



ASHA Member & Affiliate Guide

2025/2026 Season

July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

ASHA has created this guide to assist our member and affiliate as they navigate the evolving needs of athletes, families and communities.

These are shared guidelines and tools meant to support the unique and diverse ways our member and affiliate programs operate, while keeping the focus where it belongs: on the athletes. Special hockey thrives when programs are inclusive, flexible, and rooted in community.

Our goal is to provide resources that help you continue growing the game in a way that works for your team, while staying aligned with the core values of safety, access, and respect for all abilities.

Thank you for your continued dedication to your athletes, your families, and this incredible sport. Your commitment makes special hockey possible.

Need Help?? Contact us at ASHA@Specialhockey.org

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The American Special Hockey Association 2025/2026 member team and affiliate guidelines were developed and designed to help you navigate the season more effectively, with practical tools and clear expectations. We appreciate the time, energy, and commitment you bring to Special Hockey, and we're here to support that work every step of the way.

What's Inside & Why It Matters

- **Built for Inclusion:** These guidelines are made for athletes who need something different. ASHA exists to make hockey accessible, and your programs make that mission real every day.
- **Leveled Play that Supports Growth:** Clearer player rating descriptions help everyone, from coaches to officials, create matchups that are safe, encouraging, and fun.
- **Flexible Team Models That Fit Your Game Plan:** Leveled, Mixed-Bench, or Unified. Whatever your team looks like, ASHA supports the structure that works best for your athletes.
- **Clear Game Format Breakdowns:** You'll find simple, side-by-side guidance for Level A, B, and C games, reflecting how your teams actually play and grow.
- **Coach & Volunteer Support:** Real-world expectations for coaches, managers, and volunteers focused on safety, encouragement, and practical help.
- **SafeSport Compliance Made Clear:** Straightforward guidance on reporting, boundaries, and prevention, so your team knows what to do and where to turn when it matters.
- **Celebrating Team Identity:** Your athletes' sense of pride and belonging matters. We've included guidance to help teams stay connected, even when rosters are split for leveled games.

Administrative Tools & Forms

- Practical resources to make your season smoother from start to finish:
 - **Team Registration Guide:** Step-by-step instructions to help your team register with ease
 - **ASHA Member Team Season Form:** A quick way to tell us who you are and how we can support you
 - **Event Sanctioning Request Form:** Use this when planning tournaments, scrimmages, or events
 - **Insurance Certificate Requests:** For rinks and partners that need proof of coverage.

We're proud to serve our member teams and deeply value the work you do in your communities. Our goal is to provide meaningful support, and we're always open to feedback and ideas on how we can do that better.

ASHA MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

WHAT ASHA PROVIDES

- Affordable No Fee Membership
- National insurance.
- Training built for adaptive hockey
- Game and conduct guidelines
- Access to 20+ events.
- Grant support, equipment donations & scholarships
- Marketing tools
- Advocacy
- Responsive Support

All so your program can focus on the athletes

COMMITMENT TO SERVICE AND FOCUS ON MISSION

- ASHA is a volunteer organization governed by a dedicated Board of Directors. We do not charge membership fees for our services.
- Every dollar raised goes back into the community, directly supporting ASHA-affiliated programs and athletes.
- As a national network, we also connect teams with one another, helping members learn, collaborate, and engage across communities.

FOCUSED SUPPORT FOR SPECIAL HOCKEY

- ASHA provides training and resources specific to working with individuals with disabilities in adaptive recreation settings. New training programs for the 2025/2026 season will reflect updated regulations and feedback from our member teams.
- Recognized national guidelines are provided for game play, player ratings, codes of conduct, and volunteer responsibilities.
- Members have access to over two dozen sanctioned tournaments and events each season, as well as guidance and support for those coordinating events at the local level.
- Skills camps are held throughout the year, including in the summer months, to maintain community connection and continue athlete development opportunities.
- ASHA's network of over 130 member and affiliate organizations offers valuable peer learning, coaching support, and shared opportunities for participation.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

- ASHA provides participant insurance coverage at no cost to registered organizations and players. This umbrella policy includes commercial general liability, participant accident coverage, catastrophic loss, crime coverage, special event coverage and access to optional Directors & Officers (D&O) liability coverage at minimal cost.
- Teams benefit from access to online tools including an updated website, online registration, background checks and abuse prevention training (provided at a low vendor cost), and individualized team pages.
- ASHA also offers responsive phone and email support for member organizations, including referrals to professional services when needed.

DEVELOPMENT AND FISCAL SUPPORT

- ASHA provides support for new program development through in-kind equipment donations and startup grants.
- Junior Coach Scholarships are awarded annually to student volunteers pursuing post-secondary education.
- Members also benefit from grant writing support, access to state-specific nonprofit governance resources, and assistance navigating best practices for responsible financial and operational management.
- We work to connect member teams with corporate and community partnerships that offer group discounts on equipment and merchandise.

MARKETING AND AWARENESS

- ASHA offers support for marketing and outreach through our national website, social media presence, and content development.
- We assist with the creation of customized brochures, posters, and awareness campaigns.
- Member teams may also request support in building relationships with local schools and agencies serving individuals with special needs.

ADVOCACY

- ASHA collaborates with local governing bodies, leagues, and hockey associations to ensure that individuals with special needs are fully included in the sport.
- We work to promote consistency, accessibility, and positive communication across the broader hockey community.
- We also support teams in building partnerships with local stakeholders and sponsors to sustain and grow their programs.
- Volunteer and coach contributions are recognized throughout the year as part of our commitment to community-based leadership.



EVERYONE BELONGS

Special Hockey celebrates all abilities and creates space for athletes who need adapted support to participate fully.

FOCUS ON ACCESS

Our goal is to provide a safe and welcoming environment for those who may not have equitable access to typical hockey programs.

SUPPORT FOR ALL ABILITIES

Athletes may benefit from accommodations in areas like communication, coordination, learning, or social interaction.

NO AGE LIMIT

Special Hockey is open to individuals age five and up, with no upper age limit and a wide range of diagnoses welcomed. No pressure to choose one path.

ELIGIBILITY IS GUIDED BY PURPOSE

Local programs make eligibility decisions based on ASHA's core mission: creating access for those who need it most.

Athletes participating in typical hockey are encouraged to stay engaged, and are always welcome in Special Hockey in supportive roles.



OUR MISSION

The American Special Hockey Association (ASHA) serves individuals with physical, intellectual, and developmental disabilities by providing accessible opportunities to participate in the sport of hockey.

Our mission engages families and communities by including athletes of all abilities in the game. Special Hockey provides a recreational environment that emphasizes community engagement, teamwork, and personal skill development. For individuals with disabilities, it supports life skills, promotes inclusion, and builds a strong sense of belonging. For families, coaches, and volunteers, Special Hockey offers a meaningful network that strengthens communities through shared involvement in the sport.

ELIGIBILITY

The American Special Hockey Association (ASHA) welcomes athletes with disabilities who need a modified or adapted hockey environment to participate safely, successfully, and meaningfully. Special Hockey is intended for individuals who benefit from structured support on the ice, on the bench, and throughout the experience. It is not designed for those who can independently participate in traditional recreational or competitive hockey programs.

ASHA is committed to inclusion and access, recognizing the diverse strengths and needs within the disability community. Our goal is to ensure that individuals who may not otherwise have the opportunity to play hockey can do so in a setting that is safe, welcoming, and tailored to their needs.

Eligible participants may have physical, intellectual, or developmental disabilities that impact communication, learning, mobility, motor coordination, sensory processing, social interaction, or behavior. Common diagnoses include autism spectrum disorder, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, seizure disorders, cognitive disabilities, sensory processing challenges, and other neurological or physical conditions that require adaptation.

Participation is open to individuals starting at age five, with no upper age limit. Athletes may join at any stage of life and often remain involved for many years. Programs are encouraged to consider functional needs, rather than diagnosis alone, when determining whether Special Hockey is the right fit for a prospective athlete.

If an athlete requires structured support, game modifications, or adaptive equipment to participate fully and safely, they likely meet the spirit and intent of ASHA eligibility. When in doubt, programs are encouraged to reach out for support in making decisions that reflect ASHA's mission and the individual strengths and needs of each athlete.

ASHA does not discourage any individual with a disability from participating in typical hockey programs alongside their peers. Special Hockey exists to provide an adaptive and inclusive option for those who require additional support to succeed. Individuals who are thriving in standard hockey environments are encouraged to continue doing so. At the same time, they are always welcome to stay connected to their local Special Hockey community in other meaningful roles such as junior coaches, mentors, assistant coaches, or volunteers, depending on the structure and needs of the program.

Final eligibility decisions are made by local programs. These decisions should always be guided by the mission and intent of Special Hockey: to create equitable access to the game for individuals with disabilities who would otherwise be excluded. **5**





TEAM INFORMATION

The New Season Organization Form must be submitted and approved by July 15—or within 30 days of forming a new team.

REGISTRATION

All athletes, coaches, and volunteers must be registered with ASHA before participating in any team activity.



TEAM ELIGIBILITY

ASHA MEMBER ORGANIZATION

To be recognized as an ASHA Member Organization in Good Standing—and to remain eligible for participation in ASHA-sanctioned festivals, events, insurance programs, and development opportunities—each program must meet the following requirements:

- Submit a New Season Organization Form by July 15 each year, or within 30 days of forming a new team, whichever is later.
- Ensure that all team participants—including athletes, coaches, and volunteers—are registered through ASHA before engaging in any team activities. Where required, individuals must also complete background screening and abuse prevention training through ASHA's registration system.

In addition to these registration requirements, all ASHA Member Organizations must commit to the following:

- Maintain accurate, complete, and up-to-date registration records for all participants.
- Uphold the ASHA IDEA Zero Tolerance Policy, which promotes inclusion, dignity, equity, and accountability.
- Follow all ASHA rules, guidelines, and safety protocols—not only in technical compliance but in mission and spirit.

These expectations help ensure consistency, safety, and integrity across all ASHA-affiliated programs and events.

AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP

Affiliate Members are organizations that participate in ASHA programs or receive ASHA support on a more limited basis. This category includes Canadian affiliate teams, community-based agencies, and adaptive sports programs that may not operate as full ASHA teams but are engaged in shared goals and activities.

Affiliate members are eligible for select ASHA benefits, such as:

- Special event insurance
- Equipment donation support
- Collaboration and guidance to help reduce barriers to participation

DUAL REGISTRATION AND COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

ASHA does not restrict member organizations or affiliates from registering with other leagues, associations, or sports governing bodies. We recognize that every opportunity is a valuable one. Programs are encouraged to collaborate with their local communities and make use of all available resources to support their athletes and grow the game.



LEVELED PLAY AT A GLANCE

ASHA's leveling framework helps make gameplay safer, more balanced, and more meaningful for every participant. It gives teams the tools to create appropriate matchups, supports officials in managing fair play, and ensures athletes of all abilities can fully enjoy the game. These descriptions are not meant to restrict the use of mixed-bench teams in everyday programming. Instead, they offer a shared language and structure for events where leveled play is needed.

If a mixed-bench team is scheduled to play a clearly leveled opponent, communication between coaches is essential. A brief safety and risk management plan must be submitted in advance.

TEAM COMPOSITION QUICK GUIDE

Level A — Highly skilled and independent athletes; no on-ice support required

Level A/B — Mix of A-level and strong B-level athletes

Level B — Moderate independence and developing skills; may need occasional prompts or support

Level B/C — Primarily B-level athletes, with supportive C-level participants

Level C/B — Mostly C-level athletes, with minimal B-level support; developmental pace

Level C — Athletes needing significant support or adaptive equipment; focused on inclusion and basic skill-building

Leveled play isn't about separation—it's about setting every athlete up for success.

ASHA SPECIAL HOCKEY GUIDELINES



HONORING TEAM IDENTITY

ASHA deeply respects and values the connection athletes have to their home teams. For many participants, the sense of belonging, pride, and camaraderie developed within their local program is just as meaningful as the game itself. That identity should be honored and celebrated—especially at larger events.

When athletes represent their home programs in leveled play formats at regional or national events, it's important to remember that every team member plays a role. Athletes who are not rostered for a specific leveled game are strongly encouraged to attend, cheer, and support their teammates. Their presence contributes to the overall team experience, reinforces inclusion, and strengthens community spirit.

ASHA recognizes that many teams include athletes with a wide range of abilities, and that assigning players to specific levels can be challenging—especially for programs that do not use formal leveling in their regular practices. However, at regional and national events where games are structured by ability, it is essential to provide clear and consistent guidance to promote safety and fair play.

The leveling framework helps ensure that gameplay is safe, balanced, and enjoyable for all participants. It assists teams in forming appropriate matchups, provides clarity for officials, and helps ensure that athletes of all ability levels have a meaningful experience on the ice.

These descriptions are not intended to restrict or replace the use of mixed-bench teams in day-to-day programming. Instead, they offer a common language and structure for events where leveling is necessary. Mixed-bench teams—those that include athletes across multiple ability levels and do not align with one of the outlined categories—require prior approval and a safety plan when participating in leveled games. If a mixed-bench team is scheduled to compete against a clearly leveled opponent, communication between coaches is essential to ensure shared expectations and alignment.

ASHA GAME LEVELS AND TEAM FORMATS OVERVIEW

To ensure leveled play remains fair, safe, and engaging for all, ASHA encourages programs to build rosters with thoughtful balance:

- Level A teams are composed of athletes with the highest level of independence and skill, capable of structured, competitive play with no on-ice support.
- Level A/B teams include a mix of A-level and high B-level athletes.
- Level B teams consist of athletes with intermediate skills and moderate independence, who may benefit from occasional prompts or on-ice Jr. Coach/Mentors.
- Level B/C teams are primarily made up of B-level athletes, supported by C-level players who can safely engage in a faster-paced environment.
- Level C/B teams are inclusive rosters composed mostly of C-level athletes, with minimal B-level support. Games are adapted for developmental participation.
- Level C teams include athletes who require significant support or adaptive equipment, with a focus on basic skills, engagement, and on-ice mentorship.

EVERY TEAM FORMAT HAS VALUE

ASHA supports leveled, mixed-bench, and unified teams—what matters most is clear communication and athlete safety.

PLAN AHEAD

Mixed-bench teams must submit a simple plan before participating in leveled events to help everyone stay safe and informed.

Ratings should stay consistent. Athlete ratings (A, B, or C) should be applied the same way across all team formats, including mixed-bench.

COMMUNICATION BUILDS TRUST

Teams playing each other should always discuss leveling, gameplay, and support needs in advance

Leveled Teams

Athletes are grouped by similar skill level and on-ice independence (Level A, B, or C). This format is commonly used at festivals and tournaments for safer, more structured play.

MIXED-BENCH TEAMS

Athletes with varying levels and support needs play together on the same team. This format is especially common in home games and smaller regional events.

UNIFIED TEAMS

In pre-approved cases, athletes with disabilities may be paired with peer Jr. Coach/Mentors to participate in recreational-style adult league play.



TEAM COMPOSITION

Special Hockey games are typically played with five skaters and one goaltender per team, similar to traditional hockey. Depending on the local program, teams may include youth players (under 18), adult players (18 and older), or a combination of both. To promote safety, fairness, and a more enjoyable experience, athletes are generally grouped by ability level—commonly designated as Level A, B, or C.

The American Special Hockey Association understands that its member programs vary in size, resources, and regional structure. Some programs are able to field multiple leveled teams, while others combine athletes into a single roster. There is no one-size-fits-all approach, and ASHA supports flexible team design—as long as it prioritizes athlete safety, communication, and a positive experience.

COMMUNITY GAMES AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Games between ASHA teams and local recreational, high school, or professional teams are considered special events. These games are covered under ASHA's insurance policy when properly sanctioned. To receive coverage, programs must submit an Event Sanctioning Form along with a roster of all guest team athletes and coaches prior to the event.

TEAM STRUCTURES IN ASHA PROGRAMS

Across ASHA programs, three common team formats are used:

- **Leveled Teams:** Athletes are grouped by similar skill level and on-ice independence (Levels A, B, or C). This format is often used at tournaments and festivals.
- **Mixed-Bench Teams:** Athletes of varying levels and support needs play together on the same team. This format is common in smaller programs or for home games.
- **Unified Adult Teams:** In some pre-approved cases, adult athletes with disabilities participate alongside peers in recreational adult league play.
- No one format is considered more “official” than another. Each approach supports athlete engagement in different ways, and all rely on respectful communication and thoughtful planning to ensure safe, inclusive, and meaningful participation.

LEVELED PLAY & MIXED-BENCH

At ASHA-sanctioned events where games are organized by level, programs that wish to bring a mixed-bench team must request prior approval. This allows time to submit a brief safety and risk management plan, which outlines:

- How expectations for gameplay will be communicated
- How support needs will be addressed during the game
- How potential matchups will be managed

This step is not meant to discourage creativity or limit participation. Many teams rely on flexible rosters to include all athletes—and ASHA supports that. The goal is simply to ensure everyone (athletes, coaches, officials, and families) knows what to expect and can participate safely and confidently.

When games involve teams from different ASHA-affiliated organizations, it is expected that both programs communicate in advance to agree on leveling standards, gameplay format, and accommodations as needed. Whether playing leveled or mixed, athlete ratings should be applied consistently across all formats. A player rated as Level B for one event should not be rated differently in another setting simply due to roster structure. This consistency protects the integrity of the leveling process, reduces confusion, and builds trust between programs.



GAME FORMAT GUIDELINES

A Level Games

- 5 skaters + 1 goaltender on the ice per team (unless pulling goalie for an extra attacker).
- No coaches on the ice during play (exceptions for safety may be approved in advance).
- No double-shifting unless necessary due to roster size.
- Line changes made on the fly; no buzzer system.
- Score is kept, with a max 4-goal differential shown on the scoreboard.
- Penalties result in a penalty shot (ideally taken by the fouled player); 2-minute penalties may be assessed if appropriate.
- Teams must have at least 5 skaters on the ice regardless of penalties.
- Coaches are responsible for managing lines to avoid running up the score.
- Games officiated by experienced referees familiar with Special Hockey and Level A play.
- Game length: 60 minutes (three 20-minute running clock periods). Adjustments must be agreed upon in advance and communicated clearly.

B Level Games

- 5 skaters + 1 goaltender per team; with mutual coach approval, 1–2 roamers may be added.
- Junior Coaches or Jr. Coach/Mentors may be on the ice (with prior agreement from both teams).
- No double-shifting unless roster size is limited.
- Line changes typically on the buzzer; fly changes allowed with agreement from both teams.
- Score is kept, with a max 4-goal differential shown.
- Participation of any A-level athletes must be managed carefully to preserve balance.
- Penalties result in a penalty shot (ideally taken by the fouled player); 2-minute penalties allowed at coach/referee discretion.
- Extra penalty shots may be awarded to encourage engagement and skill-building.
- Games may be officiated by certified referees or trained volunteer officials.
- Game length: 60 minutes (three 20-minute running clock periods). Any modifications must be agreed upon in advance and communicated to all parties.

C Level Games

- 5 skaters + 1 goaltender per team; with coach agreement, additional roamers may be used.
- Up to 3 Jr. Coach/Mentors or on-ice helpers are allowed, provided all coaches agree and support enhances athlete experience.
- Line changes made on the buzzer to support structure and consistency.
- Modified scoring may be used—1 goal per team per score, regardless of who scores. Actual score may be kept with prior coach agreement.
- B-level player participation must be carefully managed to preserve fairness and support.
- Penalties result in a penalty shot (taken by any player, as determined by coach/referee).
- Extra penalty shots may be awarded to maintain engagement.
- Games may be officiated by trained volunteers or certified officials.
- Game length: 60 minutes (three 20-minute periods). A 5-minute warm-up is recommended for player evaluation and matchup review. All adaptations must be agreed upon and communicated prior to play.



Level A **Independent & Competitive**

Athletes at this level play independently, understand the game, and thrive in fast-paced, structured environments with little to no support.

Level B **Developing & Supported**

These athletes show growing skills and moderate independence. They may need occasional guidance and benefit from a slower pace or nearby support.

Level C **Emerging & Assisted**

Athletes at this level require substantial support and focus on basic skills, engagement, and inclusion—often with on-ice Jr. Coach/Mentors or adaptive equipment.

ATHLETE LEVEL A (A+ to A-)

Athletes at Level A are typically the most independent and skilled players on their teams. They often:

- Skate confidently and independently at higher speeds
- Maintain balance, edge control, and directional changes without assistance
- Demonstrate strong game awareness and actively track puck movement and play development
- Execute hockey fundamentals such as stickhandling, passing, and shooting with accuracy and control
- Understand and apply rules and strategies (e.g., offside, icing, positioning) with minimal guidance
- Participate in structured drills and team activities with full comprehension
- Take regular shifts and change lines independently without prompting
- Require little to no in-game support or prompting from coaches or volunteers
- Can play competitive, full-ice hockey at a pace comparable to non-disabled recreational levels
- Thrive in fast-paced, structured environments that emphasize competition and skill execution

ATHLETE LEVEL B (B+ to B-)

Athletes at Level B demonstrate moderate independence and developing hockey skills.

These players typically:

- Skate unassisted but may have limited speed, stamina, or control
- Show growing ability in stickhandling, passing, and shooting, though execution may be inconsistent
- Understand basic game rules and concepts, with occasional reminders needed
- Remain engaged in gameplay most of the time, with occasional lapses in focus
- Participate in structured drills with some understanding and may require repetition or modeling
- May need assistance with positioning, line changes, or reminders about gameplay flow
- Benefit from a coach or on-ice Jr. Coach/Mentor nearby to reinforce instructions and safety
- Can participate in leveled games with minimal adaptations (e.g., slower pace, simplified rules)
- May have one-on-one support on the ice who serves as a non-intrusive guide
- Often enjoy balanced competition that allows them to apply their skills in a moderately paced, supportive setting

ATHLETE Level C (C+ to C-)

Athletes at Level C are in the early stages of hockey development and often require substantial support. These players typically:

- May need physical assistance with skating, such as a gait trainer, walker, or close on-ice support
- Have limited balance or motor control and may tire quickly
- Are learning basic movements like stopping, turning, or pushing the puck
- Require continuous guidance to stay engaged and safe during gameplay
- May not understand rules or structured gameplay but enjoy being on the ice and participating at their own pace
- May struggle to follow drills or group activities without direct one-on-one instruction or visual modeling
- Often benefit from shorter shifts and modified game formats (e.g., 3-on-3, open play, or half-ice)
- Require assistance with positioning and may need reminders to stay with the group or respond to cues
- Respond well to encouraging environments focused on fun, inclusion, and peer interaction



FACILITY

The American Special Hockey Association supports adapted gameplay across a variety of surfaces, including full-size regulation ice, half-ice, and cross-ice formats. While full-ice remains the standard for ASHA-sanctioned events, half-ice or cross-ice games may be used based on ice availability or to enhance the experience for newer athletes or those developing foundational skills. The choice of rink size should be guided by what best supports a safe, positive, and inclusive experience for all participants.

ASHA also encourages the use of off-ice hockey formats, including street hockey, floor hockey, and ball hockey. These are effective tools for increasing access, develop skills, building local participation, and maintaining athlete engagement year-round. These formats are especially valuable for new programs, athletes with mobility concerns, or teams with limited access to ice time.

EQUIPMENT

All athletes must wear full protective equipment while on the ice. This includes a helmet with full facial protection, gloves, and protective footwear when not wearing skates—such as when using adaptive equipment. This same standard of safety applies to coaching staff and on-ice volunteers: helmets and protective/anti-skid footwear are mandatory for anyone stepping onto the ice in a coaching or support role, regardless of whether they are skating.

Neck guards are requested for all A level athletes and are strongly encouraged for athletes at the B and C levels. While ASHA understands that neck guard policies may vary by region or facility, we believe that promoting their use reflects our shared commitment to player safety, especially at higher speeds or in more structured gameplay.

The American Special Hockey Association supports adaptive play and believes that athletes of all abilities should be able to safely access the game. Equipment such as gait trainers, wheelchairs, and other mobility devices may be used during both practices and games, provided they are properly supervised and integrated in a way that supports safety and positive participation for all. Programs are encouraged to consult with ASHA when introducing new equipment to ensure that adaptations meet safety and gameplay guidelines while supporting athlete success.

To further promote safety and accessibility:

- Protective footwear is strongly recommended for athletes using mobility devices. Options such as steel-toe boots or modified skate boots without blades can provide essential toe and ankle protection.
- For athletes who use their feet to move across the ice while using a mobility device, anti-slip soles or grip-enhancing footwear are encouraged to help reduce the risk of slipping or injury.

FULL GEAR IS REQUIRED

All athletes must wear full protective equipment—including a helmet with full facial protection—while on the ice for game play. Coaches and volunteers need helmets too.

Anyone stepping onto the ice in a coaching or support role must wear a helmet and protective footwear (anti-skid), even if not skating.

ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT IS WELCOMED

Mobility devices like wheelchairs and gait trainers are permitted when properly supervised and safely integrated into practices and games.

Safety comes first.

All equipment adaptations should align with ASHA's goal of safe, inclusive participation for athletes of all abilities.



EQUIPMENT Continued

- Use of mobility aids on the ice should generally be reserved for athletes who are full-time or regular users of such devices outside of hockey, ensuring safety, appropriate integration and supervision.
- ASHA encourages coaches to reach out when a new or unique adaptation is being introduced, so we can help support a safe and successful experience for all athletes.

ASHA does not restrict the use of wheelchairs or mobility aids and remains committed to creating meaningful opportunities for athletes of all abilities. We expect that every athlete has the appropriate support to participate safely, and that participation—regardless of mobility—promotes safety, success, and team inclusion. Clear communication with coaches is essential to ensure shared expectations and a safe environment for all.



GAME MANAGEMENT

To promote fair, inclusive, and enjoyable play, coaches should make every effort to match lines with players of similar ability on the opposing team. Thoughtful line-matching helps create a positive experience for all athletes.

When a team has a large roster—especially at lower skill levels—and wishes to rotate more than five skaters at a time, coaches must first gain approval from the opposing coach and inform officials before the game begins. Coaches must present an accurate, up-to-date ASHA roster prior to the game.

Athletes classified at Level A should participate in Level A games whenever possible. If an A-level athlete is attending in a supporting role—such as assisting a younger or mixed-level team—coaches must ensure that their involvement aligns with the spirit of the game.

While many higher-level athletes bring leadership and encouragement, this is not always the case. Coaches should ensure that their participation enhances the experience for everyone involved, especially athletes at earlier stages of development. The focus should remain on encouragement, teamwork, and shared success.

Double-shifting should be avoided whenever possible, to ensure equitable ice time for all players. If a game becomes one-sided or engagement begins to drop—especially in lower-level matchups—coaches are encouraged to work together to implement creative, agreed-upon adjustments. This may include awarding additional penalty shots to give more athletes a chance to handle the puck and shoot on goal. These adaptations should be discussed with referees prior to implementation.

Coaches and officials are encouraged to meet before each game to review lineups, confirm game flow expectations, and discuss any rule modifications (such as how offsides, icings, or faceoffs will be handled). Open communication sets the tone for collaboration and consistency. Event organizers should make every effort to group teams by skill level whenever possible to prioritize safety, fairness, and fun for all participants.

Game formats may be designated as Level A, A/B, B, B/C, or C, depending on the composition of the rosters participating in the game. These designations help align game pace, on-ice support, and overall structure to the abilities of the athletes involved.

Coaches are strongly encouraged to communicate with one another in advance of any game, especially at festivals or events—to discuss team composition and agree on the appropriate level designation. This proactive collaboration ensures safer matchups, clearer expectations, and a more enjoyable experience for all players.

AMERICAN SPECIAL HOCKEY ASSOCIATION ATHLETE & GAME LEVELING GUIDELINES



ASHA's leveling framework helps make gameplay safer, more balanced, and more meaningful for every participant. It gives teams the tools to create appropriate matchups, supports officials in managing fair play, and ensures athletes of all abilities can fully enjoy the game.

These descriptions are not meant to restrict the use of mixed-bench teams in everyday programming. Instead, they offer a shared language and structure for events where leveled play is needed.

If a mixed-bench team is scheduled to play a clearly leveled opponent, *communication between coaches is essential*. A brief safety and risk management plan must be submitted in advance.

Supporting Inclusion & Safety

- Match lines by pace and ability to keep games safe, fun, and competitive.
- Use ASHA's leveling framework to build balanced, event-ready rosters.
- All athletes matter—non-rostered players should still cheer, support, and participate as part of the team.
- Mixed-bench teams must be pre-approved with an ASHA risk plan—work with event organizers early.
- If playing a leveled team, coaches must communicate in advance to align expectations.
- On-ice mentors (higher-level athletes) must be clearly marked and act only in a support role.
- Teams may skate 6 players (instead of 5) at lower levels with coach and ref approval.
- For lopsided games, coaches and refs can agree to add penalty shots, adjust lines or take action to balance the game.
- Assign players by ability, not age or team history, for the best experience on both sides.
- Ensure no single player dominates or disrupts the game; everyone deserves meaningful ice time.
- Matching by ability brings out the best in Special Hockey: joy, connection, and fair play.

A Level Game Guidelines

- 5 skaters + 1 goalie per team (unless pulling goalie for an extra attacker)
- No coaches on the ice during play; safety exceptions must be approved in advance
- No double-shifting unless roster size requires it
- Line changes made on the fly; no buzzer system used
- Score is kept with a maximum 4-goal differential shown on the scoreboard
- Penalties result in a penalty shot (ideally by the fouled player); 2-minute penalties may also be assessed as appropriate
- Teams must field at least 5 skaters at all times, regardless of penalties
- Coaches are expected to manage lines to avoid running up the score
- Games officiated by referees experienced in Special Hockey and Level A play
- Game length: 60 minutes (three 20-minute running clock periods); a 5-minute warm-up is recommended for evaluation and line planning any changes must be agreed upon in advance and clearly communicated

B Level Game Guidelines

- Standard format: 5 skaters + 1 goalie per team; 1–2 roamers may be added with coach agreement
- Junior Coaches/Mentors allowed on ice if both teams approve in advance
- No double-shifting unless roster size requires it
- Line changes typically on the buzzer; fly changes allowed with mutual agreement (No Off Sides)
- Score is kept with a maximum 4-goal differential displayed
- A-level athletes may participate but must be managed to maintain balance
- Penalties result in a penalty shot (preferably by the fouled player); 2-minute penalties allowed at ref/coach discretion
- Extra penalty shots may be used to encourage engagement and development
- Games may be officiated by certified referees or trained volunteer officials
- Standard game length: up to 60 minutes (three 20-minute running clock periods); a 5-minute warm-up is recommended for evaluation and line planning, any changes must be agreed upon in advance and communicated to all involved

C Level Game Guidelines

- 5 skaters + 1 goalie per team; additional roamers allowed with coach agreement
- Up to 3 mentors or on-ice helpers permitted if agreed upon by both coaches and used to enhance athlete experience
- Line changes are made on the buzzer to support structure and consistency (No Off Sides)
- Modified scoring may be used—1 goal per team per score, regardless of who scores; full scorekeeping allowed with prior coach agreement
- Participation of B-level players must be carefully managed to maintain fairness and support lower-level athletes
- Penalties result in a penalty shot, taken by any player as chosen by the coach or referee. Extra penalty shots may be awarded to encourage engagement and participation
- Games may be officiated by trained volunteers or certified referees
- Game length: up to 60 minutes (three 20-minute running clock periods); a 5-minute warm-up is recommended for evaluation and line planning. Any modifications must be agreed upon in advance and clearly communicated

RATING YOUR SPECIAL HOCKEY PLAYER

Level A (A+ to A–)

Highly independent and skilled athletes who:

- Skate fast with strong balance, edge control, and direction changes
- Handle the puck, pass, and shoot with accuracy
- Understand and apply rules (e.g., offside, icing, positioning)
- Read the play and stay actively engaged
- Follow drills and strategies with minimal guidance
- Change lines independently and take regular shifts
- Require little to no on-ice support
- Compete at full-ice pace similar to recreational non-disabled players
- Thrive in fast, structured, and competitive environments

Level B (B+ to B–)

Moderately independent players with developing skills who:

- Skate unassisted but may lack speed, control, or stamina
- Can stickhandle, pass, and shoot, but may be inconsistent
- Understand basic rules with occasional reminders
- Stay engaged with some lapses in focus
- Follow drills with some help and repetition
- May need support with positioning and line changes
- Benefit from nearby coach or on-ice mentor
- Play in leveled games with slower pace or simpler rules
- May have one-on-one support acting as a non-intrusive guide
- Do well in moderately paced, supportive games

Level C (C+ to C–):

Athletes new to hockey or needing high support who:

- May use walkers, gait trainers, or close assistance to skate
- Have limited balance and tire quickly
- Are learning basic movements (stopping, turning, puck pushing)
- Need continuous help to stay safe and engaged
- May not grasp structured rules but enjoy being on the ice
- Require direct 1:1 instruction or visual modeling
- Benefit from short shifts and modified formats (3-on-3, half-ice)
- Need help with positioning and staying with the group
- Thrive in positive, inclusive environments focused on fun



ASHA MEDICAL EMERGENCY GUIDELINES

Athlete Safety, Support & Communication

ASHA recognizes the diverse medical needs within our community. To ensure appropriate care ASHA affiliate member organizations must work closely with parents and guardians to identify any known medical diagnoses or conditions that may require additional monitoring or support. This includes—but is not limited to—diabetes, seizure disorders, asthma, allergies, and developmental or communication-related needs. This collaboration helps ensure that athletes receive the safety, support, and dignity they deserve at all times. Medical accommodations should be reviewed at the start of each season and adjusted as needed.



EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN (EAP)

Each ASHA team must maintain a site-specific Emergency Action Plan for all venues that includes:

- ED location
- Emergency access points for EMS
- Medical info and emergency contacts for all athletes
- Roles and responsibilities of coaches and volunteers
- Location of emergency forms and EpiPens (if applicable)
- Parents/Guardians must always be granted immediate access to their athlete during any medical concern or emergency

GENERAL MEDICAL EMERGENCY STEPS

1. Stop the activity and ensure safety.
2. Call 911 immediately for:
 - a. Loss of consciousness
 - b. Breathing difficulty or chest pain
 - c. Seizures (especially if prolonged or first-time)
 - d. Diabetic or allergic emergencies
 - e. Head/neck injury or trauma
3. Do not move the athlete unless necessary for safety
4. Assign someone to meet EMS
5. Notify parent/guardian immediately and remain with the athlete
6. Complete the ASHA Incident Report within 48 hours

MEDICAL INFORMATION & RECORDS

Programs must keep accessible:

- Emergency contacts
- Known diagnoses (diabetes, seizures, allergies, etc.)
- Prescribed action plans or emergency medications

TRAINING & RESPONSIBILITIES

All coaches, volunteers, and mentors must:

- Know how to recognize and respond to concussions, seizures, and diabetic events
- Understand the team's Emergency Action Plan
- Respect family input and ensure parental access at all times
- CPR/First Aid certification is strongly encouraged for all team staff

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Any of the following must be reported using ASHA's Incident Report Form within 48 hours:

- Injury during practice or play
- Concussion
- Seizure
- Diabetic event
- Emergency services called
- Reports are reviewed by the ASHA Executive Director for follow-up and compliance

CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

(CDC HEADS UP Compliant)

Recognize Symptoms:

- Headache, nausea, blurred vision, dizziness
- Confusion, irritability, memory issues
- Slurred speech, balance problems

Respond:

- Remove athlete from play immediately—no same-day return
 - Monitor and call 911 if symptoms worsen
 - Notify the parent/guardian right away
 - Require written medical clearance before returning to play
 - Complete and submit incident report
-

SEIZURE PROTOCOL

Responding to a Seizure:

1. Protect the athlete from injury; clear the space.
 2. Do not restrain or insert anything into the mouth.
 3. Time the seizure. Call 911 if:
 - a. It lasts more than 5 minutes
 - b. It is the athlete's first seizure
 - c. The athlete does not regain consciousness
 4. Place in recovery position once seizure ends.
 5. Notify parent/guardian immediately and follow any action plan
 6. Document and report
-

HYPOGLYCEMIA/DIABETES PROTOCOL

Recognize Low Blood Sugar (Hypoglycemia):

- Shakiness, sweating, fatigue
- Sudden behavior changes, confusion
- Hunger, pale skin, rapid pulse

Respond:

1. Stop activity and sit the athlete down.
2. Provide fast-acting sugar: juice, glucose tablets, regular soda.
3. Monitor closely. If symptoms worsen or don't resolve, call 911.
4. Follow the athlete's diabetes action plan (if on file).
5. Ensure parent/guardian access and notify immediately.
6. Report and document the event.

Treat first, then confirm. It is safer to assume hypoglycemia than delay treatment.

We're excited to share this Family Resource, available on SPECIALHOCKEY.ORG, to help make the family special hockey experience smoother, more fun, and full of support. If you would like an editable version to customize for your team, email your request to asha@specialhockey.org.

What to Expect at Special Hockey Practices, Games & Festivals

This guide is here to help you and your athlete feel comfortable, confident, and excited about being part of Special Hockey.

First Things First—You Belong Here

Special Hockey is for athletes who benefit from a flexible, adaptive, and inclusive approach to the game. We welcome players of all abilities, some skate independently, some use walkers or wheelchairs, and some need on-ice buddies. No matter your athlete's needs or experience, there's a place for them here.

✓ **Please note:** Athletes must have completed the current season's ASHA registration (the season starts July 1 each year) before they can participate. If you're unsure about your athlete's status, check with your team manager.

What to Wear and Bring

- Full hockey gear is required: helmet with full face mask, gloves, shin guards, elbow pads, chest protection, and skates.
- Need help with gear? Your team manager can help you get fitted, and a size guide is available at SpecialHockey.org.
- Using a mobility device? No skates, no problem, athletes using wheelchairs, gait trainers, or walkers can still play. Just be sure they wear sturdy, protective footwear (steel-toe or anti-slip recommended).
- Neck guards are encouraged for all athletes and are requested for Level A players.
- Most teams have loaner equipment, don't hesitate to ask!
- Over time, create a personal checklist for practices and events. Being prepared includes checking for schedule updates, having the right gear, and showing up ready to have fun!

At the Rink

- Arrive 20–30 minutes before ice time to get settled in.
- Locker rooms may be assigned. Volunteers can help guide you.
 - Parents may assist their athletes but must be registered Locker Room Support Volunteers with a completed background check and abuse prevention training.
 - To avoid crowding, one parent/guardian only is allowed in the locker room if support is needed.
- Athletes should never remove their base layers in locker rooms. ASHA teams are mixed-age and gender, and privacy is important.
- Practices are structured but flexible. Athletes will be grouped by ability level (A, B, or C) and supported by trained coaches, jr. coaches/mentors, and volunteers.
- A team manager or coach will greet you and check in on how your athlete is doing.
- **Ask questions anytime!**

Who You'll See on the Ice

- Head & Assistant Coaches lead the sessions and make sure things run smoothly.
- Junior Coaches (Mentors) are trained youth volunteers who support athletes—especially at the C and B levels.
- On-Ice Buddies provide hands-on or nearby support. That's not just allowed—it's encouraged!
- Parents are not permitted on the bench or ice unless they are registered, background-checked volunteers and invited by a coach.

Safety and Support

- All on-ice coaches and volunteers wear helmets and follow ASHA safety rules.
- Practices are non-contact and designed to meet athletes where they are. Breaks are totally okay!
- Please share any specific medical or support needs—like seizures, mobility, or sensory considerations—so we can help your athlete succeed.

You're Part of the Team

- Parents are encouraged to stay at the rink during practices and games.
- You'll be part of a strong, caring community. Welcome new families, get involved, and cheer for all athletes!
- Every athlete has good days and tough days. We celebrate effort, growth, and connection, not just goals.

Festivals & Special Events

- ASHA events are organized by volunteers and sometimes take time to finalize. We appreciate your patience!
- Accurate athlete registration helps avoid delays—make sure your athlete is fully registered and listed on your team's roster.
- Every festival is unique. Ask your team manager or head coach for details about activities, accommodations, and schedules.
- Use the QR code on the back of your athlete's badge to access up-to-date event info.
- Just like practice, come fully dressed and fully prepared—and don't forget to bring all your gear home afterward!
- To reduce locker room stress:
 - Athletes needing extra support should arrive partially dressed and ready to play.
 - Only one registered adult may assist in the locker room.
 - The environment can get crowded—please be mindful of others and patient with transitions.



MOST IMPORTANTLY Special Hockey is about friendships, not scores.

Ask questions | Celebrate effort over perfection. | Cheer for every athlete. | Be prepared, be kind, and be proud
We're excited to have you on the team. Every practice, game, and event is a step forward—on the ice, in confidence, and in community.



ASHA Game Day Coach-to-Coach Checklist

Keeping Games Fun, Fair, and Focused on the Athletes

Special Hockey brings together players of all abilities—and it works best when coaches connect before a game to make sure everyone's on the same page. This checklist is a tool to help streamline those conversations, especially during tournaments or events when teams and levels vary. We're not here to tell anyone how to coach. This is just a quick-hit reminder of what's worth covering to make the game better for everyone involved.

Pre-Game Conversation Checklist

1. Team Snapshot

- “Our team is mostly Level ___ (A, B, or C).”
- “We’ve got ___ skaters, ___ goalies, and ___ first-timers.”
- “Let me know if there’s anything I should watch for with your group.”

2. Support & Adaptations

- “We’ve got a player playing up/down today—wanted to give you a heads-up.”
- “Some of our A Level Players would like to participate as helpers”
- “We’re using adaptive gear today—walkers, chairs, or visual supports.”
- “Open to swapping ideas—if you’ve tried something that works, we’re always learning.”

3. On-Ice Help

- “We’ll have ___ (coach, mentor, experienced player) on the ice.”
- Their role: ___ (support a skater, help manage play, not part of active game, etc.)
- Let us know if you’ve got someone out there too.

4. Scorekeeping Preference

- “How do you want to handle scorekeeping?”
 - Keep it even (one goal each)
 - Keep it accurate
 - Flexible—add penalty shots or mix it up
- “We’ve got some players who do better when the score feels close.”

5. Game Flow Adjustments

- “If things get lopsided, I’m fine with adjusting—mixing lines, rotating players, extra chances.”
- “Let’s stay in touch mid-game if something feels off.”

6. Officials & Communication

- Introduce any refs or helpers and set expectations.
- Share how your team responds best—verbal cues, extra whistles, no goal horns/no buzzers, shift timing, etc.

Emergency Readiness Tip

- If there's a medical issue during a game:
- Have one off-ice adult ready (not in skates) to handle 911 calls and contact info.
- Keep printed emergency contact info for players, coaches, and mentors nearby.
- Highlight any players who attend independently or have seizure risk—only what's necessary.
- Have a copy of the Emergency Incident protocol on the bench.
- Off-ice person makes the calls; coach stays with the athlete.

One Last Thing

Quick check-ins like this can make a big difference. Everyone’s juggling a lot during events—but this five-minute conversation sets the tone, keeps things running smooth, and helps every athlete walk off the ice feeling like a champ. We’re all on the same team when it comes to making Special Hockey something extraordinary.



ASHA POLICY



Governance Disclaimer

This section provides a basic summary of the American Special Hockey Association's governance structure and key responsibilities. For complete information, including the full ASHA Bylaws, Board of Directors' policies, and organizational procedures, please contact us. The full governance documents are available upon request by emailing asha@specialhockey.org. We are committed to transparency and welcome inquiries from our members, partners, and stakeholders.

Need Help?? Contact us at ASHA@Specialhockey.org



ASHA AFFILIATE VOLUNTEER ROLES

Volunteers are the heart of ASHA. Whether on the ice, behind the bench, or supporting events, your commitment helps create safe, inclusive, and joyful experiences for every athlete and family. Each role is essential to the success of our programs, and we are deeply grateful for your time, energy, and care.

HEAD COACH

The Head Coach is responsible for overall team leadership. Duties include: Organizing practices and games; Leading player leveling and skill evaluation; Communicating directly with ASHA leadership; Ensuring compliance with ASHA safety policies and game guidelines. Head Coaches have full access to the ASHA Team Page for scheduling, registration review, and team-wide communication. Your leadership helps build not just better players—but better teammates and communities. Thank you for setting the tone.

TEAM MANAGER

The Team Manager oversees all administrative and logistical tasks. Responsibilities include: Managing player registration and roster documentation; Serving as the point of contact with ASHA for compliance matters; Coordinating event details, scheduling, and travel communication. Team Managers also have full access to the ASHA Team Page to support roster management and group communication. You keep the wheels turning so athletes can take the ice. Thank you for everything you do behind the scenes.

ASSISTANT COACH

Assistant Coaches support the Head Coach in running practices, assisting athletes, and ensuring safety and consistency on the ice. All Assistant Coaches must complete background screening and abuse prevention training. You're a key part of each athlete's experience. Thank you for stepping up, encouraging our players, and reinforcing positive team culture.

ON-ICE VOLUNTEER

On-Ice Volunteers assist with practices or C-level games by: Providing player support and encouragement; Helping with drills or positioning; Assisting from the bench or directly on the ice (at the discretion of the Head Coach). This role requires background screening and abuse prevention training. Your support brings stability, safety, and fun to the rink. We're grateful for the joy and encouragement you share with every athlete.

PARENT LOCKER ROOM SUPPORT

Parent volunteers may assist in locker rooms before or after practice or games, based on need and Head Coach discretion. This role: Must follow ASHA Locker Room Policy and MAAPP supervision rules; Requires background screening and abuse prevention training; Must never be in a one-on-one situation with a minor athlete. Thank you for helping create a safe and respectful space for every player to prepare and connect.

JUNIOR COACH/MENTOR*

Junior Coaches (Mentors) are youth volunteers who assist with C-level teams or practices. They must: Be 14–18 years old; Follow ASHA's game and supervision guidelines; Always work under adult supervision; Support athletes by modeling inclusion, encouragement, and patience.

Important Note: When A-level athletes assist as Jr. Coach/Mentors, they should not be dressed in full gear. Instead, they must wear a pinny, volunteer jersey, or clearly identifying apparel to distinguish themselves as support—not players. This helps maintain structure and safety for all participants. Thank you for being a positive role model and reminding us that leadership begins with kindness.

OFF-ICE VOLUNTEER

SPECIAL EVENT VOLUNTEER

These volunteers support the team by helping with: Social activities, community events, or fundraisers; Administrative help, such as handing out materials or managing check-in; Non-ice roles at tournaments or festivals. This role does not require background screening, but all volunteers are expected to follow ASHA's Code of Conduct and instructions from the coaching staff. Whether setting up tables or cheering from the bleachers—your presence means the world to our athletes.



*The terms "Jr. Coach" or "Mentor" refer to youth volunteers who provide peer-to-peer support for athletes. Many teams and affiliates may use different titles for these roles, but they all serve a similar purpose—supporting athletes in a positive, inclusive way.



ASHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ASHA is a national nonprofit that provides support, structure, and resources to our member programs. While each team operates independently, ASHA is here to offer guidance, oversight, and shared tools to help everyone succeed.

The American Special Hockey Association (ASHA) supports the growth and sustainability of sport of special hockey in the United States. We deliver specialized support and services to our member clubs so they may effectively provide exceptional hockey programming for individuals with intellectual, developmental and physical disabilities. Our Association believes that special hockey is more than just a game, or simply time spent on the ice. Participation in special hockey provides unique opportunities for individuals to gain self-advocacy, build self-reliance & independence, increase concentration, expand capacity to work with others, and improve personal accountability.

ASHA advocates for the sport of special hockey to engage communities both inside and outside the arena with the game of hockey in a positive and meaningful manner. ASHA's purpose is to ensure that the any individual with an intellectual, developmental or physical disability, who wishes to play the game of hockey, has the opportunity to engage with the sport in a safe and inclusive manner. We accomplish this with advocacy, support and services to our member clubs.

BOARD STRUCTURE OVERVIEW

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- President: Leads board governance and works with the Executive Director to set direction.
- Vice President: Oversees special projects and board support.
- Secretary: Maintains records and meeting documentation.
- Treasurer: Oversees financial matters and compliance.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Volunteer board members oversee national programming and provide leadership in key areas:

- Community Initiatives
- Partnerships
- Tournaments & Events
- Finance & Fundraising
- Safety & Compliance
- Coaching Development
- Program & Stakeholder Engagement

ADVISORY & NON-VOTING ROLES

Subject matter experts in areas like special education, speech pathology, or regional development contribute valuable input without formal voting power.

STAFF (NON-VOTING)

ASHA's operations are provided by volunteer part-time and full-time staff to support day-to-day operations and member services.

- Executive Director: Reports directly to the Board of Directors and is responsible for the consistent achievement of ASHA's mission, operational execution, staff supervision, regulatory compliance, and financial stewardship. Serves as a non-voting member of the Executive Committee.
- Assistant Director: Reports to the Executive Director. Provides operational and administrative support to ensure continuity and execution of ASHA initiatives.
- Hockey Operations Director: Reports to the Executive Director. Provides operational, programmatic, and administrative support to ensure continuity and execution of ASHA initiatives.
- Additional Staff Roles (Non-Voting): Include Operations Director, Media Coordinator, National Registrar, and Warehouse Distribution. These roles support ASHA programs and events by ensuring compliance, communication, resource distribution, and logistical coordination.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The American Special Hockey Association (ASHA) is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for every athlete, volunteer, coach, official, and family member. Participation in ASHA programs is a privilege, not a right, and that privilege comes with the responsibility to uphold the highest standards of behavior.

These Codes of Conduct reflect ASHA's core values of safety, inclusion, respect, and joy. Whether you are on the ice, behind the bench, in the stands, or supporting from the community, you are expected to follow these guidelines at all times.

These expectations are not just about rules, they're about protecting our athletes, honoring their growth, and building a positive, fair, and welcoming experience for all. These Codes will be enforced consistently, and violations may result in disciplinary action, including removal from practices, games, or the program.

TEAM MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION

Team managers and administrators are leaders in our community. Your commitment to integrity, communication, and policy implementation sets the tone for the entire season. You are expected to:

- Follow all ASHA and affiliated organization policies.
- Ensure all athletes, staff, and volunteers are properly registered and compliant with required screenings and SafeSport training.
- Communicate clearly with families—including pre-season orientations and timely updates.
- Uphold ASHA's athlete leveling system and ensure roster accuracy.
- Recruit coaches and volunteers who reflect our values of inclusion and safety.
- Provide a place to play for all registered athletes and support leveled team formation.
- Enforce all locker room, supervision, and abuse prevention policies.
- Maintain transparency with all program finances, rosters, and athlete participation.
- Support education and continued learning opportunities for your team.
- Onboard new administrators to grow the program sustainably.

COACHES

Coaches are mentors, role models, and protectors of the game. You shape the athlete experience and hold the responsibility of building safe, developmentally appropriate practices. You are expected to:

- Prioritize athlete development and safety over competition or winning.
- Create inclusive, adaptive practices that meet the needs of all athletes.
- Enforce locker room and abuse prevention protocols without exception.
- Model respect, patience, and professionalism at all times.
- Communicate clearly with athletes and families.
- Place athletes according to ASHA's leveling guidelines.
- Give honest, encouraging feedback and support positive reinforcement.
- Never engage in therapeutic behavior unless licensed to do so.
- Maintain professional boundaries in all interactions.
- Attend clinics or trainings when available and required.



CODE OF CONDUCT

PARENTS & GUARDIANS

Parents and guardians are essential partners in the success of every athlete and the tone of our team.

You are expected to:

- Prioritize your athlete's enjoyment, effort, and progress over outcomes.
- Remain present at events or assign a responsible adult to attend in your place.
- Support your team's decisions and policies with positivity and trust.
- Address concerns respectfully and privately with team staff.
- Avoid disruptive behavior at games or practices.
- Celebrate all athlete's efforts and milestones.
- Comply with locker room and supervision policies.
- Support fair and honest athlete leveling.
- Learn about special hockey and participate in your team's volunteer culture.
- Encourage officials, coaches, and all volunteers.

ATHLETES

Every athlete helps create a positive, safe, and inclusive team culture. All athletes are expected to try their best, respect others, and enjoy the game. You are expected to:

- Show up on time and ready to participate.
- Treat teammates, coaches, and opponents with kindness and respect.
- Follow rules and listen to coaches.
- Celebrate your progress and support others.
- Trust coaches to place you on the team that's right for you.
- Play safely and have fun.

ON-ICE OFFICIALS

Officials are responsible for ensuring safe, fair play. You are not just enforcing rules—you're shaping the game's tone and accessibility. You are expected to:

- Know and apply ASHA rules consistently and fairly.
- Communicate respectfully with coaches and athletes.
- Intervene in unsafe or abusive behavior.
- Remain professional, calm, and composed.
- Follow all ASHA procedures for special hockey.
- Support appropriate athlete leveling and game balance.

SPECTATORS

Spectators are an active part of our team culture. Your energy should reflect the joy, pride, and sportsmanship that define ASHA. You are expected to:

- Cheer for effort, not just results.
- Refrain from yelling at athletes, referees, or coaches.
- Avoid leaning on the glass or interfering with play.
- Use positive language and remain encouraging—especially during tough moments.
- Respect all athletes, teams, officials, and fellow spectators.
- Understand that spectators attend as guests. Disruptive or disrespectful behavior may result in removal.



ASHA Locker Room Policy

Updated for 2025–2026 Season

Safe Sport Act & MAAPP Compliant Statement of Responsibility

Every ASHA Affiliate Member is responsible for developing and enforcing a Locker Room Policy that is compliant with the Safe Sport Act and the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP). The following policy is provided to help ASHA teams meet federal compliance standards while addressing the unique needs of Special Hockey athletes. ASHA continues to work directly with the U.S. Center for SafeSport to advocate for reasonable accommodations that reflect the developmental and physical needs of our participants.

ASHA VALUES

ASHA understands that the camaraderie and friendships our athletes form in the locker room are central to their experience. These guidelines are not intended to diminish that connection—but to ensure safety, privacy, and legal compliance across all member programs.

BASE LAYER REQUIREMENTS

All athletes, coaches, and volunteers must arrive at the rink wearing their base layers or shorts and t-shirts under their street clothes. No one may change to or from a state of undress in the locker room. Base layers should be clean, intact, and provide adequate coverage. Any changes must occur in a private, non-shared bathroom or family dressing area.

GENDER-APPROPRIATE AND ACCESSIBLE SPACES

Locker rooms must be designated by gender or use staggered access if separate spaces are not available. Coaches and monitors present inside locker rooms must match the gender designation of the locker room. If accommodations are needed, consult with your head coach to make appropriate arrangements. If an athlete requires support dressing or undressing and cannot be left alone, that athlete must be accompanied by their parent or legal guardian in a designated Family Dressing Area. Athletes may not be left unattended or be dressed by unrelated adults. If your facility cannot meet these needs, alternative plans must be made in advance.

MONITORING & SUPERVISION

Locker room access should be limited to registered ASHA members who are compliant with current background check and abuse prevention training regulations. Each team must have two compliant adults present during all periods of locker room use. If not inside the room, one screened adult must monitor just outside with the door open (as long as privacy is still preserved). Prior to each use, locker rooms should be inspected by a coach or SafeSport-screened volunteer. Locker rooms must be locked or secured while the team is on the ice.

USE OF CELL PHONES & RECORDING DEVICES

Cell phones and all recording-capable devices are strictly prohibited inside locker rooms. If a phone is needed, it must be used outside the locker room.

ADULT ACCESS & CREDENTIALS

No adult is permitted in the locker room or on the bench without an active ASHA membership, valid abuse prevention training, and background screening.

Parents/guardians may only enter locker rooms:

- At the specific request of the head coach
- If registered with ASHA as a Locker Room Coach
- With a current and verified Background Screening and Abuse Prevention Training.



INCLUSIVE PRACTICE FOR MIXED-GENDER & MIXED-NEEDS TEAMS

ASHA teams often include male and female athletes as well as individuals with various personal care and privacy needs. Wherever possible:

- Use separate locker rooms for male and female athletes
- Allow for flexible arrival/departure times to accommodate staggered dressing
- Provide a private or family-friendly changing space when needed
- Convene as a team in a neutral space once dressed (for pre-game talk or meetings)

If separate rooms are unavailable, staggered access should be used. No athlete should ever be made to feel uncomfortable or exposed.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Athletes requiring mobility assistance, behavioral supports, or specific care routines should have a pre-arranged plan developed by their team leadership and family. ASHA encourages programs to create “Skate Tying Areas” outside the locker room to reduce unnecessary locker room access.

REQUIRED TRAINING & SCREENING

All adults with access to youth athletes must:

- Complete a criminal background screening every 2 years
- Complete Core Abuse Prevention Training every 2 years
- Be listed on file with ASHA as cleared for locker room or bench access

No exceptions will be made for compliance.

ABUSE PREVENTION & REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

All forms of misconduct are strictly prohibited: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, harassment, hazing, grooming, and any behavior violating SafeSport policy.

Anyone who becomes aware of or suspects misconduct must report it within 24 hours to:

- Local law enforcement (if applicable)
- ASHA@specialhockey.org
- U.S. Center for SafeSport (when appropriate)

Staff and volunteers are protected by law when reporting in good faith.

RECOGNIZING GROOMING & RED FLAGS

All ASHA members should be aware of grooming behaviors, including but not limited to: isolating athletes, excessive gift-giving, boundary-pushing physical contact, overuse of private electronic communication, or exposure to sexualized content. If these behaviors are observed, they must be addressed immediately through appropriate channels.

ENFORCEMENT

Failure to adhere to ASHA’s Locker Room Policy may result in:

- Immediate removal of access privileges
- Temporary or permanent suspension from team activities
- Legal reporting to state or federal agencies where required

FINAL NOTES

ASHA believes that locker rooms should be a space where athletes feel safe, supported, and respected. We remain committed to balancing the developmental needs of our athletes with our legal and ethical responsibilities. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping Special Hockey a safe space for all.



POLICIES AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION SUMMARY

HARRASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION & ZERO TOLERANCE

The American Special Hockey Association (ASHA) maintains a strict zero-tolerance policy for any form of misconduct. Every person deserves to feel safe, respected, and welcomed.

- Prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to:
 - Harassment, bullying, or intimidation
 - Discrimination based on race, gender, identity, ability, or religion
 - Retaliation or exclusion
 - Sexual misconduct or inappropriate contact

ASHA'S I.D.E.A. ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

- Clearly defines the behavioral standards expected of all participants and reinforces our unwavering commitment to inclusion, dignity, equity, and accountability.
- All reports of misconduct will be taken seriously and investigated promptly, thoroughly, and confidentially in alignment with local affiliate policies, the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP), and all applicable legal requirements.

COMPLAINTS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- Concerns related to safety, program integrity, or violations of ASHA policy must first be reported to the local affiliate program or appropriate authorities. All reports should be addressed promptly, with care, discretion, and confidentiality at the local level.
- ASHA strongly believes that conflicts are best resolved within each affiliate's own structure and leadership. Volunteers and families are expected to handle minor personal disagreements in a respectful and constructive manner without escalating unnecessarily.
- ASHA does not oversee day-to-day operations of individual teams and will only review complaints after the local affiliate has made documented, good-faith efforts to resolve the issue internally and submits a formal appeal. Misusing the complaint process to escalate interpersonal conflicts, avoid local accountability, or bypass reasonable dialogue may result in suspension or termination of ASHA membership.

REPORTING

- Any violations of the ASHA Code of Conduct or Locker Room Policy by a player or coach must be reported to the local program within 24 hours of the incident. These reports must be documented and addressed in compliance with the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP) and the U.S. Center for SafeSport Code.
- The ASHA Board of Directors reserves the right to review the eligibility of any coach or player with a documented history of violent, disruptive, or unsafe behavior, whether on or off the ice.
- Questions regarding ASHA rules or conduct policies should first be directed to the local affiliate member. If not resolved at the local level, the matter may be elevated to ASHA for review. ASHA may also be consulted for national-level guidance or clarification when appropriate.
- All ASHA participants are subject to the U.S. Center for SafeSport Code, MAAPP, and related regulatory standards. All individuals are expected to uphold ASHA's mission, values, and policies and understand that misconduct may carry serious consequences, including suspension or removal from participation.

MANDATORY ABUSE REPORTING

Concerns involving suspected abuse, neglect, or harm—whether on or off the ice—must be reported immediately. This obligation applies regardless of the reporting party's membership status with ASHA.

Reports should be directed to:

- The U.S. Center for SafeSport: www.safesport.org | 833-5US-SAFE
- Local law enforcement or child protective services, as required by law
- The Local Affiliate Member, who must also contact ASHA's designated SafeSport representative for national-level guidance

**Failure to report suspected abuse may result in sanctions or disciplinary action.
ASHA complies fully with all SafeSport regulations and mandatory reporting laws.**



ASHA CONFLICT RESOLUTION POLICY AND CONDUCT REVIEW PROCESS



The American Special Hockey Association (ASHA) is committed to ensuring a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all athletes, volunteers, and staff. We recognize that conflicts may occur and believe that respectful resolution strengthens our teams and communities.

All ASHA participants are subject to the U.S. Center for SafeSport Code, Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP), and ASHA's Codes of Conduct. Misconduct or ongoing conflict may carry serious consequences, including suspension or removal from participation.

GOOD FAITH REPORTING REQUIREMENT

All concerns and complaints must be submitted in good faith—based on sincere belief, genuine concern, or firsthand knowledge.

ASHA considers knowingly filing false, misleading, or retaliatory complaints to be a form of harassment and a violation of ASHA's Code of Conduct. Complaints submitted in bad faith, or with the intent to discredit or retaliate against another individual, may result in disciplinary consequences.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Confidentiality and neutrality must be upheld throughout the process.
- All parties must be treated respectfully and fairly, with efforts to resolve issues as quickly and constructively as possible.
- Conflict resolution efforts must not delay the mandatory reporting of abuse or safety concerns.
- ASHA believes it is the responsibility of the local ASHA Member Club or Affiliate to attempt to resolve all conflicts in an unbiased and positive manner.
- In cases where local resolution is not possible, Member Clubs must maintain clear documentation of the process, including all reasonable efforts made to resolve the issue amicably.
- This conflict resolution process is not to be used for personal grievances or interpersonal disagreements unrelated to ASHA policy. All actions and outcomes must align with stated policies and procedures.
- Member Clubs are expected to act promptly, fairly, and transparently, maintaining the integrity of ASHA's mission and values.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROTOCOL REQUIRED STEPS

To ensure consistency and accountability, ASHA Member Clubs must follow these steps when addressing conduct concerns or interpersonal conflict:

1. Identify and Document the Conflict

- a. A concern or complaint is raised by a participant, coach, volunteer, or parent. The local ASHA Member Club must document the issue within 24 hours.

2. Initial Determination at the Local Level

- a. The ASHA Member Club reviews the concern to determine:
 - Can the matter be addressed informally through direct communication or restorative conversation?
 - Does the concern involve a potential violation of ASHA policy?

b. Mandatory Reporting if Abuse Is Suspected

- If abuse, harassment, or any reportable misconduct is suspected:
 - The local Member Club must immediately report the concern to the U.S. Center for SafeSport and/or local law enforcement, as appropriate.
 - ASHA must be notified for recordkeeping and guidance.
- Clubs must follow any SafeSport directives related to ongoing investigations or interim measures.

3. Determine the Resolution Process

a. Restorative Process (when appropriate)

- i. Parties may engage in a restorative conversation or mediation to resolve interpersonal disputes when no policy violation is suspected.

b. Internal Review and Action

- i. The ASHA Member Club conducts a good faith review, ensures that all parties have an opportunity to be heard, and reaches a resolution aligned with ASHA policies and the SafeSport Code.

4. Notification of Resolution

- a. A resolution must be documented and communicated to the parties involved. This may include corrective measures, mediation outcomes, education, or disciplinary action, depending on the circumstances.

5. Appeal to ASHA Disciplinary Committee

- a. If a participant believes the resolution was reached in error or without due process, they may submit an appeal to the ASHA Disciplinary Committee.
 - The Committee will review the rationale of the local decision to determine whether ASHA policy was followed.
- Should the Committee determine that violations of ASHA policy occurred, the Committee may impose consequences up to and including suspension or removal from participation in ASHA programs and events.

American Special Hockey Association

Action Plan and Zero Tolerance Policies on Harassment, Discrimination & Bullying

Coach/Volunteer/Athlete Responsibilities

IF YOU HAVE experienced or observed ableism, hate, racism, sexism, anti-semitism, homophobia, bullying, or harassment in any form*, it is the responsibility of your Head Coach (or Board Member) to gather as many facts as possible, which includes time of the incident, location, witnesses, and other related pieces of information that are needed to determine the next course of action. Depending upon the seriousness of the incident, your Head Coach (or Board Member), in close collaboration with the officers of your ASHA Member Club Board of Directors, will also determine if local law enforcement support is needed. Once an ASHA Member Club investigation is concluded, a number of actions can occur:

- The volunteer or athlete, who exhibited bullying or harassing behavior (policies are attached) can receive a range of disciplinary consequences including suspension or expulsion from all ASHA Programs.
- A restorative justice conversation amongst the volunteers or athletes involved will be utilized as a means to restore relationships and that is only if all parties involved are willing and want to participate in a restorative process. In some cases a restorative justice (RJ) conversation is not the appropriate option.
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are always contacted and included in determining how to respond to a volunteer or athlete when they are either the victim or the individual making choices that is harming others.
- ASHA Member Club Heads Coaches work in very close collaboration with the American Special Hockey Association, and can provide resources to provide social and emotional support to volunteers and athletes.

ASHA works closely with our ASHA Member Clubs on any incidents of hate and will take serious action to hold our volunteers and athletes accountable. We believe every member of our organization is capable of treating one another with compassion and kindness.

A zero tolerance policy means that we will not tolerate hate in any form within the American Special Hockey Association or at any of our sanctioned events. Your responsibility, volunteers and athletes, is to follow the reporting expectations as noted above. What would be most expedient, is that you confidentially report directly to your ASHA Member Club Head Coach. If you are not comfortable with speaking to your ASHA Member Club Head Coach, please tell a Board Member of your ASHA Member Club and that adult will inform your Head Coach or ASHA Regional Director/ASHA Executive Director who will need to speak with you.

American Special Hockey Association

Zero Tolerance for Harassment, Discrimination & Retaliation Policy

Federal law and state law, specific to the Civil Rights Act of 1972, prohibits discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics, including, but not limited to: race, color, sex, sexual orientation or preference, gender, gender identity, religion, national origin, creed, citizenship status, ancestry, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, medical conditions including, but not limited to genetic characteristics, intellectual or physical disability, and veteran status.

The American Special Hockey Association (ASHA) is concerned about the safety and well-being of volunteers and athletes, and is committed to providing an environment that is free from harassment, discrimination and retaliation on the basis of these protected characteristics, and any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law, ordinance or regulation.

ASHA is committed to eliminating racism and other forms of discrimination, retaliation, and harassment throughout our organizations and our membership. It is our policy that harassment, ableism, racism, homophobia and discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated. This includes all form of hate speech/language and derogatory slurs/language and exclusion of the use of safe and approved adaptive techniques and equipment in adaptive hockey programming.

To this end, ASHA strictly prohibits any and all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment (including the use of hate speech/language, sexual harassment and sexual violence), discrimination or retaliation in any form. Anyone who violates this policy of zero tolerance is subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination or dismissal.

Zero Tolerance

The American Special Hockey Association strictly prohibits all forms of unlawful harassment (including the use of hate speech/language, sexual harassment and sexual violence), discrimination, the use of hate speech* or retaliation in any form. Anyone who violates this policy of zero tolerance is subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination or dismissal.

Hate Speech/Language

Hate speech/language is any use of slurs or derogatory terms or language which includes (but not limited to) hurtful or negative references about: intellectual or physical disability, race, color, sex, sexual orientation or preference, gender, gender identity, religion, national origin, creed, citizenship status, ancestry, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, medical conditions including, but not limited to genetic characteristics, and veteran status.

Unlawful Discrimination Defined

Unlawful discrimination occurs when an individual's protected characteristic is used as a basis for adverse decisions affecting that individual. Prohibited discrimination includes, but is not limited to racism of any kind, sexual harassment and sexual violence. Discrimination encompasses a wide range of conduct.

Examples of specifically prohibited conduct include, but are not limited to:

- Terminating an individual's participation based on a protected characteristic;
- Refusing a request based on a protected characteristic;
- Denying participation based on a protected characteristic.



Unlawful Harassment Defined

Unlawful harassment includes all forms of unwelcome verbal, physical and visual conduct and displays that are based on any of the above mentioned protected characteristics and which interfere with performance and/or create an offensive or hostile environment. Harassment can take many forms. The following are some examples that may constitute harassment:

- (a) Verbal harassment such as jokes, epithets, slurs and unwelcome remarks about an individual's race, color, ethnicity, ability or any of the protected characteristics as described above. Including body, dress, clothing, physical appearance or abilities, derogatory comments, discussions of a sexual nature and/or harassing remarks;
- (b) Physical harassment such as physical interference with normal activity, impeding or blocking movement, assault, unwelcome physical contact or touching, staring at a person's body, and threatening, intimidating or hostile acts that relate to a protected characteristic; and
- (c) Visual harassment such as offensive or obscene e-mails, instant messaging, web blogs, photographs, calendars, posters, cards, cartoons, drawings and gestures, displays with sexually suggestive or lewd objects, unwelcome letters or notes or any other graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of the individual's protected characteristics.
 - The conduct can occur in any program or activity and can take place in or around ice rinks, or other gathering places.
 - The conduct can occur virtually through any internet communications.

Sexual Harassment Defined

Sexual harassment is unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or visual, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- (1) submission to such conduct is made a term or condition of participation in sports or Club activity;
- (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for participation decisions affecting the individual; or
- (3) such conduct has the effect of unreasonably interfering with a volunteer or athlete's right to participate in an environment free from discrimination, unreasonably interfering with a volunteer or athlete's participation, and creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working, educational, or living environment. Sexual harassment also includes sexual violence, which, in addition to violating this zero tolerance policy, is a crime.

Sexual harassment, including sexual violence, encompasses a wide range of conduct. Examples of specifically prohibited conduct include, but are not limited to:

- Promising, directly or indirectly, a volunteer or athlete a reward, if the volunteer or athlete complies with a sexually oriented request;
- Threatening, directly or indirectly, retaliation against a volunteer or athlete if the volunteer or athlete refuses to comply with a sexually oriented request;
- Denying, directly or indirectly, a volunteer or athlete's opportunity to participate, if the volunteer or athlete to comply with a sexually oriented request;
- Engaging in sexually suggestive conversation or physical contact or touching a volunteer or athlete;
- Displaying pornographic or sexually oriented materials; Telling sexual or "dirty" jokes; Engaging

American Special Hockey Association Zero Tolerance for Policy for Bullying & Bully Prevention

The American Special Hockey Association (ASHA) believes that all volunteers/athletes have a right to a safe and healthy environment. ASHA Member Clubs have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance.

ASHA and ASHA Member Clubs will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any volunteer/athlete. ASHA Members (Staff, Volunteers or Athletes) shall not intimidate, harass, or bully another member through words or actions. Such behavior includes: use of hate speech, or demeaning language, direct physical contact, such as hitting or shoving; verbal assaults, such as teasing or name-calling; and social isolation or manipulation.

ASHA expects volunteers/athletes and/or staff to immediately report incidents of bullying to their local ASHA Member Club Leadership or ASHA Regional/Executive Director. Any Coach or volunteer who witness such acts take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so. Each complaint of bullying should be promptly investigated. This policy applies to volunteers/athletes during ASHA sanctioned activities.

To ensure bullying does not occur during ASHA activities, ASHA will cultivate acceptance and understanding in all volunteers/athletes and staff to build ASHA's capacity to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment

ASHA Head Coaches should discuss this policy with their volunteers/athletes in cognitive and age-appropriate ways and should assure them that they need not endure any form of bullying. Volunteers/athletes who bully are in violation of this policy and are subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from ASHA.

Each ASHA Member Club will adopt a Coach/Volunteer/Athlete Code of Conduct to be followed by every ASHA Member.

The Code of Conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Any volunteer/athlete who engages in bullying may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.
- Volunteers/athletes are expected to immediately report incidents of bullying to the ASHA Member Club Head Coach or designee.
- Volunteers/athletes can rely on staff to promptly investigate each complaint of bullying in a thorough and confidential manner.
- If the complainant volunteer/athlete or the parent of the volunteer/athlete feels that appropriate resolution of the investigation or complaint has not been reached, the volunteer/athlete or the parent/guardian of the volunteer/athlete should contact the ASHA Regional Director/Executive Director. ASHA strictly prohibits retaliatory behavior against any complainant or any participant in the complaint process.

The procedures for intervening in bullying behavior include, but are not limited, to the following:

- All staff, volunteers/athletes and their parents/guardians will receive a summary of this policy prohibiting intimidation and bullying: at the beginning of the hockey season, as part of the volunteer/athlete handbook and/or information packet, as part of new volunteer/athlete orientation, and as part of the ASHA Member Club's notification to parents/guardians.
- All ASHA Member Clubs will make reasonable efforts to keep a report of bullying and the results of investigation confidential.
- ASHA Member Coaching Staff and Volunteers who witness acts of bullying shall take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so. People witnessing or experiencing bullying are strongly encouraged to report the incident; such reporting will not reflect on the target or witnesses in any way.





INSURANCE SAFETY & ASHARE EQUIPMENT PROGRAM



Need Help?? Contact us at ASHA@Specialhockey.org

2025 2026 American Special Hockey Association Member & Affiliate Insurance Summary

The following is a summary of the insurance policies provided to ASHA registered members & affiliates in good standing.

General Liability Coverage

General liability coverage provides commercial general liability insurance with a \$4,000,000 general annual aggregate limit. This coverage protects the American Special Hockey Association (ASHA) and its registered members against claims of negligence during an ASHA-sanctioned event. General Liability Insurance provides coverage for negligence, injuries, property damage, and lawsuits including but not limited to:

- Third-party bodily injuries.
- Third-party property damage.
- Products Liability
- Advertising injuries.

General Liability Limit of Insurance

- \$4,000,000 General Aggregate Limit
- \$4,000,000 Products/Completed Operations Aggregate Limit
- \$2,000,000 Personal and Advertising Injury Limit (Any One Person or Organization)
- \$2,000,000 Each Occurrence Limit
- \$100,000 Rented To You Limit (Any One Premises)
- \$5,000 Medical Expense Limit (Any One Person)

Accident Medical Benefits

Accident & Health Insurance is excess medical payments for athletes, volunteers, coaches and officials, and participants or affiliates of ASHA, if injured during sponsored and supervised activities. The coverage may pay up to a maximum of \$50,000 for covered medical expenses incurred for medically-necessary treatment required as a result of an accidental bodily injury. All medical and dental expenses are payable in excess and only after all other valid and collectible insurance in force at the time of the accident has been applied to the claim.

Accidental Medical Benefits: Full Excess – coverage will respond after the primary insurance of the injured party, or in the absence of primary health insurance. For covered incidents, the following coverage applies:

- \$500 deductible
- Accident Medical Expense \$25,000
- Benefit Period: 52 weeks
- Accidental Death: \$10,000
- Accidental Dismemberment: \$10,000
- AD&D Aggregate Limit: \$500,000



Crime Coverage

Crime coverage is a necessity and has a variety of purposes; ASHA carries a \$25,000 limit for each of the following:

- Employee Theft – covers ASHA from loss due to theft from employees or volunteers
- Funds Transfer (including 'social engineering' coverage) – covers ASHA for loss of funds due to unauthorized transfers, willful or not
- Counterfeit Funds & Money Orders – covers ASHA for unauthorized transactions or checks

Directors & Officers Coverage

(available optionally to Member Teams)

Directors & Officers Insurance (D&O) is a business liability policy that protects board members who are sued over decisions they make while serving on your board. The policy usually covers legal expenses for accusations of discrimination, defamation, and mismanagement of funds.

- D&O Limits of Insurance
- \$1,000,000 Each Policy Period
 - \$1,000,000 Aggregate
 - \$1,000 Retention

Association members are encouraged to independently obtain additional D&O Coverages. Contact us for details.

Participant Legal Liability Coverage

Participant Legal Liability (PLL) offers coverage if an incident occurs during participation which is the alleged result of poor or defective quality and conditions of the playing surface or area. PLL is an essential part of any sports & recreation insurance policy and is a requirement for ASHA and all its affiliates.

All normal ice hockey-related activities, such as games, practices and scrimmages, between registered ASHA hockey teams and affiliates (in good standing) are automatically sanctioned/approved. Coverage is provided for affiliated members from the United States and Canada for approved and sanctioned events. Regular use of premises for meetings and fundraising do NOT require a special event sanction/approval, unless the proprietor (owner) requires being named as an additional insured on ASHA's coverages. The selling of alcoholic beverages will not be sanctioned/approved, and such sales are not covered. Other restrictions apply.

**Certificates of insurance will be provided with a completed and approved
2024/2025 ASHA Season Member/Affiliate Team Application and Event Sanctioning Request.**



HOW TO REQUEST A CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE (COI)

For ASHA Affiliated Teams & Programs ASHA provides Certificates of Insurance (COIs) for member teams in good standing. COIs are typically required by rinks, venues, or event partners to verify liability coverage for American Special Hockey Association activities.

STEP-BY-STEP: HOW TO REQUEST A COI

Email ASHA@specialhockey.org

& use the following format to ensure your request is processed quickly and accurately.

1. **Subject Line Format:** COI Request ASHA: [Team Name]; Need by [MM/DD]
2. **Email Body Details:** Please include ALL of the following information:
3. **Who is the certificate for?** (Rink Name or Facility Name)
4. **Facility Contact Information:** (Name / Phone Number / Address / Email)
5. **What is the certificate for?** (Specify the purpose Practice, Game, Event, etc. Must be ASHA-related.)
6. **Is the facility requesting to be listed as "Additional Insured"?**
 - a. If yes, provide exactly how they want to be listed on the certificate.)
 - b. Any special instructions or requests?
 - c. (Example: specific language or endorsements needed.)
7. **Team Name** _____
8. **Head Coach Name & Contact Number** _____
9. **Team Manager Name & Contact Number** _____

Program Eligibility Reminder: Your team must have a current season team application on file with ASHA. The team must be an accepted program in good standing to receive a COI.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

Q: CAN I GET A COI FOR A NON-ASHA EVENT?

No. COIs are only issued for activities directly related to ASHA programming.

Q: WHAT IS A CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE (COI)?

A COI verifies that your team is covered under ASHA's general liability insurance for approved activities (practices, games, events, etc.). It may be required by rinks, venues, or other facilities.

Q: HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO RECEIVE THE COI AFTER I SEND MY REQUEST?

Please allow 5-7 business days for processing. Requests with missing information will take longer.

Q: WHAT DOES "ADDITIONAL INSURED" MEAN?

This means the rink or venue is requesting to be listed on the certificate as an additional covered party. Be sure to ask them exactly how they want to be listed.

Q: DO I NEED TO REQUEST A NEW COI EACH SEASON?

Yes. COIs are issued per location and per season. Renewing teams must submit a new request each year.



ASHARE EQUIPMENT PROGRAM

GEAR UP FOR INCLUSION!

The ASHAre Equipment Program is one of the most impactful ways the American Special Hockey Association supports growth and accessibility in the game of hockey. We're proud to collaborate with Private Foundations, Bauer Hockey, Hockey Monkey, Pure Hockey, and the NHL Industry Growth Fund (IGF) (Under specific circumstances) to get essential gear into the hands of athletes who need it most.

This program focuses on helping new athletes get started and supporting those who require adaptive equipment or aids to fully participate in the game.

WHAT WE PROVIDE

- Standard hockey equipment for new athletes joining a special hockey team
- Adaptive gear such as skate Aids, Kaye Trainers and Sleds for recreational adaptive sport.
- Supplies for athletes who need extra protection, sensory-sensitive materials, or social stories, communication tools and balance aids
- Primarily supporting new programs and those growing their rosters with new.

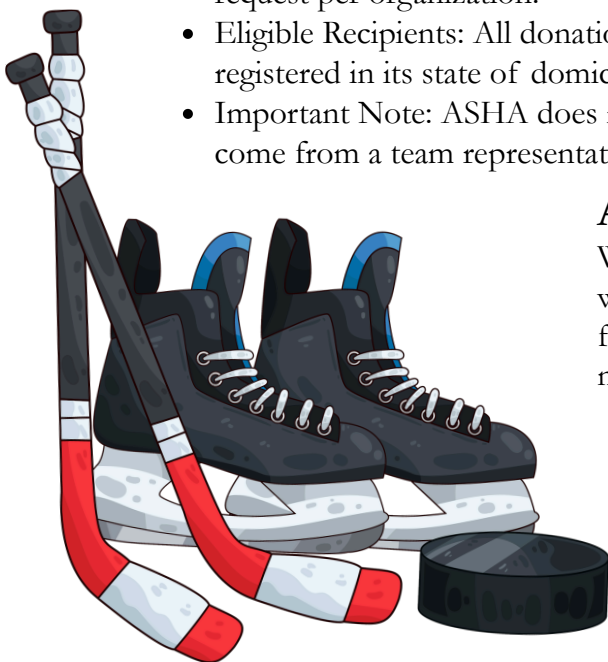
OUR PHILOSOPHY

At ASHA, we believe hockey should be for everyone—regardless of diagnosis, physical or cognitive ability, or access to resources. The ASHAre Equipment Program reflects our commitment to equity through participation: making sure every athlete has a chance to get on the ice, feel safe, and experience the power of inclusion. Participation in sport builds confidence, community, and joy—and no one should be left out because of gear barriers. That's why this program exists: to make sure the equipment gap doesn't become an opportunity gap.

HOW TO REQUEST EQUIPMENT

Team Managers can access the ASHAre Equipment Request Form through their "Troubleshooting" link on the ASHA website.

- Who Can Submit: Only the Head Coach or Team Manager for each team may submit one request per organization.
- Eligible Recipients: All donations must go to a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization that is registered in its state of domicile.
- Important Note: ASHA does not accept individual or family requests—all requests must come from a team representative.



AVAILABILITY REMINDER

We do our best to fulfill as many requests as possible using our warehouse inventory. However, submission does not guarantee fulfillment. Equipment is distributed based on availability and overall need, with priority given to:

- New athlete participation
- Adaptive equipment needs
- Programs in historically under-resourced areas

**Together, we're building a stronger,
more inclusive hockey community
one stick, one helmet, one athlete at a time.**

How to Request Equipment from the ASHAre Equipment Program

The American Special Hockey Association is proud to support our affiliated teams and programs through the ASHAre Equipment Program, made possible by partnerships with Bauer Hockey, Pure Hockey, Hockey Monkey, the NHL Industry Growth Fund, Hockey Players in Business, and generous private foundations.

This program provides essential equipment support for adaptive hockey programs. Requests are coordinated through ASHA's central warehouse and reviewed on a monthly basis during the regular season.

Please note: Submitting a request does not guarantee that the requested items are in stock or available.

Step-by-Step: How to Submit an Equipment Request

Complete the official [ASHAre Equipment Request Form](#) available through your online administrative trouble shooting page. For urgent or time-sensitive requests, email: asha@specialhockey.org

Required Information for the Online Submission:

1. **Organization Name**
2. **Is your team currently registered and in good standing with ASHA?**
3. **501(c)(3) Charity Verification (EIN & state of domicile)**
4. **Head Coach Name & Contact Info**
5. **Team Manager Name & Contact Info**
6. **Requested Equipment List**
 - Quantity and sizes (Be as specific as possible - See sizing guide)
 - Are these for NEW athletes?
 - Are any adaptive tools or modifications needed?
7. **Would you like to:**
 - Donate toward shipping costs
 - Pick up equipment at ASHA's warehouse
 - Be contacted about alternative options if equipment is unavailable (gently used or discounted gear)
8. **Eligibility & Restrictions**
 - Only the Head Coach or Team Manager for each team in good standing.
 - One request per team will be reviewed per season.
 - No individual/family requests will be accepted.
 - Do not publicly share the request form or link.
9. **Requests may be denied if:**
 - The team is not in good standing with ASHA
 - Equipment is requested for stock, not current registered athletes
 - Required documentation is incomplete or missing
10. **Equipment Use Agreement**
 - By submitting a request, you agree to:
 - Use all donated equipment only for ASHA athletes and programs
 - Not resell, rename, or repurpose any donated equipment
 - Reimburse full retail value if items are misused or misallocated
 - Credit applicable partners and ASHA when posting on social media
11. **NHL Adaptive Learn To Play Program**
 - ASHA and the NHL Industry Growth Fund also support a dedicated Adaptive Learn to Play Equipment Program for new athletes with disabilities entering hockey.
 - Pre-Approval Required
 - Requests must include specific sizing and adaptive needs
 - Equipment may include: sensory tools, social stories, adaptive gear
 - Shipping is free, and items are provided based on verified need and program capacity
 - To pre-qualify, contact: ASHA@specialhockey.org



ASHAre Equipment Program

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



Q: Can we request equipment for programs not associated with ASHA?

A: If there is available inventory from Bauer Gives Back, programs not affiliated with ASHA may submit a request.

Q: How do I submit a request

A: All requests must be submitted through ASHAre online submission form. This form can be located at SpecialHockey.org/MembersOnly/ASHARE

Q: Can we request equipment for future athletes or extras to keep on hand?

A: No. Equipment requests must be based on identified needs for currently registered athletes.

Q: How long does it take to receive the gear?

A: Please allow up to 4–6 weeks for processing. Requests are reviewed monthly, and fulfillment depends on inventory.

Q: What if you don't have what we need?

A: You'll be given the option to:

- Access gently used equipment through our network
- Purchase gear through ASHA's discounted partner program

Q: Can we publicly post the request form?

A: No. Please do not share the form publicly or with anyone not authorized to complete it on behalf of your organization.

Q: Can we request helmets or gear for athletes not registered yet?

A: No. All requests must be tied to registered participants in the current season.

Q: My team needs additional therapeutic resources like a Kaye Trainer or Skate Aides. Can ASHA help?

A: Yes. ASHA is committed to supporting adaptive hockey athletes by helping teams identify and access therapeutic equipment and on-ice mobility aids, including Kaye Trainers, Skate Aides, gait supports, and other adaptive tools. These requests are reviewed individually and coordinated in partnership with our vendors and supporters whenever possible.

Q: My team is looking for sensory supports or communication tools. Can ASHA provide these?

A: Yes. ASHA recognizes the importance of sensory regulation, communication access, and behavioral supports for many athletes. We will work with your program to provide or help develop resources such as:

- Sensory bags or fidgets
- Social stories tailored to hockey routines
- Visual communication cards
- Quiet spaces or calming corner ideas

Please include these needs in your request and contact ASHA@specialhockey.org if you would like help developing customized solutions for your team.

Thank you for all you do to grow the game and support your athletes. ASHA is proud to stand with you—and to work together to make Special Hockey possible for every player, of every ability.

Questions? Email: asha@specialhockey.org

ASHA FUNDRAISING PLATFORM WITH GIVESMART

ASHA's GiveSmart Platform is made available by the generous support of Hockey Players In Business



WHAT IS GIVESMART?

GiveSmart is a secure and user-friendly online fundraising platform used by thousands of nonprofits nationwide. ASHA provides access to GiveSmart for free to all Member Teams under a 100% pass-through model—this means ASHA collects no portion of funds raised. The only fees incurred are standard credit card processing fees per transaction. Currently this platform is only available for members and affiliate based in the United States.

GiveSmart helps ASHA Member Teams raise funds creatively and efficiently through online auctions, peer-to-peer campaigns, and text-to-donate options.

FUNDRAISING OPTIONS AVAILABLE THROUGH GIVESMART

1. ONLINE AUCTIONS

- Run a digital silent auction where families, friends, and community supporters can bid from anywhere.
- Showcase donated items, memorabilia, or experiences.
- Promote with links, QR codes, and social media—no physical event required.
- Automatic outbid notifications encourage continued participation and giving.

2. CHAMPION FUNDRAISING PAGES (PEER-TO-PEER GIVING)

- Supporters create their own fundraising pages connected to your team's campaign.
- Ideal for athletes, parents, or coaches to say: "Help me raise \$500 to support my team!"
- Great for birthdays, holidays, Giving Tuesday, or to celebrate your team's accomplishments.

3. TEXT-TO-DONATE CAMPAIGNS

- Donors can text a custom keyword (e.g., ASHATeamName) to 76278 and receive an instant link to donate.
- Fast and mobile-friendly—perfect for tournaments, team events, or local media promotions.
- No app or account needed, just a phone and a few clicks.

GETTING STARTED IS EASY

1. EMAIL ASHA AT ASHA@SPECIALHOCKEY.ORG

- Include your team name, primary contact, and a short description of your planned fundraiser or campaign.

2. ASHA WILL SET YOU UP

- We'll provide your team with a custom GiveSmart campaign and help you get started.
- Campaign Dashboard is transparent and teams can access

3. LAUNCH AND SHARE

- Use email, social media, text, and team meetings to promote your campaign or auction.

IMPORTANT GUIDELINES

- All funds raised must directly support your ASHA Member Team's programs and activities, including ice time, equipment, athlete support, and travel.
- Personal fundraising is not permitted. Funds may not be used for individual financial gain or unrelated expenses.
- Campaigns must comply with ASHA's policies and reflect our commitment to transparency, accessibility, and community values.

QUESTIONS OR NEED HELP?

We're happy to walk you through setup or brainstorm ideas. Email asha@specialhockey.org to get started!



REGISTRATION RESOURCES



Need Help?? Contact us at ASHA@Specialhockey.org



Getting Ready for the 2025/2026 Season

Thanks to the generous support of Hockey Players in Business, ASHA is able to offer free membership for athletes, coaches, and volunteers for the 2025–2026 season.

Please note: A small vendor fee may apply for required background screenings and abuse prevention training.



ASHA Membership

New Season ASHA Team Membership Forms are DUE No Later Than July 15th

- Form is available online at [SpecialHockey.org](https://www.SpecialHockey.org)>Troubleshooting
- Event & Festival Sanctioning Requests are DUE No Later than October 1, 2025



Registration Opens July 1, 2025

- Registration can be found online at www.SpecialHockey.org
- Detailed Step by Step Instructions are located under the "Registration Tab"
- Team Managers & Head Coaches SHOULD NOT Complete Registrations for Athletes or other Staff. (If assistance is required, the athletes caregiver may request an accommodation in writing to asha@specialhockey.org)



Credentials

ASHA will issue a season credential for each athlete, coach & volunteer who is registered (and approved) on September 1, 2026. Please help us make this process go as smoothly as possible by encouraging your team to register over the summer.

For RETURNING participants

Every year the new season registration opens on July 1.

Everyone is asked to complete a new season registration for each season.

If the registrant completed a Background Screening and Abuse Training during the 2024/2025 season, they will not have to repeat this. However, they will need to check their SportsEngine account for proof of compliance.

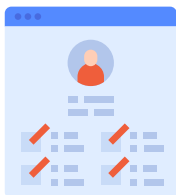
Please note that any assumption that they have completed compliance could delay their registration approval. The national ASHA registration staff are all volunteers, and we process over 10,000 registrations. Their assistance in checking their SportsEngine account to ensure that they have met all compliance requirements is greatly appreciated.

For NEW participants

The First Step in the registration process will prompt them to set up a "Sports Engine Account". This account works like a "File Cabinet" and will hold the athletes information for use in any ASHA registrations including season, summer camps and special events. The Second Step is to register for the new season. This registration should be carefully filled out as it helps coaches and team managers with important information.

If the participant (Athlete or Junior Coach) is Under the age of 18, registration takes only a few simple steps. Once the athlete has a sports engine account established, the registration process is a very simple and quick process. This registration should be carefully filled out as it helps coaches and team managers with important information.

If the (Athlete, Coach or Volunteer) is 18 years or older, registration has an extra step to ensure compliance with the Safe Sport Act Law. ASHA has worked diligently to offer a variety of accommodations to meet the diverse needs of our athletes. We understand that this is new and different, and can be overwhelming for families.



We're excited to share this Family Resource, available on SPECIALHOCKEY.ORG, to help make the family special hockey experience smoother, more fun, and full of support. If you would like an editable version to customize for your team, email your request to asha@specialhockey.org.



REGISTER FOR ASHA

Step 1

Sign In

Step 2

Register

Step 3

Confirm

Game Plan

Check in with your head coach or team manager to confirm expectations for athlete's player level coaching role or your volunteer role.

Save Time! Over 18??

Whether you are a new or returning Athlete, Coach or Volunteer, being prepared for this will help ASHA approve your season registration.

We provide flexible options to meet the diverse needs of our members. Please carefully review the options and proceed with the one which best fits your needs!

If you are NEW

Create A New Sports Engine Account

Click on the "Sign In" Button on the top right hand of the SpecialHockey.org Home Page

Parents/guardians should set up their Sports Engine Account BEFORE they register their athlete

Sports Engine works like a file cabinet for our members. The platform holds your registration files & also helps your team communicate with you!

If you are RETURNING

SIGN IN TO YOUR Sports Engine Account

Click on the "Sign In" Button on the top right hand of the SpecialHockey.org Home Page

Click on your initials in the circle, then "My Sports Engine" You will be able to see your previous registrations, including any current Background Screening & Abuse Prevention Training under the REGISTRATIONS on the right side of your screen

PLEASE DO NOT DUPLICATE BY CREATING A NEW ACCOUNT

Go To SpecialHockey.org> Registration

Simple & Easy Taking only a few minutes on your desktop or Mobile Device.

There is no cost for ASHA Registration or ASHA Membership!

Approval may take up to 7-10 days

Confirm Your Registration Status


Click on the "Sign In" Button on the top right hand of the SpecialHockey.org Home Page

Click on your initials in the circle, then "My Sports Engine" You will be able to see your current & previous registrations, including any current Background Screening & Abuse Prevention Training under the REGISTRATIONS on the right side of your screen

PLEASE DO NOT DUPLICATE BY CREATING A NEW ACCOUNT

Frequently Asked Questions

Additional information is available under the "Options" button on our registration screen



Check to see if your previously completed compliance has not expired.

Fill out all forms as instructed

Answer all questions carefully

RENEWING YOUR REGISTRATION

- To avoid any delays, please check your Sports Engine account for any previous abuse prevention training & background screenings.
 - If you completed during the 2023/2024 season, you will need to renew this season.
 - If you do not see previously completed compliance, check to see if you have multiple Sports Engine Accounts and merge them.
- If you submitted a "Request For Accomodation" You will need to re-submit for this season.
- Inaccurate answers to compliance questions WILL RESULT IN DELAYS OR INELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION.
- Please DO NOT forward certificates directly to ASHA. You MUST forward them to your team manager, who will submit them on your behalf.

NEW REGISTRATIONS

- Please read all instructions carefully!
- If you are a parent or guardian, please register YOURSELF prior to registering your Athlete.
- All registrations must have their OWN Sports Engine Account when completing the background screening or abuse prevention training.
- If you are a registered coach with USA Hockey, please follow the instructions carefully.
- If you are submitting a "Request For Accommodation" for an athlete. Please be aware that the form MUST BE Printed, filled out completely (with a full sentence for description & reason) and hand signed. We WILL NOT accept abbreviated forms or electronic copies.
- Inaccurate answers to compliance questions WILL RESULT IN DELAYS OR INELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION.
- Please DO NOT forward certificates or requests directly to ASHA. You MUST forward them to your team manager, who will submit them on your behalf.

The American Special Hockey Association has worked closely with the US Center for Safesport and our partners to provide safe and appropriate methods to comply with the Safe Sport Act requirements. If you have any questions regarding this Federal Law, please go to SafeSport.org

We're excited to share this Family Resource, available on SPECIALHOCKEY.ORG, to help make the family special hockey experience smoother, more fun, and full of support. If you would like an editable version to customize for your team, email your request to asha@specialhockey.org.

QUICK GUIDE TO CHECK YOUR ASHA REGISTRATIONS

To check the status of the registrations, screenings and abuse prevention trainings, please follow these steps:

- Step 1: Go To www.SpecialHockey.org
- Step 2: Click On "Sign In" (Top Right Corner)
- Step 3: Click On "Blue Circle With Your Initials"
- Step 4: Click On "My Sports Engine"
- Step 5: Click On "Registrations" (Left Side)
- Step 6: Click On "2023/2024 Background Screen By NCSI and Abuse Prevention Training"
- Step 7: Scroll Down to View Background Screening Status

If your screening is listed as pending, and its been longer than 5 days since your submitted, please contact NCSI directly at support@ncsiusa.com for a status update. Depending on the status, the NCSI team may be able to expedite the completion and delivery of the report.

If you have completed the Background Screening but NOT the Abuse Prevention Training

- Step 1: Go To www.SpecialHockey.org
- Step 2: Click On "Sign In" (Top Right Corner)
- Step 3: Click On "My Sports Engine"
- Step 4: Click On "Registrations" (Left Side)
- Step 5: Click On "2024/2025 Background Screen By NCSI and Abuse Prevention Training"
- Step 6: Click Abuse Training URL
- Step 7: Complete the training
- Step 8: PRINT THE CERTIFICATE and forward a copy to your Team Manager

Registration Session	Site	SportsEngine Account	Entry Filled Out For:	Registration Date:	Abuse Training URL
2023/2024 ASHA Player and Coach/Instructor Registration	American Special Hockey Association (ASHA)				
Background Screen By NCSI and Abuse Prevention Training	American Special Hockey Association (ASHA)				
2024/2025 ASHA Player and Coach/Instructor Registration	American Special Hockey Association (ASHA)				

IF YOU NEED ANY ASSISTANCE - PLEASE CONTACT YOUR TEAM MANAGER - ASHA REGISTRARS WILL WORK WITH YOUR TEAM TO SUPPORT - THANK YOU

To check the status of the registrations, screenings and abuse prevention trainings, please follow these steps:

Go To www.SpecialHockey.org

Click On "Sign In" (Top Right Corner)

Click On "My Sports Engine"

>Click On "Registrations" (Left Side)

>Click On "2023/2024 Background Screen By NCSI and Abuse Prevention Training"

Scroll Down to View Background Screening Status

Registration Session: Background Screen By NCSI and Abuse Prevention Training

Site: [American Special Hockey Association \(ASHA\)](http://www.american-special-hockey.org)

SportsEngine Account:

Entry Filled Out For:

Registration Date:

Abuse Training URL: https://www.specialhockey.org/survey_result/abuse_training/134474846

Click on URL to go to the registration's SPECIFIC Abuse prevention Training. They will not have to pay any additional fees when using this link.

In many cases this folks did not complete the entire quiz at the end and it needs to be retaken.

If they have completed the videos, there is a box they can check to go directly to the quiz.

MANAGING MY TEAM'S REGISTRATIONS

SAFE SPORT ACT COMPLIANCE

A common question is: Why is the ASHA system not automatic?

The answer is... because we have advocated to accept a variety of methods to ensure compliance which meets the diverse needs of those we serve. This ensures that athletes can access the information in a manner that is appropriate for their learning needs.

Safe Sport Act Compliance – Required for All Participants Age 18 and Older

There are no exceptions. Anyone age 18 or older—including athletes, coaches, volunteers, and locker room support—must comply with the Safe Sport Act. This can be completed using one of the five approved options listed below.

Important Notes:

- **All coaches and volunteers must complete compliance using Option 1 or Option 2.**
- As of October 31, 2023, ASHA cannot accept compliance documentation from other organizations.

OPTION 1: PREVIOUS ASHA COMPLIANCE

If you completed your background screening and abuse prevention training through ASHA 2024/2025 season, and it remains valid, no further action is needed. Your compliance will appear in your SportsEngine account. Please verify it is marked as complete.

OPTION 2: COMPLETE COMPLIANCE THROUGH ASHA REGISTRATION

If your screening or training has expired—or if you're registering for the first time—you will complete both steps during the 2025–2026 ASHA season registration. Athletes may complete this process with the support of a parent or guardian.

OPTIONS FOR ATHLETES WHO REQUIRE ACCOMMODATIONS

OPTION 3: PARENT OR GUARDIAN COMPLETES REQUIREMENTS ON ATHLETE'S BEHALF

- A parent or guardian registers as a volunteer and completes the background screening and abuse prevention training.
- They register the athlete as part of their household and complete the Request for Accommodation Form to certify that the training content has been appropriately shared with the athlete.
- This form must be printed, filled out clearly by hand, and signed by the parent/guardian.
- The team manager or head coach must review and sign the form before it is submitted to ASHA.

OPTION 4: COMPLETE THE “SAFESPORT FOR YOUTH” COURSE

The SafeSport for Youth course is available at no cost and is designed to present information in a way that is more accessible for individuals with intellectual and/or cognitive disabilities.

- Athletes may complete this course with the help of a parent or guardian.
- Whenever possible, athletes should also complete the background screening.
- If an athlete is unable to complete the background screening, a Request for Accommodation Form may be submitted.

This option provides a developmentally appropriate path for athletes to meet Safe Sport Act compliance while recognizing their individual support needs.

OPTION 5: FULL ACCOMMODATION REQUEST

- A parent or guardian registers the athlete and completes a Request for Accommodation Form, explaining why the athlete is unable to complete the abuse prevention training.
- This form must be reviewed and signed by the team manager or head coach prior to submission.

Note: This option is intended only for cases where participation in the training is not possible. It should not be used for convenience. Misuse of this option may result in serious consequences in the case of an audit or incident.

Questions or Special Circumstances?
If you need support or are unsure which option applies to your situation, please contact asha@specialhockey.org.





Because your team welcomes athletes of all ages, your organization is mandated by Federal Law to comply with the Safe Sport Act of 2017. We hope that this guide helps ASHA Team Managers & Head Coaches navigate their athletes and families through the registration process, so everybody can focus on what they love to do best - Play Hockey!

WHAT IS THE SAFE SPORT ACT

At a time when child abuse has become all too common in the sports world, all youth sports organizations must take action to protect vulnerable youth athletes. In reaction to recent abuse scandals in youth sports, the United States government has established the Safe Sport Act of 2017 that mandates new safety requirements that aim to protect youth athletes through abuse prevention training and mandated reporting.

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE AFFECTED?

All youth sports organizations are affected by the Act in one way or another. Organizations that participate in international (or interstate) amateur athletic contests – and which involve one or more adults being in close contact with one or more amateur athletes who are minors – are required to comply.

WHAT HAPPENS TO ORGANIZATIONS THAT DON'T FOLLOW THE NEW REQUIREMENTS?

Individuals and organizations found not to be in compliance with the act could receive civil or criminal charges. Failure or refusal to comply with a federal statute meant to protect the public safety is negligence per se. Under the Act, the claimant may bring a civil lawsuit in U.S. District Court. They can recover actual damages or liquidated damages and the costs of the action including reasonable attorney's fees. The court may also allow punitive damages, and criminal charges are possible. Insurance companies also demand compliance, so any coverages for errors or omissions would not be in place.

WHAT DOES THE SAFE SPORT ACT REQUIRE OF ORGANIZATIONS?

The Act requires that all adults who interact with youth athletes must complete abuse awareness training and are required to report suspicions of abuse to the appropriate law enforcement agencies within 24 hours. There is no exclusion or waiver to this requirement for Adults with disabilities. Organizations must also provide a “mechanism for communication” for all participants and volunteers where they can confidentially report incidents of abuse, or suspicion of abuse.

HOW DO I KEEP MY ORGANIZATION IN COMPLIANCE?

Team Managers and Head Coaches are required to monitor their team's registrations to ensure that all participants over the age of 18 have completed the compliance requirements including the Abuse Prevention Training, Background Screening and/or Obtained approval for a "Request for Accommodation Form". Each ASHA Registration reviews the Locker Room Policy and provides a mechanism for communication. Copies are available to all members.





MANAGING MY TEAM'S REGISTRATIONS

ASHA relies on team managers & head coaches to monitor all registrations to ensure that all participants are appropriately registered before anyone steps out on to the ice. The Team Manager/Head Coach will be able to see the registration in their administrative team reports. They will review for accuracy, and alert the National Registrar to review and approve.

It is the responsibility of every team have a clearly communicated Locker Room Policy and to maintain the compliance records for all participants age 18 or older. This includes anyone who steps out on to the ice or enters a locker room to assist (This includes parents).

The Administrative Reports have been designed to assist the team managers and head coach in tracking their registrations and compliance accurately and efficiently.



HOW TO VIEW YOUR ADMIN REPORTS

Go to SpecialHockey.org

Sign In (Top RIGHT Corner)

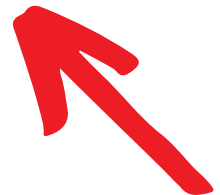
Click on "Find A Team"
(Located in the Quick Links on the home page of SpecialHockey.org)

Scroll down on left and find your Team Name

Click on Your Team Name

Admin Reports are located in the GRAY BAR ABOVE the ASHA Logo.

For the 2025/2026 Season, Team Admins are able to download their team report to Excel to create a Verified Roster to submit to events.



ROSTER VS ADMIN REPORT



Sports Engine has a "Roster" that can be viewed by any member of your team. This is a team communication tool that an athlete can opt out of in their registration. The Admin Reports are viewable to team admins only and provides the team manager access to view all registration information. This information is NOT public for privacy purposes.



MANAGING MY TEAM'S REGISTRATIONS

REVIEWING & APPROVALS



Team Managers and Head Coaches should review all registrations.

If there are "Missing" registrations, ask the registering person to check their Sports Engine Account to ensure that the correct registration has been completed.

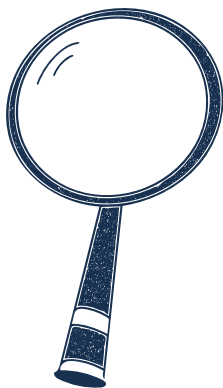
If they have, submit an inquiry to asharegistrar@gmail.com. It is not uncommon that the participant needs to be "rostered" to your team

In the Admin Reports, there will be a Blank in the "ASHA Verified" Column for any registrations requiring a "Review & Approval"

Team Managers, should review the information paying special to the any documents uploaded. If there are changes needed, the team manager should work with the registrant to make any needed edits.

When a registration needs approval, the team manager or Head coach should check the registration to make sure that all information is complete. Then notify the ASHA Registrar that an approval is requested.

COMMON ERRORS YOU CAN CATCH



- Jr Coaches do not list a parent or guardians information.
- Coaches, Volunteers & Athletes indicate that they are completing or have completed the background screening & abuse prevention training and do not complete the compliance requirements
- Athletes do not have a correctly filled out Request for Accommodation form, missing a Hand Written signature or Coaches/Team Managers Signature.

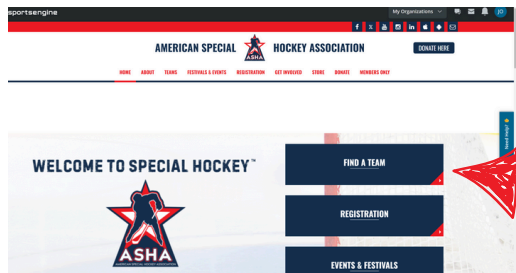
Reviewing and correcting these commons errors prior to requesting approval makes this process much quicker!

RESOURCES FOR YOUR TEAM MANAGER/REGISTRAR

HOW TO FIND YOUR REGISTRATION REPORT

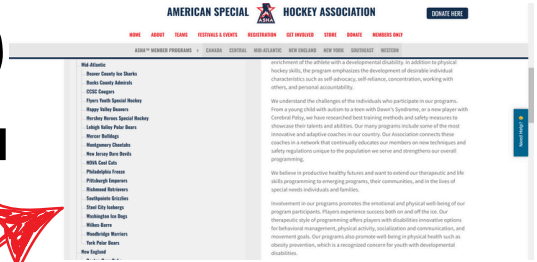
NEED HELP? EMAIL ASHAREGISTRAR@GMAIL.COM

1



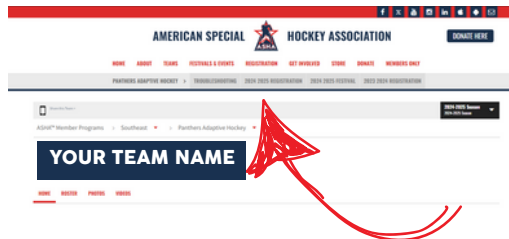
Step 1: Log in to Specialhockey.org. Once logged in (You will see your initials in top right corner), return to the main page and click on "Find a Team"

2



Step 2: Scroll down to find your team's name, then click on it.

3



Step 3: On your team's page, locate the Administrative Reports in the gray bar and click on "2025/2026 Registration"

We have provided a trouble shooting tab for quick links and other FAQ's and Registrar Information

YOUR TEAM NAME

Download CSV for complete registration information

HOME ROSTER PHOTOS VIDEOS

2024/2025 ASHA PLAYER AND COACH/VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION

PAGE 1 OF 2
Displaying Results 1 - 15 of 29

ENTRY NUMBER	REGISTRATION STATUS	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	WHAT ARE YOU REGISTERING AS? CP1	MEMBER TYPE	MISSING COMPLIANCE	COMPLIANCE SOURCE	COMPLI
	Approved			Self	Athlete		ASHA (2/24 NCIS Background Screening & AFS Training not expired)	
	Pending			Parent/Guardian for Athlete	Off for Volunteer (Admin or Special Event)	ASHA Abuse Prevention Training: APA (Abuse Prevention Systems) is missing or expired	ASHA (2/24 NCIS Background Screening & AFS Training not expired)	
	Approved			Parent/Guardian for Athlete	Athlete			
	Approved			Self	Coach (over 18) (Head, Assistant or Locker Room Support)		ASHA (2024/2025 NCIS Background Screening & AFS Training on file)	

Export CSV

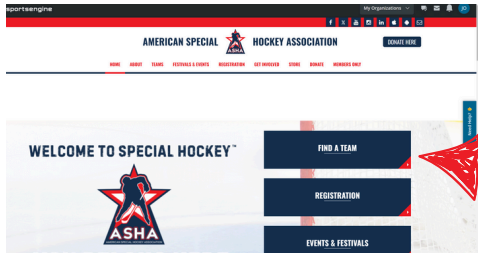
If someone is not listed, ask them to check their SportsEngine account. In most cases, it means they created an account but did not complete their ASHA registration for the new season.

Registration Status
(If this is blank - please contact the ASHA registrar to review)

If Pending or Not Eligible
This column tells you why

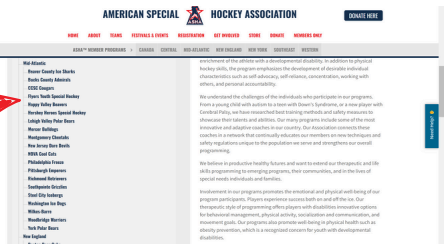
HOW TO HELP YOUR TEAM WITH LINKS

1



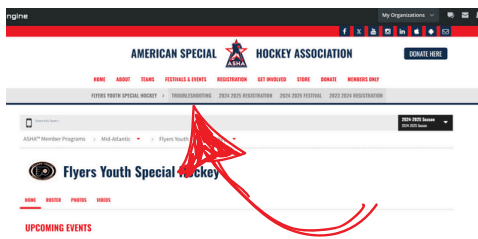
Step 1: Log in to Specialhockey.org. Once logged in (You will see your initials in top right corner), return to the main page and click on "Find a Team"

2



Step 2: Scroll down to find your team's name, then click on it.

3



Step 3: On your team's page, locate the Administrative Reports in the gray bar and click on "Troubleshooting."

4



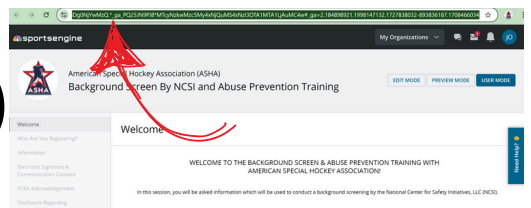
Step 4: Click on the blue box to be directed to the troubleshooting page.

5



Step 5: The troubleshooting page contains various resources, including the Registrar's guide, text for common issues, and links for registration items like background screenings and abuse prevention training. This page is restricted to authorized users only. Do not share it with anyone without proper permission.

6



Step 6: After selecting the link you need, you will be taken to the appropriate registration page. Copy the full URL from the address bar.

7



Step 7: Paste the URL into a new email and send it to the person requesting the link.



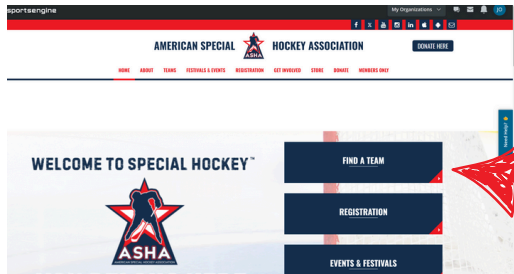
To check the status of the registrations, screenings and abuse prevention trainings, please follow these steps:
 Go To www.SpecialHockey.org
 Click On "Sign In" (Top Right Corner)
 Click On "My Sports Engine"
 >Click On "Registrations" (Left Side)
 >Click On "2024/2025 ASHA Athlete, Coach Volunteer Registration"
 Scroll Down to View Background Screening Status

if folks have already paid for the abuse prevention training, but did not get the link, they can find their link here.

Registration Session: Background Screen By NCSI and Abuse Prevention Training
 Site: American Special Hockey Association (ASHA)
 SportsEngine Account: _____
 Entry Filled Out For: _____
 Registration Date: _____
 Abuse Training URL: https://www.specialhockey.org/survey_removal

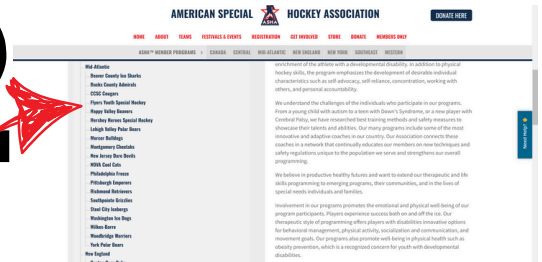
TEAM COMMUNICATIONS

1



Step 1: Log in to Specialhockey.org. Once logged in (You will see your initials in top right corner), return to the main page and click on “Find a Team”

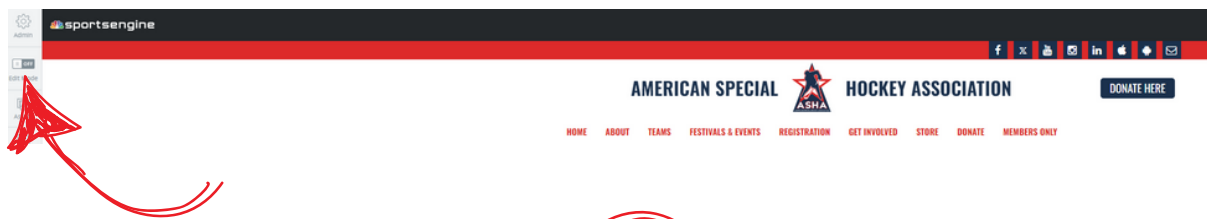
2



Step 2: Scroll down to find your team’s name, then click on it.

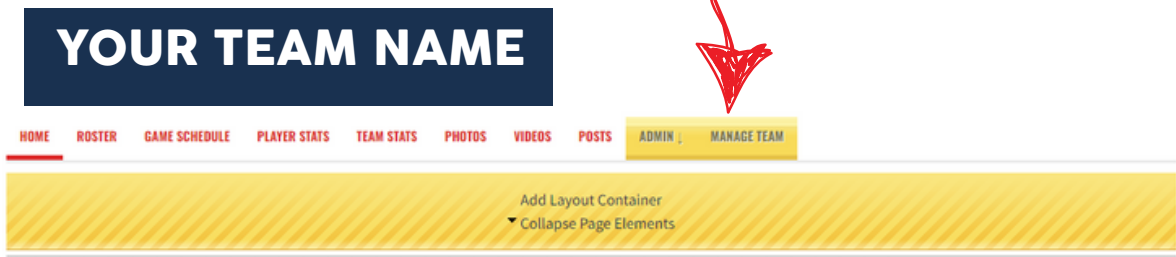
3

Click > Edit Mode



4

Click > Manage Team



5



You can add events - this will have an automatic RSVP option to any registered member that has OPTED IN for communications
Use the Chat feature to communicate with parents
Send Emails to parents etc.

Please NOTE - The ROSTER TOOL ONLY GIVES YOU INFORMATION ON PEOPLE WHO HAVE OPTED IN> Use your Registration Reports to monitor registration status.

Handiest Help Button EVER



FORMS



Need Help?? Contact us at ASHA@Specialhockey.org



THE AMERICAN SPECIAL HOCKEY ASSOCIATION
 37 KENILWORTH ROAD ~ BINGHAMTON, NEW YORK 13903 ~ (607) 765-4529
2025/2026 MEMBER TEAM APPLICATION
PLEASE SUBMIT BY JULY 15

To be a team in good standing, the member organization would document through registration that ALL coaches, Jr. Coach/Mentores, Volunteers and Athletes* are registered and determined eligible for participation. All registrants age 18 (as of December 31, 2007 or older, are required to be compliant with the Safe Sport Act regulations. For any practice, activity or event to be sanctioned by ASHA, all participants would require approved 2024/2026 registration. All special events must be approved with ASHA Administration no less than 14 days in advance of the special event. In submitting this application, the requestor agrees to abide by this expectation.

Team Name		
Mailing Address	City	State Zip
Team Manager	Team Manager Contact	Team Manager Email
Head Coach	Head Coach Contact	Head Coach Email
Team Registrar	Team Registrar Contact	Team Registrar Email
Rink Name	Rink Contact Name	Rink Contact Email
Rink Location Address	City	State Zip

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION (NEEDED FROM ALL APPLICANTS)
 (IF THE ORGANIZATION IS NEW OR FORMING — PLEASE NOTE KEY PERSONNEL INVOLVED INSTEAD OF BOARD MEMBERS)

State & EIN	IRS Tax Status
Board President/Chairman	Board/Vice Chair
Name	Name
Board Secretary	Board Treasurer
Name	Name
Please Attach (New Organizations Only) <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of IRS Determination Letter <input type="checkbox"/> or Letter of Explanation (explain the status of your organization)	Registrations & Membership: Will your team be hosting any festivals or interstate events? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <i>Please submit an 2025/2026 Event Sanctioning Form</i> Will you have equipment needs? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Website	Facebook	Twitter	Instagram
----------------	-----------------	----------------	------------------

* Athletes who are being introduced to the sport are considered special guests and covered for first two events with appropriate release forms on file.
 Application Reviewed & Approved (Region)



THE AMERICAN SPECIAL HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

37 KENILWORTH ROAD ~ BINGHAMTON, NEW YORK 13903 ~ (607) 765-4529

2025/2026

EVENT SANCTIONING REQUEST

This form is required for all special events & festivals (NOT REQUIRED FOR Regular Season Member Club Home Games)

EVENT NAME:

Team Name

Mailing Address

City

State Zip

Team Manager

Team Manager Contact

Team Manager Email

Head Coach

Head Coach Contact

Head Coach Email

Event Rink Name

Event Rink Contact Name

Event Rink Contact Email

Event Rink Location Address

Event City

Event State Zip

EVENT INFORMATION

Event Coordinator Name

Event Coordinator Contact Phone

Event Coordinator Email

of Teams Expected

Will this Event host a party or Off-Ice Event. (If Yes, how many people are expected to attend)

If Insurance is required for Off Ice Location, please note location name, address, dates & times

Game Types

A Level Games

Community Game

B Level Games

Unified Game

C Level Game

Will your team require a fee to participate? If so, how much _____

If you have any questions regarding the game format and your event, please contact ASHA. "Mixed Bench" Games are accepted for smaller events, with a written risk management plan and agreement of all participating parties

Hotels/Accommodation Information:

If this is a Community Game: Please list participating team with contact information

If this is an invitational event: Please list expected teams.

By signing this request, you agree to abide by all Locker Room Rules, Codes of Conduct, and agree to submit verified rosters 7 days in advance of event start.

Team Manager/ Head Coach Signature _____

Application Reviewed & Approved (Region) _____

American Special Hockey Association SINGLE USE RELEASE

Registration Type Special Hockey Athlete Community Athlete Jr. Coach Coach Volunteer

Registrant Information

First Name	Middle	Last	Date of Birth	Phone #1
Street			<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	Phone #2
City	State	Zip	Country	
ASHA Team		Player Level	Jersey Size	

Parent Guardian Information

Parent 1: First Name	Middle	Last	Relationship		
City	State	Zip	Country	Home #	Cell #

Release of Information

Waiver of Liability, Assumption of Risk, Release, and Indemnity Agreement

This Agreement is intended to exempt and release the American Special Hockey Association (ASHA), its affiliates, member teams, event hosts, volunteers, and associated parties ("Releasees") from liability for personal injury, property damage, or wrongful death—even if arising from their negligence.

In consideration for the undersigned participant's registration with ASHA and its affiliated organizations, and participation in any ASHA-sanctioned event or activity, the participant (and their parent(s) or legal guardian(s), if applicable) agrees as follows:

1. **Waiver and Release:** The undersigned hereby waives, releases, and relinquishes any and all claims, causes of action, or liabilities—known or unknown, anticipated or unanticipated—arising out of or related to participation in ASHA activities, including but not limited to practices, games, travel, or related events. This waiver applies to claims resulting from the negligence of any Releasee.
2. **Assumption of Risk:** The participant (and parent(s)/guardian(s)) understands and assumes all inherent and potential risks associated with participation in the sport of ice hockey, including but not limited to: bodily injury, partial or total disability, paralysis, death, or property damage. Risks may arise from the participant's own actions or the actions/inactions of others, including other players, coaches, or the Releasees. Participation in age groups outside the participant's typical range may also increase risk.
3. **Facilities and Premises:** The undersigned acknowledges risks related to the condition, maintenance, inspection, and supervision of any premises, rink, or facility used in connection with ASHA activities. This release includes any claims based on alleged negligence in facility management, dangerous conditions, or lack of warnings.
4. **Media Release:** The undersigned consents to ASHA and its designees photographing, filming, or recording the participant during events. The participant grants ASHA a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, irrevocable license to use, reproduce, distribute, and display the participant's image, likeness, and voice in any format now known or developed in the future, for promotional or educational purposes.
5. **Compliance with ASHA Policies:** The participant agrees to comply with all current ASHA rules, regulations, and by-laws, which are available upon request and at www.specialhockey.org. This includes acceptance of all terms, waivers, and consents contained within the online registration process, which must be completed by the team's designated representative.
6. **Indemnification:** The undersigned agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the Releasees against any and all claims, suits, liabilities, or damages arising from or related to participant's involvement in ASHA activities—including any claim brought by or on behalf of the participant or their estate.
7. **Severability:** If any provision of this agreement is found unenforceable by law, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.
8. **Insurance Limitations:** The undersigned acknowledges that ASHA's insurance policies may contain significant exclusions, including the exclusion of liability for claims brought by one player against another.

By signing below, the participant (and parent(s)/guardian(s), if applicable) acknowledges they have read, understood, and voluntarily accept the terms of this agreement. They have not relied on any oral representations by ASHA or any Releasee and understand the legal consequences of signing this release.

Signature	Printed Name
Relationship to Athlete	Contact Phone Number



ASHA Incident Report Form

This form must be completed within 48 hours of any medical incident during an ASHA-sanctioned event or practice.

Basic Information

Date of Incident: _____

Time of Incident: _____

Location (Facility/Ice Rink):

Event Type: Game Practice Off-Ice
Activity Travel Other: _____

Program/Team Name:

Athlete Information

Athlete Name:

Age: _____

Parent/Guardian Notified? Yes No

Parent/Guardian Name:

Phone Number: _____

Pre-existing Medical Condition?

Yes No

If yes, please describe
(e.g., diabetes, seizures):

Description of Incident

Describe what happened, including the activity leading up to the incident, observable symptoms, and any known diagnosis or action plan in effect.

PLEASE ATTACH A DESCRIPTION

Submitted By

Name: _____

Role/Title: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Immediate Response

First Aid Provided? Yes No

If yes, by whom?

Was 911 Called? Yes No

Transported to Hospital? Yes No

If yes, which hospital?

Emergency Medication Administered? Yes No

If yes, what and by whom?

Individuals Involved

Responding Coach or Safety Lead:

Witnesses (name/contact):

1. _____
2. _____

Follow-Up Actions

- Parent/Guardian given CDC HEADS UP Info (for head injury)
- Athlete removed from play
- Written medical clearance will be required for return
- Program will follow up with family within 24-48 hours
- Incident will be reviewed by ASHA Safety Director

For ASHA Use Only

Date Received: _____ Reviewed By: _____

Additional Notes/Actions Taken: ATTACH

2025/2026 ASHA REQUEST FOR ACCOMODATION

PART ONE
ATHLETE INFORMATION

I, _____, am the parent or legal guardian of _____,
a registered participant with ASHA, born on _____. I acknowledge and understand that, in accordance with
Federal law, The Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP), and the U.S. Center for SafeSport Code, any player who is eighteen (18) years of age or older on or before December 31, 2025, and who participates on an ASHA affiliate member team that includes minor-aged players, must complete an approved sexual abuse prevention training and undergo a national background screening. I further understand that no participation in _____ activities may occur for the 2025/2026 season until either (1) both requirements are completed and documented, or (2) a formally approved request for accommodation is on file with ASHA

PART TWO
BACKGROUND CHECK

REQUEST FOR BACKGROUND SCREENING ACCOMODATION

I certify that _____ has no pending criminal charges, open investigations, or prior convictions, and is not currently the subject of any legal, disciplinary, or child protection proceedings. To the best of my knowledge, there are no circumstances that would raise concern about this individual's suitability to participate in programs that may include minor-aged athletes. Accordingly, I am submitting this formal request for accommodation from the standard background screening requirement for participation in ASHA-affiliated hockey programs, due to:

A complete sentence is required to clearly explain the reason this accommodation is being requested. Incomplete or vague responses will result in the form being returned without approval.

PART THREE
ABUSE PREVENTION TRAINING CHOOSE ONE OPTION

REQUEST FOR ABUSE PREVENTION TRAINING ACCOMODATION

OPTION 1 – Volunteer-Led Training Participation

I certify that I, _____, am a registered 2025–2026 ASHA volunteer and have completed the required background screening and abuse prevention training. I further certify that _____


Participated in the training alongside me to the best of their ability. With my guidance and support, received explanations and reinforcement of the key safety concepts, including personal boundaries, respect, and how to ask for help.

OPTION 2 – Completed Safe Sport For Youth Course

I certify that _____ has successfully completed the SafeSport for Youth course as part of the 2025–2026 ASHA season registration, and that the completion certificate has been submitted to the Team Manager.

OPTION 3 – Request for Accommodation Due to Disability

I certify that I am the parent/legal guardian of _____, and that the individual has one or more cognitive or intellectual disabilities that prevent meaningful understanding of the SafeSport for Youth Course/Abuse Prevention Training in its current format. I request an accommodation from the standard training and background screening requirements, on the basis that 1) the athlete is not in a supervisory role, and 2) Participation in standard training would not be developmentally appropriate or effective. I commit to reinforcing safe behaviors, boundaries, and expectations appropriate to the athlete's understanding and needs

 Please describe the athlete's disability and explain why they cannot participate in the abuse prevention training:

A complete sentence is required to clearly explain the reason this accommodation is being requested. Incomplete or vague responses cannot be accepted.

PART FOUR
This Form MUST BE HAND SIGNED BY
Parent/Guardian AND Head Coach or Team Manager

Parent/Guardian Acknowledgment and Signature

As the parent or legal guardian, I accept responsibility to inform both ASHA and the team of any changes to the information provided, including any behavioral, legal, or supervision-related concerns. I understand this request is subject to ASHA review and approval and may be denied or revoked at ASHA's discretion. We agree to comply with all ASHA Locker Room Policies, supervision requirements, and related safety guidelines established by ASHA and its affiliated members. By signing below, I certify that the information provided in this form is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that this request for accommodation is subject to review and approval by the American Special Hockey Association (ASHA), and that it does not exempt the participant from adhering to all other safety policies, conduct requirements, and supervision expectations. I understand that any false statement, material omission, or failure to report changes may result in suspension or removal from ASHA participation and may carry additional consequences under ASHA's Code of Conduct.

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed): _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

For Team & ASHA Administrative Use Only

This Request for Accommodation must be reviewed & accepted by the Head Coach/Team Manager to be rostered for the 2025/2026 season.

Accepted by _____ Role: _____ Date: _____

Team Name: _____

ASHA recommends that ALL Athletes age 18 or older make an attempt to comply with the Safe Sport Act of 2017 regulations. We believe that the abuse prevention training is in the best interest and safety of all athletes. We understand that the abuse prevention training may be difficult or considered inappropriate for some athletes. The "Request for Accommodation" is NOT advised for all athletes, and request that parents/guardians submit a request ONLY under appropriate circumstances. Please DO NOT submit a Request for Accommodation for Abuse Prevention Training without careful consideration. Additional Resources:

<https://uscenterforsafesport.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Parent-Toolkit-Complete-1.pdf>

2025/2026 ASHA REQUEST FOR ACCOMODATION

PART ONE
ATHLETE INFORMATION

I, Jane Doe, am the parent or legal guardian of John Doe, a registered participant with ASHA, born on 1/1/2004. I acknowledge and understand that, in accordance with Federal law, The Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP), and the U.S. Center for SafeSport Code, any player who is eighteen (18) years of age or older on or before December 31, 2025, and who participates on an ASHA affiliate member team that includes minor-aged players, must complete an approved sexual abuse prevention training and undergo a national background screening. I further understand that no participation in Home Team Name activities may occur for the 2025/2026 season until either (1) both requirements are completed and documented, or (2) a formally approved request for accommodation is on file with ASHA

PART TWO
BACKGROUND CHECK

REQUEST FOR BACKGROUND SCREENING ACCOMODATION

I certify that John Doe has no pending criminal charges, open investigations, or prior convictions, and is not currently the subject of any legal, disciplinary, or child protection proceedings. To the best of my knowledge, there are no circumstances that would raise concern about this individual's suitability to participate in programs that may include minor-aged athletes. Accordingly, I am submitting this formal request for accommodation from the standard background screening requirement for participation in ASHA-affiliated hockey programs, due to: John's (diagnosis) impacts his ability to comprehend the information as presented.

A complete sentence is required to clearly explain the reason this accommodation is being requested. Incomplete or vague responses will result in the form being returned without approval.

PART THREE
ABUSE PREVENTION TRAINING CHOOSE ONE OPTION

REQUEST FOR ABUSE PREVENTION TRAINING ACCOMODATION

OPTION 1 – Volunteer-Led Training Participation

I certify that I, Jane Doe, am a registered 2025–2026 ASHA volunteer and have completed the required background screening and abuse prevention training. I further certify that John Doe participated in the training alongside me to the best of their ability. With my guidance and support, received explanations and reinforcement of the key safety concepts, including personal boundaries, respect, and how to ask for help.

OPTION 2 – Completed Safe Sport For Youth Course

I certify that John Doe has successfully completed the SafeSport for Youth course as part of the 2025–2026 ASHA season registration, and that the completion certificate has been submitted to the Team Manager.

OPTION 3 – Request for Accommodation Due to Disability

I certify that I am the parent/legal guardian of John Doe, and that the individual has one or more cognitive or intellectual disabilities that prevent meaningful understanding of the SafeSport for Youth Course/Abuse Prevention Training in its current format. I request an accommodation from the standard training and background screening requirements, on the basis that 1) the athlete is not in a supervisory role, and 2) Participation in standard training would not be developmentally appropriate or effective. I commit to reinforcing safe behaviors, boundaries, and expectations appropriate to the athlete's understanding and needs

Please describe the athlete's disability and explain why they cannot participate in the abuse prevention training:

John's (diagnosis) impacts his ability to comprehend the information as presented.

A complete sentence is required to clearly explain the reason this accommodation is being requested. Incomplete or vague responses cannot be accepted.

PART FOUR
This Form MUST BE HAND SIGNED BY Parent/Guardian AND Head Coach or Team Manager

Parent/Guardian Acknowledgment and Signature

As the parent or legal guardian, I accept responsibility to inform both ASHA and the team of any changes to the information provided, including any behavioral, legal, or supervision-related concerns. I understand this request is subject to ASHA review and approval and may be denied or revoked at ASHA's discretion. We agree to comply with all ASHA Locker Room Policies, supervision requirements, and related safety guidelines established by ASHA and its affiliated members. By signing below, I certify that the information provided in this form is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that this request for accommodation is subject to review and approval by the American Special Hockey Association (ASHA), and that it does not exempt the participant from adhering to all other safety policies, conduct requirements, and supervision expectations. I understand that any false statement, material omission, or failure to report changes may result in suspension or removal from ASHA participation and may carry additional consequences under ASHA's Code of Conduct.

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed): Jane Doe Signature: Jane Doe Date: 7/1/2025

For Team & ASHA Administrative Use Only

This Request for Accommodation must be reviewed & accepted by the Head Coach/Team Manager to be rostered for the 2025/2026 season.

Accepted by: A. Smith Role: Head Coach Date: 7/1/2025

Team Name: Home Team Name

GETTING THE RIGHT FIT

A GUIDE FOR SPECIAL HOCKEY FAMILIES

Let's Make Fitting A Positive Experience

We know equipment fittings can be overwhelming for some athletes. Take your time. Let athletes touch and try things at their own pace. Celebrate small wins. If something doesn't feel good, that's okay—we'll try something else. We want every player to feel like they belong in this game—and it starts with making sure they feel good in their gear.

Equipment Guide

One of the biggest thrills for a new youth hockey player is getting the chance to put on their equipment.

Follow this guide in numerical order to get yourself ready to play.

1 SUPPORTER AND CUP: essential protective equipment

2 SHIN PADS: check for proper length to ensure pads protect the knee and shin completely

3 HOCKEY SOCKS: pull on over shin pads and attach to Velcro on hockey supporter

4 PANTS/BREEZERS: pants provide protection for the lower spine, hips and thighs

5 SKATES: should be laced from bottom to top tightly to ensure that ankles do not bend

6 SHOULDER PADS: line-up the center-line of player's shoulders with the center of the shoulder pad caps

7 ELBOW PADS: tighten straps so pads do not move on the arms during play

8 JERSEY: goes over shoulder and elbow pads

9 HELMET & FACEMASK: must be of a design and construction approved by the Hockey Equipment Certification Council (HECC)

10 GLOVES: check for good finger and hand mobility

11 STICK: length should generally extend from the ice to the player's chin (with skates on)

Right Size, Right Support

Hockey gear isn't one-size-fits-all, and it shouldn't be. Elbow pads should actually cover elbows. Shin guards should reach the top of the skate. Chest protectors shouldn't shift when the athlete moves. For younger athletes or those still learning balance, this kind of proper fit matters even more—it helps prevent injuries and gives athletes the support they need to build skills at their own pace.

What Matters Most? Helmets, Skates, and Pads

All equipment is important, but some items are essential for head-to-toe protection. Helmets must fit snugly and stay in place—with full face protection. Skates should feel stable and secure, especially for athletes who are still working on balance. Shin guards, elbow pads, and chest protectors are there to prevent painful bumps and bruises. These are the pieces to get right first. Other gear—like gloves, pants, or jerseys—offers more flexibility based on what feels good for your athlete. If it's comfortable, protective, and allows your athlete to participate with confidence, you're doing it right.

HOCKEY EQUIPMENT SIZING GUIDE

Helmets (Head Circumference in Inches)

X-Small 19.2" - 21.2"	Small 20.4" - 22.4"	Medium 21.8" - 23.6"	Large 22.8" - 24.8"	X-Large 23.6" - 25.6"	
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Shoulder Pads (Senior)

Small 5'5"-5'9"	Medium 5'7"-5'11"	Large 5'9" - 6'1"	X-Large 5'11" - 6'3"	XX-Large 6'1" - 6'5"	
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Shoulder Pads (Junior)

Small 4'3" - 4'8"	Medium 4'7" - 5'0"	Large 4'11" - 5'4"			
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Shoulder Pads (Youth)

X-Small 3'0" - 3'10"	Small 3'3" - 4'1"	Medium 3'7" - 4'4"	Large 3'9" - 4'7"		
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Elbow Pads (Senior)

Small		Medium		Large	
Height (in)	Weight (lbs)	Height (in)	Weight (lbs)	Height (in)	Weight (lbs)
5'5" - 5'9"	120 - 160	5'7" - 5'11"	140 - 180	5'9" - 6'1"	160 - 200

Elbow Pads (Junior)

Small		Large			
Height (in)	Weight (lbs)	Height (in)	Weight (lbs)		
4'3" - 4'8"	60 - 90	4'11" - 5'4"	80 - 110		

Elbow Pads (Youth)

Small		Medium		Large	
Height (in)	Weight (lbs)	Height (in)	Weight (lbs)	Height (in)	Weight (lbs)
3'3" - 4'1"	40 - 60	3'7" - 4'4"	45 - 65	3'9" - 4'7"	50 - 70

Gloves (Senior)

13"		14"		15"	
Height (in)	Arm Length (in)*	Height (in)	Arm Length (in)*	Height (in)	Arm Length (in)*
5'5" - 5'9"	12--13	5'7" - 5'11"	13--14	5'9" - 6'1"	14--15

*Please note that arm length is measured from knuckle to elbow.

Gloves (Junior)

10"		11"		12"	
Height (in)	Arm Length (in)*	Height (in)	Arm Length (in)*	Height (in)	Arm Length (in)*
4'3" - 4'8"	9--11	4'7" - 5'0"	10--11	4'11" - 5'4"	11--12

*Please note that arm length is measured from knuckle to elbow.

Gloves (Youth)

8"		9"			
Height (in)	Arm Length (in)*	Height (in)	Arm Length (in)*		
3'3" - 4'1"	7--8	3'9" - 4'7"	8--9		

*Please note that arm length is measured from knuckle to elbow.

Shin Guards (Senior)

13" 5'5" - 5'9"	14" 5'7" - 5'11"	15" 5'9" - 6'1"	16" 5'11" - 6'3"	17" 6'1" - 6'5"
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Shin Guards (Junior)

10" 4'3" - 4'8"	11" 4'7" - 5'0"	12" 4'11" - 5'4"
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Shin Guards (Youth)

7" 3'3" - 4'1"	8" 3'7" - 4'4"	9" 3'9" - 4'7"
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Player Pants (Senior)					
X-Small		Small		Medium	
Height (In)	Waist (In)	Height (In)	Waist (In)	Height (In)	Waist (In)
N/A	N/A	5'5" - 5'9"	30" - 34"	5'7" - 5'11"	32" - 36"
Large		X-Large		XX-Large	
Height (In)	Waist (In)	Height (In)	Waist (In)	Height (In)	Waist (In)
5'9" - 6'1"	34" - 38"	5'11" - 6'3"	36" - 40"	6'1" +	40" +
Player Pants (Junior)					
X-Small		Small		Medium	
Height (In)	Waist (In)	Height (In)	Waist (In)	Height (In)	Waist (In)
4'1" - 4'7"	22" - 23"	4'3" - 4'8"	22" - 24"	4'7" - 5'0"	24" - 26"
Large		X-Large			
Height (In)	Waist (In)	Height (In)	Waist (In)		
4'11" - 5'4"	26" - 28"	5'3" - 5'8"	28" - 30"		
Player Pants (Youth)					
X-Small		Small		Medium	
Height (In)	Waist (In)	Height (In)	Waist (In)	Height (In)	Waist (In)
3'0" - 3'10"	20" - 22"	3'3" - 4'1"	20" - 22"	3'7" - 4'4"	21" - 23"
Large					
Height (In)	Waist (In)				
3'9" - 4'7"	21" - 23"				
Senior Skates					
Skate Size	6	6.5	7	7.5	8
Shoe Size	7.5	8	8.5	9	9.5
Skate Size	8.5	9	9.5	10	10.5
Shoe Size	10	10.5	11	11.5	12
Junior Skates					
Skate Size	1	1.5	2	2.5	3
Shoe Size	2.5	3	3.5	4	4.5
Skate Size	3.5	4	4.5	5	5.5
Shoe Size	5	5.5	6	6.5	7
Youth Skates					
Skate Size	8	9	10	10.5	11
Shoe Size	9.5	10.5	11.5	12	12.5
Skate Size	11.5	12	12.5	13	13.5
Shoe Size	13	13.5	1	1.5	2

Adapting Gear for Sensory and Physical Needs

Some of our players are sensitive to the feel of fabrics, seams, or tight straps. Others may need help getting dressed or use mobility aids. That's okay. There are ways to make gear work better:

- Try soft, tagless base layers under equipment for athletes with sensory differences.
- Look for gear that's easy to adjust and accommodates braces, gloves, or assistive equipment.
- Allow time for athletes to get used to new items slowly and without pressure.
- Talk to your coach or team manager if you're not sure how to adapt gear safely.