**CLIFTON PARK YOUTH HOCKEY ASSOCIATION POLICIES**

Revision 3.1 – April 2016

***Philosophy***

It is the objective of Clifton Park Youth Hockey to provide the opportunity for young men and young women to learn and play the game of ice hockey, and in so doing develop sportsmanship, character, teamwork, self-esteem and other attributes that will serve them well in all of their future pursuits.

As board members, association members, parents and spectators, we are all expected to lead by example in demonstrating these attributes. CPYHA follows, and requires all participants to adhere to, USA Hockey Codes of Conduct and Zero Tolerance Policy.

CPYHA is a non-profit, volunteer led organization. It is affiliated with the New York State Amateur Hockey Association and USA Hockey. All policies stated within are intended to be within the parameters of the rules established by these organizations. Where differences occur, every effort will be made to align with the parent organizations as soon as possible.

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# 1 Registration and Team Formation (Travel and House teams)

1.1

All players interested in participating at any level for CPYHA must be properly registered with the Association. 1.1.1

All registration fees, or other fees due to CPYHA (e.g., from previous years) must be paid in full prior to any player involvement in tryouts or any other on ice activity. If the player was previously registered at another organization, a release must also be obtained prior to any CPYHA participation.

1.1.2

All players and parents (or legal guardians) must submit to CPYHA all forms required by CPYHA and USA hockey as listed in the registration instructions.

1.2

CPYHA will offer teams at the Midget, Bantam, Pee Wee, Squirt and Mite levels as well as applicable Girl’s only teams as defined by USA Hockey and as numbers permit.

1.3

Players will participate at the lowest division of play for which they are eligible based on their birth year, and will not be considered to play below their age level unless excepted by USA Hockey mandate (see appendix).

1.4

The number of teams offered at each age level will be determined by the Board based on registration numbers prior to the beginning of tryouts each fall.

1.4.1

One Tournament-Bound team may be defined as eligible for the state tournament each year (from the 12U level and above).

1.4.2

Additional teams may be tiered (e.g., highest ranked players based on tryouts on the first team, next highest group on the second team, etc.) or two or more teams may be comprised of equal talent (e.g., a group of 30 players is divided into two equal teams such that each team has a balance of higher ranked and lower ranked players). This decision will be made each year at each division level based on player registration information to provide a structure that best allows for scheduling of competitive games for all teams involved. The ACE Coordinator, the Director of Player Development, and the respective Division Directors will meet each year to make these decisions and will communicate the results to the membership as early as possible.

1.5

Tryouts will be conducted annually no later than the end of September, and no earlier than allowed by USA Hockey. Typically the Major/Minor and Girls’ tryouts will occur within one month from the conclusion of the USA Hockey National Tournaments. See attached Tryout Document for additional details.

# 2 Team Selection

2.1

The designated player selection committees will select teams based on the current Tryout Document. 2.2

Team sizes will be as equal as possible, with higher tiered teams given the opportunity to choose team size on the margin. (For example, if there are 3 teams and 43 skaters and 4 goalies registered, the “A” level team may choose to have either 14 or 15 skaters, with either 1 or 2 goalies.)

2.3

Barring exceptional circumstances, travel teams from the Squirt through Pee Wee level and all Girls-only teams should have between 13 and 15 skaters with 1-2 goalies. Bantam and Midget teams may choose to go with slightly larger rosters, but must stay within USA Hockey maximums.

2.4

Players will be notified as soon as possible after the conclusion of tryouts to whether they have made a team or not by the Division Director or his/her representative. For Spring tryouts, Players will have 72 hours from their notification of making the team to accept being on the team and complete full registration with CPYHA. If the player’s registration is not complete within the 72 hours it will be assumed they have declined the roster spot.

# 3 Mites

3.1

The Coaches, Director of Player Development and Mite Director will coordinate the selection of Mite House teams in accordance to USA Hockey’s ADM red, white, and blue team program so as to best balance skill levels.

3.2

There is not a specific age criterion separating mini-mites from mite house. As a guideline, mini-mites are ages 3-6 and mite house ages 6-8, but that can vary based on individual skating experience.

# Player Positions

4.1

It is the coach’s responsibility to designate individual player positions based on what is best for the team and the individual’s development.

4.1.1

At the mite and squirt level, with the exception of Squirt A, players shall have the opportunity to try all positions at some point during the season, and to get considerable exposure to both offense and defense in order to build versatile players with diverse skills as they progress.

4.1.2

At the PW, Bantam and Midget levels, player positions are typically more stable, although rotation may happen at the coach’s discretion.

# Goaltenders

5.1

At the Mite House level, goaltending responsibilities rotate on a weekly basis and all players wishing to try playing goal should be given the opportunity at least once during the season. Coaches should encourage all players to try the position at least once. Then, for additional opportunities, preference shall be given to any mite players who may be moving to travel hockey the following year. Exclusive goaltending at this level is strongly discouraged.

5.2

For younger travel teams, particularly squirts and Girls 12U, arrangements among two or more players can be made at the discretion of the coach to share responsibilities for goaltending as well as skating at other positions. This can be an excellent developmental experience thereby improving skills at both positions.

5.2.1

The Director of Player Development, Division Director, and Registrar must be consulted for these arrangements. 5.3

On travel teams, only full time registered goalies will receive the CPYHA goalie credit incentive. Full-time goaltenders that skate out at the coach’s discretion will not be penalized their goalie credit for doing so.

5.4 Goalie Credit Policy 5.4.1

Each full time travel goalie registered with the organization will receive the current years pre- registration payment credited back to them as well as the additional player credit (that will be defined annually by the organization) the first month of the season toward their individual team assessment. Any additional assessments less these credits due to the team will be the responsibility of the individual family.

# Ice Time

6.1

At the squirt level, lines should be rotated continuously with little to no consideration given to managing the bench in order to win a particular game.

6.1.2

As players get older, and particularly for Tournament-Bound teams competing at the State Tournament level, coaches have the discretion to employ a number of strategies that may cause certain players to have increased ice time. While obvious disregard for any player’s lack of playing time will not be tolerated, ice time is not necessarily equal at this level and is rewarded by effort and performance.

6.1.3

Depending on the number of skaters for a given game, ice time can vary based on position (e.g., three lines of forwards, two sets of defense). The intent however is that all players receive a regular shift and that playing time works out similarly for all players during the course of the season. However, the coach may use discretion in tournament play to use players he/she sees fit to compete in close “end of game” situations.

6.2

The exception to the above is where ice time is curtailed due to injuries and/or disciplinary reasons, such as game penalties or suspensions.

6.2.1

Coaches may choose to sit a player during practice, for a shift, or an entire game for reasons including blatant disrespect toward coaches, officials, or other players, or negligent behavior that creates the risk of injury.

6.2.2

Behavior requiring extended time off the ice (multiple games or practices) must be raised by the coach or Division Director to the CPYHA disciplinary committee at the interest of all players involved.

6.3 Coaching Ethics 6.3.1

USA Hockey Certified coaches appointed for head coaching positions by the Board have the ultimate responsibility to balance the individual development of their players with the overall performance and success of their respective team. 6.3.2

The Board grants considerable latitude to each head coach. In addition to assembling their own coaching staff , this latitude also applies to exercising sound judgment and discretion in determining reasonable and appropriate ice time for players on their team. The Board has a Policy regarding player ice-time (section) that coaches are expected to understand and apply when determining a player’s ice time.

6.3.3

However, the Board reserves the right to discipline or remove any coach from their appointed coaching position for any number of serious infractions of USA Hockey, NYSAHA or CPYHA Rules, Regulations and Policies. These include, but are not limited to, unfairly denying or unreasonably restricting one or more player’s ice-time for unethical reasons (overemphasis on winning or in retaliation for earlier complaints) or showing equally unacceptable partiality to one or more players (including a coach/team official/Board member’s son or daughter.)

6.3.4

When concerns and/or complaints regarding coaching partiality or unfair ice-time are brought to the attention of the appropriate Division Director, The CPYHA ACE and Dir. Player Development will investigate the complaint. This may include direct observation of the coach and team in question over the course of several games without informing the coach or team in advance. The objective is for the organization to see first hand if player ice-time is determined primarily by coaching decisions (line changes) or by game situations (numerous penalty kills, power-plays, etc.).

1. The Association’s Player Advocate may also participate in the investigation/deliberations as an impartial observer to ensure the interests of the player are properly served.
2. After investigating such complaints, if the ACE and Dir. Player Development determine that player ice-time *is not* being dictated by the coach for unfair, unreasonable or unethical reasons, this conclusion will be shared with the appropriate Div. Director and parent raising the complaint or concern. Under such circumstances, no further action will be taken by the ACE and Dir. Player Development in the matter.
3. If the ACE and Dir. Player Development unanimously agree that player ice-time is being dictated by the coach for what, in their opinion, appears to be unfair, unreasonable, or unethical reasons, then a meeting will be convened with that coach to re-emphasize and clarify CPYHA’s Ice-time Policy and to discuss all other pertinent rules and regulations that apply to the situation.
4. If the ACE and Dir. Player Development receives additional concerns and/or complaints regarding the same coach/coaching staff for the second time in the same season, and if after further investigation both the ACE and Dir. Player Development unanimously agree that these complaints and/or concerns are found to be further substantiated, the Dir. Of Player Development will make a detailed written report of both instances and their findings. This report shall then be submitted to the Disciplinary Committee for further consideration.

# Team schedules

7.1

After each team is selected and before the season schedule is secured, a meeting should be held with the parents of players for each team to gain consensus around approximate number of total season games, amount of travel, hotel stays, and overall expenses.

7.1.1

“A” level coaches will give this information prior to the start of the A level tryouts in a parent meeting. 7.2

Factors may vary team by team, but must be within the parameters outlined below. Total season games (Home and Away):

Girls 12UB: Up to 25 games

Squirts, Pee Wee, and Girls12UA: Up to 50 games Bantams, Midgets, Girls14U, and Girls 16U: Up to 55 games

Notes:

1. The above does include tournaments (counted as no more than three games), but excludes state tournament play for Tournament Bound teams.
2. The number of games can be managed by using weekend “game slots” as practice sessions as appropriate throughout the season.
3. A Game is defined as a competition against a team from another organization or an inter-organizational game for league play which requires the presence of registered, paid referees.

7.2.1

Any games exceeding the above limits must be reported to the Division Director and ACE Coordinator in advance.

# 8 Expense

8.1

In addition to the initial registration fee, assessments of $250-$300 (based on age group) are charged in October, November and December.

8.1.1

At the Midget level the monthly scale may begin earlier for a before-and-after team, or slightly later for a league team. 8.2

Additional assessments may be charged on a team-by-team basis, and such assessments may not exceed a total of $300 per player. (Division Director approval required for exceptions).

8.3

Some teams may choose to fundraise to offset expense, although there is no Mandatory Fundraising for teams. (see section 16: Fundraising below).

# Length of Season

9.1

The Clifton Park Youth Hockey Ice contract for practice and game ice begins the first of October and ends the last day of February.

9.2

Team tryouts shall occur in the Spring and the Fall with all travel teams forming by October. 9.3

The season typically concludes by late February or early March based on tournament play. 9.4

No team may continue seasonal play beyond March 31 (save for extended state/national tournament or league participation) without prior approval from the Division Director.

9.5

No team may continue seasonal play beyond the USA Hockey National Tournament Weekend without prior approval from the Division Director.

9.6

Any skills sessions or other activity during the off-season will have no bearing on tryouts or team selections. (Note: Midgets are an exception from these dates due to high school before/after season implications and an earlier state sectional requirement).

# Conflicts

10.1

CPYHA strongly encourages all young athletes to participate in multiple sports. Unfortunately, participation in fall or spring sports may conflict with the hockey season.

10.2

Other conflicts related to academic, extra-curricular, religious commitments, etc., should be handled similarly. (Note: Parents are also encouraged to use discretion, and players should be discouraged from trying out for teams especially if they are state bound when excessive conflicts are expected, so as to afford the opportunity to other players).

# 11 Equipment

11.1

Each participant must provide his or her own complete set of ice hockey equipment as outlined by USA Hockey. 11.2

Full equipment, including helmets with face mask and chin strap must be worn at all team games and practices in an effort to prevent serious injury.

11.2.1

CPYHA follows all USA Hockey guidelines regarding mouth guards. 11.2.2

A neck guard, while not mandated, is recommended. 11.3

A white helmet and black gloves are the standard for all Clifton Park teams, and are required for all “A” travel teams squirt and above, with the exception of goaltending helmets and equipment.

11.4

Game jerseys are provided by the team/association. 11.4.1

For association owned jerseys, a rental fee is involved and jerseys are handed in at the conclusion of the season. 11.4.2

All CPYHA uniforms must be approved in advance by the Board. 11.5

Goaltending equipment at the mite house level is also provided by the association. 11.5.1

When available, reserve goaltending equipment for higher levels may also be provided to teams on a game basis. Please check with the Division Director for equipment availability.

11.6

All coaches are required to wear a helmet when on the ice for all CPYHA activities.

# Coaching

12.1

All coaches are required to submit the CPYHA coaching application to the ACE Coordinator. 12.2

Coaches are selected annually by the coaching committee, with “A” coaches named in April and B/C level coaches named as soon as practical prior to the start of the season.

12.3

All coaches and assistants must obtain the appropriate level of coaching certification and submit to NYSAHA background screening in accordance with USA Hockey regulations. CPYHA will reimburse only coaching clinic fees, module fees, and screening fees.

12.3.1

Each head coach is responsible for appointing an assistant coach(es). 12.4

Parent coaches are encouraged wherever qualified parents are willing to volunteer. 12.4.1

Although it is the intent that all players be assigned to teams based on ability level, a son or daughter of the head coach (only, not applicable to assistants) may be assigned to such team if required to secure a qualified coach for a given team. 12.5

Volunteer non-parent coaches are also encouraged, especially in circumstances where there may be a shortage of parent coaches at a particular level or for a particular team.

12.5.1

Anyone volunteering to be a non-parent coach will be assigned to the team and division most in need of a coach, or based on coaching committee feedback.

12.6

All coaches are expected to maintain proper behavior in accordance with the USA Hockey coaching zero tolerance policy.

# Team Volunteers

13.1

Several adult volunteers are required to successfully run each team. 13.2

Parents and guardians are strongly encouraged to volunteer to assist with coaching, team management, tournament coordination (note: parent coverage for shifts at the annual home tournament is required), jerseys, scorekeeping/penalty boxes for home games, etc.

13.3

All team managers must be approved in advance by the CPYHA Treasurer. 13.4

Roles and responsibilities will be coordinated by the head coach and team manager. 13.5

All coaches, team officials and board members serve as volunteers. No remuneration, player credits, or other reimbursement (beyond required USA hockey fees for screening, registration, and certification) is permitted. (Note: In extreme circumstances, where volunteer coaches are not available, the board may choose in advance to fund payment for a coach. In this case, types and responsibilities of payment would be decided by the board on a team by team basis.) 13.6

Player credits for the Master Ice Scheduler is an approved exception to this policy. 13.7

All team schedulers must be approved in advance by the CPYHA Master Ice Scheduler.

# Player Movement

14.1

As noted above, all players must be registered for the lowest age group for which they qualify under USA Hockey guidelines. Given the various levels of competition offered by CPYHA, it is expected that both highly talented individuals and beginning skaters can develop appropriately within these parameters.

14.2

The board is entitled to approve exceptions for playing up from the defined age ranges, however, to accommodate extreme circumstances.

14.2.1

Any request for player move-ups or move downs should be submitted annually in writing with full details of such request to the current President of Clifton Park Youth Hockey by July 1st of the upcoming season and discussed with the board at the monthly July meeting of such season.

14.2.2

A board vote is necessary for any player movement decision to play up and an answer shall be provided within 30 days of review of request.

14.2.3

Any requests for players to “play down” will be handled in accordance of USA Hockey policies and procedures. 14.3

Players joining Clifton Park after the tryout period will be assigned to the lowest level of competition (e.g., “C” team) by default.

14.4

Any player may move up to a different level of competition within the same age division during the season in order to rebalance roster sizes (due to migration in, out, injuries, etc.). Such moves require consultation from the coaches and Division Director and approval by the Director of Player Development.

14.5

In situations where the opportunity for a player to move up within a division does arise, players that originally tried out and were not chosen for a team must first be given the option to move up. In instances where the above does not apply or the list has been exhausted, any player upon consultation as stated above may be given the opportunity to move up.

# 15 Cross-Rostering

15.1

Cross-rostering occurs when a player appears on more than one current, official USA hockey roster. 15.1.1

There may be instances in which travel division teams may not carry a full complement of players or goaltenders due to registration numbers. In these circumstances, tournament bound teams or other travel division teams are allowed to cross-roster within the same age division a finite amount of players (normally two or three in total) and a second goaltender to prepare for the possibilities of injury, long-term illness, player withdrawals, or other extenuating circumstances.

15.1.2

Player movement during the season among CPYHA teams and overuse of cross-rostering (particularly to the extent that it impacts playing time of selected team members or participation on the “lower” team) is strongly discouraged and should be monitored by Division Directors.

15.1.3

Any higher level team that chooses to cross-roster players from lower levels must do so from the pool of players that originally tried out and were not originally chosen for that respective team. In cases where the above does not apply, all lower level players within the same division are eligible for cross-rostering.

15.1.4

In any case in which players are cross-rostered to a state-bound team, or any other travel team, all USA Hockey and State Guidelines must be followed in good faith to ensure that player’s eligibility for the tournament season, with the coordination and consent of the parent/guardians and the present team’s head coach.

15.1.5

Division Directors will be responsible for advising the registrar for any cross-rostering prior to the cut-off date of each season for NY State Tournament-bound teams.

15.1.6

Any team cross-rostering a player during the season must also inform the registrar in order to update the roster. 15.1.7

Any player cross-rostering up an age division must be approved by the Board in advance. 15.2

Any player from another association wishing to cross-roster with CPYHA from another organization with the intent of playing for both associations concurrently must first contact the Association President of their current Association for approval. Both Association Presidents must then come to a consensus and a written agreement regarding the player cross-rostering between Associations. It will then become an agenda item to be voted on at the next scheduled CPYHA Board meeting. If approved, it then must be submitted to the Northern Zone Section President for approval.

# Fundraising

16.1

Fundraising efforts may occur at the association level (e.g., rink banners), for groups of teams (e.g., tournament raffle) or individual teams (e.g. sales of attire).

16.2

Team fundraising may be organized to benefit an entire team equally, or in proportion to the funds raised by individual player/families. All such activities must be approved in advance by the Treasurer and designated Vice President.

16.3

The intent of the fundraising or approval is to preserve the brand image of CPYHA in the community, and help ensure that such efforts are complementary and conducted in such a way as to provide the greatest benefit to the entire organization over time.

16.4

Fundraising is not mandatory

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1. **Participant Codes of Conduct and Zero Tolerance Policy**

17.1

It is the policy of CPYHA that all participants in the sport of ice hockey, including players, coaches, parents, spectators, on-ice officials, and administrators, adhere to the applicable Code of Conduct and Zero Tolerance Policy set forth in the CPYHA Code of Conduct and Zero Tolerance Policy Statement.

17.2

As a condition of on-ice participation, each parent, coach, and player in CPYHA must annually acknowledge receipt and understanding of the CPYHA Code of Conduct and Zero Tolerance Policy Statement.

17.3

CPYHA players, coaches, parents and administrators whose conduct violates the Code of Conduct and Zero Tolerance Policy may be removed from participation temporarily and/or subject to discipline as otherwise provided for in CPYHA policies and by-laws, up to and including termination of membership in CPYHA.

# Exceptions and Amendments

18.1

This document or any policy may be amended at any scheduled meeting of the Board by a majority vote. 18.2

Individual exceptions to stated policies require approval from the Board.

# Appendices:

Tryout Document (per website)

Board positions and descriptions (per website)

Special Committees and Responsibilities (Coaching Selection, Disciplinary, other per By-Laws) USA Hockey Zero Tolerance Policy (USA Hockey website)

USA Hockey Mandate on player movement. (USA Hockey website) CPYHA Locker Room Policy (per website)

CPYHA Co-Ed Locker Room Equity Policy (per website)

CPYHA Codes of Conduct and Zero Tolerance Policy (per website)