

## California High School State Championships

### Eligibility Exceptions

Updated 3/6/2019

At the discretion of the Competition State Youth Coordinator - [syc\\_ca@usultimate.org](mailto:syc_ca@usultimate.org) -, high school teams may formally request to add Free Agents\* to their High School State Championship roster given the following conditions:

- Teams are limited in the number of additions:
  - Boys/Open
    - **Div I:** up to 4 Free Agents may be added if properly requested by April 1st, provided that the team is comprised of least 70% Regular Members.‡
    - **Div II:** up to 4 Free Agents may be added if properly requested by April 1st, provided that the team is comprised of least 70% regular members.
    - **Div III “Developmental”:** up to 5 Free Agents may be added if properly requested by April 15th, provided that the team is comprised of least 60% regular members.
  - Girls
    - **Div I:** up to 6 Free Agents may be added if properly requested by April 1st, provided that the team is comprised of least 50% Regular Members.‡
    - **Div II “Developmental”:** up to 7 Free Agents may be added if properly requested by April 8th, provided that the team is comprised of least 40% regular members.
- The Free Agent must:
  - Join a school team with an ultimate program, club, or team within 15 miles of the school he/she attends.
  - Compete in at least two games with the team he/she is joining prior to the State Championship; or must practice with the team for more than two months before making her/his Request.
  - Submit a formal Eligibility Exception Request to the Competition State Youth Coordinator - [syc\\_ca@usultimate.org](mailto:syc_ca@usultimate.org) - by March 1<sup>st</sup> including:
    - A signed statement (by Player, Coach, and School Administrator) that the Free Agent’s school has not formally acknowledged an ultimate program, club, or team in that school year; or that the Free Agent’s School will not be attending the State Championship. *(This clause to be phased in by 2019.)*
- A Free Agent may only compete with a team for 2 years total starting in 2018.
  - After the first Exception year, he/she (or a parent/guardian/mentor) must get in touch with California Ultimate Association – at [learn-to-play@calulti.org](mailto:learn-to-play@calulti.org) – to arrange a Learn to Play Clinic (this is a free service that CUA will either provide directly or via a local disc organization) during the following Fall in an attempt to kickstart an ultimate program at her/his school.
  - Failure to contact the above email address will result in an automatic rejection of future Exception Requests.
  - The Free Agent may reapply for a second year of Eligibility Exception if he/she has contacted CUA and made an effort to start a program but 1) the program has an average attendance of 12 or less players at team events through December 1<sup>st</sup>; or 2) the Free Agent’s school won’t formally acknowledge the new program, club, or team via organizational support, field space, and/or funding.
- Any team rostering Free Agents for the HS State Championships must be comprised of least 70% “regular members” and eligible homeschooleders, combined.

**All Exceptions are at the discretion of the Competition State Youth Coordinator each season and previous season’s decisions will not be considered precedent setting.**

\*A Free Agent is defined as a player who does not attend the school he/she wishes to play for at States and falls outside of [USA Ultimate’s High School State Championship Eligibility Guidelines](#).

‡Regular Members are students that attend the school from which the team is created plus eligible homeschooleders, combined.

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## Starting in 2019

- Free Agents must have practiced with the team they wish to join for more than two months before making her/his Request; and/or must compete in at least two games with the team they are joining prior to the State Championship.
- Free Agent must join the *closest* formally acknowledged school ultimate program, club, or team team within 15 miles of the player's home or 3 miles of the school they attend.
- Teams taking on Free Agents for States must have a *demonstrated need* for players; or a *demonstrated history* with said player lasting longer than 6 months.
  - "Need" may be declared after December 1<sup>st</sup> (beginning 12/1/2018) if a team has averaged 14 or less players from their own school and has held 6 or more qualifying team events (practices, league games, tournament games) prior to said date. *Note that Team Administrators and/or Coaches are highly encouraged to keep detailed attendance records; this is important for coaches' liability coverage, parents ease of mind, and State Championship qualifying.*
  - "History" should include tracked attendance, league registration, and/or tournament registration.
- All Roster Eligibility Exceptions must be submitted by April 1<sup>st</sup>. Decisions will be formally made and communicated by the State Competition Youth Coordinator in advance of the State Championship, no later than April 10th.
- Approval of Eligibility Exception Requests will be dependent on a 2/3 majority vote by the State Championship Committee consisting of the Competition State Youth Coordinator, Boy's SOC, Girl's SOC, and 3 District Coordinators.

## Moving Forward

As California's Competition State Youth Coordinator, I'd also like to set some lofty goals for California to remain one of the leading movers in the youth ultimate community. Over the next several years, we hope that youth programs in California schools blossom at an exponential rate; as such we endeavor to implement the following evolving guidelines:

- **Boys/Open Div I or Div II** teams rostering Free Agents for the HS State Championships must be comprised of:
  - **2017/2018/2019**: At least 70% regular members.
  - **2019/2020**: At least 75% regular members.
  - **2020/2021**: At least 80% regular members.
  - **2021/2022**: At least 85% regular members.
  - **2022/2023**: At least 90% regular members.
- **Boys/Open Div III** teams rostering Free Agents for the HS State Championships must be comprised of:
  - **2017/2018/2019**: At least 60% regular members.
  - **2019/2020**: At least 60% regular members.
  - **2020/2021**: At least 60% regular members.
  - **2021/2022**: At least 65% regular members.
  - **2022/2023**: At least 65% regular members.
- **Girls Div I** teams rostering Free Agents for the HS State Championships must be comprised of:
  - **2017/2018/2019**: At least 50% regular members.
  - **2019/2020**: At least 50% regular members.
  - **2020/2021**: At least 60% regular members.
  - **2021/2022**: At least 60% regular members.
  - **2022/2023**: At least 70% regular members.
- **Girls Div II** teams rostering Free Agents for the HS State Championships must be comprised of:
  - **2017/2018/2019**: At least 40% regular members.
  - **2019/2020**: At least 40% regular members.
  - **2020/2021**: At least 50% regular members.
  - **2021/2022**: At least 50% regular members.
  - **2022/2023**: At least 60% regular members.

It is also worth noting that starting in 2020 we will be looking to host a larger State Championship event that brings together the Elementary School (open), Middle School (open), and High School (girls & open) divisions. We suspect this may affect some players' decision regarding which division to play in; we would like to hear from coaches and players that this may affect to better understand how we can ease this transition and hopefully make the event work for all. Our intention is never to reduce playing opportunities, but rather to promote growth (in terms of number of school teams *and* number of players) equally across age and gender divisions while providing a more communal event where players and teams can learn from, cheer for, and be inspired by other students.