



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Minnesota Hockey Announces COVID-19 Rule Changes** *Changes Focus on Enforcement of Mask, Quarantine and Bench Policies*

**St. Paul, MN – October 26, 2020** – The Minnesota Hockey Board of Directors, which hosted a special board meeting on Sunday, October 25, has instituted multiple rule changes related to the COVID-19 pandemic for the 2020-2021 season.

“With the rise of COVID-19 cases across our state and region, it is up to all of us in the hockey community to band together so our young players can safely play the game they love this season,” said Steve Oleheiser, Minnesota Hockey president. “While the large majority of our members are doing the right things such as wearing a face covering, social distancing and staying home when appropriate, we must do a better job of holding each other accountable to prevent the actions of a few putting the rest of our members and our game at greater risk.”

**Face Covering Enforcement:** District Directors will now be coordinating with on-ice officials, arena staff and association leadership to enforce progressive penalties for coaches not wearing a mask or face covering during all games and practices. Coaches will receive a verbal warning for the first offense. For the second violation, coaches will receive a three-game suspension, including all on-ice activities leading up to those three games. For a third violation, coaches will be suspended for 30 days from all team activities. In addition, associations may be subject to sanctions by their respective District Director for multiple violations of the mask rules.

**Quarantine Enforcement:** Players who are instructed per Minnesota Department of Health policies to quarantine, whether related to a positive test, close contact, etc., will be considered 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, Minnesota Hockey rules subject to playing an ineligible player shall be enforced. Under these rules, the team would be ineligible for District, Region and State Tournaments, and the head coach would be suspended for the rest of the season.

**Bench Rules for Games:** The Board of Directors also passed two rules designed to limit the number of people on benches for games. There will be a maximum of two coaches allowed on the bench for games and only players actively participating (no injured players) are allowed on the bench. These rules shall apply to 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.

**Tournament Banquets:** There will not be any banquets permitted for the 2021 Minnesota Hockey Region and State Tournaments.

The rule changes listed above have been implemented for the 2020-2021 season only. For the latest version of Minnesota Hockey Return to Play Guidelines, click [here](#), and for Guidelines on Managing Positive Cases, click [here](#).

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