



Olds Minor Hockey Association:
Underage Player Acceleration Policy and Procedure

Organization: Olds Minor Hockey Association (OMHA)

Policy Name: Underage Player Acceleration Policy and Procedure

Date of Policy Adoption: 2024 (through Team Formation Handbook)

Date of Policy Amendments: August 19, 2024

Policy Purpose: The purpose of the Association's Underage Player Acceleration Policy and Procedure is, in recognition that player acceleration is at the discretion of the minor hockey association, to determine eligibility for player requests to advance above their prescribed age category and to ensure a competitive and fair hockey program throughout the Olds Minor Hockey Association.

Applicable Hockey Canada Regulation(s): ☐ No ☐ Yes

Applicable Hockey Alberta Regulation(s): ☐ No ☒ Yes

Applicable Olds Minor Hockey Association Bylaw(s): ☐ No ☒ Yes

This policy is authorized under Article 3.7(i) of the Olds Minor Hockey Association bylaws.

Olds Minor Hockey Association Policy:

Exceptional Circumstances:

- The Association does not actively encourage or promote the "fast tracking" of players upwards between age divisions, and acknowledges that most players should be playing within their appropriate age division.
- The Board of Directors will only consider acceleration under exceptional circumstances, not on a routine basis.



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Acceleration Request-to-Tryout Application and Processing Requirements:

- All players must register within their appropriate age division, even if they are applying for player acceleration.
- Players requesting to accelerate above their age division must complete the Player Acceleration Request-to-Tryout Form and pay the acceleration application fee and the acceleration tryout fee with their general registration. The acceleration application fee is non-refundable. The acceleration tryout fee is refundable only if the application for an acceleration tryout is declined.
- When the Association approves a player acceleration tryout, the advancement is for evaluation purposes only and does not presume the player is guaranteed a roster position in the advanced age division.
- If the player's original age division evaluations are prior to the requested accelerated division evaluations, the player must attend their original age division evaluations for team formation purposes in case they do not meet the rankings threshold for the accelerated age division.
- If a player secures a roster position in an age division that results in higher registration fees, the additional registration fees applicable to the higher division will be added to the player's outstanding fees.
- Acceleration applications must be made on an annual basis with registration. There is no guarantee that acceleration tryout requests will be able to be accommodated by the Association every year, even if a player has been granted underage status in previous seasons.
- Applications for an acceleration tryout must be received by the general registration deadline. Requests for an acceleration tryout will not be determined by the Association until up to fourteen days after the close of registration, unless permitted elsewhere by this policy.
- The Association reserves the right to waive the acceleration application fee if the acceleration is proactively sought by the Association.



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Supporting Documentation:

- The following supporting documents are required when a “Player Acceleration Request-to-Tryout Request Form” is submitted:
 - Player Resume:
 - List of teams and category for the past three years; and
 - List of additional programs or clinics attended.
 - Previous Head Coach and Assistant Coach Summarizing, with Supporting Detail:
 - Skills assessment (both acquired and lacking);
 - Player development throughout the previous season;
 - Team systems knowledge and situational awareness; and
 - Coaching endorsement for the acceleration.
 - Previous Age Coordinator Report:
 - Player maturity and conduct;
 - Rapport with other players;
 - Any discipline issues; and
 - Level of parental involvement.
- If a player was with another local minor hockey association in the previous season, supporting documentation from the previous local minor hockey association will be accepted.

Age Division Standards for Acceleration Consideration:

- Players must only be one year underage from the division they are applying for advancement to.
- The following categories outline age division standards for the Board of Director’s consideration of acceleration requests:

Requests from players registered in U7, U9 and U11:

- Players in U7, U9 and U11 divisions may be approved for an acceleration tryout by the Board of Directors.



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- Players applying to advance from U9 to U11 must have consistent ability and intensity to participate in full ice practices and games.

Requests from players registered in U13:

- Players in U13 division may be approved for an acceleration tryout by the Board of Directors.
- Male players in U13 division applying for advancement to U15 must be able to safely participate in contact hockey.

Requests from players registered in U15:

- Players in U15 division may be approved for an acceleration tryout by the Board of Directors.

Minimum Player Criteria to Apply for Acceleration Request-to-Tryout:

- The player's skill level must be at a stage where they exceed the minimum requirements for the next age division.
- The player must clearly exhibit maturity beyond that of their peers.
- Size alone does not determine if a player has the capabilities to succeed at an advanced age division.
- Players requesting acceleration must demonstrate “exceptional abilities” in the following developmental areas of a complete hockey player: skill, speed, strength, compete, commitment, character, and hockey sense acuity.
- The player must easily be in the top third on the highest tiered team of their current age division.
- For the AA program, the Association will follow the guidelines laid out in Hockey Alberta's AA Hockey Model, and specifically abide by the maximum of one underage player per team.

Board of Director's Considerations for Acceleration Request-to-Tryout:

- The Association recognizes that acceleration decisions affect the individual player requesting acceleration evaluation as well as players throughout the Association's hockey program.



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- When considering requests for underage player advancement, the Board of Directors will also consider, in addition to the *Minimum Player Criteria* and *Supporting Documentation* outlined above, the following factors:
 - The safety of the players in the lower age division and whether the size, speed, skill, strength, and other factors of the player requesting acceleration may detrimentally affect the safety of other players if he or she plays in an age division below his or her skill level;
 - The safety of the player requesting the acceleration and whether the size, speed, skill, strength, and other factors of the player will allow the player to safely compete with players in the higher age division;
 - Other developmental considerations of the player applying for acceleration; and/or
 - Overall Association registration numbers and general effect on potential team formation, if allowing the advancement of an underage players in a division may better balance player numbers between divisions.
- If warranted, the Board of Directors may request the opinion of the independent evaluators arising from the player's current age division conditioning camp before finalizing their decision on the acceleration request-to-tryout.

Decision-Making on Acceleration Requests-to-Tryout:

- Acceleration tryout requests will be determined by the Board of Directors.
- The Board of Directors will consider player acceleration tryout requests within fourteen days of the close of registration, unless permitted elsewhere by this policy.
- The decision of the Board of Directors will be final.

Decision-Making on Acceleration During Evaluations Process:

- Once the evaluation process has commenced, a player may be recommended for an acceleration tryout under the following conditions:



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- The independent evaluators make a recommendation to the Team Formation Executive;
- The Team Formation Executive makes a unanimous recommendation to the Board of Directors;
- The Board of Directors affirms the recommendation by majority decision; and
- The player and player's parent or guardian consents to the acceleration.

Team Placement for Players in Accelerated Tryouts:

- The underage player must evaluate to be selected for the AA team (for U11 to U18) or in the top third of the independent evaluators rankings (for U9 A mainstream), in the accelerated age division, as outlined in the "Team Formation Policy and Procedure". If this ranking threshold is met, team placement for the accelerated player then falls within the "Team Formation Policy and Procedure".

Players Who are Not Placed on an Accelerated Team:

Players Who are Not Placed on an Accelerated Team (U7 trying out for U9):

- A U7 player who is approved to tryout in an accelerated division, but who does not make the accelerated division as outlined by the "Team Placement for Players in Accelerated Tryouts" section in this policy, must then choose one of the following options that reasonably applies to their accelerated tryout circumstances:
 - Return to mainstream evaluations in their current age division. The player will subsequently be placed based on the independent evaluators rankings and according to the "Team Formation Policy and Procedure"; or
 - If applicable under the Association's "Player Release Policy", request a release to tryout in an accelerated age division with another minor hockey association.

Players Who are Not Placed on an Accelerated Team (U9 trying out for U11, U11 trying out for U13, U13 trying out for U15, U15 trying out for U18):



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- A player who is approved to tryout in an accelerated division, but who does not make the AA team in the accelerated division as outlined by the “*Team Placement for Players in Accelerated Tryouts*” section in this policy, must then choose one of the following options that reasonably applies to their accelerated tryout circumstances:
 - Return to their current age division to tryout for AA, if applicable (applies to U11 to U15 only);
 - Return to mainstream evaluations to tryout in the accelerated division. The player must then rank in the top ten of the independent evaluators rankings to be placed in the accelerated mainstream division, otherwise the player must return to their current mainstream age division for evaluation and placement; or
 - Return to mainstream evaluations in their current age division. The player will subsequently be placed based on the independent evaluators rankings and according to the “Team Formation Policy and Procedure”; or
 - If applicable under the Association’s “Player Release Policy”, request a release to tryout in an accelerated age division with another minor hockey association.

Policy Review: This policy will be reviewed annually by the Olds Minor Hockey Association Board of Directors.

Policy Oversight:

The Board of Directors is primarily responsible for the implementation of this policy, although there are policy accountabilities for all Association affiliates.

Operational Appendix:

Player Acceleration Request-to-Tryout F



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Player Acceleration Request-to-Tryout Form:

Please complete this form to request a player acceleration tryout for the upcoming season. A printed version of this form may be emailed to: omahregistrar@gmail.com. Acceleration requests must be received by the Association by the registration deadline in the evaluation year the player is requesting acceleration for.

Name of Player Requesting Acceleration: _____

Age Division the Player is Required to Register for (please circle one):

U7 U9 U11 U13 U15 U18

Age Division the Player is Requesting Acceleration to (please circle one):

U9 U11 U13 U15 U18

I/We are applying for player acceleration on grounds of the following “exceptional abilities” in the following developmental areas (please circle all that apply):

Skill Speed Strength Compete Commitment Character Hockey Sense

Supporting documentation is required to complete this application. Have you attached the required supporting documentation?

Yes No

☐ The \$100 non-refundable player acceleration application fee is included with this application.

☐ The \$150 acceleration tryout fee is included with this application (refundable only if the acceleration request-to-tryout application is declined).

☐ I consent to this request for acceleration tryout.

Player Signature: _____

Date: _____

☐ I consent to this request for acceleration.

Player Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____



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FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Acceleration Request Meets Policy:	Yes	No
Date of Decision:		