



# SMHA U-13 AAA & U-11 AA Spring Tryout ID Camp

Hockey Alberta has recently announced changes to the recommended Elite (AAA/AA) Team Formation process effective for the 2025-2026 Season. Details in appendix.

*Strathcona Minor Hockey Association* will be hosting Spring Tryout ID Camps for the U-11 AA and U-13 AAA teams.

- **Date & Location:** April 4-6, 2025 at the Ardrossan East Arena
- Spring Tryout ID Camp registration will initially be open to any players eligible to play in the U-11 or U-13 age division of play for the 2025-26 season and currently rostered on a Tier 2 or higher team for the current season. **Registration will be capped at 36 skaters and 6 goalies with 10 player and 2 goaltender registrations reserved for waitlisted players who will be accepted in priority order.**
- Players registered for the Spring Tryout ID Camp will participate in 3 evaluation skates, which could be composed of skills skates, game play or a combination thereof, at the discretion of SMHA. Goaltenders will be scheduled to attend an additional evaluation.
- Following a collaborative review by SMHA Hockey Operations and relevant staff, a roster spot offer may be extended to identified players.
- Players not receiving a roster spot offer are welcome to register for Fall Tryouts, when season registration opens.

## **Roster Spot Offers**

- Players may be offered a spot on the team roster after Spring Tryout ID Camp.
- Players must attend Spring Tryout ID Camp to be eligible to receive a roster spot offer.
- The roster spot offer must be accepted via email by a specified deadline prior to the opening of season registration.
- Upon acceptance of the roster spot offer, a lump-sum monetary assurance of acceptance will be required. These details will be provided with the roster spot offer and funds will be applied to season registration.
- Players receiving a roster spot offer still need to attend fall tryouts and pay the associated tryout fee.
- A maximum number of 10 players for U-13 AAA and 6 players for U-11 AA will receive roster spot offers out of Spring Tryout ID Camp.
- As per Hockey Alberta's Elite Policies & Procedures, signed players' names will be posted on the Hockey Alberta website on, or before, August 1st, 2025.

## **Registration**

Registration for the Spring Tryout ID Camp opens on Tuesday February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 9:00am.

[U-11 AA Spring Tryout Camp Registration](#)

[U-13 AAA Spring Tryout Camp Registration](#)

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **1. Why are these changes to evaluations being made?**

Hockey Alberta has recognized that families have options as to what leagues their players can play in, and one of the impactful factors is a guaranteed signing in the Spring versus waiting until the Fall.

Hockey Alberta and SMHA are striving to create more certainty, much earlier in the process, while still allowing Fall Tryouts.

- 2. I've seen a Hockey Alberta announcement that draw zones are being taken away and that there will be no borders. Is this correct?**

Hockey Alberta released [Information Bulletin 24-04](#) on 12/09/2024. The communication applies primarily to first-time hockey registrants. That is, if you are registering your child for the first time with a sanctioned Hockey Alberta program, you have the option to register for the Minor Hockey Association (MHA) of your choosing, as long as, that MHA will accept your registration. It also outlines changes to players that successfully applied to Hockey Alberta's player movement process in the prior season.

As it pertains to elite hockey (AAA and AA), draw zones still exist and tools like the [Elite Player Movement Process](#) or the [Second Tryout Process](#) can be utilized if you want to explore options outside of your designated draw zone. Any player from outside the current draw zone boundaries that wishes to play in SMHA in the upcoming season must complete and submit the Elite Player Movement Application form prior to July 1 and be approved prior to attending Fall Tryouts.

- 3. Does this mean that any player outside of SMHA's draw zone can attend SMHA's Spring Tryout Camp, or that my player can attend a Spring Tryout Camp offered by another association?**

Players can only participate in Spring Tryout ID Skates within the association they meet registration requirements for, based on the AAA/AA Hockey Model. This means any player who would require an Elite Player Movement Request to play for a AAA/AA team would not be eligible to participate in Spring Tryout ID Camp for that association. If a player is a member of an association that does not offer a U-11 AA team, they are free to register for a Spring Tryout ID Camp with an association that is hosting a team.

It is highly recommended that you familiarize yourself thoroughly with the elite player movement process and the second tryout process.

**4. To make a AAA or AA team in SMHA, do I have to attend Spring Tryout ID Camp?**

No. However, players must attend Spring Tryout ID Camp to be eligible to receive a roster spot offer to the team.

**5. Who will be evaluating the camps?**

Evaluations during all camps will be completed by a combination of SMHA's Hockey Operations staff and the team's coaching staff and/or third-party evaluators. On-ice skills skates may be run by the coaching staff, third party evaluators or skills providers at the association's discretion.

**6. If I am not given a roster spot offer after Spring Tryout ID Camp and register for the Fall Tryouts does that mean I get a second chance to tryout for the AAA/AA team?**

Yes. It is acknowledged that improvements to skills demonstrated during Spring Tryout ID Camp can be made over the summer therefore your participation in Fall tryouts would be your second opportunity to tryout for the elite team.

**7. If unsuccessful making the team after Fall Tryouts, may I still apply for a second tryout somewhere else?**

Yes second tryouts for U-13 AAA can be sought however no second tryout at U-11 AA is available per the [Hockey Alberta U-11 AA Hockey Model](#).

# APPENDIX



## ELITE HOCKEY TEAM FORMATION UPDATE

**Feb 11, 2025**

Shared with – AA & AAA Host MHAs.

### **Definitions:**

- Spring ID Camps: Occur between April 1 & June 1 & do not result in a final team being formed
- Tryouts: Occur after August 15 and lead to a final team being formed.
- Commitment: A player who is guaranteed a position, prior to tryouts, on the final team being formed from Tryouts.

### **Team Formation Process:**

1. **SPRING ID CAMP FORMAT:** Elite Teams may operate Spring ID Camps from April 1 until the start of June. These camps can be an open registration opportunity for all Draw Zone/Recruitment Area players, or by invitation only.
2. **PLAYER ACCESS:**
  - i. If the Spring ID Camp is an open registration opportunity for all Draw Zone/Recruitment Area players, teams may host invitation-only Tryouts should they choose. The number of invitations to Tryouts are entirely up to the team/association to determine. OR
  - ii. If the Spring ID Camp is by invitation only, Tryouts must be an open registration opportunity for all Draw Zone/Recruitment Area players.
3. **COMMITMENTS:** Any team who operates a Spring ID Camp may commit final roster positions to players. The number of players committed to is entirely up to the association/team. All players who have earned commitment must be shared publicly by August 1.
4. **INVITATION ONLY TRYOUTS:** If not operating an open registration tryout, teams must publicly share the list of players invited to Tryouts by August 1. The list must also clearly identify any players who have earned a Commitment.
5. **TRYOUT TIMELINES:** Elite Teams may operate Tryouts beginning August 15.
  - i. AAA rosters must be reduced to 20 players by the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday in September at the latest. (U17 AAA date Sept 29)
  - ii. AA rosters must be reduced to 20 players by October 1 at the latest (U16 AA date Oct 3)

### **Principles that Associations Must Uphold in their Tryout Process:**

1. Players who want to play Elite Hockey, and have the skill to play Elite hockey, have the opportunity to be identified/tryout for an Elite Hockey team.
2. Players can develop throughout the off season and have a legitimate chance of earning an invitation to AAA Tryouts even if not invited following spring camp
3. The players who are closest to making Elite Hockey teams are released in time to afford access to a second tryout opportunity.
4. Players for Elite Hockey teams are selected based on merit

5. The Team formation processes are staggered to align with a proper flow-through of players within the Draw Zone and Recruitment Area
6. Where minor-aged players are pursuing junior hockey, Associations and coaches of teams must create plans in collaboration with the junior teams to accommodate the returning player a place to play on a previously registered team if returned to the Elite Stream. All players directly impacted by these plans should be informed and principle 4 must be upheld.

**Elite Player Movement:**

1. As changes are implemented to the tryout process, Elite Player Movement applications will continue to be received from May 1 to July 1, with decisions being rendered by July 15. This will be reviewed again during the 2025-26 season to determine if further changes are required.
2. Players can only participate in Spring ID Skates within the association they meet registration requirements for, based on the AAA/AA Hockey Model. This means any player who would require an Elite Player Movement Request to play for a AAA/AA team would not be eligible to participate in Spring ID skates for that association. Associations should account for this in their Spring ID process and in the number of commitments and invitations they offer.

**Second Tryouts:**

1. No player can skate in a second tryout during a Spring ID Camp.

Any questions can be directed to Hudson Kelly – Manager, Elite Leagues ([hkelly@hockeyalberta.ca](mailto:hkelly@hockeyalberta.ca)).

