

**Missisquoi Amateur Hockey Association Handbook
2025-2026**



**MAHA Handbook Updated
5/2025**

Welcome

Welcome to the 2025-2026 season of the Missisquoi Amateur Hockey Association, (MAHA). The board of directors welcomes the participation of your family in the association. The purpose of this handbook is to help make your experience with MAHA more rewarding by offering information about our program.

MAHA exists to provide a constructive recreational opportunity for our child(ren) that will have a positive effect on their development. The goal is to create an environment in which the participants may challenge themselves physically, build confidence, and learn sportsmanship, teamwork, and fair play. The personal commitment to these values by every member of the association is fundamental to the continued success of MAHA and the enjoyment of all of its participants.

MAHA is an all-volunteer organization including elected officers, a board of directors, committee members, coaches, team coordinators, and parents. All parents are required to volunteer regularly throughout the season. In the very near future, we will all be very busy with practices, games, and many other tasks required to make the program work.

On behalf of the children in our association, the board wishes to express our appreciation in advance to each parent for volunteering their time. It is your dedication and hard work that will make this season rewarding and memorable for the children. You make it all possible and we are looking forward to a great season.

About the Missisquoi Amateur Hockey Association

Board Member Information

(2025-2026)

Current Board Member Information can be found on the MAHA Website:

www.mahahockey.org

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President	Corey Fregeau
Vice President	Marcy Stefaniak
Treasurer	Judy Laroche
Secretary	Kimberly Delorme
Past President	Adam Fortin

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director - Coaching	Mike Fontaine
Director – U14	Justine White
Director – U12	Bridget Cadieux
Director – U10	Luc Choquette
Director – U8	Kyle Baker
Director - T-blades	Nikki Bushey
Director - Girls Program	Jon Godin
State Representative	Karen Fortin

MAHA board meetings are normally held monthly at 7:00 pm via Zoom. All meetings will be warned one week prior to the monthly meeting on the website and post on the MAHA Facebook Page. Any alterations will be communicated to the membership. Board meetings are open to all MAHA members in good standing. Participation is strongly encouraged. Bring your feedback and ideas forward in a positive environment and be willing to participate to further improve our hockey program. We also encourage you to register your email address at our website to stay informed of the latest information. Check out www.mahahockey.org for board meeting minutes, schedules, and much more.

Without volunteers, MAHA would cease to exist, parents are needed to schedule games, help with fund raising events, manage violations of the policy on sports conduct, assist with community, school, and member communication, and endless other activities. Parents should attend at least one board meeting each year to identify opportunities to contribute to the organization and lead it into the future. Get involved and contribute positive energy and ideas. We are here for the children first and foremost!

What is USAHockey?

USAHockey is this country's national governing body for the sport of ice hockey. In this role, USA Hockey provides a registrar to register teams, a risk manager to oversee liability and safety programs, and an initiation program administrator to facilitate learn-to-skate programs for youth players and their parents.

USAHockey studies and makes recommendations for protective equipment and provides an insurance plan covering excess medical and liability among other services.

For coaches and officials, USAHockey conducts Coaching and Officiating Education Programs. USAHockey also promotes uniformity in playing rules and the interpretations of those rules.

Our Philosophy

The purpose of MAHA shall be to provide the opportunity for the youth within MAHA's services area to play amateur hockey at prescribed levels which may consist of T-Blades (U6-and under), U8, U10, U14 and corresponding girls' teams. It shall also be a purpose of MAHA to prepare its players through attention to skill development and competition for future play at High School level.

Our Values

Sportsmanship- Foremost of all values is to learn a sense of fair play. Become humble in victory and gracious in defeat. Foster friendship with teammates and opponents alike

Integrity- Seek to foster honesty and fair play beyond mere strict interpretation of the rules and regulations of the game

Respect for the individual- Treat all others as you expect to be treated

Pursuit of excellence- Each member of the organization, whether player, volunteer, or staff, should seek to perform, each aspect of the game, to the highest level of his or her ability

Teamwork- We value the strength of learning to play together. The use of teamwork is reinforced and rewarded by success in the hockey experience

Enjoyment- It is important for the hockey experience to be fun, satisfying and rewarding for all participants

Our Objectives

- To make every possible attempt to provide everyone, at all skill levels, with a place to play
- To provide programs that encompass fairness to all participants, promote fair and safe play, and teach sportsmanship
- To permit volunteers, including coaches, in the community who demonstrate qualities conducive to being role models to the youth, in the sport of hockey
- To support programs that train and educate players, coaches, parents, officials, and volunteers

- To partner with parents by practicing open communication through parent meetings as well as by being available to answer questions and address problems throughout the season
- To promote and publicize our programs and to seek out financial support when possible

MAHA Programs

T-Blades

(U6 and Under)

This program is designed to meet the needs of beginning hockey players ages 4 and up. Basic skating and hockey skills are taught in a noncompetitive environment. Physical skill development and fun are encouraged. Participants skate one to two hours per week for approximately 20 weeks.

U8

In 2007, VSAHA eliminated Travel Mites. Therefore, MAHA has adopted a 'Cross Ice' format for the U8 Level of youth Hockey in Vermont as proposed by VSAHA. The intent of this new format is to: Focus on skill development, promote fun, reduce travel for these younger aged skaters, increase interest in youth hockey throughout Vermont and de-emphasis competition for the sake of more balanced player development.

U8 Teams will still typically practice two times per week and may have up to three games. The game format will be 3-on-3, cross-ice or 4-on-4 half/patch ice. Regular tournament travel will be replaced by regional cross-ice format jamborees.

Travel Teams

(U10, U12, U14, and Girls)

This program provides an opportunity for higher-level skill development for players who have the desire and ability for a competitive experience. A balance of winning and sportsmanship is stressed. Travel is required for competition with other teams within the Vermont State Amateur Hockey Association. Teams may choose to travel within New England, New York, and Canada to play in one or two away tournaments during the season. This competitive experience involves more practices, games, and travel than the House program.

MAHA Program Fees

Program fees are established to cover actual team costs including practice ice, home game ice, referees, insurance, and administration. MAHA does not pay for away game ice and tournaments.

Teams may attend away tournaments during the season. Team fees range from \$1000-\$2000. The expense of away tournaments is not included in the program fee. Parents cover the additional cost of the team entry fee, and their own travel expenses.

VSAHA State Tournament: MAHA pays for the participation in the State, Regional, and Sectional tournaments. The expense of these tournaments is included in the program fee.

Skaters that have not paid their fees for the season by February 1st, will no longer be eligible to participate in practices or games, including the State Tournament, until their fees are paid in full. Additionally, skaters will not be eligible to register or participate in the tryout process for the following season until all prior year fees are paid in full.

Registration

Families are encouraged to refer to the MAHA registration plan.

Players transferring from another organization must have a signed release at registration.

MAHA Fundraising

Vision and Purpose- Making youth hockey in Highgate, Franklin, and Swanton an accessible, fun, and educational experience through partnership with our community, local businesses and families.

MAHA has an organized fundraising committee with an objective to raise funds from individual, corporate and business sponsors. This is done through a series of events and activities.

The goal of the MAHA fund raising committee is three-fold:

1. Make the sport of organized hockey more accessible to the communities' youth
2. Raising sufficient funds to allow MAHA to maintain reasonable program fees and fund a scholarship program for those needing assistance
3. Provide a fun and quality experience in the development of fitness, sportsmanship and hockey knowledge and skills in the communities' youth

Funds raised are used to assist in the general operating expenses of MAHA.

Partner with local businesses and larger corporations for the achievement of our goals for the mutual benefit of our community, its families and its youth.

Policy

The primary source of fundraising for MAHA comes from special events including, but not limited to Barn Dance, RADA, Pizza Kits, Gun Raffle.

Tryout Process

I. Objective

MAHA has developed an evaluation process for tryouts that is intended to place players on teams matching the individual skills and competitive level of each child. Great care is taken to ensure that the process is as impartial as possible. MAHA utilizes non-parent, non-level evaluators, and parent or level coach evaluators to evaluate each of the players.

Each player is given the opportunity to perform at their highest level, in a fair and open chance to compete for a position on each team for which they are eligible. **MAHA adheres to an open tryout at all levels, a player is not guaranteed a position on their previous year's team.** If a player is unable to tryout due to injury or other absence, then their placement will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Players will be required to declare for which team they will be trying out for before the start of the tryouts. They will not be allowed to switch after the tryouts have begun (i.e. a female player will not be allowed to tryout for a squirt team and then switch to U12 girls if they do not make the team they want).

VSAHA requires that all players will play at their age-appropriate group as outlined by USA Hockey. No player in any age group will be allowed to 'play up' without approval by the MAHA Board of Directors and subsequently the VSAHA Board of Directors.

The Director of Coaching/President of Organization manages tryouts. The Director of Coaching will be required to attend the entire tryout process to provide oversight.

II. Definitions

Independent (Objective) Evaluators- The Independent Evaluators may be chosen by the tryout committee. They will be chosen for their experience and knowledge of ice hockey. The independent evaluators will be required to participate during the entire tryout process. Evaluators will be asked to do evaluations independently and will be given a specific

location of the arena to conduct said evaluations. Evaluation forms **will** be kept confidential (even between other evaluators). **These evaluators are volunteers and should not be contacted with questions about any part of the evaluation process. Any questions should be directed to either the President or the Director of Coaching.**

Subjective Evaluators- The Subjective Evaluators will be chosen by the Director of Coaching/President of Organization. The subjective evaluators will be coaches with proximity to the level being evaluated (i.e. for squirts - last year's mite A and mite B head coach, in addition to the head coaches for the squirt teams). **The goal will be to have non-parent, non-level subjective evaluators for each level, as well as previous coaches. The subjective evaluators do not have to have been head coaches.** The subjective evaluators will be required to participate during the tryout process for their assigned level (i.e. on the ice and/or bench). The involvement of the subjective evaluators will be further explained in the results and evaluation section of this policy. **These evaluators are volunteers and should not be contacted with questions about any part of the evaluation process. Any questions should be directed to either the President or the Director of Coaching.**

III. Notification Process

Tryout dates for the upcoming season will be selected by the September Board Meeting – once Highgate Sports Arena releases the ice schedule.

The MAHA membership will be notified of Registration and Tryouts. Notification will be made via e-mail and the team pages on the website.

IV. Tryout Process-Action Plan

- a. Each player will be checked in during the night of warm-ups
- b. Players/parents will be required to complete all necessary MAHA and USAHockey paperwork before they are allowed to tryout
- c. Players/parents will be required to read and acknowledge acceptance of the policy on sports conduct in the MAHA Handbook (located on the MAHA Website) by signing in the appropriate field on the Registration form. Failure to accept the requirements of the policy will result in a player, coach, or parent not participating in MAHA
- d. Each player will be assigned a jersey, with a number. The jersey must be worn for the entire tryout process. No player may trade numbers with another player. Any player knowingly found not to be wearing their assigned number, will be removed from the tryouts

- e. Prior to going onto the ice, before warm-ups and each tryout session, the Director of Coaching will meet with the players in the locker room
- f. In order to maximize the use of the ice, each player will be required to be ready to skate 15-minutes prior to their tryout session
- g. During tryouts, all players, coaches, and parents will abide by the MAHA policy on sports conduct. **Parents will be allowed to view the tryouts, but must do so in a designated area, and may not verbally or physically intervene or interfere with players, coaches, or evaluators during the evaluation process. If parents cannot abide by this rule, they will be asked to leave**
- h. The tryouts will include up to three (3) evaluation days

V. Drills and Scrimmages

- a. The Director of Coaching will select the drills for the tryout process.
- b. The drills selected will be chosen to show a player's abilities
- c. Drills selected will maximize the number of players participating at any one time, to minimize downtime for players – while keeping in mind the limitations on evaluating multiple players at one time. There will still be drills where only one skater participates. However, we will include drills in which multiple players are skating (i.e. skating the circles up to 3 players may be sent at a time to add the element of competition to the drill
- d. The tryout committee will prepare the appropriate number of drills for the given ice time (no set number is required for each session). Each evaluation day will have a combination of skills and scrimmage
- e. There will be a minimum of two coaches assigned per bench during the scrimmages. These coaches will be required to rotate players equally on the ice and to ensure players rotate positions and partners
- f. For scrimmages, effort will be made to create balanced teams

VI. Evaluation Process

- a. The evaluators will observe and score players during the scheduled tryout process.
- b. Players are identified only by the number assigned to them at the beginning of tryouts
- c. Player information will be kept completely confidential during the tryout process. The scores are entered with player jersey #'s only - **no names are associated during any portion of the try-out process**

- d. The Director of Coaching/President of Organization will select drills that are applicable for each level (see drills and scrimmages section for a more detailed explanation)
- e. The Director of Coaching/President of Organization will select coaches to be on the ice during each drill session. The Director of Coaching/President of Organization will select coaches to be on the ice during scrimmages
- f. After the final day of tryouts, a separate numbered ranking (no names) will be created for the MAHA coach evaluator. The ranking will be an average of the MAHA coach evaluator's scores for each player. This will create a ranking of all players by level. The MAHA coach evaluator will be advised of the cut offs for each team, based on the total number of players in each age group. This will allow the MAHA coach evaluator to focus on players who are closest to the top and bottom of their respective teams (i.e. bubble players). This information will be used during the team selection process
- g. Goaltenders will be evaluated at the same time as skaters

VII. **Team Selection Process**

- a. The scores from the evaluators will be tabulated and checked
- b. A final ranking for each level will be established
- c. The team size will be determined by the MAHA Board, based on the total number of players trying out at each level
- d. If during the team selection process, an evaluator or MAHA Board member's child is being discussed, the participant will be recused from the discussion (of their child only)***
- e. The Director of Coaching will be responsible for assigning coaching staffs to teams

VIII. **Skill Level Tolerance**

If during the tryout process it is determined, and approved by the MAHA Board, that a player does not have the skill to participate safely, MAHA reserves the right to not assign the player(s) to a travel team. MAHA will make every effort to provide these players with an opportunity to skate at their level.

IX. **Team Consolidation**

If after the start of the session, due to a large number of players making high school or other teams, the MAHA Board is required to consolidate teams due to the number of players, they will use the information provided during the tryouts to determine which team

a player is assigned. The MAHA Board will also decide, with input from the coaches, which level the remaining teams will play.

Missisquoi Amateur Hockey Association Policy on Sports Conduct

Preamble and Core Values - For Parents, Players and Coaches

The Missisquoi Amateur Hockey Association ascribes to the various codes of conduct of USAHockey. At the heart of this organization are the Core Values of USAHockey.

- **SPORTSMANSHIP-** Foremost of all values is to learn a sense of fair play. Become humble in victory, gracious in defeat. We will foster friendship with teammates and opponents alike. **We will not argue with coaches or official's decisions**
- **SAFETY-** Player safety is of the utmost importance. Players should be observing safe practices on and off the ice, adhering to the facility rules and MAHA rules. Hockey is a fast-paced sport, and spectators should always be observant to the play on the ice
- **RESPECT FOR THE INDIVIDUAL-** Treat all others as you expect to be treated. Get along with your teammates. Respect your coaches, teammates, parents, opponents, officials, and property
- **INTEGRITY-** We seek to foster honesty and fair play beyond interpretation of the rules and regulations of the game. Learn the rules and play by them
- **PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE AT THE INDIVIDUAL, TEAM AND ORGANIZATIONAL LEVELS-** Each member of the organization, whether player, volunteer or staff, should seek to perform each aspect of the game to the highest level of his or her ability
- **ENJOYMENT-** It is important for the hockey experience to be fun, satisfying and rewarding for all participants
- **LOYALTY-** We aspire to teach loyalty to the ideals and fellow members of the sport of hockey
- **TEAMWORK-** We value the strength of learning to work together. The use of teamwork is reinforced and rewarded by success in the hockey experience. Put the needs of the team first and foremost
- **COMMITMENT-** Understand the commitment to your teammates, coaches, and yourself. Work hard to improve your skills. Be on time for practices and games.
- **FACILITY RULES-** All players, coaches, and spectators shall abide by the facility rules. Rules will be listed on the website and the bulletin board

Expectations of Parents

Each parent is expected to be familiar with the core values and their place in the organization. MAHA is a not-for-profit organization, devoted to promoting youth hockey by making it as accessible as possible – to as many youths as possible. To fulfill this goal, everyone involved, from the individuals who serve on its executive board, to the coaches who spend countless hours working with the players in practices and games, are volunteers. This not only minimizes the expense for our players, but it also allows all of us to enjoy the unity of teamwork our coaches instill in our children that makes the program so rewarding. However, many newcomers to MAHA are unfamiliar with the operation of the organization and don't know where they can help. So, to make it easy for everyone concerned, we have established a very simple process to get you acquainted with some of the fundamental responsibilities associated with hosting a hockey game. Every team has a 'coordinator' who facilitates the process and coordinates the assignments. The coach and coordinator will notify parents at the start of the season and periodically update the assignments to accommodate everyone involved.

Missisquoi Amateur Hockey Association is dedicated to introducing the game of hockey to young men and women and their families. We expect the pursuit of hockey excellence will be accompanied by appropriate sports behavior and respect for every individual as described in the various USAHockey codes of conduct.

- Children participate in organized sports for their enjoyment. Make it fun and support them
- Encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game, practice, or other youth sports event
- Encourage your child to play by the rules. Remember, children learn best by example, so applaud good plays of both teams
- Emphasize skill development and practices and how they benefit your young athlete. De-emphasize games and competition in the lower age groups
- Know and study the rules of the game and support the officials on and off the ice. This approach will help in the development and support of the game. Any criticism of the officials only hurts the game
- Recognize the importance of volunteer coaches. They are important to the development of your child and the sport. Communicate with them and support them
- Remember the game is for the children, not the adults

MAHA, consistent with ***USA Hockey's Zero Tolerance Policy***, requires all parents/spectators to maintain sportsmanlike behavior and preserve the educational atmosphere before, during and after all USA Hockey sanctioned games and MAHA events (practices, meetings, etc.).

MAHA wants the hockey experience to be rewarding for your child. As a parent, you can help to ensure that it is in many ways.

- Volunteer to help with the many tasks required to make our programs successful
- Be sure that your child wears properly fitting equipment
- Ensure that your child attends all practices and games

Finally, MAHA strongly encourages you to embrace and observe the ***Parent Code of Conduct*** endorsed by USA Hockey.

Team Coordinator

The Team Coordinator assists the coaching staff by communicating team news and information to the parents of the players, organizing team events, scheduling parent participation and managing the rotation of game assignments including clock, timekeeper, penalty box attendants and locker room monitors. The Team Coordinator relieves the head coach of the administrative tasks and allows them to focus on player development. The Team Coordinator also maintains the team binder with the official state roster, code of conduct forms and consent to treat forms for all players and coaches, game sheets and the tally for state games.

Expectations of Players

Each player is expected to be familiar with the core values and their place in the organization.

Missisquoi Amateur Hockey Association is dedicated to introducing the game of hockey to young men and women and their families. We expect the pursuit of hockey excellence will be accompanied by appropriate sports behavior and respect for every individual as described in the various USA Hockey codes of conduct.

MAHA, consistent ***with USA Hockey's Zero Tolerance Policy***, requires that players maintain sportsmanlike behavior and preserve the educational atmosphere before, during and after all USA Hockey sanctioned games and MAHA events (practices, meetings, etc.)

Participation Standards for Parents and Players

1. Expectations for arrival time will be determined by the coaches and communicated at the beginning of the season
2. For Mites and Under, parents are responsible for getting their child ready to get on the ice
3. If a player is not able to make a practice or a game, the player or parent are responsible for notifying a coach. Repeat offenses could lead to missed shifts or periods during a game – this will only occur after a meeting with the coach, player, and parent
4. A responsible adult needs to be in the rink at all times, when their child is on the ice. If a parent needs to leave, they should find another parent to monitor their child in case of emergency
5. Players are expected to participate in practice – active listening and strong effort. Ice time is a valuable commodity we cannot afford to waste with players that goof off
6. MAHA jerseys need to be treated with respect – hung up and kept clean – we recommend storing and transporting them in a protective garment cover (this is an effort to ensure the jerseys last as long as possible). The Board of Directors may require purchase of a new set of jerseys if those belonging to a player are not presentable
7. All skaters are required to wear protective neck guards. All skaters at the cross-ice level or above are required to wear a mouth guard
8. Coaches/Team Coordinator may have team meetings during the season in order to keep parents up to date on team happenings and to address any concerns. Email and SportsEngine chat is also widely used for communication and teams are encouraged to have weekly email and SportsEngine chat communication including the upcoming schedule of practices, games, etc.
9. No Parents on the bench during team practice or games unless there is a specific need or specifically requested by the coach
10. In order to ensure the best possible success of each team, players should make every effort to be available for all state tournament games
11. Parents are expected to equally share the responsibilities at practices, games and tournaments, ie: clock, penalty box, score, and admissions table

Expectations of Coaches

Each coach or administrator is expected to be familiar with these values and their place in the organization.

Missisquoi Amateur Hockey Association is dedicated to introducing the game of hockey to young men and women and their families. We expect the pursuit of hockey excellence will be accompanied by appropriate sports behavior and respect for every individual as described in the various USAHockey codes of conduct.

- ***Winning is a consideration, but not the only one, nor the most important one. Care more about the child playing than winning the game. Remember, players are involved in hockey for fun and enjoyment***
- Be a positive role model to your players, display emotional maturity and be alert to the physical safety of players
- Coaches are responsible for knowing, understanding, and following all rules of the game
- Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their players. Whenever a player exhibits unsportsmanlike behavior on his or her own, it is the responsibility of the coach to address the behavior and put an end to it
- Game officials (on and off ice) shall at all times be treated in a professional and courteous manner. It is the responsibility of the host coach to ensure the safety and well-being of these officials in the host facility
- Maintain an open line of communication with your player's parents. Explain the goals and objectives of the association and the team

MAHA, consistent with **USAHockey's Zero Tolerance Policy**, requires all coaches maintain sportsmanlike behavior and preserve the educational atmosphere before, during and after all USAHockey sanctioned games and MAHA events (practices, meetings, etc.).

All coaches will abide by the standards contained in the Coaches Policy on Sports Conduct and Responsibilities. If the standards are violated, the coach may be subject to immediate suspension or dismissal as a coach. ***Coaching is a privilege and not a right.***

All coaches must adhere to the USAHockey coaching education requirements as defined by VSAHA and USAHockey. Coaches may be reimbursed the cost of one coach's clinic, per year, per request. Coaches officially assigned to a MAHA Team will be reimbursed the cost of USAHockey Registration and age-appropriate modules per request. Any coaches that have not completed the certification requirements by December 31st will not be eligible for reimbursement by MAHA.

Coaching Responsibilities

Working with young people is both a responsibility and a privilege; the importance of this position of authority and leadership cannot be underestimated. The following is a list of examples of a coach's responsibilities.

Administrative Duties

- All coaches will attend all meetings held by the MAHA Director of Coaching
- Conduct an organizational meeting for parents and players prior to the first game of the season
- Organize practices that are fun and challenging for your players. Familiarize yourself with the rules, techniques and strategies of hockey; encourage all your players to play as a team

Coaching/Mentoring

- Encourage participation of every player in practices and games
- Emphasize good sportsmanship on and off the ice
- Stress the importance of teamwork
- Treat all players equally
- Stress **fun** and skill development over winning
- Provide each player with fair and equitable ice time
- Adjust to personal needs and problems of players; be a good listener; never verbally or physically abuse a player or official; give all players the opportunity to improve their skills, gain confidence, and develop self-esteem; teach them the basics

Encourage Healthy Lifestyle

- Help players develop physically by learning skills, improving conditioning, develop good health habits, and avoiding injuries
- Help players develop psychologically by learning to control their emotions and develop feelings of self-worth
- Be concerned with the overall development of your players; stress good healthy habits and clean living
- Use of tobacco products while in the presence of players is prohibited.
- Consumption of alcoholic beverages or use of drugs prior to practices and/or games is prohibited

Role Models

- Lead by example - maintain a positive attitude towards referees, parent, players, and other coaches
- Be generous with your praise when it is deserved; be consistent and honest; be fair and just; do not criticize players publicly; learn to be a more effective communicator and coach; do not yell at players
- Coaches should never teach their players tactics or skills designed to circumvent the intent of the rulebook and the standards of fair play. The rules exist to protect players and provide a common standard by which final results will be determined
- Coaches should be sensitive to the impropriety of private meetings with on-ice officials before, during, or after the contest, without the presence of a representative of the opposing team
- Coaches wishing to express displeasure with an official's conduct must follow the proper procedure, as established by VSAHA, and at no time will the media be used to criticize an official

Coaching Selection Process

The Director of Coaching will select coaches with MAHA Board approval.

Interested candidates will submit a letter of interest to the Director of Coaching. The Director of Coaching will then compile a list of interested candidates.

The Director of Coaching will select all head coaches. Each team will have a Head Coach and no more than three assistant coaches (the number of assistant coaches will be at the discretion of the head coach). These will be the only coaches allowed on the bench during games. It is at the discretion of the Head Coach if they allow another coach on the ice during practice.

The goal of the Director of Coaching is to select coaches who best exemplify the values of MAHA, VSAHA, and USAHockey. Below are listed items of consideration during the process. These are meant as criteria guidelines, but they are not followed in any order nor are they weighted in any particular way.

Examples of Selection Process Criteria:

- USAHockey Certification and level obtained
- Years of coaching experience in MAHA (outside of MAHA and other sports)
- Recommendation from other coaches, players, and/or parents
- Participation in the growth and operation of the organization as a whole

- Attitude and enthusiasm
- Follow core values of the organization and USAHockey
- Disciplinary action history
- Input obtained by committee members from other associations
- Past coaching history in hockey
- Knowledge of hockey
- Love of the game
- Desire to teach players skills for life (physical and psychological)
- Organization and management skills
- Honesty
- Teaching skills
- Listening skills
- Coaching skills
- Communication skills with parents, players, and other team officials
- Desires and expectations of candidates
- Ability of child(ren) to play at the level applied for

No candidate is guaranteed a coaching position from year to year. Not all coaching candidates will be selected to coach. ***Reminder, coaching is a privilege, not a right.*** The Director of Coaching will do the very best to select the best candidates for each team, with the interests of the organization and the players coming first.

Penalties and Violations - For Parents, Players, Spectators, and Coaches

At their discretion, a coach may take immediate action against a player for Class I violations of this policy. A coach may bench the offending player during a game, or even ask them to leave the ice for the remaining duration of a practice or game. The coach will discuss the incident with the player and the parents in a timely manner. The coach will be required to document the incident and provide a copy to the MAHA Board within 5 days of the occurrence. The MAHA Board will make all final disciplinary decisions.

Class I Violations carry a penalty of a minimum ***one (1) week suspension from all practices, games, and/or any team activity.*** The MAHA Board will determine the penalty. The suspension begins when the MAHA Board has reached a decision on the issue; however, the MAHA Board has the authority to immediately suspend the offender until the investigation is complete. This time will count towards the overall suspension period. Suspensions that occur at the end of a season will carry over to the following season after the end of try-outs.

Class I Violations include, but are not limited to:

- Use of obscene or vulgar language in a boisterous manner to anyone at anytime
- Use of abusive or disrespectful language (teammates, coaches, parents, officials, other players, and spectators)
- Taunting of players, coaches, officials, or spectators by means of baiting, or ridiculing
- Addressing a coach, official, or volunteer in an unsportsmanlike, discourteous, or threatening manner
- Active or passive refusal of a player to follow a direct, reasonable instruction from the coach with regard to games and practices
- Questioning the coach(s) coaching during or after practices or games, in a disrespectful manner
- Questioning the referees during or after games
- Approaching a referee to voice a complaint; complaints should be directed to the coach

Class II Violations carry a penalty of a ***minimum thirty (30) day suspension from all practices, games, and/or any team activity***. The MAHA Board will determine the penalty. The suspension begins when the MAHA Board has reached a decision on the issue; however, the MAHA Board has the authority to immediately suspend the offender until the investigation is complete. This time will count towards the overall suspension period. Suspensions that occur at the end of a season will carry over to the following season beginning immediately after tryouts.

Class II Violations include, but are not limited to:

- Threats of physical violence towards any player, coach, parent, official, MAHA volunteer, or spectator
- Throwing of any object in the spectators viewing area, players bench, penalty box, in the locker room, or on the ice surface, that in any manner creates a safety hazard
- Intentional shoving or striking another player, coach, or official during any MAHA functions, whether in the locker room, on the ice, or at any time the team is getting together
- Public disparagement of other members (allegations found to be false)
- Repeat Class I Violations

Class III Violations carry a penalty of a **minimum one (1) year suspension from the program to permanent termination from the MAHA organization**. The MAHA Board will determine the penalty. The suspension begins when the MAHA Board has reached a decision on the issue; however, the MAHA Board has the authority to immediately suspend the offender until the investigation is complete. For Class III Violations penalties will require ratification by a 2/3 majority of the MAHA Board, at a meeting where there is a quorum of the Board.

Class III Violations include, but are not limited to:

- Use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs at the arena or official team function is not permitted. Parents, players and coaches are expected to represent MAHA at any team functions
- Physical abuse of a player, coach, parent, official, MAHA volunteer, or spectator
- Activities that violate State or Federal Laws which create a safety risk to any member of the organization
- Repeat Class II violations

Player/Parent Notification

Players and parents will be informed of this Policy on Sports Conduct before at registration. Parents/guardians are required to acknowledge (by signature) that they received a copy of the Policy **before** their child may participate in USAHockey sanctioned games.

Right to Appeal

Any parent, player or coach has the right to appeal a decision of the MAHA Board. The appeal is to be made in writing to the MAHA Board within 10 days of the decision rendered by the MAHA Board. The MAHA Board of Directors (elected and appointed) will render a decision regarding the appeal, and once rendered, is final.

Reporting

The President of the MAHA organization will deliver an annual report to the organization at the Annual Meeting stating such particulars as number of Policy incidents, sanctions levied, and policies pursued.

Coaching Education Program

The most up to date program information can be found on the VSAHA website:

www.vthockey.org

Officiating Seminars

The most up to date program information can be found on the VSAHA website:

www.vthockey.org