

# Flathead Valley Hockey Association



# POLICY MANUAL

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Flathead Valley Hockey Association offers the youth of the Flathead Valley of all ages and abilities the opportunity to participate in the sport of ice hockey.

## **FVHA BOARD AND DIRECTORS MEETINGS**

The frequency, place and time of the Board of Directors shall be determined pursuant to the bylaws and on an as needed basis by the Board of Directors. It is intended that meetings be held at least once per month. General members are encouraged to attend meetings. Please contact the Secretary for time and place of meetings. Approved minutes of meetings of the Board of Directors shall be available to all membership at a location approved by the Board.

## **FVHA FINANCIAL POLICY**

FVHA's financial dealings; including expenditures and revenue collection, capital projects, service contracts, grants and awards shall be the domain of the standing Board of Directors and if necessary, their appointed representatives. In general, the FVHA board shall work to keep the association financially sound by not over extending one season's obligations to adversely influence or debit the next season. FVHA's annual fiscal (financial) year shall be from July 1st to June 30th. Record, bookkeeping and operational processes shall be maintained in order to keep FVHA compliant with that fiscal year and with the IRS codes governing non profit status, including annual filings. As necessary, the FVHA board of Directors may appoint or hire a bookkeeper or accountant to keep and maintain the records. Annual dues and fees are payable by FVHA members as declared by the Board of Directors. No player/ family may register for, or participate in FVHA's current season with outstanding debits or costs to FVHA from the previous season. Fundraising will be conducted for the general good of the order including the active support of scholarship and /or specific assistance programs. Fundraising conducted by specific teams shall be approved by the board of directors who may ask for an accounting of the funds raised and request control of the funds distribution. Any team who fundraises for the specific good of one team will contribute 10% of the gross collected to the general fund of the association.

## **TRAVEL EXPENSES FOR LEAGUE MEETINGS**

The Board of Directors can approve payment for gasoline, food and lodging expenses incurred by members of the Board incident to their attending meetings of leagues in which FVHA participates.

## **TRAVEL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT FOR COACHES**

The Board has approved a fund to assist with the travel expenses of coaches. The intent is to defray costs of travel to games during the regular season. Receipts may be submitted for reimbursement. Reimbursement requests will be reviewed by the scholarship committee and awarded on an as-needed basis determined by the committee.

## **MANDATORY SEASON OPENING MEETING FOR PARENTS**

The board will set a mandatory meeting for members joining FVHA and their parent and guardian prior to the start of the season. The purpose of this meeting is to outline in clear detail expectations and responsibilities of coaches, managers, parents and players. Review of all association documents and commitment forms will take place at this mandatory meeting.

## **SEASON DURATION**

The ice hockey season will commence when the Woodland Ice Park is ready for use (October/November) and will conclude in February/March when the final scheduled event has concluded.

## **SCHOLARSHIPS FOR ICE FEES AND EQUIPMENT**

FVHA shall award partial scholarships for seasonal fees and/or equipment rental on an annual basis for players and families who apply for scholarship assistance and demonstrate financial need and/or hardship. Confidential scholarship inquiries will be processed by officers on the FVHA board. **Those officers should gather and document enough information from the applicants to insure need** and make their recommendation to the full board. Scholarships are to be awarded equitably across all age brackets in a non-discriminatory manner at the board's discretion. **No scholarship monies are available for the purpose of covering travel expenses.** Scholarship and assistance money and equipment may be rescinded by the Board at any time based on the player's behavior and lack of merit. Strict confidentiality will be maintained by the board in the area of scholarships and assistance.

Families receiving scholarships will be asked to contribute one volunteer hour/\$10 of scholarship. Players will be asked to sign a Scholarship Agreement in which they commit to attending all practices and games except in cases of illness or injury, family emergency or other absence where the player and their family communicate with the coach/manager prior to the absence to discuss special circumstances. Failure to meet expectations and commitments could result in the scholarship being rescinded. In cases where the scholarship is rescinded the player will be asked to pay the full session fee.

Scholarship applications will be available on the website and will be accepted by new members at any time. Returning members should complete the required scholarship application by October 5<sup>th</sup>. Returning members will not be allowed on the ice until the scholarship application is approved. New players will not be allowed on the ice until the scholarship paperwork is complete.

## **ANNUAL ADMINISTRATION**

No player will be allowed on the ice until the USA Hockey registration is complete; all paperwork is received by the FVHA registrar and session payment is made or a written payment plan is accepted by the registrar.

A jersey deposit as determined by the board must be submitted in full before a jersey set will be issued. The deposit will be returned when the jersey set has been returned in good order to the association.

Refund of ice fees for players unable to continue for medical reasons shall be prorated.

## **TEAMS/ DIVISIONS**

Player classifications are made pursuant to the rules of USA Hockey and MAHA.

No player will be allowed to skate “up” as a result of a parent’s request for either the sake of convenience or perceived skill level. Coaches will not be allowed to cherry-pick players from a younger division as this hollows out a team and deprives it of leadership.

HOWEVER, the Board of Directors reserves the right to allow “groups” of players to practice and play “up” in an ADDITIONAL age group for the benefit of a team that may otherwise be too small to participate in games. This is done strictly for the benefit of the association. If the opportunity to play and practice with an additional team is held open to some players, with the exception of first year skaters, it will be held open to all players within a defined group with an interest in doing so. Players will be expected to practice with their appropriate age group as well as any other group they may be allowed to join for the benefit for the association. **Due to the introduction of full-checking rules at the Bantam level, the Board of Directors has determined that a player who does not meet the age-eligibility requirements for Bantam will be invited to play up at the Bantam level in any case.**

FVHA follows rostering rules as outlined in the MAHA (Montana Amateur Hockey Association) Annual Guide.

**All participants are expected to participate with their own age group as defined by USA Hockey.**

## **TEMPERATURE POLICY**

Temperatures between 10 degrees Fahrenheit and -10 degrees Fahrenheit are considered a discretionary zone. Discretion as to whether or not to participate in a practice or game due to low temperature lies with parents, players and coaches at no penalty to the player.

In the event that the temperature is 0 degrees Fahrenheit or lower, all MAHA league games will be cancelled.

All activities at Woodland Ice Center will be cancelled at a temperature of -10 degrees Fahrenheit or lower.

## **GAME/ TOURNAMENT PLAY**

There is an expected level of commitment when a child joins an FVHA team that participates in League or Tournament play. Players are expected to participate in all games and practices. Coaches will set their own team policies regarding absences, which may include reducing

playing time. Circumstances preventing attendance at a practice or game must be communicated to the coach or team manager.

## **UNIFORM COLORS/ LOGOS**

The FVHA Board has adopted red, yellow and black with the registered Flames logo (which appears on this cover) to represent FVHA. No other jerseys will represent our Association unless directly distributed by FVHA.

## **EQUIPMENT**

The Board of Directors has adopted a policy mandating the use of all standard hockey safety equipment as required by USA Hockey.

## **PROHIBITED CONDUCT AND REPORTING**

FVHA 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 in FVHA may be subject to disciplinary and/or legal action for violation of these locker room policies or for engaging in any misconduct or abuse or that violates the USA Hockey SafeSport Policies.

Reports of any actual or suspected violations, you may email FVHA at safesportfvha@gmail.com or contact USA Hockey directly at SafeSport@usahockey.org or may call USA Hockey at 1-800-888-4656.

## **TRAVEL POLICY**

FVHA has some teams that travel regularly to play individual games, two or three games at a time, or in tournaments, has some teams where travel is limited to only a few events per year, and some teams where there is no travel other than local travel to and from our own arena.

FVHA has established policies to guide our travel, minimize one-on-one interactions, and reduce the risk of abuse or misconduct. Adherence to these travel guidelines will increase player safety and improve the player's experience while keeping travel a fun and enjoyable experience.

We distinguish between travel to training, practice, coordinated overnight stay ("team travel").

### **LOCAL TRAVEL**

Local travel occurs when FVHA or one of its teams does not sponsor, coordinate, or arrange for travel.

1. Players and/or their parents/guardians are responsible for making all arrangements for local travel. The team and its coaches, managers or administrators should avoid responsibility for arranging or coordinating local travel. It is the responsibility of

the parents/guardians to ensure the person transporting the minor player maintains the proper safety and legal requirements, including, but not limited to, a valid driver's license, automobile liability insurance, a vehicle in safe working order, and compliance with applicable state laws.

2. The employees, coaches, and/or volunteers of FVHA or one of its teams, who are not also acting as a parent, should not drive alone with an unrelated minor player and should only drive with at least two players or another adult at all times, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the minor player's parent.
3. Where an employee, coach, and/or volunteer is involved in an unrelated minor player's local travel, efforts should be made to ensure that the adult personnel are not alone with the unrelated player, by, e.g., picking up or dropping off the players in groups. In any case where an employee, coach and/or volunteer is involved in the player's local travel, a parental release should be obtained in advance.
4. Employees, coaches, and volunteers who are also a player's parent or guardian may provide shared transportation for any player(s) if they pick up their player first and drop off their player last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement.
5. It is recognized that in some limited instances it will be unavoidable for an employee, coach or volunteer of FVHA or one of its teams to drive alone with an unrelated minor player. However, efforts should be made to minimize these occurrences and to mitigate any circumstances that could lead to allegations of abuse or misconduct.

#### **TEAM TRAVEL**

Team travel is overnight travel that occurs when FVHA or one of its teams sponsors, coordinates or arranges for travel so that our teams can compete locally, regionally, nationally or internationally. Because of the greater distances, coaches, staff, volunteers, and chaperones will often travel with the players.

1. It is the responsibility of the player's parents or guardians to ensure that the player has adequate travel arrangements prior to the team travel including transportation, lodging, and medical needs. FVHA employees, coaches, manager, or volunteers are not required but may assist the player in those needs.
2. All players, regardless of possession of a valid driver's license, still in high school or younger must travel with a parent, guardian, or adult age 21 or older. Players graduated from high school may drive him/herself to away games, but may not transport players still in high school or younger.
3. When possible, FVHA will provide reasonable advance notice before team travel. Travel notice will also include designated team hotels for overnight stays as well as a contact person within FVHA or the team. This individual will be the point of contact to confirm your intention to travel and to help with travel details.
4. FVHA will post specific travel itineraries when they become available. These will include a more detailed schedule as well as contact information for team travel

- chaperones. FVHA will make efforts to provide adequate supervision through coaches and other adult chaperones. FVHA will make efforts so that there is at least one coach or adult chaperone for each five to eight players. If a team is composed of both male and female players, then we will attempt to arrange chaperones of the both genders. However, we rely on parents to serve as chaperones and may be limited in providing this match.
5. Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with a minor player (unless the coach is the parent, guardian or sibling of the player).
  6. Because of the greater distances, coaches, staff, volunteers, and chaperones will often travel with the players. No employee, coach, or volunteer will engage in team travel without the proper safety requirements in place and on record, including valid drivers' licenses, automobile liability insurance as required by applicable state law, a vehicle in safe working order, and compliance with all state laws. All chaperones shall have been screened in compliance with the USA Hockey Screening Policy and all team drivers shall have been screened and the screen shall include a check of appropriate Department of Motor Vehicle records. A parent that has not been screened may participate in team activities and assist with supervision/monitoring of the players, but will not be permitted to have any one-on-one interactions with players.
  7. Players should share rooms with other players of the same gender, with the appropriate number of players assigned per room depending on accommodations.
  8. The coach will establish a curfew by when all players must be in their hotel rooms or in a supervised location. Regular monitoring and curfew checks shall be made of each room by at least two properly screened adults.
  9. The team personnel shall ask hotels to block adult pay per view channels.
  10. Individual meetings between a player and coach may not occur in hotel sleeping rooms and must be held in public settings or with additional adults present.
  11. All players will be permitted to make regular check-in phone calls to parents. Team personnel shall allow for any unscheduled check in phone calls initiated by either the player or parents.
  12. Family members who wish to stay in the team hotel are permitted and encouraged to do so.
  13. The team will make every effort to accommodate reasonable parental requests when a child is away from home without a parent. If any special arrangements are necessary for your child, please contact the team personnel who can either make or assist with making those arrangements.
  14. Meetings do not occur in hotel rooms, but the team may reserve a separate space for adults and athletes to socialize.



15. If disciplinary action against a player is required while the player is traveling without his/her parents, then except where immediate action is necessary, parents will be notified before any action is taken or immediately after the action.
16. No coach or chaperone shall at any time be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing their coaching and/or chaperoning duties.
17. In all cases involving travel, parents have the right to transport their minor player and have the minor player stay in their hotel room.
18. During team travel, coaches, team personnel, and chaperones will help players, fellow coaches, and team personnel adhere to policy guidelines, including, without limitation, the Travel Policy, Locker Room Policy, and Reporting Policy.
19. Prior to any travel, coaches will endeavor to make players and parents aware of all expectations and rules. Coaches will also support chaperones and/or participate in the monitoring of the players for adherence to curfew restrictions and other travel rules.

## **EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE**

A medical release must be signed by the player's parents/ guardian, in which emergency medical care is authorized before the player is allowed to participate in games or tournaments away from home. The permission will be given to the team manager or other responsible adult who will accompany the team. The permission shall contain appropriate health insurance data. This release will be part of the registration paperwork.

## **FVHA'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 FVHA's goals. FVHA 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, FVHA 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.

At Woodland Ice Center there are 4 locker rooms available for our program's use. Each of the locker rooms has a closing door and open-topped walls but do not have restrooms nor showers; all areas of the locker room are immediately visible from the locker room entrance. Some teams in our program may also occasionally or regularly travel to play games at other arenas, and those locker rooms, rest rooms and shower facilities will vary from location to location. FVHA's team organizers will attempt to provide information on the locker room facilities in advance of games away from our home arena. At arenas for which you are unfamiliar, parents should plan to have extra time and some flexibility in making arrangements for their child to dress, undress and shower if desired.

**LOCKER ROOM MONITORING**

FVHA 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. Needs of privacy will be balanced in order to provide a safe environment for all.

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, manager, or voluntary locker room monitors (each of which has been screened) shall be posted directly outside if not inside of the locker rooms and changing areas during periods of use, and leave the doors open only when adequate privacy is still possible, so that only participants (coaches and players), approved team personnel and family members are permitted in the locker room. Team personnel will also secure the locker room appropriately during times when the team is on the ice.

No adult will be permitted to meet with any participant one-on-one in a closed locker room.

Good sportsman like conduct is expected at all times. The Code of Conduct signed by participants and others will be strictly enforced. Infractions may result in disciplinary hearings and punishments including expulsion.

**PARENTS IN LOCKER ROOMS**

Except for players at the younger age groups, we discourage parents from entering locker rooms unless it is truly necessary. If a player needs assistance with his or her uniform or gear, if the player is or may be injured, or 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.

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. In circumstances where parents are permitted in the locker room, coaches are permitted to ask that the parents leave for a short time before the game and for a short time after the game so that the coaches may address the players. As players get older, the coach may in his or her discretion prohibit parents from a locker room.

**MIXED GENDER TEAMS**

Some of our teams consist of both male and female players. It is important that the privacy rights of all of our players are given consideration and appropriate arrangements made. Where possible, FVHA will have the male and female players dress/undress in separate locker rooms and then convene in a single locker room before the game or team meeting. Once the game or practice is finished, the players may come to one locker room for a team meeting and then the male and female

players proceed to their separate locker rooms to undress and shower, if available. If separate locker rooms are not available, then the players will take turns using the locker room to change. 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 without prior written permission of the FVHA Board or the SafeSport Coordinator. If phones or other mobile devices must be used, they should be taken outside of the locker room.

## **STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

**EXPECTED CONDUCT:** Every player, parent, coach, board member, team manager and other persons associated with FVHA are expected to conduct themselves at home and on the road in a manner that reflects favorably on FVHA. FVHA spectators and guests are also expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects well on the players and the association.

#### **PROHIBITED CONDUCT:**

In reference to conduct outside of on-ice violations addressed by a referee, the Board has determined that there will be two classifications of prohibited conduct, **MINOR VIOLATIONS** and **MAJOR VIOLATIONS**. Prohibited conduct shall include, but not limited to the following:

#### *MINOR VIOLATIONS:*

1. Swearing - This includes the inappropriate use of profanity, vulgarity or ethnic slurs.
2. Excessive Roughness - This includes inappropriate use of physical force between players, coaches or parents and another person or persons during practice, play, or tournaments that causes safety concerns.
3. Arguing with Officials, Coaches and Board Members - This includes inappropriate verbal disagreement with coaches, officials and board members by players, coaches, parents, relatives or friends.
4. Disruptive Behavior - This includes inappropriate rough-housing, game playing, or other activity considered to be disruptive to others during practices and/or games at home or on the road.

#### *MAJOR VIOLATIONS:*

1. Property Damage
2. Controlled Substances - FVHA players may not possess or use alcohol, tobacco or drugs at any time during the season. Adult members of FVHA must abide by associated laws and USA Hockey and MAHA rules as they apply to the adult's position in the organization regarding these substances.
3. Theft

4. Fighting - This includes belligerent physical contact with another person while at home or on the road. Flathead Valley Hockey Association has a zero tolerance policy for fighting on the ice or otherwise and all FVHA members determined to be guilty of fighting will be disciplined by the Board of Directors regardless of penalties assigned during the game.
5. Verbal Abuse - Verbal abuse, harassment or intimidation of players, coaches, referees, team managers, board members, volunteers of FVHA by a player, parents, relatives, friends, coaches or officials of FVHA will be considered unacceptable. Refer to the USA Hockey SafeSport Program Handbook for further definition.
6. Physical Abuse - Physical abuse of players, coaches, referees, team managers, volunteers or other officials of FVHA will be considered unacceptable behavior of the highest order and will be reported to public authority. Refer to the USA Hockey SafeSport Program Handbook for further definition.

**DISCIPLINARY ACTION:** A written complaint or documentation of a violation must be submitted to the Board to prompt action by the Board of Directors. If it is determined that disciplinary action is appropriate, the Board of Directors has determined that the following disciplinary procedures will apply in cases of minor or major classification violations. These procedures are intended for the protection and enhancement of the Association, players, and others involved with youth hockey. *Note: Coaches may subscribe to team policies that are more strict, but not less strict than the following disciplinary action protocols. Use of policies other than what is listed in the FVHA Association Policy Handbook must be communicated to parents and players at the outset of the season.*

*MINOR VIOLATIONS (not assessed as a penalty during a game)*

1. First Offense

If a first offense violation occurs and immediate responsive action is taken, it must be reported to the board.

a. Player: When an act prohibited under Minor Violations is committed, the involved party will be suspended from the practice or game session during which the violation occurred. He/she will leave the arena immediately. If the act occurs after a practice or game session, the involved player will be suspended from the next practice session or game. Depending on a coach's policy, a missed practice may also result in missing one to three periods of the next game.

b. Adult: He/she will leave the arena immediately.

2. Second Offense

a. Player: A second offense will result in the party being suspended from practice and games for a period of seven (7) days from the date of the violation to include the next full game.

b. Adult: A second offense will result in the party being suspended from the arena all Association activities for a period of seven (7) days from the date of the violation.

3. Third Offense

a. Player: A third offense will result in the party being suspended for a period of thirty (30) days from all Association activities, including practice and games.

b. Adult: A third offense will result in the party being suspended from the arena all Association activities for a period of thirty (30) days from the date of the violation.

*MAJOR VIOLATIONS (not assessed as a penalty during a game)*

1. First Offense

a. Player: the party involved will be immediately suspended from playing in the next three (3) games. Players will be expected to attend practice without exception. Failure to attend practice could result in additional suspension from games. Players are expected to travel with their team to games regardless of suspension, suit-up and support all teammates in a manner becoming to a member of FVHA.

b. Adult: the party involved will be immediately suspended from the arena and all Association activities for a length of time to be determined by the FVHA Discipline Committee.

2. Second Offense

- a. Player: A second violation will result in the involved party being immediately terminated for the remainder of the season. Any party wishing to participate after the termination is completed will be on a sixty (60) day probation period.
- b. Adult: the party involved will be immediately suspended from the arena and all Association activities for a length of time to be determined by the FVHA Discipline Committee.

#### *SPECIAL DISCIPLINE*

The physical abuse of a player, coach, referee, parent, volunteer, team manager, board member or other official of the association will result in immediate termination of the involved player for the remainder of the season. In instances where a coach, referee, or official of the association is involved, that member's position and duties will be terminated for the remainder of the season. A sixty (60) day probationary period will apply for the following season.

#### *SPECIAL PROCEDURES*

The following procedures will be adhered to in the case of the suspension or termination of players, coaches, or referees. In the case of a violation for which termination was mandated as above, a review of the circumstances and confirmation of the disciplinary action shall be made by the board. Proper procedure for a hearing will be afforded as indicated. The decision of the board is final. In the case of a suspension or termination, no return of fees will be made. In instances where full payment of fees has not been made, the fees must be paid prior to accepting the suspended or terminated party for continued participation. Any party on probation will be considered to have committed a second major violation.

#### *MAJOR GAME CONDUCT VIOLATIONS (assessed as a penalty during a game)*

All Major, Misconduct, and Match Penalties are reported to MAHA and will be addressed according to MAHA/USA Hockey rules and procedures (see USA Hockey Rules and MAHA Annual Guide). In an instance of a major violation requiring investigative or disciplinary action by MAHA, FVHA will receive notice. Further disciplinary action to be imposed by FVHA will be determined by the FVHA Board of Directors/Discipline Committee.

## FVHA STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FORM

### *Goals:*

The goals of the Flathead Valley Hockey Association include:

1. Provide a wholesome and positive experience for Flathead Valley and area youth.
2. Develop character and high moral standards in the young people participating in the program.

### *Definitions:*

When used in this Standards of Conduct, the following terms have their generally accepted definitions and in addition are specifically defined to mean:

1. At Home - this term includes the period of time from when a player first enters the arena until they leave for either practices or games.
2. On the Road - this term includes the period of time from when the players first report for transportation to out of town games until they are released to their parents or guardian upon return.
3. Property Damage - this term means either intentional or negligent damage to any type of personal or real property.
4. Possession or Use - this term includes mere possession whether or not accompanied by intent to use.

I CERTIFY THAT I HAVE READ AND AGREE TO THESE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT. ADDITIONALLY I HAVE READ THE USA HOCKEY PARTICIPANT CODE OF CONDUCT AND UNDERSTAND THAT ANY VIOLATION OF THAT CODE WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINE ACTION AS DESCRIBED IN THIS POLICY MANUAL.

Player: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_





