

**Grand Traverse Hockey Association’s Travel Policy**

Grand Traverse Hockey Association (GTHA) has some teams that travel regularly to play individual games, two or three games at a time, or in tournaments, has some teams where travel is limited to only a few events per year, and some teams where there is no travel other than local travel to and from our own arena. GTHA has established policies in an attempt to guide our travel, minimize one-on-one interactions and reduce the risk of abuse or misconduct to the greatest extent possible. Adherence to these travel guidelines is intended to help increase player safety and improve the player’s experience while keeping travel a fun and enjoyable experience. Enactment of this policy is being done pursuant to USA Hockey (USAH) Safe Sport 2022/2023 recommendations and the GTHA intends to follow Michigan Amateur Hockey Association (MAHA) and USAH rules, regulations, and other acts to the best of our ability.

We distinguish between travel to training, practice and local games or practices (“local travel”), and team travel involving a coordinated overnight stay (“team travel”).

**Local Travel**

Local travel occurs when GTHA or one of its teams does not sponsor, coordinate, or arrange for travel.

* Players and/or their parents/guardians are responsible for making all arrangements for local travel. The team and its coaches, managers or administrators should avoid responsibility for arranging or coordinating local travel, if or when possible. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure the person transporting the minor player maintains the proper safety and legal requirements, including, but not limited to, a valid driver’s license, automobile liability insurance, a vehicle in safe working order, and compliance with applicable state laws.
* The employees, coaches, and/or volunteers of GTHA or one of its teams, who are not also acting as a parent, should not drive alone with an unrelated minor player and should only drive with at least two players or another adult at all times, unless otherwise arranged by the minor player’s parent or legal guardian.
* Where an employee, coach and/or volunteer is involved in an unrelated minor player’s local travel, efforts should be made to ensure that the adult personnel are not alone with the unrelated player, by, e.g., picking up or dropping off the players in groups.
* Employees, coaches, and volunteers who are also a player’s parent or guardian may provide shared transportation for any player(s) if they pick up their player first and drop off their player last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement when possible.
* It is recognized that in some limited instances it will be unavoidable for an employee, coach or volunteer of GTHA or one of its teams to drive alone with an unrelated minor player. However, efforts should be made to minimize these occurrences and to mitigate any circumstances that could lead to allegations of abuse or misconduct.

**Team Travel**

Team travel is overnight travel that occurs when a team sponsors, coordinates or arranges for travel so that the team can compete locally, regionally, nationally or internationally. Because of the greater distances, coaches, staff, and volunteers will often travel with the players. The bullets below are nearly a guide to our intended best practices, however, the GTHA understands that strict adherence to these guidelines is not always possible.

* When possible, the team designee should provide reasonable advance notice before team travel. This notice should include designated team hotels for overnight stays as well as a contact person within GTHA or the team. This individual will be the point of contact to confirm your intention to travel and to help with travel details.
* Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with a minor player (unless the coach is the parent, guardian or sibling of the player), unless otherwise arranged by the minor’s parent or legal guardian.
* Players should share rooms with other players of the same gender, with the appropriate number of players assigned per room depending on accommodations.
* The coach should establish a curfew by when all players must be in their hotel rooms or in a supervised location.
* Individual meetings between a player and coach should not occur in hotel sleeping rooms and should be held in public settings or with additional adults present if at all possible.
* The team will make every effort to accommodate reasonable parental requests when a child is away from home without a parent. If any special arrangements are necessary for your child, please contact the team personnel who can either make or assist with making those arrangements.
* Meetings should not occur in hotel rooms unless there is no other place for said meeting to occur, but the team may reserve a separate space for adults and athletes to socialize.
* If disciplinary action against a player is required while the player is traveling without his/her parents, then except where immediate action is necessary, parents will be notified before any action is taken or immediately after the action.
* No employees, coaches, or volunteers shall at any time be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing their duties.
* In all cases involving travel, parents have the right to transport their minor player and have the minor player stay in their hotel room or other location as determined appropriate by the parent or guardian.
* During team travel, coaches and team personnel will help players, fellow coaches and team personnel adhere to policy guidelines, including, without limitation, the Travel Policy, Locker Room Policy and Reporting Policy.
* Prior to any travel, employees, coaches, and volunteers will endeavor to make players and parents aware of all expectations and rules. Employees, coaches, and volunteers will work together to adhere to these restrictions and travel rules.

**Prohibited Conduct and Reporting**

GTHA prohibits all types of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing, all as described in the USA Hockey SafeSport Handbook. Participants, Employees, Parents, Family Members, or Volunteers in GTHA may be subject to disciplinary action for violation of the Travel Policies or for engaging in any misconduct or abuse or that violates the USA Hockey SafeSport Policies. Reports of any actual or suspected violations, you may email USA Hockey at SafeSport@usahockey.org or may call 1-800-888-4656.