

New Hamburg Hockey Association (NHHA)



Operations Manual

(Revised Feb 14, 2024)

An Incorporated Association

1291 Nafziger Road, Unit 2

Baden, Ontario

N3A 0C4

Email: president@newhamburghockey.com

www.newhamburghockey.com

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1. Preface / Authority

- 1.1. The purpose of this manual is to enable New Hamburg Hockey Association (NHHA) to operate its hockey program in a manner consistent with its constitution, mission, its bylaws, the regulations of governing bodies and common sense. Safety and fair play, on and off the ice, are critical to the success of the hockey program.
- 1.2. These guidelines, rules and regulations are policies of New Hamburg Hockey Association (NHHA), as defined in the Bylaws and having been considered and approved by its Executive on August 1, 2005. The Manual of Operations of the Ontario Minor Hockey Association (OMHA), including playing rules, is adopted and form part of these rules. This book covers the most frequently used rules regarding coaches, players, parents in the New Hamburg Hockey Association (NHHA).
- 1.3. Additional organizational documents, instructions and forms can be found on the New Hamburg Hockey Association (NHHA) website. Members are to reference and use these and additional information throughout the season.
- 1.4. All Executive Members and Volunteers are responsible for reading, understanding, and following everything in this Operations Manual.

Mission Statement

- 1.5. New Hamburg Hockey Association (NHHA) is committed to providing a positive hockey experience where participants at all age levels encouraging for all members to achieve strong commitment, determination, and positivity in the pursuit of excellence while instilling values of discipline in team work, sportsmanship, and respect to all officials, players, and volunteers.

Privacy Policy

- 1.6. NHHA believes in respecting everyone's right to confidentiality. NHHA collects personal information from prospective members, members, coaches, referees, managers and volunteers for the purposes of conducting hockey programming.
- 1.7. Information specific to a player such as a player's name, address and date of birth are collected to determine that the player's geographical, division of play and level of play information are

consistent with Hockey Canada/Branch regulations. Historical information concerning past teams played for is collected in order to determine if any NHHHA transfer regulations may apply. At no time are lists generated for the purpose of marketing, or the sale of information.

- 1.8. Team lists and phone numbers are not to be shared with anyone outside of NHHHA and specifically may not be distributed to outside agencies, companies, associations or individuals.
- 1.9. Use of photos on the website are provided by coaches and NHHHA Executive. If a member does not wish to have their child's photo displayed on the NHHHA website and related marketing, please contact the President of NHHHA directly.

Social Media Policy and Enforcement Guidelines

- 1.10. Social media violations may vary in terms of their seriousness and effect, care will be taken to consider sanctions that are appropriate in each situation that presents itself. These guidelines assist NHHHA to address any social media violations of varying severity. Factors that can be considered when dealing with social media violations include:
 - a. The intent of the violator
 - b. Whether harm, physical or otherwise, resulted from the violation.
 - c. The circumstances of the violation.
 - d. The effect the violation had upon its recipient, the recipient's family, the team, the Association, or the community.
 - e. Any previous social media violation history.
- 1.11. Social media disciplinary measures therefore depend on a number of factors. The following suggested responses for various conducts are:
 - a. Implicit or implied threats of death or serious bodily harm: indefinite suspension, referral to NHHHA Executive for investigation and punishment (also refer to police).
 - b. Encouraging someone to do themselves serious harm: indefinite suspension.
 - c. Posting of pictures of a threatening nature: indefinite suspension, (also refer to police).
 - d. Slurs against someone's race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation: lengthy suspension.
 - e. Slurs against another or their family: suspension.
 - f. Posting comments and/or pictures of self of an implied sexual nature: suspension.

- g. Posting comments and/or pictures of someone else of an implied sexual nature: indefinite suspension, referral to NHHHA Executive for investigation and punishment (also may refer to police).
- h. Gossip: warning, then suspension.
- i. Posting or sending cruel gossip to damage a person's reputation and relationships with friends, family, and acquaintances: suspension.
- j. Breaking into someone's e-mail or other online account and sending messages that will cause embarrassment or damage to the person's reputation and affect his or her relationship with others: indefinite suspension, referral to NHHHA Executive for investigation and punishment (also refer to police).
- k. Posting or sending unwanted or intimidating messages: suspension.
- l. Tricking someone into revealing secrets or embarrassing information, which is then shared online: suspension.
- m. Negative or derogatory comments about the team or any member of the association: suspension.

2. Organizational Code of Conduct

- 2.1. This Code for Conduct identifies the standard of behaviour which is expected of all NHHHA members and participants, which for the purpose of this policy shall include all players, guardians, parents, coaches, officials, volunteers, directors, officers, committee members, convenors, team managers, trainers, administrators and employees involved in NHHHA activities and events.
- 2.2. NHHHA is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect. Members and participants of NHHHA shall conduct themselves at all times in a manner consistent with the values of NHHHA, which include fairness, integrity and mutual respect. Players look up to their coaches and take cues from their behavior. Being calm and collected behind the bench at all times teaches players how to act in a sportsmanlike way. Being negative, angry, aggressive and abusive sends all the wrong signals.
- 2.3. During the course of all NHHHA activities and events, members shall avoid behaviour which brings NHHHA or the sport of hockey into disrepute, including but not limited to abusive use of alcohol, use of non-medical drugs and use of alcohol by minors.

- 2.4. NHHA members and participants shall at all times adhere to NHHA's operational policies and procedures, to rules and regulations governing NHHA events and activities, and to rules and regulations governing any competitions in which the member participates on behalf of NHHA.
- 2.5. Members and participants of NHHA shall not engage in any activity or behaviour which interferes with a competition or with any player or team's preparation for a competition, or which endangers the safety of others.
- 2.6. Members of NHHA shall refrain from comments or behaviours, which are disrespectful, offensive, abusive, racist or sexist. In particular, behaviour, which constitutes harassment or abuse, will not be tolerated, and will be dealt with under NHHA's Harassment policy. This includes any abuse towards on ice officials, timekeepers, spectators, or any team volunteers before, during or after a game.
- 2.7. Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Discipline Policy of NHHA. Such action may result in the member losing the privileges, which come with membership in NHHA, including the opportunity to participate in NHHA activities and events, both present and future.
- 2.8. Head Coaches are encouraged to expand on the NHHA Code of Conduct and draft their own team code of conduct for players and parents to have the team on the same page with regards to expectations of behavior.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE ORGANIZATION

- 2.9. The NHHA Executive and its designates will:
 - a. Do its best to see that all children are given the same chance to participate, regardless of gender, ability, ethnic background, or race.
 - b. Discourage any sport program from becoming primarily an entertainment for spectators.
 - c. Make sure that all prudent and reasonable, appropriate and necessary measures are taken on an ongoing basis to protect the safety of all members wherever NHHA activities take place, in those programs, and at the hands of NHHA members or others.

- d. Make sure that age and maturity level of children is considered in program development, rule enforcement, and scheduling.
- e. Remember that play is done for its own sake and make sure that winning is kept in proper perspective.
- f. Appropriately and thoroughly screen all those who provide service on behalf of the organization, both before, but especially after they are involved, seeking to have all volunteers who are capable of promoting fair play as well as the development of good technical skills.
- g. Distribute, publicize, promote, and enforce the Codes of Conduct within this organization.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PLAYERS

2.10. As a player, I will:

- a. Make a commitment to my team at all times by attending all practices, games, meetings, special events, and by playing to the best of my ability.
- b. Respect my Coaches at all times. I will remember that my Coaches are providing me with the opportunity to learn and play the game of hockey.
- c. Respect the safety of other players by playing the game within the rules at all times.
- d. Respect the officials and their decisions at all times.
- e. Accept disciplinary action if I violate the rules or spirit of the game.
- f. Represent NHHA organization with respect, maturity and appropriate behaviour when in public and at team functions (hotels, restaurants, arenas, etc) maturity to promote positive image of the organization.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS AND SPECTATORS

2.11. As the parent of a player, or as a spectator, I will:

- a. Enroll my child for the pure enjoyment of the game and the opportunity to learn the skills of the sport.
- b. Recognize that at a hockey rink, my child's development is in the hands of volunteers who are giving their time and energy for the sake of all participants.
- c. Respect the decisions of the Coaches, whether at practice, special events, or during a game.
- d. Conduct myself in adult manner by attending games, practices, special events, and by being positive and encouraging to all players at all times.

- e. Encourage my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility, profanity, verbal or physical violence.
- f. Never verbally abuse a Coach, Assistant, Manager, Trainer, or Official. I will remember that they have difficult jobs and will not undermine them by contradicting, interfering, or questioning their character, motivation, or judgment in public. I will not engage in or encourage gossip. I will take concerns to the proper NHHA Executive individual.
- g. Represent NHHA organization with respect, maturity and appropriate behaviour when in public and at team functions (hotels, restaurants, arenas, etc) maturity to promote positive image of the organization.
- h. Accept that I remain responsible, as a parent, for the safety of my child while he/she is participating in NHHA activities. I will therefore do my part to protect and enhance the safety of my child and others.
- i. Understand and accept that violation of this Code may result in disciplinary action of some kind up to an including revoking of membership and all rights associated with membership.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COACHES AND TEAM PERSONNEL

2.12. As a Coach (or assistant coach, manager, trainer, team parent, volunteer, etc.), I am in a position of trust and authority. I will:

- a. Be reasonable when scheduling games and practices, remembering that players have other interest and obligations.
- b. Teach players to play fairly and to respect the rules, officials, and their opponents.
- c. Remember that players play to have fun and must be encouraged to have confidence in themselves.
- d. Remember that participants need a coach they can respect. I will be generous with praise and set a good example.
- e. Respect all participants, striving to be a responsible (coach, assistant, etc.). I recognize that I am in a position of trust and power, and I will do nothing to take advantage of or abuse it.
- f. I will do my best to be a competent, well prepared and adequately skilled. I will obtain proper training and will attempt to upgrade and improve my skills.
- g. Fulfill my obligation and responsibility toward the team and to the organization, as established by NHHA, to the best of my abilities.

- h. Direct comments at an individual's performance and not at the individual.
- i. Not ridicule or yell at players for making mistakes or for performing poorly.
- j. Take reasonable steps to see that equipment and facilities are safe and appropriate for players.
- k. Cooperate with officials and refrain from public criticism of them or of other coaches. I will put my concerns in writing and will send them to the proper individual.
- l. Learn the definitions and signs of harassment and abuse, and the process for responding to allegations or disclosures, and comply with NHHA's safety guidelines, working to prevent physical, emotional/verbal, and sexual harassment and abuse.
- m. Communicate with my players and with their parents, regularly throughout the season, so that everyone is clear about the rules and expectations, and so that we have a shared goal for the season.
- n. Emphasize the importance of the Players' and Parents' Codes of Conduct, and hold my team members and their parents accountable for compliance.
- o. Represent NHHA organization with respect, maturity and appropriate behaviour when in public and at team functions (hotels, restaurants, arenas, etc) maturity to promote positive image of the organization.
- p. Recognize and accept that violations of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary measures being taken against me up to and including revoking of membership and all rights associated with membership.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR OFFICIALS

2.13. As an NHHA Official, I will:

- n. Recognize that my position is one of a teacher and role model for fair play, especially where young children are concerned. I will strive to honor my role and not to abuse it in any way;
- o. Strive to see that every player has a reasonable opportunity to perform to the best of his or her ability, within the limits of the rules.
- p. Work in cooperation with Coaches for the benefit of the game, and will be open to discussion, constructive criticism, and will respect and consider different points of view.
- q. Take all reasonable measures to avoid or put an end to any situation that threatens the safety of players, team, team members, or spectators.
- r. Seek to maintain a healthy atmosphere and environment for competition.

- s. Not permit players to be intimidated by word or action. I will not tolerate unacceptable conduct toward officials, other players, team personnel, spectators, or myself.
- t. Strive to be consistent and objective in making my calls, regardless of the personal feelings I may have toward a player or team.
- u. Strive to handle all conflicts firmly and with dignity.
- v. Obtain proper training and continually upgrade my officiating skills.

CODE OF CONDUCT MEMBER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I (print name) _____ acknowledge that I have received a copy of the New Hamburg Hockey Association Code of Conduct, which identifies the standard of behaviour, which is expected of all New Hamburg Hockey Association members.

I understand the Code of Conduct includes all players, guardians, parents, coaches, officials, volunteers, directors, officers, committee members, convenors, team managers, trainers, administrators, and employees involved in New Hamburg Hockey Association and OMHA activities and events.

I understand that failure to comply with this Code of Conduct and the Constitution of New Hamburg Hockey Association may result in loss of membership and privileges which come with membership in the OMHA including the opportunity to participate in OMHA and New Hamburg Hockey Association activities and events both present and future.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

3. Ethical Business Conduct & Conflict of Interest Policies

- 3.1. NHHA always has conducted business ethically and without conflict of interest. It is expected the same from all NHHA organizational employees and volunteers.
- 3.2. The ethical business policy does not list every do and don't. It is expected that NHHA employees and volunteers to use common sense, individual conscience and a commitment to 100% compliance with the law in applying the policy to particular situations.
- 3.3. It is expected that NHHA employees and volunteers will not benefit from their position within NHHA that could hurt the organization.
- 3.4. NHHA Executive members, employees and volunteers and their immediate family members may not ask for and may not accept payments, services or other things of value from anyone who is doing business or seeking to do business with NHHA. It is recognized that the practice of many of NHHA suppliers and business partners is to provide small gifts, or to pay for meals or entertainment for NHHA Executive members. This is not prohibited as long as NHHA Executive members, employees or volunteers use common sense and follow certain guidelines:
 - a. NHHA Executive members, employees or volunteers may never accept cash.
 - b. NHHA Executive members, employees or volunteers may never accept anything offered in exchange for something from NHHA.
 - c. NHHA Executive members, employees or volunteers may not accept a gift that is more than a nominal value (generally gifts less than \$100.00 in value).
 - d. NHHA Executive members, employees or volunteers may not accept excessive meals or entertainment.
 - e. Exception to these guidelines requires the approval of the NHHA Executive. No exceptions ever will be made to guidelines a) and b).
- 3.5. NHHA Executive members, employees or volunteers may not do business or seek to do business with a company, unless NHHA Executive have approved. This includes serving as a director, officer, owner, employee or consultant of a company that does business with or seeks to do business with NHHA.

- 3.6. NHHA Executive members, employees or volunteers may not serve as directors, officers, and employees to any Minor Hockey Association that is a competitor of NHHA.
- 3.7. A NHHA Executive member, employee or volunteer whose immediate family member serves as a director, officer, employee or consultant of:
 - a. A company that does business with NHHA.
 - b. A company that seeks to do business with NHHA, or
 - c. A company or minor hockey association that is a competitor of NHHA, must disclose that information to the NHHA Executive and must comply with any actions NHHA decides are necessary to protect against the conflict of interest.
- 3.8. NHHA Executive members, employees or volunteers and their immediate family members may not use and confidential information received from NHHA for their personal benefit. It also includes disclosing NHHA confidential information to persons outside the NHHA and its executive without written permission from the NHHA Executive.

Ethical Business Conduct

- 3.9. NHHA expects executive members, employees and volunteers to act in an ethical manner and to avoid acting in a way that could damage NHHA's reputation.
- 3.10. NHHA does not attempt to control the private lives of its members, employees or volunteers.
- 3.11. NHHA Executive members, employees or volunteers may not drink alcohol while conducting NHHA business. The Executive must approve exceptions to this policy. Also, NHHA members, employees and volunteers may not gamble, or possess, use or distribute controlled substances or illegal drugs while conducting NHHA business.
- 3.12. NHHA expects its executive members, employees and volunteers to be honest and truthful. During the course of their employ or tenure, members shall not steal, lie, falsify documents or prepare or issue any false or misleading reports. As an example, a false expense report would violate this policy.

- 3.13. NHA expects its executive members, employees and volunteers to work only for NHA during their tenure and to use NHA property only for NHA business. Except for incidental activities or use, members, employees or volunteers may not:
- a. Conduct personal business with NHA property.
 - b. Use NHA property for a non-NHA related purpose; or
 - c. Loan or dispose of NHA property, unless approved by the NHA Executive.
- 3.14. All NHA accounts, invoices, memoranda and other documents and records must be prepared and maintained with strict accuracy and completeness. All assets, liabilities, revenues and expenses must be recorded in the regular books of the NHA.

4. Organizational Registration Guidelines

- 4.1. The NHA Executive will set the registration fee annually and accepts all registered players that sign up and complete their registration as defined below before the annual deadline.
- 4.2. Registration for NHA will be posted on the NHA website and must be done in the spring time each before the annual deadline. Registration usually occurs between May and June of each year.
- 4.3. All players new to NHA registering for the first time must complete the Parent Respect in Sport course prior to the start of the hockey season. This online course only has to be completed once by one parent. It is transferable and can be linked to siblings registered in multiple sports. The program is a proactive, educational program that empowers parents with the tools to ensure the game is enjoyable and respectful for themselves, their children and all other stakeholders in the game.
- 4.4. Players interested in attending Rep tryouts must register first online for tryouts then secondarily register online for their individual player registration to complete their final registration before the deadline. Additional pre-season practice sessions for Under 11 and below age categories are also available as a separate registration option.
- 4.5. There are additional costs to attend Rep team tryouts and Under 11 pre-season practices. These fees are set by the NHA Executive annually and will be assessed to those players only.

- 4.6. Players selected to play on Rep teams have an additional player Rep fee to pay each season. This fee is set by the NHHA Executive annually and will be assessed to those players only. The base registration fee covers the cost of Local League registration only.
- 4.7. Players who register late after the annual registration deadline will be put on a registration waiting list. A \$100 late registration fee will be charged. Players registering for Rep tryouts and not registering by the deadline will also be put on the registration wait list.
- 4.8. The NHHA Registrar will notify players on the registration wait list if they can be removed from the wait list and complete their registration if NHHA has room for additional players.
- 4.9. No player may play for more than one NHHA team except for such periods as may be deemed necessary by the NHHA Executive (see the Affiliated Player Policy in this document). High School teams are not included in the application of this rule. No player will be permitted to sign more than one Hockey Canada (HC) player registration card with all associations under the one Hockey Canada (HC) branch organization.
- 4.10. Completed registrations shall consist of clearance on residency rule, proof of age, player medical information sheet, Rowan's Law Concussion acknowledgement form, Respect In Sport – Parent, parent and player code of conduct, signed OMHA player commitment form, properly completed roster sheet and payment of all the registration fees (also tryout and Rep fees if applicable).
- 4.11. Satisfactory proof of age (birth certificate) must be submitted with registration of a player who did not play in the previous year with NHHA.
- 4.12. All player and volunteer registration documents will remain in the possession of the NHHA Registrar who will make them available from time to time to others, but who will maintain custody at all times. The NHHA Registrar will act at the organizational privacy taker.
- 4.13. Residents of NHHA as defined in the NHHA Constitution registering to play in Local League shall be given first priority and others may be brought in from out of boundary to fill team rosters.

- 4.14. The NHHA Treasurer and NHHA Registrar are empowered to waive or modify registration fees for a player where circumstances warrant special consideration. The NHHA Executive must approve all such registration waivers with a majority vote.
- 4.15. NHHA does not provide refunds to players. A request for a refund of a portion of the registration fee for a person who ceases to play with the NHHA prior to the end of the calendar year due to medical (injury) reasons or relocation may be submitted in writing to the NHHA Treasurer. The NHHA Treasurer may only consider an application submitted for a player who ceases to play after December 31 on instruction from the NHHA Executive.
- 4.16. Registration refunds for to medical (injury) reasons or relocation reasons will be provided on a prorated basis based on the number of league (season and play-off) and OMHA games played compared to games that could have been played. In determining the total number of games it will be assumed that the subject team will play three league and three OMHA play-off games. If the player is withdrawing to play in another centre (other than AAA) a further 15% will be retained by NHHA. (Players injured or moving residence to another centre will not be subject to the 15%). A \$25 service fee is charged for all registration refunds.

5. Coach Committee Guidelines

- 5.1. The NHHA President will appoint a Coach Committee Chair responsible to form a Committee approved by the NHHA Executive by majority vote each season to coordinate recruitment and applications for team Head Coaches. The NHHA Coach Committee Chair and NHHA Coach Committee Members will recruit, interview, and evaluate potential candidates and applicants to bring forth their recommendation for each team's Head Coach position to the NHHA Executive to vote by majority for approval at the monthly NHHA Executive meetings. The Coach Committee Chair will bring forth to the NHHA Executive the list of applicants and provide rationale for their recommendation of the Head Coach to be voted on for approval in-camera for each team to the NHHA Executive.
- 5.2. The NHHA Coach Committee Chair will post on the NHHA website in January each season the application form for team Head Coaches. Deadlines for accepting Head Coach applications will be set for each season. Members are to refer to the website posting for application instructions.

- 5.3. Applicants will be contacted and notified whether or not they have been assigned as the Head Coach of the team they applied for by the NHHA Coach Committee after NHHA Executive approval. The NHHA Coach Committee must interview all prospective Head Coaches and new volunteers that have never been interviewed.
- 5.4. Once a Head Coach is assigned to a team by the NHHA Executive and notified by the NHHA Coach Committee Chair, a Head Coach Team Plan is to be created and submitted to the NHHA Coach Selection Chair for review and approval. Example templates are available to Head Coaches if requested to the NHHA Coach Selection Chair. Representative team Head Coaches are not to select or announce their coaching staff members unless they are non-parent volunteers until after tryouts are completed and communicate this to parents in their tryout handout to avoid the perception that volunteering results in a player automatically making a representative team.
- 5.5. NHHA has a two-year Head Coach policy where Head Coaches can only be the same individual in two consecutive years of the same age group unless otherwise voted by the NHHA Executive (eg: in the case of no other more qualified applicants). Fresh coaching ideas and a new voice are encouraged to help develop and respond to different leadership. If a recommendation is made for a volunteer to Head Coach for more than two years, the Coach Committee Chair must share the rationale, in-camera, to the NHHA Executive.
- 5.6. No Head Coach will be chosen for multiple teams in the organization in the same season (including other organizations such as Wilmot Girls Hockey Association Wolverines). Many hours each week are required to prepare and run practices and games. Coaching focus must be on a single team.
- 5.7. For Under 14 and above age categories NHHA's policy is to recruit and have Head Coaches that are non-player parents whenever possible. The Coach Committee Chair will work with the committee to recruit these coaches along with non-parent volunteers on other teams to assist team Head Coaches and become a future Head Coach.
- 5.8. The NHHA Coach Committee Chair will setup the below season meetings with Head Coaches. For all meetings the Head Coach of each team is required to attend or send a designate.
 - a. **Rep Coaches Meeting** in August prior to the start of the season outlining team rules.
 - b. **Local League Coaches Meeting** is held in September prior to player evaluations/selection.

- c. **Pre-Playoff Meeting** in December outlining schedules and playoff rule changes.
- d. **Spring Tryout Meeting** in April before tryouts outlining details with approved coaches.
- e. **End of Season Meeting** in April to review events that occurred during the season.

6. Under 11 and Below Player Development Guidelines

- 6.1. It is NHHA's mission to build a strong foundation of hockey skills with a focus on all players having fun, in order to develop a lifelong love for the game of hockey.
- 6.2. NHHA's goals and objectives are to teach basic hockey skills with a keen focus on skating followed by passing, shooting and puck skills at all age categories, specifically at the Under 11 and below age levels.
- 6.3. Additional NHHA goals and objectives are to develop team work aspect of the game, through participation, instilling principles of respect and fair play towards all parties within the game (teammates, opponents, coaches, trainers, officials, spectators, administrators, media, etc).
- 6.4. In order to continue to grow and develop as a strong association NHHA believes that the leadership of its executive is required to take a lead role with the entry level grass roots program.
- 6.5. The NHHA Director of Player Development with assistance of the NHHA Executive will recruit and appoint Under 7, Under 9, and Under 11 NHHA Convenors each season to manage and coordinate the organization and execution of this program. These convenors are typically recruited from pool of volunteers that have been involved in the Under 11 and below age category programming for at least 1 year. Ideally the Under 7, Under 9 and Under 11 NHHA Convenors will lead their age category teams for at least 2 years.
- 6.6. Volunteer staff members such as coaches, trainers, team managers, and on-ice-helpers can apply or be recruited to apply for positions on each team. These individuals must follow the same application process as all other teams for Head Coaches and Coaching Staff Members being approved by the NHHA Executive and having the required credentials. NHHA preferred on ice instructor to player ratio is 4 to 1 and should not be below 5 to 1 for Under 7 age category.

- 6.7. NHHA philosophy includes that all Under 7 and below aged players should be tiered and play with players of similar ability as the progress. All players are evaluated under the direction of the Under 7 Convenor and placed on appropriate skill level teams within their age level. This is done at the beginning of each season and with the help of coaches, players can move between teams and levels the year as they develop (up until November 1st).
- 6.8. Each category of players can be further broken down into teams of approximately 18 players per team with each team having an assigned volunteer coaching staff including head coach, trainer, assistant coach, manager and on ice helpers. Note that OMHA roster rules apply to each team.
- 6.9. NHHA does not promote the movement of players playing in a higher age category. However, individual cases are handled using the NHHA Higher Player Movement Policy outlined in this document.
- 6.10. NHHA's Under 11 and below program has these levels:
1. **Pre-School Fundamentals Under 7**(4, 5, & 6-year-old players starting hockey)
Next step after learn to skate programs, with progression to skating skills related to hockey (i.e. with a puck, stick-handling, shooting, passing). Generally, 4 year's old or first year hockey players.
 2. **Junior Initiation Learn-To-Play Under 7** (5 & 6-years-old progressing with their development)
Continued focus on skating skills in combination with puck handling, shooting and passing. Generally, second year players that have been in the Fundamentals program the previous season.
 3. **Senior Initiation Under 7** (5 & 6-years-old further developing)
Continued focus on skating skills in combination with puck handling and shooting and passing. Generally, third year players that have been in the Learn-To-Play program the previous season. Introduction to goalie for players to rotate trying.
 4. **Under 8** (7-years-old developing and divided by skill levels)

Continued focus on skating skills in combination with puck handling and shooting and passing. Additional fore-checking, back-checking, positional play with pass and skate movement. Further development on player goalie rotation.

5. **Under 9** (8-years-old developing and divided by skill levels transitioning from small-ice programming to full-ice programming half way thru the season)

Continued focus on previous skill developments introducing full-ice games half way thru the season transitioning to positional play, off-sides, penalties, icing and face-offs. Developing players interested for more goalies focusing on positioning and movement requirements for goalies.

6. **Under 11** (9 & 10-years-old playing full-ice programming)

Continued focus on previous skill developments playing full-ice games thru the season. Developing players interested for full time goalies focusing on positioning and movement requirements for goalies. Introducing extended passing, cycling of the puck and positional play for offense, defence, and neutral ice zones.

- 6.11. All Under 11 and below players will have the option of attending four fun skates in September before tryout and player evaluations. These ice times will be scheduled by the NHHA Ice Scheduler and run by the NHHA Under 11 and below Head Coaches. No player evaluations will be done by any NHHA member during these four skates. Players interested must sign up in advance and pay the required fee to participate in these four fun skates.
- 6.12. Developmental practice plans are responsibility of the team volunteers and coaches under the guidance of the Convenors. Coaches are encouraged to utilize Hockey Canada developed practice plans and drill set ups with focus on use of stations breaking players down into small groups.
- 6.13. NHHA follows the OMHA Under 9 and below Implementation Guidelines for all players under the age of 9 years old as of December 31 of the previous calendar year. Small-ice matches or full-ice games can be played during the season according to the OMHA Under 9 and Below Implementation Guidelines. Coaches and volunteers are to ensure all players receive equal playing ice time.

- 6.14. NHHA promotes the development of goalies. Prior to becoming a full-time goalie, players are required to have basic skating skills. At the Under 7 age categories there are to be no fulltime goalies. Players should be allowed to rotate through the position and determine who has an aptitude for the position.
- 6.15. Under 8 to Under 11 full time goalies may start to be identified and dress as such for ice times allowing other players still be permitted to take turns as a goalie.
- 6.16. NHHA will supply dedicated goalie equipment to each level for this purpose. This equipment is property of NHHA on loan and must be maintained and returned to the NHHA Equipment Manager at the end of each season in good standing order.

7. House League Roster Select Team Guidelines

- 7.1. NHHA does not support or *House League Roster Select Teams* (also known as Select Team) for Under 8 and above age categories. Limited ice available for scheduling along with scheduling conflicts with NHHA Local League teams prevent the program from being possible. NHHA focus for player development is to have Rep BB level teams.

8. Higher Division Player Policy

- 8.1. NHHA policy for players playing up in higher age divisions starts with players who are 4-years-old before December 31 of the hockey season. Any players this age or younger will not be allowed to play up an age group under any circumstances. These players will be registered in the NHHA Under 7 Hockey Program.
- 8.2. Players who are 5-years-old before December 31st of the hockey season or older could be allowed to play up an age group based on the following criteria:
 - a. Player is of exceptional skill (forward, defence, or goalie) and a AAA or AA tryout is not available (U8 and U9 only) on a case by case situation and would be the top skill of the team they would play up with; or

- b. Players are required (forward, defence or goalie) to fill and balance out team rosters (maximum 5 lower age players per team); or
 - c. Any player under special circumstances presented and voted on by the NHHA Executive.
- 8.3. Any players registered on team rosters above their age group must be voted and approved by the NHHA Executive with a majority vote.

9. Organizational On Ice Officials Guidelines

- 9.1. The NHHA Executive will appoint the NHHA Referee Assigner with a majority vote.

On Ice Officials

- 9.2. It is the responsibility of the NHHA Timekeeper and NHHA Referee Assignor to provide timekeepers and officials for all Rep and Local League home games. NHHA will cover the cost for all NHHA scheduled game cost for officials and timekeepers throughout the season.
- 9.3. The Head Coach and on ice official relationship should be one of mutual respect. The Head Coach is responsible for the behaviour of all players and staff. No player or staff member is to yell, speak, or say anything to an official during the game. Only players with 'C' or 'A' designations are to talk to officials or the Head Coach if the official approaches the bench to discuss the coach's request.
- 9.4. Team staff members must lead by example showing great sportsmanship by not yelling or complaining to on ice officials during the game. Concerns and complaints with officiating can be communicated to the NHHA Referee Assignor or NHHA President to handle through the proper channels.
- 9.5. Ensuring everyone respects on ice officials during the game is important. Head Coaches are to communicate to all parents that yelling and complaining is not acceptable in the arena and if asked by the on-ice Official or Head Coach to leave the arena if requested.
- 9.6. Hockey Canada and the OMHA impose certain conditions and restrictions to on ice officials, which will take precedence over those imposed by NHHA.

- 9.7. Additional Guidelines for the NHHA Referee Assignor are to:
- a. Assist in the recruitment of new officials.
 - b. Line up training of officials – obtain facilities for it. (i.e., ice and classroom).
 - c. Ensure a CHOP certification program is available to all officials.
 - d. Ensure that all officials have copies of all Rules.
 - e. Appoint officials for games.
 - f. Interact with officials regarding schedules.
 - g. Shall appoint the required number of properly qualified officials for all games.
 - h. Ensure that new officials have experienced officials with them.
 - i. On ice officials will be supplied with a copy of the Bylaws and Rules.
- 9.8. On ice officials shall be fully conversant with the current Hockey Canada and the OMHA Rules and strictly enforce them in all instances.
- 9.9. All written reports of misconduct by on ice officials must be delivered to the NHHA Referee Assignor who will thoroughly investigate them and report to the NHHA Executive necessary action.
- 9.10. On ice officials shall not start any game until the game sheet is signed by all team Coaching Staff Members on the respective benches and is in the hands of the timekeeper.

10. Harassment & Abuse Policy

Policy Statement

- 10.1. NHHA is committed to providing a sport and work environment, which promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices. Harassment is a form of discrimination. Harassment is prohibited by human rights legislation in each province of Canada. In its most extreme forms, harassment can be an offense under Canada's Criminal Code.

Application & Scope

- 10.2. This policy applies to all categories of members in the NHHA, as well as to all individuals participating in activities of or employed by the NHHA, including, but not limited to, players,

officers, convenors, committee members, team managers, trainers, administrators, parents/guardian members and employees. This policy applies to harassment, which may occur during the course of all NHHA business, activities and events, including, but not limited to competitions, team practices, training camps, exhibitions, meetings and travel associated with these activities.

Definition of Harassment

- 10.3. Harassment is defined as conduct, which is insulting, intimidating, humiliating, offensive or physically harmful. Types of behavior which constitute harassment include, but are not limited to:
- a. Unwelcome jokes, innuendo or teasing about a person's looks, body, attire, age, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation.
 - b. Condescending, patronizing, threatening or punishing actions, which undermine self-esteem or diminish performance.
 - c. Practical jokes, which cause awkwardness or embarrassment, endanger a person's safety or negatively affect performance.
 - d. Unwanted or unnecessary physical contact including touching, patting or pinching.
 - e. Any form of hazing.
 - f. Any form of physical assault or abuse.
 - g. Any sexual offence.
 - h. Behaviors such as those described above which are not directed towards individuals or groups but which have the effect of creating a negative or hostile environment.

Abuse and Neglect of Minor

- 10.4. When any person in authority has a reasonable belief that in the course of NHHA business, activities or events a minor is being abused or neglected, he or she shall report this belief to Ontario child protection authorities or Police and shall advise the NHHA President or delegate of having made this report.
- 10.5. The NHHA shall take no further action until such time as the authorities and/or police have concluded their investigation.

Confidentiality

- 10.6. The NHHA recognizes the sensitive and serious nature of harassment and will strive to keep all matters relating to a complaint confidential. However, if required by law to disclose information, the NHHA will do so. This shall not preclude publication of the final outcome of any matter, where a sanction imposed under this policy includes publication.

11. Complaint Policy

- 11.1. A person who experiences or witness's harassment, inappropriate behaviour, or a breach of NHHA/OMHA rules and policies, are encouraged to make it known that the behavior is unwelcome, offensive and contrary to the values of the NHHA and this policy.
- 11.2. If the behaviour continues, the matter should be reported to an NHHA Executive member or NHHA volunteer.
- 11.3. After a compliant incident is reported, the role of the reporter is to serve in a neutral, unbiased capacity in receiving the report of the incident, advising the person or parents/guardians of the incident (if the person who has experienced the harassment is a minor), and assisting in an informal resolution of the complaint, where this is appropriate.

Investigation

- 11.4. A reporter who receives a formal written complaint shall advise the NHHA President, who shall appoint an individual to investigate the complaint.
- 11.5. For serious matters, the investigator should be experienced in harassment matters and investigation techniques, and may be an outside professional.
- 11.6. The investigator shall carry out the investigation in a timely manner and at the conclusion of the investigation shall submit a written report to the OMHA who will determine the necessary sanctions, if any towards the individual.

Incidents Requiring Immediate Response

- 11.7. This policy shall not prevent a person in authority from taking immediate, informal, corrective and appropriate disciplinary action in response to behaviour prior to the investigation being completed and the report submitted to the OMHA while the parties wait for the OMHA to advise the sanction, if any.
- 11.8. Complaints arising during competitions may be dealt with immediately, if necessary, by a NHHA representative in a position of authority, provided the individual being disciplined is told the nature of the infraction and has an opportunity to provide information concerning the incident. In such situations, sanctions shall be for the duration of the competition only until the OMHA reviews the matter and provides direction and any sanction necessary.
- 11.9. In the event that an alleged offense is so serious so as to possibly jeopardize the safety of others, the NHHA representative may immediately remove the alleged offender from NHHA activities, pending an investigation and sanction result from the OMHA.

12. Discipline Policy

Introduction

- 12.1. This policy applies to all members of the NHHA, as well as to all individuals participating in activities with, or employed by the NHHA, including but not limited to players, parents, coaches, officials, volunteers, directors, officers, convenors, committee members, team managers, trainers, administrators and employees.

Application

- 12.2. This policy applies to discipline matters which may arise during the course of all NHHA business, activities and events, including but not limited to competitions (including exhibition games and tournaments), practices, training camps, meetings and travel associated with these activities.
- 12.3. Discipline matters arising within the business, activities or events of member organizations of the NHHA shall be dealt with using the discipline policies and mechanisms of such organizations.

Types of Infractions

- 12.4. Under this policy, there shall be three types of infractions, which may warrant discipline:
- a. **Technical Infractions** - these are violations of the Rules or Operations and Regulations of Competition of the NHHA, which shall result in automatic sanctions as specified in the OMHA Manual of Operations Suspension List.
 - b. **Minor Infractions** - these are infractions under the NHHA Code of Conduct which are not severe but which may warrant immediate corrective action as per examples specified in this Policy.
 - c. **Major Infractions** - these are infractions under the NHHA Code of Conduct, which are more severe and may warrant disciplinary action as per examples specified in this Policy.

Discipline Procedures

- 12.5. Membership of the NHHA, as well as participation in the activities of the NHHA brings with it many benefits and privileges. At the same time members and participants are expected to fulfill certain responsibilities and obligations, including but not limited to complying with the Code of Conduct, Policies, Regulations and Rules of the NHHA.
- 12.6. The NHHA Code of Conduct and the Rules of Operations and Regulations of Competition identify the standard of conduct, which is expected of members, and other persons involved in NHHA activities and events. Individuals who fail to meet this standard may be subject to the disciplinary sanctions identified within this policy.

Minor Infractions

- 12.7. Disciplinary situations involving minor infractions occurring within the jurisdiction of the NHHA will be dealt with by the direction of the OMHA. It is at the discretion of the NHHA President or delegate, to discipline in the interim, pending guidance and direction from the OMHA.

Examples of Minor Infractions

- 12.8. A single incident of disrespectful, offensive, abusive, racist or sexist comments or behaviour directed towards others, including but not limited to peers, opponents, players, parents, coaches, officials, managers, trainers, administrators, spectators and sponsors.

- 12.9. Unsportsmanlike conduct such as angry outbursts or arguing.
- 12.10. A single incident of being late for or absent from NHHA events and activities at which attendance is expected or required.
- 12.11. Non-compliance with the rules and regulations under which NHHA events are carried out.

Sanctions for Minor Infractions

- 12.12. The following disciplinary sanctions may be applied immediately by an appropriate person having authority over the situation and the individual involved (this person may include, but is not restricted to, NHHA Executive or committee member, convenor, tournament chairperson, official, coach, team manager, team captain, parent/guardian) until the OMHA reviews and determines the final sanction, or NHHA Executive majority vote approval for final sanction, singly or in combination, for minor infractions:
 - a. Verbal reprimand.
 - b. Written reprimand to be sent to the individual.
 - c. Verbal apology by the individual.
 - d. Written apology by the individual.
 - e. Termination of Team service or other voluntary contribution to the team, or membership to the minor hockey organization or to the NHHA.
 - f. Suspension from the current competition and/or for a specified number of games, other sanctions as may be considered appropriate for the offence.

Major Infractions

- 12.13. Any member or representative of the NHHA may report to the NHHA President a major infraction using the NHHA Harassment and Abuse Policy of this document.
- 12.14. Upon receipt of an Incident Report, the NHHA President shall determine if the incident is better dealt with as a minor infraction, or if the incident is to be reported directly to the OMHA for the OMHA to handle as a major infraction.

Examples of Major Infractions

- 12.15. Repeated incidents of disrespectful, offensive, abusive, racist or sexist comments or behaviour directed towards others, including but not limited to peers, opponents, players, parents, coaches, officials, managers, trainers, administrators, spectators and sponsors.
- 12.16. Repeated unsportsmanlike conduct such as angry outbursts or arguing. Repeated incidents of being late for or absent from NHHA events and activities at which attendance is expected or required.
- 12.17. Activities or behaviour, which interferes with the organization of a competition or with any player's or team's preparation for a competition.
- 12.18. Pranks, jokes or other activities, which endanger the safety of others. Deliberate disregard for the rules and regulations under which NHHA events are conducted.
- 12.19. Abusive use of alcohol where abuse means a level of consumption which impairs the individual's ability to speak, walk or drive; causes the individual to behave in a disruptive manner; or interferes with the individual's ability to perform effectively and safely.
- 12.20. Any use of alcohol by minors; illicit drugs and narcotics, or condoning the use of, banned performance enhancing drugs or methods.

Sanctions for Major Infractions

- 12.21. The following disciplinary sanctions may be applied by the OMHA, singly or in combination, for major infractions:
 - a. Written reprimand to be placed in individual's file.
 - b. Written apology by the individual.
 - c. Suspension from certain NHHA events, which may include suspension from the current game or competition or from future competitions.
 - d. Payment of a financial fine in an amount to be determined by the Discipline Panel.
 - e. Suspension from certain NHHA activities (i.e. competing, coaching, officiating, or membership privileges) for a designated period of time.

- f. Suspension from all NHHA activities for a designated period of time.
 - g. Expulsion from the NHHA.
 - h. Other sanctions as may be considered appropriate for the offence.
- 12.22. Unless directed otherwise, any disciplinary sanctions shall commence immediately.
- 12.23. In applying sanctions, regards to the following aggravating or mitigating circumstances:
- a. The nature and severity of the offence.
 - b. Whether the incident is a first offence or has occurred repeatedly.
 - c. The individual's acknowledgment of responsibility.
 - d. The individual's extent of remorse.
 - e. The age, maturity or experience of the individual.
 - f. The individual's prospects for rehabilitation.
- 12.24. Notwithstanding the procedures set out in this Policy, any member or participant of the NHHA who is convicted of a criminal offence involving sexual exploitation, invitation to sexual touching, sexual interference or sexual assault, shall face automatic suspension from participating in any activities of the NHHA for a period of time corresponding to the length of the criminal sentence imposed by the Court, and may face further disciplinary action by the NHHA in accordance with this Policy.

Appeals Procedure

- 12.25. Except where otherwise provided, an appeal of any disciplinary matter will be done directly to the OMHA.

13. Revision History

0.00	2005.09.01	Created
0.01	2020.11.25	Revised
0.02	2020.12.16	Clarified 4.15 that NHHA does not provide refunds unless medical injury or relocation presents the players from playing.
0.03	2021.12.08	Added participation sheet guidelines, noted the weekend before is part of March Break.
0.04	2022.01.12	Added 14.1 so that Head Coaches who sign AP's must attend A/AE tryouts and ensure they attend body checking clinic. Exceptions can be brought to NHHA Executive for vote.
0.05	2022.04.14	Added 27.9 to include 1 practice time after last game and 1 practice per week until last team tournament for each team.
0.06	2022.05.13	Added to 13.2.a. "and a AAA or AA tryout is not available (U8 and U9 only)." Added 24.3 regards rules for indoor pregame stretches and warm-ups.
0.07	2022.10.12	Changed AE to BB, removed House League Select, updated tournaments to 3+1 (early bird/Christmas Break/March Break/End Season), U7/8/9 to 3 jamborees, budget increase rep from \$12,000 to \$18,000, local league \$3,600 to \$6,000, added name bars and updated Emergency Action Plan. Removed Incorporated status.
0.08	2023.02.08	Added team equipment requirements and donations on budgets for sections 16.5 and. 17.15. Added 23. Dressing room policy for player changing options. Added 17.5 to use equipment outside of NHHA ice time with permission.
0.09	2023.11.08	Removed sections to coach's manual for two separate documents.
0.10	2024.02.07	Updated harassment and abuse policy, appeal discipline policy to include complaint policy. Updated 5.1, 5.4 and 5.5 for coach approval to disclose all applicants, track history, and to announce staff after tryouts are completed.