



Operating Rules 2025-2026

Revision 1.0
July 15, 2025

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**MICHIGAN GIRLS HOCKEY LEAGUE
(A MICHIGAN NON-PROFIT CORPORATION)**

OPERATING RULES

As amended and approved by the MGHL Operations Board for the 2025/2026 season.

SECTION 1 – PURPOSE

The purpose of Michigan Girls Hockey League (MGHL) is to provide a positive and rewarding hockey experience for amateur hockey players. MGHL shall emphasize youth development and leadership, excellence in coaching, sportsmanship, and competitive and fair play. MGHL desires to provide an environment to improve the ability and attitude of its participants while fostering and promoting the reputation and goodwill of the League, the sponsors, the teams, and the players.

MGHL shall solicit, receive and administer funds to support youth hockey. The League shall hold, administer, and dispose of these funds for accomplishment of the foregoing purposes and goals and to engage in any lawful activities as necessary, incidental, or helpful to the achievement of these purposes and goals.

SECTION 2 – GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE RULES

These Rules and Bylaws are intended to address the great majority of situations that arise pursuant to operation of a league the size of MGHL. These rules may not address every event, or a strict application of these rules may yield conflicting results. In all such situations, MGHL, the Board, and any other decision-making body sanctioned by MGHL

to apply these rules shall resolve such situations in the interest of fairness and equity for the affected teams and MGHL.

SECTION 3 – CODE OF CONDUCT

MGHL expects its participants (team officials, players, families and spectators) to conduct themselves in a manner that shows respect for the game, MGHL and other participants. MGHL shall have the authority to act to suspend participation in the League when any participant behaves in any way so as to violate this principle. MGHL shall have sole discretion to act, and its actions shall not be subject to any governing body other than MGHL.

SECTION 4 – RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMPLIANCE

While all Team Officials must comply with these Rules, a team's Head Coach has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring compliance with these Rules, including the criteria for meeting eligibility requirements of its respective USA Hockey Affiliate. MGHL will make decisions regarding placement of teams in the League based on its interpretations of USA Hockey and USA Hockey Affiliate rules as it can best interpret them.

SECTION 5 – DEFINITIONS

- 5.1. "Affiliate" shall mean a USA Hockey Affiliate and any local hockey association having agreements or sub-agreements to operate directly or indirectly as an affiliate of USA Hockey.
- 5.2. "Board" shall mean the MGHL Board of Directors.
- 5.3. "League Play Deadline" shall mean the date published on the MGHL website by which all League Play shall be completed. The MGHL website is www.MGHL.org.
- 5.4. "MGHL" or the "League" shall mean Michigan Girls Hockey League.
- 5.5. "League Management Tool" or "LMT" shall mean any and all systems, software, and websites designated for use and sanctioned by MGHL for teams to enter and view information, such as scheduling, statistical, or game result data.
- 5.6. "MGHL Game" shall mean MGHL games, both League Play and Playoffs.
- 5.7. "Membership" shall be defined as in Section 6.
- 5.8. "League Play" shall mean MGHL regular season games.
- 5.9. "Player" shall mean an individual participant, other than a coach or manager, listed on a certified Roster of a team.
- 5.10. "Playoff" shall mean games that occur after League Play to determine the MGHL champion for each age classification.
- 5.11. "Roster" shall mean a complete copy of a USA Hockey certified roster, including the original roster and any and all certified additions or deletions for the entire season.
- 5.12. "Rules" shall mean the MGHL Operating Rules as provided herein.
- 5.13. "Team Official" or "Team Officials" shall mean any coach or manager listed on a stamped or otherwise certified Roster of said team, and any individual not listed on a certified Roster, but acting under designated authority as a team representative.
- 5.14. "USA Hockey Affiliate" shall mean a body recognized by USA Hockey with authority to conduct ice hockey programs within a USA hockey area of jurisdiction. Michigan Amateur Hockey Association (MAHA) and Mid American Hockey are examples of USA Hockey Affiliates.

SECTION 6 – REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

6.1. Eligibility for MGHL Membership – Except as specifically authorized by the Board, to become a member of MGHL, prior to participating in any MGHL Game, a hockey team must:

6.1.1. Qualify for membership in its respective USA Hockey Affiliate;

6.1.2. Pay membership fees and dues as determined by the Board;

6.1.3. Provide MGHL with a certified copy of the USA Hockey Roster for all players and staff at or prior to its first League game;

6.1.4. Comply with Michigan Amateur Hockey Association (MAHA) age (birth year) and district rostering requirements for the appropriate Tier 2 and Tier 3 teams.

6.1.5. Be in good standing with its Affiliate.

6.2. Teams must accept that membership in MGHL is non-transferable and non-assignable.

6.3. Each team must be prepared to provide and shall provide a copy of their Roster upon request to any Division Director, other League official, or to a Team Official of an MGHL member team at any time during the MGHL season. The Division Director or other MGHL official may retain a copy of said Roster at their discretion. The requesting Team Official shall be permitted to review the Roster and may retain a copy only if authorized by the providing team. Each Head Coach must, upon request and by December 31st of each season, provide to their respective Division Director a confirmed roster in pdf format, sent via email. These rosters must then be forwarded in a timely manner by each Division Director to the Hockey Director.

SECTION 7 – TIER I EXCEPTIONS

7.1. MGHL uses MAHA age requirements to organize age classifications within the league. MGHL is a Tier 2 and Tier 3 League.

7.2. Tier I teams may not participate in MGHL.

SECTION 8 – REGISTRATION

8.1. On-Line registration – All participants must register with the league in accordance with published registration guidelines and deadlines. Registration deadlines will be published on the MGHL website.

8.2. Teams registering after published registration times may be subject to a late fee.

SECTION 9 – LEAGUE FEES

- 9.1. League fees are required to be paid on or before the published fee schedule.
- 9.2. The fee schedule will be posted on the MGHL website.
- 9.3. All teams should coordinate payment of league fees with their association prior to submitting payment.
- 9.4. There will be no refunds after payment is received by MGHL.

SECTION 10 – MEETINGS

- 10.1. The League may hold an annual meeting for all teams. Each team should send a rostered coach, team manager, or other authorized representative to the meeting.
- 10.2. Meeting activities can include distribution of League materials, roster review, payment of any outstanding League fees, training, and an overview of League rules and the calendar for the upcoming season.
- 10.3. The MGHL Board of Directors shall hold regular meetings to discuss league operation and to conduct requisite voting on matters pertinent to league administration and operation.
- 10.4. The time and location of MGHL Board of Director meetings shall be published on the MGHL website or via the MGHL social media accounts two weeks prior to the meeting.
- 10.5. MGHL Board of Director meetings may be attended by a representative for any team currently registered in the MGHL. The representative must be the head coach, manager, or girls hockey director for the registered team.

SECTION 11– SCHEDULING

- 11.1. MGHL will align all teams, publish brackets, and publish schedule outlines. Each team is responsible for the process of contacting other teams to schedule games. The home team is responsible for entering game schedule information into the League Management Tool. The away team is responsible for verifying the schedule entry.
 - 11.1.1. Teams will have until the deadline published on the MGHL website to schedule their games and, for the home teams, to enter the date, time, and location of their home games into the League Management Tool.
 - 11.1.2. Failure by the home team to enter the required scheduling information into the League Management Tool will result in review by the Discipline Committee.
- 11.2. It shall be the responsibility of the visiting team to inquire as to the expected period length of the game when scheduling the game. The home team should, as a courtesy, inform the visiting team of the expected period length when the teams are scheduling the game.

11.3. All League Play must be completed by the League Play Deadline unless the Scheduler for the League authorizes an extension in writing, either generally or for specific games, of the League Play Deadline. This date will be published on the MGHL website.

11.4. Failure to complete the League Play within the prescribed period of time in Paragraph 11.3 will result in review by the Discipline Committee.

SECTION 12 – ASSOCIATIONS

12.1. Each association shall register with MGHL and provide the League with an updated list of its Board Members and anticipated Tier 3 and Tier 2 team counts by the date published on the MGHL website.

12.2. Each association shall be responsible for the conduct of the teams it registers with MGHL. Any listed Board Members may be notified by League officials of any disciplinary action initiated against a team within its association.

SECTION 13 – TEAMS

13.1. All teams must provide MGHL with contact information for two (2) people (not from the same household). One must be the head coach; the second may be an assistant coach or the team manager.

13.2. Team Rosters must be finalized by Dec 31st. Any players added to a Roster after Dec 31 will be ineligible for Playoffs. The Division Director will review any allegations of a team playing an ineligible player in either League Play or Playoffs and determine whether to refer the matter to the Discipline Committee.

13.3. All Team Officials are responsible for:

13.3.1. The provision of adequate supervision of their team by the Team Officials at all League functions;

13.3.2. The conduct of their teams before, during, and after a MGHL Game;

13.3.3. Any damage or other loss caused by the team. The Team Officials will be held responsible for making restitution for any such damage or loss;

13.3.4. The conduct of the team's spectators, ensuring that none are abusive to the officials, players, opposing coaches and managers, or other spectators;

13.3.5. Violations of the responsibilities outlined in Paragraph 13.3 may result in review of the team's conduct by the Discipline Committee.

13.4. Independent Teams - Independent teams are not allowed in any division of MGHL.

SECTION 14 – GAME RULES

14.1. All rules in Section 14 shall apply to both Tier 2 and Tier 3 teams except where these MGHL Rules specifically provide otherwise.

14.2. MGHL Games shall be played in accordance with USA Hockey and MAHA rules except as modified by MGHL.

14.3. Jerseys - Home teams are expected to wear white or light color jerseys, and visiting teams are expected to wear dark colored jerseys. Teams can agree to wear jerseys opposite this expectation, or can wear jerseys opposite this expectation when a team has only one set of jerseys.

14.4. Neck guards are optional but are highly recommended for all Players.

14.5. Each age group must use a puck that is in compliance with USA Hockey guidelines defined for that particular age group.

14.6. The scheduled game time is when both teams are to take the ice.

14.7. Early Start Time – No MGHL Game shall start prior to the scheduled game time unless Team Officials from both teams and the game officials agree otherwise.

14.8. Warm-Ups – Both teams are to be given a reasonable warm-up period, regardless of whether they choose to use the time to warm up, commencing at the scheduled game time as defined in Paragraphs 14.6 and 14.7 or when the ice becomes available. Both teams shall be given an equal time to warm up on the ice before a game.

14.9. Period Lengths – The MGHL Division Director will set the length of periods prior to the start of the season and distribute to the teams in a given division. The will provide consistency in league play. The following limits apply:

14.9.1. All games will be a minimum of 10-minute, stop time periods.

14.9.2. 8U will play a maximum of 12-minute periods.

14.9.3. All other age groups may play a maximum of 15-minute periods.

14.9.4. The length of the game should be documented on the score-sheet prior to the start of the game and should be acknowledged by the visiting team prior to the start of the game.

14.9.5. Once the game starts, the period length for the first period is assumed to be the period length for the remainder of the game.

14.10. Teams should shake hands following the game.

14.11. Time-outs are not allowed in League Play.

14.12. If the goal differential between the two teams is equal to or greater than 7 goals at the end of the second period or any time in the third period, running time will commence for the remainder of the game. The game reverts to regular timing for the remainder of the game if the goal differential is reduced to 4 goals.

14.13. Overtime periods are not allowed in League Play. Games tied at the end of regulation thus end in a tie.

14.14. Teams will receive 2 points for a win, 1 point for a tie, and 0 points for a loss.

14.15. Game Misconducts, Match Penalties, and Suspensions

14.15.1. A Team Official must email the report and score-sheet to its Division Director within 24 hours of the assessment of a game misconduct, match penalty, or suspension during a MGHL Game to any player or Team Official. This requirement also applies to any suspensions by the USA Affiliate.

14.15.2. Any player or Team Official who receives three (3) game misconducts during the season may be required to appear before the Discipline Committee.

14.15.3. Any team having a player or Team Official serving a game misconduct, a match penalty, or a suspension must note it clearly on each copy of the score-sheet for the game in which the game misconduct, match penalty, or suspension is being served.

14.15.4. All MGHL Game misconducts, match penalties, and suspensions must be served in accordance with USA Hockey, USA Affiliate and League rules. The offender serves the NEXT PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED GAME. Any game added to the team's schedule following the date that the game misconduct was assessed does not fulfill serving the game misconduct. Violation of this rule is grounds for dismissal from the league. The serving of any suspension under this Paragraph 14.15.4 must be reported to the Division Director. Failure to notify the Division Director of the serving of the penalty may result in the League determining that the suspension had not been served and applying appropriate penalties.

14.15.5. Teams should be prepared to submit to MGHL, upon request, documentation sufficient to show that any game misconduct, match penalty, or suspension has been served in accordance with Paragraph 14.15.4.

14.15.6. The League may audit any team's score-sheets and schedules without notice. If the League determines that a team has not served a game misconduct, match penalty, or suspension in accordance with the USA Hockey or USA Affiliate rules, the violation will be referred to the appropriate governing body.

14.15.7. A Team Official of the team that sustained the penalty is responsible for having the Scorekeeper document any game misconduct, match penalty, or suspension being served in the appropriate section of the score-sheet.

14.16. Home Games – It is the responsibility of the HOME TEAM to provide the following:

14.16.1. A score-keeper;

14.16.2. A game puck in accordance with Paragraph 14.5;

14.16.3. A score-sheet with all the appropriate information correctly documented. See Paragraph 15.3;

14.16.4. Adequate locker room facilities;

14.16.5. Arrange for certified USA Hockey officials.

14.16.5.1. No MGHL team shall allow a family member or a coach in the same division to officiate a game without the written consent of a Team Official from the opposing team in the appropriate section of the score-sheet prior to start of the game.

14.16.5.2. If only one official is present prior to the game start, Team Officials from both teams must agree in writing in the appropriate section of the score-sheet to play the game .

14.16.5.3. Games must be rescheduled if a) no officials are present or b) Team Officials do not agree to proceed with a single official. If a game must be rescheduled for either of these reasons, then the home team will absorb the expenses associated with the rescheduled game. Teams should follow the rescheduling procedures outlined in Section 16 below.

14.16.6. Once the game commences (i.e. initial puck drop), the game shall be played to conclusion in accordance with USA Hockey rules.

14.16.7. The home team should enter the completed game score into the LMT within 48 hours of the scheduled game.

SECTION 15 – SCORING PROCEDURES

15.1. MGHL shall provide to all teams:

15.1.1. Score-sheets for all MGHL Games;

15.1.2. MGHL binder to hold all of the team records; and

15.1.3. Login credentials and a password for the League Management Tool (LMT).

15.2. The League Management Tool will be the official record-keeping tool for the League. All Tier 2 and Tier 3 teams participating in the League are required to enter game data into the LMT.

15.2.1. To ensure that data is entered in a timely manner, each team should designate at least one person to be responsible for entering game information into the LMT.

15.2.2. Instructions for using the LMT will be available at any MGHL meetings, and from the Division Directors.

15.2.3. All teams shall be responsible for entering the required data fields into the LMT prior to the first scheduled MGHL Game.

15.2.4. The individual designated in Paragraph 15.2.1 will be responsible for data entry for their individual team, home games, and playoff games when they are the home team within the time period as determined by MGHL.

15.2.5. Schedule changes and record corrections can only be made by the individual designated in Paragraph 15.2.1, Division Directors or League officials.

15.2.6. Division standings for all teams will be publicly available via the LMT and may be publicly available on the MGHL website.

15.3. An approved MGHL score-sheet should be used to document the game and shall be kept in accordance with USA Hockey and USA Affiliate requirements. Score-sheets should include the home team, visiting team, arena, date, time, player names and numbers, players that did not participate, player and coach suspensions, signatures of all coaches on both benches, curfew information if applicable, period lengths, the period and time of all goals and penalties, referee information, and any other information that may affect the game.

15.4. After the game has been played, the home team is responsible for:

15.4.1. Verifying all information and distributing the score-sheet.

15.4.2. Retaining the original or top copy of the score-sheet and being prepared to submit the score-sheet to its Division Director if so requested.

15.5. After the game has been played the visiting team must verify that all information is correct.

15.6. Both Teams must retain a copy of the score-sheet in their MGHL book and update the game log.

15.7. It is the home team's responsibility to enter all game data into the LMT within 48 hours after completion of the game, unless a shorter time period is required under Rule 14.15.1. In the event that the home team does not enter the data, the visiting team may update the LMT. If data is not entered, at the discretion of League officials, the head coach of the home team may be subject to discipline up to and including suspension from League play.

15.8. Both teams are responsible for validating that the score-sheet data that is entered into the LMT.

15.9. A request for a score-sheet error correction must be made to the Division Director. Changes to the data can only be made by the designated MGHL Officials.

SECTION 16 – RESCHEDULED AND CANCELLED GAMES

16.1. Weather Conditions – MGHL reserves the right to cancel any MGHL Game due to weather conditions. Every reasonable attempt should be made to play scheduled games; however, the League does not require a team to compete when inclement weather could threaten the safety of players, coaches, and family members traveling to and from games.

16.1.1. Games should be cancelled if the arena or roads are closed due to weather, and rescheduled on a mutually agreed-upon date. The home team must monitor its home arena's status and notify the Division Director and one visiting Team Official of the closure and cancellation.

16.1.2. Any game cancellations due to weather must be rescheduled and played by the League Play Deadline. The game shall be played in the originally scheduled arena unless otherwise agreed upon by both teams. Notification of the rescheduled game shall be provided to the Division Director.

16.2. Ice Pulled/Arena Equipment Failure – The home team must notify the Division Director and a visiting Team Official of the situation and of when the arena or its local association notified the home team of a change in the ice schedule that prevents the playing of a previously scheduled game. Teams must provide notice within 48 hours of learning of said schedule change that the scheduled ice will not be available, or at least 24 hours before the scheduled game, or immediately at the scheduled game. If the League determines that a team cancelled a game under false pretenses or delays contacting the appropriate team representative, the Head Coach will be referred to the Discipline Committee.

16.3. No-Show Officials – If a scheduled game is cancelled due to failure of the home team to provide officials, the home team must reschedule the game to be played before the League Play Deadline. Both teams must notify the Division Director of the missed game and the date, time, and arena of the rescheduled game. The team that originally failed to provide referees shall bear the cost of the referees for the rescheduled game.

16.4. No-Show Teams – Unless otherwise mutually agreed upon, any team that fails to show for a scheduled MGHL Game for any reason will reschedule the game with the non-offending team at the home ice of the non-offending team. The game must be rescheduled to be played before the League Play Deadline. Both teams must notify the Division Director of the missed game and the date, time, and arena of the rescheduled game. The offending team shall bear the cost of all ice, referees, and other costs in connection with the rescheduled game.

16.5. Rescheduling Process - Scheduled games may need to be changed for the reasons discussed in this Section 16 or to accommodate either team if agreeable to both teams.

16.5.1. Teams rescheduling a game must first contact a representative of the opposing team to arrange for a mutually agreeable date, time, and arena.

16.5.2. Once a time and arena have been agreed upon, the home team should contact the Division Director and advise the new date, time, and arena of the game. The visiting team will be required to confirm this change with the Division Director.

16.5.3. Once the Division Director receives appropriate notification from both teams, the Division Director will update the schedule in the LMT to reflect the change.

16.5.4. Teams are not required to reschedule games once they have been scheduled. MGHL encourages teams to be as accommodating as possible; however, no game shall be changed unless both teams agree to the proposed change.

16.5.5. Game changes as the result of weather, equipment failure, or other extenuating circumstances, and a date, time, and arena may be decided by the Division Director or the Board in the event that teams cannot agree to a date, time, and arena.

16.5.6. Any rescheduled game must be rescheduled to be played by the League Play Deadline. If the game is not played, both teams will be referred to the Discipline Committee.

16.6. No Forfeits - Teams may not voluntarily forfeit a game for any reason. Any team that is advised by another team that they will be forfeiting a game must immediately report this information to the Division Director. The matter will be immediately referred to one or both of the Board or Discipline Committee.

16.7. Game Cancellations – A game may be cancelled for extenuating circumstances. Only the Board has the authority to approve a cancellation. The Board will review all circumstances surrounding the situation and make its best efforts to cause the game to be rescheduled prior to approving a cancellation. Any team not completing their MGHL schedule shall be ineligible to participate in playoffs without the approval of the Board.

16.8. Refusal to Compete – A team that refuses to play in any scheduled or required MGHL Game by the published league deadline, will forfeit eligibility for league playoffs. At the MGHL Board's discretion that team may be refused league membership in the subsequent season.

SECTION 17 – CURFEW ARENAS

17.1. Many ice arenas in the league have strict enforcement of the ice times allotted to their teams. MGHL games played at curfew rinks must be documented on the score-sheet prior to the start of that game.

17.2. The home team is responsible for:

17.2.1. Notifying the visiting team that it is a curfew game;

17.2.2. Indicating on the score-sheet that the game is a curfew game; and

17.2.3. Verifying after the game is complete, that the scorekeeper filled in the start and end time on the score-sheet.

17.3. The visiting team is responsible for verifying that the score-sheet is marked to document that the game is a curfew game.

17.4. Once a curfew game is declared, it must remain a curfew game. However, if a game is interrupted due to extenuating circumstances the opposing teams may mutually agree to waive the curfew. Such waiver shall be documented on the score-sheet and signed by a Team Official from each opposing team.

17.5 The curfew clock only determines the end of the game at a curfew rink. For a curfew rink, the game clock will follow stop time rules throughout the duration of the game unless running time clock conditions exist (see rule 14.12).

SECTION 18 – DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

18.1. The Discipline Committee will address issues that relate only to compliance with League rules and guidelines and the Code of Conduct contained in Section 3. The League shall be made aware of disciplinary issues in a detailed writing through the following means:

18.1.1. The Division Director will function as the primary conduit for the communication of disciplinary issues to the League.

18.1.2. Other League officials, such as, but not limited to, the Board, can also refer issues to the Discipline Committee.

18.1.3. Disciplinary actions initiated by someone other than a League Official shall first be reviewed by the Division Director of the affected age classification. Only Team Officials can initiate disciplinary action against another team.

18.1.4. Reference is made to the STAR form as an example of a format for a detailed writing under this Section 18.1.

18.2. A Discipline Committee shall be composed of at least 3 MGHL volunteers to be determined at the start of each season. A Discipline Committee Chair will be appointed by the Board. At least one of the three volunteers shall be a member of the Board and shall be present at all meetings of the Discipline Committee.

18.3. Meetings in connection with disciplinary proceedings shall be held as required by the League.

18.4. Process for discipline - If the League is advised of a disciplinary issue, a meeting of the Discipline Committee will be called no later than 14 days after receiving notification, but preferably as soon as practical.

18.5. The MGHL Division Director or Board shall have 24 hours to notify the Discipline Committee Chair upon becoming aware of a disciplinary issue.

18.5.1. Once an issue has been deemed to require action by the Discipline Committee, the Discipline Committee Chair will convene a meeting within 14 days to review the situation. Team members, game officials, and any other person or persons with knowledge of the issue may be asked to give information or be present at the meeting. Such individuals will be notified immediately once the meeting has been scheduled.

18.5.2. Within 24 hours of the meeting, the Discipline Committee shall reach a determination of any disciplinary action that should result based upon its investigation, and promptly notify the party under review of its decision. The Discipline Committee shall, at its discretion, notify other interested parties to the investigation.

18.6. The Discipline Committee Chair shall provide a complete, written record of any investigation of the issue to the MGHL League Commissioner.

18.7. The disciplined party must notify the MGHL League Commissioner in writing within 48 hours of receipt of the Discipline Committee decision of its intention to appeal the decision. The MGHL League Commissioner shall consult with the Board within 10 days of receipt of the appeal. Paragraphs 18.4 and 18.5 define the process for the appeal generally with the League Commissioner acting similarly as the Division Director and the Board acting similarly to the Discipline Committee. The decision of the Board is final.

SECTION 19 – PROTESTS

19.1. Protest Committee – A Protest Committee shall be composed of at least 3 MGHL volunteers to be determined at the start of each season. A Protest Committee Chair will be appointed by the Board. At least one of the three volunteers shall be a member of the MGHL Board and shall be present at all meetings of the Protest Committee.

19.2. Protests may be lodged only in connection with incidents that occur during the playing of an MGHL Game. Only the violation of league rules as stated in these MGHL Operating Rules may be protested. The on-ice calls of an official cannot be protested.

19.3. Process for Filing and Hearing a Protest.

19.3.1. At the game:

19.3.1.1. A protesting Team Official:

19.3.1.1.1. Must verbally advise the opposing coach and the game officials at next stoppage of play of his intention to protest an event;

19.3.1.1.2. Must cause the scorekeeper to note the nature of the protest in the appropriate section of the original or top copy of the score-sheet (e.g., in the "Notes" section) by the conclusion of the game; and

19.3.1.1.3. Must sign the original or top copy of the score-sheet in reasonable proximity to the notation made in Paragraph 19.3.1.1.2.

19.3.1.2. The protesting Team Official in each subparagraph of Paragraph 19.3.1.1 need not be the same Team Official.

19.3.1.3. The game may continue to conclusion with the protest noted.

19.3.1.4. In the event that the referee will not allow the protest to be noted on the score-sheet prior to the conclusion of the game, it is acceptable to verbally note the protest at the stoppage of play and document the protest at the end of the game.

19.3.2. After the game, a protesting Team Official must:

19.3.2.1. Advise the Division Director by telephone within 24 hours of the intent to file the protest;

19.3.2.2. Present the protest within 48 hours of the incident in a written, letter of protest with a legible copy of the score sheet by mail or e-mail to the Division Director and the Protest Committee chair.

19.3.2.3. The letter of protest of Paragraph 19.3.2.2 shall specifically cite the number of at least one MGHL rule that the protesting team asserts has been violated and the action or actions alleged to violate any specifically cited rule.

19.3.2.4. Must send a \$50.00 check made payable to MGHL to the League secretary as posted on the MGHL website with a copy of the written protest of Paragraph 19.3.2.2 to the appropriate address listed on the MGHL website.

19.3.3. The Protest Committee Chair will review the protest to determine if it meets the criteria of a League protest. If the protest involves a League rule and proper notice was given, the Protest Committee Chair will convene a meeting within 14 days.

19.3.4. The Protest Committee will review the information presented and either uphold the protest or deny the protest. Team Officials and anyone else involved may be asked to one or both give information or be present at the meeting.

19.3.5. The Protest Committee Chair shall notify the teams involved in the protest of the outcome within 24 hours of the meeting.

19.3.6. The Protest Committee Chair shall keep a record of the outcome until the end of the following season.

19.3.7. If a protest is upheld, the result and statistics of the game may be vacated and the game caused to be replayed on the protest winner's ice at the protest loser's expense, or some portion of the game could be used to determine MGHL Game results.

19.3.8. If a protest is denied, the original game stands.

19.4. To appeal the outcome of a protest, either team must notify the MGHL League Commissioner in writing within 48 hours of receipt of the Protest Committee decision. The MGHL League Commissioner will hold a hearing of the Board within 10 days of receipt of the appeal. The protest review process described in Paragraph 19.3.4 will be followed for the appeal, with the Board acting similarly to the Protest Committee. The decision of the Board is final.

SECTION 20 – RULES APPLICABLE TO TIER 3 TEAMS

20.1. Participation - The League believes strongly that Tier 3 teams should promote equal participation for all players on their Roster for all MGHL Games. Issues with game participation should be pursued through that team's local association prior to the promotion of that issue to the League.

20.2. Challenges to any Tier 3 Team's qualifications must be directed to the rostering officials representing the respective USA Hockey Affiliate.

20.3. Team Placement – MGHL will attempt to align teams geographically and competitively. Association preferences for geographical placement should be forwarded to the MGHL Scheduler and the Division Director at the time the association registers for the season.

SECTION 21 – BOUNDARIES

21.1. MGHL shall define League Boundaries which shall be used as criteria for participation in the league. The MGHL website will publish the boundaries for a given season. Boundaries may be adjusted by MGHL from year to year during off-season planning activities. The boundaries for the 2025/26 season are included in section 21.6.

21.2. When a team registers for a season, if the team's home arena is within these League Boundaries, the team's application is automatically approved.

21.3. If the applying team's home arena is outside of the League Boundaries, the applying team may:

21.3.1. Secure the use of ice within the League Boundaries on which to play home games. The applying team will then be considered in compliance with the League Boundaries;

21.3.2. Apply to MGHL for an exemption in accordance with Paragraph 21.4; or

21.3.3. Register with MGHL and conditional upon a sufficient number of teams registering in the applying team's local area a separate division would be created.

21.3.3.1. This option is intended for teams outside of the League Boundaries that would like to be a part of MGHL.

21.3.3.2. Teams choosing this option should not submit League fees at the time of online registration, but should wait for the League to determine whether said sufficient number of teams have applied

21.4. Exemptions will be considered individually based on the following criteria:

21.4.1. The number of teams from the local association to which the team belongs that have applied to MGHL;

21.4.2. Prior experience between the applying team and MGHL;

21.4.3. The geographic effect of travel distances of teams aligned within the same division of a Competitive Level as used in Section 22; and

21.4.4. The best interests of MGHL.

21.5. If opposing teams are both within the league boundaries but the teams' home rinks are located more than 250 miles apart, the host team should secure ice within a 50 mile radius of the geographic mid-point between the teams' home rinks.

21.6 The league boundary for the 2026/26 is defined as follows:

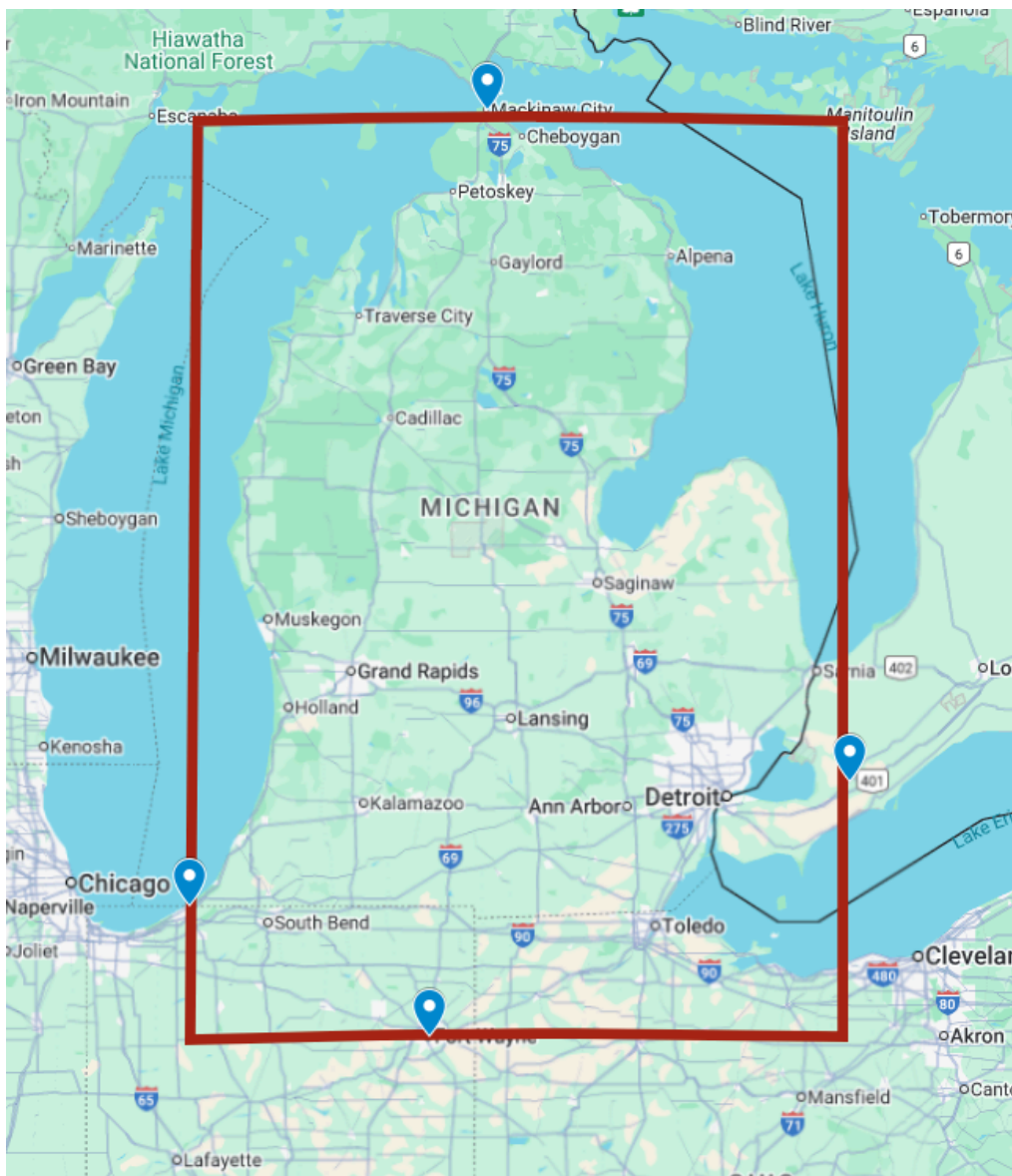
The league boundary is a rectangle passing through and including the following boundary cities.:

North: Mackinaw City, Michigan

South: Fort Wayne, Indiana

East: Chatham, ON

West: Michiana, Michigan



Michigan Girls Hockey League Boundary 2025/26 Season

SECTION 22 – COMPETITIVE DIVISIONS

22.1. The goal of the MGHL is to create competitive divisional alignments. At all times, Team Officials shall demonstrate decorum and respect for the process, the Division Directors, and the other teams and Team Officials. Candid and honest assessments are an invaluable part of the process, but should be provided in a respectful tone and manner. Failure to adhere to this requirement will be referred to the Discipline Committee and may result in the most severe of penalties.

22.1.1. MGHL teams will fall under one of the divisions set out in Table 1. A team's ability to play 'up' or 'down' in a division is clearly spelled out below. There are no exceptions to this rule.

22.1.2. All teams looking to play outside of their approved USA Hockey 'rostered' division will play exhibition games as designated by the Division Director to ensure the proper alignment. The MGHL board will approve the placement of every team in the league.

22.1.3. It is the goal of the MGHL to have only Tier 2 teams within the age classification they roster to play in that respective division. Any exceptions to this rule must be approved by the MGHL board of directors. As an example, all 12U Tier 2 teams should play in the 12U Tier 2 Division.

22.1.4. Tier 3 teams can play up or down one age classification only. For example, a 12U Tier 3 team may play in the 10U Tier 3 division or the 14U Tier 3 division depending on their competitive level at the start of the season. The MGHL board must approve the movement of any team.

22.1.5. Tier 1 teams - There is currently no Tier 1 level of play in the MGHL.

22.1.6. Tier 2 teams will typically hold tryouts to select their team for this most competitive level of play.

22.1.7. Tier 3 teams cannot hold tryouts and will attempt to find a team for every girl looking to play. This level of play is designed for beginners or players looking for more of a recreational level of play, similar to house hockey.

Table 1: MGHL Divisional Eligibility

DIVISION	DESCRIPTION	CAN PLAY IN
10U Tier 3	Designed for girls 10 years of age or younger in the calendar year the season starts.	10U Tier 3 12U Tier 3
10U Tier 2	Designed for the most competitive girls 10 years of age or younger in the calendar year the season starts.	10U Tier 2
12U Tier 3	Designed for girls 12 years of age or younger in the calendar year the season starts.	12U Tier 3 10U Tier 3 14U Tier 3
12U Tier 2	Designed for the most competitive girls 12 years of age or younger in the calendar year the season starts.	12U Tier 2
14U Tier 3	Designed for girls 14 years of age or younger in the calendar year the season starts.	14U Tier 3 12U Tier 3 16U Tier 3
14U Tier 2	Designed for the most competitive girls 14 years of age or younger in the calendar year the season starts.	14U Tier 2
16U Tier 3	Designed for girls 16 years of age or younger in the calendar year the season starts.	16U Tier 3 14U Tier 3 19U Tier 3
16U Tier 2	Designed for the most competitive girls 16 years of age or younger in the calendar year the season starts.	16U Tier 2
19U Tier 3	Designed for girls 19 years of age or younger in the calendar year the season starts.	19U Tier 3 16U Tier 3
19U Tier 2	Designed for the most competitive girls and women 19 years of age or younger in the calendar year the season starts.	19U Tier 2

22.2. All alignment recommendations for Competitive Divisions shall be solely at the discretion of the Division Directors as approved by MGHL. Appeals of an alignment decision may be made in accordance with Paragraph 22.12.

22.3. Division Directors have great discretion to align the teams within their respective divisions, but all alignments are subject to review and approval of the Board.

22.4. All Tier 2 Divisions will be aligned for league play by level of competition and by location of the team's home rink.

22.5. Considerations for Alignment of Competitive Divisions

22.5.1. The primary considerations for alignment of teams shall be prior year results, number of returning players and pre-season game scores.

22.5.2. Participation in league pre-season games is a requirement of playing in the MGHL. Division Directors shall retain discretion regarding the timing of completion of alignment determinations and shall be under no obligation to delay such determinations until completion of any such League arranged competitions.

22.5.3. Secondary consideration may be given to other information presented to the League, but no consideration will be given to any games played by a team following completion of the prior Fall/Winter season.

22.6. There will be up to three Competitive Levels for league play.

22.6.1. Superior shall be the highest level of competition.

22.6.1.1. Preference for placement in Superior level will be given to teams that played in the Superior level the previous year and greater than 50% of their players and at least one returning coach from the prior season return to play with the team in the upcoming season.

22.6.2. Michigan - This Competitive Level is the next most competitive after Superior and is for established or new teams that desire a high level of competition.

22.6.3. Huron – This Competitive Level is the next most competitive after Michigan and is for entry level and developing teams.

22.7. Each Competitive Level will be assigned one or more divisions. When a Competitive Level has more than one division, the divisions may be aligned with the intent of multiple divisions of equal strength or multiple divisions of differing strengths. Such alignment shall be at the discretion of the Division Director. Division Directors may also utilize, but are not obligated by, geographical considerations when placing teams within a division of a Competitive Level.

22.8. Division Directors shall place teams in the Superior, Michigan, and Huron divisions in accordance with the best interest of competitive play in each respective age classification.

22.9. The number or percentage of teams placed in a Competitive Level of one age classification shall not define the number or percentage of teams placed in a Competitive Level in another age classification. Division Directors may, but need not, review another Age Classification for guidance as appropriate.

22.10. Each team's coaching staff will be relied upon during the registration process to provide a recommendation for alignment in a Competitive Level based on a credible assessment of its team. The recommendation will be given consideration, but such consideration does not obligate the Division Director to follow the recommendation.

22.11. A Division Director will not consider any information submitted by someone other than a Team Official within a respective Division. However, the Division Director may solicit information from any individual, which the Division Director believes will assist in determining an appropriate alignment. Under no circumstance, however, shall a

team attempt to assert pressure on a Division Director through threats, anger, volume of submissions, or any other inappropriate tactic, and such tactics shall be referred to the Discipline Committee and subject to punishment of one or both of the offending team and any or all of its Team Officials.

22.12. A team may only appeal its placement in the alignment initially published on the MGHL website. Such appeal shall be submitted to the Division Director and shall be made within the time limit specified on the MGHL website. The Board shall hear and respond to the appeal in a timely manner, but no later than the date as published on the MGHL website. All decisions of the Board shall be final and no further appeal shall be available.

SECTION 23 – DIVISION DIRECTORS

23.1. All Tier 2 and Tier 3 Divisions will be assigned a respective Division Director. The MGHL Commissioner will appoint a Division Director for every division of play. Division Directors shall assist teams within the guidelines shown here and escalate matters to the appropriate MGHL League Official as needed.

23.2. Division Directors are the primary liaison between teams in their Divisions and MGHL and should be the first source of contact for all issues related to their respective Divisions. A Division Director's responsibilities for their respective Division, include, but are not limited to the following:

23.2.1. Communicating MGHL information to teams in their division;

23.2.2. Ensuring all teams in their division are completing data entry as required in the LMT;

23.2.3. Approving and completing schedule changes as needed by the teams in their division;

23.2.4. Managing scheduling and error correction information in the online league management tool for their division;

23.2.5. Responding to any issues within their division;

23.2.6. Ensuring that the MGHL League Commissioner and the Board are apprised as necessary of information regarding their division;

23.2.7. Addressing issues of discipline and participating in Discipline Committee meetings as necessary;

23.2.8. Acting in the best interest of the League, Players, Coaches and families at all times;

23.2.9. Attending MGHL meetings; and

23.2.10. Participating in League conference calls.

SECTION 24 – DIVISION WINNERS AND PLAYOFFS

24.1. Division Winners - MGHL will declare all division winners at the completion of League Play as published on the MGHL website. MGHL will provide awards as determined by the Board of Directors and such awards will be distributed to the team representatives as provided on the website.

24.2. If a team does not complete its League Play as specified in Paragraph 11.3, the results of games played after the League Play Deadline or any extension under Paragraph 11.3 will count toward division standings, but will not count or be considered when seeding teams for the playoffs.

24.3. Tie-Breakers – Division Champs Following League Play

24.3.1. If two or more teams have an equal number of points, the position in the standings of all tied teams will be determined by the following tie breaking format - points acquired in games played between tied teams in order of the highest number of points.

24.3.2. If a tie cannot be broken, the division will have co-champs and awards will be distributed to the Team Officials.

24.3.3. Ties in regular season standing not affecting the division champion will not be broken and will be declared a tie for regular season standings.

24.4. The Playoffs are not mandatory for any team. If a team does not choose to participate, a Team Official should contact the Division Director by the last day of League Play. The team will be removed from the Playoffs, but the team's standings for League Play will remain intact.

24.5. Registration for Playoffs will be completed online in a manner similar to league registration. The playoff fee amounts and schedule as determined by MGHL will be published on the MGHL website prior to the League Play Deadline.

24.6. MGHL will determine divisions for Playoffs. The USA Hockey tiebreaker will be used to break the ties for playoff seeding purposes only. Division placement for Playoffs is at the discretion of the MGHL Division Directors and the Board. It will also consider whether a Tier 2 team should move between competitive levels. Factors affecting the seeding of teams for Playoffs include:

24.6.1. The team standings at the League Play Deadline; and

24.6.2. The total number of teams participating in the Playoffs.

24.7. Playoff Round-Robin Rounds – The following shall govern Round-Robin playoff formats:

24.7.1. The format of the Playoffs for each division will be determined by the Division Director and published on the MGHL website;

24.7.2. Teams will schedule this round based on the information published on the MGHL website in a manner similar to scheduling league play;

24.7.3. The home team will schedule the game on its home ice; 24.7.4. The home team shall arrange for referees;

24.7.5. The home team shall pay for the ice and referees;

24.7.6. The following game rules will be followed:

24.7.6.1. NO TIME-OUTS; and

24.7.6.2. No overtimes allowed unless . Games end in a tie.

24.7.7. Game scores must be entered into the LMT by the winning team in compliance with the rules established under Section 15. If game information is not entered, the league reserves the right to drop the team from Playoffs.

24.8. Round-robin games are to be completed by the date published on the MGHL website.

24.9. Playoff Elimination Rounds

24.9.1. Elimination round games may include quarterfinal, semifinal, and championship games. Advancement of teams after round-robin play will be determined by the MGHL. The League shall contact the teams advancing to this round and post the schedule on the MGHL website and the LMT.

24.9.2. If an advancing team cannot play the next round game, it MUST notify the League through its Division Director as soon as it becomes aware of the situation. The League will determine the appropriate course of action to rectify the team's inability to participate.

24.9.3. If a team does not notify the League that it will not be at the next game, ALL game costs will be assessed to the no-show team. The coach may be suspended from further participation in the League for the remainder of the season or later. If the game costs are not paid, the Team Officials and team will be ineligible for further participation within the League.

24.9.4. Elimination round games shall be scheduled by the League at various arenas. Game and referee costs shall be funded through the MGHL for semi-final and final rounds only. For quarter-final rounds the home team shall pay for the ice and referees; .

SECTION 25 – RULES APPLICABLE TO PLAYOFFS

25.1. In addition to USA Hockey playing rules and MGHL rules, the rules of this Section shall be applicable to Playoff games.

25.2. Period Lengths – The length of each period for all quarterfinal, semi-final, and championship games is as follows:

25.2.1. 8U Travel divisions shall play three 12 minute, stop time period games.

25.2.2. All other divisions shall play three stop time period games with a minimum of 10 minute and maximum of 15 minute periods consistent with the regular season period lengths established by the Division Director; and

25.3. No curfew clock will be in effect after the first round.

25.4. One time-out is allowed in semi-final and championship games, and no time outs are allowed in any other playoff games.

25.5. All penalties being served at the end of regulation carry over into overtime.

25.6. Game misconduct, match penalties, and suspensions received in a Playoff game must be served in the next scheduled USA Hockey game. The requirements of Paragraphs 14.15.4 and 14.15.5 apply to this Paragraph.

SECTION 26 – QUARTER-FINAL, SEMI-FINAL AND CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES

26.1. The Division Directors will manage the quarter-final format for playoffs. Semi final and championship games can NOT end in a tie. If a semi-final or championship game is tied after regulation the following format will apply:

26.1.1. A one (1) minute timeout will be allowed in each of the semi-final and final games.

26.1.2. One THREE-minute, stop time, 4-on-4, sudden-death overtime period will be played.

26.1.3. If the game is still tied after the overtime played in Paragraph 26.1.2, One THREE-minute, stop time, 3-on-3 sudden-death overtime period will be played

26.1.4. If the game is still tied after the overtime played in Paragraph 26.1.2, a three player shoot-out will occur. The visiting team will always shoot first in the shootout. All players are eligible for the shootout, including players serving minor or major penalties, but not players serving misconducts or game misconducts. All eligible players must participate in the shootout before a player can shoot a second time. The coach is NOT required to list his shooters prior to the game

26.1.5. If the game is still tied after the overtime played in Paragraph 26.1.3, a sudden death shootout will occur. Players used in the three player shoot out may not be used again until all eligible players have participated in the shoot-out.

26.2. Penalties in Overtime - If non-coincidental penalties are called in overtime, which would result in a team being reduced below an on-ice strength of 3 players, players will be added to the team on the power play. At the first stoppage of play after the penalty expires, the on-ice strength will be adjusted so that the proper number of players are on the ice.

26.2.1. Example for overtime playing 3-on-3: Team A receives one minor penalty. Play resumes with Team B on a 4-on-3 power play. Before the first penalty expires, Team A receives another minor penalty. Play resumes with Team B on a 5-on-3 power play. When the first penalty expires, Team A would release this player from the penalty box and play would continue 5-on-4 until the next stoppage of play or until the second penalty expires, whereas play would continue 5-on-5 until the next stoppage of play. If a whistle occurs before the second penalty expires,

play would resume 4-on 3. If the whistle occurs after the second penalty expires, play would resume at the original set-up of 3-on-3.

26.2.2. Example for overtime playing 4-on-4: The first penalty to a team would result in a 4-on-3 power play; a second consecutive penalty to the same team would result in a 5-on-3 power play. If three non coincident penalties are called (2 on Team A and 1 on Team B and none have expired), play would resume 4-on-3 and NOT 5-on-4.