



# Brainerd Amateur Hockey Association

## Player/Parent/Coaches Handbook

BAHA is a non-profit organization, governed by the rules of District 15,  
Minnesota Hockey and USA Hockey

[WWW.BRAINERDHOCKEY.COM](http://WWW.BRAINERDHOCKEY.COM)

## Association Mission Statement

The Brainerd Amateur Hockey Association (BAHA) is committed to providing a safe environment for youth hockey players that increases participation and improves skills while teaching life lessons through the sport of hockey.

## Core Values

The following core values, as adopted by USA Hockey, are BAHA's guide in planning, program development, and expectations for play:

- **Sportsmanship:** Foremost of all is values to learn a sense of fair play. Become humble in victory, gracious in defeat. We will foster friendship with teammates and opponents alike.
- **Respect for Individuals:** Treat all others as you expect to be treated!
- **Integrity:** We seek to foster honesty and fair play beyond mere strict interpretation of rules and regulations of the game.
- **Pursuit of excellence:** Individual, team, and organizational levels. Each member of the BAHA organization, whether player, volunteer, or staff, 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.

## History of Brainerd Amateur Hockey Association (BAHA)

### Brainerd Hockey

The Brainerd Amateur Hockey Association was legally formed on August 14, 1972, when the Articles of Incorporation were filed. The purpose of this corporation was to encourage and improve the standard of ice hockey in the Brainerd area; to conduct the formation of teams; schedule practices, games, and tournaments; to select representative teams to participate in tournaments; to associate with other ice hockey associations; and to do all acts necessary to create further interest in amateur hockey. The original Board of Directors included Robert House, Rosemary Popple, and Fred Wiltse. BAHA is governed by USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey and participates in MN Hockey District 15. We currently have approximately 350 boys and girls from ages 4 to 18 participating in our program.

The first Brainerd High School Boys hockey team began play during the 1971-1972 season. The first boys' varsity coach was Bob House. BAHA started an amateur girls' program in 1995 and the first Girls High

School hockey season was during the 1997-1998 season. Chuck Whalen was the first girls' varsity coach.

It is a tribute to the BAHA founders and hundreds of volunteers who have followed them that so many Brainerd area boys and girls have not only learned the game of hockey but have had so many memorable moments playing in our association.

The Brainerd Amateur Hockey Association and its the Board of Directors are dedicated to offer a youth hockey program, in which participants can learn the game of hockey. The goals are to acquire skills of respect, sportsmanship, and teamwork.

## **The Arena**

The Brainerd Area Civic Center opened its doors in 1977. Until this time, outdoor rinks were used for the hockey program. The Brainerd Area Civic Center Board operated the facility until 1996, when the City of Brainerd assumed ownership. When the City of Brainerd took over the Civic Center, plans had already been developed by a group of hockey supporters to add a second ice sheet to the facility. With the addition of girls' hockey and increasing membership, a second sheet of ice was needed for the hockey program.

BAHA and the City of Brainerd secured a Mighty Ducks grant to provide funds to purchase a new ice plant for both ice sheets. The BAHA Board of Directors and a very dedicated group of hockey parents worked to raise funds and construct what was known as the "Gold Medal Arena." The Gold Medal Arena name was given to the new building because the original hockey boards in the facility were purchased from the Lake Placid Hockey Arena that were used when the 1980 USA Olympic Men's Hockey Team won the Gold Medal (Miracle on Ice). These boards would later need to be replaced. 1999 brought the first full season of hockey to the new facility. BAHA has continued to work on the building since that time with the addition of locker rooms, training facilities, and, in 2018, a shooting area. Since adding the Gold Medal Arena, BAHA has experienced increased membership and the ability to host larger home tournaments. The second ice sheet has also provided more scheduling options and consistent ice times for our program. The Gold Medal Arena is now known as the Crow Wing Recycling Rink.

The facilities were renamed to the Essentia Health Sports Center in 2014 and is currently owned and operated by the Brainerd Amateur Sports Foundation (BASF). Renovations to the facility in the fall of 2014 included ADA-accessibility areas such as restrooms, locker rooms, and a concession area. The addition of an elevator brought access to the second-level viewing areas and other key upgrades to welcome community members and visitors.

## **General BAHA Information**

**Registration** - Registration opens online on August 1st, with a registration deadline of September 1st for travel team players. If registration occurs after September 1st, a \$300 late fee will be assessed. Members will be notified of registration dates via email and are listed on the BAHA website.

USA Hockey requires all new members to provide a copy of the player's birth certificate upon starting their first year within any given association. All registration forms are available on the BAHA website.

For current year age levels, please visit: [Season Registration](#) tab at [www.brainerdhockey.com](http://www.brainerdhockey.com)

The BAHA hockey season operates from October through March. Practices and games can and will occur during the weekdays and weekends, including holidays, and when school is not in session. Please consider your player's team schedule when making non-hockey plans, as their team depends on player attendance.

You MUST register your child for the appropriate age level. Any player "move-up" will be addressed by the parties involved and handled as outlined in the Move-Up Policy Section of this handbook.

**Fees and Payments** - The registration fee for BAHA is based on projected operating costs for the upcoming year as set in the annual budget by the Board of Directors. Members with outstanding fees from the prior year will not be allowed to register until those fees are paid in full.

Members will be given the option to pay their fees in full or select a payment plan at the time of registration. When selecting a payment plan, future payments will be automatically deducted from your credit/debit card on the designated dates. A payment plan fee will be assessed to cover transaction fees if you select this option. ALL PAYMENTS MUST BE PROCESSED ONLINE. Pre-paid cards are accepted.

A late fee of \$300 will be imposed on all participants registering after the last publicized sign-up date. Families registering with three or more players will receive a 10% discount on registration.

Players with outstanding fees will not be allowed to participate in association practices or games. Members who require special financial arrangements or scholarships can apply. Families not fulfilling their volunteer requirements within the regular hockey season will be invoiced. Payment in full will be due before players can register for any BAHA-sanctioned activities. See volunteer policy for more details.

**Refunds** - All refund requests must be submitted to the Board of Directors in writing and then approved by the Board of Directors.

Players may qualify for a pro-rated refund if the player starts in BAHA and is moved up to a varsity team, or a medical condition resulting in the player to not participate the remainder of the season.

**Residence** - BAHA is open to all families who reside within the Brainerd Public Schools (ISD #181) attendance area or are openly enrolled in the Brainerd Public Schools. The association's policy is to accept players from any surrounding communities that do not have youth hockey programs.

**Volunteer** - Profits from our concessions stand, and home tournaments return directly to our hockey program. Both programs operate primarily on a volunteer basis. It is mandatory for parents to work their general volunteer pool hours and home game/home tournament shifts per the volunteer policy section of this handbook. Please see the Volunteer Policy.

**Fundraising** - Fundraising is a major contributor to our annual budget and helps lower the cost of our hockey programs. All players are expected to participate in the execution of designated yearly fundraising. Annual fundraising event details will be communicated during the hockey season.

## **BAHA Board of Directors**

A board of directors governs the Association. The terms of the directors are for two years. Elections are held per current BAHA bylaws.

The Board of Directors shall be composed of not less than three (3) nor more than fifteen (15) persons who are broadly representative of the community interests, possess applicable professional experience, or who have an expressed concern for the educational and charitable purposes of BAHA. Directors shall be natural persons, over the age of eighteen (18), who are voting members "in good standing" of BAHA.

The monthly Board of Directors meetings typically occur on the last Wednesday of each month. The meetings start at 5:30 PM. Any member is welcome to contact the Board of Directors to schedule a meeting that works well with all parties. Notice to the board president is required should any member request time on the agenda. Unless posted otherwise, the meetings are held at the Essentia Health Sports Center, 2nd floor board room.

**Board Member Contact Information** - For a current listing of Board members and their committee responsibilities visit [BAHA Board of Directors](#) .

**Board Member's Duties and Responsibilities** - The duties and responsibilities of the officers of the BAHA Board of Directors (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer) are listed in the BAHA By-Laws, a copy of which can be viewed on our website "Member Info" tab.

## **BAHA Team Level Duties and Responsibilities**

**Head Coach and Assistants** – link to [BAHA Coaching](#)

- The Head coach is responsible for the operation of the team and is responsible to BAHA through the Player Development Committee.
- Head coaches are selected by the Player Development Committee and approved by the BAHA Board of Directors.
- The head coach will select his/her assistant coaches with the approval of the Player Development Committee and the BAHA Board of Directors.
- Only the coach and a maximum of three assistants can be on the bench during a game.
- The coach's main objective is to teach and promote hockey and develop the team's full potential in a positive and safe manner. The coach should attempt to build individual skills into a continually improving team.
- Coaches must exhibit good sportsmanship, refrain from using profanity or belittling language, and always be a good representative of BAHA and our programs.
- Coaches must know and understand the rules of the game and share that understanding with the players.
- Coaches are required to follow the player's commitment and expectation policy for their level. See policy.
- Coaches should be available to discuss any problem with players and/or parents after the mandatory 24-hour cooling-off period.
- Coaches are required to maintain proper certification through USA Hockey.
- Coaches are required to follow the guidelines of the Player Development Plan regarding skill evaluation. See [Development Plan](#)

- Coaches and team managers are responsible for coordinating Locker Room Monitors for the team. In the case of a male coach or a female coach coaching the opposite sex, an assigned parent of a player will be asked to be in the locker room as a monitor. [Click here for BAHA's current locker room policy.](#)
- The coach is responsible for maintaining discipline on the team during scheduled hockey-specific team events. In the event there is an incident with a player or parent, the coach must contact the level rep within 48 hours of the incident. If needed, the problem will be escalated to the Hockey Director. Next steps are to be determined by the Hockey Director.
- The Head Coach must be at all games and practices or arrange for a proper substitute.
- Coaches cannot use any tobacco, beverages containing alcohol, or any controlled substance defined by law in the locker room or on the bench. (Except as prescribed by a physician).
- Coaches are not allowed to physically, emotionally, or psychologically abuse any player, parent, game official, or director.
- Head Coaches select a team manager.

**Team Manager** - Assist the head coach with the team's administration at his/her discretion. The Team Manager is expected to be the lead contact for the home tournament that BAHA is hosting. See [Team Manager checklist.](#)

### **Coaching Selection Policy** – link to [BAHA Coaching](#)

Those interested in coaching at any level please consult the BAHA website for details. The association has a great number of young skaters. BAHA is always in need of coaches at the Mini Mite and Mite levels to assist with both on-ice instruction, and off-ice coordination. For more information about coaching, please e-mail the Hockey Director or visit our website. The coach selection is determined by the Player Development Committee and requirements are listed on the website.

Selected coaches will be contacted as to when the first coaching meeting will be held. Attendance is required at all coaching meetings.

## **BAHA Policies and Procedures**

### **Player Try-Outs**

Player Try-Out Policy-General:

- Player evaluators will be comprised of experienced, unbiased, individuals with hockey knowledge to ensure a fair and consistent player selection process.
- The Coaches, Player Development Committee, and the BAHA Board of Directors shall establish team sizes considering the number of players and their skill levels.
- Prior to Try-Outs, the appropriate coach shall be notified if a player does not want to travel.
- Prior to Try-Outs, any player wanting to play at the lowest level shall inform the Hockey Director.

- Player should arrive at least 45 minutes early to their first try-out session and 30 minutes prior to the remaining sessions. Try-Out Procedures:
  - The first segment will consist of skill evaluation (i.e. skating, stick handling, shooting, etc.)
  - The second and third segment will consist of evaluation of hockey skills in competitive game type situations (i.e. 3 on 3, 4 on 4 and 5 on 5)
  - The fourth segment will consist of evaluation of position specific skills and small area games (i.e. breakouts, 1 on 1, 2 on 1, 3 on 2, body contact, etc.)
  - BAHA may bring in an outside team for any part of the tryout process
  - The number of players assigned to each team at a particular level will be determined by the Player Development Committee and the Hockey Director, and then reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors.

**Injury or illness exemptions:**

- Injury exemptions may be granted prior to or during the selection process in cases where injury or illness prevents a player from participating in the selection process or impairs the player’s ability to perform at his or her best ability.
- All injured or sick players will be placed accordingly and evaluated upon their healthy return and duration of Try-Outs.
- All Try-Outs will be completed in three (3) days.

**Roster Deadline:**

- Rosters ARE NOT completely set until December 31<sup>st</sup> of each season.

**Player Placement Policy**

Players are required to play at their appropriate age level per MN Hockey. Any level movement will be determined by the Player Development Committee and approved by BAHA’s Board of Directors. The only exceptions to this are:

1. The player wishes to play with his/her grade level.
2. Players are needed at an older level to complete a team.

<b>Level</b>	<b>Players entering:</b>
Squirt/10U	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Peewee/12U	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Bantam/15U	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade

Player Rosters are finalized on December 31st. Player placement may be adjusted on a case-by-case basis as determined by the Player Development Committee and BAHA's Board of Directors prior to this date.

### **Move Up Policy – Player Development Committee**

- For questions about the Move Up Policy, please contact the Hockey Director. Go to the Board of Directors link and scroll down to the Hockey Director. [Hockey Director](#)
- Co-ed Program Move Ups
  - A player move up will be allowed for all co-ed levels if the player is showing exemplary skill to join the top team/s of the next level. Players must meet one of the following conditions to be eligible for move up:
    1. Mite to Squirt – must make the Squirt A or B1 team following tryouts, otherwise the player will return to Mite
    2. Squirt to Peewee – must make the Peewee AA team following tryouts, otherwise the player will return to Squirt
    3. Peewee to Bantam – must make the Bantam AA team following tryouts, otherwise the player will return to Peewee
  - Any parent who would like to have their player be evaluated at the next level must submit a written request to the Player Development Committee and Hockey Director, no later than September 1<sup>st</sup> of that playing year to be considered. If the September 1<sup>st</sup> date is missed, your player will not be considered for moving up that season.
  - The Player Development Committee will discuss all applicants and make final recommendations to the Board of Directors as to whom the committee would support allowing a tryout. All applicants will receive a formal response from the Player Development Committee following the Board of Director's approval or denial to try out for the next level.
  - If the move-up player has evaluation scores to place on a top team, Squirt A/B1, or Peewee/Bantam AA, they can skate at their age level or move up.
  - If the player evaluated does not meet the move-up requirements above, that individual will be placed back into their appropriate age level for the season.
  - Attributes that will be considered during the evaluation process will be the following: exemplary skill set, competitiveness, coachability, maturity, attitude, and respect. Each item should be on display at the highest levels every day.
- Girls Program Move Ups
  - Due to the fluidity in numbers within our girl's program, move ups will be discussed without the need of parent request. Move-up requests will be at the discretion of our girls' co-op committee and may be utilized to boost team numbers or players at a given

level. All move-up requests are not requirements and can be denied by the player or the parents. Our goal in the move-up requests will always be to try to take the older players first. Still, we will also consider the skill set each player possesses to ensure each player who gets asked to move up will be in the best place to allow them to succeed and develop.

- Peer or Grade Move Ups
  - Peer or grade move-ups are allowed for all our travel teams. If your player falls into the category for a peer move up, please register your player at their designated level and send a peer move up request to the Hockey Director no later than September 1<sup>st</sup> of the playing year. Requests made after September 1<sup>st</sup> could be denied approval.
- Girls to Co-ed
  - Girls to Co-ed will be allowed. Please register the player in her appropriate age group for the girl's side and send a move-over request to the Hockey Director no later than September 1st of the playing year. Requests made after September 1<sup>st</sup> could be denied approval.

### **Player Commitment and Expectations**

BAHA recognizes that it is important for all players to develop in all areas of the game. Players and parents should expect that all teams will require a significant commitment of time.

Coaches at all levels will expect that players attend practices and games on a regular basis.

Communicating with the coaches when a player can't be at a game or practice is essential for the coaches to prepare for either the game or practice. Remember, individual improvement and skill acquisition is the result of frequent practice and attendance.

Playing time may be adjusted for reasons including, but not limited to, the following:

- Attendance
- Effort
- Willingness to adopt the "Team" philosophy
- Attitude

We cannot stress enough that regardless of the level your child will play, the commitment he/she is making is significant. Players and parents must understand this at the time of registration. The Player Development Committee will monitor player participation, and subsequent action will be taken as deemed appropriate.

### **Code of Conduct**

Whether you are a parent, coach, or player your conduct is a reflection on our association. Although inappropriate behavior by an association member is rare, there is no room for poor behavior whether the incident occurs at home or away. We all must work to ensure that we operate in a positive and fun

environment for our players. See full codes of conduct for players, parents, and coaches on our website. [Click here for current codes of conduct.](#)

## **Leveled Discipline Policy**

Code of Conduct violations will result in the following disciplinary action:

The first violation will result in up to a two-week suspension from all BAHA-sanctioned activities.

A second violation will result in suspension from all BAHA-sanctioned activities for up to the duration of the season.

A third violation will result in at least one calendar year suspension from all BAHA-sanctioned activities.

BAHA-sanctioned activities include, but are not limited to, team events, home and away practices, games, and tournaments.

Any disciplinary action, including suspension, will be served during the regular season as defined by MN Hockey. If a violation occurs outside the regular season, disciplinary action will carry over to the next season. If a disciplinary action cannot be served in its entirety during the regular season, any remaining portion will be carried over to the next season.

At any time, due to the severity of the said offenses, the disciplinary action can be elevated from the leveled discipline matrix in this section. Except for the circumstances outlined in MN Hockey Bylaw 10, any disciplinary action will start as quickly as possible following any applicable hearings.

## **Grievance Policy**

BAHA provides for an orderly procedure for resolving problems, concerns, and formal grievances. BAHA's goal is to resolve issues at the most immediate level possible.

A mandatory 24-hour cooling-off period should be observed before an action is taken.

Any concern should first be addressed to the head coach of the respective team. The head coach will address the concern within three (3) days of the initial contact. Any grievance should be brought to the coaches' attention in an appropriate setting. If the grievant is not satisfied with the resolution offered by the coach, he/she may file an official grievance in accordance with BAHA's policies. [Click here for grievance documents.](#)

Any other concerns can be addressed to the appropriate committee chair, SSGD Committee Chair, or Board of Directors. The grievant may also file an official grievance using the Grievance Resolution Form on BAHA's website.

## **Waiver Policy**

The Brainerd Amateur Hockey Association abides by the Rules and Regulations set forth in the

Minnesota Hockey Handbook and District 15, which states that Minnesota Hockey is a community-based amateur hockey program, and that players are to participate on teams from their local association based on the residence of their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and the established Minnesota Hockey boundaries. When a waiver is being considered, the best interest of the Brainerd Amateur Hockey Association will be first, and foremost. The parents of the hockey players will personally appear before the BAHA board and present their reason for, and commitment to the requested transfer.

Waivers must be submitted to BAHA's Board of Directors no later than August 1st. Requests arriving after this date will not be reviewed unless the player has no other opportunity to play in his/her home association.

If the waiver is approved, the registration fee must be paid in full prior to the start of try-outs. If the full fee is not paid prior to tryouts, the skater will not be allowed to skate until the fee is paid or other arrangements approved by BAHA are made.

Should the waived player decide to leave BAHA during, or at any time following try-outs, the registration fee will be forfeited in its entirety.

Failure to remain with the Brainerd Amateur Hockey Association for the waived season or failure for the player to return for succeeding seasons will jeopardize all future waiver requests.

Once approved, the player and player's family are considered a member of the Brainerd Amateur Hockey Association. As such, the parents and player understand and will comply with all the BAHA rules of conduct, promotional efforts, enrollment fees and policies of the BAHA.

## **Safe Sport**

BAHA has adopted and follows the USA Hockey Safe Sport Policy. [Click here for the current USA Hockey Safe Sport Policy.](#)

## **Locker Room Policy**

BAHA adheres to USA Hockey's SafeSport Program to help protect its participants from physical abuse, sexual abuse, and other types of misconduct, including emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment, and hazing. BAHA has adopted a locker room policy designed to maintain personal privacy, prevent abuse, and reduce the risk of misconduct in locker rooms. [Click here for BAHA's current locker room policy.](#)

## **Food/Beverage Policy**

Food and drink are prohibited in locker rooms at Essentia Health Sports Center, in both the Civic Center and Crow Wing Recycling rinks (or other arenas for away games/tournaments), except for water, nutrition or energy drinks, nutrition or energy foods, hot chocolate, or coffee.

## **Volunteer Policy**

BAHA is a non-profit organization that relies heavily on volunteers. The profits from the Concession Stand and Home Tournaments, which are both operated solely by volunteers, directly fund our hockey program. To make volunteer work more equitable for the entire association, the board has established a volunteer policy which includes families working MANDATORY hours in the concession stand or general volunteer pool, at their player(s) home tournament as well as other district, regional and state tournaments. [Volunteer policy found here.](#)