

# **NWAHA Locker Room Policy**

In addition to the development of our hockey players and enjoyment of the sport of hockey, the safety and protection of our participants is central to NWAHA's goals. NWAHA adheres to USA Hockey's SafeSport Program as a means to help protect its participants from physical abuse, sexual abuse and other types of misconduct, including emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing. To help prevent abuse or misconduct from occurring in our locker rooms, NWAHA has adopted the following locker room policy. This policy is designed to maintain personal privacy as well as to reduce the risk of misconduct in locker rooms.

At the Jones Center there are locker rooms available for our program's use. 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. NWAHA team organizers will attempt to provide information on the locker room facilities in advance of games away from our home arena. At arenas for which you are unfamiliar, parents should plan to have extra time and some flexibility in making arrangements for their child to dress and undress and shower.

## **Locker Room Monitoring**

NWAHA has predictable and limited use of locker rooms and changing areas (e.g., generally 30-45 minutes before and following practices and games). It is the policy of USA Hockey that all Affiliates, Districts, Leagues, and local hockey Programs have at least one responsible adult present directly monitoring the locker room during all team events to assure that only participants (coaches and players), approved team personnel, and family members are permitted in the locker room and to supervise the conduct in the locker room. Any individual meetings with a minor participant and a coach in a locker room shall require a responsible adult be with the coach. Further, responsible adults must personally monitor the locker room environment at all times while participants are present and also make sure the locker room is appropriately secured during times when minor participants are on the ice. Teams, Leagues, and local hockey Associations shall also comply with the USA Hockey Co-ed locker room policy.

## **Parents in Locker Rooms**

Except for players at the younger age groups (Minis and Mites), 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 player is or may be injured, or a player's disability warrants assistance, then we ask that parents let the coach know beforehand that he or she will be helping the player.

Naturally, with our youngest age groups it is necessary for parents to assist the players getting dressed. We encourage parents to teach their players as young as possible how to get dressed so that players will 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 and for a short time after the game so that the coaches may address the players. As players get older, the coach may in his or her discretion prohibit parents from a locker room.

## Co-Ed Locker Rooms

Head Coaches are responsible for selecting, clearly communicating, and ensuring that their team consistently follows an approved dressing/undressing option outlined below. For the purposes of this policy, sports bras, underwear, and jocks are *not* considered base layers.

(Copied from USA hockey Safe Sport Program Handbook pages 21-22)

As a team sport in which youth teams can often include players of different genders, special circumstances may exist that can increase the chance of abuse or misconduct. If the team consists of players of different genders, the privacy rights of all players must be given consideration and appropriate arrangements made. It is not acceptable under USA Hockey's Sexual Misconduct Policy for persons to be observing the opposite gender while they dress or undress. There are a variety of ways to comply with the above tenets, and what works may depend on the locker rooms that are available at a particular Facility. Although there are likely other acceptable ways to accommodate teams of different genders, below are some other options for compliance with USA Hockey's Co-ed Locker Room Policy:

a. Minimum Attire. Have a minimum attire policy if sharing one locker room. All players should be required to arrive at the rink wearing their hockey base layers or shorts and t-shirts (in good condition – no holes or tears in clothing) under their street clothes. All members of the team must have this minimum attire before entering a co-ed locker room so that no player of one gender has the opportunity to see players of the opposite gender in a state of dress/undress. If a player is not wearing the required minimum attire, that player can be directed to a restroom or private area to change into his/her minimum attire before entering the locker room.

b. Separate Locker Rooms. A second option is for the program to have players of different genders change/ dress in separate, supervised locker rooms. Then approximately ten (10) to fifteen (15) minutes before each game/practice everyone is to be ready in gear in one designated locker room so the coach can address the entire team. If a player is not fully dressed by the time the coach arrives, then that player must go to a separate locker room or bathroom to finish dressing. The onus is on the players being properly dressed when the coaches begin preparing the team for the practice or game.

c. Alternate Use of One Locker Room. Another option is the alternate use of a single locker room. Players of one gender dress in the locker room while players of the opposite gender wait outside. When the one group is ready (this may mean dressed in gear but not skates and helmets), then the players switch places and the players in gear

wait for players of opposite gender to get dressed. No coaching is to be done until all the players are together in the locker room. Taking turns is a means of reasonable accommodation; neither gender group should be favored, nor should one group be the group who always has to wait to change.

Where possible, when players of different genders are together in the locker room, there should be at least two adults in the locker room that have completed SafeSport Training and been properly screened in compliance with USA Hockey Screening Policy. USA Hockey would consider it acceptable to have one locker room monitor immediately outside the locker room and regularly checking in on the locker room, but two locker room monitors is always preferable. If there are two monitors, then they can monitor from inside the locker room. Having only one monitor inside a locker room can expose that person to allegations or possible policy violations, so a second person can help protect one another from allegations. The USA Hockey Safe Sport website ([usahockey.com/safesportprogram](http://usahockey.com/safesportprogram)) contains sample approaches that may be used by a Member Program depending on the facilities available at a particular arena.

## **Cell Phones and Other Mobile Recording Devices**

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

## **Prohibited Conduct and Reporting**

The NWAHA organization 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 in [PROGRAM] may be subject to disciplinary action for violation of these locker room policies or for engaging in any misconduct or abuse or that violates the USA Hockey SafeSport Policies. Reports of any actual or suspected violations, you may email USA Hockey at [SafeSport@usahockey.org](mailto:SafeSport@usahockey.org) or may call 1-800-888-4656.

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Player's Signature

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Parent's Signature

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Date