



AMHA Handbook

Updated: 2023-2024

This Handbook intends to capture and outline most hockey operation expectations for athletes and families of Ames Minor Hockey Association (AMHA). It should be viewed as a complement to other AMHA policies, procedures, and expectations which are posted on the AMHA website under Forms & Resources and/or established by the AMHA Board of Directors.

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Affiliation

AMHA is affiliated with USA Hockey's Central District as part of the Midwest Amateur Hockey Association (MWAHA). Our High School team participates in the Midwest High School Hockey League.

www.usahockey.com (USA Hockey)

www.centraldistricthockey.org (Central District)

www.tristatehockey.com (MWAHA)

www.ameshockey.com (AMHA)

<http://midwesthighschoolhockey.pointstreaksites.com/view/Midwesthighschoolhockey>

(HS Hockey)

Structure of Organization

Defined in the Bylaws (found here: <https://www.ameshockey.com/page/show/1449926-by-laws>) and follows USA Hockey rules. See further structure details below.

Mission Statement

To positively engage local youth in the fundamentals of hockey through:

- Sportsmanship
- Teamwork
- Character Development

AMHA Philosophies

Below is the list of philosophies which should guide each season and help everyone align with AMHA's Mission:

- Association members represent USA Hockey, AMHA, your team, and yourselves. Your actions are constantly before the public, and influence anyone around you, including potential future participants. Help grow the sport by being upstanding representatives!
- Hockey is a lifelong sport, which takes years to master. Athletes will develop in ebbs and flows, allow and trust this process to occur. Short term successes or failures are only indications of development, and the best way for long term success is to "show up tomorrow."
- USA Hockey has outstanding resources, research, and practice guidance available – use it!

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- American Development Model (ADM) – AMHA expects the use of the game and practice number recommendations:
https://assets.ngin.com/attachments/document/0098/1005/Hockey_For_Life_Poster_2016.pdf
- ADM practice planning and organization is helpful for large athlete numbers and should be emphasized, though traditional practice planning methods (full-ice, flow drills, etc.) may also be utilized as a compliment
- AHMA will separate into like-skilled teams and groups based on USA Hockey recommendations, where necessary
- AMHA Teams and levels will utilize the “One Team” mindset which is AMHA’s unique stance that separates us from others:
 - “Hockey family” is key – get to know others, share in the experiences, share in the volunteering, and make memories. The time will pass before you know it!
 - Despite current skill discrepancies, AMHA athletes will eventually grow and develop, and may compete on one High School team together. Youth levels with multiple teams per level should practice together, travel to tournaments together as feasible, attend each other’s games in support, and strive for non-political inclusion where reasonably possible.
- Coaches need to earn trust and respect, and athletes and parents should trust the process and tough coaching decisions along the way
 - Coaching direction and decisions are in the best interest of athlete development and having fun
 - Winning vs losing has its place; Bantams/14U, Peewees/12U, and Squirrels/10U should strive for seasons that end at .500 (same number of wins as losses)
 - Coaches will expect all families utilize the 24-hour rule - no discussion of concerns/questions/complaints until at least 24-hours after the situation
- Coaches must adhere to USA Hockey’s rules, regulations, and registration requirements
- Athletes, coaches, and Association members must follow their appropriate Codes of Conduct

AMHA Player and Coach Development Committee

Through a close partnership with the AMHA Board of Directors, the Player and Coach Development Committee (PCDC) shall help guide hockey operations. The PCDC structure requires:

- Board Member Liaison
- Director/Administrators

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- Previously, one Player & Coach Development Director was utilized, though recent Association growth required introduction of 3 total Directors/Administrators (LTP/House, Coach, and Travel Player)
- These Director/Administrator roles are reimbursed for their responsibilities as determined by the AMHA Board of Directors and shall report to the AMHA Board of Directors. They shall sit on PCDC meetings, and may be requested to assist the Conduct Review Committee.
- The Director/Administrator roles are annual appointments reviewed annually by the Board. While there are no term limits, if there are interested candidates you should reach out to AMHA Board or PCDC with your interest for potential annual consideration.
- Coaching Director/Administrator:
 - Recruit and train coaches with assistance from the Player & Coach Development Committee (PCDC)
 - Complete annual/semi-annual coach evaluations for paid coaches to ensure continuous improvement and alignment with AMHA's mission
 - Make recommendations for Association coaching roles to the Board for appointment with assistance from PCDC
 - Partner with Association Registrar to ensure coaches are informed of and meet USA hockey and Safe Sport Compliance requirements
 - Partner with PCDC to provide practice tips and suggestions to coaches of all levels
 - Assist coaches with appropriate coaching resources throughout the season
 - Coordinate annual pre-season Coaches meeting
 - Conduct in-season Coaches meetings to discuss player development approach and issues, as needed
 - Act as a mentor for any Coach needing or looking for support
 - Help bridge gaps between Coaching Staff and Parents at all levels, and where additional assistance is needed
 - Drive creation of streamlined, consistent pre-season parent meeting agenda template for use at all levels
 - Other duties as assigned by the Board
- Travel Player Director/Administrator:
 - Coordinate annual player evaluation process to appoint teams and place players in correct level/team
 - Make recommendations to Board for approval or non-approval of player move-up requests
 - Coordinate July AMHA Camp

- Coordinate PEP Camps, PEP Coaches and AMHA Coaches at Pep Camp, or other similar camps established by AMHA (3v3, Skills clinics, etc)
- Support In-Season player moves ups within Age Level Travel Hockey, when necessary and present to the Board for review and approval.
- Bring forward recommendations for player development growth to PCDC for Board recommendations (Ice Hockey Systems app, Intelligym, etc)
- Coordinate with Power Skating Coach to implement Power Skating (edge work) on weekly basis
- Assist with tournament coordination across all travel teams through close partnership with Lead Coach at each level, depending on how much assistance is needed
 - Ensure all teams remain within AMHA requirements for quantity, and stick to budget. Present exceptions to quantity or budget to the Board. Ensure tournaments being registered for each team will allow best environment for athlete development with overall goal of .500 win season
- Other duties as assigned by the Board
- LTP/House Player Director/Administrator:
 - Support In-Season player moves ups from LTP/House to Age Level Travel Hockey, when necessary
 - Partner to ensure coordination of Learn To Play (LTP) and House levels
 - Support family questions before, during, and concluding the season
 - Ensure necessary coaching coverage exists, recruit and train where needed
 - Support LTP Equipment Days with Equipment lead
 - Support and Coordinate “Try Hockey for Free Day”
 - Organize & prepare practice plans with focus on fun and active drills which align with USA Hockey’s recommendations & involve little standing/non-movement
 - Coordinate with Power Skating Coach to implement Power Skating (edge work) on weekly basis
 - Other duties as assigned by the Board
- Committee Members (approximately 7-11)
 - Ideally shall be diverse representing the following: as many age levels as possible, gender, hockey experience levels, coaches, parents, and those willing to put in the effort to drive the Association forward
 - PCDC members are voted in by AMHA Board upon recommendation from existing PCDC Directors and members

PCDC shall meet on a regular basis to ensure several overarching tasks are discussed, planned, and communicated. AMHA's Board of Directors reserve the ultimate vote, where applicable, though PCDC's suggestions should provide fair & balanced, non-political guidance for but not limited to the below topics:

- Ice schedule creation for practices and games, including any summer off-season plans
- Coordination of evaluation/tryouts for travel teams, and other player placement situations
- Coordination of coach selections
- Development suggestions and plans for both players and coaches
- Input on Team Level, Age Level, or Athlete Level concerns or challenges brought forth through Lead Coaches, Head Coaches, AMHA Board, or others
 - Referral will occur to the AMHA Conduct Committee when appropriate
- Hockey operation related policies, rules, USA Hockey guidance, or program guidance

AMHA Expectations and Typical Athlete Roadmap

This roadmap intends to highlight the path for athletes, and deviation from this path should come through PCDC and/or AMHA Board decisions.

Introduction to Hockey

Every season AMHA will host a Hockey 101 session, a meeting for new parents which provides a high-level overview of the sport of hockey and AMHA. Parents are encouraged to attend in person. [Hockey 101 Document](#)

AMHA experienced dramatic growth and development from 2015 to 2023, with continued upward trajectory on the horizon. Many of the below items are rooted in seeing where we were vs. where we're heading, and are supported through the USA Hockey and ADM Hockey For Life chart, which must be followed.

New to AMHA athletes:

- Follow the outlined path for new to hockey athletes, but can work with the LTP/House Director, Travel Director, and PCDC for testing and placement based on skill & age

New to hockey athletes:

- Participate in Learn to Skate (LTS) program run by Ames Figure Skating Club (AFSC) for at least one season/session (approx. 2-3 months) before starting AMHA:
<http://www.amesfsc.org/learn-to-skate.html>

- Utilize public skating, open hockey, stick and helmet, and/or local pond hockey or outdoor rink hockey
- Continue the below path starting with Learn to Play
- Athletes older than 12 by December 31st should continue utilizing the above resources, where possible to build upon their skills. AMHA's size and limitations to one sheet of ice prevent our ability to provide youth hockey options, unless the athlete is able to make an AMHA travel team – contact the Travel Director to inquire.

Learn To Play (LTP):

- Be between 4 & 12 years old by December 31st
- Free equipment use included in registration
- Have completed at least one session of LTS with Ames Figure Skating Club (AFSC) or comparable, or in pursuit of LTS certification. LTP/House Director/Administrator may require a session of LTS to be completed before LTP in cases where athlete safety is in-question.
- Will get one ice touch per week, generally during the morning of Saturday or Sunday, depending on ice availability
- Coaching will focus on USA Hockey's LTS1 & LTS2 curriculum (<https://www.usahockey.com/learntoskate>) which build upon the AFSC LTS skills and will begin to introduce puck handling and shooting
- Recommend continuing with AFSC LTS programs & other non-AMHA ice touches for continued development

House:

- Be between 5 & 12 years old by December 31st
- Have completed at least one session of LTP and tested out by AMHA LTP/House Director
- Will get 2-3 ice touches per week, one of which will be for in-house scrimmages against other AMHA house teams
- Coaching will continue to focus on USA Hockey's LTS curriculum, as well as introduce more complex skating, puck handling, and shooting skills through practice sessions
- Recommend continuing with AFSC LTS programs & other non-AMHA ice touches for continued development

House/Select Travel Team (if organized):

- House athletes and families may coordinate a coach/team to attend up to 3 travel tournaments per team under one of the below options:
 - 6U, Mite/8U, Squirt/10U, Peewee/12U, or an all-girls team at any of these ages
- LTP/House Director & PCDC to be consulted for any necessary team and coach decisions, and the AMHA Board may provide direction, where needed

- Team jerseys must be purchased, though practice-style jerseys are allowed. At a minimum, the Flying A should be on the front and a jersey number on the back. Team socks are optional. AMHA Board requires approval of final designs.
- All finances should be split by the families participating, and are independent of registration dollars

Travel Hockey Team:

- Travel hockey teams are for players who want to make a serious commitment to the game of hockey and to further their individual development. Travel hockey requires a significant amount of travel and financial obligation.
- In alignment with USA Hockey recommendations that like-skilled athletes participate together, not all athletes may qualify for AMHA travel hockey teams
- AMHA strives to develop athletes to move into travel hockey teams, but must also consider safety and other factors when determining athlete placement

Learn To Play and House Leagues:

- Registration – includes ice time and rental equipment, when needed
- These options are key to development of foundational hockey skills outlined by USA Hockey
- Athletes may utilize LTP/House as family alternatives to travel hockey, or may be assigned these levels to increase development before the pursuit of travel hockey

Travel Teams:

Registration:

- Registration fees include:
 - AMHA dues to cover Association expenses such as ice rental, referees, and other AMHA overhead
 - Team tournament allotment to cover each team's registration expenses for tournaments/games (see "Travel Team Tournament Scheduling" section below for more details)
 - Fundraising can be done with Board approval to cover tournament fees and other team expenses, but fundraising cannot offset the athlete's AMHA dues

Jerseys/uniforms:

- AMHA travel jerseys and socks are required
- Jersey numbers are assigned and kept in the AMHA master jersey number list
 - No athlete one birth year above or one birth year below can have the same number

- Number assignment prioritization is as follow:
 - Athletes that have the number already
 - Oldest to youngest by birth year
 - Same birth year prioritized by siblings who have the number already, so new jerseys don't need to be purchased
 - Followed by annual registration date/time, earliest registration takes priority
 - Last priority if still tied is rock/paper/scissors competition
 - Player's who 'skip' a regular season with AMHA is not guaranteed their number if they return the following year(s).

Volunteering:

- All travel hockey families are subject to the volunteer requirements in the Volunteer Section of the handbook
- Teams are expected to follow the outlines laid out below, some of which are pulled from USA Hockey's American Development Model [Hockey For Life chart](#) and the [Skills Progression Manual](#).

USA Hockey American Player Development Model



USA Hockey's American Development Model



Hockey for Life

Any Age – Players can enter at any stage. 'Hockey for Life' can provide quality recreational opportunities for all ages. USA Hockey also hopes that as adults we lead a physically active lifestyle and continue to contribute to the sport through volunteerism as coaches, referees and administrators.

Active Start	FUNDamentals	Learn to Train	Train to Train	Learn to Compete	Train to Compete	Train to Win
<p>Ages 0-6</p> <p>This early development period is essential for acquiring fundamental movement skills (running, gliding, jumping, kicking, catching, striking...) that lay the foundation for more complex movements, thereby preparing children for a physically active lifestyle. USA Hockey encourages activity that incorporates fundamental movement skills in the environments that lead to physical literacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the water: Swimming On the ground: Athletics In the air: Gymnastics On ice and snow: Sliding (skating) <p>Kids should start with a team to skate program and then learn to play program as their initial steps into ice hockey.</p> <p>6 & Under (Mites): 50-60 ice sessions 2-3 ice sessions per week 50-60 minute ice sessions 7-9 skaters per team 0 full-time goalies 34-40 quality practices 16-20 cross-ice game days</p>	<p>Ages 6-8 Female Ages 6-9 Male</p> <p>The objective of this stage is to refine fundamental movement skills and begin to acquire basic sports skills. This is the time when a foundation is laid for future acquisition of more advanced skills.</p> <p>The focus is on the development of physical literacy. Fundamental movement skills should be mastered and motor development emphasized, while the participation in many sports/activities is encouraged. For optimal skill acquisition, the basic hockey skills of skating and puck control are introduced. FUN competitions are also introduced in a team environment.</p> <p>8 & Under (Mites): 50-60 ice sessions 2-3 on-ice/1 off-ice sessions/week 50-60 minute ice sessions 9-12 skaters per team 0 full-time goalies 34-40 quality practices 16-20 cross-ice game days</p>	<p>Ages 8-11 Female Ages 9-12 Male</p> <p>This is the period of accelerated learning of coordination and fine motor control and is the critical stage for the acquisition of hockey skills.</p> <p>Prior to the beginning of the growth spurt, players have the best opportunity to learn and begin to master fine motor skills that can be used in combination with other skills. In most cases what is learned or not learned in this stage will have a very significant effect on the level of play that is achieved later on.</p> <p>Players should be able to begin to transfer skills and concepts from practices to games. Group, on-ice action, team building and social activities should be emphasized. A balance of practices and games will promote the continued development and mastery of key hockey skills.</p> <p>10 & Under (Squirrels): 96-100 ice sessions 3-4 on-ice/2 off-ice sessions/week 60 minute ice sessions 10-12 skaters and 1 goalie 75-80 quality practices 20-25 game days</p> <p>12 & Under (Pewees): 105-120 ice sessions 4 on-ice/2 off-ice sessions/week 60 minute ice sessions 12 skaters and 2 goalies 80-80 quality practices 30-35 game days</p>	<p>Ages 11-15 Female Ages 12-16 Male</p> <p>The focus of this stage is to further develop specific skills, begin to introduce competition, and start to emphasize support training to continue development of speed, strength and stamina while maintaining flexibility.</p> <p>Players should consolidate sport specific technical skills with an increased emphasis on hockey and a reduction in the number of other sports played. A continued emphasis is also placed on the development of individual and group tactics. Social and emotional considerations are addressed by placing an emphasis on team-building, group interaction and social activities.</p> <p>14 & Under (Bantam) & 16 & Under (Midget): 160 ice sessions 4-5 ice sessions per week 80 minute ice sessions Combined and separate practices for team/position 9 month training calendar 16 skaters and 2 goalies 120-130 quality practices 40-50 games Appropriate off-ice training for LTAD stage</p>	<p>Ages 15-18 Female Ages 16-18 Male</p> <p>This is the time to prepare athletes for the competitive environment, continue to refine technical skills, ancillary skills and develop the physical attributes.</p> <p>The focus is on optimizing fitness preparation and to begin to specialize in ice hockey. Training should be individualized to the athlete's particular needs in skill development, mental preparation, fitness and recovery. During this stage, training volume will increase, as does training intensity. Competitions become more important and the focus shifts to performance. Training will stress the development of position specific technical and tactical skills under competitive conditions. Mental skills that contribute to performance are also emphasized.</p> <p>18 & Under (Midget) & 19 & Under (Female): 200 ice sessions 5 ice sessions per week 80 minute ice sessions Combined and separate practices for team/position 10 month training calendar 18 skaters and 2 goalies 130-140 quality practices 50-60 games Appropriate off-ice training for LTAD stage</p>	<p>Ages 19-21 Female Ages 19-23 Male</p> <p>The objective of the Train to Compete stage is to transfer from the training environment to a competitive environment. Athletes must consolidate technical skills, and maintain ancillary skills and underlying physical capacities. During this stage training volume remains high while intensity increases with the importance of competitions. The training is usually 10+ months of the year and is disciplined and hockey-specific. Athletes will usually be required to move away from home for training and competition environments that fit this level of athlete development. The training is individualized to the athlete's particular needs in skill development, mental preparation, fitness and recovery.</p> <p>Junior, NCAA: Training calendar that equally supports both training and competition.</p>	<p>Ages 19+ Female Ages 19+ Male</p> <p>The focus of this stage is the stabilization of performance or demand characteristics and excellence within the highest level of performance of the NHL, World Championships and Olympics. This is the final phase of athletic preparation that only a very small minority will achieve. Maturation is complete and all the performance factors should be fully established to optimize performance in national or international competitions. The athletes in this stage will be the performers in the highest level professional leagues and at the highest international level. It is important to build a winning strategy with these athletes, and to individualize training and recovery programs to prevent over-training.</p> <p>NCAA, Professional: Appropriate training that supports competition calendar.</p>

For complete details, visit ADMkids.com

*Game days are defined as days on which games are played. Playing in two games on one day is just considered one game day.

* Any requests to go above the game our tournament requirements must be brought to PCDC for consultation and approved by the Board.

* Exceptions to game/tournament count may not apply to some athletes that are dual-rostered, though family approval and overall athlete schedule needs to be factored into dual-rostered athlete situations.

Mites/8U:

- Be between 7 to 8 years old by December 31st
- Participate in no more than 4 tournaments
- Compete in no more than 20 total games
- Mite Lead Coach to determine appropriate team split with PCDC buy-in
- No more than 4 Mites/8U travel teams due to ice capacity, all others should be referred to LTP/House

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Squirts/10U:

- Practice focus: Individual Skills – 85%, Hockey Sense – 15%, Systems – 0%
- Be between 9 to 10 years old by December 31st
- Participate in no more than 6 tournaments, plus end of season playoff tournament (MWAHA)
 - NOTE: MWAHA Select/House level may be more fitting skill-wise, but format may be different and wouldn't be considered an end of season playoff tournament
- Compete in no more than 30 total games
- No more than 3 Squirts/10U travel teams due to ice capacity, all others should be referred to LTP/House
- Practice focus: Individual Skills – 75%, Hockey Sense – 15%, Systems – 10%

Peewees/12U:

- Be between 11 to 12 years old by December 31st
- Participate in no more than 6 tournaments, plus end of season playoff tournament (MWAHA)
 - NOTE: MWAHA Select/House level may be more fitting skill-wise, but format may be different and wouldn't be considered an end of season playoff tournament
- Compete in no more than 40 total games
- No more than 3 Peewee/12U travel teams due to ice capacity, all others should be referred to LTP/House
- Practice focus: Individual Skills – 65%, Hockey Sense – 25%, Systems – 10%

Bantams/14U:

- Be between 13 to 14 years old by December 31st
- Participate in no more than 6 tournaments, plus end of season playoff tournament (MWAHA)
 - NOTE: MWAHA Select/House level may be more fitting skill-wise, but format may be different and wouldn't be considered an end of season playoff tournament
- Compete in no more than 50 total games
- No more than 2 Bantam/14U travel teams due to ice capacity, all others should be referred to LTP/House or other hockey opportunities
- Practice focus: Individual Skills – 50%, Hockey Sense – 35%, Systems – 15%

High School:

- Be between 15 to 18 years old by December 31st
- 14 year old Freshman are eligible to tryout in accordance with MHSHL rules, but are not required to play high school hockey

- Contact the HS Manager for any additional details (HSCoordinator@ameshockey.com)

Travel Team Skill Levels

- Per USA Hockey, AMHA is a Tier II Association which typically registers teams in the A, B, and House/Select/C levels
- Historical AMHA skill level puts our top teams (Black team) in the MWAHA A level, but comparable to Minnesota B1 level, and Wisconsin A2-A4 level (this means one step down from the top A levels in Wisconsin)
- Our AMHA second teams typically are somewhere between the B and the Select/House/C level
- We should strive to “play-up” to challenge our athletes where possible, though this can be a challenge and sometimes impossible to know exactly which level to register in the different states
- MyHockeyRankings.com is a good resource to use, but is more accurate the later in the season it gets – you can report scores and see how/where your team ranks against other opponents. Some tournaments utilize this resource, as well.

Travel Team Tournament Scheduling

- Lead Coaches should utilize other potential assistant coaches & managers, past coach/manager feedback, Travel Director, and online resources to locate appropriate skill level tournaments
- Suggestions for booking tournaments:
 - Some places open their tournaments earlier than others – some as early as April/May (MN tends to open sooner than other places), and others don’t open until Sept/Oct or later – keep checking back or reach out directly
 - Google the various cities in the region that have youth hockey (MN, WI, SD, NE, IA, KS, MO, IL) and look for the local websites – find their tournaments tab for information
 - Utilize hockey tournament companies
 - NOTE: some companies offer Buy One/Get One (BOGO) if booked earlier
 - MyHockeyTournaments.com, BigBearTournaments.com, CanAmHockey.com, OneHockey.com, ItsHockeyTime.com, etc.
 - Get input from other coaches/managers from past years for your age group
- AMHA recognizes the importance of a “destination” tournament for each team to annually look forward to – past experiences show a lot of value in the below recommendations (please build on this year-over-year). For example:
 - Mites:

- Ozarks Outdoor Tourney
- Squirts:
 - Black (potentially also Orange depending in skill): Fargo Squirt International
- Peewees:
 - Orange: Dodgeville, WI (coldest rink in Wisconsin!)
- Bantams:
 - Buffalo, NY Outdoor tourney (Team van travel)
 - South Bend, IN/Notre Dame tourney
- AMHA tournament allotment dollars:
 - Cover up to 6 travel tournaments (4 for Mites)
 - Fundraising can be done with Board approval to cover tournament fees and other team expenses, but fundraising cannot offset the athlete's AMHA dues
 - Going over the tournament allotment number or dollars requires pre-approval from the Board
- Annual MWAHA year-end tournament is the Midwest Championship – teams should do their best to support the MWAHA Championship by coordinating appropriate regular season games required by MWAHA, report results as necessary to MWAHA, and compete in the year end Championship tournament.
 - Association will cover the registration fees for this year end Championship tournament for any team that qualifies (Squirt to Bantam)
 - NOTE: MWAHA House/Select level tournament is currently organized in a different format than the year end championship, and instead involves multiple weekends throughout the season for round robin play. Costs are different. Teams deciding to compete in MWAHA House/Select tourneys will count each weekend tournament towards their 6 should consider these in place of the “core” or “add-on” tournaments – no additional funds will be paid by the Association beyond the registration allotment

Continued Development Opportunities:

Often the most frequent question received by PCDC is “what can my athlete do to get better” – we’ve pulled together the below bullets to help answer this question as best as possible. Please reach out to PCDC or your coaches for any further questions:

- 1) Do what is best for your family and your athlete – don’t attempt to “keep up with the Jones’”
- 2) USA Hockey defines the sport as a long term development sport (https://www.usahockey.com/news_article/show/1175588) – allow time for your

athlete to fall in love with the game, encourage time away from the sport in the summer months, and trust the process and returning to the rink and enjoying the sport leading to the most optimal outcome for the broadest group of athletes' development

- 3) Early Sports Specialization is a thing we suggest avoiding (https://www.usahockey.com/news_article/show/1094156) – play other sports, develop other muscles, and know that your time away from the rink isn't impairing your development
- 4) AMHA attempts to offer summer ice time to help families get off-season ice touches – utilize this as best as possible
- 5) You may see camps, summer teams, Team Midwest, USA Hockey Select camps, AAA hockey, futures camps, combines, etc – there are bountiful opportunities to spend a lot of money. Not all of the opportunities are going to be best for all athletes. Do your research, talk to coaches/other Association members about their experiences and suggestions, and most importantly know that the most important aspect is for your athlete to have fun and return to the rink tomorrow!
- 6) Rollerblade! Stickhandle and shoot in your garage – 5,000 shots/10,000 touches challenges (https://www.omha.net/news_article/show/722993-how-to-do-the-5000-puck-challenge, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HcHCX5uHsQk>, https://www.omha.net/news_article/show/477819-10-000-touches, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lsypX803Sac>)
- 7) AMHA urges athletes to drive off-season interest or opportunities, while families balance the amount completed. These opportunities should not be parent-driven/forced.

AMHA Move Up Policy

Ames Minor Hockey Association (AMHA) provides USA Hockey sanctioned travel hockey as defined in the AMHA Travel Hockey Program (THP) Policy. While most athletes will develop well following USA Hockey's recommended age groups, occasionally an athlete may be considered to move-up to the next age level. This option is not for all athletes, and the Player & Coach Development Committee (PCDC) suggests the following when considering athletes for AMHA's move-up opportunities:

- This policy is drafted as simply as possible to ensure Association members know it is an option, but not all scenarios can be drafted into formal policy. AMHA Board, AMHA High School Coaches, and/or PCDC reserves the right to adjust the use of this tool to various scenarios not defined below.
- The size of the Association generally determines the use of this tool – a larger/growing Association doesn't have as much room for athletes to meet these general eligibility suggestions, while a smaller/shrinking Association may have more opportunity

If a move up opportunity arises the following factors are considered:

Move-up requests are a tool only to be utilized by coaches within AMHA. This tool is not to be used at a family's request. Any coach(es) that has an athlete in mind for possible move-up should reach out to PCDC (amhapcdc@ameshockey.com). Discussion will occur between PCDC and the coach(es) regarding multiple factors, including but not limited to:

- Skill level of the athlete against peer athletes
- Skill level of the athlete against next age level athletes
- Maturity level of the athlete to understand on and off-ice interactions
- Discussion with coaches at both levels: the athlete's current age level and proposed move-up age level
- Roster/Team sizes of both levels
- Family's interest in this option for their athlete
- Determined pros & cons of the decision against both short term and long-term athlete, team, and Association development
- Other criteria determined by the PCDC
- Board Approval REQUIRED For ALL MOVE UP REQUESTS

Based on the above discussions, notes and a suggestion will be presented by PCDC to the Board for formal approval. Outcomes will be communicated out, as appropriate.

AMHA Practice-Only Player Policy

Another coach tool is a practice-only player. This tool is available for scenarios where an athlete is unable to commit to a travel team schedule, but still has the interest in development of hockey skills through practices. Instances where this tool may be used include, but are not limited to:

- AAA player or other level/league that doesn't compete against other teams offered by AMHA
- Injury or other scenario where an athlete cannot participate in games/tournaments
- Skill level isn't developed enough to safely participate in games/tournaments

NOTE: Practice-only players should generally only be used at the Bantam or High School level, as Mites/Squirts/Peewees have House options available to athletes.

Athletes who are selected to the Practice-Only option will be required to abide by the following:

- Pay appropriate AMHA fees as outlined by the Board

- Participate in practices as instructed by the age level coaches, respecting the coach's right to coach to the overall team's needs in any given practice, and as such may involve or un-involve the AAA player in periods of practice in a way that supports the team needs and the overall development of the AMHA players.
- Communicate with the appropriate age level coaches for attendance RSVPs, questions/changes in availability or the desire to join the full-time travel game/tournaments
 - Additional fees may be required
- Follow all other AMHA rules and policies
- AMHA reserves the right to revoke the Practice-Only option with no refund for any athlete not complying with AMHA's expectations
 - Any issue or question about this decision can be taken up with the AMHA Board on a case-by-case basis as

Dual Rostering/Cross Rostering

Another tool available to coaches is called dual rostering or cross rostering. This is where an athlete is able to be listed on more than one team roster within an Association, which is allowed by USA Hockey registration rules. The tool is not used often, and is there at coach discretion for several key purposes:

- Allow flexibility for injuries or sickness
- Allow flexibility with position-specific needs (goalies, especially)
- Assist with balancing team numbers when overall numbers don't coordinate well with team size/needs

PCDC requires that coaches follow the below outline when determining dual roster decisions:

- Consult with other Head Coaches and Lead Coaches when determining which athletes should be dual rostered
- When pulling up an athlete, consider team size and impacts to ice times – additional players should not be added when that pushes the team above USA Hockey recommended team sizes
- The Head Coach and Lead Coach are to make decisions in the best interest of the originally rostered team as a whole
- Exceptions to game/tournament count may be necessary for athletes that are dual-rostered, though family approval and overall athlete schedule needs to be factored into dual-rostered athlete situations/decisions.

AMHA Coaches

All coaches are selected through PCDC recommendations and must be **approved through AMHA Board vote**, and are expected to follow the below outline and expectations:

- Follow and support AMHA Mission and Philosophies and USA Hockey recommendations for leading team practice concepts and progressions ([Hockey For Life chart](#), [Skills Progression Manual](#), age specific modules, etc)
- Comply with direction from Coaching Director and the AMHA Board
- Be compliant with AMHA Registrar requirements and expectations, in alignment with USA Hockey requirements and expectations (background check, SafeSport, CEP courses, code of conduct, etc)
- AMHA will reimburse coaches for their USA Hockey coach registration, class fees, and background check/SafeSport/CEP coursework/Modules/Continuing Education – send proof of payments to Billing@ameshockey.com for reimbursement request
- Above all else, set a positive example for the athletes towards the refs, parents, etc

Below is a breakdown of the various coaching opportunities available within AMHA. Please note, AMHA appreciates any and all help. Formal coaching positions may be awarded to those deemed most experienced, but please don't let that discourage you from attempting to learn the sport with your athletes and help along the way!

[USA HOCKEY COACH CODE OF CONDUCT COACHES MUST ADHERE TO:](#)

https://cdn1.sportngin.com/attachments/document/0042/0990/CEP-Ethics-Code_2019.pdf?_gl=1*7mqp16*_ga*MjA0NDk1NjQ2OS4xNjk5OTA3NDYz*_ga_PQ25JN9PJ8*MTcwMTk5ODkzMj4yLjAuMTcwMTk5ODkzMj4wLjAuMA..

- Lead Coach:
 - Lead Coach is selected late Spring/early Summer to allow the level to get organized and begin appropriate coordination. Interested candidates should email AMHABoard@ameshockey.com. Selection takes place based on PCDC recommendation and AMHA Board approval.
 - Lead Coaches report to Coaching Director and are responsible for managing the overall age level – ensuring a “one team” approach is achieved, that the Head Coaches are acting in the best interest of the athletes and AMHA, and generally take on practice planning for the level.

- Drive performance, expectations, and unity across all athletes (and families) within assigned level to ensure a “One Team” feel
 - Organize and host annual preseason parent meeting in conjunction with other level teams with the assistance of other coaches and managers to ensure a consistent message is provided to all athletes/families
 - Partner with other Lead coaches to align vision and trajectory in accordance with USA Hockey, AMHA Mission and policies, and AMHA HS Head Coach
 - Ensure evaluations are completed and teams selected in accordance with USA Hockey guidelines, and in the best development perspective for AMHA athletes
 - Partner with other level coaches and coordinators to select season tournament and game schedule
 - Conduct/attend conflict resolution meetings, as necessary
 - Complete off-season preparation necessary to ensure solid season kicks-off from the beginning
 - Reinforce positive examples for our athletes - no yelling at refs or other exhibits of poor leadership
 - Primary responsible party to ensure practice plans are completed
 - Other functions as deemed necessary
- Head Coach:
 - Take overall responsibility of the team, in close partnership with the age level Lead Coach
 - May help with practice planning to ensure team-appropriate skill development is incorporated
 - Partner with Lead Coach on any parent/athlete concerns, though escalation to Conduct Review Committee is there to assist, as well Serve as official spokesperson on behalf of the team
 - Partner with other level coaches and coordinators to select season tournament and game schedule
 - Secondary responsible party to ensure practice plans are completed
 - Travel with the team to away games/tournaments
 - Reinforce positive examples for our athletes - no yelling at refs or other exhibits of poor leadership
 - Other functions as deemed necessary
- Assistant Coach/Bench Coach:
 - Partner with Head Coach on any responsibilities in practice or games that are requested and communicated
 - Travel with the team to away games/tournaments

- Reinforce positive examples for our athletes - no yelling at refs or other exhibits of poor leadership
- Other functions as deemed necessary
- Practice Coach:
 - Partner with Head Coach on any responsibilities in practice that are requested and communicated
- Goalie Coach:
 - Partner with all level coaches to develop Behind The Mask (BTM) weekly practice plan

NOTE: Coaching jackets are provided to AMHA Coaches who provide value to helping practice or games.

Non-Parent Coaches:

- AMHA philosophy is that the use of a non-parent coach for our older age groups, especially, is a good thing for all involved. However, this isn't always feasible.
- Non-parent coaches can be selected to be used at any level and for any team, at the recommendation/approval of PCDC, Coaching Director, and Board approval (when necessary)
- As voted at the June 2021 Board Meeting, AMHA has approved compensation packages for non-parent coaches. Compensation amounts are listed in the AMHA Annual Price Sheet. Below are the details and further expectations of these sub-contracted parties:
- Coaches selected as a Head Coach will also attempt to be added as a Lead Coach for the level
- Bench Assistant Coach is defined as those listed on USA Hockey Rosters that aren't Head Coach
- Travel Reimbursement Details:
 - Only provided for tournaments and away games - not practice or home games
 - No dollar cap (given that AMHA has a tournament cap in-place, and follows USA Hockey guidance for game totals)
 - Coach stays at same hotel as the team, and takes advantage of any free rooms awarded by participating hotels for filling of blocks (we feel this perk isn't utilized much anymore post-COVID)
 - Hotel to be booked by placing on coach's personal credit card and reimbursed by AMHA
 - \$35 meal per diem provided for the same number of hotel night stays, or for when single day travel is further than 4 hours one-way

- Mileage reimbursement at the current government rate
- Non-Parent Coach reporting structure is as follows:
 - All non-parent coaches will report to the AMHA President
 - As directed by the AMHA President, feedback and expectations may be driven through the Player & Coach Development Coordinator and/or Player and Coach Development Committee (PCDC)

Team Managers

Team Managers help coordinate many off-ice items to help the season run smoothly. Managers are chosen through AMHA Board vote, so interested candidates should follow social media for the application form to ensure it is submitted timely. High level details of the Team Manager role include:

- Provide transparent communication to the parents and coaches as often as necessary to keep all team members updated & informed
- Initial point of contact for parent concerns - 24-hour rule applies here, as well
- Maintain the team calendar (AMHA webpage) & SportsEngine App – these two are integrated
- 1st line contact for parent questions
 - Address what you can, but all hockey-related matters/concerns should be passed to the Head Coach
- Organize hotel blocks for each game/tournament requiring an overnight stay
- Assist with tracking and handing out team jerseys before and after the season
- Ensure locker room parents are assigned for all team events (games and practices)
- Assist with athlete injuries during team events (games and practices) – provide aid as needed or contact parent to assist
- Complete concussion baseline testing for all team events (games and practices)
 - If unable to be present, ensure a proxy has the information necessary to complete in your absence
- Prepare scoresheet roster stickers for games/tournaments – submit with game/tournament staff upon arrival to the rink prior to each game/tournament
 - Reach out to the Head Coach if there are questions or issues that arise when working with the game/tournament staff
- Register for and schedule tournaments and games after they've been identified and agreed upon by the Head Coach, Assistant Coaches and Coordinators
 - May also require communication with the parents if excess costs are factored in

- Distribute tournament information to parents, including t-shirt orders or other pre-tournament items
- Coordinate team pictures at tournaments, if the team desires
- Ask for and assign home game volunteers (score clock, penalty box, etc)
- Coordinate with the Referee-In-Chief the week-of home games/tournaments to ensure referees are assigned to be present
- Track parent volunteer hours via DIBS app
- Work with AMHA Lead Manager, as needed
- Attend Manager & ice time meetings
- Other duties as assigned/asked by the Head Coach

Team Manager Manual

Parent/Guardian Volunteer Requirements

- Volunteering is a huge part of youth sports, and AMHA is no exception. Without selfless volunteers, our athletes will not have the chances to learn the great sport of hockey. Please share these duties and do your part!
- LTP and House families are not subject to the travel volunteer expectations outlined below, but there may be needs at the LTP and House level that the Team Manager or Coaches may request help with – please step up if possible and when necessary
- High School volunteer requirements are outlined in the High School section of the Handbook
- Travel hockey families are required to complete 15 hours of “hockey operations” volunteering. Families with 2 or more athletes in travel hockey are required to complete 25 hours of “hockey operations” volunteering. Please recognize that even if you’ve hit your quota, our athletes still may need your help to ensure the hockey season is a success.
 - Hockey Operations tasks include, but are not limited to:
 - Game clock
 - Penalty box
 - Score sheet
 - 1 game videographer per game
 - Locker room attendants
 - Backup Team Manager gameday duties
 - Lead Coach, Head Coach, Assistant Coach, or Goalie Coach
 - Lead Manager, Team Manager
 - Mite Meltdown tourney help
 - Other opportunities as determined by the Board

- Hockey operations volunteer tasks do not include:
 - Board membership or Committee participation
 - Practice Coach
 - Additional videographers, announcers, color commentators, or other assistants beyond 1 game videographer per game
- Travel hockey volunteer preseason buyout is available for \$300 for one athlete, or \$500 for 2 or more athletes.
 - These funds are due at time of registration from all families and will be refunded at the end of the season if you've hit the required number of volunteer hours
 - Families that don't hit all hours will have their refunds reduced by \$20 per hour short of the goal hours

Conduct Expectations

- All Participants are expected to follow USA Hockey, MWAHA, and AMHA outlined conduct expectations that were signed at the start of the season
- Non-compliance will be addressed through the Conduct Review Committee and/or AMHA Board, and may include penalty up to and including removal from the Association as outline in the AMHA Bylaws
- You can find the AMHA forms that you signed at registration here and we follow the USA Parents Code of Conduct [USA CODE OF CONDUCT](#)

Conduct Review Committee:

- As a USA Hockey association we follow USA Hockey's By Law #10 in regards to handling conduct complaints (Provide link)
- This committee is formed primarily with the AMHA Executive Board (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer), though others may be asked to assist
- If situations arise from athletes, parents, or other Association members from complaints or escalations from a variety of sources in which there are allegations of misconduct, non-compliance with AMHA and USA Hockey expectations for athletes, parents, spectators, or other miscellaneous scenarios then the Conduct Review Committee will take appropriate actions, which could impact offending athletes.
- Diligence will be done to determine the background of the situation, and a resolution path will be determined
 - Repeat offenders, even from season-to-season, will be dealt with more harshly
 - Penalty up to and including expulsion from the team/Association may be necessary depending on severity and/or occurrence as outline in the AMHA Bylaws

Concussions and Baseline Testing:

- AMHA takes concussions and baseline testing seriously in order to prevent any long term effects – please visit AMHA Concussion page for more information on this topic and USA Hockey’s concussion information :

<https://www.ameshockey.com/page/show/1545371-concussion-information>

Locker Rooms:

- Refer to the locker room policy: [Locker Room Policy](#)
- [Locker Room Rules](#)

AMHA Annual Roadmap:

- [General guide to Season](#). Planning starts the February before Regular season starts in the fall but also ties up loose ends from current season, things like summer ice.