



<b>Policy Name:</b> Participation of Overage Players		<b>Date of Approval</b> January 31, 2026	<b>Effective Date:</b> January 31, 2026
<b>Approved by:</b> Board of Directors		<b>Prepared by:</b> Minor Committee	<b>Replaces Previous Versions</b> December 6, 2025 June 10, 2023 October 19, 2019
<b>Review Cycle</b> Biennial			
<b>Responsible</b> Minor Committee	<b>Accountable</b> Board of Directors	<b>Consulted</b> Board of Directors	<b>Informed</b> Minor Members

## PREAMBLE

This policy supports fair and development-focused participation for overage players. It is not intended to increase team numbers or competitiveness. Associations must apply due diligence when approving overage players, with special attention to player safety, skill level, and impact on the game.

## POLICY

### Eligibility Criteria

To apply, players must meet **criterion (a)** and **at least one of (c) to (g)**.

Players under (b) are exempt from this rule.

- a) Must be only one year older than the age category they're applying to.
- b) Has a documented physical or mental disability.
- c) Has significantly weaker hockey skills than peers in their age group.
- d) Is new to hockey and has weaker skills than peers.
- e) Has no team in their age group within 75 km of their home association.
- f) Is 18 and enrolled full-time in high school.
- g) Seeks special exemption with detailed rationale and on-ice evaluation.

### U7/U9 Exception

Associations may move a U9 player to U7 if it supports the player's development. HNO approval is not required. However, the association's President or Registrar **must** notify the HNO Membership Services at [info@hockeyhno.com](mailto:info@hockeyhno.com) before the player joins U7 activities.

## Application Requirements

- Must clearly reference **two criteria** (a + one of c to g).
- Must include detailed rationale and supporting documents.
- Applications missing clear criteria will not be reviewed.
- Must be submitted by the Association President or Registrar via the HNO portal.
- Applications under (c) or (g) must include an on-ice evaluation.
- Submission window: **September 1 to December 1** only.
- Players who complete the First Shift Program after the December 1 deadline may submit an overage application within 14 days of their program end date. This exception applies only to First Shift graduates. All other policy requirements remain in effect, and late applications without First Shift completion will not be accepted.

## Evaluation & Monitoring

- HNO may request follow-up evaluations if concerns arise.
- Evaluators must have a minimum of 3 years coaching experience.
- Associations submitting false complaints will be billed for evaluation costs.
- Overage players must be monitored for game impact and penalties.
- Players with excessive penalties or major impact may be reassigned or removed.

## Not Valid Reasons

Applications will be rejected if based on:

- Dislike of coach or teammates
- Ice time preferences
- Parent's personal wishes

## Conditions for Participation

- Must be marked "Approved (Overage)" in the HCR roster.
- Game sheets with major/match penalties must be sent to the Association President and HNO.
- Players approved under (f) cannot participate in provincial, inter-branch, or national playoffs.
- Overage status may be revoked if:
  - Player's skills improve beyond justification
  - Player receives a match penalty or major suspension
  - Player is no longer in the bottom half for penalty minutes
- Overage players cannot affiliate to higher divisions or categories.

HNO may review or change placements at any time.