

DOPS RULES AND PROCEDURES

1. Introduction

The Department of Player Safety ("DOPS") is the body charged by England Ice Hockey ("EIH") with safeguarding the welfare of all participants and maintaining the integrity of the game. These Rules and Procedures set out how DOPS investigates incidents, determines liability, and applies sanctions. They apply to every player, coach, official, club, team, volunteer, and supporter who falls under EIH jurisdiction. The document seeks to provide clarity, transparency, and consistency while ensuring that the best interests of children and young people are placed at the centre of every decision.

2. Mission Statement

DOPS exists to uphold fair play and safety in English ice hockey. It does so by enforcing the IIHF Rule Book together with all EIH regulations, by educating participants about responsible conduct, and by collaborating with clubs and stakeholders to foster an inclusive, respectful, and enjoyable environment. DOPS is committed to transparent investigations, proportionate sanctions, and continual improvement in line with the highest safeguarding standards, including those of the Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU).

3. General Principles

1. DOPS and any Appeals Panel must act impartially, in good faith, and in accordance with the rules of natural justice at all times.
2. A decision shall not be invalidated by a minor procedural error unless that error materially compromises fairness.
3. DOPS proceedings are internal sporting processes. They may run in parallel with criminal, civil, or safeguarding investigations, but they do not constitute legal proceedings in their own right.
4. Where these Rules and Procedures are silent, DOPS or the relevant Appeals Panel shall adopt the approach that is most equitable in the circumstances.
5. All formal communication must be undertaken by e-mail so that a verifiable written record is created.
6. In the case of the National Ice Hockey League (NIHL), DOPS will apply these Rules and Procedures with regard to the particular standards, context, and expectations of NIHL competition, recognising that certain activities or patterns of play may be treated differently than in other leagues. Any NIHL-specific guidance or interpretations will be set out in an Appendix K to this Policy, which shall form an integral part of these Rules and Procedures.

4. Governance

4.1 Reporting Line — DOPS reports operationally to the Chief Operating Officer (COO) and provides formal assurance to the Board through its Risk and Governance Committee. A written Player Safety Report is tabled to that committee and onward to the Board at least once per season.

4.2 Independence — Although accountable to the Board for good governance, data protection, and safeguarding, DOPS exercises complete independence when investigating, determining, and sanctioning cases.

4.3 Panel Composition — A standard hearing panel consists of three trained members drawn from the DOPS pool. Youth hearings must include at least one member who holds CPSU "Time to Listen" accreditation and one member with medical expertise relevant to injury assessment.

4.4 Conflicts of Interest — Every panel member must file an annual declaration of interests and withdraw from any case in which a real or perceived conflict arises.

5. Jurisdiction

These Rules govern all matches, training activities, and off-ice conduct involving EIH-registered participants, regardless of location. DOPS may impose any sanction described in this document or its appendices.

6. Operational Framework

6.1 All disciplinary correspondence shall be sent to discipline@englandicehockey.com The DOPS Co-ordinator will acknowledge receipt and outline next steps.

6.2 Clubs are responsible for uploading game sheets, referee reports, and unedited video footage within the stated deadlines. Failure to do so may itself give rise to sanction.

6.3 The DOPS General Manager may convene a hearing, amend an offence classification, or extend procedural time limits if this is necessary to achieve a just outcome. Only in the case of an appeal may an extension be granted by an Appeals Panel rather than DOPS.

7. Education-First Approach for Minors

For players under the age of 16, the disciplinary pathway emphasises learning and behaviour change ahead of exclusion from play. The progressive sequence is:

1. Official Warning;
2. Mandatory Education Module (for example, the Respect in Hockey course); and
3. Suspension.

Written decisions must be phrased in language appropriate to the child's age, and the child's parent or guardian must ordinarily attend any appeals hearing unless the panel determines that attendance would not be in the child's best interests. Wherever practicable, youth cases should be concluded within fourteen days of the incident.

8. Concussion Management

Where an incident involves actual or suspected head contact:

- The **offending player** will serve any suspension imposed by DOPS.
- The **injured player** must follow the medical **Return to Play Protocol** set out in the EIH Concussion Guidelines.

An injured player may not resume on-ice activity until they have received **written medical clearance**.

A suspended player may not return until their **disciplinary suspension** is fully served.

9. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

DOPS will not tolerate discriminatory language or behaviour. The use of racist, sexist, homophobic, or transphobic slurs triggers an immediate provisional suspension pending investigation. If the allegation is upheld, reinstatement is conditional upon satisfactory completion of an Inclusion Workshop or such other rehabilitative measure as DOPS may prescribe. Weekly progress updates are provided to the Chief Operating Officer until the matter is resolved. Maliciously false allegations are treated as misconduct and sanctioned accordingly.

10. Evidence and Data Handling

10.1 Clubs must supply unedited video covering at least sixty (60) seconds before and after the incident under review. Where minors are identifiable, faces must be blurred before any footage is released publicly.

10.2 All evidence is stored securely in SharePoint Online, with encryption in transit and at rest. Access is restricted to authorised DOPS staff through role-based permissions. A retention period of six (6) seasons applies; files cannot be deleted or altered during this time. A chain of custody log (including upload details, handlers, and timestamps) is maintained for every exhibit. Integrity is verified through file version history and checksum checks. External sharing is disabled by default; any exceptional access must be approved and logged.

10.3 Personal data is processed in accordance with UK GDPR and the EIH Data Protection Policy.

11. Penalty Points and Sanctions

The allocation of penalty points to players, coaches, and teams, together with the thresholds for automatic suspension, is contained in Appendices C to F. A suspension shall be **served in full in the league where the offence occurred**, and the player must also miss **one game in every other league or age-group for which they are registered**. After the cross-level one-game ban has been completed, any remaining games of the suspension continue to be served only in the league of infraction. Fielding a suspended person will result in the forfeiture of the match, a financial penalty, and the suspension of the responsible coach.

12. Appeals

An Appeals Panel is composed of three independent individuals who took no part in the original decision, one of whom will act as Chair. Members must be independent of the appellant, the teams, and all persons involved.

A party may appeal on the grounds of new evidence, material procedural error, or disproportionate sanction. Notice of appeal must be lodged in writing within seven days of the written decision and must be accompanied by a fee of £250, save that the fee is waived for appellants under sixteen. The Appeals Panel will aim to hold the hearing within fourteen days and will issue a reasoned written decision within a further seven days. The Appeal Panel's decision is final within EIH.

13. Decision Review System (DRS)

Teams in NIHL, NIHL 1, NIHL 2, WNIHL, and all junior divisions are entitled to submit up to three video reviews per season in accordance with the procedure set out in Appendix I. Further reviews may be requested but will incur a financial penalty if the outcome is not in the applicant's favour. DRS outcomes are final except where the review leads to an additional playing suspension, in which case the suspension may itself be appealed under section 12.

14. Publicity, Notification, and Communication

14.1 No party may publish details of DOPS proceedings without the written consent of all parties and the Chief Operating Officer. Breach of this provision may result in further sanction.

14.2 The EIH Board must be notified in writing of any suspension, resignation, or expulsion arising from a **Tariff 4 or Tariff 5 offence**. The responsible panel shall supply a summary of the facts, the sanction imposed, and the authority under which it acted.

14.3 All e-mails are deemed received twenty-four hours after transmission unless proved otherwise. The sender bears responsibility for addressing e-mails correctly.

15. Injury Reporting

Any injury sustained during a game must be reported via the official online form within forty-eight hours. DOPS will take the severity of injury into account when determining sanction only if a completed form has been received.

16. Safeguarding and Criminal Allegations

16.1 Any report that a child may be at risk must be referred immediately to the EIH Safeguarding Lead, Chief Operating Officer and, where appropriate, to the Local Authority Designated Officer or the police.

16.2 DOPS may impose an interim suspension on any individual who is the subject of a criminal investigation or serious safeguarding concern, where continued participation is deemed to present a risk to others or the integrity of the game.

- Interim suspensions are precautionary, not disciplinary, and do not imply guilt.
- The individual will be notified in writing of the reasons and scope of the suspension.
- The suspension remains in place until the conclusion of the criminal or safeguarding process, at which point DOPS will review the matter and determine whether additional sporting sanctions are required.
- The period of interim suspension may be credited against any subsequent playing suspension imposed for the same matter.

16.3 Individuals indirectly linked to an investigation may be required to undergo a risk assessment before returning to activity.

17. Appendices The following appendices form an integral part of this document:

- Appendix A: Non-exhaustive list of misconduct offences.
- Appendix B: Indicative sanctions for misconduct.
- Appendix C: Suspension tariffs for playing offences.
- Appendix D: Player penalty points table.
- Appendix E: Suspension thresholds.
- Appendix F: Penalty points for staff and bench officials.
- Appendix H: Supplementary notes on suspension implementation.
- Appendix I: Supplementary discipline process.
- Appendix J: Education-First Discipline Pathway for Players Under 16.

- Appendix K: National League ONLY
- Appendix L: Definitions.

This policy shall enter into force on 1 September 2025 and shall remain in effect until amended or repealed by the EIH Board.

Appendix A - Non-Exhaustive List of Misconduct Offences

1. Violence, Threats or Intimidation

- Any act or threat of physical aggression—on or off the ice—towards players, coaches, officials, spectators, or venue staff (including changing rooms, tunnel, warm-up and travel areas).

2. Abuse of Match Officials or Participants

- Verbal or non-verbal behaviour that is abusive, insulting, intimidating, or offensive toward referees, linespersons, off-ice officials, opponents, team-mates, or spectators.

3. Discriminatory Language or Conduct

- Any statement, gesture, or action that demeans or discriminates on the basis of race, colour, religion, national or ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or disability.
- Use of racist, sexist, homophobic, or transphobic slurs (automatic provisional suspension under Section 9).

4. Integrity of Competition

- Attempting to influence the result or any aspect of a match by offering, accepting, or soliciting a bribe or other undue benefit.
- Betting—directly or indirectly—on any game or competition in which the individual is involved or connected.

5. Misleading or Obstructing DOPS Processes

- Knowingly providing false or misleading information (e.g., prior disciplinary record or future playing intentions).
- Comments or conduct—public or private—intended to prejudice, intimidate, or improperly influence ongoing or anticipated DOPS or match-officiating proceedings.
- Failure, delay, or refusal to cooperate with a DOPS, Appeals Panel, Safeguarding, or anti-doping investigation, including non-production of requested evidence.

6. Breach of Codes, Policies or Orders

- Violation of any EIHC or IIHF Code of Conduct (Player, Coach, Manager, Social-Media, Safeguarding, Anti-Doping, etc.).

- Failure to comply with an order, direction, or sanction issued under the DOPS Rules (e.g., ignoring a suspension or education requirement).

7. Club / Team Mismanagement

- A club or team failing to exercise proper control over its players or associated individuals during travel, at the venue, or on social media.
- Persistent breaches of the Laws of the Game by a club's players or staff.
- Failure or refusal to fulfil a fixture or to submit mandatory documentation (gamesheets, video, injury forms) within prescribed timelines.

8. Anti-Doping & Medical Integrity

- Failure or refusal by a player, club, or staff member to comply fully with any investigation under the Ice Hockey UK Anti-Doping Programme.
- Failure by a club to inform and educate players about anti-doping obligations or concussion Return-to-Play requirements.

9. Data Protection & Evidence Handling

- Unauthorised publication or distribution of match footage or personal data, including failure to blur minors' faces before public release.
- Tampering with, altering, or destroying evidence (video, reports, electronic files) relevant to a DOPS case.

Note: The above list is illustrative, not exhaustive. DOPS retains discretion to treat other conduct as misconduct where it undermines the safety, integrity, or reputation of the game.

APPENDIX B - Indicative Sanctions for Misconduct

The panel may impose any of the following sanctions, individually or in combination, taking account of the seriousness of the offence, any aggravating or mitigating factors, and the age and welfare of the participant.

1. Caution / Written Warning – A formal notice that further misconduct will attract a more severe penalty.
2. Educational Requirement – Mandatory completion of an approved course (e.g. *Respect in Hockey*, Inclusion Workshop, Concussion Awareness) within a specified timeframe.
3. Fine – A monetary penalty levied on an individual, team, or club; non-payment by the deadline constitutes a further offence.
4. Playing Suspension – Exclusion from participation for a stated number of games or a defined period (days or weeks). Applies across all registered levels in accordance with Section 11 of the main policy.
5. Non-Playing Suspension – A ban from coaching, officiating, bench duties, game-day administration, or any other hockey activity for a specified period.
6. Competition Ban – Removal from a particular competition, tournament, or season.
7. Expulsion – Permanent removal of membership, registration, or affiliation with EIH.
8. Probation Order – Part or all of a sanction suspended, conditional on good behaviour for a defined monitoring period.
9. Restitution / Costs – Requirement to reimburse financial loss or pay reasonable costs incurred by EIH, an opposing club, or a venue owner.
10. Club Sanctions – Measures against a team or club such as penalty points, match forfeiture, fixture relocation, spectator restrictions, or full/partial stadium closure.
11. Combination Sanctions – Any suitable mix of the above measures to achieve a fair, proportionate outcome and safeguard participants.

Note: For participants under 16, panels must prioritise educational and restorative measures before imposing exclusionary sanctions, unless safety considerations dictate otherwise.

APPENDIX C - Suspension Tariffs (Core Policy)

(supersedes all previous tariff tables; to be read with Appendices D–F, and Sections 7, 8 & 11 of the main policy)

C.1 Guiding Principles

1. Tariff bands provide a starting maximum for first-time offences; panels adjust up / down after considering intent, injury, prior record, discrimination, head contact, and other factors.
2. Mandatory IIHF one-game bans (Boarding, CFB, Illegal Head Check, racial slur, Fighting in last 5 min) remain in force but are superseded if the upgraded tariff is higher.
3. Youth (U16) – apply the Education-First ladder (warning → education → suspension) before selecting a tariff.
4. Cross-League Rule – a suspension is served in full in the league of infraction plus one game in every other league/age-group in which the individual is registered (Policy S11).

C.2 Tariff Bands

Senior Leagues- All Age Groups						
PHYSICAL INFRACTIONS						
Rule #	Offence	Tariff 1	Tariff 2	Tariff 3	Tariff 4	Tariff 5
41	Boarding	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
42	Charging	Up to 2	Up to 4	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10
43	Checking from Behind	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
44	Clipping	Up to 2	Up to 4	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10
45	Elbowing	Up to 2	Up to 4	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10
46	Fighting	See Fighting Expanded Below				
47	Head-butting	Up to 4	Up to 8	Up to 12	Up to 16	Up to 20
48	Illegal Check Head/Neck	Up to 4	Up to 8	Up to 12	Up to 16	Up to 20
49	Kicking	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
50	Kneeing	Up to 2	Up to 4	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10
51	Roughing	Up to 3 - Only applies to Netminder using blocker glove				
52	Slew-footing	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
53	Throwing Equipment	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
RESTRAINING INFRACTIONS						
54	Holding	Up to 2	Up to 4	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10
55	Hooking	Up to 2	Up to 4	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10
56	Interference	Up to 2	Up to 4	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10
57	Tripping	Up to 2	Up to 4	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10
STICK INFRACTIONS						
58	Butt-ending	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
59	Cross-checking	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+

60	High-sticking	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
61	Slashing	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
62	Spearing	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
OTHER INFRACTIONS						
70	Leaving players Bench/Penalty box	Up to 1				
75	Unsportsmanlike conduct	Up to 4	Up to 8	Up to 12	Up to 16	Up to 20

Junior Leagues- All Age Groups						
PHYSICAL INFRACTIONS						
Rule #	Offence	Tariff 1	Tariff 2	Tariff 3	Tariff 4	Tariff 5
41	Boarding	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
42	Charging	Up to 2	Up to 4	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10
43	Checking from Behind	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
44	Clipping	Up to 2	Up to 4	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10
45	Elbowing	Up to 2	Up to 4	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10
46	Fighting	See Fighting Expanded				
47	Head-butting	Up to 4	Up to 8	Up to 12	Up to 16	Up to 20
48	Illegal Check Head/Neck	Up to 4	Up to 8	Up to 12	Up to 16	Up to 20
49	Kicking	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
50	Kneeing	Up to 2	Up to 4	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10
52	Slew-footing	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
53	Throwing Equipment	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
RESTRAINING INFRACTIONS						
55	Hooking	Up to 2	Up to 4	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10
56	Interference	Up to 2	Up to 4	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10
57	Tripping	Up to 2	Up to 4	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10
STICK INFRACTIONS						
58	Butt-ending	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
59	Cross-checking	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
60	High-sticking	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
61	Slashing	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
62	Spearing	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
OTHER INFRACTIONS						
70	Leaving players Bench/Penalty box	Up to 1				
75	Unsportsmanlike conduct	Up to 4	Up to 8	Up to 12	Up to 16	Up to 20

Fighting - Expanded					
Willing combatant(s)	Up to 1	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 9
Unwilling combatant(s)	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
Downed opponent	Up to 3	Up to 5	Up to 7	Up to 10	Up to 11+
Off the playing surface	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10	Up to 12	Up to 13+
3rd Man-in	Up to 1				
Last 5 minutes, OT & or End of game	Mandatory 1 game plus any other penalties				

Unsportsmanlike conduct - Expanded					
Obscene Gesture – towards Player, Official, Off Ice Official	Up to 3	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10	Up to 11+
Obscene Gesture linked to Racist abuse	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10	Up to 12	Up to 13+
Obscene Gesture towards Spectators	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10	Up to 12	Up to 13+
Racial or Sexual Slur by/with Inappropriate Language rather than with Malicious Intent	Up to 4	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10	Up to 11+
Racial or Sexual Slur with Malicious Intent.	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10	Up to 12	Up to 13+
Blood Smearing/Spitting at or on an opponent/Official/Off Ice Official or Spectator	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 10	Up to 12	Up to 13+
Verbal Abuse of Official – Profane/Obscene/Racist & Sexual Slur.	Up to 3	Up to 6	Up to 10	Up to 15	Up to 16+
Physical Abuse of Official	Up to 6	Up to 8	Up to 12	Up to 17	Up to 18+
Netminder using Blocker or Catcher	Up to 3	Up to 7	Up to 12	Up to 17	Up to 18+
Refusing to Start or Continue Game	Mandatory 5 games (Coach in Charge)				
Playing Suspended player(s)	Mandatory 3 games (Coach in Charge)				
Playing Improperly or Unregistered player(s)	Team/Club to be awarded an additional 10 Team Penalty Points				

APPENDIX D - Penalty Points for Players

The schedule below sets out the **default penalty-point values assigned to each type of in-game sanction**. Points accumulate across *all* leagues and age groups in which the player is registered and are used to trigger the automatic-suspension thresholds listed in Appendix E.

The DOPS Committee retains discretion to adjust points where aggravating or mitigating factors apply, or to impose supplementary points following video review.

In-game sanction	Description	Points
Minor penalty (2')	Two-minute bench penalty served by the offending player; no carry-over suspension.	0
Major penalty (5')	Five-minute bench penalty; no game expulsion.	1
Misconduct penalty (10')	Personal 10-minute penalty; player remains eligible to return.	2
Game misconduct	Immediate expulsion from the remainder of the game.	4
5 + Game misconduct	Five-minute major <i>plus</i> automatic expulsion.	5

Youth alignment (U16)

- In keeping with the “Education-First” framework in Section 7, when a player in this age band reaches **3 points** in a season DOPS will ordinarily require completion of a Respect-in-Hockey (or equivalent) module **before** any suspension is activated.
- Further accumulation then follows the standard Appendix E thresholds.

Cross-league application

Penalty points are **collective** across all competitions. A suspension triggered by points must be served in full in the league of infraction *and* the player must also miss one game in every other league or age group in which they are registered (see Section 11).

Note – Persistent offenders or incidents involving head contact, discrimination, or deliberate intent to injure may attract supplementary points or immediate referral to a full DOPS hearing.

APPENDIX E - Automatic Suspensions Triggered by Accumulated Penalty Points

The totals below apply to points accrued across all leagues and age groups in which a player is registered (see Section 11 for cross-league application). Suspensions begin with the next eligible fixture once the threshold is reached. There is no appeal against an automatic-point suspension, although DOPS retains discretion to adjust points or impose additional sanctions in exceptional circumstances.

Cumulative Points	Standard sanction
10 points	1-game suspension
15 points	2-game suspension
20 points	3-game suspension
25 points	DOPS hearing convened (player and head coach required to attend); further sanction at panel's discretion

Youth-specific pathway (U16)

To align with the “Education-First” framework in Section 7 and Appendix D:

- 3 points – Mandatory completion of an approved Respect-in-Hockey (or equivalent) module. Evidence of completion must be provided to DOPS.
- 5 points – 1-game suspension plus confirmation that the education module has been completed; further accumulation then follows the standard table above.

Failure to complete the required education may lead to an immediate DOPS referral and additional sanction.

Cross-league enforcement

A suspension triggered under this appendix must be served in full in the league where the final points were accrued, and the player must also miss one game in every other league or age-group in which they are registered before any remaining games are served solely in the league of infraction (see Section 11).

APPENDIX F - Penalty Points for Coaches, Managers and Team Officials

This appendix provides the default penalty-point values and automatic consequences that apply to non-playing personnel. Points accrue across all levels at which the individual is registered and are added simultaneously to the team's season total.

F.1 Points for In-Game Sanctions

- Misconduct (10 minutes) – 3 team penalty points recorded against the individual and the team.
- Game Misconduct – 5 team penalty points *plus* an automatic one-game suspension across all age-groups (DOPS may extend to two games if aggravating factors exist).
- Game Misconduct for racial, discriminatory language, or abuse of an official – 7 team penalty points and an immediate provisional suspension pending a DOPS hearing (minimum two-game ban after review).

F.2 Cumulative Suspension Thresholds for Individuals

- 10 points – 1-game suspension.
- 15 points – 2-game suspension
- 20 points – Mandatory DOPS hearing; further sanction at the panel's discretion.

F.3 Team-Penalty Thresholds (Season-to-Date)

- 50 aggregate team points – The **registered Head Coach of record for that team (as declared at the start of the season, or the officially notified replacement)** will be suspended for two games.
- 100 aggregate team points – The same Head Coach will be suspended until a DOPS hearing is held and an improvement plan is submitted and approved.

F.4 Education and Inclusion Requirements

Where the offence involves discriminatory language or failure to protect player safety, reinstatement is conditional upon completion of an approved Inclusion Workshop or Safety Module.

F.5 Cross-Level Enforcement

Any suspension imposed under this appendix applies across every league and age-group in which the coach, manager, or official is registered.

Note: The points and suspensions listed are starting points. DOPS may increase or decrease penalties where aggravating or mitigating factors apply, consistent with Section 11 of the main policy.

APPENDIX H - Supplementary Notes on the Implementation of Suspensions and the DOPS Process – Season 2025-26

H.1 Scope and Purpose

This appendix explains *how* the suspension rules and disciplinary pathways in Sections 6–13 of the DOPS Policy are put into practice during the 2025-26 season. It does not create new powers; it clarifies timelines, decision-making steps, and escalation triggers so that clubs, players, and officials understand exactly what will happen once an incident is reported.

H.2 Standard Review Pathway

Step	Responsible Party	Timeline	Outcome
1 – Incident report (game sheet, referee report, Cognito submission, or video flag)	Club, referee, or match supervisor	Within stated post-game deadlines (Policy S6.2)	Incident logged in DOPS case-management system (PPT).
2 – Initial screening	Relevant DOPS Associate	≤ 24 h from receipt	Classify offence; assign provisional points; decide whether further footage or statements are needed.
3 – Routine sanction	DOPS Associate	≤ 48 h from receipt	For <i>standard</i> Game Misconduct or 5 + Game penalties: apply Appendix C tariff and update suspension register (PPT).
4 – Escalation for exceptional cases	DOPS Associate → two additional Committee Members	Triggered when circumstances appear <i>aggravating</i> (e.g. discrimination, head contact, intent to injure) or <i>mitigating</i> beyond normal tariff.	Two-person concurrence required; revised sanction or referral to full three-person panel.
5 – Notification	DOPS Associate	Within 24 h of decision	Written decision emailed to clubs, league, and (if U18) to parent/guardian.
6 – Appeal window	Affected party	7 days	See Section 12 for grounds and fee structure.

Where the incident involves potential head injury, discriminatory language, or safeguarding concerns, an immediate provisional suspension may be imposed under Policy Section 9 pending full review.

H.3 Provisional Suspensions

- Automatic for racist, sexist, homophobic, or transphobic slurs (Policy Section 9).
- Automatic 5+Game Misconduct penalties that involve injury or Game Misconduct abuse of officials.
- Discretionary where the Associate believes continued participation would present an unacceptable safety risk.

Provisional suspensions are reviewed within 72 hours by a three-person panel; they can be lifted, reduced to points, or converted into a full sanction.

H.4 Cross-League Enforcement

Consistent with Policy Section 11, any suspension:

- is served in full in the league of infraction; *and*
- requires the player (or coach/official) to miss one game in every other league or age-group in which they are registered before completing the remaining games solely in the league of infraction.

H.5 Youth-Case Handling (U16)

If the suspended individual is U16:

1. Progressive-discipline ladder applies (warning → education → suspension).
2. Education modules must be assigned and completed before the ban starts unless the offence is violent or repeated.
3. Decisions are written in plain, age-appropriate language and copied to a parent/guardian.

H.6 Evidence Collection and Data Integrity

- Where available, clubs must supply unedited video footage (≥ 60 seconds before and after the incident) via secure links.
- All digital evidence received is hash-checked and stored on the encrypted EIH server for six seasons (Policy S10).
- Face-blurring of minors is mandatory before any public release.

H.7 Attempts to Circumvent Procedure

Contacting EIH Board members, league officials, or staff outside the DOPS channel in order to influence a case is misconduct under Appendix A and may lead to any or all:

- Additional penalty points or suspensions for the individual;
- A misconduct charge against the club;
- Reporting of parents/guardians (junior players) to the club for action.

All enquiries must be routed through discipline@englandicehockey.com.

H.8 Interaction with the Decision Review System (DRS)

- If a DRS request is pending for the same incident, DOPS will defer its final determination until the DRS footage is reviewed (maximum 48 h after the Tuesday deadline).
- A DRS outcome that results in a suspension > 1 game is itself appealable under Section 12.
- <https://www.cognitoforms.com/EnglishIceHockeyAssociation/DRSVideoReviewRequest>

H.9 Match Officials and IHUK Performance Coaches

A referee or IHUK Officials Performance Coach may lodge an incident referral *in addition to* the game sheet. Such referrals follow the same screening and escalation process described in H.2.

H.10 Season-End Carry-Over

Suspensions and penalty points not fully served by season's end carry forward into the player's/coach's next registered season and competition.

These notes should be read in conjunction with the full DOPS Rules & Procedures (effective 1 September 2025) and Appendices A–G.

APPENDIX I – DOPS SUPPLEMENTARY DISCIPLINE PROCESS

(Applies to all EIH competitions – Season 2025-26)

This appendix explains the step-by-step pathway that follows any major penalty with a Game Misconduct (or Match/Gross Misconduct) that does not carry an automatic suspension in the IIHF Rule Book. It aligns with the governance, evidence-handling, cross-league enforcement and appeal provisions set out in Sections 4–13 of the main policy and with Appendices C–H.

I.1 Trigger & Evidence Collection

1. **Incident Trigger** – Major + Game Misconduct, Match penalty, or any incident flagged by a referee, IHUK Officials' Performance Coach, club, or DRS submission.
2. **Document Upload** – Game sheet and referee report must be uploaded by the club within the standard deadlines (Policy S6.2). *Unedited video (≥ 60 seconds before/after) must also be supplied where available.*
3. **Fallback** – Where no video is available, the panel will proceed based on written reports, testimony, and any other admissible evidence.
4. **Safeguarding Flag** – If the report suggests head contact, discriminatory language, or risk to a minor, an immediate provisional suspension is imposed under Policy S9 pending review.

I.2 Initial Review (≤ 24 h)

- Conducted by the DOPS Associate responsible for that league.
- Associate verifies game documentation, checks the Penalty-Point Tracker, and classifies the offence using the Tariff Tables (Appendix C).
- Routine cases (Tariff 1) receive the default suspension/points and are entered in the Tracker; clubs are notified via Cognito.

I.3 Escalation Criteria

The case is escalated to a three-person panel (Associate + two Committee Members) if any of the following apply:

- Tariff 2 or higher penalty-point value.
- Potential error in the on-ice call visible on video.
- Alleged discriminatory language (automatic escalation).
- Serious head contact or intent to injure.
- Youth player (U16) where progressive-discipline ladder must be applied.

Escalated review is normally completed within 48 h of receipt.

I.4 Panel Decision & Notification

1. **Decision** – Panel may uphold, reduce, or increase the default tariff; may add education requirements; or may convene a full oral hearing for exceptional cases.

2. **Cross-League Application** – Decision specifies how the suspension is served under Policy S11 (full ban in league of infraction + one game at all other registered levels).
3. **Written Notice** – Issued by the DOPS Co-ordinator to both clubs (and parent/guardian for U16s) within 24 h of the decision.
4. **Public Release** – For senior competitions, a summary is posted on the EIHL website within 36 h of club notification, unless safeguarding considerations delay publication.

I.5 Decision Review System (DRS) Interaction

- If a DRS request covering the same incident is pending, the DOPS decision is deferred until the DRS clip is reviewed (max 48 h after the Tuesday deadline).
- A DRS outcome that upgrades the infraction to > 1-game suspension triggers full appeal rights under Policy S12.

I.6 Appeal Rights

- Automatic-point suspensions (Appendix E thresholds) are not appealable.
- All other suspensions may be appealed on the grounds and timelines in Policy S12; the fee is waived for under-16 appellants.

I.7 Anti-Circumvention

Any attempt by a club official, player, or parent to influence a decision by directly contacting an EIHL Board member or staff outside the DOPS channel constitutes misconduct (Appendix A) and may result in additional sanctions for both the individual and club.

I.8 Penalty-Point Tracker

The encrypted Tracker records every major, misconduct, and supplemental decision across all EIHL leagues:

- Auto-flags players/coaches reaching Appendix E or F thresholds.
- Generates club-level totals for team-penalty milestones (Appendix F).
- Provides DOPS with a live dashboard for season monitoring.

These procedures ensure disciplinary decisions are transparent, timely, and consistent with the safeguarding, inclusion, and cross-competition principles of the 2025-26 DOPS Rules & Procedures.

Appendix J - Education-First Discipline Pathway for Players Under 16

Principle

The disciplinary approach for players under the age of 16 emphasises *learning and behaviour change* ahead of exclusion from play. The aim is to develop understanding of the rules, respect for opponents and officials, and long-term safe playing habits.

Progressive Pathway

The sequence of interventions is as follows:

1. First Offence – Official Warning

- Issued by the Department of Player Safety (DOPS) in writing.
- Language must be age-appropriate and understandable for the player.
- Warning should explain: the nature of the incident, why it is unsafe, the relevant rule(s), and what behaviour is expected going forward.
- Parent/guardian and team coach notified.

2. Second Offence – Mandatory Education Module

- The player must complete an **approved education module**, such as the *Respect in Hockey* course, or an equivalent IHUK-approved programme.
- Education delivery may also include:
 - Video review of the incident and similar examples.
 - 1:1 or small-group rules session with an official or coach.
 - Reflection task (written or verbal) explaining what happened, why it was unsafe, and what they will do differently.
- Parent/guardian and team coach must be involved to reinforce the learning.
- Completion must be confirmed before the player returns to competitive play.

3. Third or Serious Offence – Suspension

- Suspension length determined by DOPS according to the offence and in line with youth discipline guidelines.
- Education requirements from step 2 must still be completed before reinstatement.
- Where an act is deemed to be **recklessly endangering an opponent and causes injury**, DOPS retains the discretion to escalate the case directly to the appropriate disciplinary stage, bypassing lower sanction thresholds.

Hearings & Parental Involvement

- For all youth appeal hearings, the **parent or guardian must ordinarily attend**, unless the panel determines that attendance would not be in the child's best interests.
- Written decisions must be phrased in language appropriate to the child's age and comprehension level.

Timeliness

- Wherever practicable, youth cases should be **concluded within 14 days** of the incident to ensure swift resolution and learning while the incident is still fresh.

Record-Keeping & Monitoring

- All warnings, education completions, and suspensions must be recorded in the player's DOPS record.
- Progressive action resets after **12 months without further incident**, unless otherwise directed by DOPS.

APPENDIX K – National League ONLY

The following provisions apply solely to NIHL National competition. They supplement the core DOPS Rules & Procedures and take precedence where specifically stated.

Pre-Season Fixtures

- Suspensions carried over from the previous season are **not enforced** during pre-season unless otherwise instructed by DOPS.
- All incidents remain subject to **GRP review** as usual.
- Any infraction that calls for a **suspension** will be enforced.
- Both team and player penalty point tallies will be reset to zero for the start of the regular season.
- Rationale: avoids inconsistency where clubs play different numbers of pre-season games.

Suspensions vs Penalty Points

- Where an infraction leads to a **suspension**, the **player** will serve the suspension but will **not** also receive penalty points.
- The **team** (and therefore its named Head Coach) **will** receive the relevant team penalty points.
 - Example: Player called for 5' + GA-MI HI-ST. GRP upholds call and awards 1 game suspension. Player = 1 game suspension, 0 points. Team = 5 penalty points.
- NIHL/League Ops will maintain the official **Penalty Point Tracker** for teams and Head Coaches.
- Clubs should still track their own penalty point posture, consulting with NIHL/League Ops where required.

Repeat Offenders

GRP/DOPS will apply **additional sanctions** to any player who, **in the same season**, incurs **prior suspensions for the same offence group** (as grouped under the IIHF Rule Book and DOPS Tariff Tables in Appendix C).

Three-strikes mechanism (same offence group):

- **Second suspension** in the same offence group → **+1 game** (added to the new incident's tariff).
- **Third suspension** in the same offence group → **+3 games**.

- **Fourth suspension** in the same offence group → **Indefinite suspension** pending a disciplinary review meeting between League, DOPS, the team's Head Coach, and the player.

Sequencing & appeals. Repeat-offender add-ons are **imposed separately from—and consecutive to—the incident's tariff suspension**, and **are not appealable**. (Appeal rights for the **incident tariff** remain as per Policy/Appendices C–I.)

Scope & timing. The repeat-offender counter **resets at season end**. **Pre-season** fixtures do **not** count toward the strike tally. Multiple suspensions arising from **a single game** count as **one strike** for repeat-offender tracking.

Consistency. Application uses the **IIHF offence groupings** and **DOPS Tariff Bands** (Appendix C) to determine “same offence group.”

Worked example

- **Game 5:** Player suspended **2 games** for **Illegal Check to the Head/Neck (CHE-HD)** (Tariff-1).
Strike count in CHE-HD group: 1 (no add-on on first suspension).
- **Game 12:** Player suspended **1 game** for **CHE-HD** (Tariff-1).
Second suspension in same offence group → repeat add-on +1 game.
Total to serve now: 1 (incident tariff) **+1** (repeat add-on) = **2 games**.
Strike count: 2.
- **Game 21:** Player suspended **2 games** for **CHE-HD** (Tariff-1).
Third suspension in same offence group → repeat add-on +3 games.
Total to serve now: 2 (incident tariff) **+3** (repeat add-on) = **5 games**.
Strike count: 3.
- **Game 28:** Player receives another **CHE-HD** suspension.
*Fourth suspension in same offence group → **indefinite suspension** pending review (League, DOPS, Head Coach, player).*

Notes: Incident tariffs follow normal appeal rules. The repeat-offender add-ons (**+1, +3, indefinite**) are **non-appealable**.

Cross-League Suspensions

- NIHL National will honour suspensions issued by **EIHL DOPS** and other **EIH DOPS** bodies.
- The suspension is served **in full** in the league of infraction.

- For other levels/age groups in which the player is registered, the default is **one (1) game suspension only**.
- Exception: **serious offences** (e.g. violent conduct, discriminatory language, safeguarding breaches) may attract **wider or extended cross-league suspensions** at DOPS discretion.

Reciprocity

- It is expected that other competitions (EIHL, NIHL1, juniors, etc.) will similarly honour suspensions imposed by NIHL National.
- Note: Implementation outside NIHL National lies with those competitions.

Scope of Penalty Points

- NIHL National will only consider **penalty points accrued in NIHL National games** for players and teams.
- Points from other competitions (e.g. NIHL1 South, U18) will **not** transfer into NIHL National tallies.
- Players on two-ways will therefore maintain **separate penalty point counts** across different leagues.

Transparency

- NIHL National will publish:
 - The **named Head Coach** for each club;
 - The **weekly team penalty point tallies** and any resulting team sanctions;
 - The **weekly player penalty point tallies** and any resulting suspensions.
- Publication will be via the official League website.

Evidence

- GRP/DOPS reviews will be based solely on **official game footage**, in line with Appendix C of the Rules of Competition and including DRS submissions.

Accountability of Coaches

- Persistent failure by a Head Coach to control a team's conduct, or to comply with penalty point rules, will be referred to DOPS for further sanction under **Appendix F (Bench Officials)**.
- League Ops may impose additional measures where clubs repeatedly breach submission or reporting requirements.

Notes

- The provisions in this appendix are aimed at “**keeping players playing**”, while still holding **teams and coaches accountable**.
- The structure ensures that:
 - Repeat offenders face escalating sanctions;
 - Team discipline is incentivised;
 - Cross-league suspensions are applied fairly and proportionately.

APPENDIX L – Definitions

(updated to align with the 2025-26 DOPS Rules & Procedures and Appendices A–I)

- **Accumulated Penalty Points** – The running total of penalty-point values assigned to a player, coach, or team under Appendices C–F.
- **Appeal** – A formal challenge to a DOPS or Appeals-Panel decision lodged under Section 12.
- **Appeals Panel** – A three-person body, independent of the original panel, appointed by the COO to hear an appeal.
- **Appellant** – The player, coach, club, or other person submitting an appeal.
- **Board** – The England Ice Hockey (EIH) Board of Directors.
- **Chief Operating Officer (COO)** – The EIH officer with operational oversight of DOPS and primary reporting line for risk assurance.
- **Club** – An organisation affiliated to EIH that fields one or more teams.
- **Coach** – An individual registered with EIH to deliver coaching or bench duties.
- **Concussion Guidelines** – The EIH Return-to-Play protocol that must be followed after any suspected head injury (Section 8).
- **CPSU** – Child Protection in Sport Unit (NSPCC); provides safeguarding standards referenced in Section 7.
- **Cross-League Suspension** – The requirement for a suspended individual to miss one game in every league or age-group in which they are registered before completing any remaining games solely in the league of infraction (Section 11).
- **Decision Review System (DRS)** – The video-review mechanism described in Section 13 and Appendix I.
- **Discriminatory Language** – Racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, or similarly derogatory remarks that breach Section 9.
- **DOPS** – The Department of Player Safety of England Ice Hockey.
- **DOPS Associate** – The designated official who performs the initial review of incidents within a specific league.
- **DOPS Co-ordinator** – The administrator who manages case files, notifications, and the Penalty-Point Tracker.
- **DOPS Committee** – The standing pool of trained panel members authorised to investigate and sanction misconduct.
- **Education Requirement** – A compulsory course (e.g. *Respect-in-Hockey*, Inclusion Workshop, Safety Module) that must be completed as part of a sanction (Appendix B).
- **Game Misconduct Penalty** – Immediate expulsion from the remainder of a game; carries four penalty points (Appendix D).
- **IIHF** – International Ice Hockey Federation, the worldwide governing body for the sport.
- **Inclusion Workshop** – The mandatory rehabilitative session for individuals sanctioned for discriminatory language (Section 9).

- **LADO** – Local Authority Designated Officer; statutory contact for safeguarding cases involving minors.
- **Minor Penalty** – A two-minute penalty; carries no penalty points.
- **Bench Minor Penalty** – A two-minute bench penalty; carries no penalty points.
- **Major Penalty** – A five-minute penalty; carries one penalty point (Appendix D).
- **Misconduct Penalty** – A personal ten-minute penalty; carries two penalty points (Appendix D).
- **Game Misconduct** – A personal twenty-minute penalty; carries four penalty points.
- **5 + Game Misconduct** – Expulsion for dangerous play or abuse of officials; carries five (or more) points and triggers provisional suspension.
- **NIHL** – National Ice Hockey League (England).
- **Penalty-Point Tracker** – The encrypted system that records all major, misconduct, and supplemental penalties across EIH leagues.
- **Penalty Points** – Numerical values assigned to penalties, used to trigger automatic suspensions (Appendices D & E).
- **Person** – Any player, coach, official, volunteer, supporter, or individual connected to EIH activities.
- **Player** – An individual registered to participate on-ice for a team or club.
- **Player/Coach** – A person registered simultaneously as a player and a coach.
- **Probation Order** – A sanction that is suspended subject to good behaviour for a set monitoring period (Appendix B).
- **Provisional Suspension** – An immediate, temporary suspension pending full investigation (e.g. for discriminatory language or serious head contact).
- **Referee** – An on-ice official with authority to enforce IIHF rules during a match.
- **Referee's Report** – The official post-game incident report submitted by match officials.
- **Risk and Governance Committee** – Sub-committee of the Board that receives the annual Player Safety Report (Section 4.1).
- **Safeguarding Lead** – The EIH official responsible for child-protection matters.
- **Suspension** – A ban from participating in specified activities for a defined number of games or period.
- **Tariff** – The baseline suspension or points value applied to a specific offence, as set out in Appendix C.
- **Team** – A group of players representing a club in a competition.
- **Youth Player (U10–U16)** – A participant aged under 16 who is subject to the progressive-discipline ladder in Section 7.

Unless otherwise defined above, capitalised terms have the meaning given in the IIHF Rule Book or relevant EIH regulations.