



**Tier I Application
and
Information Packet
(2018-2020)**

Applications Due: February 1, 2018



**TEXAS AMATEUR HOCKEY
ASSOCIATION YOUTH TIER I RULES
Effective January 1, 2018**

Introduction

The Texas Amateur Hockey Association (TAHA) has full jurisdiction and authority over the Tier I designation within the Texas and Oklahoma region. Such authority is granted to TAHA by USA Hockey Bylaws and the duly executed Affiliate Agreement.

The TAHA President shall establish and appoint a Youth Tier I Committee and Chairperson ("Tier I Chairperson"). The Tier I Committee shall be comprised of four representatives from TAHA (President, Vice President, Travel Section President, and Immediate Past President).

The Tier I Committee shall have responsibility for all matters pertaining to the recommendation to the TAHA Board of Directors of Tier I Member Associations or Organizations, Tier I Teams, and Tier I Hockey, pursuant to TAHA Bylaws.

The TAHA Board of Directors will review the recommendation of the Tier I Committee. The responsibility of the Tier I Committee shall include, but is not limited to, recommending the following:

- Granting or terminating authority to organize and/or operate a Tier I organization, club or association ("**Tier I Organization**") and/or field a Tier I Team ("**Tier I Team**");
- Determining the total number of Tier I teams permitted in any age division; and
- Establishing guidelines to be used to carry out the purpose of the Tier I Committee.

The TAHA Board of Directors may accept or reject the recommendation, may send the matter back to the Tier I Committee for further consideration or may, in its sole discretion, make the final determination of both Tier I Organizations and Tier I Teams.

Purpose

The purpose of Tier I hockey in Texas is to provide an opportunity for the best youth players in Texas to develop and compete at the highest level of hockey available in North America at their ages by and through USA Hockey. Tier I hockey in Texas is limited to those youth players who have the desire and ability to play at the highest youth level available and to continue to develop as players by playing Tier I hockey.



**TEXAS AMATEUR HOCKEY
ASSOCIATION YOUTH TIER I RULES
Effective January 1, 2018**

Guidelines to Determine Number of Organizations/Teams

TAHA uses guidelines for determining the number of Tier I Teams. They include, but are not limited to the following:

1. The number of rostered players in an age division in Texas and Oklahoma.
- 2.
2. The number of Tier I and Tier II youth teams at any age level the previous season.
3. Not more than two (2) Tier I Organizations fielding Tier 1 Teams in age divisions in which USA Hockey conducts a National Championship, which currently includes 18U, 16U, and 14U (Boys' age divisions), and 19U, 16U, 14U (Girls' age divisions).
4. Awarded Tier I Organizations shall have no more than one (1) Tier I Team per age division (e.g. 18U, 16U, 15U, 14U). (Organizations may not be awarded teams in all age classifications.)
5. The number and competitiveness of Tier teams fielded the previous season.

A. Tier I Organizations:

1. Responsibility: A Tier I Organization is an established TAHA member association that is in good standing. Each Tier I Organization that is authorized by TAHA to register a Tier I team shall govern, control and be fully responsible for its organization, actions, inactions and/or infractions of its teams, players, coaches, managers, parents, and personnel. This responsibility shall include debts incurred by or in the name of the Tier I Organization, or any of its Tier I teams, players, coaches, or representatives. The proposed Tier I Organization must be duly organized and operated in accordance with the By-Laws, Rules, Regulations and Policies of TAHA and authorized according to TAHA rules to field, govern and control Tier I Teams organized by such Tier I Organization in the State of Texas each season. Tier I Organizations are expected to demonstrate leadership in the hockey and local community.
2. Authorization Period: Tier I authorization is granted for a period of two (2) years plus a one (1) year option at TAHA's discretion provided the designated Tier I Organization maintains compliance with all established or subsequently-modified requirements. Tier I Organizations will be advised ninety (90) days prior to the expiration of the two-year designation whether the one-year option will be awarded



**TEXAS AMATEUR HOCKEY
ASSOCIATION YOUTH TIER I RULES
Effective January 1, 2018**

by TAHA. For purposes of this document, the Tier I season (year) begins the day after the conclusion of the USA Hockey National Championships and concludes on the last day of the USA Hockey National Championships the following season (year).

3. Tier I authorization can be withdrawn at any time during the Authorization Period should a Tier I Organization fail to comply with all Tier I requirements or TAHA rules, experience financial instability, or if representatives (Board, coaching staff, etc.) demonstrate conduct detrimental to amateur youth hockey, TAHA, or USA Hockey.
4. TAHA reserves the right to replace an existing Tier I Organization should circumstances warrant. TAHA will provide notice of any vacancy of Tier I Organization, the application process and deadline.
5. TAHA reserves the right to increase or decrease the number of Tier I Organizations should it determine that the player talent pool (both quantity and quality) necessitate a change.

B. Tier I Team Authorization Procedure:

1. Application: Prospective Tier I Organizations or any existing Tier I or II member shall complete and deliver the TAHA Tier I Application to the Tier I Chairperson no later than **February 1st** of the application year. Such Application shall comply with the requirements set forth in paragraph D below and Addendum 1. The Tier I Committee, subject to the review by the TAHA Board of Directors, may waive a particular requirement it deems not material to the application. No new or existing Tier I Organization shall have authority to operate or otherwise participate in Tier I hockey in any capacity unless it has received its authorization in writing from TAHA. The Tier I Chairperson, with support from the Tier I Committee, shall recommend to the TAHA Board of Directors the acceptance or denial of such application. The TAHA Board shall have final approval of the Tier I Organizations based on information provided by each applicant and other pertinent information assembled by the Tier I Committee.
2. Interview: Each applicant, whose written submission is deemed satisfactorily responsive to the requirements of the application, may be invited to make a presentation directly to the Tier I Committee. Such in-person meeting should include the Director of Hockey, Head of Coaches/Head Coach and any relevant financial resource that is capable of responding to financial inquiries.



**TEXAS AMATEUR HOCKEY
ASSOCIATION YOUTH TIER I RULES
Effective January 1, 2018**

3. **Notification:** Existing and new Tier I Organizations will be notified in writing by the Tier I Chairperson of the acceptance or denial of its application no later than **March 15th** of the current season.
4. **Compliance:** Each authorized existing or new Tier I Organization shall comply with the minimum requirements set forth in this document, TAHA and USA Hockey By-laws, Policies, Rules and Regulations, which include, but are not be limited to, the following:
 - a. An Organization fielding Tier I teams must be affiliated via its By-Laws and/or registration with a TAHA member association that fielded Tier II teams the previous three seasons.
 - b. A Tier I Organization may only apply for one (1) Tier I Team in each of the following ages: 18U, 16U, 15U, 14U.

C. Out of Affiliate Roster Exceptions:

In accordance with TAHA commitment to advance Affiliate players to the highest levels possible, Tier I teams registered through TAHA shall limit the number of Out-of-State Players (as defined in this Article) to the following:

- (i) 5 skaters and 1 goalie at 18U,
- (ii) 3 skaters and 1 goalie at 16U and 15U
- (iii) 1 skater and 0 goalies at 14U,

For purposes of this Article, an Out-of-State Player is any player who, at the time of roster submission, does not have an immediate family member who is domiciled in Texas/Oklahoma. An immediate family member is defined as (1) a natural or adoptive Parent or Grandparent, (b) an older sibling or (c) a Guardian appointed due to the death or incapacity of a Parent. A player who meets the requirements of this subsection is an In-State Player, subject to the provisions described below.

A player who has reached the age of eighteen (18) years and who otherwise would be an Out-of-State Player under subsection (iv) of this paragraph will be treated as an Out-of-State Player notwithstanding any assertion that said player is of the age of majority.

In any case where a player's address, as submitted on a Tier I Roster, is different than that of the immediate family member domiciled in Texas through which the player claims to be an In-State Player, the TAHA Tier I Committee is authorized and directed to



**TEXAS AMATEUR HOCKEY
ASSOCIATION YOUTH TIER I RULES
Effective January 1, 2018**

conduct such investigation as may be necessary to determine whether treating the player as an In-State Player is consistent with the purposes of this Article.

The TAHA Tier I Committee shall have final decision authority in determining whether a player sought to be rostered on a Tier I Team is an Out-of-State Player.

D. Application Requirements

To be considered for designation as Tier I, each submitting organization will be required to provide the following information:

- a. A list of Officers, Directors, and Registrar, the age divisions for its proposed Tier I Teams, the names of the Coaches for each Tier I Team, written proof that each Coach has completed the appropriate coaching certification and USA Hockey coaching module for that age division, and has complied with TAHA's background screening requirements.
- b. Historical financial information that demonstrates the organization proposing to field Tier I Teams has been financially stable the prior three (3) consecutive seasons and has the ability to finance the following season.
- c. Ice contract(s) that demonstrate the time slots and days of the week that the proposed Tier I teams shall practice or play games for the upcoming season. It is imperative that Organizations provide sufficient ice to support an appropriate number of home games and practices consistent with the size of its program, its season and this Article. In addition, Tier I Organizations must provide evidence of a supporting off-ice development program.
- d. A Fact Sheet as defined in Paragraph E(5) below.
- e. Written information regarding the structure, organization and responsibilities of the Tier I Organization and each Tier I Team, its coach, manager and any administrators.
- f. Written By-Laws, Rules and Regulations.
- g. Current compliance and a statement of future intent, ability, and procedures to comply with USA Hockey and TAHA By-Laws, Policies, Rules and Regulations as well as the Guidelines and Policies established by the Tier I Committee.



**TEXAS AMATEUR HOCKEY
ASSOCIATION YOUTH TIER I RULES
Effective January 1, 2018**

- h. Internal Revenue Service 501(c)(3) tax exemption status under the Internal Revenue Code.
- i. All Tier I games played in Texas must have officials scheduled by assignors authorized for Tier I hockey.
- j. Any other information determined to be necessary by the Tier I Committee or Tier I Chairperson.

E. Team Selection Process:

- 1. Procedures: Each Tier I Organization shall institute procedures to select the best players available. Guidelines for team selection process shall include, but not be limited to the following:
 - a. Each Tier I Organization shall hold open tryouts. Tryouts may **not** be announced or advertised until the Tier I Organization has received written notification from the Tier I Chairperson of its approval as a Tier I Organization and Tier I team for the ensuing season.
 - b. Tryouts must be conducted in accordance with TAHA's tryout schedule published each spring. Tier I Organizations will conduct tryouts for their Tier I teams at 18U, 16U, 15U, and 14U age divisions during the protected Tier I tryout period, which will allow Tier I Organizations to attract, evaluate, and select the best players at each age group.
 - c. Tier I Organizations that conduct tryouts during the protected Tier I tryout period (i.e. players on the ice) will be required to skate teams at Tier I for the coming season. Should a Tier I Organization determine, either during or following tryouts, that one or more teams will not be competitive at Tier I, the Tier I Organization may opt to disband the Tier I team or register the team as House/Rec. Such teams will not be permitted to drop to Tier II following the Tier I tryout period.
 - d. Personal invitations for tryouts are permissible but tryouts must be announced publicly through a general publication or individual mailing to all players at each level, and inviting any player who wishes to tryout.



**TEXAS AMATEUR HOCKEY
ASSOCIATION YOUTH TIER I RULES
Effective January 1, 2018**

- e. The announcement must contain at a minimum the organization name, level of tryouts, name of head coach, contacts with phone numbers, dates/location/time of tryouts, and a brief statement about the program.
 - f. Each Tier I Organization shall provide a Fact Sheet that shall be provided to anyone who attends tryouts.
2. Player Commitment: Any player who signs a USA Hockey 1T Tier I roster is committed to that Tier I Team for the ensuing playing season and cannot play for another Tier team until he/she has been released from that Tier I Team. All such player releases shall be submitted to the Tier I Chairperson. Exceptions to this rule are Girls, High School, House League, Juniors, Junior College, College or University.
3. Roster: USA Hockey rosters (1T) for Tier I Teams must be submitted to the appropriate USA Hockey Associate Registrar for Texas prior to any team participating in a non-league game, league game or tournament game. Any Tier I Organization or team found to be in violation of this rule will be sanctioned accordingly as outlined in the USA Hockey Annual Guide. Tier I Organizations must register their Teams as Tier I Teams by **September 15th** of the current season to be eligible for the state tournament. A Tier I team may not be registered as a High School **or House/Recreation** team at any point during the season.
4. Commitment Date: No player shall be allowed to contractually commit to play on a Tier I Team or sign a roster or pay monies prior to TAHA-approved tryout dates for the ensuing season.
5. Fact Sheet: Tier I Organizations and Tier I Teams shall furnish each Player and his/her parent(s), in writing, before any tryout and prior to signing a roster, a Fact Sheet that provides **full disclosure** of their Tier I program and season, including all applicable costs (at a minimum, fundraising, jerseys, off-ice training, approximate travel costs, season registration fees of the Tier I Organization, and any other expected expenses), number of games and practices, amount of travel, and any "rules" of the Tier I Organization or Tier I Team. The Fact Sheet shall also outline the refund policy of the team should a player not play for the full season, regardless of reason. The player and parent must sign this fact sheet and a copy shall be provided to TAHA along with the team registration by September 15th. If a player is added to the Tier I Team roster after September 15th, the player and parents must sign the fact sheet before being added to the roster, and a copy of the fully signed fact sheet shall be



**TEXAS AMATEUR HOCKEY
ASSOCIATION YOUTH TIER I RULES
Effective January 1, 2018**

immediately provided to TAHA. Copies of all signed Fact Sheets and rosters (1T) shall also be submitted to the Tier I Chairperson.

- F. **Competition among Tier I Organizations and Teams:** TAHA and current Tier I Organizations have agreed that local competition among the Tier I Organizations and Teams will provide for high quality, cost-effective play in Texas and further promote Tier I hockey in Texas. Each authorized Tier I Team shall play each other in Texas a minimum of four (4) games (excluding tournament games) at each appropriate age division each season. All such games should be scheduled as soon as possible to be included in each team's season schedule. The cost for these games shall be split evenly by both teams. Scheduling of such games shall take place and the dates of said games given to the TAHA Tier I Chairperson prior to August 1st. All such games must be played at least two (2) weeks prior to the Tier I State Tournament.
- G. **Tier II:** A Youth Tier II Organization is an established TAHA member association in good standing that has fielded teams at 14U, 16U or 18U age divisions for the prior two (2) consecutive seasons. All Tier II teams shall be community based as stated by USA Hockey and TAHA. Tier II community-based teams shall only include in-State players whose family's domicile or family's permanent residence is in the same local community of the registered TAHA member association's home rink. Commuting players or other players whose guardian resides in Texas/Oklahoma but outside of the community where the member association's home rink is located are not eligible for a Tier II team based outside of the family's domicile. No billeted or out-of-state players are allowed to be rostered on a Tier II team. If a player does not have a Tier II team in his local community, such player may petition to play for the next-closest community that does have a Tier II team in the appropriate age division. Such petition shall include the age division for the upcoming season, address of family's domicile or permanent residence, address of nearest rink, name of organization and level of team from prior season, and name/address of organization and level of team that is being requested for the upcoming season. All such information shall be submitted to TAHA Tier I Chairperson by August 1st of the current season.



**TEXAS AMATEUR HOCKEY
ASSOCIATION YOUTH TIER I RULES
Effective January 1, 2018**

ADDENDUM 1

TAHA Tier I Application

- A. Name of proposed Tier I Organization
- B. Name(s) of TAHA feeder member associations that fielded Tier II teams the previous three seasons.
 - 1. Age division and level of teams
 - 2. Number of years of existence of member association
- C. Proposed Tier I teams for upcoming season.
 - 1. Age division
 - 2. Name, certification, and years of experience as a coach (written proof required)
 - 3. Background screening date of head coach and results (written proof required)
- D. List of Tier I teams and returning head coaches from prior season
- E. A list of current Officers, Directors, and Registrar and contact information for each.
 - 1. Name
 - 2. Home address
 - 3. Phone number
 - 4. Email address
- F. Historical financial information that demonstrates financial stability.
 - 1. Profit and loss statement from the prior season
 - 2. Form 990 from the previous two (2) years
- G. Practice plan that demonstrates the time slots and days of the week for its proposed Tier I teams.
 - 1. Days and times of planned practices
 - 2. Name of home rink and/or practice facility
 - 3. Copy of ice contract
 - 4. Scope and evidence of a supporting off -ice development program.
- H. A Fact Sheet as defined in Paragraph G(5) of the above Youth Tier I Rules.



**TEXAS AMATEUR HOCKEY
ASSOCIATION YOUTH TIER I RULES
Effective January 1, 2018**

- I. Description of the Tier I Organization
 - 1. Organization structure
 - 2. Mission statement
 - 3. Responsibilities
 - 4. Hockey or coaching director
 - 5. Head coach
 - 6. Team manager
 - 7. Any and all administrators
 - 8. Written By-Laws
 - 9. Team Rules
 - 10. Internal Revenue Service 501(c)(3) tax exemption status under the Internal Revenue Code.

- J. Compliance statement of intent, ability, and procedures to comply with:
 - 1. USA Hockey rules
 - 2. TAHA By-Laws, Policies, Rules and Regulations
 - 3. Tier I Committee

- K. Any other information determined to be necessary by the Tier I Committee or Tier I Chairperson.

Submission Deadline

Applications Distributed: January 10

Applications Due to TAHA: February 1

Interviews Conducted: Feb 23-25

Tier I Awarded: March 15

Submit Application and attachments to:

**Lucas Reid
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