

# Hopkins Youth Hockey Association Team Travel Policy

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## Article I. Introduction

The Hopkins Youth Hockey Association (HYHA) is comprised of in-house developmental teams including Mites 1-4/6U/8U levels. Upon exiting the in-house programs, all players within HYHA are eligible to be participants in the Travel Program, consisting of all levels of Squirrels/10U, PeeWee/12U, and Bantams/15U.

HYHA is guided by the principle that developmental hockey training in an appropriate competitive context results in true enjoyment of the game and continued participation in amateur hockey. To this end, HYHA balances competitive teams with the developmental needs of individual players. HYHA places a priority on player placements on teams that most appropriately match that player's skill level and developmental potential.

The HYHA travel teams are overseen by a Director of Hockey Operations, a Youth Travel Director and a Girls Travel Director, who are members of the HYHA Board of Directors. The Director of Hockey Operations is responsible for establishing and maintaining a Hockey Development Committee (HDC) for the purposes of providing developmental and competitive guidance to the Travel Team Directors. The Travel Team Directors are responsible, under the direction of the HYHA Board of Directors, to conduct the travel team program in a manner consistent with this document.

## Article II. Information for Players & Parents

### Section 2.01 Newsletter

The HYHA Newsletter is distributed electronically via email. It is the responsibility of all parents to keep family accounts updated with correct email addresses and to read the

newsletter to stay informed. Please contact the HYHA Webmaster if you are not receiving messages.

### **Section 2.02 Tryouts**

See “HYHA Tryouts Policy & Procedure” document.

### **Section 2.03 Additional information**

Additional travel team information, including this document, is available on the HYHA website at <http://hopkinshockey.com>. Please review all relevant information.

### **Section 2.04 Commitment**

Playing on a travel team requires greater commitment of time and money relative to participation at the Mite/6U/8U levels. The travel team season spans the time period from October to March and may be extended by regional and state playoff games. Games may be played at arenas some distance from the Hopkins area. Parents are asked to fully support coaches and managers of the teams. A successful travel program requires parental support in many respects, including the annual Raspberry Jam, District, and Regional tournaments that HYHA hosts.

### **Section 2.05 Attendance**

The HYHA Board of Directors establishes a mandatory attendance policy for PeeWee/12U and Bantam/15U players at all levels, and for top level Squirt and 10U teams. As in any team sport, a critical part of development is player commitment to attend all team practices, scrimmages, district games, and tournaments. HYHA hockey is a major commitment, and attendance affects everyone on the team, so it is expected that HYHA will be the athlete’s winter-season priority for both practices and games. These expectations, and coach scrutiny on absence approvals, will rise at higher levels of play, e.g. an A team vs. a C team placement, and for teams with small rosters.

Players and parents must consult with coaches in advance of an absence. While some absences are unavoidable, any instance where the head coach is not consulted on an absence in advance may result in disciplinary action.

- a) Excused Absences. Examples of excused absences from any team commitment that are not subject to disciplinary action are defined as follows:
  - i. Player illness or injury
  - ii. Religious commitments
  - iii. School commitments in which the player is directly involved (e.g. a required orchestra concert)
  - iv. Significant family commitments (e.g. serious family illness, weddings, funerals)
  - v. Fall sports in the early part of the hockey season (especially fall sports games)

- b) Unexcused Absences. All other absences from team commitments will be considered unexcused absences and may be subject to disciplinary action by the coach.
  - i. Missing HYHA hockey to attend an activity in another winter sport (including non-HYHA hockey) is an unexcused absence unless approved by the head coach in advance.
  - ii. Disciplinary action may include game(s) suspension. Disciplinary actions may also include suspension or removal if continued abuse of policy and deemed appropriate by the disciplinary committee.
  - iii. Coaches are instructed to be consistent and fair with all players when such action is deemed necessary.
- c) Other. It is strongly recommended that parents not withdraw players from team commitments as a family disciplinary measure.

### **Section 2.06 Alcohol, Nicotine, and Drug Use Policy**

In accordance with Minnesota Hockey District 3 Rules and Regulations, players will not use alcohol, nicotine, or any substance defined by law as an illegal drug. Parents are expected to cooperate with the HYHA Board of Directors and coaching staff in enforcing this policy. Each player is required to sign a Code of Conduct at the beginning of each season indicating that they recognize their commitments as members of HYHA.

Penalties for violations follow the progressive penalty schedule of the MN State High School League. The current schedule is available at [www.mshsl.org](http://www.mshsl.org).

If a Travel Director has reason to believe a player violated this policy, the Director must immediately investigate the incident and, with coordination of the HYHA Disciplinary Committee, determine if the incident constitutes a violation. The Travel Director and Disciplinary Committee meet and make a final determination within three (3) days of the completion of the investigation. The affected athlete and his or her parents and/or representative must present the athlete's perspective to the Committee before a final decision is made.

### **Section 2.07 Player Eligibility Waivers**

Team and player eligibility is determined by the official boundaries of HYHA as defined by District 3, per the affiliate agreement, and MN Hockey Rules and Regulations, including with regard to school and level waivers.

### **Section 2.08 Type and Composition of Travel Teams**

The HYHA Hockey Development Committee (HDC) and the Travel Director(s) meet in the spring of each year to determine projected player numbers for the following year. Projected team levels for the following season are presented to the HYHA Board of Directors. While this is necessary for planning purposes, the process refines specific team level plans throughout the offseason to ensure optimal development opportunities for players. Parent input is welcome in the spring and throughout the offseason. Roster

numbers for each team are flexible within reason to ensure proper competitive levels for each player's skill.

- a) A/AA Team. An "A" or "AA" team is the highest level of competition and will be composed of the highest evaluated players in each age division.
- b) B1 Team. A "B1" team is the second highest level of competition in a division.
- c) B2 Team. A "B2" team is a developmental team.
- d) C Team. A "C" team is a developmental team. "C" teams are part of the travel program and considered travel hockey by MN Hockey.

## Article III. Hockey Development Committee (HDC)

### 3.01 Mission

The HDC plays a vital role in fostering a positive and inclusive environment for young players to learn, grow, and enjoy the game of hockey. The purpose of the HDC is to oversee and manage the growth and development of athletes within HYHA. The HDC will set the development structure for HYHA youth teams within the guidelines and rules of MN Hockey District 3, MN Hockey, and USA Hockey, including skills development, coach selection, team level and size determination, tryout structure, move-up requests for players, and scheduling framework per level.

### 3.02 Reference document.

Refer to the HYHA Hockey Development Committee Governance Document for further details.

## Article IV. Rosters

Once a final Travel Team roster is complete, no player may be removed from the travel team for reason other than that player's serious injury, serious illness, suspension or expulsion as provided by applicable rules, acceptance of an offer to play for a high school team, or acceptance of an offer to move up to play at a higher team level as described below.

- a) High School Team. All players selected for a travel team must have fully participated in the travel team tryout process. Any player eligible to try out for a high school team may do so without consequence from the travel team. Any player accepting an offer to play for a high school hockey team must notify the

Travel Director in writing. An acceptance of an offer to play for a high school hockey team automatically terminates that player's membership in the Association and position on the travel team. The terminating player may be financially responsible for some expenses (e.g. clinic fees) to be determined by the Travel Director.

- b) Roster Move-Up. The head coach of any travel team losing a player to a high school hockey team, to a travel player quitting, or to serious illness or injury may submit a written petition to a committee consisting of the Travel Director and HDC to request a move up of a specified player from a lower playing level or age level within the association. After appropriate due diligence including but not limited to consultation with all involved coaches, the player, and player's parents, the Travel Director and HDC determines the disposition of the petition and either grants or denies such petition no longer than 10 days after its submission.
- c) Girls on Youth Teams. Girls may try out for and play on Youth travel teams, subject to the same rules of all other players.
  - 1) Once the player participates in tryouts for a Youth team she cannot return to the girl's program during that season.
  - 2) A player may only tryout for one team per season. A female player trying out for a Youth team must play on the team for which she is evaluated.

## Article V. Travel Team Coach Responsibilities

### Section 5.01 Coaches' regulations

Travel team coaches will abide by the travel team regulations of the HYHA, the Travel Team Philosophy and Operating Procedures, and the rules and regulations governing the District in which our travel teams compete. These directives will be provided to the travel team coaches by the Travel Team Director at the mandatory coaches meeting prior to the beginning of each season.

### Section 5.02 Parent meetings

Travel team coaches will have a parent meeting as soon as possible following travel team selection. Items which must be discussed include:

- a) Goals and objectives of the travel program;
- b) Organization of the travel team program;
- c) Expectations and responsibilities of players and parents;
- d) Tournaments and tournament play
- e) Travel team coaches will work with the HYHA Volunteer Director to identify an appropriate parent manager or co-managers for the season.

### Section 5.03 Practice and Game Times

The travel team coaches will use sound judgment and discretion in scheduling practice times and non-district games.

### **Section 5.04 Cancellation of Ice Times**

Due to the high cost of ice, travel team coaches will only under rare and exceptional circumstances cancel scheduled on-ice events. Coaches must notify the HYHA Ice Scheduler and all other travel team coaches of the availability of the ice as soon as possible.

### **Section 5.05 Expectations of Coaches**

- a) HYHA stresses to coaches the importance of their position in working with young people. If a coach violates any of the following rules, the disciplinary procedure outlined in the HYHA Bylaws will be followed.
  - 1) A coach will not physically or verbally abuse players, other coaches, referees, officials, parents, or other spectators.
  - 2) Coaches will not use alcohol or illegal drugs before or during a practice, game, or scrimmage.
  - 3) Coaches will ensure there is adult supervision for the full duration of all practices, games, or scrimmages, in the locker rooms as well as in and around the arena.
  - 4) A coach is not permitted to use tobacco of any kind during practice, games, or scrimmages.
- b) Coaches are required to attend all seminars, meetings and training sessions that they are asked to attend.
- c) As is required by MN Hockey, all coaches are required to receive "Safesport" training and remain compliant with the rules of "Safesport". Coaches, both parent and non-parent, are responsible for locker room monitoring. HYHA will have zero tolerance for violations.
- d) Player participation and equitable ice time. To the extent that team members fully participate in all team events to the best of their abilities (attendance and effort) and exhibit a positive attitude and spirit of teamwork, then it is the coaches' responsibility to ensure those players are treated fairly and equitably in games regarding playing time. Coaches retain discretion with regard to playing time and lineups.
- e) Coaches will be responsible for providing a detailed year-end evaluation of each player (as defined by the Director of Hockey Operations), that will be used at the next season's tryout evaluation. The Girls Director will retain records of each evaluation for the girls and by the Boys Travel Director for the boys.

### **Section 5.06 Parent Coach Volunteer Hour Exemption**

Parent coaches will not be required to work in-season concessions or tournament volunteer shifts for the player they are coaching. If the parent has another player, who they are not coaching, they are required to work those in-season concessions and/or tournament volunteer shifts.

Each travel team is allowed 3 parent coaches to be excluded from in-season concession and tournament volunteer shifts. Only the head mite or 6U/8U coach for each level is excluded from working inseason concession volunteer shifts. All

assistant mite coaches are required to work their in-season concession volunteer shifts. If a mite head coach has another player on a different mite team and is not the head coach of that player's team, they will be required to work those in-season concession shifts.

## Article VI. Finances

### **Section 6.01 Team Finances**

Overall fiscal responsibility rests with the HYHA Board of Directors. Travel team financial affairs will be managed in accordance with the provisions of the HYHA Bylaws, and other provisions which may be established.

### **Section 6.02 Player Payments**

Players wishing to play travel team hockey will register for HYHA hockey and agree to the schedule of payments defined in the registration information online. Directors will determine the allocation of these funds.

### **Section 6.03 Members In Good Standing**

A family is considered In Good Standing if all financial obligations to HYHA have been satisfied. Only families In Good Standing will be allowed to register a player for a new season.

### **Section 6.04 Financial Aid**

The players' families pay a portion of the cost of travel team participation and the remainder is offset by fundraising activities of the travel team program. There are limited scholarships available in accordance with the HYHA scholarship guidelines available at <http://www.hopkinshockey.com>. Scholarship requests must be made before registration.

### **Section 6.05 Refunds**

There will be no refund of a player's initial registration fee and deposit for the first installment of team expenses once travel team try-outs are completed and upon the player being placed on a travel team.

If a player subsequently misses part of the season due to an injury or illness, the following will apply:

For injuries while participating in a HYHA event (game, scrimmage, practice, or dryland), the player will be responsible for the following amount of the player's portion of team expenses for the year:

- a) Player misses 0-50 consecutive days: 100% of player's team expense portion
- b) Player misses 51-100 consecutive days: 2/3 of player's team expense portion
- c) Player misses 101 or more consecutive days: 1/3 of player's team expense portion

In cases of a player injury or illness of 51 or more consecutive days, the player's unpaid team fees will be paid to the team by the HYHA general fund.

For major illnesses and non-HYHA related injuries, the above refund schedule will be evaluated on a case-by-base basis and may be applied at the Board's discretion.

All such requests must be submitted to the HYHA Board of Directors for approval. Upon request by HYHA, an injured or ill player must furnish documentation from a physician stating that the player is not allowed to play hockey for the specified time period. The HYHA Board of Directors shall have the authority to modify the above-reference team fee reimbursement policy in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

- d) A travel player who quits a position on a travel team, other than through a move-up as provided in these Rules, either after travel team try-outs are completed, but before October 20, or to accept an offer to play for a high school hockey team on or before December 1, forfeits that player's entire registration fee and the first installment of team expenses. In such cases, the travel team losing a player position directly or through a player move-up as provided in these Rules, may submit a written request to the Board of Directors for the General Fund to pay the unpaid team expenses for that lost player position. The Board of Directors must receive such requests on or before December 20.
- e) A travel player who otherwise quits his position on a travel team after October 20, must pay the entire portion of that player's team expenses for the entire season. For purposes of this policy, the official date a player quits shall be the date the Registrar receives notice, in writing, that the travel player quit the travel team or accepted an offer to play for a high school hockey team.
- f) The Board of Directors may modify these player financial responsibility requirements and travel team expense reimbursement policies in the event of unforeseen circumstances or as it deems in the best interests of the Association.
- g) Girls' policies on refunds
  - 1) Any 15U girl that is named to the High School Roster to start the season at their High School and accepts the spot will have all fees refunded by HYHA except for the Clinic Fee. This entitles her to receive the same refund provided to Girls that tried out for the 15UA team with a Conditional Tryout Waiver and were cut and returned to their Native Hockey Association following tryouts.
  - 2) A Girls' travel player, who otherwise quits her position on a travel team after tryouts must pay the entire portion of that player's team expenses for the entire season. For purposes of this policy, the official date a player quits shall be the date the Registrar receives notice, in writing, that the

travel player quit the travel team or accepted an offer to play for a high school hockey team.

### **Section 6.06 Other finances**

- a) The HYHA Treasurer will be responsible for paying all district fees.
- b) The team manager will be responsible for working closely with the HYHA Treasurer to manage the team's finances. The team manager can delegate the responsibility to a team treasurer.
- c) HYHA-sponsored tournaments are fundraisers. Parents are required to volunteer per the HYHA volunteer policy. Registering a player in HYHA is considered an agreement to abide by the current volunteer requirements. Parents are responsible for reviewing and understanding the current volunteer policy as is posted at <http://www.hopkinshockey.com>.

## **Article VII. Tournaments**

### **Section 7.01 Squirt Tournaments**

Squirts will participate in the Hopkins Raspberry Jam Tournament and two additional out-of-town tournaments. Squirt teams may elect to supplement their schedule with an additional in-town tournament, at the discretion of the coaching staff, provided game limits are not exceeded.

### **Section 7.02 PeeWee and Bantam Tournaments**

PeeWees and Bantams will participate in the Hopkins Raspberry Jam Tournament, one additional in-town tournament, and two out-of-town tournaments. PeeWee and Bantam teams may elect to add one additional tournament, at the discretion of the coaching staff, and will pay an additional amount for participation in an extra tournament. Teams seeking to add a supplemental tournament may not do so if there are any conflicts with District league games and may not request to reschedule a league game to attend a supplemental tournament.

### **Section 7.03 Girls' Travel Tournaments**

The HYHA Tournament Director will work with the coaches to determine appropriate tournament options.

## **Article VIII. Other Information**

### **Section 8.01 Squirt Game Limits**

District games, scrimmages, and tournament games will be limited for the Squirt age. HYHA abides and agrees with the current game limits for Squirts. Any attempt to manipulate, hide, or exceed the game limit by a manager or coach will be subject to

immediate suspension. Current game limit information will be explained at the District 3 mandatory coach and manager's meeting and information is available at <http://www.d3hockey.org>. A ratio of two (2) practices to one (1) game is recommended. No team may have more than two (2) on-ice activities per day. There is a mandatory MN Hockey rest rule which requires three hours from the end of one ice time to the start of the next.

### **Section 8.02 Fighting and Violence**

In accordance with Minnesota Hockey District 3 Rules and Regulations, fighting, other forms of violence or profanity by players or coaches in the HYHA travel program will not be tolerated. During games or scrimmages, referees have the authority to penalize for misconduct. Parents, players, and coaches must support the officials.

### **Section 8.03 Self-Reporting**

Coaches and managers are required to be aware of and compliant with all reporting of infractions as set forth by MN Hockey, District 3 and USA Hockey. The self-reporting guidelines are explained at the mandatory District 3 coach and manager meeting.

### **Section 8.04 Exceptions**

Recognizing that special circumstances may exist in the future, the HYHA Board of Directors has the ability to grant an exception to this policy for the upcoming season of play if requested by a parent or player by July 30th. Such requests shall be in writing and directed to the President.