

# USA HOCKEY POLICY ON MOUTH GUARDS



## Rule 304 | Protective Equipment

*(Note) Not all protective equipment is mandatory in all age classifications. However, if not mandated by rule, USA Hockey strongly recommends that all players and goalkeepers in all age classifications properly wear an internal mouthpiece, a HECC approved helmet and a HECC approved full facemask for all games and practices.*

(a) Each **player** is personally responsible to wear protective equipment for all games, warm-ups and practices. Such equipment should include gloves, shin pads, shoulder pads, elbow pads, hip pads or padded hockey pants, protective cup, tendon pads plus all head **protective equipment** as required by USA Hockey rules. It is recommended that all protective equipment be designed specifically for ice hockey.

(b) All **protective equipment**, except gloves, padded hockey pants, helmet/facemask and **goalkeeper's** leg guards, must be worn under the uniform.

*(Note) Players, including goalkeepers, violating this rule shall not be permitted to participate in the game until such equipment has been corrected or removed.*

(c) It is mandatory that all **players** (except Adults) wear a **HECC** approved helmet (including ear protection) with chin strap properly fastened.

*(Note) HECC certification includes an expiration date on the sticker and a helmet that has an expiration date that has expired is no longer considered certified. The player may not wear a helmet that does not have a valid and current certification sticker.*

**Players** in the Adult classification must wear a hockey helmet (including non-**HECC** approved) with chin strap properly fastened.

All **players** on the **players'** and the **penalty** bench must wear the protective helmet/facemask while in the bench area. For a violation of this rule, after a warning by the Referee, a misconduct **penalty** for an equipment violation shall be assessed to the offending **player**.

(d) All **players**, including **goalkeepers**, in all age classifications below Adults, are required to wear a facemask certified by **HECC**, plus any chin protection that accompanies the facemask.

*(Note) Any helmet or facemask that is altered except as permitted in Rule 304(c) shall be deemed to be illegal equipment and shall not be allowed to be used in a game. (This shall include helmets from which a part has been cut or removed, facemasks from which the chin-cup has been removed or any other such alterations from the original manufacturing specifications.)*

(e) In all classifications, excluding Adults, if a **player's** helmet/facemask comes off during play, the Referee or Linesman shall stop play immediately. The **player** shall be ruled off the ice and may not participate in the game until completion of the ensuing **face-off**.

A minor **penalty** for delay of game shall be assessed to a **goalkeeper** or **player** who causes a stoppage of play by deliberately removing his helmet/facemask during play.

In Adult classifications a **player**, excluding the **goalkeeper**, whose helmet/facemask has come off his head during play may not resume play until his helmet/facemask has been properly replaced. A **player** not conforming to this rule shall be assessed a minor **penalty** for an equipment violation.

In all classifications, if the **goalkeeper's** helmet/facemask comes off during play, the Referee or Linesman shall stop play immediately.

(f) All **players**, including **goalkeepers**, in the 12 & under (Youth and Girls') through Youth 18 & under (including High School) and Girls' 19 & under age classifications are required to wear a colored (non-clear) internal mouthpiece that covers all the remaining teeth of one jaw, customarily the upper. It is strongly recommended, in all classifications, that all **players** wear a mouthpiece form fitted by a dentist.

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.

(g) All **players** must wear the required, or recommended, **protective equipment** in the manner for which it is designed.

For violation of this rule, following a team warning, a misconduct **penalty** for an equipment violation shall be imposed.