



Upper Valley Hockey Association Policies and Procedures

Revised September 28, 2020

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 UVHA Policies & Procedures

These policies and procedures were initiated, established and adopted to provide written guidance and direction for the Upper Valley Hockey Association (UVHA). These policies and procedures shall not supersede the Bylaws (where conflict exists), but shall be used as a tool to provide guidance and consistency from year to year.

1.2 New Policies & Changes to Existing Policies

New policies and changes to existing policies shall be discussed and may be revised as necessary to meet the needs of the UVHA. Such additional policies and procedures may be adopted as deemed necessary by the UVHA Board of Directors. This is in contrast to the Bylaws where changes must be adopted by the association as a whole at the Annual or “Special” Meeting.

2. UVHA PHILOSOPHY

2.1 General Philosophy

The philosophy of the UVHA is consistent with that of USA Hockey for its Youth Programs: “To provide an improved grass-roots foundation for the growth and development of USA Hockey, designing programs aimed at increased participation, improved skills, and a responsible environment for the conduct of youth hockey.”

2.2 USA Hockey Core Values

The UVHA supports the following core values as stated by USA Hockey:

- Sportsmanship: Foremost of all values is to learn a sense of fair play. Become humble in victory, gracious in defeat. We will foster friendship with teammates and opponents alike.
- Respect for the Individual: Treat all others as you expect to be treated.
- Integrity: We seek to foster honesty and fair play beyond mere strict interpretation of the rules and regulations of the game.
- Pursuit of Excellence: Each member of the organization, whether player, volunteer, or staff, should seek to perform each aspect of the game to the highest level of his or her ability.
- Enjoyment: It is important for the hockey experience to be fun, satisfying and rewarding for the participant.
- Loyalty: We aspire to teach loyalty to the ideals and fellow members of the sport of hockey.
- Teamwork: We value the strength of learning to work together. The use of teamwork is reinforced and rewarded by success in the hockey experience.

3. BOARD OFFICERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Duties & Responsibilities

The UVHA shall elect four (4) Officers: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary. The Bylaws of the Association define limited duties of these Officers. Historically, the officers have taken on certain other responsibilities. This Policy describes these other responsibilities of the Officers, as well as including those defined by the Bylaws. The UVHA's Officers have the largest influence on how the UVHA philosophy is implemented. The following is a non-comprehensive list of their key responsibilities under the UVHA Policies and Procedures:

- Administering the Association pursuant to the approved Bylaws
- Upholding the mission of the Association
- Directing the selection process of qualified coaches
- Ensuring unbiased selection of teams
- Attending all UVHA Board meetings and subcommittee meetings (as appropriate)
- Approving fundraising efforts or team sponsors
- Resolving conflicts between teams, parents, and coaches, as well as communicating UVHA philosophies and policies
- Enforcing the Policies and Procedures of UVHA

- Serving as a member of standing committees (as appropriate)
- Posting minutes (24) twenty-four hours after approval

3.2 Board Members

The position of Board Member provides an opportunity for more members of the UVHA to participate in the activities and organization of the Association. By creating these positions, future candidates for Board Officer positions can learn how the Board of Directors operates and, at the same time, the Board of Directors can evaluate potential candidates for Board Officer positions.

3.2 (a) Appointment & Number of Board Members

The Board of Directors shall consider names submitted from the membership of the Association for positions as Board Members and shall appoint such members by affirmative vote. Where appropriate, the Board will attempt to select one Board Member for each team level, from Mites through Bantams. Board Officers shall refer to the Bylaws to determine the total number of Board positions.

3.2 (b) Duties & Responsibilities

Board Members will attend all regularly scheduled meetings. Board Members shall participate in discussion, the development of positions, and decision making through voting privilege. Board Members shall be actively involved in committee and project organization. As such, they, like Board Officers, shall be responsible to see that specific activities are organized and carried out in accordance with the Association's calendar of activities.

3.3 Board of Directors' Meetings

The policy describes the schedule and format for Board of Director meetings.

3.3 (a) Open Attendance

All Board of Director meetings shall be open to all Association members. Only Board Members shall have voting privileges.

3.3 (b) Agenda

The President, or his designee, shall prepare a meeting agenda and distribute it to all Board Members by the start of the meeting.

3.3 (c) Schedule

Board of Director meetings shall occur at least once each calendar month. Meetings may be held more often, as deemed necessary.

3.3 (d) Executive Session

The Board Officers may meet in closed, Executive Session for discussion of matters that are private in nature, such as hearings for financial hardship. Any Board Member may call for an Executive Session. Only Board Officers are allowed at such meetings. Discussion and results of voting at Executive Session shall not be written in minutes and shall not be discussed outside of the Executive Session.

3.3 (e) Emergency Session

When time is critical to make a decision on behalf of the organization, the President or, in his absence, the Vice President, may call an emergency session of the Board of Directors. In such a case, an agenda is not required. An emergency meeting shall not take the place of one of the regular monthly meetings.

3.4 Conflict of Interest of Board Members

UVHA realizes that it is impossible to eliminate all Board Members who might possibly have an overlapping interest. To ensure the confidence of the public and the Association, the Board will make a matter of public record any and all areas of conflict of interest, to the extent possible. The policy describes the schedule and format for Board of Director meetings.

3.4 (a) Self-Abstention

Any Board Member may abstain from voting on any issue in which he or she feels they are interested, whether directly or indirectly, to a degree that significantly impairs the independent and impartial exercise of that Member's judgment as a Board Member. If a Board Member takes this position, it shall be incumbent upon him/her to notify the President or presiding Officer prior to the vote, so that the minutes of the meeting will reflect that Board Member's abstention.

3.4 (b) Abstention by Board Vote

If any member of the Association feels a conflict of interest exists, the issue should be raised prior to a vote on the issue. If the Board Member has not already abstained him/herself, a vote shall be taken to determine whether the member may vote on the particular issue before the Board. This vote shall be taken in Executive Session and the Board Member under consideration shall not be permitted to observe the vote. Only the vote tally shall be noted in the minutes of the meeting.

3.4 (c) Resignation by Board Vote

The Board of Directors may consider the conflict of interest matter to be so great that the Board Member under consideration cannot remain an impartial and independent member of the Board of Directors. In this case, the Board of Directors is permitted to vote for the resignation of that member. This vote shall be taken in Executive Session and the Board Member under consideration shall not be permitted to observe the vote. Only the vote tally shall be noted in the minutes of the meeting.

3.5 Financial Transactions

Where there are transactions totaling more than \$5,000 in one year with a Member of the Board of Directors or a Member of their immediate family, a good faith effort will be made to obtain multi-quotes. Where there are transactions totaling more than \$500 in one year with a Member of the Board of Directors, these transactions must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Board. This requirement extends to members of the immediate family of the Board of Directors.

4. SCHEDULER

The Association shall invest responsibility for scheduling ice time for games and practices in the position of Scheduler.

4.1 Appointment by the Board

The Board of Directors shall appoint a Scheduler as soon as possible after the first meeting of the new Board.

4.2 Duties of the Scheduler

The scheduler shall:

- A. Arrange schedules for practice for all UVHA programs.
- B. Arrange schedules for travel team games through contact with other organizations.
- C. Communicate with the Referee-in-Chief to arrange for home game referees.
- D. Inform coaches and parent representatives on a timely basis of new schedules and changes in schedules.
- E. Inform the webmaster of updated schedules for posting on the UVHA web site, or change the information on the website directly.
- F. Report to the Board of Directors immediately if there are any problems securing adequate ice time, or arranging suitable schedules for any program. This report may be made to one of the officers of the Board.

4.3 Waiving of Registration Fee

If the scheduler has a player(s) registered with the Association, the Association shall waive the highest registration fee.

5. EQUIPMENT COORDINATOR

The Association shall invest responsibility for assuring that there is sufficient and suitable equipment provided to players of the organization in the position of Equipment Coordinator.

5.1 Appointment of Equipment Coordinator

The Board of Directors shall appoint an Equipment Coordinator.

5.2 Equipment Provided by the Association

The UVHA shall provide:

- A. Home and away jerseys for all travel team players.
- B. Goalie equipment (not including skates) for Mite teams.
- C. A bag of pucks, sufficient for team size.
- D. A first aid kit for each team.

5.3 Duties of the Equipment Coordinator

The Equipment Coordinator shall:

- A. Make all purchases of equipment on behalf of the Association. The Board shall approve all purchases above \$100 in advance. All purchases shall be reported to the

Board within one week. Receipts for all purchases shall be sent to the Treasurer within one week.

B. Check with coaches during the season for replenishment of supplies.

C. Collect and properly store all equipment at the end of the season.

D. Make an inventory of equipment at the end of the season. Attend a Board of Directors meeting between seasons to recommend necessary purchases.

E. Distribute equipment as needed at the start of the season.

6. STATE DELEGATES

The UVHA is a member of the New Hampshire Amateur Hockey Association and is an allied member of the Vermont State Amateur Hockey Association. NHAHA meetings are held on a monthly basis. The UVHA is obligated to have a delegate attend each monthly NHAHA meeting. A UVHA delegate is also obligated to attend VSAHA's annual kick-off meeting.

6.1 Appointment of State Delegates

The Board of Directors shall appoint a Primary State Delegate.

6.2 Duties of the State Delegate

The State Delegate shall:

A. The Primary State Delegate is responsible for knowing when the meetings are to occur and to attend the meetings. If he/she can not attend a particular meeting, then he/she shall arrange for an Alternate Delegate to attend that meeting.

B. The Delegate that attends the state meeting shall report on the state meeting at the next Board of Directors meeting.

7. REGISTRAR

7.1 Appointment of Registrar

The Board of Directors shall appoint a Registrar to be responsible for all aspects of the USA Hockey registration process.

7.2 Duties of Registrar

- A. This person will be responsible for all aspects of the USA Hockey registration process. He/she will chair the registration committee and will work closely with the Board of Directors and team coaches, reporting on all aspects of the registration process, including player payments and a breakdown of current registration numbers.
- B. He/she must attend the August state meeting to acquire all needed forms and information.

7.3 Waiving of Registration Fee

If the Registrar has a player(s) registered with the Association, the Association shall waive the highest registration fee.

8. COACHING COORDINATOR

The UVHA considers our coaches to be a critically important element of our Association. The coaches are the principal adult contact with the players. The position of Coaching Coordinator is established to be the primary contact between the coaches and the Board, in particular, ensuring that Bylaws and Policies of UVHA are followed. The Coaching Coordinator shall also provide assistance to coaches to understand these policies and other requirements that they are expected to follow during the coaches meeting.

8.1 Appointment by the Board

The Board of Directors shall appoint a Coaching Coordinator as soon as possible after the first meeting of the new Board.

8.2 Duties of the Coaching Coordinator

The Coaching Coordinator shall:

- A. Coordinate the procedures for selection of coaches as defined in Policy 16 of these Policies and Procedures. The Coaching Coordinator shall actively solicit potential coaches to submit applications in cases where none have been submitted for teams that are expected to play next season
- B. Determine patching requirements for the various team levels.
- C. Procure a USA Hockey Annual Guide and Rule Book for each coach.
- D. Procure enough game sheets for each coach.
- E. Develop a template for the game sheet roster label.

- F. Review the Coaching Guidelines document before the start-of-year coaches meeting and make revisions/updates as necessary. Send the revised document to the person that archives the UVHA documents on behalf of the Board.
- G. Coordinate screening checks of coaches as defined in UVHA Policy 16.
- H. Coordinate a coaches' meeting at the start of the season. This meeting must include:
 - a. distribution and review of the Coaching Guidelines document;
 - b. distribution of the USA hockey material;
 - c. distribution of game sheets and the template for game sheet roster label
 - d. discussion of patching requirements.
- I. Verify on behalf of the Board that all coaches are patched at the appropriate level.
- J. Distribute, gather, summarize and bring for Board review midseason and end of season coaching evaluations according to UVHA Policy 17, "Coaching Evaluations".

8.3 Compensation

The Coaching Coordinator will receive six hundred dollars (\$600) at the end of the hockey season for their time and commitment to the other coaches and Board of Directors.

9. REFEREES

9.1 Referee-in-Chief

The Board of Directors shall appoint a Referee-in-Chief. The Referee-in-Chief shall be responsible for:

- A. Scheduling referees.
- B. Informing referees of all rule changes.
- C. Hearing and presenting to the Board of Directors any complaints about or by Referees.

9.2 Certification

All referees shall be certified by NHAHA and USA Hockey. A list of approved referees shall be maintained by the Referee-in-Chief. Upon request, the Association shall reimburse referees for certification fees.

9.3 Stipend

The per-game stipend shall be determined by the Referee-in-Chief, with approval by the Board.

10. UVHA TEAMS

This policy lists current programs offered by the UVHA. The UVHA reserves the right to change the programs offered, as it deems necessary. Ages for travel categories are established by USA Hockey rules. Ages for the other programs are recommended (see Appendix 6: Mite Program Definitions and Policies for Participation and Advancement); participation outside of the recommended age range is permitted only with Board approval.

A. U8 Mites

- a. Learn to Skate
- b. Learn to Play
- c. 8U Travel

B. 10U Squirts

C. 12U Peewees

D. 14U Bantams

10.1 Player Commitments

Players and parents must be agreeable to the major commitment of time, energy and money to hockey during the season, which begins in October and may last until late March. Once selected, players are expected to fulfill their commitment to the team for the entire season. Conflicts with outside activities or other teams should be avoided. Failure to honor such commitments may result in diminished playing time for the player.

10.2 Commitment to Academics

The UVHA believes academic achievements are the most important thing in a child's life. Accordingly, activity schedules should minimize occurrences where players must be removed from school and should be limited for travel tournament times only.

10.3 Eligibility and Roster Sizes

All players are subject to USA Hockey eligibility and rules, and team rosters are limited to a maximum number of players determined by the UVHA Board of Directors and the New Hampshire Amateur Hockey Association.

11. PLAYER AND TEAM REGISTRATION

This policy describes the rules for registration with the UVHA and the schedule for payments. UVHA intends that every player who undertakes the registration process will have a position on a team. However, undertaking the registration process does not guarantee a position on a team. In making final team assignments, UVHA will take into consideration State regulations and the number of players at each level. Final team assignments shall be made at the end of tryouts.

11.1 Registration Fee

The UVHA registration fee is formulated based on the cost of such items as ice rentals, insurance, game sheets, administration expenses, tournament fees, equipment needs, referee payments, and other miscellaneous costs. Due to fluctuating team number and sizes, operating expenses, etc., program fees are subject to change on an annual basis. Members may pay registration fees in full online or sign up for an automatic withdrawal payment plan. Members opting to pay offline must make an immediate initial down-payment upon registration and be paid in full no later than September 15th. Any member not adhering to this policy may forfeit his/her player's roster spot. All players must be in good financial standing before participating in sanctioned tryouts, practices or games.

11.1 (a) UVHA Player Registration

Submitting a player registration application to UVHA does not guarantee a player will be accepted into the UVHA organization. All applicants who were not a UVHA member at the conclusion of the previous season will be reviewed by the Board of Directors for entry into the Association. The Board of Directors shall have sole unfettered discretion as to whether to admit any player into the UVHA organization each year irrespective of whether the player is a returning player or new to the UVHA organization.

11.2 Fundraising

Fundraising is a component of the UVHA's operation. As a volunteer-run, nonprofit organization committed to seeing that no interested youth is discouraged from play, the UVHA relies on fundraising to offset the cost of operating expenses in order to keep registration fees as low as possible and to provide for need-based scholarships. The membership should understand that there are associations within NHAHA and VSAHA that are for-profit organizations. The

membership should also understand that there are associations within NHAHA and VSAHA who choose not to fundraise. These organization's fees are considerably higher.

11.2 (a) Volunteerism

As a volunteer-run association, UVHA participants inherently share the responsibility of the organization's operation. Members are expected to be active volunteers, participating in UVHA fundraising events.

11.2 (b) Fundraising Committee

UVHA participants with a desire to have a role in the planning and implementation of UVHA fundraising activities will comprise the Fundraising Committee.

11.2 (c) Fundraising Committee Chair

The Board of Directors shall appoint a Fundraising Committee Chair. All fundraising activities must be discussed and approved by the UVHA Board of Directors and comply with the UVHA guidelines and state and municipal laws and be well supervised and controlled. The Fundraising Committee Chair shall be responsible for communicating with the Board of Directors and will work closely with the Treasurer to maintain detailed records of expenses and earnings within the fiscal year.

11.3 Scholarships and Modified payments

No child shall be prohibited from playing hockey for financial reasons, providing the family has requested and has submitted the application form for a modified payment schedule or scholarship application to any Board Member who will then present the case before a closed meeting of the Board Officers for an action. Failure to adhere to the payment plan will result in the child not being allowed on the ice, until payments have been made. Any request for assistance must be made in writing on the required form (Appendix 1) and delivered to any Board member. The request MUST be made prior to June 1st.

11.4 Invitational Tournaments

Invitational hockey tournaments offer an enjoyable opportunity for players to demonstrate their hockey skills competitively, in an environment that encourages fair play, and above all, fun. In addition to tournament play, UVHA encourages all teams to participate in and support

tournaments at home and other areas, as deemed appropriate by the team coaches. The participants on a proportional basis will share tournament funding equally. “Sweat equity” service will be required in place of monetary fees for all home tournaments the team is involved in. A balance must be maintained between the team’s objective for the season and the financial constraints experienced by the participants. Teams shall enter only USA Hockey sanctioned and reputable tournaments.

11.5 UVHA Refund Policy

UVHA registration fees are non-refundable, except under extraordinary, mitigating circumstances, such as injury, illness, financial hardship or family relocation. Under such circumstances, a detailed request for a refund must be made to the UVHA Board of Directors in writing. Upon approval of the request for refund by vote of the Board of Directors, registration fees will be returned based on the following schedule:

Before September 1: 75% Refund

Before December 1: 50% Refund

After December 1: No Refund

The Board reserves the right to increase (but not decrease) the refund amount at its discretion depending upon the specific circumstances of the request.

11.6 Midseason Entries

Players joining a team prior to November 1st of each year shall pay the full amount of fees established by the UVHA Board of Directors. No Player will be allowed to register after November 1st without authorization from the Board of Directors. There must be extenuating circumstances to grant this late registration, and, even with just cause, registration after November 1st may not be granted due to the number of players on a team. Players joining on or after November 1st shall pay a reduced amount, based on costs incurred to the date of joining the team, but in no event shall such amount be less than 50% of the full amount of fees (appropriately adjusted in all cases for the costs of uniforms, USA hockey registrations, etc. purchased or paid for on behalf of a specific player).

12. UNIFORMS, APPAREL & EQUIPMENT

12.1 UVHA Uniforms

Travel team players will be provided official home and away jerseys. Coordinating socks should be purchased separately and are required. Game jerseys, with the exception of player nameplates, shall not be altered in any way unless approved by the UVHA Board of Directors. Players must wear the UVHA official team jerseys and corresponding socks for all games. They should not be worn to practice, school, or any outside activity. Unusual wear and tear of these jerseys will be the responsibility of the player and their parents. If a jersey is returned in less than acceptable condition, a replacement fee will be assessed. If the replacement fee payment is not made, the player will not be considered to be in good standing with the organization and will not be permitted to register or be released to register elsewhere the following season.

12.2 Invitational Tournaments

Teams are expected to wear official UVHA jerseys and socks in any invitational tournament or exhibition game.

12.3 Protective Gear

Full, properly fitted and maintained protective gear is required for all UVHA players in all divisions and must be USA Hockey Equipment Certification (HECC) approved. Mouth guards in their originally manufactured condition, or altered only in accordance with manufacturer's specifications, shall be worn by players at all times while on the ice surface during all UVHA on-ice activities, without any exceptions. Skaters at all levels should be equipped with:

- Hockey skates
- Hockey helmet with Facemask: All players, including goalkeepers, in all age classifications, are required to properly wear a HECC (Hockey Equipment Certification Council) approved helmet and mask as designed by the manufacturer and with no alterations and chin strap properly fastened.
- Shin pads
- Shoulder pads
- Elbow pads
- Hockey pants
- Protective cup
- Gloves

- Neck protector
- Mouth guard

The equipment defined above shall be worn for all on-ice play, including games, scrimmages, and practices. Also, players shall wear a helmet with full face mask when at the bench, even if not playing and otherwise dressed for play.

12.4 Care of UVHA-Provided Equipment

Players are responsible for the care of any equipment provided by the UVHA, including, but not limited to, jerseys and goalie equipment. Players determined to be responsible for the damage or loss of UVHA equipment shall be responsible for the replacement cost of the lost or damaged equipment, at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

12.5 Coaches & On-Ice Volunteers' Protective Gear

Every person on the ice MUST wear a helmet. This is a USA Hockey mandated rule.

13. TEAM SIZE & COMPETITIVENESS

This policy is established to more carefully match the skill level of players with the level of play of the team the player is placed on, to more carefully have our teams placed at the appropriate level within the league, and to make sure all players who register with the Association are placed on a team.

13.1 Desired Team Size

13.1 (a) The Optimal Team

The Association will strive to make teams with fourteen (14) players consisting of three (3) forward lines, two (2) defensive lines, and at least one (1) goalie.

13.1 (b) The Acceptable Team Size

The Association, when determining the number of teams it will field for each year, will strive to field an Optimal Team size, but will consider fielding teams between eleven (11) and twenty (20)

players. The Association will be extremely careful about fielding any team with only eleven (11) players, as this is the minimum number allowed for play.

13.2 Team Size Selection Process

Step 1.) At the close of Spring Registration each year, the Board will analyze the numbers of players at each level to determine:

- A. The number of players at each level in relation to the optimal team.
- B. An estimate of the skill level of the players.
- C. Preliminary number and rank of teams (preliminary estimate).
- D. Number of excess or shortage of players in preliminary estimate.

Step 2.) Based on the “preliminary estimate”, the Board will review any excess or shortage of players at all levels to determine if there are any internal solutions to alleviating the excess or shortage. Solutions could be any combination of:

- A. Recruitment
- B. Petition changes
- C. Movement between UVHA teams

Step 3.) After the review undertaken in Steps 1 and 2, the UVHA will contact neighboring associations with the intent of either placing its excess players with neighboring associations or recruiting extra players to fill a team with UVHA. This contact with neighboring associations is done under the premise of discussions the UVHA has had with these neighboring associations with the common goal of matching the skill level of players with the level of play of the team the player is placed on due to an excess or shortage of players. It is not meant to permanently move players from association to association, but to alleviate the problem of all associations of achieving this common goal.

Step 4.) Adjustments to teams will have to be made after final registration in the fall. Discussions with neighboring associations can be raised again at this time if necessary.

13.3 Considerations for Skill Level and Safety

For player safety concerns for teams of Peewee and higher at Tier Levels I to III, the Association may require a player or players to find another team firstly within the Association, or, secondly,

with a neighboring association if the player or players' skill level is significantly lower than the skill level of the majority of the other players on that team and the player or players' safety may be in peril. This decision is premised on the following conditions:

- A. If the number of players for any given team are between 12 and/or exceed 16, and;
- B. With information gathered during the tryout process, and;
- C. At the discretion of the coach of that team, and;
- D. With the concurrence of the Coach Coordinator.

13.4 Final Team Size Selection

If the UVHA is unable to field Optimal Teams after any adjustments that were made or not made in Sections 13.2 and 13.3, then the UVHA will make teams at the appropriate level with the players the UVHA has registered.

14. TRYOUTS

The objective of this process is to place players at the level that will afford them the best possible hockey experience, given the levels available for their age group. This policy applies to Travel Teams only.

14.1 Formation of Placement Committee

A Placement Committee of at least three (3) people will determine the appropriate level of play for each player. It is the responsibility of the Placement Committee to remain unbiased and to maintain confidentiality and fairness for all players. The Board of Directors will approve the members of the Placement Committee prior to the beginning of tryouts. The Committee will consist of at least three (3) Placement Committee members, with one acting as Placement Coordinator. This Committee may be composed of the coaches of the team in question, Board Members, or anyone the Board of Directors feels is appropriate that has demonstrated hockey knowledge and experience with hockey as either a coach or player. The Committee will add a minimum of two (2) independent evaluators to provide input during the selection process. These independent evaluators will be present at a minimum of two (2) of the evaluation sessions and will provide written feedback to the Committee after each session.

14.2 Criteria

A combination of hockey drills and scrimmages will be used to evaluate players, as well as other indicators of a player's past and future hockey performance that the Committee sees appropriate.

The Placement Committee will determine session procedure and evaluation criteria prior to tryouts.

14.3 Tryout Process

The tryout will consist of a minimum of four (4) sessions. Players not interested in being placed on an upper level team do not need to attend these sessions. If this is the case, that player's parent/guardian should inform the Placement Committee of this decision.

14.4 Final Selection of Teams

The Committee will consider the recommendations of the independent evaluators, as well as feedback from the coaches of the team in question. The Committee will have final review and will make the ultimate decision on the placement of players. It is recommended that in the instance that a coach has a son or daughter whose player placement is in question, that coach will excuse himself from decision making regarding his own child. At the end of the final tryout session, the Placement Committee will make final determinations and separate players into teams. Following tryouts and placement, parents will be contacted by a Placement Committee representative, informing them of the team their player has been selected for. Individual player evaluations will be shared with parents if a request is made to the Placement Committee. The Placement Committee will disclose to parents evaluation information pertaining only to their individual player.

15. PETITIONS OF PLAYERS TO A HIGHER LEVEL

This policy establishes the rules for permitting a player to play at a level above his/her age group.

15.1 Applicability

Any player within the Association may petition the Board Officers for a waiver to play at a level above their age bracket, but not below their age bracket. Movement is limited to one level.

15.2 Application Process

All requests for waivers must be submitted in writing to the Board Officers by the parent or legal guardian by September 1st. Players will play at their assigned age brackets until the waiver is either approved or rejected. All waivers that are granted shall be conditional on a trial period not to exceed the second game of the season. This is to give the head coach and assistants ample time to fairly evaluate the player as to his/her individual hockey skills and attitude toward the game.

15.3 Decision Process

The Board Officers shall be the final say on all waiver applications at the Association level. They shall evaluate fairly based on the criteria developed for a waiver and shall seek a fair resolution. Previous head coach shall be contacted by the Board for a skills assessment of the applicant. The coach will also be asked for his/her recommendation for the waiver. Prospective head coaches shall also be contacted for evaluation of impact on the current team regarding roster size and level of play.

15.4 Criteria for Waiver

The following criteria shall be used as a guideline in determining the suitability of granting a waiver:

- A. Impact on the team the player would normally be on (e.g. roster size).
- B. Impact on the team the player is applying for waiver to (e.g. roster size).
- C. Level of hockey skill.
- D. Physical size regarding player safety.
- E. Emotional level and learning ability.
- F. Age with respect to level applying for waiver.

16. COACHING POLICIES

16.1 Coaching Eligibility

All coaches and assistant coaches are volunteers and must abide by the rules of the UVHA, State Association, and USA Hockey. All coaches and assistant coaches must complete the UVHA coaching application (Appendix 2), complete a Background History Check, and sign the UVHA Code of Conduct. (Appendix 5). Coaches who decline to sign such forms and/or abide by the Coaching Code of Conduct will not be permitted to participate with the UVHA team. Any person who has been convicted of sexual or physical abuse of a child, rape, homicide, kidnapping, manslaughter, is ineligible to coach for UVHA. Any person convicted of a drug or alcohol related offense or any offense listed in the personal information section on Part II of the Volunteer/Coaches Application within the last ten (10) years is not eligible to coach for UVHA, unless the UVHA President deems that the Board should review the circumstances/rehabilitation of such individuals. The UVHA Board of Directors will not knowingly appoint such a person to a coaching position or any other position within UVHA.

16.2 Coaches Selection Procedure

No coach or assistant coach will be considered for a coaching position unless he/she has submitted a completed coaching application (Appendix 2) and has completed the Background History Check. The UVHA Coaching Coordinator will review all applicants and their respective coaching attributes. Applicants will be reviewed based on various criteria including, but not necessarily limited to hockey knowledge and experience, coaching skills, ability to interact and communicate with children and parents, and history with the UVHA. The UVHA Coaching Coordinator will submit the list of proposed team head coaches, assistant coaches and practice coaches to the UVHA Board of Directors for approval. All matters discussed in selecting coaching staffs shall be deemed confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties.

16.3 Assistant Coaches

The Board of Directors shall approve the Coaching Coordinator's recommendation for head and assistant coaches. There should be no more than four (4) coaches on the bench during games, although head coaches are free to utilize as many USA Hockey certified helpers during practice as he/she deems appropriate.

16.4 Coaching Certification

“All coaches must have attained at least the Level I (Initiation Level) of USA Hockey Coaching Education Program (CEP). All coaches are defined as the Head Coach and the Assistant Coach(es) of the same team. The following levels, which are administered by the UVHA Coaching Coordinator, must be obtained in order to be a coach in good standing.”

Classification Level

Mite: Level 1 (Initiation)

Squirt: Level 2 (Associate)

Bantam & Younger: Level 3 (Intermediate)

Midget & Younger: Level 3 (Intermediate)

Women's 14-Under: Level 3 (Intermediate)

Women's 12-Under: Level 2 (Associate)

Years of Coaching	Certification Requirements
Year 1 (ex: 2017-18)	Level 1 clinic + age-specific component.
Year 2 (ex: 2018-19)	Level 2 clinic + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level.
Year 3 (ex: 2019-20)	Level 3 clinic (expires Dec. 31, 2021) + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level.
Year 4 (ex: 2020-21)	No Level certification required but can attend a Level 4 clinic + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level.
Year 5 (ex: 2021-22)	Complete the online Level 3 Recertification Track 1 (expires Dec. 31, 2023), or attend a Level 4 clinic + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level.
Year 6 (ex: 2022-23)	No Level certification required but can attend a Level 4 clinic + age-specific component if not previously taken for current age level.

16.5 Standards of Conduct

UVHA requires a high standard of conduct from its coaching staff in dealing with players, parents, other coaches, referees, and other officials and in the image projected to participants and parents of the UVHA. The coaching staff is an integral part of the UVHA and carries the responsibility to portray a proper role model for all players and is expected to support the decisions of the Board and abide by the UVHA Policies & Procedures.

16.6 Coaching Responsibilities

Coaches and assistant coaches are responsible for the equal development of all players on their teams to the best of the coaches' and players' abilities. The duties and responsibilities of the team's coaching staff include:

- Participating and promoting fair play.
- Coaching with a focus on teaching and improving hockey skills of individual players and promoting teamwork and good sportsmanship.
- Ensuring that each player is eligible and properly protected. Coaches should regularly check all players' equipment to ensure it meets safety standards.
- Supervising players, assistants, and parents to ensure appropriate conduct on and off the ice prior to, during, and after games.
- Maintaining a controlled attitude towards referees. Lack of coaching self-control will not be accepted by the UVHA and will bring review and possible dismissal.
- Checking game sheets for suspensions of participants. Suspensions are immediate and are to be communicated by the coach to his/her players.
- Attending any meetings at the request of the Board of Directors, Team Parent, State representative or Head Coach.
- Preparing team philosophy and strategies and organizing practices with the coaching staff prior to going on the ice.
- Enforcing the UVHA Policies & Procedures.
- Ensuring team compliance with State Guidelines.
- Review the USA Hockey Code of Conduct. Each coach, player and parent must sign the form, acknowledging acceptance of the Code of Conduct.
- Maintaining a team binder with copies of the player's birth certificate, game documentation, and Consent-to-Treat forms.

16.7 Coaching Authority

The coaching staff must maintain discipline for their players during games and practices, both on the ice and in the locker room. The head coach is responsible to maintain a presence in the locker room at all reasonable times. The coaching staff has complete authority to remove any player from the ice during a game or practice that is acting in a un-sportsmanlike manner, jeopardizing the safety of any other player or refusing to follow the directions of the coaching staff.

16.8 Team Rules

Head Coaches may adopt appropriate team rules governing the conduct of team players. These may include, among other things, game dress codes, arrival times before games, procedures on notification of absences and parents' admission to the locker room before and after games. Team rules must be consistent with the substance of the UVHA Policies & Procedures manual and communicated to the players and their parent/guardian(s) in writing. A copy of the team rules should be provided to the Vice President and the UVHA Coaching Coordinator.

16.9 Tournament Guidelines

All applicable hotel and ice-rink rules and regulations must be adhered to at all times. The UVHA policies regarding theft/vandalism apply to all hotels where players and parents lodge. A reasonable curfew will be determined in advance and communicated to all players. The parent/guardian will ultimately be responsible and held accountable for the conduct and behavior of their player.

16.10 Discipline

Coaches have the responsibility for player discipline when the team is together for games, practices or other events. Ongoing discipline problems should be documented in writing, and the coaching staff should notify the UVHA Coaching Coordinator, Vice President, and/or President of any habitual discipline problems. A coach may “sit-out” a player for not more than one (1) game or practice as a discipline for inappropriate or un-sportsman-like behavior. Any further disciplinary action must be in consultation with the UVHA Coaching Coordinator and must be discussed with the player parent(s) or guardian(s). Coaches may not use foul or abusive language towards a player and shall never physically assault a player or use physical contact as part of disciplinary action. The UVHA Vice President, Coaching Coordinator, and President must be advised of all player suspensions, game misconduct penalties, and requests that any player, coach or parent leave any arena by a referee, official from another organization or an arena official.

16.11 Enforcement of Parent/Guardian & Player Code of Conduct

All coaches are responsible for making their players aware of the USA Hockey Players Code of Conduct as stated in the USA Hockey Annual Guide and enforcing the UVHA Code of Conduct.

16.12 Dismissal or Discipline of Coaches

Coaches may be suspended, dismissed or disciplined by the UVHA Board of Directors for any of the following:

- Noncompliance with USA Hockey, State, or UVHA rules, regulations, policies or procedures or other conduct detrimental to the UVHA.
- Violations of the UVHA Coaching Code of Conduct.
- Mistreatment of players (physical, emotional or psychological abuse).
- Misappropriation of team assets/resources.
- Failure to fulfill commitments to the team (e.g. recurring absences from practices or games).
- Failure to provide adequate team instruction or to maintain discipline.
- Physical or verbal abuse of parents, referees, opposing coaches or UVHA officials.

17. COACHING EVALUATIONS

Timely feedback to the coaches by the Association is important for improving the playing experience of the players. This policy describes the Associations' procedures for obtaining evaluation of coaches and reporting the results to the coaches.

17.1 Time of Evaluation

Coaching evaluation forms shall be distributed to the Association prior to the end of the season.

17.2 Evaluation Form

An evaluation form shall be approved by the Board of Directors.

17.3 Review of Evaluations

The Board Officers and Coaching Coordinator will review coaches' evaluations in confidence.

17.4 Reporting of Evaluations

As deemed necessary by the Board Officers, the Coaching Coordinator shall compile a summary for a coach and/or assistant coach from the evaluations in a manner that ensures anonymity of the respondents. The Coaching Coordinator may form a temporary subcommittee of Board Members to assist in compiling the summary report. The summaries shall be reported to the Board of Directors and discussed by the Board in Executive Session. The Board shall decide how the summary information shall be reported to each coach and assistant coach. The Coaching Coordinator shall carry out such reporting.

18. SCREENING OF BOARD MEMBERS, COACHES, AND VOLUNTEERS

18.1 Screening Policy

It is the policy of the Upper Valley Hockey Association that it will not authorize in its programs any volunteer who refuses to consent to be screened before he/she is allowed routine access to children (anyone under the age of majority) in UVHA's hockey programs, both for travel and house teams. This policy is in keeping with the policy of USA Hockey, as detailed in 2002-2003 Annual Guide, page 79, section D.

18.2 Disqualification Criteria

A person may be disqualified and prohibited from serving as a volunteer of Upper Valley Hockey Association if the person has:

- A. Been convicted (including crimes the record of which has been expunged and pleas of "no contest") of a crime of child abuse, sexual abuse of a minor, physical abuse, causing a child's death, neglect of a child, murder, manslaughter, felony assault, any assault against a minor, kidnapping, arson, criminal sexual conduct, prostitution related crimes or controlled substance crimes;
- B. Being adjudged liable for civil penalties or damages involving sexual or physical abuse of children;
- C. Being subject to any court order involving any sexual abuse or physical abuse of a minor, including but not limited to domestic order of protection;
- D. Had their parental rights terminated;
- E. A history with another organization (volunteer, employment, etc.) of complaints of sexual or physical abuse of minors;
- F. Resigned, been terminated or been asked to resign from a position, whether paid or unpaid, due to complaints of sexual or physical abuse of minors; or
- G. Has a history of other behavior that indicates they may be a danger to children in the Upper Valley Hockey Association.
- H. Any other conduct detrimental to the well being of the Association as deemed by a majority of the Board of Directors.

18.3 Screening Procedure

At or prior to the first coaches' meeting, the UVHA Coaching Coordinator will direct prospective coaches to complete the online Criminal Background Check with the State of New Hampshire. The SafeSport Coordinator is responsible for reporting coaches' compliance to the Board. If an applicant is found to be in violation of one of the above listed infractions, the Coaching Coordinator will notify the applicant in writing that their coaching application has been declined. If the applicant was an assistant coach, the head coach will be notified that this application has been denied; however, to ensure the privacy of the applicant, no reason for this denial will be discussed outside of the Executive Session.

18.4 Appeal Process

Declined applicants have the right to appeal the Boards' decision, but will be prohibited from any contact with players until that appeal is heard by the UVHA Board of Directors. Applicants who wish to appeal must appear at the next scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors, prepared to present evidential material to support their case during the Executive Session. The UVHA Board of Director's decision after this appeal shall be considered final.

18.5 Holding of Records

The SafeSport Coordinator shall hold screening responses for a period of four (4) seasons including the season for which they were obtained. They shall then be destroyed. The records shall not be reviewed by anyone other than the Board Officers.

19. COMMUNICATIONS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Board of Directors shall adopt and implement procedures to inform all Association Members of matters regarding its policies and other timely information of convenience to Association Members.

19.1 Format of Communications

The following means shall be undertaken, as deemed appropriate, to implement the objective of this policy.

- A. Email
- B. Website
- C. Facebook
- D. Print communications

- E. Team parents
- F. Postings at rink

19.3 WEBMASTER

19.3 (a) Appointment of Webmaster

The Board of Directors shall appoint a Webmaster.

19.3 (b) Webmaster's Duties

The webmaster shall maintain the website of the association. At a minimum, the web site shall provide links to current practice and game schedules, important forms (such as registration and scholarship), the By-Laws and Policies and Procedures of the Association, and direction to away-game rinks. Other information will also need to be posted on a case-by-case basis (such as tournament dates). The webmaster shall work with other officers of the association to post updated information as quickly as possible.

20. TEAM INFORMATION

20.1 Team Officials

Each team should have assigned Head and Assistant Coaches, and a Team Parent.

20.2 Team Parent

The Team Parent has primary responsibility for the administrative functions of the team. Duties and responsibilities of Team Parent include for coordinating all off-ice activities of the team which may include the following:

- A. Carrying out all team obligations regarding all tournaments in which the team is participating.
- B. Ensuring that each player/family receives game and practice schedules and any changes in a timely manner.
- D. All Team Parents will become familiar and comply with UVHA's Policies & Procedures.

- E. Arrangements including obtaining parents' approval for all trips, identifying and reserving suitable lodging facilities and furnishing directions to arenas.
- F. Ensure home games have a timekeeper, scorekeeper, and penalty box attendants.
- G. Welcome visiting teams and ensure locker room assignments and game essentials are provided.
- H. Must ensure all game score sheets are properly completed and signed by head coaches, game officials, and that copies are distributed to appropriate parties.
- I. Acting as a liaison between parents and coaches to foster open communications.
- J. Recruiting parent volunteers for the Fundraising Committee.

20.3 Safety Considerations

UVHA shall seriously consider all matters pertaining to player safety. The Board of Directors role is fundamentally non-medical in nature and does not directly deal with the medical diagnosis and treatment of injuries that occur in hockey practice or games. Rather, the Board stresses the importance of injury/victim prevention and management.

- **Player Conditions or Injuries:** It is an UVHA policy not to place a player on the ice with any injury or condition that might cause further aggravation, injury or damage in the normal course of UVHA activities. However, the UVHA can only be aware of those injuries or conditions which occur during UVHA activities and are brought to the attention of the UVHA, by notifying the specific player's coach or Team Parent immediately upon discovery. Therefore, it is the responsibility of each parent, guardian and player to inform the Team Parent and coach of any injury, condition or other matter which may be affected by further participation in any UVHA activity, regardless of whether the injury, condition or matter occurred during a UVHA activity or elsewhere. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to withhold the player from any UVHA activity if there is any risk of aggravation, injury or damage in the normal course of UVHA activities. If a player suffers any injury or condition in a UVHA activity or elsewhere, which is reported to the Team Coordinator and coach as stated above, and that injury or condition results in medical treatment of any kind, the player will not be permitted further participation in any UVHA activity until the player's Team Parent and coach receive written approval from the treating physician that the player is cleared to participate fully in all further UVHA activities. If the injury or condition resulted in no medical treatment, the player's parent or guardian accepts full risk and responsibility for the decision to allow the player to participate in UVHA activities. However, in such instances, the UVHA reserves the right not to permit a

player to participate in UVHA activities in the absence of a written approval from a physician in the appropriate medical discipline or specialty, as determined by the UVHA.

- Concussion Awareness: The coaching staff should underscore concussion awareness and prevention with his/her players and their parents.
- Protective Equipment: Parents are responsible for ensuring proper fitting equipment and its protective quality.

20.3 (a) UVHA Locker Room Policy

In addition to the development of our hockey players and enjoyment of the sport of hockey, the safety and protection of our participants is central to UVHA's goals. UVHA adheres to USA Hockey's SafeSport Program as a means to help protect its participants from physical abuse, sexual abuse and other types of misconduct, including emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing. To help prevent abuse or misconduct from occurring in our locker rooms, UVHA has adopted the following locker room policy. This policy is designed to maintain personal privacy as well as to reduce the risk of misconduct in locker rooms.

There are four (4) locker rooms available for our program's use. Each of the locker rooms has its own restroom. Some teams in our program will regularly travel to play games at other arenas, and those locker rooms, restrooms and shower facilities will vary from location to location. When travel teams are on the road, it is expected that all players will adhere to UVHA's locker room policy (Appendix 4).

20.4 Accident Report Form

Coaches or Team coordinators are required to complete the USA Hockey Accident Report Form (available from USA Hockey) for any injury occurring in connection with the team's activities and provide the completed form to the UVHA general manager or Vice President of Travel or House as soon as reasonably possible.

20.5 Non-Discrimination

All coaches and players will follow USA Hockey Guidelines and UVHA Policies in preventing gender harassment and discrimination.

(<http://www.usahockey.com/page/show/893032-coaching-ethics>).

20.6 Ice Access

No players are allowed on the ice surface and the rink doors shall remain shut while the ice-resurfacing machine is at work. The only exception is an adult UVHA member or game official who shall remain on the ice only long enough to move the goals. Players will not be allowed on the ice surface unless a USA Hockey registered coach is present. No player can enter the ice without a mouthguard properly worn in accordance with Section 11.3 of this Policy and Procedures manual.

21. GENERAL CONDUCT & DISCIPLINARY ACTION

As a member of USA Hockey, the UVHA is obligated to enforce USA Hockey's Zero Tolerance Policy. The UVHA not only supports the Zero Tolerance Policy, but formally incorporates it into our own Policies in this document. USA Hockey's Zero Tolerance Policy (defined in its 2003-2004 Annual Guide) is adapted below as UVHA's Zero Tolerance Policy:

ZERO TOLERANCE

In an effort to make ice hockey a more desirable and rewarding experience for all participants, the UVHA requires all Association participants to adhere to certain points of emphasis relating to sportsmanship. This Policy is designed to require all players, coaches, officials, team officials and administrators and parents/spectators to maintain a sportsmanlike and educational atmosphere before, during and after all hockey games and scrimmages.

21.1 Player, Coach, Parent/Guardian, and Team Parent Behavior

While engaged in any activities in connection with their involvement with the UVHA, all players, coaches, parents/guardians, and Team Parents are subject to and expected to comply fully with all the rules, regulations, policies and procedures of the UVHA, including all those set forth in this complete document and all its appendices, and any prior decisions of the UVHA Board or Disciplinary Committee. All parents/guardians, players, coaches, Board of Directors, and Team Parents will be required to sign and comply with the UVHA Code of Conduct.

21.2 Disciplinary Action

Players, coaches, parents/guardians, Board of Directors, and Team Parents violating or failing to comply with the rules, regulations, policies and procedures of the UVHA, including all those set forth in this complete document and all its appendices, and any decisions of the UVHA Board or

Disciplinary Committee may be subject to disciplinary action by the UVHA. The following disciplinary actions may be taken immediately upon knowledge of the conduct:

A. Any coach may suspend a player immediately for one practice or one game for any such conduct. Such suspension could include immediate ejection from the building.

B. UVHA Board may immediately suspend a coach or Team Parent for one practice or one game for any such conduct. Such suspension could include immediate ejection from the building.

C. UVHA Board may immediately suspend, or eject from the building, any parent/guardian or participant for any such conduct.

21.3 Discipline for Game Disqualification Penalties

When a player or coach receives a major penalty, game misconduct, gross misconduct or a match penalty, the coach will notify a Board Officer within 48 hours. The Discipline Committee shall determine if further action is deemed necessary and if so shall call a special meeting of the Board Officers. If it is determined by the Discipline Committee that a player or coach must appear before the Board Officers, he/she shall not be allowed to participate in practices or games until he/she has done so. The Board Officers may impose additional disciplinary actions upon the player or coach and such discipline is mandatory. A player receiving game disqualification(s) shall accompany the team to the suspended game(s), dress for the game(s), and sit on the player bench. The coach must notify the referee or scorer. If a player fails to accompany the team to such game(s) while on suspension, an additional game suspension shall be imposed. A coach shall be in attendance for suspended games but shall not provide any coaching advice to his/her team.

21.4 Duty to Notify

Players, coaches, parents/guardians and Team Parent and Coordinators are expected to and required to notify UVHA Board and the Disciplinary Committee in writing of any suspected cause for disciplinary action, as outlined herein, against any player, coach parent/guardian or Team Parent as soon as practicable after learning of such conduct.

21.5 Grounds for Disciplinary Action.

In addition to those grounds for disciplinary action set forth above, the following is a supplemental and specifically articulated list of grounds for disciplinary action against a player,

coach, parent/guardian, Team Parent or coordinator. While engaged in any activities in connection with their involvement with UVHA, no player, coach, parent/guardian or Team Parent shall engage in any of the following:

- Use of obscene, profane or sexually explicit language, racial, ethnic, gender or religious slurs or insults, verbal abuse, harassment and threats.
- Use or distribution of drugs or other controlled substances (except by prescription and over-the-counter medications by an adult or as approved by a parent) or performance enhancing substances of any kind.
- Use or distribution of alcoholic beverages by or to those under twenty-one (21) years of age.
- Attendance or participation in, while intoxicated or under the influence of illegal drugs, a UVHA function, defined herein to mean a game, practice or other on-ice activity, transport of persons to and from games or practices or other on-ice activities or other occasions wherein minors and adults are present because of the occurrence of a UVHA game, practice or other on ice activity.
- Use of tobacco in any form by anyone under eighteen (18) years of age.
- Use of tobacco in any form by anyone in any area other than those designated as a smoking area.
- Use or possession of guns, knives and other dangerous weapons, excepting legally permitted firearms by law enforcement personnel.
- Theft, vandalism, deception or material misrepresentation for personal or monetary gain.
- Sexual contact of any nature, except between two consenting individuals over the age of eighteen (18) but in no instance involving a player or players.
- Fighting and physical or bodily contact of any nature when such contact evidences an intent to threaten, intimidate, injure or restrain, except in reasonable self-defense from such fighting, or physical or bodily contact initiated by another.
- Possession of pornographic or sexually explicit materials by or in the presence of individuals under the age of eighteen (18).
- Entering onto an ice surface, locker room or bench when not authorized to do so.
- Throwing any object or liquid on an ice surface or at another person with an intent to express displeasure.
- “Hazing” of any nature.
- Conduct detrimental to the UVHA or which jeopardizes the safety, health, morals or welfare of any minor, failure to adhere to or comply with coaching directions or decisions, failure to adhere

to or comply with UVHA staff or management directions or decisions, or engaging in a course of conduct which undermines or is detrimental to the ability of a coach or UVHA staff or management to perform their appropriate functions.

21.6 Spectator/Playing Area

All spectators shall abide by USA Hockey's Spectators Code of Conduct adopted by the UVHA. Spectator and playing areas must remain separate for the safety of all persons. If any spectator goes onto the ice surface, locker room or bench when not authorized to do so, or interferes with the game in any way including by throwing objects or liquids on the ice, or exhibits excessive verbal abuse of officials, coaches, players or other spectators, the spectator shall be ejected from the rink. Fighting or any verbal altercation in the spectator areas will not be tolerated. The UVHA staff, any Board member, coaches, and/or referees, have the authority to immediately eject a spectator from the ice rink for game interference, fighting or any verbal altercation.

21.7 Physical Abuse

UVHA reserves the right to investigate any allegation of physical abuse, past or present. All complaints of physical abuse shall be held in confidence, should be made in writing and should be addressed only to the Disciplinary Committee of the UVHA.

21.8 Sexual Abuse

UVHA reserves the right to investigate any allegation of sexual abuse, past or present. All complaints of sexual abuse shall be held in confidence, should be made in writing and should be addressed only to the Disciplinary Committee of the UVHA. All parties who have reason to believe sexual abuse is taking place or has taken place are required by state and federal laws to submit all such complaints to the proper law enforcement authorities.

21.9 Punctuality

Players should be punctual to practice and to games. Ice time is valuable and should not be wasted. All participants should strive to arrive at games and practices in sufficient time to allow for suiting up and the necessary pre-game/practice instruction and/or warm-up. Coaches may determine the appropriate arrival time for their teams' practices and games, within reason and subject to review and approval by the Board.

21.10 Attendance

Reliable attendance is essential to personal skill development and the development of team continuity. General guidelines that govern attendance are as follows:

- A. Two unexcused absences from practices or games in any combination will result in disciplinary action at the coach's discretion.
- B. Three or more unexcused absences from practices or games in any combination will result in a player being referred to the UVHA Disciplinary Committee. The coach shall refer the player's name and record of infraction to the UVHA Disciplinary Committee for appropriate disciplinary action.

21.11 Theft/Vandalism Damages

Any participant proven to the satisfaction of the Disciplinary Committee to have committed theft or vandalism in connection with any team activities will be subject to dismissal immediately from the UVHA program without refund. Parents of the responsible player(s) shall be responsible for the cost of the loss or damage.

21.12 Player Discipline

The UVHA Board of Directors, in its discretion, may act as an independent Disciplinary Committee to review serious or repeated misconduct offenses and determine appropriate action. The UVHA Vice President, Coaching Director and President shall be advised of all full-game suspensions and the reasons therefore.

21.13 Checking From Behind

Without exception, the UVHA will adhere to all State and USA Hockey Rules and Regulations regarding this matter.

21.14 Minor/Major Penalties

Without exception, the UVHA will adhere to all State and USA Hockey Rules and Regulations regarding minor and major penalties.

21.15 Deliberate Attempt to Injure

Without exception, the UVHA will adhere to all State and USA Hockey Rules and Regulations regarding deliberate attempt to injure penalties.

21.16 Abuse of Alcohol

A coach who is arrested for, or convicted of, Driving Under the Influence, Public Intoxication or Public Drunkenness may be subject to immediate suspension from further UVHA involvement at the sole discretion of the Disciplinary Committee.

21.17 Board Members

Disciplinary matters involving members of the Board of Directors in their capacity as either coaches, parents/guardians, Team Parents or other volunteers, shall be decided exclusively by the Board of Directors of the UVHA and not in accordance with Sections 21. The Board shall have sole discretion in such disciplinary matters as to grounds for and nature of disciplinary actions to be taken.

22. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

22.1. Disciplinary Committee

The Disciplinary Committee, a committee of the UVHA Board of Directors, is charged with the overall responsibility and authority for hearing and resolving disciplinary issues involving participating players, coaches, team parents and parents/guardians of the UVHA. This may include, but is not limited to, probation under defined terms, suspension from games or practices, exclusion from games, practices or other activities or dismissal or debarment from the UVHA. Disciplinary action against a parent may be enforced by suspending or excluding the parent's child from games or practices if the parent fails to abide by the UVHA's action. Discipline shall be imposed fairly, consistently and in relationship to the wrongdoing but without regard to the player's importance to his/her team.

22.2. The Role of Coaches in Establishing and Maintaining Discipline

The UVHA Board of Directors recognizes the importance, to the coach, the team and the individual players, of a coach's role in establishing and enforcing disciplinary standards on his/her team. The Board of Directors further reaffirms the coach's authority to establish standards of conduct and fair play and to take immediate and reasonable one-game or one-practice disciplinary action, including benching or suspension, in "on-ice" situations, such as games and practices, and in "off-ice" situations, such as those involving locker rooms and

tournament, in which either the coach is responsible for the players' conduct or such conduct could be detrimental to the team or the UVHA. However, the UVHA Board of Directors also recognizes the importance of fairness and consistency in the application of multiple game or practice disciplinary standards and has, therefore, established the mechanism outlined below.

22.3 Commencement of Disciplinary Action

In accordance with Section 21, a disciplinary action against a coach, player, parent/guardian, and team parent is commenced by submitting the matter to the UVHA Disciplinary Committee. Requests for action by the Disciplinary Committee must be in writing, dated, with a description of the conduct alleged and the date of the involved individual's next game or practice if applicable. Matters may not be submitted anonymously. Upon receipt of such writing, the Disciplinary Committee, at its sole discretion, may decline to entertain any matter submitted in which case no action of any kind will be taken by the Disciplinary Committee and no further communication with any involved party will be made. As for those matters which the Disciplinary Committee agrees to entertain, it will convene by phone, email, in person, or by other reasonable means before the next regularly scheduled practice or game of the involved person. If that is not possible, any one-game or one-practice suspension shall continue for one additional game or practice. If two practices or games pass without decision by the Disciplinary Committee, the involved person shall be reinstated pending resolution of the matter by the Disciplinary Committee. But if the safety, health, morals or welfare of any minor may be jeopardized, the suspension shall continue until resolution of the matter by the Disciplinary Committee.

22.4 Time and Place of Meetings

The Disciplinary Committee shall meet as necessary during the year to decide matters before it. The exact date, time and location of such meetings shall be established by the Disciplinary Committee. The involved player(s), coach(es), parent(s)/guardian(s) team parent(s) or coordinator(s), or other witnesses may be requested to attend or provide input, as determined at the sole discretion of the Disciplinary Committee.

22.5 Membership and Quorum

Due to the sensitivity of the subject matter being covered, the Disciplinary Committee shall be composed of three (3) Board Members with one Member being the President. Each Member

shall serve until the UVHA's next annual membership meeting. Members of the Disciplinary Committee may serve multiple terms. A majority of the appointed Members shall constitute a quorum. Decisions of the Disciplinary Committee shall be determined by a simple majority of voting members, provided a quorum is present. Members of the Disciplinary Committee may vote on matters involving their own teams but are expected to exercise sound judgment in determining whether a particular situation may represent a conflict. Members of the Disciplinary Committee shall recuse themselves from all matters involving him/herself or a family member.

22.6. Specific Authorities and Responsibilities

Specific authorities and responsibilities of the Disciplinary Committee are:

- To hear all complaints of misconduct involving coaches, players, parents/guardians and Team coordinators.
- To determine and assess disciplinary action against players, coaches, parents/guardians, and Team coordinators, as considered appropriate in the circumstances, up to and including suspension and/or dismissal from the team and forfeiture of games.
- To maintain a record of and report to the UVHA Board of Directors all actions taken.
- To report other matters of which the UVHA Board of Directors should be aware that may come to its attention as a result of its activities.
- To compel the appearance and testimony of a player, coach, or parent/guardian at a hearing and/or compel production of score sheets, video tapes, and other documentation in the possession of a coach, player, member, or representative of the UVHA.
- To solicit statements, testimony, evidence, or other documentation from interested parties other than players, coaches, and UVHA members, as considered necessary in the sole judgment of the Disciplinary Committee.
- To establish such procedures as it considers necessary to conduct its activities.

22.7 Appeal

Decisions of the Disciplinary Committee may be appealed in writing to the UVHA Board of Directors. The Board may decline to hear any appeal, at its sole discretion, in which case the action of the Disciplinary Committee shall stand. If any appeal will be heard, the Board shall convene a special meeting to hear the appeal within thirty (30) days of receipt of written notice of such appeal. Any actions taken by the Disciplinary Committee will continue in effect until the appeal is heard and ruled upon by the UVHA Board of Directors.

23. DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

23.1 Exclusive Procedure

As a not-for-profit organization whose services are provided by volunteer efforts, the UVHA has established this Dispute Resolution Procedure to provide an efficient, orderly and uniform method of resolving all covered disputes. This grievance procedure provides the exclusive remedy to resolve such disputes. Each UVHA member, player, coach, official, referee, parent, guardian, agent or other person, team, sponsor, or other group or organization (“Participant”) agrees to abide by the Dispute Resolution Procedures as the exclusive remedy for all grievances by virtue of their membership, affiliation or participation at any time in the UVHA or UVHA program.

23.2 Scope of the Grievance Procedures

A “grievance” is defined as any conflict, dispute or disagreement between Participants, including any parents or guardians of a player and that player’s coach or a league official or members of different UVHA teams that may allege an on-going violation of UVHA Policies & Procedures and/or State Association or USA Hockey rules and policies or some other continuing circumstance which requires resolution. All Participants should attempt to resolve grievances expeditiously and fairly at the lowest possible level within the Dispute Resolution Procedure. These procedures are not, however, intended to resolve minor issues related to a player’s participation on a team (such as playing time, positioning, or minor discipline) or private disputes between Participants. If applicable, grievances should allege a specific violation of UVHA, State Association or USA Hockey rules, policies or procedures.

23.3 The "Twenty-Four Hour" Rule

Unless the nature of the grievance requires immediate attention, UVHA members and participants are required to wait at least twenty-four hours after the event or incident before initiating these procedures. It should also be understood that a violation of UVHA Policy by one person does not justify violation of UVHA Policy by another person.

25. ACCEPTANCE OF THE UVHA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

All UVHA parents/guardians, players, coaches, Team Parents and coordinators, and Board members must sign the UVHA Policies and Procedures Acceptance form (Appendix 5). The Team Parent must receive the player, parent/guardian, coach, Team Parent/coordinator's signed forms prior to a player's participation in any on or off-ice UVHA activities. The Registrar is to retain the original form and be able to provide this information upon request of the Association President or delegate. The Association Secretary will collect all signed forms by the Board and maintain as part of the UVHA Official Records.

Appendix 1

Scholarship Assistance Application



Upper Valley Hockey Association

PO Box 1364, Lebanon, NH 03766

Purpose

The mission of the Upper Valley Hockey Association is to introduce the youth of our area to and promote the game of hockey so that every child can enjoy a positive experience through encouragement, skill development and character building, while creating a passion for the game. So that our youth hockey programming is more accessible, the UVHA provides scholarships to players displaying financial need, to the extent that funds are available.

Applicant Criteria

The household wishing to apply for a scholarship must currently receive Medicaid, SSI, TANF, WIC, 3SquaresVT, SNAP, Food Stamps, National School Lunch Program or other public assistance. There may be instances where an applicant is eligible for financial aid due to situations not adequately addressed by this criteria. In such cases, a letter of request and description of extenuating circumstances should be submitted, along with the documents required for income verification.

Approval Process

Only complete applications will be reviewed by the UVHA Executive Board. Every effort will be made to protect the privacy of applicants. The funds available for aid are limited. Applicants are expected to make a minimum contribution. Awards will not exceed 50% of the program fee. In consideration of the funds available, the percentage of fee forgiveness may be greater than,

equal to, or less than the percentage requested in the application. The Executive Board may contact the applicant for clarification or to require further supporting documentation. Applicants will be notified of the Executive Board’s decision by mail or email.

Recipient Responsibilities

1. Recipient players are expected to consistently participate in practices and compete in games.
2. Recipient parents or guardians are expected to volunteer their assistance to the Fundraising Committee, participating in UVHA fundraising activities.
3. Details pertaining to the level of aid awarded are sensitive. Recipients are expected to treat it as such, keeping this information private.

Application

The information requested is required and necessary to determine the degree of need for each applicant. If you are applying for scholarships for multiple players, you must submit separate applications for each child. Below is the scale used for determining the scholarship percentage an applicant may receive, taking into consideration the number of dependents in the household.

Number of Children in the Household

Gross Combined Household Income	1	2	3	4	5	6
\$18,000 - \$25,999	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
\$26,000 - \$33,999	30%	30%	35%	35%	40%	50%
\$34,000 - \$41,999	20%	20%	25%	25%	35%	45%

Section I - Player Information

Player 1 Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____
 Player 1 Team: _____ Team’s Registration Fee: _____
 Player 2 Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Player 2 Team: _____ Team's Registration Fee: _____

Player 3 Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Player 3 Team: _____ Team's Registration Fee: _____

Player 4 Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Player 4 Team: _____ Team's Registration Fee: _____

Section II - Parent/Guardian Information

Parent/Guardian Name(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

Parent 1 Employer: _____

Parent 2 Employer: _____

Section III - Household Information

of Adults Living in the Household: _____ # of Children Living in the Household: _____

Household Season Registration Total: \$ _____ We are able to pay: \$ _____

Public Assistance (*please check all that apply*):

- Federal Public Housing Assistance/Section 8
- SNAP Food Stamps
- Medicaid
- National School Lunch Program (free or reduced lunch)
- Other: _____

Gross Annual *Combined* Household Income (*please circle one*):

\$18,000-\$25,999 \$26,000-\$33,999 \$34,000-\$41,999 \$42,000-\$65,000

Over \$65,000

- I have included documents *required* to verify public assistance.

- I have included documents *required* to verify household income (W2s, two recent pay stubs, unemployment or disability statement/statement of benefits, or federal tax returns).

By signing this document, I confirm that I have read and understand all of the information on page one of this application. I also confirm that all of the information I've provided on page two of this application is true and accurate.

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

Please mail completed application(s), along with proof of public assistance and income verifying documents, to the attention of the UVHA Scholarship Committee.

Applications must be received by June 1st.

Appendix 2



Declaration of Interest in Coaching

Name:	
Address:	
Phone:	Home: _____ Mobile: _____
Email:	
Hockey Experience:	Youth High School College Men's League Other
Coaching Experience:	
Credentials:	(i.e. SafeSport, Last Background Check, CEP Level)
Desired Level:	Termite Mite Squirt Peewee Bantam
Desired Role:	Head Coach Assistant Coach Practice Coach Bench Coach
Why do you want to coach?	

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 3

USA Hockey Codes of Conduct



Administrator's Code of Conduct

Follow the rules and regulations of USA Hockey and your association to ensure that the association's philosophy and objectives are enhanced.

- Support programs that train and educate players, coaches, parents, officials and volunteers.
- Promote and publicize your programs; seek out financial support when possible.
- Communicate with parents by holding parent/player orientation meetings as well as by being available to answer questions and address problems throughout the season.
- Work to provide programs that encompass fairness to the participants and promote fair play and sportsmanship.
- Recruit volunteers, including coaches, who demonstrate qualities conducive to being role models to the youth in our sport.
- Encourage coaches and officials to attend USA Hockey clinics and advise your board members of the necessity for their training sessions.
- Make every possible attempt to provide everyone, at all skill levels, with a place to play.
- Read and be familiar with the contents of the *USA Hockey Annual Guide* and USA Hockey's official playing rules.
- Develop other administrators to advance to positions in your association, perhaps even your own.

Coach's Code of Conduct

- Winning is a consideration, but not the only one, nor the most important one. Care more about the child than winning the game. Remember, players are involved in hockey for fun and enjoyment.
- Be a positive role model to your players. Display emotional maturity and be alert to the physical safety of players.

- Be generous with your praise when it is deserved; be consistent and honest; be fair and just; do not criticize players publicly; learn to be a more effective communicator and coach; don't yell at players.
- Adjust to personal needs and problems of players; be a good listener; never verbally or physically abuse a player or official; give all players the opportunity to improve their skills, gain confidence and develop self-esteem; teach players the basics.
- Organize practices that are fun and challenging for your players. Familiarize yourself with the rules, techniques and strategies of hockey; encourage all your players to be team players.
- Maintain an open line of communication with your players' parents. Explain the goals and objectives of your association.
- Be concerned with the overall development of your players. Stress good health habits and clean living.
- To play the game is great, to love the game is greater

On-Ice Official's Code of Conduct

- Act in a professional and businesslike manner at all times and take your role seriously.
- Strive to provide a safe and sportsmanlike environment in which players can properly display their hockey skills.
- Know all playing rules, their interpretations and their proper application.
- Remember that officials are teachers. Set a good example.
- Make your calls with quiet confidence; never with arrogance.
- Manage and help to control games in cooperation with the coaches to provide a positive and safe experience for all participants.
- Violence must never be tolerated.
- Be fair and impartial at all times.
- Answer all reasonable questions and requests.
- Adopt a "zero tolerance" attitude toward verbal or physical abuse.
- Never use foul or vulgar language when speaking with a player, coach or parent.
- Use honesty and integrity when answering questions.
- Admit your mistakes when you make them.
- Never openly criticize a coach, player or fellow official.

- Keep your emotions under control.
- Use only USA Hockey-approved officiating techniques and policies.
- Maintain your health through a physical conditioning program.
- Dedicate yourself to personal improvement and maintenance of officiating skills.
- Respect your supervisor and his/her critique of your performance.

Parent's Code of Conduct

Do not force your children to participate in sports, but support their desires to play their chosen sports. Children are involved in organized sports for their enjoyment. Make it fun.

- Encourage your child to play by the rules. Remember, children learn best by example, so applaud the good plays of both teams.
- Do not embarrass your child by yelling at players, coaches or officials. By showing a positive attitude toward the game and all of its participants, your child will benefit.
- Emphasize skill development and practices and how they benefit your young athlete. De-emphasize games and competition in the lower age groups.
- Know and study the rules of the game and support the officials on and off the ice. This approach will help in the development and support of the game. Any criticism of the officials only hurts the game.
- Applaud a good effort in both victory and defeat, and enforce the positive points of the game. Never yell or physically abuse your child after a game or practice – it is destructive. Work toward removing the physical and verbal abuse in youth sports.
- Recognize the importance of volunteer coaches. They are important to the development of your child and the sport.
- Communicate with them and support them.
- If you enjoy the game, learn all you can about hockey – and volunteer.

Player's Code of Conduct

- Play for fun.
- Work hard to improve your skills.
- Be a team player – get along with your teammates.
- Learn teamwork, sportsmanship and discipline.
- Be on time.

- Learn the rules and play by them. Always be a good sport.
- Respect your coach, your teammates, your parents, opponents and officials.
- Never argue with an official's decision.

Spectator's Code of Conduct

- Display good sportsmanship. Always respect players, coaches and officials.
- Act appropriately; do not taunt or disturb other fans; enjoy the game together.
- Cheer good plays of all participants; avoid booing opponents.
- Cheer in a positive manner and encourage fair play; profanity and objectionable cheers or gestures are offensive.
- Help provide a safe and fun environment; throwing any items on the ice surface can cause injury to players and officials.
- Do not lean over or pound on the glass; the glass surrounding the ice surface is part of the playing area.
- Support the referees and coaches by trusting their judgment and integrity.
- Be responsible for your own safety – be alert to prevent accidents from flying pucks and other avoidable situations.
- Respect locker rooms as private areas for players, coaches and officials.
- Be supportive after the game – win or lose. Recognize good effort, teamwork and sportsmanship.

Appendix 4



UVHA's Locker Room Policy

In addition to the development of our hockey players and enjoyment of the sport of hockey, the safety and protection of our participants is central to UVHA's goals. UVHA adheres to USA Hockey's SafeSport Program as a means to help protect its participants from physical abuse, sexual abuse and other types of misconduct, including emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing. To help prevent abuse or misconduct from occurring in our locker rooms, UVHA has adopted the following locker room policy. This policy is designed to maintain personal privacy as well as to reduce the risk of misconduct in locker rooms.

There are four (4) locker rooms available for our program's use. Each of the locker rooms has its own restroom. Some teams in our program will regularly travel to play games at other arenas, and those locker rooms, restrooms and shower facilities will vary from location to location. When travel teams are on the road, it is expected that all players will adhere to UVHA's locker room policy.

Locker Room Monitoring

UVHA has predictable and limited use of locker rooms and changing areas (e.g., generally 30-45

minutes before and following practices and games). This allows for direct and regular monitoring of locker room areas. While constant monitoring inside of locker rooms and changing areas might be the most effective way to prevent problems, we understand that this would likely make some players uncomfortable and may even place our staff at risk for unwarranted suspicion. We conduct a sweep of the locker rooms and changing areas before players arrive, and if the coaches are not inside the locker rooms, either a coach or voluntary locker room monitor (each of which has been screened) will be posted directly outside of the locker room and changing area during periods of use, so that only participants (coaches and players), approved team personnel and family members are permitted in the locker room. Nothing of value should ever be left in a locker room as these rooms are not monitored while players are on the ice.

Parents in Locker Rooms

Except for players at the younger age groups (Termites-U6, Mites-U8 and Squirts-U10), we discourage parents from entering locker rooms unless it is truly necessary. If a player at the Peewee or Bantam level needs assistance with his or her uniform or gear, we ask that the player leaves the locker room and seeks help from his/her parent. If a player's disability warrants assistance, then we ask that parents let the coach know beforehand that he or she will be helping the player in the locker room.

Naturally, with our youngest age groups it is necessary for parents to assist the players getting dressed. We encourage parents to teach their players as young as possible how to get dressed so that players will learn as early as possible how to get dressed independently. Only one parent/guardian shall accompany a player in the locker room (this goes for games as well as practices). On game days, all parents/guardians should be cleared out of the locker room fifteen (15) minutes prior to game time so as to let coaches address the players without distractions.

Locker Room Attire

The UVHA's Locker Room Policy attempts to balance the social integration and camaraderie of a team sport while providing a safe and respectful environment for all of our participants. It is important that the privacy rights of all our players are given consideration and appropriate arrangements made. All players are required to arrive at the rink wearing their hockey base layers or shorts and t-shirts in good condition (no holes or tears in clothing) under their street clothes. All players are also encouraged to show up to play hockey and leave all incidentals or add-on enhancements at home (i.e. jewelry, phones and make-up). All members of the team must have this minimum attire before entering a locker room so that no player has the opportunity to see players of the same or opposite gender in a state of compromised dress. If a player needs to change under clothing, then it is expected that he or she will utilize the bathroom/shower stall in the restroom before returning to the shared locker room space. We understand that these arrangements may require that players arrive earlier or leave later to dress, but believe that this is the most reasonable way to accommodate and respect all of our players.

Cell Phones and Other Mobile Recording Devices

Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras, are *not* permitted to be used in the locker rooms. If phones or other mobile devices must be used, they should be taken outside of the locker room.

Prohibited Conduct and Reporting

UVHA prohibits all types of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing, all as described in the USA Hockey SafeSport Handbook. Participants, employees or volunteers for UVHA may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion, for violation of these locker room policies or for engaging in any

misconduct or abuse that violates the USA Hockey SafeSport Policies. To report any actual or suspected violations, you may email the SafeSport coordinator at safesport@uvha.org.

Appendix 5



Acceptance of Policies and Procedures and USA Hockey’s Codes of Conduct

I acknowledge that I have read and agree to abide by the Upper Valley Hockey Association’s Policies and Procedures and USA Hockey’s Codes of Conduct. I have reviewed these documents with my player. I understand that this document must be signed and returned prior to participation this season.

Parent/Guardian Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Player Name

Player Signature

Date

Appendix 6

Mite Program Definitions & Policies for Participation and Advancement

Learn-to-Skate Participation (Storm Academy)

- a. Participation in the Learn-to-Skate program has no strict age limits. Instead, the inclusion or exclusion of skaters within this program will be made based on the preservation of a safe environment for the majority of the participants. Coaches at this level are to consider such elements as relative size, body control, coordination, temperament, and aggressiveness when assessing the overall safety within a group of skaters spanning a broad range of ages.
- b. Participation in Learn-to-Skate requires no prior skating experience and has no minimum age requirement, although skaters should be able to take direction from a non-parent adult, follow-instructions, and generally stay on-task for 1 hour without parent intervention.
- c. Advancement from Learn-to-Skate to Learn-to-Play requires the recommendation of the Learn-to-Skate coaching team. The Learn-to-Skate coaching team should evaluate the advancement readiness of each participant on or before the end of the season and clearly communicate the status to the player's parents. In the case of a determination that a player is not ready to advance, the coaching team should clearly communicate the areas of improvement required for future advancement.

Learn-to-Play Participation (House Mites)

- a. Participation in the Learn-to-Play program has no strict age limits. Instead, the inclusion or exclusion of skaters within this program will be made based on the preservation of a safe environment for the majority of the participants. Coaches at this level are to consider such elements as relative size, body control, coordination, temperament, and aggressiveness when assessing the overall safety within a group of skaters spanning a broad range of ages.
- b. Participation in Learn-to-Play requires previous participation in Learn-to-Skate. Alternatively, players who have not previously participated in Learn-to-Skate must demonstrate skating proficiency consistent with the USA Hockey Skill Progression for 8U players. Proficiency assessments will be made by the Learn-to-Play coaching team.
- c. Should coaches elect to participate in cross-ice games or tournaments with the Learn-to-Play group, then only players meeting the age requirements of the games or tournaments may participate. Historically, most of the Learn-to-Play group has consisted of 8U players and the Learn-to-Play group has participated in a limited number of games and 1-2 tournaments at the 8U level. Families of players who are not 8U (10U or 12U for example), should be notified both at registration and again at the beginning of the season that they are ineligible to participate in such events to set expectations appropriately.

d. Advancement from Learn-to-Play to 8U, 10U, or 12U Travel teams requires the recommendation of the Learn-to-Play coaching team. The Learn-to-Play coaching team should evaluate the advancement readiness of each participant on or before the end of the season and communicate the status to the player's parents. In the case of a determination that a player is not ready to advance, the coaching team should clearly communicate the areas of improvement required for advancement.

8U Travel Participation (Travel Mites)

a. Participation in 8U Travel requires previous participation in Learn-to-Play. Players who have not previously participated in Learn-to-Play must demonstrate skating and game-play proficiency consistent with the USA Hockey Skill Progression for 8U players. Proficiency will be assessed by the 8U Travel coaching team, and the coaching team may make exceptions to this policy in the interest of generating sufficient numbers to complete a team.

b. Participation in full-ice 8U Travel is limited to final-year 8U Travel players who will be advancing to 10U in the following season. The 8U Travel coaching team may make exceptions to this policy in the interest of generating sufficient numbers to complete a team or if a younger player has demonstrated the skill necessary to participate safely and competitively as determined by a majority of the coaching team. The age of all full-ice 8U Travel players must be consistent with any standing exemption granted by USA Hockey to sanction full-ice 8U play.