

5.0 Discipline

5.1 Disciplinary Committee – The AAHA Board of Directors shall annually appoint one (1) AAHA Disciplinary Committee (DC). They will operate in Phoenix, Arizona to be chaired by the AAHA appointed Chair. The Committee, through its Chair, is solely responsible to the Board of Directors of AAHA in performing its functions. The DC will be comprised of no less than members of 3 Member Organizations. It is advisable to have additional committee members without Member Organization affiliations. The DC will conduct any hearing in compliance with USA Hockey Bylaw 10 related to Summary Suspensions, Playing Rules Suspensions and Safe Sport violations.

5.1.1 DC decisions may be made by as few as three (3) of the members if there are abstentions, absences, or conflicts of interest. DC actions and decisions are based on a simple majority vote. In situations in which a tie vote is possible, a vote by the Chair will be reserved and occur only as a tie-breaker. The Chair may note conflict of interest or appearance of conflict of interest and excuse him/herself or request another member of the DC to excuse him/herself from the proceedings in which the conflicts or appearance of conflict is thought to occur. The Chair, as necessary to compensate for abstaining or absent members and conflict of interest exclusions for the time being, will appoint members. The Vice-Chair will serve as Chair should the appointed Chair be absent, or in a conflict situation. The DC will notify the Member Organization to which the player(s) belong in writing via email of the action taken by the DC within three (3) business days after the meeting.

5.1.2 The general business of the DC may be conducted in an open session; in person or through telephonic or digital technology such as Zoom. General business conduct by telephonic communications is to be available to the public upon request. Any hearing involving a suspension or other form of discipline of a confidential or quasi- confidential or personal nature shall be conducted in a closed session with those present being members of the DC and:

1. The person against whom an action is being considered (including a parent or designated guardian who must be present with a minor and/or coach for players); and/or
2. Designated representative(s) of the team or Member Organization against whom an action is directed: and/or
3. The aggrieved people, including parents or designated guardians who must be present with a

minor and/or coach for players, team or Member Organization involved: and/or

4. Individuals providing testimony in such proceeding shall appear in the proceeding alone, and be excused after providing testimony. Any discovery or allegation by an individual shall be presented in writing to the DC. Accusations in writing should be provided as promptly as possible following the incident with sources of the accusation identified in documentation. DC may preserve anonymity provided the Chair is aware of the identity and has access to the source of the information. The Chair may accept documentation at a later date based on hearing schedule and discovery.

5.1.3 The deliberations of the DC related to a disciplinary hearing are confidential and will not be recorded.

5.1.4 A player or team official incurring a match penalty shall be suspended from participating in any USA Hockey games and practices until the case/hearing has been conducted and any additional suspension has been determined by the AAHA Disciplinary Committee. A hearing shall be offered (including any further disciplinary action) within 30 days of the incident ("30-day period") together with a decision in accordance with USA Hockey Bylaw 10.D(3)(b). If extenuating circumstances prevent conducting of the hearing within the 30-day period, the player or team official shall be automatically reinstated after the 30-day period. The failure to offer the hearing shall not prohibit the AAHA Disciplinary Committee from conducting the hearing after the 30-day period and imposing further disciplinary action.

5.1.5 DC actions can be initiated by:

1. Notice to the Chair of an infraction of USAH or AAHA rules that require match penalty, by a referee or an appropriate designated tournament official, in writing, or verbally followed by an annotated score sheet or other appropriate written notice
2. A request from the AAHA President

5.1.6 The DC will respond/act on any such notification at its next regularly scheduled meeting or as soon thereafter as all pertinent materials and persons involved in the issue at hand can be assembled.

5.1.7 Scheduled meetings of the DC: It is anticipated that the

DC will not need to have a regularly posted schedule for hearings on match penalties. Even though the rules of USA Hockey provide a thirty (30) day window for scheduling hearings, the DC will make every attempt to schedule the hearing in a timely manner. In most cases when a match penalty occurs, a hearing will be scheduled within fourteen (14) days of when the match penalty is reported to the Disciplinary Chair. The AAHA President, Board of Directors, or Chair may call an ad hoc meeting for specific issues at any other time during the full calendar year.

- 5.1.8 Appeal Procedures – Any party that is suspended or otherwise disciplined may, after a hearing or failure to have a hearing in accordance with USA Hockey Bylaw 10, appeal that decision to the AAHA Board of Directors. The appealing party must submit a Statement of Appeal within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the decision of the DC to the AAHA President. The Statement of Appeal must be accompanied by all written documentation from the original proceeding. A check or money order in the amount of \$250 shall accompany the appeal. Any check or money order is to be made out to the AAHA. The AAHA Executive Committee will determine whether the appeal will be presented to the Appeal Committee (made up of three disinterested Directors on the AAHA Board) or the full Board and will be responsible for all appeal proceedings and actions. The Appeal Committee shall follow USA Hockey Bylaw 10.E when processing the appeal and render its decision within a reasonable period thereafter in accordance with USA Hockey Bylaw 10.E(2)(d).
- 5.1.9 DC actions and decisions will be based on USA Hockey published rules and regulations, AAHA Hockey rules and regulations, specific tournament rules and regulations, and generally accepted policies for implementation of all such rules and regulations.
- 5.1.10 The Appeal Committee may affirm, reverse, or modify (including increase or decrease the term of a suspension) any decision in its sole discretion and as it deems proper under the circumstances.
- 5.1.11 A person or team that wins their appeal will be refunded the \$250 appeal fee. A win is considered when the appeal reduces the suspension in any amount of games or time.

2. Penalty Enforcement

- 5.2.1 The Member Organizations, teams, coaches and other team officials are responsible for ensuring that all game

misconducts incurred are served at the next game in accordance with USA Hockey and if applicable, league or tournament rules. This includes any games that are played outside the AAHA boundaries.

- 5.2.2 Match Penalties – Match penalties shall be reported by the referee in a written report to the Local Area Officiating Supervisor who shall report to the Referee-In-Chief, AAHA President, and to the AAHA Disciplinary Committee (DC). Any player or team official receiving such a penalty shall be suspended from any further USA Hockey sanctioned games or practices until the AAHA DC determines the appropriate penalty disposition for the infraction.
- 5.2.3 All match penalties must be referred to the AAHA DC for referral and advice. In no circumstances will the penalized player/coach be allowed on the ice, on the bench, in the locker room, or to practice with the team during the suspension period. Therefore, any suspension will be “total” during the suspension period. All Member Organizations should advise their coaching staffs of USA Hockey playing rule 405C, the circumvention of which will be dealt with severely by the AAHA DC.
- 5.2.4 Any suspension imposed by the local organization, team or league shall be served separate and apart from any suspension assessed by the AAHA Disciplinary Committee.
- 5.2.5 At the **June** 2021 USA Hockey Annual Congress, the USA Hockey Standardized Discipline Policy covering match penalties was adopted. The policy is listed below and can also be found in the preface of the Official Rules of Ice Hockey, 2021-2025 edition. AAHA will follow this policy with one exception. The third paragraph of the policy states that an individual will review the report and make a determination of the severity of the penalty. The change is that the Chair of the DC along with two other members of the DC will make the initial determination of the penalty.

USA Hockey 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 by the proper authorities as determined by the Affiliate in each instance when a match penalty is assessed.

(Note) Any match penalty assessed under Rule 601(f.1) (Physical Assault of Official) is excluded from this policy. Original jurisdiction in any hearing resulting from a match penalty assessed under Rule

601(f.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 proper authorities as determined by the Affiliate. The proper authorities as determined by the Affiliate will designate an individual who shall review the report and make a preliminary determination of one of the following:

- 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 10.D (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.

- 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.
- 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.

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

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/Deliberate Injury of 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)

5.3 Administrative Action Challenges and Appeals

5.3.1 A member of the AAHA may challenge an Administrative Action of the AAHA as provided herein. An "Administrative Action" is defined as any action or decision by the AAHA that affects any parties' eligibility to participate in domestic competition and/or their membership in any AAHA organization within the jurisdiction of the AAHA Bylaws or Policies and Procedures.

5.3.2 A member of the AAHA may contest an Administrative Action

by submitting a written statement within fourteen (14) days of notification of the action or decision to the AAHA President. The written submission should address how the Administrative Action was made in an arbitrary or capricious manner or was not supported by the facts. The written submission should be accompanied by all written documentation generated from the Administrative Action. A check or money order in the amount of \$250 shall accompany the challenge. Any check or money order is to be made out to the AAHA. The AAHA Executive Committee will present the challenge to an Administrative Action Hearing Panel consisting of at least three (3) reasonably disinterested and impartial persons. The AAHA Executive Committee will be responsible for all proceedings and actions. The Hearing Panel shall follow USA Hockey bylaw 10.C when processing the Administrative Action challenge and render its decision within a reasonable period thereafter in accordance with USA Hockey Bylaw 10.C.(3)(g).

5.3.3 Appeal Procedures - Appeals of Administrative Actions shall be appealed to the AAHA Board of Directors or a panel of three (3) reasonably disinterested and impartial persons at the discretion of the AAHA Executive Committee. An Administrative Action appeal shall follow USA Hockey Bylaw 10.E addressing Administrative Action appeals. The Administrative Action Appeal Authority shall render its decision in the manner provided by USA Hockey Bylaw 10.E(2)(d). There shall be no further appeals of Administrative Actions

5.3.4 If the AAHA member/member program/other party is not successful in overturning the Administrative Action in its entirety, the AAHA member /member program/other party shall pay to the AAHA any and all fees, expenses, and other costs incurred by the AAHA (including its local associations) with respect to that matter (including but not limited to attorney's fees, expenses of any third-party consultants, experts, investigators, and witnesses). Failure to reimburse the AAHA for the fees, expenses, and other costs may result in the termination of membership in the AAHA.

5.3.5 Any Administrative Action shall remain in full force and effect unless overturned pursuant to a hearing or appeal as set forth herein.