



San Antonio Youth Hockey Association

PLAY UP GUIDELINES

Consistent with USA Hockey guidelines, SAYHA strongly encourages players to play in the correct division for their age. In certain limited circumstances, however, SAYHA may permit a second year player in his/her age division to play up to the next higher age division. Requests to play up will be granted only when that is in the best interest of both the player and the Association as a whole.

When a player will be allowed to play up

The Association will consider granting a request to play up only when the SAYHA Commissioners, in consultation with the coaches in the player's age division and the next higher age division, conclude that a player has the skills and other qualities required to succeed in a higher age division. If the Commissioners and coaches believe a player should not play up, the player will not play up. Even if the Commissioners and coaches believe a player has the skills and other qualities required to succeed in a higher age division, the Association might not approve the play up request. The Association will grant play up requests only if all of the other factors the Association considers in evaluating play up requests also support allowing the player to play up. Those other factors include:

1. Whether allowing a player to play up positively or negatively affects the Association's ability to form teams or second teams at either affected age level,
2. Whether allowing a player to play up afford more players overall the opportunity to play travel hockey in the Association, and
3. Whether allowing a player to play up would involve the player taking the position of an age-appropriate player who would then be left with no position on an Association team. Playing up will not be allowed in that circumstance.

As stated in the Bylaws, the SAYHA Commissioners will make the final decision allowing or not allowing a player to be rostered in a higher age division after consulting with the coaches in the affected age divisions, subject to Board approval. Those decisions will be final, and are not subject to appeal or other reconsideration.



The process for requesting permission to play up

To implement these guidelines in a manner that is fair to each family and player in the Association, the following specific rules and deadlines will apply:

1. Parents who want the Association to consider allowing their child to play up must submit a written request to the SAYHA Commissioners at least 30 days before the first designated tryout date for the division the player wants to move up to. The submission of this request does not mean a player will be allowed to play at the higher age level or even that he/she will be allowed to attend a tryout for a higher age division. The written request simply notifies the Association that a particular player wants to be considered for the higher age division. Play up requests must include a signed copy of the SAYHA Risk Acknowledgement and Liability Waiver form, acknowledging the risks associated with playing outside of a participant's age classification. This form may be obtained from the Commissioners or another Board member.
2. The SAYHA Commissioners, in consultation with the coaches in the affected age divisions, will evaluate each request under the guidelines described above, subject to Board approval. No later than 10 days before the first tryout date for the affected age divisions, the Commissioners will notify parents who have submitted a written play up request whether the Association has decided to allow or not to allow particular players to try out at a higher age division. Allowing a player to come to a tryout for a higher age division does not mean that the player will make a team in that division, only that the player is being given the opportunity to be evaluated along with other players who attend the tryouts.
3. In some years, the Association could conclude as tryouts approach that the number of players anticipated to attend tryouts may not be sufficient to form the number of teams the Association hopes to form in some divisions. If that happens, the SAYHA Commissioners, in consultation with the coaches in the affected age divisions and the Board, may determine that the best interests of the Association would be served by inviting second year players from one age division to attend one or more of the tryouts in the next higher age division. The Commissioners will notify the parents of those players as soon as possible if that decision is made. The Commissioners will attempt to make this determination no later than seven days before the first tryout, but depending on the circumstances that exist in a particular year reserve the right to make this decision at any point before the conclusion of tryouts.



Rules that apply when a player is allowed to play up

If the Association allows a player to play up in a particular year, the following rules will apply to that player:

1. The SAYHA Commissioners specifically reserve the right to reverse a decision allowing a participant to play-up at any time up to December 15 based on the recommendations of the coaches involved, subject to Board approval. If a player that has moved up is experiencing difficulty at the higher age level, as determined by the coaches and Commissioners, the player may be moved back to his or her age-appropriate division. This will allow the registrar time to complete the necessary changes on the 1T Rosters prior to the December 31 deadline.
2. If the Association allows a player to move to the next higher age division, the player must forfeit their number if a player is already using that number on the team at that higher age level.
3. If the Association allows a player to move to the next higher age division, the participant is responsible for all costs associated with playing at the next higher age division. These may include, but are not limited to the following: the cost of buying jerseys and name plates if necessary, as well as higher registration fees.
4. If the Association allows a player to move to play at the next higher age division, the decision is valid only for that season.