



**CALGARY JUNIOR FIELD HOCKEY
AGE DISPENSATION POLICY FOR JUNIOR PROGRAMS
(AGES 11-18)**

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

- 1.1. It is preferred that participants play in their appropriate age groups, but dispensation can be granted in special situations. If there are exceptional participants that could play out of their age group, their club/certified coach will recommend them to the Technical Director to begin the process.
- 1.2. Players will only be moved if it does not create an imbalance in numbers and teams.
- 1.3. FHA assesses each player dispensation individually and will reevaluate annually.
- 1.4. Reference date for all dispensation will be January 1st of the current year.
- 1.5. Age dispensation will be offered to participants who are between the ages of 11 and 18 years by reference date of January 1st of the current year.
- 1.6. Participants may move up/down maximum one age group.

2. GRASSROOTS PROGRAMS

Field Hockey Alberta (FHA) believes that grassroots programs like Calgary Junior Field Hockey should have participants playing in their age group. These are inclusive programs that value fun: where friendships are made and personal development can occur. They strive to create an environment that is safe with age-appropriate programming.

There are many benefits to being strong players in ones' age group, such as developing leadership skills on and off the field, maintaining long term relationships with peers and building confidence.

3. DISPENSATION FOR YOUTH PARTICIPANTS PLAYING IN A YOUNGER AGE GROUP

- 3.1. FHA aims to let every player play at an appropriate level for their age, maturity and skill. A club may have reasons to let a player play "over age" in a younger age group.
- 3.2. A club/certified coach can request to let a player play "over age" for the following reasons:
 - 3.2.1. **Medical**
For medical reasons, a medical certificate may be requested.
 - 3.2.2. **Not A Suitable Team**
In the absence of a suitable team in a certain age group and because the club can't form a team in this age group.



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3.3. FHA will assess each case individually and prevent unsafe situations from arising.

3.4. Dispensation can only be granted to a maximum of 25% of the make-up of a team.

4. DISPENSATION FOR YOUTH PARTICIPANTS PLAYING IN AN OLDER AGE GROUP

4.1. FHA aims to let every player play at an appropriate level for their age, maturity and skill. A club may have reasons to let a player play “under age” in an older age group.

4.2. A club/certified coach can request to let a player play “under age” for the following reasons:

4.2.1. Medical

For medical reasons, a medical certificate may be requested.

4.2.2. Not a Suitable Team

In the absence of a suitable team in a certain age group and because the club can't form a team in this age group.

4.2.3. Unsuitable Level of Play Available

In the absence of a suitable level of play in a certain age group, clubs can request to let individual player play “under aged”.

To be eligible to play “under-aged” based on skill level there needs to be a distinguished difference in skill level between the participant and the other participants of the same age group.

A participant will require evaluation by their provincial coach/technical director and/or participation in a Field Hockey Canada/Next Gen program. Club/past coaches may be consulted.

4.3. FHA will assess each case individually to prevent unsafe situations from arising.

4.4. Dispensation can only be granted to a maximum of 25% of the make-up of a team.

***2020 CALGARY JUNIOR FIELD HOCKEY REVIEW NOTE**

Consistent expectation to move younger players into older age groups with the goal of creating more competitive environments results in deterioration of younger athletes' program. This devalues the athletes' interests to play within their own age groups.