

Fargo Youth Hockey Association



**Player & Parent Handbook
2023-24 Season**

Welcome to the Fargo Youth Hockey Association (FYHA)

This handbook is designed to provide parents, players and coaches a complete overview of the FYHA. Please read and make a copy of this document as it will be your guide throughout your participation in FYHA. Should you have any additional questions about the program, or wish to volunteer for one of the committees, please contact [Jeff Nygaard, FYHA Executive Director](#).

Fargo Youth Hockey Association (FYHA) Mission Statement

The purpose of Fargo Youth Hockey Association (FYHA) is to promote, develop and administer a youth hockey program. This program is meant to serve the youth of Fargo who reside within the boundaries of the Corporation and petitioning players who reside outside the boundaries of the Corporation. The Corporation's principal purpose is to provide the athletes in the appropriate age group the opportunity to have fun participating in hockey by offering high quality coaching, adequate ice time for practice and skill development, and exposure to advanced competition through participation in high caliber games and tournaments. Fargo Youth Hockey Association is an affiliate of USA Hockey. USA Hockey rules and policies govern the manner in which we manage the programs we offer.

USA Hockey Mission Statement

USA Hockey encourages an environment in which children can learn the basic skills without the distractions that are often associated with an overemphasis on winning. Mastery of fundamental skills and the fun of playing are essential to the development of a lifelong interest in hockey. Programs must be conducted to accommodate the number of new players who wish to play hockey, and to reduce the number who become disenchanted and drop out.

Core Values of FYHA

FYHA will strive to provide:

- A chance to play hockey at a level appropriate for each child.
- A safe, fun and rewarding hockey experience.
- An environment that stresses skill development rather than competition.
- A sense of pride deriving from membership and participation in our organization.
- Quality coaching.
- Positive adult role modeling - from coaches, parents and association representatives.
- An economically feasible fee structure for the player and the non-profit organization.
- Opportunity for each participant to develop skills and progress on the ice.
- A setting where sportsmanship and good behavior are stressed at all times.
- An environment in which discipline and teamwork are learned, valuing the strengths of working together and learning as a team.
- An environment free from verbal or physical abuse, retaliation and discrimination.
- An environment in which sportsmanship, a sense of fair play, humility in victory and graciousness in defeat is stressed.
- Reinforcement of the Golden Rule: Members and athletes will treat others as they would expect to be treated.
- Pursuit of excellence in which each member, athlete, coach and parent will seek to perform to the highest level of their ability if they so desire.
- An ethic of teamwork in which the strengths of working and learning together as a team are valued.
- A mentorship for players to become conscientious adults and hockey ambassadors.

FYHA Executive Board of Directors

For a complete list of the FYHA Board of Directors click this link [HERE](#).

Fargo Youth Hockey Program Description

The FYHA program emphasizes high quality coaching and ongoing coaching education. The FYHA program stresses a specific set of skill progressions for the respective levels. These skill progressions follow USA Hockey American Development Model (ADM). For more information on USA Hockey guidelines, visit the web site at www.usahockey.com.

Fargo Youth Hockey Fees, Fundraising & Volunteer Requirements

The cost to fund a player in the FYHA exceeds \$1,750 per travel player each season, and even more at some levels. Your fees, fundraising efforts and volunteer hours are essential to keep costs reasonable and to ensure opportunities for the youth we serve now and in the future. The FYHA Board of Directors continually evaluates ways to minimize the cost to participate and the mix of ways to subsidize the program.

Registration is conducted electronically via the [FYHA website](#). Fees are due on dates published at the time of registration unless other arrangements are made with the executive director. In the event your account is in financial arrears, your player(s) will not be allowed to register or participate in any FYHA activities until the account is paid up.

If a player decides, of their own accord, to terminate membership after they have participated in any on-ice sessions, no fees paid up to that point will be refunded. In the event of an injury, accompanied by a recommendation from a medical professional that a player shouldn't continue, the fees could potentially be pro-rated depending on date of injury. These decisions would be considered on a case-by-case basis by the executive director.

Your fundraising efforts and volunteer hours are greatly appreciated. They are essential in keeping costs reasonable and ensuring opportunities for the youth we currently serve and for those in the future.

Each family must commit to fulfill both the fundraising/buyout and the volunteer requirements as defined for each level and program for each hockey season.

This includes:

- Working the minimum required shifts as a family at Fargo Youth Hockey tournaments or festivals. Children age 12 and older are capable of serving in specific volunteer positions which may help fulfill the family obligation. They must be accompanied by an adult family member. Younger family members may not work the clock or scorekeeping.
- Each member Mite/8U and up must fulfill BOTH the fundraising/buyout AND the volunteer requirements.
- Mite/8U playThose not fulfilling the fundraising/buyout requirement by the stated dates will not be allowed on the ice for practices or games. Those not fulfilling volunteer requirements will not be allowed to participate in any FYHA program activities after the deadline date as defined each season, including State Tournaments.

Donations

FYHA is a 501(c)3 charitable organization, which means contributions may be tax deductible (consult your tax professional for verification). Your donation to FYHA would be very welcome. If your employer matches your charitable contributions please arrange for that also.

FYHA Programs

Fall Camps

- Fall camps are intended to allow all players at a certain level to participate in on-ice activities and instruction prior to tryouts.
- Fall camps shall not be used to evaluate players in the program at any level.
- Fall camps are included with the programming and registration fees at every level.
- The structure of the Fall camps, frequency of camps, and length of the camps will be determined by the Hockey Director.

Tryout Evaluators

Evaluators may consist of any combination of the following people:

- Level Coaches
- Level Coordinators
- Independent qualified volunteer evaluator, including coaches from past seasons
- Evaluators may or may not have a child/children in the program
- Evaluators may or may not have a child/children at the Level being evaluated
- If evaluator has a child playing at the Level being evaluated, the evaluator must abstain from ranking their own children
- If an evaluator's child's ranking needs to be discussed amongst the group of evaluators, the evaluator with the child being evaluated must remove himself/herself from the conversation.
- A minimum of three evaluators shall be used at each Level.
- Evaluators will attempt to make a full-time commitment to attending all tryout sessions at the particular Level they are evaluating (excused absences may be granted by the Hockey Director).

Tryout Process

- Tryouts shall remain closed to membership
- The tryout process shall be communicated to membership prior to tryouts beginning.
- A minimum of 3 on-ice sessions shall be used to evaluate players during a defined period of time
- Tryouts shall consist of objective and subjective evaluation of skills. It is recommended that a subjective ranking be used initially prior to grouping kids into stacked ranked groups for the objective evaluations
- Following the evaluation of skills, it is recommended that each tryout process consists of subjective rankings by the evaluators as the players compete in a scrimmage/game format

- During evaluations, there shall be a concentrated focus on the “bubble” players, including placing the bubble players in situations where they will be allowed to compete against one another during the evaluation process.
- Once the evaluation process is complete the players will be ranked and the ranking will be reviewed and approved by the Hockey Director. Rankings will not be made public or shared with anyone.
- A player must try out at his/her age level. There is no process for a player or parent to petition or request playing “up” a level. Should the Hockey Director deem a player best served to play “up” that conversation will take place at the Hockey Director’s determination.

Program Structure

Roster Sizes

Roster sizes will vary from year-to-year and will be based on placing kids on teams based on the skillsets of players. All efforts should be made to avoid having too many kids on one team with varying degrees of skill sets.

- For Mites/8U and younger there is no minimum or maximum number of players per roster at these levels.
- Team sizes will vary from year to year to accommodate practice structure and game structure.
- Jr Gold teams must have a minimum of 1 player designated to play goalie to form a team
- Teams without a designated goalie shall rotate players at the goalie position until a goalie is identified

Class of Play

Age 6 and Under (Termites):

- Three classes of play, T1, T2, T3. These classes of play can be described as beginner, intermediate, and advanced for this age group.
- Teams will be formed within each Class of play by grouping kids together according to which school they attend, when possible. At this Level, boys and

girls play together as FYHA does not provide a separate option for girls only play.

Age 8 and Under (Mites):

- Classes of play will be set up in accordance with the number of players participating and grouped by skill level.

- Teams will be formed within each Class of play by conducting live drafts by coaches and shall be balanced by skill sets.
- To ensure teams are balanced, players shall be evaluated to start the season. Players should be stack ranked and grouped for drafting purposes.

8U Girls:

- Teams will be formed by live drafts and shall be balanced by skill sets.
- To ensure teams are balanced, players shall be evaluated to start the season.

Age 10 and Under (Squirts):

- Three classes of play, A, B1 and B. Players will be placed on teams in one of the three classes of play based on the tryout process.

10U Girls:

- Two classes of play, A and B.
- Players will be placed on teams in one of the two classes of play based on the tryout process.

Age 12 and Under (Pee Wees):

- Four classes of play, AA, A, B1 and B.
- Players will be placed on teams in one of the three classes of play based on the tryout process.
- Number of teams at each Class of play may vary from one year to the next and shall be governed by the NDAHA rules and regulations.

- The Hockey Director shall submit the number of teams for each Class of play to the NDAHA each season for approval.

12U Girls:

- Two classes of play, A and B.
- Players will be placed on teams in one of the two classes of play based on the tryout process.
- Number of teams at each Class of play may vary from one year to the next and shall be governed by the NDAHA rules and regulations.
- The Hockey Director shall submit the number of teams for each Class of play to the NDAHA for approval.

Age 14 and Under (Bantams):

- Four classes of play, AA, A, B1 and B.
- Players will be placed on teams in one of the four classes of play based on the tryout process.
- Number of teams at each Class of play may vary from one year to the next and shall be governed by the NDAHA rules and regulations.
- The Hockey Director shall submit the number of teams for each Class of play to the NDAHA for approval.

14U Girls:

- Players will be placed on teams in one of the two classes of play based on the tryout process.

- Number of teams at each Class of play may vary from one year to the next and shall be governed by the NDAHA rules and regulations.
- The Hockey Director shall submit the number of teams for each Class of play to the NDAHA for approval.

15U Girls:

- When a 15U team is needed to support the development of girls within our organization, team(s) will be formed and this team will

play at the 15UA class of play or higher (19U/High School League).

Junior Gold:

- There is the possibility of two classes of play (18U & 16U) at this level depending upon registration and high school tryout process
- FYHA reserves the right to set the teams up by age group, as indicated above, or two teams of equal talent in one age group.

Program Structure Guidelines

The following section reiterates our commitment to player development within our organization. The core of that player development revolves around the American Development Model (ADM) as adopted by USA Hockey. With a focus on the long term athlete development principles, the programming committee can make our existing systems and structures more consistent.

The following helps define the structure of our program and shall be used as a guideline when structuring the program at each level.

Ages 6 and Under (Termites):

- Coaches shall use age-specific practice plans, including small area games, with a focus on player development.
- Station based practice formats with multiple teams on the ice.
- No designated goalies for practices or games.
- Two 60-minute on-ice sessions per week.

- Use cross-ice game format. 16-20 games. No full ice games.

Ages 8 and Under (Mites/8U Girls):

- Coaches shall use age specific practice plans for each practice, including small area games, with a focus on player development.
- Station based practice formats with multiple teams on the ice.
- No full time goaltenders for practices or games. Give all players an opportunity to play

goalie for the week of practice and game.

- Players grouped in practice and games by ability.
- Three 60-minute ice sessions (includes games and practices) per week. Use cross-ice or half-ice game format.
- No player at the Mite/8U age group shall be allowed to move up to the Squirt/10U age group, except for a grade exception as defined by FYHA.

Ages 10 and Under (Squirts/10U Girls):

- Coaches shall use age specific practice plans for each practice, including small area games, with a focus on player development.
- 3-4 on-ice sessions per week, includes practices and games. Target for games is 25-30.
- Minimum of two teams on ice per practice (recommend three teams), with 30-40 players on ice.
- Fair playing time for all players. Rotating players at all positions, except goalie.

Ages 12 and Under (PWs/12U Girls):

- Coaches shall use age specific practice plans for each practice, including small area games, with a focus on player development.
- Target for games is 30-35.
- Minimum of two teams on ice per practice and up to 3 teams, with 30-40 players on ice.
- Fair playing time for all players. Rotating players at all positions is acceptable, but players should begin to gravitate towards playing a specific position and coaches should help facilitate this process.

Bantam/14U Girls:

- Coaches shall use age specific practice plans for each practice, including small area games, with a focus on player development.
- Target for games is 40-45. One or two teams on ice per practice. Individual skill development practices shall be conducted throughout the season.
- Appropriate off-ice training for long term athletic development, LTAD stage, is recommended.

Fargo Youth Hockey Association Membership

Parents or guardians of players in FYHA automatically become voting members when the registration fee is paid and the volunteer and fundraising requirements are met. All members are eligible to vote at the annual meeting – commonly held in April.

Communications

Several communication methods will help our league and teams have an enjoyable experience. Please get your information directly from an official source.

- Schedules – Posted on Website with periodic updates as necessary
- Team meetings and parent meetings – Held at the beginning of the year and periodically throughout the season as needed
- Suggestions – Thoughts, comments, suggestions and questions can be directed to the relevant FYHA staff person.
- Board meetings – Will be held monthly and are open to all members.
- Annual meeting – The annual meeting will be held each spring at a location and time to be announced via email and on the website.
- Office – Headquartered at HA Thompson & Sons Arena, capable of taking phone messages, emails and written comments. Staff office hours, by appointment only, posted on FYHA website.

Rules

FYHA is governed by the rules and regulations of the North Dakota Amateur Hockey Association and USA Hockey. The Board of Directors of FYHA, for good cause shown, reserves the right to refuse participation by any player or refuse membership to any person.

Required Registration Materials and Fees

All participants are required to provide the following, upon registration:

- Applicable fees
- FYHA will not guarantee participation to travel players who register after September 15th.
- A copy of their birth certificate as proof of age
- Electronic acknowledgment that this Player/Parent Handbook and the appropriate Codes of Conduct have been read, understood and agreed to.
- Applicable USA Hockey information and NDAHA registration information

Participating in FYHA is a privilege, not a right. FYHA reserves the right to expel or suspend a player/parent/guardian(s), and/or a coach for failing to meet their commitments. FYHA will assess additional fees to participants who fail to meet their fundraising or volunteer commitments.

Team Managers

Each team will have a person, usually a volunteer parent/guardian, who is the team manager. This person distributes schedules if applicable, organizes team volunteers for game management and can be a general information source for the team. Team

managers are NOT responsible for problems or issues with coaches, supervision of players or serving as a replacement “parent” for any player.

The First Shift

The First Shift (formerly titled Intro To Hockey) is designed to help kids fall in love with hockey. The focus is on fun while teaching basic hockey skills and educating families on the importance of properly fitted equipment.

Eligibility requirements:

- Children previously registered in FYHA Winter Hockey are not eligible
- Participants eligible within the following grades Pre-K through 3rd
- Participants must be (or will be*) enrolled in Fargo Public Schools

Equipment Policy

- No Deposit Required. If your child chooses to continue hockey through the winter season, he/she may keep the equipment and register for the upcoming winter hockey season at:www.FargoHockey.org
- If your child is not interested in continuing with winter hockey, please return the gear after the final session to give another child a chance to try hockey.

Level/Gender of Play

Players are required to register at their applicable age group.

Concussion Policy

If a player is suspected of sustaining a head injury and or concussion, he/she shall be immediately removed from play. The player will not be allowed to return to practice or games until the player is cleared by a physician trained in concussion management. Parent/Guardian must provide a written copy of the physician’s clearance to return to normal hockey activities.

FYHA Throat Protection Policy

The FYHA follows USA Hockey’s recommendations regarding throat protection:

[USA Hockey Throat Protection Information](#)

FYHA Compliance Policy and Procedures

Please refer to the cited policy listed on the FYHA website, under the Board tab or by clicking [HERE](#).

Weather Cancellation Policy

FYHA follows the weather cancellation procedures adopted by the Fargo Park District (for in-town hockey events). In the case of questionable/stormy weather conditions, please check the internet address: www.fargoparks.com or call the Fargo Park District's weather cancellation line at (701) 298-6915 ext 4. If the facilities stay open, the FYHA events will stay as scheduled. They will not list FYHA events as canceled. For out of town hockey events, the weather cancellation procedures shall be as follows:

1. The FYHA hockey director and scheduler(s) shall consult with the coaches and/or coordinators for the initial decision if FYHA out of town games will be canceled.
2. The FYHA hockey director shall be contacted by concerned individuals if their team does not agree with a decision (Coaches may not cancel out of town games at their discretion).
3. The FYHA scheduler shall contact the host town to cancel the game and contact the central scheduler about rescheduling the game(s) if possible.
4. The team manager or coaches shall contact their team's families and inform them of the cancellation.

*** FYHA does not follow Fargo Public Schools cancellation decisions with the exception that 6 a.m. Freeze practices are always canceled if Fargo Public Schools are canceled OR delayed ***

In addition, FYHA coaches may request to cancel practices/games with the approval of the Hockey Director if weather/travel is a concern. All final decisions on cancellations will come from the Hockey Director. Parents/Guardians ultimately reserve the right to determine whether or not their child should participate in FYHA activities on any particular day. Children who don't participate in FYHA hockey events due to questionable/stormy weather conditions will not be disciplined for their absence.

- *Please be advised that parents/guardians should always be sure the arena is open and staffed when dropping a child off for FYHA activities.*

After Season Play

FYHA does not support postseason rostering. No team shall wear FYHA jerseys under any circumstances outside of the “in season” FYHA programming.

FYHA Staff

Click [HERE](#) to view the current FYHA staff and their contact information.