

MAHA 'Return to The Game' – 2020-21 Season Frequently Asked Questions

Since the release of its '[Return to The Game](#)' plan for the 2020-21 season, the Michigan Amateur Hockey Association (MAHA) has received a variety of questions pertaining to the guidelines and recommendations presented to its hockey community. In addition, through the Executive Orders presented by Governor Whitmer for the State of Michigan, significant progress has been made towards a potential return to hockey activity. As a result, there are key points in the MAHA's 'Return to The Game' plan that require additional clarification.

The following is a series of Frequently Asked Questions, presented by our hockey community. Additional updates, pertaining to Michigan's return to hockey activity, will be provided as they become available.

[As a coach, I'm utilizing the Player Agreement Policy to assemble my team for 2020-21. Once my local rink is open for business, can my team start skating right away?](#)

Yes. Through use of MAHA's Player Agreement Policy for 2020-21, many Tier I and Tier II teams are being formed prior to their local rink's re-opening. At the same time, in reaction to the recent progression of [Regions 6 & 8 to Phase 5 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan](#), rinks around the state are taking a proactive approach to preparing for their respective region's re-opening. Based on the staggered timing of these regional re-openings, many rinks will not require a 14-day grace period for preparation (as suggested in MAHA's 'Return to The Game' plan.) Per local and state government guidelines, once your local rink is open and ready for business, your team may begin skating.

[I have made several commitments to players, utilizing the Player Agreement Policy. Where do I go to register those commitments on the MAHA website?](#)

The Early Player Agreement Registry can be found in the Youth section, of the 'Parents and Players' menu, on the MAHA website. Click on www.maha.org/2020tryouts to get started.

[Are teams required to follow MAHA's recommendation regarding smaller rosters \(i.e. 10 skaters, 1 goalie\) for the 2020-21 season?](#)

This is a recommendation... not a requirement. The MAHA's recommendation for smaller rosters, as outlined in its 'Return to The Game' plan, is a "player-centered" approach to addressing potential on-ice capacity restrictions mandated by State government. It maximizes playing time for rostered players, while minimizing (or eliminating) the need for players to sit out of the lineup. In addition, this recommendation allows for shared ice utilization, as well as potential cost-saving scenarios.

While there are pros and cons to this recommendation, coaches should be mindful of their roster size for the 2020-21 season, as we continue to navigate through unprecedented times caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.



Is there a form that MAHA will be providing for the COVID-19 Financial Hardship Relief Policy?

The MAHA requires that all early player agreements include a COVID-19 Financial Hardship Relief Policy. While the MAHA will not provide an official document for this policy, Clubs and Associations should utilize the guidelines outlined in the 'Return to The Game' plan when drafting their program's policy.

If my family is required to utilize the COVID-19 Financial Hardship Policy, while my son is rostered on a travel team... are we allowed to register for a recreational / House program?

Yes. Families who must utilize this policy, due to a financial hardship, are permitted to roster with a team at a lower tier. Participants / families exercising the policy will not be permitted to roster with another club at the same tier level for the 2020-21 season.

For those players who don't commit early to a team, through the Player Agreement Policy, what opportunities might they have to return to the ice to prepare for team tryouts?

Players who intend to earn a position on a travel team, during the team tryout process, are encouraged to utilize local on-ice and off-ice programming options available to them. As rinks are permitted to re-open, players should actively pursue camps, skills clinics, Sticks & Pucks sessions, open skates, off-ice and dryland training options in their local area.

Likewise, rinks and associations are encouraged to develop programming options that cater to these members. Association skates and "free play" options can be tailored to each age group, in an effort to allow local members to return to the ice. Given our ongoing navigation of the COVID-19 pandemic, click [here](#) for additional resources and direction on formatting on-ice activity to maintain proper social distancing guidelines.

