

OWHA Underage Player Tryout Policy

The Ottawa West Hockey Association operates a minor/major system throughout the various age divisions as endorsed by the Hockey Canada Rules & Regulations. As such, the association operates under the premise that all players will tryout for, and play on teams within their respective age group. (i.e.: a minor will play minor, a major will play major through the Atom, Pee wee, Bantam and Midget divisions) and does not encourage underage players to tryout at higher age levels. In order to ensure fairness and opportunity for players within the proper age category, exceptions will only be considered subject to the following conditions:

1. There is no higher level competitive team within the District (e.g. A, AA) for which the player is eligible to tryout at their age category.
2. An underage player may only request to tryout at the next higher age category.
3. Prior to registering for tryouts and no later than 14 days in advance of the first tryout session, a request must be submitted in writing (email acceptable) to the OWHA seeking permission to tryout at the higher age category. The executive committee of the OWHA, in its sole discretion, will determine if there are reasonable grounds for the request (e.g. player identified as '*obviously far superior*' to others of the same age by former coaches, past performance, etc.).

If the executive committee of the OWHA determines there are reasonable grounds to permit the player to tryout at the higher age category, the following process will then be adhered to:

- a. An independent evaluation panel will be selected by the executive committee to assess the player at the first tryout session. The panel will make the following assessments:
 - i. For a player other than a goalie, is he/she likely to be amongst the three top players attending tryouts at the higher age level.
 - ii. For a goalie, is he/she is likely to be the best goalie attending tryouts by a significant margin (Note: Due to the specialty skills associated with this position the panel will include a qualified goalie evaluator to fairly assess the individual's skill-set compared to established standards for the higher age category).
 - iii. In the opinion of the panel, does the player also possesses physical and social maturity matching the player's superior hockey skills, is he/she well rounded in all aspects of development and not placed at a higher risk of injury then all players trying out.
- b. The panel will present its findings to the executive committee and if the qualifications are met the player will be permitted to continue attending the remaining tryout sessions. The determination of the panel is final and not subject to appeal.
- c. To then be selected to play on the team, at the conclusion of tryouts the player must have actually been ranked by the coach's evaluation staff according to the same criteria set out above (amongst top three skaters overall, or best goalie overall by a significant margin).

Regardless of outcome, tryout fees will not be refunded. Any additional cost associated with the independent evaluation of the player (such as professional services charged to retain qualified members on the panel) must be borne by the parent(s) of the player, with such costs to be disclosed to them in advance.