

## **Section 1: Overview**

### **Rule 101 General**

The SSWHL will comply with [USA Hockey Rules](#) except as amended or amplified in these rules.

## **Section 2: Structure of Organization**

### **Rule 201 Board of Directors**

The SSWHL Board of Directors is composed of the President, Vice President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary.

### **Rule 202 Officers**

All officers are elected in elections held prior to the start of the season. Each team from the previous season possesses one vote.

### **Rule 203 Election**

Members of the Board of Directors serve two year terms. Elections will be staggered to avoid a complete turnover of Board members in a year. The following lists the start of the term for each Board Member:

President	Odd Year	Vice President	Even Year
Vice President	Odd Year	Treasurer	Even Year
		Secretary	Even Year

In the event that a quorum is not present, the Board of Directors will appoint a candidate to the position through a Board of Directors vote.

### **Rule 204 League Meetings**

A minimum of two league meetings will be scheduled annually. Each team must have one representative present at the meeting. Additional meetings will be scheduled by the Board of Directors as needed throughout the season.

**Rule 205     Quorum**

At least 50% of all SSWHL teams must have a representative present at any meeting to have a quorum.

**Rule 206     Rule Changes**

- (a) Proposed new SSWHL rules and rule changes are proposed to the League by the Rules Committee 30 days prior to a scheduled meeting. Teams may submit proposed rule changes to the President for consideration by the Rules Committee and preparation for League vote.
- (b) Teams have the 30 day period to examine the rule and develop modification proposals for discussion at the next meeting.
- (c) A quorum of SSWHL teams must be present to vote new rules or rule changes into action (see Rule 205). A team representative can only represent one team. Each team has one vote in the voting process. If a quorum exists, votes on rules are approved by simple majority of the teams present.
- (d) In the event that a scheduled meeting does not have a quorum present for the voting proceedings, the Rules Committee proposal will be enacted and the new rules and rule changes will be set into action.

**Rule 207     Rules Committee**

- (a) Each year during the pre-season meeting, the SSWHL will nominate, elect, or appoint at least five but no more than ten members of the Rules Committee. If the Rules Committee membership is fewer than five, the SSWHL can appoint a new member at any point during the season to ensure the minimum is met.
- (b) The Rules Committee works under the direction of SSWHL Board of Directors and when directed by the Board will review aspects of the SSWHL rules that relate to safety, sportsmanship, competition, and administration.
- (c) The SSWHL Rules Committee has oversight and leadership in the development and maintenance of the SSWHL Rules.

- (d) USA Hockey Playing Rules must be followed. However the Rules Committee may make recommendations that create SSWHL Rules that are more stringent or carry a greater penalty than USA Hockey Rules.
- (e) The Rules Committee will draft Rules Proposals and submit the Proposal to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will review the proposal and either submit the Proposal as written for League Vote per Rule 205, make modifications to the proposal and submit it to the League, send the proposal back to the Rules Committee for further study, or reject the proposal.
- (f) The Rules Committee will collaborate, either virtually or an in-person meeting, with no fewer than 3 members.
- (g) The Director of Referees will serve as an advisor regarding USA Hockey Playing Rules. They can attend Rules Committee meetings and/or comment on the proposal and make recommendations.

**Rule 208     State of Emergency**

If a State of Emergency is declared, the Board of Directors has the ability to modify, amend, or amplify league rules to ensure the safety, health, and wellness of league members.

**Section 3: Game Play**

**Rule 301     No checking**

**Rule 302     Time**

- (a) Periods - Three 12 minute stop time periods. First period, 12 minute stop time; second period, 12 minute stop time; third period 12 minute stop time if overall game time permits. If not, referees and scorekeepers will calculate the time allowed for the period.
- (b) The last two minutes of the game are always stop time.
- (c) There will be a 3 minute warm-up before the start of the game. The timekeeper will start the warm-up clock three minutes prior to game time. If a game will be started late due to

delays in ice availability, the three minute warm-up will commence when the Zamboni door is closed. Once the warm-up clock expires the game will commence.

- (d) A maximum delay by a team of 5 minutes will be allowed before the game is forfeited. The team to which the forfeit is awarded need not replay the game.
- (e) If both teams agree that they are ready to start play and the ice surface is prepared early for the game, the referees will commence the three minute warm-up and the game will commence after the warm-up.

#### **Rule 304      Mutual Swap Policy**

Teams may make a same day mutual swap of game times if all four teams agree to swap and they notify the league scheduler at least seven days in advance. Timekeepers at each rink must also be notified.

#### **Rule 305      Game Cancellation & Forfeit Policy**

(a) Forfeit. A forfeit shall be defined as any instance when a team cannot play any scheduled game due to a lack of the required number of players (at least 6 players – either 6 skaters or 5 skaters and one goalkeeper). A forfeit shall also be declared when a team does not show for a game or cancels the game with less than 30 days notice to the other team and the league officials. Team representatives should notify the Scheduler as soon as it becomes known that the team will not be able to skate so that the opposing team can be notified. The SSWHL Board of Directors will review all weather related instances to determine whether or not a forfeit shall be declared.

(b) Forfeit Penalties:

1<sup>st</sup> Forfeit – A warning shall be issued and the forfeiting team is responsible for paying the cost of the game for both teams (cost determined by the SSWHL treasurer). The opponent will be offered the ice for practice or scrimmage at no charge.

2<sup>nd</sup> Forfeit – The forfeiting team is responsible for paying the cost of the game for both teams (cost determined by the SSWHL treasurer). The opponent will be offered the ice for practice or scrimmage at no charge. In addition, the SSWHL Board of Directors will review the circumstances surrounding the team's two forfeits and may expel the team from the league at the next half.

- (c) Payment of Forfeit Fees. Forfeiting teams have 30 days from the date of the forfeit to pay the forfeit fee to the league treasurer. If the fee is not paid within 30 days, the team will receive a warning. Should the forfeit fee not be paid by 60 days from the date of the forfeit, the team will be expelled from the league at the next half.
- (d) Cancellation with Less Than 30-Day Notice. The team that cancels the game is responsible for paying the cost of the game for both teams (cost as determined by the treasurer). The opponent will be offered the ice for practice or scrimmage at no charge.
- (e) Cancellation with 30-Day Notice. The team that cancels must find a substitute team to play their game in the same division and inform the league scheduler. Each team will be allowed one 30-day cancellation. Teams who find a substitute team will not be fined a forfeit fee. Once scheduled, the substitute team will be responsible for the game and subject to forfeit rules.
- (f) Weather Related Cancellations. Safety is the primary concern during inclement weather. Games will be canceled at the discretion of the SSWHL President, with input from the Board of Directors. If the rink is open and the SSWHL has not canceled games and the teams can not travel to the game due to weather, the league will not charge the individual teams if the rink does not charge the league. If a team is unable to play due to weather and driving conditions and the SSWHL President has not canceled the games, the teams should confirm with each other that the game cannot be played. Then, either team must inform the SSWHL President (Primary) or SSWHL Vice President (Alternate) at least three hours prior to the start of the game.

**Rule 306      Players in Uniform**

- (a) Except as modified below, SSWHL Teams shall follow the rules listed in Section 2 of most current "Official Rules of Ice Hockey" published by USA Hockey ("USA Hockey Rules").
- (b) Unless preprinted rosters are provided on the scoresheet, Teams shall submit to scorekeeper each player's full name and jersey number prior to the start of the game and indicate on the scoresheet which players are designated as the Captain and up to two Alternate Captains.
- (c) Team Representatives shall verify that each player's full name and number is written legibly on the scoresheet. The Coach or designated Team Representative shall revise preprinted rosters, if used, with number changes or cross off players not active for this game prior to the start of the game. The Team Representative shall then sign the scoresheet

prior to the start of the game. Failure to sign a game sheet may result in a game not considered for USA Hockey Championship Tournament qualification.

**Rule 307**

Prior to the game, the home team will have their choice of jersey color and make their selection known to the opposing team. The visiting team must wear a color that contrasts with the home team's jerseys. If a team possesses only one color of jersey, the opposing team will wear a contrasting color.

**Section 4: Team and Player Management**

**Rule 401 Team Rosters**

- (a) Before the start of each season, every player must register with USA Hockey at least one week prior to the start of the season, or one week prior to their first game if they are joining a team after the beginning of the season and register on the SSWHL website indicating the team they will be rostered with. The League Registrar will then register teams with MA Hockey. If a player is found to be in violation of this Rule, the player will be suspended from the SSWHL until the registration number is received and the team will forfeit any games the ineligible player skated in.

**Rule 402 Player Eligibility**

- (a) Eligibility
- All SSWHL players must be 19 years of age or older to play in a game. Players who will turn 19 prior to the end of the season are eligible to play.

Example: The last game of the season is April 1st. A player is 18 years old, and will turn 19 on January 29th. The player is eligible to be rostered for the season because they will be 19 by the end of the season.

Example: The last game of the season is April 1st. A player is 18 years old, and will turn 19 on April 2nd. The player is not eligible to be rostered for the season because they will not be 19 by the end of the season.

- The league, while traditionally named a "Women's" hockey league, recognizes that the gender identities of our players may extend beyond the gender binary. Our

**South Shore Women's Hockey League  
RULES. Updated 9/27/21**

league is open to any player who identifies as a woman and to players who are genderqueer/nonbinary or transmasculine.

- c. All players should refer to the division recommendations to ensure they are playing at the division level that meets their experience and skill level.

(b) A player shall only be rostered on one SSWHL team at any given time.

(c) Only the players listed on the Team Roster on file with the Registrar may play for that Team in a SSWHL game, with the exception of goalkeepers and substitute players(see Rule 403).

(d) Teams may add or drop players from their Team Roster; provided that changes shall be submitted to the Registrar not later than seven (7) days prior to that player's first game with that team.

(e) The League Registrar shall be responsible for verifying rosters and compliance with this Rule and shall report all violations to the League President.

(f) A player is free to leave one Team, and join another Team during the season, as long as that player has no financial or contractual obligation to the first Team. That player may not play in a SSWHL game with their new Team until they are rostered with the new team in accordance with the above rules.

**Rule 403      Use of Substitute Players**

- (a) A team may use a substitute player from any equal or lower level team, provided that player:
  - 1) has a current USA Hockey registration number on file with the league registrar,
  - 2) is rostered on an existing SSWHL team,
  - 3) is in good financial standing with their current team, and the team is in good financial standing, and
  - 4) is not serving a suspension or probation due to disciplinary action.

- (b) Substitute players MUST be listed on the game sheet in a legible manner including name, number, AND team they are rostered with.

**South Shore Women's Hockey League  
RULES. Updated 9/27/21**

- (c) A team may use NO MORE than 4 sub players in any one game and may expand their bench to NO MORE than 10 skaters. The goaltender(s) do not count towards the 10 skater limit. In the event the goaltender is also a sub, the goaltender does not count towards the 4 sub limit.

Example - a team has 4 skaters and would otherwise forfeit - they use 4 skaters from an equal or lower level for a total of 8 skaters. In this case, they have maxed out on subs and cannot use another sub to bring their bench to more than 8.

Example - a team has 5 skaters - they use 4 skaters from an equal or lower level to bring their bench to 9 skaters. In this case, they have maxed out on subs and cannot use another sub to bring the bench to 10.

Example - a team has 8 skaters - they use 2 skaters from an equal or lower level to bring their bench to 10 skaters. In this case, they could not use the third sub since it would bring their bench to more than 10.

- (d) If a team cannot play without going over the maximum sub-player limit, they can consult with the other team to still play the game as a **scrimmage** if the other team agrees. This applies to individual sub-player limit, and not the bench limit outlined in Rule 403 subsection C. The game will not count towards the season record. The team will not be assessed a forfeit fee if the game proceeds as a scrimmage. Teams must notify the league scheduler if a scrimmage will or has taken place. Teams that have more than three scrimmages in a single season will be assessed by the Disciplinary Committee to review their ability to continue in the league.
- (e) An individual player may sub for the same team NO MORE THAN six times if the team they are subbing for is in a different division. That player MUST be moved to the new team's roster and change divisions before that player participates in a seventh game. Goaltenders are not restricted in the number of games in which they may sub.
- (f) An individual player may sub an indefinite number of times for any team in the same division and/or subdivision as the team they are rostered on.
- (g) Teams that use a substitute player without properly adding them to the game sheet will be given a warning after the first instance. Teams that continue to use substitute players without properly adding them to the game sheet will be assessed a forfeit in the standings and may face additional disciplinary action at the discretion of the Disciplinary Committee.

- (h) Teams that use an illegal or ineligible substitute player will be given a warning after the first instance. If a player is found to be an ineligible substitute player, the player must immediately leave the ice. Teams that continue to use illegal or ineligible substitute players will be assessed a forfeit in the standings and may face additional disciplinary action.
- (i) An individual player that knowingly participates as a sub in an improper manner will be given a warning after the first instance. Individuals that continue to sub in an improper manner will be assessed a suspension and may face additional disciplinary action.
- (j) A team may use a goalkeeper that is on another roster, provided that the goalkeeper is rostered on a team in the same division or a lower division. If a goalkeeper rostered on a team in the same division or a lower division is not able to play, a team may use a substitute from a higher division with approval from the opposing team and play the game as a scrimmage. Games using a goalkeeper from another team will not count towards eligibility for nationals.
- (k) Players who are substituting as a goalie, or goalies who are substituting as a player, may be considered exempt to the established rules of substitution. Goalies and skaters switching positions must adhere to division definitions of their skill level in the position they are playing.

Example: An A level goalie would like to skate out. They are a C-level skater. They may skate out in the A, B, or C division, but would not be eligible to play in the D division.

Example: An A level skater would like to play goalie. They are a D level goalie. They may play goalie at the D level, but would not be eligible to skate out at that level.

#### **Rule 404      New Teams**

- (a) Entrance must be approved by a majority vote.
- (b) Level of the new team must be approved by a majority vote..
- (c) Must pay a one-time \$200 buy-in fee.

- (d) Team jersey color must not conflict with any existing team's jersey color in that division.

**Rule 405 Team Requested Division Change**

Teams begin a new season in the same level as they ended the previous season unless they have had significant player changes or request a change in division. In that case, a level change must be requested by the SSWHL Team and approved by a majority vote prior to the new season's scheduling. Teams may request to make a division change either at the beginning of the season for the full season or at the mid-season meeting for a division change in the second half of the season. The Board of Directors will approve or reject this request based on the input of the team desiring the move and the input of the current and future divisions.

**Rule 406 Division Alignment**

At the mid-season, the SSWHL President and Disciplinary Committee will review the competitive balance of the teams within each division. If a team concludes the season with a goal differential + or - of twice the number of total games (i.e.-24 games = goal differential of +/- 48), the President and Disciplinary Committee can propose for that team to move up or down a division prior to the start of the new season. The team can state their case as to why they should remain in their current division and the league will vote on it by a simple majority vote. If a team does change divisions, the team can be re-evaluated at the conclusion of the season to determine if they should remain at that division or move down or up. The President and Disciplinary Committee will consider input from any team so identified and the other teams within the current division prior to rendering a decision.

Division Recommendations:

Teams and players should review these recommendations and also consider their individual skill level and previous hockey experience when determining the most appropriate division in which to participate. Women who are actively rostered on an Olympic, national, or professional team are not eligible for SSWHL. *There are exceptions to the recommendations below, i.e. an injury that has affected level of play.*

A Division: This division is recommended for elite players with Olympic, National Team, Professional, or Division I, II, or III college experience.

B Division: This division is recommended for experienced players. Most players will have Division II, III, or elite club-level college experience. Division I collegiate players or

**South Shore Women's Hockey League  
RULES. Updated 9/27/21**

higher (professional or national teams) should not play in this division unless they were last rostered on that team at least 10 years ago.

C Division: This division is recommended for established players who may have had college club or high school experience. Players who played division II or III, but were last rostered on that team 10 years ago are eligible. Players who played division I, but were last rostered on that team 15 years ago are eligible.

C/D Division: This division is recommended for players who may have had some experience playing at the high school or college intramural levels, but may be still considered as beginner/intermediate hockey players. Players who are over 50 or will turn 50 years old during the season are able to play in this division regardless of experience.

D Division: This division is recommended for recreational or novice players. Most players have started playing hockey as an adult without youth, high school or collegiate (divisional, club, intramural) experience. Players who are over 60 or will turn 60 years old during the season are able to play in this division regardless of experience.

While the recommendations have been written for the average player with that level of experience, there are always exceptions, especially in the case of injury. Players will have discretion in determining which division will best fit their skill level.

When new players are added to a team's roster, they and the team they are joining should check the division recommendations to determine where they best fit given their level of play.

If an opposing team finds that a player is playing in a division below their skill level, they will be able to file a complaint with the league. Player stats will also be periodically monitored to identify players who may be playing in a division below their skill level. Suspected violations should be reported to the League President and the Disciplinary Committee with evidence to support the claim. The League President and Disciplinary committee will make a determination based on the division recommendations, player statement, and evidence provided by the opposing team.

Note - Teams intending to participate in National competition at the Senior A, B or C level must comply with all applicable USA Hockey rules for eligibility for National-bound teams. Participation in a particular SSWHL division does not ensure eligibility in any National-bound classification.

## **Section 5: Finances**

### **Rule 501 Payments**

Payments of the league dues are to be made to the treasurer according to the schedule put forth by the Treasurer prior to the season start. League dues must be paid in full to the treasurer by December 15 of the current season. Failure to pay the full league dues to the treasurer by December 31 of the current season will result in that team's suspension from the league until the dues are paid in full. Games will not be scheduled for these teams in the second half of the schedule. Players rostered on any teams who have not paid league dues are not eligible to sub for any other team. In addition, the league will notify the state USA Hockey registrar of said team's failure to pay which could result in that team being barred from state and/or national tournaments.

## **Section 6: Disciplinary**

### **Rule 601 Fighting**

- A. See USA Hockey Rule 615.
- B. First fight in one season - Suspension for balance of game plus the next scheduled league game, and also league review.
- C. Second fight in one season - Suspension for balance of game plus the next three scheduled league games. You will also come under league review for possible season suspension.
- D. Second fight in two consecutive seasons - If a player has a first fight in the previous season, they will serve the same suspension outlined in section c.
- E. Players who have suspensions for fighting over multiple seasons will be sent to league review for possible league expulsion.

### **Rule 602 Maximum Number of Penalties per Game – Individuals.**

- (a) Any player shall be limited to a total of 4 penalties per game.
- (b) First offense in one season - Upon commission of the 4<sup>th</sup> penalty, that player must leave the game and will also be assessed a game misconduct penalty. That player will not be allowed to play the next regularly scheduled league game.

- (c) Second offense in one season – Upon commission of the 4<sup>th</sup> penalty, that player must leave the game and will also be assessed two game misconduct penalties. That player will not be allowed to play the next two regularly scheduled league games. In addition, the disciplinary committee will review the number and type of penalties committed by that player and may further suspend said player or expel the player from the league.
- (d) Third (or more) offense in one season - Upon commission of the 4<sup>th</sup> penalty, that player must leave the game and will also be assessed game misconduct penalties to match the number of times said player has had 4 penalties in one game in the current season. That player will not be allowed to play that number of the next regularly scheduled league games. In addition, the disciplinary committee will review the number and type of penalties committed by that player and may further suspend said player or expel the player from the league.
- (e) Game misconducts received at the end of a season must be served in the following season.

**Rule 603 Maximum Number of Penalties per Game – Teams**

- (a) If a team commits 8 or more penalties during a single game, that game shall automatically undergo review by the Disciplinary Committee. Disciplinary Committee actions may include (but are not limited to) warnings, suspensions, or expulsions of players and teams.
- (b) In addition to any other actions by the Disciplinary Committee, the player who has received the highest number of penalties during the game under review may receive one or more game suspensions.

**Rule 604 Disciplinary Committee**

- (a) Each year during the pre-season meeting, the SSWHL will nominate, elect, or appoint at least five but no more than ten members of the Disciplinary Committee. If the Disciplinary Committee membership is fewer than five, the SSWHL can appoint a new member at any point during the season to ensure the minimum is met.
- (b) The Disciplinary Committee works for the League Vice President and, when directed by the Vice President or through a complaint directly submitted to the Disciplinary Committee, will review the incident or behavior by a player or team and determine an appropriate sanction(s).

**South Shore Women's Hockey League  
RULES. Updated 9/27/21**

- (c) Disciplinary action includes suspension in addition to USA Hockey and SSWHL suspension penalties already stated in USA Hockey and SSWHL Rules. Disciplinary action also includes expulsion from the SSWHL.
- (d) The player and team will be notified of a Disciplinary Committee Hearing regarding the player or team and the reason or incident that is under investigation by the SSWHL.
- (e) The Hearing will be scheduled as soon as possible but not later than one month after notification. The player or team is encouraged, but is not required, to attend the hearing and may waive their participation in the hearing.
- (f) The Disciplinary Committee will collaborate, either virtually or an in-person meeting, with no fewer than 3 members.
- (g) The Director of Referees or their designated referee representative will be consulted as necessary to ensure adherence to USA Hockey Rules. Referees may participate as witnesses to the incident if necessary.
- (h) Players may present their explanation of the incident in person or in writing. In the case of a player incident team representatives may participate only if allowed by the League President or the Disciplinary Committee.
- (i) For Team incidents, the team can be represented by the Team's Captain, Coach, or Program Director or any combination of the three.
- (j) Following the hearing, the Disciplinary Committee will provide a record of the hearing and make a recommendation in writing to the League President.
- (k) The Disciplinary Committee, with consultation from the President, implements sanctions and contacts the Team representative or Coach to make notification. This is to notify all teams, coaches, referees, and players of the action and assist in compliance.

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