Following, you will find the basic rules, regulations and recommendations as set up by the VPA Hockey Committee. Please read them and please direct your athletic staff to read them so there will be no misunderstandings.

We are very concerned at the league hockey games that there are still occasions when there isn't even a well-supplied first aid kit available, including appropriate communicable disease preventative materials. As of July 1, 2015 all schools will be required to have medical personnel, as identified in Title 26 of the Vermont Statues, at every home game.

**2019-2020 NFHS POINTS OF EMPHASIS**

The following rules are Points of Emphasis. Please review the full rule change description in the 2018-2020 Ice Hockey Rule Book.

1. COACH SAFETY
2. PLAYER SAFETY/DANGEROUS HIT
3. CONCUSSION RECOGNITION AND MANAGEMENT
4. MOUTHGUARD USE

These situations are addressed in the NFHS Ice Hockey Rules Book (page 76). Coaches are responsible for reviewing this information and for also reviewing 2019-2020 Ice Hockey Rules Changes listed on page 2 of the NFHS Ice Hockey Rules Book.

The V.P.A. Ice Hockey Committee, in conjunction with the Vermont Hockey League, has been charged with the responsibility of supervising boys’ and girls’ interscholastic ice hockey in Vermont, and establishing guidelines for regular season and post-season competition.

1. The boys’ and girls’ ice hockey season will begin on Wednesday, November 20, 2019.

2. A school may schedule no more than twenty interscholastic ice hockey games in a season, exclusive of the V.P.A. state tournament.

3. Rescheduling and adding games to the schedule in order to qualify for a tournament will not be allowed. Such actions will result in the removal from seeding.

4. All Vermont interscholastic hockey teams, boys and girls, will play by the National Federation Ice Hockey Rules, and the Vermont Hockey League rules modifications, including:
   a. Rule 5-2-2-Warm-Up As of 2012-2013, Warm-up will consist of 10 minutes prior to the start of the game. The first period will be played on warm-up ice. The officials meeting with the coaches will occur during the warm up period. Officials will approach each bench to have the coaches verify that all athletes are properly equipped. The captains meeting will occur during the last minute of warm-ups on ice.
   b. Fifteen minute periods will be used.
   c. Vermont Hockey League and VPA requires that all players must wear commercially manufactured throat protectors that are clearly visible. And which meet the manufacturer's original specifications.
   d. A game (disqualification) results in suspension from the game, plus the next two games. A second game (disqualification) offense results in suspension of that player for the season. (VPA Rule) All VHL schools must file a report with the
Vermont Principals’ Association office and the VHL commissioner for any game disqualification within 2 days (prefer 24 hours if possible) of the infraction (both in and out of state).

e. A game disqualification in the final game of the season will result in a two game suspension to start the next season in which the disqualified player participates. Please note that if a team receives more than two player or coach disqualifications during the season or tournament, the school will be required to meet with the Activities Standards Committee before being allowed to continue in the tournament. (VPA Rule)

g. Final decisions of the VHL Grievance Committee may be appealed through the VPA Ice Hockey Committee.

h. Rule 4-11: Removal from the game. (NFHS Rule)

When a player, manager or other team personnel is removed from the game, that person is to leave the playing area immediately. If the removed person is a student or school-age person, the removal will take place only if there are authorized school personnel available for supervision. The individual will not return to the playing area at any time.

If there is no one available for supervision, the individual must remain on the bench. At that point, the coach shall be notified that any further disruption by that individual shall result in termination of the contest. **PENALTY - FORFEITURE, and the score shall be 1-0.**

Article IVB. (VPA Bylaws)

A coach who intentionally strikes, shoves, kicks, or makes other aggressive physical contact with another coach before, during, or after an interscholastic contest, shall be disqualified immediately and his/her coach’s eligibility may be suspended for up to one full calendar year. A coach who is disqualified under this provision shall not coach in any contest, pending a hearing before the Activities Standards Committee. The Activities Standards Committee shall determine the length of the suspension, giving due consideration to all relevant factors, including the seriousness of the offense. At the end of any suspension the coach may request the reinstatement of his/her eligibility. At this time, the Activities Standards Committee will place the request on their next meeting agenda, at which meeting the coach and principal are required to attend. The Activities Standards Committee will make the determination whether or not to reinstate the coach’s eligibility.

i. Penalty Options Rule 7-4-2 (Page 35). The penalty options for the following have been increased by the VPA. See specific rules for penalty option criteria.

- Boarding Rule 7-18
- Checking From Behind Rule 7-19
- Grabbing a Face Mask Rule 7-20
- Head-Butting Rule 7-21

VPA Penalty Options

- MAJOR PENALTY or
- MAJOR and GAME MISCONDUCT PENALTY or
- GAME DISQUALIFICATION PENALTY

There is no provision for minor penalty assessment for any of these infractions.

j. Goal Differential Rule: For the 2019-20 Hockey season the following goal differential rule is in place.

In all games, periods 1 and 2 are played as regular periods. In period 3, if there
is an 8 goal or larger differential, running time is implemented. If during the period, the goal differential goes to less than 8, regular time is resumed.

5. Uniforms - abide by Rule 2, Sec. 1.2, of the 2019-20 National Federation rulebook regarding color of visiting team uniform. Qualify: Except as mutually agreed upon by both teams and with approval of the tournament director within 24 hours prior to the game.

6. The host school shall also provide minor officials, including timers and goal judges, who must be adults. Minor officials shall be under the jurisdiction of the game officials. A) Schools are responsible to have staff available to move nets for ice cleaning; the officials will be responsible for setting the nets for the next period of play. This is a safety issue for the school staff, and it allows the officials to make sure that the nets are set properly for play.

7. It is required that host school have designated school rep and recommended that police be present at all contests and remain until all game participants have left the arena.

8. Host schools must have designated medical personnel and/or ambulance at all games.

9. REMINDERS FOR PLAYERS ON NON-SCHOOL TEAMS (I.E. YOUTH HOCKEY, MIDGETS) WISHING TO PLAY ON SCHOOL TEAMS:

   A member of a school team is a student athlete who is regularly present for, and actively participates in, all team tryouts, practices and competitions. Bona fide members of a school team are prevented from missing a high school practice or competition to compete with an out-of-school team, practice or competition to include tournaments, showcases, combines or other athletic events.

   Whenever a conflict arises between the high school team practice/competition and an out-of-school practice/competition on the same day, the high school team practice/competition shall be honored by the student athlete. Priority must be given at all times to the high school team, its practices, and its contest unless permission has been granted by the school. It is expressly understood that permission shall not be granted on a regular basis.

   It is highly recommended to all schools that this information be put into all athletic handbooks and also should be presented by Athletic Directors/Coaches at pre-season meetings with athletes and parents. (Date Warned: 5-28-14, Date Adopted: 8-8-14)

11a. During the regular season games (i.e. all non-VPA sanctioned post season games), no tie-breaker overtime periods except the single overtime period provided in National Federation Rules shall be played. This single overtime period shall be 5 minutes in length (SUDDEN VICTORY).

b. To break regular season tournament ties after final overtime period, the following will be used:

   1. Each team will select five different players.
   2. Each player will take a penalty shot, with the referees alternating shots from team to team (visitors go first).
   3. At the end of all 10 shots, the team with the highest number of goals advances (wins).
   4. If the score remains tied after this round, the same five players will take alternating sets of single penalty shots (visitors first) until one player fails to score when the opponent shooter scores.
   5. Regular season tournaments that remain tied after overtime are officially considered a tie for the purpose of their regular season record.
12. Note- During, the 2019-2020 season, players must be on a schools hockey roster for 60% of the schools regular season games in order for the player to participate in the tournament.

13. During the regular season, no more than 29 individuals shall be on the team bench, consisting of 24 players and 5 non-playing personnel.

SCRIMMAGES
A scrimmage is defined as and intended to be a learning situation, not a competitive event. Further it is defined as a practice session involving students from more than one school, organization or group.

*While the public need not be denied admittance to a scrimmage, it shall not be played as a regular game, and no admission shall be charged.  
*Scrimmages shall not be publicized.  
*Awards cannot be given.  
*If a timing device is used, normal game time shall be altered to ensure that instruction is the primary reason for the scrimmage.  
*No official score shall be kept.  
*Neither team may count the scrimmage as a game.

VPA BOYS AND GIRLS TOURNAMENT INFORMATION
1. All VPA teams are eligible to apply for the 2019-2020 tournament. The top 16 teams in each division are accepted. In order to qualify for VPA Tournament play, a VPA member school must have played at least 40% of its regular season games with Vermont schools in their respective Division. Example-a Metro Division school must have played at least 40% of its regular season games (8 out of 20 games) with Vermont Metro Division schools.

2. Seeding into the tournament will be based on the school's entire played schedule.

3. The entire season schedule, record and League win/loss points must be listed on the application.

4. A completed application must be electronically filed to the VPA office no later than 10:00 A.M. on Thursday, February 27, 2020.

5. The following dates for boys and girls hockey tournaments will be as follows:
   - Completed application deadline: February 27, 2020, 9:00 A.M.
   - Last game to count: February 26, 2020
   - Pairings: February 27, 2020 (posted approx. noon)
   - Play downs, if necessary: February 28/29, 2020 at home ice of higher seeded team
   - Quarter-finals: March 3/4 2020 at home ice of higher seeded team
   - Semi-Finals: March 6/7, 2020 at home ice of higher seed.

Girls/Boys Division I (Metro) and Division II (Lake) finals will be at UVM(Gutterson).

Girls Championships - March 9, 2020  
Division 2/Lake Division-6:00 P.M.  Division 1/Metro Division 8:00 P.M.

Boys Championships - March 11, 2020  
Division 2/Lake Division - 6:00 PM  Division 1/Metro Division – 8:00

All hockey school administrators - please notify rink managers of dates for playoffs and quarter-finals.
6. ADEQUATE police (security) will be provided at each tournament contest. A designated school representative from each school shall be present and remain until all participants have left the arena.

7. A signed official roster shall be presented to the official scorer prior to warm-up.

8. For 2019-2020 tournament season, the first overtime period will be a maximum of eight (8) minutes in length. At end of the first overtime, there will be a resurfacing intermission followed by 15 minute periods until a winner is determined. New ice will be made at the end of each period at all levels of state tournament play. There will be no ice made between regulation play and the first overtime period, unless the tournament director and working officials so determine. In the tournament, after one overtime period, new ice will be made, after each 15 minutes of play. Teams will change ends at the beginning of each overtime period.

9. The higher seeded team will be designated as the home team at all games with the lower seeded team being designated as the visiting team. The Hockey Committee will make the seedings, based on all games played, using the following point system teams keep original seed throughout the tournament:

   Only games at the varsity level with members of our Association or games with out-of-state schools that are members of their comparable state athletic association, will count in determining the point index. Different point indices as listed below are based on which division the school is to be placed for the state tournament. The tournament divisional alignments are listed in the division alignments section of the winter guide. Games listed and no disposition noted in the VPA office will be considered a loss. IN PREPARING THE APPLICATION, THE ENTIRE SEASON’S VARSITY SCHEDULE MUST BE LISTED. Do not include club competition or J.V. contests.

   **As of 2019-2020 hockey point index has been implemented.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOYS</th>
<th>GIRLS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Division I win</td>
<td>Tier 1 Win</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division II win</td>
<td>Tier 2 Win</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division I tie</td>
<td>Tier 3 Win</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division II tie</td>
<td>Tier 4 Points</td>
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</tbody>
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   The points will be totaled and the total divided by the number of games played to find the point index. All teams will be paired in the order of their index.

   The new Girls Alignment/Scheduling proposal is on the VPA Hockey Page.

   Please note – a minimum of 2 tier II girls hockey teams will move into D1.

10. People wishing to videotape must make arrangements with host site director.

**VPA SANCTIONED POST-SEASON TOURNAMENTS:**

1. There will be a 10-minute warm-up period prior to each game.

2. Medical coverage will be provided at all the tournaments and playoff games at V.P.A. expense.
3. Ticket information:
   a. Once eliminated during tournament play, team members are ineligible for free admission to the next scheduled tournament event. However, schools may request to purchase tickets for the players.

4. Champions will be awarded a trophy, and runners-up in each division will be awarded a plaque. Individual awards will be presented to team members of champion and finalist teams, plus coach, assistant coach, and manager.

5. The traditional handshake practice by mutual consent of the coaches is recommended after the game. Players/Coaches ejected from the game shall not return to the ice or bench area for any reason.

6. No more than 29 persons shall be on the team bench, consisting of 24 players and 5 non-player team personnel.

COACHES CODE OF ETHICS
NATIONAL FEDERATION COACHES ASSOCIATION
The function of a coach is to educate students through participation in interscholastic competition. An interscholastic program should be designed to enhance academic achievement and should never interfere with opportunities for academic success. Each student-athlete should be treated as though he or she were the coaches' own, and his or her welfare should be uppermost at all times. Accordingly, the following guidelines for coaches have been adopted by the NFCA Board of Directors.

The coach shall be aware that he or she has a tremendous influence, for either good or ill, on the education of the student athlete and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.

The coach shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. In all personal contact with student-athletes, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school athletic association, the media, and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.

The coach shall take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse.

The coach shall avoid the use of alcohol and tobacco products when in contact with players.

The coach shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct his or her program in harmony with the total school program.

The coach shall master the contest rules and shall teach them to his or her team members. The coach shall not seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.

The coach shall exert his or her influence to enhance sportsmanship by spectators, both directly and by working closely with cheerleaders, pep club sponsors, booster clubs, and administrators.

The coach shall respect and support contest officials. The coach shall not indulge in conduct which would incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players in unethical.

Before and after contests, coaches for the competing teams should meet and exchange cordial greetings to set the correct tone for the event.

A coach shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give student-athletes special consideration.
A coach shall not scout opponents by any means other than those adopted by the league and/or state high school athletic association.

**RULES EMPHASIS**

The following provides more detail and specifics related to Rule 6-23 section in the National Federation Ice Hockey Rules Book under the Obstruction heading.

Through the new standard of rules enforcement, our game will continue to allow the opportunity for improved skill development and a more positive hockey environment for all participants. Through this new initiative a greater emphasis will be placed on skating, puck possession and the proper use of the body to establish position and a competitive advantage.

The goal of the enforcement standard is to reduce restraining infractions in the game and not to remove legal body checking or body contact. A body check or using body contact/position to gain a competitive advantage over the opponent should not be penalized as long as it is performed within the rules. Body Checking is prohibited in Girls Ice Hockey.

The principles of this new enforcement standard include the following:

- The use of the stick will be limited to only playing the puck.
- The stick will not be allowed to in any way impede a player’s progress.
- The use of a free hand/arm will not be allowed to grab or impede a player’s progress.
- Players who use their physical skills and/or anticipation and have a positional advantage shall not lose that advantage as a result of illegal acts by the opponent.
- Players will be held accountable for acts of an intimidating or dangerous nature.

**Enforcement Standard – These penalties are to be called with very strict enforcement**

**Use of 8th Grade Girls on a Girls High School Team**

The declining enrollment in schools across Vermont has had an increasing effect on participation on athletic teams. It has gotten to the point that some districts are unable to provide opportunities for middle school athletes to play on appropriate girls’ teams, forcing girls’ to play on the boys’ teams or finding outside clubs to participate on. These girls’ should be given the opportunity to play on teams that follow the appropriate rules meant for these sports, not only for their safety, but also to allow them to develop the proper skills they need to develop as athletes in these sports.

The declining enrollments around the state is also effecting high school participation; even very successful high school programs are struggling to field full teams. Allowing eighth grade girls’ to play on these teams will help high schools maintain their programs.

In order for eighth grade girls to qualify to play on a high school team the following would have to apply:
- There is a lack of a 14U youth girls’ hockey program either in a local club or middle school program. **Example:** the only option is to play on a boys’ team, with full contact or join a travel program in the state or out of state.
  
  - Schools wishing to use eighth grade athletes need to complete an application, available in the VPA Hockey Guide.
  
  - School requesting to use eighth graders will be required to produce documentation from the local youth program verifying that there won’t have an acceptable girls’ program. (14U) Documentation needs to be a formal letter on letterhead from the youth hockey board president or designee.
  
  - If an acceptable youth program is available no eighth grader will be allowed to play on their local high school team or another high school team in the state. This policy is not designed to give early access to “Elite” eighth grade players.

- The requesting high school program has a demonstrated need for athletes; using the Member to Member numbers as a full complement of players for a team. Any program that will be receiving eighth grader players on their team are prohibited from making cuts.

**CONCLUSION**

All members of Vermont High School Hockey share an equal responsibility to ensure the integrity of the game is upheld. The onus to incorporate change is not only on the officials, but also the administrators, coaches, parents and player, as well.

Administrators are expected to hold players, coaches, officials and parents accountable for their actions in an effort to promote a safe and positive environment for all participants. Coaches are expected to teach proper skills and hold their players accountable for illegal and dangerous actions, regardless as to whether they are properly penalized, or not. Parents are expected to support the decisions of the officials and support the coaches in teaching the proper skills in a safe and positive environment. Officials shall enforce a strict penalty standard according to the guidelines that have been established. Players are expected to compete within the playing rules.

All Vermont High School Hockey members must demonstrate awareness and support for the application, spirit and the respect of the rules in order for continued improvement in the game of hockey.