

Glacier Hockey Association Handbook



Policy Manual

2025/2026 Season

GHA Policy Manual

GLACIER AVALANCHE YOUTH HOCKEY ASSOCIATION (GHA) is a federally recognized 501c3 non-profit, youth hockey organization dedicated to providing a fun, safe, and rewarding learning environment to enhance the growth and development of young athletes through high-quality hockey programs. GHA strives to ensure that it accomplishes this mission by promoting each player's love of the sport through hockey instruction that emphasizes team and individual skill development. Our goal is to continue to develop and strengthen our programs and organization and give our players the opportunity to participate to the best of their ability and develop as young athletes, while making the costs of the programs affordable to all families.

Location & Affiliation: GHA conducts its hockey programs at the Stumptown Ice Den Arena in Whitefish, Montana and utilizes additional ice opportunities at Woodland Ice Center in Kalispell, MT. All youth hockey players and teams are registered with GHA and USA Hockey. GHA members benefit from affiliation agreements with the Montana Amateur Hockey Association (MAHA), East Kootenay League (EKL), and USA Hockey. GHA follows USA Hockey's policies (see Bylaws section of the USA Hockey Annual Guide), including the AmericanDevelopment Model (ADM), which provides hockey associations with a proven plan for age-appropriate athlete development.

GHA develops, promotes and administers its youth hockey programs for players residing in the greater Flathead Valley area on behalf of teams, players, coaches, referees, parents and administrators consistent with the bylaws, policies, and procedures of MAHA and USA Hockey. This document serves as the Policy Manual for GHA to carry out its mission.



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MISSION STATEMENT:

Glacier Hockey Association is a non-profit community youth hockey organization that provides instructional hockey experience for youth ages 4-18 in a safe and supportive environment. Glacier Hockey Association strives to promote an enriching environment in a community setting while providing foundational skills, in accordance with USA Hockey's American Development Model (ADM) program to foster youth development and encouraging a lifelong love of hockey and team sports. GHA endeavors to impart the hockey values of character, hard work, teamwork, sportsmanship and respect that lead to play success both on and off the ice.

VISION:

We desire to grow the sport of hockey in the Flathead Valley by being the premier developmental hockey program in Montana. This goal is grounded in providing the best possible experience for our athletes. We strive to provide a challenging, fun and rewarding experience on and off the ice. We aspire to provide the entire hockey family (athletes, coaches, managers, families and stakeholders of GHA) a first class experience. To this end, we are committed to excellence across our in-season programs, out of season development programs, coaching development, character development, facilities and fundraising.

CORE VALUES:

We have a set of core values that align directly with our Mission. These are driving principles that direct our organization. They combined with our Mission Statement, are our True North and will carry us to our vision. Our #1 priority is to create an incredible experience for our athletes.

CORE VALUES:

- Our #1 priority is to create an incredible experience for our athletes.
 - We want to ignite, stoke and fan a love for the sport of hockey. This ultimately creates a life long appreciation of the sport
 - Our decisions are motivated by what is in the best interest of our athletes and their families.
- We believe hockey can deliver skills for off the ice:
 - As is the case with all sports, hockey can deliver skills that will serve our athletes for the rest of their life. We acknowledge so many of those skills/lessons come organically through the course of a hockey season. But we intentionally impart these principles to our athletes and teams:
 - Team Comes First
 - Attitude
 - Effort
 - Play with Discipline
- We are a Development Organization
 - We provide the best opportunities in-season and out of season for our athletes and coaches to develop. This includes practices, dryland, camps and other opportunities to help our athletes reach their full potential.

- While we desire success on the ice, the priority is our athletes and teams reaching their potential. This might mean sacrificing on ice success early on in development.
- We are an organization for all
 - Our programming is for all who want to develop as hockey players, regardless of ability, gender and financial resources.
- Whether an athlete is just starting their hockey journey (Learn to Play/House League) or desiring to excel at the highest levels of the sport (Travel & Select Teams), we have a place and programming for them on their hockey journey.
- We do not discriminate based upon gender. We have both coed programming and girls-only programming.
- We believe that all who desire to play the sport should have the opportunity to play regardless of financial resources. We have resources and scholarships to help those families that need assistance to participate in the organization.

GHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS & MEETINGS: All authorities of GHA are vested in a Board of Directors as specified in GHA's bylaws. The Board of Directors is responsible for developing and enforcing the bylaws, policies and activities of GHA.

Board Meetings: The frequency, place and time of meetings of the GHA Board of Directors shall be determined pursuant to the GHA Bylaws and on an as needed basis to be determined by the Board. The GHA Board shall hold regular meetings at 1 time per month and no less than 9 times per calendar year. General members are encouraged to attend the Board of Director meetings and have an opportunity to comment during the "public comment period" for the first 15 minutes at the beginning of each meeting. Minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors will be recorded by the Secretary and shall be available to all GHA members upon approval by the Board of Directors.

Annual General Meeting: GHA's Annual General Meeting, hereafter referred as AGM, will be held no less than once per year to discuss policy manual updates, bylaw modifications, mission statement alignment, approval for budgets, board of director seat vacancies and appointments, professional service agreements/contracts, or any major programming news. GHA's AGM will be held in May and will be open to all members of GHA.

GHA'S FINANCIAL POLICY:

GHA's financial dealings, including expenditures and revenue collection, capital projects, service contracts, grants and awards shall be the sole domain of the standing Board of Directors. The GHA Board of Directors shall ensure the sound financial operation of GHA. This includes not overextending one season's obligations to adversely influence debit the following season. Decisions on multisession financial dealings in excess of 30% of the annual budget require a vote of poll of the general membership. No financial dealings shall be allowed that compromise the non-profit status of the association or the integrity of the association and/or its members.

- GHA's annual fiscal (financial) year shall be July 1 through June 30. Record, bookkeeping, and operational processes shall be maintained in order to keep GHA compliant with that fiscal year

and with the IRS codes governing the association's non-profit status, including annual filings. As necessary, the GHA Board of Directors may hire a bookkeeper or accountant to help the Treasurer track and maintain financial records and accounts.

- Annual dues and fees payable by GHA members as declared by the GHA Board of Directors. No player/family may register for or participate in GHA's current season with outstanding debts or costs to GHA from previous seasons.
- Fundraising will be conducted for the general good of the order including the active support of scholarship and/or specific assistance programs. GHA's fundraising and sponsorship activities are developed, administered, and implemented by the Fundraising Committee, which consists of the Hockey Director, Fundraising Director (Board Member), and at least one Board member at large. Fundraising and sponsorship activities are intended to underwrite GHA costs, including programs, Director and coaching salaries, uniforms, equipment, referee expenses, etc. Fundraising conducted by specific teams shall be pre-approved by the Board of Directors who may ask for an accounting of the funds raised and request control of the funds distribution.

TRAVEL EXPENSES FOR LEAGUE MEETINGS: The Board of Directors approves payment for gasoline, food, and lodging expenses incurred by the Hockey Director, members of the Board of Directors, or GHA representatives (approval by the GHA Board of Directors) incident to their attending meetings of leagues in which GHA participates.

TRAVEL EXPENSES FOR COACHES: The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the reimbursement of expenses related to required training for parent coaches and other eligible expenses for non-parent coaches of the Glacier Hockey Association (GHA). This policy is designed to support the professional development of our coaches while ensuring responsible use of GHA funds.

1. Eligible Expenses

1.1. Parent Coaches: Parent coaches are eligible for reimbursement for required background checks and training related to coaching activities only including:

1.1.1 USA Hockey Registration

- USA Hockey Age Specific Modules
- Coach Clinics
- CEP Training
- Background Checks

1.2. Non-Parent Coaches: Paid, non-parent coaches can submit expenses for reimbursement up to a **maximum of \$2,500** per year for eligible expenses. Travel

related expenses are limited to only out of town games/tournaments, sponsored by GHA. Coaches are expected to use the allocated funds responsibly, in support of our growing organization. Expenses should be reasonable and necessary. Items that can be reimbursed are as follows:

1.2.1 USA Hockey Registration

USA Hockey Age Specific Modules

Coach Clinics

CEP Training

Background Checks

1.2.2. *Hotel:* Hotel/accommodation only; **up to \$175.00 per night**, unless lodging rates exceed – then excess will need to be approved by the Executive Director.

1.2.3. *Fuel:* Fuel reimbursement to/from out-of-town games & tournaments is eligible to submit for reimbursement (submit receipts to Executive Director).

1.2.4. *Meals:* Only meals at out-of-town tournaments for the non-parent coach is eligible. Itemized receipts are required, alcohol will not be reimbursed under any circumstances. **Limited to \$60 per day.**

1.2.5. *Other:* There is no reimbursement for: team dinners, team activities, etc. Expenses incurred from additional non-GHA sponsored tournaments should be paid by the parents, based on agreement with the team manager.

2. Receipts

Receipts are required for all expenditures billed directly to Glacier Hockey Association or expenditures that require reimbursement to the Glacier Hockey Association personnel from each vendor – showing the vendors names, a description of the services provided (if not obvious), the date, and the total expenses (including tip).

2.1. E-mail copies of ITEMIZED receipts to the Executive Director at ahayes@glacierhockey.org

2.2. All receipts must be submitted within 45 days of the event.

2.3. Once approved, reimbursements will be processed within 30 days of receiving the complete and valid documentation.

3. Compliance and Review

3.1. The GHA Board will review this policy periodically to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with the organization's financial goals.

3.2. Any violations or misuse of funds will be subject to disciplinary actions as determined by the GHA Board.

4. Contact Information For any questions or clarifications regarding this reimbursement policy contact board@glacierhockey.org

REFEREE SCHEDULING AND REIMBURSEMENT: The Referee Coordinator, typically the Hockey Director and/or the Executive Director, shall be responsible for the scheduling of all referees for home games and their subsequent reimbursement. The Referee Coordinator shall review the fee schedule for referees and linesmen on an annual basis prior to the beginning of the season and submit the schedule for approval by the Board of Directors.

Adjustments in the payment schedule can be affected at the time, or on an as needed basis as determined by the Board of Directors.

PLAYER SCHOLARSHIPS: GHA shall award full and/or partial scholarships for seasonal ice time fees on an annual basis for players and families that apply for scholarship or assistance and demonstrate financial and/or hardship needs. Assistance may also include the loan or purchase of hockey equipment for a player's needs on a seasonal basis. If a request for equipment usage is granted, the equipment must be signed for and returned at the end of the season.

- Confidential scholarship inquiries will be handled by officers on the GHA Board of Directors and the Executive Director. The committee shall consist of the Treasurer, a second Board of Directors and a member at large. This committee shall gather and document necessary information from the applicants to ensure need and make their recommendations to the full Board of Directors for scholarship and/or assistance awards. The GHA Board of Directors will vote to approve/reject each scholarship application.
- A preference will be shown to returning GHA players who show ongoing need of financial assistance. No more than 20% of GHA's annual ice fees budget may be awarded in seasonal scholarships. In awarding scholarships, the GHA Board of Directors shall take steps to ensure scholarships are awarded equitably across all age brackets and in a non-discriminatory manner.
- On a discretionary basis, the GHA Board of Directors may prudently award scholarship and/or assistance for pre/post season programs and player advancement.
- Scholarship and assistance programs may be rescinded by the GHA Board of Directors based on the awarded players' behavior or lack of merit.

- On an as needed basis only, annual monthly payment plan will stand pre-approve as equal monthly payments of that season's ice fees with the first installment due before the first day of the team's normal season practice and the final installment due before the last day of the team's normal season practice.
- Strict confidentiality shall be maintained by the GHA Board of Directors in the area of scholarships and assistance.

REGISTRATION FEE PAYMENT: Annual registration shall be open on or around July 1st for the upcoming hockey season. First payment is due at the time of registration. Payment plans are as follows:

1. Monthly - First payment is due at the time of registration followed by equal monthly installments with the last payment due by February 1st.
2. Full Payment - Full payment is due at the time of registration.

No player will be allowed on the ice until he/she has registered with GHA and has a valid USA Player Membership for the current hockey season.

Refund of ice fees for players unable to continue due to medical reasons or approved extenuating circumstances shall be issued as follows: 75% for withdrawal before December 1st, 50% before January 1st, and 25% before February 1st.

JERSEY DEPOSIT: A **\$150 jersey deposit** will be collected at the time of handing out the jerseys. A deposit will be collected and then credited back to the account used upon the player's returned jersey as long as the jersey is returned in good order to the association.

FAMILY VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT: All families with a registered GHA player must complete **ten (10) hours** of volunteer service to support GHA activities during each hockey season. A **\$150.00 volunteer deposit** will be collected at the time of registration for each registered player. Volunteer deposits will be refunded directly from the registration site upon completion of the volunteer hours mandate. Deposits will be kept by GHA if families fail to complete the requested hours of volunteer service by the end of the hockey season. Coaches, managers and Board Members will be credited their volunteer hours for the season at the time of their commitment. In order to receive a refund of your volunteer hours deposit, families will need to track their volunteer hours (date, activity, amount of time) and submit them at the end of the season to the Executive Director.

REGULAR SEASON

SEASON DURATION: The seasonal playing year of GHA shall begin on the first day of September in each year and end on the last day of August in the following year. Regular season practices in team play for league participation in the EKL and MAHA (Treasure State League) begins in October and ends in March of the following year. Practice seasons will end as teams complete their Banner/State Tournaments.

TEAMS & DIVISIONS: Player classifications are birth-year specific and determined pursuant to the roles of USA Hockey, MAHA & EKL.

- Learn to Play Hockey (L2PH): 2016-2020
- 6u/8u House Division: 2017-2019
- 10u House Division: 2015-2016
- 6u/8u (Mites/Novice): 2017-2019
- 10u (Squirts/Atom): 2015-2016
- 12u House Division: 2013-2014
- 12u (Peewee) 2013-2014
- 10u/12u Girls: 2012-2016
- 14u Girls: 2011-2014
- 14u (Bantam): 2011-2012
- High School (Coed): 2007-2010
- 19u Girls: 2006-2010

Each team is limited to a 20 player roster; 18 players and 2 goalies (with L2PH and House League being the exceptions). High School teams can roster up to 30 players but only 20 can be on the bench for a game. Ideally team sizes should follow USA Hockey's ADM recommendations to maximize individual player and team development. Because GHA is a member of MAHA and an affiliate of USA Hockey, all player and team classifications follow their rules and regulations. Final season rosters must be confirmed by December 31st of each season and must be certified by USA Hockey's Northern Plains District Registrar.

GAME & TOURNAMENT PLAY:

- All players are expected to participate in League games and League Playoffs.
- While encouraged, participation in non-league games and tournaments on the road is not mandated by this commitment (except for those participating at Mites/Squirts levels). In instances of non-league games/tournaments, the team manager is responsible for assuring that a sufficient number of players are willing and able to participate in non-league games or tournaments prior to committing the team to that function.
- The Board of Directors expects each player within the Association to honor all league game commitments with his/her Glacier Hockey team.
- Every effort will be made to prevent conflicts between Montana development programs and league commitments. Due to the unique opportunity of higher-level development programs, if conflicts arise, the Board of Directors encourages participation in league commitments but realizes the decision of participation will be left to the discretion of

DUAL OR DOUBLE ROSTERING: At times, it may be beneficial to roster a player at different levels/teams to ensure adequate numbers to make a team roster for league play. Such may be the case for instances that warrant a need to fulfill league play requirements, specifically to cover injured or sick players and/or suspended players. The tool of dual/double rostering is applicable only to those GHA members who are registered for the season as travel league players. This will not apply to those registered as “practice players” or to players committed to other leagues outside of EKL and TSL.

PLAYER EVALUATION POLICY:

GHA Evaluation & Tryout Process*: Glacier Hockey Association (GHA) is committed to providing a fair and unbiased comprehensive assessment process in an effort to place players at appropriate levels that will maximize their skill development. Our goal is to conduct a consistent and comprehensive player evaluation process that the player can use in order to improve upon their development trajectory. Over time, this will benefit the organization's development of players, coaches and parents alike by setting expectations and benchmarks across all levels of our youth hockey program. GHA adheres to USA Hockey's American Development Model (ADM) to reinforce the tenets to youth hockey development.

GHA is making every attempt to minimize conflicts with other sports and activities during the fall season in an effort to create inclusion for all players in the formation of rostering teams. Any player that cannot participate in the scheduled evaluations will be placed on a team at the discretion of the GHA Hockey Director and the Board of Directors, usually at the lowest skill level within a particular age group, unless previous level of play suggests otherwise.

Evaluation sessions will be an array of drills and scrimmages designed to test individual and teamwork skills. In addition, Goaltenders will also be evaluated based on their skill in making saves and controlling rebounds. It is GHA's intention to evaluate all players that play in this organization to best develop their potential and to grow the organization at the same time.

Evaluations and tryouts for the 2025-2026 season will be held **September 12, September 13** and **September 14, 2025** in an effort to start the season with a better idea of scheduling and commitment for the year. A full schedule of tryouts will be published once finalized.

Evaluators will be composed of a pool of GHA coaches (outside of the level being evaluated), as well as the Hockey Director. A minimum of 3 evaluators will be utilized for each level. Head coaches of each level will be assisting in the process and final roster selection.

Evaluations will be based off of a ranking from **1-5** for skating, skills, competition drills and game play. 5 = Excellent (outstanding); 4 = Good (exceeds standard); 3 = Average (meeting standard); 2 = Moderate (below standard); 1 = Below Average (still developing)

Each player will be thoroughly reviewed and discussed among the evaluators. Those attending the evaluations meeting will include all evaluators involved, all coaches of the team and the Hockey Director. After the evaluators have finished the review, coaches will discuss with the Hockey Director to rank each player, then re-evaluate with the coaching staff to assign players to

teams, taking into account the team needs, the players development schedule and the current coaching philosophy.

Team announcements will be made by **September 20, 2025**.

There will be an additional cost for tryout/evaluations this year. Players will need to register with a **\$50 fee**. This covers the cost of the ice and coaching supplies needed to facilitate evaluations outside of regular season practice time.

***This process is still developing under the purview of the Hockey Development Committee and additional information and updates will be shared as details become available.**

Feedback of the evaluation process will be available to each participant upon request and will include their ranking scores. Parents are directed to contact the Hockey Director to ask questions and file complaints. It is GHA's goal to provide the fairest and most impartial evaluation process possible and to maintain transparency and communication with everyone involved. The evaluation process is a key component to developing the organization and its players to the highest possible outcome.

PLAYER MOVE-UP POLICY: The GHA philosophy of player development is that it is best for all players to play within their respective age group; often referred to as an age appropriate athlete development. This philosophy is strongly encouraged by GHA and USA Hockey (e.g. ADM).

However in certain circumstances players and teams may benefit from player move-ups to the next age group. For example, teams may have insufficient numbers, requiring additional players to form a functional team that consists of players at commensurate skill levels. In exceptional cases, an advanced player may benefit from playing in the next older age group to ensure individual growth and development.

In order for a player to participate in a higher age group, the following criteria need to be met:

1. Only a 6u/8u (Mite/Novice) or 10u (Squirt/Atom) player who played on the most advanced team in the previous season and is returning to that same age level would be eligible to move up.
2. A request to move up must be submitted to the GHA Hockey Director by the player's parents/legal guardian prior to Evaluations.
3. Players with the desire to move up must participate in Evaluations for both their age appropriate and upper level
4. The Hockey Director would need to receive approval from the players' current (age appropriate) head coach, next level head coach, as well as the GHA Executive Director to make a recommendation to the Board.
5. The final decision to approve or disapprove the request will be made by the Board of Directors.
6. Players, at the discretion of the head coach and Hockey Director, may be invited to participate in a different division as long as the movement does NOT conflict with the

schedule of the primary division to which the player is committed and does not violate any association rules and regulations. Subject to Dual/Double Rostering position stated above.

Tournament specific play-up requests (younger players playing in an older age group)

1. For younger players who want to play up in an older age group tournament, they may move to the lowest skill level team (e.g., B team) at the older age group.
2. The exception to the above is if the younger player is in the top 10 of all the players at the older age group to which they are applying to play up.
3. Lower skill level (e.g., B team) players at the older age group have higher priority over younger play-up requests.
4. The younger age group coaches have the discretion to disallow the play-up request if it conflicts with a game at the same time at the player's age-appropriate level.

UNIFORM COLORS & LOGO: The Board of Directors has adopted the uniform colors: Maroon, Blue and White for the Glacier Hockey Association. It is recommended by the Board of Directors that the members of GHA purchase and wear blue or black pants and a blue or black helmet. The Board of Directors of GHA has approved the logo that appears here.



Glacier Avalanche Hockey Logo

EQUIPMENT: The Board of Directors have adopted a policy mandating the use of all standard hockey safety equipment as required by USA Hockey:

Rule 304 - Protective Equipment:

(Note) Not all protective equipment is mandatory in all age classifications. However, if not mandated by rule, USA Hockey strongly recommends that all skaters and goalkeepers in all age classifications properly wear an internal mouthpiece, a HECC approved helmet and a HECC approved full face mask for all games and practices.

- Each player is personally responsible to wear protective equipment for all games, warm-ups and practices. Such equipment should include gloves, shin pads, shoulder pads, elbow pads, hip pads, or padded hockey pants, protective cup, tendon pads plus all head protective equipment as required by USA Hockey rules. It is recommended that all protective equipment be designed specifically for ice hockey.

- All protective equipment, except gloves, padded hockey pants, helmet, face mask and goalkeeper's leg guards must be worn underneath the uniform.

(Note) Players, including goalkeepers, violating this rule shall not be permitted to participate in the game until such equipment has been corrected or removed.

- *All players, including goalkeepers, in all age classifications except Adults, are required to properly wear a HECC approved helmet as designed by the manufacturer and with no alterations and chin strap properly fastened.*

(Note) HECC certification includes an expiration date on the stick and a helmet that has an expiration date that has expired is no longer considered certified. The player may not wear a helmet that does not have a valid and current certification sticker.

All players on the players' and the penalty bench must wear the protective helmet/face mask while in the bench area. For a violation of this rule, after a warning by the referee, a misconduct penalty for an equipment violation shall be assessed to the offending player.

- All players, including goalkeepers, in all age classifications below Adults, are required to wear a face mask certified by HECC, plus any chin protection that accompanies the face mask.

(Note) Any helmet or face mask that is altered except as permitted in Rule 304(c) shall be deemed to be illegal equipment and shall not be allowed to be used in a game. The player, or such equipment, shall be removed from the game until corrected. (This shall induce helmets from which a part has been cut or removed, facemarks from which the chin-cup has been removed or any other such alterations from the original manufacturing specifications).

- In all classifications, including adults, if a skater's helmet/face mask comes off during play, the officials shall stop play immediately. The skater shall be ruled off the ice and may not participate in the game until completion of the ensuing face-off.
- In all classifications, if the goalkeeper's helmet/face mask comes off during play, the officials shall stop play immediately. However, the goalkeeper shall not be ruled off the ice prior to the face-off.
- A minor penalty for delay of game shall be assessed to a goalkeeper or skater who causes a stoppage of play by deliberately removing their helmet/face mask during play.
- All Players, including goalkeepers, in the 12 and under (Youth & Girls) through Youth 18 and under (including High School) and Girls 19 and under age classifications are required to wear a colored (non-clear) internal mouthpiece that covers all remaining teeth of one jaw, customarily the upper. It is strongly recommended, in all classifications, that all players wear a mouthpiece form fitted by a dentist.
 - For the first violation of this rule, the team shall be issued a warning. A misconduct penalty for an equipment violation shall be assessed to any player or goalkeeper of that team for a subsequent violation during that game.

- As of August 1, 2024 USA Hockey is requiring that all players, including goalkeepers, wear a neck laceration protector, choosing a design that covers as much of the neck as possible. This will be required at **all GHA ice times** (*practices, games, clinics, etc.*)
- All players who wear the required, or recommended, protective equipment must wear it in the manner in which it is designed.
 - For violations of this rule, following a team warning, a misconduct penalty equipment violation shall be imposed.

EQUIPMENT RENTAL & SWAP: GHA owns hockey equipment and it is available to all players at no cost. For players who wish to use GHA equipment, a \$100 equipment deposit will be collected at the time the equipment is loaned out.

PERMISSION FOR UNACCOMPANIED TRAVEL & EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE: When a player travels to an away game or tournament and is unaccompanied by his/her parent(s) or guardian, he/she must possess a written permission form from his parents to travel. This permission must include the destination and must name the responsible adult who will accompany and transport the player.

All players, including those of driving age, must travel to away games or tournaments with an adult parent or guardian who accepts responsibility for said player.

A medical release must be signed by the player's parent(s) or guardian, in which emergency medical care is authorized, before a player is allowed to participate in games or tournaments away from home. The permission will be given to the Team Manager or other responsible adult who will accompany the team. The permission shall contain appropriate health insurance information. The medical release is part of the required registration paperwork process.

Travel to Canada requires permission from unaccompanied players' parent(s) or guardians and a copy of birth certificate/ passport to facilitate Canadian and United States border crossing.

SAFESPORT AND LOCKER ROOM POLICY: In addition to the development of our hockey players and enjoyment of the sport hockey, the safety and protection of our participants is central to GHA's goals. GHA adheres to USA Hockey's SafeSport Program as a means to help protect its participants from physical abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing. To help prevent abuse or misconduct from occurring in our locker rooms, GHA has adopted the following locker room policy:

U.S. CENTER FOR SAFESPORT MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICIES:

POLICY APPLICATION

- Policy applies to all in-program contact occurring in locker rooms and changing areas
- Monitoring and availability of semi-private and private changing areas must occur at all sanctioned events, or facilities that are partially or fully under the Organization's jurisdiction.

POLICY REQUIREMENTS

1. Must follow ALL aspects of the One-on-One Interactions Policy
 - Observable
 - Interruptible
2. The photographic or recording capabilities of any device (cell phones, cameras, tablets) cannot be used by any Participant in the locker rooms or changing areas during in-Program activities. Consent can be withdrawn at any time.
3. Adult Participants **MUST NOT** change clothes or behave in a way that intentionally exposes their breast, buttocks, groin or genitals to a Minor Athlete.
4. Adult Participants **CANNOT** shower with a Minor Athlete unless:
 - The door remains unlocked
 - A Close-in-Age exception exists: The Adult Participant has no authority over the Minor Athlete and there is no more than a four year age difference.
 - The Adult Participant and Minor Athlete are wearing swimwear and the shower is part of a pre or post activity rinse.
5. Media and Championship Celebration recordings are allowed if:
 - Parent/guardian consent is given
 - Organization approval is given for specific insurance
 - Two or more Adult Participants are present
 - Everyone is fully clothed
6. Monitoring must occur for all locker rooms and changing areas
7. A semi-private or private area to change must be provided to all Minor Athletes

POLICY EXCEPTIONS

If one of the following exceptions exists with appropriate consent, interactions between a Minor Athlete and an Adult Participant in a Locker Room are not required to be observable and interruptible:

- Emergency
- Dual Relationship - The Adult Participant has an existing relationship with Minor Athlete outside of the sport program (Note: there is NO dual relationship exception for showering)
- Close-in-Age: The Adult Participant has no authority over the Minor Athlete and is not more than 4 years older than the Minor Athlete
- Personal Care Assistant: The Adult Participant is a Personal Care Assistant and has met all the requirements

LOCKER ROOMS AND CHANGING AREAS MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAM:

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This policy is designed to maintain personal privacy as well as to reduce the risk of misconduct in locker rooms. At the Stumptown Ice Den, there are six locker rooms available for our program's use. Four of the locker rooms have their own shower area and four share a restroom with one or more locker rooms. Some teams in our program may also occasionally or regularly travel to play games at other arenas, and those locker rooms, rest rooms and shower facilities will vary from location to location. GHA's team organizers will attempt to provide information on the locker room facilities in advance of away games. At unfamiliar arenas, parents should plan to have extra time and some flexibility in making arrangements for their child to dress, undress, and shower if desired.

LOCKER ROOM MONITORING:

GHA has predictable and limited use of locker rooms and changing areas (e.g. generally 30-45 minutes before and following practices and games). This allows for direct and regular monitoring of locker room areas. While constant monitoring inside of locker rooms and changing areas is the most effective way to prevent problems, this is likely to make some players uncomfortable and may even place our staff at risk for unwarranted suspicion. Therefore, a sweep of the locker rooms and changing areas is required before players arrive, and if the coaches are not inside the locker rooms, either a coach or voluntary locker room monitors will be posted directly outside of the locker rooms and changing areas during periods of use.

Only participants (coaches and players), approved team personnel and authorized family members are permitted in the locker room. Each coach, parent, or volunteer locker room monitor must be SafeSport certified before being allowed into locker rooms for GHA run activities. SafeSport certified team personnel will also secure the locker room appropriately during times when the team is on the ice. For more details, please visit the SafeSport and certification procedure:

<https://www.usahockey.com/uscenterforsafesport>

PARENTS IN LOCKER ROOMS:

Except for players at the younger age groups (10U/Squirts and below), we discourage parents from entering locker rooms unless it is truly necessary. If a player needs assistance with his or her uniform or gear, if the play is or may be injured, or a player's disability warrants assistance, then it is recommended that parents let the coach know beforehand that he or she will be helping the player. Naturally, it is necessary for parents to assist the players getting dressed with our youngest age groups.

It is recommended that parents teach their players as young as possible how to get dressed so they learn as early as possible how to get dressed independently. In circumstances where parents are permitted in the locker room, coaches are permitted to ask that the parents leave for a short time before the game/practice and for a short time after the game/practice so that the coaches may address the players. As players get older, the coach may in his or her own discretion prohibit parents from the locker room.

MIXED GENDER TEAMS:

GHA Teams consist of both male and female players. It is important that the privacy rights of all of our players are given consideration and appropriate arrangements made. GHA requires that male and female players dress/undress in separate locker rooms and then convene in a single locker room before the game/practice or team meeting. Once the game or practice is finished, the players may come to one locker room for a team meeting and then the male and female players proceed to their separate locker rooms to undress and shower, if available. If separate locker rooms are not available, then the players will take turns using the locker rooms to change.

CELL PHONES AND OTHER MOBILE RECORDING DEVICES:

Cell phones and other devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras are not permitted to be used in the locker rooms. If phones or other mobile devices must be used, they should be taken outside the locker room (it may be permissible to have a team manager collect cell phones).

PROHIBITED CONDUCT AND REPORTING:

GHA prohibits all types of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing, all as described in the USA Hockey SafeSport Handbook. Participants, employees, or volunteers of GHA may be subject to disciplinary action for violation of these locker room policies or for engaging in any misconduct or abuse that violates the USA Hockey SafeSport Policies.

Reports of any actual or suspected violations, please immediately contact a GHA representative or contact USA Hockey (safesport@usahockey.org), 1-800-888-4656.

EQUAL PLAYING TIME POLICY:

The Equal Playing Time Policy's purpose is to support our top core values: Create an incredible experience for our athletes and Promote their development. GHA takes a long term perspective to our athletes development. This long term perspective is the cornerstone to development and means sometimes sacrificing short term success. This is also congruent with USA hockey's ADM(American Development Model)

Policy Details

1. Hockey is a dynamic Sport

- a. No game will ever have exact equal playing time for all athletes. But we encourage and expect our coaches to strive to play all athletes as equal as possible.
- b. Shift lengths should be relatively even regardless of skill. We believe the development of the 3rd best line is equally as important as the development of the best line.

2. Coaches Liberty

- a. While equal playing time is our goal, we also give our coaches the liberty to make the best decisions for athletes. An example of this would be shortening a shift after a prolonged shift to allow a line to rest up.
- b. In game adjustments are acceptable but playing time equality is the top priority.

3. Exceptions

- a. Adhering to the 80% attendance policy is a requirement for athletes to earn equal playing time. If short of the policy minimum, coaches may adjust playing time(see 80% attendance policy for more details)
- b. Injury and illnesses may result in reduction of playing time.
- c. Disciplinary Issues may result in the reduction of playing time. These issues generally will be grounded in the 4 tenets that we believe hockey teaches for life: team comes first, playing with discipline, attitude and effort.

4. Special Teams Play

- a. GHA believes all players should be encouraged to develop in all parts of the game. This includes Special Teams Play (ie power play / penalty kill).
- b. We ask that our coaches instruct all our athletes to be successful in these situations and in turn give all our athletes opportunities to participate in games in these situations.

Bantams and older: As our athletes age, development is still a priority but begins to balance with fielding a competitive hockey team. In turn, starting at Bantams(and older) our coaches are instructed to balance playing time with the overall competitiveness of the team. The goal of equal playing time is replaced with a guarantee to be able to compete and earn playing time on merit of play.

This policy aims to create a supportive and inclusive environment where every player feels valued and has the opportunity to grow as a hockey player.

TRAVEL TEAM ATTENDANCE POLICY:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure consistent attendance and commitment from players participating in our travel hockey teams. Travel Hockey requires a commitment by the athletes and the families that support them. In order to promote development, we desire to keep teams small. In turn, every player is valuable to the success of the team; that success is grounded in regular attendance as it promotes team cohesion, skill development, and overall team performance.

Policy Details

1. Attendance Requirement:

- Players are expected to attend at least **80%** of all scheduled practices, games, and team events.
- Exceptions may be granted for excused absences (e.g., illness, family emergencies), but these must be communicated in advance to the coaching staff.

2. Consequences for Non-Compliance:

- If a player's attendance falls below 80%, a meeting will occur between the head coach (and the GHA director if needed) and the player's family to discuss the attendance concerns and potential solutions. If attendance continues below 80% the following consequences may apply:
 - **Reduced Playing Time:** Players with attendance below the threshold may receive reduced ice time during games.

- **Ineligibility for Tournaments:** Players falling significantly below the attendance requirement may be ineligible for certain tournaments or special events.
- Players or their parents/guardians must notify the coaching staff in advance if they cannot attend a scheduled practice or game.

Coaches/Managers will maintain an attendance log to track each player's participation.

This policy aims to cultivate the growth of our athletes, team cohesion and team performance. Travel hockey is a wonderful experience when a team reaches its potential. To reach their potential, our teams need consistent attendance and development.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT:

The goals of GHA include:

- Providing a wholesome and positive experience for Flathead Valley youth through an organized ice hockey program
- Developing athletic skills through adequately coached practice and game experience
- Promoting the development of team spirit, leadership, and fair play through practice and competition

Definitions: When used in these Standards of Conduct, the following terms have their generally accepted definitions, and in addition are specifically designed to mean:

- *“At home” -this term includes the period of time from when a player first enters the Arena for either practice or games, until he/she leaves*
- *“On the Road” - the term includes the period of time from when the player first enters the Arena for either practices or games, until he/she leaves*
- *“Property Damage” - this term means either intentional or negligent damage to any type of personal or real property*
- *“Possession or use” - this term includes mere possession whether or not accompanied by intent to use*

EXPECTED CONDUCT:

In support of the above stated goals, every player, parent, coach, Board Member, Team Manager, and others associated with GHA are expected to conduct themselves at home and on the road in a manner that reflects favorably on the Association. Relatives and friends of players, parents, and coaches are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects well on the players and the Association.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT:

The Board of Directors has determined that there will be two classifications of prohibited conduct. MINOR VIOLATIONS and MAJOR VIOLATIONS. Other instances of misconduct will be determined and judged by the Hockey Director, a coach, Team Manager, or Board Member with

knowledge of the incident, as the need arises. A formal hearing will be held if needed by GHA and MAHA/EKL if necessary. Prohibited conduct shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- **Swearing:** This includes the inappropriate use of profanity, vulgarity, or ethnic slurs
- **Unnecessary Roughness:** This includes inappropriate and intentional use of physical force between players, coaches, or parents, and another person or persons during practice, play or tournaments, with the “at home” and “on the road” concepts applying.
- **Arguing with Officials or Coaches:** This includes inappropriate verbal disagreement with coaches or officials by players, parents, relatives or friends.
- **Disruptive Behavior:** This includes any inappropriate rough housing, skylarking, game playing, or other activity considered disruptive to others while at home or on the road. It also includes practice and game situations

MAJOR VIOLATIONS:

Prohibited conduct in this classification includes the following and is applicable while at home or on the road:

- Property Damage
- Possession or use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs by players
- Theft
- Fighting with Intent to Injure: this includes belligerent physical contact with another person while at home or on the road, except players during a game situation where appropriate penalties will apply
- Verbal Abuse: including harassment or intimidation of players, coaches, referees, team managers, Board Members, or other officials of the Association, by a player, his/her parents, relatives, friends, or coaches or officials of the Association, will be considered unacceptable behavior
- Physical Abuse/Assault: Physical abuse of players, coaches, referees, team managers, Board Members, or other officials of the Association, will be considered unacceptable behavior of the highest order

DISCIPLINARY ACTION: The Board of Directors has determined that the following disciplinary procedures will apply in cases of minor and major violations. These procedures are intended for the protection and enhancement of the Association, players and others involved in Youth Hockey.

MINOR VIOLATIONS:

First Offense: When an act prohibited as a Minor Violation is committed, the involved player will be immediately suspended from practice or game session during which the violation occurred. He/She is required to leave the ice or arena immediately. If the act occurs after a practice or game session, the involved player will be suspended from the next practice or game.

Second Offense: A second offense under Minor Violations will result in the involved player being suspended from practice and play for a period of seven (7) days from the date of the violation to include the next full game.

Third Offense: A third offense under the Minor Violations classification will result in the involved player being suspended from practice for a period of thirty (30) days from the date of the offense.
Three minor violations by the same member will be considered a First Offense Major Violation

MAJOR VIOLATIONS:

First Offense: In cases of Major Violations, the involved player will be immediately suspended from practice or play for a period of two (2) weeks from the date of the violation. Additionally, the player shall be prohibited from participating in the next two (2) games.

Second Offense: In the case of a second violation, the involved player will be immediately terminated from practice or play for the remainder of the season. A player wishing to participate in ice hockey following a termination will be on a probation period of sixty (60) days.

Special Discipline: The physical abuse of a player, coach, referee, parent, team manager, Board Member, or other official of the Association, will result in immediate termination of the involved player for the remainder of the season. In instances where a coach, referee, or official of the Association is involved, that member's position and duties will be terminated for the remainder of the season. A sixty (60) day probationary period will apply for the following season.

Any violation, minor or major offense, is subject to appropriate action deemed justifiable by the Hockey Director, Board of Directors and subsequent Disciplinary Committees outside of the aforementioned protocol set forth above as deemed necessary to address.

SPECIAL PROCEDURES: The following procedures will be adhered to in the case of the suspension or termination of players, coaches, or referees.

In the case of a violation for which termination of a player is mandated above, a review of the circumstances and confirmation of the disciplinary action shall be made by the Board of Directors.

In the case of a suspension or termination of a player, no return of fees will be made. In instances where full payment of fees has not been made, the fees must be paid prior to accepting the suspended or terminated player for continued participation in the hockey program. A player on probation will be considered to have committed a 2nd Major Violation.

INCIDENT REPORTING: Incidents of consequence or personal injury potentially involving Glacier Hockey Association shall be documented by generating a written record at the time of the occurrence to minimize subsequent confusion, omission, or misrepresentation of facts of the circumstances. This record will minimize and simplify later evaluation of the situation. Concerned parties can be more effectively prohibited or dealt with on this basis.

The Board of Directors has approved an Incident Report Form, a copy of which is attached. The Board has established the following guidelines for reporting an incident:

Confidential use of the incident report form: All members of the Glacier Hockey Association are encouraged to avail themselves of the opportunity to report on a contemporary basis, their knowledge of any incident of consequence that may conceivably involve the Association or any of its members in any way. It is recommended that, at the earliest possible moment, a person having knowledge of an incident records that knowledge on the Confidential Report of Incident Form. This Form has been

developed in a general fashion on purpose, recognizing that there is a virtually infinite variety of circumstances and happenings that might appropriately be reported. It is not meant to be all-inclusive, and should circumstances warrant, the person completing the Incident Report is encouraged to amplify their knowledge of the incident as necessary.

Channeling of Incident Report: As a report of incident may be a sensitive issue for both the reporter and those directly involved in the incident itself, the Board of Directors recognizes the need to protect the confidentiality of this information. The following procedures will therefore apply:

- The person completing the Report of Incident shall first enclose it in a sealed envelope and then forward it to the President of Glacier Hockey Association (Jesse Rigler) or GHA Executive Director (Amanda Hayes) for discussion by the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors. The Secretary of the Association thereof, will maintain the report and copies in a closed file. While being channeled as directed above, the confidential nature of the report will be respected by all those involved. The first analysis and subsequent distribution will be the responsibility of the President of the Association. The importance of respecting the privileged nature of this communication and its confidentiality will be respected by all those involved in the initiation, transmission, and evaluation of the document.
- Availability: The Board of Directors has determined that the blank Incident Report Forms and envelopes are available from any member of the Board of Directors or Team Managers upon request. A copy is downloadable on the GHA website or may also be made from this publication. The Board of Directors has recognized the need for availability and use of an Incident Report Form for the protection of the Association and its members as well as for the benefit of other involved parties such as insurance carriers and legal counsel.

A non-restrictive Form has been developed and will be available for use by members of the Association who may have first-hand knowledge of an incident or significance. The method for transmitting the communication of the Incident Report has been delineated. The confidential nature of an Incident Report is acknowledged by the Board of Directors and will be respected in the interest of all parties concerned, especially the person completing the report. The understanding and cooperation of members of the Association is solicited and appreciated.

COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

- Winning is a consideration, but not the only one, nor the most important one. Care more about the child than winning the game. Remember, players are involved in hockey for fun and enjoyment.
- Be a positive role model to your players, display emotional maturity and be alert to the physical safety of players. Conduct yourself in a professional manner as a representative, not only of the team, but of Glacier Hockey Association as a whole.
- Be respectful of officials and understand there is a “Zero Tolerance” policy in regards to attitude, verbal or physical abuse towards referees both on and off the ice.
- Be generous with your praise when it is deserved; be consistent and honest; be fair and just; do not criticize players publicly; learn to be a more effective communicator and coach; don't yell or swear at players.
- Adjust to personal needs and problems of players, be a good listener, never verbally or physically abuse a player or official; give all players the opportunity to improve their skills, gain confidence and develop self-esteem; teach them the basics and challenge them when appropriate.
- Organize practices that are fun and challenging for your players. Familiarize yourself with the rules, techniques and strategies of hockey; encourage all your players to be team players.
- Maintain an open line of communication with your players' parents. Explain the goals and objectives of your association.
- Be concerned with the overall development of your players. Stress good health habits and clean living.
- Be committed to the team; show up when you expect your players to; commit to helping your players grow, not only in skill, but as people as well.
- To play the game is great, to love the game is greater.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE CODE OF CONDUCT AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY IT IN ITS ENTIRETY.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

In accordance with *USA Hockey*, it is the intention of this agreement to promote fair play and respect for all participants within GHA. It is expected that parents sign this pledge and must continue to uphold this code throughout the year:

- I will not force my child to participate in hockey. I will try to make it FUN!
- I will encourage my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflict without resorting to hostility and violence.
- I will teach my child that doing one's best is as important as winning so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of the game.
- I will never ridicule my child for making a mistake or losing a game.
- I will remember that children learn by example. I will applaud good plays and performances by both my child's team and opponents.
- I will never question the officials' judgment or honesty in public. I recognize officials are being developed the same way as players.
- I will never yell, taunt, threaten, or inflict physical violence on any player, coach, official, spectator, other parent or volunteer at any youth hockey function.
- I will leave the coaching to the coaching staff, and I will communicate with them and support them.
- I will not condone the athletic use of alcohol, drugs or tobacco.
- I will not be intoxicated at GHA activities, including games and practices and will refrain from using alcohol and drugs at GHA activities.
- I will remember that my child plays hockey for their enjoyment, not mine.

I have read and understand the above Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its guidelines. I understand that if I do not follow this code of conduct, I may be asked to leave the game or practice, or be suspended from all GHA activities.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____
Parent or Guardian 1

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____
Parent of Guardian 2

PERMISSION FOR UNACCOMPANIED TRAVEL AND EMERGENCY CARE FORM

To Whom it May Concern:

I/We, _____ (Full name(s) of Custodial and/or
Non-Custodial Parent(s)/Legal Guardian) Am/are the lawful custodial parent and/or non-custodial
parent(s) or legal guardians of (Child's full name): _____

Date of Birth: _____ Place of Birth: _____

_____ (Child's full name), has my/our consent to travel with (full name of
accompanying person): _____

To travel to _____

During the period of _____

Parent(s) or Legal Guardian(s):

Full Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____



Glacier Avalanche Youth Hockey Association
Whitefish, Montana

INJURY/INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Date of Incident: _____ Time of Incident: _____

Site/Facility of Incident: _____

Name of injured person: _____

Role of injured person (circle one): Athlete Coach Official Spectator Volunteer

Date of birth: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Address: _____

Guardian/Parent (If injured person is a minor): _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____

Was the parent/guardian contacted about the incident? Yes / No

Time: _____ When did the incident take place? (circle one): Practice Game Other: _____

Name of team: _____ Name of coach: _____

Name of official: _____ Telephone #: _____

Name of witness: _____ Telephone #: _____

Name of witness: _____ Telephone #: _____

Describe the incident and how it occurred (Use additional pages as needed):

Was any rule violated which contributed to the injury?: Yes / No

Describe the type of injury and the part of the body injured: _____

Describe the treatment or actions taken: _____

Name of person giving treatment: _____

Were emergency medical services contacted?: Yes / No

Was the injured person transported to a medical facility?: No

Additional Comments: _____

Signature of person filling out this form: _____

Signature of Coach/Official/Witness: _____

Date: _____

SUBMIT COMPLETED FORM TO ahayes@glaicerhockey.org