

New Mexico Mustangs Girls Hockey Association Locker Room Policy & Procedure

Adopted by majority vote of New Mexico Mustangs Girls Hockey Association (NMMGHA) Board of Directors, **August 9, 2023**. Contact information for Association Head Coach, Mustangs Board President, and Board of Directors may be found here:

<https://www.nmmustangsgirlshockey.org/boardofdirectors>

The safety and protection of all participants is central to NMMGHA's goals. NMMGHA adheres to the policies of USA Hockey and the US Center for Safe Sport as a means to help protect its participants from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment, hazing, and other threats.

To help prevent abuse or misconduct from occurring in our locker rooms, NMMGHA has adopted the following locker room policy. This policy, based on the standards provided by USA Hockey and the US Center for Safe Sport, is designed to maintain personal privacy as well as to reduce the risk of misconduct in locker rooms. For the complete USA Hockey Safe Sport Policy, see the Safe Sport handbook at <https://www.usahockey.com/safesporthandbook>.

The responsibility to ensure that this policy is enforced lies with the Team Head Coach(es) of the Mustangs Team(s) that are participating in the relevant practice or game.

Safe Sport Prohibited Conduct

NMMGHA prohibits all types of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing, all as described in the USA Hockey Safe Sport Handbook. Participants, employees or volunteers in NMMGHA may be subject to disciplinary action for violation of these locker room policies or for engaging in any misconduct or abuse or that violates the USA Hockey Safe Sport Policies.

Reporting of Violations

Players, Coaches and Locker Room Monitors are required to report any Safe Sport violations, misconduct or abuse immediately to the NMMGHA Safe Sport Administrator and follow the reporting guidelines. Reports of any actual or suspected violations may be made by email to USA Hockey at safesport@usahockey.org or you may call 1-800-888-4656.

Violations of team behavioral rules (for example: persistent bad language, use of recording devices) should be reported as soon as practical to the Team Head Coach or Association Head Coach.

Approved Locker Room Monitors

At the beginning of each season, the NMMGHA Board and Coaches will identify adult women volunteers to serve as locker room monitors for the NMMGHA teams. These volunteers are typically parents or other adult family members of players, but that is not required. Coaches can also serve as locker room monitors, but that is not the preferred standard, as coaches have other duties before and after games and practices.

An Approved NMMGHA Locker Room Monitor must meet the following criteria:

- Must be an adult female age 21 or over
- Must be registered with USA Hockey as a Volunteer or Coach
- Must be registered with the New Mexico Mustangs as a Volunteer or Coach
- Must be up-to-date on USA Hockey approved Background Screening
- Must be up-to-date on USA Hockey's Safe Sport training certification

For the rest of this policy, "Approved" means certified according to the above steps.

Locker Room Monitoring Procedure for all Practices and Games

NMMGHA teams typically have the use of locker rooms for 60 minutes before and up to 30 minutes after all practices and games. Per USA Hockey and Safe Sport policies, the following procedures will be followed for use of locker rooms by NMMGHA teams and programs:

- When you arrive, check to make sure that the locker room is unlocked and vacant. If the locker room is locked, ask rink personnel to unlock it or provide a key. The rink personnel may want to hold your car keys as collateral for the locker room key. If there are people, equipment, or clothing already in the locker room, notify rink personnel. This could mean that others are using that locker room and are planning to come back there to change, or it could mean that the previous users have not yet vacated.
- As players arrive, introduce yourself as the locker room monitor. Collect any cell phones or other recording devices from the players before they enter the locker room. If a player objects to having their phone collected, advise her that the alternative is to leave it with a parent or other trusted adult, or in a vehicle. Also remind them that respectful conduct is expected while at all Mustangs events, including in the locker room.
- In some circumstances, the team Head Coach may authorize use of a device for the playing of music in the locker room. Also, there could be circumstances where a player or Authorized Caregiver has been given permission to have a phone in the locker room, for example to monitor a medical device. If in doubt, contact the Board President or Association Head Coach as shown below.
- At a minimum, one approved Locker Room Monitor shall be present near the door of the locker room when players are in the locker room. When there is only one monitor, the monitor should stay outside of the locker room and frequently enter briefly or look and listen into the locker room to monitor behavior. In the case where two locker rooms are

used and the doors are adjacent, a single monitor may supervise both locker rooms in the same way.

- If two approved Locker Room Monitors are available, then they may be posted inside the locker room, and the door may remain closed. It is recognized that often locker rooms are very crowded and it is not practical for two or more monitors to supervise from within the locker room. In that case, the monitors may remain outside the locker room and supervise as described in the previous paragraph.
- While players are in the locker room, monitor their behavior both audibly and visually. If you hear inappropriate language or see inappropriate conduct, please remind the players of locker room conduct expectations. If behavior persists, identify players with the problem behavior and bring the behavior to the attention of team coaches. If there is immediate threat of harm, the locker room monitor should call 911.
- At the rinks where Mustangs typically practice and play games, it is not possible to fully secure the locker rooms while players are on the ice. Therefore, players should not leave valuables in the locker room during practices and games.
- If a coach needs to speak to an individual player without other players present, it is best if this occurs in an open area and not in the locker room. In any case, another approved adult volunteer, coach, or monitor must be nearby such that the coach-player conversation is “observable and interruptible” per Safe Sport standards.
- If there is an authorized adult caregiver helping a player in the locker room, at least one locker room monitor should also be in the locker room to be consistent with USA Hockey and SafeSport rules.
- Locker rooms are typically monitored during the following times. Outside of these times, the NMMGHA and its volunteers and coaches, and affiliated adults will not be responsible for monitoring locker room activity:
 - For practices: 30 minutes before and 30 minutes after
 - For games: 60 minutes before and 30 minutes after

Locker Room Behavioral Standards

In addition to policies on Prohibited Conduct and Recording Devices as described below, the NMMGHA has the following specific behavioral expectation for all people in and around NMMGHA locker rooms:

- Verbal and nonverbal communication must be respectful and not vulgar, profane, or obscene
- Language threatening violence against self or others is prohibited

Locker room monitors are empowered to verbally correct players who are not abiding by these standards. If the behavior is egregious or persistent, the locker room monitor should report the behavior to the Team Head Coach or Association Head Coach. If there is immediate threat of harm, the locker room monitor should call 911.

Use of Recording Devices including Phones

Cell phones and other mobile devices with audio or video recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras, are NOT PERMITTED TO BE USED in the locker rooms. The NMMGHA Board strongly encourages players to leave their devices with a parent or other trusted adult while in the locker room and during practices and games.

Cell phones, smart phones, or other recording devices will be collected from players by the Locker Room Monitor or Team manager prior to players entering the locker room, and returned to the player after the game or practice. The NMMGHA and its volunteers and coaches, and affiliated adults will not be responsible for loss or damage of devices.

Before games and possibly practices, at the discretion of the Team Head Coach, one device may be used for playing music. This device must be oriented in a way such that it cannot video record players while they are in the locker room.

Coaches in Locker Rooms

Approved female coaches may enter locker rooms at any time according to the same guidance that applies to locker room monitors.. Male coaches may enter the locker room only with an accompanying cleared adult (following the Safe Sport “Observable and Interruptible” principle) and only after the locker room has been checked by approved female coaches or locker room monitors to ensure that players are properly clothed. Approximately 15 minutes both before & after games, players should be and remain fully dressed for coach talk in the locker room.

Adult male coaches may never change clothes in the same locker room as female players. Approved adult female coaches are strongly discouraged from changing clothes in the same locker room as youth, but are allowed to do so as long as they wear a base layer and do not “intentionally or recklessly expose their breasts, buttocks, groin, or genitals to a Minor Athlete” (per Safe Sport policy).

Family Members and Caregivers in Locker Rooms

Approved Locker Room Monitors, approved female coaches, and Approved Caregivers are allowed in the locker room. Approved male coaches may enter according to the guidelines shown above under “Coaches in Locker Rooms.”

Other parents, family members of players, and any other adults and children are prohibited from entering locker rooms while players are present.

- When players need assistance putting on or taking off hockey gear, the assistance should be provided outside of the locker room. Parents are encouraged to help their players develop independence in putting on and taking off their gear.
- If a player has an injury, disability, or medical condition that warrants assistance or supervision in the locker room from a parent or other caregiver:

- The parent or caregiver must satisfy all of the requirements described above under “Approved Locker Room Monitors”
- The parent or caregiver must obtain prior written approval from the Mustangs Board President or the Association Head Coach to be in the locker room

Mustangs and non-Mustangs Players Sharing Locker Rooms

In some situations there may be players from other Associations who are sharing a locker room with Mustangs players before, during, or after a Mustangs event. This is common at the Outpost Ice Arena, where typically one locker room is designated for all 17 & under girls regardless of team or Association. Mustangs have no authority to enforce this Locker Room policy onto such players. However, if Locker Room Monitors or Coaches observe players from other associations violating USA Hockey policy (e.g. using mobile phone in locker room), please report the violation or concern to that Association’s locker room monitor. If no such monitor is present, inform the Mustangs Board President so that the other players’ Association lead(s) can be notified.

Non-Mustangs Players attending Mustangs Practices

Any players from other Associations who are attending Mustangs practices must comply with this Locker Room Policy, whether or not they are sharing a locker room with Mustangs players. The Team Head Coach of the Mustangs team hosting the visiting players is responsible for informing those players of this requirement.

Facility Specific Guidance:

Outpost Ice Arena (Outpost) in Albuquerque, New Mexico

Due to the unique configuration of locker rooms at the Outpost, the Mustangs Locker Room Policy includes the following points of emphasis:

- When the locker room door is open, very little privacy is available in the locker room, so locker room monitors should emphasize the following practices:
 - Minimize the time the door is open, and avoid holding or blocking the door open when players are changing clothes.
 - If the door must be held open, politely block the foot traffic in the hallway to avoid compromising the privacy of those in the locker room.
 - Keep the benches opposite the locker room doors free from people other than female players, approved locker room monitors, approved caregivers, and approved female coaches.
- There are sometimes players from other associations using the same locker room as Mustangs players. If these players are practicing or playing with Mustangs, they are fully subject to the Mustangs locker room policy.
- Sometimes the Mustangs will be assigned multiple locker rooms at the Outpost, commonly Locker Rooms 5 & 6, which are oriented “back to back” and connect together while also opening onto opposite hallways. This situation necessitates the presence of

more locker room monitors since the doors cannot be monitored by the same person at the same time.

- Sometimes the shared girls locker room will have two groups using it successively, where the overlapping sizes of the two groups would overcrowd the locker room. In this case, politely block the first group (coming off the ice) from returning to the locker room until the majority of the second group has exited. In the case where there are players from another Association in one of the groups, please coordinate with their locker room monitor to make sure that the transition of players into the locker room goes smoothly.

Facility Specific Guidance:

Genoveva Chavez Community Center (GCCC) in Santa Fe, New Mexico

Due to the unique configuration of locker rooms at the GCCC, the Mustangs Locker Room Policy includes the following points of emphasis:

- Sometimes the Mustangs will be assigned multiple locker rooms at the GCCC. These are typically connected locker rooms with adjacent entrance doors. Although it's always preferable to have multiple locker room monitors present, in this circumstance a single approved individual can monitor both locker rooms.
- If players from other Associations are practicing or playing with Mustangs at the GCCC, they are fully subject to the Mustangs locker room policy. The Team Head Coach of the Mustangs team hosting the visiting players is responsible for informing those players of this requirement.

Conflict Resolution

Players are expected to respect the authority of the locker room monitors, as well as instructions from the locker room monitors that are consistent with this policy. If conflicts arise between any of the parties involved (players, siblings, parents, locker room monitors, coaches, volunteers, or people not connected to Mustangs), the concern should be elevated to the Team Head Coach, Association Head Coach, or Mustangs Board President.

END OF THE POLICY DOCUMENT