



**MWHSHL**

# Policy & Rules Manual

\* May 7, 2024

Advancing female high school hockey  
by delivering the best possible hockey experience  
for the benefit and enjoyment of our players.

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## Article A. Code of Conduct

*\*Adapted from the MHSAA Sportsmanship, Ethics and Integrity Guidelines*

The Manitoba Women's High School Hockey League (MWHSHL or League) has established a tradition of sportsmanship, collegiality and fair play. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to nurture and maintain this culture. Sportsmanship is the first objective of high school athletics. As such, it should be taught and personified. According to the Manitoba High Schools Athletic Association (MHSAA), good sportsmanship is a commitment to fair play, ethical behavior and integrity. All League members and school representatives including players, coaches, referees, teacher-supervisors and administrators, as well as parents and fans, are expected to be aware of their behavior and its influence on others, and to model good sportsmanship.

The mission of the League is to establish a safe and caring environment in which female athletes can participate with their high school classmates in competitive hockey.

The goal of the League is to always act in the best interests of the athlete.

### Section 1. Expectations of Team Officials & School Representatives

- (a) Always set a good example for players and others to follow, exemplifying the highest moral and ethical behavior.
- (b) Conduct yourself always as you would in a classroom and in a school. Remember that you are in fact representing the school and its students.
- (c) Instruct players in proper sportsmanship responsibilities.
- (d) Respect the judgment of Referees, abide by the rules of the event and set a positive example for fans.
- (e) Treat opposing coaches, administrators, players, parents and fans with respect.
- (f) Support participants, coaches and fans who teach and display good sportsmanship.
- (g) Avoid conduct and speech which constitutes discrimination, harassment, bullying or abuse, and model appropriate behaviour to others.
- (h) Declare conflicts of interest promptly to the League Executive, particularly those that involve other hockey leagues.
- (i) Make complaints or concerns in writing and discuss them in private after emotions have cooled.
- (j) Inform, if attending League meetings, the head coach and the other rostered team management of all pertinent information within 24 hours of the meeting.

### Section 2. Expectations of Players

- (a) Treat all opponents with respect.
- (b) Respect the judgment of Referees and abide by the rules and regulations of the game.
- (c) Cooperate with Referees, coaches and fellow players to conduct a fair competition.
- (d) Accept seriously the responsibility and privilege of representing school and community and display positive public action always.
- (e) Conduct yourself always as you would in a classroom and in a school. Remember that you are in fact representing the school and your fellow students.

- (f) Live up to the high standard of sportsmanship established and modeled by your coaches.
- (g) Avoid conduct and speech which constitutes discrimination, harassment, bullying or abuse, and model appropriate behaviour to others.

### **Section 3. Expectations of Referees**

- (a) Treat coaches, players, parents and fans with respect.
- (b) Maintain confidence and poise, controlling the contest from start to finish.
- (c) Know the rules and mechanics thoroughly and abide by the established Code of Ethics.
- (d) Never exhibit emotions or argue with participants and/or coaches when enforcing the rules.
- (e) Remember that hockey is a game of emotions; de-escalate situations where possible and understand that suspensions have a severe impact on players and coaches and should be used strictly as a last resort.

### **Section 4. Expectations of Parents, Students and Fans**

- (a) Treat coaches, players, parents and fans with respect.
- (b) Maintain confidence and poise, controlling emotions during the contest from start to finish.
- (c) Know the rules and mechanics of Hockey thoroughly and abide by this Code of Conduct.
- (d) Never exhibit emotions or argue with participants and/or coaches or referees when they are enforcing the rules.
- (e) Avoid conduct and speech which constitutes discrimination, harassment, bullying or abuse, and model appropriate behaviour to others.
- (f) Support high school athletics and refrain from verbally assaulting others or being in general obnoxious.
- (g) Respect the judgment of Referees, abide by the rules of the event and set a positive example for others.
- (h) Be an exemplary role model by positively supporting teams in every manner possible, including the content of cheers and signs.
- (i) Respect other fans, the coaches and the participants on both teams.
- (j) Maintain enthusiasm and composure.

### **Section 5. Communications Conduct – Social Media & Networking**

This policy will encompass all off-ice public communications through internet and social media applications (such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) as well as more traditional forms of communications like print, radio and television.

The policy will be applicable to all members of the MWHSHL Community including members of the League, Team and School Officials, players, players' family members and supporters.

The MWHSHL recognizes and appreciates the value of communications and networking to all members and respects their right to express views publicly. At the same time, it recognizes the responsibility of members to express those views in accordance with our Conduct Policy (Article A) and this Communications Conduct Policy, modelling good sportsmanship always on and off the ice.

The purpose of this policy is to educate the MWHSHL Community on the risks associated with public communications including social media and to ensure all Teams and League personnel are aware that conduct deemed to be inappropriate may be subject to disciplinary action by the League, Team and/or High School.

### **1. Media Guidelines**

- (a) Comments or remarks of an inappropriate nature which are detrimental to an individual, Team or the League will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action.
- (b) It should be recognized that social media comments are on the record, instantly published and available to the public, news media and sponsors. You should always conduct yourself in an appropriate and professional manner.
- (c) Refrain from divulging confidential information of a personal or team related nature. Avoid revealing business or game strategy that could provide another team or individual a competitive advantage. Furthermore, do not discuss injury information about any player. Only divulge information that is considered public.
- (d) Always Use your best judgment – pause before posting. Ultimately, you are solely responsible for your comments and they are published for the public record.
- (e) If requested to participate in an online network, as a direct result of your affiliation with or participation in MWHSHL, MWHSHL recommends that you request approval from the Team and/or the League.

### **2. Media Violations**

The following are examples of conduct through social media and networking mediums that are considered violations of the MWHSHL Communications Policy and may be subject to disciplinary action by the Team, School and/or League.

- (a) Any statement deemed to be publicly critical of League officials or detrimental to the welfare of a player, individual, member Team or League.
- (b) Divulging confidential information that may include but is not limited to the following: player injuries; trades or other player movement; game strategies; or any other matter of a sensitive nature to an individual, member Team or the League.
- (c) Negative or derogatory comments about other members, Teams and/or the League.
- (d) Any form of bullying, harassment or threats against players or officials.
- (e) Photographs, video or comments promoting negative influences or criminal behavior, including but not limited to drug use, alcohol abuse, public intoxication, hazing, sexual exploitation, etc.
- (f) Online activity that contradicts the current policies of MWHSHL.
- (g) Inappropriate, derogatory, racist, or sexist comments of any kind, in keeping with the MWHSHL policies and regulations on these matters.
- (h) Online activity that is meant to alarm other individuals or to misrepresent fact or truth.

### **3. Discipline**

The Team and/or League Executive will investigate reported violation(s) of this Policy. If the investigation determines that a violation has occurred, the Team and/or League will impose an appropriate suspension. Generally, the violation will be considered like other language violations described in this policy, whether the comments are obscene, racial / ethnic slurs or otherwise, and will

carry and equal or greater penalty as determined by the Team and/or League (For example: 1st offence: 3 games, 2nd Offence: Indefinite suspension).

Any appeal of the suspension will be dealt with by the League Executive.

## **Article B. Game Conduct**

1. A minimum of seven (7) skaters on each team, plus a goalie, are required to start a game.
2. Players are permitted on the ice prior to the arrival of the Referees only if there is a rostered coach from the players' team on the bench supervising the players on the ice.
3. The home team is responsible for providing pucks for the warm-up and game play, and for providing the game sheet.
4. All games must have at least two (2) League-approved Referees on the ice.
5. Upon arriving on the ice, the Referees will direct the timekeeper to put five (5) minutes on the clock. After the five (5) minutes, the referee will blow the whistle and the teams will begin the first period immediately or be assessed a penalty for delay of game.
6. At the end of the period when the players have arrived at their respective benches, an Official will direct the timekeeper to put one (1) minute on the clock. At the end of the one (1) minute of time, the official will blow the whistle and the teams will line up to begin the next period immediately or be assessed a penalty for delay of game.
7. After the game, or when leaving the ice for a flood, unless otherwise directed by the official, the visiting team will leave the ice first and go to their dressing room, followed by the home team.
8. When the teams return to the ice following the flood, only the starting lineup for each team will remain on the ice. The official will blow the whistle and the teams will begin the period immediately, or the offending team will be assessed a delay of game penalty.
9. After the game, both teams including the players and team Referees will line up and shake hands.
10. Any school that does not have an on-staff, teacher coach must have a supervising teacher present in the immediate proximity of the players' bench and identified as such to the Referees.
11. Once the headman whistles the start of the game and both teams have collected around their goalie, the visiting team will perform their pre-game cheer followed by the home team.
12. For regular season games points will be awarded as follows:
  - (a) Win in regulation time - 3 points
  - (b) Win in overtime or after a shootout – 2 points
  - (c) Loss in overtime or after a shootout – 1 point
  - (d) Tie – 1 point

## **Article C. Uniforms and Equipment**

1. All teams are required to have both home and away uniforms (hockey jerseys and matching socks) at each official game. The home team wears their dark coloured uniform, and the away team wears their light uniform. The uniform worn by the goalie must be the same as that worn by her teammates.
2. Where a player is injured resulting in blood staining a player's uniform, the player wearing the bloodied uniform is not eligible to play further until she is treated for her injury and the blood is removed from the uniform or, preferably, the bloodied part of the uniform is replaced.

3. In addition to the team uniform (Article C.1), the following equipment is mandatory:
  - a. helmet with a face protector
  - b. neck guards
  - c. mouthguard
  - d. hockey pants
  - e. shin guards
  - f. gloves
  - g. elbow pads
  - h. shoulder padsRingette pants are not permitted.
4. The referee will check for mandatory equipment prior to the beginning of the game. Thereafter, any player found failing to wear the mandatory equipment during game participation will be assessed a ten-minute misconduct.
5. It is recommended that each team carry extra home and away uniforms in case of injury or other unforeseen circumstances.
6. A player who is unable to play due to injury or illness may remain in the team box during a game, if she wears a team jersey, a helmet and a neck guard for safety and protection; however, the player must not be in full equipment or that player will be deemed fit to play by the Referees.

#### **Article D. Insurance**

1. The League may elect to provide insurance coverage for Referees, players and team management at its sole discretion, and if it does carry such insurance, it will communicate the level of coverage to the League.
2. Every high school may carry an insurance policy that provides a certain level of coverage to League participants. The head coach or designate is responsible for ensuring that all members of their team (players, parents/guardians and bench staff) are made aware of the coverage offered by their school, as well as any additional coverage that may be provided by the League. The head coach or designate must then confirm that all members of their school team has adequate insurance including that covering personal injuries, third party injuries, and ambulance transportation.

#### **Article E. Player Eligibility**

##### **Section 1. All Players**

For the purposes of Player Eligibility in this section, the League follows the MHSAA eligibility rules.

- (a) Only students who are enrolled by September 30 of the current school year are eligible to become a rostered player of that school's hockey team. If the head coach wishes to roster a player who has transferred to their school after September 30, the head coach must make an Eligibility Appeal to the Competition Committee as described in Appendix 1. If the Appeal is approved by the Competition Committee, the Committee will then seek approval from the MHSAA. If MHSAA approves the Appeal, then and only then, will the coach be allowed to add the player to the team roster.
- (b) Students are eligible to participate in the League in each year of high school to a maximum of 4 years in a grade 9-12 high school and to a maximum of 3 years in a grade 10-12 high



school. For clarity, any student who repeats a grade is eligible to play in the league subject to Article E.1 (e).

- (c) No student can be rostered on more than one team.
- (d) No rostered player can play for another rostered team, except that a rostered goaltender may play for another team as per the rules in Article E. 2.
- (e) No student who is over the age of 19 as of midnight on August 31 of the current school year can be added to a team's roster.
- (f) Students attending a semestered high school are only eligible to play in the semesters in which they are registered and attending classes.
- (g) Unless otherwise stated, Eligibility Appeals are granted only for the season in which the Appeal was made. Should a school wish to continue using the player granted eligibility in a subsequent season, the eligibility appeal must be resubmitted as per the process described in this Section 1.

## **Section 2. Special Eligibility Rules for Goaltenders**

- (a) Where a team has conducted an exhaustive search and has been unable to secure a goaltender from within their school, the head coach may make an Eligibility Appeal to the Competition Committee to roster a goaltender from another school for the current season. The requested goaltender must meet the Player Eligibility rules set out in Section 1. The Eligibility Appeal will be made by submitting a completed 'Special Eligibility Goalie Request Form-Season' along with any required documentation to the Competition Committee Chair. The Committee will review the Appeal and advise the team and the Executive whether it has been granted.
- (b) Where a team requires a goaltender on a short-term basis, the head coach may make an Eligibility Appeal to the Competition Committee via its Chairperson by submitting a completed 'Special Eligibility Goalie Request Form – Short Term' with any required documentation. The requested goaltender must be rostered in the League, preferably but not necessarily from another division; or one of the goaltenders in the League sanctioned Goalie Pool. No requested goaltender under this section will be allowed to play more than four times, including playoffs, for the same team. The Committee will review the Appeal and advise the team and the Executive whether it has been granted.
- (c) Goaltender Eligibility Appeals are granted only for the season in which the Appeal was made. Should a school wish to continue using the player granted eligibility in a subsequent season, the eligibility appeal must be resubmitted as per the process described in this section. It is expected however that the team will take it upon themselves to find and develop an existing or new player to take on this position the following year.

## **Article F. Rosters & Game Sheets**

### **Section 1. Team Rosters**

- (a) Every team desiring to register a team to play in the League must submit an Official Team Roster ("Roster") and Player Registration Form for each player on their team to their Registrar in the manner and form prescribed by the Executive on or before the first day of the mandatory pre-season division alignment games.
- (b) All teams must have a minimum of thirteen (13) skaters and one (1) goalie, a maximum of two (2) goalies and twenty (20) skaters, for a total minimum of fourteen (14) and maximum of twenty-two (22) players on the Roster.

- (c) Any person, player or team official, who is not listed on the approved Roster, will not be permitted on the team bench.
- (d) The Registrar will review each Roster and provide written confirmation of its approval and/or detail any inadequacies that need to be remedied. Until a Roster is approved by the Registrar, and all the Player Registration Forms have been received, the team may not participate in any League activities, excluding the Pre-Season Alignment Tournament.
- (e) Any regular season or playoff games scheduled or played, without an approved Roster, or in contravention of the approved Roster, will be recorded as forfeited regardless of the outcome of games played. The team will also be fined \$50.00 for each non-rostered player and for any non-rostered team official, who participated in any games played.
- (f) A maximum of five (5) rostered coaches are allowed on the bench.
- (g) [NTD: MOTION AT AGM SAID REWRITE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS WITHOUT GIVING DETAIL]

## **Section 2. League Goalie Pool Roster**

- (a) The League Competition Committee will maintain an official roster of goalies eligible to play in the League each season known as the Goalie Pool.
- (b) Teams can forward the names and contact information of any non-rostered goaltenders to that Committee.
- (c) Any Goaltenders attending a League team high school must be added to the Goalie Pool Roster by the final Roster deadline to be eligible to play in the League as per the rules in Article E. Section 2. All other goaltenders can be added to the Goalie Pool Roster at any time during the season.

## **Section 3. Rosters on Game Sheets**

- (a) Game sheets must be electronically generated with the full Roster shown, and names of any players not dressed to play scratched out. Failure to properly complete the Official Game Sheet will result in a fine as follows: first offence- \$25, second offence- \$50, further offences- \$100 each.
- (b) The Referee shall confirm the attendance of all players listed on the game sheet and shall report any discrepancies to the Referee-in-Chief.

## **Article G. Qualification of Coaches and Referees**

1. All rostered coaches must have a minimum of Coach Level, National Coaches Certification Program Certificate and the Respect in Sport Certification. One rostered coach on every team must possess these certifications at the start of the regular season; and all rostered coaches must possess these certifications by December 31 of the current year. Any coach who does not possess these certifications after December 31 will be deemed to have been removed from the official Roster until the certifications are completed. In addition, at least one coach or other team official on the Roster, must have the Safety Program Certificate and attend any games played.
2. All Referees must attend one (1) officiating clinic each year and complete all components of the clinic curriculum.
3. All timekeepers used for League games must be League-approved.

## **Article H. Cancellation & Rescheduling of Games**

From time to time a coach may need to cancel a game for a variety of acceptable reasons. Acceptable reasons include inclement weather, a significant shortage of players due to injury or another scheduled school event, and not having a goalie. Absence of the best players is not an acceptable reason. If a game must be cancelled, the team cancelling the game must make every effort to notify the League and re-schedule the game at the earliest possible time. The following procedure will apply:

1. Time is of the essence. Provide the League with as much notice as possible.
2. The cancelling team must provide notice to the opposing team, the Referee-In Chief and the League Statistician a minimum of three (3) days before game day as follows:
  - (a) Contact the opposing coach or team official to notify them of their need to re-schedule, and to set a new date, location and time for the game.
  - (b) Email the Referee-In-Chief and League Statistician to advise of the re-scheduled game, detailing the game number, the new game date, location and time and the reason for the cancellation.
3. Less than three (3) days' notice of a game cancellation may be provided in the event of:
  - (a) inclement weather, where a travel advisory has been issued for the location of the home or opposing team;
  - (b) closing the team's School Division;
  - (c) notice from the only team goaltender that the goalie is unable to play the game in question, and a replacement goalie could not be secured within three (3) days of game day.

In this case, the cancelling team must email the opposing coach, Referee-in-Chief and League Statistician immediately to advise that the game will have been cancelled, detailing the game number and the reason for the cancellation. The cancelling team will then reach an agreement with the opposing team to re-schedule the game as soon as possible and will notify the Referee-In-Chief and the League Statistician of the new date, location and time of the re-scheduled game.

4. Where a game is cancelled with less than three (3) school days' notice for reasons other than stated in Article H.3, or where a game is cancelled with less than five (5) hours notice for reasons set forth in H.3.(b) or (c), the cancelling team, at the sole discretion of the Executive, may be financially responsible for the ice fees and/or Referees' fees for the cancelled game; and/or may be required to forfeit that game.
5. Other special cases will be at the sole discretion of the League. Generally, the League will not be responsible for the ice costs associated with cancelled games, unless the League was responsible for the ice costs, such as final playoff games.
6. Where a team chooses not to follow the procedures outlined in this Article H, the team will be levied a \$50.00 fine for the first offence and a \$75.00 fine for the second and subsequent offences. The fine will be taken from the team's performance bond and, consequently, the team is not eligible to play until the fine has been paid.

## **Article I. Sanctioning of Games**

1. Exhibition Games between League teams may be played at the discretion of the teams concerned. However,
  - (a) League-approved Referees must be used; and
  - (b) The teams are responsible to contact the Referee-In-Chief to arrange for Referees and to pay the Referees directly at rates set by the League.
  
2. Any team hosting an exhibition game or hosting a tournament, involving a team(s) outside the jurisdiction of the League, must obtain sanction from the Secretary/Registrar of the League. A formal letter needs to be forwarded to the Secretary/Registrar by email, fax or mail, containing:
  - (a) The name of the outside team(s) involved;
  - (b) The date, time and location of the game or tournament;
  - (c) The roster(s) of the outside team(s) involved; and
  - (d) The on-site contact person.

Only League-approved Referees may be used, and the team is responsible for contacting the Referee-In-Chief to arrange for Referees and for paying the Referees directly.

3. The official game sheet for all games played under this Article I must be forwarded to the President, the Referee-In-Chief and the League Statistician within 48 hours by the home team for games played under this Article I.1, and by the League coach for games played under this Article I.2. Any penalties incurred in the last 10 minutes of the third period or anytime in overtime (match penalty, gross misconduct, checking from behind, fighting, or other), that need to be served, will be served in the next sanctioned League game, and additional penalty or action may be taken by the Executive if deemed necessary. The game scores and statistics will not be recorded, other than penalties or suspensions that must be served.

## **Article J. Special Rules**

It is the intention of the League to have rule parity with Hockey Canada. The rules governing hockey played in the League will therefore generally be governed by the Hockey Canada Official Rulebook. Specific variations in the League are noted in this Article J. Where a conflict exists between Hockey Canada and any League Policy in this section, the League Policy will stand.

### **Section 1. Time of Game**

- (a) All games consist of two (2) fifteen (15) minute and one (1) twenty (20) minute stop-time periods with a flood after the end of the second period. Where two games are played back to back, as in some tournaments and possibly in playoffs, a flood may be done after every two periods.
- (b) Each team is permitted two (2) thirty (30) second timeouts per game. A team may elect to have both timeouts consecutively, provided that this request is made at the time the first timeout is requested.

## **Section 2. Regular Season Overtime to Break Tie**

- (a) If any game ends in a tie after regulation time, a five (5) minute three on three sudden death overtime period will immediately follow to break the tie. Any timeouts remaining from regulation time can be used. The clock will be stopped during any timeout and will start again when the puck is dropped.
- (b) The five (5) minute overtime period will be played as stop time with changes allowed only on the fly.
- (c) Teams will remain in the same end of the rink as they defended during the third period of regulation play.
- (d) If a penalty occurs during the overtime period, the penalized team will remain with three (3) players on the ice and the other team will be allowed a fourth (4th) skater. The clock will be stopped to allow the fourth (4th) skater to come to the ice once the referee has blown the play dead and will start again when the puck is dropped.
- (e) If the score remains tied after the 3 on 3 sudden death overtime period, the teams will proceed to a three-round shootout which will occur in accordance with the rules for an overtime shootout which apply in the Quarter and Semi-Finals of the playoffs.
- (f) Points:
  - i. The team that loses the overtime/shootout will be given one (1) point for an overtime/shootout loss.
  - ii. The team that wins the overtime/shootout will be given two (2) points for an overtime/shootout win.
- (g) Insufficient Time for Overtime  
In the event there is insufficient time for overtime as per Article J, Section 4, which shall be determined at the sole discretion of the Head Referee, both teams will be credited with a tie and given one (1) point.

## **Section 3. Mercy Rule**

- (a)
  - (i) When a team is winning by five (5) or more goals in the last five (5) minutes of the game;
  - (ii) When a team is winning by seven (7) or more goals in the third period and at the request of the coach of the team that is trailing by seven (7) or more goals, the game is played with the clock running. If the goal differential become less than five (5) goals, the game clock reverts to stop time.
- (b) During running time, penalties will continue to be assessed and applied in the standard format. Penalties will commence on the drop of the puck. Should a penalty expire while play is stopped, the player will remain in the penalty box and return to the ice only when play has resumed.

## **Section 4. When Insufficient Time Remains for Game Completion**

- (a) When there are four (4) minutes remaining in the scheduled ice time and more than three (3) minutes remaining on the game clock, the timekeeper will signal the on-ice Referees and advise them that there is insufficient time to finish the game. The on-ice Referees will immediately notify both teams that there are only two (2) minutes remaining in the game

and the timekeeper will reset the clock to show two (2) minutes. Stop time will be used unless the mercy rule is in effect and running time is in effect.

- (b) If the arena attendant advises that the game must be shortened the on-ice Referees will immediately notify both teams that there are only two (2) minutes remaining in the game and the timekeeper will reset the clock to show two (2) minutes. Stop time will be used unless the mercy rule is in effect and running time is in effect, and any remaining time outs may be taken.

#### **Section 5. Faceoff Location After a Penalty is Called**

- (a) After a penalty the faceoff will be held in the penalized team's zone.

#### **Section 6. Game Ejections**

- (a) Any player that is ejected from the game must be released to a team representative and escorted to the dressing room. Once changed, should the player elect to remain to watch the game, she must do so from outside the area of the arena actually enclosing the ice surface. Should the player's ejection result in a suspension and the player wishes to watch subsequent games until her suspension has been served, she is permitted to do so from the stands or behind the glass.
- (b) Any team official that is ejected from the game must leave the area of the arena actually enclosing the ice surface and should they decide to watch the remainder of the game, must do so from outside that enclosed area. To watch subsequent games until the coach's suspension has been served, the coach can do so from the stands. The coach, however, is forbidden to be inside, or in the immediate vicinity of, the team's dressing room or the immediate vicinity of the player's bench during the game.
- (c) Maximum number of penalties per game: Any player upon being assessed her third stick penalty or her fourth penalty of any type during a hockey game shall automatically be assessed a Game Ejection. The double minor penalties (spear, butt-end, etc.) will count as only one penalty in this count. A minor penalty and a misconduct at the same stoppage of play shall constitute two penalties in this count.

#### **Section 7. No Change Icing**

- (a) Where a Team is guilty of icing the puck, that team is not allowed to change the skaters who were on the ice. The players must remain on the ice for the ensuing faceoff except where a player was injured during the previous play.

#### **Section 8. Hybrid Icing**

Should there be a 'race' for the puck during an icing, there are two (2) judgements a Linesperson must make when applying the 'hybrid-icing' rule:

- (a) First, the Linesperson must determine if the puck will in fact cross the goal line in the attacking zone. If it is determined that the puck will NOT cross the goal line then the icing will be waved off. However, if it is determined that the puck will cross the goal line the Linesperson should proceed to the second judgment for hybrid-icing.
- (b) Secondly, the Linesperson must determine whether a defending skater or attacking skater would be first to touch the puck after it crosses the goal line. This decision must be made

no later than the instant the first player crosses the threshold of the end zone faceoff spot(s), although the decision may be made earlier. If a defending skater is determined to be the first player to potentially touch the puck, then hybrid-icing will be called and the play will be stopped. If an attacking player is determined to be the first to potentially touch the puck, then hybrid icing will be waved off and play will continue.”

## **Section 9. Jailbreak Rule**

If a goal is scored by or against the short-handed team, the 2-minute minor with the least amount of time on the clock of the short-handed team will be removed and the player will be allowed to leave the penalty box immediately. If there is a secondary minor penalty, the first will be erased and the second will start. The Jailbreak rule will not apply for five minute major penalties nor when penalties are coincidental.”

## **Article K. Suspensions**

### **Section 1. All Suspensions**

It is the intention of the League to have rule parity with Hockey Canada. The rules governing hockey played in the League will therefore be governed by the Hockey Canada Official Rulebook. Specific variations in the League are noted in Article J. Where a conflict exists between Hockey Canada and any League Policy in this section, the Hockey Canada Official Rule Book will stand.

All suspensions listed below are automatic and it is the responsibility of the coach/school to ensure that suspended players do not participate in any games while suspended. All suspensions outlined below are:

- (a) Minimum suspensions;
- (b) Additional to the game in which the penalty or penalties were assessed; and
- (c) The Executive Committee may be called upon to hear and/or rule on extraordinary or emergency situations.

### **Section 2. Fighting**

- (a) Major
  - a. First Offence            3 games
  - b. Second Offence        5 games
  - c. Third Offence Indefinite suspension pending a hearing by the League.
- (b) Instigator
  - a. First Offence            2 games
  - b. Second Offence        Indefinite suspension pending a hearing by the League.
- (c) Aggressor
  - a. First Offence            3 games
  - b. Second Offence        Suspended for the balance of the season pending a hearing by the League.

### **Section 3. Checking from Behind**

- (a) Minor 2 minutes, suspended rest of the game; or if occurs in last 10 minutes, a one game suspension.
- (b) Major
  - a. First Offence 5 minutes, suspended rest of game, plus 1 game suspension; if in the last 10 minutes, suspended rest of game, plus a 2 game suspension.
  - b. Second Offence Indefinite suspension pending a hearing by the League.
- (c) Match
  - a. First Offence 5 Games
  - b. Second Offence Suspended for the balance of the season pending a hearing by the League.

### **Section 4. Checking to the Head**

The League is serious about player safety, and strives to create a fun, respectful and safe hockey experience. The League has a zero-tolerance policy concerning any contact above the shoulders including neck, face and head (Head Contact). All Head Contact is to be called, and referees are instructed not to substitute other penalties when a player is Checked to the Head.

- (a) A Minor Penalty shall be assessed to any player who accidentally contacts an opponent in the head, face or neck with his stick or any part of the player's body or equipment.
- (b) A Major and a Game Misconduct Penalty, at the discretion of the Referee and based on the degree of violence of impact shall be assessed to any player who intentionally contacts an opponent in the head, face or neck with her stick or any part of the player's body or equipment.
- (c) A Major and a Game Misconduct penalty, or a Match penalty, will be assessed to any player who injures an opponent by Checking to the Head.
- (d) A Match Penalty will be assessed to any player who deliberately attempts to injure or deliberately injures and opponent by Checking the Head.

### **Section 5. Game Misconducts**

- (a) Obscene, profane or abusive language or gestures to any person:

- 1st offence: 2 games
- 2nd offence: 3-5 games
- 3rd offence: Indefinite Suspension

- (b) Major and Game Misconducts (Boarding, Charging, Checking to the Head, Cross-Checking, Elbowing, High Stick, Holding, Hooking, Interference, Kneeing, Roughing, Slashing, Tripping and Body Checks) are automatic and to be served in the next sanctioned game(s):

- 1st offence: 1 game
- 2nd offence: 2 games
- 3rd offence: Indefinite Suspension



- (c) All Game Misconducts, excluding 5.(a) and excluding when assessed with an inadvertent major penalty, assessed in the last 10 minutes of the 3rd period or anytime in overtime; or at the conclusion of the game and prior to the player or team official entering the dressing room shall be suspended for 1 additional game suspension.
- (d) The inadvertent major penalty occurs when, in the opinion of the referee, no reckless or negligent behavior was involved when such a player was assessed a major penalty due to an injury.
- (e) A Player or Team Official receiving a second and/or subsequent game misconduct penalty in the same game must serve a game suspension for second and subsequent game misconduct penalties in the same game.
- (f) A player receiving a second and/or subsequent misconduct penalty in the same game must serve a game suspension for the second and subsequent misconduct penalties in the same game.

## **Section 6. Gross Misconducts**

- (a) First offence                      2 games
- (b) Second offence                  3 games
- (c) Third offence                      Indefinite suspension pending a hearing by the League.

**If the Gross Misconduct is a racial/ethnic slur, then the following shall apply:**

- 1st offence: 3 games
- 2nd offence Indefinite Suspension

## **Section 7. Match Penalties**

- (a) Involving an official
  - i. First offence                      Indefinite suspension pending a hearing by the League.
  - ii. Second offence Permanently banned from all League activities.
- (b) With injury
  - i. First offence                      5 games
  - ii. Second offence Indefinite suspension pending a hearing by the League.
- (c) No injury
  - i. First offence                      3 games
  - ii. Second offence 5 games
  - iii. Third offence Indefinite suspension pending a hearing by the League.
- (d) Spitting
  - i. 1st offence: 5 games
  - ii. 2nd offence: Indefinite Suspension

Where a misconduct penalty is assessed to a player and there is less than ten (10) minutes of playing time remaining in the game, the player must leave the game but no game suspension for a subsequent game is applied.

## **Section 8. Accumulation of Player Penalty Minutes**

These suspensions are automatic. It is up to the Head Coach to monitor the penalty minutes of their players, and to ensure that the suspensions below are served as stated, and that they are noted on the game sheet. Failure to do so will result in the suspension being served at the next possible opportunity whether in regular season and/or playoffs, plus one additional game suspension will be added.

- (a) Fifty (50) penalty minutes accumulated within one (1) season of regular League play results in a one (1) game suspension to be served immediately.
- (b) Seventy-five (75) penalty minutes accumulated within one (1) season of regular season play results in a two (2) games suspension to be served immediately.
- (c) One hundred (100) penalty minutes accumulated with one (1) season of regular season play results in an indefinite suspension pending a hearing by the League, to take effect immediately.

## **Section 9. Penalties Assessed to a Coach or Team Representative**

- (a) Game Misconduct Penalties
  - i. First Offence 2 games
  - ii. Second offence 5 games
  - iii. Third Offence Indefinite suspension pending a hearing by the League.
- (b) Gross Misconduct Penalties
  - i. First Offence 5 games
  - ii. Second Offence Indefinite suspension pending a hearing by the League.
- (c) Match Penalties
  - i. First offence Permanently banned from all games and League activities pending a hearing by the League.

Where a misconduct penalty is assessed to a player and there is less than 10 minutes of playing time remaining in the game, the player must leave the game but no game suspension for a subsequent game is applied.

## **Article L. Serving Game Suspensions**

1. Game suspensions can be served:
  - (a) In regular League games or playoffs;
  - (b) In sanctioned tournament games; or
  - (c) In sanctioned exhibition games scheduled prior to the game in which the suspension was incurred, excluding pre-season games.
2. While a player is serving a suspension, the player's number and name must be listed on the game sheet for any games the team plays until the suspension has been served. "SUSP" must be printed behind the player's name.
3. Suspensions will be enforced from one playing season to the next.
4. Violations of the above will result in further suspensions and possibly fines.

## **Article M. Appeals**

1. All Appeals will be directed the Competition Committee via the Chair and dealt with in the manner prescribed in Appendix 1, except for appeals concerning Competition Committee decisions and any appeals not described in this Manual.
2. All appeals concerning Competition Committee decisions and any appeals not described in this Manual will be emailed to the President with a copy to the Vice President.
3. All appeals must be made in a timely manner. Unless otherwise stated in this Manual, all appeals should be made within 48 hours of notification of the decision /suspension.
4. Under exceptional circumstances a verbal appeal may be heard.
5. Appeals will not be accepted for consideration concerning an on-ice official's decision as to fact or judgment, such as an offside call, the scoring of a goal, occurrence of a slash, etc.
6. All available evidence will be considered in connection with an appeal.

## **Article N. Reporting Game Results**

### **Section 1. Regular Season and Playoff Games**

- (a) The home team is responsible for texting in the game score within one hour from the conclusion of every League game. In the event that the home team is unable to text, a phone call may be made to the same number detailing the game number and the score for each team.
- (b) Any home team who fails to report the game score within the stated time will be fined \$20 for each offence. The fine must be paid in full prior to the start of the next League game or that game and any subsequent games will be forfeited until the debt is paid regardless of whether they were played.
- (c) Changes to game statistics may be made by 4:00 p.m. the day following the day of the game and not thereafter.

### **Section 2. Exhibition and Tournament Games**

- (a) The official game sheet for all Exhibition and Tournament games played must be forwarded to the President, Referee-In-Chief and the League Statistician as set out in Article I.3.

## **Article O. Conduct Complaints**

1. Any complaints about a breach to the Code of Conduct must be submitted to Executive via the President using the Conduct Complaint Form. If the complaint is concerning a Referee, or the officiating of a specific game, the Form must also be emailed to the Referee-In-Chief.
2. Upon receipt of the complaint Executive will confer to determine how the complaint should be handled, and the complainant will receive a response within seven (7) days of the complaint.

## **Article P. Breaking Ties in Standings**

1. In the event of a tie in points, the winner is decided by:

- (a) Most Regulation wins; then if necessary
- (b) Least Regulation losses; then if necessary
- (c) Most wins/losses head to head; then if necessary
- (d) Goals For + Goals Against/Goals For = Lowest Number; then if necessary
- (e) Goals For
- (f) Least penalty minutes; then if necessary
- (g) The Executive Committee will flip a coin to determine a winner.

## **Article Q. Playoffs**

### **Section 1. Schedule & Format**

Following the end of the regular season, playoffs will be held. The general timing of playoffs will be determined at the first League meeting in the current season, however playoffs for all divisions must end no later than two Fridays prior to Spring Break. The format will be determined by the League at its annual Playoff meeting held prior to the end of the first half of the season depending on the number of divisions and/or teams in the League in that season.

Notwithstanding that format, the following general guidelines will apply:

- (a) The teams' final standings in their division at the end of the regular season will dictate their ranking in that division in each round/series in the Playoffs. For example, the team with highest points in division A will be Team A, the team with the next highest points will be Team B, and so on. Regardless of how many teams play in each division's round/ series, the highest ranked team will play the lowest ranked team, and the next highest plays the next lowest until all teams are assigned a competitor.
- (b) Regardless of where the games are played, the highest ranked team in each round/series will be the home team, wearing light jerseys, and the lowest ranked team will be the visiting team, wearing dark jerseys.
- (c) If there is a preliminary round prior to Quarter finals, the teams will continue to provide the ice, time keeper, game sheet, warm-up and game pucks as they would in the regular season.
- (d) Teams are required to book a minimum of one hour and 45 minutes of ice for playoff games.
- (e) In any three (3) game Quarter or Semi-Final series, the highest ranked team will provide the items listed in (c) in the first, and third game if required, and the lower ranked team will assume those responsibilities in the second game. If a third game is required, the League will, upon request, reimburse the designated home team for the cost of the ice.
- (f) Once a schedule for games has been determined in each series, the highest ranked team is responsible for notifying the Referee-In-Chief and the League Statistician so that on-ice Referees are assigned for the games and the series schedules are posted on the website.
- (g) In the final playoff round, the teams from the A Division will be playing off for the League championship. The teams playing in any other division will be playing for their division championship. The League will determine the location of all games and pay for all game related costs including ice and time keepers, and will provide game sheets, game and warm up pucks.
- (h) If a final playoff game is tied at the end of regulation time, the overtime rules in the next Section 2 will apply.

## **Section 2. Overtime – Qualifying Rounds**

### **(a) Schedule & Format**

In Quarter Finals, Semi-Finals and any qualifying rounds required, overtime play will be the same as outlined for the Regular Season in Article J., Section 2 (a) through (d) inclusive, except that:

- i. Teams will be given a two (2) minute rest between the end of regulation time and the start of the overtime period;
- ii. The overtime period will be ten (10) minutes, sudden death, stop time with changes allowed during stoppages and on the fly; and
- iii. If the game remains tied after the overtime period, an overtime shootout will occur.

### **(b) Overtime Shootout**

- i. Three (3) players from each team will shoot alternately, with the home team deciding which team will shoot first. The team that has scored the most goals at the end of the round will be awarded the win.
- ii. Penalties will carry over into the overtime period, however, players in the penalty box may participate in the overtime shootout if held.
- iii. Teams will remain in the same end of the rink as they defended during the overtime period; and,
- iv. A maximum of three (3) players per team at one time will remain on the ice and should be positioned in the neutral zone (the zone between the blue line and the red line);
- v. Coaches will determine the order of the shooters subject to Article Q:2 b(i).
- vi. If the score remains tied after the overtime shootout, a sudden death shootout round will follow.

### **(c) Sudden Death Shootout**

- i. The skaters on each team will continue to shoot alternately until one (1) team scores and the opposing team fails to score on its turn. The team who scored will be awarded the win.
- ii. The three (3) shooters who participated in the overtime shootout will not shoot a second time until all other skaters on their team have taken one shot, or until all the players on the team with the shorter bench have taken one shot, whichever comes first.
- iii. If the score still remains tied after c.ii (meaning an equal # of shots per team), then a new sudden death shootout round will be held following the same process as c. (i) and (ii) above, except that the Coaches may change the order of the shooters in the second overtime shootout round and any additional rounds required. For clarity, this may mean that players on the longer bench may not participate in the overtime shootout round(s) at their coach's discretion.
- iv. Teams will remain in the same end of the rink as they defended during the overtime period; and,
- v. A maximum of three (3) players per team at one time will remain on the ice and should be positioned in the neutral zone (the zone between the blue line and the red line);
- vi. Coaches will determine the order of the shooters subject to Article Q:2 b(i).

### **Section 3. Overtime - Finals**

#### **(a) Schedule & Format**

In finals, the following rules will apply:

- i. Teams will be given a two (2) minute rest between the end of regulation time and the start of the first overtime period only.
- ii. Any timeouts remaining from regulation time may be used in overtime.
- iii. Penalties will carry over into overtime, however, players in the penalty box may participate in the overtime shootout if held.

#### **(b) Sudden Death Overtime Period(s)**

The winner will be resolved as follows:

- i. Overtime will begin with one (1) ten (10) minute period, stop time, with changes allowed during stoppages and on the fly. There will be no reduction in the number of players (i.e. it will be played 5 on 5). This overtime period will be sudden death.
- ii. If the game remains tied after the first overtime period, then there will be a second overtime period. It will be ten (10) minutes, stop time, with changes allowed during stoppages and on the fly. The number of players will be reduced to 3 on 3. This overtime period will be sudden death.

#### **(c) Overtime Shootout**

- i. If the game remains tied after the second overtime period, an overtime shootout will occur. In the overtime shootout round, five (5) players from each team will shoot alternately, with the home team deciding which team shoots first, and the team that has scored the most goals at the end of the round will be awarded the win. If the score remains tied after the overtime shootout, a sudden death shootout round will follow.

#### **(d) Sudden Death Shootout**

In the sudden death shootout round, the following rules will apply:

- i. The skaters on each team will continue to shoot alternately until one (1) team scores and the opposing team fails to score on its turn. The team who scored will be awarded the win.
- ii. The five shooters who participated in the overtime shootout will not shoot a second time until all other skaters on their team have taken one shot, or until all the players on the team with the shorter bench have taken one shot, whichever comes first.
- iii. If the score still remains tied after #2 has been completed (meaning an equal # of shots per team), then a new sudden death shootout round will be held following the same process as #1 and #2 above, except that the Coaches may change the order of the shooters in the second overtime shootout round and any additional rounds required. For clarity, this may mean that players on the longer bench do not participate in the overtime shootout round(s).

- iv. Teams will remain in the same end of the rink as they defended during the overtime period; and,
- v. A maximum of five (5) players per team at one time will remain on the ice and should be positioned in the neutral zone (the zone between the blue line and the red line);
- vi. Coaches will determine the order of the shooters subject to Article Q:2 b(i).

#### **Section 4. Player Eligibility**

Subject to meeting the Player Eligibility requirements in Article E, including any approved Eligibility Appeals, a rostered player is eligible to play during the playoff season when that player has participated in a minimum of thirteen (13) regular season games for a minimum of two periods per game.

For clarity, this policy applies to regular season League games only and no other sanctioned League games; and this policy applies to all players including goalies, except that goalie participation will be defined as dressed and on the bench for a minimum of 50% of regular season games.

It is the responsibility of the coach to monitor and confirm player eligibility. Any team which plays an ineligible player will forfeit that game.

Appeals to Playoff Eligibility due to extensive player injury, illness or other extenuating circumstances may be made to the Competition Committee via its Chairperson using the *Playoff Eligibility Appeal Form*.

#### **Article R. Pre-Season Division Alignment Tournament**

1. Prior to the start of each season the League will hold a Pre-Season Division Alignment Tournament for aligning teams into competitive divisions. Participation is mandatory for all League teams eligible to compete in each season.
2. The Executive, in conjunction with the Competition Committee, is responsible for determining the dates, times, format and fees for the Tournament, and for communicating the same to the League at the first League meeting.
3. Upon receiving notice of the Tournament, all member teams must complete the 'Pre-Season Division Alignment Coach Evaluation Form' and any other documentation required by the Competition Committee in a timely manner.
4. The Competition Committee will oversee the execution of the Tournament in the manner described in Appendix 1, and both the Committee and League Teams will comply with their duties and responsibilities as described.

## **Appendix 1. Competition Committee**

Reporting to the Executive, the Competition Committee is responsible for overseeing, enforcing and ensuring fair and equitable application of the League's Policy & Rules Manual each season and for performing the duties more specifically described herein.

### **Section 1. Membership**

The Competition Committee shall consist of the following members:

- Two (2) members of the Executive namely the Registrar and the Referee-in-Chief.
- Up to six (6) League Members, who are not on the Executive, one of whom shall be the Chair. Ideally, an equal number of members from each competitive division to allow for due consideration of appeals if certain members must recuse themselves.

The League Members including the Chair shall be elected by most votes at the MWHSHL Annual General Meeting and serve for two years. If a position on the Committee becomes vacant, the Committee shall appoint a person to fill the position until the expiry of the person's term of office unless there are less than three (3) months remaining in the term in which case the position shall be filled by election at the next Annual General meeting.

### **Section 2. Quorum & Voting**

1. Quorum for all meetings shall be 50% of the members.
2. All members have one vote, except that the Chair shall only vote to break a tie.
3. The voting majority shall be a simple majority of fifty percent plus one votes cast at the meeting, provided quorum has been achieved.

### **Section 3. Meetings & Guidelines**

1. The Committee shall meet a minimum of four (4) times a year in person at a venue agreed upon by the members. Meetings may occur through email or other methods at the discretion of the Chair when time is of the essence.
2. The Chair shall coordinate all meetings, circulating agendas, minutes and information as required, and will report to the Executive and to the League on their activities.
3. The conduct of all meetings shall be as described in the MWHSHL Constitution.
4. Any member who is in a conflict of interest with respect to any decision before the group will not be present for, or participate in, that part of the meeting.

### **Section 4. Duties of the Committee**

#### **a) Pre-Season Division Alignment Tournament**

On behalf of the Executive, the Competition Committee will operate the Pre-Season Division Alignment Tournament including:

1. In conjunction with the Executive, determine the dates, times, format and fees for the Tournament each season, secure ice and referees.



2. Set the tournament schedule, based on submitted Coach Evaluation Forms and declarations regarding which division they would best perform in prior to the start of the Tournament.
3. Ensure that each team is aware of the Tournament, and the policies and rules that govern it; communicate the schedule and resolve any conflicts.
4. Ensure that at least one member of the Competition Committee is present at all Tournament games to oversee and report on that game;
5. Evaluate the performance of each team including a review of:
  - a) final game results;
  - b) SOG statistics;
  - c) general game impressions given by the member(s) present;
  - d) rosters (noting any strikes on game sheet, review actual player participation);
  - e) the Officials Game Report;
  - f) Coach Evaluation Forms and declarations.
6. Align the teams to the appropriate divisions, and communicate the results to the League, the day after the Tournament. Upon receipt of the Division Alignment Results, the Head Coach may make a written appeal to the Executive Committee within 24 hours of receipt. The Executive Committee will hear any appeals made, and report its decision to appealing team, as well as to the League in the case where a revision is made, prior to the League Scheduling meeting.

#### **b) League Goaltender Roster**

The Committee shall be responsible for maintaining a League-wide Roster of goalies as described in Article F. Section 2, including keeping track of the number of games played for each team for eligibility purposes.

#### **c) Policy & Rules**

The Competition Committee shall be responsible for monitoring the conduct of players, coaches and rostered team representatives, and for overseeing, enforcing and ensuring the fair and equitable application of the League's policies and rules as described in this Manual, by:

1. Hearing and ruling on Appeals from League members concerning Code of Conduct (Article O), Player Eligibility (Article E and Article P. Section 3), Cancelling and Rescheduling of Games (Article H), Suspensions (Article K), taking and enforcing any disciplinary actions warranted including assessing related fines.
2. If in the case of Eligibility Appeals MHSAA approval is also required, this will be facilitated by the Chair of the Competition Committee, and the outcome of that process will also be reported to the appealing party and the Executive.
3. All appeals should be dealt with in a timely manner as possible, and decisions communicated to those directly involved in the Appeal, the Executive and the League.
4. Recommending changes to the Policy & Rules Manual as warranted.

If dissatisfied with the result of an Appeal to the Competition Committee, the appealing team may email a written appeal of the Competition Committee's decision to the President and Vice President within forty-eight (48) hours of the decision. The President will circulate the appeal to the Executive and communicate the outcome to the appealing party in a timely fashion.

## **Appendix 2. Zones & The Zone Committee**

### **Section 1. Operational Zones**

League teams are divided into Operational Zones. New teams will be added by the Executive, and where possible added to maintain geographical proximity and an equal number of teams in each zone. In the 2017-18 season, the Operational Zones were set as follows:

Zone 1: Beliveau Barracudas, CJS Olympiens, CSLR Renards, Dakota Lancers, Glenlawn Lions, JH Bruns Broncos, Lorette Scorpions, Transcona Titans

Zone 2: Fort Richmond Centurions, Kelvin Clippers, SJR Eagles, St. Mary's Flames, Sanford Sabres, Vincent Massey Trojans

Zone 3: CSHC Huskies, Garden City Gophers, Oak, Park Raiders, PCI Saints, Shaftesbury Titans, Westwood

Zone 4: CPET Canadiennes, KEC Reivers, Miles Mac Buckeyes, River East Kodiaks, Selkirk Royals, Springfield Sabres, WK Wolverines

### **Section 2. Zone Committee**

Reporting to the Executive, the Zone Committee is responsible for overseeing and coordinating the major League events such as All Star Day and Playoffs to ensure their smooth operation.

#### **a. Membership**

In each season, one of the four Operational Zones in Section 1, on a rotating basis, will coordinate League events for that season starting with Zone 1 in 2017-18. The Zone Committee will include one (1) member from each team in that Operational Zone. Teams would be responsible for nominating their member to the Committee (ideally, the team manager). The Chair will be elected at the Annual General Meeting held at the end of the previous season.

#### **b. Quorum & Voting**

1. Quorum for all meetings shall be 50% of the members.
2. All members have one vote, except that the Chair shall only vote to break a tie.
3. The voting majority shall be a simple majority of fifty percent plus one votes cast at the meeting, provided quorum has been achieved.

#### **c. Meetings, Guidelines & Duties**

1. In each season, the President would call the first meeting of the Zone Committee, to be held in person within a month of the initial Roster deadline. At that meeting, the duties would be reviewed with the members.
2. The Committee shall meet as often as needed to coordinate the events. Subject to #1, meetings may occur through email or other methods at the discretion of the Chair when time is of the essence.

3. The Chair shall coordinate all meetings, circulating agendas, minutes and information as required, and will report to the Executive and to the League on their activities.
4. The conduct of all meetings shall be as described in the MWHSHL Constitution.
5. Any member who is in a conflict of interest with respect to any decision before the group will not be present for, or participate in, that part of the meeting.