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# CONDUCT & CHARACTER- DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE HANDBOOK

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*Program Resource Guide*



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# PLAYING RULES

Start here! Is this a playing rules violation? If so, those rules will govern the situation first.

Any game suspension or playing rules violations will be dealt with under the USA Hockey and/or Hockey Canada playing rules, along with any affiliate/province rules and/or league rules. There are multiple sources that must be consulted when understanding what penalties a player must serve. The Association leadership, Hockey Director and/or coaches must be well-versed in how these suspensions work, and must always consult any governing bodies if there are questions.

In all cases, for any Team Official or Player who is serving a game misconduct violation and/or disciplinary suspension, the suspension will commence 45 minutes prior to the start of each game and conclude 30 minutes following the conclusion of each game. The Team Official or Player serving the suspension shall be prohibited from:

- Having any interaction, involvement or communication "in person," electronically or otherwise with the team.
- Being present in the locker room.
- Being on or near the bench of their team.

Any violation of this Rule may result in supplementary discipline and may subject such Team Official or Player to further disciplinary proceedings.

In general, your Discipline and/or Conduct/Character Committee will review and/or consult with only Match Penalties. PNAHA rules indicate that the local program is the "proper disciplinary authority" in the review of a Match Penalty. Other penalties that are assessed (such as game misconduct penalties) are not reviewed at a local program level. If there is an issue with a penalty that was assessed by a game official and/or the league (or the scoresheet is incorrect), these issues must be elevated to the league and/or state/province disciplinary authorities (and not dealt with at a local program level).

In the case of a Match Penalty, the proper disciplinary authority (the local program) shall be required to conduct any disciplinary actions in accordance with the provisions of USA Hockey's Standardized Discipline Policy. If a hearing is requested by either party (the offending player/team official or the proper authorities), it shall follow USA Hockey's "Resolutions of Disputes, Arbitration and Suspensions" section of the current USA Hockey Annual Guide. (Rule 410(c) | Supplementary Discipline).

Standardized Discipline Policy - Match Penalties. USA Hockey has established suspension range recommendations for match penalties. These suspension ranges shall serve as a means to create consistency in the application of suspensions involving players or team officials assessed match penalties. The following procedure shall be followed in each instance when a match penalty is assessed.



# PLAYER NOTIFICATIONS

*Best Practices*

Once an Incident Report is received (or a report from a coach and/or review of a game sheet that indicates a suspension is warranted), your program will designate a point person who will review the situation and determine next steps. This is typically going to be the people who are receiving the Incident Reports.

If the suspension is warranted, a program administrator will direct a written notification via email to the player, coach and team manager indicating the date that the suspension will be served. It will be the obligation of the coach and team manager to ensure that the player's suspension is noted on the game sheet where the suspension is served. The served suspension(s) should be provided via email back to the designated program administrators to close the loop on the suspension. The team manager will also file that game sheet in a Credentials Notebook (where applicable) and highlight the served suspension.

If there is a question as to the correct player and/or correct call that has been noted on the game sheet, an inquiry should be conducted with the league and additional information gathered from the coaching staff. This is not typical, but can occur. If there is a deviation from the game sheet (ie., player #44 is given a game misconduct, but it should be player #47 instead), the appropriate league should be notified of the error. The steps above regarding notice will be followed. Once the correct player serves the suspension, that information will be forwarded to the correct league.

**\*\*NOTE:** Coaches should ALWAYS review the scoresheet following the games if there is any question as to whether the correct player is serving or receiving penalties. Many errors can be fixed RIGHT THEN as opposed to having to follow up later with an investigation with the league. Scorekeepers must also be VERY CAREFUL when putting the appropriate players with the appropriate penalties on the game sheets.

If the player has been assessed a Match Penalty, a hearing must be held (or an offer in lieu of a hearing must be accepted). Please see the next page for more information.

What can suspended players do while suspended?

- They should attend games in appropriate game day, off-ice apparel and support the team.
- They can assist the team with filling water bottles, organizing sticks, etc.
- They can assist the team with stats or other responsibilities in the stands.
- They cannot be on the bench.
- They can support the team in the stands.
- They cannot be in the locker room.
- They cannot be with the team 45 minutes before the game starts, or 30 minutes after the game ends.
- If the next game(s) are away games, have a discussion with the family about whether they will attend. It is not a requirement that a suspended player be present for the game; however, this will be a team by team discussion as to whether that player will be required to travel if they cannot play. For example, it may be expected that the player attends the away weekend if they have to sit two (2) games, but would be eligible to play the remaining two (2) games in a tournament weekend.
- In all instances, this should be a learning opportunity for the player.

# EXAMPLE OF PLAYER NOTIFICATION



Shelby FitzGerald <shelby@spokanejrchiefs.com>

Fri, Feb 9, 12:17 PM



As you received a game misconduct on Sunday, February 4th (USA Hockey Rule 620b-head contact), you have received an automatic three-game suspension. The suspension will be served during the following games:

February 10th game (Spokane vs North Oak, Midway BC)

February 11th game (Spokane vs North Oak, Midway BC)

February 17th game (Spokane vs Cristeros, Eagles Ice Arena)

For any **Team Official** or **Player** serving a suspension for a prior game misconduct violation or disciplinary suspension, the suspension will commence 45 minutes prior to the start of each game and conclude 30 minutes following the conclusion of each game.

The **Team Official** or **Player** serving the suspension shall be prohibited from:

1. Having any interaction, involvement, or communication "in person," electronically or otherwise with the team
2. Being present in the locker room
3. Being on or near the bench of their team

Any violation of this Rule may result in supplementary discipline and may subject such Team Official or Player to further disciplinary proceedings.

██████████ please submit the scoresheet of ██████████ noting the game where ██████████ serves his game suspension, copying me and VP-Admin, ██████████ (copied here).

Thank you,

--



**Shelby FitzGerald**

Administrative Manager

Spokane Youth Hockey | Home of the Jr. Chiefs!

# MATCH PENALTIES

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(Note) Any match penalty assessed under Rule 601(e.1) (Physical Assault of Official) is excluded from this policy. Original jurisdiction in any hearing resulting from a Match Penalty assessed under Rule 601(e.1) (Physical Assault of Official) shall reside with the Affiliate and is governed by USA Hockey's "Resolutions of Disputes, Arbitration and Suspensions" section of the current USA Hockey Annual Guide.

When a Match Penalty has been assessed, the official(s) will submit the required incident report to the local program administrators. The program will designate an individual who shall review the report and make a preliminary determination of one of the following:

## Option 1

The incident report is accurate and the proper application of the rule(s) has been implemented. The action warrants the suspension as outlined in the policy. The offending party is then notified of this finding and offered the opportunity to accept the suspension or reject the decision and request a hearing. If a hearing is requested, the hearing shall be offered in accordance with Playing Rule 405(c) and with Bylaw 10D (Suspension Hearings/Domestic Competition Playing Rules). (Note) If the offending party requests a hearing under this section, the hearing body may, as a result of that hearing, reduce the suspension, maintain the suspension or increase the suspension imposed.

## Option 2

The incident report was determined to be inaccurate (misapplication of the rule(s) or wrong player identified), in which case the matter shall be turned over to the proper authorities as determined by the Affiliate for further review.

## Option 3

The incident report is accurate and the proper application of the rule(s) has been implemented. However, the action and/or history warrants further disciplinary review. The proper authorities as determined by the Affiliate shall notify the offending party that a hearing shall be conducted in accordance with Playing Rule 405(c) and Bylaw 10D (Suspension Hearings/Domestic Competition Playing Rules).

In all instances where a player or team official has been suspended for a period of time as a result of a Match Penalty, the player or team official shall be prohibited from participating in all USA Hockey activities for the length of the suspension. The required game(s) suspensions shall include the next regularly scheduled games that appear on the schedule of their team at the time of the incident. A player or team official who is rostered on multiple USA Hockey registered teams must serve the suspension in full before they are permitted to participate on any other USA Hockey registered team, unless otherwise specified by the proper authorities as determined by the Affiliate.

# *standardized* GAME SUSPENSIONS

For the purpose of this policy, there shall be three levels of standardized suspension.

## Level 1

Match penalties assessed under the below rules have a recommended range of a 6-10 game suspension.

**Rule 305(b)** Dangerous Equipment

**Rule 601(e)** Abuse of Officials and Other Misconduct (This includes all match penalties assessed under this rule except 601(e.1) Physical Assault of an Official)

**Rule 602(a)** Attempt to Injure or Recklessly Endanger an Opponent

## Level 2

Match penalties assessed under the below rules have a recommended range of a 4-8 game suspension.

**Rule 603(c)** Boarding

**Rule 606(b)** Butt-Ending

**Rule 607(e)** Charging

**Rule 608(c)** Checking from Behind

**Rule 619(b)** Head Butting

**Rule 620(c)** Head Contact

**Rule 634(d)** Slashing (Swinging Stick During Altercation)

**Rule 635(b)** Spearing

## Level 3

Match penalties assessed under the below rules have a recommended range of a 3-5 game suspension.

**Rule 601(e.3)** Abuse of Officials and Other Misconduct Hateful/Discriminatory Language

**Rule 604(e)** Body Checking- Competitive Contact Category

**Rule 609(c)** Cross-Checking

**Rule 611(c)** Elbowing

**Rule 615(c)** Fighting (Helmet Removal)

**Rule 621(c)** High Sticks

**Rule 622(c)** Holding an Opponent

**Rule 623(c)** Hooking

**Rule 627(b)** Kicking Opponent or Puck

**Rule 628(c)** Kneeing

**Rule 633(a or b)** Refusing to Start Play

**Rule 634(c)** Slashing

**Rule 639(c)** Tripping/Clipping/Leg Checking/Slew Footing

**Rule 640(e)** Unnecessary Roughness (Roughing)

# DEVIATIONS FROM STANDARDIZED DISCIPLINE | SUPPLEMENTARY DISCIPLINE



If the hearing committee and/or review determines anything less than what is determined under Standardized Discipline, the local program must submit its review to PNAHA to determine if the proper adjudication and due process occurred (ie., review, hearing or acceptance of an offer in lieu of a hearing, etc.). PNAHA will then issue back a finding to the local program either affirming or denying the lesser suspension. This process is important as the affiliate acknowledgement will need to be filed in any team credentials book to affirm player eligibility. **In general (and in most circumstances) the expectation is that the local program will not deviate from Standardized Discipline.**

**Supplementary Discipline.** In addition to Match Penalties, the local program, at its discretion and after the game has been completed, may investigate any incident that occurs in connection with any game. Any incident that occurs prior to, during, or after the game is subject to review regardless of whether the action was penalized by the Referee. (Rule 410(a) | Supplementary Discipline).

So while your program's Disciplinary or Conduct/Character Committee is only required to review Match Penalties, it does have discretion to review and/or investigate any other incident that occurs in a game. This would be investigated and adjudicated under the local program's discipline policy (and would require an acceptance of an offer in lieu of a hearing and/or a Bylaw 10 hearing to add any additional discipline).

In general, however, when an incident occurs on the ice, the playing rules are the authority to adjudicate the matter. For example, a player cannot file a Physical Misconduct Safe Sport report for a check from behind penalty - that is dealt with under the playing rules (and not Safe Sport). While there are some instances where conduct on the ice can rise to the level of a Safe Sport complaint, this is not typical.

Additionally, complaints related to officiating are not intended to be covered by Safe Sport Program policies, and are instead to be addressed to the local program governing bodies in either USA Hockey or Hockey Canada (PNAHA and/or BC Hockey through the appropriate channels).

# *Teams playing in Canada* **USAH TO HCR RULES**

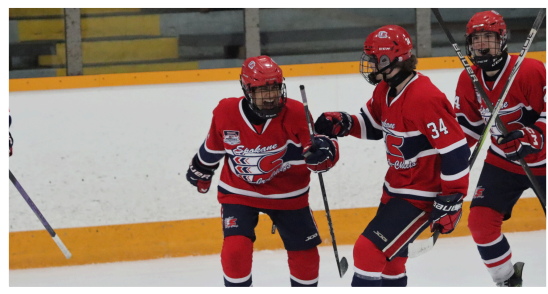
Any USA Hockey player/coach committing major infractions while playing in Canada that would normally incur a suspension under USA Hockey rules, or count towards the progressive suspensions rules, shall serve all suspensions according to the USA Hockey Playing Rules. This includes the 4/12 penalty rule and anytime a major penalty, game misconduct or match penalty is assessed.

This rule can be confusing and does require some analysis. For assistance, the program should reach out to PNAHA for assistance ([vpeastside@pnaha.com](mailto:vpeastside@pnaha.com)).

To review an analysis of the application of rules between Hockey Canada and USA Hockey, please see the linked memo (below).



# OTHER SITUATIONS: DO WE HAVE JURISDICTION?



**Jurisdiction. This is where we start!** First, does the program have jurisdiction over the individual in order to investigate and hold the person accountable? A "participant" means and includes, with respect to USA Hockey, any person who is seeking to be, currently is, or was at the time of an alleged violation:

- (i) Registered with USA Hockey as a Registered Participant Member (players and coaches), Referee, or in the Manager/Volunteer category;
- (ii) Serving as a member of USA Hockey's Board of Directors, on a national level council, committee or section, or in any other similar positions appointed by USA Hockey;
- (iii) Within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of USA Hockey;
- (iv) A coach, official or staff person (e.g., trainers, physicians, equipment managers) for any USA Hockey team, camp or national level program;
- (v) An employee of USA Hockey, a USA Hockey Affiliate or Member Program; and/or
- (vi) Authorized, elected or appointed by USA Hockey, a USA Hockey Affiliate or Member Program including board members of an Affiliate or local program to a position of authority over Minor athletes or to have regular contact with Minor athletes (even if not registered with USA Hockey).

If a person is not within these categories, you may not adjudicate any USA Hockey disciplinary action or Safe Sport investigation against them - you must have jurisdiction to do so.

That said, local programs can require all of its members to acknowledge the USA Hockey Codes of Conduct or any other policies and/or procedures (such as the Code of Excellence) that would subject them to discipline within your local program. **Best Practice!** Have them acknowledge these on behalf of all members of the player's family at your program registration.

If there is a member of the public that does not fit in to any of these categories, and who (for example) is removed from the game by an official, unfortunately there would not be any recourse against this individual (except to work with your building to trespass the individual).

Most of the time the jurisdiction issue will not be a problem because the program is working with players (who - by their required registration with USA Hockey - will be under your jurisdiction and is a "participant"). However, it is important to ask this very preliminary question before getting too far into an investigation.

# IS THIS SAFE SPORT?

**Is this Safe Sport?** After determining jurisdiction, a program's very first inquiry is to review the case for any Safe Sport issues, which means we must be familiar with the USA Hockey Safe Sport policies, and our own local program policies. This Committee should strive to work closely with both the program and PNAHA Safe Sport Coordinator/Director. Any Safe Sport questions can always be directed to [safesport@pnaha.com](mailto:safesport@pnaha.com).

**Safe Sport History.** On February 14, 2018, the U.S. government enacted the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and SafeSport Authorization Act of 2017. Pursuant to the SafeSport Authorization Act, the Center has adopted Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies, published on January 1, 2022 (the "MAAPP") and effective as to USA Hockey on December 22, 2022, which include policies that the SafeSport Authorization Act requires be adopted by all national governing bodies ("NGBs") recognized by the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (the "USOPC"). The Center has also adopted the SafeSport Code for the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement (the "SafeSport Code"), which includes information, policies and procedures that must be complied with by the USOPC, all NGBs recognized by the USOPC, and all programs recognized by a national governing body.

The Safe Sport program is focused on the organization's off-ice safety efforts. USA Hockey has zero tolerance for abuse and misconduct with policies in place to address sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats and harassment, hazing, as well as other areas where misconduct can occur.

**Reporting Policy.** It is the policy of USA Hockey that every Adult Participant must report (1) actual or perceived violations of the USA Hockey Safe Sport Program Handbook, (2) suspicions or allegations of Sexual Misconduct or Child Abuse, and (3) any violations of the, Physical Misconduct, Emotional Misconduct, Bullying, Threats, Harassment, or Hazing Policies.

**Safe Sport Complaints.** Anyone can make a report or complaint directly to USA Hockey. The National Office sends Safe Sport violations to the PNAHA Safe Sport Coordinator, who in turn can send to a program/local coordinator. USA Hockey has 34 different geographical affiliates and the jurisdiction for handling reports and investigations of incidents or potential discipline is with the applicable USA Hockey Affiliate organization that governs that area.

Outside of the mandatory reporting requirements, it should be noted that **the most expedient way to handle a Safe Sport complaint is within the local program. In other words, your members should be reporting directly to your Safe Sport Director in your program.** However, some complainants believe (incorrectly) that by filing with the US Center for Safe Sport or with USA Hockey, that the complaints will be handled more expeditiously. Ironically, this only prolongs our ability to begin investigating a report.

There are times when you know that this is clearly a Safe Sport complaint, but more often than not, the Safe Sport issues may be wrapped up in other disciplinary investigations. Again, it is important to first review the complaint for any potential Safe Sport issues, and to continue to do so throughout the investigation.

# MANDATORY REPORTING: SAFE SPORT

## A. General Requirements

1. Adult Participants must know their reporting requirements under the Safe Sport Handbook, the SafeSport Code, state law, and federal law. Lack of knowledge about a reporting obligation is not a defense.
2. Nothing in the policy shall be construed to require a victim of Child Abuse or other misconduct to self-report.
3. No one should investigate suspicions or allegations of Sexual Misconduct or Child Abuse, or attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of allegations as a condition of reporting to the Center or to appropriate authorities. As necessary, however, a person receiving a report may ask a few clarifying questions of the minor or person making the report to adequately report the suspicion or allegation to law enforcement authorities.
4. The reporting requirements under this section are an individual obligation of Adult Participants. Reporting to a supervisor or administrator does not relieve an Adult Participant of the obligations to report as specified under this section. Adult Participants must report even if they believe someone else has already reported.



## B. Reporting Requirements Relating to Sexual Misconduct

1. An Adult Participant who learns of information or reasonably suspects that an incident(s) of Sexual Misconduct has occurred, must immediately report the incident(s) directly to the Center.
2. This reporting requirement applies regardless of whether the suspected victim is an Adult or Minor.
3. If the Sexual Misconduct involves a Minor, it must be reported as child sexual abuse, as described below.

## C. Reporting Requirements related to Child Abuse, including Child Sexual Abuse

1. An Adult Participant who learns of information or reasonably suspects that a child has suffered an incident of Child Abuse, including sexual abuse, must immediately:
  - a. Make a report to law enforcement AND
  - b. Make a report to the US Center for SafeSport AND
  - c. Comply with other applicable reporting requirements under state law.
2. Reporting to the Center alone is not sufficient. You must report to both the Center and to law enforcement, and comply with any other applicable state or federal laws.
3. Child Abuse includes incidents that involved a victim who is a minor at the time of the alleged incident, even if the victim is now an adult and child sexual abuse may include incidents of peer to peer sexual abuse.



**US Center for SafeSport Report**  
**USA Hockey Safe Sport Report**  
**PNAHA Safe Sport Report**  
**Sample Safe Sport Report**  
**USA Hockey Safe Sport Handbook**  
**PNAHA Safe Sport Resources**  
**Sample Local Program Safe Sport Policies (Website)**

# *reporting and investigating misconduct* **SAFE SPORT INVESTIGATIONS**

**Reporting Other Misconduct and Policy Violations.** If any staff member, volunteer or other Adult Participant of USA Hockey, an Affiliate or Member Program receives an allegation or observes misconduct or other inappropriate behavior that may violate Safe Sport Policies other than Sexual Misconduct or Child Abuse, reports of such allegations should be made immediately to USA Hockey as set forth below or to the applicable Affiliate Safe Sport Coordinator. Reports that are required to be made to USA Hockey and/or the applicable Affiliate Safe Sport Coordinator include allegations of violations of:

- Physical Misconduct Policy
- Emotional Misconduct Policy
- Bullying Policy
- Threats
- Harassment Policy
- Hazing Policy
- One-on-One Interactions Policy
- Locker Room Policy
- Athletic Training Modalities Policy
- Electronic Communications Policy
- Transportation/Lodging Policy
- Billeting Policy

USA Hockey will address such reports as provided in the USA Hockey Safe Sport Program Handbook and any requirements of the Center or applicable law. In all cases, USA Hockey and its Affiliates and Member Programs are required to promptly inform an identified reporting party that the matter either is being referred to the Center, is being addressed by USA Hockey, or is being referred to an Affiliate for investigation and resolution.

**How to Handle Complaints.** Regardless of the validity of the complaint, all investigations should be geared toward the goal of achieving a satisfactory conclusion. View it as an opportunity, not as a task, to achieve the following goals:

1. Stop the abuse or the behavior.
2. Stop the abuse or behavior from recurring.
3. Protect the victim.
4. Sanction the abuser.
5. Create customer satisfaction.
6. Limit liability.
7. Limit or avoid bad publicity.
8. Preserve the integrity of Safe Sport and the Discipline/Conduct and Character Committee.
9. Preserve the integrity of the organization.
10. Educate others (use the experience as a learning tool).

# *reporting and investigating misconduct* **INTAKE FORMS**

**Ask the Right Questions!** To streamline investigations, an intake form is crucial because it ensures that the organization gathers comprehensive, accurate, and actionable information.

## 1. Thorough Understanding of the Incident

- Proper questions provide a complete picture of what happened, including the who, what, where, when, and how.
- This clarity ensures that the organization can assess the situation accurately and determine the appropriate next steps.

## 2. Facilitates Fair and Effective Investigations

- The right questions help identify key details that might otherwise be overlooked, such as witnesses, specific actions, or relevant circumstances.
- This ensures the investigation is unbiased and thorough, reducing the risk of errors or oversights.

## 3. Supports Timely Action

- Comprehensive information enables faster decision-making and responses to incidents.
- Missing or unclear details can delay necessary interventions, leaving individuals potentially at risk.

## 4. Ensures Compliance

- Your organization is required to meet Safe Sport requirements in documenting and addressing incidents.
- Asking the right questions ensures the form collects all information needed to satisfy these requirements.

## 5. Provides Consistency

- Standardized questions ensure that every incident is evaluated on the same criteria, promoting fairness and consistency across cases.
- This helps the organization maintain a reliable process and prevents gaps in documentation.

## 6. Identifies Patterns and Trends

- Comprehensive data from multiple incidents can reveal recurring issues, helping the organization take proactive steps to improve safety and culture.

## 9. Demonstrates Due Diligence

- Proper documentation shows that the organization is taking every report seriously and acting responsibly.
- This builds trust with participants, families, and the broader community while mitigating potential legal risks.

# reporting and investigating misconduct

# SAMPLE FORM



**One Form for All Incidents.** Having one form where parents, coaches, players, etc. can report any incident that occurs within a program helps to streamline the internal response by your organization. This form (developed by Spokane Youth Hockey) incorporates both Safe Sport (and other potential disciplinary issues) into one form, requiring that the person submitting the report acknowledge the following:

## I UNDERSTAND AND ACKNOWLEDGE:

- I am reporting a violation(s) of the USA Hockey/Spokane Youth Hockey Safe Sport Program and/or other Spokane Youth Hockey program and/or team rules.
- I am NOT reporting an officiating complaint. Complaints related to officiating are not intended to be covered by the Safe Sport Program and/or Spokane Youth Hockey policies. Please contact our staff if you have an officiating concern.
- I am NOT reporting a violation of the USA Hockey Playing Rules. Those rules are administered directly by the game officials.
- If my report involves allegations of Sexual Misconduct or Child Abuse, and I am a mandatory reporter and will also report my allegations directly to the U.S. Center for SafeSport and law enforcement, if applicable.

The Form also provides the following information prior to submission:

Adherence to USA Hockey and Spokane Youth Hockey standards of conduct ensures that we foster a safe and enjoyable experience for all of our players, coaches and families. Incident reporting of violations is an important mechanism to manage our players, parents, teams and association in order to monitor/document compliance with USA Hockey and Spokane Youth Hockey standards. This report is intended to document and relay information regarding situations that may have occurred (or are currently occurring).

**When Should This Report Form be Used?** With the exception below, Safe Sport reports should be submitted with this form. Incidents that should be reported include player behavior (locker room incidents, physical/verbal altercations, etc.) and can also include disrespectful behavior with regard to coaches/officials during games (this would also include parent behavior - ie., being removed from the arena, not adhering to the 24 hour rule with regard to coach/parent interactions, etc.).

**Safe Sport Reporting - Sexual Misconduct or Child Abuse.** If a report is made that includes allegations of Sexual Misconduct or Child Abuse, Spokane Youth Hockey will refer those allegations to the US Center for SafeSport pursuant to federal law. If you are a mandatory reporter, you are also obligated to report any allegations of Sexual Misconduct or Child Abuse directly to the US Center for SafeSport (<https://uscenterforsafesport.org/report-a-concern/>). Under the Safe Sport Code, third-party reporters' names and contact information are kept confidential.

Thank you for submitting this report. We encourage you to provide as much information as possible. All information that you are able to provide assists us in promptly and effectively responding to reported allegations. As the person filling out this form, it is important that you INCLUDE yourself as one of the parties and add yourself in the next sections where you will have the opportunity to add all the relevant parties to this investigation. You may report anonymously by omitting your identifying information. However, remaining anonymous may limit our ability to investigate and/or respond to the information you provide.

This Google Form is embedded on the program's website. The Google Form is then also utilized in Google Sheets to track progress on each of the cases. To view the entire form, please use the QR Code at the top. If you would like the form shared with you, please contact Spokane Youth Hockey administrators.

# HOW TO START AN INVESTIGATION

**How Do I Start a Safe Sport or Disciplinary Investigation?** The very first thing to do is to acknowledge to the complainant that the report has been received and that someone is looking into the matter. A proactive approach is to be open minded and non-judgmental when gathering information. Those who file complaints often feel violated and do not consider the respondent's opinion.

## Reporting and Intake.

- Make sure that you have a mechanism in your organization for filing both Safe Sport reports and/or Disciplinary or Incident Reports (see previous page for example of an intake form).
- Determine whether the alleged misconduct is covered under USA Hockey Safe Sport AND was the alleged misconduct committed by a Participant?
- Determine any conflicts of interest and assign an investigator. This person will gather all relevant information and evidence and prepare a formal investigation report for a decision.
  - Contact the Complainant or Complainant's Parent/Guardian.
  - Learn urgency/current status of victim.
  - Is there immediate danger (summary suspension)?
  - Should law enforcement be notified? If so, call local authorities and obtain an agency case number or police report number.
  - Know mandatory reporting requirements for your State(s) - see page 12).
- Discuss confidentiality concerns and determine if witness/complainant wish to remain anonymous.
- Gather more detail about the incident(s).
- Determine if other motives may be a factor (release, financial commitment, playing time, team assignment).
- Obtain preliminary witness list: Name, Contact information, what information they can offer/provide.
- Assess the complainant's intended outcome: Apology/Education, Suspension/Expulsion, Criminal Charges
- Educate the complainant on policies and process.

## Investigation.

Analyze allegations:

- Perceived or specific allegations?
- Isolated or pattern of behavior?
- Can allegations be verified?
- Determine if report may be in retaliation to prior incident.
- Additional Safe Sport violations by any/all parties involved?

Contact initial witnesses. Best practice! Do so by email and request information by a certain date.

- Identify who you are and your position
- Inform them of the Safe Sport Program and inform them of the issue at hand
- Stress and discuss confidentiality concerns
- Identify goals, next steps
- Make them aware of and caution about retaliation

# HOW TO INVESTIGATE (CONT.) & RESOLUTION

## Investigation (continued).

Obtain written statements (emails are permissible) about incident(s)

- Eliminates denial and reduces misunderstanding
- Can be compared to additional statements if a hearing is needed.



Gather additional relevant information, including physical and/or documentary evidence (LiveBarn footage, screenshots, etc.).

Contact Respondent (at appropriate time)

- Identify who you are and purpose of email.
- Explain the accusation/allegation.
- Note any admission or denial, any counterclaim, or if accused is completely confused by claim.
- Determine what they are willing to do regarding the incident.
- Make person aware of confidentiality issues and caution about retaliation.

Evaluate Your Interviews

- What is their relationship to the primary parties involved?
- Is there other history behind the allegation?
- Ultimate goal is to protect our participants

Even if the report is not ultimately a Safe Sport issue, all reported incidents must still be investigated. The determination is whether the Safe Sport Coordinator will be conducting the investigation or whether it will be conducted by the Discipline/Conduct and Character Committee. Either way, the process is very similar.

**Resolution.** The Safe Sport Director will review the investigation and make a decision (the assistance of the Discipline/Conduct and Character Committee can be utilized by the Safe Sport Director). The determination is whether it is more likely than not (the preponderance of the evidence) that the misconduct occurred.

The organization will issue a decision as to whether a violation of the Safe Sport Handbook occurred, and if so, what the sanction will be. Note that any form of suspension will require a hearing (see below). If the investigation is completed by the Discipline/Conduct and Character Committee (not Safe Sport), the investigators should allow the committee to review the case and make suggestions on any outcomes that involve education, probation and/or behavior contracts.

If the Committee is recommending any type of suspension, again there must be an offer in lieu of a hearing or an actual hearing completed before the suspension can be enforced. An offer in lieu of a hearing should be reserved for a Respondent who takes accountability for the misconduct. Otherwise, the proper procedure would be to hold a hearing. Strict compliance with notifications and hearing procedures should be adhered to. See QR Code above for sample notices.

All association Safe Sport investigations must be reported by the 1st of the month to the PNAHA Safe Sport Coordinator ([safesport@pnaha.com](mailto:safesport@pnaha.com)).

**USA Hockey Bylaw 10 Hearing Information and Sample Forms**

*best practices*

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**When does the PNAHA Safe Sport Coordinator need to investigate and when does the association/program coordinator investigate?** The PNAHA Safe Sport Coordinator will evaluate potential conflicts of interest and seriousness of issues at hand to determine if PNAHA will investigate or whether it would be acceptable for the association/program to investigate. These determinations are conducted on a case by case basis, but for the most part, the local program is tasked with investigating Safe Sport complaints. The local program should always involve the PNAHA Safe Sport Coordinator for assistance.

Again, any person or organization that may have a conflict of interest because they are named in a complaint, are a witness to an allegation, are closely affiliated with the person accused of misconduct, or who may have other potential bias, shall recuse themselves and/or be recused from participating in an investigation or other disciplinary process.

**What is an appropriate recourse when the Complainant is just as guilty as the Respondent? Can a separate investigation be opened?** Cross complaints are sometimes filed or sometimes the person reporting is equally at fault. While separate investigations can be opened, it is better that all the information is obtained as part of the same investigation. Please be cautious of retaliatory Safe Sport complaints, which can create a separate basis for a Safe Sport violation.

**What do I do if there are no other witnesses and it is a he said/she said type scenario?** Whoever has burden of proof would need to meet that burden. The appropriate burden of proof in USA Hockey disciplinary matters is "more likely than not." Additionally, the coordinator can follow up and have conversation with the person(s) involved, have people complete Safe Sport Training, or bring the parties together in same room to see if it can be resolved. Sometimes going through the process and knowing a party has been investigated or named, puts that person on the right track.

**What recourse is there if someone is falsely accused? Conversely what is the recourse for a person that made a false accusation?** A report of abuse, misconduct or policy violation that is malicious, frivolous or made in bad faith is prohibited. Such reports will be considered a violation of the Safe Sport Program and grounds for disciplinary action.

**Do we give out detailed report of investigation?** When an investigation is concluded, there must be proper communication regarding the action taken. However, the Safe Sport Director and/or Committee should be mindful of the sensitivity of each complaint. Only a general statement regarding the result is required. We do not have an obligation to provide any party with a written copy of the full report.

*best practices*

# APPROPRIATE SANCTIONS

## **What are appropriate sanctions for Safe Sport and/or Code of Conduct/Local Program violations?**

**Are there suggested or proposed sanctions across all Affiliates?** First and foremost, feel free to contact the PNAHA Safe Sport Coordinator and ask them if they have come across similar situations. In general, though, a combination of any one or more of the following forms of discipline may be recommended or imposed:

- Warning
- Education
- Probation and/or Behavior Plans - consider a proactive educational condition
- Loss of privileges
- Suspension or other eligibility restrictions

Sometimes it is helpful to ask a respondent who has admitted fault what they believe are reasonable consequences when they fail to meet established standards of behavior.

Factors relevant to determining appropriate discipline include, without limitations:

- Seriousness of the violation
- Any party's prior history
- Ages of individuals involved
- Whether any party poses an ongoing threat to the safety of others
- Voluntary disclosure of offense and/or cooperation
- Post-offense rehabilitative efforts
- Other mitigating or aggravating circumstances

## **Additional Considerations.**

**Have Your Athletes/Coaches/Teams Determine Standards and Consequences Together.** Coaches and athletes should co-create standards and policies for the team. This includes establishing agreed upon consequences and accountability measures. These standards should align with the coach's vision, values and the team's goals and desired experience for the season. It is a powerful expression for the team's leadership group to stand before the parents and present the roadmap that they have co-created for a successful season. These team rules should be shared with this committee so as to determine that they are (1) appropriate and (2) how this committee can assist in enforcement.

**When to Involve Parents in Disciplinary Matters.** When confronted with conflict, determining when to involve parents and when to handle it solely between the organization, coach, athlete or team can be challenging. **One simple guideline: If the parents will be aware of the consequences, it is valuable to include them in the communication about the situation.** Emphasize that the intention is to work together to provide support for the athlete.

*bylaw 10 hearings*

# HOW TO ISSUE SUSPENSIONS

**How do we issue a suspension?** Each organization and each Affiliate MUST abide by the procedures set forth in Bylaw 10 when imposing suspensions or other discipline.

A person can be summarily suspended or there can be a complaint, a hearing and then the person is suspended. There is also an additional option of offering the respondent an offer in lieu of hearing, which would bypass the formal Bylaw 10 hearing (see above).

Unless there are exigent circumstances (see below), a suspension should not be imposed until after a party has been afforded a right to a hearing (or an acceptance of an offer in lieu of a hearing) under the procedures set forth in Bylaw 10.C. Please see the Appendix (and the QR Code and links below) that provides sample forms for a summary suspension as well as sample form for a notice of hearing.

**When do you use Summary Suspension?** Disciplinary action should generally not be imposed prior to a hearing on a matter unless the person poses a danger to other participants. Summary Suspensions are permitted “only in those cases where a person has been arrested for a crime alleged to have been committed, a person has assaulted another or violated the USA Hockey Safe Sport Policy, including such abuse between adults, or other violations of USA Hockey Policies set forth in the Annual Guide or comparable Policies of Affiliate Associations that are in writing and have been approved by USA Hockey. . . .”). Although the language allowing Summary Suspensions for “violations of USA Hockey policies” may be interpreted broadly, it is intended that situations calling for suspension are the exception rather than the rule. If a Summary Suspension is imposed, the suspended party must be provided a written notice of their right to request a hearing under Bylaw 10 Section B.

**Can coaches suspend an athlete without a hearing?** No. Unless their team rules allow for a suspension for violation of team rules, and the athlete and their family are fully aware of potential consequences that can result in a suspension, a Bylaw 10 hearing must be held. Coaches may not arbitrarily suspend a player without a hearing (unless outlined in team rules). See Team Rules Resources at the end of this Guide.

## Hearings and Appeals Process

**Offer in Lieu of Hearing.** If the Respondent takes accountability for the misconduct, the organization can offer a resolution in lieu of a hearing which will outline the investigation and findings, and allows for the Respondent to agree to the terms of what the committee will offer. They can also decline the offer, which would then lead to a formal hearing to determine a suspension.

All USA Hockey hearings have certain requirements which are outlined in the Annual Guide under Bylaw 10.C. These requirements (and sample forms) are also linked below.

**USA Hockey Bylaw 10 Hearing Information and Sample Forms**



*how to make an offer*

# OFFER IN LIEU OF HEARING

**How to Fill Out the Offer in Lieu of Hearing Template**



**Offer in Lieu of Hearing Template (Fillable PDF)**



# *how to hold a hearing and appeals*

## **BYLAW 10 HEARINGS**

**Who do Associations use in the hearing process?** Each organization should have a committee, or persons that could be named to serve on a committee, and ensure that there are at least three (3) reasonably disinterested and impartial persons to hear each matter. Additionally, any person or organization that may have a conflict of interest because they are named in a complaint, are a witness to an allegation, are closely affiliated with the person accused of misconduct, or who may have other potential bias, shall be recused from participating in an investigation or other disciplinary process.

**Who can appeal a decision?** Any person suspended or otherwise disciplined may appeal the suspension after the hearing or failure to have a hearing. The person submitting the complaint cannot appeal any decision.

**How does the appeals process start?** The Appealing Party must provide a written Statement of Appeal to the Disciplinary Authority and Appeal Authority within 14 days from receipt of the decision from the hearing body or the date of the failure to have a hearing. Failure to provide a written Statement of Appeal within the fourteen (14) day period waives all appellate rights and the suspension becomes final.

**Where are appeals sent?** Playing Rule Suspensions or suspensions for violations of bylaw and/or rules shall be appealable to the Board of Directors of the State Association.

Upon the written appeal of any Party whose suspension has been upheld by a state or Affiliate Association, the Executive Committee of USA Hockey shall allow an appeal of such suspension, provided that the appealing party shall have the burden of proving that the Appeal Authority committed a "gross abuse of discretion."

Administrative Actions and Other Disciplinary Actions shall be appealed to the Board of Directors of the state association.



# COACHING ETHICS CODE

## INTRODUCTION

This USA Coaching Ethics Code ("Code") intends to provide standards of ethical conduct for coaches involved with USA Hockey and its member organizations. It provides General Principles and Ethical Standards which cover many situations encountered by coaches, with its principle goals the welfare and protection of participants with whom coaches work. In addition to the Code, the USA Hockey SafeSport Program provides resources for the safety of all involved in the game. For more information, go to [usahockey.com/safesport](http://usahockey.com/safesport). Coaches will respect and protect human and civil rights and not knowingly participate in or condone unfair discriminatory practices.

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES

### COMPETENCE

Coaches will maintain a standard of excellence with regard to education and information related to coaching and make an on-going effort to maintain competence in the skills they use.

### INTEGRITY

Coaches will exercise integrity in the practice of coaching and be honest, fair and respectful of others.

### PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Coaches will uphold professional standards, clarify professional roles and obligations, accept appropriate responsibility for behavior and adapt methods to the needs of participants.

### RESPECT FOR PARTICIPANTS

Coaches will respect the fundamental rights, welfare, dignity, values, opinions and worth of all participants and will be aware of cultural and individual differences including those due to age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language and socio-economic status.

### CONCERN FOR PARTICIPANTS

Coaches will be sensitive to different roles and responsibilities of all participants and not exploit or mislead them.

### RESPONSIBLE COACHING

Coaches will be aware of ethical responsibilities to society and the community in which they work and live as well as comply with the law and encourage the development of policies which serve the interest of the sport and USA Hockey.

## ETHICAL STANDARDS

### APPLICABILITY OF THE ETHICS CODE

Although many aspects of personal behavior and private activities may seem far removed from the official duties of coaching, Coaches will be sensitive to their positions as role models for participants and will consistently obey the standards of the Code. Additionally, the USA Hockey SafeSport Program has policies prohibiting sexual, physical and emotional abuse, hazing, bullying and harassment. There are also locker room, travel, billeting and electronic communications policies that are intended to reduce the risks of potential abuse.

### DISCRIMINATION

Coaches will not engage in or condone discrimination based upon age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, socio-economic status or any other basis prescribed by law.

### SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Coaches will not engage in sexual harassment which includes but is not necessarily limited to sexual solicitation, unwelcome physical advances and verbal or non-verbal conduct. Coaches will not deny any participants the right to participate in any activity based upon their having made or their being the subject of a sexual harassment claim.

### HAZING/BULLYING

Coaches will not engage in or condone behavior which is harassing, harmful or demeaning to participants.

### PERSONAL PROBLEMS AND CONFLICTS

Coaches will recognize a personal problem may harm participants. Coaches have an obligation to take reasonable steps to prevent

impaired performance by recognizing a personal problem and seeking assistance for it.

### **AVOIDING HARM**

Coaches will take reasonable steps to avoid harm being caused to participants whether it be physical, verbal or through electronic/social media.

### **MISUSE OF INFLUENCE**

Coaches will guard against the misuse of influence and understand any action or judgment may have an effect on participants.

### **OUTSIDE RELATIONSHIPS**

Coaches will refrain from entering into personal, professional, financial or other relationships with anyone if such a relationship may impair objectivity, interfere with properly performing coaching functions or directly or indirectly exploit or harm participants. Coaches will refrain from taking on obligations if a pre-existing relationship may create a conflict of interest.

### **EXPLOITATION**

Coaches will not exploit or have a sexual or intimate relationship with participants.

### **STATEMENTS**

Coaches will not make a statement which is deceptive, false, fraudulent or misleading.

### **COMMUNICATION WITH PARTICIPANTS**

To avoid any misunderstanding with participants, coaches will discuss the nature and course of training with them and answer any questions they may have.

### **RELATIONSHIP INVOLVING COACHES, PARTICIPANTS AND PARENTS**

Coaches will clarify the role of each party and any service provided relative to a relationship with participants and parents.

### **ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND TOBACCO**

Coaches will refrain from using and discourage the availability or use of alcohol, tobacco or performance enhancing or recreational drugs in conjunction with, including travelling to or from, any USA Hockey competition, training or practice session and prohibit the use of alcohol, tobacco or performance enhancing or recreational drugs by participants.

### **GAMBLING**

Coaches will refrain from and prohibit gambling of any kind in conjunction with, including travelling to or from, any USA Hockey competition, training or practice session.

### **PORNOGRAPHY**

Coaches will refrain from and prohibit the use of pornographic or sexually explicit material in conjunction with any USA Hockey competition, including travel to or from any USA Hockey competition, training or practice session.

### **RECRUITING**

Coaches will not recruit a participant who is already a member of another USA Hockey team. Direct contact by a coach or his/her staff or indirect contact through an agent or parent during the playing season with a participant who is a member of another USA Hockey team is considered tampering and is prohibited.

### **EVALUATING PARTICIPANTS**

Coaches will evaluate participants on actual ability, attitude and performance and in a manner consistent with the Code.

## **RESOLVING ISSUES**

### **FAMILIARITY WITH CODE**

Coaches will be familiar with the Code. Lack of awareness or misunderstanding of general principles or ethical standards included in the Code will not excuse violations of the Code.

### **CONFRONTING ISSUES**

Coaches will consult with other coaches when they are uncertain if a particular situation or course of action violates the Code.

### **ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICTS**

Coaches will clarify the nature of any conflict between the demands of an organization and the Code, make known their commitment to the Code and seek to resolve the conflict in a way which adheres to the Code.

### **REPORTING VIOLATIONS**

Coaches will inform participants of any perceived violation of the Code and their right to report any violation to the president or other appropriate designee of their association and complete an Ethical Violation Form provided by the association. Any violation of the Code shall be addressed via the process explained in USA Hockey Bylaw 10 and referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency as required. USA Hockey requires coaches to report abuse, misconduct and violations of its safety policies. Procedures by which coaches should respond to allegations of abuse and misconduct are also outlined in USA Hockey's SafeSport Program Handbook.

### **COOPERATION WITH INVESTIGATIONS, PROCEEDINGS AND RESOLUTIONS**

Coaches will cooperate with any investigation, proceeding or resolution related to a perceived violation of the Code as mandated by USA Hockey or any of its member organizations. Failure to cooperate in itself is a violation of the Code.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Coaches acknowledge the USA Hockey Coaching Ethics Code is administered under the authority of USA Hockey and its member organizations. Any violation of the Code subjects the violating coach(es) to the disciplinary processes of USA Hockey and its member organizations.

## Parent's Code of Conduct

Do not force your children to participate in sports, but support their desires to play their chosen sports. Children are involved in organized sports for their enjoyment. Make it fun.

- Encourage your child to play by the rules. Remember, children learn best by example, so applaud the good plays of both teams.
- Do not embarrass your child by yelling at players, coaches or officials. By showing a positive attitude toward the game and all of its participants, your child will benefit.
- Emphasize skill development and practices and how they benefit your young athlete. De-emphasize games and competition in the lower age groups.
- Know and study the rules of the game and support the officials on and off the ice. This approach will help in the development and support of the game. Any criticism of the officials only hurts the game.
- Applaud a good effort in both victory and defeat, and enforce the positive points of the game. Never yell or physically abuse your child after a game or practice – it is destructive. Work toward removing the physical and verbal abuse in youth sports.
- Recognize the importance of volunteer coaches. They are important to the development of your child and the sport.
- Communicate with them and support them.
- If you enjoy the game, learn all you can about hockey – and volunteer.

## Spectator's Code of Conduct

- Display good sportsmanship. Always respect players, coaches and officials.
- Act appropriately; do not taunt or disturb other fans; enjoy the game together.
- Cheer good plays of all participants; avoid booing opponents.
- Cheer in a positive manner and encourage fair play; profanity and objectionable cheers or gestures are offensive.
- Help provide a safe and fun environment; throwing any items on the ice surface can cause injury to players and officials.
- Do not lean over or pound on the glass; the glass surrounding the ice surface is part of the playing area.
- Support the referees and coaches by trusting their judgment and integrity.
- Be responsible for your own safety – be alert to prevent accidents from flying pucks and other avoidable situations.
- Respect locker rooms as private areas for players, coaches and officials.
- Be supportive after the game – win or lose. Recognize good effort, teamwork and sportsmanship.

## Administrator's Code of Conduct

Follow the rules and regulations of USA Hockey and your association to ensure that the association's philosophy and objectives are enhanced.

- Support programs that train and educate players, coaches, parents, officials and volunteers.
- Promote and publicize your programs; seek out financial support when possible.
- Communicate with parents by holding parent/player orientation meetings as well as by being available to answer questions and address problems throughout the season.
- Work to provide programs that encompass fairness to the participants and promote fair play and sportsmanship.
- Recruit volunteers, including coaches, who demonstrate qualities conducive to being role models to the youth in our sport.
- Encourage coaches and officials to attend USA Hockey clinics and advise your board members of the necessity for their training sessions.
- Make every possible attempt to provide everyone, at all skill levels, with a place to play.
- Read and be familiar with the contents of the USA Hockey Annual Guide and USA Hockey's official playing rules.
- Develop other administrators to advance to positions in your association, perhaps even your own.

## Coach's 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.
- 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 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 players the basics.
- 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.
- To play the game is great, to love the game is greater.

## Player's Code of Conduct

- Play for fun.
- Work hard to improve your skills.
- Be a team player - get along with your teammates.
- Learn teamwork, sportsmanship and discipline.
- Be on time.
- Learn the rules and play by them. Always be a good sport.
- Respect your coach, your teammates, your parents, opponents and officials.
- Never argue with an official's decision.

# RESOURCE: LOCKER ROOM MONITORING BEST PRACTICES

## New in the 2024-25 Season in PNAHA:

Associations and/or coaches found in violations of the USA Hockey Locker Room Policy shall be sanctioned in the following manner:

1. First offense \$250 fine to the team and one game suspension to the head coach.
2. Second offense \$500 to the club and two game suspension to the head coach.
3. Third offense the head coach and a program representative shall attend a hearing which may result in further sanctions up to and including fines, suspensions and/or post season sanctions.

- Your players and parents should be informed that no players should enter the Locker Rooms until there is a LR Monitor present (30 minutes before practice and 20 minutes after practice).
- Head Coaches are responsible for monitoring the locker rooms (or ensuring that there are others assigned to monitor the locker room). LR Monitoring is required for every practice and every game.
- Although coaches can fill the monitor role, it is clear that coaches doubling as monitors is difficult.
- Consequently, Safe Sport makes the plea for parents to take an active role in assisting the team leaders in assuring that the locker rooms and changing areas are monitored.... ALWAYS.
- We understand that some parents do not want to serve in this role, but the facts about the abuses taking place in unsupervised locker rooms are serious and troubling. Everything that can be done to lessen or eliminate these opportunities for harm is critical - cooperation and vigilance from all parents is key.
- Practices can be canceled by coaches if there is no LR Monitor scheduled, or the coaches can cover the room. Alternatively, players may be instructed to come dressed to practice (without access to the room if there is no LR Monitor assigned).
- If a single player is present, the locker room should be monitored by at least two adults until additional players arrive. If there is only one adult present, whether a coach or volunteer parent, they should wait for multiple players to arrive before allowing access to the locker room.
- The same strategies should be applied after practice with a monitor staying until the last player leaves, and at no time should one adult be alone in the locker room with one player, unless the player is their own child.
- Coaches should clearly explain the rules and expectations for players with respect to locker room activity (and what corrective action will be taken if there are transgressions (player suspensions, etc.).
- Ensure players and parents understand the locker room monitor is there to help ensure there is a safe environment for all members of the team.
- Team playlists should not include any music that includes racial and/or sexually explicit language. Only "clean" language versions of songs should be utilized in locker rooms.
- Cell phones should be kept out of locker rooms. Please have parents collect those from players prior to entering the locker rooms.
- Any coach(es) meeting(s) with an individual, minor player shall be conducted on the ice, on the bench, in the locker room with the other team members and/or locker room monitor(s) present, or in an observable and interruptible setting.
- If a player is ejected from a game there must be at least two adults consisting either of locker room monitors or coaches in the locker room with the suspended player. If there is a break and players go to the locker room without coaches, a locker room monitor must be inside the locker room.

# RESOURCE: CORRECTING LOCKER ROOM BEHAVIOR

## If an Issue Arises:

- Monitors/team managers/coaches need to be respectful and keep their own emotions in check.
- Speak quietly and calmly to a player to help avoid embarrassment. However, it may be appropriate and necessary to use a strong verbal command to stop misbehavior.
- If the attempt to intercede is ignored, or the problem persists, and there is no immediate threat of potential harm, the monitor/supervisor should seek assistance from another adult to remove the misbehaving player from the locker room and address the issue separate from the rest of the team. If the player's parent(s) are present, they should be engaged immediately.
- Situations where misbehavior could lead to the threat of immediate harm are very rare (especially with monitors present); however, if a situation arises, it may become necessary to intercede to stop the problem (examples include fighting, wrestling, hitting with sticks, throwing items, dangerous use of skates, etc.). If you are uncomfortable directly engaging to separate players in these circumstances, send someone for help and continue to calmly attempt to de-escalate the situation until it can be resolved. However, with an adult in the locker room, none of these potential scenarios should occur.
- Immediately report any misbehavior occurring in a locker room to your local Safe Sport Coordinator or any other program administrator. Identify as best you can both the participants as well as anyone who closely witnessed the incident and the actions of those involved.
- Report any incidents of unmonitored or inadequately monitored locker rooms to your Affiliate Safe Sport Coordinator ([safesport@pnaha.com](mailto:safesport@pnaha.com)).

# RESOURCE: TEAM RULES | PLAYER EXPECTATIONS

- Head Coaches should create team rules for their team and provide the Hockey Director and Conduct & Character Committee with a copy of them within the first two weeks of the season.
- Your team rules can also include what responsibilities you - as the coach - will pledge to your team! This shows accountability on both sides. See below for examples.
  - Pro Tip: Have the players work on their own team rules with you. That way they will have more buy-in with the enforcement.
- It is the responsibility of the head coach to establish and fairly enforce all team rules. Team rules must be applied equally and consistently to every player.
- Discipline by the head coach and all team officials must be administered appropriately and in a controlled manner, mindful of the age of the player, with a clear goal of teaching appropriate behavior. Discipline is never to be used impulsively or out of anger, or to embarrass or humiliate players.
- The head coach may suspend a player for one game (or longer if deemed appropriate), but that disciplinary suspension must be written into team rules. In other words, suspensions may be a disciplinary consequence, but the players must be informed of that possibility ahead of time in the team's rules. If suspensions are not written into team rules, a coach may not unilaterally suspend a player without a Bylaw 10 Hearing.
- Things to Include:
  - No hitting, striking or any abuse toward another player is allowed.
  - Yelling at players, refs, coaches, etc. will not be tolerated. Unsportsmanlike offenses will result in suspension (shift, period or game).
  - Emphasize sportsmanship at all times: Gracious winners and losers.
  - Coaches should encourage players to demonstrate the following behaviors at all times:
    - Positive, team oriented attitude
    - Strong work ethic at practices and games
    - Coachability
  - Coaches may reduce playing time for players who do not demonstrate these three qualities and will communicate with the player in order to correct the problem.
- Attendance Policy: Create your expectations in the team rules!
  - Reasons for Attendance Policy – teach kids about commitment/choices/responsibility, fairness to those who come every day, planning practices, juggling lines for games, staying competitive.
  - Players should arrive 30 minutes ahead of practice, and should be exiting the locker room within 20 minutes following practices.
  - For practices, players must be ready to go on the ice before the Zamboni is finished.
- Work on a “3 strikes” system:
  - 1st Strike: The athlete sits a period or rest of practice.
  - 2nd Strike: The athlete sits a game and practice but must attend.
  - 3rd Strike: Referral to the Conduct and Character Committee.
- Share the Team Rules at your Parent Meeting.
  - Coaches will provide parents and players with a written handout explaining goals, philosophies, expectations, and team rules for the upcoming season. The handout will include consequences if players fail to meet rules regarding behavior, attendance at practices, respecting the coach and other players, etc.

## Resources:

[\*\*Sample Team Rules\*\*](#)

[\*\*Sample Team Rules 3\*\*](#)

[\*\*Sample Team Rules 5\*\*](#)

[\*\*Sample Team Rules 7\*\*](#)

[\*\*Sample Team Rules 2\*\*](#)

[\*\*Sample Team Rules 4\*\*](#)

[\*\*Sample Team Rules 6\*\*](#)

[\*\*Sample Team Rules 8\*\*](#)

“Your culture isn't what you hope it is or say it is. Your culture is what you create and allow each day through the way you work, the behaviors you reward, how you speak to people, how/why you make decisions, how you spend your time. Create your culture on purpose.”

# HOW TO BE A GREAT TEAMMATE



## Work Hard

Working hard is more than just doing your job, it's about setting a precedent of dedication and collaboration. Working hard is leading by example. When you give your all, it motivates others to match your level of commitment, fostering a strong, united team.



## Be Humble

Embracing humility means putting the team's needs above your own achievements. Your humility encourages teamwork and collective success. It fosters a culture where collaboration is valued over individual glory, leading to a more unified and effective team.



## No Complaining

Complaining only changes everyone's attitude to be more negative. Avoiding complaints and negative talk helps maintain a positive team atmosphere. When you focus on the negative, everyone views the environment as more negative. Create a supportive environment where the focus on collaboration and productivity.



## Commit Fully

Full commitment involves sacrificing personal interests for the benefit of the team. It shows you prioritize the team and others. This dedication is more than words because it shows that you prioritize the team's goals over individual recognition, inspiring others to also c

## Own Your Role

Owning your role means understanding and excelling in your specific duties. It provides reliability and consistency. This reliability ensures that every part of the team functions smoothly, with everyone contributing their best. In all great teams, everyone has a crucial role to play.



## Be Positive

Positive energy is contagious. By maintaining an optimistic and encouraging demeanor, you're reinforcing that attitude that you want to see in your teammates. It creates a motivating and encouraging environment, which is essential for long-term success and morale.



## Be Accountable

Full commitment involves sacrificing personal interests for the benefit of the team. It shows you prioritize the team and others. This dedication is more than words because it shows that you prioritize the team's goals over individual recognition, inspiring others to also commit wholeheartedly.



## Care For Others

Caring for your teammates goes beyond work-related interactions.

Strong relationships create a supportive and valued team. Genuine concern and connection foster strong bonds within the team, ensuring that everyone feels supported and valued, which is crucial for a healthy and productive team environment.



## It only takes ONE.

- One Teammate can set the Tone
- One Teammate can be the Leader
- One Teammate can be the Anchor
- One Teammate can set the Standard
- One Teammate can be the Missing Link
- One Teammate can make ALL the Difference

The most dedicated athletes I come across never talk about how dedicated they are, how hard they work or what they sacrifice. They just show up every single day and give their very best. It's not a hardship, not a chore. They WANT to do whatever it takes - and then some - to succeed!

Tom Izzo said, "Championships and great seasons are won in locker rooms." Great teams have great teammates.

- They own their roles.
- They care about each other.
- They commit to each other and the team.

A great team isn't made up of individual superstars. It's made up of people who trust, commit, and work together towards a common goal.