



The MidAm District of USA Hockey Presents:

The 2025 Association Must Know Information

Youth Hockey Association 101

August 17, 2025

Last Revised on September 2, 2024

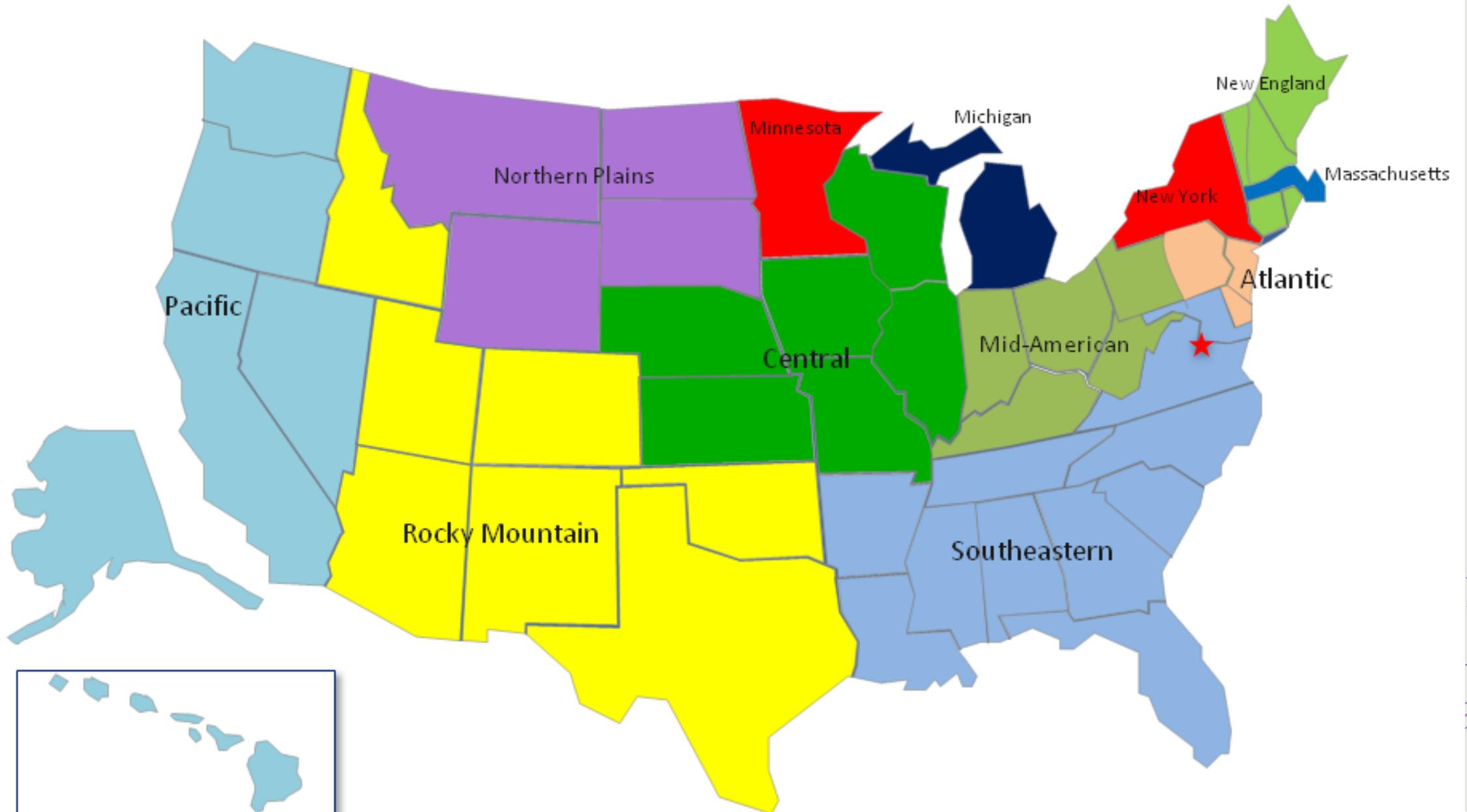
The road map for the USA Hockey & Mid Am journey

.....What is USAH? Youth Hockey Association 101...o and Mid Am and What Do They Do?

*The Mid Am District is one of 12 Districts in USA Hockey, and it administers the affairs of USA Hockey within the district.

*The geographical boundaries of the Mid Am District include Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia and Western Pennsylvania with over 45,000 registered players.

USA Hockey Districts



.....What is Youth Hockey Association 101...or....
USAH and Mid Am and What Do They Do?

*USA Hockey Annual Guide

* <https://www.usahockey.com/annualguide>

The Mid Am District has 4 USA Hockey,
Representatives, Council and Section
Representatives who participate at the
national level with USA Hockey



**International Olympic
Committee**



**United States
Olympic and Paralympic
Committee**



***Your USA Hockey
Associations***



Objectives

At the conclusion, you should have the basic understanding and Mid Am resources of the following:

- * Registration of players/coaches/volunteers
- * DEI- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion
- * Background screening
- * Safe Sport Program
- * Coaching Program
- * Referee Program
- * Discipline (Playing Rules and Non -Playing Rules)
- * High School Hockey
- * Girls Hockey
- * Disabled Hockey
- * Risk Management
- * Player Safety
- * National Tournament Championship
- * Player Development (National and District Select process)
- * Roger Sharrer “Grow Hockey” Award





Registration



All players, coaches, and volunteers need to register with USA Hockey

- Link to Registration: Website <https://www.usahockey.com/> under Be Come A Member.
- Fees: 6 and younger \$17-, 7 and 8-year-olds \$56, 9 thru 12-year-olds \$69, 13 thru 18-year-olds \$79, Coaches \$52 (Mid Am Affiliate fee \$5) 2006 & Older (Adults) \$ 52.00 Volunteers are free...
- All associations must have a Registrar who is responsible for administering the USA Hockey Registry portal which manages association player, coach and volunteer data and USA Hockey approved rosters.

All adult members associated with a youth association need to be registered with USA Hockey, complete a background screen, and complete Safe Sport training prior to participation in any USA Hockey activity.

Note: Youth players who are born in 2008 or earlier must complete Safe Sport training.

MidAm District Registrar Keith Kenitzer keith.Kenitzer@usahockey.org



Background Screening



Who needs to be screened?

*All coaches, all volunteers who have periodic contact with minors and or persons of any age with intellectual impairment

When do they need to be screened?

*Every other year (prior to participation)

* How do they get screened?

* Website @ <https://www.usahockey.com/backgroundscreen>

All teams should have a link from their association registrar to check their roster. What does it mean if someone is Redlined on a roster?

Screen is not complete, and the member is ineligible for participation

Note: Youth players who are born in 2008 or earlier must complete Safe Sport Training

Safe Sport

USA Hockey's Reporting Policy is a key part of its Safe Sport Program, and an effective reporting policy is crucial to preventing abuse. Section IV of the Safe Sport Handbook contains specifics on the Reporting Policy. The Policy requires that every employee or volunteer of any USA Hockey Member Program must report (1) actual or perceived violations of the USA Hockey Safe Sport Program Handbook, (2) any violations of the policies prohibiting Sexual Abuse, Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Bullying, Threats and Harassment, and Hazing, and (3) suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse to the appropriate USA Hockey representatives.

1. To make a report to USA Hockey, you may do so either by: (1) clicking on <https://www.usahockey.com/makingareport> and completing the Reporting Form, (2) emailing to: USA Hockey Safe Sport Program or (3) calling 800-888-4656.
2. **In all cases involving suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse, every employee or volunteer of USA Hockey Member Programs must also report to the appropriate law enforcement authorities and The Center For Safe Sport** <https://uscenterforsafesport.org/report-a-concern/>
3. In all cases involving suspicions or allegation of child physical or sexual abuse is under the authority of The Center For Safe Sport
4. Note, these cases can take a considerable amount of time to research and then to resolve.
5. Not all Safe Sport claims are managed directly by The Center For Safe Sport; many are referred to the district. The District may then send the claim back to the Local Association for investigation and necessary action.



Safe Sport



6. Parents and guardians and administrators should read the Safe Sport Policy and have a clear understanding of it . They are also encouraged to Register <https://membership.usahockey.com/register/age> with USA Hockey as a volunteer and take the safe sport exam as there is no cost to register or to take the exam. . **We strongly encourage the free online course for parents and guardians offers essential information to help you champion athlete well-being and protect your child in sport.** Empower your child or teen—take our free SafeSport® for Kids (ages 5-12) course and SafeSport® for Youth Athletes (ages 13-17) course alongside your kids.

<https://uscenterforsafesport.org/courses/>

7. Only reports filed that are actual Safe Sport matters will be accepted!

8. All incomplete reports will be returned to the remitter

9. All non-Safe Sport reports filed will be returned to the local association and or the remitter for disposition.

All Teams must have locker room monitors current with Safe Sport and Screening at all time. The monitor must be listed on your official USA Hockey Roster. Co-Ed rooms must have a monitor for each locker room! No Exceptions!



DEI

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



Accessibility - creating an inclusive and welcoming environment that enables the widest possible access to the game. Key initiatives include:

- *Help make the game more accessible to youth everywhere who want to try the sport before making a commitment to it (floor, street, or ball hockey).
- *Help make the game - and offshoots of the game - more accessible to disabled individuals.
- *Help make the game more accessible to girls, women and adult hockey players.

MidAm DEI Coordinator: Howard Smith Smith@midamhockey.com



Coaching



- All coaches must, PRIOR to any participation in any USA Hockey activity (Redlined):
 - * Register with USA Hockey as a Coach,
 - * Complete the Age Specific Module for the appropriate age level,
 - * Complete a Background Screen, and
 - * Complete Safe Sport Training
 - * After the above is met, the Coach has till December 31st to attend the appropriate Coaching Education Clinic
 - * There are 5 levels of Coaching Education in USA Hockey

Resource for Coaching Material: <https://www.usahockey.com/mobilecoach>

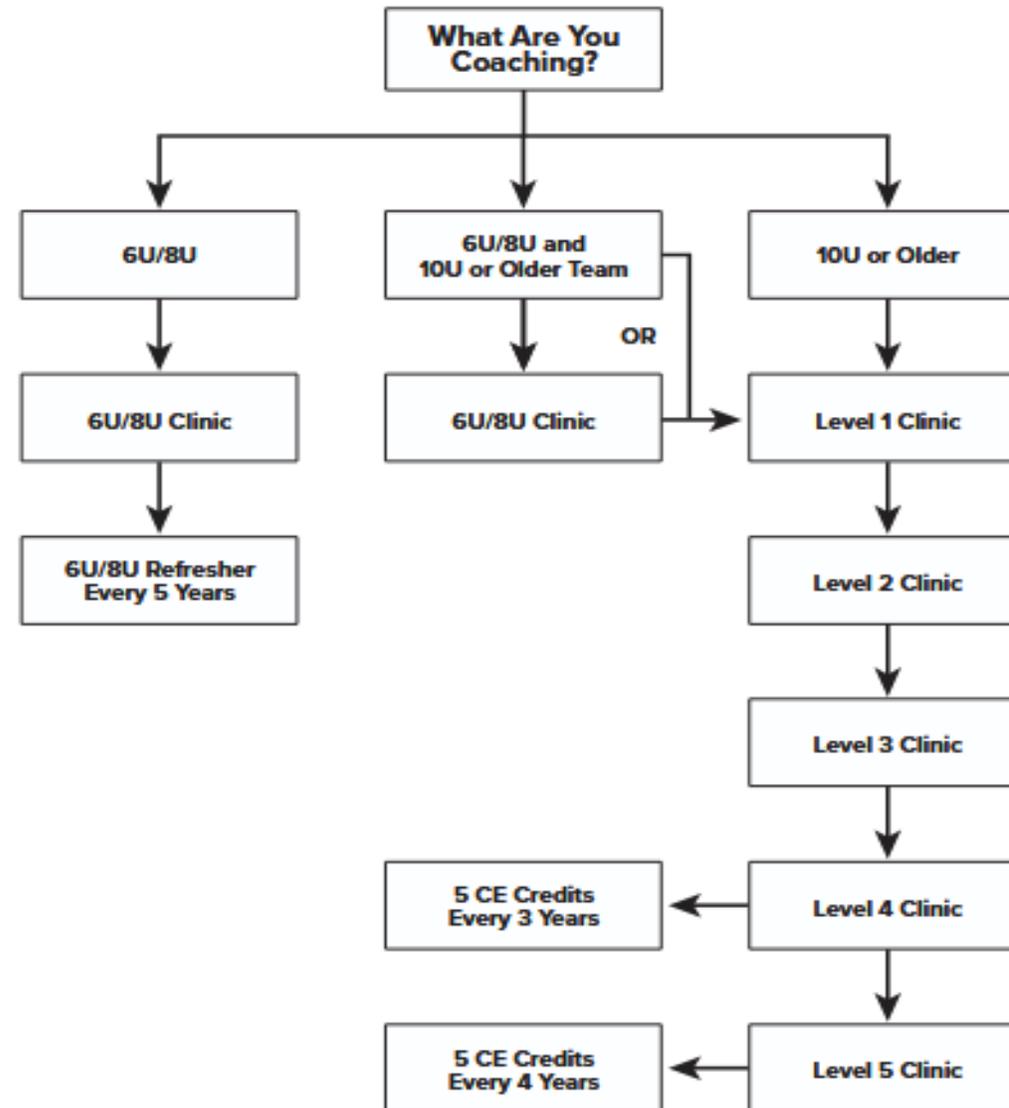
MidAm Coach-In Chief: Bill Switaj: Bill.switaj@usahockey.org

2025-26 Cep Age Progression Guidelines

MidAm Coach-In Chief:
Bill Switaj:

Bill.switaj@usahockey.org

2025-26 CEP AGE PROGRESSION GUIDELINES





ADM



USA Hockey's American Development Model (ADM) is an athlete-centered, coach-enhanced, administrator-supported framework that aims to help all individuals realize their athletic potential and utilize sport as a path toward an active and healthy lifestyle.

This can be accomplished by following the age group recommendations that focus on developing all aspects of hockey performance in a developmentally appropriate manner, based on research and best practices in youth sports, human development, coaching, and the sports sciences. <https://www.admkids.com/>

Scott Paluch: USA Hockey Director Of Player Development

scottp@usahockey.org



Referees



- * USA Hockey appoints a single Referee-in-Chief for each of the twelve Districts.
- * The Mid Am District Referee-in-Chief is Jim Weaver in McMurray, PA
- * Mr. Weaver appoints Local Supervisors of Officials throughout the District to assist him locally in carrying out his duties and responsibilities and to provide a local presence for the hockey community and for our officials.
 - * USA Hockey Referee Section is responsible for registering and educating referees.
- * Teams, Leagues or Associations are responsible for scheduling Officials for their games, typically through a local referee association or league assignor. We request that games are scheduled with similar age groups back-to-back for more efficient referee assigning, especially for our newer, younger officials to be assigned with a mentor. Schedulers are the key to including new officials at the appropriate levels with a mentor to be successful.

Mid Am District Referee-in-Chief is Jim Weaver: midamric@verizon.net



Referees



GREEN ARM BANDS - The Mid-Am District has partnered with the District RIC to provide green arm bands for our minor-aged officials to wear when officiating USAH games. The purpose is to provide a visual reminder that these are new young officials, who are not to be verbally abused but understood that they are learning the difficult job of officiating a hockey game. Coach, spectator and player abuse is causing these young men and women to give up on officiating and others not to even start. Zero Tolerance

- Rule 502 – REFEREE -The Referee shall have general supervision of the game, and their decision shall be final in all matters occurring before, during or after the game and in doing so shall have full authority over all participants (Including players, coaches, off-ice officials, and spectators).
- The referee may not change their decision, or that of any other official after the resumption of play following the rendering of the original decision, including after the game.
 - Clerical errors on the scoresheet may be changed. Examples: a penalty assessed by the referee was not entered properly by the scorekeeper (for instance the referee assessed a game misconduct, but the scorekeeper incorrectly entered only a misconduct); a player with four penalties or a team with twelve penalties was not noticed until after the game. The referee shall make any allowable clerical corrections prior to signing the scoresheet.
- **Mid Am District Referee-in-Chief is Jim Weaver:** midamric@verizon.net



Discipline Violations



Playing Rule Violations

- ❖ A Referee's decision is final and is not appealable Rule 502 (a)
- ❖ Only a hearing decision may be appealed (no on ice calls may be appealed)
- ❖ All **Match Penalties** are addressed by the Affiliate (Mid Am) Discipline Committee
- ❖ The Discipline Committee after review may make an offer to the offending player
- ❖ The player may accept the offer or ask for a hearing
- ❖ The Discipline Committee may elect to not make an offer and allow the incident to proceed to a Mid Am hearing or delegate the hearing (**see hearing procedures**) to the local authority

Progressive Penalties (Rule 411- 3 Major penalties and Rule 615 (f)- 2 Fighting majors)

- ❖ These penalties are not appealable
- ❖ Both Match Penalties and Progressive penalties will be communicated to the player's parents' email, and a copy will be emailed to the local association and/or league

Non-Playing Rule Discipline Violations - include Code of Conduct and Association or League Rule Violations

Resource for Playing Rules: USA Hockey Mobile Rulebook App



Discipline Hearing Procedures



Hearing Procedures

- ❖ No USA Hockey member can be suspended without first having a hearing (exceptions Summary Suspensions and Playing Rules Violations/Match Offers)
- ❖ **Meeting vs Hearing** (A Meeting is investigative whether to proceed to a hearing)
- ❖ Impartial investigator- disinterested to the outcome and responsible to finding of facts

Procedure **must include all of the following** anytime a member is sanctioned or suspended:

- ✓ Member must be given **notice** of the violation prior to the hearing (email)
- ✓ Member must be given a **7 day-notice** (email) of the hearing unless waived and documented
- ✓ Member must have the opportunity to review all evidence
- ✓ The hearing committee must be made up of at least **3 impartial members** who have not been involved in the investigation of the incident
- ✓ Decisions must be **communicated in writing** (email) within 5 business days
- ✓ Instructions must be provided of how to **appeal** the decision, which must be appealed within 14 days of the decision notification



Discipline

Spectator Behavior Policy



All Associations must develop a **Spectator Behavior Policy** which is approved by the affiliate. These policies must be submitted to the Mid Am Administrator by December 31, 2025. Only revised or new policies need submitted in subsequent years.

- ❖ The Policy must be enforceable by the local association
- ❖ **Recommended Suspension:**
 - ✓ **First Offense** - a suspension from all events involving the Association for a minimum of fourteen (14) days to a maximum of thirty (30) days;
 - ✓ **Second Offense** - a suspension from all events involving the Association for a minimum of thirty (30) days to a maximum of one hundred twenty (120) days
 - ✓ **Third Offense** - a suspension from all events until a decision has been rendered from an USA Hockey Affiliate hearing

If the local association fails to address the incident, the incident will be addressed by the league and or Mid Am Affiliate which may include local association sanctions.

An Association Policy Sample is on our website: www.midamhockey.com under forms

Secretary/Discipline Chair, **Biff Cummings**, Biff.Cummings@comcast.net



High School Hockey



School based hockey programs between 9th and 12th grades

High School students on these hockey teams must be:

- * Full-time students
- * In Grades 9-12
- * Under 20 years of age before December 31st of the current playing season
- * Eligibility begins in freshman year (9th grade)
- * Not to exceed eight (8) consecutive semesters

The High School National Championship continues to grow and will now be divided into four competitive levels: 3A / 2A / 1A / Girls. The Division I (pure teams), Division II (combined teams) and Prep School teams will be placed into one of the first three competitive levels, with 3A being the highest, and may not be exclusively pure or combined teams.

All 4 of these Divisions are State based teams, representing their State.

USAH High School Section Representative: Kathy Santora Kathy@Santora.us



Girls Hockey



- To be successful with any type of Girls program, you need a dedicated contact that anyone reaching out to your organization knows where to direct new parents: Mid Am has events planned throughout the district that include giveaways, all-day events and funding for your own events.
- You don't have to have an all-girls' team to be a proponent of Girls' Ice Hockey
 - *Having a dedicated girls locker room is a **must** for you to show you are promoting Girls Hockey
 - *Add as many female role models in leadership positions such as coaches, board members and officials. Mid Am has various programs to assist young females into these leadership positions
 - *Mark calendars for specific dates for all-female events such as Learn to Play. This will help those already in your programs as well as attract more girls to your organization See your local representative for more events in your area.
 - *Girls' Ice Hockey is one of the fastest growing youth sports and our district has maintained more than a 5% growth over the last 5 years
 - *Mid Am has developed a district wide committee to assist in starting or re-energizing your Girls' Hockey programs whether it's a drop in situation or all girls' teams. Ladd Wagner is here to assist you. Please contact Ladd at:
- **Ladd Wagner USAH Girls/Womens Council Representative** lwagner@midamhockey.com



Disabled Hockey



Hockey is for every **BODY**

- ❖ **Sled Hockey** – physical impairment
- ❖ **Special Hockey** – intellectual impairment
- ❖ **Blind Hockey** – visual impairment
- ❖ **Warrior Hockey** – Veterans ONLY (standing hockey)
- ❖ **Standing / Amputee** – limb loss; learns to skate w/ a prosthetic
- ❖ **Deaf/Hard of Hearing** – hearing impairment

The MidAm District has a sled loan program.

USAH has a GROW GRANT to assist new programs.

Need assistance with program development, growth, retention, grants, fundraising, other individual program needs – ASK RENEE

USAH Disabled Section Representative: Renee Loftspring, PT, EdD

CincinnatiSledhockey@gmail.com



Disabled Hockey



THIS SEASON

*Coaching levels do not expire if ONLY coaching adaptive hockey
Coaches highly encouraged to proceed to next coaching level annually

*SafeSport waiver - for players unable to understand the content, even with a parent/guardian's assistance **OR** players don't speak or read English and SafeSport doesn't have a compatible module -

Completed waivers must be sent to: don.pino@usahockey.org

USAH Disable Section Representative - Renee Loftspring, PT, EdD

cincinnatiadishockey@gmail.com



Risk Management

Sanctioned and Approved events – USA Hockey Rosters and Organization-approved events (can include off ice activities).

- Tournaments: MUST BE USA Hockey- sanctioned to provide coverage, AAU and non-USA Hockey rostered teams will exclude coverage.
- USAH Insurance Coverage: General Liability, Directors & Officers, Crime, Participant Accident (Excess) are the most common coverages discussed. See your USA Hockey Risk Manager for the Mid-American District for other available coverage.
- Claims: For an efficient claims process, it is important to document all activities related to the claim when filing. The organization has exposure and a duty to respond in a timely fashion so that all claims are handled appropriately.
- Ice Contracts: Beware of what you sign to assure USA Hockey coverage matches up to exposure within contract. USA Hockey Risk Manager for Mid-American District can help you understand what you are signing PRIOR to document execution.
- Paid coaches: This presents an “employment” scenario so discussion should be had with USA Hockey Risk Manager for the Mid American District. Workers’ Compensation IS NOT a provided membership benefit and something the Association Board of Directors needs to discuss and clarify in the contract with a paid coach.
- Canadian Tournaments require Canadian Travel Permit (USA Hockey Registrar for Mid-American District) and must be sanctioned/approved by Hockey Canada. Generally, 5/31 to 8/31 are NOT sanctioned/approved by Hockey Canada so no coverage is applicable. Contact USA Hockey international department to assure your event is sanctioned/approved by Hockey Canada. Organizations should speak with Risk Manager if organization account balances are larger than the limit of the policy
- **Mark Zukowski MidAm District Risk Manager** mmzukowski@end-ins.com



Player Safety



Neck Laceration Protectors (Now Required for all Youth Players)

<https://www.usahockey.com/playersafety>

Concussion Information

<https://www.usahockey.com/safety-concussions>

Return to Play

[https://portal.usahockey.com/forms/Concussion RTP FORM.pdf](https://portal.usahockey.com/forms/Concussion_RTP_FORM.pdf)

District Player Safety Coordinator Must be completed and returned to Shena Link, Mid Am

Slink1392@yahoo.com Locker Policy (Safe Sport> Locker Room Monitors, Electric Devices...)

.Zero Tolerance Policy -creating a safe and fair environment for all participants

[https://cdn1.sportngin.com/attachments/document/8d29-3353718/USAH Zero Tolerance Policy 2 1 1 .pdf](https://cdn1.sportngin.com/attachments/document/8d29-3353718/USAH_Zero_Tolerance_Policy_2_1_1.pdf)

Spectator Behavior Policy

MidAm District Player Safety Coordinator: Shena Link Slink1392@yahoo.com



USA Hockey National Tournament

MidAm oversees district and state tournament dates and sends qualifying teams to USA Hockey National Tournaments.

*USA Hockey [Tryout/Player Selection](#) Policy.

*New this year MidAm will now host the Tier I tournament in two separate locations with the 13O(Now Permanent) and 14U in one location. The 150, 16U & 18U will be held in another location. This is being done over security concerns.

*Also new this upcoming season Tier I and Tier II national tournament application must be received on or before October 31 with no exception. If the application is received after that date, there will be a late fee of \$500.00



USA Hockey National Tournament

These tournaments are usually in March and include:

Youth: 13 Only, 14U, 15 Only, 16U, 18U Tier I District-wide, limited to 6 teams

Youth: 14U, 16U & 18U Tier II by state, limited to 8 teams

Girls/Women: 14U, 16U & 19U Tier I and Tier II, District wide

High School as determined by state

Note: registering a team for Tier 1 or Tier 2, does not register the team for the District or State tournament. A separate tournament application and entry fee is required.

District Tournament Sites: are awarded to programs in the district for these events upon review of all applications (Deadline for next season application is March 1,2026)

MidAm District Administrator Lori Billings administrator@midamhockey.com



USA Hockey and Mid Am Player Development



Player development: Manage district wide camps to identify players for USA Hockey District & Nationals Camp. Nominations start to be accepted in February, tryouts.

Who should be nominated: Only US citizens and Mid Am District residents only.

Nomination forms should be returned to Mid Am Administrator-Lori Billings

MidAm will create a list of the Top players within our district. Those players will then be invited to their age classification tryout.

Not all nominated players will be invited to participate in the tryout process

In-District Development Camps (Girls and Boys 14u)

MidAm District Administrator Lori Billings: administrator@midamhockey.com



USA Hockey and Mid Am



USAH Growth and Improvement of the Game Initiatives:

Try Hockey for Free

*Mid Am will reimburse ice costs. Associations must complete the Registration and Reimbursement for Try Hockey for Free document on the Mid Am Website (Try Hockey Free Info)

USA Hockey Try Hockey For Free September 13, 2025 & March 7, 2026

USA Hockey provides jerseys, promotional and marketing tools for the national dates.

https://www.tryhockeyforfree.com/host_signup

Associations may hold a Try Hockey for Free event at any time that is best for them but still need to register with both MidAm and USA Hockey.

Roger Sharrer “Grow Hockey” Award

- The Roger Sharrer “Grow Hockey” Award provides between \$50,000-\$100,000 annually to Mid-Am Associations in order to subsidize initiatives designed to help them grow participation in ice hockey.
- This award assists with 50-75% of the purchase of assorted equipment such as small/intermediate nets; border patrol and hard rink dividers; sled, mite and goalie equipment as well as new, non-equipment ideas to draw in new players. All items are meant exclusively to grow/increase participation in recreational ice hockey for both youth, adult, abled and disabled players.
- Associations need to apply by April 25th, for the upcoming season with award recipients being announced at the Mid-Am District Annual Meeting in June.
- The application is sent by email to all Mid-Am Associations and is also available on the district website under the “**About Us**” tab. Our goal is to increase your program participation! **Roger Sharrer Chair Kathy Santora: Kathy@Santora.us**



ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT

- All associations must complete the Mid American District Hockey Association **Membership Agreement** and return it to the Mid Am District Administrator prior to registering any teams.
- The Membership Agreement outlines and defines the association's obligations and requirements to remain compliant as a member of USA Hockey and the Mid American District
 - Association board members should be aware of their USA Hockey Association Number
 - This number can be found on any USAH team's roster
 - Or can be found on the Mid Am Web Site **Mid Am Web Site & MidAm Annual Guide**
 - **MidAm District Administrator Lori Billings:** administrator@midamhockey.com

Communication Methods

State Vice Presidents

Mid Am Administrator

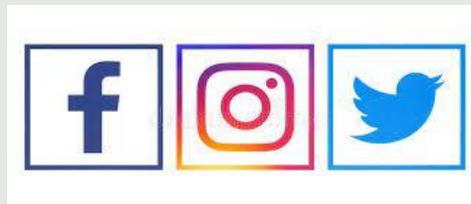
Website: www.midamhockey.com

Newsletter

“Got a Minute?” electronic flyer

Social Media: Facebook Mid-American Hockey, @USAHockey

Annual Meeting: typically held in late June every year



Your Key Contacts in USA Hockey within Mid Am

- * President
- * John Karolcik: john.karolcik@icloud.com
- * Mid Am Administrator
- * Lori Billings: administrator@midamhockey.com 419-304-6060
- * Discipline:
- * Biff Cummings: Biff.Cummings@comcast.net
- * Safe Sport
- * Scott Gray: safesport@mahockey.org
- * Coach-in-Chief: Bill Switaj: : <mailto:Bill.switaj@usahockey.org>
- * Referee-in-Chief: Jim Weaver: midamric@verizon.net .

Your Western Pennsylvania Key Contacts in USA Hockey within Mid Am

State Vice Presidents: Western Pennsylvania

*John Folmer: folmerj7755@gmail.com

*Chris Stern: sluggoesq@yahoo.com

*Jim Black: jblack@nextstephockeyppgh.com

Associate Registrar: Western PA/West Virginia

*Chris Skowron: chris.Skowron@usahockey.org

Associate Registrar: Western PA/West Virginia (High School)

*Michelle Miller: Michelle.Miller@usahockey.org

Player Safety Coordinator *Shena Link: Slink1392@yahoo.com

Review of Recent Changes

- *Tier I teams 150,16U,18U and Girls 19U can now roster and dress 22 players and increase in the previous limit of 21 allowing more flexibility in player selection on game day.
- *All neck laceration protectors must be HECC certified. BNQ certified protectors will be allowed through the 2026/27 season.
- *Officials and Disabled Players under the age of 18 must wear neck laceration protectors.
- *A two-minute bench minor will be assessed when a team challenges a player's mouthpiece, and the challenge is not verified.
- *Cameras and microphones are added to the list of devices prohibited for players to use during a game, a misconduct will be given for these violations.
- *Goalkeepers will no longer receive a mandatory minor penalty for shooting the puck outside the playing area.
- *In the 150 and above age and Girls 16U and above teams will be allowed to ice the puck while shorthanded
- * The same ages listed above teams may play delayed offsides.
-

Review of Recent Changes

- * If a team in the attacking zone causes a stoppage and the puck moves into the neutral zone, there will be a neutral zone faceoff. If the player causes the stoppage is deemed to have intentionally cause the stoppage to avoid a penalty, there will be no free faceoff for the either team.
- *The lineman position will be changed to linesperson.
- *Stricter penalties for abuse of officials will be implemented to foster respect and sportsmanship.
- Game misconducts penalties will be assessed for players and coaches who use obscene, profane and abusive language towards any person at the completion of any game.
- *The officiating education programs will be updated with new requirements, including online education video and modules, online playing rules exercises and a virtual classroom seminar curriculum

Concussion Information <https://www.usahockey.com/safety-concussions>

- Return to Play
- **USA Hockey Concussion Management Return to Player Form**
 - **Must be completed and returned** to Shena Link, Mid Am District Player Safety Coordinator Slink1392@yahoo.com
- **Billeting Family Form: This Form must be completed for all billeted players**



Questions???

The only bad question is the question not asked...

The Associations must know information

Youth Hockey Association 101

The road map for the USA Hockey & Mid Am journey



The Associations must know information

Thank you!

Youth Hockey Association 101

The road map for the USA Hockey & Mid Am journey