



2026 CAHA Tournament General Information and Application

Dates & Locations

Youth Tier I North Carolina: January 31 - February 2, 2026 – Winston-Salem, NC

Youth Tier II North Carolina: February 20-22, 2026 - Charlotte, NC

Youth Tier II South Carolina: February 21-22, 2026 - Charleston, SC

High School South Carolina: January 31 – February 1 – Greenville SC

All North Carolina Tier II teams should be prepared to start play on Thursday.

All North Carolina Tier I and South Carolina Tier II teams should be prepared to start play on Friday.

Timetable

Notification to Associations – by October 15, 2025

Registration Opens – October 15, 2025

Registration Closes – November 5, 2025

Payment Due – December 5, 2025

Tournament Classification

This is the USA Hockey Southeastern District and National Championship Tournament qualifier. All Tier I and Tier II Youth and Girls teams properly registered in North Carolina or South Carolina in the 14U, 16U, 18U and 19U, and High School age classifications may apply to enter the CAHA Championship Tournaments.

This application also serves as the formal declaration form for teams that bypass the CAHA Championship Tournament and advance directly to the Southeastern District Championship Tournament or the USA Hockey National Championship Tournament.

Tier I and Girls Tier II - In the event there is only one applicant for this tournament within the affiliate at an age classification noted above, that team shall bypass the CAHA Championship Tournament and advance directly to the Southeastern District Championship Tournament. In the event there are no Tier I or Girls Tier II applicants for this tournament within the affiliate at an age classification noted above, there will be no representative from CAHA in the Southeastern District Championship Tournament at that age classification.

Tier II and High School - In the event there is only one applicant for this tournament within a respective state at an age classification noted above, that team shall bypass the CAHA State Tournament and advance directly to the USA Hockey National Championship Tournament. In the event there are no applicants for this tournament within the affiliate at an age classification noted above, there will be no representative from CAHA in the Southeastern District Championship Tournament at that age classification.

All National Bound Youth Tier I teams must play each of the other national bound teams 2 games to qualify for the CAHA State Tournament or SE District Tournament. Tier I teams have until January 1 to complete the requirement

Any association whose team applies to participate in the CAHA Championship Tournaments and fails to fully participate therein or which qualified for the subsequent Southeastern District and/or the USA Hockey National Championship Tournament and fails to fully participate therein may not be permitted to enter ANY team in the CAHA Championship Tournament at any age classification in the succeeding playing season and shall be referred to the CAHA Disciplinary/Disputes Resolution Committee for appropriate action.

Application Deadline

The deadline for formal declarations and applications to participate in this tournament is November 5, 2025.

Register your team: <https://www.carolinahockey.org/2026tournament>

Fees

The fee schedule will be based on the number of applicant teams and full payment of fees will be due no later than December 5, 2025. In the event an applicant does not remit full payment of fees by December 5, that team will be withdrawn from the tournament.

Format

Tournament format will be based on the number of applicant teams as stated in the Rules and Regulations. The tournament will be divided into divisions based on state and age classification. A team's state affiliation will be determined by 1) state of registration and 2) the residence of 80% of its rostered players. Any exception must be approved by the CAHA Board of Directors. Exceptions will be allowed only for teams who roster players residing on a state border where the closest proximity to a Tier II team crosses the state line. This determination will be based on the roster as of November 30 of the current playing season.

There will not be separate divisions for 'AA' and 'A' teams. All applicant teams in each age classification will compete against each other based on the formats noted above.

Team Qualifications

- All teams must be properly registered as Tier I, Tier II, or High School with USA Hockey and CAHA on or before November 30th of the current playing season.
- National Game Count requirements must be met prior to the State/Affiliate and/or District and National Championship Tournament.
- Player changes to Youth Tier I, Youth, High School, and Girls Tier II team rosters will not be accepted after Dec 31st.
- A maximum of twenty (20) players may be rostered on a team. The maximum number of players, excluding goalkeepers, shall not exceed eighteen (18). For Tier I 18U, the maximum is 22 players.
- Each Association may enter a maximum of two (2) teams per age group for Youth Tier II and Girls Tier II Tournaments.
- Each team must submit the USA Hockey roster link for their approved roster (Form 1-T) with the formal declaration/tournament application. The roster link can be obtained from your local association registrar. **Links to team pages on the association website will not be accepted.**
- Each team may select its players in any manner it sees fit if it conforms to CAHA Bylaws and Rules & Regulations.
- Tier I and Tier II teams are not required to participate in the CHL or ACHC to apply for this tournament.
- A team may only participate in its registered age classification.
- Only coaches listed on the approved team roster are eligible to be on the player bench during tournament games. A maximum of four (4) coaches is allowed on the player's bench and each coach must have the USA Hockey required CEP certification level and age-specific module to participate in the tournament. Changes to a team's coaching staff will not be accepted during this tournament.

Player Qualifications

- All players must be properly registered and in good standing with both USA Hockey and CAHA.
- The playing of an ineligible player automatically forfeits all games in which he/she participated. Any coach or team that knowingly plays an ineligible player shall be suspended from coaching for the balance of the tournament and will be referred to the CAHA Disciplinary/Dispute Resolution Committee for appropriate action.

Age Classifications

Youth 14 & Under, Girls 14 & Under – Players born between January 1, 2011, and December 31, 2012

Youth 16 & Under, Girls 16 & Under – Players born between January 1, 2009, and December 31, 2010

Youth 18 & Under – Players born between January 1, 2007, and December 31, 2008

Girls 19 & Under – Players born between January 1, 2006 and December 31, 2008

Playing Rules

The official USA Hockey Playing Rules shall be used. No protests shall be permitted on the playing rules.

Tournament Committee Contact: Brad Hoffman, BDHATHPG@aol.com

Credentials Contact: Terri Mills, caharegistrar2020@gmail.com