

2025 PAHL PLAYOFFS TEAM GUIDE



Table of Contents

- Competition Information
- Operations Information
- Administrative Information

Mission

- Have fun and make the postseason experience a positive one for all of our players!
- The best way to make the playoffs enjoyable is to come with a positive attitude and put forth your best effort.
- It is always rewarding – win or lose – to be a part of a collective effort toward our goal of being a great league.

Sportsmanship

- Sportsmanship is everyone's responsibility.
 - When we succeed at this task, we succeed as a league.
 - If we fail at this task, we fail as a community.
- The behaviors of the adults directly influence the behaviors of the minors, on and off the ice.
 - Coaches must set the right example and be the first to address their unruly players.
 - Spectators must create an enthusiastic, supportive environment.
 - Referees do not dictate a team's ability (or inability) to advance in the playoffs; only the teams do.
- Competition, intensity, and losing is not an excuse for anyone to discard maturity, respect, and decency.
 - Respect for the game can never be sacrificed due to the desire to win.
 - Our champions must win with dignity; all other teams must lose with grace.
 - True character is best displayed in adverse situations; the "heat of the moment" is not an excuse.

COMPETITION INFORMATION

Game Schedule

- The game schedule is set and locked, as posted on the PAHL website.
 - Start times cannot be altered due to requests and other conflicts.
 - All teams must be ready to enter the ice at the scheduled start time.
- A game can start early if the ice becomes available due to the previous game ending early.
 - Both the referees and head coaches must agree to the earlier start.
 - All game personnel must be present for the earlier start time.
 - Refer to Section 8.1.B of the PAHL Game Manual.
- If a previous game runs long (OT/SO), the next game will start immediately upon the ice being resurfaced.
 - The start of a game should not be otherwise delayed for any reason (such as players/coaches coming from another game); contact the Executive Administrator if a delay is encountered.

Rules & Rulebooks

- All games shall be played according to the USA Hockey rulebooks and the PAHL Game Manual.
 - The PAHL Game Manual shall take precedence when a conflict arises between the two sets of rules.
- The host association shall provide accessibility to the USA Hockey Rulebook and the PAHL Game Manual upon the request of the On-Ice Officials during each game.
 - All playing rules are accessible on the PAHL website at www.pahockey.com/rules

Suspensions and Discipline

- All unserved suspensions accrued during the regular season shall carryover into the playoffs.
 - A scrimmage/exhibition game cannot be added prior to the playoffs to serve a suspension.
 - All suspensions and disciplinary actions received during the playoffs shall apply to subsequent rounds for winning teams, including the MidAm State Tournament, where applicable.
 - Suspensions and disciplinary actions for players/coaches on losing teams shall fall under the guidance of PAHL policies on Carryover Suspensions and USAH rules on serving suspensions.
 - All rulings regarding suspensions shall be directed to the PAHL Discipline Director only; no other entity shall be authorized to provide an official statement on suspensions.
- No protests shall be permitted during playoff games; all disputes shall be resolved by the PAHL League Office.
- There shall be no guarantee that a Match Penalty hearing will be conducted prior to a team's next playoff game.

Time of Play

- Period lengths and penalty lengths shall match those of the regular season, per division.
 - The applicable period lengths and penalty times are noted near the top-left of all PAHL scoresheets.
- There shall be no curfew – and therefore no curfew rules – applied to any playoff game.
 - The PAHL running-clock and mercy policies remain in effect for playoff games.
- Each team is granted a timeout of 1-minute in duration during regulation time.

Playoff Overtime

- All elimination games with a tied score at the end of regulation time shall continue into sudden-victory overtime.
- The overtime period shall be 10 minutes of sudden-victory, stop-time play.
 - There shall be a rest period of 1 minute prior to the start of the overtime period.
- The on-ice manpower for the overtime periods shall be based on 4-on-4 play, minus applicable penalties.
 - Penalty time(s) not completed during regulation play shall carryover into the overtime period.
 - Multiple penalties to a team during overtime shall never reduce a team to less than 3 skaters on the ice.
 - The On-Ice Officials shall make all determinations regarding the application of penalties and subsequent on-ice manpower, including any adjustments required at a stoppage in play.
- Teams shall switch ends between the end of the third period and the start of overtime, and teams shall defend the end for the duration of overtime.
- No timeouts are permitted by either team in overtime.

Playoff Shootouts

- All playoff games with a tied score at the end of the overtime period shall conduct a shootout.
- There shall be a rest period of 1 minute prior to the start of the shootout.
- Teams shall defend the net closest to its bench for the duration of the shootout.
- A player who has uncompleted penalty time at the conclusion of overtime is not eligible to participate in the shootout, and any player who has been removed from the game at the direction of the Medic due to injury or illness is not eligible to participate in the shootout.
- All shots shall be conducted under the provisions of the USA Hockey rule for Penalty Shots.
 - All players must remain fully inside the team bench during each shot attempt, except for the goaltender of each team who is participating in the shootout and the skater who is attempting the current shot.
 - No timeout nor warm-up activity of any kind shall be granted once the shootout begins.
- The shootout shall consist of 5 rounds unless, at any point, one team holds a lead greater than the number of shooters remaining for the opponent.
 - Teams must use 5 eligible shooters in the order of their choice.
 - Coaches do not need to report shooters prior to the shootout; a game official shall track which players from each team have attempted shots.
 - The home team shall have the option of shooting first or defending first, which shall then apply to all rounds of the shootout.
- If the shootout score is tied after 5 rounds, an additional tiebreaker round shall be sequentially added, as needed, to determine a winner.
 - Any eligible shooter may be used by a team during any necessary tiebreaker rounds, regardless of the number of previous shot attempts by any player.
 - Each team will attempt an equal number of shots in the tiebreaker round(s) until a winner is declared.
- The final score of the game at the end of a shootout shall be established by awarding 1 additional goal (credited to the "Team" and not to an individual player) to the team that wins the shootout, regardless of how many goals were scored during the shootout.

OPERATIONS INFORMATION

Scoresheets

- The PAHL League Office shall supply the official scoresheet to the host for all games in all rounds.
 - Pre-printed scoresheet packets will be sent to the host to print prior to each game.
 - Playoff scoresheets will not be made available in the online shared folder for any team to print.
- Scoresheets shall be available at the check-in table upon arrival and shall remain at the check-in table until obtained by the Official Scorer for use in the game.
 - Team Managers must prepare the team's game roster on the scoresheet at the check-in table so that it remains available for player check-in.
 - The Head Coach of each team must come to the check-in table to provide sign-off on the game roster.
 - The game's Official Scorer shall obtain the scoresheet from the check-in table before the game and return it to the check-in table immediately after the game.

Player Rosters

- The PAHL Scoresheet for the game shall list all eligible players for each participating team.
 - Any issue with a player not pre-listed on a game roster shall be resolved by contacting the PAHL League Office prior to the start of the game. No player is to be hand-written onto a scoresheet without explicit authorization from the PAHL League Office, as provided – verbally or in writing – to both the affected team and to the Playoff Site Coordinator.
 - Secondary Goalies are not eligible for use in a PAHL playoff game without explicit approval from the PAHL League Office. Without approval, the SG will not be listed on the scoresheet.
 - A player who did not meet PAHL playoff eligibility requirements will not be listed on the scoresheet, including any player who was not approved for an injury exemption waiver. Any player who was approved by the PAHL League Office for an injury exemption waiver will be listed on the team's game roster.
 - Use of an ineligible/unapproved player in a game shall result in the game being stopped immediately and ruled a forfeit win for the non-offending team.
- Each team must properly mark its team roster on the game's scoresheet at least 5 minutes prior to the scheduled start of each playoff game.
 - Coaches/managers shall place a thin straight line through "scratched" players and note any suspended player with 'SUSP' in the SUSP column.
 - The Head Coach of each team – and only the Head Coach – must apply a signature at the bottom of the team's roster area prior to the opening face-off of the game to verify the team's game roster.

Game Equipment

- Teams are to use only the locker room to which it is assigned and leave that room cleaner than it was found.
 - Each team is responsible for providing a Locker Room Monitor for each playoff game.
- Each team is responsible for providing its own warm-up pucks, water bottles, and other game/bench supplies.
- The host association shall ensure a continuous supply of pucks suitable for game play.
 - It is recommended that game pucks be kept in a container of ice/snow or placed on a cold surface until needed for use.

Game Personnel

- The host association shall arrange for all Game Personnel for all playoff games.
 - The host entity and/or host venue may arrange, at their discretion, for a PA Announcer, Arena DJ, and/or Security Guard at a playoff game(s), as defined within the PAHL Game Manual.
 - Individuals from participating teams are not entitled to assume a role as Game Personnel (except for Penalty Box Attendant) or have someone present in the scorer's box to monitor game operations.
- Each participating team shall provide one adult to serve as its Penalty Box Attendant for its playoff game(s).
 - Such individuals must remain impartial and undistruptive to the operations of the game.
 - A Penalty Box Attendant shall not be performing any other duties, and a coach who temporarily moves from the team bench into the penalty box must cease all coaching activity and act only as the Attendant.
- All playoff games shall utilize a 2-official system, as arranged by the host entity.
 - At no time shall play start or resume at any other level of play without at least 2 certified officials on the ice. The game shall be stopped in all such instances until the matter is resolved through the League Office.
- The on-ice officials are always the authority on the game, as a representation of the rulebooks.
 - Off-Ice Officials, league personnel, nor the site coordinator shall intervene with nor overrule the on-ice officials pertaining to matters of penalties and on-ice play.
 - Those individuals are authorized to consult with the On-Ice Officials on matters related to PAHL-specific playoff procedures and game operations.

Score Reporting

- The host entity shall be responsible for scanning and submitting the scoresheet from each playoff game using the standard PAHL Score Reporting procedures (pahockey.com/scorereporting).
 - The Team Manager of a participating team can assume this duty if agreed upon by the host.
 - Scores do not need to be reported in any other manner.
- The PAHL website will be updated routinely throughout each day of playoff games with game results.
 - The schedules and brackets involving advancing teams will also be updated on the PAHL website.
 - Divisional pages for playoff results can be found at www.pahockey.com/playoffs2025

Championship Celebrations

- A traditional postgame handshake shall be conducted between the teams after the championship game.
- The losing team is not required to stay on the ice beyond the handshake.
 - There is no shame in leaving the ice if done so respectfully.
- After the handshake, an on-ice presentation will be made by the PAHL to honor the winning team.
 - The team's players and coaches are granted this time together on the ice to celebrate their win as a team.
 - The winning team will have a team photo taken by the PAHL photographer before departing the ice.
- No spectators are permitted to enter the ice surface during the postgame celebration, with no exceptions.
 - The winning team will be asked to clear the ice immediately if spectators or other unauthorized individuals enter the playing area (ice, benches, boxes) during this time (including for pictures), and any unauthorized person entering the playing area will be removed from the premises immediately.
 - A dedicated area away from the ice surface shall be provided to the winning team after the game for photographs with family and friends. Spectators are asked to use this area and honor the policy of remaining off of the ice surface.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Travel & Arrival

- Only the PAHL League Office has the authority to postpone/delay a playoff game for any reason, including adverse weather conditions.
- An affected team must immediately contact the League Office at the first opportunity if the team is concerned about weather conditions or the team encounters travel issues on the way to a game.

Check-In

- Each participating player must check-in at the designated table prior to each playoff game.
- Injured players and suspended players do not check in since they will not be participating in the game.
 - An injured player is eligible to be on the team bench during the game if wearing a helmet/cage and a team jersey/jacket.
 - A suspended player is not eligible to be on or near the team bench during the game and shall only enter the ice surface for a championship celebration with his/her team after the completion of the postgame handshake.

Payment Per Game

- Each team must pay the host association a game fee prior to the start of each game in which it participates.
 - Games with a minimum of 85-minute ice slots = \$350 per team, per game
 - Games with a minimum of 65-minute ice slots = \$300 per team, per game
- Full payment of the per game fee shall be made via check to the host association or, in the case of championship games, to the PAHL.
 - Payments should be submitted at the designated check-in table operated by the host; it is the obligation of the team to submit the payment and not the obligation of the host to pursue the payment.
 - Any team failing to make payment prior to the scheduled start of the game shall be issued a forfeiture for the game.

Spectators

- The USA Hockey Zero Tolerance Policy shall be strictly enforced at all games.
 - Spectators who are ejected from a playoff game are automatically banned from all subsequent PAHL playoff games, in addition to consequences henceforth applied by the applicable association's Spectator Conduct Policy.
 - Security staff will be present at all PAHL Championship Games and could be assigned to any other playoff game by the host entity.
- Spectators who enter restricted areas -- namely, locker room hallways -- will be ejected from the premises.
 - Restricted areas must remain clear of unauthorized individuals for the safety of our athletes.
- Spectators are reminded that they are not to enter the ice surface during the championship presentation.