

East Coast Women's Hockey League (ECWHL)

League Bylaws

Current as of September 24, 2024



A. Who We Are

1. ECWHL Mission Statement:

- a. The mission of the ECWHL is to promote women's hockey in a fun, organized, competitive, and friendly manner.
- b. The ECWHL is a space for new players to grow and for current players to compete against players within a similar range of skill.
- c. In the event that conflict ensues within the league, the communality of the league, including the goal of providing space for women's hockey players of all skill levels to meet both on and off the ice, must always prevail over other considerations.

2. Locations

- a. The ECWHL is currently comprised of teams from the states of West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia.

3. Players

a. Women's Hockey Defined

1. For purposes of this league, "women's hockey" is inclusive of:

- a. Persons assigned female at birth
- b. Persons who are transgender and identify as female
- c. Persons who identify as nonbinary or gender-fluid

2. The ECWHL is a community-focused and community-run organization. Discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated.

b. Skill

1. The ECWHL is D level and thus all teams should fall within a range of D level skill.
2. A broad and flexible definition of D level skill for purposes of this league is defined below:
 - a. D level players have typically not competed at the Division I or II college level. Those who played on lower division college or college club teams are generally appropriate for this league.
 - b. D level players may have substantial hockey experience (10+ years). Much of this hockey experience was likely acquired at the recreational level or in their youth.
 - c. D level includes players who have limited or no hockey experience so long as they can safely perform the basic functions of the game without injuring themselves or others. Basic functions include skating, stopping, and stickhandling safely.
3. Multiple factors should be considered when assessing level of skill including:
 - a. The skill of the players
 - b. The skill of the team
 - c. Diversity of points scored.
 1. Defined as the number of different players per team per game who are scoring goals or assists.
4. Players of a higher skills level than D may play on teams in this league.
 - a. Teams with these players MUST ensure they are balancing the multiple factors listed in A.3.b.3 when adding these players to their roster.
 - b. Teams are responsible for keeping their team as a whole at an appropriate skill level to compete fairly with other teams in this league.
5. The ECWHL recognizes that team parity and balance are moving

targets. All teams are to comply with the Code of Good Faith with regards to the skill of their players and teams.

c. Age

1. The ECWHL is an adult hockey league. Players must be 18 years old to participate in games.
 - a. Exemptions to this age limit will be considered by the Board on a case-by-case basis.

4. ECWHL Executive Board:

a. Layout

1. The ECWHL executive board is comprised of four executive positions as well as one representative from each team in the league.
 - a. A person may hold the Vice President, Treasurer, or Statistician position and a team representative position simultaneously.
 - b. The President cannot hold both of these positions simultaneously.

b. Roles Defined

1. President

- a. Serves as the figurehead of the league, ensuring that the league acts in accordance with its mission statement at all times.
- b. Serves as the main point of contact and spokesperson for the league, responding to both external and internal sources.
- c. Serves as the delegator of internal projects on an as-needed basis.
- d. Serves as a neutral mediator of all league disputes, including, but not limited to, player issues, team issues, and game issues.
- e. The President is responsible for coordinating the executive board to meet and discuss issues as they arise.

2. Vice President

- a. Serves as note-taker for all board meetings.
- b. Serves as the lead organizer for the season schedule, working

with all teams to coordinate and finalize each season's games prior to the season beginning.

- c. Responsible for relaying final schedule to statistician to input the season's games.

3. Treasurer

- a. Responsible for maintaining league finances in a fiscally prudent manner.
- b. Responsible for bringing financial issues or decisions to the board for discussion and/or voting.
- c. Serves as the lead organizer for end-of-season playoffs, including coordinating and finalizing dates with all teams as well as acquiring ice and referees.

4. Statistician

- a. Responsible for entering statistics for all games into the MyStats software from their associated scoresheets.
- b. Responsible for tracking down missing statistics/scoresheets from teams so that league statistics remain accurate.
- c. Responsible for responding to requests from teams concerning statistics, such as inquiries about player eligibility for end-of-season playoffs.

5. Team Representatives (multiple)

- a. The number of team representatives will equal the number of teams in the league. The Vice President, Treasurer, and Statistician may serve their positions and a team representative position simultaneously.
- b. Team representatives are responsible for representing the views or opinions of their team at board meetings.
- c. Team representatives are responsible for surveying or discussing issues in question with their team prior to casting their vote at board meetings.
- d. Teams are individually responsible for determining how they will elect their representative as well as how (or if) they will require their representative to vote in a certain way.

c. Voting

1. Allocation of Votes

- a. Each team will receive two (2) votes in every board decision.
No team will receive more than two (2) votes in any decision.
 - 1. If a person holds both the Vice President, Treasurer, or Statistician position as well as the team representative position simultaneously, that person will receive two (2) votes.
 - 2. If a person holds the Vice President, Treasurer, or Statistician position and does not also hold their team representative position, they will receive one (1) vote and their team representative will receive one (1) vote.
- b. The President will receive one (1) vote in every board decision.
 - 1. The President is entitled to vote in whatever way they deem fit, keeping in mind that the President's charge is to ensure that the league acts at all times in alignment with its mission.
 - 2. If the President is also a player on a team in the league, they should diligently ensure that their vote is made on their own accord. The President's vote should not automatically be in alignment with their team or in furtherance of their team's personal motive.

2. Quorum

- a. In order for the board to vote on an issue, a majority of the available votes (greater than 50%) must be present to meet quorum.
 - 1. *For example, if five teams exist in the league the number of available total votes would be ten (10) team votes plus one (1) President vote for a total of eleven (11) votes. Quorum in this example would be met by six (6) votes.*

3. Voting

- a. Voting on an issue is required when a member of the executive

board presents a motion to the board.

1. A board member may bring a motion on behalf of a concern expressed by their team or on their own.
2. The board as a whole should be made aware of a motion at least one (1) week prior to convening so that members can discuss the issue with their teams prior to voting.

- i. Emailing a motion to all members of the board constitutes proper notice.
- ii. Motions raised without one (1) week notice can still be heard and voted on by the board so long as no objections are raised.

- b. In order for a motion to pass, a majority of votes (greater than 50%) is required.

- 1. For example, if five teams exist in the league, the number of available total votes would be ten (10) team votes plus one (1) President vote for eleven (11) total votes. A motion would need a minimum of six (6) votes in order to pass.*

- c. This majority requirement applies to votes on issues of all kinds, including adding new teams to the league.

d. Appointment to the Board

1. President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Statistician

- a. These positions will be filled on a volunteer basis and are entitled to a two-season term.

1. At the end of this two-season term, an election (or re-election) vote will take place among the board prior to the beginning of the third season.
2. Any interested players may add their name to the ballot to be considered for these positions, including the

incumbent.

- i. Players will be notified of an upcoming election through their team representatives.

3. Majority vote is needed to elect or re-elect a member to one of these positions.

- i. Board members are allocated the same number of votes as for other board issues.

- ii. Voting will take place via a digital voting platform, such as Google Forms. The link will be emailed to all board members.

- iii. All board members may vote, including the incumbent.

1. The incumbent is permitted to vote for themselves for reelection.

2. Team Representatives

- a. These positions will be filled on a volunteer basis and are governed by any rules set by their respective teams.

1. Teams are fully responsible for determining who will represent them as a team representative on the board, how long that person will represent them, and how they will re-elect a representative.

2. The board maintains no control over selection of team representatives aside from requiring that each team produce one (1) representative for board meetings.

e. Board Meeting Protocols

1. Board meetings can be conducted remotely or in-person

- a. Votes cast remotely or in-person are counted equally.

2. All board meetings are open to all players of the ECWHL.
 - a. Players may request a link (virtual) or address (in-person) for a board meeting from their team representative.
 - b. Board meetings are generally not open forums. Meaning, a player must bring any concerns or issues they wish to be heard by the board through their chosen team representative.
 1. The board reserves the right to hear directly from players at their discretion on a case-by-case basis.

f. General Powers of the Board

1. Each board member has the powers allocated to them in the above “Roles Defined” section.
2. The board has the power to vote on any issues or concerns raised by its members or team representatives.
3. The board has the power to add, delete, and amend these league bylaws by majority vote.

B. How We Play

1. Season Dates (Generally)

- a. Each season will begin no earlier than October 15th.
- b. End-of-season playoffs will take place before the end of March.
 1. Good faith attempts to follow these date guidelines will be accepted.
 2. Any objections to game dates set by teams must be made to the board, otherwise game dates will be assumed to be approved.

2. Rosters

- a. Full-Time Player Rosters

1. Teams are responsible for entering their full-time player roster into the MyStats software prior to their first game of the season.
 - a. Rosters entered must include each player's first name, last name, and jersey number.
 - b. Goalies should be labeled in MyStats as a goalie under player position.
 2. There is no limit to the number of players who can be on a team's full-time roster.
 3. A player can only be rostered as a full-time player on one (1) team roster at a time.
 - a. Simultaneous full-time registration by a player on two or more teams is prohibited.
 - b. A player may switch full-time teams mid-season.
 1. A player must be in good financial standing with the team they are leaving in order to join another team within the league.
 2. Playoff eligibility and any behavioral concerns surrounding a player switching full-time teams mid-season will be reviewed and determined by the board on a case-by-case basis.
 4. A team's full-time roster can be adjusted at any time throughout the season. However, a player should be rostered before they play in a game.
- b. Substitute Player Rosters
1. All substitute players must be added to the team's roster and labeled as a substitute player in MyStats.
 - a. Players can be added at any time throughout the season but should be rostered before they play in a game.

2. There is no limit to the number of players who can be on a team's substitute roster.
3. Substitute players can play on multiple teams within the league at a time.
 - a. If a substitute player also plays full-time on another team within the league, any points (goals, assists, etc.) they earn while substituting will not be attributed to them.
 1. These points earned WILL count towards the overall score but will not be attributed to the individual player.
 - i. *For example, Jordan is a full-time player for Team Red. Jordan is asked to substitute in a game on Team Blue as they face Team Orange. Jordan scores a goal and earns an assist for Team Blue. This goal and assist will count towards the overall score of the game Team Blue vs. Team Orange. However, the goal and assist will not be attributed to Jordan's overall statistics for the season.*
 - b. If a substitute player also plays full-time on another team within the league, they cannot substitute on an opposing team during a game against their full-time team without permission from their Team Captain.
 1. If the full-time Team Captain permits the substitution, the player may substitute for the opposing team.
 - i. *For example, Jordan is a full-time player for Team Red. Jordan is asked to substitute in a game on Team Blue as they face Team Red. Jordan cannot play as a substitute for Team Blue in this game unless Team Red's Captain grants them permission to do so. Without this permission. Jordan cannot substitute for Team Blue here.*

3. USA Hockey Registration

- a. All players and teams are required to be registered with USA Hockey before their first league game of the season.
 - 1. Players are individually responsible for obtaining a USA hockey number and sending it to their team leadership
 - 2. Teams are individually responsible for registering their teams with USA Hockey.
- b. If a non-USA Hockey registered player plays in a season or playoff game, the game will be forfeited by the team of the non-registered player.

4. Regular-Season Games

- a. Number of Games
 - 1. Each season, each team will play at least one (1) home game and at least one (1) away game against each team.
 - a. The home team will be the team who practices or plays regularly at that rink.
 - b. The away team will be the team traveling to play in that rink.
 - c. As needed, a team may use ice other than their own for “Home” games.
 - 2. Teams may play more than one (1) home and one (1) away game in a season. However, all teams must play an equal number of games against one another to ensure parity.
 - a. Determination of the number of season games to be played will be made by the Board pre-season once input is gathered from all teams.
- b. Jerseys
 - 1. Home teams will wear light-colored jerseys.
 - 2. Away teams will wear dark-colored jerseys.
 - 3. Teams can agree to deviate from these jersey guidelines for any

given game but should discuss this in advance.

c. Scorekeepers

1. The home team is to provide a scorekeeper and someone to run the clock for each home game. This may be the same person.

d. Referees

1. Home teams are responsible for acquiring a minimum of two (2) USA Hockey certified referees per game. Two (2) USA Hockey certified referees are required.
2. If a game does NOT have at least two (2) USA Hockey certified referees present, the Team Captains from the home and away team must confer and agree on how to proceed.
 - a. The options for proceeding without at least two (2) USA Hockey certified referees are as follows:
 1. Option 1: The home team can forfeit the game to the away team.
 - i. The teams may still choose to use the ice slot to scrimmage, but the score will not count for statistical ranking purposes.
 - ii. If the Team Captains cannot come to a consensus on how to proceed, this option will be the default.
 2. Option 2: The Team Captains can agree to play the game without the required USA Hockey certified referees.
 - i. A non-USA Hockey certified referee may be used, or the game may be self-regulated.
 - ii. The score will count for statistical ranking purposes as if the game was played with a USA Hockey certified referee.

- b. After the Team Captains have come to a consensus on how they will proceed, that choice is final and binding upon puck drop.

e. Game Play

1. Rules

- a. The ECWHL bylaws shall apply to all games.
- b. If the ECWHL bylaws do not address a specific issue, USA Hockey on-ice rules will be consulted by the Board and a determination made as to what rule shall apply.
 - 1. The Board can choose whether to add this determination to the ECWHL bylaws or continue addressing issues on a case-by-case basis.

2. Timing

- a. Each game will have a warm-up and two short breaks between periods.
 - 1. There is no set amount of time required for warm-up or period breaks, although a minimum of three (3) minutes for warm-up is recommended.
- b. Each game will consist of three (3) fifteen-minute stop-clock periods.
 - 1. If a game start is delayed, the third period may be played with a running clock.
- c. If a regular season game is tied at the end of regulation, it will count as a tie.
 - 1. No overtime will be played, and no shootout will occur.

3. Players

- a. A team must have at least six (6) players, full-time or substitute, in attendance in order to play in a game.
- b. If after a ten (10) minute grace period, a team fails to have a minimum of six (6) players ready to begin the game, they will automatically forfeit that game.
 1. The teams may still choose to scrimmage despite this forfeiture. These statistics will not count for ranking purposes.

4. Statistics

- a. For statistical ranking purposes:
 1. A team win will count as two (2) points
 2. A tie will count as one (1) point
 3. A loss will count as zero (0) points.
 - i. A forfeit will count as a loss for the forfeiting team and a win for the other team.

5. Unforeseen Circumstances

- a. In the case of unforeseen circumstances, including but not limited to inclement weather, health emergencies, rink-related issues, or scheduling errors, the game should be rescheduled to an alternate date if reasonably possible.
 1. If rescheduling is not reasonably possible, the Team Captains should confer and decide on how to proceed.
 - i. If the Team Captains cannot come to a resolution, they may consult the Board to mediate.
 2. This section does not apply to absent USA Hockey Certified referees on game day.

- i. Consult the “Referees” section for rules pertaining to this issue.
- b. If a game is rescheduled, the teams must communicate the new game date to the Statistician so that they can adjust the schedule in MyStats.

5. Scoresheets

a. Pre-Game

1. The home team is responsible for printing scoresheets for each game.
 - a. These scoresheets should be printed from the MyStats website so that all rostered players will be pre-filled.

b. Game Day

1. The scoresheet should be distributed to both teams prior to the start of the game.
 - a. Teams MUST:
 1. Verify or write-in correct names and jersey numbers for all players who will play in that game AND
 2. Place a mark beside the name of each player who will play in that game to record that they are in attendance.
 - b. Teams who fail to properly enter their team’s roster (names and player numbers) for a game may not receive player-specific statistics for that game.
 1. The Statistician has all discretion when entering player statistics using incomplete rosters.
2. The scoresheet should then be given to the scorekeeper prior to the start of the game.
 - a. For both teams, the scorekeeper must:

1. Record all goals and assists
 2. Record all penalties
 3. Record all shots
 - b. The scorekeeper should record the jersey number of each player who scores a point or obtains a penalty for statistical purposes
- c. Post-Game
 1. The completed scoresheet should be distributed to both teams.
 - a. Both teams should obtain a copy or photo of the scoresheet after the game.
 - b. The physical copy of the scoresheet should be retained by the home team for the entirety of the season.
 2. Both teams MUST timely enter their data from the scoresheet into the MyStats website.
 - a. Each team must assign one player to enter their team's data into the MyStats website. The contact information for this team representative must be provided to the Statistician by the first game of the season.
 3. A copy of the scoresheet should be distributed to the Statistician for verification purposes.

6. Playoffs

- a. Standings
 1. Standings for playoffs will be determined by the number of total points each team has earned throughout the season.
 2. The team with the highest number of points at the end of the season will take first place. All other teams will fall behind this team in order of points from most (first place) to least (last place).
 - a. If any teams are tied in their number of points at the end of the

season, the tie will be broken as follows:

1. First, the number of goals for each team when playing head-to-head should be compared. The team who scored more goals will be ranked above the team who scored less goals.
 - i. *For example, Team Red and Team Blue are tied for points at the end of the season. Cumulatively, in all games where Team Red played Team Blue, Team Red scored 15 goals and Team Blue scored 14 goals. Team Red will be ranked above Team Blue in the standings for playoffs.*
2. If after comparing head-to-head goals the teams are still tied, the team with the most diverse number of individual goal scorers for the season will determine the ranking between the two teams.
 - i. *For example: Team Red and Team Blue are still tied for points after comparing head-to-head goals. Team Red had 12 different players score goals throughout their season. Team Blue had 8 different players score goals throughout their season. Team Red will be ranked above Team Blue in the standings for playoffs.*

b. Game Schedule

1. The game schedule for playoffs will be set by the Board. The following models are guidelines:
 - a. Four Teams – Consolation & Championship Model
 1. Game 1:
 - i. First (1) vs. Fourth (4)
 2. Game 2:
 - i. Second (2) vs. Third (3)
 3. Game 3 (Consolation):
 - i. Loser Game 1 vs. Loser Game 2
 4. Game 4 (Championship):
 - i. Winner Game 1 vs Winner Game 2

b. Five Teams – Single Elimination Model

1. Game 1:
 - i. Fourth (4) vs. Fifth (5)
2. Game 2:
 - i. Second (2) vs. Third (3)
3. Game 3:
 - i. First (1) vs. Winner Game 1
4. Game 4 (Championship):
 - i. Winner Game 2 vs Winner Game 3

c. Six Teams – Single Elimination Model

1. Game 1:
 - i. Third (3) vs. Sixth (6)
2. Game 2:
 - i. Fourth (4) vs. Fifth (5)
3. Game 3:
 - i. First (1) vs. Winner Game 2
4. Game 4:
 - i. Second (2) vs. Winner Game 1
5. Game 5 (Championship):
 - i. Winner Game 3 vs. Winner Game 4

c. Locations

1. Playoffs can be hosted at any team's home rink or in a neutral location.

d. Player Eligibility

1. Players must play at least 50% of regular season league games with their full-time team to be eligible to play in playoffs.
 - a. Goalies are exempt from this 50% eligibility requirement.
 - b. Teams are individually responsible for determining in good faith which of their players have met this 50% game requirement and are eligible to play in playoffs.
2. For teams with established part-time player programs, players designated by their teams as part-time must play at least 30% of games in order to be eligible for playoffs.

- a. The ECWHL board reserves the right to veto part-time players in exceptional circumstances, such as extreme skill incompatibility with the league and/or imbalance of teams.

3. Special Situations

- a. Forfeited games

- 1. If a team forfeits a game but chooses to play the game as a scrimmage, the attendance of the players in this game will count towards this 50% eligibility requirement.

- b. Substitute players

- 1. A full-time rostered player who substitutes on another team cannot count that game towards their 50% eligibility requirement.
 - 2. A player without a full-time team who substitutes on multiple teams cannot play in playoffs without meeting the 50% eligibility requirement.

- c. Any other special situations concerning player eligibility for playoffs should be brought to the Board for determination.

- e. Game Play

- 1. Rules

- a. All regular season rules concerning Jerseys and Game Play will apply to playoffs.

- 2. Referees

- a. At least two (2) USA Hockey Certified referees will be provided for each playoff game.

- 3. Scorekeeping

- a. Each playoff game will have a scorekeeper and/or timekeeper.

4. Overtime

- a. Unlike regular season games, playoff games will not end in a tie.
- b. If the score is tied at the end of three (3) 15-minute periods, a five-minute running clock, sudden-death overtime will commence.
- c. If the score is still tied after this sudden-death overtime, a shootout will commence.
 1. Three (3) players from each team will be selected to shoot.
 2. If the score is still tied after these three (3) players from each team shoot, teams will continue choosing players to shoot in a sudden-death format. All players from a team must shoot once before players from that same team can shoot a second time.

f. Cost

1. The cost of Playoffs will be split equally between the number of teams in the league.
2. This fee will cover all ice rental, referees, scorekeepers, and awards.

C. Code of Good Faith

- a. By playing in the ECWHL, all teams and players agree to abide by a Code of Good Faith. This Code is as follows:
 - i. All teams and players agree to abide by the ECWHL bylaws in their entirety.
 - ii. In the event that a player or team violates a rule within the ECWHL bylaws, it will be assumed that the player or team was acting in Good Faith and that the violation was a mistake.

1. If the violation has negative repercussions, the Board will work to find an equitable solution.
 - a. Fines of any kind against a player or team will never be imposed as a solution.
2. Repeat or clearly intentional violations of the ECWHL bylaws will be addressed by the Board on a case-by-case basis.