



Southern Maryland Sabres Hockey Club
P.O. Box 6350
Waldorf, MD 20603

Southern Maryland Sabres Play-Up Policy

SMSHC strongly recommends that all players participate within the age groups recommended by USA Hockey because there is increased risk of injury for players playing outside of their designated age division. However, USA hockey allows movement in certain situations if specific guidelines are followed. The SMSHC Board believes in balance and endeavors to achieve this in all decisions that it makes, in concert with our coaches. Parents should carefully consider the increased risks involved and follow the guidelines below when making a request to move a player into an older age division.

SMSHC will allow, in very rare circumstances, playing up based on the following guidelines:

- A player will not be permitted to move up more than one year in age. For example, a first year Squirt cannot be moved to the PeeWee division, only a second year Squirt could be considered. This will apply at Squirt, Bantam, and Midget divisions. Any request to play-up from PeeWee to Bantam will not be allowed because of the body-checking aspects associated with the Bantam division. Any request to play-up from Mite to Squirt will not be allowed per PVAHA restrictions that would disqualify the club from playoffs.
- The parent(s) of the player requesting to play-up must initiate the action by notifying the appropriate Hockey Director in writing, including the stated reason for the request to play-up.
- The Hockey Director will discuss the request with the player's most recent head coach as well as the Coach of both impacted teams. The Hockey Director will present the request to the Board for approval in Executive Session.

Factors that will be considered in making a decision to allow a player to play-up include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The skaters' ability, skill level and versatility would be compelling reasons for that skater to be with the older age level. The move up skater should be projected to be among the top of all players in the next age division. If the skater is not projected to be one of the top players on the team, then it is highly questionable whether the move up is truly in the best interest of that skater. Goalies will be evaluated against goalies taking into consideration all other stated factors.
- The player is physically and socially ready and has the appropriate maturity for the older age level as determined by the coaches.
- The impact to the teams at both the younger and older age levels.
- The need of players at both age levels to solidify teams.

If approved to play-up by the Sabres Board, the player must only participate at the older age level and will forfeit all rights to play in the younger age level that season. Also, the parent(s) must sign an agreement/waiver acknowledging that the transfer is in the player's best interest and there is possibility of an increase in risk of injury. Appropriate age fees will be assessed and no refunds will be issued if the younger skater later decides that the play-up decision was not the right one.

Adopted by SMSHC 2012 – Revised March 2015