



## What are Playdowns?

During the month of March each year, Massachusetts Hockey conducts State Tournaments at each level (see level classifications below). Mass Hockey breaks the state into 10 districts - AHA is considered a part of District 2 – Essex County. Each District Champion advances to the State Tournament. On occasions, a District Tournament Runner Up also advances to the State tournament – although rarely (if ever) has the runner up in District 2 advanced as typically it is only the District 2 Champion that advances to the State Tournament. For those teams fortunate enough to advance, it can be a truly great experience for players and parents.

In order to determine the District champ, each of the ten Districts conducts what are called "Playdowns". For each district, all of the teams that enter the playdown for that particular district play hockey games in a tournament. Certain years, some AHA teams have received a “free pass” to the State Tournament and not been required to play a Playdown Game – and been allowed to advance directly to the State Tournament. Oftentimes AHA’s Squirt 1 and Pee Wee 1 teams have been the only teams in District 2 classified in the “Large” Levels, and as such have benefited from the free pass; other AHA teams have had to win up to two Playdown games to advance to the State Tournament. The number of Playdown games a team plays is simply a function of how many teams from other Programs within District 2 sign up for the Playdowns.

**District 2 Playdowns have traditionally been held very early in the morning on the February School Vacation week at Malden Forum.** If your team is scheduled to play you **must** show up. You cannot re-schedule the game to a more convenient time or venue (even if you are playing another AHA team) as games can only be played at the venues designated by Mass Hockey for Playdowns. There are heavy fines \$\$\$\$ for no shows – and a no-show can impact the entire AHA Program’s participation in the State Tournament not only for the current year, but future years as well. The teams can only play the players officially listed on their rosters (**no call ups from lower teams**). **In addition, each Coach must meet the coaching certification requirements as well. Coaches who are not “patched” at the appropriate level will not be allowed on the bench.** Before you commit your team to Playdowns, make sure enough kids will not be away on vacations and that Coaches are current with their certifications.

The Mass Hockey State tournaments are for different levels broken down as follows:

- Mites. There is no State Tournament for Town Mite Teams.
- Squirts
  - Squirt Tier I (Mass Select League)
  - Squirt Tier II-Large, referred to as the Town 1 team with more than 54 players enrolled in the town's Program
  - Squirt Tier II-Small, referred to as the Town 1 team with less than 55 players enrolled in the town's Program
  - Squirt Tier III, referred to as the Town 2 team
  - Squirt Tier IV, referred to as the Town 3, 4 and above teams
- Peewees
  - Peewee Tier I (Mass Select League)
  - Peewee Tier II-Large, referred to as the Town 1 team with more than 54 players enrolled in the town's Peewee Program
  - Peewee Tier II-Small, referred to as the Town 1 team with less than 55 players enrolled in the town's Peewee Program
  - Peewee Tier III, referred to as the Town 2 teams
  - Peewee Tier IV, referred to as the Town 3, 4 and above teams
- Bantams
  - Bantam Tier I (Mass Select League)
  - Bantam Tier II-Large, referred to as the Town 1 team with more than 39 players enrolled in the town's Peewee Program
  - Bantam Tier II-Small, referred to as the Town 1 team with less than 40 players enrolled in the town's Peewee Program
  - Bantam Tier III, referred to as the Town 2 teams
  - Bantam Tier IV, referred to as the Town 3, 4 and above teams