



# House Hockey Parents Handbook

*Updated: Apr 5, 2022*

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# Introduction

Congratulations! By signing your child up for the Birmingham Hockey Association you have joined one of the best hockey programs in the area. The BHA youth hockey program is built around the ADM, which is USA Hockey's American Development Model. Through ADM kids learn that hockey is fun, develop a genuine love for hockey, and excel by advancing their skills and athleticism throughout their childhood.

The following handbook was developed for new house hockey parents to give you an understanding of how BHA is structured, how our programs are run, and to help you know what to expect as you participate in our program.

## House vs. Travel Hockey

House hockey is intended to be an introduction to the sport of hockey for newer and developing players. In general, house hockey teams do not have as much ice time each week as travel teams (usually a goal of 3 times per week vs. 4 times per week), and games are played regionally within a driving radius of about 1 hour. Travel hockey tends to be a bit more expensive as a result of the additional ice time, and travel teams may travel 2 hours or more for regional games.

House hockey teams generally do not have tryouts. Any player who signs up to play house hockey will be put on a team, provided that there are slots available. Travel hockey teams will typically host tryouts, and players must demonstrate a sufficient enough level of skill in order to make those teams.

In Michigan, you will hear a mix of terms expressing the skill levels and age tiers that youth hockey is divided into. This is a result of changes to the terms that have been introduced over the past few years.

## Skill Levels

- Tier I / AAA - Tier I, also called AAA hockey, is the most competitive tier available
- Tier II / AA / A - Tier II is the next most competitive tier. Within Tier II you may hear of teams as being described as AA or A. Usually a AA team, also called a "Major" team, is a team consisting of all one birth year that is is the most senior birth year for a given age bracket, while an A team, also called a "Minor" team, is all one birth year that is the junior birth year for a given age bracket.
- House / B - House teams, or B teams, consist of a mix of birth years for a given age bracket, and generally do not have tryouts.
- Within the Tier I and Tier II teams, in Michigan, you may also encounter the following skill divisions:
  - Yzerman - most competitive

- Howe 1
- Howe 2
- Howe 3
- Howe 4

## Age Brackets

USA Hockey has adopted a standard for age ranges for hockey that is fairly easy to understand, which is the maximum age of players in the division and “Under”. So for example 12U means “12 years old and under”. However, you will often hear legacy terms for each range, as follows:

- 14U / Bantam
- 12U / Pee Wee
- 10U / Squirt
- 8U / Mite
- 6U / Mini-Mite

## Examples

So, given the above, the following are some examples you may encounter in discussions with other parents regarding the skill level teams are competing at:

- Squirt AA / Howe 2 - this would be a travel team consisting of all 10 year-olds competing at the Howe 2 level.
- Pee Wee A / Howe 3 - this would be a travel team consisting of all 11 year-olds competing at the Howe 3 level.
- 14U House - this would be a House or B team consisting of a mix of 14 and 13 year-olds
- It should be noted that travel teams may just refer to themselves by the birth year. For example, the 2012 Rangers is BHA's travel 12U team consisting of all 2012 birth-year players.

## BHA Philosophy

The BHA House Hockey program is committed to ensuring that all players develop a love for the sport and progress to the best of their abilities. As a practical matter, this generally means that we try to ensure that our teams are balanced based on the capabilities and skills of the individual players during each season. Some programs will field multiple teams where one or more teams are comprised of their more experienced players, and other teams consist of all new or developing players. The downside to this is that the developing teams generally are not competitive against other teams in the area, and we feel that it is difficult for new players to learn to enjoy the sport if they are constantly getting beaten by other teams by a large margin.

For our teams, in divisions where we have enough players to field more than one team, we attempt to balance those teams with an even mix of players based on skill level. The upside to this is that each team is likely to be competitive and able to win games. The downside is that it

is unlikely that either team will be competitive at the state level. However, we believe that this philosophy is more likely to engender a love of the sport, especially for newer players, in that they are able to learn from more advanced players and able to enjoy the experience of winning games.

## BHA Organizational Structure

The Birmingham Hockey Association is run by a Board of Directors organized as follows:

- Co-President / Co-President
  - ADM Director
  - 1st Vice President
  - 2nd Vice President
  - Secretary
  - Treasurer
  - Travel Director
  - House Director
    - 6U Mini-Mite Director
    - 8U Mite Director
    - 10U Squirt Director
    - 12U Pee Wee Director
    - 14U Bantam Director
  - Ice Director
  - Registrar
  - Equipment Director
  - Sponsorship Director
  - Counsel

The Bylaws for the organization may be found on the website at:

<https://birminghamhockey.net/bylaws>

The Constitution for the organization may be found on the website at:

<https://birminghamhockey.net/constitution>

## Leadership Directory

The following is the contact information for the current Board of Directors for the 2022/2023 season:

<b>Title</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Email</b>
Co-President	Jill Rymsha	canamathletics@gmail.com
Co-President	Brandon Reinkensmeyer	brandon.reinkensmeyer@gmail.com

ADM Director	Zack Warson	zack.warson@gmail.com
1st Vice President	Jason Daley	jasondaley896@gmail.com
Secretary	Sandra Wolff	srushka@comcast.net
Treasurer	Shelli Adams	birminghamhockeytreasurer@gmail.com
Travel Director	Matt Gadlage	mjpgadlage@gmail.com
House Director	Brian Razzaque	razzaque@gmail.com
Ice Director	Matt Gadlage	mjpgadlage@gmail.com
Registrar	Philippe Sainte-Marie	birmingham.hockey.registrar@gmail.com
6U Mini-Mite Director	Jason Daley	jasondaley896@gmail.com
8U Mite Director	James Healy	HEALYJAM@gmail.com
10U Squirt Director	Jim Rice	jim.rice40@yahoo.com
12U Pee Wee Director	Brian Razzaque	razzaque@gmail.com
14U Bantam Director	Robert Smith	wcsdep2313@gmail.com
Equipment Director	Jill Rymsha	canamathletics@gmail.com
Sponsorship Director	Jim Walsh	jimwalsh582@gmail.com
Counsel	Andrew Harris	Andrew.Harris@kitch.com

## Dues & Budgets

In general, there are two models that associations can have: the first is that parents pay for everything and get a bill each month. Costs are variable and parents generally don't have much say in what the expenses are, and generally, these types of programs are more expensive than BHA and very difficult to budget for. Most travel programs run this way, and monthly costs are usually around \$500-700/mo.

The BHA House program follows a fixed-price model, with one flat fee for the entire season. Within this fixed-price model, Directors are allocated an overall budget based on how many players there are and are tasked with working within that budget over the course of the season. This budget must cover all ice time fees, ref fees, new team equipment, and anything else that comes up.

BHA is somewhat unique in providing the following as part of your dues:

- Professional coaching support - BHA engages professional trainers to work with coaches to assist in running practices and drills and to help ensure consistency and continuity from practice to practice.
- Professional goalie coaches - BHA additionally engages professional goalie coaches to work with goalies to help them grow and develop.

- Tournaments - your BHA dues generally cover the fees associated with participating in at least one, if not two, tournaments per season.

Finally, BHA strives to ensure that house players have at least three ice slots per week for 8U and up, whereas other house programs may only have two ice slots per week. Ice is the single biggest expense for virtually all programs.

## Registration

Presumably you are receiving this because you have completed the registration process through the BirminghamHockey.net website and TeamSnap.

Once you've submitted your registration your player will be able to come out to participate in practices. In general, coaches will have a few preliminary practices to evaluate players and their skillsets before dividing players up into teams, assuming that there are enough players for more than one team.

Once placed on a team players must be formally rostered with MAHA, the Michigan Amateur Hockey Association, which is the governing body that oversees BHA and the other teams that we compete against.

MAHA has some constraints regarding the number of players that are "out-of-district" that may play on a team, as well as constraints regarding the age ratios of players on a team. For that reason, it may be necessary to make some adjustments to team rosters at the beginning of the season.

Further, as part of the rostering process, you may need to provide your child's birth certificate or other documentation. The process of getting a roster approved may take up to 4 business days. Until a roster, or a new addition to a roster, is approved teams or players may be restricted from competing in games. Teams that play games before their rosters are approved may not be able to compete in the MAHA District play-offs.

## Player Development

As previously indicated, BHA is committed to the USA Hockey ADM (American Development Model). This model prescribes goals and targets for players at each level. More information about the model and goals for each age can be found here:

<https://www.admkids.com/page/show/915458-age-appropriate-hockey>

If you would like your child to be able to progress to play travel hockey then you should let your coach know early into the season. Your coaches are committed to your child's success, and will

do what they can to help promote their growth, and can help in directing you to additional resources that can help you and your child achieve their goals.

## Equipment

You are responsible for providing all of the hockey equipment required for your child to safely play hockey. The following is a checklist of equipment that you should be prepared to purchase:

- Skates
- Leg Pads
- Hockey Pants
- Protective Cup (boys) or Pelvic Protector (girls)
- Shoulder Pads
- Elbow Pads
- Hockey Gloves
- Neck Guard
- Helmet
- Mouth Guard (required for 12U and older)
- Hockey Stick
- Hockey Bag

Your dues include game jerseys and a practice jersey, as well as game socks, but these will not arrive until later in the season. For that reason, you should be prepared with a practice jersey and socks as well.

In terms of sticks, new players often will purchase low-end sticks that have no curve on the blade. This can sometimes be helpful for very young players who do not know which hand they are, but is detrimental in learning how to do more advanced techniques, such as lifting the puck. For this reason, it is recommended that you purchase a stick that is sized appropriately for the height and age of your child, and that has a curve based on whether they are left or right-handed.

If you are new to hockey then it is recommended that you purchase your equipment in person from a retailer that specializes in hockey. Their staff will be able to help you size equipment appropriately and answer questions you may have. Perani's in Bloomfield Hills and B&R Sports in Troy are two good local options. Play-It-Again can also be a good resource for finding less expensive used equipment.

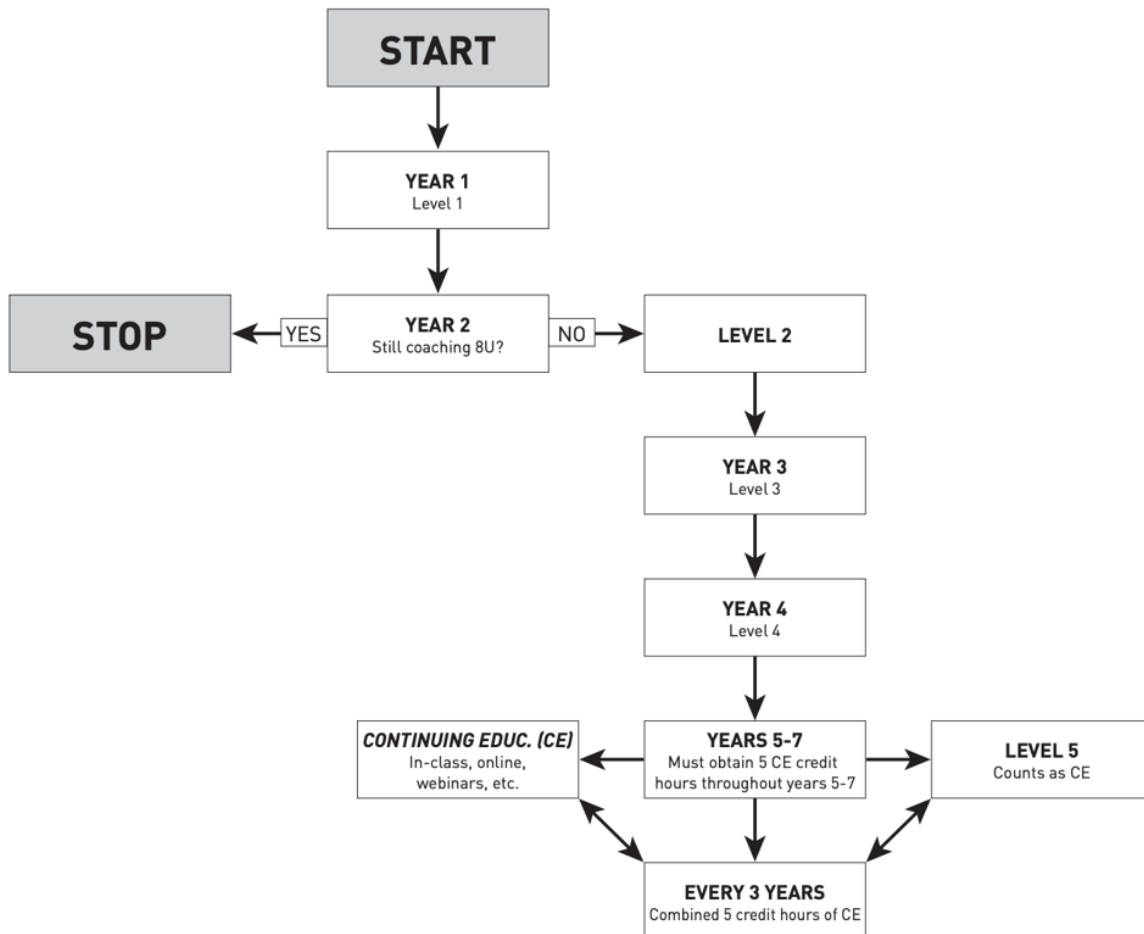
BHA usually has a seasonal trade-in event where used equipment may be purchased. Finally, BHA does have goalie equipment available for younger players (6U and 8U) to be able to try out the goalie position without first committing to purchasing goalie equipment.



# Coaching

BHA Coaches are unpaid parent volunteers who are supported by paid hockey trainers during practices. Any parent may volunteer to become a coach, but then must obtain a number of certifications and go through a certain amount of training through USA Hockey in order to be a Certified Coach. USA Hockey trains coaches through the following levels, with each level requiring approximately 8 hours of in-person or online training, along with corresponding age-level modules (each of which is approximately 2 hours in length).

## 2021-22 CEP PROGRESSION GUIDELINES



Coaches oversee and collaborate with the paid hockey trainers during practices, and run the benches and lines during games. They are instrumental in guiding and shaping our youth players and in the overall success of our program.

If you are interested in becoming a coach please contact the House Hockey Director.

# Team Managers

The Team Manager is a volunteer parent position responsible for assisting the coach(es) in scheduling games, ensuring referees are scheduled, planning social activities, maintaining scoresheets and records, and assisting in tournament planning. If you are interested in being a manager please contact your Director.

## Ice Times & Game Scheduling (Regular Season)

The regular season or fall / winter season runs from September through March.

8U teams and higher are generally assured a target of 3 ice times per week at the Birmingham Ice Arena. These times are posted online for scheduling purposes and are always on the same day and time each week.

However, these ice slots must be used for both games and practices and may be shared between two teams (or more in the case of 8U and under).

As a result, when coordinating game schedules it may sometimes be that one of the teams has to use one of the fixed home slots for a game, and so the other team may not have ice that particular day. Usually, an effort is made to ensure the other team has an away game when this happens, but this cannot always be guaranteed.

Further, away games are scheduled against opposing teams based on the availability of the ice that they have at their rinks. These times can be virtually any day of the week and at any time (outside of normal school hours).

**As such, it is important to note that the times, dates, and locations of ice time cannot be assured to always be, for example, on Sunday afternoons.**

Occasionally your team may have the ability to pick up additional ice time while staying within their allocated budget. This may happen throughout the season and may be on random days or times based on when the ice is available.

## Ice Times & Game Scheduling (Spring Season)

The spring season runs from April to May.

The spring format is a bit different, in that all levels are generally assured that they will have ice 3 times per week, but because player enrollment is lower due to conflicts with other sports many of the slots are combined slots with other age groups.

During the week there will generally be skills sessions, with 6U and 8U potentially sharing the ice, and with 10U, 12U, and 14U potentially sharing the ice. Whether or not ice is shared ultimately depends on player enrollment, which tends to be much lighter in the spring due to conflicts with other spring sports.

On weekends there are generally coach-led games or scrimmages between players of similar skill levels, with the ice again being shared between 6U and 8U, and between 10U, 12U, and 14U.

Depending on how the scheduling works out, it may be that at the 10U, 12U, and 14U levels they are able to get a dedicated ice slot. During this time the ice may be used for either skills training or games against other teams in the region.

Coaches may, at their discretion, also schedule away games against other teams in the area.

During the Spring season, BHA does not participate in any formal leagues (such as the Adray league as described during the regular season), and as such any games against other teams are generally just scrimmages.

## TeamSnap

TeamSnap is the scheduling and coordination software that BHA uses for its teams. Please be sure to download the app and create an account for you and your player ([www.teamsnap.com](http://www.teamsnap.com)). The use of this tool is critical for scheduling and team coordination between you and your coach and team.

## Leagues & Games

Most BHA House Teams participate in the Adray League (<https://www.adrayhockey.org/>). This is a league consisting of other regional teams that are at approximately the same skill level as our teams.

The Adray League divides the season up into two halves. The first half of the season runs from the beginning of October to the middle of December. Games are scheduled by the end of September.

Based on the results of the first part of the season, teams may be divided into two or more groups (if there are enough teams and a wide enough skill gap to warrant it) for the second part of the season. Games for the second part of the season are scheduled by the end of December and will run from January to February with playoffs and championships taking place by the first weekend in March.

The Adray league provides for the top 5 teams in a division to be able to progress to the State-level championships. Lower performing teams are divided into groups based on the number of teams and compete for regional trophies within their skill division.

In this way, teams of all skill levels are able to stay competitive and have the ability to potentially win a trophy.

## Tournaments

Tournaments are planned and coordinated by your Coach and Team Manager and are an opportunity for your team to bond and compete outside of ordinary league play. Tournaments are usually scheduled for within a 2-4 hour drive from Birmingham and generally take place over a weekend. Most tournaments guarantee at least 4 games, followed by playoffs and a championship. As a result, teams will play 2-3 games or even more per day during the weekend.

Your BHA dues cover the tournament team participation fee, but you will be responsible for the cost of hotel and travel. Your Coach and Team Manager will coordinate with all parents to identify and select a tournament that makes the most sense for your team.

## Locker Rooms: Access & Expectations

Locker rooms are a safe space for players and coaches to prepare for practices and games, and to debrief following practices and games. Parents are asked to limit their time in the locker room only as much as is necessary to assist with getting younger players dressed. The locker room is not the appropriate venue for expressing concerns, raising issues, or providing criticism, either to the coaches or to the players. Please refrain from doing so, and if you do have something you wish to discuss with your coaches please pull them aside outside of the locker room or contact them via phone or email.

All BHA coaches and managers are required to be [U.S. Center for SafeSport](#) certified on an annual basis and to follow their guidelines, and they must also pass mandatory background checks, to help ensure the safety of your children.

The Birmingham Ice Arena's recent renovation now provides for a dedicated girls' locker room that may be used for changing if desired for older players.

## USA Hockey Codes of Conduct

BHA expects all parents and spectators to abide by the [USA Hockey Parents Code of Conduct and Spectators Code of Conduct](#).

## Parents Code of Conduct

- Do not force your children to participate in sports, but support their desires to play their chosen sport. Children are involved in organized sports for their enjoyment. Make it fun.
- Encourage your child to play by the rules. Remember, children learn best by example, so applaud the good plays of both teams.
- Do not embarrass your child by yelling at players, coaches or officials. By showing a positive attitude toward the game and all of its participants, your child will benefit.
- Emphasize skill development and practices and how they benefit your young athlete. De-emphasize games and competition in the lower age groups.
- Know and study the rules of the game, and support the officials on and off the ice. This approach will help in the development and support of the game. Any criticism of the officials only hurts the game.
- Applaud a good effort in both victory and defeat, and enforce the positive points of the game. Never yell at or physically abuse your child after a game or practice - it is destructive. Work toward removing the physical and verbal abuse in youth sports.
- Recognize the importance of volunteer coaches. They are important to the development of your child and the sport. Communicate with them and support them. If you enjoy the game, learn all you can about hockey - and volunteer.

## Spectators Code of Conduct

- Display good sportsmanship. Always respect players, coaches and officials.
- Act appropriately; do not taunt or disturb other fans; enjoy the game together.
- Cheer good plays of all participants; do not boo opponents.
- Cheer in a positive manner and encourage fair play; profanity and objectionable cheers or gestures are offensive.
- Help provide a safe and fun environment; throwing any items on the surface can cause injury to players and officials.
- Do not lean over or pound on the glass or fence; the glass and fence surrounding the surface is part of the playing area.
- Support the referees and coaches by trusting their judgment and integrity.
- Be responsible for your own safety - be alert to prevent accidents from flying pucks and other avoidable situations.
- Respect locker rooms as private areas for players, coaches and officials.
- Be supportive after the game - win or lose.
- Recognize good effort, teamwork and sportsmanship

## Additional Resources

4D Hockey - <https://4dhockey.com/>

Kim Muir Power Skating - <https://kimmuirpowerskating.com/>

Motor City Hockey - <https://motorcityhockey.com/>

The Player's Edge - <https://playersedgehockey.net/>