

Tryout & Evaluation Policy



APPROVED BY	EFFECTIVE DATE	VERSION	DATE APPROVED
Executive Hockey Director	2026-27	4.6 revised September 16th, 2026	August 28th, 2026 Designated Tryout Lead appointed September 4th, 2026

This is the standalone STMA YHA Tryout & Evaluation Policy referenced by the Member Handbook under Players: Rules, Regulations & Tryouts. It governs player evaluation, scoring, movement and team formation for the 2026-27 travel season.

Status. Approved in substance August 28th, 2026, revised September 14th, 2026. The Designated Tryout Lead for 2026-27 is appointed under Section 2, which closes the condition on approval. The forms required by this policy are listed in Section 3 and are maintained on stmayha.org under Documents.

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1 Purpose and Scope

This policy governs the annual tryout and evaluation process for all STMAYHA travel age groups. It establishes who runs the tryout, how players are scored, how players move between groups, how teams are formed, and what families are entitled to know.

The purpose of the tryout is to place every skater on the team that matches their ability, using objective evaluation data. The process is intended to be transparent, merit based, and free from political influence. No leadership position, board seat, coaching role or volunteer function carries any advantage for any person's child.

STMA and NWC work to place all players on a prospective team. The tryout determines which team a skater is placed on. Movement through the evaluation moves a skater between pools; it does not remove them from the program.

This policy applies to Squirt, PeeWee and Bantam boys and the corresponding girls age groups. Placement within the Mite and 8U program is governed by the Playing Divisions and Mite/8U Program policy. A Mite or 8U player requesting to move up to Squirt or 10U is governed by this policy, and Section 4 applies to that request in full.

2 Authority and Roles

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY UNDER THIS POLICY
Executive Hockey Director	Owns the tryout process, including evaluator selection, tryout format design and team formation. Approves the tryout plan, sets competition levels, and issues the final determination on any administrative error escalation.
Designated Tryout Lead	Named by the Executive Hockey Director. A Designated Tryout Lead is named for each age group , and one person may hold the role for more than one age group. Plans, coordinates and supervises all sessions for that age group. Receives evaluator conflict disclosures and rules on them. Is the single route for all illness, injury and equipment communication during the tryout. Controls access to evaluation data. No person may serve as Designated Tryout Lead for an age group in which they have a child, niece, nephew or sibling participating.
Goalie Tryout Director	Designs and runs the goaltender evaluation, recruits and approves goalie evaluators, and delivers the goaltender ranking to the Designated Tryout Lead.
HOC Directors	Boys and Girls Hockey Operations Directors run team formation for their side with the Executive Hockey Director, and handle placement questions arising from injury.
Evaluators	Score players against the published criteria. Independent and non parent for the age group they evaluate.
Designated tryout staff	Volunteers formally assigned by the Designated Tryout Lead to operate a session: check in, timing entry, locker room monitoring, bench and door, clock, and puck handling. Their assignment is what grants them rink access under the Handbook.

Appointment of the Designated Tryout Lead

A Designated Tryout Lead is appointed for every age group by the Executive Hockey Director before the first session of that age group. The appointment is recorded in the minutes of the Board of Directors and is available to any member in good standing on request. One person may hold the role for more than one age group.

Contact. The Designated Tryout Lead is reached at tryoutlead@stmayha.org. The address is the route for all illness, injury and equipment communication during the tryout.

When the role is active. The Designated Tryout Lead holds the role for an age group from the first session of that age group until the final session for that age group wraps. The role then ends for that age group, whether or not other age groups are still running. Outside that window, and on every matter after teams are posted, correspondence goes to the **Executive Hockey Director**. The tryoutlead@stmayha.org address is monitored during the tryout period only.

The Handbook routes evaluator conflict rulings, all illness and injury communication and evaluation data access through this role, so every age group must have one named. A person is ineligible to serve as Designated Tryout Lead for an age group in which they have a **child, niece, nephew or sibling** participating, matching the recusal standard in the Handbook's Conflict of Interest Policy.

The Executive Hockey Director may serve as Designated Tryout Lead for age groups in which he has no such relative participating. This is the Handbook's own mechanism: it requires that a *designated alternate appointed by the Executive Hockey Director* oversee evaluation, scoring and team formation for any age group from which the Executive Hockey Director is recused. Naming a Lead for each age group is how that alternate is appointed.

The Executive Hockey Director shall not serve as Designated Tryout Lead for any age group in which he or she has a skater participating. A Lead is appointed for those age groups under this section and the appointment is recorded.

3 Publication and Notice

1. The tryout plan for each age group, including session dates, group sizes, movement rules and scoring weights, shall be presented to the Board of Directors before the first session.
2. The evaluation criteria and the scoring methodology shall be published to families no later than **seven (7) days before the first tryout session** of that age group.
3. This policy shall be posted on stmayha.org under Documents and shall remain posted for the season.
4. A written description of each timed test is published with the criteria so that every family sees the same standard before their skater is measured. The association may also publish a short demonstration of each test.

Forms required by this policy

The following forms are maintained on stmayha.org under **Documents** and stay posted for the season. Each one is linked from the tryout page for the season it applies to.

Responses to every form below are collected in a single record maintained by the Executive Hockey Director and the Hockey Operations Committee, and are handled under the Access, Confidentiality and Records section of this policy. The three disclosure forms are additionally held under the Conflict of Interest section, where the Executive Hockey Director and the Board President both hold standing access to them.

FORM	WHO COMPLETES IT	WHEN	LINK
Evaluator Intake and Disclosure Form	Every skater evaluator and goaltender evaluator	Before the first session worked	Open form
Volunteer and Staff Tryout Intake and Disclosure Form	The Goalie Tryout Director, every Designated Tryout Lead, every HOC member and the HOC Administrator, and every volunteer who enters, handles or views scores, including timing gate, score entry, check in and Tryout HQ	Before the first session worked	Open form
Head Coach Disclosure Form	Every head coach and head coach candidate	With the coaching application, before interviews	Open form
Excused Absence Request	The family of any player missing a session, including a Tier 1 practice or game conflict	Before the missed session where possible, otherwise as soon as able	Open form
Tryout Injury Hold	The family of any player unable to continue because of injury or illness. Requires documentation from a treating provider	As soon as the player is unable to continue	Open form
Lower Team Placement Request	A family requesting placement on a lower team than ranking would produce	Before teams are formed	Open form
Post-Tryout Inquiry	A family with a question about their own player's evaluation	After the 48-hour hold, within seventy-two (72) hours of that period closing	Open form
Peer Up Election	A family of a June, July or August birthdate player electing to move to the next classification with their classmates	Before tryouts. Applies for the entire season	Open form
Play-Up Request	A family asking that their player be evaluated in a higher classification for any other reason	Before the first session of that age group	Open form

4 Eligibility, Move-Up and Play-Up

Eligibility

A player must be a registered member in good standing to participate. Players intending to try out for a high school team must declare that intent to the Executive Hockey Director before association tryouts begin.

Peer up

A player with a **June, July or August birthdate** may elect to move to the next classification to participate with their classmates. **The election is automatic and is not evaluated.** It shall be made **before tryouts** and **applies for the entire season.** The player is evaluated in that classification on the same criteria as every other skater in the group and is placed on the results of that evaluation.

Play-up

A move to a higher classification for any other reason is a **play-up** and is **not automatic.** It is granted at the discretion of the Executive Hockey Director in consultation with the relevant HOC Director. STMAYHA may also elevate a player where evaluation results and roster needs support it.

Consequences a family should understand

1. A player evaluated in a higher age group is ranked against that group only. There is no parallel ranking held at the player's own age group.
2. A move-up request is a request to be evaluated up, not a guarantee of placement on any particular team.
3. A player who moves up and is not placed to the association's satisfaction at that level may be returned to their own age classification by the Executive Hockey Director and placed on available evaluation data.

2026-27 transition. Sixteen move-up requests were received at registration for this season. Because this policy is being published after tryout registration closed, all requests received at registration are honored, and no deadline is enforced against a family for 2026-27.

5 Evaluators

1. Each skater session is staffed with **three (3) player evaluators** as the association standard, and with four to five where availability allows. Where availability prevents the standard being met for a session, the Designated Tryout Lead records it and the session is scored as held.
2. Each goaltender skills session is staffed with **two (2) goalie evaluators** as the association standard, so that no goaltender score rests on a single opinion, and with three to four

where availability allows. Where availability prevents this, the Designated Tryout Lead records it.

3. All evaluators shall have, at minimum, high school, junior or college hockey coaching, scouting or playing experience, and shall be well versed in player evaluation.
4. All evaluators shall be independent and non parent. No evaluator shall have a child participating in the age group they are evaluating.
5. All evaluators shall be approved by the Designated Tryout Lead and the Executive Hockey Director before sessions begin.
6. Any evaluator with a familial, coaching or training relationship to a player shall disclose it to the Designated Tryout Lead, who determines whether that evaluator may grade the age group. If permitted, that evaluator's scores for the related player shall be flagged for additional review.
7. Parent head coaches shall not serve as evaluators or participate in score tabulation for their child's age group.
8. **Evaluator identities shall not be published to families.** A roster of every approved skater evaluator and goaltender evaluator is retained by the Executive Hockey Director and is **available to the Board of Directors on request**, including the experience relied on in approving each of them. The roster is kept current as evaluators are added.
9. Evaluators are paid staff. Compensation is set in the Fees and Paid Staff section of this policy.

6 Conflict of Interest

The Conflict of Interest Policy in the Member Handbook applies in full and is not restated here. The operational requirements for this tryout are:

1. **Everyone involved in evaluation or team formation files a disclosure** before the first session. The **Evaluator Intake and Disclosure Form** is completed by every skater evaluator and goaltender evaluator. The **Volunteer and Staff Tryout Intake and Disclosure Form** is completed by the Goalie Tryout Director, every Designated Tryout Lead, every HOC member and the HOC Administrator, and **every volunteer who enters, handles or views scores**, including timing gate operators, score entry, check in and anyone working in Tryout HQ. These forms identify children or relatives in STMAYHA programs, financial relationships with private coaching or training businesses, and any other real or perceived conflict.
2. **Head coaches and coaching candidates** file the **Head Coach Disclosure Form** with their coaching application. A coach takes no part in evaluating or scoring. The rules that govern a coach are in the Team Formation section: no pick may be used on the coach's own child, niece, nephew or sibling, and a parent head coach candidate does not attend sessions of the age group their child is in or enter any area where scores are tabulated.

3. Disclosures are filed on the three forms named above. The responses are held in a **single record** to which the **Executive Hockey Director and the Board President both have standing access**. The Executive Hockey Director determines whether a disclosure requires recusal or additional safeguards. Because the President holds the same record, no disclosure is reviewed out of sight of a second officer, including a disclosure filed by the Executive Hockey Director.
4. The two routes are distinct and are not interchangeable. A **disclosure form** is a pre-tryout filing and is made on the applicable form above. A **relationship disclosed during the tryout**, including a familial, coaching or training relationship to a player in a session being graded, is raised with the **Designated Tryout Lead** for that age group, who rules on it in the moment and reports the ruling to the Executive Hockey Director.
5. New conflicts arising during the tryout must be disclosed within **72 hours**.
6. No more than three evaluators from any single outside clinic, training program or organization shall work a single age level.
7. **Prior coaching or training relationships are disclosable**. Having coached, trained or skilled players in an age group in a previous season is a real or perceived conflict and shall be disclosed on the form, whether or not the evaluator still has a player in the association. Prior involvement does not by itself disqualify an evaluator, and association knowledge is often useful. Where an evaluator has such a relationship with players in a group they are grading, **their scores for those players shall be flagged for review against the rest of the panel**, and the Designated Tryout Lead confirms the flagged scores sit within the range of the other evaluators before the ranking is used.
8. **Recusal from discussion of one's own player**. The Executive Hockey Director and any member of the Hockey Operations Committee shall recuse themselves from any discussion, deliberation or decision concerning the evaluation, ranking or placement of their own child. They shall step out of the room for that portion of the discussion and shall not receive the notes or scoring detail from it. The Designated Tryout Lead for that age group records the outcome, or a second HOC member where the Lead is not present.
9. Recusal under the paragraph above applies only to the discussion of that individual player. Once that player's placement has been decided and recorded, the individual resumes their role in full and continues to carry out every other duty of the position, including the discussion and placement of all other players. Recusal from one player's conversation does not remove that individual from the team formation process as a whole.
10. **Scope of recusal during team formation**. Recusal attaches to the **selection round in which that person's own player is under consideration**. A coach's pick is comparative, so a member whose player sits in the **pick pool** for a team is recused from that team's entire pick round, steps out for it, and does not receive the notes from it. Recusal does not attach to the age group, to the meeting, or to the day. The individual returns for every other team and every other decision.

11. **Where the member's own player is locked by rank**, no pick is required for that player and there is nothing to deliberate. The member takes part in team formation for that team without restriction.
12. **Resumption of duties.** Once evaluations for an age group are complete, the Executive Hockey Director and all Hockey Operations Committee members resume their roles in full for that age group, subject only to the pick round rule above. Once that person's player is **locked on a roster**, the recusal ends entirely and the individual resumes full duties immediately, **whether or not tryouts are still running at other levels**. Recusal is a limit on one selection round, never a suspension from the office.

7 Session Structure

Each travel age group runs a published multi-session tryout. The number of sessions, group sizes and ice times for 2026-27 are set out in the age group structure documents, which form the appendices to this policy and are published alongside it.

SESSION	PURPOSE
Day 1, timed skills skate	Every skater is measured on the same timed tests. These times are scored and carry the weight set out in Section 10. The skating groups on Day 1 are administrative only, formed without reference to prior results.
All remaining sessions	Graded ice using intrasquad scrimmages, practices and games, in whatever combination the age group's structure document sets out. These sessions are scored and carry the balance of the weight. Groups from Day 2 onward are formed from cumulative score.

The mix of scrimmages, practices and games differs by age group and is set by the ice available to that age group. The session names, order and format used at an age group are those published in that age group's structure document.

Ice times, session structure and team structure are fixed once published. They are not altered to accommodate a variance in numbers.

8 Skills Testing

Every skater is measured on the same five timed tests. Each test is run twice and the faster attempt is the score of record. Tests 2 and 3 are two splits of a single skate, so four runs produce five scores.

TEST	NAME	HOW IT IS RUN
1	5-10-5 change of direction	Start at the red line, skate to the blue line and stop, skate through the gate to the far blue line and stop, then skate back through the red line gate. No puck.
2	Acceleration	A sprint from the goal line to the hashmarks. First split of the speed skate.
3	Full speed fly	Blue line to blue line on the same skate. The skater has already built speed and is measured moving through the neutral zone at full speed. Second split of the speed skate.
4	Forward and backward transition	The skater works down the ice transitioning between forward and backward, alternating the whole length.
5	Puck control	In and out of obstacles with a puck. The skater may take either direction at the start and alternates through the objects from there.

Each test is timed at the gates against the skater's pre-assigned timing number. Each test is described in writing and demonstrated to evaluators before the session so the standard is identical at every station.

9 Evaluation Criteria

The timed tests in the Skills Testing section produce a measured result. Every other session in the tryout is scored by the evaluator panel in two core categories, Skating and Puck Skills, and Game Play, against the criteria set out under each below. These are the published evaluation criteria referred to throughout this policy, and they are the only criteria on which a skater is scored.

CATEGORY AND CRITERION	WHAT THE EVALUATOR IS SCORING
Skating and Puck Skills	
Skating	Speed, stride, edges, balance, agility and change of direction under game conditions.
Stick handling	Puck control in motion, in traffic and under pressure.
Passing	Accuracy and timing of the pass, and the ability to receive one.
Shooting	Release, accuracy and shot selection.
Game Play	
Hockey sense	Reading the play, positioning, decisions with and without the puck, support of teammates.
Physical play	Body position, angling, competing for pucks along the wall and in front of the net, and legal body contact. Bantam age group only.
Soft skills	Attitude, body language, penalties taken, and treatment of teammates, opponents and officials.

Every evaluator working a session scores against this same list. A skater is not scored on anything outside it, and no criterion is added, removed or reweighted during the tryout.

Physical play applies to the Bantam age group only. It is not scored at Squirt or PeeWee, or in the corresponding girls age groups, where body checking is not part of the game.

10 Scoring Methodology

1. Within each timed test, skaters are ranked by their fastest attempt. The five test scores are averaged to produce the skater's skills score.
2. Practices, scrimmages and game sessions are scored by the evaluator panel against the published evaluation criteria and produce a session score on the same scale.
3. Weighting follows the published split below: a small portion of a skater's score comes from the Day 1 timed tests and the large majority comes from all remaining evaluated ice. Weighted scores are divided by the weights actually entered, so a skater is never penalized for a session their group did not skate.
4. Players are ranked by cumulative weighted score within their level.
5. Score tabulation is performed by the Designated Tryout Lead or a designated, conflict-free administrator. No coach, Board member or HOC member with a child in the age group participates in tabulation.

6. A player's score is never restated, adjusted or recalculated because the player changed pools. Scores already earned stand as earned.

Session weights, 2026-27

The association applies one weighting at every age group. A small portion of every skater's score comes from the Day 1 timed skills. The large majority comes from the evaluated ice that follows, spread across the sessions the skater actually skates.

COMPONENT	PORTION OF THE SCORE	APPLIES TO
Day 1 , the five timed skills tests	Small portion	Every skater
All remaining evaluated ice , in any combination of scrimmages, pool play, practices and games	Large majority	Every skater, on the sessions they skate

Evaluated ice means any session a skater is scored at. Those sessions are not required to carry equal weight. A later session may carry more than an earlier one, because a skater in a later session is being evaluated against a stronger group on the ice. The weighting is set before an age group's first session, is the same for every skater at that age group, and is not changed once tryouts have begun. The number of sessions after Day 1 varies by age group and by pool.

A skater is scored only on the sessions they skate. A skater's weighted scores are divided by the weight actually entered for that skater, so missing a session a skater's pool never held does not lower their score.

11 Goaltender Evaluation

1. Goaltenders are evaluated and ranked on a separate track from skaters. A goaltender is never ranked against a skater.
2. The goaltender evaluation is designed and run by the **Goalie Tryout Director**, who has built and run goaltender evaluations for Minnesota Hockey and other associations.
3. Goaltenders are scored throughout the goaltender skills sessions and then ranked across the remainder of the tryout.
4. **The majority of a goaltender's score comes from their goaltender specific evaluation.** Game and scrimmage play carries the remaining weight. This reflects the settled view among goaltending specialists that game outcomes are a poor instrument for ranking goaltenders.
5. Each goaltender is scored by more than one evaluator at the skills sessions so that no single opinion determines a ranking.
6. **Goaltender coverage at the remaining sessions.** The Association shall make reasonable efforts to staff a goalie evaluator at the sessions following the goaltender skills sessions. Where a goalie evaluator is not available for a session, the player evaluators

working that session may score the goaltenders. All evaluators meet the credential standard in the Evaluators section of this policy and are qualified to assess a goaltender inside a session.

7. **A session without a goalie evaluator is not cancelled, rescheduled or discounted.**
8. The Goalie Tryout Director delivers the goaltender ranking to the Designated Tryout Lead. Goaltender placement then follows the same team formation process as skaters.

12 Movement and Advancement

Movement between pools is published in advance for each age group and is expressed as a fixed number of players moving up or down after a named session. Movement is determined by rank, not by opinion.

Two terms that are not interchangeable. Finalized is a movement rule: a finalized skater stops moving between pools for the rest of the tryout. **Locked** is a roster rule in the Team Formation section: a locked skater is on the team and cannot be moved off it. A skater may be finalized during the week and is still subject to the lock count when the roster is built.

1. The number of players advancing after each session is published before the tryout begins and does not change during the tryout.
2. Pool 1 group counts are fixed. Where a variance in numbers occurs, it is absorbed in the lowest pool.
3. **Finalized.** Where an age group structure finalizes a group of top skaters at a named session, those skaters stop moving between pools for the rest of the tryout and carry straight to the final session of the top pool. Finalizing is a movement rule and is decided by rank at that session.
4. **Movement between pools is placement, not removal.** A skater who moves to a lower pool remains in the evaluation and continues toward placement on a prospective team.

13 Attendance and Absence

1. A player unable to participate in a session must notify the **Designated Tryout Lead before the missed session**, on the **Excused Absence Request form**. Where the player cannot continue because of injury or illness, the family files the **Tryout Injury Hold form** instead.
2. **Unexcused absence.** A player who does not appear for a session and has not been excused receives a score of **zero (0)** for that session.
3. **Excused absence.** An excused absence is granted in rare circumstances only. The family must communicate the conflict in advance on the **Excused Absence Request form** and receive an exemption before the session. **No family should assume an absence will be excused.** Documented injury or illness, and an absence approved in advance by the Executive Hockey Director, are the grounds on which one is granted. Where an absence is

excused the session is left blank, the player's weighted score is calculated on the sessions actually skated, and the player advances to the next stage of the process. An absence that has not been approved in advance is unexcused and scores **zero (0)**.

4. **Tier 1 conflict.** A player required to attend a Tier 1 team practice or game is excused for that session. Tier 1 attendance is required of a selected player and is not treated as a missed STMAYHA session. The session is left blank and the player advances on the sessions actually skated.
5. **The final session of the pool a player is in is required of every player.** A Tier 1 commitment does not excuse a player from it. That session produces team formation, and a player cannot be placed accurately without it. Age groups do not all end on the same day or with the same session, so this is read against the published structure for that age group. A player who misses the final session of their pool without an approved documented injury or illness receives a score of **zero (0)** for that session. **One exception applies.** A skater who does not dress for that session because of their own rank, whether finalized under the published structure for the age group or locked and asked by the evaluators not to attend, is excused. That skater is not scored for the session and it never counts against them. The exception covers a skater kept off the ice by the association; a skater who simply does not appear is unexcused.
6. A player unable to attend any session shall be placed under the Injury Hold provisions below.

Injury Hold

A player who is unable to complete the tryout because of a documented injury or illness is placed on **Injury Hold**. An Injury Hold protects the player's standing in the association. It is not a withdrawal or a forfeit of a roster spot.

1. **Trigger.** An Injury Hold applies where a player, because of documented injury or illness, misses so much of the tryout that the sessions actually skated do not support a placement. A player who skates enough sessions to be ranked is scored under the excused absence rule above and is not placed on hold.
2. **Request.** The family notifies the Designated Tryout Lead as early as possible and provides documentation from a treating provider. The Executive Hockey Director grants the hold.
3. **Initial placement.** A player unable to participate because of injury or illness starts with a group chosen by the relevant HOC Director, who may consult the player's coaches from the previous season and the HOC in determining that placement. Placement uses any evaluation data from the current tryout, the player's prior season with STMAYHA, and the player's evaluation history. **No score is estimated, averaged or assigned on the player's behalf.** Missed sessions remain blank.
4. **Final placement.** The HOC makes final team placement after further evaluation of the player.
5. **Held roster place.** The relevant HOC Director holds a roster place for the player at the level identified above. The place is held from the time the hold is granted, so the team is

built with that place already accounted for and **no other player is displaced** when the player returns.

6. **Return and placement.** Once the player is medically cleared, they are given **seven to ten days of practice** before placement is determined. The HOC Director then places the player on a team. That placement is the player's tryout result. It is not a change to a published tryout result and does not reopen any other player's placement.
7. **Return to play.** STMAYHA may require written physician clearance before the player returns to activity, consistent with the Member Handbook and the Concussion Protocol. Concussion cases follow the return-to-play protocol without exception.
8. **Roster effect.** A player on Injury Hold counts against the roster of the team whose place is held. The association does not carry an additional player in that spot, and the held place is inside the roster limits in the Member Handbook.
9. **Injury during the tryout.** A player injured during a session is placed on hold from that point forward and retains every score already earned.
10. **Questions** regarding injury or illness placement are directed to the Boys HOC Director, Derek McChesney, hocdirector@stmayha.org, or the Girls HOC Director, Brandon Mitchell, girlshocdirector@stmayha.org.

14 Team Formation

Coaches and the tryout process

1. **Non-parent head coaches** are named before tryouts begin and take part in the tryout process. They may attend sessions only for age groups in which they do not have a child participating.
2. **Parent head coaches are not named until the conclusion of tryouts.** A parent head coach may be named only if their own skater or goaltender finishes on that team's roster. A parent head coach candidate shall not attend any session of the age group in which their child is participating, and shall not enter any area where scores are tabulated. **Once scoring is complete they may then begin to finalize their roster, within the coach's pick rules set out in this section.**
3. Coaches shall not communicate with evaluators, players or parents during sessions.

Team formation meeting

1. Following the final session at each level, the Executive Hockey Director, the relevant HOC Director, the HOC Administrator and the head coach of the team being formed meet to review player rankings and finalize rosters.
2. Where the Executive Hockey Director is recused for that age group, a **designated alternate appointed by the Executive Hockey Director** sits in their place. The same applies to any HOC member recused for that age group.

How a skater is ranked

Every skater is scored at each session. Those scores are combined into the weighted average set out in the Scoring Methodology section, and that average produces one list for the age group, **ranked from 1 to the last skater**. Every rule below works off that rank. There is no second list and no separate calculation.

Ties. Where two skaters finish on the same weighted average, the higher rank goes to the skater with the **higher score in their most recent scored session**. Where that session is also tied, the next most recent scored session is used, and so on. The same rule applies at every level and in every pool.

Two rule sets

Four teams follow the first process: **PeeWee AA, Bantam AA, 12U A and 15U A**. All other travel teams follow the second process. Both work the same way. A set number of skaters are **locked** by rank, and the coach fills the rest from a **pick pool**. Only the numbers differ.

Locked means the skater is on the team and cannot be moved off it. **Pick pool** means the skater is eligible to be chosen for one of the places left.

Why the two processes differ. PeeWee AA, Bantam AA, 12U A and 15U A lock a smaller share of the roster by rank, which gives those coaches more room to finalize by **positional need**. That is deliberate. Those four teams compete at the highest level STMAYHA fields and must be built as complete teams, with the forwards, defense and goaltending a competitive roster requires. Every other travel team is **development first**, so players are taken in the order they rank as hockey players and the roster is not shaped around positional need. The difference in flexibility is a difference in purpose, not a difference in standard.

Process for PeeWee AA, Bantam AA, 12U A and 15U A

1. **Team size is set first**, on the last day of tryouts, by the **Executive Hockey Director and the HOC Director**. Where either is recused for that age group, the designated alternate acts in their place.
2. **Locked by rank.** The number locked follows the team size:
 - 11 to 12 skaters: the top **6** are locked.
 - 13 to 14 skaters: the top **7** are locked.
 - 15 to 18 skaters: the top **8** are locked.
3. **The skaters finalized in that age group's published structure do not dress** for the final session. Their placement is already settled. Sitting out is a consequence of their rank and never counts against them. The number finalized is set in the published structure for that age group and is not the same as the number locked above.
4. The remaining skaters dress and are scored. After that session, the locked places still open are filled **by skater rank**.

5. **Pick pool.** Every skater who skated the final A Pool session and is not locked is eligible to be a coach's pick. Skating that session is the only requirement. A skater moved up from a lower pool for that session is an A Pool skater from that moment and is eligible on the same terms as everyone else on that ice.
6. **Where one of these four teams plays no final game,** the pool is every skater who skated the final A Pool session at that level, and it runs **five (5) skaters past the roster size.** For example, on a 13-skater roster the top 7 are locked and ranks 8 through 18 are the pool for the remaining places.

Process for all other travel teams

This process is used for every travel team except PeeWee AA, Bantam AA, 12U A and 15U A.

1. **Locked by rank**, following the anticipated skater roster size, goaltenders excluded:
 - 10 to 11 skaters: the top **8** are locked.
 - 12 to 13 skaters: the top **9** are locked.
 - 14 or more skaters: the top **10** are locked.
2. **Pick pool**. The pool runs **five (5) skaters past the roster size**. On a 13-skater roster the top 9 are locked and ranks 10 through 18 are the pool for the remaining 4 places.

Standards governing every pick, both rule sets

1. Picks are made off the same skater rank used to lock players. The pool defined above is the limit of a pick; no selection may be made from outside it.
2. A pick may account for position need, defensive reliability and demonstrated compete level. These are factors considered by the selecting coach, not a formula.
3. **No pick may be used on the selecting coach's own child, niece, nephew or sibling.** Where that skater is already locked by rank, no pick is required. Where that skater is not locked, the place is filled by rank.
4. Where the head coach of a team has not yet been named, the picks for that team are made by **the HOC**.
5. **Every pick is recorded**, showing the player selected, the team and who made the selection, and is retained with the tryout data under this policy.

Locked players and the final session

A locked skater holds their place whether or not they attend the final session. Evaluators may ask a locked skater not to attend the final scrimmage so other skaters get more puck touches and can be evaluated properly. **Being excused in this way never affects a skater's standing.** Attendance matters only for the pick pool.

Family requests to place a skater on a lower team

A family may request that their skater be placed on a **lower** team than their ranking would otherwise produce, for example to play alongside a sibling. Such a request is granted or declined **at the discretion of the relevant HOC Director**, and shall be made on the **Lower Team Placement Request** form before teams are formed. **There is no equivalent request upward.** A request of this kind never moves another skater down, and never places a skater on a team their evaluation did not earn.

Equal-level teams

Where an age group fields two teams at the same level, for example two B2 teams, the teams are built by **snake draft** off the evaluator rankings. The highest ranked available player goes to

the team picking, and the pick order reverses each round, so the team picking first in one round picks last in the next. This distributes ability evenly rather than stacking the top of the ranking on one bench.

Goaltenders in an equal-level split. Goaltenders are distributed the same way and are drafted against the skaters. The team that does not receive the highest ranked skater receives the highest ranked goaltender, and the order then alternates, so no team receives both the top skater and the top goaltender.

Goaltenders

Goaltenders are placed through the goaltender evaluation process and are not subject to coach's picks. Where two goaltenders are tied after evaluation, the Executive Hockey Director, the relevant HOC Director and the team head coach jointly make the final determination. Where the Executive Hockey Director or an HOC member has a child, niece, nephew or sibling participating in that age group, they are recused from the determination and the designated alternate acts in their place.

Posting

1. **Notice to the Board.** Final rosters are provided to the Board of Directors within **one (1) day** of the final tryout session for that level.
2. **Publication.** Final teams are posted to the association website within **three (3) days** of the final tryout session for that level. Teams are commonly posted sooner, and the association posts as soon as rosters are confirmed.
3. **15U is the exception.** 15U teams are posted after high school team rosters are selected, and within three (3) days of those rosters being released.
4. Rosters provided to the Board before publication are confidential under this policy. A Board member shall not disclose a placement, including their own child's placement, before teams are posted.

15 Player Requirements and Rink Conditions

What the player wears

1. **Tryout jersey.** Each skater receives a numbered tryout jersey at check in on the first day. It is worn for every session of the tryout and **returned at the end of the final session** the skater attends. Jerseys are association property and are reissued each season.
2. **Socks.** STMA or NWC colored socks are required, matching the association the skater is trying out for.
3. **Helmet label.** Each skater wears the association-issued helmet label carrying their timing number. The timing number is assigned in advance and does not match the tryout jersey number.

Rink conditions

1. **Sessions are closed.** Tryout ice and the locker room areas are closed to spectators for the duration of every session.
2. **Younger skaters.** At Squirt and 10U a parent may enter the locker room to tie skates before the session, and then leaves.
3. **Live streaming is off. LiveBarn is turned off for the duration of every tryout session.** No session is streamed, recorded or broadcast. This protects the skaters and keeps evaluation footage from circulating.
4. **Tryout HQ.** The room where scores are entered and teams are discussed is restricted to evaluators, the Designated Tryout Lead and designated tryout staff, core HOC members, HOC Admin, the Executive Board and the Girls and Boys Coordinators, subject in every case to the recusal rules in the Conflict of Interest section.

16 Access, Confidentiality and Records

1. **Tryouts are closed to the public.** Only the following may be in the rink during a session: approved evaluators; confirmed coaches for age groups where they do not have a child participating; the Designated Tryout Lead and designated tryout staff; and the Executive Hockey Director for age groups where he does not have a child participating.
2. Any Board member, HOC member, commissioner or volunteer with a child participating in an age group shall not be in or near the rink during that age group's sessions, including any area where scores are tabulated. This governs attendance at sessions. It does not limit an HOC member's part in team formation, which is governed by the recusal rules in the Conflict of Interest section.
3. There shall be no unnecessary contact between players, parents, evaluators, commissioners and coaches during the tryout process. Necessary communication, including illness, injury and equipment problems, routes through the Designated Tryout Lead only.
4. Access to evaluation scores, tryout data and team formation records is limited to the Designated Tryout Lead, the Executive Hockey Director and designated administrators. Coaches receive only what is necessary for their team.
5. All tryout scores and team formation discussions are confidential. Disclosure to unauthorized persons is grounds for removal from the Board, HOC or volunteer position.
6. Tryout scores and evaluation data are retained for **twelve (12) months** for nonprofit audit purposes, then destroyed.

17 Post-Tryout Inquiry Process

1. **48-hour rule.** No inquiry regarding tryout results, a player's position, or team status is accepted within 48 hours of teams being posted. This mirrors the 48-hour rule in the Parent Code of Conduct in the Member Handbook and is enforced under that code.
2. **Inquiry submission.** Once the 48-hour period has passed, a parent may submit an inquiry on the **Post-Tryout Inquiry form**, requesting their own child's individual evaluation report. The Designated Tryout Lead role has ended by this point, so no inquiry after teams are posted goes to that address. Inquiries must be submitted within 72 hours of the close of the 48-hour period.
3. **Individual report only.** The parent receives their own child's ranking. No other player's scores, ranking or placement information is disclosed.
4. **Results are final.** Consistent with the Member Handbook, tryout results are final and no roster change is made as a result of any inquiry, grievance or appeal. Correcting a demonstrated administrative error in score tabulation is not a roster change made in response to an inquiry; it is a correction of the record, made by the Designated Tryout Lead and the Executive Hockey Director so that the published result matches the evaluations actually recorded.
5. **Report timing.** The individual evaluation report is provided within seven (7) days of a properly submitted inquiry.
6. **Escalation.** A parent who believes an administrative error occurred raises it with the **Executive Hockey Director** within 48 hours of receiving the individual report. The Executive Hockey Director reviews the record, consulting the Designated Tryout Lead who held the age group, and responds within 3 days.
7. **Final determination.** Where the matter is not resolved at the step above, it is referred for review to a committee of **no fewer than three (3) members of the Hockey Operations Committee**. The committee reviews the record and issues a final determination within 7 days. That determination is not subject to further appeal.
8. **Committee membership.** The committee is drawn from the Hockey Operations Committee and is set before the first tryout session, so it is not assembled after a complaint is received. No member with a child, niece, nephew or sibling in the age group under review sits on it, and a replacement is named from the Hockey Operations Committee. Final authority over tryout and evaluation matters otherwise rests with the Executive Hockey Director under the terms of that office.

Tryout grievances follow this process and are excluded from the general grievance process in the Member Handbook.

18 Fees and Paid Staff

Player fees

No player pays a fee to be evaluated for any team at any level. The additional tryout fee previously charged to be considered for a AA team has been removed for 2026-27.

Paid roles

The following tryout roles are compensated. All other tryout roles, including all volunteer session staffing, are unpaid.

- **Evaluators**, compensated at an hourly rate set annually by the Board of Directors.
- **Goalie Tryout Director**, engaged under a seasonal contract.
- **Timing gate system and operation**, engaged under a seasonal contract.

Rates and contract amounts are approved by the Board of Directors as part of the annual tryout budget and are recorded in the Association's financial records. They are available to any member in good standing on request to the Treasurer.

Disclosure to the Board. Before the first tryout session, the Executive Hockey Director shall provide the Board of Directors with a list of **every individual paid or contracted in connection with the tryout**, inside and outside the evaluator group, stating each person's role and responsibilities. Contracts for the Goalie Tryout Director and the timing gate system are made available to the Board President and the Treasurer on request.