

## **USA HOCKEY LOCKER ROOM POLICY**

Youth players are particularly vulnerable in locker rooms, changing areas and restrooms due to various stages of dress/undress and because they are often less supervised than at other times. Athlete-to-athlete problems, such as sexual abuse, bullying, harassment or hazing, often occur when a coach or other responsible adult is not in a position to observe – this is especially true in locker rooms. Adherence to a locker room policy enhances privacy and reduces the likelihood of misconduct. Proper supervision of the locker room areas also helps ensure that players that may have suffered an injury during a game or practice have an adult present to confer with regarding such injury.

### **Locker Room Supervision**

USA Hockey is concerned with locker room activities between minor participants; minor participants and adult participants; adults being alone with individual minor participants in locker rooms; and with non-official or non-related adults having unsupervised access to minor participants at team events.

It is the policy of USA Hockey that all USA Hockey Member Programs have at least one responsible screened adult present monitoring the locker room during all team events to assure that only participants (coaches and players), approved team personnel and family members are permitted in the locker room and to supervise the conduct in the locker room. Acceptable locker room monitoring could include having locker room monitors in the locker room while participants are in the locker room, or could include having a locker room monitor in the immediate vicinity (near the door) outside the locker room that also regularly and frequently enters the locker room to monitor activity inside. If the monitor(s) are inside, then it is strongly recommended that there be two monitors, both of which have been screened. A local program or team may impose or follow stricter monitoring requirements. Any individual meetings between a minor participant and a coach or other adult in a locker room shall require that a second responsible adult is present. The responsible adult that monitors and supervises the locker room shall have been screened in compliance with Section III of this Handbook.

Further, responsible adults must also secure the locker room appropriately during times when minor participants are on the ice.

It shall be permissible for a local program or team to prohibit parents from a locker room. However, in doing so the team shall be required to have properly screened adults monitoring and supervising the locker room as required above. With younger players, it is generally appropriate to allow parents to assist the player with getting equipment on and off before and after games or practices and they should be allowed in the locker room to do so.

Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, which includes voice recording, still cameras, and video cameras, increase the risk for some forms of abuse or misconduct. As a result, the use of a mobile device's recording capabilities in the locker rooms is not permitted at any USA Hockey sanctioned event, provided that it may be acceptable to take photographs or recordings in a locker room in such unique circumstances as a victory celebration, team party, etc., where all persons in the locker room are appropriately dressed and have been advised that photographs or recordings are being taken.

All local programs shall publish locker room policies to the parents of all minor participants that are specific to the facilities they regularly use. The local program's policies shall include the program's (a) practices for supervising and monitoring locker rooms and changing areas; (b) permission or lack of permission for

parents to be in the locker rooms; (c) prohibited conduct, including at least all forms of abuse and misconduct prohibited by USA Hockey; and (d) specific policies regarding the use of mobile electronic devices and phones and prohibiting the use of a device's recording capabilities. A sample locker room policy form may be found at [www.usahockey.com/safesport](http://www.usahockey.com/safesport).

For each team, the coach and/or team administrators shall be responsible for compliance with the locker room supervision requirements of this Policy. A coach and/or team administrator that fails to take appropriate steps to ensure the Locker Room Policy is adhered to, and any USA Hockey participant or parent of a participant who otherwise violates this Policy is subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

### **Co-Ed Locker Rooms**

As a team sport in which youth teams can often include both male and female players, special circumstances may exist that can increase the chance of abuse or misconduct. If the team consists of both male and female players, both female and male privacy rights must be given consideration and appropriate arrangements made. It is not acceptable under USA Hockey's Sexual Abuse Policy for persons to be observing the opposite gender while they dress or undress. There are a variety of ways to comply with the above tenets, and what works may depend on the locker rooms that are available at a particular facility. Where possible, the male and female players should undress/dress in separate locker rooms and then convene in a single dressing room prior to the game or team meeting. Once the game is finished, the players may come to one locker room and then the male and female players proceed to their separate dressing rooms to undress and shower (separately), if available. If separate locker rooms are not available, then the genders may take turns using the locker room to change and then leave while the other gender changes. Where possible, when both male and female players are together in the locker room, there should be at least two adults in the locker room that have been properly screened in compliance with USA Hockey Screening Policy.

The USA Hockey SafeSport website ([www.usahockey.com/safesport](http://www.usahockey.com/safesport)) contains sample approaches that may be used by a local program depending on the facilities available at a particular arena. Additionally, reference USA Hockey's Co-Ed Locker Room Policy set forth in the USA Hockey Annual Guide, which also addresses gender equity and the need to provide equal exposure to coaching and instruction as it may be impacted by a program's Co-Ed Locker Room Policy.