



Colorado Thunderbirds

Tier 1 Hockey Handbook

2024-2025

Dear Colorado Thunderbird Players, Coaches, Managers, and Parents:

The Leadership of the Colorado Thunderbirds, including the coaching staff, have worked together to hold every member of our organization accountable to the policies and procedures contained in this handbook. While some of this content comes straight from USA Hockey, we also adhered to many of the best Junior and College player and parent handbooks that our players aspire to one day reach. The result is a document that addresses social issues and topics that our players, parents and families are faced with every day. The content within this document will also lay the standard and expectation we expect from players, coaches, and parents on and off the ice as a member of the Colorado Thunderbirds.

Our athletes today are faced with a world filled with technology, social networking and other “online” opportunities where their personal lives become an open book to the world. Junior, collegiate, and professional coaches, scouts, and recruiters – as well as college admissions offices and future employers - spend time and find out how “Potential Prospects” are utilizing these tools. Even the legal implications that a slight mistake within half a second can greatly impact our players and their families. We want to be preventative and proactive towards these issues to protect the Colorado Thunderbirds Family and its members. We want to educate and arm our players and families with information to keep them safe.

This season, each team will be presented with this document and players and parents will be required to sign and acknowledge that you clearly understand these policies. We are available for any questions, comments, and suggestions, as we believe this is a living document that will be minimally updated on an annual basis. On behalf of the Colorado Thunderbirds, I thank you for taking the time to carefully review, discuss and support these policies with the athlete in your home.

Thank you for your sacrifice, time, and commitment you make each day to our program. Have a great season!

Jordan Pietrus

Jordan Pietrus

Director of Hockey
Colorado Thunderbirds



TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 - GENERAL INFORMATION

- 1.1 ABOUT US
- 1.2 MISSION STATEMENT
- 1.3 TBIRDS PHILOSOPHY
- 1.4 TBIRDS CORE VALUES
- 1.5 TBIRDS / USA HOCKEY SAFESPORT POLICY
- 1.6 TBIRDS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

CHAPTER 2 - POLICIES

- 2.1 PARENTAL CONDUCT
- 2.2 USA HOCKEY ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY
- 2.3 PARENT/COACH 24-HR RULE
- 2.4 SEXUAL ABUSE / HARASSMENT / DISCRIMINATION POLICY / PHYSICAL ABUSEPOLICY
- 2.5 HAZING POLICY
- 2.6 SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY
- 2.7 CONCUSSION POLICY
- 2.8 CONFLICT OF INTEREST / WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

CHAPTER 3 - REGISTRATION & MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1 MEMBERSHIP
- 3.2 TBIRDS PLAYER REGISTRATIONS AND DEPOSITS
- 3.3 TBIRDS REGISTRATION / ASSOCIATION FEES
- 3.4 NO-PAY / NO-PLAY POLICY
- 3.5 TBIRDS REFUND POLICY
- 3.6 RECOVERY OF LEGAL FEES
- 3.7 SHARING OF INFORMATION / MEDIA RELEASE
- 3.8 USA HOCKEY INSURANCE
- 3.9 PLAYER RELEASES (TIER 1 / JUNIORS / COLLEGE)
- 3.10 FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

CHAPTER 4 - HOCKEY OPERATIONS

- 4.1 DIRECTOR OF HOCKEY OPERATIONS
- 4.2 TBIRDS DISCIPLINE
 - COACH / MANAGER REMOVAL
 - PLAYER REMOVAL
- 4.3 APPEAL PROCESS

- 4.4 TEAM DISPUTE RESOLUTION
- 4.5 COACHES
- 4.6 SELECTION OF COACHES / PROCESS
- 4.7 PLAYER EVALUATIONS
 - PLAYER MOVE-UP / PLAYING UP
 - TIER 1 TEAM TRYOUT PROCESS
- 4.8 CAHAHOCKEY PROGRAMS

CHAPTER 5 - ADMINISTRATION

- 5.1 HOME FACILITY
- 5.2 TBIRDS ICE ARENAS RULES & REGULATIONS
- 5.3 LOCKER ROOM POLICIES
- 5.4 VOLUNTEER POSITIONS
- 5.5 CORRESPONDENCE & WEBSITE
- 5.6 FINANCIAL GUIDELINES

ADDENDUMS - PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN!

TBIRDS RELEASE AND INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT
ATHLETE & PARENT RECEIPT AND CONFIRMATION

GENERAL INFORMATION

CHAPTER 1

1.1 ABOUT US

The Colorado Thunderbirds Hockey Association (TBIRDS) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) corporation, is a member of the Colorado Amateur Hockey Association (CAHA) and USA Hockey and conducts its programs at Big Bear Ice Arena in Denver, Colorado. All teams are registered with CAHA and USA Hockey. The TBIRDS will abide by and act in accordance with Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, Playing Rules of USA Hockey and CAHA. In partnership with the parents, coaches and these ice facilities, we want to ensure that children are provided a meaningful, enjoyable, challenging and safe hockey experience. We are an athlete-centered organization that places the needs of children first. We give each Member the opportunity to participate to the best of their ability and to develop as a young athlete.

1.2 MISSION STATEMENT

The Thunderbird mission is to promote competitiveness, character, sportsmanship, team work, discipline in an environment that maximizes player development and player advancement in the youth hockey community. We are guided by the values of good sportsmanship, honesty, respect for all individuals and personal integrity. The TBIRDS are committed to the long-term growth and development of all levels of developing ice hockey players. Our success will be measured by more children who enjoy playing and participating in hockey in the future at an elite level.

1.3 TBIRDS PHILOSOPHY

The consistent demonstration of good sportsmanship by all players, parents and fans at the ice rink is the guiding principle of our mission. We are committed to giving these young players a positive experience in ice hockey in these important years. In our Association, this means ensuring that every young player is treated with dignity and respect. We will be encouraging and promoting the true competitive spirit while focusing on players' personal growth.

1.4 TBIRDS CORE VALUES

- **SPORTSMANSHIP** – A sense of fair play; be humble in victory and gracious in defeat, and show friendship with teammates and opponents.
- **RESPECT FOR THE INDIVIDUAL** – Treat all others as you expect to be treated.
- **INTEGRITY** – Foster honesty and fair play beyond strict interpretation of the rules and regulations of the game.
- **PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE** – At both the individual and team level, perform each aspect of the game to the highest level of his/her ability.
- **ENJOYMENT** – The hockey experience should be fun, satisfying and rewarding.
- **LOYALTY** – Aspire to teach loyalty to the ideals and to fellow Members of the sport of hockey.
- **TEAMWORK** – Value the strength of learning to work together.

1.5 COLORADO THUNDERBIRDS / USA HOCKEY SAFESPORT POLICY

It is TBIRDS policy that every participant complies with the USA Center for SafeSport Program. This policy is designed to promote an environment where coaches and athletes can work and learn together free of emotional, physical and sexual abuse and misconduct. The policies and procedures set forth in the USA SafeSport Program Handbook, are incorporated in this handbook by reference and may be accessed at [USA Hockey Safe Sport](#). All athletes who will turn 17 during 2024 or are older must take the SafeSport Certification training course. All Colorado Thunderbirds coaches and staff will be SafeSport Certified.

1.6 COLORADO THUNDERBIRDS HOCKEY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

The TBIRDS Board of Directors will host quarterly Board meetings for the purpose of conducting TBIRDbusiness. Issues affecting the general membership will be decided upon by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. TBIRDS By-laws outline Board voting procedures and Board responsibilities. Issues affecting on-ice matters will be handled by the Executive Director and Director of Hockey Operations as outlined later in this manual. Meeting dates and minutes are available upon request.

POLICIES

CHAPTER 2

2.1 PARENTAL CONDUCT

TBIRDS fully supports USA Hockey's ZERO TOLERANCE policy in our facilities and reserves the right to enforce it within. TBIRDS asks for your cooperation while at the arena. Please refrain from:

- Any abusive language directed at any official, player, coach or other fans
- Any unruly behavior during TBIRDS practices or games
- Any behavior deemed inappropriate in a private facility
- All Thunderbirds parents and host family parents will sign a parent code of conduct

2.2 USA HOCKEY ZERO TOLERANCE

In an effort to keep ice hockey a more desirable and rewarding experience for all participants, CAHA has instructed the Officiating Program to adhere to certain points of emphasis relating to sportsmanship. This campaign is designed to require all players, coaches, officials, team officials and administrators and parents/spectators to maintain a sportsmanlike and educational atmosphere before, during and after all USA Hockey sanctioned games. Thus, the following points of emphasis must be implemented by all On Ice Referees and Linesmen:

- **PLAYERS**

A minor penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct (Zero Tolerance) shall be assessed whenever a player:

- Openly disputes or argues any decision by an official

- Uses obscene or vulgar language at any time, including any swearing, even if it is not directed at a particular person
- Visually demonstrates any sign of dissatisfaction with an official's decision
- Abusing or destroying locker rooms or rink property
- Disregarding or violating facility-imposed rules

Any time that a player persists in any of these actions, they shall be assessed a misconduct penalty. A game misconduct shall result if the player continues such action.

- **COACHES**

A minor penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct (Zero Tolerance) shall be assessed whenever a coach:

- Openly disputes or argues any decision by an official
- Uses obscene or vulgar language at any time, including any swearing, even if it is not directed at a particular person
- Visually displays any sign of dissatisfaction with an official's decision: including standing on the boards or standing in the bench doorway with the intent of inciting the officials, players or spectators

Any time that a coach persists in any of these actions, they shall be assessed a game misconduct penalty.

- **PARENTS / SPECTATORS**

The game will be stopped by on-ice officials when the parents/spectators displaying inappropriate or disruptive behavior interfere with other spectators or the game. The on ice officials will identify violators to the coaches for the purpose of removing the offending parents/spectators from the viewing and gamearea. Once removed, play will resume. Lost time will not be replaced and violators may be subject to further disciplinary action by the local governing body. This inappropriate and disruptive behavior shall include:

- Use of obscene or vulgar language in a boisterous manner to anyone at anytime
- Using any language that could be considered a racial or other derogatory slur
- Taunting of players, coaches, officials or other spectators by means of baiting, ridiculing
- threat of physical violence or actual physical violence
- Throwing of any object in the spectators viewing area, players' bench, penalty box or on ice surface, directed in any manner as to create a safety hazard

2.3 PARENT / COACH 24-HOUR RULE

Parents may not approach coaches to voice complaints or displeasure with coaching decisions immediately following a game or practice. Parents must arrange a meeting through the team manager to meet with the coach not sooner than 24 hours after the game or practice. At the meeting, all questions and concerns will be addressed by the coach in an effort to move towards a resolution. Individuals in violation of this policy will be contacted by the Director of Hockey Operations and face sanctions that may lead to suspension.

ALL HOCKEY PARTICIPANTS AND FANS ENTERING FACILITIES WHERE TBIRDS ARE PARTICIPATING SHALL:

- Display strict adherence to the policies and procedures of TBIRDS
- Have respect for opponents and play by the rules of the game
- Display respect for the players and parents of other youth hockey organizations
- Display respect for officials, coaches and volunteers of TBIRDS and accept their decisions

Coaches, players, parents and officials will always agree to act in the spirit of good sportsmanship while participating in TBIRDS activities.

2.4 SEXUAL ABUSE / HARASSMENT / DISCRIMINATION POLICYAS ADOPTED BY USA HOCKEY / PHYSICAL ABUSE POLICY

- SAFE SPORT PROGRAM

TBIRDS are committed to improving the development, safety, and welfare of its players and all members involved in hockey and our organization. Therefore, TBIRDS support the USA Hockey SafeSport Program, CAHA SafeSport Program and TBIRDS SafeSport Program and require all players (18U and older), coaches, managers, billet host families, Directors, Board Members, volunteers, officials and Members that have regular contact with minors to register and be fully compliant with all Safesport, Concussion Training, USA Hockey each year and Background screening every two seasons.

The Association hereby adopts the sexual abuse, screening and physical abuse policies of USA Hockey. These policies may be amended from time to time; provided, however, that upon reasonable notice to the Members, the Board shall have the discretion to adopt and enforce policies, or sanctions for the violation

of such policies, which are more stringent than the prevailing policies and/or sanctions promulgated by USA Hockey.

- DISCRIMINATION

The unfair or unequal treatment of a person or group (either intentional or unintentional) based on race, color, age, national origin, religion, sex, or disability.

- HARASSMENT

Conduct that involves an atmosphere of unwelcome conditions that have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Conduct that may constitute harassment or discrimination may include, but is not limited to:

- Derogatory written or oral statements regarding one's age, race, disability, color, ethnic origin or religion;
- Offensive jokes, drawings or photos.

- SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is illegal under federal and state laws. It is defined as any unwelcome sexual advance, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when the conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Conduct that may constitute sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances or propositions
- Derogatory, vulgar or graphic written or oral statements regarding one's sexuality, gender or sexual experience
- Unnecessary touching, patting, pinching or attention to an individual's body- Physical assault
- Unwanted sexual compliments, innuendoes, suggestions or jokes- The display of sexually suggestive pictures or objects
- The transmission of sexually suggestive emails
- Harassment and Sexual Harassment will not be tolerated within the TBIRDS organization.

- PHYSICAL ABUSE POLICY

It is the policy of TBIRDS that there shall be no physical abuse of any participant involved in any of its sanctioned programs. Physical abuse means physical contact with a participant that intentionally causes the participant to sustain bodily harm or personal injury. Physical abuse also includes physical contact with a participant that intentionally creates a threat of immediate bodily harm or personal injury.

Physical abuse does not include physical contact that is reasonably designed to coach, teach or demonstrate hockey skill. Permitted physical contact may include, but is not limited to, shooting pucks at a goaltender, demonstrating checking or other hockey skills, and communicating with or directing participants during the course of a game or practice, by touching them in a non-threatening, non-sexual manner.

Any suspicion of activity that violates any of, but not limited to, these policies listed above will be reported in accordance with USA Hockey Safesport rules and regulations.

2.5 HAZING POLICY

It is the TBIRDS policy that there shall be no hazing of any player by any other player, coach, or staff member. Hazing is any conduct that occurs within a context that is reasonably related to hockey or other sport and that subjects another person, whether physically, mentally, emotionally, or psychologically, to anything that may endanger, abuse, humiliate, degrade, or intimidate the person as a condition of joining or being socially accepted by a group, team, or organization. Purported consent by the person subject to Hazing is not a defense, regardless of the person's perceived willingness to cooperate or participate.

2.6 SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

For the purposes for this policy, key definitions are as follows:

Online social media – an online service, platform, or site that allows users to share information, ideas, comments, events, or media (for example: articles, photos, video, or music).

The TBIRDS understand and appreciate the importance of social media as it relates to the personal and professional lives of its Members and its stakeholders. This immediate and public forum provides unique opportunities for networking and promotion; however, it also provides an unsupervised medium for inappropriate conduct to occur. This conduct may be deemed detrimental to the welfare of the TBIRDS and its players. The TBIRDS hold their players, coaches, and staff who participate in social media to the same standards as it would with all forms of communication including television, radio, and print.

These policies are designed to protect all parties from harassment, stalking, inappropriate contact, or behavior. If requested by an outside party to participate in social media as a direct result of your affiliation or participation with the TBIRDS, the TBIRDS recommends that this request be declined.

The following are some examples of social media behavior that will result in review by the TBIRDS:

- Posting or divulging confidential information including, but not limited to, a player's personal information, contact information, medical conditions, injuries, and/or other sensitive matters pertinent to the TBIRDS and its players
- Posting negative or derogatory comments about any TBIRDS coach, staff, programs, stakeholders, or players
- Posting photographs, video, or comments regarding fights, penalties, or other such in-game incidents

- Posting photographs, videos, or comments promoting negative influences or criminal behavior including, but not limited to, drug use, alcohol abuse, public intoxication, sexual exploitation, etc
- Posting sexually explicit materials of any kind
- Participating in any online activity in contravention of TBIRDS policy
- Posting any inappropriate, derogatory, racist, or sexist comments in contravention of TBIRDS policy

The TBIRDS players, coaches, and staff always represent the TBIRDS and are expected to demonstrate the requisite discretion and respect. A simple rule of thumb is that if a posting would be inappropriate in other environments, then it is inappropriate for social media. Any athlete, coach, or staff member that posts material, comments, or actions in social media that is inappropriate will result in review by the TBIRDS.

2.7 CONCUSSION POLICY

The TBIRDS feel concussion awareness is critically important for the safety of the athletes. All TBIRDS coaches are required to take the CDC Heads Up Concussion Awareness or the NFHS online certification programs. The TBIRDS policy is to remove any player who exhibits symptoms of a head injury from participation in any athletic activity. Any player who is suspected of having a concussion must and will be removed from play and cannot return to play until a minimum of twenty-four hours have passed. To return to athletic activity the athlete must provide the TBIRDS with the USA Hockey Return to Play Form signed by a qualified medical provider and a parent.

2.8 CONFLICT OF INTEREST / WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

- CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Conflicts of interest have the potential to cause legal problems as well as embarrassment for CAHA and USA Hockey. While transactions involving conflicts of interest are not prohibited, they must be duly considered by the Colorado Thunderbirds Board of Directors, based on disclosures as may be required by CAHA.

The conflict of interest policy defined in the USA Hockey Annual Guide is intended to help directors, officers, and certain other persons identify situations that present possible conflicts of interest and to provide a procedure whereby such potential conflicts may be reviewed by an appropriate party when necessary. CAHA has adopted USA Hockey conflict of interest policy and Colorado Thunderbirds Board Of Directors, CAHA Executive Committee Members shall provide, in writing, acknowledgement of conflict of interests.

- WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

A whistleblower as defined by this policy is a CAHA member, volunteer, executive committee member, or board member of CAHA who reports an activity that he or she considers to be illegal or dishonest to one or more other parties specified in this policy. The whistleblower is not responsible for investigating the activity or for determining fault or corrective measures; appropriate management officials are charged with these responsibilities.

If a member or volunteer has knowledge of or a concern of illegal or dishonest fraudulent activity, the member or volunteer is to contact the CAHA President who is responsible for investigation and coordinating corrective action. The member or volunteer must exercise sound judgment to avoid baseline allegations. A member or volunteer who intentionally files a false report of wrongdoing will be subject to discipline up to and including suspension.

Whistleblower protections are to cover two important areas: confidentiality and retaliation. Insofar as possible, the confidentiality of the whistleblower will be maintained. However, identity may have to be disclosed to conduct a thorough investigation, to comply with the law and to provide accused individuals with their 1.91.9 legal rights of defense. There shall be no retaliation against a whistleblower. This includes, but is not limited to, protection from retaliation in the form of an adverse action such as suspension, fines or threats of physical harm. Any whistleblower who believes he or she is being retaliated against must contact the CAHA President immediately. The right of the whistleblower for protection against retaliation does not include immunity for any personal wrongdoing that is alleged and investigated.

Members or volunteers with any questions regarding this policy should contact the CAHA President.

REGISTRATION & MEMBERSHIP

CHAPTER 3

3.1 MEMBERSHIP

TBIRDS shall provide equal membership / employment / service opportunities to all eligible persons without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, citizenship, age, gender, sexual preference, marital status, parental status, veteran status, handicap, membership in any labor organization, political affiliation, and for employment purposes only, height, weight, and record of arrest without conviction.

Membership in TBIRDS shall be comprised of the following (collectively, the Members):

Participant Members: Players currently registered with the Association ("Participants"), which in the case of a Participant Member who is not at least eighteen (18) years of age shall include the parent(s) guardian(s) legally authorized to act on behalf of such minor Participant Member. Parents of Participant Members are subject to fines and/or suspensions for violations of USA Hockey, CAHA, or TBIRDS Policies.

Coach Members: Any coaches that are involved in on-ice hockey development for the Colorado Thunderbirds Association.

Other Members: Other persons who are deemed necessary to the operation of the Association's Program.

All Members must register, complete all forms and provide any documentation required by TBIRDS or USA Hockey to participate in any TBIRDS activities. Activities include tryouts, evaluations, practices, games, clinics or any TBIRD sponsored events.

3.2 TBIRDS PLAYER REGISTRATIONS & DEPOSITS

When a player is offered a spot on a Thunderbirds team, each family (player/parent(s) must submit a NON-REFUNDABLE deposit and a signed player payment agreement. A player is not considered registered until the deposit and all required documents are received, including: signed payment agreement, deposit and player release from prior association.

3.3 TBIRDS REGISTRATION & ASSOCIATION FEES

All players must pay TBIRDS Club Association fees. This registration fee does not include participant registration with USA Hockey. TBIRDS coaches and players shall be registered with USA Hockey. TBIRDS require all Coaches, Players, Managers, Volunteers, officials and Board Members to register

with USA Hockey each season. Each player is responsible for registering with USA Hockey and submitting the confirmation number to the registrar. Registering with USA Hockey also covers your CAHA registration. A fee is assessed for USA Hockey Registration.

Team fees may vary from team to team and are determined based on the number of practice slots, game participation and many other factors. Once a family signs the player contract agreement, there will be an initial fee assessed to each player.

Please note: TBIRDS will provide a player fee sheet that includes what is included as well as what is not included, in team fees prior to the start of the season to the parents.

3.4 NO PAY – NO PLAY POLICY

If it is determined that a registration payment has not been made by a TBIRDS player, the "no pay - no play" policy takes effect and the delinquent family will be notified. Payment compliance must be made at that time or the player's coach will be notified. The player will not be allowed to skate until the bill is paid in full. If a coach allows the player to skate, the player will be disciplined accordingly. In addition, per the CAHA rule, any player who has an outstanding balance with a CAHA team cannot be registered and rostered on another CAHA team until the outstanding balance is paid.

3.5 TBIRDS REFUND POLICY

Members are only eligible for a refund in the case of a mutually agreed upon release per USA Hockey Tier 1 Player Agreement. If a Player or Responsible Party violates the Parent or Player Code of Conduct, they forfeit the right to any refund.

In the case of a mutually agreed upon departure:

If a player leaves prior to August 15 - Full refund minus non refundable deposit of \$5000

Prior to Sept 15 - 75% after non refundable deposit of \$5000

Oct 15 - 50% after non refundable deposit of \$5000

Nov 15 - 25% after non refundable deposit of \$5000

Dec 15 - 0% after non refundable deposit of \$5000

3.6 RECOVERY OF LEGAL FEES

Should any civil action be instigated under the Registration Agreement in regard to any alleged negligent acts, or dispute of non-refundable fees, TBIRDS shall be entitled to recover reasonable attorney fees and costs incurred as a result of that civil action.

3.7 SHARING OF INFORMATION / MEDIA RELEASE

TBIRDS reserves the right to disclose player information to other youth hockey associations with respect to the player's financial standing with TBIRDS as well as the player's standing with respect to the player's Code of Conduct.

Additionally, by signing TBIRDS player agreement, said parents and players give TBIRDS and its approved Members or business associates permission to use their likeness (photo, video, digital image) in any TBIRDS approved hockey related production for the purpose of promoting TBIRDS, its teams and/ or its players.

3.8 USA HOCKEY INSURANCE

USA Hockey has now enacted the Individual Membership Registration process on-line. TBIRDS Members are now responsible for their own USA Hockey registration. Members can access the form by visiting www.usahockey.com and clicking "on-line registration". Registrations are effective for one year. Upon registering, Members will then need to provide a copy of their USA Hockey confirmation to the TBIRD Registrar as part of their registration paperwork for the upcoming season. USA Hockey registration is a requirement for participation in TBIRDS Programs.

Once registered, this program provides Accident Insurance for covered medical expenses of Members in excess of their personal or group medical insurance. Please be sure to report all hockey related injuries that require outside medical attention to the TBIRDS or the USA Hockey. TBIRDS must be kept informed of all serious injuries.

USA Hockey Registration fees include EXCESS insurance coverage through USA Hockey.

3.9 PLAYER RELEASES (TIER 1 / JUNIOR / COLLEGE)

Players seeking release from TBIRDS must provide a statement in writing to the TBIRDS naming the player, the player's date of birth, and current or most recent team assignment with the TBIRDS. Approved releases must be signed by the TBIRDS.

Past and present financial obligations must be paid in full before a release will be granted. Players requesting releases will relinquish their position with the TBIRDS organization.

Based upon TBIRDS mission statement, we believe in the promotion of our players to the highest level of competition available. To that end, we will grant a release to a player in order to play at a sanctioned Junior or College level as long as past and present financial obligations have been paid in full before release will be granted.

3.10 FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

TBIRDS are committed to working with families with legitimate financial hardships. Financial assistance is offered in good faith and Members are reminded that their TBIRDS financial obligations are a condition for their child(ren)'s participation. TBIRDS volunteer work can be assigned to help offset a TBIRDS financial support.

Any TBIRDS Member, in good standing, may request financial assistance. All requests must be submitted in writing and given to the TBIRDS.

HOCKEY OPERATIONS

CHAPTER 4

4.1 DIRECTOR OF HOCKEY OPERATIONS

The Director of Hockey Operations will oversee/facilitate all on ice TBIRDS programs. The organization of programs, divisions, specification of formats and local playing rules, screening of coaches plus evaluation and placement of players are the responsibilities of the Director of Hockey Operations.

4.2 TBIRDS DISCIPLINE

The function of the Disciplinary Committee will be to enforce all USA Hockey rules and TBIRDS regulations as they apply to TBIRDS players, coaches and parents. The Committee will also be informed of all Game and Gross Misconducts, as well as Major and Match penalties, and is responsible for assessing or ensuring that the minimum USA Hockey suspensions are served.

- ***Discipline Committee Objective***

A Discipline Committee has been established by the Colorado Thunderbirds AAA Hockey Association. (TBIRDS) to help enforce USA Hockey's Zero Tolerance Policy, the CAHA, USA Hockey and the TBIRDS Code of Conduct. It is the intent of the Discipline Committee That any individual participating in the activities in the Association, including but not limited to, players, coaches, officials, fans and parents, exhibit qualities of good sportsmanship and civil behavior and abide by the Code of Conduct established by the association.

- ***Committee Makeup***

The Discipline Committee is made up of three members that are appointed by the TBIRDS Board. Members must be in good standing and may consist of present and past TBIRDS association members. Committee members are expected to be reasonably available for all discipline hearings, be active participants in the process and maintain an unbiased, reasonable point of view congruent with imposing fair discipline rulings.

- ***Necessary Discipline Actions***

All coaches, players, board members and parents will adhere to the Code of Conduct found in the TBIRDS guidelines. Any deviation from the code, or any action deemed detrimental, unsportsmanlike, or damaging to the Association may be subject to disciplinary action.

- ***Discipline Guidelines for Parents/Coaches/Board Members***

In addition to adherence to the TBIRDS Code of Conduct, the following actions may be subject to disciplinary action:

- If you are asked to leave a TBIRDS arena or any hosting facility by a referee, parent representative, board member or coach because of your actions
- If you approach a coach or other representative of TBIRDS in anger or frustration either in person, by phone or by email prior to following appropriate reporting procedures after the designated 24-hour rule
- If your actions against any other persons, including but not limited to, players, fans, parents, officials, board members and rink managers, causes a disruption on or off the ice or represents the TBIRDS in a derogatory manner
- If you enter the locker room, bench area or ice, without permission from the coaching staff, in frustration or anger

- ***Notice of Disciplinary Action***

The purpose of the discipline procedure is to provide all parties with a fair hearing prior to being subject to disciplinary action and to allow for an opportunity for parties to prepare and present their case and argument in accordance with these rules. All persons requested to attend a discipline hearing will be given 48-hours advance notice of rescheduled hearing. Notice of this request will be arranged by the TBIRDS Discipline Committee and may be communicated by telephone, email or in person.

Confirmation of contact by recipient will be requested. Failure to respond to the request and failure to appear at the scheduled meeting will warrant further disciplinary action, including not allowing the subject's skater(s) on the ice. Minutes will be taken during all disciplinary hearings and retained for the remainder of the family's membership within the TBIRDS. Results of the Discipline Committee decision will be forwarded in writing to all parties within 48-hours of review.

- **24 Hour Rule**

No member shall initiate the complaint process (see complaint reporting procedures document) to discuss a game, a game incident or a situation that occurred during the game that has provoked an adverse emotional response or a hostile situation until at least 24-hours after the fact. The intent of this rule is to move an emotional and confrontational discussion away from the presence of players, and to allow the parties to "cool off," compose themselves, and put the provoking incident in perspective before meeting to discuss it.

- **Chain of Complaint**

If at any time a coach, team member, parent or spectator suspects a Safesport violation or misconduct you are required under mandatory reporting laws to report directly to Safesport.

TBIRDS have established clear steps for resolving non Safesport conflicts in effort to ensure that issues are handled at the appropriate levels. Below is the TBIRDS Chain of Complaint:

1. Complaints must wait 24 hours before taking any action to allow time for emotions to settle and for a calmer approach.
2. The parent should first attempt to resolve the issue directly with the other party involved, such as the coach, staff member, or other team member without any formal intervention.
3. If the issue remains unresolved, parties will involve a third party as a mediator within the team. This could be a neutral team member, or someone appointed to handle such matters.
4. Only if there is still no satisfactory resolution should the issue be escalated to the disciplinary committee.

This chain of complaint allows for an initial attempt at informal resolution and only escalates to higher levels, when necessary, which can save time and effort for all parties involved. It also encourages communication and cooperation among team members to address issues effectively.

- **Disciplinary Guidelines**

While the Discipline Committee reserves the right to review each hearing on a case-by-case basis, the following guidelines are taken into consideration during the process. The Committee reserves the right to escalate beyond and or deviate from these guidelines should the situation call for it.

- First Offense: Written warning and/or possible short-term suspension of the offending party from all TBIRDS activities
- Second Offense: Possible long-term suspension of the offending party from all TBIRDS activities
- Third Offense: Season long (or longer) suspension of the offending party from all TBIRDS activities
- Any offense that occurs at a TBIRDS function, to include a crime alleging violence, illegal activity, sexual misconduct, intentional property damage or other criminal activities is subject to third offense penalties, regardless if a first or second offense have been committed.

Failure to adhere to Discipline Committee decisions will result in suspension of the involved party's player(s).

- ***Appealing a Discipline Committee Decision***

All members have the right to appeal the decision of the Discipline Committee. The first step in this process is to submit a formal written appeal to the President of the TBIRDS Board of Directors. This written appeal must be submitted within 2 business days of the receipt of the Discipline Committee hearing results. The Board will schedule a hearing within 30 days of receipt of the written appeal. Notice of appeal hearing will be given at least 7 days PRIOR to the hearing date. All appeals will follow guidelines set forth in USA Hockey By-law 10. If a member is unsatisfied with the results of the appeal hearing by the TBIRDS Board of Directors, he/she may appeal to the Colorado Amateur Hockey Association according to their procedures.

- ***Reporting Infractions***

All members of the TBIRDS are encouraged to report any behavior infractions as outlined above the TBIRDS Discipline Committee. In most cases, infractions are of public knowledge and will automatically be investigated by Discipline Committee members to determine the necessary steps in the disciplinary process. However, infractions may be reported by individuals who feel discipline action is necessary for the benefit of the TBIRDS, or when Zero Tolerance and Code of Conduct rules have been broken. These infractions should be reported directly - either in writing, by phone, or in person.

- ***Good Intentions***

The intent of the Discipline Committee and the discipline guidelines is to help prevent unnecessary behavioral incidents and to foster more sportsmanlike behavior within the Association, both in the stands and on the ice. The hope is that coaches, parents and players will “think twice” before engaging in inappropriate behavior and that the actions of the Discipline Committee will not be necessary. Thank you for helping the TBIRDS model positive attitudes and behaviors to our skaters.

The Disciplinary Committee also has the power to impose sanctions and / or expulsion from TBIRDS for any rules violations by a player, coach or parent.

Players receiving discipline other than a Game Misconduct shall be notified in writing of their discipline hearing, when and where the player should appear for the hearing. Decisions by the Disciplinary Committee will be made in a timely manner and the player shall be notified in writing of the decision.

● **COACH / MANAGER REMOVAL**

All coaches and team managers will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the spirit of the TBIRDS Mission Statement. Any inappropriate behavior may result in disciplinary action by the Disciplinary Committee. This may include removal of the individual from their position.

The Disciplinary Committee can remove a coach or manager by a majority vote of the committee. The Director of Hockey Operations will inform the coach or manager of their dismissal in writing, which will include an explanation for the action and steps available to appeal the decision. The Director of Hockey Operations will select the replacement coach or team manager.

● **PLAYER REMOVAL POLICY**

All players will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the spirit of the TBIRDS Mission Statement. Any inappropriate behavior may result in disciplinary action by the Disciplinary Committee. This may include removal of the individual from the team or TBIRDS.

The Disciplinary Committee may dismiss any player from any team by a majority vote and then final

approval by the TBIRDS board. The Director of Hockey Operations will inform the Player and his/her parents of their dismissal in writing, which will include an explanation for the action and steps available to appeal the decision.

4.3 APPEAL PROCESS

Those wishing to appeal a disciplinary decision made by the TBIRDS Disciplinary Committee may seek a hearing of the full TBIRDS Board of Directors.

To appeal a disciplinary decision the appeal must be submitted in writing to the TBIRDS. The Appeal shall include the Disciplinary Committee's ruling, along with the petitioner's case. The appeal will be reviewed by the TBIRDS President who will make a determination on the merit of the appeal within three business days. If the TBIRDS President determines that the appeal warrants further review, it shall be heard by the full Board of Directors at their next regularly scheduled meeting. No special meeting will be convened to hear a disciplinary appeal. Should the appeal lack merit, the matter will be considered closed and any discipline handed down by the Disciplinary Committee will be served. The TBIRDS President's decision is final.

Note: Minimum suspensions assessed according to USA Hockey rules are not reviewable.

Any Member or Official who complains or openly grieves to other Members or individuals outside of the formal process may be in violation of the TBIRDS policies as they pertain to the prevention of harassment and abuse of TBIRDS members.

4.4 TEAM DISPUTE RESOLUTION

All criticisms within a team should first be taken to the Team Manager of that team. Thereafter, meetings should be set up with the Head Coach and/or Manager. If the issue is not resolved, the dispute must be presented to the TBIRDS Director of Hockey Operations outlining the concerns in writing. This dispute will then be passed on to the Disciplinary Committee for review.

The Disciplinary Committee will contact the Head Coach and concerned parties within three working days. If needed, the Committee will bring all parties together to discuss the issues.

4.5 COACHES

The USA Hockey Coaching Certification program is a requirement for any coach who wishes to coach in our Association. Coaches must be up to date with USA Hockey CEP levels as well as age specific modules.

Without their dedication and commitment to the growth and development of our players, TBIRDS could not operate to the level we currently enjoy. Please take time this year to thank your coaches for their efforts!

4.6 SELECTION OF COACHES / PROCESS

The coaches will be interviewed and selected by the Director of Hockey Operations. TBIRDS Board of Directors may review the selection of coaches. Coaches may be asked to fill out a coaching application.

4.7 PLAYER EVALUATIONS

In accordance with USA hockey rules, no earlier than 48 hours after USA Hockey Nationals, each year the TBIRDS staff will conduct on-ice evaluations of the respective registered tryout players to rate hockey skills and playing ability.

- **MOVE-UP / PLAYING UP**

TBIRDS encourages players to only tryout at the specific birth year as decided by USA Hockey Guidelines. However, any player wishing to try out at a higher age group may be allowed to. We are committed at the Tier 1 level of placing a player(s) at the highest level possible to help their advancement and development.

Player(s) may be called up during the season, however, all rosters must be finalized by December 31 each year per USA Hockey rules.

- **Tier 1 TEAM TRYOUT PROCESS**

The Director of Hockey Operations will oversee the tryout process for TBIRDS. The TBIRDS website will list the schedules for all tryout dates and times. Any player properly registered with TBIRDS and in good standing may tryout for the team at their respective age level as determined by USA Hockey guidelines.

4.8 CAHA HOCKEY PROGRAMS

TBIRDS is committed to the development of all CAHA Grow the Game Initiatives. TBIRDS supports CAHA, Grow the Game and its subsidiary programs such as try hockey for free and learn to play for both male and female interested hockey players.

ADMINISTRATION

CHAPTER 5

5.1. HOME FACILITY

Big Bear Ice Arena is the home of TBIRDS serving as the primary facilities for all home games and practices. Additional ice may be obtained at other facilities/arenas throughout the season.

5.2 TBIRDS / ICE ARENA RULES AND REGULATIONS

The game of hockey provides much excitement and enthusiasm at these rinks. Parents and all other spectators are reminded that these facilities are your home rink and should be treated accordingly. The Following rules and regulations must be adhered to at all times by TBIRDS Members. If you, as a Member, witness a violation, please enforce or inform a Member of the TBIRDS or rink staff immediately. Your Assistance is greatly appreciated.

- Players must dress in locker rooms. Tbirds players must sign locker room code of conduct form.
- Do not allow your child to "run wild" throughout the rink. Your child is your responsibility.
- Parents are responsible for any damage to locker rooms and rink grounds or property caused by their child.
- Absolutely no hockey is to be played anywhere on the grounds except on the ice. No wall hockey, lobby hockey, passing of pucks or balls, knee hockey or street hockey.
- Please keep children out of restrooms unless they are using the facilities. No playing is permitted in or around the restrooms.
- No one is allowed on the bench or bench area except players, coaches and or gameofficials. Continued warnings will result in disciplinary action. A limit of 4 adults are allowed on the bench

during a game, all of which must be USA Coaching Certified. No children, except those playing, are allowed on the bench at any time.

- Parents are not allowed near player benches during games or practices.
- No one is allowed on the ice until the Zamboni doors are closed and locked. Anyone found continually violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.
- No players are to go onto the ice surface without a coach present. Players must wait for a coach to enter the bench area or take the ice. Coaches are also required to wear helmets, as outlined with USA Hockey, while conducting any on-ice activities. Sanctions will be imposed upon coaches and teams for violations of the helmet rule.
- Players must leave their helmets on while on the ice or the bench. Removal of helmets is strictly prohibited.
- All players, coaches, managers and parents must treat rink employees, league representatives, coaches and officials with respect. The Association will not tolerate the mistreatment of or disrespect towards anyone involved in the program or the rink staff. Players and children will listen to adults and follow directions when reprimanded.
- Foul language will not be tolerated. Players and coaches are subject to immediate disciplinary action for failure to comply with this rule. We have guests in the rink to watch games. We have small children present on a regular basis. There is no need for foul language at any time. Maintaining the integrity of the Association is everyone's responsibility.
- Alcohol or drugs are not allowed. Any player or coach who shows up to a THIRD practice or game under the influence of alcohol or drugs is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from the Association.
- In accordance with USA Hockey Rules, all players are required to wear a neck laceration protector that is commercially designed and manufactured for that purpose.

5.3 LOCKER ROOM POLICIES

All TBIRDS players will treat the locker rooms with respect. Trash, water bottles, tape and miscellaneous garbage will be picked up and vandalism will not be tolerated.

Males and females of all ages will dress in separate locker rooms at all rinks that provide separate dressing facilities.

Males and females will be permitted in the same locker room for coach briefs once fully dressed, generally 10 to 15 minutes before and after a practice or game.

- Collateral in the form of car keys or a driver's license may be required to be left with the rink representative.
- Teams are responsible for the cleanliness of their locker room and the collateral item will be returned only when the locker room has been inspected by a rink representative who confirms the locker room was left in a clean and presentable manner.
- Any items left in the locker room are not the responsibility of the TBIRDS.
- Teams and/or individual players causing damage to the locker room will be assessed the charges to repair the damages.

5.4 VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

For parents wanting to be directly involved, TBIRDS offers numerous positions that require only small increments of time. Those interested in any of the following should contact the TBIRDS.

- Team Manager - Assist by getting information to and from your team via e-mails, phone calls, flyers, etc. Act as the team representative when dealing with Issues Involving your team and Director of Hockey Operations. Assure that a qualified Member of your team is available to run the scoreboard or score sheet during games. This position requires some dedication and you will be

required to attend at least one meeting at the start of the season. Each team is required to have a team manager.

- Team Duties - Willing to serve on a team where your general expertise in a certain area can be utilized.

5.5 TBIRDS CORRESPONDENCE & WEBSITE

It is important to maintain open lines of communication between the administration and the membership. In an effort to accomplish this goal, TBIRDS will utilize electronic correspondence (email) and telephone communications to the membership as their primary source of information. It is extremely important that all Members provide the Association with a valid email address to ensure you receive this valuable

information. Once you receive these notices, please take the time to read the material to ensure you are up to speed on all Thunderbirds Hockey matters.

Another vital information tool for TBIRDS Members is the website. Members can access program and league schedules, team rosters, standings, TBIRDS News & Information, and other important issues.

5.6 FINANCIAL GUIDELINES

- TBIRDS prohibits bank accounts outside the control of the TBIRDS Treasurer for any team.
- Prior to each season the TBIRDS will establish the upcoming season's club dues and distribute that information to the membership.
- Any player leaving the TBIRDS after being assigned to a team is responsible for payment per signed player payment agreement.

CAUTION: READ THIS DOCUMENT CAREFULLY. THIS IS A GENERAL RELEASE AND INDEMNIFICATION OF ALL CLAIMS.

IMAGE/INFORMATION RELEASE WAIVER

During your and/or your child(ren)'s participation in the Colorado Thunderbirds (TBIRDS) Hockey program, pictures and/or videos of TBIRDS events may be taken that include you and/or your child(ren). The TBIRDS would like to be able to occasionally use these items in press releases, brochures, recruiting events, on our websites and social media platforms or in other ways to showcase the many things that are happening in and around the TBIRDS.

I give permission, without remuneration and as a part of our voluntary participation with TBIRDS, for me and my child(ren) to be interviewed, photographed and/or videotaped by TBIRDS for publication in news stories and/or displayed on TBIRDS website and social media platforms and/or for use by TBIRDS in brochures, promotional materials, recruiting events and/or in other ways to showcase the TBIRDS. I understand that my child(ren)'s ice hockey statistics, image(s), name(s), age(s), city, state and/or other personal information may be used.

I hereby release TBIRDS, their agents, employees, owners, volunteers, contractors, officers, directors, associates, and other assignees from any and all claims for damages, libel, slander, invasion of the right of privacy, or any other claim based on the use of said interviews, images and/or personal information.

WAIVER OF LIABILITY, RELEASE, ASSUMPTION OF RISK, AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

1. Assumption of Risk. I recognize that there are certain risks which are inherent in ice Hockey activities, and such risks are increased by willful (intentional) or wanton (outrageous disregard for physical wellbeing) misconduct. I further recognize that these risks cannot be eliminated regardless of the care taken to avoid injuries. On my own behalf, and on behalf of the Child(ren) and on behalf of my successors, representatives, family, heirs, assigns, and estates, I acknowledge and understand that our decision to participate in TBIRDS activities places me or the Child(ren) at a risk of injury, illness, liability, and possibly death. I voluntarily accept and assume all risks arising out of my or the Child(ren)'s participation in the TBIRDS activities, including but not limited to property damage, personal injury and death.

2. Liability Release and Indemnity. I acknowledge and agree that both the Child and I receive a number of benefits through participation in the TBIRDS run program. In exchange for such benefits provided to the Child(ren) and to me by the TBIRDS, and other good and valuable consideration, which I acknowledge to be sufficient, I forever WAIVE, RELEASE, DISCHARGE AND INDEMNIFY the TBIRDS and any and all individuals or entities involved with or associated with the TBIRDS, including but not limited to, all of their officers, directors, members, agents, instructors, coaches, referees, volunteers, sponsors, employees, successors, assigns, and affiliates of the foregoing (collectively, the Administrators) from any and all PRESENT AND FUTURE liability, claims, demands and causes of action of any kind whatsoever, whether asserted by me or by third parties (the Claim(s)) arising as a result of my or the Child(ren)'s participation in the TBIRDS activities. Through this document, I have also been told that under

Colorado Law, that TBIRDS cannot be held liable for the intervening criminal acts of a third party unless the TBIRDS knew or had reason to know that the criminal act was about to occur on its premises. I also agree not to sue or bring any legal action against the TBIRDS or their Administrators for any Claim released hereunder and further agree that if such an action is brought by me, for me, or by a third party, I will indemnify the TBIRDS and their Administrators from any costs associated with defending or litigating such Claims, including but not limited to attorney fees, costs, and legal expenses.

3. Insurance Coverage. I further acknowledge that TBIRDS recommend that I obtain some type of insurance to cover the Child(ren) and my needs. I know and understand the dangers and risks involved with not having insurance coverage in the event of an accident, injury, or illness.

4. Acknowledgment of My Understanding of This Agreement. I represent and acknowledge that I have completely read and understand this document and all its terms, that I have had ample opportunity to consult with counsel about it, and that by signing this document, I am giving up legal rights and remedies that may have otherwise been available to me. I understand that this Waiver of Liability, Release, Assumption of Risk, and Indemnity Agreement shall be construed as broadly and inclusively as is permitted by the laws of the State of Colorado. I agree that if any portion of this document is held invalid, the remaining shall continue in full force and effect.