



TO: AAHA Club Presidents

FROM: Glenn Hefferan

DATE: October 1, 2018

RE: **IMPORTANT** - Helmet Compliance & Suspension – Coaches

There have been numerous reports that coaches are not wearing helmets during on-ice practice/skill sessions. This is unacceptable and Club Leadership needs to address this matter immediately.

The following is from the USA Hockey Annual Guide:

*All ice hockey coaches and instructors of registered USA Hockey Youth 18 & Under and below, high school, girls'/women's 19 & under and below, and disabled programs must properly wear an approved ice hockey helmet during all on-ice sessions, including practices, controlled scrimmages and all Coaching Education Program clinics and/ or workshops. Failure to comply will result in a 30-day suspension from all activities involving USA Hockey registered programs.*

This language has also been adopted by the AAHA, however the 30-day suspension is the minimum recommended suspension, which means it may be a longer suspension.

Due to the significant safety concern and volume of reported violations, I will now recommend a minimum of a 60-day suspension to the coach plus a \$100 fine assessed to the Club. It is permitted and encouraged for Clubs and Leagues to enforce this rule. However, over the course of the season, particularly in the coming weeks, we will ask Evaluators from the Officiating Program and Instructors from the Coaching Education Program to perform **compliance visits** to several facilities, to verify that coaches are wearing helmets as required.

Two seasons ago, an NCAA Division I Referee died as a result of head trauma when he fell to the ice during a college game warm up. Because Coaches are often in the middle of and engaged in the practice session, there can be a higher likelihood of falling. Do you really want to put your players in the position of having accidental contact with you, which causes serious injury (or worse) to a coach all because he/she wasn't wearing a helmet?

It's simple: **WEAR THE HELMET OR YOU WILL BE SUSPENDED.**

