

Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association, Inc.



TRY HOCKEY FOR FREE TRAILER

GUIDELINES FOR RESERVING TRAILER

To reserve Trailer visit the WAHA website under
TRY HOCKEY FOR FREE TRAILER RESERVATION





Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

WAHA/USA Hockey “Try Hockey for Free” Event

Purpose:

To provide a safe, organized, and engaging introductory hockey experience for new players while promoting local association programs and leveraging USA Hockey’s Try Hockey for Free resources.

1. EVENT OVERVIEW

Goal: Introduce children (typically ages 4–9) to hockey in a positive, fun, and safe environment.

Duration: 45–60 minutes of ice time, plus 30–45 minutes for registration and equipment fitting.

Key Outcomes:

- Kids have fun and feel successful on the ice.
 - Parents learn about the next-step opportunities (Learn to Skate, Learn to Play, 6U/8U, etc.).
 - Families leave informed, excited, and ready to register for future programming.
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2. TIMELINE & PLANNING CHECKLIST

4–6 Weeks Before Event

- **Register event** through the [USA Hockey Try Hockey for Free Portal](#).
- **Review USA Hockey Resource Center** for sample practice plans, waivers, marketing materials, and email templates.
- **Reserve the WAHA THFF Trailer** **(insert form or calendar link)**
- **Recruit volunteers:**



- 4–6 off-ice (registration, equipment fitting, parent greeters)
 - 6–10 on-ice helpers (including coaches and high school players)
 - **Identify on-ice lead coach** to design 4–5 skill-based fun stations (reference practice plans available in the Resource Center).
 - **Plan next-step programming** (Learn to Skate/Play, 6U/8U).
 - **Create marketing plan** (see Section 8).
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2 Weeks Before Event

- **Confirm volunteer assignments** and review roles.
 - **Customize event page** in USA Hockey portal (update event description, contact info, time, and next-step info).
 - **Prepare signage** for:
 - Registration check-in
 - Equipment fitting area
 - Ice entrance and exit
 - **Print waivers** (for walk-ins who missed online registration).
 - **Confirm ice time & off-ice meeting space** with the rink.
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1 Week Before Event

- **Send confirmation email** (use USA Hockey template) to registered families:
 - Date, time, location, what to bring (warm socks, a base layer to wear under equipment)



- Arrival time (30-45 min minutes)
 - Parking and rink entry directions
 - **Prepare goodie bags** (jerseys, stickers, flyers on next-step programming).
 - **Assign photographer/social media volunteer.**
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3. VOLUNTEER ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Event Coordinator (1)

- Oversees all logistics, safety, and communication with WAHA/USA Hockey.
- Ensures registration, ice plan, and follow-up tasks are complete.

B. Registration Table Volunteers (2–3)

- Check off pre-registered participants using the USA Hockey portal list.
- Have families sign the IMR waiver for any walk-ins.
- Issue name tags and SWAG, if provided.

C. Equipment Fitting Team (3–4)

- Assist children with skates, helmets, and gear.
- Have extra socks, tape, and helmet adjustments ready.
- Keep the fitting area clear and safe.

D. Parent Greeters / Information Ambassadors (2–3)

- Float near stands to answer parent questions.



- Explain Learn to Skate / Learn to Play / House programs.
- Provide flyers and QR codes for registration.

E. On-Ice Coaches (6–10)

- Must wear helmets at all times (adults and youth helpers).
- Lead small-group stations:
 - **Station 1:** Skating basics
 - **Station 2:** Stopping/turns or games like “Red Light, Green Light”
 - **Station 3:** Stickhandling & passing
 - **Station 4:** Shooting at nets
 - **Station 5:** Goalie Try Station (optional)
- End session with cross-ice scrimmage or fun relay.

F. Youth Player Volunteers

- High school or 14U and up: players earn service hours.
- Act as role models; engage directly with younger kids.
- Must wear helmets and gloves on ice.

4. DAY-OF-EVENT FLOW

Arrival (45–60 min before ice)

- Volunteers set up check-in, fitting area, signage, and music.



- Equipment and sticks laid out by size.
- Assign one lead volunteer to coordinate transitions to/from ice.

Check-In & Gear Up (30 min before ice)

- Families arrive and check in via the THFF portal list.
- Walk-ins complete the IMR waiver.
- Volunteers help children gear up, label helmets, and match stick sizes.

On-Ice Session (45–60 min)

- Welcome announcement: introduce coaches, safety reminder.
- Warm-up skate (5 min).
- Rotate through skill stations every 8–10 minutes.
- End with fun group activity or mini games.
- Music optional for energy and atmosphere.

Post-Ice Transition

- Volunteers assist with taking off gear and direct families to the info table.
- Distribute goodie bags and handouts on next-step programs.
- Encourage families to register **on-site** (have tablets or QR codes ready).

5. SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- All on-ice participants and volunteers **must wear helmets**.



- Maintain a 1:5 adult-to-child ratio on the ice.
 - Have a first aid kit and certified coach or medical volunteer on-site.
 - Keep exit/entry areas clear and supervised.
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6. POST-EVENT FOLLOW-UP

Within 24–48 Hours

- **Mark attendance** in the USA Hockey portal.
- **Distribute USA Hockey membership redemption codes (ages 4–9)** for next-step registrants.
- **Send thank-you email** using USA Hockey template:
 - Thank families for attending.
 - Provide photos (if available).
 - Include registration links for next-step programs and contact info.

Within 1 Week

- **Call or email** families who attended to personally invite them to Learn to Play or Learn to Skate.
 - **Log event summary** (attendance, volunteers, notes for improvement).
 - **Submit feedback or grant requests** to USA Hockey if applicable.
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7. NEXT-STEP PROGRAMMING



Offer at least one immediate opportunity:

- **Learn to Play / Learn to Skate:** 6–8 weeks, 45–60 minutes per session.
- **Low-cost, low-commitment:** Focus on fun and basic skills.
- **Consistency is key:** same day/time weekly builds retention.
- **Female participation:** group girls together and ensure female role models on and off ice.

Encourage sign-ups **on-site** by providing:

- QR codes and tablets for registration.
- Free USA Hockey membership code (ages 4–9).
- Flyers or posters describing upcoming sessions.

8. MARKETING & PROMOTION

A. USA Hockey Resources

- Use official flyers, social media templates, and postcards from the **Resource Center**.
- Customize with your rink's name, date, and registration link.

B. Community Outreach

- Distribute “**Welcome Back to Hockey**” cards at schools and youth programs.
- Partner with:
 - Local schools and after-school programs.
 - Boy/Girl Scouts, PAL clubs, Boys & Girls Clubs.



- Other sports leagues (soccer, baseball, basketball).
- Encourage **current players** to bring friends.

C. Social Media

- 10-day countdown posts (use USA Hockey sample calendar).
- Tag local media and post photos from prior events.

9. USA HOCKEY PORTAL USE

Managing the Event

1. Log in at tryhockeyforfree.com.
2. Select your event under “My Events.”
3. Use the **direct event link** for all promotions.
4. Customize event details under “Edit Event.”
5. Add additional event managers for shared access.
6. After event: mark attendance and export participant list.

Adding Walk-ins

- Have families complete the **IMR waiver form**.
- Manually enter them in the portal following the event.

10. SUMMARY CHECKLIST



Phase	Task	Complete
6 Weeks Before	Register event, inventory gear, recruit volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Weeks Before	Promote event via schools/social media	<input type="checkbox"/>
1 Week Before	Confirm details, send family email	<input type="checkbox"/>
Event Day	Registration, equipment, on-ice fun, info table	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Event	Attendance submission, thank-you emails, follow-up invites	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. KEY CONTACTS

Role	Name	Contact
USA Hockey Regional Coordinator	[Your Region Contact]	[email]
Local Association Event Lead	[Your Name]	[email/phone]
Rink Manager	[Name]	[email/phone]
Next-Step Program Coordinator	[Name]	[email/phone]

12. FINAL REMINDERS

- Assume all families are new to hockey — overcommunicate details.
- Keep it simple, fun, and welcoming.
- Encourage high school player involvement for mentorship and visibility.



- Celebrate the day — smiles and fun are the best recruitment tools!