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UPDATE: 2019-2020 AND 2020-2021 SEASONS SANCTIONED EVENT INFORMATION

June 29, 2020

To All NYSAHA Association Presidents:

As you know, this past March, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, USA Hockey canceled its National Tournaments and National Player Development Camps, and NYSAHA canceled its State Tournaments and other hockey activities including its Player Development Camps. At that time, the State of New York suspended all non-essential public activities, including amateur athletics, and NYSAHA followed those directives and suspended all hockey activities and sanctioned events, as provided in its Notices to Association Presidents, dated March 22, 2020, and June 15 and June 17, 2020, that are posted to the NYSAHA website.

Certain limited exceptions were made by NYSAHA which were posted to the NYSAHA website, such as the signing only of players for the 2020-2021 season. No additional players may be added to a roster until the USA Hockey registration portal is opened.

This letter **updates** our membership about permitted reopening activities pursuant to New York State governmental directives, which are based on the Phased reopening of each Region in the State. In this regard we refer you to:

<https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/governor.ny.gov/files/atoms/files/SportsAndRecreationSummaryGuidance.pdf>, which provides detailed **Guidance** on permitted amateur sports activities. Each Association is directed to review the Guidance by accessing it via the provided link, and to conduct itself in compliance therewith.

In the Guidance the State of New York provides this summary:

This guidance is effective immediately for the statewide permitted outdoor, low-risk recreational activities, as determined by the Empire State Development Corporation. **For all other sports and recreational activities described herein, this guidance is effective on July 6, 2020 in regions that have reached or surpassed Phase 3 of the State's reopening.**

These guidelines also apply to non-professional and non-collegiate sports and recreation activities conducted by gyms/fitness centers/training facilities. However, such facilities are limited to no more participants than is allowed under the non-essential gathering restriction that is in effect for their region; and such facilities are prohibited from conducting indoor activities at this time.



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During the COVID-19 public health emergency, all [recreation] businesses/leagues/organizations should stay up to date with any changes to state and federal requirements related to sports and recreational activities and incorporate those changes into their operations. This guidance is not intended to replace any existing applicable local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and standards. For more information, see “Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation.”

According to the Guidance, ice hockey falls under “Higher Risk Sports.” For those regions that fall under Phase 3 or Phase 4 (as of July 6 or later), this means that New York State will permit certain ice hockey activities **limited to**:

- Individual or distanced group training or activities
- Organized or no/low-contact group training (e.g. sports camps or clinics)

It **DOES NOT** include:

- Competitive team practices
- Games, meets, matches, scrimmages, (e.g. organized leagues, pick-up sports)
- Competitive tournaments of multiple games, meets, matches, or scrimmages requiring travel [such as travel between regions within New York, or outside of the State]

The Guidance further addresses “Mandatory” and “Recommended Best Practices” that should be carefully reviewed for the following activities:

- Physical Distancing
- On-Site Activity
- Protective Equipment
- Hygiene, Cleaning, and Disinfection
- Communication
- Screening

To the extent permitted under the Guidance, including the Phase governing the reopening of your region, and applicable New York State and local governmental directives, NYSAHA sanctions Associations to conduct the activities that are expressly permitted above.

This letter further reiterates that based on New York State and local governmental directives, **until further notice all other USA Hockey and NYSAHA sanctioned events in the State of New York remain suspended for the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 seasons, such as tryouts and other on-ice and off-ice activities including the prohibited activities listed in the Guidance.** USA Hockey has authorized its Affiliates, including NYSAHA, to suspend such activities based on Governmental directives and other local requirements. NYSAHA will notify the membership of when tryouts and other sanctioned events may start to be scheduled and held.

An Association that violates the suspension of hockey activities and sanctioned events as detailed in this letter, is placing itself and its related programs and individuals at risk of not being covered by USA Hockey insurance, and may be acting with gross or intentional negligence. NYSAHA has not and will





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not sanction the activities that remain suspended, and those involved are placing themselves at risk of substantial liability and exposure without the benefit of USA Hockey-provided insurance

It should also be noted that pursuant to USA Hockey mandates, if any tryouts or other ice hockey or related activities take place in violation of the above, the Association will be sanctioned, and violations will result in a hearing to be held before the NYSAHA Board of Directors.

Sanctions regarding USA Hockey tryout rules are as follows –

- **For Tier I**, the USA Hockey Youth Council has agreed that the violation of the recruiting and tryout rules by a Tier I team shall result in that team being ineligible to be recognized as a Tier I team and ineligible for National Championships for the season for which it was holding tryouts.
- **For Tier II**, the USA Hockey Youth Council has agreed that the Affiliate has the authority to subject the coach, team, program and/or responsible administrators to appropriate discipline, or ineligibility of the team or coach for violation of the recruiting and tryout rules by a Tier II team. The Youth Council has strongly recommended that the appropriate discipline for a Tier II team's violation of the recruiting and tryout rules is to prohibit said team from being recognized as a Tier II team and making said team ineligible for the National Championships for the season for which it was holding tryouts.
- **For both Tier I and Tier II**, if a team is determined to be ineligible for National Championships, the Youth Council further recommends that players that were not subject to improper recruiting or tryouts should be released and (subject to roster deadlines) free to join an eligible team.
- **For Tier III**, all Tier III teams must follow all Tier I and Tier II rules in the USA Hockey Guide as provided at NYSAHA Rule 10.A.9.

The NYSAHA Board of Directors will continue to make changes as necessary to facilitate the conduct of business.

Thank you for your attention to these considerations.

Yours in Hockey
New York State Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.

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District Director

cc: NYSAHA Board of Director



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