



Anchorage Women's Hockey League

*...bringing women of all skill levels together to play hockey
in a fun, organized and supportive atmosphere*

AWHL Rules & Regulations

Updated September 23, 2025

I. MEMBERSHIP

1. **AGE** - Players must be women at least 18 years of age on December 31 of the playing year.
2. **SKILL LEVEL** All players of all skill levels, from beginning to advanced, are welcome to be AWHL members.

II. TEAM ORGANIZATION

1. **League-Managed Teams** The league assigns players to teams to help provide balance between teams in a division. Player preferences for specific teams or teammates are also considered in placement. All members of league-managed teams submit individual payments to AWHL.
 - a. A league-managed team is considered FULL at 13 players plus goalie, however, AWHL may elect to bring a roster up to 15 players under special circumstances.
 - b. A league-managed team may also vote to add players with a maximum roster of 18 players including goalie, **with approval from the AWHL board for extenuating circumstances only.**
 - c. AWHL is responsible for providing team jerseys.
 - d. AWHL seeks out and maintains team sponsorships.
 - e. AWHL may create one or more League-Managed Teams to provide more playing opportunities at any levels if there is demand and ice availability.
2. **Player-Managed Teams** determine their own roster with a maximum up to 20 members, including goalie. A TEAM fee is assessed and submitted as directed by the Board.
 - a. Player-Managed Teams may seek sponsorships to help offset their team fee.
 - b. Player-Managed Teams are responsible for providing their own numbered jerseys.
 - c. Any new Player-Managed Team must first apply to AWHL for league entry and approval of jersey color and name.
 - d. A Roster Freeze goes into effect on DECEMBER 31. New players may only be added under extenuating circumstances with Board approval.
3. **Team Reps** are volunteers selected to be the primary managers of all AWHL teams and the

designated contacts with the league. Team Rep duties are outlined in the AWHL Bylaws and the Team Rep Guide.

III. DIVISION ORGANIZATION

1. AWHL offers play in **up to** three divisions defined by styles of play, skill levels, methods of team organization and playing rules. **For the 2025-2026 season, two divisions will be offered: Intermediate and Recreational.**

2. **Division Selection** - Player-Managed teams may select the DIVISION they want to compete in, pending board approval.
 - a. **Advanced** is geared toward members who have the ability and desire to play a highly competitive and fast-paced style of hockey. This includes players who have skated on collegiate or competitive teams as well as other players with advanced skills. **(NOT OFFERED IN THE 2025-2026 SEASON)**
 - b. **Intermediate** is geared towards members that seek a more challenging and faster play than the Recreational tier. Skaters should be comfortable with game play situations and a faster paced game while still exemplifying the highest level of good sportsmanship.
 - c. **Rec** is geared toward members who seek a more relaxed, recreational style of play. This level is open to players of all skill levels from beginner to advanced. All players are expected to exemplify the highest level of good sportsmanship and moderation in playing with opponents and teammates who may not be evenly matched.

IV. REGISTRATION

1. All members, including coaches, must register with USA Hockey and AWHL for the current season. Members may register for more than one team in more than one division and assume the risk of scheduling conflicts.

V. FEES

1. AWHL is a member-supported organization. The Board determines the league fees proportionally for players each season based on all expenses.
 - a. Member Fees must be paid in full by the specified deadlines to play in AWHL ice events.
 - b. All fees paid to AWHL will be considered fully earned on the occasion on which the player participates in a scheduled game, practice, or scrimmage.
2. Refunds for members of player-managed teams are at the discretion of each team.
3. Refunds for members of **league-managed teams** may be considered for extenuating circumstances, such as relocation or medical need.
 - a. Refund requests must be made in writing to the board specifying the allowable reason to be considered.
 - b. Refunds will be prorated on the following schedule:
 - (1) From registration to first scheduled league ice: 100% minus league expenses.
 - (2) From first scheduled league ice to December 31st up to 50% minus league expenses.
 - (3) **After December 31: no refunds.**

VI. TEAM MODIFICATIONS

1. **Substitute Players:** All substitute players must be AWHL members in good standing.
 - a. A team may add up to three eligible substitute players to bring the number of players on its bench up to 10 players (excluding the goalie).
 - b. Substitutes must be noted in writing on the score sheet.
 - c. **If a team is unable to field at least 6 players from its roster, the game can still be played but will be scored as a forfeit (0 for the Forfeiting team /1 for the Opposing Team) The forfeiting team may field as many subs needed to bring their bench up to 10 players.**
 - d. Players in the Intermediate Division are prohibited from subbing in Rec Division games, unless they are also registered in Rec.
 - e. Rec Division players may sub up to Intermediate Division without being registered in Intermediate.
 - f. All substitute players officially rostered on teams in BOTH divisions are free to score according to division allowances.

2. **Substitute Goaltender:** If a goaltender is unavailable to play a scheduled game, a team may use another AWHL registered goaltender from any division, provided this rule is not abused to give the team an unfair advantage. If a team is found by the Board to have abused this rule, the team will automatically forfeit any games played with the substitute goaltender.
 - a. If a substitute goaltender is unavailable then the team may put a sixth player on the ice. A sixth player will only have goaltender privileges if wearing all required goaltender equipment.
 - b. A sixth skater Goaltender must remain behind the blue line in the defensive zone.
 - c. If a team elects to pull their sixth skater from the net, that person must skate to the bench before a new player can get on the ice.

3. **Coaches:** All AWHL teams may have volunteer coaches on the bench.
 - a. Coaches must be registered with AWHL.
 - b. Coaches who are not rostered and equipped players on that team may not be on the ice.
 - c. Coaches of teams must recognize the recreational philosophy governing adult league play, and must be guided by this philosophy in decisions about how much playing time experienced versus new players will receive in each game.
 - d. If there are complaints about a coach, the Board reserves the right to caution and ultimately dismiss a coach from the league.

VII. GAME REQUIREMENTS

1. **Player Eligibility:** All players must be registered with AWHL and with USA Hockey for the current season. No one may be on a team bench if they are not a member of AWHL.

2. **Ineligible Players:** If any ineligible player is used, the offending team will forfeit the game. The infraction will be brought before the Board for further assessment.

3. **Protective Equipment:** Players who fail to wear proper protective equipment will not be allowed to play on the ice but can return to the ice once they have all of the proper equipment. A player may be suspended for part or all of the season if the Board determines the player is

intentionally ignoring the league equipment rules on a regular basis. See **APPENDIX A** for a complete list of all required equipment.

VIII. GAME PLAY

1. **USA Hockey Rules** will be used during the season except as modified by Alaska State Hockey Association (ASHA) and AWHL, Inc. provisions.
2. **Periods** - Games will start after a five-minute warm up. The first two periods will be seventeen (17) minutes with a running clock, followed by a minimum one (1) minute break. The third period will be fifteen (15) minutes with the last two (2) minutes stop clock if a scorekeeper is present, the score difference is no greater than 4 points, and game play can be concluded by the allocated time. All rink schedules shall supersede these times. Tie games will be allowed during regular season play. In a game once the score difference is five points or greater, additional goals will be recorded on the scoresheet but not the scoreboard.
3. **Officials** - Two referees will officiate each scheduled game. If only one referee is present the game will still be played and considered a league game.
 - a. If no referees are present the game will be considered a tie and a scrimmage may be played. If at a later date, ice is available to reschedule a game, a game will be played and the outcome will replace the tie.
 - b. AWHL membership does not disqualify a referee from officiating at AWHL games.
4. **Protests** of any game must be written on the score sheet after the game, but before the referee has signed it. If the protest is deemed justified by the Board, the game will be rescheduled for play. Coaches may write a comment about the game or referee on a score sheet after the game only before the referee has signed it. Nothing may be written on the score sheet after the referee has signed it.
5. **Alcoholic Beverages** will not be allowed during games, practices, or other AWHL sponsored events on ice. No coach or player may smoke or drink while engaged in a game.
 - a. Players/coaches that come to an AWHL, Inc. sanctioned event under the influence of mind altering substances, e.g. alcohol, may be removed from the ice or game at the referee's discretion.
 - b. If the player/coach refuses to leave the ice at the referee's request, the team will forfeit the game and will be required to leave the ice.
 - c. Violation of these rules will result in forfeiture of the game and/or suspension of the offending player or coach for up to three (3) games.
 - d. Subsequent infractions by player/coach may result in expulsion from the league.

IX. DIVISION PLAYING RULES

1. **Advanced (NOT OFFERED IN THE 2025-2026 SEASON):**
 - a. **Scoring Limits:** A player may score no more than 3 GOALS per game. Additional goals scored by that player will not be counted.
 - b. **Slapshots:** Allowed

2. **Intermediate (Applies to all matchups):**
 - a. **Scoring Limits:** A player may score no more than 3 GOALS per game. Additional goals scored by that player will not be counted.
 - b. **Slapshots:** Prohibited
3. **Recreational**
 - a. **Scoring Limits:** A player may score no more than 3 GOALS in one game per Season.
 - b. **Slapshots:** Prohibited
4. **A/B Team Designation and Scoring**
 - a. The league may choose to designate teams in a division as “A” or “B” tier based on their team’s skill level, as measured by player self-rankings at registration. “A” is the more advanced level and “B” is the standard level. The league has the discretion to assign and re-assign teams as appropriate to create balanced divisions.
 - b. **Scoring Rules Based on Matchups:**
 - (1) **A vs. B Games:**
 - (a) To encourage fair play, when an “A” team plays a “B” team:
 - (i) Every skater on the “A” team must score once before any player may record a second goal.
 - (ii) The “B” team has no individual scoring restrictions.
 - (2) **A vs. A and B vs. B Games:**
 - (a) When teams of the same tier compete, either “A” vs. “A” or “B” vs. “B”, there are no additional scoring restrictions beyond the standard divisional rules (e.g., 3-goal limits per player in Advanced and Intermediate, 3-goal total per season in Recreational).
 - (b) These matchups follow the standard AWHL gameplay rules outlined in Section IX.

X. TOURNAMENT

1. A HOUSE Tournament will be held for each division as ice availability allows. **AWHL reserves the right to modify its rules for tournament play.**

XI. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

1. **Disciplinary actions apply to coaches and players.**
All major penalties will result in an automatic one (1) game suspension to be enforced during players’ next scheduled game.
2. Three or more (2-minute) minor penalties in one game is an automatic one game suspension (for the duration of that game). *If the third penalty is received any time in the third period, an automatic next game suspension will be enforced.* Suspension requires leaving the bench.
3. If a player or coach receives a game misconduct, the Board will convene to discuss the incident and whether any further disciplinary actions are necessary. The Board may also discipline any player or coach for any violation of league rules regardless of penalties assessed by referees. Disciplinary action may include suspension of an unlimited number of games and/or for the season.
4. The Board will send a written notification of its disciplinary action to the person being disciplined.
 - a. A player or coach has the right to appeal any disciplinary action taken by the Board. Appeals should be written and submitted within the time frame specified in the notification of the

disciplinary action.

- b. If the player or coach does not agree with the Board's final decision, an appeal may be submitted to the ASHA.

XII.CHAIN OF COMMAND

1. Concerned players should pose questions or concerns regarding players and teams as follows:
 - a. Concerned Player(s) to Team Representative
 - b. Concerned Team Representative to Referee (during period breaks)
 - c. Concerned Team Representative to opposing Team Representative
 - d. Concerned Player, Players, or Team Representative to Division Coordinator
 - e. Concerned Player, Players, or Team Representative to League President

APPENDIX A

REQUIRED PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

PLAYERS:

Helmet, with full face-shield
Pelvic protector
Hip pads or padded hockey pants
Hockey stick (*must not be cracked or broken*)
Shin pads
Shoulder pads
Elbow pads
Hockey gloves
Hockey skates
Jersey
Internal mouthguard
(optional but recommended)

GOALTENDERS:

Helmet, with full face-shield
Pelvic protector
Padded hockey pants
Neck protector
Shoulder and arm pads
Chest protector
Blocker and catcher gloves
Leg pads
Goalie or hockey skates
Goalie stick
Jersey

LEAGUE ASSETS

Jerseys for Teams - The league currently provides jerseys to players on league organized teams. Players **MUST** sign a jersey check out sheet and return their jerseys to their team rep at the end of the season. Players who do not return their jerseys will be assessed a \$100 charge for replacement and may not be allowed to register with AWHL in the future.

Jerseys for Loan - The league currently allows members to check out a set of jerseys for use in non-AWHL events with a \$500 refundable deposit by check. The jersey set must be returned complete, clean and organized by the designated time or the member will forfeit the deposit and will be responsible for any additional damage or loss.

GOALIE GEAR - A limited amount of goalie equipment (except skates, neck protector and stick) is available for seasonal loan from AWHL for rostered members. This equipment loan is intended to help goaltenders who may not be able to purchase ALL goalie gear at once. Each goaltender must sign a form assuming responsibility for the gear during the season, and must return the gear in good shape after the last game. The goaltender will be charged for any gear damaged or not returned.