

Empire Playoff Rules – Tournament Style 2025 (10U & 12U & 14U)

All USA Hockey Rules will be enforced by the referees. All teams must be registered with USA Hockey with all participating players and coaches on the team's USA Hockey Roster. All EAHC rules from the regular season apply including (but not limited to) continuing to accrue penalty minutes, required equipment, alternates, noisemakers.

1. Any team using a non-rostered player in any game will forfeit the game. **All games must be played.** All forfeited games in the preliminary round for the forfeiting team will be officially recorded as a 3-0 loss for the purposes of determining tournament standings. It should be noted that the purpose of this rule is to absolutely discourage forfeits for any reason, as this causes another team to miss a playoff game.
 - a. Teams who forfeit (or are disqualified) a Semi-Final or Championship will be replaced by the next qualified team as determined by the EAHC Board.
 - b. EAHC Alternate rules will be strictly followed. *Horizontal skater alternates are not allowed in playoffs.* Use of travel goalies will only be allowed in the most extreme circumstances and MUST be pre-approved. Alternates must be on the team's USA Hockey roster (no exceptions!). Coaches should plan ahead by having all possible alternates added BEFORE their 1st game. Games will be played when any team has 6 players, any team with less will forfeit as games can't be rescheduled.
2. A team manager or coach must enter players' names and the head coach must sign the scoresheet **prior** to each game. Players do not need to sign in. It is highly recommended all teams bring 3 stickers for each game or plan on hand writing their rosters on the scoresheet. Players listed who are not playing due to suspension or conflict MUST be crossed out on the scoresheet.
3. Each Team MUST provide a penalty box attendant for every game. Attendants MUST be adults aged 19 or more.
4. Scorekeeper and timekeeper is supplied by the Home Team on the schedule for round robin games. For Semi-Finals and Finals, each team supplies one volunteer. Team Managers responsible for coordinating with their opponent in Finals & Semi-Finals which role they fill (Scorekeeper or Timekeeper).
5. Post-game hand-shakes are optional at the discretion of the coaches, referees and COVID restrictions.
6. Playing time for all games will be **THREE 11 or 12 minute periods at 10U (see divisions for 11 or 12 minute), THREE 12 minute periods at 12U and THREE 14 minute periods at 14U.** There will be a **65 minute curfew for 10U & 12U and 80 minute curfew for 14U.** Games end when the curfew clock expires except for tied Semi-Final or Championship Games (see below).
7. Mercy Rule: A running clock will be used in the third period when one team is ahead by 5 or more goals. If the goal differential narrows to less than 5 goals, then stop time will resume. In running time, the clock will only be stopped for major injuries at the direction of the referees.
8. Penalty times are as follows for 10U/12U divisions: **Minor 1 minute, Major: 3 minutes, Misconduct: 6 minutes** and for 14U divisions: **Minor 1.5 minutes, Major 4 minutes, Misconduct 8 minutes.**
9. Teams should be ready to enter the ice surface for the warm-up period up to fifteen minutes prior to the scheduled start time. If the tournament/playoffs are running ahead of schedule teams are expected to be ready to play. Teams may lose their warmup time if not ready to play.
10. Warm-up time shall be three minutes. **No timeouts** except in the Championship Games (1 per team).
11. Referees will be instructed to strictly enforce zero tolerance rules. EAHC and the host arenas reserves the right to remove from the arena players, coaches or spectators who violate USA Hockey zero tolerance policies or EAHC rules. Games may be stopped and ended if, in the judgement of EAHC, continuing play is deemed to be not in the best interest of the EAHC, participants, spectators, officials, etc. The final score and outcome of the game will be decided solely by the EAHC Board and Commissioners based on the current score, time remaining and situation which lead to suspension of the game. There are no tie breakers based on Goals For (and Goal differential is a max of 5) thus the expectation is NO TEAM will run up the score. Teams who act in an unsportsmanlike manner, abuse players or officials, or grievously run up the score can be disqualified. **No noisemakers are permitted.**
12. Suspensions resulting from game misconducts, match penalties, or any other circumstances, which are mandated by USA Hockey, Tournament or EAHC Rules will be strictly enforced. Players, coaches and parents should be fully aware of the potential consequences of their actions at all times.
13. Protests of games shall not be accepted or considered for any reason. Decisions of on-ice officials are final. Decisions by the EAHC Board or Commissioners related to game suspensions and tie-breakers are final.
14. The HOME TEAM on the schedule is responsible for supplying the scoresheet at least 30 minutes before each game to the visiting team so stickers can be affixed or rosters handwritten and the Head Coach can sign. The HOME TEAM is responsible for scanning the scoresheet and emailing it to their Commissioner after each game (within 4 hours, sooner if possible) along with the score. All scoresheets from the playoffs should be mailed to their commissioner no later than Monday after the playoff weekend. *Commissioners are responsible for updating the game scores on the EAHC website once they receive the scanned copies from their teams.*
15. Teams will be awarded points in round-robin play according to the following:
 - A) Two points for a win
 - B) One point for a tie
 - C) Zero points for a loss

Standings & Tie-Breakers:

Standings will be compiled by the Commissioners and staff and posted on the EAHC website. Teams will be ranked within their tournament division by the total number of points obtained. In the event of a tie, final standings will be determined by the following criteria:

- a) Head to head competition – With 3 or more teams tied, all teams must have played each other and there must be an obvious winner. If not, skip Head to Head and go to Most Wins.
- b) Most wins
- c) Goal differential (5 goal maximum differential for a single game) involving only the tied teams, if all tied teams have played one another
- d) Goal differential (5 goal maximum differential for a single game) in all games.
- e) Fewest goals against in games involving only the tied teams
- f) Fewest goals against in all games
- g) Fewest Penalty Minutes
- h) Coin Toss

Further Clarification on Tie-Breakers:

If multiple teams are tied, as we move down the list of tie-breakers, we will never move back to the top of the tiebreaker list. For example, if three teams are tied and head-to-head and most wins do not settle the tie, but goal differential decides a winner, ties between the remaining teams will be decided by moving down the list to fewest goals against, etc..

Head-to- Head Tiebreakers: With three or more teams tied, it will be very unusual for the head-to-head tiebreaker to apply. All tied teams must have played each other and there must be a “obvious winner” of the tiebreaker. One exception to this case is if three teams, Teams A, B and C are tied, and Team A has defeated both Team B and Team C, Team A would win the head-to-head tie-breaker whether Teams B and C have played each other, or not. If Teams B and C have played each other and are still tied, the team that won the head-to-head match-up between teams B and C will advance. If Teams B and C have not played each other, we would move to the goal differential tie-breaker.

Goal Differential Between Tied Teams: If three or more teams are tied and if all of the tied teams have played one another and the Head-to-Head and Most Wins tie-breakers do not provide a winner, goal differential involving only games between the tied teams will apply. If Teams A, B, and C are tied and all have played each other and either the same or different other opponents, only the games between “A and B”, “A and C” and “B and C” will be used to calculate goal differential between the teams. The team with the greatest goal differential will advance. If all tied teams have not played each other, then the next tie-breaker, goal differential in all games will decide the winner.

Fewest Goals Against Between Tied Teams: If three or more teams are tied and if all of the tied teams have played one another and the Head-to-Head, Most Wins and Goal Differential tie-breakers do not provide a winner, fewest goals against involving only games between the tied teams will apply. If Teams A, B, and C are tied and all have played each other and either the same or different other opponents, only the games between “A and B”, “A and C” and “B and C” will be used to calculate goals against for each team. The team with the fewest goals against will advance. If all tied teams have not played each other, then the next tie-breaker, fewest goals against in all games will decide the winner.

Semi-Final and Championship Games:

If a semi-final or championship game ends in a tie the following tie-breaking procedure will be followed:

- a) 5 minute sudden victory overtime period (4 on 4, plus goalies)
- b) Shootout (3 players/team – each player may only shoot once) – most goals wins. Home team chooses whether to shoot first or last. Players serving penalties at the end of OT are ineligible for the shootout.
- c) If shootout ends in tie, sudden death shootout until winner is decided (each team must continue through their roster until all skaters except goalies and ineligible players have taken a shot). If the shoot-out is not decided, players will continue to shoot in the same order as their first shots.