

## Principal Skating Headquarters Explained

One of the most important aspects of any successful figure skating club is the ability to develop a strong working relationship with its home facility. The critical partnerships that need to be developed and nurtured include relationships with rink personnel, coaching staff and other user groups within the facility. Trouble lies ahead for clubs that do not cultivate positive relationships with these constituents. Two-way communication is a key ingredient to building these successful relationships. It is U.S. Figure Skating's goal that all member clubs are considered a strong asset to the facility, a contributing tenant and ambassadors of the sport within the community.

Member clubs have to abide by certain membership rules set forth by U.S. Figure Skating; one of these includes submitting a facility usage form to declare principal skating headquarters on an annual basis and Club Ethics. These specific rules read:

### **MR 2.04 Definitions:**

*A. The "principal skating headquarters" of a club shall be the address of the rink in which the club conducts the majority of its skating activities. This address will be recorded in the U.S. Figure Skating database under the club's name. A club may name only one principal skating headquarters. Clubs in violation of this rule may be subject to disciplinary action by the Membership Committee. This listing is in place to protect the ice of one club from being usurped by another (see rule MR 7.01).*

*B. To maintain a club's principal skating headquarters, a Facility Usage Form must be completed each year by the club president, certifying the facility is the principal skating headquarters of said club and said club secures ice and/or runs sanctioned activities at the facility certified as the principal skating headquarters in compliance with MR 2.04 (A). Clubs in violation of this rule may be subject to disciplinary action by the Membership Committee, including omission of said principal skating headquarters from the U.S. Figure Skating directory.*

*C. Other rink locations, listed as "additional rink addresses" in the U.S. Figure Skating directory and database, may be listed by the club. These locations are defined as any other surface where the club secures ice. These listings are in place to protect the activities of one club from being usurped by another (see rule MR 7.01) and for additional insurance coverage.*

*MR 7.01 A member club may file a written complaint with the Membership Committee chair if the club has reason to believe that unfair practices, prejudicial to the club, are being employed by another club.*

*A. It is an unfair practice for a member club or a club applying for interim and/or provisional membership to bid for or attempt to usurp ice time currently being used by or negotiated for by a full member club or another club that has applied for provisional membership at its principal skating headquarters and other locations listed in U.S. Figure Skating database.*

*B. It is an unfair practice for a member club (full, interim or provisional) to conduct tests or sanctioned events such as ice shows, exhibitions, Learn to Skate USA programs, or competitions at the principal skating headquarters of another member club (full, interim*

*or provisional), without first having obtained the permission of the other member club. Such permission will not be unreasonably withheld. If a facility usage form is not on file with U.S. Figure Skating headquarters for the current season, permission is not required. Please consult the facility usage guidelines on the Club Management section of the U.S. Figure Skating website. All disputes will be referred to and resolved by the Membership Committee chair and the appropriate sectional vice chair of the Membership Committee.*

These rules are meant to be mutually beneficial to both the club and its home facility. The listing of member clubs and principal skating headquarters can be found in the U.S. Figure Skating directory and also available at [www.usfigureskating.org](http://www.usfigureskating.org). Facility usage forms must be renewed annually and due to headquarters by the middle of June each year. All member clubs must ask permission of the facility before declaring it 'home.' If for whatever reason this request is denied, then the member club must seek out a new facility in their area to declare as their principal skating headquarters.

All member clubs need to realize that MR 2.04 is a U.S. Figure Skating rule and does not supersede rink management's ability to secure ice time contracts or purchases with other user groups. This rule was written to assist in fostering strong relations between member clubs and their home rinks by giving them privileges within their home facility- i.e. two-way promotions, signage within the facility, space for meetings or a designated club room, priority to purchase ice time as a consistent user-group, and any other benefits that both parties agree upon.

*The following is a real world example of the jurisdiction and limits of MR 2.04:*

If another member club (Club B) wishes to purchase ice at the principal skating headquarters of a member club (Club A), that isn't already contracted for by Club A and the rink wishes to sell ice time to Club B, this is allowed under this rule.

In this scenario- The correct procedures that should occur before the transaction is completed with the facility is that:

1. Club B asks permission of Club A to secure and purchase the desired ice time (this must occur if it is a U.S. Figure Skating sanctioned activity MR 7.01).
2. If Club A has not already secured this ice time, then Club A must give permission to Club B to secure the desired time, unless Club A has a reasonable explanation for such denial.
3. Club B should then secure its contract or agreement with the facility, host its event or ice time being cognizant and respectful of the home club at all times.
4. If this permission is not granted then the membership committee will be called to intervene and settle the dispute.

Please note...If a facility usage form is not on file at U.S. Figure Skating headquarters at the time of the request, then permission is not required.

Additionally, if Club B wishes to secure ice at Club A's additional listed facility, Club B should extend all courtesy by fostering good club relations and contact Club A prior to securing ice for their activity/event.

U.S. Figure Skating's membership committee recently drafted a document called "Expectations of Member Clubs" to further strengthen and outline their roles and responsibilities. Below is a brief summary of these six expectations. All pertain to establishing and maintaining a strong connection with a club's principal skating headquarters.

**1. Follow the mission as set forth by rules of U.S. Figure Skating**

- "The mission of the United States Figure Skating Association is to provide programs to encourage participation and achievement in the sport of figure skating on ice."

**2. Operate like a small business**

- Comply with all state and federal regulations
- Establish marketing/promotional campaign for the club
- Have governance procedures and policies in place
- Provide financial oversight

**3. Maintain a safe environment for all members**

- Enforce annual coaching requirements
- Implement codes of conduct for skaters, coaches, parents, volunteers and board members
- Establish and enforce ice usage and etiquette rules

**4. Offer programs and events for the development of figure skating**

- Create a strong connection with the local feeder program(s)
- Offer programs/opportunities for skater development – i.e. performances, competitions, camps, seminars
- Administer testing sessions for skater advancement
- Make programs enjoyable and fun

**5. Foster healthy relationships**

- Display professionalism and courteous behavior towards other club members, user groups, facility staff and surrounding clubs - display positive attitude, emotional maturity and exemplary conduct
- Be transparent in all business transactions
- Be a good tenant in your principal skating headquarters and surrounding facilities
- Have a presence within the community – positive reputation

**6. Membership development, retention and education**

- Recruit, retain, recognize all membership categories and disciplines of figure skating
- Have a multi-faceted communication strategy both internally and externally

- Recognize of members' accomplishments
- Utilize all U.S. Figure Skating membership categories – varied fee structures and benefits of membership

To review the full list of “Expectations” and to find more information regarding figure skating clubs, please go to [www.usfigureskating.org](http://www.usfigureskating.org) and click the “Clubs” tab.