

2026 CALIFORNIA WINTER GAMES ICE HOCKEY RULES

California Winter Games is governed by rules of USA Hockey. In addition, the following rules apply.

1. All teams must show proof of USA Hockey team registration, team roster and release forms for each player prior to their first game.
2. All teams must be available to start their games up to thirty (30) minutes prior to the scheduled start time.
3. ALL TEAMS must provide a volunteer for the penalty box for every game.
4. Home team will wear light jerseys. Away teams will wear dark jerseys.
5. Divisions 10U and up will utilize goal pegs during games.
6. All teams will play 15 minute stop time periods except Mites. All games are 75 minute curfew games except High School, 16U & 18U games which will be 90 minute curfew. Running time will be implemented if the game is in danger of exceeding curfew and will be evaluated by Tournament Director & Site Director after the 3rd period begins. 5 minute warm up time. No overtime shall be permitted. See 8U Mite ADM Rules.
7. Each team is allowed one 30 second time out, except Mites.
8. If a six (6) goal differential exists at any time (i.e. 6-0), Running Time will commence for the duration of the game. Despite the occurrence of running time, penalties will remain the duration prescribed by USAH rules. If the goal differential comes within 2 goals (i.e. 6-4), Stop Time will resume. EXCLUDES 8U MITES.
9. For Preliminary play, points will be awarded in the following manner: 0 points for a loss and 3 points for a win. If the score is tied at the end of the game, a 3 person shootout will commence IMMEDIATELY (no break) and 2 points will be awarded to the winner of the shootout and 1 point to the loser of the shootout. A shootout victory will be recorded as an additional goal for tie breaking purposes (i.e. a game tied 4-4 would be recorded as 5-4 after the shootout)
10. The following tie-breaker formula will be used to determine the order of finish after preliminary play: (EXCLUDES 8U MITES)
 - a) Total Points
 - b) Head to Head record between teams with equal points (not relevant in 3 way tie, except for Note below)
 - c) Most wins overall
 - d) Fewest goals allowed overall
 - e) Fewest penalty minutes overall
 - f) Most goals scored, maximum of 8 per game.
 - g) Coin Toss

(Note: In a 3-way tie, if one team has played and beat both other teams in the 3-way tie, they will advance. In a 3-way tie, tie-breakers revert back to first step of tie-breaker formula once one of the teams has been eliminated.)
11. Forfeits: If a team forfeits one or more games in the tournament, game(s) shall be recorded as 1-0 victories for the non-offending team(s). If a team forfeits one or more games in the tournament, it will not be eligible to win a medal.
12. All tournament "Championship" and "Bronze Medal" games that end regulation in a tie shall use the following process to determine a winner:
 - a) Five (5) Minute Run-Time "Sudden Death" tiebreaker – first to score wins;
 - b) If the tie still exists after the "Sudden Death" tiebreaker, a shootout to determine a winner will go into effect. Shootouts will follow USA Hockey shootout procedures, beginning with a 3 person shootout.
13. Medal presentations will be held on the ice immediately after the Gold medal game, unless games are running late. Bronze medal presentation will be made at the same time. All three medals teams will be presented on ice after the Gold medal game.
14. Protests: No protests shall be made on the playing rules. Otherwise, protests must be registered on the back of the signed score sheets and must contain all of the known facts. Protests not written on the back of the score sheet before final signing will not be considered. Tournament Director shall act expeditiously on all properly submitted protests. Tournament Director's decision shall be final. A protest fee of \$50 will be implemented.
15. All penalties and suspensions made by the referees/game officials are final.

16. Schedule change requests must be submitted via email no later than December 15, 2025. Please note that while all requests will be reviewed, approval is not guaranteed and final decisions rest with the California State Games.