



Member Handbook

Policies, procedures, and standards governing player development, coaching, tryouts, team formation, and association operations.



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General

Mission & Philosophy

STMA Youth Hockey Association (STMAYHA) provides all youth of our communities the opportunity to develop as hockey players within a team concept to the extent allowed by their physical abilities and interest. This is accomplished through skill development during practice sessions and execution during games. STMAYHA believes that winning is positive, but only when it can be done in harmony with the welfare and interest of each individual player. Each player will be encouraged to develop characteristics that promote the team concept. Players, coaches, and parents must realize that coaching is teaching and that perfection is not possible.

STMAYHA is committed to a merit-based, transparent system where every player is evaluated fairly, every coach is selected through a structured process, and every roster is built on objective performance data. The association's hockey operations are led by an Executive Hockey Director who is accountable for development standards, coaching quality, and competitive integrity across all levels of play.

Instances in the handbook that refer to STMAYHA as the organization apply to NWC as well, unless noted.

Membership

STMAYHA is open to all residents within the St. Michael-Albertville (STMA) School District #885. All individuals wishing to participate in STMAYHA that reside outside the STMA School District must follow the Minnesota Hockey waiver process.

NWC Youth Hockey is a cooperative agreement between STMAYHA and Monticello Youth Hockey Association. For more information about the cooperative agreement, please visit the Documents section of the STMAYHA website. NWC is open to all residents within the STMA School District and the Monticello Independent School District #882. All individuals wishing to participate in NWC that reside outside the STMA or Monticello School Districts must follow the Minnesota Hockey waiver process.

Waiver Process

With the exception of Junior Gold/19U Players, prior to a player's first year of Squirrels/10U a waiver shall be granted to any player in good standing other than a Mite/8U and under, without

conditions except as described below, who wishes to participate in Minnesota Hockey whose boundaries incorporate the school in which the player is enrolled and is attending, as follows:

- Players waived based on school choice shall be deemed to be members of their Association of School Attendance and shall have full rights and privileges accorded to all members of that association, including voting rights. (Exception - Changing Schools, below)
- Players receiving a waiver based on school attendance shall register with their Association of School Attendance for as long as they continue to attend the school district (including the first year). If they stop attending school in that association's area, they revert to their Association of Residence for participation or waiver.
- If a player has obtained a waiver based on this section, they shall be allowed to continue to play with their Association of School Attendance. If a player has not obtained a waiver based on school attendance prior to being eligible for Squirrels/10U, they may only play outside of their Association of Residence by obtaining a discretionary waiver.
- Any player granted a school-based waiver prior to the changes adopted by Minnesota Hockey at the January 20-21, 2024 meeting will be allowed to continue to play in the Association of School Attendance where the player attended at the time of the receipt of the waiver.
- School-based waivers that meet the criteria above are granted automatically per Minnesota Hockey rules. Discretionary waivers must be approved by the Executive Hockey Director and at least two of the four Executive Board Members.

Official Colors & Emblems

Official Colors

- **STMAYHA:** Royal Blue, Gold, and White
- **NWC:** Red, Navy, and White

Official Emblem

The official emblems of STMAYHA shall be depicted hereon. The emblems, properly and officially used, shall be exactly as they appear; except for size - either enlarged or reduced. When the emblem is colored, the colors shall be the official colors shown. Use of the emblem STMAYHA on any item or apparel not offered for sale by STMAYHA through approved vendors must be approved by the Board of Directors.

Brand and Logo Guidelines

The STMAYHA and NWC logos, wordmarks, and crests are the property of the Association. No team, coach, parent group, or outside vendor may create, modify, or distribute any logo, crest, or branded apparel bearing STMAYHA or NWC marks without prior written approval from the Vice President of Communications or their designee. Teams shall use only Association-approved logos on jerseys, warmups, team apparel, social media accounts, and printed materials. Unauthorized use of Association marks shall result in removal of the item and may result in disciplinary action.

Equipment & Uniform Standards

Please see the current STMAYHA Equipment & Uniform Standards, approved and posted separately on stmayha.org.

Association Governance

Disclaimer

STMAYHA does not recognize or support any hockey activity except for the program(s) defined in this handbook.

Revisions

The STMAYHA Board of Directors shall have the authority to amend this Handbook in order to conform with any applicable revisions to laws, regulations, judicial decisions, and District 5, Minnesota Hockey, and USA Hockey rules and regulations.

In addition, the STMAYHA Board of Directors may amend the Handbook to correct scrivener's errors or omissions and amend and restate the Handbook in order to consolidate into one document amendments, exhibits, and appendices previously adopted by the STMAYHA Board. Amendments to the Handbook shall occur at a duly noticed STMAYHA Board meeting and require a majority of the Board members, provided a quorum is established. Any amendment affecting hockey operations shall be made in consultation with the Executive Hockey Director. All amendments shall comply with District 5, Minnesota Hockey, and USA Hockey rules and regulations.

Membership-Initiated Request for Agenda Item

Any STMAYHA member in good standing may request that a topic be added to a regular Board meeting agenda. Requests must be submitted in writing (email to the Board President or Vice President of Communications) at least seven (7) days before the scheduled meeting. The request shall include a brief description of the topic and the desired outcome. The Board President, in consultation with the Executive Board, shall determine whether the request is within the Board's scope and whether to place it on the agenda. The requesting member shall be notified of the decision. Placement on the agenda does not guarantee Board action; the Board retains full discretion over how agenda items are addressed.

St. Michael-Albertville Ice Arena

The St. Michael-Albertville Ice Arena (STMA Arena) is owned and operated by the cities of St. Michael and Albertville, and the STMA School District. These entities entered into a joint powers' agreement and the STMA Arena Board was created to govern and oversee the facility.

The STMA Joint Powers Arena Board, made up by two elected officials from each of the cities of St. Michael and Albertville as well as three elected members of the STMA School Board, is responsible for operations and maintenance of the facility. The Arena Board meets monthly the 2nd Monday of the month at 6:00 PM in the Albertville Council Chambers.

The STMA Ice Arena serves as the primary rinks for STMAYHA. The Gold Rink is located on the north side of the complex while the Blue Rink is on the south side.

Organization

Association Organization

Membership in STMAYHA is on a per family basis, regardless of the number of players in the family. A registered STMAYHA member is a person who has registered their child with STMAYHA for the current season. The current season is defined as approximately a one-year time period beginning from the date the child is registered until the next season's registration. A registered STMAYHA member in good standing is a person who has paid all of their financial obligations owed to STMAYHA for the current season.

STMAYHA has a newsletter that is the official communication for the Association. Included in the newsletter is the record of all proceedings of the monthly Board meetings, advising of schedules, clinics, tryouts, team news, elections, and other related items of interest to STMAYHA players and parents. Communication will be sent to all member families via email.

STMAYHA is a member of District 5, Minnesota Hockey, and USA Hockey, and adheres to the District, Minnesota Hockey, and USA Hockey rules on rink features, teams, equipment, penalties, officials, and playing rules. Unless superseded by USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey, or the District, STMAYHA is designed primarily for players residing in the STMA School District in addition to girls residing in the Monticello Independent School District to allow for continuity for teams and teammates throughout the progression of the STMAYHA hockey program.

Operating Principle: Total Transparency

Strong culture starts with trust. Trust starts with total transparency. This principle guides every policy, process, and decision in this handbook. When families ask how coaches are selected, how teams are formed, how tryouts are scored, or how any decision is made, the answer should be: read the handbook. It is all published. There are no backroom deals, no unwritten rules, and no special access. Every process is documented, every decision is auditable, and every family has equal information. This is the standard.

Affiliations

STMAYHA is a member of District 5, Minnesota Hockey, and USA Hockey.

Board of Directors

The affairs of STMAYHA shall be managed by a Board of Directors, as set forth in STMAYHA's Bylaws. Along with establishing the rules that govern the operation of STMAYHA, the Bylaws provide a general description of the role and responsibilities of the Executive Committee (i.e., President, Vice President of Operations, Vice President of Finance, and Vice President of Communications). Exhibit A included herein is intended to supplement the Bylaws for the Executive Committee and set forth the roles and responsibilities of the remaining Board positions as approved by the Board of Directors.

Governance & Operations. The Board of Directors provides governance and oversight of the Association. The Board sets policy, approves budgets, and ensures compliance with all applicable rules and regulations. The Board does not manage day-to-day hockey operations, which are the responsibility of the Executive Hockey Director and the Hockey Operations Committee (HOC).

Role Creation and Modification

The Board of Directors and the Executive Hockey Director may create, rename, restructure, or eliminate any non-voting role within the Association, including HOC positions, Supporting Coordinator roles, and other appointed or volunteer positions. Changes to non-voting roles do not require a handbook amendment and take effect upon Board approval or, for HOC roles, upon the Executive Hockey Director's direction. Elected Board positions with voting rights may not be eliminated or removed during the officeholder's term. Changes to voting Board positions require a Bylaws amendment.

Governance Decision Matrix

To eliminate gray areas, the following chart defines which decisions belong to Hockey Operations and which belong to the Board. When a decision overlaps both columns, Hockey Operations sets the standard and the Board handles the financial or contractual component.

Decision Area	Hockey Operations (Executive Hockey Director)	Board of Directors
Player development model and curriculum	Full authority	Defers to Hockey Operations
Practice design, scheduling, and programming	Full authority	Defers to Hockey Operations
Coach selection, assignment, education, removal	Full authority (volunteer coaches)	Ratifies compensation for paid coaches only

Decision Area	Hockey Operations (Executive Hockey Director)	Board of Directors
Tryouts, evaluation, team formation, rostering	Full authority	Defers to Hockey Operations
Tournament selection, game schedules, travel	Full authority	Approves expenditures outside Player Development Budget
Jersey and uniform design, colors, look	Full authority	Defers to Hockey Operations
Jersey number assignment process	Full authority	Defers to Hockey Operations
Jersey and uniform procurement (vendor, cost)	Defers to Board	Full authority
Sponsorship placement on jerseys/apparel	Sets visual standard	Handles sponsorship deal
Player experience (locker room, bench, culture)	Full authority	Defers to Hockey Operations
Outside instructors and vendors (hockey)	Full authority	Approves expenditures outside Player Development Budget
Registration, fees, payment plans	Defers to Board	Full authority
Fundraising, gambling, sponsorship revenue	Defers to Board	Full authority
Facility contracts and ice scheduling (arena)	Ice Scheduler coordinates with Executive Hockey Director on allocation	Negotiates contracts, secures ice blocks, pays invoices
Annual budget approval	Proposes Player Development Budget	Approves all budgets
Communications to families (hockey-related)	Full authority	Defers to Hockey Operations
Communications to families (business/admin)	Defers to Board	Full authority

Communications. For hockey-related communications, the Executive Hockey Director provides content; the Vice President of Communications manages formatting and distribution through official association channels.

The rule: If it affects what a player sees, wears, or experiences on the ice, it is a Hockey Operations decision. If it affects what the association spends or earns, it is a Board decision. Board positions do not come with hockey-side privileges.

Executive Hockey Director

Purpose

The Executive Hockey Director is the senior accountable leader of the hockey side of the Association. This position provides strategic direction, operational authority, and accountability for all on-ice and hockey-specific programming. The Executive Hockey Director reports directly to the Board of Directors and serves as the bridge between governance (Board) and execution (HOC).

The Association's governance is intentionally divided. The Board and non-hockey coordinators lead the business of the Association: finance, fundraising, registration, facility contracts, and administration. The Executive Hockey Director leads everything that touches a player, a coach, or the player's experience of the program.

Authority

The Executive Hockey Director has final authority on all hockey-side matters of the Association, including but not limited to:

- The player development model, curriculum, and pathway, and how players are taught at every level.
- Practices, skills sessions, clinics, camps, and all on-ice programming - what, when, how many, how long, and in what form.
- Coaches - the Executive Hockey Director selects, assigns, educates, evaluates, sets standards for, and may remove all volunteer coaches. For paid coaching positions, the Executive Hockey Director selects and recommends each candidate; the Board's role is limited to ratifying the total compensation for each paid coach position.
- Sub-directors and hockey-side leadership - the Director of Coaching, Skills Director, Goalie Director, age-level directors, and any other hockey-side leadership role. All such roles report to the Executive Hockey Director.
- Tryouts, evaluation, team formation, rostering, and player placement.
- Tournaments, game schedules, leagues, exhibitions, and travel for hockey purposes.
- All outside instructors, skills coaches, goalie coaches, video coaches, strength coaches, and any other vendor whose work touches Association players.
- Player experience - locker-room culture, bench standards, on-ice conduct, captaincy structure, and all on-ice elements that shape how a player experiences the program.
- Player safety standards during hockey activities.

- Hockey-side communication with families on development, evaluation, placement, and coaching.

Board Approval. The Board's approval is required only for (1) paid-coach compensation and (2) expenditures outside the annual Player Development Budget. All other hockey-side decisions rest with the Executive Hockey Director.

Responsibilities

- Set the strategic direction for player development, coaching, and competitive programming across all age levels.
- Oversee the annual tryout process, including evaluator selection, tryout format design, and team formation.
- Lead or delegate leadership of the Coaches Selection Committee (CSC).
- Ensure all hockey operations comply with STMAYHA policies, District 5 rules, Minnesota Hockey rules, and USA Hockey regulations.
- Present an annual hockey operations plan to the Board of Directors, including development priorities, coaching philosophy, and competitive structure.
- Attend all Board meetings and provide a monthly HOC report.
- Serve as the primary liaison between the HOC, high school coaching staff, and the Board.
- Monitor and enforce the Conflict-of-Interest Policy as it relates to hockey operations.

Reporting Structure

The Executive Hockey Director reports to the Board of Directors. All HOC members report to the Executive Hockey Director. The Board governs; the Executive Hockey Director operates.

Conflict of Interest

All STMAYHA members in positions of authority, including the Executive Hockey Director, Board members, HOC members, coaches, and evaluators, are subject to the Conflict-of-Interest Policy. Members with a child, niece, nephew, or sibling participating in STMAYHA shall disclose that relationship and recuse themselves from the specific activities outlined in the Conflict-of-Interest Policy section of this handbook. Recusal applies to tryout evaluation and scoring sessions, score tabulation, and final team formation decisions for that player's age group. It does not restrict operational duties such as setting team sizes, planning tryout logistics, scheduling, or other program administration that must be performed regardless of the age group involved. Full recusal requirements by role are detailed in the Conflict-of-Interest Policy. No leadership position carries any privilege or preferential treatment for any person's child.

Hockey Operations Committee (HOC)

The Hockey Operations Committee (HOC) is made up of individuals with hockey-specific expertise appointed by the Executive Hockey Director. The HOC is responsible for leading the association's hockey strategy, including on-ice player development, coaching development, tryout operations, and team formation. In all aspects, the HOC reports to the Executive Hockey Director.

The Executive Hockey Director may add or reduce the number of positions within the HOC as necessary. All HOC positions are appointed by and serve at the discretion of the Executive Hockey Director. There is no fixed term; appointments are reviewed annually. The current HOC structure is outlined on Exhibit B included herein.

HOC Structure and Scope

The Executive Hockey Director shall define the positions, titles, responsibilities, and reporting lines within the HOC. The HOC shall, at a minimum, address the following functional areas:

- Coaching oversight: coach selection, development, compliance, and year-end evaluations.
- Tryout operations: planning, evaluator management, scoring, team formation, and post-tryout inquiries.
- Player development: age-appropriate programming, practice planning, goalie development, and pipeline alignment with high school programs.
- Age-level coordination: day-to-day communication between the HOC and coaches/families at each age level (Mite/8U through Junior Gold/19U, Boys and Girls).
- Board liaison: coordination between the HOC and the Board of Directors, including meeting updates and player number projections.

The current HOC structure, position titles, and role holders shall be published on the STMAYHA website and updated as positions are filled or modified.

High School Coach Integration

The STMA Boys Varsity Coach and NWC Girls Varsity Coach shall serve as advisory members of the HOC. They shall participate in development planning, tryout criteria design, and coaching philosophy discussions. High school coaches shall not have a vote on team formation or coach selection matters but shall provide input to the Executive Hockey Director.

Player Development

Player Development Philosophy

STMAYHA operates under a unified, progressive development model designed and led by the Executive Hockey Director. Every player is developed across four pillars: Skating, Skills, Hockey IQ, and Culture. These pillars drive every practice plan, every evaluation, and every coaching decision from Mite/8U through Junior Gold/19U. Practices are built on a constraint-based development model where players are placed in structured, game-realistic situations that force skill development under pressure. Skills must transfer to game performance; drills that do not build toward defined objectives are not permitted. The complete development model, training methodology, coaching frameworks, and progression standards are published in the STMAYHA Player Development Guide, maintained by the Executive Hockey Director and available to all families.

Coaching Standards

All coaches shall adhere to STMAYHA's development model as directed by the Executive Hockey Director. This includes:

- Beginning every practice with a defined problem to solve and a progression designed to address it.
- Following age-appropriate practice plans and development benchmarks provided by the Executive Hockey Director.
- Prioritizing skill development and game transfer over game results.
- Designing practices using the constraint-based model: structured chaos, not disconnected drills.
- Targeting a 3:1 practice-to-game ratio across all travel levels, with actual ratios varying based on ice availability, tournament schedules, and season length.
- Participating in all required coach education sessions.
- Teaching players to think, read, and make decisions, not executing rote systems.
- Submitting a written year-end development summary for each player on their roster.

Coaches who receive multiple substantiated complaints regarding conduct, playing time, or alignment with the development philosophy shall be referred to the Coaches Selection Committee for review and may not be re-appointed.

Finances

Cost of Hockey

The goal of STMAYHA is to provide the best program at the most reasonable cost to registered participants. The Association is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All money comes from the members through registration, fundraisers, and sponsorships; STMAYHA also receives revenue from legalized gambling. Cost of Hockey fees for Mite/8U and Travel Hockey participants will be evaluated and determined annually by the Finance Committee and then presented to the STMAYHA Board of Directors as Cost of Hockey. Cost of Hockey fees are paid at the time of registration or on an approved payment plan established by registration and the Finance Committee.

Refund Policy

Please see the current STMAYHA Refund Policy, approved and posted separately on stmayha.org.

Collections Policy

Please see the current STMAYHA Collections Policy, approved and posted separately on stmayha.org.

Financial Support

Financial assistance is intended to help a family out in troubled times and is not to be used as an annual subsidy. To be considered for financial support, please email the Vice President of Finance at finance@stmayha.org or the President at president@stmayha.org for the Financial Aid application.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee shall consist of, at minimum, Vice President of Finance, Finance Coordinator, Team Bills Coordinator, Cost of Hockey Coordinator and Collections Coordinator. The committee shall be evaluated on a yearly basis upon completion of the STMAYHA Fiscal Year.

Codes of Conduct

Player Code of Conduct

STMA Youth Hockey Association (STMAYHA) — This policy is adapted from the USA Hockey Zero Tolerance Player's Code of Conduct.

As a STMAYHA player, participating in USA Hockey, I agree to always honor the game by respecting the sport's ROOTS:

- R - Rules. The rules of hockey keep the game fair. Respect for the rules means we honor our sport.
- O - Opponent. The opponent challenges us to do our best. They are on the ice to do their best and have fun, just like you are. Without opponents, there is no game. Be humble in victory and gracious in defeat.
- O - Officials. Officials have been selected and trained to enforce rules, and they have a very difficult job. Without officials, the game would be unsafe and unfair. Officials are not perfect (just like athletes, coaches, and parents) and sometimes make mistakes. However, respect must be shown even when you disagree.
- T - Teammate. Being a teammate is part of hockey. Being with teammates should be fun. Encouraging, supportive teammates practice together to learn teamwork, sportsmanship, and discipline.
- S - Self-Respect. Having self-respect in hockey means you will challenge yourself to give 100% effort in all things and practice self-control on and off the ice.

Further, I pledge to abide by the following Code of Conduct Policy:

- Play for fun. Work hard to improve your skills and give 100% at practice and games.
- Learn teamwork, sportsmanship, and discipline. It is a privilege, not a right, to play youth hockey.
- Respect and support your teammates. Be a team player, get along with my teammates, and encourage my teammates. Do not criticize other teammates or their play. Hockey is a team sport. The interests of the team take precedence over the individual.
- Respect and support your coaches. Adhere strictly to the coach's rules and be supportive of the coach's practice plans, game plans, and other decisions.

- Be on time. Be at the arena by the appointed time set by the coaches. If unable to attend practices and/or games, notify the coach or team manager in advance. A legitimate reason such as religion class, school activity, illness, etc. must be provided.
- Respect and support officials. Learn the rules and play by them. Never argue with an official's decision. Trust the coaches to handle all matters pertaining to officials.
- Do not attempt to deliberately injure another player. Any player incurring a MATCH penalty for "attempt to injure" or engaging in any other offense deemed equally serious by the coach may be subject to disciplinary action beyond the USA Hockey rules as deemed appropriate by the STMAYHA Executive Board. Fighting, wrestling, or throwing a punch in a game, practice, or locker room qualifies under this code.
- Always conduct yourself in a respectable manner. Destructive or delinquent behavior in the locker room and/or before, during, or after a practice or game will not be tolerated. Conduct should be respectable when with the team at any other public facility including, but not limited to, restaurants, hotels, etc.
- Use of cell phones or other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras is strictly prohibited in the locker rooms.
- There will be ZERO tolerance of offensive behavior, either physical or verbal. Harassment, obscene language or gestures, inappropriate physical contact, and other behavior deemed to be offensive toward coaches, officials, teammates, opponents, parents, spectators, volunteers, arena personnel, or STMAYHA officials will not be tolerated.
- Follow the rules. Adhere to all policies, procedures, rules, and guidelines set forth by STMAYHA, District 5, Minnesota Hockey, and USA Hockey.

Depending on facts and circumstances, consequences due to violation(s) of the above may range from verbal warnings, loss of playing time, probation, suspension, removal from the team and/or STMAYHA. Any alleged violation of this Code of Conduct brought to the STMAYHA Board of Directors may be referred for a disciplinary hearing with the Executive Board if warranted. Past concerns may be considered by the STMAYHA Board of Directors. Following a disciplinary hearing, the STMAYHA Executive Board will notify the individual(s) in writing, outlining the sanction that is being set forth. This will be done in a timely manner. All violations and resulting sanctions will be maintained in confidence by STMAYHA and will be cumulative throughout the parent/legal guardian's participation in STMAYHA. If need be, all sanctions will be forwarded to District 5 and/or Minnesota Hockey for further enforcement.

Parent/Legal Guardian Code of Conduct

This policy is adapted from the USA Hockey Zero Tolerance Parent's Code of Conduct. As a parent/legal guardian of a STMA Youth Hockey Association (STMAYHA) participant, I agree:

- It is a privilege, not a right, for my child/children to play youth hockey.
- That sportsmanship, teamwork, and fair play are essential to the sport of hockey, and as such are the most important skills that my child/children can gain from being involved in youth hockey.
- My child/children learn from my example. I need to exemplify the highest level of sportsmanship by supporting all players, coaches, team managers, referees, and parents.
- Showing a positive attitude toward the game and all of its participants, my child/children will benefit.

Further, I pledge to abide by the following Code of Conduct Policy:

- Encourage my child to play by the rules and support STMAYHA's Player Code of Conduct.
- Emphasize skill development and practices and how they benefit youth players.
- Recognize the importance of volunteer coaches. They are essential to STMAYHA and important to player development. Communicate respectfully with and support all rules, guidelines, and expectations set forth by them.
- Observe the 48-hour rule. No parent/legal guardian, or relative of any STMAYHA player, in a fit of frustration/anger over a player's ice time/position, coaches' play of a player, and/or team status per STMAYHA's tryout policy will contact the coach, level coordinator, or any other member of the STMAYHA Board of Directors within 48 hours. This includes email, phone call, text message, written/typed letter, or any social media avenue. Any parents/legal guardians who are evicted from any rink may be subject to disciplinary action by the STMAYHA Executive Board.
- No inappropriate yelling at players on any STMAYHA team or any opposing team.
- No inappropriate actions toward coaches, officials, arena personnel, volunteers, parents, or spectators.
- Volunteer. Assist in providing a positive youth hockey experience by volunteering to help with the player's team and STMAYHA.
- Follow the rules. Promote, support, and adhere to all policies, procedures, rules, and guidelines set forth by STMAYHA, District 5, Minnesota Hockey, and USA Hockey.
- Communicate violations of the Code of Conduct. Any STMAYHA member witnessing or involved in a violation of any portion of the Code of Conduct may bring the issue forward,

after the 48-hour rule, to the STMAYHA Board of Directors or by emailing the level coordinator.

At registration, players and parents will be asked to abide by the following agreement. We are in agreement that:

- It is a privilege, not a right, for our child to play youth hockey.
- Sportsmanship and fair play are essential to the sport of hockey.
- Sportsmanship and fair play are the most important skills that our child can possibly learn from youth hockey.

Depending on facts and circumstances, consequences due to violation(s) of the above may range from probation or suspension of the parent/legal guardian, and possibly the player, from STMAYHA events to expulsion from STMAYHA. All violations and resulting sanctions will be maintained in confidence by STMAYHA and will be cumulative throughout the parent/legal guardian's participation in STMAYHA. If need be, all sanctions will be forwarded to District 5 and/or Minnesota Hockey for further enforcement.

Sportsmanship Agreement

Children learn by example; parents and coaches need to exemplify the highest level of sportsmanship and fair play. It's a game for the youth.

THEREFORE, we agree as follows:

- Sportsmanship: That we will dedicate ourselves to serve as good examples of sportsmanship and fair play in all of our dealings with coaches, referees, and others associated with youth hockey.
- Referees: That, recognizing that no one is perfect, we will refrain from vocal criticism of referees and trying to influence a call during a game and, instead, will use only the formal process established by District 5 to voice our criticism in a constructive way on refereeing issues.
- Grievance Process: That we do hereby agree to follow the Rules of USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey, District 5, and STMAYHA and to abide by the Grievance Processes of the STMAYHA and District 5. We agree to honor the rulings of the Grievance Boards of said associations. We specifically recognize that the sanctions that can be imposed against us include being restricted from participation as a spectator. We recognize that our child may be restricted from participation in hockey events for his or her misconduct and/or for our misconduct as parents.

Coach's Code of Conduct

As a coach in STMA Youth Hockey Association (STMAYHA), I agree that:

- The coach/athlete relationship is a privileged one, not a right.
- Sportsmanship, teamwork, and fair play are essential to the sport of hockey, and as such are the most important skills that players can gain from being involved in youth hockey.
- Winning is a consideration, but not the only one, nor the most important one. The value of winning should never be placed over the objective of instilling the highest ideals and character traits in every player on the team.

Further, I pledge to abide by the following Code of Conduct Policy:

- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my players ahead of my personal desire to win.
- I will be alert to the physical safety of players. I will do my best to provide a safe playing/practice situation for my players and ensure they wear the required safety equipment.
- I will lead by example and will treat all teammates, coaches, officials, opponents, spectators, and parents with respect.
- I will be consistent, honest, and fair. I will motivate my players in a positive way. I will be generous with my praise when it is deserved. I will not criticize players publicly.
- I will be knowledgeable in the rules of the game, and I will teach these rules to my players.
- I will treat each player as an individual, recognizing that athletes differ in learning and readiness to learn. I will give all players the opportunity to improve their skills, gain confidence, and develop self-esteem.
- I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players.
- I will respect the game officials and their authority during every game. I will establish a positive relationship with officials. I will not excessively argue any decisions made by them or confront any referee or league official.
- I will be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.
- I will do my best to attend all STMAYHA coach's meetings as directed and keep the appropriate Age-Level Coordinator informed of all team activities when necessary.
- I am responsible for my conduct at all times. I will always be a positive representative of STMAYHA, District 5, Minnesota Hockey, and USA Hockey.

- I will refrain from using foul, profane, harassing, or offensive language or gestures in the conduct of coaching duties.
- I will refrain from using alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, vape, or any recreational drugs in conjunction with, including traveling to or from, any STMAYHA event.
- I understand that I, or a team representative, need to be present in the locker rooms at all times that players are in the rooms.
- I will enforce STMAYHA's Player's Code of Conduct and Parent Code of Conduct.
- I will adhere to all rules, guidelines, policies and procedures of STMAYHA, District 5, Minnesota Hockey, and USA Hockey.

Violations of this Code of Conduct may result in but are not limited to: full or partial forfeiture of coaching privileges, dismissal from STMAYHA, or loss of opportunity for future participation in programs sanctioned by USA Hockey and/or Minnesota Hockey.

Coach Accountability Addendum

In addition to the Code of Conduct above, all coaches are subject to the following:

- **Playing Time Compliance.** Coaches who repeatedly violate the Playing Time Standard shall be subject to review by the HOC. Violations confirmed by the HOC may result in a formal warning, mandatory corrective plan, suspension from coaching duties, or removal - at the discretion of the Executive Hockey Director.
- **Mid-Season Feedback.** All travel-level head coaches shall provide a mid-season development update to each player's family no later than January 30. The update shall address progress on skating, skills, Hockey IQ, and compete level, with specific areas of focus for the remainder of the season. The format (written summary, in-person meeting, or both) shall be determined by the Executive Hockey Director by age level.
- **Year-End Player Evaluations.** All head coaches shall complete a written year-end development summary for each player on their roster. These summaries shall be submitted to the HOC and made available to the player's family upon request. Failure to complete year-end evaluations may disqualify the coach from future coaching consideration.

Parent Coach Conduct. A parent serving as head coach shall not advocate for their own child's playing time, line placement, or roster position beyond what is established by the Playing Time Standards and the team formation rules. Violations shall be referred to the HOC and Executive Hockey Director.

Volunteer Code of Conduct

STMAYHA is a non-profit, volunteer-led and -run organization. One of our goals is to provide a safe and fun environment; we expect the same from all of our participants, including volunteers.

- Always conduct yourself in a manner that positively reflects on all participants and STMAYHA regardless of the opportunity or location to which you are fulfilling your hours.
- Respect the property of STMAYHA, the cities of Albertville and St. Michael, as well as our gambling partners.
- Take steps to prevent theft or damage whenever possible.
- STMAYHA has a zero-tolerance rule for drinking during volunteer shifts. If you are caught drinking during a shift, you will be asked to leave and will forfeit all volunteer hours and your credit card will be charged. This includes both gambling and regular volunteer shifts.
- Volunteers may not participate in any lawful gambling activity (including, but not limited to, paper or electronic pull-tabs, tipboards, paddlewheels, raffles, or bingo) while scheduled to work or while performing any gambling-related duties. Volunteers involved in the conduct of paddlewheel without a table or tipboards with 32 tickets or less may purchase pull-tabs on days they are not volunteering (Minnesota Statute 349.181, subd. 3). If you are volunteering at a site for a gambling event, you are not allowed to participate in any gambling at that specific site on that specific day.

Policies & Programs

Academic Standards

Because STMAYHA wishes to encourage all players to maintain at least a 2.0 (“C”) grade point average on a 4-point system, parents and legal guardians may at any time suspend their player from participation until the player can demonstrate satisfactory academic improvement to the parent or legal guardian. If a player is held out for academic reasons, the player will miss equal practices and games (i.e. cannot skip practices but play in games). Any parental suspension for academic reasons will not be considered in any way in future team selections.

Anti-Harassment Policy/SafeSport

STMAYHA maintains a zero-tolerance policy for all forms of abuse, misconduct, and harassment as defined by USA Hockey’s SafeSport Program. This policy applies to all participants, including players, parents, coaches, officials, volunteers, and spectators.

Prohibited Conduct

No participant shall engage in physical, verbal, or electronic conduct that constitutes harassment, discrimination, or abuse based on any of the following characteristics:

- Race, color, or ethnicity
- Religion or creed
- Sex, gender, or gender identity
- Sexual orientation
- National origin
- Disability or medical condition
- Socioeconomic status
- Age

Prohibited conduct includes any behavior that:

- Creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment for any participant;

- Substantially or unreasonably interferes with a participant's ability to participate in team or association activities;
- Adversely affects a participant's opportunities within the program; or
- Constitutes sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, or neglect as defined by USA Hockey's SafeSport Handbook.

SafeSport Compliance

STMAYHA adheres to all requirements of the USA Hockey SafeSport Program, including:

- Annual SafeSport training for all coaches, board members, and volunteers with regular or routine access to minor participants.
- Background screening for all adults in positions of authority over minor participants.
- Compliance with the Locker Room Policy, Social Media Policy, and all electronic communication guidelines.
- Designation of a SafeSport Coordinator responsible for receiving reports, coordinating investigations, and ensuring compliance.

Retaliation Prohibited

No person shall retaliate against any individual who in good faith reports a concern, participates in an investigation, or cooperates with SafeSport proceedings. Retaliation includes threats, intimidation, harassment, or adverse actions directed at the reporting individual or their family. Any person who retaliates shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including permanent removal from the association.

Reporting

Any participant who believes they have experienced or witnessed harassment, abuse, or misconduct should report the concern to the STMAYHA SafeSport Coordinator, any member of the Executive Board, or directly to Minnesota Hockey SafeSport first, then USA Hockey SafeSport at safesport@usahockey.org or (719) 538-1145. Reports may also be submitted to the U.S. Center for SafeSport at safesport.org.

Hazing Policy

STMAYHA maintains a zero-tolerance policy for hazing in any form, consistent with Minnesota Statute 121A.69 and USA Hockey SafeSport requirements.

Definition

Hazing is any act committed against a participant, or any situation in which a participant is coerced into committing an act, that creates a substantial risk of physical or emotional harm, in

order for the participant to be initiated into, affiliated with, or maintain membership in any team, group, or organization within STMAYHA. Hazing includes, but is not limited to:

- Physical acts: hitting, branding, paddling, excessive exercise, sleep deprivation, exposure to elements, or forced consumption of any substance.
- Emotional acts: humiliation, degradation, intimidation, forced isolation, personal servitude, or requiring demeaning behavior.
- Actions that violate law: theft, vandalism, assault, or any illegal act performed under group pressure.

The implied or express consent of a participant does not excuse or justify hazing. The fact that an activity is described as “tradition” or “team bonding” does not exempt it from this policy.

Reporting and Consequences

Any participant, parent, coach, or volunteer who witnesses or becomes aware of hazing shall report it immediately to the STMAYHA SafeSport Coordinator or any Executive Board member. Violations shall result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate removal from the team and the association, and may be reported to law enforcement.

Bullying and Cyberbullying Policy

STMAYHA is committed to providing a safe, supportive environment free from bullying for all participants.

Definition

Bullying is repeated aggressive behavior, whether physical, verbal, or electronic, that involves a real or perceived power imbalance and is intended to cause harm, distress, or intimidation. Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place through electronic means, including but not limited to text messages, social media, group chats, online forums, and email.

Prohibited Behavior

The following behaviors are prohibited when directed at any STMAYHA participant:

- Repeated verbal taunting, name-calling, or insults directed at a player, parent, coach, or official.
- Deliberate exclusion, spreading rumors, or manipulating social relationships to cause harm.
- Posting, sharing, or distributing harmful, embarrassing, or threatening content about a participant online or through electronic communication.
- Creating fake accounts or group chats intended to ridicule, intimidate, or exclude a participant.

- Taking or sharing photographs or video of a participant without consent in a manner intended to embarrass or harass.

Reporting and Response

Bullying or cyberbullying should be reported to the head coach, Age-Level Coordinator, or SafeSport Coordinator. Reports will be investigated and may result in consequences ranging from a formal warning through suspension or removal, depending on severity. Repeated bullying by a player may result in team removal. Bullying by a parent or spectator may result in suspension of spectator privileges and, if warranted, player ineligibility.

Mandatory Reporting

Consistent with the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act (federal law), all adults who are authorized by STMAYHA to interact with or have authority over minor participants are considered mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse or misconduct.

Who Must Report

All coaches (head and assistant), board members, HOC members, team managers, locker room monitors, volunteers, evaluators, and any other adult acting in an official capacity for STMAYHA.

What Must Be Reported

Any reasonable suspicion of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, hazing, bullying, or any other misconduct involving a minor participant. A mandatory reporter does not need to have proof. A reasonable suspicion based on observable signs, disclosures by the child, or credible third-party information is sufficient.

How to Report

- Immediate safety risk: Call 911.
- Suspected abuse: Report to local law enforcement and/or the Minnesota Department of Human Services child protection intake line at (651) 431-4661.
- SafeSport misconduct: Report to the STMAYHA SafeSport Coordinator, USA Hockey SafeSport (safesport@usahockey.org, 719-538-1145), or the U.S. Center for SafeSport (safesport.org).

Failure to report suspected abuse or misconduct is a violation of federal law and STMAYHA policy. Any mandatory reporter who fails to report shall be subject to immediate removal from their position.

Concussion Protocol and Return to Play

Pursuant to Minnesota Statute 121A.37, STMAYHA maintains the following concussion protocol for all youth athletic activities.

Education

- STMAYHA shall make concussion risk information accessible to all coaches, officials, players, and parents/guardians at the start of each season. This information shall be consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines and shall address the nature and risks of concussions, signs and symptoms, the need for proper medical evaluation, and return-to-play protocols.
- All coaches and officials must complete the CDC “Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports” online training before their first on-ice activity and must renew the training at least once every two calendar years.

Recognition and Removal

- Any coach, official, or trained volunteer who observes a player exhibiting signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion, or who suspects a player has sustained a concussion, shall immediately remove the player from participation. There are no exceptions.
- Signs and symptoms include but are not limited to: headache, dizziness, confusion, balance problems, nausea, sensitivity to light or noise, difficulty concentrating, memory problems, irritability, or loss of consciousness.
- The removed player shall not return to the ice, bench, or any physical activity for the remainder of that practice or game.
- The coach or team manager shall notify the player’s parent or guardian immediately. If the parent or guardian is not present, reasonable efforts shall be made to contact them by phone.

Return to Play

A player who has been removed due to a suspected concussion may not return to any STMAYHA activity (practice, game, dryland, or any physical exertion) until ALL of the following conditions are met:

- The player is completely symptom-free at rest and during exertion.
- The player has been evaluated by a licensed healthcare provider trained in concussion management (physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or certified athletic trainer).
- The healthcare provider has provided written clearance specifically authorizing return to contact sports.

- The written clearance has been submitted to the team manager, who shall provide a copy to the STMAYHA Registration Director.

No coach, parent, or board member may override a medical professional's recommendation. When in doubt, sit them out.

Documentation

All suspected concussions shall be documented using a STMAYHA Concussion Incident Report form and filed with the Registration Director. Documentation shall include the date, time, circumstances of injury, symptoms observed, and actions taken. Records shall be maintained for a minimum of two years.

Emergency Action Plan

STMAYHA maintains an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for the STMA Ice Arena and requires all coaches and team managers to be familiar with it.

Emergency Equipment

The STMA Ice Arena is responsible for maintaining AEDs, first aid kits, and posted emergency information at the STMA Ice Arena. Current equipment locations, the 911 dispatch address, and facility emergency maps are posted at the arena.

Emergency Response Procedure

- **Assess the situation.** The head coach or nearest qualified adult shall assess the injured player and determine severity. Do not move a player with a suspected head, neck, or spinal injury.
- **Call for help.** Designate one specific person to call 911 (if warranted) and one person to retrieve the AED and first aid kit.
- **Administer first aid.** Provide appropriate care within your training level. Do not exceed your training.
- **Stay with the player.** A coach or team manager shall remain with the injured player at all times until a parent/guardian arrives or EMS takes over.
- **Clear the area.** An assistant coach or team manager shall move all other players to a locker room or safe area away from the scene.
- **Notify the parent/guardian.** If not already present, the team manager shall contact the player's emergency contact immediately.

- **Document the incident.** Complete a STMAYHA Incident Report within 24 hours. Submit to the Registration Director and the Vice President of Operations. All incident report forms are maintained on the STMAYHA website under Documents.

Attendance Policy

Please see the current STMAYHA Attendance Policy, approved and posted separately on stmayha.org.

Accountability and Progressive Discipline

STMAYHA uses a progressive discipline system to address violations of the Codes of Conduct by players, parents, coaches, and spectators. The goal of progressive discipline is to correct behavior, protect the integrity of the program, and ensure a safe and positive environment for all participants. All discipline decisions shall be documented and maintained by the Executive Board.

A coach may reduce a player's ice time or bench a player for the remainder of a game or practice for behavioral or safety reasons (Level 1-2). Any action beyond a single-game bench must follow the Progressive Discipline framework and be reported to the Age-Level Coordinator.

Player Progressive Discipline

Level	Offense Type	Consequence
Level 1	Minor conduct issues (disrespectful language, minor unsportsmanlike behavior, first-time attendance issues)	Verbal warning from head coach. Documented in writing and communicated to parent/guardian. Player and parent acknowledge the warning.
Level 2	Repeated Level 1 offense, or moderate misconduct (taunting opponents, deliberate minor rule violations, disrespect to officials or coaches)	Written warning from head coach and Age-Level Coordinator. Player may lose ice time for 1-2 games at coach's discretion. Parent meeting required.
Level 3	Repeated Level 2 offense, or serious misconduct (fighting, targeting, equipment abuse, bullying, verbal abuse of officials)	Suspension of 1-3 games. Written notice from the Executive Hockey Director. Player and parent must meet with the Executive Hockey Director before reinstatement.
Level 4	Repeated Level 3 offense, or severe misconduct (assault, hazing, threats, hate speech, illegal activity)	Suspension for remainder of season or permanent ban from STMAYHA. Executive Board hearing required. Reported to District 5 and Minnesota Hockey.

Parent and Spectator Progressive Discipline

Level	Offense Type	Consequence
Level 1	Inappropriate yelling, criticizing officials or coaches from stands, violating 48-hour rule (first offense)	Verbal warning from Age-Level Coordinator. Documented.
Level 2	Repeated Level 1 offense, confronting coaches/officials, disruptive behavior at games or practices	Written warning. Parent must acknowledge in writing. Second 48-hour rule violation results in 2-game spectator ban.
Level 3	Ejection from arena by officials or arena staff, threatening behavior, severe verbal abuse of any participant	Spectator ban of 3-5 games. Executive Board review. Player remains eligible to play but parent may not attend.
Level 4	Physical altercation, repeated Level 3 offenses, threats of violence, conduct that endangers participants	Season-long or permanent spectator ban. Reported to law enforcement if warranted, District 5, and Minnesota Hockey.

Game Ejection Protocol

- Any player or coach ejected from a game by an official shall serve the minimum suspension required by USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey, and District 5 rules before returning to play.
- Any spectator ejected from the arena shall leave the premises immediately. Refusal to leave may result in law enforcement being contacted and escalation to Level 4 discipline.
- The head coach shall report all ejections (player, coach, or spectator) to the Age-Level Coordinator within 24 hours. The Age-Level Coordinator shall report to the Executive Hockey Director, the STMAYHA District 5 Representative, and the Executive Board.

Reinstatement

Any player, parent, or coach who has been suspended at Level 3 or above must complete a reinstatement meeting with the Executive Hockey Director and the Executive Board before returning to participation. The meeting shall address the root cause of the behavior, expectations going forward, and any conditions of reinstatement. All reinstatement decisions are at the sole discretion of the Executive Board.

Documentation and Cumulative Record

All disciplinary actions shall be documented using a STMAYHA Discipline Report form and maintained by the Executive Board. Violations are cumulative across seasons. Prior history may be considered in determining consequences for subsequent violations.

Dryland Policy

For safety reasons, players are not permitted in the dryland room unless a coach is present. The access code for the door is provided exclusively to coaches and designated volunteers. Violations are handled progressively: first offense results in a written warning to the head coach; second offense results in loss of dryland access for two weeks; third offense results in loss of dryland access for the remainder of the season.

Equipment & Maintenance

All STMAYHA equipment must be treated with respect. Players/parents are responsible for replacing or repairing any lost or damaged items. If equipment is not repaired, the player/parent will be charged for the cost of repair. STMAYHA provides goalie equipment for use during the season at the Mite/8U level. This gear must be treated with care and not damaged. Coaches are responsible for any lost or stolen equipment.

Fundraising Policy

Individuals or teams must obtain prior approval from the STMAYHA Board of Directors before engaging in independent fundraising activities.

Grievance Policy

It is the belief of STMAYHA that most differences are minor and the best way to work out a difference of opinion is for the parties involved to meet with one another. This is true whether the discussion is between parents, a coach and player, a coach and team manager, or a coach and parent. Every effort should be made to resolve differences in this manner.

If a dispute cannot be resolved with someone acting on behalf of the STMAYHA, the following steps must be adhered to:

- Notify the appropriate Age-Level Coordinator, the Executive Hockey Director, and Executive Board members of the grievance. The Age-Level Coordinator will attempt to resolve the grievance by communicating with and obtaining documents from all parties involved. If unresolved after 7 days, or sooner at the discretion of the Age-Level Coordinator, the grievance will be moved to the Executive Hockey Director and then, if necessary, the Executive Board. The written grievance must include: (a) description of the incident including date and time if available; (b) list of all parties involved and any witnesses; (c) cite the section of STMAYHA / USA Hockey and/or Minnesota Hockey Handbook(s) that is the basis of the grievance.

- The Age-Level Coordinator will submit the written grievance and all documentation to the Executive Hockey Director. The Executive Hockey Director shall review and attempt resolution within 7 days. If unresolved, the matter escalates to the Executive Board.
- The Executive Board may use all means at their disposal to resolve the grievance, including reviewing documentation, meeting with all parties separately and together, and holding a meeting within 10 days of receiving the grievance to recommend a resolution and vote on it. All parties will be notified in writing within 10 days of the Executive Board decision.
- If in the opinion of the Executive Board the grieving or grieved party has not followed the above procedures, the Executive Board reserves the right to suspend either party for the remainder of the season.
- If this matter moves to District 5, the STMAYHA Executive Board will forward copies of all documentation to the appropriate District 5 Representative.

Tryout Grievances. Grievances related to tryout results, team placement, or evaluation scores shall follow the Post-Tryout Inquiry Process (see Tryouts & Evaluations section) and are NOT subject to the general grievance process above. Tryout results are final and roster moves shall not be made as a result of any inquiry or grievance.

Locker Room Policy / Supervision

Each team is required to have a qualified Locker Room Monitor (LRM) present at all times whenever a player/players are in a locker room. A player should never enter a locker room without adult supervision. If the players are dressing, this person must be a “qualified adult” (any adult of the same gender as the players who has passed the USA Hockey approved Background check and is SafeSport certified). If the players are not changing, any qualified adult can supervise the players. For this reason, it is permissible for opposite gender coaches to be in the locker room only for game discussions before or after all players are finished dressing.

Reminder: A coach cannot be in the locker room with only one player, unless that player is his or her child. If a coach wants to have a “private” conversation with a player, an LRM or another adult must be present.

Cell Phone and Recording Device Ban

Cell phones and all devices with recording capabilities (cameras, smart watches, tablets) are prohibited from use in locker rooms at all times during STMAYHA events. Devices must be stored in bags or turned off and kept face-down. There are no exceptions for texting, checking scores, or music. The only circumstance under which photographs or recordings may be taken in a locker room is a team celebration or group photo where all persons present are fully and appropriately dressed and have been informed that a photo or recording is being taken. Violations shall be addressed under the Progressive Discipline framework. First offense: verbal

warning and documentation. Repeated offense: device confiscated for the remainder of the event and escalated to the Age-Level Coordinator.

Privacy Policy

By registering your family as a member of STMAYHA, you authorize STMAYHA to use your child's name and/or picture in articles and social media posts representing our association. You are agreeing to waive any claims against the STMAYHA, any board member, or any member of the STMAYHA. We will keep all email information confidential. STMAYHA will never rent or sell your email address to anyone. In addition, the STMA Ice Arena has installed LiveBarn. Please visit www.livebarn.com for their terms and privacy policy.

Publicity and Marketing Policy

All public announcements, mass email, mass mailings, brochures, media communications, and other communications meant for public or media consumption made on behalf of STMAYHA must be approved by the Vice President of Communications or his/her designee before being sent, printed, or disseminated. No personal information or other data regarding a member or player in STMAYHA may be sold, given, traded, shared, or otherwise transferred to any other person, business, organization, or other entity without the approval of the STMAYHA Board.

Sanctions and Discipline

The Executive Board shall hold a hearing to determine, in its sole discretion, whether disciplinary action is necessary for violations of the Code of Conduct by a player or parent. If the Executive Board, in consultation with the Executive Hockey Director and Age-Level Coordinator, determines that disciplinary action is needed, the Executive Board shall follow the Progressive Discipline framework (see Accountability and Progressive Discipline section above) and determine the extent of the punishment, which may include but is not limited to, a warning, suspension, or ban from STMAYHA. All sanctions shall be documented and maintained by the Executive Board.

Coach-to-Player Electronic Communication

All direct electronic communication from a coach, team manager, or other adult volunteer to a minor player, including email, text message, direct message, and social media, must copy a parent or guardian. No exceptions. Group messages to the full team or roster are permitted without individual parent copies, provided parents have access to the same communication channel. This requirement is consistent with USA Hockey SafeSport best practices.

Social Media Policy

- Post only Appropriate and Respectful Content. Common sense is the best guide if you decide to post information that relates to the game or to the association. Express only your personal opinions; keep those opinions appropriate and respectful.
- Social Media Sites. Coaches are prohibited from having players joined to their personal social media page. An official organization or team page may be set up and players and parents may join. All posts, messages, text, or media of any kind between coach and player must be non-personal in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities.
- Reporting Misconduct. Infractions should be reported to STMAYHA's SafeSport Coordinator. Violations are subject to appropriate disciplinary action including but not limited to suspension, expulsion, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities.

Vandalism Policy

Players found to have been responsible for any property damage or vandalism at the STMA Ice Arena or at any team activity under the auspices of the Association will be subject to suspension and/or reimbursement for damages.

Volunteer Policy

Please see the current STMAYHA Volunteer Policy, approved and posted separately on stmayha.org.

Multi-Team and Outside League Participation

STMAYHA players are welcome to participate in outside clinics, camps, skills sessions, and 3-on-3 leagues during the season. These activities support player development and are encouraged.

However, no STMAYHA player may roster on another Minnesota Hockey-affiliated team during the same season without a written waiver from the Executive Hockey Director. Dual rostering without a waiver is a violation of Minnesota Hockey rules and may result in loss of eligibility. Players considering an outside roster that participates in another USA Hockey-sanctioned event during the STMAYHA season (e.g., a spring team, Tier 1 tryout, or showcase league) must contact the Executive Hockey Director before registering with the outside organization.

Zero Tolerance Drug Policy

Continued participation in team activities under the auspices of STMAYHA is contingent upon the strict avoidance of mood-altering chemicals. Any player who is found to have consumed/used, possessed, sold, or furnished alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, vape, or controlled substances shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including permanent suspension from all player activities under the auspices of the Association.

Family Emergency Hardship & Support Policy

STMAYHA is committed to supporting our hockey community during times of need. In alignment with this commitment, the following policy outlines how the association will assist STMAYHA families facing hardship:

- **GoFundMe and Similar Fundraisers:** STMAYHA will share GoFundMe or similar online personal fundraising efforts on the association's official social media channels under the following conditions: (1) the fundraiser must directly benefit a current STMAYHA family or a family that has had players in the association within the past five (5) years; (2) the Vice President of Communications must review and approve the fundraiser link and message prior to posting; (3) fundraisers will be shared one time, with additional posts considered on a case-by-case basis.
- **Additional Fundraising Support (Meat Raffles, Horse Races, etc.):** Upon request from the family, STMAYHA will coordinate a fundraising event such as a meat raffle, horse racing night, or similar gambling-approved activity. These events will be coordinated by the association's Gambling Manager in accordance with lawful gambling guidelines, planned in partnership with the requesting family to ensure appropriate timing and promotion, and subject to venue availability, gambling schedule, and state regulations.
- **General Guidelines:** All fundraising activities must align with STMAYHA's values and mission. The association reserves the right to decline any fundraising request that may conflict with legal, ethical, or reputational standards. This policy is intended to provide compassion and support to our hockey families while maintaining transparency and consistency in our fundraising efforts.

Travel and Transportation Policy

Parent/Guardian Responsibility

Supervision of players is the parents' responsibility. For Bantam/15U and under, coaches are supervisors only at the rink. Parents and legal guardians are responsible for transporting their own children to and from all STMAYHA practices, games, and events. STMAYHA does not provide transportation.

Coach and Volunteer Transportation

Coaches, volunteers, and other adults acting in an official capacity for STMAYHA shall not transport a player alone in a vehicle unless the adult is the player's parent or legal guardian. If a coach or volunteer must transport players, a minimum of two players must be in the vehicle at all times, or a second adult must be present. This requirement is consistent with USA Hockey SafeSport guidelines.

Overnight Travel

For tournaments, showcases, or other events requiring overnight travel, the following requirements apply:

- **Rooming:** Players shall be assigned to rooms with other players of similar age. No adult shall share a room or bed with a player unless the adult is the player's parent or legal guardian. Coaches shall have separate rooms.
- **Supervision:** A team manager or designated parent chaperone shall be responsible for room checks at a curfew established by the head coach.
- **Adult-to-Player Ratio:** A minimum of two (2) adults shall be present for any overnight trip. For teams with 15+ players, a minimum of three (3) adults is recommended.
- **One-on-One Interactions:** Coaches shall not be alone with a single player in a hotel room, vehicle, or any private setting. All one-on-one conversations shall take place in open, observable areas.

Communication: The team manager shall provide all families with the hotel name, address, emergency contact numbers, and curfew time before departure.

Inclement Weather and Travel Safety

The head coach shall consult with the Age-Level Coordinator or a member of the HOC before canceling or postponing travel to away games or tournaments due to severe weather or unsafe road conditions. For District 5 league games, the District 5 cancellation protocol shall be followed. Player safety takes priority over game commitments. STMAYHA will not penalize any family for a weather-related absence.

Insurance

USA Hockey registration includes secondary accident insurance coverage for all registered players, coaches, and volunteers. This coverage is secondary to the family's primary health insurance. Details regarding coverage limits, claim procedures, and exclusions are available on the USA Hockey website (usahockey.com) under the Insurance section. Families are responsible for maintaining their own primary health insurance. STMAYHA does not provide primary insurance coverage.

Player Medical and Health Information

Registration Requirements

At the time of registration, each family shall provide the following for every player:

- At least two (2) emergency contact names and phone numbers.
- Disclosure of any known medical conditions, allergies (including medication allergies), or physical limitations that may affect participation or require special attention from coaches or medical personnel. Health insurance information.
- Authorization for emergency medical treatment in the event a parent or guardian cannot be reached.

Access and Confidentiality

Emergency contact and medical information shall be maintained by the team manager and made available to the head coach. Medical information is confidential and shall not be shared beyond the head coach and team manager except as necessary in an emergency situation. Information shall be stored securely and destroyed at the end of each season.

Physician Clearance

STMAYHA may require physician clearance before a player returns to activity following a significant injury, surgery, or concussion (see Concussion Protocol). The team manager shall maintain clearance documentation on file.

Conflict of Interest Policy

Purpose

STMAYHA is committed to operating with integrity, transparency, and accountability. This policy establishes rules to prevent conflicts of interest from influencing decisions related to tryouts, team formation, coaching selection, and governance.

Definitions

A “conflict of interest” exists when a Board member, HOC member, coach, evaluator, or volunteer has a personal, familial, or financial relationship that could reasonably appear to influence - or actually influence - their judgement in STMAYHA matters.

Disclosure Requirements

- All Board members, HOC members, coaches, and evaluators shall complete a Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form at the start of each season, identifying: (a) children or relatives participating in STMAYHA programs; (b) financial relationships with private coaching,

training, or hockey-related businesses; (c) any other relationship that could create a real or perceived conflict.

- Disclosures shall be submitted to the Executive Hockey Director and the Board President using the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form maintained on the STMAYHA website under Documents. The Executive Hockey Director and Board President shall jointly determine whether any disclosed relationship requires recusal or additional safeguards.
- New conflicts that arise during the season must be disclosed within 72 hours.

Recusal Requirements

- **Executive Hockey Director.** If the Executive Hockey Director has a child, niece, nephew, or sibling participating in STMAYHA, they shall recuse themselves from all evaluation, scoring, and team formation activities for that player's age group. They shall not communicate with evaluators regarding that age group during sessions or participate in score tabulation or team formation decisions. A designated alternate appointed by the Executive Hockey Director shall oversee those activities. The Executive Hockey Director may be present in the facility for operational purposes (e.g., facility management, medical emergencies) but shall not enter the rink area or observation areas during sessions for that age group. The Executive Hockey Director is eligible to be selected as a coach through the same application and selection process as any other candidate. During the tryout and selection process, the EHD shall remain fully recused from all decisions for their child's age group. Once tryouts are complete and coaching assignments are finalized, an EHD who has been selected as a coach shall operate in the role of coach for that team and is subject to the same coaching standards, conduct expectations, and oversight as any other head or assistant coach.
- **Board Members.** Any Board member with a child, niece, nephew, or sibling participating in a specific age group shall recuse themselves from all votes related to team formation, coach selection, and tryout grievances for that age group. Board positions do not come with hockey-side privileges of any kind. A Board member is eligible to be selected as a coach through the same application and selection process as any other candidate. During tryouts, they shall remain fully recused from all Board decisions for their child's age group. Once tryouts are complete and coaching assignments are finalized, a Board member who has been selected as a coach shall operate in the role of coach and is subject to the same standards as any other coach.
- **HOC Members.** Any HOC member with a child, niece, nephew, or sibling participating in a specific age group shall not serve as an evaluator, score tabulator, or team formation decision-maker for that age group. An HOC member is eligible to be selected as a coach through the same application and selection process as any other candidate. During tryouts, they shall remain fully recused from all HOC decisions for their child's age group. Once tryouts are complete and coaching assignments are finalized, an HOC member who has

been selected as a coach shall operate in the role of coach and is subject to the same standards as any other coach.

- **Evaluators.** Any evaluator with a familial relationship to a player shall disclose the relationship to the Designated Tryout Lead. The Designated Tryout Lead shall determine whether the evaluator may grade that age group. If permitted, the evaluator's scores for related players shall be flagged for additional review.
- **Coaches.** A parent serving as head coach shall not advocate for their own child's playing time, line placement, or roster position beyond what is established by the team formation rules. Parent coaches shall not serve as evaluators or participate in score tabulation for their child's age group.

Earn Not Given

No leadership position, board seat, coaching role, or volunteer function in STMAYHA carries any privilege, advantage, or preferential treatment for any person's child. Every player earns their roster spot, their playing time, and their jersey number through the same published processes available to every family. This is the cultural standard. If you hold a position of authority in STMAYHA, you are held to a higher standard of recusal and transparency, not a lower one.

Tryout-Specific Anti-Corruption Rules

- During the tryout process, there shall be no unnecessary contact or communication between players, parents, evaluators, commissioners, and coaches. A person found in violation of this policy will be removed from tryouts; the Board will determine appropriate action.
- Any Board member, HOC member, commissioner, or volunteer who has a child participating in an age group shall NOT be in or near the rink where a session for their child's age group is being held. This includes access to any area where scores are being tabulated or teams are being selected.
- A Board member found in violation of the rule above shall be immediately suspended pending a hearing by the Executive Board within seven (7) days. If the violation is confirmed, removal from the Board shall be the presumptive outcome. Commissioners and volunteers found in violation shall be subject to an immediate hearing. Their athlete shall be removed from tryouts and the remaining Board members will determine proper team placement based on available information.
- Tryouts are closed to the public. Only the following persons are permitted in the rink during tryout sessions: (a) approved evaluators; (b) confirmed coaches for age groups where they do NOT have a child participating; (c) Designated Tryout Lead and designated tryout staff; (d) Executive Hockey Director for age groups where they do NOT have a child participating.

- Any necessary communication (such as illness, injury, or equipment problems) shall be routed through the Designated Tryout Lead only.

Voting Restrictions

Any person with a disclosed conflict shall abstain from voting on the matter in which the conflict exists. Abstentions shall be recorded in the meeting minutes.

Confidentiality

All tryout scores, team formation discussions, coach selection deliberations, and grievance proceedings are confidential. Disclosure of confidential information to unauthorized persons shall be grounds for removal from the Board, HOC, or volunteer position.

Duties & Responsibilities

Duties and Responsibilities of Coaches

USA Hockey Requirements

STMAYHA will reimburse: USA Hockey Registration fee, USA Hockey Online age-specific module fee, and USA Hockey Coaches Certification Clinic fee.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Register as a member of USA Hockey.
- Complete a background screening.
- Complete SafeSport Training every year; coaches cannot be added to the roster until completed.
- Complete the online age-specific module(s) for the age level of play you are coaching. Must complete PRIOR to participating in any team activities.
- Find, register, and attend the required level certification clinic (Coaching Education Program Certification Clinic Requirements).
- Coach on focus areas depending on level: fun by play, hard skills (skating, stickhandling, shooting, passing and receiving), body contact/checking, game skills and team concepts, goaltending, soft skills, understanding the game.
- Follow age-appropriate practice plans and development benchmarks provided by the Executive Hockey Director.
- Provide safe playing/practice situations.
- Lead by example and treat everyone with respect.
- Be knowledgeable about the rules of the game and teach them to players.
- Organize practices with purpose, pacing, and layered progression.
- Attend all coaches meetings, scheduled games, scrimmages, and practices.
- Submit written year-end development summaries for each player.

Team Managers

- Gather team contacts at the beginning of season and ensure information is up to date with Crossbar.
- Plan manager/coach meeting to establish roles, responsibilities, and expectations for the season.
- Plan parent/coach meetings to discuss team expectations.
- Enforce Code of Conduct for players and parents.
- Verify parent completion of SafeSport and Background screenings.
- Schedule parent volunteers for locker room monitors, scorebook, time clock, and penalty box.
- Plan a meet and greet party at the beginning of the season.
- Organize apparel and jerseys for the team.
- Provide rosters at each game, scrimmage, and tournament if requested.
- Communicate team photo information.
- Provide recognition of last year's players.
- Manage team calendar on Crossbar.
- Maintain GameSheet roster information.
- Report games on Youth Hockey Hub.
- Communicate tournament information to families and check in at tournaments.
- Collect and manage slush funds for team activities.
- Manage team finances.
- Manage USA Hockey Awards / Minnesota Hockey Recognition.
- Plan an end of season party.

Bench & Ice Restrictions

Access to the player's bench and ice during games and practices, in accordance with Minnesota Hockey rules, is limited to individuals registered as head coaches and assistant coaches who meet the following coaching requirements:

- SafeSport training

- Background screening
- Coaching Education Program (CEP) certification – age-specific modules
- Coaching ethics form
- Concussion training declaration

Players: Rules, Regulations & Tryouts

Playing Divisions & Mite/8U Program

Please see the current STMAYHA Playing Divisions & Mite/8U Program, approved and posted separately on stmayha.org.

Travel Program

Competition levels will be determined annually based on the perceived ability level of the team. The Executive Hockey Director will determine this competition level. Competitive levels are as follows:

- AA - Top level (Bantam and Peewee only)
- A - Top level at most playing divisions
- B1 - Competitive with developing skills
- B2 - Skill development level
- C - Skill development level

Playing Time Standards

Please see the current STMAYHA Playing Time Standards, approved and posted separately on stmayha.org.

Tournament Policy

Please see the current STMAYHA Tournament Policy, approved and posted separately on stmayha.org.

Roster Size Policy

Please see the current STMAYHA Roster Size Policy, approved and posted separately on stmayha.org.

Jersey Number Assignment Policy

Please see the current STMAYHA Jersey Number Assignment Policy, approved and posted separately on stmayha.org.

Coaches Selection Policy

Please see the current STMAYHA Coaches Selection Policy, approved and posted separately on stmayha.org.

Tryout & Evaluation Policy

Please see the current STMAYHA Tryout & Evaluation Policy, approved and posted separately on stmayha.org.

Ice Times Policy

Please see the current STMAYHA Ice Times Policy, approved and posted separately on stmayha.org.

Additional Policies

Whistleblower Policy

STMAYHA encourages any person who has a good-faith concern about unethical conduct, policy violations, financial irregularities, or safety issues to report the concern without fear of retaliation.

Reporting

Reports may be submitted in writing to any member of the Executive Board or to a designated confidential email address on the STMAYHA website. Reports may be submitted anonymously.

Protection

No person who in good faith reports a concern shall be subject to retaliation, harassment, or adverse action by any STMAYHA member, Board member, coach, or volunteer. Any person who retaliates against a whistleblower shall be subject to disciplinary action, including removal from their position.

Investigation

The Executive Board shall investigate all reports within 30 days and document findings. If the report involves a member of the Executive Board, the remaining members shall conduct the investigation or engage a neutral third party.

Data Privacy Policy

Collection & Use

Personal information shall be collected only for legitimate STMAYHA purposes (registration, communication, safety, compliance). Information shall not be sold, shared, or disclosed to third parties without Board approval and member notification.

Access

Access to player evaluation scores, tryout data, and team formation records shall be limited to the Designated Tryout Lead, Executive Hockey Director, and designated administrators. Coaches shall receive only the information necessary for their team.

Retention

Tryout scores and evaluation data shall be retained for two years for nonprofit audit purposes, then destroyed. Registration records shall be retained per USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey requirements.

LiveBarn

The STMA Ice Arena has installed LiveBarn. Please visit www.livebarn.com for their terms and privacy policy.

Cash Handling Policy

- No single individual shall be solely responsible for counting, recording, and depositing cash. A minimum of two (2) persons shall be present for all cash handling.
- All cash received shall be counted, recorded on a deposit form, and deposited within 48 hours. The Vice President of Operations shall reconcile all cash transactions monthly.
- Any discrepancy exceeding \$50 shall be reported to the Executive Board within 7 days. Volunteers responsible for cash handling during gambling or fundraising events who experience a cash shortage shall replenish the shortage at the end of their shift, per existing Volunteer Policy.

Charitable Gambling Compliance

STMAYHA conducts charitable gambling activities (including pull-tabs, bingo, meat raffles, and other permitted forms) as a licensed nonprofit under the Minnesota Gambling Control Board (GCB). All gambling operations must comply with Minnesota charitable gambling law and GCB regulations.

Oversight

- The Board shall designate a Gambling Manager who holds a valid GCB gambling manager license. The Gambling Manager is responsible for the lawful conduct of all gambling activities.
- The Vice President of Operations, in coordination with the Gambling Manager, shall ensure all monthly reports are filed with the GCB by the required deadlines.
- The Board shall maintain a current organization gambling license with the GCB and renew it annually.

Volunteer Requirements

- All gambling volunteers must be at least 18 years of age.

- Volunteers may not consume alcohol during gambling shifts (see Volunteer Policy).
- Volunteers may not participate in any lawful gambling activity while scheduled to work or while performing gambling-related duties. Volunteers involved in the conduct of paddlewheel without a table or tipboards with 32 tickets or less may purchase pull-tabs on days they are not volunteering (Minnesota Statute 349.181, subd. 3).
- Volunteers shall follow all cash-handling procedures as outlined in the Cash Handling Policy.

Use of Gambling Proceeds

Net gambling proceeds shall be used exclusively for lawful purposes as defined by Minnesota statute, including but not limited to player development, ice time, equipment, and association operations. The Vice President of Operations shall report gambling revenue and expenditures to the Board monthly.

Compliance and Recordkeeping

All gambling records, including daily sales reports, cash counts, and bank deposit records, shall be maintained for a minimum of 3.5 years as required by the GCB. The Board shall cooperate fully with any GCB audit or investigation.

Exhibit A - Board of Directors

The following elected positions serve on the STMAYHA Board of Directors:

Position	Term	Election
President	2-year	April, even years
Vice President of Operations	2-year	April, odd years
Vice President of Communications	2-year	April, odd years
Vice President of Finance	2-year	April, even years
Travel Director - Youth	2-year	April, odd years
Travel Director - Girls	2-year	April, even years
Mite/8U Director	2-year	April, even years
Registration Director	2-year	April, odd years
HOC Administrator	2-year	April, odd years
District 5 Representative	2-year	April, even years

Exhibit B - Supporting Coordinators

Supporting Coordinators are volunteer positions that assist the Board of Directors and the Executive Hockey Director in the operation of the Association. Supporting Coordinators are not elected Board members and do not hold voting rights at Board meetings. The Board may add, modify, or remove Supporting Coordinator roles as needed. Current role holders and contact information are maintained on the STMAYHA website.

Exhibit C - Committees

The Board may establish standing and ad hoc committees as necessary to support Association operations. Current standing committees include the Finance Committee, the Gambling Committee, and the Hockey Operations Committee (HOC). Committee membership, scope, and duration shall be determined by the Board (for business-side committees) or the Executive Hockey Director (for hockey-side committees). Committees may be added, modified, or dissolved at any time without amending this Handbook.