

BAHHA Parent/Player Guidebook

Disclaimer

Nothing in this guidebook is to be construed as a guarantee or contract to or with any player, parent, coach, official or member of the Bay Area Houston Hockey Association. This publication is intended to serve as a guideline for the operation of BAHHA, and any part or portion of the handbook can be changed, modified or amended at anytime by the BAHHA Officers and Board of Directors. Should any single section of this document be changed, or found to be legally unenforceable, only that section shall be deemed such, and all other sections shall remain in force as written.

Bay Area Houston Hockey Association (BAHHA) Guidebook Overview

This Guidebook reflects the best thinking of the Board of Directors of our Association at the date of its publication. It also represents contributions from many youth hockey associations. We have borrowed from their writings and their experiences and, in turn, invite them and you to borrow from ours.

We look forward to the season ahead and to the continued growth of our program and our young people.

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Introduction

This resource was developed to provide everyone involved with youth hockey an opportunity to become acquainted with the philosophies, policies, rules and expectations that shape the Bay Area Houston Hockey Association (BAHHA) program. We encourage you to review it carefully. This resource will provide you with information about the structure, size, and complexity of BAHHA. It is hoped that it may also spark your interest to become more involved.

As you will see, there is much to do. Many hours of planning are required to get our program ready for opening day each year, and dedicated volunteers are needed throughout the season to help the Association run smoothly. Your help is essential. As you read through this material, please note areas where your particular interests, talents or expertise may be of value to the Association. The only way an organization like ours can successfully function is with active parent participation and support.

BAHHA teams play under the name of Hounds. Our team colors are red, white and blue, modeled after the Montreal Canadiens.

About BAHHA – Our Philosophy: More than just hockey

The Bay Area Houston Hockey Association (BAHHA) was founded in 2004. The primary purpose of BAHHA is to develop, support and promote the sport of ice hockey for all ages in the Galveston Bay and Houston areas. BAHHA is committed to providing players the opportunity to have fun on the ice while learning the basic skills and how to play the game of ice hockey. Our program is available to all interested players and coaches regardless of socio/economic background, race, religion, gender, national origin or family status.

BAHHA strives to teach the basic hockey skills of skating, stick handling, passing and shooting which facilitate the development of motor skills, hand/eye coordination, quickness and endurance. Physical size is not the most important factor in becoming a skilled and successful hockey player. Each player participates in the game, which is exciting and fast moving. Each player is encouraged to do the best he/she can and to contribute to the success of the team. In doing so, each skater learns to win with pride and to lose with dignity.

As a team sport, hockey affirms the importance of commitment, self-discipline, and sportsmanship among participants (Team = Together Everyone Achieves More). It is the rare child who grows up to become an NHL All Star. Our commitment is to assure that all young people who participate will develop skills and values that will have lifelong benefit to them and to society.

Specific benefits participants in youth hockey receive include:

- Development of the skills necessary to play ice hockey
- Knowledge of the rules and strategies of the game
- Knowledge of conditioning techniques that affect short and long term health and performance
- Enjoyment and recreation
- Commitment to teamwork
- Building self-esteem

- Building a good work ethic
- Good sportsmanship
- Respect for their teammates, coaches and opponents
- The opportunity to meet and become friends with children from many different schools, homes and backgrounds.

Membership in BAHHA

Membership of parents/legal guardians in BAHHA is automatic with the registration of a player. All Officers, Board of Directors, Managers, and Coaches appointed by the Board are also voting members of BAHHA. Membership will correspond to the term of player registration and will automatically terminate upon withdrawal from the program, failure to re-register or (in the case of Officers) be re-appointed.

Board of Directors/Officers

Association members have the opportunity to elect persons to the Board of Directors and to vote on proposed amendments to the by-laws of the Association at the Annual Meeting. The Board of Directors consists primarily of parents of players and serves two-year alternating terms.

The by-laws of BAHHA authorize the Board to oversee the operation of the Association and carry out its goals. Board meetings are usually held every two weeks during the fall season. Both the Board and the membership can meet as often as needed but they are not required.

In order to be eligible for President, one must have been on the Board for the prior year. In order to be eligible for an Officer position, one cannot have a child playing with a competing Houston organization. In order to be a BAHHA Board Member and one has a child playing with a competing Houston organization; one must also have another child that is playing for BAHHA. A Board Member may be removed for 3 unexcused absences (unexcused absence is failure to notify President) per term. In addition, Board Members may be removed with a 2/3 vote from the Board. Resignations must be given by written notice to the Board of Directors. More information about the Board of Directors can be found in the Bylaws.

Volunteers

BAHHA is a volunteer organization. Without our volunteers, we would not exist. All of our Board Members and Team Officials are volunteers. We need you to step forward and help too.

You don't have to know a thing about hockey to operate a scoreboard, organize equipment, take care of statistics, assist with/organize fundraisers or volunteer at Tournaments. There are many other opportunities. All it takes is a bit of time and care. Please volunteer by contacting any Board Member.

Team Support

There are many areas where parents can contribute to the welfare of the team. Two very important functions for individual teams are:

Team Managers:

Each team, regardless of level, should have a Team Manager. Team Managers have administrative responsibilities for items such as attending Board meetings; scheduling Minor Officials; notifying parents of schedule changes; coordinating scrimmages; completing game score sheet rosters; and, especially, for facilitating communication between coaches and parents throughout the hockey seasons. The team manager can also serve as the Parent Liaison or the team can select a different parent to fill this role. The Parent Liaison would be the interface between the parents and the coach. Any issues or concerns would be brought to the Parent Liaison who would then communicate back to coach and then back to the parents. For a detailed list of Team Manager duties, refer to the Hounds website at www.houndsicehockey.org.

Minor Officials:

Each team is responsible for providing a Scorekeeper, Time Keeper, and Penalty Box Official at their home games. These are relatively easy tasks to perform once you become familiar with the procedure. These responsibilities also offer a new perspective to the game. Other support roles may include equipment managers, tournament coordinators and social chairpersons.

Communications

BAHHA believes that communications between the Associations' officials and the general membership is critically important. This guidebook and the BAHHA newsletter are examples of how we attempt to keep our members informed. Emails are also frequently sent that contain upcoming hockey related events and items of interest.

Everyone is encouraged to attend the annual membership meeting. A variety of topics, updates and important Association business are discussed and voted upon during the meetings. Some of the topics at the Annual Meeting include Board Member elections and annual reports.

Our web site, www.houndsicehockey.org, contains links of interest, rosters, schedules, general BAHHA information, coaching and sponsorship information, forms, association news and notes, and tryout information. Everyone is welcomed to submit articles, photos, and items of interest for inclusion into the website and/or newsletter.

Your Team Manager is an excellent source of information. He/she will have the most up to date information on schedules and practices, and team and Association activities. Your Team Manager is also your primary facilitator with the team coach and Board of Directors.

Social Activities

BAHHA hosts a Hounds Hockey Day at Space City Ice Station. This is a fun way for the kids to get on the ice, renew friendships from prior seasons, and meet potential new BAHHA players. This event is held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting. Other activities include skills competitions (fastest shot, fastest skater, most accurate and best goalie) and a used

hockey equipment sale.

Individual teams may hold parties and social activities throughout the season. Typically, a team will hold a Holiday party in December, and an end-of-season party in March or April. Also, social events occur when traveling to out of town tournaments in the form of team dinners, pin swaps and other team events.

Beginning Hockey

BAHHA does not operate its own in-house hockey program. However, we do work closely with the hockey programs at Space City Ice Station.

SCIS provides learn-to-skate and learn to play programs (referred to as Cross-Ice). BAHHA frequently provides coaches and instructors to SCIS for several of these developmental programs. SCIS also offers a spring and summer power skating, hockey skills program and many other hockey oriented activities for players in which BAHHA is pleased to support and participate. When beginning hockey programs are completed, the player moves to competitive hockey in which games are played.

More information about the Space City Ice Station Hockey Beginning hockey programs can be obtained by calling the rink at 281-486-7979 or email hockey@spacecityice.com.

Development Hockey

A few players may qualify for a special program available to BAHHA players. If a player desires to have additional ice time, the player may attend practices for another coach at a higher level. Both coaches must agree and an additional cost will be incurred by the player that must be paid in advance. A commitment to attend all proposed practices must be agreed upon. For example a Bantam travel player may attend Midget travel practices or a met Peeewe player may attend Peeewe travel practices. The guidelines are:

- Meet certain skill level requirement
- Player has desire to get better
- Can commit to weekly participation
- Fee for participating goalies: none
- Fee for others: total cost of practices / # players on full roster (i.e. 20)
- Payment due at the beginning of each of the two sessions - Winter and Spring
- Payment given to Team Manager
- Players joining in the middle of the season and meeting above qualifications will be prorated.

Competitive Hockey

All BAHHA teams are registered and play under the rules established by USA Hockey. BAHHA teams are classified as met or travel. The first level of competitive hockey is the met league play. Met league games are played locally in Houston. The league is sanctioned by the Houston House League (www.houstonhouseleague.com). Official tryouts are not held at this level. Instead, the player will be evaluated at practices. If there are sufficient players at that level to form two or more teams, the coaches will determine the teams based on factors such as skill level, carpooling, etc.

The second level of competitive hockey is travel league. Most travel league games are not played in Houston. The league is sanctioned by the North Texas Hockey League (www.ntxhl.com). Travel teams are formed in all age divisions and will compete as AA, "A" Major and/or Minor, and "B", divisions. If there are sufficient numbers of available players, multiple teams may exist at each age level. All AA teams Peewee age or older are classified as Tier II and are eligible to participate in the state tournament qualifier. The remaining teams are registered with USA Hockey as "house rec".

BAHHA hockey is intended to offer a progressive, developmental hockey experience for all players. Each competitive level has differing objectives and goals:

- "B"
These levels focus on the development of the basic skills needed to play hockey and learning the fundamentals of game and position play. The emphasis is on learning and developing, before winning. Typically, "B" teams at the Squirt through Bantam levels are comprised of players who are first year players or returning players who are still developing their hockey and game skills at that particular level.
- "A" (A1 or A2)
The A level introduces a more competitive team-based level of play while continuing to enhance individual skills. These players typically are returning players who understand the concepts of team and position play, game situations, and have the necessary skating and other skills to be successful at this level. Of the three competitive levels, the A level will often have the broadest range of skill attainment by individual players. The Midget A division is further defined by the "Major" and "Minor" categories, and teams are formed at these levels depend on the number of players available, ages, and the skills of those players demonstrated during tryouts and early season scrimmages.
- "AA"
The AA level is the highest competitive level in NTxHL. Players at this level are highly developed in their skating, hockey and game skills. Coaching and development at this level is focused on refining concepts of team play, introduction of more complex game strategy and honing the individual's hockey skill. At the Pee Wee, Bantam and Midget level, these teams are considered to be "Tier II" and may elect to compete in the post-season playoffs to qualify for the USA Hockey National Championship tournament.

Team Placement – Travel Only

BAHHA attempts to field teams at each competitive level in each age division. The number and level of teams are determined after the tryout process, and are based on the number and skill level of the players attending the tryouts.

While the initial team placement is made following tryouts, the level at which the team plays during the coming season may be changed under two conditions.

Association/Coach/Parent Decision: Many things can occur during the summer that could change a team's competitive potential: children develop and grow, the group of children as a team are greater than, or less than the individual skill they showed in the tryouts, players may decide not to play for BAHHA, or families may move out of/in to the area.

If it becomes apparent during the pre-season practices that the team was placed at an incorrect level and it is felt that a change is in the best interest of the player, the team's placement may be changed. The Head Coach and the BAHHA Coach in Chief may make the

final decision jointly.

Tryout Process - Player Placement – Travel Only

Team players are selected after a series of open tryouts. Tryouts are typically held in the spring of each year. Players are required to attend all tryout sessions at their selected level to receive proper evaluation for placement.

The goal of the tryouts is to assess the comparative skill levels and playing abilities of each player to place him or her on a team that is best suited to their current skill level, and that will enable the player to develop during the coming season. BAHHA is also attempting to assemble teams that have the best opportunity for success in a competitive environment.

Following the tryouts, players will be offered a position on a team roster. Once a player is offered and accepts a team assignment, he/she is expected to fulfill that commitment for the entire season.

All players are subject to USA Hockey eligibility rules, and team rosters are limited to a maximum of twenty players. A minimum of nine skaters and a goalie must be on a team in order to compete in NTxHL.

Injured players: If a returning BAHHA player is injured and unable to attend the tryouts, the player will be tentatively offered a position on either an A or B team. The player will then be evaluated in the fall at one or two team practices before the season begins for final team placement.

The player will be reassigned to a higher competitive level ONLY IF a roster position exists on the other team and the player demonstrates the ability to play at the higher level. BAHHA does not guarantee placement at any particular level for any injured player, but will make every effort to place the player at the proper competitive level.

Filling Roster Positions After Tryouts - Travel Only

BAHHA exists to provide children the opportunity to play hockey. We will make every attempt to provide an appropriate position on a roster to a child who wishes to play hockey, but contacts BAHHA following our team selection and player placement process.

If a roster opening becomes available between the time player placement is completed in the spring and the beginning of the competitive season in September, BAHHA will first consider those players who attended our spring tryouts and have accepted roster positions on lower classified teams. If a player was evaluated as having the ability to play at the higher level but insufficient roster positions were available for him/her at the time of original team placement, the player may be offered the opportunity to "move up" to the higher competitive level.

BAHHA may also hold a series of "supplemental" tryouts in the late summer to fill open roster positions. Current BAHHA players on lower competitive level teams may attend supplemental tryouts for higher-level teams, along with any non-BAHHA members who are interested in participating in our program.

If a roster position becomes available on a team after pre-season practices begin, a single tryout session may be held. Current BAHHA players on lower competitive teams, and/or non-BAHHA member players can be evaluated for the open roster position. The open roster position will be offered to the player who demonstrates the best ability and potential to

compete at the team's level. BAHHA will charge a small fee to cover the cost of additional ice time for the evaluation.

Players who contact BAHHA after the teams are selected will be evaluated for placement only if a roster position is available at the player's age group. Roster additions after the start of the competitive season may be made with the approval of the BAHHA Board and after an assessment of the player to be added. Roster additions can be made through December 31 of the competitive season.

Season Teams

There are two hockey seasons: fall and summer. BAHHA fields fall hockey teams for travel and met league play. Typically the fall travel season plays about 20 games plus playoffs and tryouts are scheduled. Most of these games are not played in Houston. The fall met season plays about 20 games plus playoffs. BAHHA fields summer hockey teams for met league only play with 12 games and has no official tryouts or playoffs. The met games are evenly divided between our home rink and other local Houston rinks.

NTxHL teams are located throughout Texas, Oklahoma and Louisiana. It is possible that a team may have to travel to such areas as San Angelo or Odessa to play some of their away games. The NTxHL establishes the divisional structure (A, AA, etc.) for the regular season based on the number of declared teams at each competitive level.

NTxHL provides BAHHA with a list of the teams each of our teams must play during the season, and then our Schedule Coordinator works with the other organizations to schedule their league games.

In addition to the regularly scheduled fall season games, teams often have scrimmages in the pre-season or during the year to provide additional game experiences for their players. Home scrimmages are usually scheduled when the team has a full ice practice, but the team can elect to purchase additional ice time for scrimmages. The team is responsible for securing and paying any officials for the game. Scrimmages do not count in the NTxHL regular season standings.

Ice Time

Ice time is a precious commodity that consumes the majority of the BAHHA's budget each year. BAHHA attempts to schedule games and practices as far in advance as possible.

Generally, BAHHA travel teams receive two (younger players) to three (older players) practice slots per week during the regular season. These slots are either practice or scrimmage game times. BAHHA met teams receive one practice per week. The summer season has one practice per week as well.

Regular practice time for the met and travel teams entire fall and summer seasons are set at the beginning of the season and usually don't change. Situations do arise which affect practice schedules. Some weekday ice slots are shared with another team (e.g. each team has half the ice for practice purposes). BAHHA attempts to provide teams with as many full ice practices as possible both in the pre-season and during the regular season. Again, full ice practice slots depend on availability of ice time and a team's budget.

Weekend ice times rotate to meet the needs of practice and game schedules. You will be

notified by your Team Manager of any last minute changes.

Sometimes, ice time becomes available on short notice, resulting in changes to practice times, particularly on the weekends. This may create the appearance of erratic and disorganized scheduling. In reality, another group may make last minute changes that make ice available on short notice. However, when we can get extra ice time, we'll usually take it.

Our Schedule Coordinator is very careful to try and make sure that all teams receive an equivalent number of full and shared ice practices, and that everyone has a turn at the less desirable practice times (e.g. 6 a.m. on Sunday morning!)

The games for met and travel leagues are scheduled differently. The travel schedule is set by having BAHHA representatives attend the NTxHL scheduling meeting which occurs prior to the beginning of the season. After this meeting the game schedule is known for the entire season. Situations do occur that causes changes in the schedule. The travel schedule is available at www.ntxhl.com.

Met league Team Managers receive their schedules in phases. This allows for flexibility in scheduling throughout the season. The met league schedule is available at www.houstonhousehockey.com. A typical schedule scenario may look something like this:

- The beginning two or three games are released;
- After a few games have occurred, the game schedule through early January will be completed and distributed;
- The end-of-season game schedule (January through February) will be released in early January.

Our web site will have practice schedules for all teams as they are released. The site will be updated as frequently as possible; however, it is always wise to check with your Team Manager for any last-minute changes, cancellations or additions.

There are times when some teams will decide to purchase extra ice time on their own. These practices are considered voluntary, and are in addition to time provided by BAHHA.

Families will be asked to share the cost of the extra ice time.

Team Jerseys

BAHHA requires travel players to purchase two jerseys (home and away) for game use only. These will be ordered through the Director of Uniforms. Jersey numbers are managed by BAHHA to avoid duplication of numbers at each age group level. Met teams are required to purchase one jersey for game use only. For met, the cost of jerseys is included in the assessment.

For travel, full payment is required for the jerseys at the time of order. It takes approximately 4-6 weeks from the time the order is placed with the manufacturer to delivery of the completed jerseys. Jersey orders made immediately after our evaluations/tryouts will assure delivery before the start of the regular season. Orders after September 1 cannot be guaranteed to arrive before the start of the regular season.

Jerseys are to be worn for BAHHA games or authorized events only. Players should not wear game jerseys for team practices. No patches, artwork or other insignia may be placed on the jersey without the expressed written permission of the BAHHA. Independent teams that are not rostered with BAHHA cannot wear BAHHA jerseys.

The BAHHA logo is protected under the copyright laws and is the sole property of the Bay Area Houston Hockey Association. It may not be copied or used without BAHHA's written consent.

Players should always bring both jerseys to all games.

BAHHA Logo Merchandise

BAHHA sponsors an annual logo-merchandise clothing sale. Members can select from a wide variety of items, including t-shirts, sweat-shirts, varsity or windbreaker jackets, hats and so on. Some items can be monogrammed with the player's name and/or number. BAHHA does make a small profit, if any, from the sale of this merchandise. This merchandise is also available for sale throughout the year by contacting any Board Member.

Equipment Requirements

Selection of hockey equipment is a key issue for players, parents and coaches. When purchasing and fitting hockey equipment, remember two important factors. First, make certain the player is adequately protected, and second, be sure the fitting allows freedom of movement so the player can properly perform the necessary skills.

Shop around for the best values - hockey equipment doesn't have to be the most expensive to meet your skaters needs.

Each skater must wear the following USA Hockey required equipment when participating in games or practices.

- Hockey skates (not figure skates) - allow no more than ½" for growth. Seek adequate protection in the ankle, toe and instep areas. Improperly fitted skates will hamper your child's ability to skate.
- USA Hockey-approved protective helmet with full-face protection of any style, with the Hockey Equipment Certification Council (HECC) and CSA seals of approval. Sized at the time of purchase to fit properly.
- Face Mask - required at all levels and must be approved by HECC.
- Ice hockey stick (not a plastic street hockey stick) - the length should generally extend from the ice to the player's chin (with skates on).
- Neck/throat protector – not required by TAHA/USA Hockey but BAHHA recommends neck guards. Some coaches may make them mandatory.
- Hockey elbow pads - fitted properly so they do not slide.
- Hockey gloves - allow for good finger and hand mobility.
- Hockey shin pads - the length should protect the knee and shin completely.
- Hockey shoulder pads - adjust to fit at the time of purchase. A fiber cap is extremely important in preventing shoulder separation and should extend to the tip of the shoulder.
- Hockey padded pants.
- Colored internal mouth guard – required by USA Hockey for Pee wee and above. By the rules they don't have to be attached. However, BAHHA recommends attaching your

mouth guard and wearing one at all levels.

- Protective cup/supporter (pelvic protector for girls).
- Jersey - Home & away game jerseys.

Goalies require special leg pads, chest protectors, gloves and blockers. BAHHA does have a limited supply of goalie equipment for the younger age groups. Goalies should check availability before planning on using BAHHA equipment. Goalies must provide their own headgear, masks, and throat protection. All equipment belonging to BAHHA should be returned in good condition to the Team Manager at the end of each season. If you are interested in borrowing or donating equipment, please contact the BAHHA Equipment Manager. Goalies must provide their own equipment for tryouts.

Safety

Providing a safe playing environment is of paramount importance to USA Hockey and BAHHA. As such, several rules exist to ensure player and fan safety:

- All players must be registered with USA Hockey.
- Players must wear all of the required equipment (see above) at all times during games and practices. A player may be removed from the ice by a coach or referee if any protective item is missing or deemed defective.
- A USA Hockey-certified coach or assistant coach must be on the ice for all practices. If a certified coach is not available to supervise a practice, the practice may not be conducted and players may not be on the ice.
- Players that are not registered with BAHHA are absolutely not permitted to participate in any on-ice or off-ice (dryland) practices with a BAHHA team. Participation by unregistered players in BAHHA practices voids the USA Hockey insurance for all team members and the Association, and places the coach, parents and Association at risk.
- Players may not be on the ice when the ice resurfacer is on the ice. All players must wait to enter the ice surface until after the ice resurfacer has left the ice surface and the ice resurfacer doors are closed. Similarly, at the end of a game or practice, all players must leave the ice promptly when the ice resurfacer doors are opened.
- Two referees should be present at any Pee Wee, Bantam game. Three referees should be scheduled for any Midget game; however, a game may be played if only two referees are present.
- Coaches are not to let any BAHHA Team take part in any scrimmage game against a non-BAHHA team without at least one (1) USA Hockey Certified Official present to officiate the game. This is for the protection of the players, team officials, coaches, and on-ice-Officials and ensures that USA Hockey insurance coverage remains intact.
- Any non-participating players, or children under the age of 18, who are on the bench, in the penalty box or at the scorer's table during a game or scrimmage, must wear a USA Hockey approved helmet with face guard.
- A first aid kit should be on the bench during all games, and easily accessible to the ice during practices and scrimmages.

- Fans and parents are not permitted to go onto the ice surface or enter the bench area, penalty box or score keepers area during any game, scrimmage or practice unless requested to do so by an EMT, coach, team official or referee. Going onto the playing surface without such a request is a violation of the Zero Tolerance Rule and will be dealt with accordingly.
- When an EMT is present, fans, parents, coaches and referees ARE NOT to interfere with treatment of an injured player. ONLY the EMT is permitted to provide treatment.

Team and Player Classification

Bay Area Houston Hockey Association is a registered member of USA Hockey, Inc. and abides by all of its rules and regulations governing amateur hockey. BAHHA also belongs to the Texas Amateur Hockey Association (TAHA) and abides by all of its rules and regulations governing league play.

Player participants are placed in age groups. Age groups classifications starting with youngest to oldest are mites, squirts, peewees, bantams, and midget (minor and major). Details of the age groups are contained in the BAHHA website FAQ (link) and the USA Hockey web site (www.usahockey.org).

Playing "Up" - Playing at a higher age classification

It is the policy of BAHHA that all players skate within their USA Hockey age classifications. Applications for exceptions should be made in writing to a Board Member. If necessary an on ice evaluation is scheduled. When the Board reviews the letter, the parent is invited to attend and speak at the Board meeting. If accepted, a parent or legal guardian must sign a USA Hockey waiver form permitting the player to tryout and/or play at the higher age classification.

Coaching

BAHHA coaches come from a variety of backgrounds, but all share two important characteristics; they volunteer their time and they all care about the development of our children. Some travel head coaches may be compensated.

Criteria for becoming a coach are:

- Head Coaches must possess a thorough knowledge of the strategies and skills required of the game.
- Prior hockey coaching experience is strongly preferred; however a combination of thorough knowledge of the game and other youth team coaching experience is an acceptable substitute.
- Desire and ability to teach young people the skills required in the sport.
- Sincere desire to develop and nurture young people.
- Commitment to the values, mission and goals of USA Hockey and the Bay Area Houston Hockey Association. Coaches abide by the USA Hockey coaches Code of Conduct.
- Ability to receive clearance based on the National Council of Youth Sports (NCYS) Recommended Guidelines©. (screening for prior arrests/convictions under child

abuse/endangerment laws).

- USA Hockey coaching certification. -- All coaches must meet USA Hockey coaching requirements by December 1 of the current playing season, or he/she will be removed. USA Hockey provides training to individuals who wish to coach through its Coaching Achievement Program. This program is administered through affiliate District Associations in the form of clinics. These clinics are specifically designed to supply each coach with the knowledge of his/her responsibilities and skills of the game that will equip him/her to do the best possible job at whatever caliber of hockey he/she is involved with. BAHHA requires all persons interested in becoming coaches to attend these clinics. Clinics are typically held in the fall.

BAHHA loaned equipment to coaches such as pucks, pinnies and/or practice jerseys, first aid kits and puck bags are to be returned at the end of the season.

If you have an interest in coaching or assistant coaching, please contact the Coach in Chief or any BAHHA Board Member.

Off Season Teams

BAHHA officially rosters its teams with USA hockey for the period beginning in late August through the conclusion of the USA Hockey National Tournaments (April). During this time, BAHHA registered players and teams may participate in scrimmages, regular season play and tournaments as a representative of BAHHA.

BAHHA participates in the city-wide summer season league. The number of teams fielded will be based on the interest in each age division.

Coaches may not conduct any mandatory BAHHA team practices, games or other functions in the off-season. BAHHA players cannot be required to participate in any independent team during the off-season as a condition of being a member of a BAHHA team during the fall season.

This policy does not prohibit players and coaches from participating in/on independent teams or other independent teams during the off-season.

Tournament Play

BAHHA teams only participate in USA Hockey sanctioned tournaments (both scheduled and additional) in the U.S. and Canada. If there is an additional tournament that the team wishes to play in, team parents are given details (dates and costs) of the tournament. No one is required to vote for or play in these additional tournaments, however, those that do vote in favor of the tournament are assumed to have made a commitment to attend the tournament. Additional tournament fees are in addition to any BAHHA required fees and charges.

Teams may participate in up to six (6) tournaments per season. Any team representing BAHHA in a tournament during the regular season must be comprised of BAHHA registered players.

If a team does not have enough players to fill a team roster and wishes to participate in a tournament, players from an equal or lesser level team may be asked to participate. A special USA Hockey Roster must then be completed. Contact the BAHHA Registrar for more information on special rostering requirements.

Occasionally a situation exists whereby the coach of a team does not have a child participating on that team. It is considered a courtesy, but is not required, that the players' parents pitch in to help defray travel costs for the coach to away tournaments, which may include paying for the cost of a single room, meals or providing transportation.

Hockey Parents

As parents or guardians we are the most important influence on our players' attitudes toward the game of hockey and on their behavior. Parents and coaches can work together to demonstrate the philosophy of BAHHA "to develop the skills of hockey and to promote the growth of each player, promote good sportsmanship and team play, and for each player to have fun." USA Hockey has developed a "Parents Code of Conduct and Behavior Guidelines" that is consistent with the BAHHA philosophy. This is distributed in the tryout package or at a team meeting held by the manager or coaching staff.

Above all, the motivating factor for most children who enter an organized youth sport program is their desire to have fun. With a supportive attitude and a fundamental understanding of the "basics" of hockey, everyone will come away from their youth sports experience with a positive feeling.

The degree to which a child benefits from his or her youth hockey experience is as much the parent's responsibility as it is theirs. It is important for you to show support and offer encouragement while maintaining a genuine interest in the team.

Be Positive:

It is important to allow your children to establish their own goals and play the game for themselves. Be careful not to impose your own standards or objectives. The best way to help children achieve goals and reduce their natural fear of failure is through positive reinforcement. No one likes to make mistakes. If your child does make a mistake - and he/she will (they are kids, remember) keep in mind that mistakes are an important part of the overall learning process. Be supportive and point out the things that they do well. Make your child feel like a winner!

Let the Coach coach:

Most coaches have a well-defined plan for season practices and games that are focused on developing each player. Parents are responsible for supporting and respecting the coach's decisions and abilities and it is unfair to put children in the position of having to decide who to listen to - their parents or the coach.

Avoid Over-Emphasis on Winning:

A recent survey indicated that 72% of children would rather play for a losing team than ride the bench for a winner. Avoid placing an exaggerated emphasis on winning.

At Practice:

For a child to improve, he/she has to practice, not just play games. Practice emphasizes the importance of teamwork, establishing goals, discipline and learning to control your emotions, all of which are important lessons children can use both in and away from sports. While conflicts are sometimes unavoidable, it is important that your child attend all his/her team practices.

Car and Home:

Some parents spoil the fun for their kids in the car, believing that this is the perfect place for

instruction. Keep things in perspective. There's more to life than hockey, and the car and home are not the places to coach. The most important aspect of your child's youth hockey experience is for them to have fun while developing physical and emotional skills that will serve them for life. A healthy, risk-free environment that emphasizes the importance of fair play, sportsmanship, discipline and fun will be invaluable for your child as he or she continues to develop a positive self image.

In the Stands and at the Rink:

Negative and rowdy behavior in the hockey rink reflects directly and poorly on the whole organization. We must foster good relationships between our young players, within the Association and with our competitors as well.

Children are great imitators. As parents, our children look to us as positive examples for them. Parents and fans are encouraged to enjoy the game and cheer for good plays. Kids often mirror the actions of their parents; if they see mom or dad losing their cool in the stands, they probably do the same on the ice.

It is worth stating that in accordance with USA Hockey's policy of ZERO TOLERANCE, the following actions are not acceptable:

- Yelling at or threatening referees, opposing players or coaches before, during, or after games or practices.
- Direct confrontations with parents or players.
- Demonstrations of frustration or anger after a game loss.
- Unnecessary or exaggerated celebration of a goal scored or a game won that would embarrass or demean the opposing team.
- Any physical abuse of any other person.
- Approaching the bench during a game situation unless summoned by a player or coach.

Disruptive or abusive parents may be asked to leave a rink and compliance is expected. USA Hockey has invested the referees with the authority to suspend any game action until a disruptive or abusive parent or fan has left the rink area. Play will not resume until the offender has left, and the curfew clock will not be adjusted for the delay in the game.

BAHHA will enforce the Zero Tolerance rule. If notified of a parent/fan of an infraction of the Rule, BAHHA will suspend the parent/fan from attending their player's next game. Successive infractions will receive additional game suspensions. If a parent/fan refuses to abide by the suspension, the parent/fan's player will serve the game.

Any member who wishes to register a complaint regarding an on-ice official should send the complaint in writing to the BAHHA Board of Directors who will contact the proper authorities within TAHA or USA Hockey.

Parent/Coach Relationship

As stated previously, parents and coaches must work together to demonstrate the philosophy of BAHHA. With this in mind, BAHHA emphasizes the following points of the Parent/Coach relationship

- Let the coach do the coaching. Support and assist the coaches whenever possible.
- Know the rules of the game and the guidelines, policies and practices of BAHHA, TAHA

and USA Hockey.

- If an incident occurs between players, let the coaches handle the situation.

Dealing with concerns - 24-hour "Cooling Off" period

If a parent has a concern with a Coach (or any other issue with the association), he/she is required to wait 24 hours before taking up the issue with the Team Manager. This "cooling off period" provides an opportunity for all parties to separate themselves from the immediacy of the situation, and then discuss it in a calm, less emotional manner. Team officials are not required to deal with an upset or emotional parent unless the 24-hour cooling off period has been observed.

If, after discussion, a mutually agreeable resolution to the issue cannot be achieved, a formal complaint or request for intervention can be submitted in writing to the BAHHA Vice President. The BAHHA Vice President and other Board members will investigate the situation and meet with the parties to facilitate a resolution.

Likewise, a coach who has a concern about a parent must follow this same procedure.

Player Behavior, Conduct and Disciplinary Actions

The rules in this handbook are designed to establish procedures and guidelines to support young people who participate in the BAHHA. Many of the rules are those enacted by USA Hockey, Inc., which governs youth hockey. BAHHA is committed to ensuring that they are observed.

The BAHHA Board of Directors and its coaches, Team Managers and volunteer parents all have a vested interest in providing a safe, fun-filled environment for each player. In return, each player must understand that coaches, assistant coaches and parent helpers are to be treated with respect and consideration. BAHHA players are expected to be attentive to coaches' directions and instructions and to avoid disruption. The Board of Directors will support the coaching staff in cases where reasonable discipline must be exercised in order to maintain an organized and enjoyable learning environment.

USA Hockey and BAHHA have written Codes of Conduct for players, which each player is expected to sign at the beginning of the season. It is expected that a player will conduct her/himself in a controlled manner while representing BAHHA both on and off the ice while participating in team functions. Team functions include, but are not limited to, games, practices, team meetings and team trips, and may include, but are not limited to, locker rooms, hotels, team benches, on ice, or any other location of a team function.

Foul language and direct insubordination is unacceptable behavior and will be dealt with accordingly.

Ice time is valuable. All players should arrive at games and practices in sufficient time to allow for suiting up and the necessary pre-game/practice instruction and/or warm up. Unless your coach has told you differently, it is recommended that you be ready to "take the ice" at least 15 minutes before the scheduled starting time of any practice or game.

Reliable attendance is essential to personal skill development and the development of team continuity. BAHHA Head Coaches have the authority to implement a reasonable practice and game attendance policy to avoid disruption to the team. This and any other team rules will be communicated when the team is formed.

Discipline

The initial authority for player discipline is vested in each team Head Coach. Team Coaches have the authority to discipline any player(s) on their teams for just cause, including wrongful conduct that occurs during any team function as defined above.

Disciplinary actions may include, but will not be limited to, benching a player for all or part of a game, suspension from a game(s) or practice(s), or recommendation to the BAHHA Board that the player be dismissed from the team.

Appeals of disciplinary actions:

Any member(s) may appeal the disciplinary action decision to the BAHHA President after observing the 24-hour waiting period. The BAHHA President will determine if the action(s) is appropriate to the situation, and will uphold, or make changes to, the action based on the facts in the case. If needed the BAHHA President may convene a Conduct Review Committee.

An appeal of the decisions or disciplinary actions of the BAHHA President and/or Committee can be made to the BAHHA Board of Directors who will review the facts and make an appropriate decision on each case.

BAHHA will adhere to all USA Hockey and NTxHL rules with respect to minor and major penalties. All match or gross misconduct penalties whether in a NTxHL game, a tournament game or a scrimmage, will be reported to the BAHHA Board. It is the responsibility of the Team Manager to report such infractions to the BAHHA Board within 24 hours of the occurrence.

Grievance Procedure

As described in previous paragraphs, appeal procedures exist to deal with player, coach, team or association issues. Any complaints or grievances should first be addressed by the Head Coach or Team Manager following the 24-hour cooling off period. In some cases (as outlined in the Disciplinary section, above) the first appeal should be made in writing to the BAHHA President.

If the parent/guardian is not satisfied with the resolution of the problem, a written appeal should be prepared and presented to the BAHHA Board of Directors within 10 days of the action or decision by the team officials or BAHHA President. The Board will review the appeal and initiate appropriate problem solving actions.

In some cases, the grievance or complaint may be presented for resolution in the next general membership meeting. If the issue, complaint or problem is inappropriate for wide spread communication/knowledge (e.g. a personal situation that could be embarrassing if made public knowledge), the BAHHA Officers and Coach in Chief will meet privately with the parties involved to resolve the difference.

In some situations, decisions by the BAHHA Board can be appealed to the TAHA or USA Hockey authorities that have rules governing their grievance procedure.

Tryout Fees and Assessments

Tryout fees and assessments are established annually by the BAHHA Board and are based on the projected budget for the coming season. The two most significant variables used to calculate the tryout fees and assessments are expected ice costs and the number of players the Association expects to roster for the season. Additional variables include association operating costs and referee/scorekeeper charges.

Prior to the start of the fall and summer seasons, the Board of Directors will set tryout (fall season only) and assessment fees. If tryouts are required to determine player placement on a team, a non-refundable tryout fee must be paid at the time the player attends BAHHA tryouts.

Prior to the beginning of each season, players/members will be notified of the estimated season cost. In most cases, a commitment fee is due at the last tryout session for teams requiring tryouts. If the player is selected for a team, the commitment fee will be used as the player's first assessment payment. The balance of the fall season annual assessment is due according to the schedule presented at tryouts. A sample assessment schedule may have payments due September 1, October 1 and December 1. Summer season assessments are due in full prior to the beginning of the season. Players/members who do not maintain their payment schedule, or who do not complete their payments to BAHHA by 15 days after the last assessment is due, will be suspended from participating in any BAHHA activities until the account balances are made current. BAHHA has an agreement with the other Houston hockey associations that prevents players who are delinquent in one association from skating with another association until their accounts with all associations are current.

Tournament fees, extra ice times beyond those provided by BAHHA, referee expenses for scrimmages, travel expenses to and from games and tournaments, equipment and other incidental expenses are not included in the assessment fee and are the responsibility of the individual member/player.

BAHHA does allow for discounts for coaches. Players of Head Coaches receive a 30% discount. Players of Assistant coaches receive a 25% discount. There are at most two official assistant coaches. However, other helpers, if certified at the required level, may assist with practices as requested by the Head Coach, but they do not receive a discount. Only one coaching discount can be taken per player.

Fundraising and Sponsorships

Ice hockey is an expensive sport to play. Ice time, USA and NTxHL hockey fees, equipment costs all add up. To reduce these costs, both to the Association and to the individual, a variety of fundraising programs are available. Fundraising is an important component of BAHHA's operations, and successful fundraising can help reduce expenses for all members.

General:

BAHHA encourages a variety of voluntary fundraising programs during the season. These fundraisers include grocery cards, selling pizza, candles, cookies or other items on which the individual team can make a profit to offset playing expenses. Additional voluntary fundraising activities will be available throughout the season and communicated to you by the Team Manager, via the web site or newsletter, or directly from our Fundraising/Sponsor Director.

NTxHL Games:

Usually teams organize fundraising activities to coincide with the NTxHL game weekends. Some activities include raffles, breakfast, and theme baskets,

Team fundraising:

Teams may wish to do their own fundraising. This is certainly acceptable, however, individual team fundraising requires approval by the Board of Directors to ensure that the activity is consistent with the mission and goals of BAHHA and does not conflict with the Association's fundraising programs. BAHHA does not provide capital or services for any individual team's fundraising activities, and BAHHA will be held harmless regarding any and all liabilities arising from such team activity. The money is held and managed by the Team Manager.

Sponsorships:

BAHHA actively seeks corporate sponsors to underwrite regular season expenses. These sponsorships can be any amount, with BAHHA providing a wide array of benefits to the sponsor. The money is held in the BAHHA account. If the money is being donated for a specific team, BAHHA receives 5% of the sponsorship money collected by that team. The balance of the money is then available for the team to determine how to allocate (for example, help pay for assessments, team party, extra ice time, etc.). Team sponsors receive special recognition on our web site. If you or someone you know is willing to be a corporate sponsor of youth hockey, please contact the BAHHA Fundraising/Sponsorship Director. Additional information on sponsorship levels and rules is available on the BAHHA web site.