Texas Scholastic Hockey League

Varsity Division: Rules & Procedures

Fall/Winter Season

Section 1: Definitions

League Management: The Texas Scholastic Hockey League staff designated to oversee the daily administration of the League and League activities.

League: the Texas Scholastic Hockey League

League Game: any Varsity Regular Season or Playoff Game that is played within the respective season(s) of the Texas Scholastic Hockey League.

Regular Season Game: any game played as part of the League's regular season schedule for the Varsity division.

Playoff Game: any game played as part of the League playoff schedule for the Varsity division.

League Year: September 1 through the following August 31, encompassing two complete League Seasons, Fall/Winter, and Spring/Summer.

Member Club: any organization that is comprised of Varsity team(s) that has been accepted as a member of the League pursuant to the procedures set forth herein.

Team Official: any person serving as a coach, manager, team representative, or other official capacity assisting on or off the players' bench during a League Game.

TAHA: the Texas Amateur Hockey Association.

USAH: USA Hockey

USAH/CEP: USA Hockey Coaching Education Program

Section 2: Member Club Parameters

2.1 Application for Membership

Clubs wishing to join the League must submit a membership application no later than August 1 preceding the League Year in which the team desires to participate. The League shall determine whether to admit the applicant to the League within 10 days after receipt of the application.

2.1.1 Club Membership Requirements

Clubs must follow all guidelines and rules set forth by USA Hockey, TAHA, and the Texas Scholastic Hockey League.

Following are the current guidelines for member clubs. Failure to comply with the guidelines could result in penalties up to and including suspension and/or removal from the league.

- Clubs will submit team rosters to the league and verify that all players on the roster are zoned for their Club or have been assigned to the Club by the Texas Scholastic Hockey League.
- Clubs must report any players cut to the league by completing and submitting the Player Cut Notification Form to the TSHL Commissioner in accordance with Section 3.6.1. The league prefers that clubs do not cut players.
- Fundraising and sponsorship sales are permitted.

2.2 Coach Selection

Clubs will have sole discretion over the hiring, financial compensation, and termination of coaches.

2.3 Background Checks & SafeSport

All adults involved in any TAHA member league/association, including coaches (head and assistant), team representatives, team managers, locker room monitors, trainers, and/or any other adults directly involved with the administration, organization, operation, and/or coaching of the players of the team, will have to pass a nationwide background screening that will be administered by the respective association. Anyone not agreeing to this provision will not be allowed to hold any type of administrative or coaching position. Each respective association will be tasked with administration and enforcement of this regulation. The background check must be completed by the TAHA designated provider, NCSI, through the TAHA website so it can be tracked by TAHA/USAH.

2.4 Accreditation of Coaches

All coaches must have coaching accreditation at the appropriate USAH/CEP level and have taken the online USAH 13+ Module, Background Screening, and completed the SafeSport training. Coaches must have current CEP training. Any coach who has an expiring CEP level on 12/31 must take the next level prior to that date, or they will be ineligible to coach after 12/31 of that season.

Any coach with L4 or L5 CEP that has expired must complete the CEP requirements prior to being added to a team roster.

Section 3: Player Eligibility Parameters

3.1 Grade Eligibility

Students must be in the ninth (9th) through twelfth (12th) grades and attend school full-time to be eligible for a Varsity team. Full-time school attendance will be defined as a student who is taking four (4) classes at his/her school.

A student's eligibility to participate on a Varsity team shall be limited to eight (8) consecutive semesters, beginning with the student's first semester of ninth (9th) grade.

3.2 Age Restrictions

Any player who turns twenty (20) years of age on or before December 31 of the current season will not be eligible to participate, consistent with USA Hockey's High School age classification.

3.2.1 Definitions

Affiliated Player: a player who attends a school affiliated with a member club or resides in an area that is affiliated with a member club.

Unaffiliated Player: a player who does not attend a school affiliated with a team or resides in an area not affiliated with a member club.

Primary Address: the address where the player resides during the school year. Not a temporary address, second home, or relative's home.

Club Assignments: All unaffiliated player assignments will be made by the league advisory group.

3.3 Private School Students & Home-Schooled Students

If the private school the player attends has a member team, the player must play for their school. Students attending a private school that does not have a member team must play for the member club that represents the public high school attendance area in which the student resides. If the student lives in an area that does not support a team, the student will be placed on a team through the League's Unaffiliated Tryout process. Home-schooled students must play for the member club that represents the public high school attendance area in which the student resides. If the student lives in an area that does not support a team, the student will be placed on a team through the League's Unaffiliated Tryout process.

3.4 Visiting Players

Players who are rostered on another ice hockey team outside the Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area during the current season will not be eligible to join a Varsity team, unless the player's family permanently relocates before the December 31st deadline to finish the current school year in the DFW area. Players who relocate to the DFW Metroplex

must comply with the deadlines set forth in Sections 3.2, 3.9, 3.10, and 3.11. The league may include full teams from outside the DFW area. A player whose family resides in DFW and plays on a team other than a Jr. A Tier 1 or 2 team may play high school hockey even if he/she plays on a team outside the metroplex. The player must meet all TAHA and league requirements to be eligible for the playoffs and/or state tournament.

3.5 Billeted Players

Players who are billeted in DFW for the purpose of playing hockey and/or training will not be permitted to play in the league. The exception is a student that is part of a school foreign exchange program.

3.6 Unaffiliated Players

The League will hold an unaffiliated registration prior to each season. Once registration closes, the League Advisory Group will assign the players to an existing Member Club, based upon geographic location and the Member Club's need for players. Once the player is assigned to a Member Club, he/she will continue to play for that Member Club for the duration of his/her career in the Texas Scholastic Hockey League, unless his/her school enters a Member Team, at the player's skill level, into the League, at which point the player will be required to play for the new Member Team or the player moves to an area affiliated with a member club.

Unaffiliated players wishing to join the league after the unaffiliated open registration process has concluded but prior to the roster freeze may apply to the league for a team assignment.

Note 1: Unaffiliated players must complete the unaffiliated registration link and will then be assigned by the Unaffiliated Player Committee. Clubs may not recruit unaffiliated players, and unaffiliated players may not solicit roster spots with clubs.

Note 2: If a club rosters an unaffiliated player that did not get assigned by the league, then that club will lose that player and the ability to receive additional unaffiliated players for one calendar year.

Note 3: If a player refuses to join the team they are assigned to, they will not be assigned to another team that season. They may register as an unaffiliated player the following season. This option is only available at your first unaffiliated player assignment. A player who has already played for an assigned team does not have the option of reapplying as an unaffiliated player in subsequent seasons.

Note 4: The league will consider requests for a specific club but must assign players based on the following priorities: club needs and the player's proximity to the school. The league must distribute unaffiliated players as equally as possible to all teams requesting players.

Note 5: Clubs do not have the ability to "release" players for the purpose of playing for another club. Rostering and playing for your local club is an integral part of the Texas Scholastic Hockey League and the fundamental difference between high school and house/travel leagues.

3.6.1 Players Cut by HOME TEAM

A Member Club may cut a player only when doing so is demonstrably in the best interest of both the organization and the player. A common example is a Member Club with a limited number of teams that has a player who is not at the skill level required to make that team but who is also not a developmental-level player, where the organization does not have a lower-level team for that player to play on.

Any player who is cut must have a Player Cut Notification Form completed by the President of the Member Club, stating the circumstances behind the decision, and submitted to the TSHL Commissioner. Clubs that cut players without submitting this form will not be eligible to receive unaffiliated players.

A player cut under this section will be granted temporary unaffiliated status for one (1) season only and has the opportunity to be assigned to another Member Club through the League's unaffiliated player process for that season. At the conclusion of that season, the player must return to their home organization and try out again; unaffiliated status granted through a cut does not carry forward permanently, except as provided below.

Once a player has been cut by their home organization twice, the player will remain with their assigned club rather than returning to try out again.

A player cut during their junior year may not be required to return to their home organization for a tryout their senior year and may instead remain with their new team through completion of their senior season.

3.6.2 Players from Non-Participating Teams

If a Club chooses not to participate in a season, players from the non-participating Club may not play for another club.

3.7 Open Enrollment Students

A student who is actively enrolled in and physically attending a school outside of the attendance zone in which they reside — through an approved school district Open Enrollment, School of Choice, inter-district transfer, or similar program — will be permitted to register and play for the Member Club representing the school the student is physically attending, provided the student meets all other eligibility requirements of this Section 3.

This exemption applies only where the student is physically attending classes on that school's campus on a full-time basis, as defined in Section 3.1. Virtual, online, or remote-learning schools or programs do not qualify for this exemption — including virtual campuses operated by an otherwise physical school district — regardless of the student's zoned attendance area. Students in virtual or remote programs must register according to their Primary Address as defined in Section 3.2.1.

A student utilizing this exemption must provide documentation of their approved Open Enrollment/transfer status and current physical enrollment as part of their Member Team's School Attendance Form (SAF) process under Section 3.9.

Should a student's Open Enrollment status end or not be renewed for a subsequent season, the student's eligibility will revert to their zoned school/Member Club, subject to the timing provisions of Section 3.10.

Note: This exemption governs individual student eligibility only. It does not create a right for a Member Club to recruit or solicit non-zoned students, consistent with the League's zoning and unaffiliated player policies in Section 3.6.

3.8 Junior A Players

Players who are rostered on a Junior A-Tier 1 or Junior A-Tier 2 team, as of October 1 of the year in which a season begins, will not be eligible to participate in the League.

3.9 Proof of Eligibility

Each Member Team shall be required to complete a School Attendance Form (SAF), including signatures, and return it to the League no later than the start of the pre-season leveling tournament. Any Member Team that has not submitted its completed SAF will not be eligible to participate in any league games until the form has been completed and submitted. Any player who is added to the Member Team's roster after the SAF has been submitted must complete an individual Eligibility Verification Form before he/she will be permitted to play in any league games.

3.10 Students who Move and/or Change Schools

Students who move and/or change schools on or prior to December 31 of the year in which a season begins must play for the Member Club representing the school/area that the student is transferring to, unless one (1) of the following two (2) conditions is met:

- The student's new school does not have a Member Team within the League, or
- The student's new school's Member Team is full.

In the event that one (1) of the above two (2) conditions is met, the player shall complete the current season on the Member Team that represents the school the player started the season with. However, in the following season, the player must try out for the Member Team representing the school he/she has relocated to. If the player's new school/area does not have a Member Team, he/she must petition the League for an exemption for future seasons.

Students moving after 12/31 of their junior season and prior to 12/31 of their senior year may continue to play their final year of eligibility with their previous club or play for the club from their new school/area.

Students who change schools after December 31 of the year in which a season begins will be permitted to complete the current season with the Member Team that the player started the season with. However, the following season, the player must try out for the Member Team which represents the school he/she has relocated to. If the player's new school does

not have a Member Team, he/she must petition the League for an exemption for future seasons.

“Players whose families move during the season will be eligible for playoffs with their new team, provided that they meet the minimum league requirements for games played using the total games played for their primary team on both clubs. This rule is for league play only and does not apply to State Tournament games.”

3.11 Roster Deadline

No individual player may be added or deleted from a Member Team’s roster after December 23 of the year in which the season begins. No player may be added to a Member Team, at any time if the Member Team already has thirty (30) players on the roster.

3.12 Double Rostering & Emergency Players

7-Up Rule – Players may be double-rostered “up” to the next higher team in their club and may play up a maximum of 6 league games. If a player plays a 7th game “up,” they will move permanently to the upper team for the remainder of the season and will no longer be eligible to play on the lower team. Exceptions will be made for goalies on an emergency basis.

Players may be on a maximum of 2 rosters within their club. Exceptions will be made for goalies on an emergency basis.

Any other use of a non-rostered player could result in game forfeit(s) and/or a suspension for the coach.

A substitute goalie or Ebug may only play if there is no rostered goalie available to play. The decision to play an Ebug is not at the coach’s discretion and is permitted only in emergency situations when no rostered goalie is available to play.

3.13 No Pass/No Play

The purpose of No-Pass/No-Play is to recognize that school is the priority and hockey is a privilege. Since clubs may encompass multiple schools within their programs, the exact reporting dates may vary. Each club should choose dates that work for their club.

The Texas Amateur Hockey Association High School Section (TAHAHSS) strictly enforces the UIL No Pass/No Play regulations for the Varsity division. The Texas Scholastic Hockey League will support and enforce the UIL No Pass/No Play academic eligibility rules for the Varsity division. A player must be a “student in good standing” at his/her school according to the academic UIL No Pass/No Play rules established by the represented school or school district.

Any player who is not academically eligible according to the UIL and their respective local school district will not be allowed to play in any regular season or post-season games until they become academically eligible according to the UIL and/or their respective school district.

The suspension will be in effect until the player/student is reinstated by school authorities. Should a student elect to withdraw from public school and enroll in either a private school or be homeschooled while they are considered academically ineligible by the public school, that student will not be eligible to participate in the High School League. He or she must be a "student in good standing" at his/her public school according to the academic pass/play rules for the individual school district prior to withdrawing from that school. Should the student physically change addresses and become part of a different public school district while academically ineligible at the previous school, the student must become a "student in good standing" at his/her new public school according to the academic pass/play rules of the public school the student is attending.

All Member Teams are responsible for enforcing No Pass/No Play regulations. Any Member Team playing academically ineligible players will be subject to disciplinary action, including forfeiture of games the ineligible player participated in.

3.14 School Suspension

Any player who is placed in alternative education classes, suspended out of school, or placed on in-school suspension is not eligible to compete in any League game(s) until he/she has returned to the regular classroom setting for one (1) complete school day. Should a student elect to withdraw from public school and enroll in either a private school or be homeschooled while participating in alternative education classes or under any type of school-imposed suspension, that student will not be eligible to participate. He or she must be a "student in good standing" at his/her public school and have completed all disciplinary requirements or other suspensions or required attendance in alternative education classes assigned by the public school prior to withdrawing from that school. Should the student physically change addresses and become part of a different public school district while attending alternative education classes at the previous school, the student must become a "student in good standing" at his/her new public school according to the rules of the public school the student is attending.

This suspension will be in effect until the player/student is reinstated by the school authorities. Generally, if a student would otherwise be eligible to play a UIL-recognized sport for their respective school, then they are eligible to play high school hockey.

3.15 Major or Match Penalties Received by a Senior in the Final Game of the Season

If a senior in the last game of his/her team's current competitive year/season receives a major penalty, the head coach of that team will receive a minimum of a one (1) game suspension to be served in the first regularly scheduled high school game of the next competitive season.

If a senior in the last game of his/her team's current competitive year/season receives a match penalty, the head coach of that team will receive a minimum of a two (2) game suspension to be served in the first two (2) regularly scheduled high school games of the next competitive season.

In both cases, the Texas Scholastic Hockey League maintains the right to review and adjust the penalty as the case dictates. The League may increase the penalties set forth above but may not reduce them.

3.16 Major or Match Penalties Received by a Non-Senior in the Final Game of the Season

Any player who, in the last game of his/her high school team's current competitive year/season, receives a major penalty will serve a minimum of a one (1) game suspension at the start of the next high school competitive season. This penalty follows the player, meaning the player will serve the suspension regardless of what high school team he/she may be playing for in the next competitive season.

Any player who, in the last game of his/her high school team's current competitive year/season, receives a match penalty will abide by and comply with the decision and ruling of the respective high school association's hearing, conducted per USA Hockey rules concerning players receiving match penalties.

In both cases, the Texas Scholastic Hockey League maintains the right to review and adjust the penalty as the case dictates.

3.17 Playoff Eligibility

To be eligible for the playoffs, a player must play in 8 regular-season league games of the playoff-bound team. Games in which players are suspended for grades, playing rules violations, or SafeSport violations will not count as games played. Players who suffer long-term injuries may apply to the league for an injury waiver. The request must be accompanied by a physician's note that includes the date the player was injured and the clearance date. Injury waivers for single-game absences due to illness are not available.

Section 4: High School Team Eligibility Parameters

4.1 State Tournament Eligible Teams

All USAH-registered Varsity teams are eligible to register for a TAHA State Tournament. Teams may be required to play in a playdown to secure a spot in the final group. Information about the State Tournament will be shared in October by the TAHA High School Section President. Player eligibility requirements for competing in the TAHA State Tournament and USAH's High School Hockey National Tournament may be imposed by TAHA and USAH. The final determination regarding a team's or player's eligibility for the state or national tournament rests with TAHA and USAH.

4.2 Team Composition

Clubs must be comprised of a school, or schools, that support multiple sports participating in a sanctioned UIL or TAPPS conference. Virtual schools and schools whose primary focus is elite-level athletic training will not be considered for membership in the league.

Out-of-state and out-of-affiliate teams will be considered for membership on a case-by-case basis.

4.3 School Teams – Roster Composition

The Texas Scholastic Hockey League encourages the growth of high school hockey and the addition of new teams to the League. When a new team is formed, players attending the schools that comprise the new team will be required to play for that team, regardless of where they played in previous seasons, subject to the requirement in 3.6 that the new team be at the player's skill level. Players entering their junior or senior season of eligibility will have the option to be "grandfathered" for their final two seasons and will be eligible to play with the team they played with the previous season. All other players attending the new member school must play for the new member team regardless of past affiliation. The decisions of the League will be final in all cases involving eligibility. The Texas Scholastic Hockey League has final authority over all team rosters and where those teams recruit their players.

Section 5: League Schedule

5.1 Game Location

League Games shall not be conducted at any rink that has not been approved by the League. The list of approved rinks shall be distributed to Member Teams no later than August 31 preceding the League Year in which such approval shall be in effect. Any approved rink shall be eligible to host League games until such time as the League determines the approval of such rink is no longer appropriate.

5.2 Tournaments & Scrimmages

Member teams may play in games other than league games, provided those games follow all club rules and guidelines set forth in Section 2.1.1. However, league games take precedence over other games. Any team not participating in a scheduled league game shall forfeit that game and shall be subject to such disciplinary action as is deemed appropriate by the League. All officiated scrimmages/games are under the jurisdiction of the Texas Scholastic Hockey League. The league will make scheduling accommodations for the all-girls teams playing in the league so that they are able to complete a full schedule of games.

5.3 Organization of Teams by Conferences and/or Divisions

Organization of Member Teams into Conferences and/or Divisions shall be at the discretion of the League. The goal of such alignment shall be to provide a relatively balanced playing schedule, to promote geographical and traditional rivalries, and to conform to State Championship divisional organization, if applicable.

5.4 Game Forfeits

Teams should notify the league as early as possible if they will not have the minimum number of players to play a game per USAH rules (6 players). If notification is given more than 2 weeks prior to the game, every effort will be made to reschedule the game, but a reschedule is not guaranteed.

Teams notifying the league less than 2 weeks but more than 1 week prior to the game will forfeit the game but will not be penalized by the league.

Teams notifying the league of a forfeit less than 1 week prior to the game will be fined $500 by the league.

All game forfeits will be entered as a 1-0 win for the opposing team.

Section 6: League Games

The rules and regulations set forth in this section shall be applicable to all league games, including regular season and playoff games.

6.1 Six-Goal Rule

If, during the third (3rd) period of a league game, the score differential reaches six (6) goals, the game clock shall be operated using a running-time format until such time as the differential is reduced below six (6).

6.2 Jerseys

All league teams shall have two (2) sets of jerseys – one (1) white/light colored and one (1) dark. All teams must notify the League of their jersey colors prior to October 1 of each League Year. The designated home team shall wear dark-colored jerseys. Temporary numbers may not be taped onto jerseys at any time.

6.3 Protective Equipment

All protective equipment required by USA Hockey rules must be worn by all players on Member Teams for all on-ice league practices and games.

6.4 Official Rosters

Players must be rostered on the official roster that is submitted to the League.

Section 7: Regular Season Schedule

The number of Member Teams, the number of league games each team plays, game start times, length of season, and other elements of the league schedule shall be determined at the discretion of the League. No regular season game shall be scheduled prior to September

15 or later than the first weekend of April during any League Year. Each Member Team shall play the same number of regular season games each season, unless weather causes games to be cancelled and appropriate ice is not available to schedule make-up games.

7.1 Regular Season Game Format

All regular season games shall consist of three (3) periods utilizing the stopped-clock concept. The ice will be resurfaced between games.

- Varsity games will have 15-minute periods

No game shall end in a tie. If a game is tied at the end of regulation, a four-on-four (4-on-4), 5-minute stop-clock, sudden-death overtime will be played. If the game remains tied at the end of overtime, a 3-player shootout will determine the winner. If the game remains tied after each team has taken three (3) shots, the shootout will revert to sudden death with each team taking an equal number of shots. No player who was serving a penalty at the end of overtime may participate in the shootout. In any one shootout, all players, except goaltenders, must shoot once before any player shoots a second time.

7.2 Tiered Divisions

Teams will be divided into multiple divisions in seasons where the number of teams allows for a competitive schedule at multiple levels. Teams will have the opportunity to apply for the division most appropriate for their team's competitive level. The League reserves the right to place a team in the most appropriate division and may require leveling play to determine the most competitive division for a team. A maximum of eight (8) teams per division will make the playoffs. There will be separate division playoff tiers.

7.3 League Standings – Regular Season

League standings shall be determined by awarding three (3) points for a regulation victory, two (2) points for an overtime or shootout victory, one (1) point for an overtime or shootout loss, and zero (0) points for a regulation loss.

In the case of a tie, the following guidelines shall be followed:

For cases where a tie is between two (2) teams:

- Most regulation-time wins
- Points earned in head-to-head games between the two (2) teams
- Fewest goals allowed in all league games
- Largest goal differential total in all league games
- Fewest penalty minutes allowed in all league games
- Coin Toss

For cases where a tie is between three (3) or more teams:

- Most regulation-time wins
- Fewest goals allowed in all league games
- Largest goal differential total in all league games
- Fewest penalty minutes allowed in all league games
- Coin Toss

League games cancelled due to inclement weather may or may not be rescheduled by the league, based on the ability to secure available ice.

7.4 Game Re-Play

No game played in its entirety, playoff or regular season, will be replayed in part or in full for any reason, including administrative errors by the scorekeeper, officials, or league management.

Any game that has been suspended after it has begun, for any reason, may be considered final or may be replayed in part or in full at the discretion of the league management.

7.5 Game Bench Personnel

Only team coaches, players, and staff listed on the official roster or in HockeyShift are eligible to be present on the game bench. No other individuals—including, but not limited to, team doctors, photographers, goalie coaches, hockey directors, board members, or parents—are permitted in the bench area, provided the following:

- Suspended players are NOT allowed on the player bench.
- The head coach of any team found to be in violation of this Section shall be suspended for the team's next league game.

Section 8: League Playoffs

The league playoff format is affected by numerous factors, including the number of Member Teams. Therefore, the playoff format may change from time to time and shall be determined by the League prior to each League Year.

8.1 Playoff Game Format

All playoff games shall consist of three (3) periods utilizing the stopped-clock concept. The ice shall be resurfaced prior to each game.

- Varsity games will have 15-minute periods

Sudden-death overtime shall be utilized to determine the outcome of playoff games in the following manner:

- All playoff games, other than the League Championship Game, tied at the end of regulation time shall play one (1) 5-minute, stop-time, sudden-death overtime period. If the game remains tied at the end of that overtime, a shoot-out, as described below, will be utilized to determine the winner.
- The League Championship Game, if tied at the end of regulation time, shall play one full-length stop-time, sudden-death overtime period. If the game remains tied at the end of that overtime, a shoot-out, as described below, will be utilized to determine the winner.

8.2 Shoot-Out Format

Each coach will select three (3) players to participate. Each of those three (3) players will shoot on the opposing goaltender in penalty-shot fashion. The home team's coach will elect whether their team shoots first (1st) or second (2nd). Once that is determined, the teams will alternate shooters until three (3) from each team have gone. The team scoring the most goals out of the three (3) shooters is the winner.

If an equal number of the three (3) shooters from each team score, each coach will select a fourth (4th) shooter (who was not among the original three). The teams will continue to alternate shooters in order until one shooter scores and the other does not. Each team will continue selecting shooters who have not yet shot, until all players dressed for that team for that game have shot.

No player who was serving a penalty at the end of overtime may participate in the shootout.

8.3 Game Re-Play

No game played in its entirety, playoff or regular season, will be replayed in part or in full for any reason, including administrative errors by the scorekeeper, officials, or league management.

Any game that has been suspended after it has begun, for any reason, may be considered final or may be replayed in part or in full at the discretion of the league management.

8.4 Game Bench Personnel

Only team coaches, players, and staff listed on the official roster or in HockeyShift are eligible to be present on the game bench. No other individuals—including, but not limited to, team doctors, photographers, goalie coaches, hockey directors, board members, or parents—are permitted in the bench area, provided the following:

- Suspended players are NOT allowed on the player bench.
- The head coach of any team found to be in violation of this Section shall be suspended for the team's next league game.

Section 9: Penalties & Misconducts

The rules and regulations set forth in this section shall be applicable to all League games, including regular season and playoff games. Any player or head coach suspended pursuant to this section must serve the suspension in the next scheduled League game(s) for the team with which the suspension was incurred.

A player receiving a Game Misconduct penalty in a League game must serve his suspension in the next scheduled HS League game of the team he was playing for when he received the penalty. However, that player may not play in any HS game until the suspension is fully served.

9.1 USA Hockey Rules

USA Hockey's Official Rules of Ice Hockey ("USA Hockey Rules"), as applicable to the High School age division, in conjunction with League playing rules as set forth herein, shall be used in all league games.

9.2 USA Hockey Progressive Penalties and Suspensions

(Note) USA Hockey is committed to providing a safe and fair environment for all participants. While most players participate within the rules and respect the game and their opponents, USA Hockey recognizes the need to hold players and coaches who are repeat offenders accountable for their actions. Beginning with the 2014-15 playing season, the Progressive Suspensions rule took effect nationally.

- Any player who receives a third major penalty during the same season for any combination of the aggressive infractions listed below shall receive an additional three-game suspension. Any player who receives a fourth major penalty in this category shall receive an additional five-game suspension. Any player who receives a fifth major penalty in this category during the same season shall be suspended until a hearing is conducted by the proper authorities (USA Hockey Affiliate). These game suspensions shall be in addition to any other suspensions imposed through the official playing rules. The aggressive infractions that fall into this category are the following:

- Rule 603 Boarding
- Rule 604 Body Checking (Body Contact Categories)
- Rule 606 Butt-Ending
- Rule 607 Charging
- Rule 608 Checking from Behind
- Rule 609 Cross-Checking
- Rule 611 Elbowing

- Rule 619 Head-Butting
- Rule 620 Head Contact
- Rule 621 High-Sticking
- Rule 627 Kicking
- Rule 628 Kneeing
- Rule 634 Slashing
- Rule 635 Spearing
- Rule 639 Tripping/Clipping/Leg Checking
- Rule 640 Unnecessary Roughness (Roughing)

(Note) A separate progressive suspension rule for fighting is covered under Rule 615(f), Fighting.

- Any team that receives three major penalties in the same game shall have its head coach suspended for the team's next game. For any subsequent game in which that team receives three or more major penalties, the head coach shall serve a three-game suspension. For a third game with three or more major penalties by the same team in the same season, the head coach shall be suspended indefinitely until a hearing has been conducted by the proper authorities (USA Hockey Affiliate).

(Note) The role of the official is to enforce all playing rules at all times, and officials are expected to strictly enforce playing rules that fall under the aggressive infraction category. Players and coaches must be held accountable for dangerous actions, and the onus is on them to learn and play the game within the rules. Officials are required to submit a game report immediately following the game for any major penalty falling in the aggressive infraction category or for any game misconduct or match penalty that is assessed.

9.2.1 Fighting

- A major plus a game misconduct penalty shall be assessed to any player who engages in fighting. An additional minor penalty shall be assessed to any player who starts or instigates fighting. A minor penalty shall be assessed to any player who drops his stick and/or removes his glove(s) during an altercation and is not a participant in the original altercation. A game misconduct penalty shall be added if, in the judgment of the referee, such player is deemed to be the instigator of a subsequent altercation. A minor, double minor, or major plus game misconduct penalty, at the discretion of the referee, shall be assessed to any player who, having been struck, continues the altercation by retaliating.

(Note) The referee is given very wide latitude in the penalties that may be imposed under the rules, including Rule 601, "Abuse of Officials and Other Misconduct," in an effort to discourage fighting. This is done intentionally to allow the referee to differentiate between

the degrees of responsibility of the participants for either starting or persisting in continuing the fighting.

- A major plus game misconduct penalty shall be assessed to any player involved in fighting.
- A game misconduct penalty shall be assessed to any player whose helmet/facemask comes off during an altercation. A match penalty (for all Youth and Girls'/Women's Classifications) shall be assessed to any player who deliberately removes his (or an opponent's) helmet/face mask prior to or during an altercation. A game misconduct penalty (for Adult Male Classifications) shall be assessed to any player who deliberately removes his (or an opponent's) helmet/facemask prior to or during an altercation.
- A game misconduct penalty shall be assessed to any player or goalkeeper who is the first to intervene in an altercation already in progress. This penalty is in addition to any other penalty incurred in the same incident.
- A minor penalty shall be assessed to any player who fails to move immediately and directly to their players' bench (or goal crease, for a goalkeeper) when instructed to do so by the referee during an altercation.
- Any player who receives a second major penalty for fighting with the same team during the same season shall receive a three-game suspension. For a third fighting major with the same team in the same season, the player shall be suspended until a hearing is conducted by the proper authorities (USA Hockey Affiliate).

9.3 Zero Tolerance Policy

The Texas Scholastic Hockey League (TSHL) strictly adheres to the USA Hockey Zero Tolerance Policy regarding the conduct of players, coaches, and spectators. To ensure a safe and supportive environment, we maintain a zero-tolerance stance toward disruptive behavior. Any individual unable to maintain composure will be required to leave the facility immediately, regardless of the circumstances. Please report all concerns to the Manager on Duty. We are committed to fostering a positive, constructive environment for our youth athletes.

9.4 League Rules – Team Penalty Minutes

- Any player receiving 35 minutes in cumulative penalties in a season will be suspended for 1 game. If the player reaches 70 cumulative penalty minutes in the season, they will receive a 2-game suspension. Cumulative penalty minutes will be specific to each team the player is rostered on.
- The league reserves the right to review teams, players, and coaches with excessive penalty minutes on a case-by-case basis and assess additional suspensions.

9.5 Notification of Suspensions

All game misconducts and suspensions (other than Match Penalties) of less than five (5) games or thirty (30) days are automatic and non-appealable, in accordance with USA Hockey and league rules. No written notification other than the scoresheet and posting in HockeyShift shall be issued.

9.6 Serving Suspensions

A player suspended pursuant to this section (not including players suspended for a specified number of days) shall be listed on the official scoresheet as a Suspended Player for any game(s) for which the player is suspended. If a suspended player is not listed on the official scoresheet for a League Game, that game shall not count toward the player's suspension, regardless of whether the player participated in the game.

Section 10: Match Penalties

10.1 Disciplinary Committee

Any player, coach, or team official who receives a Match Penalty shall be suspended from all USA Hockey activities (including all league activities, including practices) until a hearing is held by the Texas Amateur Hockey Association (TAHA). The Disciplinary Committees shall hold hearings pursuant to a schedule established by the Disciplinary Committees. No hearings shall be held other than those held pursuant to that schedule, unless a hearing is not scheduled within thirty (30) days of the date on which the match penalty or gross misconduct was incurred. Any suspension rendered by the Disciplinary Committees shall be retroactive to the date of the incident. Once a decision is rendered, the Chairman of the Disciplinary Committees shall, within three (3) business days of the hearing, notify the head coach of the appropriate Member Team and TAHA of any suspension imposed. Any player, coach, or team official suspended pursuant to this section shall be suspended from all League activities, including practices, until the suspension has been served in full.

10.2 Appeals

Procedures for any appeals shall be in accordance with TAHA and USA Hockey by-laws, rules, and regulations and will be discussed on an individual basis between the Commissioner and the appropriate team representative as necessary.

Section 11: Coach's Code of Conduct and Responsibilities

The Texas Scholastic Hockey League is very appreciative of the time, effort, and dedication its coaches contribute to the program. All coaches are representatives of their respective schools or districts, as well as the League. To ensure that all League coaches perceive their position and responsibilities in the same manner, the following code of conduct and responsibilities have been developed.

11.1 Coach's Code of Conduct

All League coaches shall:

- Refrain from engaging in any activities or conduct that are, or may be viewed as being, detrimental to any player, team, school, district, or the League.
- Always conduct themselves in a positive and sportsmanlike manner; and
- Strive to always provide a safe and positive environment and promote fair play and sportsmanship among all players, coaches, referees, and parents.

The following behavior by League coaches shall not be tolerated:

- Any type of physical, verbal, or sexual abuse of a player.
- Verbal or physical confrontations with other coaches, players, referees, parents, or spectators; and
- Excessive use of profanity.

11.2 Coach's Responsibilities

- All League coaches shall adhere to certification requirements established by USA Hockey or the League.
- Coaches shall make efforts to continually develop their coaching skills and to learn new drills and coaching methods.
- Coaches shall conduct organized practice sessions for their team during the season.
- Coaches shall ensure that their players wear all equipment required by USA Hockey and the League for all practices and games.

Section 12: Referees' Code of Conduct and Responsibilities

12.1 Referees' Code of Conduct

All League referees shall:

- Refrain from engaging in any activities or conduct that are, or may be viewed as being, detrimental to any player, team, school, district, or the League.
- Always conduct themselves in a positive and sportsmanlike manner; and
- Strive to always provide a safe and positive environment and promote fair play and sportsmanship among all players, coaches, referees, and parents.

The following behavior by League referees shall not be tolerated:

- Any type of physical, verbal, or sexual abuse of a player.

- Verbal or physical confrontations with other coaches, players, referees, parents, or spectators; and
- Excessive use of profanity.

12.2 Referees' Responsibilities

- All League referees shall maintain proper certification as required by USA Hockey.
- Referees shall be responsible for attending all league games which they are scheduled to officiate.
- Referees officiating league games shall conduct periodic equipment checks before and during games to ensure all players are wearing the appropriate and required protective equipment; and
- Referees shall stay abreast of all rules, policies, and procedures implemented by the League.

Section 13: Parents and Spectators Code of Conduct

All parents and spectators are expected to conduct themselves in a proper, respectful, and sportsmanlike manner while attending league games. Obnoxious behavior, verbal abuse of players, coaches, referees, and other spectators, or the use of profanity, will not be tolerated. Any parent or spectator engaging in inappropriate behavior may be asked to leave the arena. If they do not, the proper law enforcement agency will be summoned. In the case of consistent or particularly egregious behavior, the League may ban a parent or spectator from all League activities.

WITH THE EXCEPTION OF COACHES ON THE BENCH, NO SPECTATOR, PARENT, PLAYER, COACH, OR TEAM OFFICIAL MAY OPEN ANY RINK DOOR FOR ANY REASON DURING A GAME, INCLUDING DURING A STOPPAGE IN PLAY, UNLESS APPROVED BY THE ON-ICE OFFICIALS. AT THE CONCLUSION OF GAMES, DOORS MAY BE OPENED FOR PLAYERS TO EXIT, PROVIDED THERE IS NOT AN ALTERCATION IN PROGRESS AND THE PLAYERS HAVE ARRIVED AT THE DOOR.

NO SPECTATOR, PARENT, PLAYER, COACH, OR TEAM OFFICIAL MAY ENTER THE PLAYING SURFACE AT ANY TIME DURING A GAME FOR ANY REASON UNLESS APPROVED BY THE ON-ICE OFFICIALS.

NO SPECTATOR, PARENT, PLAYER, COACH, OR TEAM OFFICIAL MAY ENTER THE OPPOSING TEAM'S LOCKER ROOM, OR LOCKER ROOM VESTIBULE, AT ANY TIME BEFORE, DURING, OR AFTER A GAME FOR ANY REASON.

VIOLATIONS OF THESE RULES WILL BE ADDRESSED BY THE HEARING AND DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH LEAGUE, TAHA, AND USAH RULES AND GUIDELINES.

Section 14: Complaint Process

Complaints regarding a player, coach, referee, parent, spectator, or other individual must be made in writing to the League Commissioner. A response to such a complaint shall be provided in a prompt and appropriate manner by the League. All written complaints shall remain on file with the League for a period of one year from the date of the complaint. The following procedures will be followed with respect to complaints registered with the League pursuant hereto:

- First Incident during a Twelve (12) Month Period: The League shall contact the individual involved to discuss the circumstances of the complaint. If warranted, the appropriate Code of Conduct and Responsibilities shall be reemphasized. The League may take other actions if it deems appropriate.
- Second Incident during a Twelve (12) Month Period: The appropriate individual(s) must appear before the Commissioner to discuss the circumstances surrounding the complaint. If it is determined the allegations surrounding the second incident are valid, the League shall act as it deems necessary. Such action may include termination from all duties involving the League and/or banishment from League events.
- Third Incident during a Twelve (12) Month Period: The appropriate individual(s) must appear before the Commissioner, or a designated committee, to discuss the circumstances surrounding the complaint. If it is determined the allegations surrounding the third incident are valid, and provided the allegations in the first two (2) incidents in the same twelve (12) month period were also valid, the individual involved shall immediately be terminated from all duties involving the League and shall be banned from all league events. If the circumstances in either of the first two (2) incidents were unfounded, the League shall act concerning the third incident as it deems appropriate.

In addition to the above, any written complaint of physical abuse by any individual toward a coach, referee, or player shall be thoroughly investigated by the League. If it is determined the allegation of physical abuse is valid, that individual shall be permanently terminated from all League duties and banned from all League events.

Written complaints of the use of excessive profanity by a coach or other team official will require the individual to appear before the Commissioner. If it is determined the allegations are true, the individual shall be suspended for three (3) league games (including playoffs, if any). If the League receives a second written complaint regarding the use of excessive profanity within a twelve (12) month period and concludes the allegations are valid, the individual shall be terminated from all League duties.

Written complaints of the use of excessive profanity by a referee will require the referee to appear before a committee comprised of TAHA and League representatives. If it is determined the allegations are true, the referee shall not be permitted to officiate league games for one (1) month. If the League receives a second written complaint regarding the

use of excessive profanity within a twelve (12) month period and concludes the allegations are valid, the referee shall not be permitted to officiate league games for one (1) year.

- First Incident during a Twelve (12) Month Period: The Commissioner shall contact the individual involved to discuss the circumstances of the complaint. If warranted, the appropriate Code of Conduct and Responsibilities shall be reemphasized. The League may take other actions if it deems appropriate.
- Second Incident during a Twelve (12) Month Period: The appropriate individual(s) must appear before the Commissioner to discuss the circumstances surrounding the complaint. If it is determined the allegations surrounding the second incident are valid, the League shall take action as it deems necessary. Such action may include termination from any and all duties involving the League and/or banishment from League events.
- Third Incident during a Twelve (12) Month Period: The appropriate individual(s) must appear before the Commissioner, or a designated committee, to discuss the circumstances surrounding the complaint. If it is determined the allegations surrounding the third incident are valid, and provided the allegations in the first two (2) incidents in the same twelve (12) month period were also valid, the individual involved shall immediately be terminated from all duties involving the League and shall be banned from all league events. If the circumstances in either of the first two (2) incidents were unfounded, the League shall act concerning the third incident as it deems appropriate.

In addition to the above, any written complaint of physical abuse by any individual toward a coach, referee, or player shall be thoroughly investigated by the League. If it is determined the allegation of physical abuse is valid, that individual shall be permanently terminated from all League duties and banned from all League events.

ALL SAFESPORT VIOLATIONS SHOULD BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY TO USAH/SAFESPORT. FOR INFORMATION ON HOW TO REPORT AND WHAT CONSTITUTES A SAFESPORT VIOLATION, PLEASE GO TO: Safe Sport – TAHA Hockey

Section 15: Best Interest of the Game Clause

The League reserves the right to assess additional sanctions or penalties against any player, coach, team official, or team/association member, and/or to modify rules/regulations, if the League feels it is in the best interest of the League and/or its members. This includes, but is not limited to, penalties assessed under USA Hockey Rule 410, Supplementary Discipline.

Section 16: Game Cancellations

If games are cancelled for any reason, including inclement weather, every effort will be made to reschedule the game(s). However, if there are no remaining dates on which the game(s) can be rescheduled, standings will be considered final based on the number of

games played, as long as each team in the division has played an equal number of games. If teams in the division have not played an equal number of games, standings will be determined based on win percentage as calculated in HockeyShift. There will be no refunds or credits for games cancelled due to weather or other “acts of God.”