

## **Safety Equipment Rule Change**

Effective March 1, 2022, all players registered to a USA Hockey member program governed by the Connecticut Hockey Conference as the local Affiliate, whether part of the CHC league, independent, spring/summer program, etc. are required to wear an unmodified, BNQ Certified, neck protector specifically designed for the purpose of preventing or lessening the severity of lacerations to the neck. This requirement applies to any participant in any sanctioned on-ice event, including but not limited to games, practices, tournaments, jamborees, etc. It is the obligation of the coaches of any team to enforce this requirement at all times. This rule will be interpreted as an Affiliate modification of USA Hockey Rule 304(g), as follows:

***“All players, including goalkeepers, at any level through Youth 18 & Under (including high school) or Girls 19 & Under age classifications are required to wear an unmodified, BNQ Certified neck laceration protector, choosing a design that covers as much of the neck area as possible.*”**

***For the first violation of this rule, the team shall be issued a warning. A misconduct penalty for an equipment violation shall be assessed to any player or goalkeeper of that team for a subsequent violation during that game.”***

CHC does not endorse any particular manufacturer or model, but joins with USA Hockey in its recommendation to choose the guard that provides the most neck coverage possible for each particular player. Substitution of non-conforming alternatives such as skate towels or socks worn around the neck will not constitute compliance.

USA Hockey officials in Connecticut will be charged with enforcement of this CHC rule, and it will be treated as required Protective Equipment under USA Hockey Rule 304.

In games involving non-CHC teams whose affiliates do not require neck guards, those teams will not be subject to this rule. CHC teams playing outside of Connecticut will be expected to follow this rule, regardless of official enforcement. It is the obligation of the coaches for each team to enforce this rule for their players.