

AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION COLLEGE HOCKEY

OPERATIONS MANUAL



2024-2025

AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION COLLEGE HOCKEY

OPERATIONS MANUAL - TABLE OF CONTENTS

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**AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION COLLEGE HOCKEY
OPERATIONS MANUAL: PURPOSE, PROCESS & PROCEDURE**

I: AAU COLLEGE HOCKEY OPERATIONS MANUAL

1. The AAU College Hockey Operations Manual provides a comprehensive framework designed to maintain collegiate hockey's integrity, excellence, and sportsmanship within the Amateur Athletic Union. Its primary purpose is to:
2. Establish Organizational Principles. These principles underscore the importance of the academic experience for student-athletes, ensuring their academic and athletic endeavors are balanced and aligned with their institutions' broader educational goals.
3. Define Competitive and Ethical Standards. The manual sets forth standards for recruitment, player eligibility, rostering, and the conduct of games, emphasizing fair play, respect, and ethical behavior across all aspects of the sport.
4. Facilitate a Fair and Competitive Environment. The manual aims to create a competitive yet equitable environment that champions the spirit of collegiate hockey by detailing procedures for gameplay, rankings, national tournaments, and qualification criteria based on the highest standards of competition and integrity.
5. Promote Student-Athlete Well-Being. It emphasizes the physical and mental health of student-athletes, advocating for a supportive environment that respects their well-being and encourages their development both on and off the ice.
6. Ensure Institutional Control and Compliance. The manual mandates that institutions maintain control over their hockey programs, ensuring adherence to AAU College Hockey's membership and eligibility standards and fostering a culture of honesty, integrity, and compliance.
7. Uphold Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Commitment to these values is woven throughout the manual, promoting an inclusive environment that respects the dignity of every participant and encourages participation across diverse communities.
8. Address Appeals and Violations. It outlines transparent processes for handling appeals and addressing violations, ensuring that all concerns are addressed fairly and transparently, reinforcing the accountability of conferences, teams and individuals.
9. The rationale behind the Operations Manual is multifaceted, aiming not only to govern the sport's logistical and competitive aspects but also to uphold values that resonate beyond the ice rink. It seeks to foster environments where sportsmanship, academic integrity, and personal development are paramount, ensuring that collegiate hockey contributes positively to the educational experience and personal growth of student-athletes.

II: OPERATIONS MANUAL: PROCESS & PROCEDURES

1. The Executive Team of AAU College Hockey meticulously curates the Operations Manual, which embodies the foundational principles, methodologies, standards of procedure, and organizational structures of the association. The Director of Hockey Operations oversees this critical document and ensures its relevance and adherence to the association's overarching objectives.
2. Furthermore, the Operations Manual is structured to uphold the competitive excellence and operational integrity that characterizes the AAU and its collegiate hockey division. It is characterized by an inherent systemic adaptability, permitting modifications via a structured dual-phase process. This allows it to consistently align with the evolving competitive, operational, and procedural requisites of the AAU College Hockey membership.

III: OPERATIONS MANUAL PROPOSAL FOR MODIFICATION PROCEDURE

1. Submissions from Members. During the active season, submissions such as proposals, recommendations for amendments, or requisitions for content review may be initiated by any constituent of a member team that is in "Good Standing," including coaching staff or administrative personnel.
2. Such submissions articulated by the team's administrative body or coaching staff shall be conveyed to the corresponding conference representative, who will then present it to the AAU Board of Governors for consideration, deliberation, and discussion. Following approval and endorsement by the Board of Governors, these items will be escalated to the AAU Executive team for further examination. This team reserves the right to solicit a comprehensive presentation and ancillary details to ensure a complete understanding and assessment of the submission. After accepting and incorporating any modifications to the Operations Manual, a formal notification will be disseminated to all Conference leadership in the form of a memorandum issued by the Director of Operations.
3. Initiatives from Conference Leadership & Board of Governors. Proposals, adjustments, or appeals for evaluation can be presented at any juncture during the season by any official within a conference's administrative hierarchy or by members of the Board of Governors.
4. These initiatives will be submitted to the AAU Executive team upon origination by a Conference and/or the Board of Governors. This team may seek a detailed presentation and further data to discern the proposal's full nature. Following a procedure that culminates in the endorsement and integration of changes to the Operations Manual, formal communication will be directed to all Conference leadership via a memorandum from the Director of Hockey Operations.
5. Contributions from AAU Executive Administration and Staff. Affiliates of the AAU Executive Team can generate proposals for innovation, suggestions for alterations, or the invocation of reviews during the season.
6. The Director of Hockey Operations is tasked with presenting these contributions to the AAU Board of Governors for comprehensive review and debate. Proposals that gain the Board's support will effectuate amendments to the Operations Manual and will be officially communicated to all Conference leadership through a memorandum from the Director of Operations.

**AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION COLLEGE HOCKEY
ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES & RECRUITING GUIDELINES**

IV: ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES

1. **The Academic Experience.** Intercollegiate student-athletes are enrolled, degree-seeking students in good standing with their institutions who voluntarily participate in AAU College Hockey. Each member institution is responsible for establishing and maintaining an environment where a student-athlete's activities are conducted with the appropriate primary emphasis on the student-athlete's academic experience. Intercollegiate ice hockey shall be vital to each institution's broader educational program. The admission, academic standing, and academic progress of student-athletes shall be consistent with the policies and standards adopted by the institution.
2. **The Collegiate Student-Athlete Model.** A member institution may not compensate student-athletes for participating in a sport. Still, it may receive educational and other benefits, such as compensation through Name, Image & Likeness Opportunities (NIL) as established by Federal Law and governed under the policies established by the NCAA, AAU College Hockey, and the individual member institutions.
3. **Integrity and Sportsmanship.** Each member's responsibility is to conduct its hockey program that promotes the ideals of higher education, human growth & development, and the integrity of intercollegiate athletics. All individuals associated with AAU College Hockey programs and events should adhere to such fundamental values as respect, fairness, civility, honesty, responsibility, academic integrity, ethical conduct, and the rules of their conferences.
4. **Student-Athlete Well-Being.** AAU College Hockey, divisions, conferences, and member institutions shall conduct their programs designed to protect, support, and enhance student-athletes' physical and mental health and safety. Each member institution shall facilitate an environment that reinforces physical and mental health within the game of ice hockey by ensuring access to appropriate resources and open engagement concerning physical and mental health. Each institution is responsible for ensuring that coaches and administrators exhibit fairness, openness, and honesty in their relationship with student-athletes. Student-athletes shall not be discriminated against or disparaged because of their physical or mental health.
5. **Institutional Control.** Each member institution is responsible for monitoring and controlling its hockey program and providing education and training to ensure compliance with the rules and protocols established by the NCAA and AAU College Hockey, as well as its divisions and conferences. It is the responsibility of each member institution to report all rule violations (membership, eligibility, ethics, recruiting) to its AAU College Hockey divisional commissioner and conference leadership promptly and to cooperate fully with enforcement efforts. Institutional control ultimately rests with the member program's faculty supervision, team administration, coaching staff, and student leadership.
6. **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.** AAU College Hockey is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. AAU College Hockey, its divisions, conferences, and member institutions shall create diverse and inclusive environments, cultivating an atmosphere of respect for and sensitivity to the dignity of every person.

7. Gender Equity. AAU College Hockey is committed to gender equity. All divisions, conferences, and member institutions shall be conducted without gender bias.

V: RECRUITING PRACTICES & PROCEDURES

1. Recruiting Standards. The integrity of AAU College Hockey depends significantly on the ethical recruitment of student-athletes. This policy outlines the principles and procedures to be adhered to by all member programs and affiliated personnel during recruitment. Its purpose is to ensure fairness, respect, and ethical treatment of potential recruits coming to us from junior and travel hockey teams and high school.
2. Ethical Standards. Respect for the Individual: Every potential recruit should be treated with respect and dignity, acknowledging their right to make informed decisions about their collegiate future without undue pressure or influence.
3. Transparency. The recruitment process must be transparent, with clear communication of what a potential student-athlete can expect regarding education, training, and participation in collegiate hockey.
4. Academic Importance. Recruiters must emphasize the importance of academic achievement and the role of the student-athlete in the academic community, aligning with the standards set forth by educational institutions and AAU College Hockey.
5. Fairness and Equality. The recruitment process shall be conducted fairly and equitably for all candidates, regardless of background or skill level, promoting diversity and inclusion within collegiate hockey.

VI: RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES

1. Initial Contact. Communication with potential recruits should begin by allowed by the NCAA and AAU College Hockey. Recruiters must provide accurate information about their program, academic requirements, and the benefits of joining their collegiate hockey team.
2. Academic Verification. Recruiters shall verify potential recruits' academic eligibility and progress to ensure they meet the necessary academic standards for participation in AAU College Hockey.
3. No Inducements. Offering any inducement to a recruit or their family is strictly prohibited. This includes but is not limited to, financial incentives, scholarships not based on established criteria, or any other benefits not uniformly available to all student-athletes.
4. Compliance with Rules and Regulations. Recruiters must adhere to all rules and regulations set forth by AAU College Hockey, including eligibility rules and NCAA-established recruitment windows.
5. Ethical Consideration Regarding Transfers. It is considered unethical to engage in conversations with student-athletes currently enrolled and rostered on another university or college's roster about the possibility of transferring without first formally communicating with the other team's team administration or coaching staff.

6. These protocols aim to:
 - I. Respect the commitments student-athletes have made to their current institutions.
 - II. Maintain professional relationships and integrity among AAU Collegiate Hockey Programs.
 - III. Ensure that any discussions about transferring are conducted openly, ethically, and with the student-athlete's best interests in mind.
7. Violations of this provision will be reviewed and potentially sanctioned by the violating team's conference and AAU College Hockey. Such sanctions may include, but are not limited to, suspension, fines, and public censure.
8. The ethical recruitment of student-athletes is paramount to the integrity and success of AAU College Hockey. By adhering to this policy, recruiters, coaches, and institutions demonstrate their commitment to respect, fairness, and integrity. This enhances the collegiate hockey experience for current and future student-athletes and upholds the esteemed tradition and spirit of AAU College Hockey.

VII: ETHICAL RECRUITMENT OF TEAMS

1. AAU College Hockey's policy is that all member conferences and their members are prohibited from recruiting other AAU College Hockey member teams from different conferences without prior formal communication with and consent from the respective team's conference.
2. Initial Communication: Before any recruitment activities are initiated with a member team from another AAU College Hockey member conference, the recruiting conference must formally communicate its intentions to the conference to which the member team belongs.
3. Documentation: This communication must be documented, detailing the intent to recruit and providing assurance that the recruitment will be conducted ethically and in accordance with AAU College Hockey's standards and values.
4. Consent: Recruitment may proceed only after receiving formal permission from the involved conference. This consent ensures all parties know and agree to the recruitment activities, promoting transparency and fairness.
5. Ethical Standards: Recruitment activities must always uphold the highest levels of integrity, providing member teams with unbiased information and respecting their decisions and commitments to their current teams.

VIII: VIOLATIONS

1. Violations of this policy will be taken seriously and may result in sanctions against the offending conference or member team and any individual/s involved. These may include, but not be limited to, fines, suspension from post-season play, or other penalties as deemed appropriate by AAU College Hockey's Executive Team.
2. AAU College Hockey is committed to ensuring a balanced approach to collegiate hockey, emphasizing the importance of academic and social experiences alongside participation in college hockey. All member institutions and conferences are expected to adhere to these principles and demonstrate a commitment to integrity in all their activities.

**AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION COLLEGE HOCKEY
REPRESENTING THE SHIELD & ETHICS POLICY**

IX: REPRESENTING THE SHIELD

1. Acting ethically, with moral integrity and sportsmanship, is paramount for representatives under the AAU College Hockey Shield. These values define the character of student-athletes, coaches, staff, and personnel and serve as a cornerstone for the sport's integrity and public perception. Sportsmanship embodies fairness, generosity, and respect toward opponents, vital for fostering a competitive yet respectful environment. Players, coaches, and personnel must adhere to these principles on and off the ice, as their actions significantly impact the reputation and success of their teams, conferences, and the AAU College Hockey Organization and Brand. Professional actions, ethical behavior, and moral character extend beyond personal gain; they contribute to a positive community spirit and the overall health of the sport, promoting individual character, social cohesion, and respect as AAU College Hockey Shield representatives; embodying these values is crucial for upholding the sport's honor and ensuring a legacy of integrity and respect.

X: AAU COLLEGE HOCKEY ETHICS POLICY

2. AAU College Hockey is committed to the highest standards of sportsmanship, integrity, and moral character. Our ethics policy and guidelines apply to all players, coaches, team staff, and personnel on and off the ice. This policy is designed to uphold the dignity and reputation of the AAU, AAU College Hockey, our member institutions, and the sport of collegiate ice hockey.
3. Drug Abuse. The use or abuse of illegal drugs or the misuse of prescribed medications is strictly prohibited. Members must comply with all federal, state, and local laws concerning drug use. Substance abuse that affects performance or conduct is unacceptable and will lead to disciplinary actions.
4. Inappropriate Use of Social Media. Members must exercise discretion and responsibility when using social media platforms. Defamatory posting content, harassing or detrimental to AAU College Hockey, its brand, its members, or the sport is forbidden. Social media should be used to promote positive aspects of the sport and personal achievements respectfully.
5. Illegal Gambling. Betting on AAU College Hockey games or any event AAU College Hockey participates in is strictly forbidden for all members. This includes participation in sports betting, fantasy leagues, and pools that involve monetary exchange. Such activities compromise the integrity of the sport and can lead to significant sanctions.
6. Sportsmanship and Integrity. Members are expected to always conduct themselves with the highest sportsmanship and integrity. This includes respecting opponents, officials, and fans, refraining from discriminatory or derogatory comments, and upholding the principles of fair play. Acts of unsportsmanlike conduct are grounds for disciplinary action.
7. Good Moral Character. Members are ambassadors of their institutions and AAU College Hockey. Behavior undermining our hockey community's moral and ethical standards, including acts of violence, theft, dishonesty, and moral turpitude, will not be tolerated.

8. Conduct Representing the Institutions and AAU College Hockey. Conduct on and off the ice must reflect positively on the member institutions, conferences, AAU College Hockey, and its brand. Actions that discredit or harm the reputation of either will be met with disciplinary measures.

XI: PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS

1. Violations of this ethics policy may result in suspension, censure, fines, conference and program sanctions, forfeiture of post-season eligibility, loss of status, or revocation of membership. The severity of the penalty will correspond to the nature of the violation. AAU College Hockey is committed to enforcing these standards to maintain the integrity and reputation of the sport and its participants.

AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION COLLEGE HOCKEY
MEMBERSHIP STATUS, DECLARATIONS, COMPETITIVE STANDARDS & GAME AGREEMENTS

XII: MEMBERSHIP & STATUS

1. Based on the AAU College Hockey Operations Manual, the membership criteria outlined for Conferences, Teams, and Coaches & Staff emphasize maintaining high standards of integrity, competitiveness, and compliance with organizational frameworks and values.
2. Conferences are member organizations comprised of multiple AAU College Hockey Member Teams. These organizations may have multiple member teams competing in multiple divisions within AAU College Hockey. For conferences to qualify for auto-bids within a respective division, they must have a minimum of four-member teams, all of which must be declared members of the same competitive division.
3. Conferences must also adhere to specific operational guidelines covering student-athlete eligibility and competitive standards. They are expected to develop their member programs in alignment with the AAU's criteria for quality and breadth, thus fostering comprehensive and competitive opportunities for development and competition.
4. Teams must comply with all AAU College Hockey Operations Manual membership eligibility criteria. This includes adhering to ethical and competitive standards to ensure fair play and competitive integrity, as well as all academic eligibility and proper player registration processes.
5. Coaches and staff are held to stringent standards. Coaches must strictly adhere to AAU coaching ethics and guidelines. Additionally, staff members, including administrative personnel and officials, must meet criteria approved by the AAU and NCAA. These criteria involve qualifications specific to their roles and adherence to the AAU's membership policies. Together, these criteria ensure that all involved parties uphold a standard conducive to a fair, competitive, and integral sporting environment.
6. A "Member in Good Standing" within the AAU College Hockey Member Programs is defined as a program that fully complies with all registration requirements mandated by the AAU. This includes the completion of and timely submission of the official academic roster packet for each team, as specified in the AAU College Hockey Operations Manual]. Additionally, the term encompasses adherence to membership, personnel definitions, and obligations, implying that all conferences, member teams, players, coaches, and administrative staff are appropriately registered and meet the AAU's criteria for membership.
7. Moreover, a "Member (Conference/Team) in Good Standing" must follow all guidelines and competitive standards related to game scheduling and reporting through GameSheet, ensuring all game-related data is accurate and submitted in a timely fashion. This also includes promptly reconciling all membership dues and fees according to the AAU's financial policies. Lastly, to be considered in "Good Standing," the team must also complete and submit the required AAU Declaration Form, affirming their commitment to adhere to AAU's standards and regulations.
8. ** All members seeking and competing for entry into the AAU College Hockey Post-Season (National Tournament) must be "Members in Good Standing" and meet the competitive thresholds and requirements established and outlined in the AAU College Hockey Operations Manual.

XIII: MEMBER PROGRAM DECLARATION

1. Beginning July 1st of each year, all AAU College Hockey Member Programs must begin the process of declaring and affirming their membership as a Tournament Bound Program in Division I, Division II, Division III, and Women's Division or as a Non-Tournament Bound Team in AAU College Hockey's "Federation Division." for the upcoming AAU College Hockey season. By completing the Declaration's Endorsement, each member program pledges to comply with and meet the divisionally specific competitive standards and requirements, as established in the AAU College Hockey Operations Manual, as well as fulfilling the obligations for that season's AAU College Hockey National Championship Tournament, per the rules and guidelines established by the AAU College Hockey.
2. All teams that declare themselves DI, DII, or DIII (tournament-bound), irrespective of division, are expected to make all efforts to be present and compete as scheduled in their respective National Tournament. Any team in any division that begins the season intending to participate in the national tournament, if qualified, must formally confirm their intent to accept a Nationals Bid, if awarded, no later than December 1st of each season. Failure to commit and not take a Nationals Bid may lead to financial penalties, the revocation of the program's "In Good Standing" status, a potential ban from all AAU-sanctioned Post-Season Play, and potential downgrading from current division status and other probationary measures.
3. Teams that know they cannot commit to the national tournament before the start of the season must notify their conference and divisional commissioner no later than September 1.

XIV: COMPETITIVE STANDARDS

1. Competitive standards for AAU College Hockey teams are criteria that govern the teams' conduct, performance, and operational practices across all divisions (DI, DII, DIII, Women & AAU Federation). These standards ensure that teams strive for excellence in their athletic performance and uphold the integrity and reputation of the AAU and AAU College Hockey Brand.
2. On-Ice Standards. These include adherence to the rules of the game, sportsmanship, and competitive requirements such as tournament qualification. Teams must demonstrate skill, strategy, and fair play during competitions, understanding that how they conduct themselves in-game reflects on the larger AAU College Hockey Community.
3. Off-Ice Standards. Off-ice standards relate to Scheduling, Roster Size, Adherence to Game Day Protocols, Use of Social Media, Team Marketing and Broadcasting, Team Uniform, Equipment, and Attire Protocols.
4. Division-Specific Compliance. Different divisions have unique eligibility requirements and more specific competitive standards that must be acknowledged and endorsed during the declaration process and are essential to the competitive integrity of AAU College Hockey.
5. Representation of Brand. Ensuring these standards are met is crucial for representing the AAU and AAU College Hockey Brand, reflecting the commitment to excellence, ethical conduct, and the overall enhancement of the student-athlete experience.
6. By maintaining these competitive standards, AAU College Hockey programs foster a competitive environment and instill values essential for student-athletes' personal and athletic development.

XV: COMPETITIVE STANDARDS FOR ALL TOURNAMENT DIVISIONS

1. All member teams must have an AAU Registered, Non-Athlete Head Coach.
2. All member teams must have a standard set of home (light) and away (dark) jerseys with consistent player-assigned numbers.
3. All member teams must provide a medical professional, EMT, or Athletic Trainer available to both teams during all scheduled home games.
4. All member teams must score all games live on the GameSheet Platform for all home games.
5. All member teams must adhere to the established uniform requirements outlined in the NCAA Rulebook. This includes matching jerseys, socks, helmets, and pants/shells for all games.
6. All member team players and coaches must adhere to the established dress code of professional, business casual, or uniform team attire for all AAU-sanctioned events, both at home and on the road, including matching team apparel and team equipment bags.
7. All members will play games under the rules for intercollegiate ice hockey as set forth by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (hereinafter referred to as the "NCAA") unless superseded by AAU College Hockey's Standards and Protocols.
8. All Home Teams will be responsible for scheduling and paying referees as established by the NCAA Rules of Play and AAU Member Conference Protocols for each game. The AAU College Hockey-approved referee format is 2 Referees and 2 Linemen, though the NCAA approves a 2 Referees and 1 Lineman format. Team use of the 2-1 format during the regular season is at the discretion of member conference protocols.

XV: EXPANDED COMPETITIVE STANDARDS FOR MEMBERSHIP IN DIVISION I

1. Each Division I team must schedule and compete in at least 18 intercollegiate hockey games, of which half (9) must be against AAU member teams within the declared Division I membership.
1. Each Division I team must maintain an active roster of 24 or more student-athletes.
2. Each Division I team must possess and utilize social media platforms (Instagram and Twitter) to promote all team activities, including pre- and post-game content, and support AAU College Hockey and its members with their platforms.
3. Each Division I team will make every effort to ensure that all home games are available to fans via video streaming platforms, such as YouTube, Facebook Live, Black Dog Hockey, etc.
4. All member teams must adhere to the established uniform requirements outlined in the NCAA Rulebook. This includes matching jerseys, socks, gloves, helmets, and pants/shells for all games.

XVI: EXPANDED COMPETITIVE STANDARDS FOR MEMBERSHIP IN DIVISION II

2. Each Division II team must schedule and compete in at least 16 intercollegiate hockey games, of which half (8) must be against AAU member teams within the declared Division II membership.
3. Each Division II team must possess and utilize social media platforms (Instagram and Twitter) to promote all team activities, including pre-and post-game content, and support AAU College Hockey and its members with their platforms.
4. Each Division II team will make efforts to ensure that most home games are available to fans via video streaming platforms, such as YouTube, Facebook Live, Black Dog Hockey, etc.

XVII: EXPANDED COMPETITIVE STANDARDS FOR MEMBERSHIP IN DIVISION III

1. Each Division III team must schedule and compete in at least 16 intercollegiate hockey games, of which half (8) must be against AAU member teams within the declared Division III membership.
1. Each Division III team must possess and utilize social media platforms (Instagram and Twitter) to promote all team activities, including pre-and post-game content, and support AAU College Hockey and its members with their platforms.

XVIII: GAME AGREEMENT & COMMITMENT

1. Except for inclement weather, which prohibits safe travel to or from the game as approved by the appropriate divisional commissioners or other such Acts of God, no game may be canceled without prior approval from AAU College Hockey and the member conference(s). The notice must be provided 30 days before the scheduled game(s).
2. In the event of inclement weather or other such Acts of God, both teams may cancel without penalty if agreed to by both teams before the scheduled game(s) and when there are no financial consequences for postponement. However, if a game is canceled, even in good faith, due to inclement weather, unsafe travel conditions, or an Act of God, the canceling team, if the visitor, may be responsible for the financial expenses of ice and officials if the home team still retains the accrued expense.
3. Failure to attend or host a scheduled game without good cause and not communicating through the proper channels shall result in the offending team being held responsible for all non-refundable expenses incurred by the aggrieved team, including but not limited to all ice costs and referee costs, travel, and lodging expenses; loss of "Good Standing Status" within AAU College Hockey, and the potential of additional fines or post-season consequences set forth by AAU College Hockey.

**AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION COLLEGE HOCKEY
ROSTERING, PLAYER TRANSFERS & MOVEMENT BETWEEN DIVISIONS**

XIX: OFFICIAL ROSTERS & ROSTER SIZE

1. AAU College Hockey, like the NCAA, does not restrict its members to a specific roster size or limit and recognizes that most member programs roster between 24 and 28 student-athletes. However, AAU Insurance fees cover up to 30 student-athletes, with any member rosters beyond 30 having to accrue expanded roster coverage and costs. AAU also provides alternative insurance coverage options for AAU College Hockey members whose rosters fall below 24 student-athletes.

XX: PLAYER TRANSFERS & CONTINUITY OF COMPETITION

2. Eligibility for Transferred Student-Athletes. Student-athletes who transfer from one university or college to another between the fall and spring semesters are eligible to compete in AAU College Hockey for the spring semester, provided they meet all academic and athletic eligibility requirements outlined by the AAU College Hockey Operations rules and protocols. This includes being a fully enrolled, degree-seeking student at the educational institution he/she represents and maintaining the required academic standing.
3. Rostering Procedures. Teams must follow the official AAU College Hockey rosters procedures when adding a transfer student-athlete to their roster. This includes the completion of the official AAU registration process and updating the official team roster verification document with conference compliance officers and divisional commissioners.
4. Education First. The policy underscores AAU College Hockey's core value: education is paramount. Student-athletes must prioritize their academic responsibilities to maintain eligibility. This policy facilitates the balance between academic pursuits and athletic commitments, emphasizing the importance of the student-athlete experience.
5. This policy ensures that education remains a priority while allowing student-athletes mobility and athletic development within the AAU College Hockey framework.

XXI: AAU COLLEGE HOCKEY PLAYER MOVEMENT FOR MULTI-DIVISIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

1. Recognizing the unique structure of member organizations within AAU College Hockey, including those with multiple teams across different divisions of the AAU, the American Collegiate Hockey Association (ACHA), or institutions with NCAA teams, AAU College Hockey establishes the following policy to ensure competitive integrity and maintain high standards across all divisions:
2. Player Movement Between AAU College Hockey Divisions. Member programs with multiple teams across different divisions of AAU College Hockey may move players during the regular season and before the official roster freeze, which is January 30th of each season.
3. Teams may freely move players from AAU rosters at DIII to DII, DII to DI, DI to DII, or DII to DIII at any time for up to 4 games (dressed). When the player dresses for the 5th game at the transferred level, the player becomes locked on that roster unless circumstances or situations (e.g., injuries, illness, etc.) are presented and approved by the divisional commissioner before the initial roster move transpires.

4. Player Movement Between AAU College Hockey Rosters and ACHA Rosters. Member programs with teams registered in AAU College Hockey and the ACHA may move players during the regular season and before the official roster freeze on January 30th of each season.
5. Teams may move players from AAU rosters to ACHA rosters or ACHA rosters to AAU rosters at any time for up to 4 games (dressed). Before the roster moves between associations, the AAU team must notify their conference and divisional commissioner of the move and its rationale. If the player that moved dresses for a 5th game at the transferred level, the player becomes locked on that roster unless circumstances or situations (e.g., injuries, illness, etc.) are presented and approved by the divisional commissioner before the initial roster move transpires.
6. Player Movement Between AAU College Hockey Rosters and NCAA Rosters. Member programs with teams registered in both AAU College Hockey and the NCAA may move players during the regular season and before the official roster freeze, which is January 30th of each season.
7. Teams may move players from an AAU roster to an NCAA roster during the regular season. Before the roster moves between associations, the AAU team must notify their conference and divisional commissioner of the move and its rationale. When the AAU player is added to an NCAA roster, the AAU player is prohibited from playing any AAU College Hockey games until they are removed from the NCAA roster. Suppose the transferred player continues to be rostered on the NCAA team after the January 30 freeze date. In that case, that player is ineligible for participation in the remainder of the AAU regular season and post-season unless circumstances or situations (e.g., injuries, illness, etc.) are presented and approved by the divisional commissioner before the initial roster move transpires.

XXII: ENSURING COMPETITIVE INTEGRITY

1. AAU College Hockey member organizations are responsible for monitoring and ensuring that player movements do not undermine competitive balance within and across divisions. AAU College Hockey reserves the right to review and reverse any player movements deemed to compromise the league's competitive integrity.
2. Sanctions for Violations. AAU College Hockey Member organizations found violating this policy may face sanctions, including, but not limited to, suspension of involved players, forfeiture of post-season play, fines, and additional penalties as determined by AAU College Hockey governance.
3. This policy aims to provide clarity and fairness in player movement across divisions, ensuring that educational and athletic opportunities for student-athletes are prioritized without compromising the competitive standards of AAU College Hockey.

**AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION COLLEGE HOCKEY
OPERATIONS MANUAL: ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY & ENROLLMENT**

XXIII: STUDENT-ATHLETE ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY & ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to compete in AAU College Hockey, a player must:

- a) Have been admitted as a regularly enrolled, degree-seeking student according to the published entrance requirements of the member university or college.
 - b) Be in good academic standing according to the standards of the member university or college and
 - c) Be enrolled in at least a minimum full-time program of studies leading to a baccalaureate or the equivalent (not less than 9 semester or quarter hours) and maintain satisfactory progress (2.0 Cumulative Grade Point Average) toward that degree; be enrolled in a full-time graduate or professional degree program (as defined by the school for all graduate students) or be enrolled and seeking a second baccalaureate degree, and maintain satisfactory progress (2.0 Cumulative Grade Point Average) toward that degree.
1. Players must achieve the minimum academic progress standards established by the AAU, consisting of 18 credits by the beginning of their second year 36 credits by the beginning of their third year, 54 credits by the beginning of their fourth year 72 credits by the beginning of their fifth year.
 2. Players may be enrolled in less than a full-time program only if enrolled in the last term of their baccalaureate or graduate degree or their minor or undergraduate certificate program, or they carry credits necessary to finish their degree, minor, or certificate program requirements.
 3. Players are eligible to compete during the official vacation period immediately before initial enrollment, provided your school has accepted them for enrollment in a regular, full-time program of studies and at the time of their initial participation, players are no longer enrolled in your previous educational institution and are eligible under all institutional and AAU College Hockey requirements.
 4. If a player is classified as a returning student-athlete, they are eligible to compete between terms, provided they have been registered for the conclusion of the term immediately before the date of competition or if you are either continuing enrollment or beginning enrollment, provided you have been accepted for enrollment as a regular full-time student for the regular term immediately following the date of competition.
 5. Players are eligible to participate in 5 intercollegiate seasons of hockey; Players are entitled to participate in intercollegiate hockey for up to 2 seasons while enrolled as a post-baccalaureate graduate student.
 6. An intercollegiate season consists of being rostered in 5 or more games. Less than 5 games qualify the player as a "Redshirt," and the year of eligibility is not counted. The "Redshirt" provision can only be applied to players during the fall semester; any player added to a roster for the second semester will use an entire year of eligibility regardless of games played.

7. Member programs may petition the established appeals committee to request a declaration of a “Medical Redshirt” when a player suffers a season-ending injury during the first semester. Upon a review by the appeals committee, a determination may be made that the label “Medical Redshirt” is appropriate for the petitioning player, and the year of eligibility will be restored.
8. Players who complete the requirements for their degree at the end of the fall term are eligible to receive permission to finish their seasons and qualify for AAU post-season play (AAU Senior Exemption). Proper requests for the “Senior Exemption” to the Office of the Commissioner must be completed by December 1, 2023.
9. Only an amateur student-athlete is eligible for participation in AAU College Hockey. A student-athlete who has been rostered on a team in any of the following leagues shall be deemed ineligible to compete in any of the AAU College Hockey Divisions:
 - a) NHL (US), AHL (US), ECHL (US), SPHL (US), FHL (US), LNAH (Canada), KHL (Russia), HHL (Russia), DEL (Germany), SM-Liga (Finland), SHL (Sweden), Eredivisie (Netherlands), Gilt-Ligaen (Norway), Extraliga (Slovakia), Extraliga (Czech), Any Tier 1 European League
 - b) Canadian Hockey League: OHL, QMJHL, WHL (Canada)
10. A student-athlete rostered on a team in any of the following organizations shall be eligible to compete in AAU College Hockey; however, teams must notify their divisional commissioner of this player’s intention to play. In addition to notification, such student-athletes shall forfeit their 5th year of eligibility and a year of competitive eligibility in the AAU for each academic year in which the student-athlete was rostered in another intercollegiate hockey association:
 - a) NCAA DI (US), NAIA (US), CIS/USports (Canada)

**AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION COLLEGE HOCKEY
GAMEPLAY, OVERTIME, GAMESHEETS & RANKINGS**

XXIV: OFFICIAL AAU COLLEGE HOCKEY GAMEPLAY STANDARDS

1. Under the Official Rules of Play established by the NCAA, all official AAU College Hockey Games will have three 20-minute stop-time periods.
2. AAU College Hockey expects members serving as the contest/event host or home team to provide a 10-minute warm-up period before the start of each contest and ice resurfacing between each period.
3. The home team should provide the visiting team with changes or modifications to the warm-up or resurfacing schedule at least two hours before the start of the official contest as part of the game protocol.
4. In all sanctioned AAU College Hockey Games, AAU member teams may dress up to 22 players, provided the dress roster consists of a minimum of 2 goaltenders. Teams may not Dress 21 position players and 1 goaltender.
5. All Official AAU Games played during the regular season will conclude with the winning team being awarded two points for a win (either in regulation or overtime), one point for an overtime loss, and zero points for a regulation loss.

XXV: OFFICIAL AAU COLLEGE HOCKEY OVERTIME PROCEDURES

1. Under the Official Rules of Play, as established by the NCAA, all regular season games ending in regulation ending in a tie will commence a 5-minute, 3 versus 3, overtime period. During this overtime period, goalies will switch ends. In the event the regular-season overtime period ends in a tie, the game is over, and both teams will receive one point for the tie. AAU College Hockey does not recognize the outcome of a shootout as the official result for ranking purposes. Shootouts are the explicit function of AAU College Hockey Conference Protocols or Special Event Protocols.
2. During the AAU College Hockey National Tournament during Pool Play, all games ending in regulation ending in a tie will commence a 20-minute 3v3 Overtime. Goaltenders will switch ends at the start of OT, and each team will receive 1 timeout. Teams will play until there is a winner. During the Quarterfinal, Semi-Final, and Championship rounds, OT will be 20-minute 5v5 Overtime Periods until a winner is determined. Goaltenders will switch ends at the start of OT, and each team will receive 1 timeout.

XXVI: GAMESHEET SCORING PLATFORM

1. All official games AAU Members play must be scheduled and scored through the GameSheet platform. AAU College Hockey expects all members serving as the contest/event host or home team to score games live. If live scoring isn't possible, all games must be uploaded to the GameSheet platform within 12 hours of the game's conclusion.
2. Games scheduled between AAU College Hockey Members, regardless of conference, division, or league status, will be referred to and scheduled in GameSheet as "Regular Season" games.

3. Games scheduled between AAU College Hockey Members and a non-AAU opponent will be referred to and scheduled in GameSheet as "Exhibition" games.

XXVII: AAU COLLEGE HOCKEY RANKINGS

1. AAU College Hockey has entered an exclusive, long-term contract with My Hockey Rankings (MHR) as the official service provider for its Computerized Rankings. The AAU College Hockey Director of Operations shall arrange for, oversee, and manage the computerized ranking service and ranking procedures used by the AAU College Hockey membership.
2. AAU College Hockey Ranking Calculations are computed with the results of every game scored between ranking periods, regardless of game status (Regular Season or Exhibition). Special Event contests or exhibition games between AAU College Hockey members and non-collegiate teams (i.e., junior teams, charity, or honorary teams) shall not be counted in rankings calculations.
3. The official AAU College Hockey Rankings, as computed by MHR, are developed mathematically, with no subjective weighting or human-determined values. MHR rates teams based on how well they play against other teams and how good those teams are. These two factors are "AGD," or "average goal differential," and "SCHED," or "strength of schedule." AGD is currently calculated by accumulating the goal differential of each game to a maximum of 7 and dividing it by the number of games played. Using a max game goal differential of 7 does "penalize" teams that blow out opponents. However, this is common in rating systems as it takes away the incentive for teams to run up scores and allows them to have a bad game by capping the mathematical damage. The strength of the schedule is computed by averaging the rating of each game opponent. AGD and SCHED are added together to calculate a team's rating.
4. The AAU College Hockey Rankings will begin posting on the first Wednesday of November. They are published weekly through the final regular season posting. The final ranking is published following the second weekend in February.
5. AAU College Hockey will publish rankings for each of its four Divisions, Men's DI, Men's DII, Men's DIII, and the AAU Women's Division, as well as an Overall AAU College Hockey Ranking.

**AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION COLLEGE HOCKEY
NATIONAL TOURNAMENT QUALIFICATION, STRUCTURE & FORMAT**

XXVIII: AAU COLLEGE HOCKEY NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

1. The Amateur Athletic Union shall sponsor an annual collegiate hockey national tournament after the regular season. The purposes of the AAU National Collegiate Hockey Tournament shall be to (a) provide a competition-based challenge within intercollegiate ice hockey, (b) support positive recognition for intercollegiate ice hockey, and (c) showcase the achievements of individual member teams and their student-athletes across each of AAU College Hockey’s Member Divisions (DI, DII, DIII, and W).
2. During the AAU College Hockey National Championship Tournament, a four-official system consisting of two referees and two linemen will be used for all competitions.
3. During National Tournament play, all AAU College Hockey Member Programs, coaches, and players on official rosters must adhere to the divisional standards, expectations, uniform and equipment requirements, and dress codes as established within the AAU Member Declaration Agreement.
4. AAU College Hockey will furnish awards for the divisional National Champions, National Runner Ups, and AAU First-Team All-Tournament Selections.
5. During the National Championship Tournaments, all broadcasts (including, but not limited to, audio and video) from any AAU College Hockey-promoted regional or national event are the sole property of AAU College Hockey. Any broadcast or rebroadcast from any AAU College Hockey-promoted regional or national event not initiated by AAU College Hockey must be cleared in writing by the Director of Operations or designee before the event. Fees may be assessed for the broadcast or rebroadcast of these events.

XXIX: TOURNAMENT QUALIFICATION AAU COLLEGE HOCKEY DIVISION I

For the 2024-2025 season, the Division I National Tournament field will comprise 16 teams from AAU College Hockey Conferences with Declared DI Member Programs. Qualification for the DI National Tournament will feature a combination of Auto-Bids, awarded to the Top Seed (Based on Final Ranking) of each Member Conference (NEIHC, CHS, EMPIRE, UNYCHL), and At-Large Bids will be based upon the MHR Final Rankings. Member teams qualifying will be seeded in order of MHR Final Rankings. All qualifying teams must be in good standing and compliance with all DI standards, as defined by AAU College Hockey.

The DI National Tournament will divide the field into 4 pools of 4 teams, seeded by the Final National Ranking with a third-round reversal.

POOL A	POOL B	POOL C	POOL D
1	2	3	4
8	7	6	5
9	10	11	12
16	15	14	13

The DI National Tournament Framework for Pool Play, Seeding, and Advancement Procedures will be developed by the AAU Competition Committee and the AAU Board of Governors. Upon the conclusion of the regular season, the established framework and tournament operations will be published and distributed in the 2025 AAU College Hockey National Tournament Manual.

XXX: TOURNAMENT QUALIFICATION AAU COLLEGE HOCKEY DIVISION II

For the 2024-2025 season, the Division II National Tournament field will comprise 20 teams from AAU College Hockey Conferences with Declared DII Member Programs. Qualification for the DI National Tournament will feature a combination of Auto-Bids, awarded to the Top Seed (Based on Final Ranking) of each Member Conference (ACCHL, CHS, DVCHC, EMPIRE, NEIHC & UNYCHL), and At-Large Bids will be based upon the MHR Final Rankings. Member teams qualifying will be seeded in order of MHR Final Rankings. All qualifying teams must be in good standing and compliance with all DII standards, as defined by AAU College Hockey.

The DII National Tournament will divide the field into 5 pools of 4 teams, seeded by the Final National Ranking with a third-round reversal.

POOL A	POOL B	POOL C	POOL D	POOL E
1	2	3	4	5
10	9	8	7	6
11	12	13	14	15
20	19	18	17	16

The DII National Tournament Framework for Pool Play, Seeding, and Advancement Procedures will be developed by the AAU Competition Committee and the AAU Board of Governors. Upon the conclusion of the regular season, the established framework and tournament operations will be published and distributed in the 2025 AAU College Hockey National Tournament Manual.

XXXI: TOURNAMENT QUALIFICATION AAU COLLEGE HOCKEY DIVISION III

For the 2024-2025 season, the Division III National Tournament field will comprise 12 teams from AAU College Hockey Conferences with Declared DIII Member Programs. Qualification for the DI National Tournament will feature a combination of Auto-Bids, awarded to the Top Seed (Based on Final Ranking) of each Member Conference (ACCHL, CHS, DVCHC, EMPIRE, NEIHC & UNYCHL), and At-Large Bids will be based upon the MHR Final Rankings. Member teams qualifying will be seeded in order of MHR Final Rankings. All qualifying teams must be in good standing and compliance with all DIII standards, as defined by AAU College Hockey.

The DIII National Tournament will divide the field into 3 pools of 4 teams, seeded by the Final National Ranking.

POOL A	POOL B	POOL C
1	2	3
6	5	4
7	8	9
12	11	10

The DIII National Tournament Framework for Pool Play, Seeding, and Advancement Procedures will be developed by the AAU Competition Committee and the AAU Board of Governors. Upon the conclusion of

the regular season, the established framework and tournament operations will be published and distributed in the 2025 AAU College Hockey National Tournament Manual.

XXXII: TOURNAMENT QUALIFICATION AAU COLLEGE HOCKEY WOMENS DIVISION

For the 2024-2025 season, the Women's National Tournament field will comprise 4 teams from AAU College Hockey Conferences with Declared Women's Programs. Qualification for the DI National Tournament will feature the top 2 seeds from the UNYCHL and the top 2 from CHS.

The Women's National Tournament Framework for Pool Play, Seeding, and Advancement Procedures will be developed by the AAU Competition Committee and the AAU Board of Governors. Upon the conclusion of the regular season, the established framework and tournament operations will be published and distributed in the 2025 AAU College Hockey National Tournament Manual.

AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION COLLEGE HOCKEY APPEAL OF OFFICIAL RULINGS

XXXIII: APPEALS OF STUDENT-ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY

1. Member programs wishing to appeal or challenge the eligibility of any player in a regular-season or national tournament shall submit a formal request in writing to their respective Divisional Commissioner, governing Conference Commissioner, and Compliance Officer before their program's next scheduled game or tournament.
2. Member programs understand that ruling on a player's eligibility is a function of the AAU College Hockey Divisional Commissioner, in conjunction with the member program's Conference Commissioner and Compliance Officer.
3. Official decisions shall be rendered, and member teams shall be informed before the start of the game or tournament.
4. Any member program that chooses to appeal the AAU College Hockey Divisional Commissioner's ruling may do so to the Executive Appeals Committee, which consists of the AAU College Hockey Executive Director, Director of Hockey Operations, and AAU Compliance Officer.
5. The Appeals Committee will decide before the start of the next scheduled game. Member programs understand that the Executive Appeals Committee's decision is final.
6. Member programs understand that AAU College Hockey reserves the right to petition the administration of a member's University or College to request a review of a student-athletes academic status if necessary.

XXXIV: APPEALS OF FORFEITURE OF AMATEUR STATUS

This policy establishes a structured process for AAU Member Programs to appeal the eligibility status of a student-athlete who has forfeited amateur status due to participation in specified professional leagues (Section XXIII.9).

1. Eligibility for Appeal: Student-athletes deemed ineligible due to participation in professional leagues, as listed in the AAU College Hockey Operations Manual, are eligible to appeal.
2. Submission of Appeal: The member program must submit a formal written appeal to the Divisional Commissioner, Conference Commissioner, and Compliance Officer before the program's next contest.
3. Required Documentation: The appeal must include a detailed account of the student-athletes' participation in the professional league, verification of their current amateur status and proof that no professional benefits or compensation for school were received, and evidence of the student-athletes' current academic standing and enrollment at the member institution.
4. Review Process: The Divisional Commissioner, in conjunction with the Conference Commissioner and Compliance Officer, will review the appeal. A decision will be made and communicated to the member program in an appropriate timeframe.
5. Appeals to Executive Committee: If the initial appeal is denied, the member program may appeal to the Executive Appeals Committee, which consists of the AAU College Hockey Executive Director, Director of Hockey Operations, and AAU Compliance Officer. The committee's decision is final.
6. Notification: All decisions will be communicated in writing to the member program, detailing the outcome and any further actions required.
7. Compliance: The member program agrees to abide by the final decision of the Executive Appeals Committee and ensure all necessary adjustments are made to comply with AAU regulations.

XXXV: APPEALS OF DISCIPLINE OR ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

1. Any team that wishes to appeal any decision by a Conference or Divisional Commissioner, excluding academic appeals as defined in these operational guidelines, may do so within one week of the decision's date by submitting an appeal in writing to the Chief Administrative Officer, copying the Director of Hockey Operations.
2. Any appeal for student-athlete discipline must come from a member program's coach or administration on behalf of its student-athlete/s.
3. The Appeals Committee shall consist of the Director of Hockey Operations, the Supervisor of Officials, one Deputy Commissioner from a division not involved in the appeal, and a Governor from a conference not involved.
4. The Director of Hockey Operations shall chair the Appeals Committee. In his or her absence, the Chief Administrative Officer shall serve as chair. The AAU College Hockey Appeals Committee shall hear appeals live, in person, or via video conference. The AAU College Hockey Chief Administrative Officer or a designee shall take a record of the meeting.
5. The Appeals Committee will render a formal decision and notify the appealing party within one week of the hearing. Member programs understand that the Executive Appeals Committee's decision is final and not subject to additional judicious review.