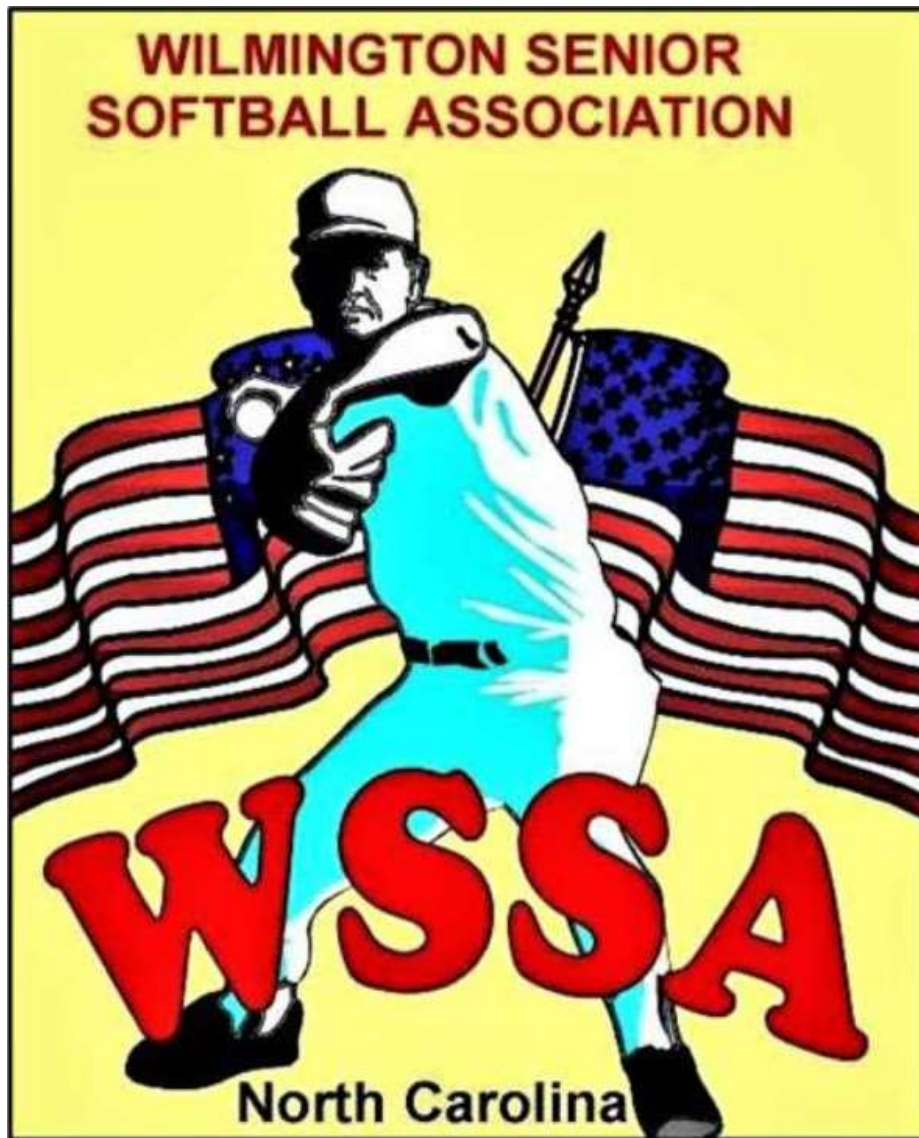


WILMINGTON SENIOR SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION  
MANUAL

Practices, Policies, Procedures, Programs and Rules



**Revised May 5, 2024**

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# Association Rules

## Section 1

*WSSA is a member of USA Softball and subscribes to its rules and regulations which are not in conflict with the following specific rules adopted by the WSSA and they take precedence over USA Softball rules. The division presidents and managers will enforce these rules to the best of their abilities. The division presidents may waive a rule or a portion of it on a one-time basis if it is determined it is in the best interest of the players and the WSSA. New rules, current rule modifications, and deletions are made and in effect only and after a majority approval vote of all current board members is held.*

### **1.0 THE GAME**

#### **1.1 Rules**

WSSA rules, ground and park rules, and any trials in progress should be reviewed by the managers and umpire before the start of the game. At every double header, teams will alternate home team advantage, however, teams will not be required to move to alternate dugouts. The first named home team on the schedule should use the first base dugout. First named home team must supply one new softball and one quality used softball and a strike mat before each doubleheader. Any changes must be agreed to by the managers.

##### **1.1.2 Infield Fly Rule**

The Coastal and Legacy Divisions will not utilize the Infield Fly Rule.

#### **1.2 Game Time/Length**

Starting game times may be adjusted at the discretion of the division president or his designee. The length of a game is seven (7) innings. If tied after 7 innings, managers may agree to play until the tie is broken or they may implement the International Tie Breaker<sup>1</sup> (ITB) rule. Each division has the discretion to shorten each game to 5 innings and/or impose the 1 and 1 count rule if agreed upon by both managers. If the two managers do not agree, the seven-inning game with standard count will prevail. The umpire will be notified of the game length and pitch count prior to each game.

There will be a 10 minute break between games of a doubleheader. The two managers will consult the umpire immediately following completion of the first game as to start time for the second game. The home team is required to be on the field and ready for game play when the second game start time arrives and the umpire declares "play ball."

*1. International Tie Breaker (ITB). When a game is tied at the end of regulation play, the International Tie Breaker rule may be used. At the start of each inning, a runner is placed on second base with the intent of accelerating opportunities to score and bringing the game to a speedier conclusion. The runner is the last batter to make an out in the previous inning.*

*At least one full inning is played, allowing each team the same chance to score. If the score remains tied, the same process is used in each inning until a victor emerges (one team scores more runs than the other at the end of a complete inning). There is also "Progressive ITB" in which runners are placed on second AND third bases at the start of the second (and subsequent) extra inning.*

### **1.3 Game Time Limit**

After 75 minutes of play, the umpire will stop the game and notify both team managers that the teams will finish that inning and play 1 additional inning with an unlimited number of runs. The 75-minute rule may be waived during the end of season tournament play if agreed upon by both team managers.

### **1.4 Run Rule**

Teams are limited to 5 runs per inning, except for the last inning in which each team may score an unlimited number of runs.

**Mercy Rule** - After 5 or 6 complete innings, a team trailing by 15 runs will concede the win to the opposing team.

**Flip Flop Rule** - The flip-flop rule will be invoked in any game when there is a 10-run differential in favor of the visiting team at the start of the "open inning." If the visiting team is ahead by ten or more runs, the home team will remain at bat and start a new at-bats (beginning their seventh or last inning at-bats), meaning all runners on base will return to the dugout. It will be an open inning. If the home team fails to tie or go ahead of the visiting team, the game ends, and the visiting team wins. If the home team ties or goes ahead, the visiting team takes its turn at bat.

### **1.5 Number of Players**

Teams will play with a minimum of 9 players and may have up to 11 defensive players. A manager may also bat all of his players. Each team must have a minimum of 9 players at the start of each game or lose by forfeit. Any team within a division, whether the opposing team or either of the two teams playing on the adjacent field, may loan a player to the team with 9 players.

The managers of the two teams playing have the authority to decide how the "loaned" player will be utilized, and must agree on all aspects of this player's participation:

1. The player plays defense (catcher or any position) and offense and, in

essence, is a part of the team to which he has been loaned to participate as one of its players.

2. The player may be loaned as a catcher only to facilitate play of the game, would not bat, and the 10<sup>th</sup> position in the batting order of the short-handed team would result in an out each time that batter's turn at bat comes up.

3. Any other method of playing the loaned player that is agreed upon by the two managers and would not adversely affect the division won/loss records and the other two teams in the Division. This could apply if a team would need to add a 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> player to facilitate a full defensive team, i.e., both a catcher and middle infielder as an example. Then managers could apply 1 or 2 above if agreed.

Player decisions should be made primarily with the best interest of the players' enjoyment, physical well-being, and social interaction. But softball is also a competitive game. Managers should strive to balance the needs of the player with the needs of his team and other teams in the division.

On game day, players on a team's roster must play a minimum of half the number of innings per game (or play one complete game of a double-header), but they may voluntarily elect to play fewer innings. Players may also opt to play only offense or defense. The managers and umpires must be informed of this at the start of the game. This status cannot change until the game is completed.

## **1.6 Foul Ball Rule**

The USA Softball rule on a foul ball will apply: If the ball goes straight to the catcher's glove, or straight to the catcher's body and bounces off his body and it is caught, it is a strike. If it is the third strike, the batter will be called out. If the catcher needs to move while catching a foul ball, the batter will be called out (there is no rule stating the ball must go over the batter's head). A foul ball on a third strike pitch is considered an out. Exception: the 1-and-1 Count Rule allows for one 'courtesy' or 'extra' foul ball on a third strike (see 1.8 Pitch Count).

## **1.7 Equipment**

### **1.7.1 Bats**

A legal bat requires a USA Softball (formerly ASA) certification stamp or is approved by Senior Softball USA (SSUSA) and may not have a BPF of more than 1.21. A bat not approved by USA Softball or one that has been altered will be illegal. The use of such a bat during a game will result in the ejection of the player from the game and the team penalized with an out.

Additional penalties may follow at the discretion of the division president.

Each division may elect to play with bats that fall below the 1.21 BPF certification. No division can play a bat that exceeds the above BPF. Here are the approved bat certifications for each division:

Coastal - USA/ASA Sticker and SSUSA and/or 1.20 (not USSSA)

Legacy - USA/ASA Sticker or 1.20 & 1.21  
(not USSSA)

Atlantic - USA/ASA Sticker or 1.20 & 1.21  
(not USSSA)

As stated in USA Softball Official Rules, Rule 3, Section A – “Exception: Senior Softball bats may be used in Senior Championship Play only.”

### 1.7.2 Pitching Safety Screen

Pitching Safety Screens, which are used for the pitcher's protection, are mandatory for all three Divisions.

#### Screen Use By The Pitcher.

1. Pitching screen must be in use whenever pre-game warm-up and a game is in progress.
2. A legal pitch is defined as follows.
  - a. ***At least half of the pitcher's body is to be behind the screen during the pitching motion towards home plate. The pitcher must then move immediately and completely behind the screen until the batter hits the ball.***
  - b. A Pitcher may not come out to field a ball until it is hit by the batter.
  - c. The pitcher is allowed to play any batted ball provided the batted ball does not make contact with the screen.
3. Failure to get behind the screen shall be a cause for the following:
  - a. A 1<sup>st</sup> offense called by the umpire shall be considered a warning.
  - b. If a 2<sup>nd</sup> offense is called by the umpire, the pitcher shall be ***removed from the position of pitcher***, in place of another player.
  - c. It is the team manager's responsibility to remove the player from the pitcher's position upon the 2<sup>nd</sup> warning being given by the umpire.
  - d. If the removal of the player from the pitcher's position causes the team to not have a pitcher available and/or are short of players, managers may consider resorting to the rules regarding teams playing with shortened rosters.
  - e. Note: if it is the first of two games, that same “removed” player may play the pitcher's position again in the second game. The removal does not carry over to future games.

### **Batting To The Screen**

All Divisions - If a ball is batted into the screen, it shall be considered a foul ball.

### **Hitting of Screen by a Thrown Ball**

1. Any batted ball already in play on the field by the defense and hitting the screen, is considered a live ball, even if the ball is deflected from contact with the screen. Both offensive and defensive play may continue.
2. If during play a thrown ball becomes lodged in the screen, the defensive player shall raise his/her hand indicating the ball is lodged, thereby having the umpire declare a dead ball. If the player retrieves the ball but declares it was lodged, the ball will be considered a live ball.

### **Screen Placement**

The Pitcher's Screen should be placed on the field centered to where the pitcher's rubber is (or would be) and no more than four feet (4') forward of the pitcher's rubber. If this is not possible due to an obstruction (pitcher's mound on the field) then the screen should be positioned as close as possible to the location noted above.

### **1.8 Pitch Count**

When the 1-and-1 count is utilized, the batter's turn at bat starts with a one ball and one strike count. A single "courtesy or extra" foul ball will be allowed after a batter has a 2-strike count. Any subsequent foul ball **after** the courtesy foul will be strike three, and the batter is out. The use of the 1-and-1 rule in a Division is up to the discretion of the Division President and/or the two competing Managers. There is no courtesy foul allowed when the 1-1 count is not in effect.

### **1.9 Protest Procedure**

1. If a call or play is protested, a manager should call a time-out and register the protest with the umpire and the opposing team's manager.
2. The umpire should contact the division president as soon as the games have ended for the day that a protest has been issued.
3. The protesting manager should email the specifics of the protest including the date, the teams competing and the nature of the protest. Depending on the nature of the protest, the division president will either render a decision or call a meeting of the other two division presidents who will take the appropriate steps to provide a decision as soon as possible and reasonable.
4. In either case, the protesting manager, the opposing manager, and the umpire will receive the final decision regarding the protest.



## **2.0 Players and Substitutes**

### **2.1 Rosters**

A master roster of application information is maintained by the WSSA treasurer and contains emergency contact information. As the Division Presidents are board members, they receive the master roster (and all updates) of all players which is provided by the division. The presidents will share with the managers each team's roster information once rosters are established at the beginning of each season.

A player's placement on a team is considered permanent for the season. Requests for movement of players between teams (or divisions), player trades, and/or player requests to change teams (divisions) should be directed to the division president(s) via the affected managers. The division president(s) will approve or reject the request.

The President, with the managers' agreement, may assign or transfer players to create a fair playing balance at any time during the regular season.

Each team manager and assistant manager must have a copy of its roster with emergency contacts at every game.

### **2.2 Player Injury/Other Absence from Lineup**

During a game, if a player cannot continue to play due to an injury, the team with the injured player will not be penalized with an automatic out when the injured player is not able to take his turn at bat if the opposing team's manager and umpire are notified when it is known that the player cannot play. Additionally, if the opposing manager and umpire are notified immediately anytime a player leaves the game for any reason, no out will be charged.

### **2.3 Defense / Offense Only Play**

A player who is injured may, before the game begins, elect to play only offense or defense and that player's manager must notify the opposing manager and umpire before play begins. At no time during the game can this player change his status regarding this rule. An injured player may request not to play either offense or defense; however, he cannot enter the game at any time once this decision is made and the managers and umpire are informed.

### **2.4 Player Behavior and Conduct**

Players' behavior on and off the field on game days reflects upon the association, players, managers, sponsors, and the board of directors. Good sportsmanship at all times should be promoted and is the responsibility of all players. Any unsportsmanlike behaviors including arguing with umpires or opposing players, using language which is abusive, vulgar, profane, or obscene will not be tolerated.

A player who violates acceptable conduct and/or sportsmanship as noted above will be

warned by the umpire along with his team manager, opposing manager, and any board member in attendance that the behavior and/or language is unacceptable and will not be tolerated should it occur again. The player, his manager, opposing manager, and umpire must be informed when or if a second occurrence on the same day of the warning results in that player being ejected and not allowed to continue play.

If the ejection occurs in the first game of a double-header, the player may not participate in the second game as well. The player will also be suspended for the next two (2) play dates. The player must immediately leave the field, dugout, and premises. Failure to do so may result in a forfeiture of the game.

A second ejection will result in a suspension of the player for the remainder of that play date and the next six (6) play dates.

A third occurrence would result in suspension for the remainder of the season to include all games and WSSA association events, with no refund of fees paid.

**Only a Manager or Assistant Manager can register a complaint with an umpire. This applies to all calls on the field, either rules interpretation or proper application of the rule when seeking an over-turning by an umpire. Managers/Assistant Managers may engage the umpires in discussions concerning a proper application of a rule.**

Players should not demean or defame another player, umpire, or spectator; make threats of physical harm or intend to injure another player, umpire, or their property, or the property of the city or county. **Any player accosting an umpire over a call or showing disrespect to an umpire or another player per the above may be ejected by the umpire without prior warning.**

Failure to comply and/or recurring instances of unacceptable behavior and/or language must be brought to the attention of the division president who will convene a meeting of that division's managers and collectively form what action is required. The division president will inform the board of directors of the player(s) involved, the situation(s), and the actions recommended by the division's managers. The board will vote to accept, modify, or reject the recommendation and will notify the player(s) in writing of the outcome.

The player has the right to appeal by requesting a meeting with the board of directors where the board will hear the appeal and then decide whether to uphold the original outcome, disregard or modify the outcome, or defer a decision to a later date. The outcome of the appeal once delivered by the board of directors in writing to the player(s) is final.

## 2.5 Hot Weather Rule

During periods of hot and humid weather, managers should monitor the condition of their players and rotate players in and out as much as possible. Players are urged to hydrate before, during, and after games. Players who demonstrate unusual fatigue, dizziness, unresponsiveness, confusion, excessive sweating or no sweating, should be placed in the shade or cool location, cool towels applied, and on the side of caution for the player's well-being, a quick decision whether or not to call 9-1-1 should be made by the managers and umpire. The decision to call 9-1-1 should never be left to the player who is in distress.

No player who exhibits the signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke should be left unattended and should not be permitted to leave the park and drive alone. The emergency contact should be notified and advised of the situation and asked how to proceed.

The Coastal and Legacy Divisions Managers use a temperature and heat index rating to define when and how to handle the hot weather. (The WECT-TV Weather App on smart phones will be the official temperature and heat index guide).

### **TEMPERATURE Heat Index ACTION TO BE TAKEN**

90-94 degrees **or** 95 degree heat index: It is Mandatory to shorten games 95 degrees & above **or** 100 degree heat index: \*All games must be stopped; **no** further play allowed\*

**Scores of games halted by heat will revert back to the end of the previous inning if doing so would result in an official game.**

### **Specific Rules for Hot Weather**

- 1) No pitching or infield warm-up period after the first inning.
- 2) All teams must have the on-deck batter ready to enter the batter's box when the last batter has completed his at bat. Failure to comply will result in the pitcher throwing a pitch to the catcher and the umpire will call it a strike. This will continue until the batter is called out on strikes or takes his place in the batter's box.
- 3) Courtesy runners must be ready to enter the game immediately. Any delay will result in no courtesy runner being allowed.
- 4) The decision of the umpire is final for rules 1-3 above.

## 3.0 **Base Running**

### 3.1 Base Runner

All batters must reach first base on their own.<sup>1</sup> Runners must run to and touch the orange bag at first base and may continue running beyond it; however, if their hit allows them to advance to second base, they may make the turn touching either bag as long as they

avoid contact with the fielder. An umpire may call a runner out if he runs to and touches the white bag depending on the circumstances.

Runners advancing to home must touch the runner's plate which is buried in the ground and away from the strike mat. Touching the strike mat instead of the runner's home plate will be called an out by the umpire. The catcher or backup player taking a throw must be touching the white portion of the strike mat after catching the ball before the runner touches the runner's plate for an out to be called.

If a batter hits a home run over the fence,<sup>2</sup> the batter and all runners are credited with a run, and all runners shall exit the bases.

*1 Legacy Division exception: Legacy Division allows for a courtesy runner for a batter who cannot reach first base on his/her own. Any player is permitted to run as a courtesy runner from home plate, but the managers of both teams must agree, and the umpire must be notified before the start of the game. The courtesy runner should be the same player running from home plate for the same batter when possible.*

*2. (Legacy Division only) The first time a batter hits the ball over the outfield fence, it will be credited as a home run. The second time the same batter hits the ball over the fence, it will be credited as a double. The third time (and any additional times) the same batter hits the ball over the fence, it will be an automatic single. After the first game has been completed this sequence starts over for the next game.*

## **a. Courtesy Runner**

### **i. Atlantic and Coastal Divisions**

The courtesy runner may be any player in the starting lineup or any player on the bench. A courtesy runner can run as often as is necessary, but only once per inning and only for the player he replaces in that inning. If a courtesy runner is on base when his turn to bat comes up, the team will be charged with an out; the runner must vacate the base with no replacement (courtesy) runner, and he then takes his turn at bat. Exception: Legacy division allows for players to be replaced by courtesy runners with no limitations.

### **ii. Legacy Division**

The courtesy runner may be any player in the starting lineup or any player on the bench. A courtesy runner can run as often as it is necessary, but only once per inning, with the following exceptions (1) if the team bats around in an inning, or (2) if both managers agree to additional runners in that game.

**b. Contact**

In order to avoid bodily contact and possible injury, a base runner must make every effort to avoid colliding with a fielder who is making a play at a base. In accordance with this rule, if it appears that the runner and fielder may collide, the runner may run past the base without touching it and will not be in jeopardy of being put out, unless in the umpire's judgment the runner would not have reached the base before being put out or has run outside the baseline to avoid being put out. The runner may go to either side of the base to avoid a collision. A runner who employs this maneuver must return and touch the base he ran by before he may advance to another base.

A defensive player may not straddle a base when a runner is approaching. If a violation of this rule is apparent to the umpire, the runner may be called safe. In an extreme violation of this rule, an umpire may eject a player.

Sliding or diving into second or third bases or back to any base is optional in all divisions. In the event of contact at any base, the runner may be called out at the discretion of the umpire and the umpire may impose additional penalties.

**c. Overrunning**

In the Legacy Division only, a base runner is permitted to overrun 2nd and 3rd bases without being subject to a tag or force out. However, a runner is subject to being tagged out if, in overrunning a base, he obviously moves toward the next base. In this case, he is subject to being tagged out while attempting to advance or returning to the base he overran. Should a runner overrun a base and not touch the base, he must return to that base and "tag up" before advancing.

**4.0 Re-Scheduling Games****4.1 Early Notice**

The deputy commissioner or his designee will be responsible for checking the fields when there is adverse weather or field conditions. The deputy commissioner or his designee will notify the WSSA webmaster, umpires and division presidents as soon as possible, that is, the preceding day or as early as possible the day of the game, of the poor field conditions and postponements.

**4.2 Options During Games**

Under inclement weather conditions during a game, the managers, division president, and umpire will decide if a game will be continued.

### **4.3 Reschedule Procedure**

A game's schedule date can be rescheduled if the cause is weather-related and/or managers and division president(s) as applicable agree to a reschedule. Every attempt to reschedule games will be made by the division president and deputy commissioner, first using all scheduled rain dates. If more make-up games are needed after all rain dates are used, they will be rescheduled, if possible, at the discretion of the division presidents.

Suspended games will be resumed where they were stopped. Both affected teams should have this point documented in their scorebooks. An official game may be called after five innings of play or four and one-half innings if the home team is ahead. Five inning games will resume at the point where they stopped.

## **Association Fee and Application Section 2**

### **1.0 Due Date and Amount**

A WSSA member annual fee is required for a player to be eligible to play. In addition to the payment of the association fee, each member must submit a signed application prior to the start of play. The application form is available on the WSSA website along with the mailing address and deadline date.

Application and fee for the current year of play for returning players are due no later than March 1. Returning players who submit their application and fee after March 1 are not guaranteed to play on the team they were previously assigned. Application and fee for new players are due no later than March 15 to be considered for team placement.

Any player on the field during regular season and/or end of season tournament play who has not complied by submitting an application and the required fee is ineligible to play; must leave the field immediately, and his team forfeits the game. The player's eligibility after such an occurrence will be determined by the board of directors.

### **1.1 Dues for partial season**

For dues paid at beginning of the season and the player is leaving due to injury (assuming the player will not play for the remainder of the season):

Injury occurs after the team has played at least 30 games – no refund

Injury occurs after the team has played 15-29 games – ¼ of the fee is refunded

Injury occurs before team has played 15 games – ½ of the fee is refunded

## **1.2 Injured Reserve**

A manager may designate a player on Injured Reserve<sup>4</sup> before, during, or after a season. The manager must notify the division president and the other managers in the division.

**<sup>4</sup>A player may be placed on Injured Reserve for an entire or partial season if he intends to return to the team he is assigned after recovery or the following year/season assuming he has paid his association fee and does not receive a full or partial refund. The division president will authorize the player's departure and return after review with all the managers within that division based on the needs of the teams.**

If a player joins the association after the season has started:

Player joins before 30 games are played – the full fee is charged;

Player joins after 30-44 games are completed – ½ of the annual fee;

Player joins after 45 games are completed – ¼ of the annual fee.

The annual player membership fees are for the costs associated with field rental, umpire fees, insurance, softballs, safety equipment, and other administrative and operational expenses. Sponsorship monies are used to provide for team uniforms and equipment.

On a case-by-case basis, any exception to the Association Fee and Injured Reserve policy may be approved at the discretion of the division president.

## Division Structure, Team, and Player Administration

### Section 3

*While age is a defining factor in a player's placement in any of the 3 divisions, there are other considerations which should be evaluated such as abilities, skills, and proficiency with regard to hitting, fielding, throwing, and running. Players who submit an application along with the membership fee cannot be excluded from a division as long as that player meets the criteria stated in this manual and in our WSSA Bylaws. Players should be placed in the division with players of similar skills and abilities.*

#### **1.0 Division Structure**

1. **Atlantic Division** - Players generally of age 55 – 67.
2. **Coastal Division** – Players generally age 68 and older, Players with over-all softball skill proficiency less than the majority of Atlantic players.
3. **Legacy Division** – No age limit on the players. Players with over-all softball skill proficiency less than the majority of Coastal players.

A player will remain in the division in which he is assigned during the regular season. If a player requests a move to another division, the affected division presidents will determine the outcome. Before any regular season begins, a player may request a move to another division. In that case, the player will attend one or more Spring Training Sessions for evaluation. A final determination will be made by the president of the division the player requested moving to.

#### **1.1 Team and Player Administration**

As provided in Article II, Section VI of the Bylaws, the division presidents are responsible for implementing and administering the policies and procedures governing the members and Association play including communication, dispute resolution, disciplinary actions, training, tryouts, team managers selection and player assignments. The division presidents may request an exception to existing Association rules on a trial basis. At a later date, they may petition the board to formalize the rule to be incorporated into the manual via board approval for the respective division.

- **Administrative Matters**

- **Communication**

- The division presidents will communicate all matters affecting the Association and/or individual teams on a timely basis to each team manager.



Such matters include Association rules, changes in rules, player placement, Board of Director directives, Association functions, etc. They will conduct meetings with the team managers as necessary. They will facilitate two-way communication between team managers so that issues with players, managers or other issues are quickly resolved and if necessary are communicated to the Board of Directors.

- **Team Managers' Selection**

Each year after the election of the board of directors, division presidents will submit a recommendation to the Board of Directors for all proposed team managers. The Board of Directors shall vote to approve or disapprove of the recommended individual(s) before a permanent assignment is allowed.

- **Spring Training**

The division presidents are responsible for conducting spring training for all new players, players who are requesting a move to another division, or players who have played previously in the WSSA but not in the preceding year. They will involve all team managers in this process. All players are responsible to obtain medical approval from their personal physician before playing in the WSSA. In addition, all players must sign the current year application before engaging in any WSSA organized activity.

## **Player Assignment**

### **Team structure**

Based on the number of expected returning players and balance of the teams from the previous year, the division presidents and managers will decide (1) if a restructure of the teams is necessary or (2) to build the teams from last year's rosters with a specified number of protected players to remain on the teams and all other players go into the pool with the new players (3) number of players on each team's roster agreed upon by all three division presidents and the commissioner.

### **Restructure of Teams within a Division**

When a division president determines that a re-balancing of existing teams is necessary, or when the number of teams within a division increases or decreases, a restructure may be necessary. Managers will evaluate and rate returning, and new players and they will all be placed in a pool. The number of teams is determined by the total number of players expected for the current season. The Managers will use any process where they select the players from the pool and compile equal teams. All the managers must agree that the teams are all equal and they would be a manager of any of the teams. The teams are designated by number. The previous year's last place team will draw the first

number and then consecutively by order of finish until first place draws last.

### **Protection System with Player Pool**

Before Spring Training begins, and based on the number of expected returning players, division presidents and managers will decide if a number of protected players will remain on each team with the unprotected players being placed in the pool with new players. All players in the pool are rated according to their softball skills and will be drafted in a round robin process.

The order of selection will be based on the team standing at the end of the preceding season: Last place will receive first pick, first place team will pick last in each round, and the process repeated. Any players not selected will be placed in a reserve pool and placed on a team when needed.

### **Team balancing**

After players have been selected for teams each year, the division presidents and managers will determine if the teams are as balanced as possible. Presidents should be cognizant of player requests for placement on teams and honor them when possible and with managers' agreement. Players are not guaranteed placement on any team, playing position, or position in lineup.

To balance teams, players may be traded between teams with managers' and president's approval. Presidents may also move players between teams at his discretion and at any time during the season if doing so benefits the good of the association, division, teams, and players.

- **New Players or players returning after 1 year or more After Teams are Assigned.**

The division presidents will assess the needs of each team and then meet to discuss how the new player will be evaluated and then either placed on a team within the most appropriate division which matches the player's skills or placed in the division's reserve pool until a need on a team is identified.

- **Existing Players Who Request a Change of Divisions After Teams are Assigned.**

Any Player requesting to move to another division during the season must be evaluated and approved by both division presidents. The division presidents will assess the needs of each team and then meet to discuss how the new player will be evaluated and then either placed on a team within the most appropriate division which match the player's skills, placed in the division's reserve pool until a need on a team is identified,

or the request denied, and the player remains in his current division.

- **Existing Players Who Request a Change of Teams After Teams are Assigned.**

The division president and affected managers will evaluate if the request is valid. If so, the managers within that division will be asked if they have any players with the same rating who would not be opposed to being traded. If so, the president will authorize the trade.

## Sponsorship Section 4

### **Purpose**

This section establishes the guidelines of conduct for the WSSA with regards to its relationship with Association and team sponsors. The WSSA recognizes sponsors who provide financial support for our Association through their generosity and desire to keep the WSSA as a valuable Wilmington institution. The WSSA appreciates our sponsors' support and desires to provide an open and transparent relationship with them. As sponsors provide the WSSA with financial support, the WSSA is responsible to exercise good stewardship of their funds and remain entirely accountable to them for the expenditures of those funds.

### **Organization Structure**

Team sponsorship is administered by a sponsorship committee chaired by the director of marketing and public relations. The committee consists of the chairman and the WSSA division presidents, or their designees. This committee is charged with assisting the managers in obtaining a sponsor as needed and maintaining good relationships with our current sponsors. They also serve to promote the WSSA through the "Friends of WSSA" sponsorships. Committee meetings will be held when deemed necessary by the chairman.

The Secretary/Procurement Officer works with the division presidents (and director of marketing & public relations when necessary) to review and approve, modify, or reject requests from team managers for equipment, supplies, apparel, etc. The secretary/procurement officer is the only WSSA member who is authorized to

purchase on behalf of the association including pre-approving purchases to be made for the association by another association member.

### **Guidelines for Division Presidents and Team Managers**

- The appropriate division president and team manager are the WSSA's representatives to our sponsors.
- To maintain a positive relationship with our sponsors, managers should keep in touch with their sponsors on a consistent basis utilizing phone calls, emails, or visits in person. The objective is to ensure the sponsors know they are appreciated.
- Recognition items provided to a sponsor (plaque, picture, etc.) should be presented to the appropriate highest level within its organization (such as headquarters, corporate office, etc.).
- Provide sponsors annually with a team picture, some game photos and a personal note.
- All members should be encouraged to patronize their teams' sponsors' places of business.
- Invite sponsors to attend game and bring their staff

### **Sponsorships**

There are three types of annual sponsorships available within the WSSA:

#### **League sponsorship--\$1,500/yr.**

- Provides financial support as a TEAM sponsor as listed for the second type of sponsorship;Contributes to the WSSA operating budget;
- Sponsor banner displayed at all team games;
- Display on WSSA website home page with link to sponsor's website;
- Write-up on dedicated sponsors' page on WSSA website;
- Includes benefits of "Friends of the WSSA" sponsorship.

#### **Team sponsorship--\$1000 first year, \$600 thereafter.**

- Team uniforms with sponsor's name, colors and logo;
- Supports some team equipment;
- Sponsor banner may be provided for games;
- Includes benefits of "Friends of the WSSA" sponsorship;
- Link to sponsor's website through company logo on "Friends of the WSSA" page.

**Friends of the WWSA--\$200 and up.**

- Provides financial support for the WSSA operating budget;
- Provides financial support for the WSSA marketing and public relations promotional efforts
- Link to the sponsor's website through company logo on "Friends of the WSSA" page

## Hall of Fame Section 5

### Nomination

The Wilmington Senior Softball Association Treasurer is responsible for compiling a list of all current and former WSSA members who served, or have served as members of the association for at least ten total years and are not current members of the WSSA Hall of Fame. Anyone who has been a member of the association for a minimum of ten years is automatically nominated. This listing will be referred to as the Nominee List (NL). The NL should be made available to the commissioner prior to June 1 each year.

### Inductee Selection Process

The WSSA Board of Directors will determine the maximum number of inductees for the given year. The commissioner is responsible for establishing a committee of a minimum of five, but no more than seven members from the present Hall of Fame to serve on the Selection Committee (SC). This committee identifies the inductees by considering, among any other relevant factors, the following criteria:

- The prospective inductee's playing skill as a participant in regular season Association games and in Association tournament play.
- The prospective inductee's level of sportsmanship and personal behavior.
- The prospective inductee's contribution of time and effort in the development and growth of the WSSA such as participation in committees, team managing, recruiting and membership on the Board of Directors.
- The prospective inductee's number of years (beyond ten years) as a

member of the association.

- Personal feelings towards the prospective inductees should not be considered.

As a facilitator only, the commissioner will attend the SC meetings, however, he may serve as a voting committee member only if he has previously been inducted into the Hall of Fame. The proceedings from the SC meetings during the inductee selection process are to remain confidential. The SC will submit the final list of prospective inductees to the commissioner by September 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

### **Induction Process**

The commissioner will present the list of prospective inductees to the Board of Directors SC for approval. The WSSA Board will be permitted to add one inductee to the list presented by the SC. The final step is the selective approval by the Board from the list of prospective inductees. The WSSA Hall of Fame induction ceremony will be held at a time and location determined by the Board, typically at the end of season banquet.

## **Manager and Assistant Manager Section 6**

### **IDENTIFICATION OF PROSPECTIVE MANAGERS:**

(1) Current managers should make known to their division president as soon as possible when they no longer wish to continue managing a team. This can be done anytime during the regular season, but no later than the last play date of the regular season is preferred so adequate time can be found for a replacement.

(2) The application includes a section which a member can check indicating current and future interest in the following areas: (a) managing and assistant managing, (b) Board of Director positions, (c) base coaching, (d) committee work etc.

(3) Current team managers who have been approached by a player expressing an interest in managing should direct him to the appropriate division president for further discussions.

(4) Managers may recommend to their division president players whom they observe as

prospective manager candidates.

(5) Players may at any time contact their division president expressing their interest concerning manager positions.

### **EXPECTATIONS OF MANAGERS:**

(1) Managers need to demonstrate with consistency the following **Attributes**:

- knowledge of the game, Association rules, and bylaws
- balanced and positive demeanor/attitude
- good character, fairness, and integrity
- positive on-field and dugout behavior
- respect for all players, umpires, and spectators
- common sense
- managing in the best interest of the team, players, and the Association

(2) Managers should be available for the regular season including spring training, called manager meetings, and Association events and tournaments.

(3) Managers must communicate with their players either via email, text, or phone regarding team practices, rain outs and rescheduled games, location changes, meetings, and all other team need-to-know information.

(4) Managers must have a first aid kit (provided by the Association) available during games and insure it is stocked at all times, at a minimum, with the items originally supplied.

(5) Managers should maintain team equipment, uniform and cap inventory; and when required, follow written procurement procedures outlined by the Secretary/Procurement Officer for the acquisition of apparel, equipment, supplies, etc. Managers do not unilaterally or independently place orders on behalf of teams, divisions, or WSSA.

written procurement procedur

(6) Managers should encourage teams to patronize all sponsors.

(7) Managers should have a named assistant manager and announce it to the team, other managers, and the division president.

(8) Managers should encourage players annually to obtain medical approval prior to play.

(9) Manager and assistant manager should be vigilant concerning the safety, health, and well-being of all players and should take appropriate actions with regard to injuries, heat exhaustion, physical exertion, etc.

(10) Managers should regularly inspect all team and individual equipment and bats to ensure compliance at all times with approved USA softball and Association rules.

(11) Managers will become thoroughly familiar with the bylaws and Association rules. They shall bring a hard copy with them to every game and be prepared to identify the specific provision or application thereof, in the event of a dispute or disagreement.

**ASSISTANT MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES:** The following duties or responsibilities may include but are not limited to the following:

- (1) Act in the manager's place when he is unavailable.
- (2) Share the responsibility of maintaining team equipment.
- (3) Coach 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base during games.
- (4) Provide input on line-up selection and defensive positions.
- (5) Prepare and implement a phone/text/email communication vehicle for announcements about team meetings, practices, rainouts, schedule changes, etc.
- (6) Maintain the scorebook and perform related administrative functions required of the manager position.
- (7) Understand Association rules and consult with team manager, opposing manager, and umpire when required regarding disputes or on-field protests.

#### **MANAGER PERFORMANCE AND TENURE:**

- (1) Satisfactory performance is determined by the division president's evaluation of adherence to the **Attributes** as previously defined.
- (2) Complaints, issues, and negative behavior which are escalated to the division president will be brought confidentially to the attention of the offending manager. The frequency and/or severity as determined by the division president will result in one or more of the following: written reprimand, warning, suspension, removal from manager position (which may occur in extreme cases and requires BOD approval).

It should be noted that division presidents will communicate with a manager when complaints or on-field observations are noted and work with the manager to resolve issues which have negative impacts before disciplinary action is taken.

- (3) Manager Tenure: Managers with satisfactory performance as determined by their division president, may continue in that role if they so choose, for up to **five** years. After the **fifth** year, if there are no new interested manager candidates, the current manager may continue on a year-to-year basis until a new manager is selected so long as satisfactory performance is maintained.



It should be noted additionally that the division presidents present to the board of directors a slate of managers each year before the start of the new season which requires BOD approval.

## **WSSA PROCUREMENT PROCESS & GUIDELINES**

### **Section 7**

#### **BYLAW REFERENCE Section 4 - Secretary / Procurement Officer**

*The procurement officer is responsible for purchasing and managing all WSSA equipment. He will order equipment as requested by the division presidents, through local resources (that he will establish). He will be accountable for all the WSSA inventory (bats, balls, masks, uniforms, first aid kits, etc.). All purchases, including team purchases, must be approved by this individual.*

#### **MANUAL REFERENCES**

*The Secretary/Procurement Officer works with the division presidents (and director of marketing & public relations when necessary) to review and approve, modify, or reject requests from team managers for equipment, supplies, apparel, etc. The secretary/procurement officer is the only WSSA member who is authorized to purchase on behalf of the association including pre-approving purchases to be made for the association by another association member.*

*Managers should maintain team equipment, uniform and cap inventory; and when required, follow written procurement procedures outlined by the Secretary/Procurement Officer for the acquisition of apparel, equipment, supplies, etc. Managers do not unilaterally or independently place orders on behalf of teams, divisions, or the WSSA.*

#### **The Procurement Process**

**1.** The procurement officer may direct each division president to conduct a full inventory of WSSA owned property. The inventory may be completed by anyone, but it is recommended that the person(s) accountable for the property during the regular season conduct the inventory. Division presidents will sign off on the completed form(s) indicating their concurrence with the accuracy of the inventories by a date set by the Procurement Officer.

Unaccounted-for items will be handled on an individual basis with the appropriate division president(s) and procurement officer with regard to replacement, write-off, etc. The procurement officer will provide an unaccounted-for item report to the BOD when year-end inventories are completed for review and any action.

For the sake of convenience and accountability, the inventories will be classified as Atlantic, Coastal, and Legacy; however, property may be moved from division to division with division presidents' approval.

2. Division presidents determine equipment/apparel items and quantities required for teams in their division. They, along with the procurement officer, will determine the useful life of apparel and equipment and create an out-year's plan indicating which teams and in which years apparel and equipment will be replaced. This information will be shared with team managers by the presidents each year.

3. Team sponsorship fees currently are set at \$1000 first year (new sponsor) and \$600 thereafter. During the first year (2020), all team balances will be applied to the Procurement Fund.

4. Team managers are the authorized representatives of their teams and may request equipment and/or apparel at any time. The request must come via email with supporting information or documentation to their division president who will determine the status of the request. If the request is approved by the president, he will forward the email with his approval to the procurement officer and copy the other division presidents.

5. Upon receiving the request, the procurement officer will evaluate the request and may or may not approve based on the basis of the need, timing, and/or cost. The procurement officer may meet with the division president and treasurer if applicable to reach a decision.

### **VENDOR SELECTION**

As directed by the BOD, with regard to equipment, supplies, gear, and apparel, the procurement officer will obtain requests for purchase (RFP) quotes in writing from a minimum of three vendors/suppliers; and will include at a minimum and when feasible, one of the three to be local (SE North Carolina).

The quotes requested must all be for the same product including - but not limited to - set-up fee if applicable, delivery and/or packaging, turn-around time, quality assurance, defect or sizing disputes and resolution, reorder terms and pricing, payment terms, return policy, and all fees & tax. Volume discounting must also be investigated through all suppliers for price breaks at various quantity levels.

The procurement officer will communicate the information regarding vendor selection to the division presidents for their approval before advising the treasurer and remaining board members, and before any purchase activity.