



# 4 ON 4 ADULT HOCKEY LEAGUE

Winter 2026 Rules



## I. League Administration

### I.1 Player & Team Eligibility

- All players must be 18 years or older and not actively participating in high school athletics.
- Individuals with professional status in hockey are ineligible to participate.
- Players may only appear on one roster within the league. Goalies are exempt and may substitute for any team in any division.
- All players must sign the official waiver on Quickscores before participating in any game.
- **Add/Drop Deadline:** January 20, 2026. Only players added by this date are eligible for playoff participation.
  - **Injury Replacement:** Season-ending injuries may allow for a replacement after the deadline, pending approval by the Sports Coordinator or Recreation Superintendent with a medical note.
- *Use of illegal or non-rostered players results in immediate forfeiture of any game (regular or playoff).*

## 2. Roster Verification & Game Check-In

### 2.1 Pre-Game Check-In

- All players must check in before each game with the front counter and get a wristband.
  - Wristbands are required to wear to enter onto the ice.
- Identification may be required if there is a discrepancy and must be provided if asked.

### 2.2 Substitutes and Transfers

- Substitute players can only be used during regular season and are not permitted during tournament play.
  - Substitute players consist of any player not on your permanent roster.
- Substitute players can only be used from your own division or lower division.
  - I.E. Semi-competitive players may NOT be used in rec division games, but rec division players may be used in semi-competitive games.
  - Goalies may substitute for any team in any division.
- Substitutes need to be identified before the game with the front counter and sign a waiver if they have not already signed one.

### 2.3 Player Transfers

- Players may transfer teams once per season, prior to the Add/Drop Deadline.
- Transfers must be requested before the player's first game with their new team.
  - *Players may not transfer teams after the add/drop deadline.*

### 3. Forfeit Policy

- All forfeits, regardless of the notification time, will incur at least the Standard Forfeit Fee of \$25.
  - **If forfeiting before 4pm:**
    - Forfeiting captain must notify the Sports Coordinator by calling the office or emailing the Sports Coordinator directly.
  - **If forfeiting after 4pm:**
    - Forfeiting captain must contact the Sports Coordinator via email and contact the opposing captain to notify them of the forfeit via phone call/text.
  - **If the forfeit is not reported to the Sports Coordinator or opposing team captain at least 1 hour before your scheduled game time:**
    - Forfeiting team will incur a Double Forfeit Fee of \$50.
- Forfeit fees must be paid before the next game. Failure to pay results in continuous forfeits and additional fees until the fee is paid.
- Teams with three forfeits during the season are ineligible for tournament play.
  - *All team captain's information is viewable on Quickscores under that team's profile. This is accessed by clicking their team's name in the standings.*

### 4. Captain Responsibilities

As a captain, your main responsibility is to ensure that there is clear communication between your team, Valpo Parks, and the officials. You are the representative of your team and the behavior exhibited by your players are a reflection of you. As the captain, you are required to:

- **Be knowledgeable about the sport in general, but also versed in our in-house rules.**
  - This includes game play, rostering/waivers, behavior policies, and anything else found within this document.
- **Be the main communicator to your team when information is sent out by Valpo Parks.**
  - This includes notifying your team when there is a cancellation, schedule update, or any other communication that is sent out throughout the season.
- **Assist Valpo Parks in upholding our Valpo Parks Adult Sports Behavior Policy.** All players on your team are expected to maintain a safe and positive environment during the season and individual behavior may affect the teams ability to continue participating.
- **Report all forfeits according to the policy in item 3.** Forfeit fees fall onto the captain so it is important to report them quickly but also to do everything in your power to find substitutes for your team in order to avoid a forfeit all together.

## 5. Game Rules & Regulations

### 5.1 General Game Format

- Two (2) 20-minute periods.
- One (1) 90-second timeout per team per period.
- Running clock except during penalties.
- Faceoffs occur only at the start of each period.
- Checking and fighting are strictly prohibited (see *Adult Behavior Policy*)

### 5.2 Start & Restart of Play

- After a goal, the scoring team must retreat to center ice until the goalie attempts a pass.
- After a save, defending players must retreat to center ice until the goalie plays the puck.
- Goalies must release the puck within 5 seconds to avoid a Delay of Game penalty.

### 5.3 Skating & Scoring Restrictions

- No icing or offsides.
- Slapshots (stick rising above knee height) are not permitted.
- Cherry-picking is penalized if a player is more than 10 feet from the center line while their team is defending.
- Players may score up to four (4) goals per game; additional goals will not count.

### 5.4 Penalties

- Standard penalties (90 seconds): tripping, hooking, slashing, checking, interference, high-sticking, slapshots, cherry-picking, delay of game, too many players, etc.
- Multiple penalties may overlap, but gameplay will not drop below 4-on-3.

### 5.5 Special Rules

- **No Goalie Rule**
  - If a team has no goalie:
  - A 54" mini goal is placed backward inside the regulation net.
  - Pucks entering the regulation net count as goals.
  - Pucks entering the mini-goal count as saves (possession changes).
  - Pucks bouncing out are live.
- **Keep the Game Close Clause**
  - If a team leads by 5 or more goals, they must play short-handed (4-on-3) until the margin falls below five.
- **Overtime**
  - A tied game proceeds to a 5-minute sudden-death overtime, played 3-on-3.
  - If still tied, the game ends in a tie.
  - No shootouts will occur at any time.

## 6. Facility Rules

### 6.1 Changing/Locker Rooms

- Private changing rooms are not guaranteed as some “locker room” areas are in the main lobby. Players should arrive dressed in at least bottoms (jocks/jills or full bottoms) or may change in the bathroom.
  - **Under no circumstances should any player be stripped down to their undergarments in the lobby** or any other public area. Central Park Plaza is open to the public at these times and children or other spectators may be present.

### 6.2 Alcohol Policy

- Alcohol is prohibited on premises, including the rink, lobby, and mat areas.
- Violations will result in suspension for the remainder of the season.
- If a player is suspected of being under the influence, the referee may ask for them to be removed for the remainder of the game.

### 6.3 Entrances and Exits

- Central Park Plaza can only be entered or exited through the front doors of the facility off Napoleon St. Do NOT move or unhook barricades to come in or leave through any other doors. This is for the safety and security of all our participants and staff.

## 8. Adult Sports Behavior Policy: Referee & Player Conduct

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a safe, respectful, and enjoyable environment for all participants, referees, and spectators. All participants in Valpo Parks Adult Sports leagues are expected to adhere to the highest standards of sportsmanship. Any inappropriate behavior directed towards referees, players, or spectators will not be tolerated.

**Definition of Inappropriate Behavior:** Inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to, the following actions:

- **Profanity or Abusive Language:** Any use of offensive or vulgar language directed towards referees, players, coaches, spectators, or staff.
- **Verbal Threats:** Any language or statements intended to intimidate, threaten, or harm another individual, whether a referee, player, or staff member.
- **Discriminatory Remarks:** Any comments that discriminate based on race, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic.
- **Disrespect Towards Officials:** Questioning or arguing calls made by the referee in a disrespectful or inappropriate manner. The referee's decision is final and must be respected.
- **Physical Acts, Threats or Intimidation:** Any gestures or actions that imply a threat of physical harm or inflicts physical harm, including but not limited to, approaching someone in a confrontational manner, raising fists, or any other aggressive behavior. *See Fighting/Physical Violence policy.*
- **Other Inappropriate Conduct:** Any additional behavior deemed inappropriate or unsportsmanlike by the referee, including excessive arguing, taunting, and unsportsmanlike gestures.

**3. Consequences of Inappropriate Behavior:** The referee or league staff reserves the right to determine when behavior is inappropriate and take the following actions:

- **First Offense:** A warning will be issued to the offending player or team. The referee has the authority to stop play and address the behavior immediately.
- **Second Offense:** Immediate ejection from the game. The player or team member must leave the playing area within two minutes, or the game will be forfeited by the offending team. All ejected players must miss the next game.
- **Severe or Egregious First Offense:** In cases of severe misconduct that imposes an immediate threat to safety or wellness of players, staff, or spectators, the referee has the authority to eject the player without warning or stop the game completely.
  - *If the game is stopped due to severe or egregious offenses, the offending team will forfeit the game regardless of score.*
- **Post-Game Review:** Depending on the severity of the incident, the offending player may be subject to further disciplinary action, including suspension from future games or permanent removal from the league.

## 5. Appeals:

- Players may appeal additional disciplinary actions by submitting a written appeal to the Recreation Superintendent within 48 hours of the incident. ***Ejections may not be appealed.***

## ***Fighting/Physical Violence Policy***

Valpo Parks has a ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY on fighting and/or physical violence. Any player exhibiting these behaviors will be suspended immediately for the remainder of the season and will need written approval before playing in the next season. A request for re-entry into the league for the next season must be submitted to the Recreation Superintendent prior to the registration deadline of the next season for review.

- This policy will go into effect regardless of if it was a first offense.
- Suspensions resulting from the Fighting/Physical Violence Policy are not subject to appeals outside of the request for re-entry.