

VALLEY YOUTH HOCKEY ASSOCIATION, INC.

PLAYER/PARENT HANDBOOK

2025-2026



www.RoanokeYouthHockey.com

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VALLEY YOUTH HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

Philosophy

It is the goal of Valley Youth Hockey Association (VYHA) to offer a program that provides opportunities for boys and girls to learn life skills such as good sportsmanship, teamwork, and the importance of commitment. These goals will be achieved while improving their ice hockey skills and playing the game in an appropriately competitive environment.

You, the athlete and parents, determine the success of VYHA; along with the cooperation and assistance of the coaches. Your dedication and hard work are factors in this success. You and your family must be familiar with and adhere to the rules of the Valley Youth Hockey Association, as well as of USA Hockey. All members of the VYHA are constantly in the public eye and our conduct on and off the ice not only influences future players, but also reflects the standards of our entire organization.

Required Protective Equipment

The following protective equipment is required for all VYHA players, in accordance with USA Hockey guidelines:

Skaters:

- Hockey Style Neck Guard/Neck Laceration Protection
- Helmet: HECC/CSA approved, not expired, with a face shield (metal cage or plastic)
- Mouth guard: internal, colored (not white or clear)
- Shoulder pads
- Elbow pads
- Gloves
- Supporter with cup (boys) or pelvic protector (girls)
- Hockey pants with pads
- Shin/knee guards
- Skates
- Stick: must have butt-end covered properly with tape or rubber end cap

Goalies:

- Face mask: HECC/CSA approved, not expired, with throat protector
- Neck Laceration Protection
- Glove & Blocker
- Chest protector
- Shoulder pads
- Hockey pants
- Leg pads
- Goalie stick: must have butt-end covered properly with tape or rubber end cap

Coaches:

HECC/CSA approved helmet **MUST** be worn on the ice during practice and if on the ice during warm-ups for games.

Student Coaches – 18 Years Old or younger.

HECC/CSA approved helmet **MUST** be worn on the ice during all practices, and if on the ice during warm-ups for games. In addition, per USA Hockey Rules Student Coaches **MUST** wear HECC/CSA approved helmet when on the bench for games and practices.

<https://www.usahockey.com/studentcoaches>

Equipment should be routinely inspected by players and parents for loose straps, hooks or screws and to make sure the equipment still fits and is not expired.

VYHA YOUTH HOCKEY (continued)

LEARN TO PLAY

What is Learn to Play Hockey?

Valley Youth Hockey Association's "Learn to Play" (LTP) program is for boys and girls ages 5 years and older who have not participated in ice hockey activities in the past or are in the early stages of the skill acquisition and development process. Some previous skating experience is a plus; however, previous skating experience is not required to participate in this program. Children will receive basic skating instruction but will learn primarily through playing hockey.

What are the Goals of Learn to Play?

To have **FUN** learning to play "the coolest game on earth." Learn the basic principles of ice hockey. Safety, rules, positions, skating, stick handling, shooting fundamentals, game play, and development of essential skating skills. Through the Learn to Play program, we seek to:

- ✓ Learn the basic skills required to play ice hockey.
- ✓ Develop an understanding of basic teamwork through participation in a variety of activities and adapted game situations.
- ✓ To create and refine basic motor patterns required to play ice hockey
- ✓ To be introduced to the concepts of cooperation, fair play, and sportsmanship in a fun environment.

HOUSE LEAGUE

What is House League Hockey?

The VYHA House League Hockey Program is intended for all players, but the beginning and intermediate player will particularly benefit from the opportunity to participate. House League allows players to enjoy the sport of hockey in a controlled, competitive, fun, non-checking environment, while improving the players' individual and team skills through practice and games. Emphasis is on players' skills, sportsmanship and love of the game. All players will be given equal playing time during games, regardless of game situations.

At the Mite level, these games may be cross-ice. Cross-ice is a concept included in USA Hockey's American Development Model (ADM) for player development that offers less competitive, fun-focused games. At the squirt level and above, House League games are played full-ice and are played using traditional rules of hockey with some modifications that are voted on by the House League Coaches prior to game play. In addition, in some cases, especially at the Lower House Level, a horn will be used to allow players to come on and off the ice.

House League hockey is where VYHA players begin to be exposed to higher order skills of hockey and develop those skills in real-game action. While house league games are competitive in nature, all games are played among and between players from VYHA. Players practice together in their age group and then split out into their house league teams for games. Continued skill acquisition and development are the primary goals of house league. Winning or losing takes a backseat to the development of every VYHA player in our house league. On average, VYHA's House League program will consist of 20 practices, 12 regular season games, and playoffs at the end of the season.

VYHA YOUTH HOCKEY (continued)

HOUSE LEAGUE (continued)

What Are the Goals of House League Hockey?

The goals of VYHA's House League Program are:

- To have fun while playing hockey and engaging in physical activities.
- To learn the fundamental skills required to play the game of hockey.
- To create and refine basic motor patterns (agility, balance, and coordination).
- To be introduced to the concepts of cooperation and fair play.

What Age Classifications Exist for VYHA House League Hockey?

VYHA assesses the composition of its house league program on an annual basis. A number of factors are considered when developing the structure of the house league program. These can include the number of players at each age group across the organization, the number of volunteer coaches at each age group, and the amount of ice time available for house league-related activities. In addition to these factors, VYHA's Hockey Development Committee takes into consideration children's developmental process when dividing our participants into house league levels and teams.

In general, the Mite age group will always conduct its own dedicated, cross-ice house league program. In the past, Lower House League has consisted of players ages 9-12 (squirts and second year peewees). Upper House has consisted of players ages 13-16 (first year bantams and midgets). All House League divisions are contingent on number of players, skill level of players, and/or size are such that they fit in well with their respective group.

Depending on the number of players registered for VYHA, there is a possibility that a dedicated Upper House league could be created. If the player census does not support an Upper House program, all effort will be made to develop a suitable alternative.

How is a Player's House League Classification Determined?

House league divisions are based on a combination of age and ability. While most kids play at their age level, it is not unusual for a beginning player to start a level below their age level, or an experienced player to play one level above. However, please discuss this with the house league director or coaches in your child's division, and remember that kids rarely have fun if they are playing above their skill level.

How Are House Teams Selected?

Teams are divided fairly by way of player evaluations at the beginning of the season to keep the competition equal. House League teams are selected by a "draft" held among the house league coaches for all applicable age groups. To the extent possible, teams in each division will be equal in overall ability, which may require player changes between teams from time to time. The decision to "trade" players between teams rests with the House League Coordinator in consultation with each team's coaches. The decision of the House League Coordinator is final.

TRAVEL HOCKEY

What is Travel Hockey?

Travel hockey provides the enthusiastic ice hockey player the opportunity to further develop his or her skills through competition with similarly accomplished teams from the other programs. The Roanoke Junior Rail Yard Dawgs travel teams compete in the Carolinas Hockey League (CHL) of the Carolina Amateur Hockey Association (CAHA, a member of the Southern District of USA Hockey), and the Atlantic Coast Hockey Conference (ACHC). In addition, the higher level teams in each age group travel division *may* compete in the Eastern Junior Elite Prospects League (EJEPL). Outside of the CHL, ACHC and EJEPL, Valley Youth Hockey Association provides a Mites travel program aimed at developing skills through cross-ice games. This is designed to prepare players for traditional travel hockey play at the Squirt (10U) age division. In addition, our girl's programs play in the CGHL.

Preparation for competition in travel hockey requires more intensive and more frequent practices; and of course, travel. The CHL and ACHC are made up of teams from North & South Carolina and a handful from Virginia. The EJEPL is made up of teams from New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia. Therefore, teams that play in the CHL and ACHC may travel to, but is not limited to, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia. While teams that play in the EJEPL may travel to, but is not limited to Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and/or Virginia. Overnight travel will be required during the season in both leagues.

For our girl's teams, the CGHL is a program dedicated to the growth of girls ice hockey programs across the Carolinas and surrounding areas. Current supporting programs are Lady Thunderbirds (Winston-Salem, NC), Lady Stars (Greensboro, NC), Queen City Royals (Indian Trail, NC), Lady Warriors (Greenville, SC), Carolina Hurricanes (Raleigh, NC), Smoky Mountain Wild (Knoxville, TN), Lady Dawgs (Roanoke, VA). CGHL typically has 3-4 girls weekend events within the NC, SC, and VA involving jamborees of all junior age categories.

Is my player ready? Is travel hockey right for us? These are very good questions! A committee of age group coordinators and coaches decide during tryouts if your player has the skill set, potential, and determination necessary to contribute to the team or age group your child is trying out for. However, a player and his/her family must be willing to commit to the practice schedule, game participation, and tournament play required at this level of play. Only you and your player can make that decision.

TRAVEL HOCKEY (continued)

What Age Classifications Exist for USA Hockey Travel Hockey?

Teams are classified according to skill level and age as of December 31st of the current season, following USA Hockey guidelines:

2025-2026 AGE GROUP CLASSIFICATIONS

DATE OF BIRTH	AGE CATEGORY	AGE DIVISION
2007	18 Years	Midget 18 & Under
2008	17 Years	Midget 18 & Under
2009	16 Years	Midget 16 & Under
2010	15 Years	Midget 16 & Under
2011	14 Years	Bantam 14 & Under
2012	13 Years	Bantam 14 & Under
2013	12 Years	Pee Wee 12 & Under
2014	11 Years	Pee Wee 12 & Under
2015	10 Years	Squirt 10 & Under
2016	9 Years	Squirt 10 & Under
2017–Younger	8 & Under	Mite 8 & Under

Who is Eligible for Travel Hockey?

Anyone who fits the age category of a VYHA travel team may express interest in Roanoke Junior Dawgs travel hockey. In most instances, it may be necessary for players to try out for Roanoke Junior Dawgs teams at various age levels. The VYHA Player/Coach Committee and the individual team coaching staff will determine a player's team placement. Parents of players of exceptional skill may petition for their player to "play up" a level. This will only be allowed per PVAHA (Potomac Valley Amateur Hockey Association) guidelines and VYHA Coaches Committee Evaluations, and will be determined on a case-by-case basis. PVAHA will not allow any "play up" requests for 8U (Mites) requesting to play up to 10U (Squirts), or 12U (Pee Wee) requesting to play up to 14U (Bantam).

The VYHA leadership believes that youth hockey (both house and travel) is about developing all players to the fullest extent possible. However, there is a notable difference between house and travel hockey at any age group. Given the level of competition, the VYHA recognizes an obligation exists to put our travel teams in a position where they are competitive whenever possible. It is at this level of hockey where we begin to see greater differences in playing time, the implementation of specialty units, and more of a merit-based approach to playing time.

How are Roanoke Junior Dawgs Teams placed in the CHL, ACHC and EJEPL

Team placement is the process by which Roanoke Junior Dawgs teams are placed in the appropriate skill level within the Carolinas Hockey League (CHL) and Atlantic Coast Hockey Conference (ACHC). Placement also determines the appropriate competitive level for non-league games and tournaments. Proper team placement is critical to the players' hockey experience and skills development, not to mention the overall "hockey experience" for the family. Prior to the beginning of the season the CHL holds an evaluation play-in tournament for all CHL associations (This year it will be held during the month of May). Team placement is carefully evaluated at the play-in tournament by the head coaches of each association's team at that age group level and CHL competition committee prior to placing a team in any competition

or division of the CHL. The ACHC placement is done at the discretion of the Head Coach in connection with discussions he/she has with the ACHC directors. The placement is based upon the talent level of that year's team and the other teams in the ACHC.

Team placement in the Eastern Junior Elite Prospects League (EJEPL) is done at the discretion of the Head Coach of the upper team in that age group. The coach's decision on which level of competition in the EJEPL is solely based on the talent level on that team. At the beginning of the season the EJEPL holds an initial showcase of games at a neutral location for all EJEPL teams and associations. Typically, a team will play other teams at the competition level a team has declared to play for that season. There are some instances where after the first showcase of games a team may be moved up a division, or down a division, based on the outcome of the games during the first showcase.

Hockey classifications, explained.

In general, hockey traditionally classifies the "AAA" level as the highest skilled for travel hockey at that age group, then "AA," "A," and "B." While the nomenclature for the brackets may vary from league to league or geographical area within the United States the concept remains the same. What follows are general guidelines that help describe how a team should be placed, keeping in mind that the skill level, maturity, parental commitment, and number of players available in a bracket weigh heavily on the final decision.

A or AA Travel Team

"A" / "AA" level teams are usually comprised of more advanced players of skills best matched with local travel players. "A" / "AA" is usually a step above the "B" level and populated with players who are willing to make the commitment to skills, practice time, game, and travel. Typically "A" / "AA" travel teams will play in either ACHC or CHL leagues. In addition, depending on the age group, some "A" / "AA" travel teams might participate in end of the season tournaments and/or national tournaments.

B Travel Teams

B teams are made up of players who are experiencing their introductory years to travel hockey, do not meet the skill set required to play at the "A" / "AA" level. B players will participate in the Carolinas Hockey League. Therefore, parents and players must be willing to commit to a "travel" schedule which includes league-mandated and tournament travel as required.

TRAVEL HOCKEY (continued)

Travel Team Tryout Policy

Mission Statement

The purpose of the VYHA travel team tryout process is to evaluate a player's skating ability, hockey skills, and commitment to teamwork, in order to place him or her on a team that will provide the best environment for improving their skills, self-confidence, and enjoyment of the sport of ice hockey. At all levels, travel hockey is competitive and equal playing time is not guaranteed.

Tryout dates and times will be posted on the VYHA website (www.roanokeyouthhockey.com) and communicated via the travel team head coaches. **In order to tryout, a player's VYHA financial account must be in good standing prior to the date of tryouts.** The number of tryout sessions may vary with each level depending on the number of players registered. We want to provide skaters and goalies every opportunity to show their skills, while at the same time to obtain thorough and consistent evaluations at the tryouts.

All skaters and goaltenders that wish to be considered for a VYHA travel team must attend tryouts if tryouts are scheduled for that player's age division. Exceptions made are generally for new families moving to the area or injury related situations. Depending on the number of players trying out, it is possible that some players who attend tryout will not make a travel team.

Valley Youth Hockey Association supports USA Hockey's Long-Term Athlete Development Principles and position of a player being developed and playing within their appropriate age classification. VYHA also recognizes the fact that allowing a player to participate as a play up may be detrimental the players development. Players wishing to advance one age group for travel hockey must have "play up application" reviewed by the coaches committee before tryouts and approved prior to accepting a rostered position on the team.

The following guidelines have been established and there are no exceptions to these guidelines without approval of the VYHA Board of Directors and/or the Coaching Committee.

Evaluations

The Coaching Committee will create a committee of evaluators (ex: Non-age group coaches, age group coaches, local professional hockey players and coaches, members of the Rusty Blades, and/or local adult league players). Evaluators will use a standardized scoring system that will assess skating ability and hockey skills at each level during scheduled tryout sessions. The Coaching Committee will attempt to select evaluators for a given level who do not have children trying out at that level. Evaluation sheets, provided by the Coaching Committee, will be issued to the evaluators with numbers assigned to the skaters on tryout day. No names will be on the evaluation sheets. Travel tryouts at the Bantam and Midget age groups may include full contact scrimmage situations that simulate game activities. Contact in these age groups is very prevalent and the ability of players to handle checking is very important to their comfort and development as players. Scrimmage situations are important evaluation tools for goaltenders and allow the skaters to display team-oriented behavior.

Tryout Fee

A tryout fee of \$35 will be charged to all players who try out for each specific age group. This fee will be collected during the tryout registration.

TRAVEL HOCKEY (continued)

Travel Team Tryout Policy (continued)

Evaluation Guidelines

Tryout sessions will consist of skills that allow players to display their individual skating abilities, puck handling, passing, and shooting abilities. Evaluators will be in the stands and are instructed not to share comments with parents, players, or each other on any players being evaluated.

Evaluators are instructed to rate players using a standardized evaluation system, with an overall score taking into consideration the following:

- Skating skills
- Hockey skills
- Team work

Team Selection

There are three important factors when choosing how and where players are placed: tryout scores from the evaluators, coach's evaluations from the previous season, Head and Assistant coaches' team goals and vision. The combination of these three components provides the fairest and most accurate evaluation for each player. It is the responsibility of the Travel team Head Coaches and Coaching Committee to ensure that the process is followed correctly.

When, based on the number of participants registered at a given age level, more than one team could exist at an age level. Tryouts will be held in order to place skaters on an appropriate team based on their skills.

For those players requesting "play up" status, the impact on the age appropriate team will also be given consideration. However, it is the policy of the organization, working in conjunction with USA Hockey, that players should generally play in their respective age group. Remember, "play up" requests will only be allowed per PVAHA (Potomac Valley Amateur Hockey Association) guidelines and VYHA Coaches Committee Evaluations, and will be determined on a case-by-case basis. PVAHA will NOT allow any "play up" requests for 8U (Mites) requesting to play up to 10U (Squirts), or 12U (Pee Wee) requesting to play up to 14U (Bantam).

Age group Head and Assistant coaches will choose the players for their respective teams. Some roster positions may be left open after tryouts. Coaches will not be required to fill all open roster spots if they feel remaining unplaced players are not of the caliber to participate on that specific travel hockey team.

Notification

After all tryouts have been completed and roster selections have taken place, the Head Coach will submit final roster selections to a select group of Board Members (2) for final evaluation of roster selections. The head coach will review roster selections with the VYHA panel to make sure all selections are to the standards and team goals of that specific team. After the panel review is complete, players will be notified of their team selection with-in 10 days via email or phone call from the Head Coach.

TRAVEL HOCKEY (continued)

Travel Team Tryout Policy (continued)

Discipline

Inappropriate behavior by a skater or parent on or off the ice during the tryouts will not be tolerated and could eliminate a player for consideration on a VYHA Travel team. Inappropriate player behaviors include but are not limited to penalty situations such as illegal checking, elbowing, tripping, and harassment of other skaters on or off the ice and use of foul language. Inappropriate parent behavior includes but is not limited to verbal or physical abuse of players, coaches, and officials. All players must read and sign the Players Code of Conduct prior to tryouts.

Parents may be required to read and sign a parental code of conduct at the discretion of the head coach.

Exceptions

The Age Level Coaching staff can place players who miss tryouts, due to a SERIOUS illness/injury, an excused absence due to a prior commitment that has been approved in advance by the Head Coach of the Travel Team, or new players who move into the area. The Head Coach will give advance notice to parents regarding the timing of their evaluation.

Grievances

Any parent who has a concern with the selection process and/or a player's placement should contact the Coaching Committee first. The Board of Directors may then be contacted if the Coaching Committee is not able to resolve the problem.

We hope that this summary of the tryout and team selection process has been informative. We understand the frustrations that may come up, it is not an exact science, and different people have different opinions about the relative talent of a group of players. Please keep in mind that we are doing our best to evaluate your children and place them on the correct team that will allow them to improve as hockey players but more importantly to have fun. Experience has shown that an individual player will achieve the most success and make the most developmental progress over the course of the season if that player is competing at the proper level for his or her ability.

NOTE: This policy is available on www.roanokeyouthhockey.com for review.

ACCOUNTING & FUNDRAISING

Season Fees

Fees are set to reflect accurately the costs of practice time, game time, referee expenses, coaching expenses and miscellaneous costs. These parameters may vary from one age division to another. Fees include the use of Association-owned jerseys and socks.

USA Hockey Registration Fees:

Annual registration and membership is required by USA Hockey for the upcoming season for all players and coaches. Skaters over the age of 6 are required to pay an additional registration fee. This fee may vary. Last season the fee was \$45.00 (\$40.00 is the fee to register with USA Hockey. \$5.00 is the fee to register with Potomac Valley Amateur Hockey Association. VYHA sees no proceeds from this fee.)

Payments

Payments should be made by check payable to VYHA with the players name indicated on the memo line.

Players with severely past due accounts will not be allowed to participate in practice or games until payments are up to date or other arrangements are made. The Treasurer will monitor all dues payable and issue notices of late payment to the responsible party and notify the appropriate head coach.

Fee Structure (projected for the 2025-2026 season)

Learn to Play (due at registration)

LTP Program Fee: \$125.00 per session (4 sessions)

****LTP Participants moving from the Learn to Play program into the VYHA House Leagues will pay a pro-rated fee based on the number of LTP sessions completed during a single season. For example, an LTP participant moving to House League after session one (of four) will receive a dues reduction of $\frac{1}{4}$ (25%). A participant moving after session two (of four) will receive a dues reduction of 50%. Session 2 is the last session where participants will be*

House Leagues

U8 (No CHL Travel Options available. No Goalie Discount Available)

U8 House League – \$800.00. Pay in full or chose payment plan at time of registration. All payment plans will be completed by January 31, 2026.

U10 through U18 - \$800.00. Pay in full or chose payment plan at time of registration. All payment plans will be completed by January 31, 2026.

Travel Leagues

Mites Travel Team (if player/coach interest) TBD.

10UA & 12UA Blue Travel Team = \$2,700.00 (10), \$3,600.00 (12u)

Pay in full or chose payment plan at time of registration. All payment plans will be completed by January 31, 2026.

10U & 12U Gold Travel Team = \$2100.00 (10U), \$3100 (12u)

Pay in full or chose payment plan at time of registration. All payment plans will be completed by January 31, 2026.

14UA & Up Elite – Travel Team = \$4000.00

Pay in full or chose payment plan at time of registration. All payment plans will be completed by January 31, 2026.

14U Gold = \$3100.00

Pay in full or chose payment plan at time of registration. All payment plans will be completed by January 31, 2026.

10U, 12U and 14U House Select (Tournament team only) – TBD if player and coach interest.

PAYMENT AND REFUND POLICY

1. LEAGUE FEES: Members may pre-pay any amount through the off-season and summer months. ***ALL FEES ARE DUE IN FULL BY January 31st*** unless other suitable arrangements have been made with the VYHA Treasurer. The VYHA Board of Directors will annually post a specific schedule of payments covering both house league and travel hockey payments. Learn-to-play participants are expected to pay their fees in full at the time of registration.

2. **OUTSTANDING BALANCES:** Families with outstanding balances from a prior season, who do not pay their outstanding balances in full by the 2025-26 season registration are subject to the “failure to pay” provision described below.
3. **CREDIT BALANCES:** Any member that has a credit balance may use the credit towards fees that have been reported to VYHA before June 1st of the upcoming season. Credits accrued after that time will be available to families for payment of fees associated with the following hockey season. In the event that a family ceases to participate in the VYHA, credit balances transfer to the VYHA, and are not refundable.
4. **FAILURE TO PAY:** Failure to pay fees outstanding from previous seasons in full by October 1st renders ALL family members ineligible for Board or office membership and causes suspension of voting privileges. A written warning that the player(s) will be removed from the roster will be mailed to everyone that does not make an initial monthly payment by October 1st. If the total balance is not paid in full by December 1st, the player/coach will not be allowed to participate in any functions until their account is paid in full.
5. **WITHDRAWALS/REFUNDS:** After registration, if a player must withdraw from the league, a notification must be made in writing to the Treasurer and mailed to:

**VYHA Treasurer
PO Box 20362
Roanoke, VA 24018**

Withdrawal/refund requests are just that. Any withdrawal refund request will be presented by the VYHA Treasurer to the Executive Board of Valley Youth Hockey Association. The VYHA Executive Board will seek input from the staff of the applicable team and the VYHA Player-Coach Committee. It is the role of the team staff and the Player-Coach Committee to make a recommendation regarding the ultimate dispensation of the withdrawal /refund request. The final decision on the request will be determined by a vote of the VYHA Executive Committee.

The amount of any withdrawal/refund requests will be based on the postmark date of the request:

Request postmarked before August 15 – maximum refund is 75% of total dues.

Request postmarked between August 16 and October 15 – maximum refund is 50%.

Request postmarked between October 16 and December 15 – maximum refund is 25%.

Request postmarked after December 16 – no refund will be granted.

Any deviation from this schedule for individual withdrawal/refund requests can only be approved by a 75% of the VYHA Board of Directors.

Should it become necessary to cancel a season for any reason, VYHA will use the schedule referenced above to determine refunds to participants. The amount of refund in extreme circumstances, such as the interruption of a season, must be affirmed by a 75% vote of the VYHA Board of Directors before issuance.

6. **PAYMENTS:** Payments for all other VYHA programs should be made online via the registration software. In extreme circumstances, special arrangements can be made with the VYHA Registrar to make in-person payments or have them sent to VYHA via the USPS. Payments for Learn to Play equipment purchases must be made at Learn to Play registration via cash, check or credit card.

7. EXCEPTIONS: Any exceptions to the payment and refund policy must be approved by the VYHA Board of Directors prior to December 1st.
8. POLICY IS SET BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS. Neither coaches nor team managers have the authority to alter the policy or make changes to the fee structure without prior Board approval.
9. NSF CHECKS: Any member that has a check returned by the bank for any reason will be assessed a \$25.00 returned check charge.

Fundraising

VYHA is a non-profit, charitable organization under Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3). It is critical that VYHA and its members be able to provide full accounting and verification of activities carried out by the organization to maintain non-profit status. To ensure compliance, all members are to request advance approval of any fundraising or charitable event or endeavor. All payments for registration, equipment, donations, fundraising activities, and other items under the jurisdiction of VYHA are to be deposited in the association's bank account.

VYHA board of directors has adopted the following policies regarding fundraising and the use of trademarks belonging to VYHA. The names "Roanoke Junior Dawgs" and the Junior Dawgs logo (also the recently retired "Roanoke Express", "Roanoke Jr. Express" and the Train engine ship logo), "Roanoke Travel Hockey", "VYHA Travel Hockey", "Valley Youth Hockey Association", and the star logo) are the sole use of Valley Youth Hockey Association. Rights to the Roanoke Junior Dawgs name and associated logos have been granted to Valley Youth Hockey Association and may not be used or reproduced without the expressed, written consent of VYHA board of directors. Persons are specifically denied the use of these items for fundraising purposes without first submitting the proposed fundraising plan, along with samples of fundraising materials, to the Fundraising Committee for approval.

Individuals attempting to raise funds for the use of VYHA teams are advised that they may not use the VYHA federal tax identification number or the Commonwealth of Virginia Non-Profit Corporation Registration Number without prior approval by the Fundraising Committee. Any funds collected using these numbers must be deposited into ECHA checking accounts and be controlled by VYHA.

ANY AND ALL DONATIONS, FINANCIAL OR OTHERWISE, ARE TO BE MADE IN THE NAME OF VYHA IF THE DONOR WISHES TO RECEIVE A RECEIPT FROM THE ORGANIZATION. Persons raising funds are reminded that federal and state laws and regulations control the collection and use of donations. Significant penalties can be incurred for failing to comply fully with such regulations. Any questions regarding these policies should be directed to the board of directors.

CURRENT FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITIES AND PAYMENTS

VYHA works in conjunction with several organizations to bring fundraising opportunities to our families. Currently families can work shifts in the concessions stands at Salem Red Sox games, Berglund Center hockey games and other events and select Virginia Tech football games. These events are coordinated by our fundraising lead and advertised by email, short shift and

sportsengine. If you have any questions about these opportunities please email hockey@vyha.onmicrosoft.com.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE FOR FUNDRAISING CREDITS (Beginning in March 2025):

Any fundraising credits earned will be credited to player's accounts on a quarterly basis. The following are the only dates credits will be put towards accounts: March 31, June 30, September 30 and December 31.

Shifts worked late March through mid-June should result in credit towards accounts for June 30 payment, likewise late June through mid-September would credit on September 30, and late September through mid-December/raffle tickets would credit on December 31.

Please note: as an example, if you work a game in late June, you will not receive credit for that game until the September 30th payment. Also, if you work for a vendor who takes longer to get checks to us, your credit may not appear in the window for the next credit date.

Per routine, you will receive an email just prior to the payment date (3-31, 6-30, 9-30, 12-31) informing you of the credit amount. If the amount is more than the payment due, it will cycle to cover part of your next payment, or it will cycle towards your player's next season.

Financial Aid

In keeping with the VYHA's mission of teaching and promoting youth ice hockey in the Roanoke Valley, VYHA has limited funds available for need-based financial aid to reduce a player's hockey dues.

Amounts will range from \$100-\$500 depending on demonstrated need, the number of applications received, completeness of applications, and other considerations. All financial aid awards reduce a player's dues for the season and are not redeemable in-cash.

It is the fair and reasonable expectation that Financial Aid recipients volunteer within the Organization as well as participate in available VYHA fundraising programs.

The Financial Aid and Scholarship Budget shall be determined based on a calculation of 3% of the previous season's gross receipts. Budgeted Financial Aid and Scholarship money shall revert to the General Operating Budget at the end of each Season.

Reviews of applications will begin at a date selected by and communicated by the VYHA Board of Directors and will continue throughout the season until all available funds have been awarded. The Executive Committee of the VYHA Board of Directors makes the decision on all awards through this program.

While the Executive Committee realizes that financial hardship does not always directly correlate with your previous year's tax return, it is expected that those applying for Aid have an income no more than 3 times the current years Federal Poverty Guidelines. If this is not the case, please include a detailed explanation in the "Optional Personal Statement" section. Meeting these guidelines is not a guarantee that you will receive Financial Aid.

PLAYER CONDUCT & BEHAVIOR

Academics

Successful school performance is critical and parents should impress upon their sons and daughters the importance of maintain good achievement in school. VYHA supports hockey as a valuable extra-curricular activity of secondary importance to the player. Any player with poor academic performance should be recommended for extra help immediately by parents and coaches.

Practices

Ice time is an expensive and valuable commodity. Players need to be completely ready to go on the ice five (5) minutes prior to the start of practice. Coaches will timely inform all players of required arrival time at the rink. Players who arrive late to practice may be subject to benching or extra drills; players who are routinely late to practice may be subject to suspension.

Games

Players are expected to follow the coaches' instructions regarding arrival time for games; both at home and away. Parents are to make sure their player arrives on time, is well hydrated, and has all required equipment.

Locker Room Policy

In addition to the development of our hockey players and enjoyment of the sport of hockey, the safety and protection of our participants is central to VYHA's goals. VYHA adheres to USA Hockey's SafeSport Program as a means to help protect its participants from physical abuse, sexual abuse and other types of misconduct, including emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing. To help prevent abuse or misconduct from occurring in our locker rooms, VYHA has adopted the following locker room policy. This policy is designed to maintain personal privacy as well as to reduce the risk of misconduct in locker rooms.

Locker Room Monitoring

VYHA has predictable and limited use of locker rooms and changing areas (e.g., generally 30-45 minutes before and following practices and games). This allows for direct and regular monitoring of locker room areas. While constant monitoring inside of locker rooms and changing areas might be the most effective way to prevent problems, we understand that this would likely make some players uncomfortable and may even place our staff at risk for unwarranted suspicion.

We will attempt to conduct a sweep of the locker rooms and changing areas before players arrive, and if the coaches are not inside the locker rooms, either a coach or voluntary locker room monitors (each of which has been screened) will be posted directly outside of the locker rooms and changing areas during periods of use, and leave the doors open only when adequate privacy is still possible, so that only participants (coaches and players), approved team personnel and family members are permitted in the locker room.

Parents in Locker Rooms

Except for players at the younger age groups (Learn to Play, Mites and Squirts), we discourage parents from entering locker rooms unless it is truly necessary. If a player needs assistance with his or her uniform or gear, if the player is or may be injured, or a player's disability warrants assistance, then we ask that parents let the coach know beforehand that he or she will be helping the player.

Naturally, with our youngest age groups it is necessary for parents to assist the players getting dressed. We encourage parents to teach their players as young as possible how to get dressed so that players will learn as early as possible how to get dressed independently. In circumstances where parents are permitted in the locker room, coaches are permitted to ask that the parents leave for a short time before the game and for a short time after the game so that the coaches may address the players. As players get older, the coach may in his or her discretion prohibit parents from a locker room.

Mixed Gender Teams

Some of our teams consist of both male and female players. It is important that the privacy rights of all of our players are given consideration and appropriate arrangements made. Where possible, VYHA will have the male and female players dress/undress in separate locker rooms and then convene in a single locker room before the game or team meeting. Once the game or practice is finished, the players may come to one locker room for a team meeting and then the male and female players proceed to their separate locker rooms to undress and shower, if available. If separate locker rooms are not available, then the players will take turns using the locker room to change. We understand that these arrangements may require that players arrive earlier or leave later to dress, but believe that this is the most reasonable way to accommodate and respect all of our players.

Cell Phones and Other Mobile Recording Devices

Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras, are not permitted to be used in the locker rooms. If phones or other mobile devices must be used, they should be taken outside of the locker room.

Prohibited Conduct and Reporting

VYHA prohibits all types of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing, all as described in the USA Hockey SafeSport Handbook. Participants, employees or volunteers in VYHA may be subject to disciplinary action for violation of these locker room policies or for engaging in any misconduct or abuse or that violates the USA Hockey SafeSport Policies. Reports of any actual or suspected violations, you may email USA Hockey at SafeSport@usahockey.org or may call 1-800-888-4656.

Player's Code of Conduct

Each player must respect all coaches, competitors, officials, parents, fans, and arena/rink employees.

All players are expected to follow the USA Hockey Player's Code of Conduct as listed below:

- Play for fun.
- Work hard to improve your skills.
- Be a team player – get along with your teammates.
- Learn teamwork, sportsmanship and discipline.
- Be on time.
- Learn the rules and play by them. Always be a good sport.
- Respect your coach, your teammates, your parents, opponents and officials.
- Never argue with an official's decision.

PLAYER CONDUCT & BEHAVIOR (continued)

Player's Code of Conduct (continued)

This code of conduct means that disciplinary action will result for any of the following items. Please see the Discipline section for detailed action.

- Disrespecting any coach, teammate, parent, opponent, official, fan and/or arena employee. Back talk, argumentative attitude, or any other displays of disrespect will not be tolerated.
- Misuse of the sticks, or use of the stick with intent to harm or injure another person.
- Instigation of and/or fighting before, during, or after games.
- Use of vulgar language, gestures, or insinuations of any kind.
- Destruction of arena/rink property and/or VYHA or other association property.
- Use of alcoholic beverages or drugs.

PARENTS

Parents and guardians are an essential part of the overall hockey experience. Not only is it your responsibility to make sure your player is at all practices, games and other VYHA events; you are also responsible for your behavior. It is the intention of VYHA to promote respect of and for all participants.

Parents should lead by example and are expected to conduct themselves according to high standards of social and ethical behavior. This includes showing the utmost respect for players, coaches, officials, opposing players and coaches, and all fans. VYHA places high value on sportsmanship but realizes that differences of opinion on a range of matters can and will exist. Parents are encouraged to convey their thoughts and feelings; however, VYHA insists that all parties do so in an adult manner. You are expected to follow USA Hockey's Parent's Code of Conduct, as listed below.

Parent's Code of Conduct

- Do not force your children to participate in sports, but support their desires to play their chosen sports. Children are involved in organized sports for their enjoyment. Make it fun.
- Encourage your child to play by the rules. Remember, children learn best by example, so applaud the good plays of both teams.
- Do not embarrass your child by yelling at players, coaches or officials. By showing a positive attitude toward the game and all of its participants, your child will benefit.
- Emphasize skill development and practices and how they benefit your young athlete. De-emphasize games and competition in the lower age groups.
- Know and study the rules of the game and support the officials on and off the ice. This approach will help in the development and support of the game. Any criticism of the officials only hurts the game.
- Applaud a good effort in both victory and defeat and enforce the positive points of the game. Never yell or physically abuse your child after a game or practice – it is destructive. Work toward removing the physical and verbal abuse in youth sports.
- Recognize the importance of volunteer coaches. They are important to the development of your child and the sport. Communicate with them and support them.
- If you enjoy the game, learn all you can about hockey – and volunteer.

TEAM MANAGER

Each team will have a manager appointed by the Board of Directors. This is a volunteer position which requires many hours per week during the season to insure that games and travel go smoothly for parents, players and coaches. Primarily, the team manager is responsible for clear communication among the entire team, coaches and parents particularly. Your manager is your primary source of information. Once a roster spot is accepted by a player, his/her family will be given the contact information for the team manager. If you have any questions, feel free to contact them. Please keep in mind that the team manager volunteers his or her time to help your child and their team.

Volunteer to help them as much as you can!

Required Documents

The following documents are required at the time of application. Copies of certain documents (*) will be retained in the Team Portfolio. Other documents will be kept with VYHA:

- Current USA Hockey coach membership registration form*
- Current CEP certification card with proof of required level of certification*
- USA Hockey waiver & release*
- Signed Compliance with USA Hockey Code of Ethics

COACHES

Eligibility & Selection

All coaches must be USA Hockey certified or working to obtain their USA Hockey certification within the next few months. All coaches must also go through a background check, performed by PVAHA.

Head coaches are selected in July for the upcoming season by the Player/Coach Committee. Assistant coaches and parent helpers are determined by the head coaches.

Required Documents

The following documents are required at the time of application. Copies of certain documents (*) will be retained in the Team Portfolio. Other documents will be kept with VYHA:

- Current USA Hockey coach membership registration form*
- Current CEP certification card with proof of required level of certification*
- USA Hockey waiver & release*
- Signed Compliance with USA Hockey Code of Ethics

Code of Ethics & Rules

VYHA fully adheres to and adopts all provisions of the USA Hockey Coaching Ethics Code. All coaches are required to follow this code. It is as follows:

- Winning is a consideration, but not the only one, nor the most important one. Care more about the child than winning the game. Remember, players are involved in hockey for fun and enjoyment.
- Be a positive role model to your players. Display emotional maturity and be alert to the physical safety of players.
- Be generous with your praise when it is deserved; be consistent and honest; be fair and just; do not criticize players publicly; learn to be a more effective communicator and coach; don't yell at players.

USA HOCKEY ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

In an effort to make ice and inline hockey a more desirable and rewarding experience for all participants, USA Hockey instituted a zero tolerance policy beginning with the 1992 - 93 season. This policy requires all players, coaches, officials, team officials and administrators and parents/spectators to maintain a sportsmanlike and educational atmosphere before, during and after all USA Hockey-sanctioned games. Thus, the following points of emphasis must be implemented by all:

Players

A minor penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct (zero tolerance) shall be assessed whenever a player:

1. Openly disputes or argues any decision by an official.
2. Uses obscene or vulgar language at any time, including any swearing, even if it is not directed at a particular person.
3. Visually demonstrates any sign of dissatisfaction with an official's decision. Any time that a player persists in any of these actions, they shall be assessed a misconduct penalty. A game misconduct shall result if the player continues such action.

Coaches

A minor penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct (zero tolerance) shall be assessed whenever a coach:

1. Openly disputes or argues any decision by an official.
2. Uses obscene or vulgar language in a boisterous manner to anyone at any time.
3. Visually displays any sign of dissatisfaction with an official's decision including standing on the boards or standing in the bench doorway with the intent of inciting the officials, players or spectators.

Any time that a coach persists in any of these actions, he/she shall be assessed a game misconduct penalty.

Officials

Officials are required to conduct themselves in a businesslike, sportsmanlike, impartial and constructive manner at all times. The actions of an official must be above reproach. Actions such as "baiting" or inciting players or coaches are strictly prohibited. Officials are ambassadors of the game and must always conduct themselves with this responsibility in mind.

Parents/Spectators

The game will be stopped by game officials when parents/spectators displaying inappropriate and disruptive behavior interfere with other spectators or the game. The game officials will identify violators to the coaches for the purpose of removing parents/spectators from the spectator's viewing and game area. Once removed, play will resume. Lost time will not be replaced and violators may be subject to further disciplinary action by the local governing body. This inappropriate and disruptive behavior shall include:

1. Use of obscene or vulgar language in a boisterous manner to anyone at any time.
2. Taunting of players, coaches, officials or other spectators by means of baiting, ridiculing, threat of physical violence or physical violence.
3. Throwing of any object in the spectators viewing area, players' bench, penalty box or on ice surface, directed in any manner as to create a safety hazard.

DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES

Players

The following will be used as a basic guide for handling specific problems that may occur during the hockey season. Each coach may put additional rules in place but will follow these basic guidelines. Additional rules will be communicated to the participants. Coaches will enforce such rules consistently and fairly with all participants.

The head coach is responsible for enforcing these rules on the bench and during practices. If he or she does not fulfill this responsibility, the President of the association will intervene.

Not listening to coach; back talk, argumentative attitude, or any other displays of disrespect; disruptive at practice; late for practice; not wearing required equipment:

- 1st occurrence: sit on bench for as long as coach feels necessary and/or extra laps, drills, etc.
- 2nd occurrence: sit out shift or time during current or next game at the coach's discretion.
- 3rd occurrence: sit a period or more at the coach's discretion.
- Repeated occurrences: meeting with the Board and parent and coach for consideration of additional disciplinary action including possible suspension or expulsion.

Disrespect of other players, such as badmouthing teammates or competition; harmful teasing; abusive

or foul language; obscene gestures:

- 1st occurrence: warning.
- 2nd occurrence: sit out one period during current or next game.
- 3rd occurrence: sit 2 periods or more at the coach's discretion.
- Additional occurrences will require meeting with the Board and parent and coach for consideration of additional disciplinary action.

Missing game (unexcused):

- 1st occurrence: sit one period of next game.
- 2nd occurrence: sit the next game.
- 3rd occurrence: possible expulsion from team.

Damage to any rink property including locker rooms or benches, provoking trouble in motels, stealing, or committing any act that is disrespectful of another person's property:

- 1st occurrence: immediate game suspension and payment for damages.
- 2nd occurrence: expulsion from team and payment for damages.

Violence towards any player, coach, or other person:

- Any offense: mandatory meeting with Board, coach and parents.
 - Suspended for a minimum of 2 games, up to a maximum of expulsion from the team.
- Second offense: Removal from the team.

Note:

During games players are subject to penalty calls by the coach. If the referee misses a call, but the coach sees it, the coach may choose to assess that player the appropriate penalty and make him/her sit on the bench to serve time for that penalty for as long as the coach deems necessary.

DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES (continued)

Grievance Policy

The purpose of the VYHA Grievance Policy is to provide its players, managers, coaches, and parents with a reasonable procedure for addressing and resolving complaints.

Any complaint from the VYHA Community - including but not limited to a player, manager, coach or parent - should be resolved informally with the team manager or coaches involved, in a spirit of compromise and conflict avoidance. If the complaint is about the manager or head coach of the team involved or following the inability to resolve the complaint in good faith with the manager or head coach, the complaint should be brought to VYHA's appointed Ombudsman.

If the matter is still not resolved after attempts at informal resolution with the Ombudsman, a formal complaint should be submitted in writing to the Ombudsman to be referred to the appropriate committee. The complaint must identify the person or persons making the complaint, describe the efforts made to informally resolve the complaint, and set forth all facts and matters to be considered and the relief or remedy sought.

All persons involved in bringing or hearing a complaint or grievance should attempt to resolve the matter informally in the best interests of the organization and the individuals involved and without the need to resort to the formal dispute resolution process.

Upon receipt of the written formal complaint, the Ombudsman shall refer the complaint, allowing a fair opportunity for all interested parties to be heard. Thereafter, in his/her discretion, he/she may

- 1) Refer the complaint to the Coaches Committee,
- 2) Refer the complaint to the Secretary of the Board of Directors who will select three (3) members of the Board of Directors who shall act as a resolution committee to hear and resolve the complaint, or
- 3) Refer the complaint to the entire Board of Directors for resolution.

In no instance shall the person or persons who are the subject of the complaint be involved in determining the resolution of the grievance. If the formal complaint involves the Ombudsman, the complaint shall be referred to the Secretary for investigation and referral.

Information of a personal or sensitive nature obtained during an investigation or through any hearing shall be maintained confidentially to the extent reasonably possible, except for such disclosures as are necessary to making a final, written decision.

The formal complaint shall be resolved within 30 days of receipt. The decision will be provided in writing. The decision may be appealed within two business days in writing to the President of the Board of Directors. If appealed, the entire Board will resolve within 30 days of receipt. The decision of the Board of Directors will be provided in writing and will be final.

Ken Sheeran Memorial Scholarship Award & Application Procedure

The Ken Sheeran Memorial Scholarship Award is granted in loving memory of Ken Sheeran. Ken was a dedicated volunteer, leader, and advocate for youth hockey in the Roanoke Valley. Throughout his life, Ken exemplified a deep commitment to the sport of ice hockey, a boundless energy for community involvement, and a desire to have a positive influence on youth throughout our area.

Through the kindness of Ken's family and friends – along with the financial support of the VYHA Board of Directors - the Valley Youth Hockey Association bestows annually the Ken Sheeran Memorial Scholarship Award. The Sheeran Award is given to a VYHA participant who best meets the following established guidelines for the award:

Minimum eligibility requirements for the Ken Sheeran Memorial Scholarship Award include:

- A player participating in his/her final year in the Valley Youth Hockey Association;
- a high school senior; and
- will be attending a college, university or post high school education program during the upcoming academic year.

The main criteria for consideration of candidates for the Ken Sheeran Memorial Scholarship Award include:

- Candidates must exhibit strength of character both on and off the ice.
- Candidates must contribute to the integrity of the team and display outstanding skills in all phases of the game.
- Consideration should be given to scholastic achievement and sportsmanship.

The Sheeran Award will be presented annually at the Valley Youth Hockey Association's General Membership Meeting at the conclusion of each season.

Applications can be found at www.roanokeyouthhockey.com.

Richard Sher Volunteer of the Year Award

Nomination Criteria

The purpose of the Valley Youth Hockey Association's **Richard Sher Volunteer of the Year Award** is to recognize outstanding commitment and significant contributions to Valley Youth Hockey Association and to the game of hockey in the Roanoke Valley and western Virginia.

Richard "Dick" Sher enjoyed a long association with VYHA as a volunteer in a variety of capacities. Dick's association with VYHA began as a volunteer coach with Valley Youth Hockey's Learn to Play program. His natural gifts for teaching children to play hockey and his interest in growing the sport of hockey in the Roanoke Valley led Dick to service in other areas of the organization, including Co-Director of the Learn to Play Program, Director of the Learn to Play Program, Squirt Head Coach, Mite Head Coach, Mite House League Coordinator and Member of the Board of Directors. Dick served VYHA with tireless effort and ceaseless dedication in every role he fulfilled. In recognition of Dick's invaluable commitment to Valley Youth Hockey Association, this organization's Volunteer of the Year Award shall be known hereafter as the Richard Sher Volunteer of the Year Award.

Nomination Criteria:

- Nominee must be an amateur hockey volunteer in any capacity with the Valley Youth Hockey Association or an affiliated organization.
- Primary emphasis will be given to volunteer activities conducted within the most recent calendar year.
- Contributions made to hockey over the past 3 years will be considered. Nominee must be active in the current year.

Nomination applications complete with a listing of the nominee's major accomplishments and contributions must be submitted at a date specified and communicated by the VYHA Board of Directors in the year during which the nominee will be honored.

All nominees shall receive acknowledgment as a Volunteer of the Year nominee. The Volunteer of the Year shall receive a suitable appreciation gift to be presented annually at the Valley Youth Hockey General Membership Meeting at the conclusion of the season.

Applications can be found at www.roanokeyouthhockey.com.

Active participation in Valley Youth Hockey Association events and the payment of player fees are an indication of your understanding of these guidelines and serve as your pledge to abide by the standards of this organization.