

Hockey Northwestern Ontario understands and appreciates the responsibility the Local Associations have in providing opportunities for all players to enjoy the game; however, the intent of this policy is **not** to bolster player numbers to have enough to form a team or to make a team more competitive. The intent of the policy is to accommodate players in their development and participation in hockey.

Pre-Requisites for Obtaining Overage Status:

- a. An Overage Player applying under the criteria for (c), (d), (e) (f) and (g) may only be one (1) year older than the age category in which the player applies for.
- b. A player who has a physical or mental disability, supported by documentation.
- c. A player who has significantly weaker hockey skills than those players within the player's eligible age category.
- d. A new player (never registered, never played before) whose skill level is significantly inferior to those players within the player's eligible age category.
- e. A player from a community for whom there is no team to play on within the player's age category and for whom there is not a team within 50km distance from the player's home association.
- f. A player who is eighteen years of age (18) and currently registered full time in high school.
- g. A player who does not meet the criteria listed above but seeks special dispensation from the policy. A request under this clause must include detailed rationale and a [completed-on ice evaluation](#).

Overage Participants other than those applying under **(b)** must meet criteria (a) as well as one other criterion in (c) to (g). *Applicants cannot participate in a younger category until approval has been received from Hockey Northwestern Ontario.*

NOTE All Requests **MUST** be clearly completed. The application **MUST** specifically refer to the criteria on which the application is based. Any application that does not clearly refer to at least two (2) criteria shall not be considered for approval. Applicants are advised that the rationale should be detailed and fully inclusive with all pertinent information clearly explained. Applicants may be required to provide supportive documentation that would strengthen the substance of the application.

1. Overage Player Application shall be entered by the President through the [HNO portal system](#).
 - a. Applications made on the criteria of (c) & (g) must include an on-ice evaluation of the player on the [appropriate form](#).
 - i. If complaints arise about a player's skill level who has been accepted as an overage player based on (c) during the season HNO may request a follow up on ice evaluation of a practice and game by an evaluator appointed by HNO at the cost of the minor hockey association.

- ii. The minor committee will take the results of the follow up on ice evaluation into consideration before deciding on the players' overage status going forward.
- iii. *Evaluators must meet the certification requirements per Hockey Northwestern Ontario Regulation E (8) Training Requirements for Coaches, Safety Persons, and Officials, and have at least three (3) years' experience in coaching.*
- iv. Associations making false or unfounded complaints about a player based on (c), will be billed the cost of any evaluations that took place as part of their complaint.

2. Applications will not be accepted prior to September 1st or beyond December 1st.

3. The procedure used for assigning overage players within an Association must be written and communicated to the player and parents involved.
4. Overage applications will not be considered if the reasons given include (1) dislike of coach or team members (2) assigned ice times (3) parent's wish.
5. When a player has been allowed to participate at a younger age the player must be identified in the HCR as Approved (Overage) on the team roster.
6. Copies of gamesheets in which an Overage player has received a major or match penalties must be forwarded to the Association President and the Branch Office. It is the responsibility of the home team Referee-In-Chief or appointed person to make sure that it is done as soon as possible.
7. Players who have received approval from HNO based on (f) are not eligible for provincial, inter-branch, branch, and national playoffs.

The following conditions must be adhered to maintain overage participation. Overage Status may be revoked at any time when it is deemed that the actions of the player are not in the best interests of those affected by his/her actions. If the player's hockey skills have developed in such a manner where participation as an overage is no longer justified, consideration should be given to having the player placed in their age-appropriate division.

- Overage players should be in the bottom half of the team in penalty minutes.
- Overage players who receive a match penalty or a major suspension will have their Overage Status revoked immediately.
- Overage players are not eligible as affiliates to a higher Division or Category.

Reviewed: May 14, 2023

Approved by Board of Directors: June 10, 2023

Reviewed: Biennial