

Special Board Meeting Report October 25, 2020



The Minnesota Hockey Board of Directors hosted a special board meeting on Sunday, October 25, 2020 via Zoom. The purpose of the meeting was to review proposed rules for 2020-21 season related to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic.

Please note these are not official minutes of the special meeting. Rather, they are intended to be informational to Minnesota Hockey members due to the timing and immediacy of the rules discussed and voted on.

[R1] Due to COVID-19 concerns related to indoor gatherings, necessary preparation time and risk of financial liabilities involved with late cancellations, it was proposed to suspend all banquets for the 2020-2021 Minnesota Hockey Region and State Tournament.

- [R1] **No Region or State Tournament host shall plan or host a banquet for the 2021 Minnesota Hockey Region and State Tournaments. Banquets may resume for the 2021-2022 season.**

[R2] Minnesota Hockey rules currently allow four coaches to be on the bench. To encourage minimize the number of people on the benches during games, it was proposed to adjust the maximum number of coaches allowed on the bench to two for the 2020-21 season only.

- [R2] **For the 2020-2021 season, only 2 coaches shall be allowed on the team bench during all games at all levels. This includes all Minnesota Hockey sanctioned events (tournaments, games, scrimmages, etc.) and all teams playing in sanctioned events, regardless of if they are Minnesota Hockey registered teams or not.**

[R3] Minnesota Hockey rules currently allow non-participating players to be on the bench in certain situations. To encourage minimize the number of people on the benches during games, it was proposed to limit the people on bench to the two coaches and active players for the 2020-21 season only.

- [R3] **For the 2020-2021 season, the only people allowed on the bench are the two coaches and players actively playing/participating in the game or contest. Players that are injured and are unable to play or are not playing in the current game are not allowed on the bench in any capacity.**

[R4] Minnesota Hockey has received reports of players not following the orders of quarantine. Due to the importance of players abiding by quarantine restrictions whether due to a positive case or possible exposure, it was proposed to treat quarantined players as ineligible for games.

- [R4] **For the 2020-2021 season, if it has been determined by the Department of Health for a player to quarantine, the player is ineligible for participation until the quarantine period issued by the Department of Health expires. If it is found that a player who is under quarantine plays in a game, rules subject to playing an ineligible player shall be enforced. Further, players under quarantine shall not participate in any team activities until such time the quarantine has expired.**

[R5] USA Hockey's Youth Council recently adopted changes to the National Championship Guidebook which require "State/Affiliate" championships leading to advancing teams to the National Championship follow the National Championship Guidebook. Minnesota Hockey intends for teams from the Minnesota Hockey Jr. Gold A level will be entered into the USAH High School National tournaments, and as a result, Minnesota Hockey will need to adopt a change to the game format for the Junior Gold A State Tournament to 17-minute periods to be in compliance with the USA Hockey National Champion Guidebook. Currently, the Minnesota Hockey rules require a minimum of 1 hour 45-minute ice slots for Region and State Tournaments, and with 17 min periods, it would require 2-hour ice slots.

[R5] For the 2021 Minnesota Hockey State Tournament, games at the Junior Gold A level shall be 17-minute periods. The tournament host is required to block a minimum of 2 hours for each game.

[R6] During the special board meeting, the District Directors submitted an additional temporary rule proposal. The board of directors voted to allow the proposal to be considered during the meeting. The proposal was related to the requirement of coaches to wear masks within the Minnesota Hockey return to play guidelines, Local associations need to assist in policing this state mandate and MN Hockey Guideline. The wearing of a mask or face covering is a mitigation strategy to protect from the spread of COVID 19, and non-negotiable in Minnesota Hockey activities. This policy outlines the response of the Minnesota Hockey District Directors, in instances where coaches are found not abiding by the mask policy.

[R6] Coaches on the bench as well as on the ice during practice are mandated to wear a face covering or mask as outlined in the Minnesota Hockey Return to Play Guidelines, unless they have a pre-existing medical condition, with prior notification to District Director.

The District Director process for coaches not wearing face covering or mask during games and practices will result in a verbal warning on first offense. A hockey official, as well as any member of an association reminding a coach to wear a mask, constitutes a verbal warning. Hockey officials will make note of the verbal warning on the score sheet. District Directors will monitor the score sheets for verbal warnings and track coaches who are repeat offenders.

A second verbal warning will result in a three (3) game suspension including all on ice activities leading up to the three games.

For third offense of a coach not wearing a mask or face covering, the District Director shall impose a thirty (30) day suspension from all team activities to the coach.

This policy covers all games and practices. Additionally, associations may be subject to all sanctions for multiple violations of the mask rule by their respective District Director.

The District Director may also impose the above when receiving communication from local arenas.

[End of Special Board Meeting Report]