



NEWS RELEASE

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USA Hockey Increases Penalty for Racial/Derogatory Slurs ***Presidential Directive Calls for Match Penalty Effective Immediately***

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. – USA Hockey announced today a presidential directive that changes the penalty for racial/derogatory slurs of any kind that fall under Rule 601 (e. 3) from a game misconduct to a match penalty.

“We continue to get reports of disturbing incidents of racial and other derogatory slurs, behavior which is reprehensible and has absolutely no place in our game, especially around our children,” said **Jim Smith**, president of USA Hockey. “For reasons I cannot explain or understand, the current penalty in place does not seem to be enough of a deterrent to stop this type of conduct.”

Smith noted that while modifying the severity of the penalty is an important step, it’s also vital that parents and coaches take the time to address the topic with athletes.

Effectively immediately, anyone penalized under Rule 601 (e.3) will receive a match penalty, which carries a five-minute penalty, disqualification from that game, and suspension from further participation until such time the governing Affiliate or junior league has conducted a hearing to review the matter. Affiliates or junior leagues have up to 30 days to investigate and conduct a hearing and the offending individual(s) is subject to further discipline.

Pat Kelleher, executive director of USA Hockey, noted the importance of all stakeholders working together for the betterment of the sport.

“The use of hateful language is a hurdle to creating a welcoming environment for families that want to be involved in our sport. Eradicating this kind of behavior from our game is critical as we continue to make a positive impact on society through hockey.”

