



# PITTSBURGH AMATEUR HOCKEY LEAGUE

## 2026 PAHL Policies and Rules Proposals



### RULE PROPOSAL

From PAHL Executive Administrator

#### TEAM DISCIPLINE

##### EXISTING RULE (OLD)

**Multiple 10-Minute Misconducts in a Season:** Any team that accumulates multiple 10-Minute Misconduct Penalties in league games over the course of a single season shall receive the following disciplinary actions:

- 1) Any team that is discovered to have 8 league games in which a 10-Minute Misconduct Penalty(s) was assessed to any individual(s) on the team shall result in a disciplinary hearing scheduled for the team's Head Coach within 30 days of discovery.
- 2) Any team that is discovered to have 10 league games in which a 10-Minute Misconduct Penalty(s) was assessed to an individual(s) on the team shall result in the team being automatically ineligible for league postseason play.

**Multiple Game Misconducts in a Season:** The following disciplinary actions shall be applied to a team that accumulates a Game Misconduct Penalty in four or more league games over the course of a single season:

- 1) Any team that has 4 league games with a Game Misconduct Penalty shall result in a disciplinary hearing scheduled for the team's Head Coach.
- 2) Any team that has 6 league games with a Game Misconduct Penalty shall result in the team being automatically ineligible for league postseason play.

##### PROPOSED RULE (NEW)

**Accumulation of Disciplinary Penalties in a Season:** Any team that is discovered to have greater than 50% of its regular-season league games in which a Misconduct, Game Misconduct, and/or Match Penalty(s) was incurred by any individual(s) on the team shall result in the team being automatically ineligible for league postseason play.

- 1) Any single league game can only count once towards a team's total count, regardless of how many applicable penalties were incurred by a team in the game.
- 2) The accumulation of 12 or more penalties by a team in a game shall, for the purposes of this rule, count as a Game Misconduct incurred by the head coach of the team.
- 3) A penalty that was not assessed in a game and/or not recorded on the official scoresheet but is required by rule (automatic misconducts and game misconducts) shall be counted as incurred by an individual as an administrative correction to the scoresheet by the League Office following the game.

##### RATIONALE FOR PROPOSAL

The current rules serve as a partial replacement for the old Fair Play Point system and are designed to address teams with recurring disciplinary problems and deter such repeated actions. But the two existing rules have some holes, and the rule, as a whole, has often been misinterpreted.

The new rule combines the two existing rules in a manner that simplifies and clarifies what is truly trying to be accomplished. It adds in match penalties to the count, since those are the most severe penalties and are not currently accounted for in the existing rules. It also sets the threshold at "greater than 50%," so a team would have to accumulate these penalties in more than half of its regular-season games, whereas the previous threshold was at the 50% mark.

# RULE PROPOSAL

From PAHL Executive Administrator

## DISCIPLINE

### EXISTING RULE (OLD)

**Participant Discipline – Accumulation of Game Misconducts:** In addition to any other applicable suspension, an individual who is assessed three Game Misconduct Penalties in league games within a single season shall have a disciplinary hearing scheduled within 30 days of discovery to determine if further discipline is warranted.

**Team Discipline – Multiple Game Misconducts in a Season:** The following disciplinary actions shall be applied to a team that accumulates a Game Misconduct Penalty in four or more league games over the course of a single season:

- 1) Any team that has 4 league games with a Game Misconduct Penalty shall result in a disciplinary hearing scheduled for the team's Head Coach.
- 2) Any team that has 6 league games with a Game Misconduct Penalty shall result in the team being automatically ineligible for league postseason play.

### PROPOSED RULE (NEW)

**REMOVE CURRENT RULES FROM PAHL GAME MANUAL**

### RATIONALE FOR PROPOSAL

These existing rules would be removed from the PAHL Game Manual by this proposal, though the second one is readdressed via the previous rule proposal. There is too much overlap (double jeopardy) between these rules and USAH rules, so we should not keep our rules and instead defer to these USAH rules:

**USAH 411(a):** Any player who receives their third major penalty during the same season for any combination of aggressive infractions listed below shall receive an additional three-game suspension. For any player who receives their fourth major penalty in this category, the player shall receive an additional five-game suspension. Any player who receives their fifth major penalty in this category during the same season shall be suspended until a hearing is conducted by the proper authorities (USA Hockey Affiliate). These designated game suspensions shall be in addition to any other suspensions imposed through the official playing rules.

**USAH 411(b):** Any team that receives three major penalties in the same game shall have its Head Coach suspended for the next game of that team. For any subsequent game where that team receives three or more major penalties in the same game, the Head Coach shall serve a three-game suspension. For a third game with three or more major penalties by the same team during the same season, the Head Coach shall be suspended indefinitely until a hearing has been conducted by the proper authorities (USA Hockey Affiliate).

**USAH 411(c):** Any coach who receives their second game misconduct penalty in the same season for a violation of Rule 601 shall automatically receive an additional three-game suspension. Any coach who receives their third game misconduct penalty in the same season for a violation of Rule 601 shall automatically be suspended from USA Hockey activities until a hearing is conducted by the Proper Authority.

# RULE PROPOSAL

## From PAHL Executive Administrator

### GAME ROSTERS

#### EXISTING RULE (OLD)

**Minimum Game Participants:** A team shall not be required to play – or continue to play – a game if it does not have the minimum number of players prescribed below. A team can still choose to start the game – or continue to play the game – if below the minimum player requirement but shall not be obligated to do so. A game that is not started or not completed due to a team not meeting the minimum requirement shall result in a Non-Contested Forfeit to the offending team.

- 1) 14U, 16U, 18U, 19G: 8 players
- 2) 10U, 12U, 12G, 14G: 7 players

#### PROPOSED RULE (NEW)

**Minimum Game Participants:** In accordance with USA Hockey rules, a team must have a minimum of six players to start a game and must be able to place four players on the ice at all subsequent points of the game.

- 1) The minimum requirements do not require a goaltender (skaters only, or a mix of skaters and goaltenders).
- 2) A game that is not started due to a team not meeting the minimum requirement shall result in a Non-Contested Forfeit to the offending team.
- 3) A game that is started but not completed due to a team not maintaining the minimum requirement shall result in a Contested Forfeit to the offending team.

#### RATIONALE FOR PROPOSAL

The current rule has been very problematic. It was authored as an attempt to keep part of a rule from the previous PAHL Playing Rules regarding minimum players for a game, but as such, all of the old rule has often been assumed to still be applied instead of reading the actual wording of the current rule. Many teams are assuming that it can get a “free pass” out of playing a game (including on the day of the game) because it does not have enough players, which was part of the previous rule. Our current philosophy is that we need games to be played, as scheduled, because of the costs, commitments, and tight schedules involved.

Unfortunately, the only means of providing a clear rule about this is to not have one that is different than USAH rules, even though the USAH version is a lower number that we had previously set as a league. We also have an approach that our rules (PAHL Game Manual) do not replace USA Hockey rules (USAH rulebook), which is one of the reasons why the existing rule is problematic.

# POLICY PROPOSAL

## From PAHL Executive Administrator

### SCHEDULING POLICIES

#### EXISTING POLICY (OLD)

##### Schedule Change Categories

1. Any change – for any reason – to the date, start time, or location of a league game constitutes a Schedule Change. There shall be three categories of Schedule Changes, which shall be delineated by the timeframe and the circumstances that prompt the change request:
2. Schedule Adjustments are defined as any change requested before the Monday immediately prior to the date of the game.
3. Rescheduled Games are defined as any change requested on or after the Monday immediately prior to the date of the game.
4. Postponements are defined as any change necessitated due to circumstances beyond the control of either team.

#### PROPOSED POLICY (NEW)

##### Schedule Change Categories

1. Any change – for any reason – to the date, start time, or location of a league game constitutes a Schedule Change. There shall be three categories of Schedule Changes, which shall be delineated by the timeframe and the circumstances that prompt the change request.
2. Schedule Adjustments are defined as any change submitted more than 14 days prior to the date of the game.
3. Rescheduled Games are defined as any change requested within 14 days prior to the date of the game.
4. Postponements are specifically defined herein and are changes necessitated due to circumstances beyond the control of either team.

#### RATIONALE FOR PROPOSAL

This is the first of two proposals that continue to put some practical restrictions on schedule changes, for which there has been very positive feedback on the progress made over the last 2 seasons.

This proposal provides an improved timeline for making standard schedule adjustments. Currently, requests coming 6-7 days prior to a game do not give a lot of time for opponents to adapt their weekend plans, as well as referees and medics to make any necessary schedule adjustments. Those requests should be 14+ days out. There are very few – if any – such requests that would not be known by a team 14+ days out, and the belief is that many of these changes are currently only coming in 7 days in advance because that is the current cutoff. By moving the deadline, that action would just be taken earlier, to the benefit of all parties.

This also provides a better timeline for the League Office to review, approve, and/or process changes, getting those changes posted to the website 7+ days ahead of the affected game instead of only a couple of days ahead. This timeline should also reduce the overlap of Schedule Adjustments and Rescheduled Games since Adjustments will be made earlier and most Reschedules come in the week of the game.

The changes to Part 4 add clarification to what separates an Adjustment/Reschedule from a Postponement to cut down on any confusion between the three.

# POLICY PROPOSAL

## From PAHL Executive Administrator

### SCHEDULING POLICIES

#### EXISTING POLICY (OLD)

##### Schedule Change Costs

1. A fee shall be charged to the team initiating a Schedule Change, and any fee over \$50 may be appealed to the Executive Board supporting evidence that the change was beyond the control of the team/association.
  - a. \$0 fee for Postponements
  - b. \$0 fee if only the start time of the game is changed by 4 hours or less
  - c. \$50 fee for the first change made to a specific game
  - d. \$200 fee for each subsequent change made to a specific game
  - e. \$500 fee for any team that makes 4 total Schedule Changes in a single season, in addition to the fees for the individual Schedule Changes

#### PROPOSED POLICY (NEW)

##### Schedule Change Costs

1. A fee shall be charged to the team initiating a Schedule Change, and any single fee over \$50 may be appealed to the Executive Board with supporting evidence that the change was beyond the control of the team/association.
  - a. \$0 fee for Postponements, including changes made in advance for situations necessitated – as a single schedule change or a related bulk of game changes – by a matter similar to the definition of a Postponement, as deemed by the Executive Administrator)
  - b. \$0 fee if only the start time of the game is changed by 1 hour or less via a Schedule Adjustment
  - c. \$50 fee for the first change made to a specific game, including all Rescheduled Games
  - d. \$200 fee for each subsequent change made to a specific game
  - e. \$500 fee for any team that makes 4 total Schedule Changes in a single season that results in a fee, in addition to the fees for the individual Schedule Changes
  - f. \$250 fee to any association that has its teams collectively make 10 or more total Schedule Changes in a single season that results in a fee, in addition to the fees for the individual Schedule Changes.

#### RATIONALE FOR PROPOSAL

This proposal is the second of two proposals that build on the progress being made to restrict schedule changes. Some of that progress has (rightfully) resulted in less tolerance for many requested changes across the league. Teams continue to be cooperative when times are changed by less than 30 minutes, but teams are now understandably not so accepting of changes that are 2-3 hours from the original start time. Since currently there is no fee for a change of 1-4 hours (including changes on pretty short notice), the push within this proposal is to place a fee on those changes to cut down on how often they are requested.

Other issues that are addressed by the proposal:

- Bulk changes at the association level, especially waiting until a weekend slate is near to start looking if several adjustments need to be made (different than a one-off situation with a single game/team). Most of these are avoidable by closing scheduling gaps early in the season instead of periodically throughout the season.
- Establishing a little more clarity that “because of our rink” is not something that falls into the category of being a free change, such as “the rink got the schedule wrong” or “the rink needs to take that ice slot for a different game.” The rinks often push for these changes now because they know they are (or were) widely accepted by the PAHL and often do not come at any cost, for which we now need a better balance.

# POLICY PROPOSAL

## From PAHL Executive Administrator

### LEAGUE SCHEDULING

#### EXISTING POLICY (OLD)

##### Scheduling Restrictions

1. Each PAHL team shall schedule no more than 60% of its regular-season league games and no less than 40% of its regular-season league games prior to December 31 of each season. The Executive Director shall authorize an exception to this restriction only when the temporary unavailability of the home rink of a team prevents the team from adhering to the requirement.
2. If two teams from the same member association are placed into the same division, the first two matchups, as applicable, between those teams must take place prior to December 31. If a third matchup in the regular season is mandated, it must be played prior to January 31st. If a fourth (or more) matchup in the regular season is mandated, there shall be no restriction on when the game is played.

#### PROPOSED POLICY (NEW)

##### Scheduling Restrictions

1. Each PAHL team at the 12U age classifications and above shall schedule at least 5 of its regular-season league games on or prior to November 30 of each season and at least 5 of its regular-season league games on or after January 1 of each season.
2. Each PAHL team in the 10U age classification shall schedule at least 5 of its regular-season league games on or prior to December 31 of each season and at least 5 of its regular-season league games on or after January 1 of each season.
3. If two teams from the same member association are placed into the same division, the first two matchups, as applicable, between those teams must take place prior to December 31. If a third matchup in the regular season is mandated, it must be played prior to January 31. If a fourth (or more) matchup in the regular season is mandated, there shall be no restriction on when the fourth game is played.
4. The League Office can authorize an exception to these restrictions if a scheduled game is postponed and henceforth cannot be rescheduled in adherence to this policy. The Executive Director can also authorize an exception within these restrictions when the temporary unavailability of the home rink of a team prevents the team from adhering to a requirement.

#### RATIONALE FOR PROPOSAL

The current policy in Part 1 is a hard one to catch/enforce, and the violation is oftentimes accidental (not realized during the hectic scheduling session). The proposed changes are still a bit hard to track but offer an improvement. A policy is still needed to prevent teams from loading up all its games in one portion of the season (every team should have to play games across a full season). This proposal attempts to strike a reasonable but flexible balance by requiring 5 games in the first two months of a team's season and 5 games in the last two months of a team's season. Every team should easily be able to adhere to the policy unless it is intentionally trying to do otherwise. The proposal also establishes a clear number to count (no math/calculations) at scheduling sessions to make this restriction easier to track at the time of the scheduling sessions.

The addition to Part 4 puts logic into writing.

# POLICY PROPOSAL

## From PAHL Executive Administrator

### PLACEMENT POLICIES

#### EXISTING POLICY (OLD)

NONE

#### PROPOSED POLICY (NEW)

##### Placement Game Provisions

- No team shall play more than one placement game on the same day. An exception shall only be granted by the League Office if a scheduled placement game is not initially played under the provisions for Postponements and no other viable date is available for the teams to play the rescheduled game.

#### RATIONALE FOR PROPOSAL

One of the most common problems within the placement process is the large quantity of notes in the game reports that state something similar to “we would have done better but we played two games today” and “it was hard to tell how good the opponent was because it was their second game of the day.” As such, it becomes obvious in the placement process that the Placement Committee is simply getting bad/useless data for at least three total teams: the team with 2 games in a day and each of the opponents in those 2 games. We need good/useful input to get placements done well, and there should be no reason, given the number of days available to play placement games, that any team would have to play 2 games in the same day.

# POLICY PROPOSAL

## From PAHL Executive Administrator

### PLACEMENT POLICIES

#### EXISTING POLICY (OLD)

##### Final Placement Appeals

1. Any team wishing to appeal its final placement must submit a written appeal via email only from the association president to the Chair of the Placement Committee. If multiple teams within an association are appealing their placement, a separate email needs to be submitted for each appealing team.
2. Appeals must be submitted no later than 5:00 PM on the Sunday immediately following the publication of final placements. No appeal submitted after the deadline shall be accepted.
3. The appeals letter must include the association name, the specific team (PAHL Team ID) making the appeal, the nature of the requested movement (move up a division or move down a division), and a brief, fact-based explanation supporting the request. Incomplete appeals shall not be accepted.
4. The Chair of the Placement Committee shall present all appeals requests to the members of the Placement Committee within 24 hours of the appeals deadline. The Placement Committee shall vote electronically to uphold the request, deny the request, or move the request to a hearing.
5. The Chair shall communicate the result of the vote to the appropriate association president. There shall be no further appeal, and only appeals voted by the committee to move to a hearing shall be granted a hearing.

#### PROPOSED POLICY (NEW)

##### Placement Appeals

1. There shall be no appeal option to the final placement of any 10U team, with no exceptions and no subsequent review.
2. Any team (12U and above) wishing to appeal its final placement must submit an appeal only from the association president via the Placement Appeal Form provided by the League Office. If multiple teams within an association are appealing their placement, a separate form must be submitted for each appealing team.
3. Appeals must be submitted, in full, no later than 24 hours after the publication of final placements. No appeal or additions to an appeal shall be accepted after the deadline.
4. The onus shall be on the appellant association to provide ample justification for the request, using supporting information from the team's roster composition and performance in PAHL placement games.
5. All appeals received prior to the deadline shall be distributed to the members of the Executive Board and members of the Placement Committee.
6. The Executive Board and the Placement Committee shall convene – in-person, electronically, or a hybrid there of – to review, discuss, and vote on all appeals requests. No less than 2 members of the Executive Board and no less than 3 members of the Placement Committee shall be present for the discussion and included in the voting. The Executive Administrator shall moderate the discussion, shall not count towards an attendance requirement, and shall not cast a vote on any appeal. The PAHL President, if present, shall count toward the total board attendees and shall cast one vote on each appeal. The Chair of the Placement Committee, if present, shall count only toward the committee attendees and shall cast one vote on each appeal. All other members of the panel present for the discussion shall each cast one vote on each appeal.
7. A majority vote of the appeals panel must be in favor of the appeal request in order for the appeal to be upheld. A tie in a vote shall not be broken and shall result in the appeal being denied.
8. The Executive Administrator shall communicate the result of the vote to the applicable association president, and there shall be no further appeals on the decision.

#### RATIONALE FOR PROPOSAL

The timeline available for the appeals process was previously about 10 days, which consisted of two possible stages: the option to appeal to the Placement Committee to review the placement again and then the option to appeal to the Executive Board, for which an Administrative Hearing is conducted. Last season, this timeline was reduced to about 48 hours due to shortening the preseason and eliminating “appeals weekend,” making it difficult to fit the two stages of appeal into that condensed timeframe.

As such, this proposal addressed a need to merge the appeals process into a single but effective step. This proposal incorporates all of the essential elements of the two previous stages, including a fair opportunity for the team to state its case and the inclusion of a “fresh set of eyes” during the placement review. It also solves a previous issue where the Executive Board was naturally hesitant to override the Placement Committee at the hearing because the committee was far more immersed and knowledgeable in the placement of a team.

# POLICY PROPOSAL

## From PAHL Executive Administrator

### ROSTER ADDITIONS

#### EXISTING POLICY (OLD)

##### Player Addition Limitations

1. A player in the process of being added to a PAHL Roster shall not be eligible for participation in a PAHL game until the roster addition process is fully completed, including explicit approval of the player by the League Office. Any player who has not yet obtained approval shall be considered an ineligible player if used in a PAHL game, which shall result in a forfeiture to the team.
2. Any player can be freely added/removed from a PAHL Roster prior to July 1 of each season. Starting on July 1, player additions must only be completed through the Roster Addition Process.
3. Players shall not be added to a PAHL Roster after deadlines prescribed by the PAHL Game Manual. No exceptions shall be granted by any entity.
4. A player currently on a PAHL Roster cannot be moved to a new roster in a lower division without 75% approval of the PAHL Placement Committee.
5. A player cannot be “temporarily” placed on a PAHL Roster for any reason, and use of player movement policies shall not be used to circumvent PAHL polices or provide a team/association with temporary relief of any applicable policy. Suspected violations of this clause shall be investigated by the League Office and shall be deferred to the Executive Board for an Administrative Hearing if evidence is found of a violation.

#### PROPOSED POLICY (NEW)

##### Player Addition Limitations

1. A player in the process of being added to a PAHL Roster shall not be eligible for participation in a PAHL game until the roster addition process is fully completed, including explicit approval of the player by the League Office. Any player who has not yet obtained approval shall be considered an ineligible player if used in a PAHL game, which shall result in a forfeiture to the team.
2. Starting on **August 1**, player additions, releases, and changes must be completed via the online form through the standard Roster Addition Process.
3. **All rostered players must remain eligible under applicable PAHL, MidAm, and USAH policies, and no player shall be added to a PAHL Roster after any deadline prescribed by applicable PAHL, MidAm, and USAH policies.** No exceptions shall be granted by any entity.
4. **A player currently on a PAHL Roster cannot be moved to the roster of a lower team in the same association after September 1. A player on a PAHL Roster after September 1 who is seeking a roster transfer to a new association must obtain at least 75% approval of the PAHL Placement Committee to be added to the roster of a team in the new association that is in a lower division than the original team.**
5. A player cannot be temporarily placed on a PAHL Roster for any reason, and use of player movement policies shall not be used to circumvent PAHL polices or provide a team/association with temporary relief of any applicable policy. Suspected violations of this clause shall be investigated by the League Office and shall be deferred to the Executive Board for an Administrative Hearing if evidence is found of a violation.

#### RATIONALE FOR PROPOSAL

This proposal moves the implementation of the Roster Addition Process to August 1, which is the unofficial start to PAHL operations. Part 3 clarifies that a player on a roster remains subject to eligibility policies, not just applicable at the time the player is first put on the roster (example: a rostered player later added to a Tier 1 roster becomes ineligible).

Part 4 addresses the downward movement of any player within an association, which goes directly against how placements are constructed. Associations are able to make roster adjustments before September to ensure players get put on the correct team and their team rosters are distributed appropriately, but individual players cannot then be re-sorted to new rosters once placement games are underway (placement games are the place the team, not place the players onto teams). If the player seeks to move to a new association and will be put on a team roster in a lower division, a higher threshold still must be met to approve this roster addition. It is common for associations to take on new players from other PAHL associations and attempt to put those players on lower rosters since their upper rosters are full, but the integrity of the division, for the sake of the rest of the teams in the division, must be ensured for these transactions.

# POLICY PROPOSAL

## From PAHL Executive Administrator

### PLAYOFF HOST POLICIES

#### EXISTING POLICY (OLD)

**NONE... with some portions cited below coming, in part, from existing rules/policies**

#### PROPOSED POLICY (NEW)

##### Playoff Game Schedules

1. Ice slots for 19G, 18U, 16U, 14U, and 14G shall be reserved as 90 minutes in length. Ice slot for 10U, 12U, and 12G shall be reserved as 70 minutes in length. All playoff games must be able to run longer than the reserved ice slot without being curfewed by the host venue.
2. A single playoff round being played in a single day at a host site shall have start times for games between 11:00 AM and 7:00 PM. A host site that has multiple playoff rounds in a single day shall have start times for games between 10:00 AM and 8:00 PM. A host site that has multiple playoff rounds for the 10U age classification shall have start times for 10U games between 9:00 AM and 8:00 PM.
3. Games involving advancing teams that will meet in the next round shall be played simultaneously or consecutively, as best applicable.
4. Once the playoff game schedule is published to the PAHL website, only the League Office is authorized to approve a change to the start time of any playoff game.
5. There shall be no less than 6 hours of rest time scheduled between any game involving a team advancing to another playoff game within the same day. The calculation is done from the scheduled end time of the first game to the scheduled start time of the second game, and the start time of the second game shall not be modified if the first game ends later than scheduled due to overtime, shootouts, late starts, and other standard delays. Unexpected delays that reduce the scheduled rest time for a team to under 5.5 hours shall be reviewed by the League Office for a potential schedule adjustment.

##### Playoff Site Coordination

1. The host association shall appoint a single individual to serve as its Playoff Site Coordinator, who will provide the ice schedule with the appropriate number of game slots and liaise with the League Office on playoff preparations.
2. The host association shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure that all participating playoff teams at a host site are given equal and adequate treatment throughout the playoff event, including the team(s) from the host association. Areas of focus include a conventional assignment of team locker rooms, the use of the respective team benches as traditionally assigned to the home/away teams, and the neutral use of in-game music and announcements.
3. The host association, through its Assignor of Officials and in advance of the playoff weekend, shall ensure that all officials assigned to playoff games are provided with the playoff rules and procedures published by the PAHL.
4. The playoff rules and procedures published by the League Office shall be made readily available by the host association in the referee room(s) prior to games and in the scorer's box(es) during games.
5. The host association withholds no authority to make a ruling on a matter, resolve a dispute, nor interpret an applicable rule/policy. The host association shall direct all such matters to the League Office. The host association does reserve the ability to provide factual information on rules, policies, and protocols to the participants of its playoff games.
6. Any information that the host association feels may be necessary, as specific to its playoff site, shall be communicated to the League Office for consideration of distribution to affected playoff teams. The host association shall otherwise not send any forms of communication to any participating team at its playoff site, and any communications sent by a participating playoff team to the host association shall be redirected to the League Office by the host association.
7. The host association shall make a reasonable effort, when feasible, to ensure that real-time scoring is provided for all playoff games via an active internet connection on the scoring device and timely scoring entries by the Official Scorer.
8. The host association for 10U championship games shall have at least one person conduct an on-ice presentation of the championship banner, distribute the championship hats, and take an organized championship picture with the winning team at the immediate conclusion of the championship game. The on-ice presentation shall congratulate the winning team and issue the championship banner. Hats are to be distributed en masse (not individually) prior to the team photo. No spectators are to be permitted on the ice surface by the host association nor host venue during or after the post-game celebration, including for on-ice pictures of any kind.

#### RATIONALE FOR PROPOSAL

More structure, guidance, and consistency is simply needed at our playoff sites. Hosts must focus on coordinating the event itself in a manner that upholds a standard across the league and should not be pulled into making rulings and considering requests.

# RULE PROPOSAL

## From PAHL Executive Administrator

### PLAYOFF PERSONNEL

#### EXISTING POLICY (OLD)

**Playoff Personnel Assignment:** The requirements of playoff personnel for each postseason game shall follow the regular-season standards for Game Personnel.

- 1) The host association shall arrange for the Scorekeeper and Timekeeper, for which a separate individual must be serving in each role.
- 2) The host association shall arrange for the Medic.
- 3) The referees shall be assigned through the host's Assignor of Officials.
- 4) Each participating team shall provide one qualified person to serve as its Penalty Box Attendant.
- 5) The League Office withholds the option of providing or requesting additional personnel, such as goal judges, a PA Announcer, and Arena DJ.

**Playoff Officiating Systems:** League playoff games shall adhere to the officiating systems, policies, and procedures defined within Game Personnel, with the following additions:

- 1) No playoff game at any age classification shall start or resume with less than 2 certified officials participating on the ice.
- 2) No assigned official shall have been on any team roster within the same association of either participating team within the current season.
- 3) No assigned official shall have held decision-making powers with any team within the applicable division within the current season.

#### PROPOSED POLICY (NEW)

**Playoff Personnel Assignments:** The requirements of playoff personnel for each postseason game shall follow the regular-season standards for Game Personnel.

- 1) The host association shall arrange for the Scorekeeper and Timekeeper.
- 2) The host association shall arrange for the Medic.
- 3) The referees shall be assigned through the host's Assignor of Officials.
- 4) Each participating team shall provide one qualified person to serve as its Penalty Box Attendant.
- 5) The League Office withholds the option of providing or requesting goal judges and/or security guards.
- 6) The host association holds the priority option on providing a PA Announcer and Arena DJ. If the host does not provide an individual(s), the home team shall be given the next option to fill the role, followed by the away team. All announcements shall be equal and consistent in content for both teams, and if utilized, a goal horn/song, must be played for all goals scored by both teams.

**Playoff Officiating Assignments:** League playoff games shall adhere to the officiating systems, policies, and procedures defined within Game Personnel, with the following additions:

- 1) No playoff game at any age classification shall start or resume with less than 2 certified officials participating on the ice.
- 2) No assigned official shall have been on any team roster within the same association of either participating team within the current season.
- 3) No assigned official shall have held decision-making powers with any team within the applicable division within the current season.
- 4) The Assignor is expected to make a reasonable effort to assign qualified and experienced officials via a merit system.
- 5) No official shall be assigned to more than 2 consecutive playoff games.
- 6) No referee mentor, "shadow," evaluator, nor supervisor shall be utilized at any playoff game by any entity unless approved by the League Office.

#### RATIONALE FOR PROPOSAL

More guidance is needed for in-game music and the assignment of officials for playoff games. Too many disputes/issues have arisen at playoff games from the current lack of standards. Music at games should not become a point of contention for anyone. The assignments of referees need to be done with more care to ensure a better quality of officiating for our playoff games.

# RULE PROPOSAL

From PAHL Executive Administrator

## PLAYOFF PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

### EXISTING POLICY (OLD)

**Playoff Player Eligibility:** In addition to standard Participation Policies, players must meet the following requirements to participate in playoffs with a team:

- 1) Appeared on the team's league roster on or before October 31st or was placed on a league roster for the first time on or before December 31<sup>st</sup>.
- 2) Participated in at least 50% of the team's regular-season league games for 14U and above, with exceptions approved via Playoff Injury Exemptions.

### PROPOSED POLICY (NEW)

**Playoff Player Eligibility:** In addition to standard Participation Policies, players must meet the following requirements to participate in playoffs with a team:

- 1) Appeared on the team's league roster on or before October 31st or was placed on a league roster for the first time on or before December 31<sup>st</sup>.
- 2) Participated in at least 50% of the team's regular-season league **games, with** exceptions approved via Playoff Injury Exemptions.

### RATIONALE FOR PROPOSAL

The proposal removes the clause that applies the rule only to 14U and above. The intention was to have it match the levels that include National Bound Teams, since those levels need to do credential forms for MidAm States. But with GameSheet, our league no longer needs to do credential forms. Moreso, the intent of the rule needs to apply to all PAHL Playoffs: teams in our postseason need to look similar to the teams that competed in the regular season. So the eligibility requirement needs to apply to 10U and 12U, especially with it now much easier to track through GameSheet.

# POLICY PROPOSAL

## From PAHL Executive Administrator

### PARTICIPATION POLICIES

#### EXISTING POLICY (OLD)

##### Financial Obligation Clearance

1. A player with outstanding financial obligations (“bad debt”) to a PAHL member association shall not be eligible to participate with another PAHL member association until all financial arrears have been satisfied.
2. Associations shall provide a list of players with outstanding financial obligations to the League Office prior to each season via a method established by the League Office. Players shall have 14 days upon notification of bad debt prior to the season to resolve the debt before the player is deemed to be ineligible.
3. A player who changes teams during the season shall not be eligible to be on a team roster within another PAHL association if that player owes money to the sending organization. If the player is added to a new roster and the sending organization later reports to the League Office that the player is in arrears, the player’s eligibility shall be immediately suspended until the debt is satisfied.
4. The League Office shall communicate all situations of “bad debt” to the receiving organization, who shall be responsible for notifying the family of the player and upholding this Financial Obligation Policy.
5. Member Associations are responsible for reporting the full payment of outstanding monies by players reported by the association to have bad debt in order to restore the player’s participation eligibility.
6. The League Office withholds the right to grant conditional eligibility to a player who has been reported to have a financial obligation but has established, in writing, terms of repayment with the sending association. Should those terms be broken by the debtor, the conditional eligibility shall be revoked and the player shall be ineligible for continued participation with the receiving association.

#### PROPOSED POLICY (NEW)

##### Financial Obligation Definitions

1. A player is deemed to have a disqualifying financial obligation when the player attempts to be released from an association during the season while still owing monies to the sending association that are specific to the “player dues” (or similar) required of the association for participating in league games with a team in the association.
2. A player is deemed to have a disqualifying financial obligation when the player was removed from participation by the association in the prior PAHL season due to failure to make full payments on a financial agreement. The association must be able to provide documentation of the financial agreement and proof that the association withheld the player from further game participation prior to the final month of the season due to the arrears.
3. A player is deemed to have a disqualifying financial obligation when the player made a financial commitment to a team during the offseason (tryouts, supplemental tryouts, open roster spot, etc.) – of which the terms of the commitment must be backed by a signed contract by a parent/guardian and furnished by the association – and then failed to fully honor any of the financial terms of that commitment.
4. A player cannot be deemed to have a disqualifying financial obligation if no written agreement can be produced, if the association did not withhold the player from further game participation during the season in which the debt was overdue, nor if the association previously submitted a release of the player to the PAHL.
5. An association cannot attempt to submit a player for a disqualifying financial obligation when the financial obligation is in regard to any matter extraneous of “player dues,” such as fees for participation in a non-league event/tournament(s) and a camp/clinic(s) conducted by the association, its home rink, or its representatives.

##### Financial Obligation Clearance

1. A player with a disqualifying financial obligation (“bad debt”) to a PAHL member association shall not be eligible to participate with another PAHL member association until all financial arrears have been satisfied. All such ineligibility shall be indefinite, which includes extending into future seasons, until the conditions of the financial obligation have been satisfied or until a determination is made by an entity of appropriate jurisdiction that no financial obligation can be enforced.
2. Associations shall report any player with a disqualifying financial obligation to the League Office prior to September 1 of each season via a method established by the League Office and submitted only by the president or treasurer of the PAHL Association. The player shall have until September 15 to resolve the outstanding debt before the player is deemed to be ineligible for further participation in league games.
3. A player with a disqualifying financial obligation to an association who is requesting a release from one of the PAHL rosters of the association during the season shall not be released by the association. At the time the release is requested by the player, the association shall – via its president or treasurer – submit the player as financially disqualified for a release via the method established by the League Office.
4. The League Office shall communicate, to the sending association, the confirmation of the eligibility status of any player submitted as having a possible disqualifying financial obligation. The sending association shall inform the affected player of an ineligibility

ruling. The League Office shall hold no obligation to communicate with the ineligible player, the player's family, nor a player's representative.

5. The League Office shall only communicate the ineligibility of a financially disqualified player to a receiving organization requesting to add a player to one of its team rosters. Upon such notification, the potential receiving association shall not place the player on the USAH roster of any of its teams, shall not attempt to intervene in the matter, and shall not offer a financial resolution to or for the player.
6. Member Associations are responsible for reporting, within 3 days and via its president or treasurer, the full payment of outstanding monies by players reported by the association to have a disqualifying financial obligation. A sending association shall also report a determination by the association that it no longer wishes to pursue further financial obligations from the player.
7. The League Office shall clear a player with a potentially disqualifying financial obligation upon determination by the League Office – or any other entity of appropriate jurisdiction – that the player does not or no longer meets the conditions for a disqualifying financial obligation.

## **RATIONALE FOR PROPOSAL**

PAHL is willing to enforce a joint and universal financial policy among member associations and will get involved where appropriate, but the sending association must sufficiently avoid the situation in the first place.

Under this proposal, the association is expected to take action during the season (while still having leverage) to withhold the player from participation if the player accumulates debt past payment deadlines. The proposal also accounts for situations where players attempt to flee within a season before being withheld in order to avoid paying and situations where players make contractual commitments (usually post-tryouts) to an association but then do not honor those contracts, situations in which the sending association had little to no opportunity to withhold the player from participation.

These procedures also require the association to proactively submit a player when it has taken the expected actions and still has not received payment from the player, not when the player is later attempting to join the roster of a team in a new association. And a statute of limitations is essentially created via this process so that submissions do not come in from debt incurred 2+ seasons prior.