

NORTHWEST HOCKEY LEAGUE

RULES AND REGULATIONS

I. LEAGUE STRUCTURE

- A. A league structure of games shall be conducted for the classifications as defined by USA Hockey and the Amateur Hockey Association of Illinois (AHAI). Should a conflict exist between NWHL Rules and USA Hockey Rules, the most restrictive will prevail.

II. LEAGUE ADMINISTRATION

- A. The designated Organization Representative (or alternate acting in his/her behalf) shall be responsible for overseeing the conduct of all NWHL games at their respective teams home arena(s). Included among the responsibilities are: checking player and team official status (i.e., eligibility, suspensions, etc.) and notifying the Conduct Committee of any and all matters of concern regarding the efficient, fair and sportsmanlike conduct of the NWHL. The Organization Representative (or alternate) must be present at all monthly League meetings. No representation at more than two meetings in a season will result in a fine. The person representing an organization must have access to an email address so information can be forwarded to them in a timely manner.
- B. The official record shall be the game score sheet; points will only be awarded upon receipt of the score sheet by the League Statistician Office, [or as recorded on the NWHL website](#). The NWHL shall in turn, compile and compute results and standings for the respective divisions and post them on the League website.
- C. FEES
 1. The level of fees will be reviewed and approved by the Board annually prior to the start of the season.
 2. Participation Fees to cover [operating expenses](#) shall be assessed to each organization based on the number of teams registered in the league. These fees will be included with, and invoiced as a portion of the NWHL Tournament fee.
 3. A scheduling fee will be paid by each participating organization based on the number of home games scheduled in the season. This fee will be billed by, and paid to, the scheduler/statistician designated by the NWHL. Invoices for this fee will be distributed to member club representatives no later than the October general membership meeting. Payment of fees will be due by the November general membership meeting. NWHL will assess a fine of \$100 for late payment. If the fee is not paid by 12/1 there will be an additional fine of \$150. If additional fees are owed for mites after 12/1, those will be billed separately.
 4. If for any reason a game is rescheduled more than 6 days after the NWHL scheduling meeting, a rescheduling fee of \$25 will be assessed. The rescheduling fee will be assessed to the team initiating the request. All rescheduling fees will be included, and itemized, on the year end club invoice. It will be the responsibility of the club to pay all fees. If it is not clear to the scheduler who initiated the request the home team (as defined in the original NWHL schedule) will be responsible for the fee.
 5. NWHL Tournament fees will be assessed to each organization based on the number of teams that participate in the regular NWHL season. Tournament fees will be based on a proportional allocation of the total cost of the tournament. Said fees will be set by the Tournament Committee and approved by the Board in January prior to the Tournament. All Tournament participation fees, as well as any additional fees or fines must be paid in full by the deadline designated by the NWHL Board. Failure to pay will be considered as refusal to compete.

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6. Referee fees are paid by the participating organization directly to the referee scheduling service.

III. TEAM REGISTRATION

- A. Commitment of teams to the NWHL shall be made in writing prior to the September board meeting, or as otherwise prescribed by the Board.
- B. All participating organizations and individuals must be registered and in good standing with the AHAI and USA Hockey for that season.
- C. The designated AHAI Director shall certify, and the team representative shall place on file with the NWHL, a copy of the USA Hockey Team Registration Form for each team prior to the start of NWHL [scheduling](#). Roster changes shall be made in accordance to these rules and the rules of AHAI and USA Hockey.
- D. All teams must submit approved, typed copies of the AHAI and USA Hockey Team Registration Forms to the Vice-President by the November Board Meeting. Each team should have a copy of their AHAI roster for all NWHL games.
 1. Signed/registered rosters are due at the November board meeting. Clubs that do not turn in rosters by this deadline will be assessed a fine of \$100.00 for each day that the rosters are late. The clubs teams will not be allowed to participate in any NWHL games until the rosters have been turned in and the club will be fined \$500.00 for each game forfeited. As long as all rosters and payments have been recorded with the USA hockey registrar, then no fines will be assessed.
 2. Once the tiering is done in November, no player may be added to a roster without a written request from the club representative to the NWHL board explaining the reason for the late addition. Once approved, signed/registered supplemental rosters are due within three weeks.
- E. Movement by any player(s) from one NWHL team to another NWHL team in the same season shall be allowed only with the written consent of the Clubs NWHL Representative and accepted by the NWHL Board. Movement by the player from one club to another in the same season, without the written permission of the clubs NWHL Representative from the club losing the player, may result in the immediate end of league play and the suspension of all points won and lost by the offending team.
- F. Whenever an organization has two or more teams at a given level, the NWHL draft system must be employed to pick teams at equal ability and strength. The NWHL Draft procedures will be distributed to all clubs prior to the beginning of the season.
- G. The NWHL discourages the recruitment of teams or players from one organization to another. When there is a group of players transferring from one club to another no more than 5 players can stay together on one team. If there are 6 or more players from one club they will have to be divided evenly among teams at that level, i.e. if 6 squirts transfer to a new club which has two squirt teams, 3 players will be placed on each team. When a club has only one team at a level a maximum of 5 players from another club will be allowed on the team. Extenuating circumstances are subject to board approval.

H. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

1. The NWHL will adhere to the USA hockey age classifications which is calendar year.

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- ~~a. Mites (U8) will abide by USA/AHAI terms. From season start to November 30th mites (U8) are limited to ½ ice games. No longer required by AHAI.~~
2. In an effort to continue the development of girls hockey, the NWHL will provide for the following:
 - a. Girls that are rostered on an all girls team in another league may be rostered on a non-girls team in NWHL at their given birth year level.
 - b. Girls that are rostered on an all girls team in NWHL may be rostered on a non-girls team in another league. If a girl is rostered on a non-girls team at Tier II or Tier I, they must play at their given birth year level in NWHL.
 - c. Girls will not be eligible for an all girls team in NWHL if they are rostered on all girls team in another league.
3. No player is eligible to be rostered on more than one NWHL team.
 - a. The only exception is a backup goalie (BUG). Only players on a NWHL team is eligible to be a BUG on another NWHL team within the same club.
4. Any player who is new to check hockey must attend an on-ice checking clinic. Each club is responsible for documenting their players participation in the checking clinic and forwarding the document to the NWHL prior to the start of league games.
5. Each organization bringing in teams to NWHL must bring in all house players (age appropriate) at each team level.
6. Participation in the NWHL tournament requires that a player has played with the team for 75% or more of NWHL regular season games that the player is eligible to play. The board would consider exceptions to this rule upon written request by the club representative. Players that are designated as injured or ill on the official scoresheet will not have that game counted as an eligible game. **The NWHL reserves the right to designate a player as ineligible if they believe that a team is shown as attempting to circumvent the rules.**
7. A team playing in the NWHL is limited to three Tier 2 level players, NIHL - GOLD, SILVER or BRONZE, of the same age level or of the next lower age level. 'AAA', CSDHL or NIHL ELITE players are not allowed to play on a team in the NWHL, unless the organization petitions the board for approval prior to the start of the season.

IV. LEAGUE GAMES

A. TEAM RESPONSIBILITY

1. An adult coach and/or manager shall accompany each team at all league games.

B. BALANCED ICE TIME (B.I.T.)

1. All teams are to adhere to a balance ice policy for games play as outlined below. There are four defined points to BIT.
 - a. No power play lines.
 - b. No penalty kill lines.
 - c. Even line rotation throughout the entire game.

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- d. BIT for goalies will be based on alternating full games, alternating periods or equal periods per number of goalies.
 - e. Player receiving 3 penalties during a game **may** be sat to avoid the possibility of the 5 penalty rule (**coaches discretion**)
- C. All coaches will sign a BIT Compliance form at the September coaches meeting. Coaches will also need to show their current coaching card at the meeting.
- D. A BIT Violation form will be located on the NWHL website to notify the league of teams not in compliance of this policy .Full information on the person filing the complaint will be required for the leagues verification. Completed forms will go directly to Rules and Conduct. Clubs will be required to investigate all alleged violations and report back to Rules and Conduct. Rules and Conduct will conduct a formal investigation after the 3rd qualified report of BIT violation.
- E. Enforcement of BIT
1. **The NWHL BIT & Blowout committee shall have the authority to immediately suspend a coach for BIT violation if the committee deems the action appropriate.**
 2. If after a formal investigation, the Rules and Conduct Committee determines that there was a violation of BIT, the following suspensions will be issued to the head coach.
 - a. First Offense - 2 game suspension
 - b. Second Offense - 4 game suspension
 - c. Third Offense - suspended for the remainder of the season including the NWHL tournament.
- F. Slaughter rulings
1. Rules and Conduct will monitor all game scores and results
 2. Consistent large goal differentials will result in an investigation of the team by Bit & Blowout committee
 3. Club rep and team coach may be required to appear before Bit & Blowout committee with certified roster and all individual players' history.
 4. If club has more then one team at that level, all team rosters at that level will be examined.
 5. Bit & Blowout committee will determine if the team is qualified under NWHL Game Rules – Challenge of Qualifications.
- G. BIT and Blowout Committee (B&B Committee): The B&B Committee will consist of 3 members, 2 of the members will rotate each year. When the BIT complaint is filed, it will go to this committee. The committee will involve the representatives of the clubs to investigate and report back their findings. The BIT form can only be submitted by a coach, NWHL rep or board member. Current penalties to those found in violation of BIT remain the same. The Blowout portion of the committee will investigate if the goal differential in a game is greater than 8 for games at the squirt through midget level. If found valid, the following penalties apply:
1. 1st time, warning to coach

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2. 2nd time, a one game suspension for the head coach on the bench at the time of the violation

H. CONDUCT

1. Team officials (coaches and managers) shall be responsible for the conduct of their teams before, during, and after league games, particularly in regard to the use of dressing rooms. The club will handle incidents of damage or other conduct prohibited by these Rules and Regulations, the rules and regulations of USA Hockey or AHAI, or by laws. Each such incident will be documented to the NWHL Rules and Conduct Committee. Team officials shall be held responsible for damages or other loss caused by their teams. Inappropriate behavior not handled at the club level will be addressed by the NWHL Rules and Conduct Committee with regret.
2. The NWHL Board reserves the right to impose additional penalties or take stricter action if deemed necessary.

I. SPECTATORS

1. NWHL supports AHAI zero-tolerance policy. In order to achieve the objective of teaching good sportsmanship to our players, it is imperative that spectators conduct themselves appropriately. Each Organization Representative shall take action to insure that spectators are not abusive to officials, players, team officials, or other spectators. Failure to do so could result in team suspension or game forfeiture.
2. Each club is responsible for providing in writing their Parental Code of Conduct policy to the League by the September board meeting. Furthermore, each club is responsible for educating and monitoring this policy with the parents in their organization.
3. Any parent assessed a zero tolerance penalty may be required to come before NWHL Rules and Conduct Committee prior to attending future league activities. Violators of the zero tolerance policy will be posted on the NWHL website under suspension.

J. HOME TEAM

1. The home team shall furnish official game pucks; a timer and scorekeeper; and at least one hour of ice; **one hour ten minutes for Bantam and Midget** safe, adequate dressing room facilities for each team. Score sheets shall list all registered players of the competing teams, and indicate the status if absent, suspended, etc. on the NWHL score sheet. Where uniform colors are similar, the home team shall supply and wear numbered or see-through “pullovers” or scrimmage vests.

K. REFEREES

1. Each club may choose to contract with any responsible ref scheduler, all scheduler contact information due to NWHL by September Board meeting.
2. 2 refs will be required, unless unanimous agreement by both coaches and the referee in writing on the score sheet.
3. Insufficient refs or no-shows, will force rescheduling of the game.
4. Home team, responsible party will be responsible for all cost associated with rescheduling: i.e. ice cost, ref fees, rescheduling fines.
5. Failure to reschedule game will result in forfeiture by home team/responsibly party unless otherwise determined by NWHL Rules & Conduct.

L. GOALIE SUBSTITUTION

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1. If a team has one and only one goalie, and if that goalie becomes ill or is otherwise absent for an unforeseen and non-discretionary reason, that team may, with the permission of the opposing coach, such approval is reasonable, (such permission is not to be unreasonably withheld), substitute a goalie from another NWHL team in their organization at that age level or lower.

M. RINK SIZE

1. All rinks must be approved by the NWHL.

V. GAME RULES

- A. League games shall be played in accordance with the rules as set forth by USA Hockey as amended by AHAI and except as modified herein.

B. TIMING

1. Mite (U8) – Squirt (U10) – Peewee (U12)

- a. All games shall consist of three (3), eleven (11) minute, stop-time periods.

2. Bantam (U14) – Midget (U18)

- a. All games shall consist of three (3), thirteen (13) minute, stop-time periods.

3. All games are to be completed within their allotted ice slot, unless prevented from doing so by external forces (ie: rink declares ice unsafe, power outages, etc.)

- C. If at any time during the 3rd period a team has a five or more goal lead, the clock will go to running time. The clock will stop in the event that the goal differential goes below 5. The clock will also stop in the event of injury and to put penalties on the board and will start again at the drop of the puck. The clock can also stop at the discretion of the on-ice official.

- D. Each team is allowed one 30 second time-out per game.

- E. Home team will provide running clock when game time equals remaining ice time.

- F. Regular season games resulting in a tie at the end of regulation time shall remain tied.

G. PENALTY TIMES

1. Mite (U8) – Squirt (U10) – Peewee (U12)

- a. Minor penalties will be one and one-half (1-1/2) minutes.
- b. Major penalties will be four (4) minutes.
- c. Misconduct penalties will be eight (8) minutes.

2. Bantam (U14) – Midget (U18)

- a. Minor penalties will be 2 minutes.
- b. Major penalties will be 5 minutes.
- c. Misconduct penalties will be 10 minutes.

H. STARTING TIME / WARM-UP

1. The time listed in the NWHL schedule shall be the time that both teams are to take the ice.
2. Warm-up time shall be three (3) minutes. The game shall commence immediately.

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I. GAME MISCONDUCT

1. A player or coach who receives a penalty requiring sitting out a game shall be suspended for at least his/her team's next NWHL game. All USA Hockey, AHAI and NWHL suspension requirements must be satisfied before the player or coach can resume play. The R&C Committee cannot "review" misconducts and penalties that are listed on the official game score sheet. The R&C Committee can be stricter than the USA/AHAI/NWHL misconduct rules but may not be more lenient than the above groups, the R&C cannot change any penalties that are listed on a score sheet.
2. Any player who receives 5 penalties in a game will be assessed 2 Game Misconducts. If a second major violation in the same season is received by the player, he/she will be required to come before NWHL Rules and Conduct before participating in future League games and receive an automatic 4 game suspension.
3. A coach whose team receives 15 penalties in a game, will receive 1 Game Misconduct and at the discretion of the committee may be required to come before NWHL Rules and Conduct. A second violation will result in a 2 game suspension and a mandatory meeting with the R&C committee.
4. Any player at a check level of hockey, who receives a 3rd-Man-In or 1st To Intervene penalty in a NWHL game will be assessed a two game suspension and be required to come before NWHL Rules and Conduct. A second violation in the same season is received by the player, he/she will be required to come before NWHL Rules and Conduct before participating in future League games and receive an automatic 4 game suspension.
5. Any player, who receives two game misconducts in a season, shall be suspended for all NWHL games until he/she appears before the Rules and Conduct Committee (exception: First time receiving 5 penalties in a game for the season.) The R & C Committee have been instructed to assess additional suspensions on all players who are required to come before them, i.e. player receives his 2nd major game infraction for the season and the R & C Committee assesses one additional game suspension. The R & C Committee has implemented a cumulative misconduct suspension process. Each time a player appears in front of the R&C Committee the suspension that player receives from NWHL will double. (2nd offense =1 game becomes 2, 2 games becomes 4, and so on.)
6. USA Hockey and AHAI rules apply to non-league games in addition to the NWHL suspension. This includes but is not limited to game misconduct, and match penalties.
7. Any coach or manager who receives a game misconduct during a league game shall automatically be suspended for 1 league game and at the discretion of the committee may be required to come before NWHL Rules and Conduct.
8. Any person (coach/player/parent) who has received a zero tolerance violation must appear before NWHL Rules and Conduct. This person/player or coach will automatically receive a 3 game suspension. The Zero tolerance suspension does not allow that person/player or coach to attend or be in the rink for any team functions (practices, games, meeting, etc) until after the third game has been completed.

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J. GROSS MISCONDUCT OR MATCH PENALTY

1. Any player, coach, or manager who receives a gross misconduct or match penalty will be reported to AHAI and must appear before the NWHL Rules and Conduct before participating in any team activities. The NWHL Board will support the AHAI findings.

K. CONFIRMATION / MAKE-UPS OF GAMES

1. Failure to appear as scheduled due to adverse weather conditions necessitates that the game be made up as soon as possible from the original scheduled date. No fines as provided for in Section II-C or IV-I. 8 will be assessed.

L. REFUSAL TO COMPETE

1. Any team not completing their NWHL schedule may also be ineligible to participate in the end of the season NWHL Tournament and will be brought immediately to the Conduct Committee with possible further action taken. Tournament fees will not be refunded.

M. CANCELLED GAMES

1. The Scheduler must be notified of all game changes and/or cancellations, and the rescheduled game date must accompany all game cancellations.
2. Changes will be assessed the appropriate fee. No schedule changes will be guaranteed with less than a four-day notification received and acknowledged by the Scheduler.
3. The team canceling the game is responsible for all fees and rescheduling of ice, as well as notification of the opposing team.
4. All games must be played prior to the completion of the regular season ending date.
5. In the event these rescheduling conditions cannot be met, the Scheduler must be notified to enable the Board to take the appropriate action.
6. Failure to comply with the above stated rules may result in a double forfeiture.
7. No game changes will be accepted after 2/1 without prior Board approval.
8. Game changes are to be mutually agreed upon. The scheduler or a NWHL Board member should be notified if it appears that a team is being coerced to make a change, or unreasonable to facilitate a change.
9. Teams that circumvent NWHL procedures will be fined \$250 and will be reviewed by NWHL Rules and Ethics. Penalties could include coach suspension and the team being removed from NWHL Tournament participation.

N. CHALLENGE OF QUALIFICATIONS

1. Challenges to any team's qualifications to play in the NWHL may be based upon draft procedures as defined in Section III, F, or evidence showing any team to be "stacked".
2. Upon determination by the Board that a team is not qualified to play in the NWHL, all games played by such team may be forfeited with all remaining games to be played as exhibition.
3. No non-qualified teams shall NOT be eligible for the NWHL tournament.

O. SIGNING SCORE SHEETS

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1. Score sheets should have the signature of each team's coach. It is the responsibility of each coach to read over the score sheet for potential errors. Refusal to sign the score sheet does not constitute a protest.

P. INDEPENDENT TEAMS

1. No independent teams will be allowed to play in the NWHL unless approved by the Board. Any player rostered on an independent team is not eligible to play in the NWHL.

Q. INELIGIBLE PLAYERS

1. The team coach is responsible for assuring that all players on his team are eligible to play.
 - a. If an ineligible player plays a league game, the coach will be suspended through the next NWHL game.
 - b. If an ineligible player or coach plays in a NWHL game, the team will forfeit that game.
 - c. Each club is responsible for enforcing eligibility rules
 - d. Repeated violations of ineligibility rules may result in the club's expulsion from the NWHL.

R. PROTESTS

1. Given the League's support of officials, and emphasis on fun and enjoyment, no formal NWHL protest policy exists. Any complaints or concerns not resolved by the team's home organization may be forwarded in writing to the NWHL Rules and Conduct Committee.

S. SCORESHEETS PROCEDURE

1. Teams will be provided packets of NWHL Score Sheets for each home game.
2. Each team representative is responsible for ensuring that the score sheet is completed properly.
3. **Game scores are to be entered by the home team on the league website within two (2) days of the game date or the organization will be assessed a late fee.**

T. GAME POINTS

1. NWHL games will consist of two points per game.
2. Two points for a win.
3. One point for a tie.
4. Zero points for a loss.

U. LEAGUE STANDINGS

1. Standings will be compiled by the NWHL Chairman - Standings and made available via the Leagues website. Clubs are responsible for checking the website regularly to verify the information is accurate.
2. League Standings will be determined by the following criteria:
 - a. Most points.
 - b. Most wins.
 - c. Fewest losses.

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- d. Head to head competition.
- e. Fewest goals allowed (maximum of 5 goal differential per game).
- f. Goal Differential (Goals For – Goals Against) (maximum of 5 goal differential per game).
- g. In the event a tie occurs after all tie breakers have been exhausted for 1st place in the League for a division, two flags will be awarded to the tied teams.
- h. In the event of a tie, team in highest division will be placed in higher tier for the tournament.
- i. Coin toss will be used in the event that both teams are in same division and tied.

V. SCHEDULES

1. The Chairman-Standings will update the website regularly with all scheduled games. It is the responsibility of each club representative to check the website and verify that the posted schedule is correct and free of errors. Any errors found must be reported to the League Scheduler immediately so the website can be updated and the Referee Scheduler notified.

VI. TOURNAMENT

A. ELIGIBILITY

1. All teams are eligible to play in the NWHL Tournament as long as each team has completed their league games. Failure to do so may cause the team to be dropped from the NWHL Tournament with not refund of tournament fees.

B. RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. The Tournament Committee will recommend and the Board will approve the rules and regulations for the NWHL Tournament.
2. The NWHL will set divisions for the NWHL Tournament, using amount of teams and time frame as deciding factors for the NWHL Tournament.

C. PARTICIPATION

1. All teams, which participate in the regular NWHL season, are required to participate in the NWHL Tournament. Refusal to compete in any NWHL Tournament game, as directed by Chairman-Scheduling or Conduct Committee is considered by the Board to be immediate resignation from the NWHL.

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