

2026-2027

RULES OF PROCEDURE

1. MEMBERSHIP

A. Founding Members

- Charleston Jr. Stingrays
- NC Golden Bears
- Queen City Royals
- Raleigh Raptors

B Members for 2026-27 Season

- Carolina Thunder
- Columbia Cyclones
- Greenville Rage
- Roanoke Jr Railyard Dogs
- Triad Storm
- Wilmington Jr. Seahawks

C Non-Member Clubs Participating in 2026-27 Season

- Cape Fear Warriors
- Carolina Jr. Hurricanes
- Richmond Generals

D Membership

i. A Club must be a "Member in Good Standing" in to maintain its Membership in the ACHC.

ii. After each season, a Club must submit an ACHC Club Renewal Form to maintain its Membership and be eligible to participate in the ACHC for the following season.

iii) Once a Club gains Membership status, it can only lose its Membership if the Club acts and behaves in a manner that is detrimental to the ACHC.

iv) A Member Club's team will not be denied placement and/or participation in the ACHC provided that the ACHC has a division for that team. The ACHC is fully committed to accommodating all the teams

that its Member Club fields for an upcoming season, once again provided that the ACHC has a division for the teams.

v) All ACHC Members must have the ACHC as its priority league or scheduling body. For 2026-2027, a minimum of 50% of a Club's total teams must participate in the ACHC for it to be considered for new Membership, and a minimum of 50% of a current Member Club's teams must participate in the ACHC for the Member Club to automatically have its Membership renewed for the following 2027-28 season.

vi) The ACHC does not prohibit its Member Clubs from participating in other leagues or scheduling bodies, but the ACHC will require that its Member Clubs prioritize the scheduling requirements of their ACHC commitment and participation over that of the other league or scheduling body that the Member Club is also participating in. Failure to prioritize the ACHC could impact on the Membership Status of Club.

2. ACHC STRUCTURE

i. Age divisions for 2026-27 Season
   A) U10, U12, U14, U16, U18

ii. Levels for 2025-2026 Season
   A) AA
   B) Single A Upper & Lower

iii. Schedule
   - Start date for 2026-2027 season for ALL divisions: August 28, 2026
   - End date for 2026-2027 season for divisions with Playoffs: February 7, 2027
   - End date for 2026-2027 season for divisions with NO Playoffs: March 14, 2027

iv. Playoffs
   - Divisions with 4 teams will NOT have season ending Playoffs. The season Champion will be the team with the most points at the top of the Standings at the conclusion of regular schedule play.
   - Divisions with 5 teams will NOT have season ending Playoffs. The season Champion will be the team with the most points at the top of the Standings at the conclusion of regular schedule play.
   - Divisions with 6 teams or more will have a season ending Playoff Tournament Bracket where the Top 5 teams at the conclusion of the regular season schedule will qualify. The Playoffs will take place February 27-28, March 6-7 & March 13-14, 2027.
   - Playoffs will follow a 5-team bracket format.

3. FEES

i) Prior to scheduling the season, teams will be required to pay a fee of $500 that will be put towards game operations such as the GameSheet App. Any additional fees incurred for game and general ACHC operations will be shared with the membership towards the end of the season schedule.

ii) Teams that cancel or do not show for scheduled games will be required to pay to the other Club a non-negotiable penalty fee of $2,500 within 7 days of the infraction if they do not give at least 30 days prior notice for the cancellation.
Even if 30 days' notice is given, the Club that gets 'stuck' with the ice is entitled to full reimbursement of the ice cost from the team in violation.
The non-played games will be entered as 0-7 forfeit loss into the standings.
The penalty fee may not be required to be paid if the 2 Clubs are able to reach an amicable settlement for the rescheduling of the games.

iii) For divisions with Playoffs, post-season fees will be calculated and communicated to the qualifying Clubs on February 6, 2027.

4. ADMINISTRATION

i) Each Club will have representation via 1 designated liaison to communicate, engage in discussions, and attend meetings with the ACHC.

ii) The ACHC will have an appointed Commissioner who will oversee discussions and decisions as required as they pertain to hockey operations.

iii) The ACHC will have an appointed President who will oversee ACHC meeting conferences and be the first ACHC administrator to review any disciplinary matters.

iv) The ACHC will operate as a Limited Liability Corporation. It will utilize it's own bank account, and will accept payments payable to the Atlantic Coast Hockey Conference LLC both manually and electronically. The ACHC will present annual financial reports to its Member Clubs in the interest of full transparency to illustrate that the league will not operate with a profit of any more than 5% of its documented expenses.

5. ROSTERS

i) Clubs must submit their official USA Hockey Rosters link on or before September 9th, 2027.

ii) Players who are not on the official roster are not eligible for play in the ACHC.

iii) Players may not be double rostered within the ACHC.

iv) Any player who is on a higher level roster outside of the ACHC than the one his/her Club has submitted for the ACHC may not play at a lower level in the ACHC.

v) All rosters will freeze on December 31, 2027.

vi) Rosters must be uploaded into the ACHC GameSheet App prior to the start of the season. Any changes or additions must be approved by the ACHC Commissioner 24hrs prior to the start of the game that the added player is to participate in.

vii) Call-ups :
AA teams may "call up' a player from their Single A team provided the Single A team is also playing in the ACHC.
AA teams may only "call up" an individual player a total of 4 times prior to the Dec 31 roster freeze deadline.
If a AA team calls up a player for a 5th time, that player must remain on the AA roster for the remainder of the ACHC season and would no longer be eligible to play in ACHC games at the Single A level.

viii) No players will be permitted to "play down" a level within the ACHC.
Eg) AA Players may not play in a Single A game.

6. RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR GAMES

i) All fundamental rules for game play will mirror the USA Hockey Guidelines as they pertain to specific age groups.

Specific ACHC Rules:

- <u>Time between games</u> - 85 minutes must elapse before a team will be required to play again.
- <u>Period lengths:</u>
SQUIRT (U10) & PEEWEE A (U12)

14 minutes. If there is less than 30min remaining in the ice slot at the beginning of the 3rd period, a curfew rule of 50% clock time of the remaining time in the ice slot will determine the length of the 3rd period. The Home team score keeper must inform both the referees and the visiting team what the end time of the ice slot is.

PEEWEE AA (U12) & BANTAM & U16 & U18

15 minutes. If there is less than 30min remaining in the ice slot at the beginning of the 3rd period, a curfew rule of 50% clock time of the remaining time in the ice slot will determine the length of the 3rd period. The Home team score keeper must inform both the referees and the visiting team what the end time of the ice slot is.

- 3rd period 5-goal differentials – running clock unless game gets back to a 2-goal differential. If the start of the 3rd period already has a 5-goal differential resulting in the 3rd period commencing with a running clock, the curfew rule of 75% clock time of the remaining time in the ice slot will determine the length of the 3rd period - but never being higher than a 15-minute 3rd period.
- Fighting - Suspensions will be automatic 2 games, of which one of the games must be served in ACHC. If neither of the following 2 games for the suspended player are in the ACHC, the Club must appeal to the ACHC to determine if the games served outside of the ACHC will be considered sufficient.
- Ice Allotments - U10, U12 U14 75min & U16, U18 85min
- On Ice Pre-Game Warm Up - 3-minute warm-ups
- Penalty Lengths – 90sec for U10, U12 / 2min for U14, U16, U18. 8 min/10 min for Misconducts. Major Penalties for U10 & U12A should be 4 minutes. Major penalties for U12AA and older should be 5 minutes.
- Handshake Between Teams – As was introduced during the 2025 ACHC Playoffs, the teams will lineup and shake hands AFTER the pre-game warmup but BEFORE the opening faceoff to commence the game. Players should also pass by the opposing team's bench to shake hands (tap fist pumps) with the coaches.
- Tie breakers for Season Standings: 1-Total Pts 2-W's 3-H2H 4-PIM 5-Quotient* 6-coin toss.

  *Quotient is (GF+GA) divided by GF
- On Ice Warm-Ups: 3 minutes