



## **USA Hockey Travel Policy**

A significant portion of USA Hockey participation involves overnight travel for youth teams to games and tournaments. Minor players are most vulnerable to abuse or misconduct during travel, particularly overnight stays. This includes a greater risk of player to player misconduct. During travel, players may be away from their families and support networks, and the setting – unfamiliar locker rooms, automobiles, and hotel rooms – is less structured and less familiar. A travel policy provides guidelines so that care is taken to minimize one-on-one interactions between minors and adults while traveling.

Further, the policy directs how minor players will be supervised between and during travel to and from practice and games. Adherence to travel policies helps to reduce the opportunities for misconduct.

USA Hockey requires that all local programs have travel policies applicable to their youth teams and to provide the policies to all players, parents, coaches and other adults that are traveling with the team. It is strongly recommended that a signature by each adult acknowledging receipt of and agreeing to the travel policy be obtained by the local program/team.

Some travel involves only local travel to and from local practices, games and events, while other travel involves overnight stays.

## **Colorado Thunderbirds Travel Policy**

Colorado Thunderbirds teams travel regularly to play individual games, two or three games at a time, or in tournaments or showcases. Some teams travel together as a team while other teams primarily travel with their parents. Colorado Thunderbirds has established policies to guide our travel, minimize one-on-one interactions and reduce the risk of abuse or misconduct.

Adherence to these travel guidelines will increase player safety and improve the player's experience while keeping travel a fun and enjoyable experience.

We distinguish between travel to training, practice and local games or practices ("local travel"), and team travel involving a coordinated overnight stay ("team travel").

### **Local Travel**

Local travel occurs when Colorado Thunderbirds or one of its teams does not sponsor, coordinate, or arrange for travel.

Players and/or their parents/guardians are responsible for making all arrangements for local travel. The team and its coaches, managers or administrators should avoid responsibility for



arranging or coordinating local travel. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure the person transporting the minor player maintains the proper safety and legal requirements, including, but not limited to, a valid driver's license, automobile liability insurance, a vehicle in safe working order, and compliance with applicable state laws.

The employees, coaches, and/or volunteers of Colorado Thunderbirds or one of its teams, who are not also acting as a parent, should not drive alone with an unrelated minor player and should only drive with at least two players or another adult at all times, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the minor player's parent.

Where an employee, coach and/or volunteer is involved in an unrelated minor player's local travel, efforts should be made to ensure that the adult personnel are not alone with the unrelated player, by, e.g., picking up or dropping off the players in groups. In any case where an employee, coach and/or volunteer is involved in the player's local travel, a parental release should be obtained in advance.

Employees, coaches, and volunteers who are also a player's parent or guardian may provide shared transportation for any player(s) if they pick up their player first and drop off their player last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement.

It is recognized that in some limited instances it will be unavoidable for an employee, coach or volunteer of Colorado Thunderbirds or one of its teams to drive alone with an unrelated minor player. However, efforts should be made to minimize these occurrences and to mitigate any circumstances that could lead to allegations of abuse or misconduct.

#### Team Travel

Team travel is overnight travel that occurs when Colorado Thunderbirds or one of its teams sponsors, coordinates or arranges for travel so that our teams can compete locally, regionally, nationally or internationally. Because of the greater distances, coaches, staff, volunteers and chaperones will often travel with the players.

When possible, Colorado Thunderbirds will provide reasonable advance notice before team travel. Travel notice will also include designated team hotels for overnight stays as well as a contact person within Colorado Thunderbirds or the team. This individual will be the point of contact to confirm your intention to travel and to help with travel details.

Colorado Thunderbirds will post specific travel itineraries when they become available. These will include a more detailed schedule as well as contact information for team travel chaperones. Colorado Thunderbirds will make efforts to provide adequate supervision through coaches and other adult chaperones.

Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with a minor player (unless the coach is the parent, guardian or sibling of the player).



Because of the greater distances, coaches, staff, volunteers, and chaperones will often travel with the players. No employee, coach, or volunteer will engage in team travel without the proper safety requirements in place and on record, including valid drivers' licenses, automobile liability insurance as required by applicable state law, a vehicle in safe working order, and compliance with all state laws. All chaperones shall have been screened in compliance with the USA Hockey Screening Policy. A parent that has not been screened may participate in team activities and assist with supervision/monitoring of the players, but will not be permitted to have any one-on-one interactions with players.

Players should share rooms with other players of the same gender, with the appropriate number of players assigned per room depending on accommodations.

The coach will establish a curfew by when all players must be in their hotel rooms or in a supervised location. Regular monitoring and curfew checks will be made of each room by at least two properly screened adults.

The team personnel shall ask hotels to block adult pay per view channels.

Individual meetings between a player and coach may not occur in hotel sleeping rooms and must be held in public settings or with additional adults present.

All players will be permitted to make regular check-in phone calls to parents. Team personnel shall allow for any unscheduled check in phone calls initiated by either the player or parents.

Family members who wish to stay in the team hotel are permitted to do so.

The team will make every effort to accommodate reasonable parental requests when a child is away from home without a parent. If any special arrangements are necessary for your child, please contact the team personnel who can either make or assist with making those arrangements.

Meetings do not occur in hotel rooms, but the team may reserve a separate space for adults and athletes to socialize.

If disciplinary action against a player is required while the player is traveling without his/her parents, then except where immediate action is necessary, parents will be notified before any action is taken or immediately after the action.

No coach or chaperone shall at any time be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing their coaching and/or chaperoning duties.

During team travel, coaches, team personnel and chaperones will help players, fellow coaches and team personnel adhere to policy guidelines, including, without limitation, the Travel Policy, Locker Room Policy and Reporting Policy.



Prior to any travel, coaches will endeavor to make players and parents aware of all expectations and rules. Coaches will also support chaperones and/or participate in the monitoring of the players for adherence to curfew restrictions and other travel rules.

#### Prohibited Conduct and Reporting

Colorado Thunderbirds prohibits all types of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing, all as described in the USA Hockey SafeSport Handbook. Participants, employees or volunteers in Colorado Thunderbirds may be subject to disciplinary action for violation of the Travel Policies or for engaging in any misconduct or abuse or that violates the USA Hockey or Colorado Thunderbirds SafeSport Policies.

Reports of any actual or suspected violations, you may email Colorado Thunderbirds or USA Hockey at [SafeSport@usahockey.org](mailto:SafeSport@usahockey.org) or may call 1-800-888-4656.