



HANDBOOK OF LEAGUE RULES

Revised September 2025

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List of MSWHL Critical Dates

Mid-July: New Board holds its annual board meeting and assigns officers

July 31st: Preliminary Team Applications and rosters due

Early-mid August: Proposed Division Team Assignments announced

August: Mandatory attendance at monthly board meeting for new team managers; Division Team Assignments finalized

September 1: Season officially begins; players must be registered with USA Hockey in order to practice

Early-mid September: Team managers complete scheduling for season with finalized division teams

Mid-Late September: Final rosters are due. All players must be officially registered via the league website prior to the first league game. The players registered on your teams will be pulled out of the MSWHL after this date and submitted to MAHA for verification and official registration.

October 1st: League games officially begin (*note: official league games may begin any time after the scheduling meeting.*)

January 31st: Final date for players to be rostered in order to be eligible for Ruicci Cup participation.

Early March: Deadline for receipt of game statistics to determine standings and Ruicci Cup seeding

Late-March: Ruicci Cup Playoffs

March 31st: End of official Regular Season

May: Annual Meeting - Applications due for board of directors

June: Annual Board Elections

I. Purpose

This handbook contains the League rules and administrative procedures. It is a supplement to the Michigan Amateur Hockey Association By-Laws and USA Hockey Rulebook. If a player or team has questions regarding the League, please consult this handbook to find the answer first. An electronic copy of this handbook and these By-laws are posted on the league's official website: www.MSWHL.com. A team may request a printed copy by contacting a Board Director.

A. HISTORY OF THE LEAGUE

The Michigan Senior Women's Hockey League (the "League") began with 5 teams in the early 1990's. At its peak, the League had 44 teams participating in advanced, intermediate, and recreational divisions. Over 700 women participate annually in the one of the largest senior women's leagues in the country. The purpose of this League is to encourage and improve the standard of ice hockey for women in the State of Michigan; to develop and encourage sportsmanship among all players for the betterment of their physical and social well-being; and to conduct an organized league wherein women may learn and enjoy recreational and competitive ice hockey. The League is a member of MAHA and USA Hockey. The season begins in September and typically runs through late March/early April, concluding with the annual "Ruicci Cup" hockey playoff weekend.

B. ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

1. The League was incorporated in 2001 with the State of Michigan under ID #765567 as Metro Skaters Hockey League doing business as the "Michigan Senior Women's Hockey League".
2. The League is organized with the IRS as a 501(c)(7) Social Club. To be exempt, a social club must meet the following requirements:
 - a. The club must be organized for exempt purposes.
 - b. Substantially all of its activities must further exempt purposes
 - i. If the club exceeds safe harbor guidelines for nonmember and investment income, the facts and circumstances must show that it is organized substantially for exempt purposes.
 - ii. The club has de minimis income from nontraditional sources (i.e., from investments or from activities that, if conducted with members, would further the club's tax-exempt purposes).
 - c. The club must provide an opportunity for personal contact among members, and membership must be limited.
 - d. The club must be supported by membership fees, dues, and assessments.
 - e. The organization's net earnings may not inure to the benefit of any person having a personal and private interest in its activities.
 - f. The club's governing instrument may not contain a provision that provides for discrimination against any person on the basis of sexual orientation, race, color, or religion.

- g. The club may not hold itself out as providing goods and services to the general public.
- h. The club can receive up to 35 percent of their gross receipts, including investment income, from sources outside their membership without losing their exempt status.

C. RULES UNIQUE to WOMEN'S HOCKEY

1. The fundamental difference between the male game and the female game is that body checking is not permitted in women's hockey. Women's hockey is very physical but blatant checks are penalized. The result of this no-checking rule is that the female game is played with an emphasis on overall skill development (e.g., skating, passing, stick handling, and shooting).
2. For the safety of its players, the MSWHL requires female hockey players to wear full-coverage protective equipment including a helmet and a full-face mask. Half-shields or half-masks are not permitted

II. DEFINITIONS

A. DIVISIONS

There are typically six to seven divisions within the League, which are divided according to skill level. The following is a brief description of the divisional structure. If needed, extra divisions may be created to accommodate an expanding number of teams. Divisions may also be eliminated or combined to accommodate a decrease in the number of teams.

1. DIVISIONS 0 and 1 (Advanced): For elite, experienced, and/or highly skilled players who may have also played at the elite youth level or in college. Nationally, the Advanced teams are comparable to Senior "A", "B", or "C", and the "30 and over" USAH classifications.
2. DIVISIONS 2 and 3 (Intermediate): For skilled players who may have played hockey in their youth and who have continued to play as an adult. This may also include players who started as a young adult and have now progressed past the level of a beginner and would like to play against higher skilled level players than those in the Recreational divisions.
3. DIVISIONS 4, 5, & 6 (Recreational): For beginners and novice players ages 19 and older who would like to start learning to play hockey, or for older or injured players whose skills have plateaued or declined. Division 5 is more for players who may be still relatively new to playing hockey, but have progressed past the beginner stage and would like to play at a slightly higher skill level.

B. MAHA

Michigan Amateur Hockey Association- Michigan's affiliate of USA Hockey. See www.MAHA.org for a list of comprehensive rules and regulations.

C. MSWHL

Michigan Senior Women's Hockey League.

D. SEASON

The season officially runs from September 1st to March 31st. Games may start any time after the scheduling meeting, typically after October 1st.

E. TEAM OFFICIALS

Team Officials include any persons on the players' bench who are not on the game scoresheet as an eligible player or goalkeeper. If a team has a coach, (s)he must be designated as such on the scoresheet and on the roster. Senior teams are not required to have a non-playing coach on the bench. If a team does not have a non-playing coach, a player acting as head coach and one acting as assistant coach must be clearly identified prior to the start of the game on the scoresheet as "Team Official". If there is no designation on the scoresheet then the captain will be considered the first Team Official and one or more of the assistant captains will be considered the second Team Official. These players will bear all the responsibilities and duties that are normally carried out by the non-playing coach(es).

III. LEAGUE

A. GOVERNING RULES

The USA Hockey and MAHA Rules and Regulations will govern the play of the League, except as supplemented herein. The League rules incorporate USA HOCKEY and MAHA rules and regulations and playing rules and exceptions may vary from USA HOCKEY and MAHA rules and regulations providing they are more stringent and without major change with the exception of age classifications. Every team official is expected to be familiar with the MAHA By-Laws and Rules & Regulations available at www.MAHA.org as well as the most current USA Hockey rulebook.

1. MODIFICATIONS

The rules and regulations of the League contained herein may be amended at any time by an affirmative vote of the majority of the Board members.

2. INTERPRETATION

An electronic copy of the most current League Handbook will be available on the League website, www.mswhl.com. If a team official does not have access to the website, the League will provide a hard copy. Every player and team official will be responsible to review the League Handbook. The rules of the League apply to every player and team. A team official should have a copy of the handbook and the MAHA rules at his/her immediate disposal at every game.

- a. If there is any question about any rule, first consult these rulebooks for clarification.
- b. If a question occurs during a game, the referees are responsible for making the final decision.

3. ACKNOWLEDGMENT/AGREEMENT

Every team official, including managers and coaches are required to submit an original signed acknowledgement that they have read, understand, and agree to comply with the guidelines set forth in this Handbook. Failure of a team to submit an acknowledgement for each team

official, even those added throughout the entire season, may subject the entire team to discipline.

B. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Election and duties of members of the Board of Directors: must be a current member of the MSWHL, must be a woman, and must be rostered on a team as a coach or a player. No more than two Board Members may be rostered on the same team. A Board Member may not be an immediate relative (Mother, sister, spouse) of another Board Member.

C. STATISTICIAN

Each division is required to have a statistician who compiles the division's win/loss/tie/forfeit record standings, goals, assists, and penalty minutes per player/team. This task may be assigned to a Board Director.

D. SCHEDULER

Each division is required to have a scheduler who compiles and maintains updates of that division's game times and locations. This task may be assigned to a Board Director.

E. DIVISION DIRECTOR

One (1) member of the Board shall be assigned to each division to handle issues, complaints, scheduling, and monitoring of statistics on the website for that division. Each division director shall manage an online roster of players for their division. It is recommended that whenever possible, no division director shall be assigned to a division in which she plays, coaches, or to which she has any personal ties (e.g., participating relative or significant other) which may impart bias.

F. FEES

1. League fees are set each year by the Board. The current league fee is a nonrefundable \$100. The fee is waived for any team who won Ruicci Cup the prior season.
2. MAHA and USA Hockey fees are determined each year by the respective organizations. League fees are due on or before the date of the Organizational Meeting. League fees pay for administrative expenses such as website maintenance, legal and/or licensing/registration fees, scoresheets, copying costs, mailings, meeting room rental, and other miscellaneous expenses.
3. All Board Directors work on a volunteer basis and are not monetarily compensated in any way, with the exception for travel expenses to games they are designated to watch and/or to other hockey-related (e.g. MAHA) meetings. The Treasurer accepts payments at the organizational meeting. If a team official wishes to pay before the organizational/scheduling meeting in September, (s)he may contact the Treasurer to make other arrangements. All checks shall be payable to the "MSWHL."

G. COMMUNICATIONS

1. MEMBERS

- a. All League announcements will be distributed to each team by email to the first and second contact (officials) listed on each team's application. If a team official does not have regular access to the Internet, it is that team official's responsibility to find another member of their team who will assume the responsibility for distributing

communication within their team.

- b. It is the responsibility of the team official to share all communications with her team members.
- c. Any player, manager, or coach within the League will be asked to register him/herself with the League's official website: www.MSWHL.com to receive timely correspondence.
- d. Announcements may also be posted on the League's official website.
- e. If a member's contact information changes, it is the team official's responsibility to notify the Board.
- f. The League reserves the right to directly contact all team representatives and players.

2. BOARD DIRECTORS

- a. All Board Directors must be reachable via email and their email contact information shall be posted on the League's official website.
- b. All Board Directors will make every effort to be reasonably available for communication to her members.
- c. Official requests of the entire Board must be made in writing and/or sent by email.
- d. Communications sent to a Board Director that are unprofessional, harassing, or threatening will result in immediate review by the entire Board for potential disciplinary action.
- e. A Board Director reserves the right not to respond to a request by SMS/text or phone and rather to require that an official communication be sent by email to the Board for action.
- f. EMAIL: All email communications to a Board Director will be responded to within three (3) days.
 - i. SMS/TEXT: A Board Director or member may utilize SMS/text for communication for informal communication between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. during weekdays, but official requests of the Board may not be sent to a Board Director by SMS/text.
 - ii. PHONE: A Board Director may be reached by phone for informal communication requests. Board Directors may be contacted between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on weekdays. Any matters that arise outside of these hours must be communicated by email.

IV. PLAYER QUALIFICATIONS TO JOIN LEAGUE

A. AGE REQUIREMENTS

All women 18 and older are encouraged to participate. Players turning 18 prior to or during the season may register before turning 18, however must wait until they turn 18 to participate in any league games.

B. CREDENTIALS

The following criteria must be met to the satisfaction of the Board in order for any individual to

become a Member (“Player”) of the League:

1. Each Player must be a woman over the age of 18 years-old per MAHA/USA Hockey rules.
2. “Woman” is defined by USA Hockey as a person who was born female and continues to identify as female, or who was born male and is identifying as female. The BOD reserves the right to invoke any or all of USA Hockey’s transgender and non-binary athletes policy at its sole discretion.
3. Each Player must be officially rostered on an approved MSWHL team as a player, coach, or other designation as established by the Board.
4. Each Player must pay the current membership fee to USA Hockey.
5. Each player must meet the residency and citizenship requirement.
6. Each player must be registered through the MSWHL league website with complete and accurate information about her player history.

C. RESIDENCY/TRAVEL

Players who are legal U.S. residents inside the United States but outside of the State of Michigan (limit 100 miles from any Michigan border) may be registered with the League if they meet the MAHA qualification rules. The majority of teams have home ice located in the five-county area of Wayne, Oakland, Washtenaw, Macomb, and Livingston. Teams typically play a home and away schedule between 20 and 26 games a season and usually travel at least twice to each city.

D. CITIZENSHIP

Registration in the League is restricted to legal U.S. and Canadian residents, unrestricted to citizenship, and limited to amateurs. Due to Michigan being a border state to Canada, Canadian residents are allowed to participate on an adult recreational league team, as long as that team is not state nor national bound. A person who is a citizen of another country shall be considered eligible if she is a full-time resident of Michigan and holds legal documentation to be a permanent resident or holds a Visa allowing temporary residency.

E. PREGNANCY

Pregnant players may participate in League events, but assume all risks and responsibilities. By choosing to play/practice, the pregnant player releases the League, team managers, opposing players, and the arena from any and all liability to themselves and/or her unborn fetus. It is recommended that the team manager or team official secure a written “waiver of liability” from any such pregnant player and keep it with their team records.

V. PLAYER DIVISION PLACEMENT

A. COLLEGE DIVISION I, II, OR III, CLUB, OR SIGNIFICANT YOUTH EXPERIENCE

All Players registering with the League for the FIRST TIME who have played college hockey at the Division I, II, III and/or Club level (depending on the strength of the Club team) or with no college experience but who have significant youth hockey experience, must register in the Advanced Divisions (0 or 1) and play in that division for at least one season unless said player submits a player eligibility appeal form that is approved by the Board. Each player may be subjected to an on-ice or video evaluation by the Board prior to the final ruling on the request.

B. AGE AND EXPERIENCE GUIDELINES

1. All Players registering with MSWHL for the first time who do not meet the above experience level must play in a division as outlined below for at least one season OR file an appeal for the board to review and make a determination of placement.
2. After one or more season(s), if a player desires to move down to a lower division, that player may petition the Board by submitting a completed Player Eligibility Appeal Form.
3. Each player may be subjected to an on-ice or video evaluation by the Board prior to the final ruling on the Player Eligibility Appeal.

18-20 YEARS OF AGE:

- 9+ or more years of playing experience, MUST play Division 0 or 1.
- 7-8 years of playing experience, MUST play Division 2 or higher.
- 5-6 years of playing experience, MUST play Division 3 or higher.
- 4 years or less of playing experience may play at any level based on individual player skill level.

21-25 YEARS OF AGE AND UNDER:

- 14+ or more years of playing experience, MUST play Division 0 or 1.
- 9-13 years of playing experience, MUST play Division 2 or higher.
- 5-8 years of playing experience, MUST play Division 3 or higher.
- 4 years or less of playing experience may play at any level based on individual player skill level.

26-30 YEARS OF AGE:

- 19+ or more years of playing experience, MUST play Division 0 or 1.
- 14-18 years of playing experience, MUST play in Division 2 or higher.
- 9-13 years of playing experience, MUST play in Division 3 or higher
- 8 years or less of playing experience may play in Division 5 or higher.

31-39 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER:

- 20+ years of playing experience MUST play in Division 3 or higher.
- 10-19 years of playing experience, MUST play in Division 4 or higher
- 9 years or less of playing experience may play at any level based on individual player skill level.

40 + YEARS OF AGE:

Players 40 and over may have the above guidelines waived to be eligible to play in any of the

Divisions unless considerable skill and experience (e.g. 20+ years playing; significant youth or college experience) require a Player Eligibility Appeal form to be filed.

C. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Team managers and coaches need to take the above criteria into consideration when organizing players for their teams. Players who are past members of the League are subject to review by the Board every year to assess whether they are participating at the appropriate skill level. If it is determined by the Board that a significant elevated skill difference exists between a player and the rest of her team and/or division even if she meets the above guidelines, that player will be asked to find a team in a higher division more appropriate to her skill level.

VI. PLAYER MOVEMENT

A. OFF-SEASON

1. A player's obligation to her regular season League team begins when she signs the official roster and ends on March 31st (or after Ruicci Cup playoffs, whichever comes first) of the current season unless her regular season team becomes inactive prior to that date.
2. After March 31st (or the completion of Ruicci Cup) and prior to September 1st, a player is free to change to another team for the next season if she desires as long as all of her financial obligations are settled and all of her team equipment is returned to the appropriate team authorities.

B. IN-SEASON

1. PROCESS

- a. A player registered with a League team at the beginning of the season who wishes to move to another team within the League during the same season must obtain an official release from her original team before registering with her new team.
- b. The Board must be notified and approve of the request for that player to be transferred to another team before the release is processed.
- c. A player shall be given a release by her original team as long as the player has fulfilled her financial and equipment return obligations at the time of the release request.
- d. A player must wait 72 hours after the player registration form and release is received by the MAHA District or League Registrar and by a Board Member to be eligible for League games.
- e. A Release form can be obtained from the league website or a team's MAHA District or League Registrar and copies of the completed Release form should be given to the MAHA District or League Registrar, the League President or Division Director, and the player's new team manager.

2. CHANGING DIVISIONS

- a. A player may move upward to a higher division level at her discretion and without limitation.
- b. A player must obtain prior Board approval to move down to a lower division.
 - i. A player must submit a completed Player Review Form to the Board.
 - ii. If the player's request is granted, the player will remain in the newly approved lower division for a minimum of two seasons before she may petition the Board to move down another level.
 - iii. No team may pick up more than TWO players who have moved down from a higher

division without prior Board approval for a whole season.

3. PLAYER REVIEW

- a. If a player rostered by a team would like to play in a lower level division than the above guidelines dictate, that player must submit a Player Eligibility Appeal Form with reasonable justification to the Board in conjunction with a Team's original or revised application.
- b. The form should include detailed information regarding the player's hockey history and the reasons why that particular player is requesting to play in a lower division.
- c. The Board will review the form within seven (7) days of receipt. The board will then make a decision if the player may conditionally play within the desired division. That player may be subjected to a hearing or an on-ice or video evaluation by the Board prior to the final ruling on the Player Eligibility Appeal.
- d. This decision cannot be appealed within that season.
- e. A player cannot be rostered with a team until the Board informs the team that the player is conditionally eligible to join the team.

4. REVIEW PERIOD

- a. If the Board conditionally approves a player to play in a division with the proposed team, that player will be allowed to play in league games.
- b. A complaint about a player's skill level can be filed with the Board after a majority of teams in the division have either played against or observed the player and agree that their skill level is inappropriate for the division. Each team must have a chance to play against or observe the player within the season.
- c. Any team not scheduled to play the team in question during this time period, is encouraged to send a representative to observe a game in which the player in question is playing to make a determination of the player's skill level.

5. COMPLAINT PROCESS

- a. Upon receipt of the Complaint form from another manager in that player's division, the Board will then submit the Complaint to the remaining teams in the division for feedback indicating agreement or disagreement with the complaint.
- b. Teams must share and discuss the Complaint form with their entire team and respond with a supporting statement within seven (7) days of notification.
- c. A team official may email the Board to request further information about the player.
- d. All teams must indicate agreement or disagreement with the Complaint.
- e. Each team's statement must be emailed to the President or appropriate Division Director by the stated deadline.
- f. The President or Division Director will then review and discuss the response statements with the other board members and announce the result along with the supporting reasons to all of the teams in the affected division.
- g. A team official will be subject to Board discipline if evidence is presented to the Board that the team official did not share and discuss the Complaint form with her entire team. The player who is subject to a player review complaint may still play with her team during the voting period. A player who receives a majority of YES votes will become immediately ineligible to play

within that division for the remainder of the season. A player who becomes ineligible to play within a division may seek a release and transfer to a team within the League in a higher division.

6. APPEAL PROCESS

- a. A player who is negatively affected by a player review Complaint may appeal in writing (email is sufficient) one time to the Board within seven (7) days of notification of the decision announced by the Board.
- b. The appeal must be submitted on the Player Eligibility Appeal Form. The Board is not required to hold a hearing on the appeal request. A player must be able to show by a preponderance of the evidence that the complaint review process was biased, unfair, or defective. Appeals submitted which do not conform to this standard will be rejected.
- c. The Board will review the Player Eligibility Appeal within seven (7) days and decide to either affirm or reverse the original decision. Any Board member(s) who participates/plays in the affected division under review may abstain from voting during this process.
- d. The Secretary will then count the votes and announce the result to the player under review/appeal and to the affected division managers.

VII. PLAYER RECRUITMENT

A. IN-SEASON

During the regular season, no coach, manager, player or other team official connected with a registered league team may directly or indirectly entice, influence, contact or otherwise recruit a player rostered on another league team without written approval by the player's team official. Those found in violation of this rule are subject to disciplinary action by the Board.

B. OFF-SEASON

Upon conclusion of the Ruicci Cup playoffs and before the next official season begins (September 1st), team officials are free to approach any player(s) for recruiting purposes.

VIII. TEAM MEMBERSHIP

A. REGISTRATION

1. Players may sign a USA Hockey Team roster registration form ONLY after August 15th of the upcoming season.
2. All members of a team (i.e. players, managers, coaches) must register with accurate demographic and playing history information via the League website.

B. APPLICATIONS

1. All team managers must complete and electronically submit a preliminary roster/application on the approved form to the President no later than July 31st reflecting their intent to participate in the upcoming season.
2. Entry of a team into the League must be approved by a majority vote of the Board.
3. New teams are accepted on a probationary status for one (1) season and are subject to a confirming acceptance vote at the conclusion of one (1) season by the Board.
4. Every question/field about each player must be completed on the application. "N/A" as an answer will invalidate an application unless the Board approves the answer as acceptable.
5. A team application must have at least eight (8) skaters and preferably one (1) goalie.
6. Divisional placement of the team will be at the sole discretion of the Board.

C. MANAGERS

Every team is required to have a minimum of two (2) managers/contacts. Teams may have more representatives if they so desire.

D. ROSTERS

1. To obtain a copy of your official USA Hockey roster, please request it from your Division Director. Official USA Hockey Rosters are required to participate in any USA Hockey Sanctioned Tournament.
2. The Registrar should be given sufficient time to complete this process. Delays of a Registrar's processing schedule are not the responsibility of the Board. Registrars are volunteers with USA Hockey and should be treated with respect, including giving ample time for processing rosters.
3. Teams cannot make changes to their official roster after January 31st. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in suspension of league play until the Original or Addendum Official USA Hockey Roster is received and also the forfeiture of any games that the illegal player/team participated in on the schedule of the offending team.
4. It is solely each team manager's responsibility to ensure that his/her paperwork is properly completed and approved by the Board. Board members, MAHA representatives, or USA Hockey officials are NOT responsible for ensuring that an individual team has properly completed their team's paperwork and been approved to play before playing in any league sanctioned games.

E. DUAL ROSTERING

A player may only register with one USA Hockey team at a time except as noted below:

1. Female players are allowed to play for more than one (1) team in DIFFERENT LEAGUES including playing in adult men's leagues and/or house leagues, but no MSWHL player may play on another MSWHL team regardless of Division.
2. A player cannot be registered with more than one (1) team that participates in games leading towards a State and/or National Championship.
3. If a team is State/National bound, any player added to a registered team after the League game schedule has begun cannot participate in any team activities (league games and scrimmages) until

a MAHA signed/sealed copy of the roster add-on (addendum) and updated application have been forwarded and approved by the President or other Board member.

IX. TEAM MOVEMENT

A. DIVISION ASSIGNMENT

1. The Board shall exercise exclusive authority and discretion to place each team in the appropriate division, ultimately striving for skill parity within each division. Teams will be placed based on the overall best interests of the league.
2. The season is typically divided into two halves. The first half occurs from approximately October 1st to December 31st. The second half occurs from approximately January 1st to March 31st.
3. The Board will review each division's standings at the end of the first half to determine if any movement is necessary and may move teams accordingly.

B. APPEAL OF DIVISION ASSIGNMENT

1. A division change for a team may be requested in writing by a team official with supporting evidence either within 14 days after the proposed divisions have been initially announced or within 7 days after any revisions by the Board in August, or between December 1st and December 15th.
2. A team may be moved for reasons including but not limited to: new to the league, substantial player changes, significant improvement or challenges during the first half of the season, or placement at what they perceive to be an inappropriate level.
3. A division change request must be approved by a majority vote of the Board members.

X. SCHEDULING OF COMPETITIONS

A. SEASON

League games typically occur between October 1st and the third week in March. All League games should be scheduled within this period. All teams must purchase enough ice to complete their scheduled home games and required rescheduled games. Only games canceled by the Board are not required to be rescheduled. Teams should seek Board approval before canceling a game because of any exception listed below in section X.D.1.a.

B. MASTER SCHEDULE

The master schedule of each division as posted on the league website will be considered a commitment by teams to make every effort to play the entire schedule. Team officials are responsible for reviewing the master schedule for accuracy and inform the Scheduler/Division Director of any errors, discrepancies, or changes to the master schedule, within seven (7) days after receipt.

C. SCRIMMAGES

1. All scrimmages in Michigan will be governed by USA/MAHA rules.
2. Scrimmages posted on the master schedule MUST be noted as scrimmages, not games.
3. Scrimmages will not count toward league/division standings.

D. RESCHEDULING PROCEDURES

1. A team manager who wishes to reschedule a game should contact both of the opposing team officials as soon as possible but must contact them no later than 72 hours before a game.

- a. Exceptions to the 72 hour Rescheduling Rule shall include the following:
 - i. Extreme Weather: A Traveler's Advisory broadcast for severe weather and hazardous driving conditions by the National Weather Bureau for either the home or visiting team's area adopted by the Board;
 - ii. Arena Closure: Mechanical breakdown or loss of power; or
 - iii. Personal Tragedy: Injury accident in transit to the rink or death of a team member within 72 hours.
 - b. If one of the above three exceptions occur, the team not able to participate in the game must contact the opposing team and officials as soon as it is determined that the team is unable to make the game. If a team official is unreachable by phone, SMS/text, or email, a message must be left to the opposing team official. If there is an alternate team official, then efforts to reach the alternate must be made in the same manner. If no team official is reachable by phone, a Division Director or alternate Board Director must be notified. Notice of contact attempts by the canceling team must be given to the Division Director as well by email, SMS/text, or telephone call as soon as possible.
2. Contact must be made by phone, email, and/or SMS/text, stating the date and time of game requesting to be rescheduled along with a reason for the rescheduling request.
 3. One of the opposing team officials must respond to a request to reschedule within two (2) days of the date and time of the email, SMS/text with either a yes or no. If no response is received within this time period, the Division Director should be notified to assist with contacting the opposing team.
 4. The opposing team has the right to deny a request to reschedule a game without good cause. It is solely the opposing team's choice to agree to reschedule.
 5. Teams will be allowed two (2) reschedule requests per season. Further reschedule requests must be approved by the Board before being communicated to the opposing team.
 6. Any schedule change must be submitted to the affected teams and Division Director by email within three (3) days with a confirmation that the email was received.
 7. If the opposing team agrees to reschedule a game, the agreement must be in writing and communicated to the other team official and Division Director. The team that canceled the game is required to propose at least two (2) reasonable dates to reschedule the original game. If the other team is unable to play on either date for good cause, it must offer two (2) alternative dates to reschedule. If either team fails to cooperate during this rescheduling process, the Board will decide who should forfeit the game.
 8. Any misunderstandings as to a game time, location, or date will result in a forfeit by the team at fault and the forfeiting team will be responsible for the costs of the officials and scorekeeper of the forfeited game. The Board may determine which team is at fault.
 9. Fees: If a rescheduled game is scheduled to be played on the visiting team's home ice, then the originally scheduled home team assumes the costs for the referees and scorekeeper. The visiting "home" team may schedule the referees for the game unless it is agreed upon otherwise with their opponent. If the visiting "home" team uses the actual home team's referees and scorekeeper, the fee amount must be discussed and agreed upon before game day.

E. CANCELLATIONS

If a team decides to cancel a game and does not attempt to reschedule, that team's official must give at least seventy-two (72) hour notice to the other team's official and to their Division Director. The opposing team is not required to reschedule a canceled game and it will be a forfeit for statistical purposes. The reasons listed below are insufficient reasons to cancel a game:

1. Lack of Players: If a team can ice six (6) players, with or without a goalie, it must play the game.
2. Tournament: If a team decides to play in a tournament after the master schedule has been posted.
3. Goalie is unavailable: If no substitute goalie can be found, the game must be played without a goalie.
4. An assumed prediction of unsportsmanlike behavior based on previous scrimmages or games between the opposing teams.

F. FORFEITS

1. A game shall be considered a forfeit if:
 - a. A team cancels a game with no attempt to reschedule.
 - b. A team cannot ice six (6) players at game time with or without a goalie.
 - c. A team plays an ineligible, suspended, non-registered, or non-rostered player.
 - d. A team plays with an ineligible, suspended or non-registered coach or assistant coach performing in his/her capacity on the players' bench;
 - e. Notification of cancellation occurs less than seventy-two (72) hours before the originally scheduled game time (see exceptions above);
 - f. A team cancels a game in the last two (2) weeks of the season.
 - g. A team cancels a game after Ruicci Cup.
2. Consequences
 - a. The forfeiting team is liable to the non-canceling team for actual expenses incurred for ice, referees, and scorekeepers.
 - b. Monies owed to a team for a forfeit must be paid within ten (10) days. The forfeiting team will receive a 0-1 loss in the League standings. The non-forfeiting team will receive a 1-0 win in the League standings.
 - c. Players on the forfeiting team serving suspensions may NOT count the game towards fulfilling a suspension, nor toward a game count for State Tournaments (if applicable). Players on the non-forfeiting team MAY count the game towards fulfilling a suspension.
 - d. After three (3) forfeits, a team will be suspended from the League. That team's remaining games will be canceled and prior games will be omitted from the League statistics and standings. Exceptions to this rule will only be made if the team can present evidence that extenuating circumstances occurred and the Board approves the exception.

G. STANDINGS

1. All statistics will be posted in a timely manner throughout the season on the league's official website. Standings in each division will be determined by a point system as follows:
 - a. Win = 2 points
 - b. Tie = 1 point

- c. Loss/forfeit = 0 points
- 2. In the event of a tie in points, end of season standings will be determined in the following order:
 - a. Win/loss record between teams involved.
 - b. Total goals for in games between the teams involved.
 - c. Total goals against in games between the teams involved.
 - d. Fewest penalty minutes throughout the season between the teams involved.
 - e. Time of the earliest goal scored in the team's first game involving a goal.
 - f. Longest length of time in total game minutes until the first penalty was received.

XI. LEAGUE GAME PROCEDURES

A. HOME TEAM OBLIGATIONS

1. The home team will furnish game pucks, a scorekeeper, at least fifty (50) minutes of ice time, adequate dressing room facilities for each team, and an official League scoresheet. Games must start no later than five (5) minutes into the curfew clock unless there are extenuating circumstances. Teams that are chronically late onto the ice to start a game will be reviewed by the Board for disciplinary action.
2. The home team is responsible for all costs of a home game, which include the ice rental fee, payment of two (2) USA Hockey Level 3 referees, and payment of a scorekeeper who has been trained to operate the time clock at the home rink.

B. UNIFORMS

1. Home teams will wear white/light colored jerseys. Visiting teams will wear dark/non-white colored jerseys.
2. In the event of uniform color similarities, the visiting team will defer to the home team. It is recommended that players have both their home and away jerseys with them at every game in case a conflict arises.
3. In the event that a team only has one jersey color, the manager(s) of that team must contact the opposing team managers ahead of time to request appropriate jersey changes.

C. PARTICIPANTS

1. Per USA Hockey rules, only players in uniform and Coaches are permitted to occupy the bench during games. Any person on the players' bench during a League sanctioned game must be registered with USA Hockey. This includes coaches, managers or any other team official.

2. A maximum of four (4) registered team officials can be on the bench during a game.
3. The minimum number of players on a team is nine (9), including a goalie.
4. The maximum number of players to be rostered on a team is twenty-five (25).
5. The maximum number of players who may be dressed during a game is twenty (20) including two (2) goaltenders.
6. A maximum of one (1) captain and two (2) alternate captains are permitted for each team. Captains and alternates must be marked with a “C” or an “A” on their front chest area, or so designated on the official scoresheet.

D. GAME LENGTH

1. All League games will consist of three (3) ten (10) minute, stop-time periods, with the exception of D0. D0 teams may host league games that last up to 90 minutes, or three (3) twenty (20) minute periods.
2. There will be running time in the last five (5) minutes of a league game if the score differential is four (4) or more goals.
3. The home team will establish if the curfew clock is being utilized before the start of the game. or if the game will be allowed to run over the curfew clock for those that have extra ice.
4. If the home team does not establish if the curfew clock is being utilized before the start of the game and there is not sufficient time to finish a stop-time period due to curfew, the referees may decide to run the clock for the remainder of the game.
5. Teams must adhere to curfew clock unless both team managers agree otherwise prior to continuing play past curfew clock.

E. TIME OUTS

1. Zero time-outs will be allowed during regular season games.
2. Ruicci Cup rules do allow for time-outs (see Section XXII. F. 3).

F. CONDUCT

1. The team officials as well as the player will be responsible for the conduct of their team before, during, and after league games.
2. Team officials can be held responsible for any misconduct of their team regardless if they had knowledge of the misconduct.
3. Consumption, use, or abuse of non-prescriptive mood-altering substances one hour before or during a game is strictly prohibited. The offending player reported to the Board will be subject to disciplinary action by the Board.

G. SPECTATORS

Each team official will take action to ensure that spectators are not abusive to officials, players, other team coaches, team officials, or other spectators. Failure to do so may result in that team’s suspension or game forfeiture.

XII. SCORESHEETS

A. SCOREKEEPER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The home team is responsible for providing at least one (1) person to work as the game

scorekeeper.

2. The scorekeeper is considered to be a minor official.
3. The scorekeeper must be at least twelve (12) years-old.
4. Complaints brought to the Board's attention against a scorekeeper are considered complaints against the home team and will be addressed in that manner.

B. DIRECTIONS FOR COMPLETION

1. Team names, date, location, division, referees names, and game number must be noted before the game starts.
2. If the game is a rescheduled one, the original date of the game and that it is a "rescheduled" game with the new date of the game must be noted on the scoresheet.
3. Only players who are participating in that game should be listed on the scoresheet. The team official of each team should review the list of players and make the necessary changes before signing the game sheet. Players' names who are absent for that particular game must be crossed out on each copy if triplicates are being used. Suspended players must be noted with an "S" next to their crossed off name. If using a label, a player's name that is not on the label must be written in on each triplicate copy. Name on the scoresheet must match the name on the registration form submitted.
4. If there is a change in the jersey number for any player, that detail must be noted legibly.
5. Team captain and alternate captains must be noted by placing a "C" or an "A" next to the respective names.
6. The designated goalie for the game must be marked with a "G" next to her name.
7. If a team does not have a non-playing coach present, a player must be identified as a team official(s) by placing the words "coach" or "asst. coach" next to their respective names.
8. The coach(s)/team official(s) should sign the completed scoresheet PRIOR to the beginning of the game.
9. The referees must legibly print or sign the scoresheet at the conclusion of the game.
10. Only scoresheets provided by the league should be used unless reasonable extenuating circumstances exist. If using a non-league scoresheet, extenuating circumstances must be noted on that scoresheet or an emailed explanation should be included when submitting it.
11. When a goal is scored, the scorekeeper must make sure that the jersey number given by the referee of the goal scorer, and assistant(s), if any, is on the scoresheet, along with the period and the time in which the goal was scored.
12. If/when a penalty is assessed, the scorekeeper must make sure the correct jersey number, along with penalty code, given by the referee, period and time at which the penalty was incurred, along with penalty duration (i.e. 2:00; 4:00, 10:00, etc.), are all marked clearly on the scoresheet.
13. If the scorekeeper cannot hear the referee or does not understand what was said, the scorekeeper should ask for clarification.
14. If any game misconduct penalties are assessed, the scorekeeper must make sure the referee indicates the number of games on the scoresheet.
15. Any inaccuracies noticed by a team official post-game must be corrected and verified by both team officials and reported to the Division Director.

C. MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. A team official is responsible before and after a game to make sure the scorekeeper is competent and knows how to properly keep time and fill out a scoresheet, to verify and sign the scoresheet before the game, to make sure that the game sheet is accurate and legible at the conclusion of the game and that the referees sign it, to retrieve a copy of the scoresheet at the end of the game, to understand the scoresheet process and take an active role in making sure that everyone else understands what the responsibilities are with regard to scoresheets and scorekeeping procedures.
2. An official from the winning team (or home team in the event of a tie) is responsible for delivering or emailing a scanned PDF replica of the scoresheet to her division director within a reasonable period (48 hours) after the conclusion of a game but no later than 72 hours after the game.
3. If a team official is unable to scan a scoresheet into a PDF file, the manager must contact the division director to make alternate arrangements, but minimally should relay the outcome of the game.
4. Failure to respond to a request for a scoresheet to the division director within 7 days after a game will result in a forfeit by the team responsible for delivering the scoresheet.
5. If a suspension occurs during the game (e.g. game misconduct penalty), the offending team's manager must report it to the league president and/or division director within 24 hours after the game.

D. RECORDKEEPING

1. The top white copy of the scoresheet of each game will become a permanent League record and must be signed by the referees and scorekeeper immediately following the game.
2. Nothing may be added or deleted from the record copy (white copy) of the scoresheet unless witnessed and initialed by the attending referee(s).
3. The top white scoresheet should match the triplicate yellow and pink copies.
4. Discrepancies on the triplicate copies will be reviewed by the Board for possible tampering and disciplinary action.
5. The official scoresheet is used to determine whether players have participated in the appropriate number of games for purposes of state and national qualification and for league statistics. Whether or not a player receives credit for playing in a game is determined by the proper authority's ability to read the game sheet. Illegible game sheets may result in players being denied participation in a state or national tournament, even though the player may have in fact played the required number of games. If a team intends to play in the state tournament, the team official will need a copy of the scoresheets as proof that both the team and players have the required number of games.

E. ERRORS

1. A scoresheet that is illegible will not be counted as an official scoresheet and will result in a forfeit of the game by the offending team.
2. A scoresheet missing required information will be reviewed by the Board and the offending team notified of the error.
3. Teams that incur three scoresheet errors may result in suspension of the team's manager(s).
4. The Board reserves the right to decide when enforcement of this rule is appropriate.

XIII. GOALIE BORROWING POLICY

A. SHORT-TERM CIRCUMSTANCES

1. A team's designated or primary goaltender will not be allowed to skate out so that a team may use a borrowed goalie to improve the number of skaters for a game or to increase a team's chance of winning.
2. Borrowing a goalie is to be used if a team only has one goaltender and she is unable to play because of illness, injury, family emergency or any other unforeseen emergency.
3. The opposing team must be verbally notified of the borrowed goalie's name and the team she normally plays for prior to the start of the game and noted on the scoresheet that a sub is being used. Failure to enter the name and team of the borrowed goalie on the game sheet prior to the start of the game will result in a forfeit of that game.
4. The Board reserves the right to review this policy on a game to game basis and take disciplinary action against any team deemed to be abusing this policy.
5. If a team exhausts all available options, and as long as both team managers agree, a higher level goalie who is registered in the league is allowed to play for a team in a lower division for that designated game only. Teams must also notify their division director that a higher level goalie has been agreed upon by noting it on the scoresheet.

B. LONG-TERM CIRCUMSTANCES

1. A team may not use a borrowed goalie in more than 25% of its LEAGUE games.
2. If extenuating circumstances exist, (e.g. prolonged injury to a team's only goaltender, pregnancy, etc.), a team may petition the Board via general appeal requesting that the 25% provision be increased.
3. A borrowed goalie must be rostered on a current League team and may only sub within her division or in a higher division unless approved to sub lower by the board.
4. Recreational goaltenders who regularly skate out on a League team but who have an interest in goaltending and wish to learn how to play the position but lack the skill to play in her own division or higher must notify the Board of their intent to be placed on the goalie substitution list.
5. After evaluation by the Board, the recreational goaltender will be placed on the list specifying the division or divisions in which she is eligible to substitute. The following table will generally apply:

DIVISION	MAY SUB FOR	MAY NOT SUB FOR
0-1	0 and 1	2, 3, 4, 5, or 6
2	1 and 2	3, 4, 5, or 6
3	1, 2, or 3	4, 5 or 6
4	1, 2, 3, or 4	5 or 6
5	1, 2, 3, or 4	6
6	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6	N/A

XIV. EQUIPMENT and TEAM FEES

USA Hockey Rules 301 to 308 and MAHA rules apply to all uniforms and equipment in this League. Refer to their respective websites for complete explanations.

A. TEAM EQUIPMENT OWNERSHIP

1. Teams are responsible for internally managing the ownership of their jerseys and socks. If team jerseys are to remain the property of the team, the team official is responsible for communicating this policy before the season begins and may collect a deposit to ensure that the individual player jersey is returned. Jerseys purchased by individual players are property of that player.
2. Failure to return the jersey to the team official in a timely manner will entitle the team official to reimbursement (or retaining of the deposit) by/of the offending player.
3. All other equipment including team pucks, coaching aids, team records, and any other materials considered to be the property of the team, must be returned to the team official or at such time when a player, manager, or coach leaves her current League team.
4. Failure of a player to return equipment may result in suspension of that player or individual from all league activities until said equipment has been returned or reimbursed.

C. FEES OWED TO A TEAM

1. All monies reasonably owed by any League player to her current League team must be paid in full at the end of each season (e.g., by April of the current season), or at such time as any MSWHL player leaves her current MSWHL team, before she can register with another League team.
2. Failure to do so will result in said player's suspension from all league activities until such financial issues have been resolved. Team equipment or dues issues must be brought to the Board's attention by May 31st or the team forfeits the right of the League to enforce this rule.

XV. REFEREES

A. GAME REQUIREMENTS

1. Every effort should be made to secure two (2) level 3 USA Hockey certified officials for every game.
2. The home team is responsible for scheduling in advance of the game the referees and has discretion to use referees of their choice.
3. The League does not control which referees a team chooses to use as long as they meet the minimum requirements stated above.
4. If a team agrees to play a home game on another team's ice, the home team is still responsible to schedule the referees and is not required to use the visiting team's referees.
5. Officials are required to be the first and last persons on the ice at all games. It will be the responsibility of the home team to remind the officials of this requirement.
6. Only the playing captain or any alternate may talk to or confer with the referees.

B. ABSENCES

1. It is up to each team to take an active role in the communication process with the referees they choose to use through a referee scheduler. Each team should discuss the League's purpose and rules, differences between men's and women's hockey, that the MSWHL games follow red-line (center ice) icing instead of blue line (offensive/defensive zone line) icing, and any other conflicts or questions that may arise. MAHA provides a Referee-in-Chief for every district.

2. A team official should be any team's first point of contact if a team is having problems with a referee(s).
3. If difficulties arise in communicating with the opposing team official or referee scheduler, a division director may become involved to help resolve the problem.
4. Referees are subject to suspension from officiating a team, a division, and or the entire league at the board's discretion.

C. INCAPACITATION

1. If a referee becomes incapacitated during a game such that (s)he cannot finish it, arrangements should be made, whenever possible, to be able to continue the game in a reasonable time frame while following the guidelines outlined in the rule (see USA Hockey Rule Reference 501c).
2. An attempt must be made to locate a USA Hockey registered official who is either in the arena, or who lives close by, and who is able/willing to step in and complete the game. Ideally, identifying a second registered official who can work would allow the game to be played using the two-official system. However, the game could be played, or continued, provided there is one registered official present and both team officials agree to play the game under these circumstances.
3. An alternative arrangement could include that each coach agrees to appoint a referee and one player from each team to serve as linesman.

D. EXCLUSIONS

1. A referee cannot participate as a referee in a League game when rostered as a coach, player, or team manager in that same division.
2. A referee may not officiate a game in another division in which a relative, spouse or significant other is a coach, manager, team official or player of one of the participating teams without advanced consent.
3. The team manager has the burden to notify both teams of any relationship noted above in advance and obtain consent to play the game from both teams.
 - a. If consent is given, no further action is required.
 - b. If consent is denied, that referee must recuse himself/herself from the game and relinquish any monies related to the game in question.

XVI. PENALTIES AND SUSPENSIONS

A. THE LEAGUE "DOUBLE" RULE FOR ALL SUSPENSION PENALTIES

If a player receives a game misconduct, the player will obtain a suspension for balance of game, plus the next scheduled League game, plus one extra consecutive game. The game cannot be a scrimmage.

B. REVIEW and ENFORCEMENT

The Board will periodically review the number and type of penalties accumulated by a player or team and may, in the interest of sportsmanship and safety, take whatever action it deems necessary to eliminate such problems in the future.

C. ON-ICE INFRACTIONS

Generally speaking, on-ice infractions, such as minor penalties, accumulation of penalties, game misconduct, and any other issues not covered directly by the League rules will be governed by MAHA

and USA Hockey rules.

1. Minor penalty: Two minutes (2:00)
2. Major penalty:
 - a. Five minutes (5:00)
 - b. A second major penalty in the same game carries a suspension for the balance of game, plus the next scheduled League game, plus one extra game per the League “Double” rule.
3. Misconduct: Ten minutes (10:00)
4. Game Misconduct:
 - a. Suspension for balance of game, plus the next scheduled League game, plus one extra game per the League “Double” rule.
 - b. Any player, coach, manager or team official who receives three (3) game misconducts in one season is immediately suspended from further participation in the league and must come before the Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting for a discipline hearing for possible further action.
 - c. If a team receives any penalties for which the head coach would receive a game misconduct, the designated head coach will serve the misconduct and must leave the game.
 - d. If the player designated as the head coach is given a game misconduct, then the player designated as assistant coach will take on the same responsibilities as a non-playing assistant coach.
 - e. If no player has been identified as the assistant coach, or if the player designated as the assistant coach is also given a game misconduct, then the game will be forfeited by that team.
5. Fighting:
 - a. Any player receiving a major penalty for fighting automatically receives a game misconduct penalty and is suspended for her next two (2) League games per the League “Double” rule.
 - b. Any player who receives three (3) fighting majors in one season is immediately suspended from further play and must come before the Board for a discipline hearing for possible further action.
6. “Third Man In”:
 - a. A game misconduct penalty must be imposed on any player or goaltender who is the first to intervene in an altercation already in progress between two opposing players.
 - b. The League “Double” rule will apply.

D. OFF-ICE INFRACTIONS

1. Off-ice infractions refer to conduct exhibited by players, managers, coaches, team officials, and teams and may be cited at league and non-league functions.
2. “Good Sportsmanship” is expected from anyone representing the League, and members shall conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times.
3. The Board will use its discretion in the case of multiple infractions.
4. Any disciplinary circumstances not elsewhere covered in these Rules and Regulations will be assigned to the Board for a hearing to be conducted by the President.

E. MATCH PENALTIES

1. All “Match” penalties must be reported by an official from the offending team to the following entities:

- a. The League Board (within 24 hours of completion of the game)
 - b. The District Council Chairperson (or proxy District Council Director) where the player or team official is registered (within 24 hours of completion of the game)
 - c. The MAHA Girls/Women's Director of all matters of suspension which involve female players or the team officials of female teams.
2. A referee (preferably who assigned this penalty) in the game has the following responsibilities:
 - a. Reporting the penalty to the District Supervisor of Officials where the affected player or team official is registered (within 24 hours of completion of the game)
 - b. Completion and submission of the "Official Game Report" form, along with a copy of the original game scoresheet within 48 hours of the incident to the following:
 - i. the Supervisor of District Officials of the affected District
 - ii. the Reporting Referee
3. Hearings
 - a. A player or team official receiving a Match penalty is automatically suspended from all amateur hockey activities until a hearing is scheduled by the proper authorities.
 - b. A mandatory hearing by the proper authorities will be held and a decision made relative to any further disciplinary action within thirty (30) days of the incident.
 - c. If extenuating circumstances prevent the proper authorities from conducting the mandatory hearing the player or team official will be automatically reinstated.
 - d. The reporting referee will personally attend or be represented at any hearing held concerning the penalty.
 - e. The Girls/Women's Director shall be given the opportunity by the District Council to attend the hearing.
 - f. See listings in MAHA Annual Guide or at www.MAHA.org for contact information, forms, and procedures
 4. Failure to comply with any of the above procedures may result in disciplinary action against the offending individuals.
 5. The Board may further penalize a player cited for a Match penalty up to and including suspension for the remainder of the season.

F. CUMULATIVE PENALTIES

1. For Players
 - a. Any player receiving a cumulative total of three (3) minor penalties within one (1) game will be immediately ejected for the remainder of that game with no further suspension (i.e. League "Double" rule will not apply).
 - b. A player designated by the coach of the ejected player's team must serve the third penalty.
2. For Teams
 - a. A team accumulating eight (8) or more minor penalties during the same game must notify the Board within 48 hours of the game.
 - b. The team officials are required to attend the next regular scheduled Board meeting for review and the Board reserves the right to suspend the team from playing further League games pending review by the Board for further disciplinary action.

- c. The Board reserves the right to designate which team players or officials will serve any further suspensions. The League “Double” rule does not apply.
3. For Team Officials
 - a. Up to two primary team officials who attended the game and whose team receives 8 or more penalties during one game will be suspended for the next scheduled game of that team.
 - b. The Board reserves the right to designate which team officials will serve the suspension. The League “Double” rule does not apply.

G. SUSPENSION PROTOCOLS

1. Any player receiving a suspension for which there are not enough regular season league games left will miss the necessary Ruicci Cup games or following season League games to complete their suspension.
2. Any suspended player must leave the ice surface or bench immediately and go directly to the locker room.
3. A suspended player or team official is not permitted on her team’s bench, in the locker room, nor permitted to be a minor official for any league games.
4. The suspended player’s name must be listed on the next game(s) scoresheet with an “S” and game # of # game suspension” written beside it.
5. The suspended player does not have to attend the game to get “credit” for serving a game suspension.
6. If a player or coach is removed from a USA Hockey roster for disciplinary reasons, the President and Division Director must be notified within 24 hours of his/her removal.

H. REPORTING PERIOD FOR SUSPENSIONS

1. All penalties incurred during League games which carry any suspension for future games must be reported by an official of the team incurring such penalty to the league president and/or division director within 24 hours of completion of that game.
2. If a team incurring such penalty is scheduled to play another game within a 24 hour period, the penalty must be reported prior to that team’s next scheduled game.
3. Any team found out of compliance with this rule will incur an additional one game suspension added to the player’s original suspension AND suspension of that team’s official for that team’s next scheduled League game.

XVII. COMPLAINTS

A. PROCEDURES

Complaints may be filed against any player, team, team official or incident arising from participation in League events. However, the following procedures must be followed:

1. The complainant submitting the formal complaint MUST be a team official who was PRESENT at the game in question. Complaint to be submitted to appropriate division director.
2. The complainant must first attempt to communicate, face to face or via phone (NOT via text nor via email) with the opposing team official no sooner than 48 hours and no later than 7 days after the

conclusion of the game to attempt to resolve the dispute informally.

3. If both team officials are unable to resolve the dispute between them, ONLY then may a formal written complaint be filed to the Board of Directors.
4. Formal written complaints are to be reported to the Board or Division Director by email no sooner than 7 days and no later than 14 days after the incident in dispute.
5. The Complaint form, found under the “forms” section of the League website must be filled out completely. Specific information (i.e. player names or jersey numbers, referee names, actual acts on/off the ice), regarding each incident should be included on the complaint form.

B. RESPONSE

1. All written/formal complaints will be reviewed by the Board within 7 days after receipt, at the next League meeting, or at a special meeting called by the Board.
2. The Board will gather information and conduct an investigation by contacting the involved people.
3. Any person under investigation may be suspended from the league during the review period if the Board deems it in the best interest of the league.
4. The Board may request certain people appear for a hearing or special meeting prior to making a decision. Failure of a person to appear for a hearing without Board approval will preclude that person from presenting information outside of the hearing.
5. Written notification of the Board’s decision will be sent to all concerned people.
6. Other discretionary action may be imposed according to the nature and severity of the offense.

XVIII. INELIGIBLE/ILLEGAL PLAYERS

A. Punishment for team official

A team official who knowingly allows the participation of an ineligible player or coach in any game will be subject to a suspension recommendation of not less than one (1) year per MAHA rules.

B. Punishment for the suspended/illegal player

A player, coach, manager and/or team official who knowingly participates in a game as an ineligible player or coach, manager and/or team official, will be suspended for not fewer than thirty (30) days per MAHA rules.

C. Scrimmages

Provided that officials from both teams are aware of and in agreement of any roster change during a scrimmage, scrimmages are exempt from the ineligible/illegal player rules.

XIX. GAME PROTESTS

A. Timing

A protest requesting a game be considered illegal may be lodged prior to a game, during a game, or within fifteen (15) minutes after the completion of a game.

B. Documentation

A protested game must be noted immediately by at least one (1) opposing team official, one (1) scorekeeper, and (1) referee. If a protest arises, the original scoresheet must show the following:

1. The words "Game Protested" on the front of the original scoresheet below the coaches signatures;
2. Proper signatures (and printed names) of the person(s) protesting must be included.

C. Notification

1. Notice of protest must be reported to the Division Director or the President within 24 hours of the game.
2. The protesting team official must notify the Division Director by phone within 24 hours of the game's conclusion.

D. Protest Fee

1. Within forty-eight (48) hours after the completion of a protested game, the protesting team must submit a formal written account of the protest, along with a \$50 protest fee, to the President or Division Director.
2. The Board will rule on the protest within seven (7) days after receipt of the scoresheet and the \$50 fee. The \$50 is refundable if the protest is upheld.

XX. APPEALS

A. FILING PROCEDURE

1. The appealing party (appellant) must submit, at a minimum, a written statement ("Appeal" located in the forms section of the MSWHL.com website) of why the complaint, suspension, protest, fine, discipline, or administrative action should be reversed or modified.
2. The appeal may only include newly discovered information that was not presented during the initial ruling process. If the new evidence could have been reasonably obtained prior to the hearing, it will not be considered new evidence and the Appeal will be dismissed.
3. The appeal must be delivered to the Board within seven (7) days of the date of receipt of the board's notification of its decision.
4. If the appeal notice is not received by the Board within the seven (7) day period, the suspension, discipline or administrative action is final and must be served.

B. HEARING

1. The Board may hold a hearing or consider the appeal on the written submissions of the parties to the appeal and establish other hearing rules so long as each party is treated as equal as possible.
2. Notice of a hearing, if any, will be given to all parties within seven (7) days' notice.
3. If a League member is asked to appear at a meeting and fails to attend, no appeal will be permitted for that person.

C. DECISION

1. The Board will decide on the appeal within seven to fourteen (7-14) days from its date of receipt.
2. The Board's decision will be in writing and state findings of facts and conclusions for its decision and emailed to the appealing party.
3. The Board may affirm, reverse, or modify (including increase or decrease the term of suspension) any decision as it deems proper under the circumstances before it.

D. BAR OF FURTHER APPEALS

Except for suspensions of Affiliate Associations (MAHA) and expulsions of any person or organization from USA Hockey, no further appeals are allowed on the incident in question and all administrative remedies will be deemed exhausted.

XXI. DISCRETIONARY DISCIPLINE ACTION BY BOARD

A. USA Hockey/MAHA rules will preside, with the following additions and interpretations:

1. The League Board can impose immediate disciplinary action regarding the offensive conduct of any team, player, coach, manager, team official or other participant of the League with or without a formal complaint.
2. Probation, game suspensions, and league suspensions may be imposed.
3. Discretionary action may be adjusted according to the nature and severity of the offense.
4. Any player or team may be subject to dismissal from the League for non-payment of fees or for gross violations of the rules as determined by the Board.

B. DURATION of SUSPENSION or DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Any suspension, discipline or administrative action will be in force and effect until it expires or the Board modifies it.

XXII. RUICCI CUP

A. PLAYOFFS

1. The Ruicci Cup Playoffs will be held on a date determined by the Board each year by November and announced to the League. It most often occurs over the third or fourth weekend in March, including possible Thursday and/or Friday night contests depending on the number of teams participating.
2. All teams participating in the regular season are encouraged but NOT mandated to participate.

B. ROSTER REQUIREMENTS

1. Players must meet all of the regular season requirements outlined in this handbook.
2. A registered player and coach must be rostered with her team no later than January 31st of the current season to be eligible to participate in the Ruicci Cup.
3. With the exception of goalies, players must have played in at least 33% of her team's regular season games before her team's first scheduled Ruicci Cup game.
4. Goalies must have played in at least two league games, either with their team or as a sub for another team.
5. Special requests for a player or coach waiver of the January 31st cutoff date or for substitute players must be made in writing to the Board by the March board meeting.
6. Emergency requests must only be made for good cause (e.g., pregnancy, injury, etc.).
7. Any team with a player or coach not found on the team's official USA roster will be disqualified from the Ruicci Cup.
8. Only players and coaches on a team's official roster are allowed on the team's bench area during a game.
9. All participating players must be listed on the official roster with appropriate designations (e.g.

Captain, Alternate Captain, Goalie, etc.).

C. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR GAMES

1. Home teams will wear light colored jerseys. If a team only has one jersey color, the team official must notify the Ruicci Cup Coordinator(s) or a Board Director to decide the designated home team for that game.
2. Games must start on time.
 - a. All players are asked to be in their locker rooms thirty (30) minutes before their scheduled game time.
 - b. All players MAY be asked to be dressed and ready to play fifteen (15) minutes before a scheduled game time to accommodate rink scheduling.
 - c. If a team is not ready to play at the start of their game, they will forfeit the game.
3. All preliminary games will consist of three (3) ten-minute stop time periods.
 - a. The last 5 minutes of the third period should be running time if the score differential is 4 goals or more.
4. There will be no overtimes nor shoot-outs in preliminary games (up to quarterfinals).
5. Rest between games
 - a. Every effort will be made so that teams will not be scheduled to play more than two (2) games in any one day (refer to Article XXII C 5d. for outstanding circumstances).
 - b. Teams will receive a minimum of four (4) hours rest between the finish of their first game and the start of their second game on any particular day.
 - c. Teams will receive a minimum of twelve hours rest between games played on consecutive days.
 - d. The Board reserves the right to modify the rules outlined above in order to accommodate the scheduling of all games with respect to time constraints and ice availability for the rink.
6. Each team is responsible for turning in locker room keys and for cleaning up their locker room after each game.

D. SEEDING OF TEAMS

1. Participating teams are seeded based on the total number of points earned during the regular season as compiled by the statistician based on the official scoresheets received by a pre-determined date in March (no later than March 15th) an equal number of most recent games played by participating teams, and as follows:
 - a. Two (2) points for a win
 - b. One (1) point for a tie
 - c. Zero (0) points for a loss
2. If a team is moved into a division mid-way through the season, standings will be determined as followed:
 - a. The games and outcomes in the former division to which that team belonged will be discounted in determining standings for the remaining teams.
 - b. The games and outcomes in the most current division to which that team belongs will be counted using a fair and equal number of the most recent games played by all teams since the new team's entry into that division (e.g., the last twelve games for all teams played between

January 1st and March 1st).

3. In the event of a tie in the standings, the following determinations will be applied in the prescribed order to break the tie:
 - a. Head to head points earned (only applies if 2 teams are tied; If more than 2 teams are tied or not all teams involved have played each other an equal number of times, then proceed to next criteria).
 - b. Goals for (GF) minus goals against (GA)
 - c. Most goals for (GF)
 - d. Fewest goals against (GA)
 - e. Fewest penalty minutes
 - f. Earliest goal scored from any preliminary or round robin game
 - g. Longest length of time in prior game minutes before first penalty received.
 - h. Coin toss

E. COMPETITION FORMAT

1. Four-Team Bracket - Requires 7 game sheets of ice (8.5 hours total)

- 4 one-hour sheets of ice (no OT)
- 3 1.5-hour sheets of ice (OT and Shootout possible)
- Three-game round robin based on league seeding:
 - Thursday or Friday night
 - 1 v 4
 - 2 v 3
 - Friday night or Saturday morning
 - 1 v 3
 - 2 v 4
- Reseed teams after two games.
 - Saturday afternoon/evening
 - Semifinal: 1 v 4
 - Semifinal: 2 v 3
 - Sunday afternoon
 - Winners of semifinals advance to championship game.

2. Five-Team Bracket – Requires 9 game sheets of ice (11 hours total)

- 5 one-hour sheets of ice (no OT)
- 4 1.5-hour sheets of ice (OT and Shootout possible)
- Begin with two-game round robin based on league seeding:
 - Thursday or Friday night
 - 2 v 5
 - 3 v 4
 - Friday night or Saturday morning
 - 1 v 5
 - 2 v 3
 - Saturday morning/afternoon
 - 1 v 4

- Reseed teams after two-game round robin:
 - Saturday afternoon/evening
 - Quarterfinal: 4 v 5
 - Saturday evening or Sunday morning
 - Semifinal: 1 v Winner of quarter final
 - Semifinal: 2 v 3
 - Sunday afternoon
 - Winners of semifinals advance to championship game.

3. Six-Team Bracket - Requires 11 game sheets of ice (13.5 hours total)

- 6 one-hour sheets of ice (no OT)
- 5 1.5-hour sheets of ice (OT and Shootout possible)
- Begin two-game round robin based on league seeding. Schedule games in the following order.
 - Thursday or Friday night
 - 1 v 6
 - 2 v 4
 - 3 v 5
 - Friday night or Saturday morning
 - 1 v 5
 - 2 v 6
 - 3 v 4
- Reseed teams after two-game round robin:
 - Saturday morning, afternoon or evening
 - Quarterfinal: 3 v 6
 - Quarterfinal: 4 v 5
 - Saturday evening or Sunday morning
 - Semifinal: 1 v Winner of quarter final 4 v 5
 - Semifinal: 2 v Winner of quarter final 3 v 6
 - Sunday afternoon
 - Winners of semifinals advance to championship game.

4. Seven-Team Bracket – Requires 13 game sheets of ice (16 hours total)

- 7 one-hour sheets of ice (no OT)
- 6 1.5-hour sheets of ice (OT and Shootout possible)
- Begin with two-game round robin based on league seeding:
 - Thursday or Friday
 - 2 v 7
 - 3 v 6
 - 4 v 5
 - Friday or Saturday morning
 - 1 v 7
 - 2 v 5
 - 3 v 4
 - Saturday morning or Saturday afternoon

- 1 v 6
 - Reseed teams after two-game round robin:
Top seed gets a quarterfinal bye.
 - Saturday Evening
 - Quarterfinal (Q1): 6 v 7
 - Quarterfinal (Q2): 2 v 5
 - Quarterfinal (Q3): 3 v 4
 - Sunday Morning/early afternoon
 - Semifinal: Seed 1 v Winner of Q1 between 6 v 7
 - Semifinal: Winner Q2 and Q3
 - Sunday afternoon/evening
 - Winners of semifinals advance to championship game.

5. Eight-Team Bracket - Requires 15 game sheets of ice (18.5 hours total)

- 8 one-hour sheets of ice (no OT)
- 7 1.5-hour sheets of ice (OT and Shootout possible)
- Two-game round robin based on league seeding. Schedule games in the following order on Thursday night, Friday night and Saturday morning.
 - Thursday or Friday
 - 1 v 8
 - 2 v 6
 - 3 v 7
 - 4 v 5
 - Friday or Saturday morning
 - 1 v 7
 - 2 v 8
 - 3 v 5
 - 4 v 6
- Reseed teams after two-game round robin:
 - Saturday morning or Saturday afternoon/evening
 - Quarterfinal (Q1): 1 v 8
 - Quarterfinal (Q2): 2 v 7
 - Quarterfinal (Q3): 3 v 6
 - Quarterfinal (Q4): 4 v 5
 - Saturday evening or Sunday morning
 - Semifinal: Winners Q1 and Q4
 - Semifinal: Winners Q2 and Q3
 - Sunday afternoon
 - Winners of semifinals advance to championship game.

6. Nine- and Ten-Team Bracket Divisions

These divisions require the groups to be split into two groups of 4- or 5-team brackets due to the limitations of tournament length and minimum four-hour between game start time requirements. Below are options for splitting. Division teams should vote on one of the following procedures.

Each team gets one vote. Division director (provided they are not in the division) makes the tiebreaker vote; otherwise, the Board President, Vice President, etc. makes the tiebreaker vote.

- Use league game results for seeding teams into upper and lower divisions. Use closeness/disparity of ranking to determine split of 4 teams pool and 5-team division when there are nine teams.
- Use league game results for seeding teams into two divisions 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 2, 4, 6, 8, 10.
- The Board President randomly draws names for team divisions. Team names are put into a hat. First 4 or 5 teams selected are placed in one division. The remaining teams are in the other division. Seed teams according to order of league game results and follow the 4- or 5-teams bracket schedule.

F. MISCELLANEOUS RULES AND PROVISIONS

1. Overtimes

- a. Preliminary games (defined as games prior to any elimination games)
 - i. At the end of regulation time, if there are ice-time limitations, there will be **no** overtime nor shoot-out.
 - ii. If there is extra ice-time allowed for these games, then tiebreakers will follow the same procedure as in the championship game tiebreaker (see XXII. D.3).
- b. Elimination games (including ALL quarter and semi-final games)
 - i. At the end of regulation time, there will be a four on four (5) five-minute sudden-death victory period.
 - ii. If the game remains tied at the end of the five (5) minutes, there will be a (3) three-player shoot-out.

2. Shoot-outs

- a. Prior to all games, coaches must identify three (3) shoot-out players by placing a star and a number (1, 2, or 3) next to the player's name on the official scoresheet indicating the order in which each player must shoot.
- b. The home team has the right to make their selections after the visiting team.
- c. If a player has a penalty at the end of the overtime period, she will not be permitted to participate in the shoot-out. If that player is part of the selected three players, then the coach will need to select another player, placing that player in the 3rd position of the three-player shootout.
- d. Home team chooses a shooting order (which team shoots first) for shootouts in eligible games.
- e. If the game is still tied after all three shoot-out players have attempted unsuccessfully, then a sudden-death victory shoot-out will occur.
 - i. Each team shall select additional shooter(s) until the tie is broken.
 - ii. The same players cannot shoot twice until all players on the roster have shot once OR the coach of the team with the higher number of active players participating may choose to "start over" choosing players on his/her roster once the opposing team has exhausted their roster.

- iii. The scorekeeper MUST keep track of the order in which every player on each team participating in the shoot-out has shot.
3. Time outs
 - a. Teams will be allowed one (1) one-minute time-out in elimination games only (quarter final, semi-final, finals).
 - b. No time-outs are available in preliminary rounds.
4. Penalty reminders
 - a. All divisions are non-checking.
 - b. Penalties will be strictly enforced according to regular season rules with the exception of the “double rule”. A game misconduct will result in ejection from the current game plus one consecutive additional game.
 - c. If the additional game suspension cannot be served in the current season it will extend into the following League season.
 - d. Any player or team official receiving a Match penalty or a Fighting Major penalty will be immediately suspended for the remainder of the Ruicci Cup.
5. Complaints
 - a. On-ice judgment calls will not be subject to protest.
 - b. The only basis for a complaint will be a question concerning player eligibility or unsportsmanlike behavior that was not called by a referee (i.e. no penalty was issued).
 - c. All complaints must be made within thirty (30) minutes following the conclusion of the game.
 - d. All complaints must go through the Ruicci Cup Coordinator(s) or a Board Director, not the rink personnel or other staff working the registration table or scorekeeper’s booth.
6. Governance
 - a. USA Hockey and MAHA rules govern Ruicci Cup, except where noted above.
 - b. The Board has the authority to waive any of the rules or provisions of the Ruicci Cup in the event of an emergency situation that may warrant such action.
 - c. The Board reserves the right to make all decisions regarding rules, protests and/or player eligibility.

XXIII. INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENT PARTICIPATION FOR MSWHL TEAMS

A. REGISTRATION

1. A player may be registered with only one MAHA/USA HOCKEY team at a time during the regular (winter) season and two MAHA/USA Hockey teams during the postseason except as noted below.
 - a. Adult Division (Men’s/Women’s) Classifications: are allowed to play for more than one team in different leagues.
 - i. All Adult Men’s MAHA rules are applicable to Women’s registered teams. Women’s players are allowed to play for more than one team in different leagues including playing in Adult Men’s leagues.
 - ii. No player can be registered with more than one Men’s Adult US team at any one time, regardless of league classification.
 - iii. A player cannot be registered with more than one (1) team that participates in games leading towards Ruicci Cup, or toward a State or National Championship

- iv. Men or Women ARE allowed to be rostered on more than one team within the same league if they are participating with the additional team(s) for the purposes of tournament play only. Players must designate to the league which team they will participate with for regular season play.

2. Explanations

- a. In past seasons (per the above MAHA rule), men and women have been allowed to play on more than one senior team, as long as those teams do not play in the same league.
- b. The purpose of this rule change (addition of item 1.a.ii. above) is to allow players in a specific league to roster on additional team(s) in the same league for the purpose of playing in an invitational tournament only.
- c. Players are still NOT ALLOWED to play on two teams in the same league for league games.
- d. Players must indicate to the league which team they are participating on for regular season play. This eliminates the need for releasing and re-rostering a player from one team to play on another team for the purpose of playing in a tournament.
- e. An individual or team may create an entirely new team (with an official USA hockey roster) to enter a tournament.
 - i. If a MSWHL team wants to attend a tournament and would like to add additional players from other MSWHL teams, the team must add the additional players to their Tournament USA hockey roster as supplemental players.
 - ii. The team must turn in both its original and supplemental USA hockey rosters to the tournament.
 - iii. All players attending any tournaments must have their appropriate USA Hockey Forms (IMR) so that the tournament-bound team does not need to pay any extra individual fees.
- f. Senior teams are limited to 25 players on the USA hockey roster.

B. TRAVEL TO CANADA

1. EXHIBITION PLAY

- a. Any U.S.-based team that wants to play exhibition games in Canada must contact the MAHA district registrar for approval.
- b. The MAHA District Registrar will then send the team a travel permit for the exhibition game(s).

2. TOURNAMENT PLAY

- a. USA Hockey teams traveling to Canada to participate in Tournaments against Canadian Hockey Association (CHA/OCHA) teams must obtain a Canadian/USA Hockey Travel Permit (available on-line at www.MAHA.org) for each Canadian tournament a team participates in during the season.
- b. The current fee for this permit is \$10.00 U.S. Dollars and can be paid by credit card online.
- c. A team official must have physical documentation (a printed copy) of the Travel Permit on their person if asked to present it at any time.