



# MEMBER HANDBOOK

*(Revised September 2025)*

## Message from the NMAHA Board of Directors

*This New Mexico Amateur Hockey Association (NMAHA) Handbook is meant to be a resource for the NMAHA hockey community. The Handbook reflects the philosophies, rules, and expectations of the Board of Directors of our Association and our affiliate organizations, USA Hockey, Inc. and the Land of Enchantment Amateur Hockey Association (LOEAHA). **Please read this Handbook thoroughly.***

*We also hope that the Handbook will encourage you to become more involved in NMAHA's activities. We value and need your participation and support to make NMAHA's hockey programs a success. Please attend NMAHA board meetings to share your thoughts. Contact a member of the NMAHA Board of Directors, a coach, or a manager to discuss how you can volunteer.*

*The success of NMAHA today is attributable to the countless hours that volunteers have devoted to hockey every year. We are grateful for the contributions of the many leaders who paved the way for NMAHA. We now look forward to the upcoming hockey season and to the continued growth of our program and our youth.*

*Let's work together to have a great hockey season!*

*Sincerely,*

*The 2025-26 New Mexico Amateur Hockey Association Board of Directors:*

*Jason Foist (President), Sabra Hensler (VP of 6U-14U Hockey), Ashley Brunette (VP of 16U/18U Hockey), Jasy Shiparski (Secretary), Loretta Tafuro (Treasurer), Jody Browning, Amanda Cayton, Liz Elsmann, Kirk Fitzpatrick.*

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## THE NMAHA PHILOSOPHY

**The primary purpose of NMAHA is to contribute to the development of our youth through the game of ice hockey.** NMAHA is committed to providing our young people with the opportunity to have fun on the ice while learning the basic skills of ice skating and playing the game of hockey. Our program is available to all interested youth regardless of socio/economic background. As a team sport, hockey affirms the importance of commitment, self-discipline, teamwork, and sportsmanship among participants and spectators. Our commitment is to ensure that the young people who participate in NMAHA will develop skills and values, which will bring lifelong benefit to them and to society. Specific benefits that participants of youth hockey receive include:

- Development of the skills necessary to play ice hockey
- Knowledge of the rules and strategies of the game
- Knowledge of conditioning techniques that affect short- and long-term health and performance
- Commitment to teamwork
- Increased self-esteem and confidence
- Leadership and collaboration skills development
- Enjoyment and recreation

## MEMBERSHIP

Each family unit of a player that meets the age and classification requirements according to USA Hockey guidelines and whose prescribed fees are paid is a voting member of the Association. Each family unit is entitled to one vote in all matters pertaining to NMAHA for each skater registered with no delinquent fees and is otherwise in good standing with NMAHA. Parents exercise voting rights as representatives of their children registered with NMAHA. Members elect the Board of Directors at the annual meeting each April. There may be subsequent votes throughout the year when making changes to the association as a whole. Membership in NMAHA corresponds to the term of registration and automatically terminates upon withdrawal from the program or failure to re-register. Association members are encouraged to voice their opinions and concerns at open board meetings held monthly. In compliance with our Privacy Policy, guests will be asked to step out of the meeting if any personal information regarding a member needs to be discussed. Guests may return after that discussion is completed.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The nine members of the NMAHA Board of Directors serve staggered, two-year terms. The named roles are President, Vice-President of Recreational 6U-14U Hockey, Vice-President of 16U/18U Hockey, Treasurer, and Secretary, and four At-Large Board positions.

Four or five board members are elected each year during the annual Board of Directors election in April. The bylaws of NMAHA authorize the Board to oversee the operation of the Association and carry out its goals. Board meetings are held monthly at the MAC on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday at around 6:30pm.

At the first meeting after the Annual Membership Meeting at the end of the season (generally the May meeting), the Board of Directors elects officers (as-applicable based on 2-year terms: President, VPs (x2), Treasurer, Secretary) and assigns responsibility for specific activities carried out by NMAHA. Also, as-needed the Board will search & assign the following organizational roles (per season, no term-limits): Scheduler, Coach-in-Chief (formerly Chief of Coaches), Equipment Manager, SafeSport Representative, Community Outreach, Registrar, and Website Administrator.

For the list and contact information of the current Board of Directors, and those holding additional positions for NMAHA, please visit our website ([NMAHA Board & Contacts](#))

To facilitate communication between the Board and the membership regarding NMAHA activities, the Team Manager or a designated representative of each team is encouraged to attend Board meetings. Individual members are also welcome.

Board members are expected to exercise the duties and responsibilities of their positions with integrity and respect, remembering that the Board serves in the best interest of the general membership overall. This includes:

- Acting in a professional manner that promotes membership in the communities it serves and cooperates with and supports fellow Board members with their projects and committees.
- Making attendance at all meetings of the board a priority – Board members are expected to attend meetings on a regular and punctual basis.
  - Board members missing more than three (3) meetings or 2-consecutive meetings without notification are subject to a vote for removal (in accordance with our bylaws)
- Being prepared to discuss the issues and business on the agenda.
- Putting the interests of the general membership above personal interests.
- Always representing the organization in a positive and supportive manner.
- Maintaining the confidentiality of Board-specific issues: future plans/proposals, disciplinary player hearings, other organizational conflicts/issues in-progress, etc. The Board will always strive to be transparent with our membership.
- Respecting the opinions of fellow board members and support the decisions (actions/votes) of the board.
- Thinking outside the box for solutions to issues concerning the membership and take initiative to help grow the membership and the sport of hockey in our community.
- Maintaining communication with other Board members in meetings and when information needs to be shared about activities/events concerning the association in between meetings (email, GroupMe app, etc.).

## RESOURCES

The Board maintains the [www.nmaha.org](http://www.nmaha.org) website to be a useful and informative resource for members and will designate a Website Administrator role to assist in this, preferably a volunteer (this is not a Board position and will also monitor/maintain the [nmaha.domain@gmail](mailto:nmaha.domain@gmail.com) email account as well). This role will also be responsible for creating season/clinic registrations, rostering, and work with the Treasurer for registration issues/corrections.

The home page will be continually updated with the latest organization news and updates as well as updates regarding hockey around New Mexico. Contact information for Board members can be found on the Board page. Contact information for teams can be found on individual team pages. The various documents sections on the website contain registration documents, Board Meeting minutes, Manager forms, applications, and other important resources. Team Managers should keep team pages up to date during the season.

## TEAM AND PLAYER CLASSIFICATION

As a registered member of USA Hockey, NMAHA abides by all of USA Hockey's regulations governing amateur hockey for both Recreational and Competitive Hockey.

## Recreational (Rec) Team Hockey

Rec team hockey focuses on providing instruction and playing hockey in a recreational environment. All children are offered the same opportunities and are treated similarly regardless of their abilities or the speed at which they learn. While scores are kept and games are won and lost, a strong emphasis is placed on sportsmanship. Players are divided into balanced teams. Player evaluation sessions may be held at the beginning of the season to assist in team assignments. These are not "try outs," as every child will be placed on a team and will receive an equal amount of ice time. Coaches and assistants are selected from the parents of Rec team players. Sponsors, Team Managers, and off-ice "officials" (Scorekeeper, Timekeeper, Penalty Box) are also needed for each team. Volunteers will be requested for these roles, please first contact the Team Manager, or the Vice President (VP) for your level (6U-14U or 16U/18U) or your Coach.

## Competitive (Comp) Team Hockey

NMAHA has partnered with the New Mexico Renegades Hockey Club (NMRHC – aka: New Mexico Warriors) for opportunities for our Rec/House players to attend tryouts to make the competitive/travel teams if so interested. The New Mexico Warriors field travel teams at the 10U, 12U, 14U, 16U, & 18U levels based on player availability **and skill-level capability based on actual tryouts**. Players can "double-roster" with both NMAHA and NMRHC if desired and this would require a Player Agreement form be completed to work through any scheduling conflicts.

**The Player Agreement Form will be required for any players dual-rostering or moving to NMAHA from another association (in or out of state).**

The form will be provided on an as-needed basis each season.

## 16U/18U (formerly "High School") Hockey

As of the 2024-25 season, the state association (Land of Enchantment Amateur Hockey Association or LOEAHA) has removed the High School hockey designations for what was Junior Varsity/JV (now 16U) and Varsity (now 18U) and will align under USA Hockey guidelines going forward. We will no longer utilize any high school naming or rules nor be part of the Rio Grande High School Hockey League (RGHSHL).

Should numbers fall short for either 16U or 18U, we will partner with another NM association. For the 2025-26 Season, we are partnering again this season with Santa Fe for the 18U level.

## SEASON PRACTICES

Prior to the start of the season, NMAHA will post the approved practice schedule for all levels. Earlier times will be reserved for younger players and 6U & 8U levels will practice on the same nights. Based on ice availability, other levels will generally need to overlap for 90-minutes of ice (30-minutes full-ice; 30-minutes half-ice; 60-continuous minutes per level) to keep practices from running too late. Older age-levels will generally have the later practice times overall.

Any practices that get cancelled due to weather or other circumstances shall **NOT** expect those ice-cost funds to be used towards end of season activities. If possible, cancelled practices shall be rescheduled, but this is NOT guaranteed.

## FALL SEASON SPORTS

NMAHA recognizes that many hockey players participate in other sports and extracurricular activities, such as football and soccer. The NMAHA Board recognizes the value of these activities and supports the participation of our players in these endeavors. As such, coaches and schedulers should make every effort to avoid conflicts with the fall sports season. To the extent that conflicts do exist with fall sports schedules, NMAHA supports players in their efforts to fulfill their commitments to their fall sports by recognizing that their first priority should be to their fall team until the fall sports season has concluded.

## PLAYER AGE / DIVISION CATEGORIES

USA Hockey sets the age categories for national youth hockey. Based on registration and participation, NMAHA attempts to field recreational/house teams at each level, in accordance with USA Hockey Age Classifications, as defined in the most current USA Hockey Annual Guide. NMAHA's goal is to keep players of the same age, physical, and emotional maturity together and to protect the integrity of each age division within NMAHA. As a general rule, players will not be allowed to play outside the appropriate age category in which he or she is classified, as determined by his or her birth year and USA Hockey policies. (See additional details under the chart below and also the "Play Up" process below).

### USA Hockey and NMAHA Hockey Age Classifications

USA Hockey regards age as the age the player is on December 31<sup>st</sup> of the current year. For example: a child turning 13 on or before December 31<sup>st</sup> of this year, would not be allowed to register as a Peewee (for 12 years and under), but would rather need to register as a Bantam (for 14 years and under). Our Season Registration will utilize this and only list the applicable level.

The following chart reflects NMAHA's division and age categories:

<u>Division</u>	<u>Age Category</u>
6U Mini-Mite*	6 Years & Under
8U Mite	8 Years & Under
10U Squirt	10 Years & Under
12U Peewee	12 Years & Under
14U Bantam	14 Years & Under
16U Midget	16 Years & Under
18U Midget	18 Years & Under

\* Mini-Mite is not recognized/registered by USA Hockey; 6U players can play in 8U games as-needed in any season.

NMAHA recognizes there may be circumstances indicating a player should "play up" in an age division above his or her USA Hockey classification, based on individual skill level and desire for continued player development. **USA Hockey does not allow players to play down age divisions in ANY games.** New skaters may practice down one-level if the head coaches at both levels agree it is practical.



## “PLAY UP” PROCESS

Play-up inquiries must **FIRST** be requested of the **CURRENT** team’s Head Coach – who will start the process/form if he/she agrees and the conditions listed below are met.

Permission to “play up” **may** be granted by the NMAHA Board, but only after the application process has been followed. A player may participate in exactly one practice with the team they are interested in moving to as part of the evaluation process described below but must return to their age-appropriate team until the “play-up” request is approved by the Board.

The process will vary depending on the time of the season it is applied:

1. **Early-season** (full evaluation w/ BOTH coaches; pay difference up to next level (Oct/Nov))
2. **Mid-season** (gaining coach evaluation; pay remaining balance differential to next level (Dec/Jan))
3. **Late season** (simple, not as complex: gaining coach evaluation, no pay up if in February)

To be considered to “play up,” several conditions must be met. They are as follows:

1. The “losing” team shall continue to have a minimum of 13 skaters plus a goalie rostered for a total of 14 skaters remaining on the team if a player plays up. If the “losing” division has multiple teams, each team shall continue to have a minimum of 13 skaters plus a goalie.
2. Notify both Team Managers and have the coach obtain the NMAHA “Play Up” Application from the Coaching section of [www.nmaha.org](http://www.nmaha.org).
3. Parents must write a letter to the Board explaining why they want their player to “play up” and provide it with the completed application to the VP of Rec.
4. Parents must request an evaluation via the Team Manager by the panel as described below.
5. A player must be evaluated to be within the top 10% of players within their appropriate age category. This is to maintain age category integrity, comply with USA Hockey insurance requirements and provide a safe developmental environment for both the individual player and the players of both teams concerned.
6. Ideally, a panel comprised of a “losing team” coach, a “gaining team” coach and a neutral USA Hockey-certified coach or the NMAHA Coach-in-Chief will conduct an on-ice evaluation for the player concerned – against both current age category and upper age category players in an effort to ensure playing up will not be detrimental to the safety or development of either the individual player or the respective team. Size and maturity level should be assessed, in addition to player skill and ability. The evaluators will sign-off on the application IF the player evaluation supports playing up to the next level. The application will then be given to the VP of Rec.
7. If the panel as described above is not practical, the “losing” coach and the “gaining” coach must sign-off IF the player evaluation supports the move. The application still goes to the VP of Rec.
8. Parents should also notify the manager of both the “losing” and “gaining” teams as a courtesy.

Once the application process has been completed and the coaches’ letters have been submitted to the appropriate VP (Rec or Competitive/Travel) the VP will then submit the application package to the NMAHA Secretary for Board approval. The decision of the Board will then be conveyed to the parents and both coaches by the appropriate VP.

There will be a **maximum of 3 play-up requests per level per season** without special approval.

## REGISTRATION ON MORE THAN ONE TEAM WITHIN NMAHA

Although not encouraged, each player may be registered and rostered on more than one team within NMAHA in select circumstances approved by the Board (current Age Division and **one level** above). Under all circumstances, attendance and participation at practices and games is expected for each player rostered on more than one team.

Fees will be assessed at the oldest Age Division where the player is rostered.



## GAMES, TOURNAMENT AND FESTIVAL PLAY

Many games will be played during the hockey season, which runs approximately from Sept.- March. The regularly scheduled games during the hockey season are included in the registration fee for NMAHA.

As of the 2025-26 Season LOEAHA game guidelines are as follows for ALL state associations:

<u>Division:</u>	<u>Class:</u>	<u>Warm Up:</u>	<u>Period length:</u>	<u>Curfew / Time Outs:</u>	<u>Overtime</u>	<u>Minor:</u>	<u>Major:</u>	<u>Game Misconduct / Match:</u>
Rec	6U-Mini 8U-Mite Cross-Ice	2 min	56-minutes - RUN clock 2-min. or 3-min. line changes HORN (Coach choice)	60-minutes / No Time Outs*	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rec	10U-Squirt	3-min	12-minute Stop clock Runtime in 3rd to stay under curfew	60-minutes / No Time Outs*	N/A	1-min.	3-min.	6-minutes / +3-minutes
Rec	12U-Pee wee	3-min	12-minute Stop clock Runtime in 3rd to stay under curfew	60-minutes / No Time Outs*	N/A	1-min.	3-min.	6-minutes / +3-minutes
Rec	14U-Bantam	3-min	13-minute Stop clock Runtime in 3rd to stay under curfew	60-minutes / No Time Outs*	N/A	1-min. 30-sec.	4-min.	8-minutes / +4-minutes
Rec USA Hockey as of 2024	16U-Midget1	4-min	15-minute Stop clock Runtime in 3rd to stay under curfew	75-minutes / No Time Outs* Non-curfew gets one 1-min. Time Out	Curfew: N/A Non-curfew: YET Allowed 5-min OT 3v3; SO to winner	2-min.	5-min.	10-minutes/ +5-minutes
Rec USA Hockey as of 2024	18U-Midget2	4-min	17-minute Stop clock Zam between 2nd/3rd periods Runtime in 3rd to stay under curfew	90-minutes / No Time Outs* Non-curfew gets one 1-min. Time Out	Curfew: N/A Non-curfew: YET RR allowed: 5-min OT 3v3; SO to winner YET Championship Only - full periods until winner.	2-min.	5-min.	10-minutes/ +5-minutes

\* No Timeouts in ANY time-limited (curfew) game – USA Hockey Rule #636(f). YET: Year-End Tournament; RR: Round Robin; SO: Shoot-Out

Throughout the season, the opportunity for teams to play in various tournaments (older levels), festivals (mid & younger levels), or other related events may also arise. As the level of play at such events can vary greatly, it is the decision of the team's coaching staff, in conjunction with the team manager(s) and parents/guardians, as to which tournaments and/or festivals teams might enter. In most situations, there will be an additional cost to the players attending tournaments and/or festivals, which is not covered by the NMAHA registration.

Any tournament or festival listed for **Rec teams** may be entered. At such events, in as much as possible, all registered players of that team shall have an equal opportunity to attend and play. For playing time equity, teams may desire to enter more than one team, providing each roster allows a minimum of 10 players and a goalie for each team entered.

However, this is not a mandatory requirement and the reduction in playing time per player should be realized in advance, especially if team rosters exceed 15 players plus a goalie. Tournaments or festivals to which a Rec team may be invited but are advertised as being for competitive-level teams, may be entered on a strictly voluntary basis. Entering such a tournament should be a joint decision of the team's coaching staff, the team manager(s), and parents/guardians. Due to the increased skill level at these types of events, the coaching staff reserves the right to decide to limit the roster size, by inviting only those players who have displayed an ability to compete at the level indicated. Communication by the coaches with all players and parents/guardians concerned is paramount to ensuring participation in such events goes smoothly.

**Tournaments fees are not refundable** unless a player is 1) under medical care or 2) the family moves to another town/state. In general, tournaments can **ONLY** be refunded if the hosting association fully-cancels the entire tournament **AND** returns NMAHA's payment.

## COACHING

NMAHA's coaches come from a variety of backgrounds, but all share two important characteristics: They are ALL volunteers and they all care deeply about the development of all the players on the teams they are coaching. Our coaches require the support of the parents of the players they are coaching. Anything parents can do to help with team activities is encouraged. The previous title of "Chief of Coaches" is now Coach-In-Chief.

Anyone interested in coaching (Head Coach or Assistant Coach) should contact the NMAHA Coach-in-Chief by email at [nmaha.domain@gmail.com](mailto:nmaha.domain@gmail.com) before the season starts. Each year, the NMAHA Board establishes a Coach Selection Committee headed by the Coach-In-Chief to review applicants. This committee consists of the Coach-In-Chief, the VPs (Rec 6U-14U & 16U/18U), a coach at large, a parent at large, and - if possible - a representative from the state referee association. If committee members are interested in being the Head Coach for a particular team, they will recuse themselves from the vote for that team's Head Coach. The Coach-In-Chief will bring the committee's slate of Head Coach candidates to the NMAHA Board for approval. The Assistant Coaches will then be determined per team by the Coach-In-Chief and the Head Coach with the approval of the committee prior to the start of the season. Please check [www.nmaha.org](http://www.nmaha.org) for details and dates regarding the Head Coach selection process, typically begun in the early-summer.

All coaches must register with USA Hockey as well as complete a Background Screen, SafeSport certification, and complete USAH age modules for the levels they will be coaching. The full list of requirements can be found here: [NMAHA Coaches Page](#)

As players develop, it becomes increasingly important for coaches to be sufficiently skilled to be able to develop the skills of the most advanced player on a team. Coaches must also possess a thorough knowledge of the rules and strategies of the game. **Head Coaches should develop a written practice plan to share with assistant coaches prior to EACH practice.** If the Head Coach must miss a practice this will assure that skills progress in the planned manner. It is encouraged that the written coaching plan be developed with input from all coaches for that team.

USA Hockey provides training and certification to individuals who wish to coach through the Coaching Education Program. This program is administered through USA Hockey in the form of clinics (mostly virtual, some in-person). These clinics are designed to supply each coach with the knowledge of his/her responsibilities and skills that will equip him/her to do the best possible job at any level of play. USA Hockey and NMAHA (Ice Hockey Systems) have resources coaches can use to develop their written coaching plans.

USA Hockey and NMAHA require all persons interested in becoming coaches to attend these clinics **BEFORE 12/31 of the current season**. *Clinics are held in the fall and the cost of registration for the clinics can be reimbursed by NMAHA upon request.*

## TEAM SUPPORT

There are many critical areas where parents can contribute to the welfare of a team. Two important roles are covered below:

**Team Managers:** Every NMAHA team must have a manager. A manager provides a vital link between the coach and parents and has administrative responsibilities for filling out team rosters, ensuring that such rosters are properly filed with USA Hockey, scheduling games, preparing team rosters for tournaments, developing the team's budget, distributing team jerseys, obtaining Minor (off-ice) officials, notifying parents of schedule changes, making hotel arrangements under NMAHA's name for away games and tournaments as necessary, completing travel game score sheet rosters, and facilitating communication between coaches and parents throughout the hockey season. All managers must be current with their background screening and their SafeSport training.

The team manager will have the authority to ask ANY unruly spectators to leave the rink area if situations unbecoming of USA Hockey conduct occur during an event or practice.

**Off-Ice Officials:** Each team is responsible for providing volunteers for a Scorekeeper (10U and up), Timekeeper (ALL levels), and Penalty Box Official (All levels) at home games. **USA Hockey asks that ALL volunteers submit a background check but it is required in some roles.** Some roles also require the completion of the SafeSport training. For more details see the Volunteering page under the Parent Resources of the NMAHA website. Off-ice officials are required to follow all instructions given by the on-ice officials before, during, and after games.

**Locker Room Monitors:** Each team should have one or two designated Locker Room Monitors in addition to the Team Manager. Preferably two monitors will be present in or around the locker rooms before and after practices and games to monitor behavior and ensure phones (as applicable) are not out with limited exceptions (celebrations, etc.). This role will require a background screening, completion of the SafeSport training, and cannot be the Head Coach of any level (in accordance with LOEAHA rules).

*\*The next two sections (Equipment Requirements and Registration) are situated as such to simplify printing out just these two pages (12 & 13) for quick reference while equipping and/or registering skaters.*

## EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

Each skater must wear the following required USA Hockey equipment when participating in games **AND** practices:

1. Hockey skates (**NOT** figure skates).
2. USA Hockey-approved protective helmet with full-face protection of any style. (must have the HECC seal of approval and not be expired)
3. Ice hockey stick (not a plastic street hockey stick). (UNCURVED sticks are strongly recommended for new players)
4. **\*\* Neck/throat protector. \*\* REQUIRED by USA Hockey as of 2024-25 Season!**
5. Hockey elbow pads.
6. Hockey gloves.
7. Hockey shin pads with hockey socks over them.
8. Hockey shoulder pads.
9. Hockey padded pants (aka: "breezers").
10. Colored mouth guard – **REQUIRED in games at 12U (Peewee) level and up.** NMAHA recommends that when using a mouth guard that attaches to the face mask, it is a type that will separate upon impact.
11. Protective cup/supporter. (aka: "Jock" for boys or "Jill" pelvic protector for girls) – recommend the type with Velcro on the legs to support our current game socks.
12. Jersey - Game jerseys (and socks) can be purchased from NMAHA in (or after) the season registration.

Jersey numbers are distributed first to returning team members. A returning team member can keep his or her number from the previous season. If that player wants to change his or her number, then the number goes to the next player who seeks the number and has paid the dues.

For all new players on a team, the first person to request a jersey number will receive that number based on the timestamp of their season registration. The team manager will resolve any conflict over jersey numbers & the decision is final.

NMAHA has a limited supply of equipment available to you. Parent/Players should check availability before planning on using NMAHA equipment. If you need equipment, please contact the VP of the level of your player (6U-14U or 16U/18U) needing the equipment. NMAHA will host an Equipment Issue/Exchange each September before the season starts in October.

## REGISTRATION PAYMENT POLICY

Payment for registration fees must be made at the time of registration. As NMAHA is a non-profit organization, **all fees collected are NON-REFUNDABLE**, and if for any reason your child cannot participate, all collected fees will be considered a donation.

*All players must have registered **and** paid the applicable fee with USA Hockey (online), **prior** to registering with NMAHA. The receipt for the payment of the USA Hockey dues **must be** presented at any in-person registration for NMAHA.*

There are usually two online options for making payment of the applicable NMAHA fees. A player may either pay the registration fee in full online during registration or utilize the online payment plan if still available.

Please check our website [www.nmaha.org](http://www.nmaha.org) for additional registration requirements, documentation, and payment options in the Registration tab > Season Registration page

New registrants are welcome at any time in the Rec Program. Registration fees for new players starting after the registration deadline (September 30) will be prorated for the season (20% per month missed, October through January).

**NMAHA has a strict “NO PAY, NO PLAY” policy.** No player will be allowed to register until any outstanding balance from the previous season is paid in full. Additionally, **no player will be allowed on the ice, for practices or games (including tournaments), until all registration fees are paid in full (or the monthly payment is made IN FULL on the Payment plan)**, unless special arrangements have been made in advance and approved by the Board.

If a player moves to a different city or state mid-season, they must pay all NMAHA registration fees **BEFORE** registering with another association. Contact NMAHA's Registrar and Treasurer ASAP if this applies.

NMAHA will attempt to accommodate prospective participants. Therefore, the NMAHA Board reserves the right to make exceptions upon written request in extenuating circumstances.

## DISCOUNTS

In an attempt to attract volunteers for our organization and reduce the financial burden on families who have a child rostered on more than one team or with more than one child playing hockey, the following discounts will apply:

- Board of Directors – 30% off registration fees
- Head Coach – 30% off registration fees (one head coach per division)
- Assistant Coach – 10% off registration fees for the first two assistant coaches on a team.
- Team Manager – 30% off registration fees
- More than one child registered – \$25 off registration fees for each additional child (via Discount Code).

**Each positional discount is for one player only, unless otherwise stated. Only one discount can be taken for any one player.** If a parent has multiple children who play on separate teams and the parent volunteers in multiple roles, the parent may only apply the applicable discount for each role matching that player's age-level specifically.

Any volunteer who qualifies for a discount with no player on a team may use the discount to sponsor a specific player or contribute to the Scholarship Fund.

If eligible for a Board discount, please ensure that the discount code is applied at checkout in the registration. Starting in 2023, all coaching (Head Coach and two (2) Assistant Coaches per level) and Team Manager discounts will be applied **retroactively via the NMAHA Treasurer** once all of the following requirements are met:

- Background screening and SafeSport for Coaches and Managers
- Age-appropriate Module(s) for Coaches only

## FUNDRAISING

Fundraising is a mandatory and necessary action for each player on a NMAHA team.

*Please note that each individual player is expected to participate in fundraising. Fundraising is done by player and/or family (multiple players).*

Fundraising will take place in the first half of the season (Oct-Dec). This fundraising activity will be held as a singular event for all NMAHA players to participate in, regardless of age or level of play.

Funds raised during the organized fundraising events will be used for tournament and/or festival expenses and covering ice costs. These two items will take priority over any other activities that funds may be raised for (end of season festivals etc.). After the priority items have been addressed, funds may be used for team building activities, end of season supplies, and other needs as deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors.

Any use of funds MUST be approved by the NMAHA Board of Directors PRIOR to the use of any funds. Failure to receive approval in advance of spending funds may result in the fees being covered by the individual who incurred the costs ahead of time. Reimbursement may not be covered. In order to present for approval to the NMAHA Board of Directors, managers must have a sign off sheet or email consent from the majority of the players/families for use of funds.

As of May 1<sup>st</sup>, of any season, any funds that have not been used by individual levels will roll into the NMAHA general fund. All funds DO NOT need to be used over the course of the season. Funds that roll into the general account will be used in future seasons to help keep our registration fees down.

NMAHA does offer a \$300 per player fundraising buyout if a family chooses to NOT participate in the organized fundraising initiative(s). This buyout option must be paid in full by December 1<sup>st</sup> of each season. Failure to participate in fundraising or buying out of fundraising will result that player not being able to participate in NMAHA team events during the season. Additionally, any funds not paid will result in the player being in poor financial standing and ineligible to register/roster with other teams per USA Hockey.

## **NMAHA Policy regarding Donations**

New Mexico Amateur Hockey Association (NMAHA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization registered in the state of New Mexico. To continue making hockey available to local youth at reasonable cost, NMAHA combines funding from a variety of sources including fundraising, registration fees, sponsorship funds, grants and charitable donations.

This policy applies to all fundraising for all NMAHA programs, regardless of type of donor or amount involved. It is to be applied to all new funding from existing donors and to all new donors in the future. The terms “donation”, “gift” and “contribution” are used synonymously in these rules. Donations are gifts and are not refundable to the donor. 501c3 donations cannot be given to any individual player, only to their Team level or NMAHA overall.

### **Donation Policy**

It is NMAHA’s policy to accept donations from any donor as long as the acceptance does not impair NMAHA’s independence to pursue its mission, nor endanger its charitable status, integrity and good reputation. NMAHA’s acceptance of a donation does not imply any endorsement of the donors’ opinions, policies or records, regardless of the donor being a private individual, business or other organization.

Donations may be given as an unspecified donation to NMAHA or for an existing purpose such as equipment purchases, tournament awards sponsorship, etc. Such specific donations shall not result in undue influence over NMAHA’s priorities or execution of a program. Donations shall be presented by the Treasurer to the NMAHA Board of Directors. The allocation of all funds shall be decided by the NMAHA board to ensure no such influence exists.

If an individual player procures sponsorship for themselves, this sponsorship needs to be made using the Givebutter site. As player funds cannot stay with the player at the end of a season, any unused funds as of May 1<sup>st</sup>, will be rolled into the NMAHA general account. Refunds or disbursement of funds cannot be made back to the original donor or the player themselves at any time.

### **Donor Privacy**

NMAHA does not share information about donors or donations, unless agreed separately with the donor.



## **SCHOLARSHIP POLICY**

It shall be the policy of NMAHA that, when available, scholarship funds will be accessible to those members of the association who demonstrate financial need.

It shall be understood by all applicants that upon approval of a scholarship request, the applicant's parents/guardians will be expected to volunteer time for the benefit of NMAHA as may be requested by the Board. Approval responsibility for scholarship applications shall rest with the Board of Directors.

To request a scholarship, if available, the following procedures should be followed:

1. Applicant shall signify desire for scholarship funding by completing the registration form at time of registration.
2. Applicant shall complete Scholarship (aka: Scholarship Packet) application.
3. Applicant shall furnish Treasurer with copies of the two most recent years' tax returns.
4. Applicant parent/guardian shall complete a background screen & SafeSport Training to account for volunteer requirements – this will apply immediately upon approval

The NMAHA Board of Directors will always strive to be reasonable and prudent in their endeavor to disburse scholarship funds fairly and equitably. Any scholarship information collected by NMAHA shall be held in strictest confidence. At no time will any association member or any other person having cause to review applicant information furnish said information to unrelated third parties or in any way perform any action which might be deemed detrimental to the applicant.

The board holds the right to review volunteer activity, along with player participation and player conduct in practices or games, for all scholarship awardees who were previously provided a scholarship. Any lack of volunteer activity, player participation, or inappropriate player conduct may be reason for the board to not award a scholarship to that player/family. Scholarships are primarily based on the need and funds available for the current season.

## **ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY**

NMAHA adheres to the Zero Tolerance Policy described in USA Hockey's rules. All players and parents/guardians will be required to sign a Zero Tolerance policy to participate in NMAHA hockey. The goal of this policy is to require all players, coaches, officials, administrators, and parents/spectators to maintain a sportsmanlike and educational atmosphere before, during, and after all USA Hockey sanctioned games.

## PLAYER BEHAVIOR AND CONDUCT / ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The NMAHA Board and its coaches, team managers, and volunteer parents all have a vested interest in providing a safe, fun-filled environment for each player. In return, each skater must understand that coaches, assistant coaches, and parent volunteers are to be treated with respect and consideration. NMAHA skaters are expected to be attentive to coaches' directions and instructions and to avoid disruption.

The Board will support the coaching staff in cases where reasonable discipline must be exercised in order to maintain an organized and enjoyable learning environment.

**Punctuality:** Ice time is valuable and should not be wasted. All participants should arrive at games and practices in sufficient time to allow for suiting up and the necessary pregame/practice instruction and/or warm-up. Unless your coach has told you differently, it is recommended that you be ready to "take the ice" at least 10 minutes before the scheduled starting time.

**Attendance:** Reliable attendance is essential to personal skill development and the development of team continuity.

**Conduct:** All players must display good sportsmanship both on and off the ice at all games and practices, regardless of whether a contest is won or lost and regardless of how a game is officiated. Damaging or defacing property and the general display of poor sportsmanship reflects poorly on the individual, the team, the coaches, and the Association. Such behavior is unacceptable and will be dealt with immediately and severely by team coaches and/or the NMAHA Board.

Repeated or any severe incident of bad sportsmanship or other inappropriate or unacceptable conduct will result in disciplinary action by the Board. Any participant found guilty of a major or persistent violation of USA Hockey, LOEAHA, or NMAHA rules shall be dismissed from the program without refund. Coaches have the right to discipline, by way of "sit outs" and other means, any behavior not consistent with the philosophy of NMAHA. NMAHA adheres to all USA Hockey & league rules with respect to minor/major penalties.

In accordance with USA Hockey procedure, the Board, or a Board appointed committee, shall review match, game, or gross misconduct penalties received by a NMAHA player during a game. It is the responsibility of the team Head Coach to report any such incident, in writing, to the NMAHA Board within 24 hours of the occurrence. In addition, all match or gross misconduct penalties and recommended actions will be reported by the Board to the LOEAHA BOD. Parents who disagree with a coach or Board Committee decision should follow the NMAHA 24-Hour Rule (see section below) and then submit their written grievance to the NMAHA Board for consideration within 48-hours of its receipt. Also see the Grievance Procedure section below.

We will follow USA Hockey and SafeSport guidelines in regard to their Anti-Bullying Policy. Key aspects of the USA Hockey Anti-Bullying Policy are:

- **Prohibited Behavior:** The policy explicitly prohibits bullying, threats, harassment, and emotional misconduct.
- **Reporting Mandate:** All employees and volunteers are required to report any actual or perceived violations of the SafeSport policies, including bullying.
- **Disciplinary Action:** Participants who engage in bullying are subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or permanent suspension.
- **Investigation:** When a bullying incident is reported, it is investigated to determine the appropriate disciplinary action.
- **Parental Notification:** In cases of reported bullying, parents of both the bullied and the alleged perpetrator are informed.

## PARENT CONDUCT

All parents (**and guests**) must display good sportsmanship at all games and practices, regardless of whether a contest is won or lost, and regardless of how a game is officiated. As parents or guardians, we must be positive in our attitudes toward the game of hockey and emphasize the cooperative nature of the game. Negative and rowdy behavior in or around the hockey rink reflects directly and poorly on the entire organization. We must foster good relationships between our young players within the Association and with officials and our competitors. As parents, we must set positive examples for our children. In accordance with USA Hockey's policy of **ZERO TOLERANCE**, the following actions are **not** acceptable:

- Yelling at or threatening referees, opposing players or coaches before, during, or after games or practices.
- Direct confrontations with coaches, parents, or players.
- Demonstrations of frustration or anger after missed play or a game loss.
- Unnecessary or exaggerated celebration of a goal scored, or a game won that would embarrass or demean the opposing team.
- Any physical abuse of any other person.
- Any threat of physical violence toward any other person.
- Approaching the bench during a game situation unless summoned by a player or coach.

**Disruptive or abusive parents (or guests) may be asked to leave a rink by rink employees, game officials, Board of Directors, or the team manager and compliance is expected** (*the MAC front office has a letter granting permission of these individuals to remove disruptive persons from their private business*). Such conduct may result in an immediate suspension from NMAHA functions until a Board hearing is held on the matter. Further penalties may be assessed at that time.

The previously noted Anti-bullying policy applies to parents and guests/spectators as well.

## NMAHA 24-HOUR RULE

Hockey can be an emotional experience. The excitement and energy generated during games can often spill off the ice and create strong reactions in coaches and parents. As parents, we will not always agree with a coach's decision(s).

However, it is important to recognize that the coach's role is to make decisions for the team first and the player second. Also, we need to understand that most players are not aware of any problem until we, as parents, bring it to their attention. For parents, it is important to separate their child's hockey development from game time emotions. For this reason, we adopted the "24-Hour Rule" which includes the following:

- **Coaches will not discuss a game, or situation in a game, until at least 24 hours after the game is completed.**
- **Parents/guardians are not allowed to confront a coach, team, player, NMAHA board member, or league official** to discuss any "negative" game or practice situation(s) with the coaches and NMAHA Board until **at least 24 hours have passed** from the **completion** of the game or practice.
- Violation of the 24-hour rule policy will result in **the Parent being suspended from ALL youth hockey-related activities for at least 7 calendar days**. If the parent should ignore this suspension, it will then extend to their player(s) as well.

If parents respect the 24-hour rule, their concerns are more likely to be fully addressed in a reasonable discussion. More importantly, a child's enjoyment of a game won't be marred by an ill-timed confrontation. The intent of this rule is to move an emotional and confrontational discussion away from the presence of the players, and to allow the parties to "cool off", compose themselves, and put the incident or situation that occurred in the game in perspective before meeting to discuss it.

## COACHES' CONDUCT

NMAHA coaches are expected to be positive role models of behavior for their players by adhering to the same rules of conduct as those outlined for parents above. At no time is a NMAHA Coach to permit a player not registered with USA Hockey and NMAHA to participate in a NMAHA practice or game (see Visitors Policy next). Such conduct may result in an immediate suspension from coaching duties until a Board hearing is held on the matter. Further penalties may be assessed at that time.

Coaches are also expected to be professional and respectful to referees and volunteers during games. Failure to do so will result in a disciplinary review by the BOD/Discipline Committee.

**REMEMBER THAT EVERY PARENT, COACH, AND PLAYER REPRESENTS NMAHA AND MUST ACT APPROPRIATELY.**

## VISITORS POLICY

Coaches will not allow any non-USA Hockey or NMAHA registered player to attend any of their practices on the ice. Coaches will not allow any visitors to their practices without first seeking the permission of their VP. The VP will grant permission at his/her discretion and advise the Board.

The Board understands that coaches may want or need to invite players to a practice to fill out their lines from time to time. Teams with only one goalie may want to borrow another for practice. If this is the case, please talk to the VP responsible for the team (Rec 6U-14U or 16U/18UI). The Board is specifically concerned with younger and older age players joining outside their age group classification. Same-age player visitors on an occasional basis will be considered.

New skaters can be allowed to skate “down” a level at practices to gain skills but must play all games at their actual age level. USAH does not allow playing “down” in games.

In addition, some of you have contact with adults in the community who have a wealth of hockey experience and will be a benefit to the development of our children. These people typically are not USA Hockey registered and, therefore, not covered by USA Hockey insurance. Submit a request through the appropriate VP, and a formal request can be written to LOEAHA to allow these non-USA Hockey visitors to our practices without compromising anyone’s insurance.

## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Any parent or guardian of a NMAHA player may appeal any decision regarding discipline or suspension of their child or themselves so long as the **24-Hour Rule was followed (see section above)**. The grievance or notice of appeal should be placed in writing and presented to the NMAHA Board within 10 days of the action taken. NMAHA has standardized hearing procedures for the conduct of hearings and appeals. These procedures will be made available to parties participating in a hearing before the NMAHA Board. The player involved shall not play until the issue has been resolved.

Only grievances (complaints) submitted to the Board in written form will be acted upon. All grievances must be signed by the party submitting the grievance. All grievances submitted in an anonymous form will not be grounds for NMAHA action. Complaints can be emailed to [nmahahockey@gmail.com](mailto:nmahahockey@gmail.com).

## CONCERN/ISSUE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

The general process when members have concerns or issues is to first follow the **NMAHA 24-Hour Rule** (see section above) and then discuss with the Team Manager of the team where the concern lies. The Team Manager will then discuss with the team's Head Coach and VP of the team's division (6U-14U or 16U/18U) and work to resolve the issue at that level if possible. If the nature of the concern involves the Team Manager, the next point of contact should be the team's Head Coach, and the same process follows to the division VP to work towards a resolution. Members should always work to follow this process but also approach the President directly if the concern involves any of the other roles noted in this process.

In order to help prevent conflicts of interest in this procedure, it is recommended that the Vice-President roles of each division (6U-14U or 16U/18U) are not also Head Coaches of any level under their division whenever possible. This process will always allow for bypassing the VP and going to the President for any concerns/issues that apply.

## PRIVACY POLICY

The privacy of our members is particularly important to NMAHA. We have established this Privacy Policy in order for you to understand how we collect, use, communicate, disclose and make use of personal information.

- Personal data collected will be relevant to the purposes for which it is to be used.
- Before or at the time of collecting personal information, we will identify the purposes for which information is being collected.
- We will collect and use personal information solely with the objective of fulfilling those purposes specified by NMAHA or for similar purposes, unless we obtain the consent of the individual concerned or as required by law.
- We will only retain personal information as long as necessary for the fulfillment of those purposes.
- We will collect personal information by lawful and fair means and, whenever possible, only with the knowledge or consent of the individual concerned.
- We will protect personal information by reasonable security safeguards against loss or theft, as well as unauthorized access, disclosure, copying, use or modification.
- Membership account contact, billing or registration information will not be shared with an individual not associated with the account without verifiable consent of contact(s) listed in the membership registration except:
  - Delinquent status of a membership account may and will be shared with Land of Enchantment Hockey Association.
  - We may also be required to disclose information to comply with a court order or a subpoena.
- We will make readily available to customers information about our policies and practices relating to the management of personal information.

NMAHA is committed to ensuring that the confidentiality of our members' personal information is protected and maintained.