



## Michigan Amateur Hockey Association

January 20, 2023

To: Tier 1 Clubs

Re: Tampering Complaints – Michigan Residency

We have had several recruiting/tampering complaints again this year, several are still under investigation. The penalty for recruiting/tampering is a minimum one-year suspension for the coach

### **Recruiting/Tampering**

**Coaches will not recruit a participant who is already a member of another USA Hockey team. Direct contact by a coach or his/her staff or indirect contact through an agent or parent during the playing season with a participant who is a member of another USA Hockey team is considered tampering and is prohibited.**

Often individuals mistakenly believe, “it’s okay because the parent called the coach, the coach did not call the player/parent”. That is not the standard by which coaches must adhere. USA Hockey’s Coaching Code of Ethics specifically defines what is to be considered prohibited “mid-season tampering”. “Direct contact by a coach or his/her staff or indirect contact through an agent or parent during the playing season with a participant who is a member of another USA Hockey team is considered tampering and is prohibited.” Violations can lead to a one-year suspension or more.

There is no confusion about this standard of conduct. It matters not that the communication was initiated by a player/parent from another team to you. Your responsibility the moment they inquired was to ask if they were a member of another USA Hockey program. If the answer is yes, the clear mandate is that a coach is not to communicate in any way with a member of another USA Hockey team, regardless as to who initiated the communication. At that point, you needed to disengage and should have never offer an “opportunity” to play for your team. That is plain and simple, unethical mid-season tampering. The only ethical way one coach can communicate with a member of another USA Hockey team is to first obtain consent from the coach of the team that rosters the player.

This is not a new ethical duty just recently added to the USA Hockey Coaching Code of Ethics, it has been in place for decades. All coaches are required to be aware of and adhere to the USA Hockey Coaching Code of Ethics, and this is especially true for the high-level Tier I coaches and programs. It is an expressed expectation that mid-season tampering not take place.



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### **Skill Sessions or Any On-Ice Contact with Players outside Your Organization**

Skill sessions are another area where tampering has been reported. Some seem to think if they run private skill sessions this is okay. It is fine if all the players are within your Tier 1 organization. It is also fine if for example in the case of a goalie coach he/she has no direct connection to or exclusive affiliation with a particular club. If any of the adult participants (coaches), organizers or owners of these skill session are on rosters as coaches all the participants (players) must be from that organization, or it is considered tampering and a tryout.

**A tryout is defined as any process on or off- ice that evaluates a player or group of players for the purpose of choosing players for a program or team. A tryout also includes any team practices, off ice training sessions, open skates, skills sessions, or identification skates which include a player that is not on a regular season USA Hockey Roster with that association's teams or program. USA Hockey programs, coaches and administrators are not permitted to operate a program outside of USA Hockey as a means of avoiding the prohibitions on tryouts or recruiting. While USA Hockey does not restrict a coach's private business, if a coach runs a private camp, meeting, event, skate, or skills clinic outside of USA Hockey for one or more players, then the coach and/or team/program the Affiliate should be investigated as Code of Conduct/tampering ...**

### **Michigan Residency**

As you know, MAHA's focus is to develop Michigan players. We have plenty of good players here in Michigan that will be elite players if developed. Our players are also good enough to compete at National Championships.

We have noticed some organizations are using spring/summer competition (both inside and outside USAH) to include out-of-state players. Those players then move to Michigan for the fall season and apply for residency. As you know, we consider people moving to Michigan for the primary reason of playing hockey to be out-of-state players. Going forward any player from out-of-state who has played on any team prior to their move will receive additional scrutiny to ensure they are in compliance with our policy.

It is your duty as organization leaders to ensure all your team personnel are aware of these rules and policies and make sure they follow them. The lack of integrity that is shown, by what should be the best organizations and leaders in the state, just sets a tone whereby others feel they can skit the rules as well. These rules and policies will be enforced, and it is possible you could lose some good coaches to suspension if you don't make sure they are informed, as the excuse of I did not know if not a valid one.