending player shall be penalized by the ejection from the game in which the incident occurred, the following game, as required by USA Hockey rules, and the second subsequent game, as an additional penalty assigned by CHC.

Upon the second incidence of fisticuffs, as cited by the referee in a penalty assessment and filed with the referee's report, the offending player shall be ejected from the game in which the incident occurred and shall not return to the ice until a hearing has taken place. The Commissioners holding the hearing are given the guidance that the hearing should be limited so that the affected player may provide any evidence or other explanation to support a lesser penalty. If no mitigating circumstances are found to exist, then if the offending player is a split-season 16U/18U it is expected that such player shall be suspended for the remainder of his or her 16U/18U season. For full-season 16U/18U players and players at a lower age level, the expectation should be that a minimum of a one-month suspension will be imposed.

ARTICLE 8 STATE TOURNAMENT / DECLARATIONS – 2024-2025

8.1 Tournament Committee Composition

The Tournament Committee will consist of a Chairman, one Sub-Chairman for each USA Hockey Youth age classification, a Girls/Women's Chairman, and a Tier 1 Chairman, who will be the Tournament Directors, the Commissioner for each CHC district, the President of CHC, and the State Registrar (ex-officio).

It is recommended that the Tournament Director not be a coach or manager of any of the contending teams, if possible, he should not be a parent of one of the players.

8.2 Team and Tournament Declarations –

To be updated with the 2024/2025 Declarations for Girls, Youth and NTB by the August (Presidents) Meeting

ARTICLE 9 CHC LEAGUE PLAY AND STATE TOURNAMENTS

9.1 Age classifications

Players shall compete in only one age classification on tournament bound teams. They may also participate on mixed-age and/or mixed-ability non-tournament bound teams within their own programs. Mixed-age teams permit players to play in an older age classification but not in a classification that is younger than their USA Hockey age level. (The purpose of this exception is to provide a flexible structure for continuous play for girls who attend school locally when prep school teammates are not available.)

9.2 Divisions

- 9.2.1 CHC will operate declared divisions for Youth Tier 1 at 13O, 14U, 15O, 16U and 18U as well as Tier 2 Youth division at 14U, 16U 18U.
- 9.2.2 CHC will operate Girls Tier 1 & Tier 2 at 12U, 14U, 16U and 19U. All Girls teams in Tier 1 and Tier 2
- 9.2.3 All teams in all divisions must be sponsored by member programs of CHC and shall be registered as tournament teams with rosters submitted to the State Registrar prior to playing their first game. Roster amendments are due no later than the December meeting. Team rosters are frozen as of that date.

9.3 Registration classifications

- 9.3.1 In order to qualify for the State, District and National tournaments, all tournament bound teams must meet the minimum standards defined in the USA Hockey Annual Guide.
- 9.3.2 Residency – Registration with CHC programs shall follow the USA Hockey residency rules as written in the current annual guide.
- 9.3.3 Non-US Citizens – All Non-US Citizens (registered aliens and foreign exchange students) must be eligible under USA Hockey Rules & Regulations, Such alien players must provide proof each season of legal U.S residency, and they must provide proof of release and transfer from their home country ice hockey federation. All such documentation, as well as a USA Hockey Written Transfer form must be submitted to the USA Hockey International Department for their approval prior to the player being registered with a CHC program.

For National Tournament Bound teams, USA Hockey limits the number of non-citizens who do not live in the US with their parents, to 4 per youth team or 2 per girls team.

- 9.3.4 Girls/Women players may be rostered on a boys/youth team or on a girls team but not on both in the same season. This applies to tournament bound, non-tournament bound, travel, house/recreational and all other teams. This limitation applies to all players except girls who are 12 years old or younger as of December 31 of the current season. Such girls may appear on the rosters of a girls team and a boys/youth team simultaneously in the same program. Players may be included on Travel Team rosters and House Team rosters within the same program. Girls rostered on both a youth (Boys) and girls team must declare in writing to the CHC State Registrar by December 31 which team they will participate on for State, Regional or National tournaments. When no declaration is made, the State registrar shall have the final authority to certify the eligibility of such player solely on the basis of the date of the earliest team roster registration.

9.4 Competitive Level & Alternates - Player Movement

Competitive divisions and tournaments will be based on age classifications as established by USA Hockey.

- 9.4.1 Players shall play at only one age classification. A player may compete in an age classification higher than his/her actual age with written proof of his/her parent's approval.
- 9.4.2 Play up / Stay up. Once a player is included on a roster in a higher age classification, he/she may not go back down to play at the lower age classification for the rest of that season. Such player must be added to the roster of the higher age group team prior to playing on that team. The player must be deleted from the roster of the lower age group team.

When applying the Play up / Stay up rule to dual rostered female players, Youth teams and Girls teams are viewed separately i.e. it is permissible for a 10U female player to play on a 10U Youth team and a 12U Girls team but may only play in the post season with one team per above. (approved April 2023).

9.4.3 Players may be included on Travel Team rosters and House Team rosters within the same program. This applies equally to boys and girls.

9.4.4 Players shall play on only one tournament-registered team in a season, except that up to five (5) reserves, designated as alternates on the roster of a team of higher competitive strength, may be regular players on another tournament-registered team of lesser competitive strength within the same program. Such alternates may play in up to nine (9) CHC declared games for the stronger team without losing their eligibility on the weaker team. The team roster size is governed by USA Hockey Rules.

Once an alternate has played in ten (10) or more games on the stronger team, however, he/she may not compete on the weaker tournament-registered team for the remainder of that season. Such players moving up must be deleted from the roster of the weaker team.

Any player, on a youth or girls team, who is registered as a regular on a team of lesser competitive strength and as an alternate on the team of next higher competitive strength within the same program, may participate with only one team consistently in State, Regional and National tournaments. "For example, once a boys "B" team player competes in 10 state games as an alternate for his program's "A" team, he is ineligible for any further play on the "B" team for the balance of the season through the National tournaments. He may not play in the State tournament for one team and the Regional (and Nationals) for the other.

If the players do not compete in the 10 game minimums for the stronger team, they are limited to participating in State, Regional and National tournaments for the weaker team only and are ineligible to participate in any post-season tournaments for the stronger team.

9.4.5 A player may move down from a team of higher competitive strength to a team of lesser competitive strength at any time prior to playing in his/her seventh (7th) game provided that such re-designation occurs before the December roster amendment deadline. Such re-designated player must be added as a regular player on the weaker team and must be re-designated as an alternate on the stronger team.

9.5 State Tournaments

9.5.1 State tournaments for member programs will be held for all USA Hockey age classifications in which enough teams are registered. Tournaments will be held at Youth Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3, Tier 4 and Open divisions. For Girls, tournaments will be held at Girls Tier 1 and Girls Tier 2.

9.5.2 The CHC Tournament Committee will provide appropriate awards to the State Champions.

9.6 Declarations

9.6.1 The Tournament Committee will propose Tier declaration process, regular season play and tournament structure on an annual basis by the August CHC Board Meeting aka President's Meeting. Said proposal will be voted on by the CHC Board of Directors, and upon approval will become a part of "Rules & Policies,".

9.7 League Rules – Eligibility

9.7.1 All teams in all Tiers, all age divisions, must be sponsored by member programs of CHC and shall be registered as tournament teams with rosters submitted to the State Registrar prior to their first game being played. Roster amendments are due no later than December 31st. Team rosters are frozen as of that date.

9.7.2 In order to qualify for the State, District/Regional, and National tournaments, all tournament bound teams in Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3, Tier 4 and Open must compete as a unit in at least 20 (Boys)/14 (Girls) USA Hockey sanctioned games during the season prior to the State tournament.

9.7.3 A player may play on only one team in State, Regional and National tournaments. Any player on a team (Youth or Girls) must have competed in ten (10) or more USA Hockey sanctioned games prior to the close of the CHC season to be eligible for the State tournament.

9.8 Cancelled Game Policy – Tier 2, Tier 3, Girls Tier 1 and Girls Tier 2:

9.8.1 A cancelled game between 2 Tier 2, or Tier 3 teams will not count as a state game if the canceling team notifies the opponent 14 days or more prior to the date the game was scheduled to be played.

9.8.2 Games cancelled 13 days or less prior to the game date will count as a state game and toward the maximum number of games with the same opponent only for the cancelled team, not for the canceling team. If the game is rescheduled, only the rescheduled game will count.

9.8.3 For games cancelled less than 14 days prior to scheduled date (non-weather or State Tournament schedule related), penalties may include monetary reimbursement of Referee fees by the canceling team. Additionally, teams who repeatedly cancel games could be subject to additional sanctions, to be assessed by the Executive Committee based on the judgment of the Tournament Director and the appropriate Division Director, not the least of which is loss of 2 power points or loss of State Tournament eligibility.

- First Offense Reimbursement of Referee Fees
- Second Offense Reimbursement of Referee Fees and 1 game suspension of Head Coach of offending team
- Third Offense Reimbursement of Referee Fees, 1 game suspension of Head Coach, and loss of 2 power points.

9.8.4 Both teams involved in a cancelled game must notify that division's Tournament Director within 24 hours of the cancellation notification.

9.9 **Cancelled Game Policy – Tier 1**

9.9.1 Cancelled games for all levels of Youth and Girls Tier 1 declared teams will only be permitted due to weather or rink closings. For any other cancellations, 2 points will be awarded to the non-canceling team.

9.10 **Game reports (scoresheets)**

9.10.1 All tournament team games in all divisions of Tier 1 and Tier 2 must be signed by the coach or manager of each team and the referees; they must be filed promptly by the winning team with the Tournament Director and postmarked no later than the 5th day following the game. For games played in February in the final week of the regular season, scores must be phoned in, and game reports mailed to confirm.

9.10.2 When a member program has two or more registered teams playing within the same age group or team classification in a playing season, each team is responsible for identifying itself specifically and consistently on all game score sheets or the games will not be credited for tournament positioning. For example, a program with 3 teams in an age classification should designate them as "A", "B" and "C" (or other appropriate designations as directed by the Tournament Committee).

9.10.3 Any team that receives three (3) or more match penalties in one season will forfeit their tournament deposit and will not be permitted to take part in that season's State tournament.

9.10.4 Electronic Game Sheets are acceptable and may be required for some league divisions

9.11 **Standings**

9.11.1 The Tournament Committee will not count for standings any game against a team not registered or not eligible for tournament play at the time of the game; or any game for which the game report is late or incomplete; or any game in which the winning team played a suspended player; or in which the winning home team used referees not registered with USA Hockey as required or otherwise conducted the contest not in accordance with USA Hockey or CHC Rules. This rule applies to all CHC tournament declared teams.

9.11.2 The Tournament Committee will not count for standings any game in which the winning home team used referees who were not members of referee associations or other groups that have been approved by the State Referee-in-chief. This applies to all CHC member program teams.

9.11.3 Standings of all tournament teams, based on outcomes of games, will be computed and posted on CHC website during the season.

9.12 **Officiating Assignments**

9.12.1 All CHC Member Programs must arrange referee coverage for all their "home" games with properly certified officials who are members of referee associations or other groups that have been approved by the State Referee-in-chief.

9.12.2 Games that are not refereed by members of such approved associations or groups will not be accepted by the tournament committee for rankings or team and player quota minimums.

9.12.3 The Referee-in-chief will assign referees for all State tournament games.

9.13 **Credentials – State, Regional and National Tournament Credentials- Boys and Girls.**

9.13.1 The CHC State Registrar must certify to the New England District that each team that advances to the District Regional tournaments is in compliance with USA Hockey's credentials requirements. Timing on when credentials are needed to be submitted to the CHC Associate Registrar will be included in the Declaration Guidelines included in [ARTICLE 8](#).

9.13.2 All 10U, 12U and 14U teams that comprise Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3, after the final rankings have been announced, must prepare a credentials book that includes the following items at least 10 days prior to the start of their State tournament.

9.13.3 All teams that will represent Connecticut in the New England Regional Tournament or USA Hockey National Tournament must prepare a credentials book that includes.

9.13.3.1 Approved Team Roster (Form 1-T).

9.13.3.2 A blank Credential Verification form with all players and coaches listed.

9.13.3.3 All players whose age has been properly verified by the State Registrar will show a “ ” on the credential verification sheet. Any player without this symbol will need to submit a valid Birth Certificate or copy of passport.

9.13.3.4 Signed USA Hockey Consent to Treat Form for each rostered player, coach and manager.

9.13.3.5 Sanctioned game score sheets to verify compliance with the 20/10 (Youth) or 14/10 (Girls) minimum number of games for eligibility rule for the team and each rostered player.

9.14 **Beyond the State Tournament**

9.14.1 Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 CHC teams that qualify for the New England Regional Tournaments, and/or National Tournaments must represent Connecticut in those tournaments and beyond in the USA Hockey National Tournaments if applicable. Teams must abide by tournament rules prescribed by the directors of those tournaments and by USA Hockey while participating. The Tournament Committee will have complete authority to discipline non-compliant teams and programs, including disqualification from State tournament play for the following season. The winners of the tournaments will be declared State Champions, and they must represent Connecticut in the District Regional tournaments. Depending on the requirements of the New England District and/or USA Hockey, additional teams may also represent Connecticut in the District Regional tournaments.

9.14.2 In addition, teams that qualify for the National tournaments are also subject to the following team requirements while attending; these items are MANDATORY:

9.14.2.1 Hotel - All team members and staff that require hotel accommodations are required to stay in the HOST hotel(s). There will be financial penalties for teams that do not stay in the host hotel(s).

9.14.2.2 Other events - All teams are required to participate in and attend any other events, if applicable, as determined by the Regional and National Tournament Directors.

9.14.3 Sanctions for refusing to play or advance.

9.14.3.1 All teams that declare for post-season play must participate in the State tournament. All teams that participate in the State tournament must be prepared to advance to the District Regional tournaments. All teams that participate in the District Regional tournaments must be prepared to advance to the National tournaments.

9.15 **TIER 1 RULES (YOUTH & GIRLS)**

9.15.1 With the USA Hockey pilot program to expand Tier 1 18U rosters to 22 player, any player dropped from a roster of an 18U Tier 1 team or team playing toward a Tier 1 allocation, after October 1st, will be considered permanent and that player will not be eligible to be added back to that Tier 1 team.

9.15.2 Connecticut Hockey Conference Tier 1 Rules and Declarations

**CHC YOUTH 14U, 15 ONLY, 16U and 18U TIER 1 & 2 TEAMS CHC GIRLS
14U, 16U and 19U TIER 1 & 2 TEAMS**

The following chart represents the teams as of the 2022-2023 season that meet USA Hockey criteria at each age level in each of the Youth and Girls categories. These teams are the “CHC Designated Tier 1 Teams” and do not have to qualify through pre-season play, if required, to be eligible for the Connecticut State Tier 1 season.

YOUTH TIER I				
14U	Mid Fairfield			
15 Only	Mid Fairfield	Yale		
16U	Mid Fairfield	Yale		
18U	Mid Fairfield	Yale		
<i>Bold Indicates Program of Record All Others Are Deemed Tier I Under Grandfather Rules</i>				

GIRLS TIER I				
14U	Mid Fairfield	Hartford Jr. Wolfpack	Darien	Northern Lights
16U	Mid Fairfield	CT Polar Bears	Watertown	
19U	Mid Fairfield	CT Polar Bears	Watertown	
<i>Bold Indicates Program of Record All Others Are Deemed Tier I Under Grandfather Rules</i>				

Tier 1 Declaration Rules

1. For the 2022-2023 season, any CHC member program in good standing can elect to declare one Tier 1 OR Tier 2 youth 14U, 15 Only, 16U and 18U team subject to the applicable USA Hockey allocation limits. Similarly, such programs may declare one Tier 1 AND Tier 2 Girls 14U, 16U and 19U teams, subject to the applicable USA Hockey allocation limits. If the number of Designated Teams meets or exceeds the allocation at any age level, there shall be no further declaration of teams at that age level. Otherwise, there is no limit on the number of programs that may declare at these levels. Those declared Tier 1 teams shall be the “CHC Recognized Tier 1 teams” for all purposes of these rules.
2. Beginning with 2022-2023 season, a program cannot declare a youth team at both Tier 1 and Tier 2 at the same age level. In other words, a program cannot have both a Youth Tier 1 18U team and a Tier 2 18U team. For purposes of clarity, this limitation does NOT apply to Girls teams.
3. Youth teams at the 14U level and Girls 14U, 16U and 19U teams will have four options for declaration: Tier 1, Tier 2, State Tournament Eligible or Undeclared. Youth teams at 15O, 16U and 18U may declare Tier 1, Tier 2 or Undeclared.
4. If the number of Designated teams plus Recognized teams exceeds the USA Hockey allocation at any age level, the CHC Tournament Committee will determine the format of a qualification process for the Recognized teams to fill available allocations. Teams not qualifying through this process shall be Undeclared for that season.
5. The CHC Tournament committee will determine the format to determine how Youth 14U, 15 Only, 16U and 18U and Girls 14U, 16U and 19U Tier 1 teams advance to the Connecticut State Tournament.
6. The CHC Tournament committee will determine the format to determine how Youth 14U, 15 Only, 16U and 18U and Girls 14U, 16U and 19U Tier 1 teams advance to the New England District Regional Tournament.
7. The CHC Tournament committee will determine the format to determine how Youth 14U, 16U and 18U and Girls 14U, 16U and 19U Tier 2 teams advance to the USA Hockey National Tournament.

As of: 3/6/22

ARTICLE 10 OUTSTANDING DEBT LIST (ODL) PROCEDURES

CHC "Outstanding Debt List" – ODL

- 10.1.1** If a program has followed all of the steps specified in the Annual Guide regarding suspension due to financial disputes and the outstanding debt has not been resolved, that program will put together a list of the players' names and birth years, together with a certification from the program officers that the USA Hockey process has been completed. Evidence of such completion need not be presented with the list except for #6 and #7 below but must be readily available if requested.
- 10.1.2** Programs with outstanding debts must follow USA Hockey's proscribed process to document all efforts to obtain payment from these families. A copy of that procedure is attached as Exhibit A. If passed, a link to the Annual Guide will be included to so this document always refers to the current process.
- 10.1.3** CHC will maintain a list of players who have not satisfied their financial obligations to a prior program or team. Member programs may add players to the ODL at any time during the season by submitting a form to the CHC ODL Manager that identifies:
- 10.1.3.1 Player Name
 - 10.1.3.2 DOB
 - 10.1.3.3 Contact information (phone, email, mailing address) for the player being added
 - 10.1.3.4 Member program making the request
 - 10.1.3.5 Dollar amount owed to a member program or team
 - 10.1.3.6 Description and/or timeline of collection attempts
 - 10.1.3.7 Copies of all correspondence between the parties
- 10.1.4** Although players can be added to the ODL at any point during the season, the last day to make additions to the list for the prior season is March 1st. Any player not added to the ODL list by that date will be assumed to be in good financial standing for the prior season and is eligible for all USA Hockey activities and to tryout and sign with any other organization for the next season. Players added to the ODL may NOT skate for any program INCLUDING the program that added the player to the ODL. A member program that adds a player to the ODL and then allows the player to skate before the obligation is satisfied will waive the rights to amounts owed and the player will be removed from the ODL.
- 10.1.5** It will be up to the original program and the family to resolve the dispute; at which time the original program is obligated to notify the ODL manager of the resolution.
- 10.1.6** If a player is added to the ODL at any point in the season his/her eligibility on all teams (travel, house, high school, adult) is suspended until the financial obligation has been settled and the CHC ODL Manager notified of such.
- 10.1.7** Further, a player who chooses to skate during the spring or summer with a program or USA Hockey adult league and fails to complete all financial obligations may be added to the ODL at any time.
- 10.1.8** Programs are responsible for verifying that players are cleared to play before allowing them to skate or take part in a scrimmage or game. Any organization found using a player whose name is on the ODL may be fined \$500 per game for each game played with the listed player will be forfeited in both league and tournament play.
- 10.1.9** Any player whose name was added to the ODL by an organization or team that ceases to operate before the debt is settled must make payment to CHC before becoming eligible to play again. Such payments to CHC will be used for scholarships, equipment grants, and other initiatives at CHC's sole discretion.
- 10.1.10** CHC will NOT be responsible for determining financial obligations or acting as a mediator between the family and the program. The only obligation will be on the Program to ensure that a player on the list is not rostered with the new program until a resolution notice has been received.
- 10.1.11** Unresolved debts will carry over from one season to the next.

ARTICLE 11 AMENDMENTS

11.1 Proposed amendments to the Policies and Rules

Proposed amendments must be submitted in writing (by first class mail or email) by CHC member programs, CHC elected officers or CHC appointed officials or committee chairmen to the Secretary 10 days prior to any regularly scheduled CHC Board of Directors meeting. The Secretary shall submit all proposals to the Standing Rules Committee for review.

11.2 Standing Rules Committee

The Standing Rules Committee shall present proposed amendments to the Board of Directors at their regularly scheduled meeting with recommendations or clarifications. The amendments will not be voted on until the next regular meeting.

11.3 Amend CHC Policies and Rules

In order to amend the CHC Policies and Rules, a proposal must receive a majority of the votes cast. Each Board Member and elected Board Officer shall be entitled to one (1) vote; the President shall cast the deciding vote in the event of a tie. In addition, Directors Chairmen (Tournament, Coaching, Women), District Commissioners, Registrar, Coaching Director, and Referee in Chief shall have voting privileges on Rules and Policies within CHC. A member program must have its representative present to be eligible to vote. (No proxies).

11.4 Amendments to existing language from Section III.B of the Rules & Regulations are below in their approved form:

11.4.1 Tryouts for all Tier II 14U-18U Youth and 14U-19U Girls Teams

No youth or girls Tier II team may recruit or solicit players or offer hockey contracts to players for the following season, or hold development camps, tryouts, player selections or any activity that could be construed as a tryout/solicitation or recruitment for the following season, until 48 hours after the last game of Youth National Championships (both Tier I and Tier II Nationals must be completed). For example, if the National Tournament ends at 4 pm on Monday, tryouts can begin after 4 pm on Wednesday. Any violation of this prohibition may subject the coach, team, program and/or responsible administrators to appropriate discipline, or ineligibility of the team or coach, as determined by the Affiliate.

11.4.2 Tryouts for Non-Tier I or II Teams.

Except for spring or summer season hockey, Affiliates are strongly encouraged to have rules for house, recreational and other youth and girls hockey teams that are not registered as Tier I or Tier II teams, prohibiting tryouts or player selection until after a certain date that is appropriate for such Affiliate.

11.5 TIER 1 TRYOUT RULE AS APPROVED IN JANUARY 2024 Tier I Proposal Draft Tryout Task Force

(approved by USA Hockey Congress on January 28, 2024)

The following language will be inserted in Section III.B of the Rules & Regulations on page 166 of the 2023-24 Annual Guide. The existing language in that section will remain as subparts (2) and (3) at the end (as amended):

These changes are effective as of August 1, 2024

B. Tryouts/Player Selection

1. Tryouts for all Tier I 13O – 18U Youth and 14U – 19U Girls Teams

This Tier I Player Rostering Policy (this "Policy") applies throughout USA Hockey to all Youth and Girls Tier I players/teams only. All teams classified within their Affiliate as "Tier I" must comply with this Policy or risk loss of their Tier I designation and other potential sanctions. As this is a national policy adopted by USA Hockey, all Affiliates are directed to remove any Tier I rules that are contrary to or in conflict with this Policy.

Under this Policy, the following definitions shall apply:

"Affiliate Presidents Review Subcommittee" shall refer to a subcommittee of the USA Hockey Affiliate President's Committee and in each case shall involve three (3) Affiliate Presidents who are not involved in the matter being reviewed and have no other conflicts of interest related to the parties in the dispute.

"Off-Season" shall mean the period beginning with the end of the prior Playing Season until September 1 (or earlier if player is signed with a team and plays in a game before September 1).

"Parents" or "parents" shall mean and refer to the player's parents or legal guardians, if applicable.

"Player Agreements" shall mean and refer to those agreements entered into between a player/parent and a team/program for the purpose of binding the player to a particular team for a particular Playing Season, and according to the requirements in Section I below.

"Playing Season" shall mean the period beginning September 1 of each year (or the first game of the team's regular season, if earlier) through forty-eight (48) hours after the conclusion of the Tier I National Championships.

"Signing Team" shall mean the Tier I team that has signed a player to a Player Agreement binding the Player to the Signing Team for a Playing Season.

"Team Fact Sheet" shall be as described in Section I.d. below.

"Tryout" means any process on or off-ice that evaluates a player or group of players for the purpose of choosing players for a program or team. A Tryout also includes any team practices, off ice training sessions, open skates, skills sessions, or identification skates which include a player that is not on a regular season USA Hockey Roster with that association's teams or program. USA Hockey programs, coaches and administrators are not permitted to operate a program outside of USA Hockey as a means of avoiding the prohibitions on tryouts or recruiting. While USA Hockey does not restrict a coach's private business, if a coach runs a private camp, meeting, event, skate or skills clinic outside of USA Hockey for one or more players, then the coach and/or team/program should be investigated as Code of Conduct/tampering and the player should face disciplinary action as set forth below.

I. Agreements between Player/Parent and the Team/Program; Rosters

USA Hockey and its Affiliates and Member Programs will recognize Player Agreements at the Tier I level according to and as set forth herein.

a. Upon execution by the Signing Team, player and parents, a Player Agreement will commit and bind the player to the Signing Team for the entirety of the applicable Playing Season, and the player will not be permitted to be rostered or to participate in any way with another USA Hockey Tier I team during the Playing Season except as set forth herein.

b. The Player Agreement will also bind the Signing Team to that player and secures a roster spot for that player on the Signing Team for the entire applicable Playing Season. The Signing Team cannot cut, release or dismiss a player from the team except as set forth herein.

c. Notwithstanding the restrictions set forth herein, it shall not be a violation of this Section I if a player and program allow the player to participate on another Tier I team within that program pursuant to and in compliance with the Vertical Roster Integration Program set forth in the USA Hockey Rules & Regulations Section III.C.

The Player Agreement will indicate that the player may not participate in any Tryout for another Tier I team/program during the term of the Player Agreement; a violation of this provision will subject the player to not less than a five-game suspension. In the event a player who has signed a Player Agreement has been found to have participated in any Tryout for another Tier I team/program, then the player will be ineligible to sign a Player Agreement or participate with that program for a period of 18 months from the last date of the Tryout. The Player Agreement will not restrict a player from moving to or participating with another team in the following circumstances:

- i. the Player Agreement would not restrict a player from leaving a Signing Team and playing on or participating with a USA Hockey Tier II (youth or girls), High School, Junior hockey or college hockey team;
- ii. the Player Agreement would not restrict a player from playing with any other team, including a Tier I team, if the Signing Team and player mutually agree for the player to be released by the Signing Team;
- iii. If the player were released by the Signing Team for violation of the Player Agreement requirements or other violation by the player of the Signing Team's or its program's written Code of Conduct, and is released following any required hearing and appeal process required under USA Hockey or Affiliate bylaws or rules, then the Player Agreement would not restrict the player from joining another team that season;
- iv. the Player Agreement would not restrict a player from playing with another team, including a Tier I team, if the player files a grievance with any applicable Affiliate (the Signing Team's Affiliate and, if different, the Affiliate where the player would like to sign) and a hearing is held or overseen by the Affiliate Presidents Review Subcommittee (and not the Signing Team or Local Program) where it is determined that the Signing Team, its coach(es) or other participants have violated USA Hockey

Safe Sport Policies or other USA Hockey, Affiliate or Signing Team policies and which violation(s) justify the player's release from the Player Agreement and eligibility to sign with another Tier I team (but still subject to any other rostering rules and timelines). The Affiliate Presidents Review Subcommittee shall endeavor to hold hearings on such grievances on an expedited basis when appropriate. The Affiliate Presidents Review Subcommittee's determination shall be final and is not subject to appeal, except that any suspension imposed by the Affiliate Presidents Review Subcommittee shall be appealable to the National Appeal Committee.

d. Prior to offering a Player Agreement to a player, or signing the Player Agreement, an authorized program or team representative from the Signing Team must present and review a Team Fact Sheet with the player and their parent, which must include all the information, provisions and requirements the player and family will be committing to by signing the Player Agreement and becoming a member of the Signing Team. The Team Fact Sheet must be referenced in the signed Player Agreement, must be signed by the team and parents, and must be provided to the player's parents. The required elements of the Team Fact Sheet must include at least the following information:

- i. The specific team upon which player will be rostered;
- ii. The Signing Team's anticipated budget and fees for the season, which includes team fees to participate on the Signing Team for the season, uniform or equipment fees, and anticipated travel fees (to the extent known or planned) for the player and any required travel for parents, and any other anticipated fees that are required to be paid as a condition of participation on the team;
- iii. The required payment schedule or payment options for the fees in (ii) above;
- iv. The anticipated or planned number and average per week of practices, games, off-ice sessions, etc.

v. Any player code of conduct and/or parent code of conduct required for participation on the Signing Team; and

vi. Players and families and the Signing Team acknowledge and agree to be bound by the terms of the Team Fact Sheet and Player Agreement.

e. Teams are only allowed to offer and sign the number of players to Player Agreements equal to the maximum number of roster spots permitted on a USA Hockey Roster at any one time for the Signing Team's rostered age level. For example, a team that is permitted to have 20 players on a USA Hockey roster may not sign more than 20 players to Player Agreements and then move players on and off the roster. A team may only sign additional players to Player Agreements if another player on the roster has been released from their Player Agreement pursuant to Section 1.c. above.

f. The Player Agreement will be immediately binding on the Signing Team upon the signature of the team, player and parents. The player will also be immediately bound to the Player Agreement upon signature by the Signing Team, player and parents.

g. During any time a Player Agreement is in effect as set forth above, any Player Agreement signed with a different team shall not be enforceable. The binding nature of the Player Agreement addresses only the player's commitment to the Signing Team, the Signing team's commitment to the player, and the enforceability of the rules and requirements set forth in this Policy. USA Hockey and the applicable Affiliate(s) are not responsible for enforcing the contractual terms of the Team Fact Sheet.

II. Signing Players

Subject to the provisions below, teams may sign players to a Player Agreement either (a) during the Off-Season, or (b) during the current Playing Season prior to December 31.

Player Agreements signed during the Off-Season are valid for the following Playing Season only. Player Agreements signed during the current Playing Season are valid for that Playing Season only. No Tier I team/program may sign a player to a Player Agreement if that player has already been bound to a Signing Team through a signed Player Agreement. No Tier I team may have more signed Player Agreements than permitted roster spots on its team.

a. Off-Season Player Agreements: A Tier I team cannot offer or sign players to Player Agreements until the beginning of the Off-Season, which begins 48 hours after the conclusion of the National Tournament. Beginning with the Off-Season, a Tier I team may sign players that are not already bound to a different Tier I team (by a Player Agreement signed with such team) to fill up to the maximum allowed roster spots.

b. Player Agreements During Playing Season: A Tier I team may offer or sign players that are not already signed to a Player Agreement with another Tier I team at any time prior to December 31 of that Playing Season, provided that at no time may the Tier I team have more signed Player Agreements than roster spots on its team.

Notwithstanding any of the above, a player that signs a Player Agreement that is already rostered on a USA Hockey Tier II, High School, Junior or College hockey team must first secure a release from the player's current rostered team before being added to the Signing Team's roster.

III. Recruiting, Tampering and Tryouts

The USA Hockey Coaching Ethics Code provides:

"Coaches will not recruit a participant who is already a member of another USA Hockey team. Direct contact by a coach or his/her staff or indirect contact through an agent or parent during the playing season with a participant who is a member of another USA Hockey team is considered tampering and is prohibited."

Coaches (or "persons affiliated with the team" as defined below) who make contact with a player (or the player's agent, advisor or parents/family members) who is bound to another Signing Team through a Player Agreement, for the purpose of inviting, enticing, or convincing them to play for a specific team/program other than the Signing Team during the current Playing Season, shall be considered Tampering and shall subject the responsible Party(ies) to sanctions according

to this Policy and applicable USA Hockey or Affiliate rules or bylaws. For the purposes of this paragraph, "persons affiliated with the team" shall include any member of the team or program and includes without limitation general managers, player development personnel, coaches, current or past team players, or their parents. Coaches and persons affiliated with a team are permitted to recruit at any time during the current Playing Season for the immediately following Playing Season so long as it does not include an on-ice skate of any kind. Players are prohibited from having any type of on-ice skate or Tryout with a recruiting program/school during the Playing Season.

IV. Coach Awareness

Coaches/programs will be made aware by their Affiliates that attempting to recruit a player in any way during the Playing Season for that current Playing Season will be a violation of the Code of Conduct/tampering. Reported Code of Conduct/tampering violations will be referred by the Affiliates involved to the Affiliate Presidents Review Subcommittee, which shall investigate and resolve any such allegations, including the issuance of sanctions if it is determined a violation occurred.

V. Enforcement

a. Enforcement against Players. Players violating the Tryout rule shall be subject to disciplinary action by their Signing Team or applicable Affiliate according to the provisions of paragraph 1.c. above. If a player leaves their Signing Team and attempts to play for another Tier I team during that Playing Season (other than as permitted above), the player will not be permitted to be rostered on the new team for the remainder of current Playing Season and the following Playing Season. Affiliate registrars will be instructed by the Affiliate to not roster the player on the new team's roster for the remainder for such period.

b. Enforcement against Coaches: Incidents in which coaches or others involved in a program are alleged to have tampered with players who have signed a Player Agreement in violation of Tampering as defined above, will be referred to the Affiliate Presidents Review Subcommittee for investigation and disciplinary action. Any coach determined by the Affiliate Presidents Review Subcommittee or USA Hockey to have tampered with another player will face a minimum suspension of one year and minimum probationary period of two years for the first offense.

c. Enforcement against Programs. A Tier I program that is involved in tampering with a player who is signed to a Player Agreement with another Tier I team, in violation of Tampering as defined above, will be referred to the Affiliate Presidents Review Subcommittee for investigation and disciplinary action. A Tier I program shall be deemed to be involved if a member of the program is involved in a tampering violation. Tier I programs assume responsibility for all actions of all personal involved in their program; if there is a finding of tampering, the organization is also held accountable for the violation. An organization who has been deemed as involved in a tampering violation are subject to sanctions that could include, monetary fines, exclusion from participating in Affiliate, District or National Tournament play and/or loss of ability to field USA Hockey sanctioned teams at a/all playing level(s). Any sanction shall be enforced by the USA Hockey Affiliate in whose jurisdiction the organization resides and shall be recognized by all Affiliates of USA Hockey. Tier I teams/programs must ensure compliance of all the requirements of this policy. Failure to do so can result in a hearing by the Affiliate Presidents Review Subcommittee and the removal of the team's and/or program's Tier I status.

d. Appeals of Suspensions. Any suspension imposed by the Affiliate Presidents Review Subcommittee shall be appealable to the National Appeal Committee.

VI. Roster Change Date

The deadline for changing hockey rosters will remain December 31.