

1. League Sanctioning and Jurisdiction

- a. USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey
The MNWAHL is sanctioned and governed by the rules of USA Hockey (USAH) and Minnesota Hockey (MNH), who are considered national and state governing bodies respectively. Participants are encouraged to read the USA Hockey Annual Guide, USA Hockey Rulebook, MN Hockey Bylaws, and MN Hockey Handbook. A participant's unfamiliarity with the rules will not be taken into consideration if a dispute arises.
- b. National Sports Center
 - i. The National Sports Center (NSC) is the local governing body for the MNWAHL.
 - ii. The NSC may set additional rules and requirements at any time that are subject to change without notice or publication. The NSC is represented in these matters by a full-time MNWAHL Director.
 - iii. The League Director has final authority over all league matters, including playing rules, team composition, player eligibility, discipline, and other aspects of the league as allowed by USAH and MNH.

2. Participant Eligibility

- a. Participants must be 18 years-old and out of high school by the start of league play.
- b. Participants must be registered with USAH for the current year to be on the team roster.
 - i. Substitute players (skaters and goalies) may be used if they meet all registration requirements, and the MNWAHL Director and NSC Registrar have provided written approval for them to play in that game(s). Without written approval, those players are ineligible for participation on that team.
- c. Players must complete all registration requirements as outlined by the NSC which are specific to the MNWAHL. These requirements will be made available to participants through the NSC Registrar.
- d. Players must be on each team roster they intend to participate on. Teams found with ineligible players will be penalized, up to player and/or team suspension from league and post-season play, without refund.
- e. Players may be rostered on multiple rosters, including those in the same division. Players may only play on one (1) team per division in playoffs. Players are responsible for notifying the NSC Registrar of their team choice prior to playoffs beginning.
- f. Rosters are frozen and cannot be changed on a date and time to be determined by the NSC for each league session.
- g. Players must have a current league eligibility sticker on their helmet to participate in the league.
 - i. Sticker Policy
 1. After the completion of league check-in at the start of each league, this policy will go into effect.
 2. In the first two periods of a game, a team may request that the On-Ice Official perform a sticker-check of the opposing team. This request must come from the Team Manager.
 3. Regular Season Play: If the sticker-check is found to be valid (the opposing team had a player without a sticker), that team will receive a 5-minute Major Delay of Game penalty and the ineligible player is ejected from the game and must leave the ice immediately. If the sticker-check is found to be invalid (the opposing team's players have all their stickers), the requesting team will receive a 5-minute Major Delay of Game penalty.
 4. Playoffs: If the sticker-check is found to be valid (the opposing team had a player without a sticker), the game will end immediately, and the offending team will automatically forfeit the game and advancement in the playoffs. The game will be over. If the sticker-check is found to be invalid (the opposing team's players have all their stickers), the requesting team will receive a 5-minute Major Delay of Game penalty.
- h. League Divisions are set by MNH and the NSC. Players must adhere to the division requirements to play in those divisions. These are available on the MNWAHL and MNH website.
- i. No refunds will be provided to those players or teams who receive game or league ejections.

3. Equipment and Jerseys

- a. All players on the team must wear matching jerseys of the same color. Jerseys must have permanent numbers on the back. Players shall wear the same jerseys and number for the duration of the league.
 - i. Goalies are exempt from this rule. However, they cannot wear a color that matches the opposing team.
 - ii. Opposing teams with similar jerseys may wear pinnies or another jersey with permission from the On-Ice Officials.

- iii. Teams found without matching jerseys, once league has begun, will receive 20 jerseys from the NSC and will be charged double the listed price of jerseys. These jerseys must be paid for prior to playing another game.
- b. Players are required to wear a minimum of elbow pads, shin pads, hockey gloves, hockey pants/breezers, mouth guard, and HECC certified helmet with permanent chin strap. Full facial protection and shoulder pads are recommended.

4. Game Protocols

- a. Four (4) minute warm-up.
- b. Three (3) seventeen (17) minute, running time periods.
- c. One (1) minute rest between periods.
- d. No timeouts allowed.
- e. No overtime in regular season play. Overtime will be used in Playoffs.
- f. Stop-time will be used in the last two (2) minute of the game if the score is within two (2) goals or less. It is the responsibility of the trailing team to start and stop the clock. In the event the game is tied, the home team will be responsible for clock operations. If the score becomes greater than a two (2) goal differential, running time will resume.
- g. Teams must have a minimum of five (5) skaters and one (1) goaltender for a game to begin.
 - i. If the required number of players is not on the ice by the conclusion of warm-ups, the game will be considered a forfeit and recorded as a 3-0 loss for the offending team. On-Ice Officials are not required to officiate forfeited games.
 - ii. If a goaltender becomes injured during the game, the game may continue if the team has a minimum of six (6) eligible skaters participating.
 - iii. If at any time a team does not have the required number of skaters to participate in play the game will be forfeited. This includes penalized player(s) in the penalty box creating the inability to have the correct number of players on the ice during play.
- h. Tag-up off-sides will be used for all MNWAHL games.
- i. Icing is called from the defensive blue line.
- j. No slapshots are allowed. Any shot ruled a slapshot by the officials will result in a whistle and face-off in the offending team's defensive zone.
- k. No body-checking is allowed. A body-checking infraction will result in the appropriate penalty or penalties per USA Hockey and MNWAHL rules and policies, including further discipline as imposed by the MNWAHL.

5. Penalties

- a. The penalty clock will begin at the drop of the puck. If the penalty expires during a stoppage of play, the player will leave the penalty box when the puck drops for the next play, at which point the penalty shall be considered complete.
- b. A player receiving three (3) penalties in a game will be given a Game Ejection and must leave the ice and arena immediately. This Game Ejection does not carry additional suspensions.
- c. Any physical abuse of an official will be called as a Match penalty, result in immediate league suspension, and may carry greater consequences, including legal and/or civil charges.
- d. Any player verbally abusing an official before, during, or after the game, will be given a minimum of a Major penalty, and Game Misconduct with a three (3) game suspension.
- e. Fighting will be called as a Match penalty and carries a minimum of a league suspension.
 - i. A single punch thrown is considered fighting.
 - ii. On-Ice Officials may use their discretion to call fighting so long as no punch was thrown.
- f. Teams may be penalized due to the actions of their spectators.
- g. Any player ejected from a game for any reason and does not leave the arena immediately will be subject to a Match penalty.
- h. The League Director may impose tougher penalties after the game has completed at any time during the league.
- i. Aggressive Penalty Rule: Any penalty deemed by the official to be an aggressive penalty will result in a minimum of a game ejection to the offending player, in addition to any appropriately assessed minor, major, game misconduct, or match penalties called for per USA Hockey Rules. Examples of situations in which this penalty could be assessed include, but are not limited to, cross-checking, roughing (any type of physical altercation), checking, boarding, aggressive slashing, elbowing, charging, checking from behind, head contact, unsportsmanlike conduct, retaliatory penalties, or any penalty that puts an opponent in unnecessary danger. The official is not required to assess this penalty for the above infractions; but may do so at his/her discretion. This rule also includes any kind of intimidating, threatening, vulgar, or abusive language or conduct toward opponents, officials, spectators, or league

staff. If an ejection resulting from this rule is assessed, and there are no game misconduct or match penalties also assessed on the play, the offending player may play in his/her team's next game, provided there is no additional discipline applied by league upon possible review of the incident. The spirit of this rule is intended to promote player safety, sportsmanship, a positive experience for all participants, respect for opponents, officials, and the game of hockey, and to eliminate behavior that has no place in non-check adult hockey.

- j. ***Game Misconduct:** Per USA Hockey Rules, any player receiving a game misconduct will be suspended for his/her team's next MNWAHL game. The game misconduct will be noted by the referee and the offending player's name and jersey number must be reported to the league director by the team manager of the player who incurs the game misconduct. Failure to report a game misconduct to the league director will result in a forfeit of any game played by a player as part of any team who should have been serving a suspension under this rule. In the case of a player rostered on multiple teams, they will not be permitted to play in any of their teams' next games (they must miss one game from each of the teams they are rostered on). Forfeits do not count as a game served under this rule. A second game misconduct in one session will result in a minimum two-game suspension from all teams a player is rostered on, and a third in the same session will result in a suspension for the duration of the session at minimum.

*Please note that a game ejection is different from a game misconduct. No automatic suspension applies to an ejection, unless imposed by the league. A game misconduct carries an automatic one-game suspension at minimum. The referee must specify which penalty(s) he/she is assessing, and team managers should confirm with the referee which penalty(s) has been assessed. In all cases, the league reserves the right to assess additional discipline. Suspended players are not permitted to be in attendance for any MNWAHL games for the duration of their suspension.

6. Post Season Play and Playoffs

- a. Any team that forfeits more than one (1) regular season game may be disqualified from playoffs at league discretion.
- b. If illegal/unapproved players are used in a playoff game, the team shall forfeit playoffs.
- c. Playoffs rounds will be single elimination.
- d. Seeding and playoff schedules will be made available on the league website.
 - i. Seeding Tie Breaker
 1. Head-to-Head
 2. Most Wins
 3. Fewest Goals Against
 4. Most Goals Scored
 5. Coin Flip
 - ii. If multiple teams are tied, procedure will follow the above tie breakers, and start over.
- e. Overtime Procedures
 - i. Five (5) minute, running time, sudden death four-on-four (4v4) period shall be played.
 - ii. If no team scores, a best of three (3) man shootout shall occur.
 - iii. If no winner at end of shootout, a sudden-death single player shootout will be held until a winner is determined.
 - iv. No player may shoot twice in the shootout until all skaters on the team have shot.

7. Protests

- a. Protests are only allowed by Team Managers and must be submitted, in writing, to the League Director.
- b. Protests must be made within forty-eight (48) hours of the protested offense.
- c. Protests will only be accepted for the following:
 - i. Violation of eligibility rules
 - ii. Behavior that may be considered detrimental to the play of the game
- d. Protests may result in additional penalties, suspensions, and/or fines to players upon investigation.

USA Hockey: www.usahockey.com

Minnesota Hockey: www.minnesotahockey.org

National Sports Center: www.nscsports.org

MNWAHL: www.mnwildadulthoodleague.org