To the Members of our Michigan Hockey Community:

The Michigan Amateur Hockey Association (MAHA) hopes everyone is enjoying their summer! The new Fall hockey season is quickly approaching, and we are optimistic that our return to the rink, in all areas of the state, will take place sooner than later. The MAHA will start the Fall season as soon as it is legally possible.

While we may experience stops, starts, and changes in regular operation to comply with local, state, and national directives, the Michigan Amateur Hockey Association (MAHA) must prioritize the safety and well-being of its members while participating in our programs. We will continue to monitor changes throughout the season, make adjustments and provide relevant updates to our membership as new information becomes available. In addition, we have already started the planning process for many MAHA-sanctioned events, including State Playoffs, along with contingency plans for holding those events with minimal disruption.

As of this writing, the majority of the state of Michigan remains in Phase 4 of Governor Whitmer’s Michigan Safe Start Plan. Per the Governor’s orders, rinks are not permitted to open for business in regions of the state (as outlined by the Michigan Economic Recovery Council map) that are in Phase 4. Furthermore, hockey activities and sanctioned events remain suspended by the MAHA in all regions currently in Phase 4. The suspension of these activities was taken pursuant to guidance from USA Hockey, as well as in conformity with the legal directives of the State and local authorities. (It should be noted that Regions 6 & 8 have advanced to Phase 5, allowing their rinks to re-open and hockey activity to resume)

In alignment with the June 2020 released MAHA ‘Return to the Game’ plan, our Early Player Agreement Policy allows for team formation through player commitments without an on-ice tryout. As we await further direction on an advancement to Phase 5 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan, teams that have assembled are encouraged to utilize outdoor off-ice / dryland training as a means of resuming physical activity. Coaches should adhere to best practices, as it pertains to social distancing and personal hygiene. This includes, but may not be limited to, the following conditions:

- Participants should maintain 6 ft of social distance during all drills
- Individual skills focus
- Participants should wear masks between drills (not required during physical activity)
- Participants should bring their own water bottle (no shared team sets)
- Participants should bring their own hand sanitizer
- Equipment shared by multiple participants should be cleaned and disinfected frequently
We encourage coaches to refer to the page 7 of the MAHA ‘Return to the Game’ Plan for additional links and resources on off-ice / dryland training.

Despite efforts to communicate these guidelines and restrictions to our membership, the MAHA Executive Board has been made aware that some participants, programs, and/or rinks have chosen to disregard the mandated suspension of hockey activity in Michigan. Specifically, these reports include, but are not limited to:

- Rinks re-opening prematurely (while still in Phase 4 of the Safe Start Plan)
- Teams participating in on-ice practices
- Coaches attempting to hold private on-ice tryouts
- Non-rostered teams participating in unsanctioned events

It must be noted that anyone who elects to participate in unsanctioned activities, such as these, also violate the legal directives of the State of Michigan and local government authorities. In addition, the unintended consequences of this may include placing USA Hockey insurance coverage at risk, as participants may be acting with gross or intentional negligence. Those involved are placing themselves at risk for substantial liability, as well as potential exposure to COVID-19, without the benefit of USA Hockey-provided insurance. The MAHA implores its Associations, coaches and leadership to proactively discourage these unsanctioned activities in order to encourage a safe return to the rink, once permitted to do so.

Furthermore, it must also be noted that pursuant to USA Hockey mandates, Associations that knowingly allow for unsanctioned activities, such as the above, will be subject to a disciplinary hearing held before the MAHA Board of Directors.

As previously indicated, the Michigan Amateur Hockey Association (MAHA) has committed to providing regular updates to its membership, as we continue to navigate the disruption in activity caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the MAHA will continue to provide clarification on the temporary restrictions and policies, imposed upon our regular hockey activity, as information becomes available. We continue to thank our membership for its ongoing patience and support, during this unprecedented time.

We look forward to seeing you at the rink very soon!

Sincerely,

George Atkinson          Jason Reynolds
President                Director of Operations & Marketing
Michigan Amateur Hockey Association  Michigan Amateur Hockey Association