

PLAYER MOVEMENT POLICY

Purpose:

This Policy outlines the requirements and process for Sunderland Ringette Association (SRA) to determine player movement(s) outside of their appropriate age category. This Policy will apply to both Regional and Provincial levels of play for players that are recommended or request to play outside of their appropriate age level.

Policy Statement:

Ringette Ontario (RO) forms divisions based on a player's birth year and recommends that every effort should be made to ensure a player remains within their age category. It is also RO's guideline that player movements should only occur where the age gap between divisions is only 1 year (for example a U12 minor should not be permitted to play U14 as the age gap is 2 years). SRA will adhere to recommendations and policies set out by RO unless extenuating circumstances arise.

A decision by the SRA to request or permit a player to play up or down a division is one that is not taken lightly. All parties should remember that the SRA's decision on player movements are made for the good of the Association as a whole and to ensure each player has a chance to play on a reasonably sized team.

In all circumstances related to player movement(s), the following should be considered:

- The number of players of similar skill level in both the higher age group and same age group
- The impact on both teams - positive and negative. The affected coaches, if possible, should have the opportunity to outline the possible impacts as well.
- Maturity of player - physical, mental and emotional readiness
- Timing of the proposed move;
- Potential for future realignment for both age group teams
- Impact on SRA as a whole for that season and future years

Players in FUN1, FUN2 and FUN3 divisions may move up or down a division as per the evaluation parameters set out by RO. Player movements within these age categories do not fall under this Policy.

Circumstances that Warrant Consideration for Player Movement:

SRA recognizes there may be instances where player movement may be considered for both Regional and Provincial teams. A request for player movement outside of their appropriate age division may be initiated in two ways:

- 1. By SRA, if player numbers are insufficient to form a team of a particular age division, or to relieve excess numbers in a particular age division.**

There will be times when registration numbers are such that the ability to field a team at a given age and division relies entirely on SRA requesting that one or more players participate in a division outside of their appropriate age. Asking a player or players to "play up" or "play down" may benefit SRA where a group of other players who would otherwise be unable to play on a reasonably sized team. These decisions however should not hinder or negatively impact the player(s) development or opportunities. An evaluation of players skills, mental and emotional development etc. as outlined by RO's policies should be taken into consideration prior to SRA recommending player movement(s). A request from the SRA to

move a player up or down an age division for the good of the Association will first take into consideration who can play safely at that proposed level followed by a discussion with the parents and implementation with parental approval.

It is understood that from time to time, temporary (game by game) instances of player 'call-ups' to a team outside of their appropriate age group may be necessary for a coach to field a team (i.e., covering for illness, injury, player absence etc.). These types of requests fall outside of this Policy and are left to the interested parties to manage however, Coaches are encouraged to 'call-up' players from within SRA and provide balanced opportunities for all players from the division that they are 'calling-up' from, where skill and maturity permits. SRA reserves the right to intervene should a recurring or special circumstance warrants SRA involvement.

2. By a parent/player when it is believed that a player's skills are clearly exceptional and the player meets all identified criteria (physical skills, mental and emotional development etc.) as recommended by RO.

Situations may occur where a player's skill level causes the player/parent to consider participation at the next competitive level. It is not the position of the SRA to force a player to play at a caliber that is well below their demonstrated ability and the ability of their peers. In this situation, the SRA has developed the following policy guidance and decision-making process that applies to both Regional and Provincial level teams:

- A. It shall first be determined by the Board of Directors where the request to move up merits review based on meeting ALL of the following criteria:
 - The request has been made in writing to the SRA;
 - The player must be in good standing with RO and SRA;
 - The affected player(s) are only 1 year lower than the division they are moving to;
 - For provincial team placement of an under-age player(s), the affected player(s) must attend the try-out of their age-appropriate division and demonstrate appropriate superior competitive caliber as determined by the try-out evaluators prior to securing a spot on the team which is higher division of play. Refer to SRA Try-out Policy for evaluation process;
 - SRA has determined there is a need for player movement(s) in one or more age categories in order for a team to be formed and/or relieve excess numbers in a particular division or some combination of both situations;
- B. If the request merits review, the player(s) will be permitted to attend the try-out or sort skate of the affected divisions. Where a tryout does not exist for that division, SRA may review/discuss the affected player(s) past performance(s) and evaluation(s) with previous coaches to determine appropriate placement.
- C. In situations of under-age players trying out for a provincial level team the following criteria must be met:
 - The composition of the provincial level team has no more than 3 underaged players. Any more and the team is not considered viable
 - Evaluation of skills and performance must be consistent within each age category and not adjusted based on the player's age
 - The underage player(s) must rank in the top 3 of all players who try out in order to qualify for a spot on that team

- The selection of an underage player cannot displace a player of age, leaving the player of age without a viable team of equal caliber to play on or result in the of age player leaving Sunderland Ringette
- The selection is a single season event and does not establish precedence for future years or teams

End of Document

Date of last Review: August 2022