

AUSTIN YOUTH HOCKEY ASSOCIATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

This manual has been written to serve as a guide for the Austin Youth Hockey Association (AYHA) board members, parents/guardians, team managers, and coaches. Changes in policy and guidelines may take place from time to time at the sole discretion of the AYHA Board. AYHA will make every effort to keep this manual updated. If you have questions regarding AYHA policies or procedures, please contact a Board member.

AYHA is affiliated with USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey District 9.

Mission

It is the mission of AYHA to provide opportunities for every skater interested in playing hockey a fun, safe and respectful learning environment that encourages the development of sportsmanship, teamwork, life skills and individual achievement while building on the fundamental skills of hockey.

Goals and Objectives

1. To teach the game of hockey to local youth ages 3-15.
2. To teach skills necessary to play hockey successfully at the youth level.
3. To prepare players for the high school program.
4. To provide a safe and organized environment where kids can have fun.
5. To teach life skills like teamwork, fair play, responsibility, and work ethic.

Austin Youth Hockey Association Information

Your main source of information for AYHA is the webpage: <https://austin.pucksystems2.com/>. The website contains registration information, links to DIBS (for concession & volunteer hours), practice and game ice schedules, and board contact information. Your team manager, coaches and level coordinators are another resource to answer questions. If you are unable to obtain answers or information from these sources, please reach out to a board member. Grievances should be raised consistent with the Grievance Policy in this manual.

AYHA Board

AYHA is run by a volunteer board. Board members are elected by the AYHA members. Elections are held annually and notifications will be provided to all registered AYHA members via the member messaging at the registered email address. Please vote in the Board elections and consider volunteering your time to serve.

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Questions about AYHA policies, concerns, or grievances can be directed to the AYHA Board. Names, positions, and contact information can be found on the AYHA website at: <https://austin.pucksystems2.com/>.

Monthly Meeting

AYHA is required, by its By-Laws, to hold at least 10 meetings a year. Generally, the AYHA holds regular monthly meetings on the second Wednesday of each month, but may change. Additional special meetings may be called from time to time. Meeting dates and notices are available on the AYHA website at: <https://austin.pucksystems2.com/>

Annual Meeting

At the annual meeting, AYHA Board members shall be elected for the forthcoming term. AYHA members will be notified one week prior to the annual election via mass email at the registered member email address and on the AYHA website of the date, time, and location of the annual meeting. Also included will be the offices open for election and the candidates running for those positions. Members may submit in-person ballots at the designated date, time, and location.

Player Eligibility & Registration

Eligibility

Any youth, age 3-15, who is a resident of Austin and surrounding communities, decided by District 9 boundaries, shall be eligible to participate within AYHA.

Membership

Local youth obtain membership in AYHA by formally registering prior to the start of the season. The requirements for registration are as follows.

1. Each player must first be registered with USA Hockey.
2. Each player must complete the AYHA online registration
3. Parent/Guardian/Child must attend a registration in person to :
 - a. Submit a copy of the players birth certificate from a government authority,
 - b. Complete any necessary payment or payment arrangements.
 - c. Pick up fundraising materials (varies each year)

Registration Fees

During the annual budget process, the AYHA board determines skater fees for the season. Fees can be paid in full or in three installments. If installment payments are selected, the first installment is due at registration, the second installment December 1, and the third installment February 1.

Past Due Accounts

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Any player who has any amount past due or owing to the AYHA shall be required to pay all past due amounts and all current fees for the upcoming season in full at the time of registration. If all past due accounts are not paid in full prior to the start of the new season, the player will not be permitted to attend try-outs or start practice.

Hardship Policy

The AYHA recognizes that due to various kinds of hardship, it may be difficult in any given year for individuals to pay all or part of the registration fees within established time-tables. AYHA considers payment for registration fees in installments at the time of registration.

Scholarships

The Tyler Brady Memorial Scholarship program assists with registration fees and is available to AYHA members who need financial assistance in order to participate. To apply, please visit our website: <https://austin.pucksystems2.com/> under “Brady Scholarship”. The Tyler Brady Memorial Scholarship is run independently from the AYHA Board and therefore, determination for scholarship recipients does not reside with the AYHA Board.

Other scholarships and grant funds are available to AYHA families. Please inquire at registration.

Release and Transfers

It is the goal of AYHA to provide a quality youth hockey experience for skaters that reside in its District as determined by District 9 and Minnesota Hockey. AYHA does not release any player from AYHA to another association or accept another player from a neighboring association except under the most unusual of circumstances. A release or transfer will be considered by the AYHA Board **only** if the player meets the following guidelines:

1. The release or transfer must be submitted in writing before September 1 to the current President of AYHA;
2. The request must include a specific reason or reasons why the player and player’s parent/guardian wish to play elsewhere;
3. The AYHA team that would be impacted would have to have a minimum number of players remaining as determined by the AYHA Board; and
4. The request must include specific information regarding the association the player would like to be released to, including association name, contact name, phone number, and address.
5. The only exception to the above criteria would occur when AYHA does not offer a team at an upper level for the player, the player must obtain a waiver from the district.

Final approval, regardless of circumstances, will be required from AYHA Board.

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Refunds

AYHA strives to provide access to the sport for all youth. If fiscally stable, AYHA desires to waive mite and first-year registration fees. Any first-year player is allowed to attend five consecutive practice dates to receive a full refund, including deposit on fundraising materials not sold, and equipment rental fees. No refund will be provided if AYHA fundraising materials and rented equipment are not returned.

Any first-year player that would like to withdraw from AYHA after five consecutive practice dates have passed will not receive a refund of registration fees, mandatory fundraising, or equipment rental fees.

At any time, any non-first year player will not receive a refund of registration fees, mandatory fundraising, or equipment rental fees if the player stops participating in AYHA.

Injury/Medical or a player moving out of the AYHA boundaries will be considered for a refund. Refunds will be prorated based on the expended ice time and fixed costs incurred up to the time of termination. Players will qualify for the refund if their injury or medical condition causes them to miss a majority of the season. Requests for refunds must be submitted to the AYHA President in writing for consideration. No refunds will be provided if AYHA rented equipment is not returned.

Refunds for reasons of player misconduct will not be considered.

Any concession shifts completed by the release date are donated to AYHA. The remainder of the concession hours are not required to be completed. If the concession buyout was paid, a refund will be provided in return, only if AYHA rented equipment is returned.

Team Formation and Play

Team Size

Team sizes or number of players per team will be set annually based on the number of players registered for the season. As a general philosophy, AYHA will create enough teams to provide each player with sufficient game time experience. Consistent with USA Hockey / MN Hockey rules, rosters can fluctuate in numbers until December 31 of that season. After that date, all rosters are finalized, and adjustments can no longer be made.

Player Movement: Up/Down

Minnesota Hockey establishes the maximum and suggested minimum age brackets for youth hockey. AYHA recommends that skaters play at their indicated age level. However, AYHA has implemented the following guidelines to consider moving up or down within our programs.

Requests to move up or down should be submitted via the online form found on the AYHA webpage promptly during registration and no later than the beginning of the season as determined by the board.

If the player's birthday is between June 1 and August 31 of the current year, AYHA will follow USA Hockey guidelines and automatically, upon online request, move the skater up to the next playing level to allow the skater to remain with the skater's classmates.

All move up or down requests will be reviewed prior to the season starting and the player's family will then be notified within 24-hours of the board meeting. Factors to be considered in the Boards' decision are:

1. The hockey skill of the player for the player level requested;
2. The best interests of the program;
3. Date of birth of the player.

Move up / move down requests will not be considered unless you are a registered player with AYHA for the upcoming season.

Age charts and classifications for the current year can be found at www.minnesotahockey.org; players; registration; age charts.

Age Groups

Mites	Ages 8 and under
Squirts	Ages 9 and 10
Girls/10u	Ages 9 and 10
PeeWees	Ages 11 and 12
Girls/12U	Ages 11 and 12
Bantams	Ages 13 and 14
Girls/15U	Ages 13, 14 and 15

Tryouts

Each year, the AYHA Board re-evaluates try out procedures in an effort to help ensure fair and equitable team selections, AYHA has established specific guidelines to be followed throughout the tryout process as follows:

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1. Tryouts will be conducted when there are enough participants within a level to allow the formation of two or more separate teams as determined by the AYHA Board.
2. Tryouts will be closed to parents, guardians and coaches. From time to time coaches board members, or other volunteers will be asked to assist at try-outs to tape numbers, organize jerseys etc. at the conclusion of this they are to leave the arena. Coaches Coordinator may be permitted to be present during try-outs to observe the process as long as they are not coaching at the level that is trying out and do not have a child or family member trying out at that level.
3. Tryouts are to be completed early in the season, so as to allow ample time for individual teams to practice together before league play begins.

AUSTIN YOUTH HOCKEY TEAM SELECTION

TRYOUT PROCEDURE

1. The purpose of all team selection in the Austin Youth Hockey Association is to place every player on a team commensurate with their skill.
2. Tryouts will be closed to all observers except board representatives chosen by coaches coordinator to monitor tryouts.
3. Try-out format will consist of individual skills and game skills
4. The coaches coordinator implements all testing procedures that will be used in try-outs.
5. Tryout procedures will be proposed by the coaches coordinator and approved by the AYHA Board annually.
6. All skill testing and selections will be completed during tryout dates.
7. The tryout evaluators will be proposed by the coaches coordinator and submitted for board approval. In the event of an emergency, the coaches coordinator, with available board members, may approve alternate evaluators.
8. The tryout evaluators will make team selections based on the amount of teams proposed by the coaches coordinator and approved by the AYHA Board prior to tryouts.
9. All scores for skills testing and selection are confidential.
10. All players will have a number assigned to them. Players will keep the same number for all try-out days.
11. Families with multiple siblings in the same level need to designate whether they want both kids to play on the same team before tryouts in writing. If one child makes the upper team and one lower team, both players will play on the lower of the two teams if parents submit in writing that they want children on the same team. Child making the lower team cannot be moved to the upper team of siblings.

12. The projected team numbers for Squirts/10U will have a minimum of 10 kids and one goalie. Pee Wee/12U and Bantams will try to have larger teams with two goalies, if possible. 'A' level teams, if possible, will roster two full time goalies as long as numbers allow them to have enough goalies at lower levels.
13. Upon completion of tryouts, AYHA's President, Vice President, Hockey Operations Director, and Coaches Coordinator will meet with level coaches to evaluate and approve player scores and placement.
14. Once teams are approved, they will be presented to the AYHA Board for approval.
15. Level coaches along with the coaches coordinator will email parents regarding team placement and what expectations they have for their players entering the season.
16. Tryout results will be posted on the AYHA website.

CRITERIA FOR AUSTIN YOUTH HOCKEY TRYOUTS

- **OBJECTIVE:** Every player must be given a fair opportunity to display his or her talents and be judged objectively. The final scores will determine the team size with a minimum of 10 skaters at the top team level. The final team size will be determined by natural breaks in the tryout ranking.
- **PROCESS:** The try-out will be a minimum of two days and will be judged by a numerical scoring system. The tryout evaluators will compile scores. The coaches coordinator will assign numbers and jerseys to all of the players.
- **THE DRILLS AND THE REQUIREMENTS TO BE JUDGED:** The try-out outline will be drills and scrimmages during the minimum two days. The drills and scrimmages structure will be organized with evaluators by coaches coordinator for each day of try-outs, the categories will be scored on a scale of one to five (five being excellent) with the total being 25.

The evaluators will judge the players based on the following guidelines in these Skating drills/Scrimmages.

1. **SKATING (forward and backward skating, crossovers, transitioning)**
2. **HOCKEY SENSE (outlined in grading criteria)**
3. **SHOOTING (forehand shots, back hand shots)**
4. **COMPETE (outlined in grading criteria)**
5. **STICK SKILLS (puck control, defensive stick control)**

GRADING CRITERIA FOR DRILLS AND SCRIMMAGES

Grading criteria guidelines for drills/scrimmages

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1. Unable to perform the skill.
2. Needs improvement
3. Satisfactory
4. Good
5. Excellent

The grading criterion during scrimmages evaluators will be looking for will be based on the following for **Hockey Sense** and **Compete**. Based on grading scale: 1 is the lowest score and 5 is the highest score.

- How hard the player works
- Defensive zone coverage.
- Play in the offensive zone.
- Aggressiveness.
- Read and react skills.

SPECIAL REMARKS

- To ensure that the player is familiar with the drill, the administrator will demonstrate the drills.
- Normally the test is not discontinued following a fall; however, if the result is unrealistic, the administrator will consider a second trial. Have the player resume as soon as possible.
- Two trials must be given to the players.

CRITERIA FOR AYHA GOALIE TRYOUTS

- **NOTIFICATION:** Each player interested in playing as a goalie must notify coaches coordinator in writing of intent of one of the following:
 1. They are trying out as a 100% full time goalie and will not be skating out as a player during the season. They will dress as a goalie for all tryout sessions. Full time goalies will be trying out for highest placement as a goalie and understand there is a possibility, they will be sharing the goalie position with another full time goalie. Option 2 -50% goalies will get to play if full time goalies are unable to play or choose not to play in game.
 2. This option 2 is if a player wants to play goalie at least 50% of the time. They then will skate in tryouts as a player trying for the highest possible team as forward or defenseman playing position. They are also making a commitment to play goalie for at least 50% of time if no full-time goalie on the team or full-time goalie is unable to play. If this option is selected, they will divide playing time with other part time goalies.
 3. If a person interested in playing goalie does not respond in writing about commitment in options 1 or 2. They may be able to still play goalie for a team rostered by tryout results but players that have responded in writing to coaches

coordinator will get first rights of choice to play goalie for the team placed on. The option 1 and 2 are for players committed to playing goalie. All players are encouraged to try goalie in practice or at goalie camp. They just need to notify their head coach to decide to try playing goalie in a practice setting. Game play ability as goalie will be determined by the head coach of the players team.

- **OBJECTIVE:** Every full time goalie must be given a fair opportunity to display their talents and be judged objectively. The final scores will determine the goalie's placement on each team.
- **PROCESS:** The try-out for full time goalies will be judged by a numerical scoring system. The tryout evaluators will rank each goalie and coaches coordinator will inform evaluators on goalie structure of each team for placement.
- **THE DRILLS AND THE REQUIREMENTS TO BE JUDGED:** The try-out outline will be drills and scrimmages. The tryout will be scored on a scale of one through five (five being excellent) the goalies will be ranked on skill scores for 4 criteria for a total of 20 points.

Grading criteria guidelines

1. Unable to perform the skill.
2. Needs improvement
3. Satisfactory
4. Good
5. Excellent

The grading criterion for scrimmages/drills will be worth 20 points, 5 points for each skill below. The criteria will be based on the following.

1. Position to make the save
2. Rebound control
3. Work ethic
4. Overall play

This process is not to prevent kids from trying out the goalie permission. We encourage all kids to try goalie at some point in their hockey career. This structure is to offer a fair process for kids' commitment to playing goalie.

Inability to Tryout

Players who are unable to tryout because of health or medical reasons must notify the Coaches Coordinator and/or President before tryouts begin and will be required to verify in writing.

If a player is unable to finish tryouts, the player must contact the Coaches Coordinator and/or the President immediately.

The Board will review each player's situation and decide on placement of the player. The

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Board's decision will be based on:

1. If a player has shown up to one tryout session. Evaluators will recommend what team they think the player should be on.
2. Previous years' team they think the player should be on.
3. Previous years' tryout scores.
4. Previous coaches' information (scoring, skating, work ethic, attitude, on ice awareness.)
5. Written reason for why the player missed tryout with any documentation to support and;
6. Severity of injury/sickness and length of time before the player will return.

In the event a child is unable to make tryouts due to illness/family emergency, the AYHA Board will take the following information to determine placing the player on the correct team. Coaches Coordinator will assemble the following information and give to the AYHA Board at the meeting.

1. If a player has shown up to one tryout session. Evaluators will recommend what team they think the player should be on.
2. Previous years' team level played on (Squirt, PeeWee, Bantam A, B, C)
3. Previous years' tryout scores.
4. Previous coaches' information (scoring, skating, work ethic, attitude, on ice awareness.
5. Written reason for why the player missed tryout with any documentation to support absence.
6. Severity of injury/sickness and length of time before the player will return.

If a player opts out of tryouts or misses tryouts due to an unexcused absence, the AYHA's Coaches Coordinator and AYHA President must be notified. Within 24 hours of notification, the AYH President and/or Coaches Coordinator, will reach out and discuss with the player's family. If the player and family still decide to opt out, the player will be placed on the lowest level team. In this instance, the player will not be considered for movement to a higher level for the entire season.

Try-Out Evaluators

Try-out evaluators will be selected by the coaches coordinator and submitted to the board for approval. Evaluators must be independent from AYHA.

No Tryout

If a player wishes to join AYHA after tryouts have been completed but before the December 31 USA Hockey roster deadline, the Board will review the options with the affected parties (player, parents, and coaches) to determine placement.

Fair Playing Time

AYHA strives for equitable playing time to the fullest extent possible; however, the dynamics of

each game may impact a precise playing time distribution. While it is advantageous to change shifts (lines) in an evenly timely manner, game conditions such as players age and abilities, field of play, play stoppage, penalty situations, player match-ups and opponent strategy can all impact a coach's decision. Additionally, defensive players may see more playing time than forwards since there are typically fewer defensive lines and players to rotate.

Coaches are expected to treat players fairly with respect to playing time given game and player conditions. There may be occasions where a player plays less time in one game, only to be balanced by playing more time in other games, Coaches are given discretion to adjust playing time in other situations such as power plays, penalty kills, in state play-down and tournament situations, during the last two minutes of each period in a league game when the score is close. Player sportsmanship, attitude, missed practices, and discipline may also affect playing times at older levels.

At times, parents tend to focus on their own skaters playing time without regard to the conditions noted above. If, after carefully considering all conditions, a chronic playing time shortage is noted, the matter can be addressed constructively with the coach. However, always keep in mind, the discretion that coaches are given as noted above. The AYHA Board required that there is a 24-hour cooling down period prior to any meeting.

Player Development

Mite/6U - This level is an entry level program, and focuses on the basic elements of skating and learning to play. Players will work on skating skills as well as stick handling, passing, shooting, and other basics of the game of hockey and having fun.

Mite/8u - This level is designed to improve skating skills and introduce players to the basic skills of the game. The game and rules of hockey will be taught with an emphasis on skill development including skating forward and backward, starting and stopping, stick handling, passing shooting, and having fun. Players should be taught basic rules of the games such as off-sides, icing, and will be offered the opportunity to play goalie to determine interest and ability. All players should be given equal ice time.

Squirts/Girls 10U - This level will continue to work on skill development, individual tactics, and team concepts. Players should be taught all the positions and given an opportunity to play each. Goalie(s) should be identified at the beginning of the session and should start to develop goalie skills. It is at this age group that players will be introduced to competitive hockey. The primary focus will be on the enjoyment of the game as well as the development of the enhanced skating and hockey skills. Coaches will attempt to provide equitable playing time versus winning.

PeeWees/Girls 12U - This level will continue the development of skills, with the goal of

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additional development in team and individual tactics. Players should be able to begin to transfer skills and concepts from practices to games. Coaches will attempt to provide equitable playing time based on age, skill, and/or experience as seems most appropriate for each game throughout the season.

Bantams/Girls 15U - This level will continue the development of skills and tactics, but puts more emphasis on the team concepts of the game. Players need to be more competitive and coaches should start preparing the players for playing high school hockey. Coaches will make their best effort to play all players an equitable number of shifts recognizing the benefit of rest time provided by playing all players. Coaches are allowed to vary the actual number of shifts consistent with AYHA policy.

Ice Hours Policy

Coordinating ice to successfully run not only AYHA, but the rinks is a specialized task to put all the pieces together. AYHA engages an Ice Coordinator to do this task. The Ice Coordinator establishes practice times for all AYHA teams in coordination with other ice commitments, such as, Austin Bruins, figure skating club, Austin High School Hockey, and Park and Rec activities. Per our ice contract with the City of Austin, several of these other organizations have 'bumping rights' over AYHA. Additionally, unpredictable weather, game schedules, and practice changes can and do occur. Be sure to regularly check the ice schedule on AYHA website (<https://austin.pucksystems2.com/>) or the Sports Engine App.

Generally, each traveling team will have equal weekday ice time for practice. Bantams will have later and additional ice times. Ice time will consist of two travel teams per ice slot, if numbers allow, in which each two-team program will share their allocated weekday ice.

Non-traveling teams, including the 6U and 8U Mite teams, will be allocated ice time around the traveling team's schedules. Generally, Mites will receive a weekday and a weekend ice time.

Tournaments

The following are the rules regarding the limits of tournaments, not including District, Regionals, and State or Club sponsored tournaments; but does include home tournaments. Teams are required to enter the tournament hosted in Austin, as long as one is held. This counts toward one of their allowed tournaments.

Bantams/15U	4 tournaments
PeeWees/12U	4 tournaments
Squirts/10U	3 tournaments + the year end tournament

AYHA will only pay for the number of tournaments allotted per age level, per year. Generally, teams will have at least one away tournament necessitating hotel accommodations, a tournament within driving distances that does not require hotel accommodations, and a home tournament. PeeWee/12U and Bantams/15U have an additional travel tournament requiring hotel

Approved 7.10.24

accommodations. Additional tournaments are the team's responsibility, unless otherwise approved by the AYHA Board.

Hosting teams are responsible for providing tournament favors to each of the visiting teams in the home tournament. Tournament Director and Treasurer will set a budget that will be the maximum amount allowable to be reimbursed by the team. Coordination of tournament favors should go through the Tournament Director and Treasurer.

Equipment

This policy is meant to outline what type of equipment AYHA will provide or make available to our skaters. All equipment not outlined in this policy is the responsibility of the skater. All skaters must wear required USA Hockey equipment. Equipment availability is on a first come, first serve basis. Players are charged an equipment fee at a registration for use of AYHA equipment. The equipment fee will be agreed upon by the board prior to the season.

Cost of traveling teams jerseys are the responsibility of the skater and family. Families are responsible for ordering jerseys at the beginning of the year. Jerseys are only to be used during game play and taking official team pictures. Players are responsible for providing their own practice jersey.

Skaters equipment: helmet, breezers, chest protectors, elbow pads, and shin guards.

Goalie equipment: blockers, chest protectors, leg pads, gloves and neck protectors.

The AYHA colors are red and white. Skaters on traveling teams should wear red gloves, red breezer's, and white helmets. AYHA socks are required and available for purchase at South Central Athlete (110 4th Ave NE Austin, Minnesota).

Volunteerism and Fundraising

Off-Ice Officials: Scorekeepers, Clock, and Penalty Box

Every hockey game requires the participation of numerous people. Players, coaches, and officials make up the most visible faction of a youth hockey game. Slightly less visible, but equally important, members of the officiating team, including off-ice officials.

One role of the off-ice officials (scorekeeper, clock, and penalty box personnel) is to serve as a liaison between the teams and the officials both before and after the game. The scorekeeper will be responsible for verifying the game rosters from each team prior to the start of the game. After the game, they will ensure the Gamesheet is properly completed and signed by the officials.

As part of the game officiating team, it is important for the **off-ice officials to remain impartial at all times**. This is difficult to do, especially since a family member or close friend may be participating in the game. However, impartiality must be maintained at all times in order to dispel any notions of favoritism and to create the positive playing environment.

Another important role of the off-ice officials is to monitor behavior in and around the area known as the penalty benches and scorer's bench; and most importantly, undivided attention to the game in progress.

Service and Concession Hours

Concession Hours

Families are required to work twelve (12) hours in the concession stand for each player registered with a maximum number of twenty-four (24) hours per family. Concession hours are claimed on DIBS, found on the AYHA website <https://austin.pucksystems2.com/>. Concession hours worked during your home tournament do not count towards your concession commitment. If you wish to not complete your concession hours, you will be billed for incomplete hours. Annually, AYHA will determine the cost of concession hour buy out and will examine the required number of hours, and adjust the number of required hours accordingly.

Home Tournaments

Families are required to provide a scorekeeper (Book), time clock operator, and concession workers for all games at all home tournaments. Hours worked during the home tournament do not count towards your concession commitment. The Tournament Director and the Team Manager will be responsible for assigning individuals to work at each game.

Home Games

Families are required to provide a scorekeeper (Book), time clock operator, and penalty box attendant for all home games. Book, clock and penalty box hours worked during your home games do not count towards your concession commitment. Home game concession hours are covered under concession hours above. The Team Manager will be responsible for assigning/signing up people to work the book, clock and penalty box at each home game. It is expected that **all families** throughout the season volunteer their time.

Parents must sign a concession and fundraising commitment agreement at the time of registration, in addition to this, they must also provide a check per skater. This check is used as a deposit and will only be cashed if the fulfillment of all hours are not completed. Checks will be destroyed following the end of the season unless you are notified your check will be cashed for failure to complete all your volunteer hours.

Referee

The members of the AYHA are encouraged to participate and serve as referees. If interested in becoming a referee, please contact the AYHA Referee Coordinator.

Fundraising Policy

Fundraising is a vital function of the AYHA program. The types of fundraising vary year to year. Requirements and expectations will be noted during registration and team meetings annually. Generally, all players are required to participate in the AYHA-wide raffle ticket sales, work the concession stand, volunteer for teams' home tournaments, as well as any additional fundraisers AYHA participated in to raise money. Additional information is available at registration or by contacting the AYHA Fundraising Coordinator.

Raffle Tickets

Each player that registers with AYHA must sell raffle tickets. There are multiplayer discounts available. Additional information is available at registration or by contacting the AYHA Fundraising Coordinator.

SCRIP Program

SCRIP is a voluntary fundraiser program used by many non-profit organizations. SCRIP basically means "substitute money" and works by purchasing and using gift cards to pay for items you normally buy, like gas, groceries, and other everyday items. It is an excellent way to earn money towards your skater fees. All funds raised go solely to your skater. For more information on the program and how it works, visit <https://austin.pucksystems2.com/> under SCRIP fundraising.

AYHA Obligation and Expectations

After teams are selected coaches and/or AYHA will conduct a player/parent team meeting to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the AYHA guidelines and requirements. The following is an outline of items that may be covered during this meeting:

General AYHA Information –

1. Introduction of coaches and assistants.
2. Parent introductions.
3. Verify all information from registration and any additional contact information.
4. Select a team manager if one has not been chosen already.

5. AYHA Policies and Procedures.
6. Safe Sport Requirements.
7. Concussion protocol.
8. Fundraising and volunteer obligations.
9. DIBS/Concession hours.

Coach Information –

1. Goals and objectives for the coming season.
2. Skills and skating techniques to be developed at this level.
3. Explanation of expected behavior from players and discipline policy.
4. Read and sign player and parent Code of Conducts.
5. Communication between coaches, players, and parents. Communication for teams will be handled through an online application, email or text messaging.
6. Use of locker rooms.
7. Discuss planned tournament schedule.

Parent/Guardian Obligations –

1. Be sure your skater arrives to games and practices on time.
2. Attend all games if possible.
3. Be encouraging, not critical of the team and coaches.
4. Leave reprimanding and coaching to the coaches.
5. Do not belittle referees or opposing players and/or coaches. Parents and guardians who fail to comply with
6. Do not disturb the players or coaches during practices or games. Only go in locker rooms if needed or requested and do not sit/stand in player bench areas during games or practices.

7. Notify coaches/team managers in advance of schedule conflicts, missed games or practices.
8. Work at home games/tournaments as needed.

Team Manager

Each team is required to have a team manager. A team manager is:

1. In charge of coordination and communication of all operational aspects of the team;
2. The main contact between the coaches, the team, and the parents;
3. Handle parent meetings, tournament coordination;
4. Collects and maintains of team documents;
5. Coordinates clock, scorekeeper, penalty box, and locker room monitor assignments for the team. This includes practices, home games, and home tournaments;
6. Any other functions which may be of help to the Team and/or Coach.

USA Hockey's SafeSport Policy

The safety of its youth players is of utmost importance to AYHA. This includes on-ice and off-ice safety in any part of AYHA programs.

USA Hockey has long had safety systems in place to protect its participants from physical abuse, sexual abuse, and other types of abuse and misconduct that can be harmful to youth hockey players. These include without limitation physical abuse, sexual abuse, screening, locker room supervision, and hazing policies, in addition to code of conduct applicable to administrators, coaches, officials, parents, players, and spectators. USA Hockey has created a SafeSport program handbook that collects USA Hockey's various policies to protect its youth participants from all types of misconducts and abuse.

USA Hockey has a zero tolerance for abuse and misconduct.

USA Hockey's SafeSport Program handbook addresses the following:

1. SafeSport Policies – including policies prohibiting sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats and harassment, and hazing. The policy also addresses areas where misconduct can occur and are intended to reduce the risk of

potential abuse, including locker room policy, a social media, mobile, and electronic communication policy, and travel policy;

2. Education and awareness training;
3. Screening and background check program;
4. Reporting of concerns of abuse;
5. Responding to abuse and other misconduct; and
6. Monitoring and supervision of the SafeSport program

A USA Hockey member or parent of any member who (1) violates any of the SafeSport policies or (2) fails to consent to, and pass a screening and background check in compliance with the screening and background check program may be denied eligibility within any USA Hockey Programs and is subject to appropriate disciplinary action including, but not limited to suspension, permanent suspension, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities.

Please refer to the SafeSport Program Handbook for details on these policies. A copy of the handbook may be obtained from USA Hockey at www.usahockey.com. AYHA follows SafeSport requirements.

Sexual and Physical Abuse Policy

AYHA bans all physical and sexual abuse of its players. AYHA adheres and implements policies and procedures consistent with USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey for the safety of its players. All coaches, Board members, team managers, and volunteers with routine contact with AYHA players are required to complete and pass a criminal background check and successfully complete and pass Safe Sport training. Any coach, Board member, team managers, or volunteer with routine contact with AYHA players will be removed from their position and ineligible to volunteer until these requirements are met. Failure to pass or refusal to complete the required criminal background check deems you ineligible to volunteer with AYHA.

Reports of sexual or physical abuse can be made to AYHA Board President or Safe Sport Representative without fear of retaliation.

Screening Policy – It is the policy of the AYHA that it will not authorize or sanction, in its programs that it directly controls any volunteer or employee who has routine access to children (anyone under the age of majority) who refuses to consent to be screened by the AYHA before he/she is allowed to have routine access to children in AYHA programs.

A person may be disqualified and prohibited from serving as an employee, volunteer, or AYHA member if the person has:

1. Been convicted of a crime of child abuse, sexual abuse of a minor, physical abuse, causing a child's death, neglect of a child, murder, manslaughter, felony assault, any assault against a minor, kidnapping, arson, criminal sexual conduct, prostitution related crimes, or controlled substance crimes;
2. Been adjudged liable for civil penalties or damages involving sexual or physical abuse of children;
3. Being subject to any court order involving any sexual abuse or physical abuse of a minor, including but not limited to domestic order or protection;
4. Had their parental rights terminated;
5. A history with another organization of complaints of sexual or physical abuse of minors;
6. Resigned, been terminated, or been asked to resign from a position, whether paid or unpaid, due to complaint(s) of sexual or physical abuse of minors; or
7. Has a history of other behavior that indicates they may be a danger to children in the AYHA.

Physical Abuse Policy – It is the policy of the AYHA that there shall be no physical abuse of any participant involved in any of its sanctioned programs by an employee, volunteer, or AYHA member. Physical abuse means physical contact with a participant that intentionally causes the participant to sustain bodily harm or physical injury. Physical abuse also includes physical contact with a participant that intentionally creates a threat of immediate bodily harm or personal injury.

Physical abuse does not include physical contact that is reasonably designed to coach, teach, or demonstrate a hockey skill. Permitted physical contact may include, but is not necessarily limited to, shooting pucks at a goaltender, demonstrating checking or other hockey skills, communicating with or directing participants during the course of a game, or practice by touching them in a non-threatening, non-sexual manner.

Sexual Abuse Policy – It is the policy of AYHA that there shall be no sexual abuse of any minor participant involved in any of its sanctioned programs or other AYHA events by an employee, volunteer, or AYHA member. Sexual abuse of a participant occur when an employee, volunteer, or AYHA member touches a minor participant, employee, volunteer, or AYHA member. Sexual abuse of a minor participant also occurs when a minor touches an employee, volunteer, or

association member for the sexual arousal or sexual gratification of either the minor participant or the employee, volunteer, or AYHA member if the touching occurs at the request or with the consent of the employee, volunteer, or AYHA member.

Violation of this policy will result in ban or suspension from AYHA and all sanctioned programs.

Locker Room Policy

In addition to the development of our hockey players and enjoyment of the sport of hockey, the safety and protection of our participants is central to AYHA's goals. AYHA adheres to USA Hockey's SafeSport Program as a means to help protect its participants from physical abuse, sexual abuse, and other types of misconduct, including emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment, and hazing. To help prevent abuse or misconduct from occurring in our locker rooms, AYHA has adopted the following locker room policy. This policy is designed to maintain personal privacy as well as to reduce the risk of misconduct in locker rooms. Coaches and players are responsible for ensuring the locker rooms that are used by the team and cleaned up after use.

At Riverside Arena and Packer Arena there are limited locker rooms available for AYHA's use. The public restrooms are separate from the locker rooms and no shower facilities. Teams in our program also regularly travel to play games at other arenas, and those locker rooms, rest rooms, and shower facilities will vary from location to location. Parents should plan to have extra time and some flexibility in making arrangements for their child to dress, undress, and shower if desired, at arenas.

Locker Room Monitoring

AYHA has predictable and limited use of locker rooms and changing areas (generally 30-60 minutes before and following practices and games). This allows for direct and regular monitoring of locker room areas. While constant monitoring inside of locker rooms and changing areas might be the most effective way to prevent problems, we understand that this would likely make some players uncomfortable and may even place our staff at risk for unwarranted suspicion.

We conduct a sweep of the locker rooms and changing areas before players arrive, and if the coaches are not inside the locker rooms, either a coach or voluntary locker room monitors (each of which has been screened) will be posted directly outside of the locker rooms and changing areas during periods of use, and leave the doors open only when adequate privacy is still possible, so that only participants (coaches and players), approved team personnel, and family members are permitted in the locker room. Team personnel will also secure the locker room appropriately during times when the team is on the ice. No coach or locker room monitor shall be alone with any one player in the locker room.

Parents in Locker Rooms

Except for players at the younger age groups (Mites), we discourage parents from entering locker rooms unless it is truly necessary. Players should exit the locker room for assistance with tying skates. If a player needs assistance with his or her uniform or gear, if the player is or may be injured, or a player's disability warrants assistance, then we ask that parents let the coach know beforehand that he or she will be helping the player.

Naturally, with our youngest age groups it is necessary for parents to assist the players getting dressed. We encourage parents to teach their players as young as possible how to get dressed so that players will learn as early as possible how to get dressed independently. In circumstances where parents are permitted in the locker room, coaches are permitted to ask that the parents leave for a short time before the game and for a short time after the game so that the coaches may address the players. As players get older, the coach may in his or her discretion prohibit parents from a locker room.

Mixed Gender Teams

Some of our teams from time to time may consist of mixed gender players. It is important that the privacy rights of all of our players are given consideration and appropriate arrangements made. Where possible, AYHA will have the players dress/undress in separate locker rooms as requested and then convene in a single locker room before the game or team meeting. Once the game or practice is finished, the players may come to one locker room for a team meeting and then the players proceed to their separate locker rooms to undress and shower, if available. If separate locker rooms are not available, the players will take turns using the locker room to change. We understand that these arrangements may require players to arrive earlier or leave later to dress but believe that this is the most reasonable way to accommodate and respect all of our players.

Cell Phones and Other Mobile Recording Devices

Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras, and video cameras, are not permitted to be used in the locker rooms. If phones or other mobile devices must be used, they should be taken outside of the locker room. If this policy is violated, team managers or coaches may collect all phones before entering the locker room. If the cell phone policy is violated, disciplinary action by the board will occur.

Photo Release Policy

Photos and video/audio recordings of Austin Youth Hockey Association (AYHA) players are occasionally used in communications, marketing materials and publications, whether print and/or electronic, including on AYHA website. By your acknowledgement of this policy during

registration, you give consent and authorization to AYHA to the use of photographs and video/audio recordings (including television or radio) of your child in communications, marketing materials and publications, whether print and/or electronic, including use on AYHA website.

You understand that you have the right to revoke your consent at any time, should you change your mind, by submitting written notice to the Registrar.

Social Media Policy

Social media is something that has been implanted into today's society. The wide arrays of social networking tools that are available provide people with easy access to share important news and events with each other. Social media technology can be defined but not limited to, Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, TikTok, Remind, group text messaging, other Internet Forums, social blogs, photographs and videos. This immediate and public forum provides unique opportunities for networking and promotion; however, it also provides an unsupervised medium for inappropriate conduct to occur. This conduct may be deemed detrimental to the welfare of AYHA, its membership and not in the best interests of the game. The AYHA holds its entire membership who participates in online social networking to the same standards as it would with all forms of communication and in line with the Parent Code of Conduct. Using these communication tools in an inappropriate manner can have negative consequences, especially if derogatory words or threats are used with the intent to hurt others.

The AYHA recognizes and is in support of athletes, coaches, board members and parents' rights to freedom of speech, expression and association, including the use of social networks. In this context, each athlete, coach, parent, and board member must remember that participating and playing for the AYHA is a privilege and not a right. Each athlete, coach, board member and parent must remember that they represent AYHA and therefore, are expected to portray themselves, their teams, and their association in a positive manner at all times. Any online postings must be consistent with federal and state laws, as well as AYHA, District 9, USA Hockey, MN Hockey, Safesport policies.

Specifically prohibited behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Sexually explicit, profane, lewd, indecent, illegal, or defamatory language/actions.
- Derogatory language regarding athletes, parents, coaches, referees, board members.
- Comments designed to harass or bully parents, athletes, coaches, referees, board members.
- Nude, sexually-oriented, or indecent photos, videos, images, or altered pictures.

Additionally, AYHA will be implementing the USA Hockey's social media, mobile, electronic communication definitions and policy as outlined in the SafeSport Handbook.

Prohibited Conduct and Reporting

AYHA prohibits all types of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment, and hazing, all as described in the USA Hockey SafeSport Handbook. Participants, employees, or volunteers in AYHA may be subject to disciplinary action for violation of these locker room policies or for engaging in any misconduct or abuse or that violates the USA Hockey SafeSport Policies. Reports of any actual or suspected violations, you may email USA Hockey at SafeSport@usahockey.org or may call 1-800-888-4656.

Use of Mood-Altering Chemicals and/or Drugs

AYHA recognizes that Minnesota Hockey strictly prohibits the use of mood-altering chemicals/drugs. The use of mood-altering chemicals (alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and marijuana) is expressly prohibited by any player or any volunteer while representing AYHA. See AYHA Discipline Guide for more information.

Grievance Policy and Procedure

It is recognized that from time to time there will be conflicts and/or disagreements with AYHA. AYHA encourages resolution of such issues at the level where these decisions are made. In the event there has been adequate discussion and problem solving at that level, the Board has adopted a method of resolution.

Board action on an issue is final. If in the opinion of the Board an issue brought to the Board has not had adequate discussion and alternative solutions have not been explored, the Board can refuse to consider the matter and will refer the issue back to the grievant.

Timelines are provided to encourage timely resolution. In the event the timelines are not followed, the Board reserves the right to refuse consideration of the grievance.

If a grievance is being brought forward by a Board member(s), that Board member(s) must abstain from any discussion or vote regarding the incident.

Scope of the Grievance Procedure

The grievance procedure can be accessed in matters of policy interpretation, player team assignment, and in matters involving player, parent, or coach conduct. In cases of misconduct where the Board is already involved in a disciplinary matter, expectations of behavior will take effect and supersede the grievance process.

Grievant can be anyone directly affected by the policies of AYHA including parents, coaches, and referees.

Disagreements concerning the operations of AYHA are not subjects of the grievance procedure. The Board invites parents to become involved to improve these matters.

Procedure

In the event there is a disagreement or dispute, the grievant (parents will represent their children) is encouraged to discuss and resolve this with the team manager and/or head coach. In the event this informal discussion does not resolve the issue and the grievant still wants to appeal the decision, the grievant will produce the complaint in writing stating the facts, at least one solution or remedy, and send this to the team manager. This letter must be sent to the team manager within ten (10) days of the action that led to the disagreement.

The team manager will consult with appropriate people in the organization (Board members, coaches, other parents, and players) and issue a written response within five (5) days of the receipt of the written grievance. A copy of that response should be sent to the Secretary of the Board and the Board President.

If the grievant is not satisfied with the response, the grievant will forward the written grievance to the Secretary of the Board within five (5) days of receiving the team manager's response.

Within ten (10) days, the Board will meet and make a decision. The Board President will call the grievant with the Board's decision and follow up with a letter to the grievant within five (5) days of the Board's decision. The Board's decision on the matter is final and binding.

Nothing obligates the Board to provide any communication to anyone inside or outside the organization except those directly involved.

Consequences of Rules Violations

The AYHA Board of Directors reserves the right to levee appropriate disciplinary action against any person or group of persons that violates the rules, policies, or AYHA code of conduct. Serious, willful, or repeated violations may result in adverse action, including suspension from games or expulsion from AYHA for the season, without refund. See the AYHA Discipline Guide for more information.

General Policies

Use of AYHA Name or Logo

AYHA allows teams the ability to show team pride and team spirit by purchasing clothing for team use. AYHA required players, parents, managers, and coaches to use our apparel coordinator to purchase clothing of any sort. Please contact the Auxiliary Coordinator for questions on merchandise or visit the AYHA website under AYHA clothing for items available and price. Payment must be made in full before items requested can be ordered.

Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement weather and school is canceled or lets out early, evening practices will be optional, unless canceled by the coach or team manager. In the rare event that the City Park and Rec closes the arenas practices will be canceled.

The final decision to practice or play a scheduled game lies with the Board or head coach and team manager. AYHA will be charged for the ice time whether the time slot is used or not. Each family needs to decide whether the risks of travel are in their best interest.

Coaching Policies

AYHA coaches at all levels should have an emphasis on hard work and hustle. Emphasis on hustle to completion of each drill should be ingrained in each player throughout the skater's youth hockey experience. Playing time will vary in certain situations. However, it is expected that coaches take into account hard work and hustle.

AYHA adopts the recommendations of USA Hockey rules on coaching certification and ethics. A certified head coach or assistant coach will be on the bench at all practices, games, and tournament games. Non-Certified coaches cannot be on the bench at games or on the ice at practices.

Education – It is required that every coach obtains at a minimum USA Hockey Level One certification the first year of coaching. Under current USA Hockey rules, any certification (levels 1-3) is good for a two-year period. It is recommended that coaches work toward obtaining additional certification levels. A coach is responsible to obtain proper certification for the level of play that is coached. Coaches are encouraged to improve their coaching skills by attending USA Hockey Coaching Clinics. Information on the coaching clinics is available at www.usahockey.com (coaches, coaching certification, coaching clinic) or by contacting the Coaching Coordinator.

Reimbursement - Costs to attend these clinics is fully refundable to an approved coach if the coach provides proof of completion of the clinic along with a receipt showing that the clinic was paid for. Expenses such as meals, mileage, and hotel are the responsibility of the coach and are not refundable.

Approved 7.10.24

Jackets – An AYHA jacket will be provided at no cost to traveling coaches their first year of coaching. Traveling teams would be those playing a district scheduled and would not include house teams. Jackets will be provided only to registered and approved coaches. The design and style approved by the Board and will include the approved logo referencing Austin. Coaches are encouraged to wear the jackets while on the bench during any game.

Let's Play Hockey!