

## Summary of USA Hockey Officiating Rules

All USA Hockey Sanctioned tournaments are governed by the same rules outline below. If a USA Hockey Sanctioned Tournament does not abide by these rules then they are in violation and will lose their sanctioning privileges. Most if not all Canada hockey leagues do not allow their teams to participate in NON-USA Hockey Sanctioned Tournaments since USA Hockey Sanctioned Tournaments provide insurance to cover catastrophic injuries that may occur during tournament play. If a tournament does not abide by all USA Hockey Rules then one must call into question the legitimacy of their USA Hockey Sanctioning.

### **Body Checking**

- “Full Body Contact” is allowed at the Minor Bantam level through Midget, while Body Contact is permitted at the Minor Mite/Novice through Major Peewee.
- What is Body Contact vs. Full Body Contact?

It is not accurate to simply say USA Hockey is taking checking out of Peewees. The overall proposal is to increase the allowable body contact beginning at Mites and progress through Bantam when full, legal body checking would begin in games. As an example, the American Developmental Model (ADM) Red, White & Blue Hockey at 8U introduces the cross-ice environment to increase traffic and congestion and thus the associated natural body contact through simply reducing space. The proposal would then increase the allowable body contact as player’s progress through Squirts and Peewees. Competing at the puck, angling to gain possession or stop an offensive attack are examples at these levels. An important objective of this proposal is to eliminate the “Big Hit” in Peewees where players ignore the puck and try to ‘blow up’ an opponent. Though not allowed in games, coaches will be asked to introduce and teach full body checking techniques in every practice during the two Peewee years. We believe this to be a better solution than what we often times see today as a single weekend “introduction to checking” clinic. The proposal is to provide players two years to acquire the necessary checking skills in a safer environment.

### **Checking from Behind**

- A player cannot deliver a body check to an opponent directly from behind or diagonally from behind. The onus is on the player delivering the check to not hit from behind.
  - (a) A minor plus a misconduct penalty, or a major plus a game misconduct penalty, shall be assessed to any player who body checks or pushes an opponent from behind.
  - (b) A major penalty plus game misconduct penalty shall be assessed to any player who injures an opponent as a result of checking from behind or who body checks or pushes an opponent from behind causing them to go head first into the boards or goal frame.
  - (c) A match penalty for attempt to injure or deliberate injury to an opponent may also be assessed for checking from behind.

### **Head Contact**

- A player cannot contact an opponent in the head, face or neck, including with the stick or any part of the player’s body or equipment. The onus is on the player delivering the check, regardless as to size differential, to not make contact in the head/neck area of the opponent.
  - (a) A minor or major penalty shall be assessed to any player who contacts an opponent in the head, face or neck, including with the stick or any part of the player’s body or equipment.
  - (b) A major plus a game misconduct penalty shall be assessed to any player who injures an opponent as a result of head contact or who intentionally or recklessly contacts an opponent in the head, face or neck.
  - (c) A match penalty for attempt to injure or deliberate injury to an opponent may also be assessed for head contact.

### **Off-Sides**

- **Tyke up to Major Peewee** - if a player is off-sides, the whistle will be blown immediately. If the off-sides is accidental then face-off will occur just outside the offensive zone blue line, intentional off-sides will be whistled down with the face-off occurring in the violating teams defensive zone, similar to an icing call.

- **Bantam up to Midget** - Official shall signal a delayed off-side if an attacking player proceeds the puck into the Attacking Zone and the delayed off-side will be nullified if:
  - (1) The puck was to exit the attacking zone.
  - (2) All attacking players are simultaneously clear of the attacking zone by making skate contact with the blue line, at the same instant. If any of the following conditions are met, play shall be stopped and a face-off conducted according to sub-section (c) of this rule:
  - (3) An attacking player touches the puck.
  - (4) An attacking player attempts to gain possession of the puck or continues to apply pressure to the defending puck carrier.
  - (5) The puck is shot directly on goal.

#### **Redline**

- The red-line is not recognized for two line passes. However, it is still considered for an icing.

#### **Goal Crease**

- If an offensive player skates through the opposing teams crease the play is automatically whistled down, with the face-off occurring outside the offensive zone.

#### **Puck Rule**

- Mite/Novice must use Blue Pucks rather than the traditional Black Puck. The Blue Puck is lighter and can be managed better by the younger players. To all Canadian Teams, it would be wise to incorporate the use of blue pucks in a few of your practices prior to the tournament.

#### **No Tolerance**

- At the referees discretion, a two minute minor may be assessed to any player or coach who uses offensive language, or antagonistic gestures towards a referee, USA Hockey Official, player, or coach

#### **Misconducts**

- A game misconduct will result in the suspension of that player for the remainder of the game and the next game. A game misconduct penalty shall also be imposed on any player who is the first to intervene in an altercation then in progress.
- Any player that gets 5 or more penalties in a game will result in the suspension of that player in that game and the following game
- Any coach whose team incurs 15 or more penalties in one game will result in the suspension of that coach in the following game. The coach may watch the game from the stands but may not communicate with the team in any manner. Failure to abide by these will result in the expulsion of the coach from the tournament and the rink.
- Games involving a Gross or a Match penalty will result in an immediate suspension and expulsion of that person from the tournament. Further disciplinary actions will be taken against the coach, team or player. USA hockey will be notified along with the parent organization. **Please understand that under USA Hockey regulations if a team causes a forfeit by leaving the ice and ending the game prematurely the Head Coach is automatically assessed a Match Penalty. The Head Coach is not allowed to be on the bench until a hearing is performed with a USA Hockey Official.**

#### **Equipment – Canadian Teams Playing in the United States**

- Canadian players must wear the following Hockey Canada mandatory equipment:

1. **Hockey Skates**
2. **CSA Approved Helmet**
3. **CSA Approved Face Mask (with color-coded CHA sticker)**
  - (Full mask - Types 1 (white) or 5 (green) for **player** over age 10.)
  - (Full mask - Types 2 (orange) or 6 (red) for **player** age 10 or younger.)
  - (Full mask - Type 3 (blue) for **goalkeeper**, any age.)
  - (Minimum of a visor - Type 4 (yellow) for Junior and Senior age classifications. Note that a Type 4 visor or a full face mask is optional for male adult recreational. If a visor is worn by a male adult recreational player, it must be type 4.)
- **BNQ Approved Throat Protector**  
(For players in all Female and Youth classifications)

**NOTE:** HC rules do not mandate the wearing of a mouthpiece at any classification.