



2026-27
CYHA Tryout Policy

Welcome to CYHA

This document outlines the full tryout process, team formation, and travel athlete and family / guardian expectations during tryouts.

CYHA strives to make this tryout process as stress free and transparent as possible; use this packet to understand CYHA goals, vision, and expectations.

Please remember, wherever your athlete is in their hockey journey, this is a process and is NOT the end, nor does it define them as an athlete. They all have hockey and growth in front of them whatever the results of this and every tryout. Athletes develop at different rates and times. The most important pieces for your athlete now and in the future are they have fun, work hard, are coachable, and they have a good attitude. Please support them and maintain a positive support system throughout this tryout process to model teamwork.

The goal of tryouts is to place all athletes with like-skilled athletes because we believe that is the ideal environment for development. Of course, this is a relative exercise, and athletes develop at different trajectories. Hence, the need for an annual tryout. REMEMBER, this is about the athletes, and not about the parents or guardians.



Plan

The tryout process for each level can span over 5-7 days due to the volume of athletes, levels, and ice availability.

The CYHA board reserves the right to make changes as it deems appropriate before or during tryouts. Due to number fluctuations year over year, level by level, the same process will be followed, but the same number of skaters and groups may not be the same across levels.

Athletes should arrive 45 minutes before the start of their first session and 30 minutes before all subsequent sessions. Check-in will be conducted in the front lobby. Athletes will be provided a tryout jersey on their first session and are responsible for that jersey the remainder of their tryouts. Athletes take their jerseys home between all sessions and are encouraged to clean them during and after tryouts. Athletes will NOT be allowed on ice without their assigned tryout jersey. After tryouts are completed, all jerseys will be collected, cleaned, and sanitized.

Tryout sessions are CLOSED to spectators, NO exceptions. Several factors go into this decision and one benefit is to allow the athletes to have a safe-neutral environment to focus on performing their best.

We wish all the athletes the best for the tryout process! It is our goal to provide the best opportunity for the athletes to showcase their talents as a hockey athlete and to ensure they are placed at the correct level that is best for both their development and the development of others for the upcoming season and for their long-term growth and development as athletes and young athletes.

[Minnesota Hockey: 10 Tips for a Successful Tryout](#)

Plan

Athletic Equipment Required

- Hockey pants / breezers must be black
- Helmets must be black
- Socks must be either black, white, red or gray in color
- All helmet stickers from prior teams and events must be removed

Jerseys

Each athlete will be randomly assigned a reversible tryout jersey by CYHA to be used for the duration of the tryouts. The athlete may be asked to wear the black side on one night and the white side on the next, for example, but the number will remain the same for the duration of their tryouts.

Plan

Athletic Equipment Required

Helmets: Must be solid black or white. *No stickers of any kind are permitted*, including AAA, Tier 1, or house league stickers.

Gloves: Must be solid black, with allowed trim colors being red or white. Bright colors or other trim combinations are not permitted.

Hockey Socks: Only black, white, or red socks are permitted. Bright or non-standard colors are not permitted. Past CYHA-issued socks will be permitted.

Jerseys

Each athlete will be randomly assigned a reversible tryout jersey by CYHA to be used for the duration of the tryouts. The athlete may be asked to wear the black side on one night and the white side on the next, for example, but the number will remain the same for the duration of their tryouts.

Cell Phone Policy

No cell phones allowed during tryouts. Phones must be fully put away before players enter the arena. Players found using a phone during tryouts will have it removed.

Register

Levels and Fees

The level at which athletes start tryouts is determined during the registration process. Level category designation is per USA Hockey age rules, this should be known prior to registration to understand what level to sign your skater up for, i.e. Squirt, Peewee, Bantam, U10, U12, etc.

As was the case starting with tryouts in 2025, athletes are to register, as noted above, per USA hockey rules and age designation for their age and level specification. No tryout fee this season for “top” teams. All athletes will register per their designated age / level.

Group formations will be formed based on last name at each level for Night 1. Group sizes and quantities are subject to change year over year based on the number of players in each group, each year.

Register

Levels and Fees

Evaluators have the right to move an athlete from a tryout group after day 1, and every subsequent session thereafter, should an evaluator determine the athlete is thriving or lacking in their respective group per skating, skills, or hockey presence. This will create an “equal” and competitive balance each day for the best tryout for skaters and their respective groups.

Girls who try out for Squirt, Pee wee or Bantam traveling teams are precluded from changing to play U10, U12, or U15 traveling teams 10-days prior to those tryouts start date. Conversely, Girls who try out for U10, U12, or U15 traveling teams are precluded from changing to play Squirt, Pee wee or Bantam teams 10 day prior to those tryouts start date.

Register

Move-Up Policy

If you are looking to have your player moved up with his/her grade. Please know that this is considered. There is a policy around this. Click Link below to review the CYHA - Move Up Policy.

[Move Up Policy](#)

Declaring Positions

Athletes will have the option to declare their position during registration for the Bantams. Athletes at the Squirts / 10U & PeeWee / 12U levels will NOT have that option and will play all positions during tryouts.

At all levels we will do our best to place players at their preferred position, but this may not always be possible. Our goal is to put players at the appropriate level based on their overall skill, not necessarily by position.

Depending on the player rankings and the mix of preferred positions some players may be asked to move to a non-preferred position in order to create full lines for the 5 vs 5 scrimmage.

At the bantam level, positions will be considered during the team selection process, i.e. there won't be 13 skaters who identified as forwards placed on the Bantam B1 team along with 2 skaters who identified as defensemen.

Register

Declaring Positions

For players at the Squirts / 10U & PeeWee / 12U levels, there could be instances where the athlete skates, for example, four shifts in a row at defense. However, the shift charts generated by the tryout software CYHA uses ensures that all players at these levels will play an equal number of shifts at every position over the course of tryouts.

Once an athlete has registered and within one week prior to tryouts, CYHA will not accept changes to the athletes level or the declared Bantam position.

Tryout Process

Skater Expectations

First and foremost, be yourself - relax - and just do your best! Each athlete is expected to do their best each time they touch the ice and work hard as a positive teammate.

For each of the “top teams,” the evaluators are looking for the athletes they feel make up the best team, not just the top 9 forwards, the top 6 defenseman and goalies. All skaters will need to be prepared to play both forward and defense during tryouts, with the exception of Bantams as noted above.

Hockey is not played in a sterile environment, and evaluators can discern between a bad bounce, poor pass to receive, and different abilities competing. Athletes will have the opportunity to show their individual skill in addition to their ability to handle adverse situations or moments that happen in game-like situations.

Some attributes we are looking for in athletes include the following:

- Skating ability
- Passing, stick handling, and shooting skills
- Ability to handle body contact within the rules
- Ability to play both ends of the rink
- Understanding of the game
- Will to learn and be coached
- Desire, discipline and work ethic

Tryout Process

Participation Importance and Attendance

Players are highly encouraged to attend each and every session to maintain control of their performance and to accurately influence their scores. Any unexcused/unexplained absence from the player's session will result in the CYHA governing board review and full control over the player's placement and a lower placement may result than if the player had participated fully.

Tryout Process

Remember, NO athlete has made any team at this point. This is a new season, and everyone comes to the grading with a fresh start for the new season. Additionally, no one will make a team based on what they did, or where they played last year or summer. It is a new season, and this is your chance to show the evaluators what you can do today, and evaluators / non-parent coaches will make our decisions based upon how you play during these tryouts, not something you did last year. If you do not make the team, you think you should have, while you may be disappointed, do not be discouraged. Keep working hard and you may accomplish your goal next year.

Parent Expectations

Please take a minute to read the Athlete Expectations section. You can help all of us have a good tryout experience if you can help support and positively push your athlete to try their best and simply have fun. Please avoid discussions about specific athletes at all times. Everyone is doing their best and development comes at many stages.

Review the phase schedules carefully; they are complex as this is a complex process with a master schedule. Athletes are expected to attend all sessions to maintain control of their tryout performance. Any unexcused / unexplained absence from a session will result in zero score, and, the evaluators notes regarding athlete placement and a potentially lower placement without full participation will be used.

Parking Lot Policy

No gathering in the parking lot: Parents are asked not to hang out or congregate in the parking lot during tryouts.

Zero alcohol: The rink enforces a strict no-alcohol policy. No drinks of any kind are permitted in the parking lot. Please plan drop-offs and pick-ups accordingly.

These boundaries exist to reduce pressure on the players and keep the focus entirely on them.

Tryout Process

Emergency Absence Policy, Medical and Fall Sport Conflicts

Any player who is unable to participate in a tryout session for medical reasons, such as an injury or illness, must notify the CYHA Tryout Director prior to the athlete's tryout session taking place. They must also provide a written explanation from a doctor that confirms the player's medical inability to participate.

The CYHA Board will then review that information and make a determination on the player's team placement for the upcoming season.

Unless the Tryout Director receives and acknowledges a medical excuse, players must attend all scheduled tryout sessions. Any player that does not attend a scheduled tryout session could have the absence impact their tryout scores and team placement for the season.

Tryout Process

Emergency Absence Policy, Medical and Fall Sport Conflicts

CYHA believes in multisport athletes. It is difficult to accommodate all fall sports schedules, but we reserve ice and plan tryouts as far in advance as possible in order to avoid as many conflicts as possible. If a fall sport conflict is imminent, please notify the tryout director ASAP. The tryout director, and/or CYHA governing board will discuss the conflict with the player's family and determine the best course of action.

One possible path is to follow that player's scores throughout the other sessions to help determine appropriate scoring for the player's missed sessions due to a fall sport conflict. Any situations and circumstances not addressed by this policy will be dealt with by CYHA governing board.

[CYHA Illness and Injury Policy](#)

Non-Emergency / Non-Medical Absence Policy

If there is a non-emergency / non-medical conflict, such as an athlete competing in fall sport, please notify Centennial asap. The Board will discuss the conflict with the athlete's family and determine the best course of action.

Any situations and circumstances not addressed by this policy will be dealt with by the Centennial Board.

Tryout Process

Tier 1 / High Performance Absence

Athletes that have been chosen to play in Minnesota Hockey's Fall Tier 1 High Performance leagues or other hockey events ran by Minnesota Hockey and/or USA Hockey may have their situation reviewed by the CYHA Board in the event their Tier 1 schedule conflicts with CYHA Tryouts in regards to team placement and tryout evaluation.

However, it should be made clear that just because an athlete is on a Tier 1 team, that does NOT guarantee them a spot on any CYHA team. High Performance Tier 1 promotes their players to prioritize association tryouts over their program.

If your athlete has a conflict during tryouts with a Tier 1 event, the expectation is that you'll attend CYHA tryouts. Athletes that elect to skip a night or nights of tryouts will receive a 'zero' score for any session missed.

For 2026, the only athletes playing Tier 1 that are eligible for CYHA team placement would be boys players that are named to the USHL Fall Classic. Should your son be named to that group of athletes, please reach out to the Tryout Director for further discussion.

Any hockey event that is not under the Minnesota Hockey's Fall Tier 1 High Performance and/or USA Hockey's umbrella will not be considered by the Board.

Tryout Process

Evaluators Expectations

Centennial will always use outside evaluators that do not have any connection to the CYHA program. Evaluators credentials are reviewed and are proactively chosen for their hockey background, acumen, and knowledge/skills of the game. Potential evaluators will be questioned and must disclose if they have instructed or coached any members in the session(s) they will be scoring.

Non-Parent Coach Expectations

In conjunction with the evaluators, non-parent coaches will assist in the evaluation process. They will have dialogue with evaluators to discuss athletes to ensure proper team placement and team formation.

Parent Coach Expectations

Parent coaches, head and assistant coaches, will be selected only after final teams rosters are announced. This is to limit perceived or actual bias in parents choosing their own or their friends kids. Parent coaches are considered a parent during tryouts, not a coach or part of CYHA board and the tryout process.

Tryout Process

Ice Scrimmage Session Process:

The CYHA Board reserves the right to make adjustments to the tryout process due to unforeseen situations that could arise during tryouts.

Included in each tryout skates is a 3 to 5 minute warm-up for all athletes.

On-ice volunteers will not be allowed on the ice during their own child's evaluation session.

Each line will scrimmage for 1-1.5 minutes and the buzzer will sound to end the shift. Time will continue.

Tryout Process

Skate 1

For all traveling levels, the first night of tryouts will feature the athletes grouped into pods, with each pod featuring two teams. All athletes trying out for a given level will partake, with the athletes being placed within pods / teams by alphabetical round-robin grouping.

Each pod gets one hour of ice. The format for the first night varies slightly by level:

- Bantams / U15: Battle, Scrimmage and Small Area Games
- Peewees / U12: Battle, Scrimmage and Small Area Games
- Squirts / U10: Skills, Battle, Scrimmage and Small Area Games

After the first night, the athletes will be ranked top to bottom and then divided into new pods / teams for Night 2.

Example

60 Bantam skaters are trying out

30 skaters per pod

15 skaters per team in each pod

4 teams of 15 skaters

After night one, the top 30 skaters will be split into the 'upper half' pod and divided evenly based on tryout scores. The bottom 30 30 skaters will be split into the 'lower half' pod and divided evenly based on tryout scores.

Tryout Process

Skates 2-5

For all remaining tryout skates, the athletes will scrimmage five on five, full ice.

At the end of each night, athletes from lower pods could move up to higher pods and vice versa. This movement could continue through the final skate of that level's tryout process. Note that a player in the 'lower pod' on the final night could end up moving past players in the 'upper pod' when it comes to final team placement.

Team Selection

After the final skate for each tryout session, a cumulative stack ranking based on scores from independent evaluators and (if applicable) non-parent coaches will be used to determine the teams at each level.

Tryout Process

Grading / Scoring:

Tryout session scoring and weighting is as follows

Each tryout session will carry a unique scoring range and weighting. The purpose of the scoring range and weighting is to allow for the most accurate overall scoring for all players.

Night 1 ▪ Weighted ▪ Score range: 3-10 for C/B players, 5-7 for B/A players, 8-10 for A/AA players

Night 2 ▪ Weighted ▪ Score range: 3-10 for C/B players, 5-7 for B/A players, 8-10 for A/AA players

Night 3 ▪ Weighted ▪ Score range: 3-10 for C/B players, 5-7 for B/A players, 8-10 for A/AA players

Night 4 ▪ Weighted ▪ Score range: 3-10 for C/B players, 5-7 for B/A players, 8-10 for A/AA players

Night 5 ▪ Weighted ▪ Score range: 3-10 for C/B players, 5-7 for B/A players, 8-10 for A/AA players

Final team placements will be made after Night 5.

This final team rosters will be made public within 72 hours of final session, but likely much sooner.

Tryout Process

All athletes, except **Bantams** (as noted above in this document) will rotate positions based on a random predetermined sequence created by the tryout software CYHA uses. A volunteer on the bench will assist the rotation. Position(s) will be rotated based on our software and its randomizing capabilities that ensures all players have the same number of ice touches as well as playing all positions.

A volunteer on the bench will rotate goalies during the scrimmages. Rotation will include a predetermined number of minutes on the ice in each net.

The on-ice adult volunteer(s) will referee and have the discretion to enforce a penalty during scrimmages for blatant cheap checks/play. Penalty will result in athlete sitting for 2 of his or her own shifts during that scrimmage or he or she will be asked to leave the ice for that session.

Tryout Process - Goalies

Goalie Expectations

Goaltender skills will be evaluated two sessions prior to the "group" tryouts. In this initial session, goalies will demonstrate proficiency in multidisciplinary skills at each station. Each station will challenge each goalie in terms of positioning, balance, movement, save technique, play awareness, rebound control, and recovery.

It is not just about stopping the puck, but also includes save technique, movement, positioning, rebound control, and competitiveness. Accordingly, these skills will be considered in the upcoming tryouts to determine proper goalie placement.

Goalie Tryout Process

The process to run goalies through the tryout system and place them on teams can be challenging for a variety of reasons, mainly due to the fact that the number of goalies we have and the amount of teams at each level can change year to year. For example, if we have five Bantam goalies for five Bantam teams, the process is much different there compared to if we have nine goalies for five teams.

So, each year CYHA will go level-by-level to determine the flow of goalies through the evaluation process. The Goalie Director will contact all goalies before tryouts with clear communication on how the process will work for that year at that level.

All goalies -- whether you are trying out for AA, A, unless you want to be placed a C, etc. -need to show up to ALL the goalie evaluations which kickoff tryouts each year. Remaining phases will have results posted online at centennialhockey.org / Tryouts by Team Level. For example... Squirts, 12U, Bantams, 15U etc...

Tryout Process

CYHA understands that players/parents may be disappointed if they do not make the team they hoped to make. CYHA also understands that parents may want to discuss why their player(s) made the team they made. Per CYHA policy, you will not be able to contact anyone on the CYHA board until 48 hours post tryout results. At that time, you will be able to email your concern to tryouts email address tryouts@centennialhockey.org

Once your email is received, you will be contacted by a CYHA member to officially discuss your question. This is for clarification purposes only. We will NOT discuss particulars of any other player's but your own during this process.

The goal is to hear concerns and suggestions to improve the process.

Team selections are final and will not be modified unless there are extenuating circumstances that require action. Examples of these circumstances may include a player leaving the program due to making a High School team or a player leaving the program due to relocation or injury. If a case such as this should arise the CYHA governing board will evaluate the situation and impact on the teams at the level involved and, in their sole discretion, will determine if player movement is qualified and necessary.