

East Grand Forks Youth Hockey



**Player / Parent Handbook
2026 – 2027**

Welcome!

This handbook is designed to provide parents, players, and coaches with an outline of the East Grand Forks Parks and Recreation Youth Hockey Program. Please read and make a copy of this document, as it will be your guide throughout the season. **Hockey registration will be done through our website: www.egfparks.com.** Should you have any questions about the program, please feel free to contact the Parks and Recreation Office at 218-773-8000.

A message from the Parks and Recreation Office...

On behalf of the Parks and Recreation Department, we would like to welcome you to the 2026-2027 youth hockey season. Please take the time to acquaint yourself with the information shared within this handbook, as it will be invaluable. The purpose of this handbook is to familiarize you with the policies, procedures, expectations and guidelines of our youth hockey program so all players, coaches, and parents can have a rewarding experience. Since parents/guardians and other family members are an integral part of that experience, it is important you have as much information as possible about the program.

Six years ago, we introduced a new and more defined Participation Policy for all City of East Grand Forks Parks and Recreation activities. The policy is included in this handbook.

Also, new four years ago was the EGF Parks & Recreation Conduct and Disciplinary Policy. The policy governs all Parks & Recreation facilities and programs. It is a separate document that all participating will be required to sign during the registration process.

As we begin this new season of youth hockey, we are especially proud of the hard work and dedication individuals have shown to help drive our program. There are countless volunteer hours invested by parents, Blue Line Club Board members, general members, and numerous other volunteers. We also recognize that by working together our program can continue to be a success. We welcome feedback and suggestions at any time during the year.

Have a great season!

Jorgen Erickson
City of East Grand Forks
Parks & Recreation Superintendent

John Wuitschick
City of East Grand Forks
Recreation Coordinator

Brenna Mathiason
City of East Grand Forks
Recreation Specialist

USA Hockey Mission Statement

USA Hockey encourages an environment in which children can learn the basic skills without the distractions that are often associated with an over emphasis on winning. Mastery of fundamental skills and the fun of playing are essential to the development of a lifelong interest in hockey. For more information on USA Hockey guidelines visit the web site at www.usahockey.com.

East Grand Forks Youth Hockey Mission Statement

The purpose of the Parks and Recreation Youth Hockey Program is to promote, develop, and administer a youth hockey program. This program is meant to serve the youth of East Grand Forks who reside within our program's boundaries. The principal purpose is to provide athletes in the appropriate age groups with the opportunity to have fun participating in hockey by offering quality coaching, adequate ice time for skill development, team play, and exposure to competition through participation in games and tournaments.

East Grand Forks Youth Hockey is an affiliate of USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey. USA Hockey rules and policies govern the way we manage the programs we offer.

East Grand Forks Blue Line Club

The Blue Line Club is the support organization (booster club) for the youth hockey program. The club assists yearly in many facets to help all our youth hockey players, such as paying for team entry fees for out-of-town tournaments, assisting in buying goalie equipment, managing home tournaments, paying for home tournament costs such as referees, trainers, and awards, purchasing team travel jerseys and helping defray the overall costs with the goal of keeping hockey an affordable activity for our youth. The Blue Line Club has also been instrumental in many of the major projects involving our youth hockey program. Most notably, the construction of the Blue Line Arena and assisting with renovation projects at the Civic Center and addition of the Girls locker room facilities. The Blue Line Club took the lead in our partnership with Power Edge Pro and in the construction of the Jim Bradshaw (BLC Arena) Outdoor Rink. Your yearly Blue Line Club membership fee is very inexpensive in comparison to the benefits gained throughout the program. Active membership is a vital part of the opportunities provided to the youth players. Blue Line Club membership is strongly encouraged to keep our program strong. Please check out the Blue Line Club website at www.egfhockey.com for further information on the club and to pay the yearly membership dues.

East Grand Forks Youth Hockey Fees

The cost to fund a player greatly exceeds the City's participation fees per player each season. Volunteer hours and fundraising efforts through the **East Grand Forks Blue Line Club** are essential to keep costs reasonable and to ensure opportunities for the youth we serve now and in the future. Together, we continually evaluate ways to minimize the cost to participate and keep the opportunities for our youth strong.

Registration must be completed prior to any player participating in any on-ice activities. Fees are due based on dates published at the time of registration unless other arrangements are made with the Parks and Recreation Department and/or the City of East Grand Forks. If past fees are owed or if jerseys from prior season(s) have not been turned in, the player will not be allowed to participate in current or future activities until such fees are paid and/or jerseys are returned. Program fees vary based on the player's level and program of participation. Late fees will be applied to all late registrations. Registration fees must be paid before the season and/or tryouts begin at the player's age level. If these fees have not been paid prior to the first day, please know that your child will not be allowed to skate.

If a player decides of their own accord to terminate participation, fees paid will **NOT** be refunded. It is requested that player termination be submitted to the Parks and Recreation Department. In the event of an injury in which a medical professional recommends that players shouldn't or cannot continue play, the fees could potentially be pro-rated depending on date of injury. Any decisions would be considered case by case.

Fall Clinic – Now Preseason Skills Sessions!

New this season, the City Preseason/Fall Clinic has been retired. The Fall Clinic sessions have been incorporated into the regular season registration fees with different dates, designed to give players time off during the MEA Break and Youth Hunt. Preseason Skills Sessions may start as early as October 5th, depending on the age group. Preseason Skills Sessions are NOT mandatory, but a time for players to prepare for the upcoming season and evaluation process. The Preseason Skills Sessions are offered as an opportunity for the players to get (re)acquainted with their hockey equipment, the ice, coaches, and other players they skate with and against during the season.

Registration

All participants are required to register on-line at www.egfparks.com. To complete the registration process, you must:

1. Complete the USA Hockey registration at www.usahockey.com – you must have a USA Hockey confirmation number **for each player** to proceed with local registration.
2. Complete the City of East Grand Forks Waiver of Liability form included in registration process.
3. Complete the City of East Grand Forks Conduct & Discipline Policy form included in registration process.
4. Pay all applicable fees at time of registration.
 - **All Non-Resident Participation requests must be submitted and approved by the Parks & Rec. Office PRIOR to registering your player(s).**
 - **All first-year players and players new to East Grand Forks must provide a copy of the player's certified birth certificate as proof of age.**

The winter registration period will start Monday, August 10th, 2026, and runs through Wednesday, September 2nd.

Starting Thursday, September 3rd, **fifty dollar (\$50) late fees will apply to all Squirt/10U, Peewee/12U, and Bantam Registrations.** There will be no late fees for Termite/6U and Mite/8U players to register this year. **Players will not be allowed on the ice until all fees are paid in full.**

Equipment

The following equipment is required to participate in youth hockey. Players not wearing the required equipment will not be allowed to play or practice.

Required Equipment			
HECC approved helmet with face mask, neck, and chin straps	Mouth guard - must be colored, non-clear, and tethered to the helmet	Neck Laceration Protector	Cup and supporter (boys) or Pelvic protector (girls)
Elbow pads	Shoulder Pads	Hockey Gloves	Stick(s)
Skates	Breezers / Pants	Shin Pads	Hockey Socks

Practice Jerseys: All players (except for goalies) at the Mite/Girls 8U through Bantam levels will be responsible for purchasing a reversible green and white practice jersey to be worn for all practices.

Jerseys: A game jersey(s) will be provided for all teams. Game jerseys for Mites & above are to be returned at the end of the season. Termite players will receive a team-colored jersey that they can keep at the end of the season.

Jersey Care: Keep jerseys clean for games. It is highly recommended that jerseys be kept in a garment bag. Wash in cold water in a detergent without bleach and air dry or tumble dry on low heat. **DO NOT PUT JERSEYS IN A HOT DRYER.** If tears occur, mend immediately to prevent further damage. Game jerseys are for game use only or at coaches' discretion for special events or circumstances as directed or permitted by your coach. Do not wear game jerseys for practice. All game jerseys are to be cleaned and returned upon completion of the season.

Socks: Squirt/10U, Peewee/12U, and Bantam players must purchase game socks for \$30/pair (\$60 for both colors). Game socks should be worn for games only to minimize holes/tears. We highly recommend purchasing plain black socks for practice.

Communications

Several communication methods will be used to keep people informed and to assist in having an enjoyable season.

Email – information will be sent out periodically by mass email to email addresses provided through our hockey registration and/or USA Hockey registration. Please use an email that you use often when registering so you can keep up with information sent out.

Team Communications – Information for individual teams will be handled by team coaches and managers.

Annual Youth Hockey Meeting – meetings will be held throughout the year that will be open to all families and individuals. Meeting times and dates will be posted on websites and ice schedules. Meetings will be setup to discuss activities and happenings throughout our program.

Team player and parent meetings – will be held following team assignments at the beginning of the year and as requested by team coaches and/or team managers.

Office: EGF Parks and Recreation: 218-773-8000 or egfparks@eastgrandforks.gov

Office Hours 8am – 5pm, Monday - Friday

Web sites: Parks and Recreation – www.egfparks.com

City of East Grand Forks – www.egf.mn

EGF Blue Line Club – www.egfhockey.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/egfparkandrec.com

Scheduling

Ice time for practices and games is determined by the ice availability of our arenas. Practices will primarily be on weekday evenings and weekends. Teams may practice before school on occasion. There won't be any team activities scheduled on Wednesday night after 6:15pm, except during school breaks and special occasions. Multiple teams will share ice time for practices to allow for the best usage of practice time. The number of team practices each week will be limited by ice availability. Practice times fluctuate from day to day depending on ice availability and other factors.

Game and Practice Schedules

Weekly Arena Schedules run Monday through Sunday and are usually posted on Tuesday prior to each week. Schedules are posted at www.egfparks.com. Game schedules will be posted once teams are finalized and are updated as changes occur. We try to keep schedule changes to a minimum, but in working with different communities and teams, changes will happen throughout the season. Be sure to check the Weekly Arena Schedules often for updates. Ice time is a valuable commodity. Players must be completely ready to go on the ice before the practice/game starts.

Weather Cancellations

In case of questionable/stormy weather conditions, please check the internet address: www.egfparks.com. For out-of-town hockey events, the weather cancellation procedures shall be as follows:

1. Team coaches and managers shall make the initial decision if an out-of-town game is postponed.
2. A team coach or manager must contact the Recreation Coordinator to confirm the postponement.
3. The coach or team manager will contact their team's families to inform them of the postponement.
4. Parent/Guardians ultimately reserve the right to determine whether their child should travel to a hockey event out of town. No discipline can occur from this reason for missing a game.

**** EGF Parks and Recreation is not tied to the EGF Public Schools for weather cancellation decisions. ****

In addition, coaches have the authority to cancel practices/games at their discretion.

Parents/Guardians ultimately reserve the right to determine whether their child should participate in activities on day with weather issues. Children who don't participate in hockey events due to questionable/stormy weather conditions will not be reprimanded for their absence.

**** Parents/guardians please make sure the arena is open when dropping a child off. The arenas are not daycare centers, and everyone should be respectful in and around all arenas. ****

Playing Levels

East Grand Forks Youth Hockey is committed to placing players at the appropriate age level. We do not encourage players to participate at older levels than the age specific levels created by Minnesota Hockey. Age specific playing levels have been created through extensive and necessary research. Players born in June, July, and August who are a part of a school class advancing a level are allowed to move-up with their classmates.

Termites (6U)

Born between 6/1/2019 – 12/31/2021

Depending on the number of players registered, groups and practice times will be set up accordingly. Players generally all practice together on Tuesday evenings but may be split into two sessions on Saturdays. Coaches are volunteers and typically parents/guardians of players. Please check weekly Arena Schedules for practice times and locations. There is no travel at the Termite Level.

SEASON: October 20th – March 7th

ICE TIME: 2 scheduled times per week (Tuesdays and Saturdays) plus Open Hockey sessions

FEES: **\$175** for EGF City residents plus USA Hockey Registration fees. Additional **\$40.00** fee for non-City residents.

DAYS: Tuesdays and Saturdays

GOALS: Beginning level to learn and develop basic hockey skills - skating, puck control and shooting, and to have FUN.

Practice plans based on and developed through USA Hockey and the American Development Model.

Mites / Girls 8U

Born between 6/1/17 and 5/31/19

This playing level is set up to continue basic player skill development. Teams are organized into two playing levels generally based upon age. A Girls 8U team will be set up if registration numbers allow and volunteer coaches are available. The goal is to make teams as even as possible at each playing level. Teams will practice with and play other local teams. Coaches are volunteers and typically parents/guardians of players. Travel is very minimal at this level.

SEASON: October 6th - March 7th

ICE TIME: 3 to 4 times a week, including games, plus Open Hockey sessions.

FEES: **\$285** for EGF City residents plus USA Hockey Registration fees. Additional **\$40.00** fee for non-City residents.

DAYS: Mondays or Tuesdays, Thursdays or Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, depending on ice availability

GOALS: To continue development of hockey skills - skating, puck control, shooting, passing, introduction to team play, and to have FUN! Practice plans based on and developed through USA Hockey and the American Development Model.

Squirts / Girls 10U

Born between 6/1/15 and 5/31/17

This playing level is a continuation of player skill development and the beginning of travel hockey. The primary focus is player skill development while introducing team concepts. We will play both in-house and travel games. Players will practice as a group throughout the season. "A" and "B" level teams will be determined following a player evaluation process. Teams will be formed by coaches, focused on assigning each player to the team level that will allow the player to continue developing individual and team skills. Teams at both the "A" and "B" levels will play other teams as well as year-end district tournaments. If numbers allow, we will have Girls 10U "A" and/or "B" team(s).

SEASON: October 5th – February 28th

FULL-ICE EVALUATION DATES (Subject to change): December 18th – 20th

ICE TIME: 4 to 6 times a week, including games and year-end tournaments.

FEES: **\$575** for EGF City residents plus USA Hockey Registration fees. Additional **\$40.00** fee for non-City residents.

DAYS: Weeknights, weekends, and school holidays.

GOALS: To allow all players the opportunity to continue to improve the hockey skills of skating, puck control, passing, shooting, and team play among playing groups of similarly skilled players. Players will learn competitive team play and to have FUN. Practice plans based on and developed through USA Hockey and the American Development Model.

Peewees / Girls 12U

Born between 6/1/2013 and 5/31/2015

This level is designed to improve player development. "AA," "A," "B1," and "B2" level teams will be determined following the player evaluation process. Teams will be formed by the coaches through an evaluation process focused on assigning each player to the team level that will allow the player to continue developing both individual and team skills. All teams will play other district teams as well as travel games and tournaments. If numbers allow, we will have multiple Girls 12U teams with both "A" and "B" teams. Teams can also qualify for Minnesota Hockey Regional and State Tournaments.

SEASON: October 5th – March 21st

EVALUATION DATES (Subject to change): October 20th – 25th

ICE TIME: 5 to 6 times a week, including games. Tournaments are held at various times/locations during the year.

FEES: **\$835** for EGF City residents plus USA Hockey Registration fees. Additional **\$40.00** fee for non-City Residents.

DAYS: Weeknights, weekends and school holidays.

GOALS: To allow all players the opportunity to continue improve the hockey skills of skating, passing, shooting, and positional play amongst playing groups of similarly skilled players. Also to give players the opportunity to continue to grow in competitive team play and to have FUN. Practice plans based on and developed through USA Hockey and the American Development Model.

Bantams

Born between 6/1/2011 and 5/31/2013

The Bantam level is the most advanced level in youth hockey player development. Body checking is taught and becomes a part of practices and games at the Bantam level. "AA," "B1," and "B2" level teams will be determined following the player evaluation process. Teams will be formed by the coaches through an evaluation process focused on assigning each player to the team level that will allow the player to continue developing individual and team skills. Teams at both the "AA," "B1," and "B2" levels will play other district teams as well as travel games and tournaments. Teams can also qualify for Minnesota Hockey Regional and State Tournaments.

SEASON: October 5th – March 21st

EVALUATION DATES (Subject to change): October 20th – 25th

ICE TIME: 5 to 6 times a week, including games. Tournaments are held at various times/locations during the year.

FEES: **\$935** for EGF City residents plus USA Hockey Registration fees. Additional **\$40.00** fee for non-City residents.

DAYS: Weeknights, weekends, and school holidays.

GOALS: To allow all players the opportunity to continue improving the hockey skills of skating, passing, shooting, and positional play amongst playing groups of similarly skilled players. To give players the opportunity to grow in competitive team play and to have FUN. Practice plans based on and developed through USA Hockey and the American Development Model.

Player Team Assignment Policy

It is the goal of our program to assign each player to the team that gives them the best opportunity to continue their individual skill development in a team environment that will allow players to learn, grow and have fun. The best way to achieve player placements is to assess each player through an evaluation / tryout period. Coaches will observe and assess each player during drills and scrimmages throughout the evaluation / tryout period. At the end of the process, coaches will review the player assessment and place each player based on their performance and coach's observations.

Commitments by Parents/Guardians and Families

Parent and Spectator Behavior

Unwarranted involvement or actions of a parent or spectator can result in suspension from arena(s) for a specified length of time. Before a suspended person can regain privileges a written letter of apology must be submitted to necessary parties. Parents must always behave appropriately, as their conduct is representative of our program.

Team Manager(s)

Each team will have a volunteer parent/guardian, who is the team manager. This person distributes schedules, organizes team volunteers, helps organize any social events or team meetings, and is a general information source for the team. All parents will be required to work shifts in the concession stand and penalty box for home games.

Locker Room Monitors

It is the policy of USA Hockey that all USA Hockey Member Programs must have at least one responsible screened and trained adult (which may include coaches, managers or other volunteers) present at all times and monitoring the locker room during all team events to ensure that only participants (coaches and players), and approved team personnel are permitted in the locker room and to supervise the conduct in the locker room. While it is not always possible, two locker room monitors are preferable. Preferred locker room monitoring includes having locker room monitors inside the locker room while participants are in the locker room; at a minimum, locker room monitors must be in the immediate vicinity outside the locker room (near the door within arm's length and so that the monitor can sufficiently hear inside the locker room) who also regularly and frequently enters the locker room to monitor activity inside. The responsible adult(s) who monitors and supervises the locker room shall have completed SafeSport Training in compliance with Section II and completed a background check in compliance with Section III of this Handbook. If the monitor(s) are inside, then it is strongly recommended that there be two monitors, as having a second monitor may help prevent allegations of impropriety by a monitor alone in the locker room. A Member Program or team may impose or follow stricter monitoring requirements. All Member Programs are responsible to work with their teams and coaches to adequately ensure that locker room monitors are in place at all appropriate times. Parents may need to complete necessary training and volunteer/serve as locker room monitors.

General Policies

Player Expectations of Coaches

Players have a right to:

- Be informed of requirements needed to successfully participate on the team.
- Be protected from verbal or physical abuse by coaches or other players.
- Be disciplined or reprimanded in private, if possible.

Parents may not directly approach a coach with any complaint, without first waiting 24 hours from the time of incident. Parents should then set a meeting time with the coaches and a liaison to discuss the issue. Coaches are accountable to the Recreation Supervisor and/or Parks and Recreation Superintendent.

Coaches will communicate the time for players to arrive at the arena for all practices and games. Coaches will be on time and present for practices and games. Coaches not able to attend a practice or game are responsible for informing the other coaches and/or Recreation Coordinator. Coaches will complete USA Hockey registration, CEP clinics and modules, Safe Sport training and required background screening by designated dates. Coaches are accountable to the Recreation Supervisor and/or Parks and Recreation Superintendent.

Practice Attendance and Behavior

Practice attendance and behavior standards will be set by individual team coaches. Coaches, at their discretion, may discipline players who have unexcused absences from practice, whose behavior at practice is not conducive to learning, who are disruptive, disrespectful, show negative attitudes, or negatively impact the ability of other players to experience optimal practices or games. Such standards will be stated at the beginning of the season and be applied fairly to all players on the team without regard for their playing ability. Coaches shall have the option to discipline players for abuse of team rules.

When a player is absent from a game or practice for any reason, players/parents must call one of the coaches **PRIOR** to the practice/game letting them know they will not be able to attend and why. Events to be viewed as excused absences: school related, such as band or choir; family functions; church events/activities; illness: a note from a parent or physician may be required if someone misses an inordinate number of practices or games.

Other Behavior Issues May Include but are Not Limited to:

Not listening to coaches / Disruptive at practice	Theft, Damage or disregard to locker rooms, benches or anywhere in an arena	Degrading teammate(s), officials, or competition
Harmful teasing	Abusive or foul language.	Fighting / Rough housing
Arriving late for practice or games	Excessive Penalties, major or minor	Not wearing required equipment

Discipline Guidelines

The East Grand Forks Parks & Recreation Department has a Conduct & Discipline Policy that will be used as our guideline for handling personnel or team conduct problems that may occur throughout the year. This policy is meant to be a guide for the expectations we have for the members of our youth hockey program, while also serving as a policy for the punishment of any conduct issues which arise. Within the policy, it does allow each coach to set forth their own rules, or expectations for their team throughout the season. Provided that the team rules have been informed to all participants, and that such rules are enforced consistently and fairly with all participants.

In the event a parent or participant has a concern, complaint, or suggested change regarding the sport of Hockey or the operation of the hockey program, the following process should be followed:

- **24-hour Cooling Off Period Requirement:** Allow 24 hours to pass before reporting the situation. In many cases, people will have issues that they feel very passionate about, and this passion can cause instant reactions, both positive and negative. This requirement will allow people to think about workable solutions to a situation and be able to discuss them in a rational manner.

The following is the hierarchy for discussion among parties to resolve issues. If resolve can't be attained by the first group, then the next group will attempt to find resolve, etc.:

1. Coaches and player(s)
2. Coaches, player(s), and parents
3. Coaches, player, parents, and Recreation Supervisor and/or Parks and Recreation Superintendent.

Player, Parents and Coaches Codes of Conduct

The purposes of the codes of conduct are to help players, parents and coaches to be informed of the standards of behavior, conduct and appearance that are appropriate for those involved within this program and our community.

Sanctions for Violations of Code of Conduct

Upon a reported violation or incident, the Parks and Recreation staff will follow the Conduct and Discipline Policy to investigate the reported violation. The procedure described in the policy will determine if a violation has occurred, and what disciplinary action is warranted for the violation. The imposed sanctions for violations of the Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy may range from verbal and/or written warning, a temporary suspension, or expulsion from youth hockey activities.

Notes

This program exists for the development of skills, attitude, and self-esteem of the athletes. The program is intended to enhance the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of the youth players. Hockey should be a FUN activity for the players. Parents are encouraged to be positive and supportive with team players, coaches, and fellow parents.