



## **MVYHA Parent/Player Guidebook 2019 - 2020**

### **Disclaimer**

Nothing in this guidebook is to be construed as a guarantee or contract to or with any player, parent, coach, official or member of the Mon Valley Youth Hockey Association. This publication is intended to serve as a guideline for operation of the MVYHA, and any part or portion of the handbook can be changed, modified or amended at any time by the officers and Board of Directors of the MVYHA. Should any single section of this document be changed, or found to be legally unenforceable, only that section shall be deemed such, and all other sections shall remain in force as written.

### **MVYHA Guidebook Overview**

This MVYHA Guidebook reflects the best thinking of the Board of Directors of our organization at the date of this publication. It also represents the contributions from many youth hockey associations. We have borrowed from their writings and their experiences and, in turn, invite them and you to borrow from ours. We are particularly grateful to MLHA which took the time to compile a handbook for their parents and players before us, and from whom this format was obtained.

We look forward to the season ahead and to the continued growth of our program and our young people.

Sincerely,

The Mon Valley Youth Hockey Association  
Board of Directors

### **Introduction**

This guidebook was developed to provide everyone involved with youth hockey an opportunity to become acquainted with the philosophies, policies, rules and expectations that shape the MVYHA program. We encourage you to review it carefully. We hope that this may spark your interest to become more involved with the organization.

As you will see there is much to do. Many hours of planning are required to get our program ready for opening day each year, and dedicated volunteers are needed throughout the season to help the association run smoothly. Your help is essential. The best way for our organization to function successfully is with active parent participation and support.

### **About MVYHA**

The primary purpose of the MVYHA is to contribute to the development of our youth through the game of hockey. We are committed to providing young people the opportunity to have fun on the ice while learning the basics and how to play the game of ice hockey.

MVYHA strives to teach the basic hockey skills of skating, stick handling, passing and shooting which facilitates the development of motor skills, and hand/eye coordination, quickness and endurance. Every player participates in the game. Each player is encouraged to do the best he/she can and to contribute to the success of the team. In doing so, each player learns to win with pride and lose with dignity.

As a team sport, hockey affirms the importance of commitment, self-discipline, and sportsmanship among participants (TEAM= Together Everyone Achieves More).

- Benefits participants in youth hockey receive include:
- Development of the skills necessary to play ice hockey.
- Knowledge of the rules and strategies of the game.
- Knowledge of conditioning techniques that affect performance.
- Enjoyment and recreation.
- Commitment to teamwork.
- Building self-esteem.
- Building a good work ethic.
- Good sportsmanship.
- Respect for their teammates, coaches and opponents.
- The opportunity to meet other players from many different organizations.

### **Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors consists of parents/ guardians of players. Board member elections are held at the annual banquet by ballot. The By-Laws and [Standing Rules](#) of MVYHA authorize the Board of Directors to oversee the operation of the Association and carry out its goals. A monthly Board meeting is scheduled for the 4th Friday of each month and all parents are encouraged to attend.

### **Volunteers**

The success of MVYHA is a tribute to the countless volunteer hours of people devoted to providing a hockey program for our children. We are very grateful for the contributions of those who paved the way before us and for those involved today.

MVYHA is a volunteer organization. Without our volunteers, we would not exist. All of our Board members, coaches, and team managers and officials are volunteers. Please volunteer by contacting any Board member to see how you can help.

### **Team Support**

There are many areas where parents can contribute to the welfare of the team. Two very important functions for teams are:

#### **Team Business Managers:**

Each team, regardless of level, must have a manager. Managers serve as a liaison between the coach and parents and have administrative responsibilities for items such as, but not limited to, attending board meetings, obtaining scorekeepers, penalty box officials, and timekeepers, notifying parents of schedule changes, coordinating scrimmages, completing game score sheet rosters, and especially for facilitating communication between coaches and parents throughout the season.

**Minor Officials:**

Each team is responsible for providing a scorekeeper, timekeeper and penalty box official at their home games. These are relatively easy tasks to perform once you become familiar with the procedure. These responsibilities also offer a new perspective of the game.

**MVYHA Communications**

MVYHA believes that communication is critically important. This guidebook is one example of how we want to keep our members informed.

**Website:**

Team schedules, scores, team news and notes, tournament information, tryout information, league news and much more can be found on the website <http://www.mvthunder.com>

**Facebook:**

Communication also occurs on Facebook. Please respect others when posting. Remember our children are a part of this social media group also. Please friend us at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/55789743238/>.

**Social Media By-law:**

This By-law is applicable to all MVYHA members, or those conducting business with MVYHA.

Social networks and blogs are an increasingly popular means of communication on the Internet. These sites include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, as well as personal websites and blogs. These sites enable users to communicate in a public forum and/or share content on the World Wide Web. This By-law outlines the use of these services by MVYHA members.

1. Confidential Procedures (if applicable)

Confidential procedures for this by-law, if any, are not public information and may not be released in its entirety or in part, without the approval of the MVYHA Board of Directors. Confidential procedures may be released to any MVYHA member on an as needed basis.

2. Specifications

Any use of the Social Media to promote the MVYHA in a positive manner is strongly encouraged; however, use of these sources to slander, degrade, or otherwise cause issue with the MVYHA is forbidden. Any individual who is deemed to be inappropriate will be advised of this and could be penalized to include being removed from the media source and/or asked to leave MVYHA. This discipline will be enforced to the utmost as we have several youth members who access these media sources and it is our wish to promote a positive and safe environment for our membership. Conduct that displays members consuming alcohol and/or drugs, acts of inappropriateness, lewdness or any illegal acts will be considered for disciplinary action by the Board of Directors and Disciplinary Committee.

### **Association Social Activities**

Each year, at the end of the season, the association holds its annual end of season banquet. Each team will be recognized for its accomplishments and individual players receive awards for their personal achievements during the year. Individual teams may also hold parties and social activities throughout the season. This is up to the individual teams.

### **Ice Time**

Ice time is a precious commodity, which consumes a majority of the MVYHA's annual budget each year.

Our ice scheduler is very careful to ensure that all teams receive an equal number of full and shared ice practices, and that everyone has a turn at the less desirable practice times. MVYHA attempts to schedule games and practices as far in advance as possible. The season games are usually scheduled late in September. Your team manager will give you the games dates and times as soon as he/she receives them.

Our web site will have practice schedules for all teams as they are released. The website will be updated as frequently as possible; however, it is always wise to check with your business manager for any last minute changes, cancellations, or additions.

There are times when some teams will decide to purchase extra ice on their own. These practices are considered voluntary, and are in addition to time provided by MVYHA. Teams will have to arrange for payment as they chose.

### **Team Jerseys**

MVYHA requires players to purchase one to two jerseys (home and away) for game use only, and hockey socks. These can be ordered early in the season. Jersey numbers are managed by MVYHA to avoid duplication of numbers at each age group level. Players should bring both jerseys to all games.

### **Equipment Requirements**

Each skater must wear/ use the following USA Hockey and PAHL required equipment when participating in games and practices.

- Hockey skates
- USA Hockey approved protective helmet with full-face protection of any style, with the Hockey Equipment Certification Council (HECC) seal of approval.
- Facemask - required at all levels and must be approved by HECC.
- Ice hockey stick
- Neck/throat protector.
- Hockey elbow pads.
- Hockey gloves.
- Hockey shin pads.
- Hockey shoulder pads.
- Internal mouth guard. - The PAHL requires that the mouthpiece be attached to the facemask (this is not required by USA Hockey).
- Protective cup/supporter (pelvic protector for girls).
- Jersey - home and away.
- Goalies require special leg pads, chest protectors, gloves and blockers.

## **Safety**

Providing a safe playing environment is of paramount importance to USA Hockey, PAHL and MVYHA. As such, several rules exist to ensure player and fan safety.

1. Players must wear all of the required equipment (see above) at all times during games and practices. A player may be removed from the ice by a coach or referee if any protective item is missing or deemed defective.
2. It is MVYHA policy that a USA Hockey registered coach or assistant coach ***must*** be on the ice for all practices. If a coach is not available to supervise a practice, the practice may not be conducted and players may not be on the ice.
3. Players not registered with MVYHA or on a PAHL approved MVYHA tournament roster are not permitted to participate in any on-ice or off-ice practices with an MVYHA team. Participation by unregistered players in MVYHA practices voids the USA Hockey insurance for all team members and the association, and places the coach, parents and the association at risk. Exceptions to this policy, for the purpose of team placement evaluation, is on a case by case basis under the discretion of the Board of Directors.
4. Players may not be on the ice when the Zamboni is on the ice. All players must wait to enter the ice surface until after the Zamboni has left the ice surface. At the end of practice all players must leave the ice promptly when the Zamboni doors are opened.
5. An EMT must be present and sign the score sheet at all PAHL regular season and playoff games at all levels. The EMT must be "in the rink" and available to go onto the ice surface when asked by the referees.
6. It is required by MVYHA to have an EMT present at all scrimmages at any level.
7. A minimum of two officials are required for all 18U youth, 16U youth, 14U youth, and girls 19U through 14U games.
8. It is MVYHA policy that any non-participating players, or children under the age of 18, who are on the bench, in the penalty box or at the scorer's table during a game or scrimmage, must wear a USA Hockey approved helmet with face guard.
9. Fans and parents are not permitted to go onto the ice surface or enter the bench area, penalty box or score keepers area during any game, scrimmage or practice unless requested to do so by an EMT, coach, team official or referee. Going onto the playing surface without such a request is a violation of the Zero tolerance policy and will be dealt with accordingly. Also during game and practice times, the glass surrounding the ice is considered part of the playing area and the above rule applies.
10. When an EMT is present, fans, parents, coaches and referees ARE NOT permitted to intervene with treatment of an injured player. ONLY the EMT is permitted to provide treatment.
11. Locker Room Supervision: USA Hockey is concerned with locker room activities between minor players; minor players and adult players; adults being alone with individual minor players in locker rooms; and with non-official or non-related adults having unsupervised access to minor participants at sanctioned team events.

It is the policy of USA Hockey and USA Hockey InLine 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 Coed locker room policy set out below.

### **Team and Player Classification**

MVYHA is a registered member of USA Hockey, INC. and abides by all of its rules and regulation governing amateur hockey. MVYHA also belongs to the PAHL (Pittsburgh Amateur Hockey League) and abides by all of its rules and regulations governing league play.

Player participants are placed in one of several age groups. The groups are determined by a participant's age as of January 1 preceding the beginning of a season. Age group classifications are as follows: 8U (birth year 2013-2011), 10U (birth year 2009-2010), 12U (birth year 2007-2008), 14U (birth year 2005-2006), 16U (birth year 2003-2004) and 18U (birth year 2001-2002).

### **Playing "up" - Playing at a higher age classification**

MVYHA discourages players from playing above their age classification. Playing up will be determined on a case by case basis with the best interests of the player and organization taking precedent.

In all cases, a parent or legal guardian must sign a USA Hockey waiver form permitting the player to tryout and/or play at the higher age classification.

### **Coaching**

MVYHA coaches come from a variety of backgrounds, but all share two important characteristics: they are ALL volunteers, and they all care about the development of children.

Criteria for becoming a coach are:

- Coaches must possess a thorough knowledge of the strategies and skills required of the game.
- Prior hockey experience is strongly preferred; however, a combination of thorough knowledge of the game and other youth team coaching experience is an acceptable substitute.
- Desire and ability to teach young people the skills required in the sport.
- Commitment to the values, mission and goals of USA Hockey and MVYHA.
- USA Hockey coaching certification.
- USA Hockey required background screenings.

### **Team Placement**

MVYHA attempts to field teams at each competitive level in each age division. The number and level of teams are determined after the tryout process, and are based on the number and skill level of the players attending the tryouts. Team placements will be determined by a group of independent evaluators and head coaches. If a player is unable to attend tryouts due to illness, injury or other reasons, their placement on a team will be at the discretion of the tryout committee and head coaches.

All team placements are submitted to the PAHL placement committee for approval. The PAHL committee reviews all team placement requests from every PAHL association, and may make changes to promote a competitive balance in each division, and to provide the proper development opportunities for each team. The decision of the PAHL review is final.

### **Regular Season Play**

The PAHL specifies the number of games for each age and competitive level, ranging from 10 jamborees per season at the Mite level, to 18-20 per season at the older levels. The games are evenly divided between home and away games. PAHL teams are located throughout Western & Central Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia. It is possible that a team may have to travel to such areas as Erie, Altoona, Johnstown, State College, Youngstown and Meadville to play some of their away games. The PAHL establishes the divisional structure for the regular season based on the number of declared teams at each competitive level.

The PAHL provides MVYHA with a list of the teams each of our teams must play during the season. Then our team managers and coaches take care of scheduling league games.

In addition to the regular season games, teams often have scrimmages in the pre-season or during the year to provide additional game experience. Home scrimmages can be scheduled during full ice practices, but the team can elect to purchase additional ice time for scrimmages. The team is responsible for securing and paying any officials or EMTs for the game. Scrimmages do not count in the PAHL regular season standings; however hat trick, playmaker and shut out awards can be earned.

### **Tournament Play**

Tournaments are in addition to regular season games. Tournaments are not mandatory. Decisions to participate in a tournament will be made by the team as a group. Tournament fees are in addition to any MVYHA required fees and charges.

### **Hockey Parents**

As parents or guardians we are the most important influence on our players' attitudes toward the game of hockey and on their behavior. Parents and coaches can work together to demonstrate the philosophy of MVYHA to develop the skills of hockey and to promote the growth of each player, promote sportsmanship and team play, and for each player to have fun.

It is worth stating that in accordance with USA Hockey's policy of ZERO TOLERANCE, the following are not acceptable:

1. Yelling at or threatening referees, opposing players or coaches before, during or after games or practices.
2. Direct confrontations with parents and players.
3. Demonstration of frustration or anger after a game loss.
4. Any physical abuse of any other person.
5. Approaching the bench during a game situation unless summoned by a coach or official.

The PAHL has invested the referees with the authority to suspend any game action until a disruptive or abusive parent or fan has left the rink area. MVYHA will enforce the Zero Tolerance Policy.

#### **Dealing with concerns - 24 hour "Cooling Off" period**

If a parent has a concern with a coach (or any other issue with the association), he/she is required to wait 24 hours before taking up the issue with the team's Business manager. This "cooling off period" provides an opportunity for all parties to separate themselves from the immediacy of the situation, and then discuss it in a calm, non-emotional manner. If, after discussion, a mutually agreeable resolution to the issue cannot be reached, a formal complaint for intervention can be submitted in writing to the Board of Directors. The Board will investigate the situation and meet with the parties to facilitate a resolution. Likewise, a coach who has a concern about a parent must follow this same procedure.

#### **Player Behavior**

MVYHA observes the rules enacted by USA Hockey, Inc. and the PAHL.

The MVYHA Board of Directors and its coaches, team managers and volunteer parents all have vested interest in providing a safe, fun-filled environment for the players. In return, each player must understand that coaches, assistant coaches, and parent helpers are to be treated with respect and consideration.

USA Hockey has a written Code of Conduct for players, which each player is expected to sign at the beginning of the season. It is expected that a player will conduct her/himself in a controlled manner while representing MVYHA both on and off the ice.

All members of MVYHA shall adhere to our Code of Conduct. This includes but is not limited to players, coaches, managers, parents and family members. The code of conduct is in effect for all MVYHA teams during all game situations. Game situations include the time entering the ice rink premises (home or away) until departure.

Foul language and direct insubordination is unacceptable behavior and will be dealt with accordingly. All players should arrive at games and practices in sufficient time to allow for suiting up and the necessary pre-game instruction and warm up.

Reliable attendance is essential to personal skill development and the development of team continuity. MVYHA head coaches have the authority to implement a reasonable practice and game attendance policy to avoid disruption to the team.

#### **Conduct and Disciplinary Action**

The initial authority for player discipline is vested in the team coaches and the MVYHA Vice President of Discipline and Disciplinary Committee.

All disciplinary actions must be reported to the MVYHA Board of Directors.



MVYHA will adhere to all USA Hockey and PAHL league rules with respect to minor and major penalties. All match or gross misconduct penalties whether in a PAHL game, tournament or scrimmage will be reported to the PAHL level statistician and the MVYHA Board of Directors. It is the responsibility of the team manager to report such infractions within 24 hours of the occurrence.

#### **Parent Behavior**

All members of MVYHA shall adhere to our Code of Conduct. This includes but is not limited to players, coaches, managers, parents and family members. The code of conduct is in effect for all MVYHA teams during all game situations. Game situations include the time entering the ice rink premises (home or away) until departure.

Foul language, verbal or physical abuse of any player coach, game official, minor official, parent or spectator are considered crude parent behavior.

#### **Conduct and Disciplinary Action**

Disciplinary action against any parent or family member shall be on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Disciplinary committee appointed to the case by the MVYHA Board of Directors.

#### **Appeals**

The appeal policy applies to all members, both playing and non-playing, whose terms and conditions of membership are administered by the MVYHA Board of Directors.

It is the policy of the MVYHA Board of Directors to promote and maintain an atmosphere in which each and every member feels the freedom to speak his/her mind and to ask questions without fear of reprisal. In those instances where misunderstandings or dissatisfaction exist, members are encouraged to use the appeals process.

Most problems should be able to be handled by the immediate coach, assistant coach, or team manager. They shall take prompt action to resolve the problem, or advise the member why the problem cannot be resolved. In that case the formal appeals procedure must be initiated within 7 calendar days of the occurrence of the problem. If the coach, assistant coach or team manager is unable to resolve the problem to the satisfaction of the member, they will instruct the member on the procedure for a formal appeal. They will also provide the member with the necessary form. It will then be turned over to the MVYHA Board of Directors to investigate and answer within a reasonable amount of time. The decision of the MVYHA Board of Directors will be considered final.

## **Finances and Fees**

Registration fees are established annually by the MVYHA Board of Directors and are based on the projected budget for the coming season.

A number of factors determine annual playing fees, including but not limited to, expected ice costs, number of players, profit from our annual mandatory fundraiser, and EMT and referee fees.

Fees for the 2019 - 2020 season are as follows:

- 8U (Mite)                      \$750
- 10U (Squirt)                 \$1250
- 12U (Pee-Wee)              \$1350
- 14U (Bantam)                \$1450
- 16U & 18U (Midget)       \$1600
- 12U Girls                      \$300/MVYHA co-ed player / \$600/outside of MVYHA

MVYHA requires that all players pay a non-refundable registration fee at the time of tryouts as well as the USA Hockey registration and insurance fee. Please register with USA Hockey at [www.USAHockey.com](http://www.USAHockey.com). Email the confirmation to yourself and our registrar, Jamie Ross ([ptsarossclan@yahoo.com](mailto:ptsarossclan@yahoo.com)). Please print out a copy for your records.

Any member who does not complete their payments in full to MVYHA by December 31 of the playing year will have their players suspended from participating in any MVYHA activities, including practices, games and tournaments, until the account balances are made current. MVYHA may notify governing organizations of amateur hockey (US Hockey, PAHL, PIHL) of any outstanding balances. If there is still an outstanding balance as of February 1, MVYHA may commence proceedings before a District Justice or Magistrate to collect the unpaid amount, obtain a judgment for such amount plus interest and costs, and execute on such judgment all lawful means.

A \$25 fee will be added to player accounts for checks which are returned due to insufficient funds, or other reasons. Owner of the check will be notified of the occurrence by the treasurer and/or registrar.

Please mail payments to MVYHA PO Box 772 Belle Vernon, PA 15012. Please write in the memo of the check which player's account the payment will be submitted towards. If the payment is for something other than tuition, please make note of that in the memo also (i.e. Jersey, socks, fundraising activity, etc.).

## **Fundraising**

We recognize that hockey is an expensive sport to play. We try to reduce these costs to the association and to the individual through fundraising.

MVYHA sponsors 1 mandatory fundraiser each season. You will receive information about these from your team's business manager as soon as it is available.

MVYHA also offers voluntary fundraisers to offset the registration fee. The information on these is available throughout the season and communicated to you by your team business manager or via the website.

MVYHA actively seeks corporate sponsorships to underwrite regular season expenses. MVYHA provides a wide array of benefits to the sponsor. If you or someone you know is willing to be a corporate sponsor of youth hockey, please contact and MVYHA Board member.



The MVYHA Parent/ Player Handbook for the 2019 - 2020 season contains important information about MVYHA and I understand that I should consult any Board of Directors representative regarding any questions not answered in the handbook. Since the information and policies described herein are subject to change at any time, I acknowledge that revisions to the handbook may occur. All such changes will generally be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. Only the Board of Directors has the ability to adopt any revisions to the policies in this handbook. I have had an opportunity to read the handbook, and I understand that I may ask any questions I might have concerning the handbook. I accept the terms of the handbook. I also understand that it is my responsibility to comply with the policies contained in this handbook, and any revisions made to it. I further agree that if I remain with MVYHA following any modifications to the handbook, I thereby accept and agree to such changes. I have received a copy of the MVYHA Parent/ Player Handbook for the 2019 – 2020 hockey season on the date listed below. I understand that I am expected to read the entire handbook. Additionally, I will sign the two copies of this Acknowledgment of Receipt, retain one copy for myself, and return one copy to MVYHA on the date specified. I understand that this form will be retained.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent/ Guardian Signature and Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent/ Guardian's Name – Printed

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Player Signature and Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Player's Name – Printed

\_\_\_\_\_  
 MVYHA Representative Signature and Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 MVYHA Rep's Name – Printed



The MVYHA Parent/ Player Handbook for the 2019 - 2020 season contains important information about MVYHA and I understand that I should consult any Board of Directors representative regarding any questions not answered in the handbook. Since the information and policies described herein are subject to change at any time, I acknowledge that revisions to the handbook may occur. All such changes will generally be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. Only the Board of Directors has the ability to adopt any revisions to the policies in this handbook. I have had an opportunity to read the handbook, and I understand that I may ask any questions I might have concerning the handbook. I accept the terms of the handbook. I also understand that it is my responsibility to comply with the policies contained in this handbook, and any revisions made to it. I further agree that if I remain with MVYHA following any modifications to the handbook, I thereby accept and agree to such changes. I have received a copy of the MVYHA Parent/ Player Handbook for the 2019 - 2020 hockey season on the date listed below. I understand that I am expected to read the entire handbook. Additionally, I will sign the two copies of this Acknowledgment of Receipt, retain one copy for myself, and return one copy to MVYHA on the date specified. I understand that this form will be retained.

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Parent/ Guardian Signature and Date

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Parent/ Guardian's Name – Printed

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Player Signature and Date

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Player's Name – Printed

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MVYHA Representative Signature and Date

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MVYHA Rep's Name – Printed