



Two Choice and Player Movement Rules for Tier II

Tier II are travel teams in the State of Illinois that compete at the "AA" and A" levels. Players are given the opportunity in Tier II to change organizations once during their playing years from Mite to Bantams. Players are allowed a substitute choice at the Midget level. These choices should be made with the same care that a parent would use to choose a school for their child.

What is a Choice?

1. Essentially, every player will have two Member Associations for which they can play for from Mite through Bantam Major. This is a community based rule. The rule does not allow for 2 viable choices available at all times. This rule allows opportunity to choose 2 clubs. As long as one of those clubs is viable an exemption to the rule is NOT allowed. Players that are U16 and U18 aged will be granted a substitute choice. They will not need to petition for a substitution, but they will be required to complete the on line acknowledgement form before they will be certified on the team's roster.

2. Never Played Tier II Before: If you have never played for a Tier II Team before, your first choice will be the Tier II Member Association where you first rostered on a Tier II Team (*but see December 15th Rule in Section 5 below*). In this regard, just because you started in a learn to skate program or a house league sponsored by a Tier II Member Association, that does not necessarily have to be your first choice, but it is the organization that introduced you to hockey and you know them.

3. No Restriction on Making a Second Choice: There is no restriction on a player's right to choose a second Member Association up to their Bantam Major age or for a substitute Midget choice. However, you only get two choices until you are of Bantam age. That second choice is your last until you are a Midget, so make the second choice with a lot of inquiry, planning and thought and not the emotion of the moment. Please see paragraph 4 on the Member Association's right to set its own rules. The exception to the Two Choice Rule is when player movement violates the 2/4/6/8 Rule. An explanation of the 2/4/6/8 Rule is at the end of this article.

4. No By-Law Restriction on Moving Between Your Two Choices: There is no restriction in the By-Laws about a player moving back and forth between the player's two choices.

5. Member Associations May Set More Restrictive Rules: The By-Law is silent on Member Associations being able to set their own rules. The general rule of interpretation is that Leagues and Member Associations may make more restrictive rules. Accordingly, Member Associations are not currently restricted in setting their own rules for accepting players back once the player makes their second choice or skates for another Member Association. Before making a choice, you should know the rules within the respective organizations.

6. Complete Tier II Declaration and Acknowledgment on line with AHAI: Every player new to Tier II hockey or new to a Member Association will be sent an email to the address used when they completed their USA Hockey registration for the current playing season. The player or their parent(s) will need to complete the declaration process online before they will be allowed to be rostered on a team with a new Tier II organization.

7. Counseling Required: IT IS REQUIRED that every player and their parent(s) new to Tier II hockey or new to a Member Association be counseled when they enter into those Tier II travel hockey programs by some official of the Tier II Member Association. The player or parent(s) will acknowledge that they have been counseled when they complete the online declaration process that is sent to them when registering on the new Tier II team. If there are any questions that have not been explained to your satisfaction, you may inquire by emailing TierII@ahai.org.

8. Limited Right to Appeal for Substitute Choice: There is a very limited right of appeal for a player to substitute one Member Association for one of the player's prior two choices. This right is extremely limited and should not be relied upon when making any choice. You should read the By-Law for the exact criteria.

9. Tryouts are NOT a Choice. You can try out for as many Member Associations as you believe prudent.

10. When is a Choice made? When the roster of the team you are on is certified by the AHAI Registrar, WHICH IS before THE FIRST GAME. Leagues may have more restrictive rules, so you have to know the League rules as well as the AHAI rules.

What about my Second Choice? What should I consider?

A player has the option of leaving the original Tier II club they started at and playing for another. If the club they go to or the club they left no longer offers a team at the level the player is at during the **current season that is not considered a hardship or special circumstance** if their first choice still has a viable Tier II team to try out for.

1. Only Two Total Choices-Make Them With Care: You only get two choices from Mite thru Bantam Major. If you have used the first one by playing Tier II hockey sometime in the past . . . **make that second choice with great care . . . you do not get another choice until Midget.**

2. Best Player, Team or Coach This Year, What About Next Year? Sure, my son/daughter may be the best player on the team or play for the best team, or coach this year, but what about next year? Things change, so make that second choice with the proper information.

3. Coach Changes Organizations: What if the coach (*we love*) decides to change organizations after we have made our second choice? (*That will not be grounds for an exception*).

4. Did Not Make Team I Wanted or Thought I Should: I did not make the AA team I wanted. Your choices have nothing to do with whether or not you make the A or AA team at either Member Association, nor does it matter that the Member Association of either of your choices does not have a team that plays in the highest level of a League or even does not belong to a League you wish to play in. (*NIHL or Central States*) You will not get an exception, so long as the Member Association fields a team at the age level you are playing for.

5. Is There A Restrictive Policy If I Leave? What is the philosophy and rule of the organization of my first choice about me leaving? What is the philosophy and rule of my potential second choice?

6. Situations that might lead to the rare substitute choice: *Example:* neither club the player has played for has a Tier II team at that player's age level; the player will receive a substitute choice, based on approval of AHAI. AHAI will grant a substitute choice that makes sense geographically (*Travel distance from home to practice*). A player will not be given an "open choice"; the exemption is a substitution requiring approval. *Example:* a player leaves their first club and goes to a second. They encounter a problem at the new club that invokes an R & E investigation with a finding that the club did not deal fairly with the player. As long as the first club they played for has a viable Tier II team at the appropriate age level, the player must try out for that club if he (*or she*) desires to play Tier II. If they are then cut (*from all the teams in that age division*), then they may apply for a substitution. AHAI will determine if the substitution request is within geographic guidelines associated with "community based" hockey. **Note:** *A change of residence which significantly impacts the distance a player needs to travel to their closest viable choice (after the relocation) may be considered.*

7. Get Involved and Change What You Do Not Like In Choices: What if I do not like the philosophy of my first or second choice? You chose them, get involved and work to change it. Merely changing organizations is not going to help improve hockey in Illinois.

8. Organization's Philosophy and History: Determine the Member Association's Philosophy and history. Be informed before you decide to use that second choice. If you are a Mite or Squirt, remember that you will also be making this choice for the rest of your playing days in Illinois up to your Bantam Major year, so check out their programs through all age levels as well as the level you are currently interested in. Determine the coach's philosophy. Are they what your player wants or needs? Are they what you want for your child?

9. Rumors and Promises-Be Careful: Be careful of rumors and gossip as well as "promises." Promises or any inducement to play hockey in Illinois could compromise eligibility. These decisions will affect you for a long time.

What if I have a Question?

Contact the AHAI Tier II Committee Chairperson:
Chairman Gregg Chudacoff
(C) 773-315-4973
(F) 773-247-2632
gregg@generaltruckparts.

TIER II TEAMS: *For more details or interpretations, consult the actual By-Law and AHAI Rules available at www.ahai.org.*

2/4/6/8/ Rule Tier II

* All Mite Tier II teams are limited to a maximum of two players who played for another Illinois Tier II team the previous fall/winter season.

* All Squirt Tier II teams are limited to a maximum of four players who played for another Illinois Tier II team the previous fall/winter season.

* All Pee Wee Tier II teams are limited to a maximum of six players who played for another Illinois Tier II team the previous fall/winter season.

* All Bantam Tier II teams are limited to a maximum of eight players who played for another Illinois Tier II team the previous fall/winter season.

* There is no limit on Tier II player movement at the Midget level.

There are two exceptions to the 2/4/6/8 player limit :

* Individuals who previously played with a Tier II club, as one of their Two Choices, will not count against the maximum, regardless of their club affiliation the previous fall/winter season.

* Individuals who played for a club that does not field a team at a level will not count against the maximum for the club in which the player moves.

Penalties: Clubs violating the 2/4/6/8 Tier II Rule will be referred to the AHAI Rules & Ethics Committee along with the coach from the team violating the 2/4/6/8 Tier II Rule. The recommended consequences include disqualification from the state tournament and referral to their Tier II league for further penalties.