TO: AAHA Youth Member Clubs –  
FROM: Glenn Hefferan, Affiliate President  
RE: Tryouts & Player Contracts/Agreements 
DATE: March 13, 2018 
CC: AAHA Board of Directors

Last year, USA Hockey approved rules that apply to Tryouts and Player contracts for Tier I & Tier II Youth and Girls levels, as well as USA Hockey’s recommendation to set tryout and contract dates for all levels youth and girls levels of play. Recently, the USA Hockey Youth Council voted to provided its Affiliates additional guidance and an important emphasis of the key points of these rules along with potential consequences for violating the rules.

I have specifically discussed the new emphasis with USA Hockey Leadership and how it applies with our own Affiliate Rules. The following is a result of USA Hockey’s actions through its Youth Council and our discussions for the application to AAHA rules. The following applies to AAHA Tier I, Tier II and Independent Clubs.

1) AAHA Youth and Girls Clubs are not permitted to offer any type of agreement or contract that obligates a player for the coming season, prior to the appropriate tryout dates for each level of play, as published on the AAHA Website. This specifically means you cannot “contract” your own players until the proper tryout dates. 

2) AAHA Youth and Girls Clubs are permitted to run “Pre-Tryout” camps, clinics or similarly termed activity for the benefit of current rostered players from their own Club prior to the appropriate AAHA Tryout dates. AAHA Clubs shall not allow the players of other AAHA Clubs to attend such camps, clinics or similarly termed activity, regardless if the player’s club has offered any kind of release. Simply stated, allowing another Club’s player on your ice for “pre-tryout” skate, open house, or similar activity is considered a violation of USA Hockey and AAHA Rules.

3) AAHA Clubs are permitted to advertise their programs, tryout dates, tuition costs, coaching staff and other related information. Email campaigns are deemed to be acceptable, provided it is for informational purposes such as tryout dates, tuition costs, coaching staffs and other programmatic information.

4) Contracts or commitment offers conveyed by an AAHA Club or its personnel, or persons acting on its behalf, made to players or their parents in any digital or written form, for the following season but prior to official tryout dates, is strictly prohibited.

5) USA Hockey and this Affiliate does not and cannot regulate the behavior of rinks and other entities that operate hockey programs, where such programs are not operated under USA Hockey and AAHA sanctioning.

6) USA Hockey’s “Tryout/Player Selection Rule” (found on page 134 of the USAH Annual Guide) applies to Tier I and Tier II Nationally Tournament-Bound teams in the 14U to 19U age categories, the rule specifically provides for Affiliates to set tryout dates for all youth and girls classifications as determined by the Affiliate. For the AAHA, this includes the competitive separation for AAA and AA level teams, and recognized by USA Hockey.

7) On March 2, 2018, a directed from the USA Hockey Vice President, Dave Klasnick, declared the following;

“If a Tier I team recruits or solicits players or offers hockey contracts to players for the following season, or holds development camps, tryouts, player selections or any activity that could be construed as a tryout/solicitation or recruitment for the following season prior to 48 hours after National Championships (for this season only, the 48 hour rule has been reduced to 24 hours for Youth Tier I or II), said team will be ineligible to be recognized as a Tier I team and will not be eligible for National Championships for the season for which it was holding tryouts.”

Similar consequences are applicable for Tier II, and those organizations seeking to field teams in the Independent classification. If you have any questions, please direct them through your Club President, who can then contact me directly. Your cooperation is appreciated.