

Maine Coast Storm Family Handbook

Updated September 2024

Welcome to Maine Coast Storm Youth Hockey! We are thrilled that your family has chosen to play with our organization.

WHO WE ARE

Maine Coast Storm is a non-profit organization that first began as the Maine Coast Skaters Association back in 2001. We provide both house and travel hockey programs, 10U-18U. Our home ice rink is at the Midcoast Recreation Center (MRC), and we operate with a volunteer board of directors that meet at least once a month.

MISSION STATEMENT

The goals of Storm youth hockey shall be to promote the following aspects of skating in the mid-coast region: fun, sportsmanship, fair play, team play and contribution, proper exercise technique, sports safety, development of skills, discipline, self-esteem, cooperation, commitment and respect.

Storm supports a strong coaching environment that focuses on building self-confidence and strong team interaction by focusing on four primary objectives:

- a. Have fun playing hockey
- b. Maximize the individual potential of each player
- c. Develop a strong sense of team spirit
- d. Encourage respect for others and develop good sportsmanship by promoting goodwill between players, officials, coaches, and parents.

ADM

We operate under the American Development Model (ADM.) USA Hockey's ADM is a nationwide model for successfully developing American hockey players. It is the tool that will ensure that every kid will have a great chance to succeed. ADM is geared to deliver more efficient skill development that will produce more skilled players, experience, and increase in player retention. The ADM is designed especially to help kids reach their full potential.

HOUSE HOCKEY

While using the ADM model, players receive two skills practices per week and a House Hockey game every other week. House Hockey games take place on Tuesdays from 6:40pm - 7:40pm. We build balanced teams of mixed ages of house only and travel players. 14U travel players are not eligible for House Hockey play unless approved by the Storm coaching director. All players will receive a House Team jersey to keep. The

House Hockey games are a fun atmosphere right at our home rink, and there's music too!

Eight-year-old skaters (birth year 2015) who play with the MRC 8U program are eligible to play in House Hockey games. This is for games only. It is a great opportunity for 8-year-old skaters to experience games on full ice. Skaters will still practice with the MRC-run 8U program.

TRAVEL HOCKEY

We have travel hockey teams for 10U, 12U, 14U, and 18U age groups. Players on these teams have been selected during our tryouts (usually end of March/Early April) or during a Fall Skills Assessment Session.

Athletes are assessed by a group of coaches and hockey skills evaluators during our tryouts. In the fall, any players interested in travel hockey who did not try out in the spring or who would like to be re-evaluated can attend a Fall Skills Assessment Session. The purpose of this session is to assess the skill level of players interested in playing travel hockey, for each 10U, 12U, 14U, and 18U travel teams that may have open spots. Coaches will determine if a player's skills are appropriate for their age level team. There is a try out fee and an assessment fee. If you paid the fee in the spring and are seeking a re-evaluation you do not need to pay the tryout fee again.

Travel teams have scheduled games throughout the league. Generally there are two games a weekend, scheduled back to back on the same day, with a small break in between.

INFERNO

An exciting part of Storm hockey is the Inferno hockey team for girls. This is a partnership between Storm, Brewer, and Maine Junior Black Bears to provide our girls an opportunity to play on an all-girls hockey team. Storm players are still encouraged to play Storm House Hockey and the Inferno practices may be woven into our House Hockey structure.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is key to the success of any organization. Storm utilizes two different apps to communicate with families. TeamReach app for House Hockey and general communications and Sports Engine app for individual travel teams. Keep an eye on your email used at registration for additional Storm communications. Storm Board member's email addresses and roles are available at the end of the handbook. Also check us on Facebook!

VOLUNTEER HOURS

Storm is a non-profit organization that is run 100% by volunteers, which means that fundraising and volunteer time from our families are critical to the success of our organization. Storm has a policy of requiring each hockey family to document 6 volunteer hours for the organization at board-led events. This could be working the clock at the rink, volunteering at one of our fundraisers, helping to check players in at the start of the season, ect. Volunteer opportunities will be communicated and the board will document your hours.

RAFFLE TICKET SALES

Did you know that we pay approximately \$70,000 for our ice time each year? Rather than passing all the at cost to our families through tuition payments, we have fundraising efforts throughout out the season to make up the difference. One of those fundraisers is our annual raffle ticket sale. Our travel and house players are required to sell \$100 in tickets each year to offset their tuition. Families have the option to sell tickets to family/friends or purchase the tickets themselves.

MEAHA & USA HOCKEY

In Maine travel youth hockey competition is organized by the Maine Amateur Hockey Association. MEAHA has representatives from every youth hockey organization from across the state that oversee travel games. MEAHA hosts Maine youth hockey state tournaments for the various age groups.

USA Hockey is the national governing body of ice hockey in the United States. All Storm players must register with USA Hockey as well.

NO CELL PHONES IN LOCKER ROOMS

USA Hockey policy prohibits the use of cell phones in locker rooms under any circumstance.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Coaches and parent volunteers (such as team assistants), who have contact with children need to complete a mandatory background check and the USA Hockey SafeSport module. SafeSport requires an annual refresher course.

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

This policy is to set clear expectations on what to expect from our players while a member of Maine Coast Storm. Storm's ZERO Tolerance policy for any inappropriate, harmful, or unsafe behavior by any player. We encourage all players to immediately

report any abusive or unsafe behavior to their coach, any board member, or their team parent.

In the Locker Room: All players are expected to behave in an appropriate manner at all times in locker rooms, whether at our home rink, or away. Players should be respectful of each other and work to maintain a safe and healthy environment.

At Practice: Activities such as tripping other players, hitting other players with a stick, punching other players, making contact with another player's head, or putting them off balance outside of the parameters of game play will not be tolerated. If a player is observed engaging in any of these types of activities or behaviors they will be immediately removed from the ice and either spent the entirety of practice sitting on the bench or removed from the ice and turned over to their parents. Further disciplinary action may also result.

During Games: Always display good sportsmanship. Never argue with an official's decision. Respect your coach, your teammates, your parents, opponents, and officials.

Discipline: Coaches have the right to remove any player, at any time, from the ice if they deem the player's behavior or activity to be unsafe to themselves or other players or to violate our ZERO Tolerance policy. Players may also face discipline or removal from the ice for inappropriate language, gestures, or other behaviors that violate our ZERO Tolerance policy.

After practice, the on-ice coach will follow up with the head coach, the player(s) involved, and the player(s) parents to discuss any potential disciplinary action. The head coach and the coaching director will notify the safety director/disciplinary committee who will document the incident and determine if any further action is required.

Based on the severity of the incident, including injury to another player, there may be a Storm Board investigation, and further disciplinary actions taken.

GRIEVANCE POLICY & PROCEDURE

Maine Coast Storm encourages open lines of communication between players, parents, coaches, and board members, and we feel that the best way to resolve differences of opinion is directly. However, if an individual feels that direct communication is no longer

working, there is a process for lodging a formal complaint. All complaints will be confidential to the extent that it is possible during a fair investigation of the complaint.

General Categories of Complaints and Steps to Report and Resolve the

Issue: Coaching complaints, including but not limited to the list below, should be directed to the player's head coach:

- playing time during a travel or house game
- general approach to coaching
- player safety during a game or practice (either a player feeling they are unsafe or a player exhibiting unsafe behaviors)

If the head coach does not respond in a satisfactory manner, or it is felt that the issue needs to be elevated further, the coaching director should be notified.

Once the coaching director has been notified, he/she will attempt to resolve the issue if it is in regards to playing time or general approach to coaching and follow through until a satisfactory conclusion is reached. If the issue is in regards to player safety, the coaching director will bring the issue to the Safety & Disciplinary Committee for review and resolution, which could result in player penalty or suspension.

Board Member Complaints: Any parent, board member, or player may make a complaint verbally or in writing against a board member for alleged misconduct, including mismanagement of funds or resources, equipment, verbal or physical abuse or harassment, or any misconduct including youth players.

Complaints should be directed to the board president, who will then determine the appropriate board members to involve based on the nature of the complaint.

The complaint will be investigated and an incident report will be created and filed. Depending on circumstances the resolution of the complaint may or may not be communicated publically to those involved, though we will communicate when the complaint is considered resolved and closed. If it is determined during the course of the investigation that any laws have been broken, the appropriate local authorities will be notified immediately.

If the complaint involves the board president, the safety director should be notified and he/she will follow the appropriate steps to investigate the claim.

Player Complaints: Complaints regarding players exhibiting unsafe behavior, unsportsmanlike behavior, or any other behaviors specifically prohibited in our ZERO Tolerance Policy should be brought to the attention of the player's head coach. Depending on the seriousness of the offense (if it is determined there is an offense), the head coach may elevate the issue to the coaching director, board president, safety director, or the Safety & Disciplinary Committee.

Officiating Complaints: Complaints regarding officiating in travel or house games should be brought to the attention of the board president, who can then determine if it should be elevated to MEAHA.

Parent/Fan Complaints: Any parents or fans who exhibit abusive, unsafe, or unsportsmanlike behavior will be handled by MRC staff. If this type of behavior is observed, it should be reported immediately to the front desk staff at MRC. If the behavior persists, MRC staff may, at their discretion, ask the individual(s) to leave the premises.

EMERGENCY & INJURY PLAN

Players or coaches sustaining an injury or with a medical emergency will be treated appropriately and in a rapid manner. The Storm Emergency and Injury Protocol plan lists detailed procedures of when an incident arises.

LINKS

[ZERO Tolerance Policy](#)

[Grievance Policy](#)

[Emergency & Injury Plan](#)

[USA Hockey Family Handbook](#)

[MEAHA](#)

[Inferno](#)

[Safesport](#)

[Storm Board Contact List](#)