

Dubuque Youth Hockey Association

Travel Team Policy

2017 – 2018



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A. Mission Statement

The Dubuque Youth Hockey Association (DYHA) strives to create and sustain an environment where participants exhibit pride and a desire to remain involved in hockey. DYHA will be successful by aligning solid leadership principles with positive coaching, strong member relationships and fiscal responsibility. DYHA will cultivate mutually supportive relationships connecting parents, players, coaches and staff while providing the opportunity for hockey players to develop life skills that will serve them well beyond the ice rink.

USA Hockey Core Values

The following core values of USA Hockey are adopted to guide the association's members in their planning, programming and play, both now and in the future. DYHA honors these core values

SPORTSMANSHIP - Foremost of all values is to learn a sense of fair play. Becoming humble in victory, gracious in defeat. DYHA fosters friendship with teammates and opponents alike.

RESPECT FOR THE INDIVIDUAL - Treat all others as you expect to be treated.

INTEGRITY - DYHA seeks to foster honesty and fair play beyond mere strict interpretation of the rules and regulations of the game.

PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE AT THE INDIVIDUAL, TEAM AND ORGANIZATIONAL LEVELS - Each member of the organization, whether players, volunteer or staff, should seek to perform each aspect of the game to the highest level of his or her ability.

ENJOYMENT - It is important for the hockey experience to be fun, satisfying and rewarding for all participants.

LOYALTY - DYHA aspires to teach loyalty to the ideals and fellow members of the sport of hockey.

TEAMWORK - DYHA values the strength of learning to work together. The use of teamwork is reinforced and rewarded by success in the hockey experience.

B. About Travel Hockey

All travel teams (Squirt through Bantam) will be known as the Dubuque Junior Saints and will be closely affiliated with the Dubuque Fighting Saints.

The DYHA travel hockey program is designed for players who want to make a serious commitment to the game of hockey. DYHA is seriously committed to the quality of our program.

The DYHA offers the opportunities for a developing hockey player to play competitive travel hockey.

DYHA travel teams will play games both in Dubuque and outside of Dubuque.

The number of games played at each level will vary but will generally increase at each age level. There will be separate travel team practices at each level. The number of practices will vary but the DYHA will strive to dedicate as much ice time as possible to the development of the travel teams.

During the course of a season, you can expect to have upwards of 40 practices (including Jr. House League), 15 - 50 games (depending on level), special skills clinics and the opportunity to go with your team to tournaments both locally and out-of-town. All tournament participation is decided on a team-by-team basis.

It is the goal of DYHA to strive to challenge the players by playing the highest level of competition the Division Head, Team Manager and Coaches see fit.

Team Skills Development

DYHA travel hockey program is designed to increase both the individual and team skill levels. The skill level progressions as laid out by USA Hockey will be used as a guideline when it comes to teaching skills at the various age levels. The skills taught will also depend on the skill level of the team even though some individuals may be ready for more advanced skill training. There is an expectation to train at all positions, including goalies. Specialized training should be utilized and should be budgeted if a goalie coach or training needs to be purchased.

League Play

The DYHA generally fields travel teams in the WAHA Region 4 Youth Hockey League and/or the Midwest League as determined by the coaches and parents. The former league consists of teams from Madison, WI area while the latter consists of teams from Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska.

Note: DYHA conducts a separate Jr. House League program for those who enjoy hockey but do not want to make the time and financial commitment that the travel teams require of participants. All Squirt Travel Team players are required to participate in all Jr. House League practices and games unless approved by the board of directors as requested by their Head Coach. The Pee Wee and Bantam Travel Team players have the choice on whether they would like to participate in the house league programs.

Age Appropriate Play

Youth hockey is organized by the birth year of the participant into these levels per DYHA & USA Hockey:

YEAR OF BIRTH	AGE CATEGORY	AGE DIVISION
2003	14 YEARS	Bantam 14 or under
2004	13 YEARS	Bantam 14 or under
2005	12 YEARS	Pee Wee 12 or under
2006	11 YEARS	Pee Wee 12 or under
2007	10 YEARS	Squirt 10 or under
2008	9 YEARS	Squirt 10 or under
2009	8 YEARS	Mite 8 or under
2010	7 YEARS	Mite 8 or under
2011	6 YEARS	Little Saint
2012	5 YEARS	Little Saint
2013	4 YEARS	Little Saint

Travel Team Classifications

SQUIRT - born in 2007 & 2008

PEEWEE - born in 2005 & 2006

BANTAM - born in 2003 & 2004

DYHA intends to field travel teams in the following categories. The number of players wishing to participate will dictate how many teams, if any, there will be at each level.

Travel teams: Usually 1 - 3 teams per division, dependent on the number of participants. Each team will seek to have 1 - 3 practices a week on average. The parents at each level will have input on how many tournaments each travel team participates in.

Mites: No travel hockey at the Mite level. The Midwest Amateur Hockey Association (MWAHA), which is the official governing body for USA Hockey covering the states of IA, KS & NE, has made a rule change for 8U (Mites). Effective with the 2011 – 2012 season, all associations within the MWAHA are mandated to follow the American Development Model (ADM) for all 8U (Mite) practices and games. All 8U games will be 3 vs 3 or 4 vs 4 cross ice until the date USA Hockey allows full ice games at the Mite level.

Squirts: The Squirts will play around 25 to 35 games.

Peewees: The Peewees will play around 35 to 45 games.

Bantams: Last step before high school hockey. The Bantams play 40 to 50 games. This is the level where full body contact hockey begins.

C. Travel Team Committee

The Travel Team Committee Chair is appointed by the DYHA Board. The Chair forms a committee that has responsibility for running the DYHA Travel Hockey Program. A few of the responsibilities include: attending evaluations, reviewing and approving travel team rosters, maintaining uniformity, handling grievances, communicating with travel team managers and promoting the travel teams of DYHA.

D. Evaluation Process

Evaluations

Players are selected for the DYHA travel teams during evaluations by team coaches from the Squirt to Bantam levels. The evaluation will be open to all parents/guardians. If the Division Head would like a closed tryout to be held, he/she must make a request to the Travel Team Committee for approval 1 week prior to the evaluations. The evaluation process is designed to place players according to their ability. This will usually result in an upper level team and a lower level team dependent on the number of participants. Representatives from the Travel Team Committee and additional unbiased evaluators will attend all evaluations. The Division Head must notify the Travel Team Committee of all evaluation dates and times a week before they are to be held. The Division Head will present the selections to the Travel Team Committee for review and approval before posting, distributing or notifying the players or parents.

Evaluation Fee

There will be a \$30 fee for each level for which a player is being evaluated (Squirt through Bantam). The fee must be paid prior to the first session of the evaluation or the player will not be allowed to take the ice. Once placed on a team, the \$30 fee will be deposited into the players travel team account at that level. All other evaluation fees will be forfeited and will go into each team's miscellaneous account.

Team Selection

DYHA will attempt to make the evaluation process as fair as possible by following the guidelines below. DYHA encourages all parents to sit down with their players prior to the evaluations and tell them that no matter what happens, if they try their hardest and if they do their best, there is nothing else that anyone should expect of them.

Number of Teams and Players on Teams

The number of teams at each level and the number of skaters on each team is determined at the discretion of the Travel Team Committee based on the Division Head recommendation, player evaluations, and head coaches' input. Every effort will be made to maximize the number of teams at each level. Every effort will also be made to establish an ideal number of players per team to best enhance the experience of all players at each level. The minimum number of players per team will not be less than 10 skaters and 1 goalie without approval of the Board of Directors.

In the event that there are insufficient skaters to formulate a travel team(s) within a particular age group, the Division Head, Coaches and/or Travel Team Committee members can recruit players. The goal of the recruitment effort is to obtain enough players to establish manageable teams and provide the players with the opportunity to develop at a level commensurate with their skill. The following are post recruitment guidelines for establishing the number of players per team:

- An evaluation will be conducted in all cases unless there are an insufficient number of players to field even one team.
- If the number of registered players supports the creation of two teams (~ 24), an evaluation will be conducted. The number of players per team will be determined by the Division Head, Coaches and Travel Team Committee taking into consideration the age and skill level of the players.
- If the number of registered players is above that required for 1 team but insufficient for two teams the Division Head, Coaches, and/or the Travel Team Committee will work at recruiting new players to fill a 2nd team. When the recruiting avenues are not viable, the Travel Team Committee will work with the Division Head and Coaches to arrive at a reasonable solution that will still include all players interested in Travel Hockey. No age appropriate players skating at the Squirt or Pee Wee levels will be cut from playing on a travel team. At the higher level of play (Bantam), the coaches must have a good cause and the Travel Team committee's approval to not place a player on a team.
- No team will be allowed to have more than 50% of their rostered players be from an age level below the appropriate age level. They will also not be allowed to double roster players on two teams for the sake of getting to the 50% level.

The actual number will depend on the following:

- Total amount of players at a given age group.
- Skill level of the entire group of skaters.
- Age of the player.
- Division (lower level teams may be able to participate with fewer numbers as skill level is reduced).

The total number of players for each given level at the age group will fluctuate depending on the above. The Division Head must see a clear cut division in skill levels within the group to place more players on one team versus the other(s). This may be done particularly at the upper level (Pee Wee and Bantam) where our travel teams strive to be the most competitive. For further information on this process see Player Evaluation Process.

When at a given age level we have more than one goalie per team the following will be used to place the candidates at a given level:

- Skill level of each goalie
- Total number of goalies available
- Previous year coach evaluation

When at all possible, two goalies will be placed on a team. If the number of goalies available is not even, goalies will be placed by skill level. This will mean one or more teams could have two goalies and one or more teams could have one goalie. At no time will it be allowed to have more than two goalies per team if one team has only one goalie.

Travel team rosters are final on November 30. Prior to that date player movement is possible within rules as defined by DYHA and USA Hockey.

Player Evaluation Process

The selected coaches for each level will conduct an evaluation to assess and select players for the team(s). The Division Head will develop the evaluation agenda. A minimum of two evaluations will be conducted. A player should attend all scheduled evaluations to be considered for selection. At the discretion of the Division Head, the evaluation should include a combination of the following:

- Drills
- Scrimmages
- Skills test

Areas identified for evaluation may include and are not limited to the following:

- Ability to take direction
- Skating skills
- Stick handling skills
- Passing, both giving and receiving passes
- Shooting skills
- Positioning during play
- Full body contact (at levels allowed)
- Hustle
- Attitude
- Hockey systems knowledge
- Previous year coaches evaluation

At least one unbiased representative(s) (Coach, Travel Team Committee/DYHA Board Member) will attend the evaluation sessions at each level. At least two unbiased talent evaluators will be present and evaluate the players and aid the Division Head in their selection process. These unbiased talent evaluators will have an extensive hockey background. Names of the evaluators will be provided to the Travel Team Committee 1 week prior to the first evaluation session (verbal or in writing). Credentials of the evaluators may be requested by the Travel Team Committee.

The Division Head will supply the independent evaluators with their evaluation plan prior to the start of evaluations. The evaluators should be allowed an area to view the players away from parents and coaches during the evaluations in order to concentrate on the task at hand. The evaluators will be asked to give their input on the players being evaluated. The Division Head will review their recommendations and use these evaluations in their team selection process.

At the end of evaluations, all documents used (evaluation plan, player jersey numbers, independent evaluations, etc.) should be provided to the Travel Team Committee in concise format for possible questions and conflict resolutions concerning player placement if they arise. The Travel Team Committee will keep these documents on file for the complete season.

Travel Team Registration

During the registration for the DYHA, players should sign up indicating their interest in participating in Travel Team hockey. If a player is intending to be evaluated at a higher age category, they will need to indicate that preference at player registration. All evaluation fees can be paid at this time, but **must** be paid prior to the player taking the ice for evaluation.

E. Playing at a Higher Age Category

The DYHA Board of Directors strongly encourages players to play at their age appropriate level. Any player wishing to play at a higher age category must have played 1 year at their age appropriate level and must submit their desire in writing at least two weeks prior to tryouts. A small committee will make a determination on each request. The committee will include past and future coaches. Some factors that may be considered are the skill of the player, the physical and mental maturity of the player and the number of players at higher and lower age levels. If not approved, the parents of the player can appeal the decision. The player would be allowed to tryout at the higher level (paying the \$30 evaluation fee which is non-refundable), but the player must be ranked in the top 5 players of the higher age division to be approved to play at that age level. If not ranked in the top 5, the player will be returned to his age appropriate level of play and placed on a team for the season. At no time will a player(s) trying out at a higher level be chosen over an age appropriate player(s) thus displacing the higher level player from a team unless it is deemed that the player being displaced could be at risk for injury at that level of play.

F. Coaching

Travel Coaches Selection

- No later than July 1st, of each year the DYHA Coaching Committee Chair will notify all past coaches via email requesting coaching registrations. Registrations must be completed on the DYHA website prior to August 1st. The travel season begins with evaluations for travel teams in August or September.
- The DYHA Board approves all Coaches and approves the Division Head for each division based on the Coaching Committee's recommendation. The Division Head selects the Head Coach(es) for each team(s). The Head Coach(es) select their Assistant Coaches from the list of approved Coaches.

Interviews deemed necessary by the coaches' selection committee will take place no later than the August Board Meeting.

Coaching Overview

It is the intent of these rules and regulations to insure the best possible coaches be made available for DYHA. It is our goal to establish a comfortable position for both the coaches and the Board. It is not our intent with these rules and regulations to restrict the coaches' involvement or the Board's controls.

For all coaching positions, the Board will actively pursue and consider non-parent and parent candidates inside and outside the association.

Coaches must attend coaches meetings as required by DYHA.

DYHA has adopted the USA Hockey methods of effective coaching as a model for its coaching staff. The role of the coach is to be a leader, teacher, and organizer.

DYHA will register one head coach and not more than three assistant coaches per team.

Coaches must be at least 18 years of age. A junior coach (as defined by USA Hockey) may serve as an assistant coach. A coach must be able to demonstrate competency in skating, hockey skills, teaching techniques, strategies, and skills in communication with parents and players. Coaches must meet the minimum acceptable coaching level requirements as outlined by USA Hockey. A Head Coach should have some prior coaching and/or playing experience, if at all possible.

Criteria for Selecting Head Coaches

The DYHA Board shall consider the following factors (listed in no particular order of importance) in determining an appointment:

- Seniority as a Head Coach in DYHA.
- Previous coaching performance
- Experience as a coach in the age level requested
- Experience as a coach in other age levels
- Attendance to and certified for that level by USA Hockey
- The coach's knowledge of ice hockey

Coaches who are parents of hockey players are generally assigned to the age level of their child.

Monitoring of Coaches

The Coaching Committee along with the Travel Team Committee will have the primary responsibility for monitoring the travel team coaches to make sure that they are adhering to this policy as outlined herein.

The DYHA Board reserves the right to review the performance of Travel Team coaches by offering recommendations for improvements when deemed necessary. Based upon the review of the individual's performance, the DYHA Board may elect to remove a coach from his or her position. This decision requires a two-thirds majority vote.

Individual conflicts and discrepancies can be raised with the League Commissioner or the President of DYHA.

G. Travel Team Management Policies

Team Manager

The Head Coach selects the Travel Team Manager (or Co-Managers) for his respective team. It is recommended that the selected Team Manager(s) not be a related to the Head Coach. The Team Manager must be approved by the Board of Directors. It is recommended that each manager only manage one team during the season. The Team Manager is what makes each team successful by coordinating the many different needs of the team.

Responsibilities may include but are not limited to the following:

- Attend the annual team manager's meeting to learn managerial procedures relating to the position.
- Hold a meeting at the beginning of the year right after teams are selected to cover an estimated budget, possible number of games, possible number of tournaments, possible home tournament, coaching philosophy, and review USA Hockey's Zero Tolerance Policy and Consent to Treat Form (parents must sign these releases at this meeting)
- Produce a team roster for each player and coach with player names, numbers, parent's first names and phone numbers.
- Keep all team related information on file. (Roster, Consent to Treat forms, etc.)
- Responsible for all correspondence with parents in order to keep them informed of team events (practices, games, tournaments, hotels, etc.)
- Responsible for updating team page on the DYHA website.
- Handling the team's registration, with the help of the Registrar to USA Hockey.
- Tournament Coordinator for any DYHA home tournaments.
- Work with coach in identifying season tournaments and be responsible for all registration needs for chosen tournaments. Including sending in fees, block hotel rooms for team, all communication with that tournament coordinator.
- Coordinate with the coach which leagues the team will play in (Dane County - Region 4, Midwest League) and be responsible for maintaining the schedule for those games (friendship games & scrimmages included) as well as reporting scores on the Dane County website.
- In the event of absence at a practice or game, prior coordination with a parent to handle taking practice attendance, notification of any changes, etc.
- Jersey distribution.
- Help coordinate photo day for team.
- Money collection and hand off to Treasurer (includes scheduled fee payments, tournaments, etc.)
- Notify the parents that their fees need to be paid as follows:
 - 1/3 fees are to be paid by October 1st
 - 1/3 of their travel fees are to be paid by November 1st
 - Remaining fees are to be paid by December 1st or the player doesn't play!

The Manager can set up a payment schedule for the parents if he/she so chooses, but payments cannot be required outside of the above parameters.

- Manage end of year party if the team chooses to have one.
- Be familiar with DYHA's rules & policies. Mutual responsibility with the coach for the enforcement of above and any duties spelled out within, i.e., game/match penalty notification.
- Coordinate all team meetings with the coach staff.
- Handle score sheet requirements for all games and recruit a timekeeper and penalty box attendant.
- Ensure the medical kit is available and stocked.

H. Team Finances

Estimated Budget

A list of each player's fees will be provided to each family at the pre-season travel team meeting. The estimated budget which is prepared by the coach and manager should be submitted to the DYHA Treasurer.

The initial fees are estimates based upon the fees that have been incurred in the past. The final fees will be determined by the actual number of games, practices, tournaments, etc. that the travel team participates in. They could end up being higher or lower than the original estimate. The Travel Team Manager should track the estimated budget as the year progresses and communicate this to the Treasurer of the DYHA and parents so that there are no surprises at the end of the year.

Payment Obligations

Payment obligations will be disseminated and managed by the Travel Team Manager. Methods of payment can be cash, check or credit card. Additional information on Fees and Dues can be found in the DYHA Bylaws.

I. Conduct

The DYHA Board has adopted the USA Hockey conduct guidelines (Zero Tolerance Policy) for players, parents and coaches. The DYHA Board takes this very seriously and will address situations that are in conflict with the USA Hockey guidelines when necessary.

J. Travel Team Grievances/Discipline

Address all complaints to the Division Head at each level in private. The 24-hour rule must be followed (24 hour "cool-down" period). The Division Head will then involve the Head Coach, Assistant Coach and/or Team Manager if necessary. In

the event that the Division Head is unable to resolve the problem, he or she will present the problem to the Travel Team Committee for resolution (if it is a travel team policy problem). If the Travel Team Committee cannot resolve the problem, then the DYHA Board will be addressed for resolution. If the problem is coaching related, the following hierarchy should be followed until a resolution is obtained: Division Head, Coaching Committee, Ace Director, DYHA Board of Directors.

At no time should a parent involve other Board Members or parents with individual or team problems.

K. Miscellaneous

Medical Kits

DYHA will provide each Travel Team with a medical kit. The medical kits will be the responsibility of each travel team. If additional supplies are needed during the course of the year the cost should be borne by the travel team and included in their expenses. At the end of the year, each travel team will be asked to turn the medical kits back to the Travel Team Committee. DYHA will re-stock the medical kits for the next season.

Jersey Policy

Travel Team Uniforms

Travel Team jerseys, socks and warm-ups are the responsibility of the individual player. DYHA does not provide any monetary reimbursement for the purchasing of these items. The respective Travel Team Managers will keep a record of all player jersey numbers so that there are no conflicts between new and existing players. A "family number" may be requested by a family held for them to reduce the cost of jerseys for younger siblings of older players. All jerseys and socks should be purchased from the same company and should be of the same style throughout all of the travel teams. The jerseys and socks must be kept in good repair and be kept in a clean, presentable manner. Any replacement or repair of these would be the responsibility of the player/parent.

Equipment

The equipment necessary to play travel hockey is the responsibility of the player. If DYHA has equipment available for use, it will be made available for rent. The exception to this is for goalies. DYHA has goalie equipment available for use if needed for the Travel Team goalies.

Helmets will be primarily black and breezers (pants) must be solid black. Gloves must be black, Saints' red or a combination of black and Saints' red.

Ice Time

DYHA will strive to provide practice hours each week for all teams as ice availability allows.

Younger age groups will be given preference for earlier weekday practice ice hours. Early morning ice hours on weekends will be shared equally among teams at each age level.

L. USA Hockey Locker Room Supervision Policy

USA Hockey is concerned with locker room activities between minor players; minor players and adult players; adults being alone with individual minor players in locker rooms; and with non-official or non-related adults having unsupervised access to minor participants at sanctioned team events.

It is the policy of USA Hockey and USA Hockey InLine that all Affiliates, Districts, leagues, and local hockey programs have at least one responsible adult present directly monitoring the locker room during all team events to assure that only participants, (coaches and players), approved team personnel and family members are permitted in the locker room and to supervise the conduct in the locker room. Any individual meetings with a minor participant and a coach in a locker room shall require a responsible adult be with the coach.

Further, responsible adults must personally monitor the locker room environment at all times while participants are present and also make sure the locker room is appropriately secured during times when minor participants are on the ice.

Teams, leagues and local hockey associations shall also comply with the USA Hockey Coed locker room policy set out below.

- A.** Where possible, have the male and female players undress/dress in separate locker rooms; then convene in a single dressing room to hold the coach's pre-game meeting;
- B.** Once the game is finished, hold the coach's post-game meeting; then have the male and female players proceed to their separate dressing rooms to undress and shower (separately), if available.
- C.** In those cases where separate facilities are not available, have one gender enter the locker room and change into their uniforms. That gender then leaves the locker room, while the other gender dresses. Both genders would then then assemble in the locker room and hold the coach's pre-game meeting.
- D.** Following the game and the coach's post-game meeting, where separate facilities are not available, the second gender group enters the locker room and undresses, while the first group waits outside until they have undressed and left the room. Once the second group leaves, the first group enters the locker room and undresses.
- E.** If sharing one locker room, have a minimum attire policy. All players should be required to arrive at the rink or change in a separate area so that prior to entering the locker room they are wearing their hockey base layers or shorts and t-shirts (in good condition - no holes or tears in clothing). All members of team must have this minimum attire before entering a co-ed locker room so that no player has the opportunity to see players of the opposite gender in a state of dress/undress.

***NOTE:** Taking turns or requiring minimum attire is a means of 'reasonable accommodation,' so neither gender group is favored.*

Full time Locker Room Monitors must complete a Consent to Screen Form through DYHA and MWAHA. They must also complete SafeSport training through USA Hockey.