

CAHA PLAY UP POLICY

CAHA Bylaws, Addendum E

19.0 PLAY UP POLICY (AGE 14 AND UNDER)

19.1 The Carolina Amateur Hockey Association (CAHA) Board of Directors recognizes that in rare and specific cases it can be appropriate and even beneficial to a player's development for him or her to play up in the next age classification. A fine balance needs to be struck, however, to avoid placing the desire of a player above the legitimate opportunity for that participant to be successful in an older age classification. In some cases, based on the skill, size and maturity of a player, it may be desirable to utilize this option; in other cases, it may be best for the player to remain in their appropriate age classification.

19.2 All players, male and female, requesting to play up during the USA Hockey season in an association must have played for that association during the previous Fall/Winter season. For example, a male or female player requesting to play up during the 2017-2018 USA Hockey season must have played for that association during the 2016-2017 Fall/Winter season. Male and female players that register in a new association are restricted to playing in their appropriate age classification during their first season with that association. The Fall/Winter season shall be defined as September 1 – February 28.

Exception – 19.2 shall be waived for female players aged 9 and older moving from an association that forms youth teams only into an association that forms girl's teams. This limited exception is intended to provide a female player that has participated in a youth association only the experience of playing on a girls' team. A play up in this situation must receive prior approval from CAHA, shall not exceed one age classification and will not be allowed if the association forms an age appropriate girls' team. A completed Play-Up Request & Acknowledgement of Risk and Liability Form shall be required for all female players in this play up situation prior to roster approval.

19.3 Players and parents should acknowledge that approval to play up in a specific season does not necessitate the need to continue in a play up situation or guarantee approval to play up in future seasons. The player or goaltender requesting a play up must meet the criteria for each year of eligibility. At some point it may be necessary to play three years in one age classification if the player's past youth participation did not align with USA Hockey age classifications.

19.4 There is increased risk of injury for players playing outside of their designated age classification. However, CAHA allows movement in certain situations if specific conditions are met. You should carefully consider the increased risks involved and follow the criteria below when making a request to move a player into an older age classification.

Players may request to play up in an older age classification under the following criteria:

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- a. Age 8 or younger - A male or female player age 8 or younger is permitted to move up to a 10U (Squirt) or Girls 10U team in an internal house program only and must meet all criteria described within this policy to be eligible to move up. Under no circumstances will a player age 8 or younger be approved on a 10U (Squirt) or Girls 10U team roster in any registration category, including but not limited to: Tier II, Travel, House/Rec and Invitational Tournament.
- b. Players aged 13 and under are permitted to move up an age classification in internal no-check house programs only and must meet all criteria described within this policy to be eligible to move up. Players aged 13 and under shall not be allowed to move up an age classification on teams that require an approved team roster except as provided in 19.6, 19.7 and 19.8.
- c. 12U (Pee Wee) - Allowing players to move from a non-body checking age classification into a body checking age classification represents the greatest risk and shall not be allowed.
- d. Players aged 14 are permitted to up to an age classification and must meet all criteria described within this policy to be eligible to move up.
- e. A player will not be permitted to move up more than one year in age. This requirement shall apply to all movement allowed under a., b. and d. For example, a first year 10U (Squirt) cannot be moved to the 12U (Pee Wee) age classification, however, a second year 10U (Squirt) may advance to Pee Wee if the remaining criteria is met. This shall apply to 8U (Mite), 10U (Squirt) and 14U (Bantam) age classifications. A second year 14U (Bantam) can be moved into the 16U (Midget 16 & Under) if all other criteria is met, however, a first year 14U (Bantam) must remain in the 14U (Bantam) age classification.
- f. Male and female players in a play up situation may not participate in games above the next age classification. For example, a 14 year old rostered on a 16U (Midget 16 & Under or Girls 16U) team may play in games against other 16U (Midget 16 & Under or Girls 16U) teams only. A 14 year old playing on a 16U (Midget 16 & Under or Girls 16U) team may not participate in games played against 18U (Midget 18 & Under) Youth or 19U Girls teams.
- g. An impartial evaluation of the player's skills, the ability to contribute to the older team as well as the player's maturity level compared to players in the older age classification must be made by a panel of neutral coaches before a decision is approved to grant the play up request.
- h. The move up player or goaltender should be projected to be among the top 25% of all players or goaltenders on the next age classification team.

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- i. A completed Play-Up Request & Acknowledgement of Risk and Liability Form for all players in a play up situation must be submitted with the team roster in order to receive roster approval from the Associate Registrar.

- 19.5 Consideration should be given as to how the play up will impact the two teams involved. The number of players within each age classification should be considered. The request should be denied if the play up will displace an age appropriate player that would otherwise have played as determined by the team selection process.

- 19.6 Based on USA Hockey recommendations, each team should include two goaltenders. Unfortunately, there is often a shortage or surplus of goaltenders at a particular age classification. The possibility exists that an age classification may not have enough goaltenders to field a team. CAHA will allow goaltender movement to address these situations. If after exhausting all possibilities to obtain a goaltender from within the age classification, a goaltender from a lower age classification may be moved up provided the age appropriate team is not left without an experienced goaltender. All goaltenders will be required to fill out a Play-Up Request & Acknowledgement of Risk and Liability Form. This will be done solely to acknowledge the risk of playing with older players and the criteria for players to be “projected to be among the top players” will be excluded, however, 19.2 shall apply. Any association that moves up goaltenders to address shortages must submit to CAHA their planned growth initiatives to avoid goaltender shortages in the future.

- 19.7 In small market youth (male or co-ed) associations where the number of registered players within the geography of the association at an age classification do not equal one team, it may be necessary to consolidate age classifications in order to create teams. If and when that occurs, upon notification to the CAHA Board of Directors, the team will carry the name of the oldest age classification and those players that are part of the younger age group will be required to fill out a Play-Up Request & Acknowledgement of Risk and Liability Form. This will be done solely to acknowledge the risk of playing with older players and the criteria for players to be “projected to be among the top players” will be excluded, however 19.2 shall apply. The notification to CAHA must include the registration statistics for the consolidated age classifications, full information on the selection process, and the association’s planned growth initiatives to avoid consolidation in the future. Consolidation of teams excludes 8U (Mite)/10U (Squirt) and 12U (Pee Wee)/14U (Bantam) consolidated teams.

- 19.8 In frequent circumstances due to numbers, it may be necessary to consolidate Girls age classifications in an Association in order to create teams. If and when that occurs, upon notification to the CAHA Board of Directors, the team will carry the name of the oldest Girls age classification and those players that are part of the younger age group will be

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required to fill out a Play-Up Request & Acknowledgement of Risk and Liability Form. This will be done solely to acknowledge the risk of playing with older players and the criteria for players to be “projected to be among the top players” will be excluded, however 19.2 shall apply. The notification to CAHA must include the registration statistics for the consolidated age classifications, full information on the selection process, and the association’s planned growth initiatives to avoid consolidation in the future. Consolidation of teams excludes 8U/10U consolidated teams.

- 19.9 The Member Association must specifically reserve the right to reverse any decision allowing a player to play up at any time. If a player that has moved up is experiencing difficulty, as determined by the association and/or the player’s coach, the association may reverse the decision allowing the participant to play up. In this case every attempt should be made to place the player on a similar team within the player’s proper age classification. Parents and players should carefully consider this outcome prior to making a request to play up.
- 19.10 Nothing in USA Hockey’s or CAHA rules requires an Association to allow any player(s) to play up.
- 19.11 Middle School students are not eligible to play up on a High School team under any circumstances.
- 19.12 CAHA will not accept or consider requests for waivers or exceptions to this Play Up Policy.