



River Lakes Hockey, Inc.

2023-2024 Handbook

Mission:

River Lakes Hockey creates positive lifelong experiences in a safe & fair environment that allows each participant to do their best.

Vision:

To be the area's leading youth-centered sports organization by creating as many opportunities for play as possible and building athletes for life, guided by the developmentally appropriate framework of the American Development Model (ADM).

Values:

Fun: *Enjoyment, Participation and Friendship.*

Sportsmanship: *Respecting teammates, competitors, coaches, officials and parents.*

Teamwork: *Working together to achieve the desired goal by putting the needs of the team before self.*

Skill Development: *Allowing each player to grow their hockey skills by using the best teaching and coaching the association is capable of providing.*

Open Communication: *Transparency and collaboration emphasizing participation by all.*

Youth Centered: *Every action is focused on the best interests of all players.*

Social Media

www.riverlakeshockey.com

@RLStarsHockey on Facebook

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Welcome and Season Overview

Welcome to the River Lakes Stars hockey season! We are looking forward to another opportunity to have fun, demonstrate sportsmanship and develop. We look forward to continuing to provide a place to grow hockey in Central Minnesota. Please continue to be Ambassadors for hockey, and promote participation in hockey to your friends, neighbors, and relatives! Any new hockey players interested in our association are encouraged to attend one of our recruiting events. Check out our website for additional information on Learn to Skate and Beginner Hockey Camps programs that we will be putting on this fall to introduce new skaters to the sport.

Our registration for all returning skaters is up and running on the website mid-August to mid-September. All registration for returning skaters will be done online. Early registration helps us to have a good idea on the number of skaters we will have for reporting team designations to District 5. Please register your skaters ASAP. Late registrations will be subject to a \$100 late fee.

We will be having player placement (evaluations) October 7th-9th. There will be opportunities to skate prior to this weekend as we will have our traditional fall camps for registered skaters.

The board is continuing its efforts to evolve the association to provide equitable and many opportunities for everyone to pitch in and support River Lakes Hockey. Remember, we are a non-profit volunteer run organization that functions on the efforts of all members doing their part where help is needed. We do a variety of fundraising to keep costs down, but these events require manpower. We will be doing multiple fundraisers this year. To ensure adequate income and cash flow, all fundraising fees are collected as part of your registration fee. One half of your balance is due with your registration. The final payment is due on or before Dec 31st. A payment plan can be set up if you contact the President or Treasurer in advance. ALL payments and payment plans will need to be completed by December 31st to set official team rosters. A major portion of these fees can then be recouped by working with the association by supporting our fundraisers, see page 20 in this handbook for more details.

As part of your membership in the River Lakes Hockey Association, you are required to participate in a committee. Committee membership terms run for a full year. There are no set hours associated with committee membership; rather, committee membership is focused on task completion. Some committee positions are appointed by the Board, others are available via preference during registration. Read more about Committee Service on page 21 in the handbook.

We will continue to require participation in volunteer (DIBS hours) for association support and the concession stand hours in the Koronis Arena. We welcome any other fundraising ideas anyone may want to bring forward.

The following document is designed to help inform our members of the operations of our organization and expectations of our members. The information herein may require additional work as we move forward through our season. The River Lakes Stars Board is always open to suggestions and help from our members. We need your help, please be willing to step up and take on some of the leadership positions within the Association.

Governance & Organization

River Lakes Hockey is a member of USA Hockey, being a member of District 5, Minnesota. The hierarchy is outlined in the following paragraphs.

USA Hockey

USA Hockey, Inc. is the National Governing Body for the sport of hockey in the United States, with the mission to promote the growth of hockey and provide the best possible experience for all participants by encouraging, developing, advancing, and administering the sport.

USA Hockey's primary emphasis is on the support and development of grassroots hockey programs. While youth hockey is a focus, USA Hockey also has vibrant junior and adult hockey programs that provide opportunities for players of all ability levels. The organization also supports a growing disabled hockey program.

Beyond serving those who play the game at the amateur level, USA Hockey has certification programs for coaches and officials to ensure education standards are met that coincide with the level of play. As the National Governing Body for the sport of ice hockey in the United States, USA Hockey is the official representative to the United States Olympic Committee and the International Ice Hockey Federation

USA Hockey is divided into 12 geographical districts throughout the United States. Each district has a registrar to register teams; a referee-in-chief to register officials and organize clinics; a coach-in-chief to administer education programs for coaches; a risk manager to oversee liability and safety programs; and a skill development program administrator to facilitate learn-to-play programs for youth players and their parents.

For more information on USA Hockey programs, visit: <https://www.usahockey.com/>

Minnesota Hockey published the following statement to provide guidance to Minnesota Hockey associations regarding non-sanctioned events and competing against teams not sanctioned with USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey.

USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey rules prohibit Minnesota Hockey association teams from participating in a non-sanctioned event and/or participating in a game or practice with a team not sanctioned by USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey unless the event is granted Special Event status from the Minnesota Hockey District Director and Minnesota District Registrar. Unless sanctioned as a Special Event, USA Hockey's insurance policies are not available to cover the arena, the association, team or individual participants involved in a game or practice with a team not sanctioned by USA Hockey/Minnesota Hockey. Parents who register their youth player with USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey and the local association have an expectation of receiving certain benefits; including training and certification of coaches and officials, background screening, disciplinary process, playing rules and tournament standards. Parents should not be put into the position of being uninformed should an injury occur at a non-sanctioned event or should other anticipated benefits be unavailable.

Although teams which represent a Minnesota Hockey association may not participate in non-sanctioned play, individuals (players, parents and coaches) may participate in non-sanctioned events and may form a team and seek affiliation with another sanctioning body other than USA Hockey/Minnesota Hockey. To avoid confusion and potential liability, it is mandatory that such a team be totally separate from your association. That team should not use assets from your association or ice contracted by your association. They should have a different identity and not wear your association uniforms. They must have separate financial accounts and all arena and vendor contracts must be under a separate entity.

Minnesota Hockey

The Minnesota District, more commonly called Minnesota Hockey, is one of the 13 districts within USA Hockey, and is the governing body of youth and amateur hockey in Minnesota and the premier developer of hockey players in the state. Minnesota Hockey (has provided volunteer services for the development and promotion of hockey in Minnesota since 1947. To learn more about Minnesota Hockey, please visit <http://www.minnesotahockey.org/>.

Minnesota Hockey is subdivided into 13 districts.



District 5

Within the state, the individual districts organize and govern hockey in accordance with USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey guidelines. Districts are composed of member associations as organized by MN Hockey, and a Board of Directors. District 5(<http://district5.pucksystems2.com>) is operated entirely by volunteers. Districts organize league play and playoffs. Every team participates in the district playoffs at the end of the year. PeeWee/12U and Bantam/15U teams have the opportunity to advance to Region and State playoffs. Squirrel/10U teams participate in the District playoffs only. Member Associations of D5 include:

[Buffalo/Annandale](#)
[Litchfield/Dassel/Cokato](#)
[River Lakes](#)
[Sauk Rapids](#)
[STMA](#) (St. Michael/Albertville)

[Hutchinson](#)
[MML](#) (Monticello/Maple Lake)
[Sartell](#)
[St. Cloud](#)
[Willmar](#)

River Lake Stars

River Lakes Hockey creates positive lifelong experiences in a safe & fair environment that allows each participant to do their best. Our goal is to help youth who participate become better citizens, better sportspersons, and educated in the sport of hockey and the art of skating, and to help our youth in their physical, mental and social development. Teaching them self-control, patience, and courage.

A volunteer association organized, managed, and funded by its member families, we provide our children an opportunity to play organized hockey in the belief that participation in

meaningful, physically challenging, team sports significantly contributes to their overall development and well-being. Organized by school district boundaries, we serve the following communities: Albany, Avon, Belgrade, Broton, Cold Spring, Eden Valley, Elrosa, New London, Paynesville, Richmond, Spicer, St. John's Prep, and Watkins.

Communication Methods

River Lakes Hockey will communicate to members via the email address associated with the Sports Engine account your child(ren) are registered under. These communications will happen by emails and Weekly Updates. Weekly Updates are sent on Thursdays each week. During the off season, you may not receive an update each week, but it will still be sent out on Thursdays. If you would like to add a second email to the account you can do that one of two ways:

Log into your Sports Engine account (these instructions are from a web browser (not the app)).

1. Click on the upper right hand corner where you see your initials
2. Click on account settings
3. Click on Household
4. Click on your skater(s) name(s)
5. Find the guardians box on the right side, hit the + sign and then add your email address to it

OR

1. Click on the upper right hand corner where you see your initials
2. Click on account settings
3. Click on edit on email, then
4. Click on the + sign to add an additional email

Your team manager and/or coach will also communicate via email or it's possible a third party messaging service such as GroupMe or TeamReach will be used.

Registration Info and Key Dates

Please refer to the website for the most updated information regarding registration.

The website will also list specific times for Fall Camps and Evaluations.

Families who have previously registered with River Lakes Hockey will also receive detailed communications regarding registration, fall camps, and player evaluations via email and Weekly Updates.

Once registration is completed, you will have until evaluations to cancel your registration and reimbursement will be prorated. No refunds will be given after evaluations. After evaluations, you will be responsible for the full registration fee, volunteer requirements (DIBS hours and team support hours) and fundraising which will need to be completed or paid in full at the end of the season.

By registering, you give your permission for River Lakes Hockey to use your child's name and/or picture on social media and in articles representing our association.

Equipment Requirements & Rental Equipment Opportunities

Required Equipment

Rule 304 of the USA Hockey handbook always requires all players to wear the following equipment at games and practices:

Hockey skates	Gloves
Shin pads	Shoulder pads
Elbow pads	Padded Hockey pants (breezers)
Protective cup	Jerseys and Socks

- HECC approved helmet with full face mask (must always be worn on ice and on the bench, in uniform or not).
- Mouth Guard - All players, including goalkeepers, are required to wear a colored (non-clear) internal mouthpiece, which covers all remaining teeth of one jaw, customarily the upper.
- Jewelry shall not be worn except for religious or medical needs. Medals shall be taped to the body under the uniform so as not to remain visible.

Rental Equipment

Equipment, excluding a protective cup, neck & mouth guards are provided to first year skaters at no cost, subject to availability. Skates and sticks are in limited supply and subject to availability. Equipment Handout will be at the following times.

For first year skaters (Instructional Program which is all kids 8 and under), equipment will be issued at the first night of practice. We will also have equipment available for those who join the association after our Learn to Skate and Beginner Hockey programs.

Second year players in the Initiation Program can rent equipment for \$50. Equipment rental to returning skaters will not be available until after the Try Hockey for Free event has been concluded (mid-November). Note: all rentals are subject to availability. This equipment will be handed out at the first practice, check schedule on the website for details.

Special Programs

First Year Skater Program

First Year Skaters at the IP level and Squirt/10U are free and pay no RLH registration fees. They must register with and pay USA Hockey registration fees. If you are a first-year skater above the Squirt/10U level, you would pay the appropriate **additional child rate** in the chart on page 19. All first year families are required to complete four (4) hours of DIBS (association support, concession stand or Beer & Wine), committee services, and team support hours.

Girls Recruitment Program

River Lakes Stars is committed to fielding a Girls team at all levels. To achieve this, we need a concerted effort to continue to recruit girls. Recruiting efforts currently include the beginner girl's camps, learn to skate, open houses, and parades. Please support River Lakes Hockey by promoting the many positive aspects of hockey to prospective new members. It is encouraged that you become involved in promoting hockey by getting involved in one of the many recruiting tools available.

River Lakes Stars Initiation Program (IP = Mite, or players 8 year old and under)

Purpose: The Future of River Lakes Hockey depends on young hockey players joining our association. A fun and challenging environment needs to be established to encourage players to continue in youth hockey and develop fundamental hockey skills at this critical time in the child's youth hockey career. Parents will need to take an active role in the success of our IP youth hockey program.

Goals: The Initiation Program's main goal is to teach the fundamental skills of hockey, in a competitive and FUN atmosphere.

IP Coordinator: This position will be appointed by the Player Development Committee and approved by the River Lakes Board. They will coordinate the whole IP program. This person may or may not be a coach at the IP level, but should be a person that has a strong hockey background and knowledge of the importance of skill development at this critical time for our young hockey players. This person will need to have strong communication skills, as a major part of the position will be to educate new families on the importance of skill development and the program and methods our association uses to ensure that this skill development takes place. The IP coordinator will report to the ACE coordinator.

The Paynesville arena Mite Coordinator and the Richmond arena Mite coordinator will handle the majority of the day-to-day activities of the IP program.

IP Program Guidelines from Minnesota Hockey: MN Hockey strongly encourages skill development for all players. This is particularly critical at the Mite level so that players are provided with the foundation to enjoy and have success in the game.

To read the full mite hockey guidelines from MN Hockey please visit:

<https://www.minnesotahockey.org/handbook> and refer to pages 25-26.

River Lakes Association Guidelines:

- River Lakes Hockey will follow all guidelines set by Minnesota Hockey.
- There will be a goal of 3 practices to every game ratio for the IP program.
- There will be a designated gameday for the IP program where cross ice and half ice games will be played throughout the whole season typically every other Sunday
- After January 15th age eligible mites may play additional half ice and full ice games with other teams in our district.

Players will be classified as

- 6U/Mini-mites: 6 years old or under on May 31st (typically 1st grade and under)
- 8U/Mites: 7 or 8 year olds on May 31st (typically 2nd & 3rd graders)

Gameday: The goal of gameday is to create a competitive and fun atmosphere for players to showcase their talents and for parents and family members to come and watch what the players have learned. Gameday will alternate between the Koronis and Richmond arenas..

- Gameday will be back-to-back ice sessions at each rink alternating rinks on Sundays. For example, all mini-mites from Richmond and Paynesville will play at the Richmond arena from 1pm-2pm, and all of the mites from Richmond and Paynesville will play at the Richmond Arena from 2pm-3pm. The following gameday would be held at the Koronis Arena.
- Gameday will be half ice games.
- There will be no exceptions for mites to play full ice during gameday.

- All players in the mite program will be given hockey socks all BLACK in color and a jersey. All River Lakes teams will be required to wear jerseys supplied or approved by the River Lakes Board. No exceptions.
- Teams will be made as equal as possible considering the skill level of players at each level.

Season Schedules: Please check the calendar on the website for the most updated schedules.

Mini-mites- (target 50-55 ice sessions a season)

- Saturday Morning (Shared ice with Mites)
- Wednesday Evening (alone)
- Every other Sunday afternoon (Gameday)

Mites- (target 50-55 ice sessions)

- Saturday Morning (Shared ice with Mites)
- Monday Evening (Skills night with the Mites)
- Every other Sunday afternoon (GAMEDAY)
- Additional full ice games may be added after January 15th
- After January 1 the practices for Mites and Squirts may be split on Monday nights. Squirts would be at one rink and Mites would be at the other.

Mini-mites & Mites will participate in two jamborees (one home and one in the St.Cloud/Sauk Rapids area. These are usually held the first week of February & March.

Mite Full Ice Games: Mites playing full ice games will be **age eligible Mite players who are advancing to Squirts in the following season.** The team(s) playing in full ice games will be a combination of Richmond Mites and Paynesville Mites. If there is a shortage of players in that age group there will be exceptions made for younger players to fill the open space if approved by the IP coordinator. Minimum size of team will be 10 skaters and a goalie. The Player Development Committee prior to December 31st will determine the coach of the full ice team (referred to as travel mites and 8U for girls).

Concussion Information

River Lakes Hockey is aware of the importance of teaching our skaters on how to safely avoid concussions while playing. Our coaches are trained each year in concussion safety and conduct various practice drills throughout the season to teach skaters the importance of keeping their head up.

We encourage you to speak with your medical provider if you are interested in baseline concussion testing for your skater.

Please visit the following resources from MN Hockey and USA hockey to learn more about the prevention and treatment of concussions.

<https://www.usahockey.com/safety-concussions>

<https://www.minnesotahockey.org/page/show/3700170--concussion-information>

Insurance

USA Hockey provides \$25,000 of insurance to registered skaters when participating in sanctioned activities only. Important exclusions apply. Visit <https://www.usahockey.com/insurancemanagement> for details.

Board of Directors

The River Lakes Board consists of fifteen (15) members. Of these 15 directors, there shall be no more than 5 residing within any single school district within the River Lakes Hockey, Inc. geographical area. The current board members and their terms are as follows. Note that elections are held for board members, and the Board of Directors will appoint positions of President, Vice President, etc. on an annual basis. If you have any questions, please direct them to any board member.

2023-2024 River Lakes Hockey Board of Directors				
Position	Name	Email Address	Phone #	Term Expires
President	Amanda Peterson	amandabrey@gmail.com	320-894-1626	2024
Vice President	Corey Larson	coreylarson78@gmail.com	651-334-5667	2025
Treasurer	Kyle Akerson	akes11@hotmail.com	320-894-7081	2025
Secretary	Julia Orth	juliaorth07@yahoo.com	818-445-1018	2025
Director	Nick Anderson	nick.anderson@andersonug	320-260-4938	2026
Director	Zsuzsa Bayer	zibayer@hotmail.com	320-204-0978	2024
Director	Baxter DuFrane	dufrane10@icloud.com	320-226-6340	2026
Director	Matt Hendrickson	hendrickson.mrh@gmail.com	320-291-5784	2024
Director	Darren Heying	darren.heyings28@gmail.com	320-492-3042	2025
Director	Amelia Hoekstra	beachesam@hotmail.com	320-260-3071	2024
Director	Sara Martinka	sara@fishhousephotography.com	612-236-7472	2025
Director	Brian Menk	brianr.menk@gmail.com	320-333-0329	2026
Director	Lacey Scheierl	lacey.scheierl@gmail.com	320-248-6063	2024
Director	Mike Thielke	mjthielke@gmail.com	320-905-6646	2026
Director	Cory Zeiher	zeiherc@yahoo.com	320-774-7925	2026
Mailing address: PO Box 82, Paynesville, MN 56362				

The board has an executive committee which consists of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. These four positions are for one year, and voted on at each April meeting by the Board of Directors. The executive committee responds to scholarship requests, payment plan requests, sets the initial budget, and is part of the decision making group when there is inclement weather.

Board meetings are held the fourth Monday of every month at 6:30 pm, in the Paynesville arena. During the summer months (off-season) the meetings may be held at various locations to show our support of the local communities. Please check the calendar for these changes.

All Board of Directors are required to sign a code of conduct. Please see pages 47-48 in this handbook to see the Board of Directors Code of Conduct.

Please contact the President to get an item put on the agenda a minimum of one week prior to the meeting. Check the website to confirm the location, date, and time of the meeting. All members are encouraged to attend. Please review the River Lakes Hockey Board of Directors Meetings Observers Rules & Expectations prior to attending a Board of Directors meeting.

Committee and Coordinating Positions:

District 5 Representative	Rotation of board members	
Director of Hockeys	Matt Hendrickson and Cory Zeiher	
Ice Schedulers:	Marsha Meed, Paynesville Arena: meeds@windstream.net	
	Kevin Mooney Richmond Arena: riverlakesarena@ci.richmond.mn.us	
PDC Chair:	Dan Selander	
Tournament Directors:	Julia Orth & Corey Larson	
Girl's Coordinator:	Steve Barten	
Registration:	Amanda Peterson & Corey Larson	
Mite Coordinators:	Mike Stang & David Zimmer	
IP Coordinators:	Paynesville Arena	TBD
	Richmond Arena	TBD
Fundraising Committee Chairs:		
	Calendars: Nick Anderson	Beer Expo: Robin Vettleson
	Gun Raffle: Nick Anderson	Golf Events: Sara Martinka
Advertising & Sponsorship:	Darren Heying	
Concessions Manager:	Amelia Hoekstra & Baxter DuFrane (Paynesville Arena)	
Dibs:	Traci Massman- rlsdibscordinator@gmail.com	
Clothing	Sara Martinka & Amanda Peterson	
Arena Operations:	Mike Thielke & Nick Anderson	
Arena Improvements:	Zsuzsa Bayer & Nick Anderson	
Equipment:	Mike Thielke, Matt Hendrickson and Corey Larson	
Recruitment Coordinator:	Matt Hendrickson & Corey Larson	
SCORE:	Kate Zimmer - kate.zimmer@yahoo.com	
Team Manager Coordinator:	Lacey Schierel	

Player Development Committee (PDC) Members

The Player Development Committee (PDC) is a standing committee of volunteers consisting of nine (9) members, each serving two year terms. Interested members are to apply to the President and the PDC Chair on an annual basis. Applications are due at the end of February; new members or re-elected members will be recommended from the PDC each year in March and submitted to the Board of Directors for a vote at the March meeting, and take office in April. This committee will be overseen by the Director(s) of Hockey for the association.

The Player Development Committee's mission is to provide oversight of the hockey program. It is committed to improving the skills of each and every player within the River Lakes Hockey Association. The PDC must devote equal time, attention and effort to provide the best possible learning environment for each skater and each level of play. The PDC orchestrates player development, selection of coaches, on-ice instruction, and execution of evaluations/player placement.

To ensure the committee represents the whole of the association, the following criteria apply to all selections:

- The committee shall emphasize diversity, representing a variety of school districts within the River Lakes Hockey, Inc. geographical area. These areas are defined as Albany Avon; Belgrade-Brooken-Elrosa; Eden Valley Watkins; New London Spicer; Paynesville, and ROCORL.
- It shall be the goal of the PDC that each gender-based competitive level of play (Bantam, Peewee, Squirt, 15U, 12U and 10U) be represented by at least one committee member. Based on their children's association enrollment, a member may represent two levels of play. It is the preference of the Board of Directors that no more than three members represent the same level of play.
- Term length shall be two years. Members may serve consecutive terms.
- The PDC chair is selected by the PDC committee who then recommends their selection to the Board of Directors for a vote of approval. The PDC chair must have been a member of the PDC for at least one year before serving as the PDC chair.
- The members of this committee shall have a strong hockey background and meet the requirements of Minnesota Hockey and USA Hockey.

PDC Chair: Dan Selander

I/P Coordinators: Mike Stang & David Zimmer

Bantam Coordinator: Shannon Olmscheid & Troy Engbretson

Squirt Coordinator: Chuck Andrews & Mike Stang

Peewee Coordinator: Scott Martinka & Charlie Orth

Girls Coordinator: Steve Barten & Scott Martinka

Goalie Coordinator: Mark Peterson

The Player Development Committee Meetings are open to the membership and are held the third Wednesday of each month.

RLHA Arenas

The association operates out of two arenas: Koronis Civic Arena in Paynesville and the River Lakes Civic Arena in Richmond.

Richmond Civic Arena: The association rents use of the arena by the season for a base rate with a base number of hours from the City of Richmond. The City of Richmond is responsible for all maintenance and operations of the building.

Koronis Civic Arena: The association is in a master lease agreement with the Paynesville Township for the use of the Koronis Arena. The association assumes all responsibility of running and maintaining the equipment therein, and hiring all management of all employees.

The Arena Operations Board of Director(s) oversees the operations of the Koronis Arena and the Koronis Rink Manager. RLHA hires a Koronis Arena Rink Manager who is charged with the task of managing the day to day operations of the Koronis Arena and outdoor rink. The Koronis Arena Rink Manager reports to Arena Operations Board of Director(s).

Season Budget & Financial Plan

The following is a summation of our budget. If you would like more details of this budget, please reach out to the president.

2023-2024 River Lakes Hockey Budget		
Income		
Registration		\$73,500
Calendars Ticket Sales		\$71,000
Gun Raffle Ticket Sales		\$42,600
Beer & Wine Expo Ticket Sales		\$28,400
Other Fundraisers		\$85,000
Program Income		\$160,250
Total Income		\$460,750
Expenses		
Fundraising Expense		\$62,000
Program Expenses		\$140,200
Koronis Arena		\$201,950
Richmond Arena		\$92,000
General Expenses		\$18,400
Total Expenses		\$514,550
Net Income		-\$53,800

Budget Explained

Per the table above, we are budgeting a loss for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. Rest assured, the Association is in good financial health due to the incredible 2022-2023 fiscal year where we came in at roughly \$100,000 Operating Profit relative to budgeted Operating Profit of \$4,000. This was due to an unexpected \$30,000 in donations (Scoreboard and Dryland Area) and increases in our tournament, concession, and clothing revenues relative to budget while adding the Shoot for the Stars Golf Events which has been a success for our Association.

For the upcoming fiscal year (2023-2024 season), we have several timing issues:

- Registration for the 2023-2024 season started early which means revenue was earned during the 2022-2023 fiscal year. This accounted for roughly \$25,000 increase in revenues to the 2022-2023 fiscal year that normally would have been in the 2023-2024 fiscal year.
- A \$10,000 dryland donation received during the 2022-2023 season will be expensed in the 2023-2024 season.
- Paynesville Township is no longer processing the Koronis Arena payroll starting July 1, 2023.
 - Historically the Township has invoiced a full year's payroll expense the following season. This means we are going to **DOUBLE UP** payroll expenses during the 2023-2024 fiscal year which will account for roughly \$33,000 additional payroll expense than the Association would have otherwise had. This is a one season anomaly.
 - This also means an increase to the accounting fees for processing payroll.
- We will no longer be working River Lakes Days or having a mattress fundraiser which accounted for roughly \$9,000 of revenue during the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

Along with the above noted timing issues, costs continue to increase in most areas (utilities, goods, services).

If you combine the actual profit of the 2022-2023 fiscal year and our budget for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, it equates to around a \$60,000 profit. The Board will continue to work hard to secure additional revenue streams while controlling costs where we are able. Although the 2023-2024 fiscal year shows a sizable budgeted loss due to these timing issues, the Board is confident this is an anomaly and will stabilize in the following years.

Membership Requirements

A member of River Lakes Hockey is defined as a parent or legal guardian of a child who has paid in full, required dues and fees for registering a child to play youth hockey. The term of the membership is one year and renews upon registration for the coming season. Members are entitled to vote and have equal rights and preferences in matters not reserved to the board. Each child is entitled to have up to two voting parents or legal guardian(s).

Hockey Fee & Payment Schedule

All fees are charged in advance and then paid according to the payment schedule below. **The Fundraising Rebate Program enables you to recover a substantial portion of season fees via fundraising sales (\$1,000 if you sell all of your required fundraising items), thus lowering your out-of-pocket cost.** USA Hockey registration fees are also required and are not included in the RLH fee schedule.

The fees for the first child registered are shown in the first chart. Fees for additional skaters from the same family are reduced and are shown in the second chart. Families with multiple skaters can add the fees from both charts to arrive at the season total, which will be shown during registration check-out.

Payment Options

1. If paying by credit card online the charges will occur on the dates the payment is due. A convenience fee will be charged and collected by Sport NGIN for this service. If you use the credit card option please note that the account will be automatically debited on the dates specified on the payment schedule.
2. Making payments by check, please write out **ALL** checks with the correct due date corresponding to the payment plan you select (or one check for the full amount if paying in full). The association will hold the remaining checks for the remaining payments and deposit them on the due date. Please date the checks according to the due date.

Important Reminders:

1. If first payment isn't made by the end of evaluations, the skater(s) name will not appear on the team lists when posted after evaluations. This also includes if you have a past due balance from the prior season as well.
2. If other payments are late, or returned due to NSF, your skater(s) will not be allowed on the ice unless prior arrangements are made.
3. If any checks returned for NSF, the fee associated with that will be added to your bill to be repaid to the association
4. If your balance is not paid in full by December 31st, your skater cannot participate in any team activities unless prior arrangements have been made.

2023/24 Registration Fee & Payment Schedule

Payment Plans:

This year we will be offering three different payment options. All of these plans require to pay an upfront non-refundable fee of \$200 for the first skater, and \$100 per each additional due at the time of registration. **This registration fee is counted towards your season dues (it is not an extra expense).**

- Pay in Full
- Payment Plan Option 1
 - Non-refundable fees due at time of registration
 - 50% of the remaining balance due on October 1st
 - 25% of the remaining balance due on November 1st
 - 25% of the remaining balance due on December 31st
- Payment Plan Option 2
 - Non-refundable fees due at the time of registration
 - 25% of the remaining balance due on September 1st
 - 25% of the remaining balance due on October 1st
 - 25% of the remaining balance due on November 1st
 - 25% of the remaining balance due on December 31st.

Jersey fees: \$120 for one home & away set for Squirt/10U, Peewee/12U and Bantam skaters. If you choose a payment plan option to pay your registration fees, the added cost for your skater(s) jerseys will be included in the payment plan.

23/24 Registration Fee & Payment Schedule Payment Plan 1:

2023/24 REGISTRATION FEE & PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Payment Plan 1: 3 payments 50%, 25%, 25%

LEVEL OF PLAY:	AGE RANGE:	TOTAL FEE:	DUE WITH REGISTRATION:	DUE OCT 1	DUE NOV 1:	DUE DEC 31:
Mini Mite	Born on or after June 1, 2016	\$1,130	\$200	\$370	\$280	\$280
Mite	June 1, 2014 - May 31, 2016	\$1,130	\$200	\$370	\$280	\$280
Squirt/10U	June 1, 2012-May 31, 2014	\$1,405	\$200	\$505	\$350	\$350
Peewee/12U	June 1, 2010 - May 31, 2012	\$1,505	\$200	\$555	\$375	\$375
Bantam/15U	June 1, 2008-May 31, 2010	\$1,605	\$200	\$605	\$400	\$400

2023/24 REGISTRATION FEE & PAYMENT SCHEDULE (ADDITIONAL CHILD)

Payment Plan 1: 3 payments 50%, 25%, 25%

LEVEL OF PLAY:	AGE RANGE:	TOTAL FEE:	DUE WITH REGISTRATION:	DUE OCT 1:	DUE NOV 1:	DUE DEC 31:
Mini Mite	Born on or after June 1, 2016	\$100	\$100	\$0	0	\$0
Mite	June 1, 2014 - May 31, 2016	\$100	\$100	\$0	0	\$0
Squirt/10U	June 1, 2012 to May 31, 2014	\$375	\$100	\$125	\$75	\$75
Peewee/12U	June 1, 2010 to May 31, 2012	\$475	\$100	\$175	\$100	\$100
Bantam/15U	June 1, 2008 to May 31, 2010	\$575	\$100	\$225	\$125	\$125

2023/24 Registration Fee & Payment Schedule Payment Plan 2:

2023/24 REGISTRATION FEE & PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Payment Plan 2: 25% payment starting Sept 1

LEVEL OF PLAY:	AGE RANGE:	TOTAL FEE:	DUE WITH REGISTRATION:	DUE SEPT 1:	DUE OCT 1:	DUE NOV 1:	DUE DEC 31:
Mini Mite	Born on or after June 1, 2016	\$1,130	\$200	\$233	\$233	\$233	\$233
Mite	June 1, 2014 - May 31, 2016	\$1,130	\$200	\$233	\$233	\$233	\$233
Squirt/10U	June 1, 2012-May 31, 2014	\$1,405	\$200	\$302	\$301	\$301	\$301
Peewee/12U	June 1, 2010 - May 31, 2012	\$1,505	\$200	\$327	\$326	\$326	\$326
Bantam/15U	June 1, 2008-May 31, 2010	\$1,605	\$200	\$352	\$351	\$351	\$351

2023/24 REGISTRATION FEE & PAYMENT SCHEDULE (ADDITIONAL CHILD)

Payment Plan 2: 25% payment starting Sept 1

LEVEL OF PLAY:	AGE RANGE:	TOTAL FEE:	DUE WITH REGISTRATION:	DUE SEPT 1:	DUE OCT 1:	DUE NOV 1:	DUE DEC 31:
Mini Mite	Born on or after June 1, 2016	\$100	\$100	\$0	0	\$0	\$0
Mite	June 1, 2014 - May 31, 2016	\$100	\$100	\$0	0	\$0	\$0
Squirt/10U	June 1, 2012 to May 31, 2014	\$375	\$100	\$69	\$69	\$69	\$69
Peewee/12U	June 1, 2010 to May 31, 2012	\$475	\$100	\$94	\$94	\$94	\$94
Bantam/15U	June 1, 2008 to May 31, 2010	\$575	\$100	\$119	\$119	\$119	\$119

Late fees will be assessed if registration is not completed by July 1st.

- First skater late fees
 - July 1st - July 31st: \$100
 - August 1st - August 31st: \$150
 - September 1st and later: \$200
- Additional skater late fees
 - July 1st - July 31st: \$50
 - August 1st - August 31st: \$75
 - September 1st and later: \$100

Fundraising Rebate Program

The Fundraising Rebate Program enables each family to earn back a substantial portion of total season fees via sales of fundraising items (a total of \$1,000 if you sell all of your tickets). For those who participate (all returning skater families, first year families are excluded from fundraising), this lowers the total out-of-pocket cost to each family significantly.

Each family will receive:

- 20 Raffle Tickets @\$25 per ticket =\$500 Distributed November
- 10 Gun Raffle Tickets @\$30 per ticket =\$300 Distributed Jan/Feb
- 8 Beer & Wine Expo Tickets @\$25 per ticket =\$200 Distributed in February

Total of \$1,000 each registering family can recoup if you sell all of your fundraising items. Families keep the funds from the ticket sales, and return all stubs to your team manager

Example 1: A family with 1 Mite skater has a total season fee of \$1130. The family sells 20 raffle tickets, 10 gun raffle tickets, 8 BWE tickets and earns a rebate of \$1000. Their net cost for RLH hockey fees is \$130 for the season.

Example 2: A family with 1 Bantam (\$1,605) and 1 Peewee (\$475) skater have a total season fee of \$2080. The family sells 20 raffle tickets, 10 gun raffle tickets, 8 BWE tickets and earns a rebate of \$1000. Their net cost for RLH hockey fees is \$1080, or \$540 per skater for the season.

Additional Rebate Sales: Families who want to earn more in the rebate program may request more than they are given. Please reach out to the appropriate fundraising coordinator to request more items to sell. For each additional item sold the member will receive a \$5 credit per item.

Depending on demand and need, other fundraising sales may be planned.

If you do not wish to sell your tickets to earn back your registration fees, please write your contact information on any tickets that need to be turned into your team manager (calendars and gun raffle tickets).

MEMBERSHIP SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Committee Service:

Each family unit registering for hockey (**including First Year Skaters**) are required to participate on a committee. Committee membership terms run for a full year. There are no set hours associated with committee membership; rather, committee membership is focused on task completion. While minimal, please recognize that some committees have responsibilities outside the hockey season.

Some committee positions are appointed by the Board, others are available via preference during registration.

Failure to fulfill the Committee Service will result in an additional (6) hours of Association Service.

List of Committees:

- 4-on-4
- Advertising & Donations
- Beer & Wine Expo
- Board of Directors
- Buddy Program Committee
- Clothing
- Coaching
- Concessions
- DIBS Coordinator
- Fall Fundraiser
- Golf Fundraiser
- Grant Writer
- Koronis Operations/Cleaning
- Koronis Outdoor Rink
- Marketing & Branding Coordinator
- Mite Jamboree
- Player Development Committee
- Recruitment & Retention
- River Lakes Days
- Safety Committee
- SCORE Coordinator
- Teals Receipt Processor
- Team Manager
- Tournament

The following individual positions are aligned under and report directly to the BOD, but receive credit for committee service:

- DIBS Coordinator
- Grant Writer
- Ice Schedulers
- SCORE Coordinator

Process

During registration, each family unit will state three preferences for committee assignment. If you liked the committee you served on last year and want to remain, please indicate so during registration. When assigning committees, an effort will be made to match assignments with stated preferences but will not be possible in all cases.

Individuals who want to coach (all levels) or serve as team managers should select those committees as their first choice. Initial committee assignments will be made by early November.

DIBS Volunteer Hours

All families are required to participate in DIBS Volunteer Hours. It is an excellent means to learn how the system works and meet the other wonderful people within the River Lakes Association. DIBS hours can be filled by anyone 18 years of age or older.

All Returning Families are required to complete the following DIBS Volunteer Hours:

- **1 Beer & Wine Expo Shift** (approximately 2 hours long)
 - Tentative Date Saturday, April 13, 2024
- **6 hours Concession Stand**
- **8 hours Association Support** (beginner camps, district playoffs, parades, etc)
*A maximum of 2 hours credit will be issued per family for parades

All First Year Skater Families are required to complete the following DIBS Volunteer Hours:

- **4 hours of any category** (concessions, association support or Beer and Wine).

While not anticipated, the number of hours may change based on need.

These are the following DIBS credits you receive depending on your role in the association:

- Squirt Level & Up Head Coaches: 8 hours association support & 6 hours concession stand
- Squirt Level & Up Assistant Coaches & Team Managers: 4 hours association support & 6 hours concession stand
- IP Level Coaches: 3 hours concession stand
- IP Level Team Managers: 6 hours concession stand
- IP Coordinators: 6 hours concession stand
- Board of Directors: 1 hour of association support for every board meeting you are in attendance & 6 hours of concession stand (as long as you attend 8 board meetings in a calendar year).

DIBS hours not worked will be billed at \$60 per hour.

If DIBS hours from the previous season have not been completed or the unfilled hours invoice paid for by evaluations, families will not receive their fundraising items based on the equivalent of their bill starting with the loss of Scheels Gift Card/Gun Raffle Tickets, Beer & Wine Expo Tickets, then Calendars.

You can swap with other members to help each other out, or donate DIBS hours to another family. Example: maybe you can sell more calendars or Beer & Wine tickets, but you do not like to work in the concession stand. If you know someone willing to work your hours in the concession stand in trade for you selling some of their calendars or Beer & Wine tickets, feel free to do so. It is important that when working in concessions for someone else you put their name on the Dibs sign in slip when having it signed. The association will not be responsible for verifying who is to get the credit for the hours worked. The association is not responsible for financial transactions between members.

How to Work the Concession Stand

We will be staffing the concession stand in the Paynesville Arena. All Association Members are required to work in the concession stands for a minimum number of hours as outlined on page 21 of the handbook. Hours can be signed up through the RLH website under the DIBS tab.

It is highly encouraged that you attend a training session with the concession stand director prior to fulfilling any shifts. Please see the concession stand manual on the homepage of the website for detailed instructions on how to work the concession stand.

Team Support

Each team is responsible for working your team's games and tournament games (penalty box, time clock, locker room monitor, etc.) and for away games (penalty box and score book).

Team Support is not covered by the buyout option.

Buyouts

If you have more money than time and wish to buyout the DIBS volunteer hours and committee services that are required, please add \$1500 to your fees from the registration fee schedule and make your payment in full with your initial payment.

IMPORTANT POLICY REMINDERS

1. If for any reason you have a balance (money or service hours) remaining on your account from the prior season, you will need to pay for that balance before the new season starts (the start of camp) – this includes service hours. **Players will not be allowed to play until all overdue balances are paid in full.**
2. A player registering for the first time with the association must present proof of age by providing a copy of the player's birth certificate issued by a governmental body or a passport. (Not a hospital or baptismal certificate)
3. If a waiver request to a higher level is granted, the family will be responsible for the balance of the registration and association requirements for the team the player has been placed on.
 - a. Peer and acceleration waiver requests are due to the registrar by July 1st.
 - b. Please see detailed waiver policy on our website and in the current handbook for details
4. Traveling Team fees include the cost of two away tournaments, minus the portion that RLH covers for away tournaments (see page 26). **Players will have additional costs on top of their current team fees if the team's parents elect to travel outside the association for more than two away tournaments.** Any team choosing to use more ice than the River Lakes Association allocates will be charged for the ice time used. See list of Association allocated ice touches, games and scrimmages found on page 23.
5. **By registering, you give your permission for River Lakes Hockey to use your child's name and/or picture in articles representing our association and on social media.**

Association Operations

Ice Touches Per Level

River Lakes Allocated Ice Touches	Suggested Ice Touches Per Week	Total Games Per Season
Mini Mite	2	6
8U/Mite	2	7 full ice per D5
10U / Squirt	4	35
12U / Peewee	4	50
15U / Bantam	5	55

- Skills night is included in the weekly practice count
- Jamborees are included in the Total Season Game Count
- Split Ice practices count for each team on the ice for time scheduled
- IP Gamedays are not included in the game counts
- A week is considered Monday – Sunday

Teams choosing to use more ice than allocated in a week will be billed for the ice at a rate of \$150 per hour. \$75 per hour for split ice practices. Team managers will be responsible for collecting each team's ice fees if they have any.

Team Management

The most important part of this task is to keep the parents of your team informed of details regarding not only the association in general, but your team. You must check and double check that they are receiving information from the association. You are the mediator between coaches and parents. If parents have an issue with a coach and don't feel comfortable approaching them, you are the link between them. As the liaison between the board (association) and the team, you could be asked to collect things from parents such as money, fundraising materials, and any other items from time to time during the season.

A mandatory meeting needs to be held at your first team practice to inform your team of the away tournaments that the association has set up for your team. You will receive a detailed invoice from the tournament director of your teams financial responsibility for your teams tournaments. You will need to collect money from each family and turn it into the Treasurer.

In the event a team would like to participate in additional away tournaments, a team vote must be held if participation is wanted, and all expenses of any additional tournaments are at the team's expense. If 75% ($\frac{3}{4}$) of the team votes in support of the tournament, then the team can participate in the tournament.

In the event that your home tournament does not fill, teams will be given permission to register at the team's expense for an additional tournament with the intent that this tournament is

drivable and hotel stays are not necessary. A team vote is not necessary for replacing a home tournament as long as the tournament is within a drivable distance. A drivable distance is determined as less than 90 minutes away from the Koronis Arena as it is the central location of our association.

The first team practice of each month is designated for team meetings:

- This is the time to ask any questions you have of the coaches. Teams can resolve any issues and get clarification on communications. If a team would like to have a board member present at the meeting to clarify policies that can be arranged
- These meetings should not be more than 30 minutes unless you have a special agenda such as tournament planning.
- The first team meeting is a great time to introduce yourself to each other and offer to help with team activities, identify both your team manager and team tournament coordinator, and to establish carpools.

Coaches

Our association depends on volunteer coaches to operate the teams of River Lakes Stars Youth Hockey. Typically, these coaches are parents. The Player Development Committee (PDC) will select coaches for the various teams. All coaches are required to be registered with USA Hockey and have current certifications for the level they are coaching. Coaches must attend the mandatory coaches meeting. Coaches are required to pay their USA Hockey registration fee. In return, coaches receive credit for various DIBS hours based on the level of play they coach. Please see page 21 in the handbook for details. Additional information for coaches is found on the Coaches Corner tab on the RLH website.

River Lakes Hockey's goal is to have non-parent coaches for the top boy's/girl's teams. If there is a non-parent coach, the Association will pay a reimbursement for head coaches and assistant coaches, with a recommendation given by the PDC Chair, which is then voted on by the RLH Board of Directors. The dollar amount is dependent on their commitment during the season as determined by the PDC Chair. The association will pay for non-parent coaches' overnight accommodations (not applicable for those with a sibling on the team) for all away tournament/s and playoffs hotel expenses.

Any coach receiving a bench misconduct penalty will be suspended for 1 week from all team activities.

Parent Roles

Parents are members of the River Lakes Hockey Association and are expected to represent our association as hosts in our arenas, and be a respectful guest in other arenas. Parents, along with their child(ren), should review the Parent and Player Code of Conduct presented at the end of this handbook.

Parents are expected to keep abreast of the requirements and expectations of being a member of this association. Certain financial and volunteer requirements must be met. These are outlined in this handbook. In addition, sales of raffle tickets, gun raffle tickets, and Beer and Wine Expo tickets are also required. Please review emails and the RLS website to keep up to date on these items.

It is also imperative that parents take leadership roles in the various boards and committees required to keep the association going. We are a volunteer run organization. Our strength will come from our volunteers.

Jersey Ordering, Number Selection and Care:

Purchasing Jerseys for Squirts/10U, Peewee/12U and Bantams

Starting in 2023, each family of travel skaters will be responsible for purchasing one home and one away jersey for each of their players. The jerseys will be personalized with your skater's last name and number of choice. They will get to keep these jerseys as a keepsake, and they will not be turned back into the association.

Based on expected wear and tear of the jerseys, we will order new jerseys every two years. The cost of these jerseys will be built into your registration expense and can be paid for as a part of the payment plan of your choice. This year the total for the two jerseys is \$120. As you complete the registration process there will be information to guide you on jersey sizing. Ordering the correct jersey size will be each family's responsibility. The association is not responsible for inaccurate orders.

Number Selection:

As an incentive to register on time, you will not be able to select your skater's number until you have completed your online registration on the River Lakes website. Once completed, you will receive an email confirmation of your registration, and a link to the online number selection process. Please click on the appropriate age level link and you will be able to choose from the numbers that are still available.

The number you select this year will be your skater's number all the way through association (youth) hockey, unless they choose to change it when new jerseys are ordered. If your skater would like to change numbers at that point, we will help guide you to the link of remaining available numbers for them to choose from.

After 2023, and going forward only 1st year Squirts and 1st year 10u skaters will be required to choose a new number. Odd numbers will be assigned for 1st years in an odd calendar year and even numbers will be assigned for 1st year skaters during even calendar years.

A range of numbers will be assigned to each cohort within any given level for the start of the 2023 season. This is to ensure duplicate numbers will not happen on teams this year and going forward causing potentially added expenses for a family if a duplicate jersey number appears.

- Odd numbers are assigned to 1st year squirts, peewees, and bantams
- Even numbers are assigned to 2nd year squirts, peewees, and bantams
- The entire 10U/12U programs will select from numbers 1-99

Jersey Number Conflict Policy: In any instances where a number conflict on a team arises due to a player waiving or choosing to not peer waiver one year, they are responsible for selecting a new jersey number and the financial costs of the jersey sets.

Jersey Care

Jersey Care for the Mini-Mite & Mite Programs

Jerseys are supplied by the association for the mini-mite and mite levels. **ONLY** association provided jerseys can be worn by teams during games. Jerseys supplied are the property of the association, and members are responsible for proper care and safekeeping of the jerseys. Accordingly:

- Members will keep jerseys clean and washed on a regular basis. Wash in cold water only and line dry or tumble dry on low heat.
- Jerseys will be stored on a hanger. Jerseys may not be stored in hockey bags due to the risk of cuts from skates.
- Jerseys are for game wear only and may not be worn to practices. Jersey can be worn on game days to school and in support of other association teams (High School teams included) during District, Regional, or State tournament games.
- At the end of the season, members are responsible to turn jerseys in a timely manner. Lost jerseys or those damaged through negligence or improper care will result in a charge to the member for the cost of the jersey plus the cost of the replacement jersey.

Jersey Care for Squirts/10U, Peewee/12U and Bantam Skaters

Jerseys are purchased by individual families going forward starting for the 2023-2024 season. **ONLY** the association approved jerseys can be worn by teams during games. Members are responsible for proper care and safekeeping of the jerseys. Accordingly:

- Teams desiring to identify captains and alternate captains may do so if no permanent damage is done to the jersey when it is removed from the jersey at the end of the season or at the head coach's discretion.
- Members will keep jerseys clean and washed on a regular basis. Wash in cold water only and line dry or tumble dry on low heat.
- Jerseys will be stored on a hanger. Jerseys may not be stored in hockey bags due to the risk of cuts from skates.
- Jerseys are for game wear only and may not be worn to practices. Jersey can be worn on game days to school and in support of other association teams (High School teams included) during District, Regional, or State tournament games.

Tournaments

River Lakes Association has paid for two away tournaments for each team at each level. For each level the amount given is as follows: Squirt/10U receive \$800, Peewee/12U receive \$900, Bantams/15U receive \$1000 towards their away tournament fees (known as Team Fees). This does **not** include gate fees, if charged. If gate fees are included in the tournament fee for the association paid tournaments, a bill will be provided to each team manager. Your team is responsible for covering these fees.

Teams are welcome to attend additional away tournaments at the team's expense.

In the event a team would like to participate in additional away tournaments, a team vote must be held if participation is wanted, and all expenses of any additional tournaments are at the team's expense. If 75% ($\frac{3}{4}$) of the team votes in support of the tournament, then the team can participate in the tournament.

In the event that your home tournament does not fill, teams will be given permission to register at the team's expense for an additional tournament with the intent that this tournament is drivable and hotel stays are not necessary. A team vote is not necessary for replacing a home tournament as long as the tournament is within a drivable distance. A drivable distance is determined as less than 90 minutes away from the Koronis Arena as it is the central location of our association.

Home Tournaments:

River Lakes will do our best to provide a home tournament for each team. Parents are expected to fill the hours required to have a successful home tournament (these are considered team support hours) so please keep Friday, Saturday, and Sunday open to be available to your team. Your team manager will divide the number of hours needed by the number of players on your team and determine how many hours each family needs to work. Please visit the [tournament page](#) on our website for the dates of our home tournaments.

Play-Offs

Play-offs are held for Bantam, Peewee, and Girls 12U leagues. All teams are seeded into a double elimination playoff format. Regional tournament entry awards for Bantam A, Bantam B, Peewee A, Peewee B, Girls 12U A, and Girls U12 B district playoff teams are identified in the posted brackets. Minnesota Hockey does not hold regional tournaments at the C level. A district play-off tournament will also be held for Squirts and 10U. District 5 will count the entire play-off tournament as one game towards the season game maximum.

River Lakes Hockey Association will pay for all district playoff games for all teams. Furthermore, teams advancing beyond Districts will have their fees paid by the Association.

“SCORE” Program

Skaters Cannot Overlook Responsible Education

Qualifying student skaters can win CASH!!!

The goal of the SCORE program is to help promote education through responsible behavior while involved in River Lakes Hockey. Therefore, skaters are encouraged to study hard and are asked to try and obtain and maintain a GRADE “B” AVERAGE or a GRADE “A” AVERAGE for two consecutive grading periods during the current hockey season. This will essentially be the sole criteria needed to qualify for a share of the CASH prizes of \$500.00.

Enrollment/Qualification process:

- **All River Lakes Hockey players will be automatically enrolled in the SCORE program after successfully completing their hockey registration.**
- Parents /Skaters should email the students report card, outlining two current school year grading periods, to the SCORE program coordinator for “B” average and/or “A” average verification by

mid March to Kate Zimmer, kate.zimmer@yahoo.com. (All grades will be kept confidential). Those who absolutely do not have access to e-mail can contact their coach or team manager and request they email the report card for them. It would be beneficial in many ways to have your skater take on the responsibility for turning in their own grades, as it will help them take responsibility and ownership in the SCORE program.

- Again, your skater will need to achieve and maintain the Grade “B” or “A” average for two consecutive grading periods during the current hockey season in order to be eligible for a portion of the cash prize money. Squirt Level and Higher skaters maintaining a “B” average will be eligible for a portion of \$300.00 in cash and prizes. Skaters maintaining an “A” average will be eligible for a portion of \$450.00 in cash and prizes. Initiation Program skaters are eligible for a \$50.00 prize. The Drawing is held at the River Lakes Hockey Year End Meeting.
- In cases of younger skaters’ grades often time other letters are used to represent levels of achievement such as “S” for satisfactory or “N” for needs improvement, etc. In these cases, a “B” average can still be computed by the SCORE coordinator given the grading scale key used by each individual school that is often located on the report card itself. The SCORE coordinator will use his/her best judgment when figuring out if a child earned a “B” average or not. (For example: some schools use O, S+, S, and N. This grading scale would be converted to O=A, S+=B, S=C, and N= D for SCORE purposes.
- In cases of home-schooled skaters. The skater's parents will be responsible to notify the Coordinator via email if their skater has obtained and maintained the equivalent of a Grade “B” or Grade “A” average as outlined above.

The Grade A and B average will be strictly enforced as well as the deadline to turn the report cards in. Any parental concerns or grievances over your child’s grade calculations should be directed first to the SCORE program coordinator and if unresolved, the matter will then be directed to the River Lakes Board for a final decision.

Send grades to SCORE Program Coordinator- Kate Zimmer, kate.zimmer@yahoo.com.

Sportsmanship Awards

Dan Boerner & Scott Wenner Sportsmanship Award

Dan Boerner and Scott Wenner were two coaches in our association that passed on early in their lives. To commemorate the contributions these individuals made to our association, a sportsmanship award has been named in their honor. This award goes to the players whose qualities of being a good sport is conducted both “on” and “off” the ice by their example of abiding by the rules and accepting victory or defeat graciously and showing respect for all that were involved. The winner of the award is decided between coaches.

The winner will receive a certificate, have their name displayed on the Sportsmanship Award page on the website, and have their name engraved on the sportsmanship plaque which is displayed at the Richmond arena. Each River Lakes Stars team Squirts and older will have one player chosen for this award.

Clothing

River Lakes will be using Rambow and various vendors as our clothing vendors for the hockey season. More information regarding the ordering periods will be sent out as they are determined via Weekly Update communications or emails from the association.

Inclement Weather Policy

River Lakes Hockey has the following Inclement Weather Policy: If any school district in our area closes school, or schools are released early, this will trigger conversations with the Executive Committee, the Koronis Arena Manager, and the Richmond Arena Manager. These individuals will look at factors such as the projected forecast, road conditions, and projected conditions as practices start and end throughout the evening.

If a decision is made to close the arenas, this information will be communicated to the Head Coaches via email and text message. Team managers will be alerted via email and whichever communication platform (e.g. Group Me or Team Reach) the Board of Director overseeing the team managers uses to communicate urgent matters to team managers.

Any closures of either Arena will be made no later than within 3 hours to the start of a scheduled practice start time unless conditions drastically worsen

As a reminder, coaches have the discretion to cancel practice at any time they see fit (this includes inclement weather). Coaches need to communicate to the ice schedulers no later than three hours before the scheduled practice if they wish to cancel.

In the event of inclement weather, we also leave travel at the discretion of the parents with no consequences if any attendance policies are in place with your team.

Grievance Procedure

If at any time, a party within the association has questions or concerns about any action taken towards themselves or their skater that they'd like to address with another party, they shall first attempt to have a conversation with that person. It is recommended that these conversations take place 24 hours after an incident to avoid an emotional or heated discussion. In the event that a parent and/or guardian has a concern about a coach, they are asked not to approach a coach in any arena on game day and to do so only in an appropriate setting and at a reasonable time. It is our belief that as adult members of the association, we have a responsibility to model conflict resolution in a manner that exhibits professionalism and a calm demeanor.

Our goal is to resolve the issue with a personal conversation between the two parties first. If this conversation does not resolve the issue, any of the parties involved may move the issue towards a formal grievance. The party not satisfied with the conversation will need to complete the [online Grievance Form](#) (hereafter referred to as the filer). The filer needs to address the concern in writing via the [online Grievance Form](#). This form is automatically sent to the Grievance Committee which consists of the Directors of Hockey, President, and PDC Chair. The grievance form will be shared with the party the grievance is being filed against (hereafter referred to as the respondent).

The respondent shall respond to the Grievance Form within three (3) days of being filed. The filer is asked not to approach the respondent in any way about the situation.

After the written response to the Grievance Form, if either the filer or respondent are not satisfied, then the Grievance Committee will meet with all parties to mediate and rule on the matter. The Board of Directors empowers this committee to rule on disciplinary actions and any other circumstances brought forth by the Grievance Form. The committee's decision shall stand as a final resolution to the Grievance Form.

Steps in Grievance Policy

1. Verbal communication with the two involved parties to work through the grievance
*Grievances will not move forward until Step 1 has been exhausted
2. Complete the [online Grievance Form](#)
 - a. Wait 3 days for the respondent to respond to the Grievance Form
3. Meeting with the Grievance Committee to convene and rule on the issue.
 - a. This step is only necessary if the parties are not satisfied after step 2

Policies

Fair Ice Policy

The River Lakes Hockey Association supports fair ice time for all players. Coaches are encouraged to use their best efforts to give ice time fairly to all players on their team.

“Fair Ice” does not mean “Equal Ice” in each game. The flow of the game may occasionally result in unequal playing times in a game. In addition, some teams may carry numbers of players that do not evenly divide up into lines which makes it more difficult to equally rotate lines.

In addition, at all levels except mites/8U, coaches are given discretion during power plays, penalty kills, and at the end of close games. Coaches should attempt to balance these playing time decisions over the course of the season to the extent possible (e.g. if a player has reduced playing time during one game to increase playing time in a future game where possible).

At Bantams and the highest level offered by RLH for Peewees and 12U, playing time is earned and not necessarily equal. Coaches will allocate playing time according to ability, effort, and game situations. At this level “fair” is a reflection of the playing time earned by a player, preparation for higher levels of hockey, and fairness to the team.

In summary:

Level of Play	Coach’s discretion allowed
Mini-Mites, Mites, 8U	Never
Squirt, 10U, Levels other than the top level of Peewee/12U	End of a close game, powerplay and penalty kill
Bantams, Highest level of Peewee/12U	At all times because playing time at this level is earned and not necessarily equal

Goalie Playing Time:

Goalie playing time should be rotated and we expect the goalies to play approximately the same amount of time over the course of a season. Coaches should communicate their goalie rotation

plans clearly to the goalies on their team. In any given multi-game weekend or tournament, all goalies should be given the opportunity to play, barring injury or suspension.

At Bantams and the highest level offered by RLH for Peewees and 12U, playing time is earned and not necessarily equal, and this applies to goalies as well. At these levels, coaches may use their discretion, including playing only one goalie throughout District, Region, and State Tournament play.

Coaches at all levels can adjust goaltender playing plans, including removing a goaltender from a game, in cases where a goaltender is not at their normal level of performance. It is the responsibility of the coach(s) to ensure reasonable, positive communication is given to the goalie pulled as to why the action was taken.

As with other positions, coaches have the discretion to allow skaters to play goalie whether they went through evaluations at that position or not and to ask goalies to skate out. In both cases, clear communication to all affected players is expected as well as providing practice opportunities to prepare players before inserting them in a game.

Special Circumstances:

At all levels, coaches are allowed to use a reduction of playing time as a consequence for violation of team policies (e.g., attendance or participation in team activities), violation of expectations (e.g., misbehavior or attitude), or in-game concerns (e.g. player injury, preventing a penalty-based suspension, keeping a player out to cool off, etc.). In all cases, the coach should clearly communicate the consequence to the player and to the family if they request it.

At Squirrels/10U, Peewees/12U, and Bantams, when a skater's ability is far below the lowest level of play offered by RLH, the coach has discretion to deviate from these expectations, or at any time when the coach has concerns for the player's safety. Examples of when this could arise include when there is a new player to hockey or a player switches to a new position (goalie to defense). The coach should clearly communicate these plans to the skater and family and provide opportunities for improvement (e.g., allow practice time for that player to develop to an acceptable level). The coach should set milestones and expectations for the player that will lead to changes in playing time (e.g., specific skill sets). If the parents of the player disputes the coach's assessment and plan, the Directors of Hockey and members of the PDC will be asked to work with the coach to evaluate the player and help develop a plan for the player. These situations will be addressed on a case-by-case basis with no standard procedure set by the Board, Directors of Hockey, or PDC.

Locker Room Supervision and Code of Conduct Policy

Mission: River Lakes Hockey exists to provide a rewarding experience, focused on the development of players and volunteers while promoting a fun, fair, and safe environment dedicated to the respect, sportsmanship, and excellence of all participants.

Purpose:

This policy integrates the USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey locker room supervision policies with a participant Code of Conduct so that all members may participate in association activities in a safe and respectful environment. This policy applies to locker room activities and on and off ice in our Association, District 5, and Minnesota Hockey venues involving minor players; minor players and adult players; adults being alone with individual minor players in locker rooms; and with nonofficial or non-related adults having unsupervised access to minor participants at sanctioned team events.

Policy:

1. A "responsible adult" is defined as an Association gender-specific member parent or registered coach.
2. At least one responsible adult must be physically present in and directly monitoring the locker room before, during, and after all team events to assure that only participants (coaches and players), approved team personnel and family members are permitted in the locker room and to supervise the conduct in the locker room. The responsible adult is present in the locker room to prevent hazing, rough-housing, inappropriate behaviors, verbal abuse, and vandalism.
3. Individual meetings with a minor player and a coach or other adult in a locker room are not allowed. A responsible adult must be present, as a third party, during any meeting or other circumstance when a coach or other adult is in a locker room with a single player.
4. Responsible (gender appropriate) adults must always personally monitor the locker room environment while participants are present and also make sure the locker room is locked during times when minor participants are on the ice.
5. All responsible adults serving as locker room monitors should be gender correct and the co-ed locker room policy must be followed as described in the current USA Hockey Annual Guide. Monitors must be screened and meet all USA Hockey screening standards.
6. Cell phones, recordable devices, cameras or devices with photographic capabilities are not allowed in a locker room.
7. Locker room behaviors of all participants shall conform to the Code of Conduct. Each registered player and a parent must read and attest by signature to the Code of Conduct. A signed copy of the Code of Conduct is a required component of registration, and players may not participate in association activities until the Code of Conduct has been signed.

Procedures and Responsibilities:

1. Team Managers will ensure this policy is implemented and enforced for each team. All adults and coaches are responsible for actively enforcing this policy.
2. A variety of techniques may be employed to support this policy. In many cases, particularly at the travel team level, coaches may elect to fulfill the responsible adult role. In other cases, it may be necessary to assign and rotate the duties among parents.
3. Parents serving in the responsible adult role are present in the locker room for locker room supervision. Coaching should be left to the coaching staff.
4. Association Directors shall periodically spot check compliance with this policy.
5. Teams who demonstrate inappropriate locker room behaviors, in violation of this policy or the code of conduct, may receive sanctions in the form of loss of locker room privileges or other disciplinary action. Individuals in violation of this policy or the code of conduct may be subjected to disciplinary action, and risk loss of Association membership

privileges. Violations of the laws of the State of Minnesota will be handed over to appropriate legal authorities.

Co-Ed Locker Room Policy

Where possible, the male and female players should undress/dress in separate locker rooms and then convene in a single dressing room prior to the game or team meeting. Once the game is finished, the players may come to one locker room and then the male and female players proceed to their separate dressing rooms to undress and shower (separately), if available. If separate locker rooms are not available, then the genders may take turns using the locker room to change and then leave while the other gender changes.

Where possible, when both male and female players are together in the locker room, there should be at least two adults in the locker room that have been properly screened in compliance with USA Hockey Screening Policy.

If separate locker rooms are not available at either our home rink or at away rinks, the following options are acceptable:

- The player may come dressed to the rink
- The genders take turns using the locker room to change. We understand that these arrangements may require that players arrive earlier or leave later to dress, but believe that this is the most reasonable way to accommodate and respect all of our players.

Peer, Numbers, and Acceleration Waiver Policy

It is the policy of River Lakes Hockey that players should play on teams as defined by Minnesota Hockey age groups and classifications. While some players may be more advanced at a particular age than others, RLH agrees with MN Hockey and USA Hockey that overall development of the player emotionally and physically is best served by having him or her progress normally through age levels and team classifications. RLH does recognize exceptions could arise beyond the normal scope of this policy.

1. **Peer Waiver:** A waiver requested to keep a skater with his/her grade in school
2. **Numbers Waiver:** Players are needed to complete a team.
 - Only the PDC can request skaters for a numbers waiver.
3. **Acceleration:** (Based on player skills and abilities) In rare instances, if a player cannot find comparable competition at his or her age level and the move would not adversely affect the numbers of either team involved.
 - The following criterion must be met in order to apply for an acceleration waiver.
 - The player must have played at the highest level of their age-appropriate group in the season prior to the acceleration request.
 - No player may accelerate more than one year beyond their age-appropriate level. For example, a first-year Peewee cannot accelerate to play Bantams.

Recommendation for team sizes is no larger than 15 skaters and no smaller than 10 skaters per team.

Waiver requests will be discussed at the July Player Development Committee meeting. All requests will be reviewed with one of the following responses: Denied, Granted, or Approved for an evaluation.

All players will begin the season playing with their age-eligible team until notified by the Player Development Committee on the status of their waiver.

If the waiver is granted by River Lakes Hockey, a formal waiver request will need to be completed and presented to the D5 Director for approval (with the exception of Peer Waivers).

If a waiver request to a higher level is granted, the family will be responsible for the balance of the registration and association requirements for the team the player has been placed on.

Peer Waiver Process:

1. Complete waiver form and turn into the Registrar prior to July 1st.

Numbers Waiver Process:

1. PDC determines a need for players to complete a team.
2. The families of all age eligible skaters will be contacted to explain the opportunity and the process that will be followed.
3. A deadline for response will be given in that communication, and the deadline must be at least 72 after the communication is sent.
4. Player readiness for the next level will be assessed by the Player Development Committee in consultation with previous coaches, discussions with parents, and/or informal observations (e.g., 4 on 4 or camps).
5. In the event that more players apply and are deemed ready than are needed, an evaluation process will be followed.
 - a. If this happens before player evaluations, the applying skaters may be asked to skate at evaluations (they still can only be placed on the lowest-level team). If this happens after evaluations or evaluations are determined not to be the preferred method of assessment, the Player Development Committee will arrange an alternative evaluation period.

Acceleration Waiver Process:

1. Complete waiver form and turn into the Registrar prior to July 1st.
 - a. No acceleration waivers will be granted from Mites/8U to Squirrels/10U.
2. Player Development Committee will review the waiver at their September meeting.
 - a. Input may be sought from previous seasons' coaches or other individuals that can provide information relevant to the decision-making process
 - b. If an acceleration waiver is approved, the player will be notified that an evaluation is approved within 48 hours after the July Player Development Committee meeting.
3. If an acceleration waiver is approved for an evaluation, the player may play at either their age-appropriate level or the level they wish to accelerate to until the evaluation process is complete.

4. The player must participate in both evaluation sessions, their age-appropriate level as well as the level they wish to accelerate to.
 - a. For levels without an evaluation process, 4-on-4 or other less formal evaluation settings may be used instead.
 - b. Must pay a \$50 non-refundable evaluation fee and must be current on all association fees.
 - c. The player must finish in the top 3 overall skater rankings at the level they wish to accelerate to. Goalies must finish as the top goalie in the level they wish to accelerate to.
 - i. If the player does not meet this requirement, they will return to their age-appropriate level and be placed on a team based on the evaluation process they participated in at that level.
 - ii. If the player meets this requirement, they will be placed on the highest-level team.
 - d. This process will repeat if the player wants to accelerate to a higher level again in the future. A player is not forced to advance to a higher level if they have been granted an acceleration waiver in the past (e.g. a player can play 3-years at one level).

Waiver request forms can be [found here](#), or on the RLH website under the “Players Evaluations Tab”

Discretionary Waiver Policy

It is the policy of River Lakes Hockey that we will not grant any Discretionary Waivers.

Per MN Hockey Section IV Participation:

5. Players denied a waiver or given a waiver with conditions by their Home Association may appeal in writing to the Home Association's District Director Committee. The Committee's decision is final.

Evaluations

Mission Statement

The goal of the Evaluation Procedure is to ensure that each skater in River Lakes Hockey is placed on a team of similar skill level to theirs to promote player development.

Objectives for the Evaluation Procedure

- A. Provide a fair and impartial assessment of a player's total hockey skills during the session(s).
- B. Provide uniformity and consistency in the evaluation process.
- C. To have player and parent expectations consistent from year to year as players move through the various levels of the association's program.
- D. To place players on teams where they can develop and participate equitably and have fun playing hockey during the season.

General Information

- A. Parents may not go beyond the lobby area during the evaluation sessions; lobby windows will be blocked.
- B. Any parent that does not want their skater participating on an “A” team can request an exemption (requests must be made prior to evaluations).
- C. Parents that prefer siblings on the same team may result in placement at the lower skill level team (requests must be made prior to evaluations).

Player Selection Process

Attendance

- A. Skaters are required to check in with a RLH Board Member at the beginning of each session.
- B. If a skater cannot attend an evaluation session or sessions due to illness or injury, a physician’s statement/slip is required for an excused absence. In the event of a conflict for an non-injured player, excused absences will be determined by the PDC Chair, Director(s) of Hockey, and the President. These absences will be treated in the same way an injured player is treated.
- C. If the illness or injury prevents a skater from participating in the evaluation sessions, the skater will be placed on the lowest team, upon being cleared to skate, for 1 to 4 practices at each level (approximately 2 weeks) and will be evaluated as to where their final team placement will be.
- D. D. The decision of placement will be determined by the evaluators of that level from evaluations weekend. In the event those evaluators are not available the PDC will select three members of the PDC who do not have a skater at that level and no other conflicts of interest will conduct the evaluations. One board member will be present at these evaluations to serve as the observer. During the trial period, those that are already at that level will not move down.

Measurement and Assessment

- A. Three (3) PDC members (PDC members cannot evaluate the level in which they have a child) will evaluate each level and the goal is to have two (2) outside evaluators (if possible, those who do not have kids in RLH). In addition, one (1) goalie specific evaluator will assist in evaluating the goalies.
- B. A board member will be assigned to each level to ensure transparency in the evaluation process. The board member can only be involved at levels in which their child is not participating.
- C. Part of the first session of evaluations will be skills based and scrimmaging. This will focus on skating, passing and shooting for skaters. For goalies they will focus on proper technique, skating and on ice movement.
- D. Drills will be reviewed by the PDC on an annual basis.

- E. The additional sessions will be a scrimmage format that will give the evaluators the opportunity to rate players in game conditions; some important factors that will be looked for in the scrimmage will include, but are not limited to:

Skill Sets to be Evaluated for Skaters:

These are examples; final skill sets will be determined by the PDC and scored on 1-10 scale

- A. Fore-checking; ability-hustle, proper angling
- B. Back-checking; coming back hard and picking up the open player
- C. Quickness/speed
- D. Team play; make passes when necessary
- E. Backward skating ability
- F. Quick puck movement up to forwards
- G. Does player jump up into offensive play
- H. Proper play of a 2 v 1 and a 1 v 1 situation

Skill Sets to be Evaluated for goalies:

- A. Movement (lateral, in/out, agility)
- B. Save selection/execution
- C. Rebound control
- D. Mental focus/competitiveness
- E. Angles/square to puck

Adjusting evaluation groups - if multiple groups are required

- A. After completion of the second session, the groups will be reorganized based on the evaluation of the previous two sessions. Evaluators may move a player after the first session or ask a player to stay and skate with the second session.
- B. This will allow assessment of skills and scrimmages within an each skill level and facilitate the assessment for the remaining sessions.

The remaining sessions may include:

- A. Mix of drills
- B. Inter-squad scrimmages

Conclusion of Player Selection Process

- a. Evaluators meet after the last evaluation session at each level and rank all the players and create a bubble where skill drop is noticed. For this meeting PDC Chair,

RLH President and the Directors of Hockey will be in attendance. At this time players are only identified by jersey number.

- b. After all the evaluation sessions. The PDC meets to go over final team sizes. Team's sizes are affected by the number of players at each level and the skill variation of players that are ranked. The RLH President and Directors of Hockey will be in attendance and they will make the players' names available during the discussion of bubble players. Players must play on the team they are listed on and cannot change to drop down a team or to another division once the evaluation process is complete.
- c. Coach's selection: the PDC will have open discussion on who they feel is the best candidate to coach each team.
- d. Evaluation results will be available to parents within 24 hours of completing the final session. Results will be posted on the RLH website.

High School Program Opportunities

River Lakes Youth Hockey has established the following policy for players that are interested in exploring their opportunities with the High School Hockey Program. If a player would like to maintain their opportunity to play youth hockey, they must register and pay the initial registration fee. This will allow the player to skate at all preseason camp opportunities, attend evaluations, and skate with the appropriate team and attend skills nights until the High School season starts.

If after skating with the High School team, the player then chooses to stay at the high school level, the player will be refunded the balance of their registration fee less the \$200 non-refundable fee and \$25 per hour of scheduled ice time that was available to the player up until the time notice was given that they would not be returning.

Bantam Eligible Player Requesting to Play for High School

If an eligible bantam player has requested to play with the high school team instead of their designated bantam team, the head coach for the River Lakes Stars hockey team can accept or deny that player's request after a tryout process. The tryout process would occur during the first week of high school practices.

There are two scenarios in which the request would be granted:

1. The player in question has shown the ability to be a consistent VARSITY contributor.
2. The JV and Varsity numbers are lower than the desired number skaters (determined by coaches during that given season) and the player in question would add to the depth of the roster.

Goalie decisions will be based on the number of goalies rostered on the JV and Varsity.

Please reach out to Zach Johnson at johnsonz@rocori.k12.mn.us if you have any questions.

Background Screening

Minnesota Hockey has adopted a policy to reduce the risk of young players becoming a victim of sexual or physical abuse. To carry out this policy, all adult coaches, officials, board members, employees, volunteers, and anyone else who will have regular contact with, or authority over, athletes under the age of 18 are required to submit to a background screen before any such contact with those athletes.

Please visit: <https://www.usahockey.com/backgroundscreen> to complete the background screening.

SafeSport

SafeSport is an USAH initiative aimed at creating the safest possible environment for all participants in USAH and Minnesota Hockey programs, particularly related to off-ice safety, by creating a mechanism that creates and centralizes policies prohibiting abuse, managing hockey environments, mandates education and awareness training, enhances screening protocols, and establishes reporting, investigation and response to violations which may occur. The policy applies not just to players, but all participants in any of our programs all the way down to spectators at our events. USAH has given this initiative the very highest priority and views it as one of the most important programs it has undertaken, and Minnesota Hockey agrees. Scott Gray sgray@metrolegal.com, 612-685-0406, is Minnesota Hockey's SafeSport Coordinator.

*The complete SafeSport Program Handbook is available at <https://www.usahockey.com/safesporttraining>, and <https://www.minnesotahockey.org/safesport>

Overview: The program provides for structure, education, reporting, investigation, and response to issues related to sexual and emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment, hazing, locker room supervision, travel, and billeting.

1. Each association names a volunteer to act as SafeSport Coordinator.
2. The association coordinator has several responsibilities including oversight of mandated training, ensuring that association establishes and enforces all related safety policies, coordination with teams/coaches on such policies, communicating SafeSport information to parents, receiving SafeSport complaints, working with Minnesota SafeSport Coordinator to investigate and respond to complaints.
3. Online training occurs prior to the start of each season.
4. Certification of training is reported to Minnesota Hockey SafeSport Coordinator.
5. Participants are made aware of the SafeSport Program and how to make reports.
6. Safety policies are monitored and enforced.
7. Reports are received and acted upon.

TRAINING: Your association SafeSport Coordinator should immediately complete the free on-line training aimed at identifying characteristics of various forms of abuse provided by USAH. To do so, they must register with USAH as a volunteer (free) and obtain a registration number, which they then can use to complete the training videos that are available at above referenced USAH website. USAH has also mandated that at least one representative from each team also complete the training program prior to the end of the season. Although training will likely be required in some format for the coaches, the final determination of what that will entail is yet to

be decided, so although your coaches may certainly complete the available training in its current format, it is suggested that the team manager be the “representative” that completes the training. Obviously, issues will occur related to dates of team formation and identifying volunteers for these roles, but generally this is the intended path currently. Then, throughout the season the SafeSport Coordinator will work with all members of the association including your board to ensure that everyone completes the training program prior to the end of the season. A census of those completing the registration shall be compiled and reported to the Minnesota SafeSport Coordinator.

SCREENING: The screening requirements have now changed. USAH is now mandating a more thorough screen for any volunteers who have “regular, routine, and frequent access” to the players. We have identified those persons as primarily coaches and managers. Another possibility would be a regularly scheduled locker room monitor however some one person filling that role on a frequent or consistent basis is unlikely. For those persons who do not have regular, routine, and frequent contact with players, such as random locker room monitors, other volunteers, and board members, we will continue use of our existing screening method. In either case, although the on-line-screening form will be somewhat different in appearance, the process to accomplish the screen will be the same as it has been by visiting [Minnesotahockey.org](https://minnesotahockey.org) and click on the SafeSport tab. Although the local SafeSport Coordinator will not be involved with the screening aspects of the program, it is essential for them to work with the association and the teams to ensure that enough locker room monitors are screened and available when needed.

LOCKER ROOM MONITORING POLICY: A key component to the SafeSport initiative is to ensure that our locker rooms are always monitored and the players are present whether for practices or games. The policy always requires that a screened gender appropriate adult be present in the locker room where there are more than one player present, and two screened adults when there is only one player present. At no time shall one adult be alone in the room with one player. It cannot be stressed enough how critical it is for each association, and each team, to abide by this policy. Over half of the SafeSport violations of abuse I received the previous season related to incidents that occurred in unsupervised locker rooms- several which were quite serious in nature. In all cases, the associations/teams reported that although they were aware of the policy, they didn’t take it that seriously and had difficulty finding people to monitor the locker room. Although we acknowledge that it may not be the most desirable assignment, and is often difficult to find volunteers, it is crucial that the locker rooms be monitored. The SafeSport Coordinator should work with each team manager to identify and screen an adequate number of parents to fill this role, and at the minimum ensure that the coaches are cognizant of this requirement sans the presence of a screened parent to fill the role.

REPORTING: People reporting SafeSport violations can contact USA Hockey SafeSport, the Minnesota Hockey SafeSport Coordinator, or the association SafeSport Coordinator. Violation reports received by anyone else should be immediately forwarded to the SafeSport Coordinator. Once the report is received, Minnesota Hockey will work with the local coordinator to investigate the allegations. It is important to note that one of the goals of SafeSport is to ensure that participants can feel comfortable with reporting abuses without fear of retribution. The reporting process allows for transparency, investigation, and action intended to be objective and neutral with the conclusion being reasonable, proportional, and fair. No reporting party should ever experience negative ramifications for bringing a report of abuse to our attention.

Website Privacy Statement

RLH Inc., as an association of families, cares deeply about protecting the children involved in our hockey program. It is necessary for the efficient conduct of business to run a website containing information about the hockey program, and to a certain extent, the names and contact information of certain participants. The names of minor children appearing on the website will only include first name and last name initial, and, for team rosters, the jersey number.

Parents who want to prevent disclosure of individually identifying information about their minor children can make their request to the respective team manager. Those requests will, in all cases, be honored.

River Lakes Hockey Coaches Code of Conduct & Responsibilities

A. Coaches Will:

- a. Follow Minnesota Hockey rules and guidelines.
- b. Follow the River Lakes Hockey Handbook.
- c. Learn the rules/regulations of the game.
- d. Have a parent meeting prior to the season
- e. Keep in mind the player is the most important part of the program and that learning, developing, and effort are more important than winning
- f. Know and understand the rules of the game and share that understanding with the players
- g. Treat players fairly and honestly
- h. Be prompt and well prepared for practice – ice time is valuable
- i. Display consideration and understanding towards the players
- j. Share ideas and techniques with other coaches for the betterment of the entire program
- k. Be considerate of other teams
- l. Have a positive attitude at all times
- m. Teach players to respect game officials' decisions
- n. Be in the locker room at all times prior to/after games/practices
- o. Lead by example and set a standard of conduct so high that coaches, players, parents, and fans will be proud
- p. Inform Hockey Directors in writing (email or text) of any conduct violations made by players, parents, or fellow leaders
- q. Participate in coaches meetings
- r. Follow the River Lakes Hockey player development plan/program
- s. Obtain necessary certification and ongoing training requirements as directed by USA Hockey

B. Coaches Will NOT:

- a. Use offensive language
- b. Show favoritism to players or families
- c. Physically or verbally abuse players
- d. Use tobacco or alcohol while supervising players during practice/games/in locker rooms
 - i. 1st Violation – verbal warning
 - ii. 2nd Violation – 1 month suspension
 - iii. 3rd Violation – season suspension

C. Any disciplinary action involving game suspension of a player must be reported by the coach to the Directors of Hockey.

By signing my name below, I certify that I have read, understand, and am in agreement with this code of conduct.

Signed Coach's Name: _____ Date: _____

River Lakes Hockey Players Code of Conduct & Responsibilities

The River Lakes Stars Youth Hockey Program believes strongly in the values of teamwork, sportsmanship and leadership through example. As a player in the RLH organization, my actions reflect not only on me, but also on my teammates, my coaches, my parents, my community, and the River Lakes Hockey program. I agree to abide by and follow the rules and guidelines below.

A. **ALL PLAYERS WILL:**

- a. Follow Minnesota Hockey rules and guidelines.
- b. Follow River Lakes Hockey Handbook.
- c. Learn the rules/regulations of the game.
- d. Respect other players, coaches, and officials.
 - i. Will not complain about penalties or calls made by the officials, and understand that they oversee enforcing the rules of ice hockey, and will respect their decisions at all times. When called for a penalty, I will skate directly to the penalty box.
- e. Be on my best behavior at games, practices, hotels, and other team events.
- f. Be committed to developing as a hockey player and always give their best effort. Be a team player by working as hard for the team as you work for yourself; your team will benefit and so will you.
- g. Show good sportsmanship both when winning and losing, and congratulate the other team and wish them good luck.
- h. Recognize that coaches are the primary source of instruction.
- i. Be prompt and prepared for all practices and games. It is the players responsibility to be fully equipped. If a player is habitually late, the coach may discipline the player as appropriate.

B. **The following actions by players will not be tolerated:**

- a. Hazing: committing an act against a player or coercing a player into committing an act that creates a substantial risk of harm to a person in order for the player to be initiated into or affiliated with any River Lakes team.
- b. Disorderly Conduct: engaging in offensive, obscene, or abusive language or in boisterous, noisy or offensive conduct tending to arouse alarm, anger, or resentment in others.
- c. Bullying: participating in or conspiring with others to engage in bullying acts of a teammate or opponent, either verbally or physically. I understand that bullying includes taunting and excessive teasing, threats, cruel, demeaning, and derogatory remarks, physical violence, vandalism of property, intimidation, and starting rumors, either verbally or electronically.
- d. Harassment: participating in or conspiring with others to engage in harassing acts that injure, degrade, or disgrace other individuals. Harassment whether willful or otherwise, includes offensive behavior relating to gender, ability, religion, culture, disability, race, and/or age.
- e. Absolutely NO picture taking technology is allowed in the locker rooms! Phones, iPods, etc. This is a Minnesota Hockey/USA Hockey rule and pertains to both practices and games.
- f. Physical Harm: Fighting of any kind or aggressive behavior with intent to injure another.
- g. Illicit items: be in possession of drugs, alcohol, or weapons of any kind to RLH games, practices, trips, or other events.

Any concerns regarding the conduct of players relating to the above must be reported directly to the coach and Hockey Directors by the player or by the parent witnessing the behavior.

Any unlawful behavior by a player may result in a suspension of the player. Chronic discipline problems will be brought before the River Lakes Board for consideration of suspension for the remainder of the season.

I understand by signing this agreement I promise to uphold the RLH Players Code of Conduct. I understand if I do not abide by the above, consequences may include but are not limited to: parent meetings, loss of ice time, partial or full game suspension and/or dismissal from the team and the RLH program.

Signed Player Name: _____ Date: _____

River Lakes Hockey Locker Room Code of Conduct

All players of River Lakes Hockey agree to abide by and follow the rules and guidelines below:

I will not:

- Be in a locker room alone with an adult (except my own parent(s)) EVER.
- Enter the locker/dressing room of an opposing team or the officials or obstruct their access.
- Deface or destroy property belonging to any individual, team, association, or arena.
- Wrestle, box, shove, push or engage in physical contact of any manner.
- Throw items around the locker room.
- Yell, scream or shout. Conversation is to be kept at a comfortable level
- Bring any camera, cell phone or other photographic device into a locker room.
- Touch any equipment or clothing that is not mine.
- Be disrespectful to anyone.
- Bring a puck into or play with a puck in a locker room.

I will:

- Listen to and follow the instructions of designated locker room supervisors.
- Avoid situations where I am the only player in the locker room. If I am one of the last two players in the locker room, I will stay and depart with the other player so that no player is left alone in the locker room.
- Always leave the locker room clean and in good condition, both at my home rink and away.

I understand by signing this agreement I promise to uphold the RLH Players Code of Conduct. I understand if I do not abide by the above, consequences may include but are not limited to: parent meetings, loss of ice time, partial or full game suspension and/or dismissal from the team and the RLH program..

Player Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Legal Guardian: _____ Date: _____

River Lakes Hockey Parents Code of Conduct & Responsibilities

Parents are the heart and soul of our program and parental involvement is vital to the players, coaches, arenas and the community. We offer the following in the spirit of good community.

A. Parents Will:

- a. Ensure players are on time to practice/games – ice time is valuable.
- b. Remember and appreciate that our program depends on volunteers, at all levels. Parents will fulfill all volunteer and fundraising requirements outlined in the handbook.
- c. Promptly report any behavior that violates any River Lakes Code of Conduct.
- d. Remember that youth are involved in organized sports for their enjoyment.
- e. Encourage players to abide by the rules of the game.
- f. Teach children that honest effort is as important as winning.
- g. Try to turn defeat into victory by helping your child work towards skill development and sportsmanship.
- h. Recognize the value and importance of our volunteer coaches by finding constructive ways to support them.
- i. Lead by example and hold fellow parents/spectators to this code of conduct.

B. Parents Will NOT:

- a. Conduct or question a coach during a game, publicly or for 24 hours following a game.
- b. Publicly question a game official's judgment or honesty.
- c. Use alcohol in excess prior to attending your child's sporting events.
- d. Ridicule or criticize a player – on either team.
- e. Condone physical or verbal abuse of players.
- f. Conduct themselves in a manner that embarrasses the River Lakes Hockey Association.
- g. Be in the locker room during or after a game (unless specifically invited by the coach).

C. If any parent/guardian is verbally or physically abusive to a coach, game official, or player, the parent can receive up to but not limited to a 2-week suspension, the parent or the child may be suspended from the program, or future discipline may be taken. Parents must respect all officials and their decisions, demonstrate respect, encourage sportsmanship, and maintain self-control at all times. Final decisions will be made by the River Lakes Disciplinary and Grievance committee.

Let the players play, let the coaches coach, let the officials officiate, and let the fans cheer enthusiastically.

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Print Parent Name _____

Player(s) Name(s) _____



River Lakes Hockey Board of Directors Code of Conduct

The River Lakes Hockey (RLH) Board of Directors, elected by the membership or appointed and approved by the Board, are expected to comply with the following set of rules in relation to the use of information and decisions made at the Board of Directors meetings, the implementation of policies and business, and their conduct within the association.

1. No member of the board shall knowingly withhold, conceal, or furnish misleading information to any person(s) in the association regarding issues discussed, voted on, or passed by the Board in a regularly scheduled, special, or committee meeting.
2. No member of the board shall directly or indirectly use RLH funds, equipment, supplies or other resources or their position as a member of the board for personal benefit.
3. On behalf of RLH, no member of the board will directly or indirectly offer to pay, promise to pay or make a payment from RLH funds to any supplier without compliance to pre-approved board expenditures.
4. No member of the board will use RLH funds or assets for any unlawful or improper purchases or establish undisclosed or unrecorded funds or assets.
5. No member of the board shall offer or grant preferential treatment to any member, member's child or their own child during traveling tryouts, or any time during their term on the board. No board member shall use their standing or influence to benefit the position or play of their own child during tryouts or the season. Board members will be held to the same code of conduct as the parents/spectators in regard to their behavior before, during and after a game.
6. In any situation where there is a possibility of conflict of interest, unethical conduct or the appearance of such, the board member is expected to immediately disclose the facts to the President of the board in the presence of at least one other board member.
7. In any situation where the possibility of a conflict of interest, of the appearance of such the board member is expected to recuse themselves from the discussion and vote on the issue.
8. No member of the board will discuss confidential information regarding a player, parent or coach-their conduct, financial standing, evaluation status, or history with the association, past grievances, or issues with anyone outside of the board. This would include any family members of the board member, who may inadvertently be privy to such information.

9. Issues and concerns addressed to board members, outside of their area of responsibility will be directed or redirected to the appropriate board member or procedure in place for that issue.
10. Board members will be courteous and conduct themselves in a respectful manner to all when participating or representing River Lakes Hockey in any sanctioned or organized event, game, meeting, tournament, fundraiser, etc.; be it home or away.
11. Board members are not to use, share, or discuss any information communicated within the board of directors, such as information shared and gleaned at a meeting, or via any other communication method, for any purposes than to meet board approved agendas or approved matters that need to be acted on by a board member.
12. All communication to association and non-members must be approved and follow communication processes and protocols.
13. Board members are to follow all documented processes and policies as noted and published. EX: RLH Handbook, Bylaws, BOD Operations Handbook. If a process warrants a change, the change must first be approved, and all corresponding documentation must be updated, only then should the process in place be changed.
14. **Board members Will NOT:**
 - a. Use offensive language
 - b. Show favoritism to players or families
 - c. Physically or verbally abuse players, coaches, or other board members
 - d. Post on social media negative comments about the association, players, coaches or other board members
 - i. 1st Violation – verbal warning
 - ii. 2nd Violation – 1 month suspension from the board, includes meetings and correspondence
 - iii. 3rd Violation – removal from the board
15. Each board of directors needs to attend 8 meetings in order to receive credit for their concession stand hour dibs. If a board of director attends less than 6 meetings in a 12 month period (beginning at the start of the new term in April through March), that BOD will be removed from the board.

I agree to treat my fellow board members, RLH coaches, RLH players and other association members with respect in my participation on the RLH Board of Directors by following this Code of Conduct.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Please sign and turn this form in to the Board President at the beginning of each year on the board.



River Lakes Hockey Board of Directors Meetings Observers Rules & Expectations

Meetings of the River Lakes Hockey Board of Directors are open to the membership. However, it is important to note that meetings are open for observation — not for participation. In order to facilitate orderly meetings, attendees may only participate or present at board meetings when placed on the agenda ahead of time, or are recognized by the meeting facilitator. We ask that all observers sign in so we know who is in attendance at the meeting. This policy outlines the general rules and expectations for observers at board of directors' meetings.

Observer Expectations

When not addressing the board:

- Do not speak or otherwise interrupt those that are speaking
- Remain respectful towards all board members and other attendees
- Recognize that some discussions at board meetings will include potentially sensitive information. Refrain from spreading rumors or revealing personal information that does not need to be widely disseminated.

If you are not on the agenda and wish to address the board:

- Raise your hand and get the attention of the meeting facilitator
- Wait patiently to be called on. Note that the meeting facilitator may choose not to recognize you or allow you to address the board.

If you are on the agenda or called upon to speak:

- Keep your comments focused on the topic at hand
- Refrain from personal attacks, rude behavior, or sharing information that should not be shared publicly
- When your turn to speak is over, you must be recognized again before addressing the board

Sensitive Topics

The Board of Directors often must address sensitive topics including financial situations, family status, incidents, punishments, behavior, and more. Sometimes, these sensitive topics are referenced in open meetings because they impact a policy or action of the association. In these cases, observer discretion is expected. Please do not share such sensitive information with others.

When sensitive topics need to be addressed openly, the Board of Directors may close the meeting to observers. We appreciate the understanding and support of observers for this necessity. When possible, the general topic to be discussed will be included on the agenda and an overview of the discussion will be presented when returning from the closed session. Note that the Board of Directors is not bound by Open Meeting Law, so the closure of meetings is at the discretion of the board.



River Lakes Hockey Board of Directors Meeting Observer Sign In

For the meeting on _____

To maintain a record of attendance at Board of Directors' meetings, all observers are expected to sign in. All attendees are expected to follow the rules and expectations laid out in the Board of Directors Meetings Observers Rules & Expectations Policy. A copy is available at each meeting and posted on the website. Meeting observers who fail to follow these guidelines may be asked to leave. Please note that observers are not permitted to participate in the meeting unless added to the agenda or recognized by the meeting facilitator.

Name

Appendix Handbook Updates:

August 28th, 2023 handbook updates voted and approved by the Board of Directors. This is a summary of the updates, please see the page notated below for the full text.

- Page 10: All mites will skate skills at one arena (no longer skating with squirts during skills)
- Page 23: Number of full ice games changed for mites from 2 to 7 per D5 rule.
- Page 24-25: Updating the team management section to align with the new tournament section (see next item) of their role in the process.
- Page 26-27: There is no limit to the number of away tournaments a team can participate in (used to be a max of 3 away tournaments per team). Any additional tournaments after those already selected by the RLH Tournament committee, must be voted on by the team. If 75% ($\frac{3}{4}$) of the team votes in support of the tournament, then the team can participate in the tournament.
 - New addition that if your home tournament does not fill, you can register for another tournament (at the team's expense) that must be within a drivable distance. A drivable distance is determined as less than 90 minutes away from the Koronis Arena as it is the central location of our association.
- Page 36: Evaluations–Attendance parts B & D updated
 - Section B: for non-injured players who are unable to attend evaluations
 - They follow the same procedures for any skater who was unable to attend due to illness
 - Section D: The makeup of who the evaluators are if a skater is ill/was unable to attend evaluations
 - Changed the evaluators for ill or skaters who were unable to attend evaluations weekend will be evaluated by the same level evaluators from evaluations weekend. However, in the event they are not available the PDC will select three members of the PDC who do not have a skater at that level and no other conflicts of interest will conduct the evaluations.
 - Removed the President being one of the people to make the decision of the skater placement.
 - Added a board member must be present at these evaluations to serve as an observer.