



## 2025-26 Men's and Women's Ice Hockey Rules Changes

The following rules changes were approved by the NCAA Men's and Women's Ice Hockey Rules Committee and the NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel. All rules changes are effective for the 2025-26 season.

If you have any questions on the rules changes or need any interpretations, please contact Jeff Fulton at [NCAAFulton@gmail.com](mailto:NCAAFulton@gmail.com)

| Rule   | Rules Change and Rationale  |
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| Supplemental Discipline – Review of Game Misconducts (Rule 29) | <p>To add game misconduct penalties to the group of penalties that a conference may request a review by the NCAA secretary-rules editor and national coordinator of officials for possible adjustment.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Last season, the rules were changed to allow game disqualification penalties to be appealed by a conference to the NCAA. This process was used rarely, but in those instances, it was successful and corrected a handful of decisions. The committee believes this should be extended to the game misconduct penalties, which have a progressive component and essentially the same rationale of fairness to the studentathlete. This would be an adjustment in the off-year to a new rule, which is permitted per playing rules policies.</p>  |
| Face Mask Penalty (Rule 47)                                    | <p>To adjust the facemask rule's penalty structure to include:</p> <ul data-bbox="464 837 1896 1016" style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A minor penalty for intentionally placing the hand on the mask and pushing the facemask of an opponent;</li><li>• A <b>minor</b> penalty for moving an open hand back and forth across an opponent's facemask (previously a major penalty);</li><li>• Major penalty and either a game misconduct or game disqualification at the referee's discretion for a player grasping and pulling or twisting to control an opponent's facemask.</li></ul> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Before last season, the committee adjusted the coach challenge rules and allowed teams to challenge plays for a potential upgrade to a major penalty. Overall, that change has been largely positive. One unintended consequence was the option for a major penalty for a player placing the hand on an opponent's facemask. That penalty was rarely enforced as a major penalty in real time (typically during after the whistle confrontations). With this challenge opportunity, officials were put in a difficult position and had to enforce major penalties after a replay challenge. The committee strongly believes major penalties are reserved for significant fouls and this description did not fit. This would be an adjustment in the off-year to a new rule, which is permitted per playing rules policies.</p> |
| High-Sticking the Puck (Rule 64)                               | <p>Clarified this rule to separate the scoring of a goal (puck may not be played higher than four feet, which is the height of the crossbar) and all other plays (puck may not be played higher than <b><u>above a player's shoulder, which is defined as that player's normal standing height</u></b>).</p>  |

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|   | <p><b>Rationale:</b> This clarifies the rule change made last year that permitted the puck to be played at a player's shoulder height in all cases. Several situations where players were not on both skates created some confusion and led to some interpretations during the season. The committee is making this proposal to make this rule clearer, while maintaining the intent of last year's rules change. This would be an adjustment in the off-year to a new rule, which is permitted per playing rules policies.</p> |
| Video Review<br>– Major<br>Penalty (Rule<br>93.4.c) | <p>Adjusted this rule to require on-ice officials to review penalties when a major penalty is being considered. After the review, officials have three options: 1) Confirm a major penalty; 2) Reduce the major penalty to a minor penalty; or 3) Remove the penalty completely, if warranted by the video review. Teams are not permitted to challenge the result of the review.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> This would be an adjustment in the off-year to a new rule, which is permitted per playing rules policies.</p>        |