

2026-2027 SYHA Travel Tryout Process

This document to make sure that everybody understands the process for tryouts, selecting teams, and commitments. The purpose of tryouts is to evaluate a player's skill level and place them on a team that will challenge them and help them grow as hockey players. As an organization, we strive to find a place for all our players. Our goal is to instill a love for the game and have hockey become a lifelong activity. **Note: For the purposes of this document, any references to the 'A team' represent the top team at each level. We have AA level teams at the U10/U12/U14 levels. 'A1' represents the second team for the purposes of tryouts.**

Registration:

The cost of tryouts is \$195 for U10-U18, \$75 for U8, \$50 for all goalies and \$100 for Lady Shark skaters.

Players will have the option of using existing practice jerseys from the 2025-2026 season for a \$20 credit for tryout registration.

Online registration and Payment are required 72 hours before a player receives a tryout jersey.

Walk-in registrations are unavailable.

Your player is ineligible to tryout if you have an outstanding balance with the league. Please speak with treasurer@syha.org if you have any questions.

Check In:

When you arrive, please check-in in at the lobby of Terry Connors Rink. You will be asked to sign this document. Your player will be given a numbered tryout jersey that is likely reversible (black and white) (red for goalies). There is absolutely no significance to the numbers or whether your player is asked to wear the black or white side of the jersey. He/she should wear that jersey for the duration of tryouts. The player's jersey number will be referenced for callback games and team selection. The player may keep the jersey.

Parents are asked to view tryouts from the visiting side of the rink (blue section, west side of rink). If parents sit on the home side of the rink (red) they will be asked to move.

Evaluation Process:

All divisions/age groups will have two evaluation skates, and a potential call-back game.

Players are required to attend only the evaluation sessions they are assigned. If a player shows to the wrong session, they will be turned away.

All players must attend tryouts at their birth year level. Although rare, there may however be a situation where the program allows a player to attend a tryout for an older birth year after the first tryout session if that placement is determined to be beneficial to the player and the program. This will be at the evaluator panel's discretion and will be discussed with the player's family and requires a Board approval.

First session:

An email will be sent informing each player on which session they must attend. The first session is broken up typically broken up alphabetically, but some players may be shifted to different sessions based on tournaments.

Second session

Players will receive a second email after the first session noting which session/date to attend for the second session.

Players will not necessarily play in the same group as the first session. Players will be assessed on the aggregation

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of their first two sessions to determine the final “A call back” group.

Session 1 and 2 details

During these sessions, on-ice coaches will run the players through a series of skating, passing, and shooting drills, as well as small area games. On-ice drills may vary in relation to the age and experience of the player pool.

There will be 4 to 5 evaluators in the booth at the top of the blue section of the rink. The evaluators will consist of SYHA Coaches, Hockey Director, Head Coach for each age level, as well as outside evaluators if possible. A non-partisan Board member may observe the evaluation process. The effort is to mix evaluators that know the players and have coached that age level and others that do not know the players. Evaluators will use Team Genius Software for evaluations, the same software used for end-of-season evaluations. Additional reference to a player’s hockey abilities will be guided by end-of-season evaluations and the previous year’s head coach as needed.

Additionally, players will be asked when registering whether they have other sports or activities that will prevent the player from being fully committed (i.e. attending 80% or more of all practices and games in the season). SYHA and USA Hockey support and encourage well-rounded athletes. However, transparency is necessary to ensure teams are picked with a full story. Short benches are unfair to the rest of your teammates.

To be clear, having a conflict does not mean a player will not be considered for the “A team”, but a coach needs to be aware of situations to ensure the teams have the correct number and makeup of players.

Families who are not forthcoming about conflicts may lose roster spots if it is discovered later.

Callback Games:

Within 24 hours of the last evaluation for a given division, some players will be called back to play in the “A callback Game.” Their tryout jersey numbers will be posted on the website, along with an email to report for the “A callback game”.

While most organizations select their teams based on the evaluation skates, SYHA also likes to know how players respond in game situations. Players may shine while skating in drills but may not be able to do well in game situations. In other words, we are looking at “hockey IQ” and in-game effectiveness. Most of the evaluation for team selections will be weighted on the performance in the callback games. There will be a component related to other factors such as coaches feedback from the previous season (if applicable) and the player commitment as mentioned above.

For the game, there will be coaches on the benches, and there will be evaluators (including the A team coach) in the top booth. The A team will be selected from this pool of players.

Players who are not invited to the “A callback game” may be invited to an “A1 callback game” that will take place after the “A callback game”.

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Commitment Letter:

The letter states that, if selected for the A team, the player will play for the “A team”, and the family will be responsible for the full season fee.

No player will be allowed on the ice for the “A callback game” until the commitment letter is signed.

If you drop off your player or he/she comes with another family, please sign the commitment letter prior to the beginning of the call-back game.

Impact Player Policy:

Who is an SYHA impact player? An impact player is a Non-Stamford Resident, who did not play for SYHA the previous season, who clearly stands out as a top candidate for an SYHA “A-team” during tryouts.

Who is not an impact player?

- If a player lives in Stamford, they are not an impact player, regardless of where they played the previous season.
- If a player is a non-resident, did not play at SYHA the previous season, but does not stand out at the top of the pack during tryouts, they are not an impact player.

What is the purpose of an impact player policy? An impact player policy is important because it helps solidify our base, increases our ability to field teams, while ensuring that current SYHA families and players can continue to play hockey at a competitive level. The addition of impact players will make all teams stronger, deeper, and more sustainable.

How many impact players are allowed on each team, and why is there a cap? SYHA can keep the program one of the most affordable in the area by ensuring that a certain percentage of its players are Stamford residents. The SYHA family and culture is a byproduct of families who join and stay with the program throughout the course of their youth careers. We want competitive teams, but we also want to ensure our Sharks’ family maintains its core foundation and culture, providing an opportunity for players of all skills levels to play hockey. This is why we cap the number of impact players.

The maximum number of impact players on an “A team” varies depending on the age level. There is no impact player rule for “A1” and “B teams”. The following are the max number of impact players for each age level “A team”:

- Mites: N/A
- Squirt: 4 players
- Pee Wees: 3 players
- Bantams: 2 players
- Midgets: N/A
- Lady Sharks: N/A

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Player Selection Process and securing your spot:

If the player is not selected for the "A team", the commitment letter will be discarded. The CHC is not letting organizations announce teams until early April. Teams will be announced at that time.

Players chosen for the "A teams" will be notified pending the allowed date by the CHC.

You will have 72 hours from when the offer is made to accept and provide the signed commitment letter through the offer section of the website, and \$1,000 (non-refundable) toward the 2026-2027 tuition or your player's position will be offered to an alternate player.

Unless you speak with the Finance Committee, treasurer@syha.org about a need-based scholarship, you will be unable to register for the season without this deposit.

Players chosen for the "non-A teams" will be notified within 72 hours of the date allowed date by the CHC. You will have 72 hours from when the offer was made to accept and provide a signed commitment letter (if not given at the callback game) and \$1,000 toward the 2026-2027 tuition, or your player's position will be offered to an alternate player.

There are no exceptions to the \$1,000 deposit unless a payment plan or Scholarship application is approved by the Treasurer prior to registering for the season.

Season fees and payment plans

Season fees are listed on the website when you register for tryouts. By default, our system will offer you a payment plan for the season. Full payments are always appreciated. Our payment structure will consist of the initial deposit in April, followed by 8 monthly payments of equal amounts to ensure the player is fully paid by December. Based on the payment plan, your player will be approximately 50% paid for the season when it begins around Labor Day.

If you are not 50% paid for the season when the season starts, your player will not take the ice and will lose their roster spot. There are no refunds or exceptions unless you are on scholarship.

Thank you for your understanding during the tryout process and good luck to all the players!

Please call or email the [HOCKEY DIRECTOR](#) should you have any questions!

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BY SIGNING, I HAVE READ, UNDERSTAND, AND AGREE TO THE STATEMENT ABOVE

Date _____

Signed _____

Printed Name _____