

2023 New USA Hockey Locker Room Policy - **Locker Room Policy - Rule Update!**

Under USA Hockey's current Locker Room Policy "all USA Hockey Member Programs are required to have at least one responsible [NCSI screened and SafeSport trained] adult (which may include coaches, managers or other volunteers) present at all times and monitoring the locker room during 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." While USA Hockey expressly prefers that locker room monitors remain inside the locker room while Participants are present, if the monitor is "in the immediate vicinity outside the locker room (near the door within arm's length and so that the monitor can sufficiently hear inside the locker room) who also regularly and frequently enters the locker room to monitor activity inside," the Member Program is in compliance.

Despite this policy, however, more than half of all SafeSport incidents reported each year occur in locker rooms. In all but a few cases, there was no locker room monitor present.

AHAI believes that presence of adults inside the locker rooms is critical to maintaining a safe and positive environment for our players. For this reason, Illinois is joining the many states that have imposed stricter locker room monitoring requirements than those required by USA Hockey.

Effective immediately, the following conditions are REQUIRED of all AHAI Affiliates for locker room use at all team events including conditioning clinics, tryouts, practices, games and any event that a locker room is being utilized:

- No players shall be allowed access to the locker room unless a NCSI background screened/Safe Sport trained locker room monitor is present in the locker room.
- If a single player is present, the locker room should be monitored by at least two adults until additional players arrive.
- If there is only one adult present, whether a coach or volunteer parent, they should wait for multiple players to arrive before allowing access to the locker room.
- The same strategies should be applied after practice with a monitor staying until the last player leaves, and at no time should one adult be alone in the locker room with one player, unless the player is their own child.

This policy applies to all minor USA Hockey Participants up through the youth 18U level and through girls 19U level. It should be noted that an Affiliate may at its discretion adopt stricter policies than those defined by USA Hockey or AHAI, but in no case may said policy be less strict. Affiliates found in violation of this policy will be sanctioned automatically, under Zero Tolerance, in the following manner starting December 1, 2023:

1st team offense: \$500 fine to the Affiliate and one game suspension to the head coach

2nd team Offense: \$1000 fine to the Affiliate and 3 game suspension to the head coach.

Any additional offenses will require the Affiliate president and coaches of the non-compliant team to appear before AHAI's Rules and Ethics Committee to determine appropriate discipline, which may include exclusion from participation in the Illinois State Tournament.

As a reminder, all Affiliates are required to publish locker room policies to the parents of all minor participants that are specific to the facilities they regularly use. The Affiliate's policies shall include the program's (a) practices for supervising and monitoring locker rooms and changing areas; (b) permission or lack of permission for parents to be in the locker rooms; (c) prohibited conduct, including at least all forms of abuse and misconduct prohibited by USA Hockey; and (d) specific policies regarding the use of mobile electronic devices and phones and prohibiting the use of a device's recording capabilities.

In addition to publishing these changes to AHAI's locker room policy, AHAI strongly encourages all Affiliates to go over its locker room policy with parents and players at a team meeting. At that time, the Affiliate should:

- Clearly explain the rules and expectations for players with respect to locker room activity.
- Clearly explain the rules and expectations of the locker room monitor....including the corrective action that will be taken if necessary (player could be benched or suspended, for example.).
- Ensure players and parents understand the locker room monitor is there to help ensure there is a safe environment for all members of the team.

AHAI is confident that this policy change will reduce incidents of hazing, bullying, harassment, or other inappropriate behaviors caused by an unsupervised locker room. The safety and well-being of every player is and will continue to be AHAI's top priority.

Wolf Pack Hockey Club- HE Parks

This season Wolf Pack and Wolverines will be implementing a 2 parent rule in the locker rooms for ALL team events. This includes, but is not limited to; practices, games, tournaments, parties.

In order to fully protect our parents who will be assisting with locker room monitoring we are asking that as many parents and guardians as possible become USA Hockey certified. This will give you some level of protection from liability if anything were to occur. The rule above states that at least one of the adults present needs to be certified. (underlined text). This responsibility cannot and will not fall on the coaches and/or managers. They are already donating enough of their time to the team. We need others to pitch in and make this a team effort in order for this to succeed.

Please complete these 3 steps in order to be cleared, Register as a volunteer. This is FREE.

1) <https://membership.usahockey.com/> send me your USA Hockey number once completed.
smcgreal@heparks.org

2) While you are logged in, complete the safe sport training certification.

<https://www.usahockey.com/safesporttraining> There is no need to print, or send me anything. This will automatically be applied to your USA Hockey account

3) Complete the background screening <https://www.usahockey.com/backgroundscreen>. This too will automatically be applied to your USA account. There is no registration number, if it asks for one.

There is a \$30 charge for this. This goes directly to USA Hockey's Background screener.

While we understand this may be an inconvenience for some parents, that is not our objective. Our goal is to follow the rules set forth by USA Hockey and AHAI and protect our children who are playing the game they love.

