



Sioux Empire PSA-Softball

Athletic Code

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Mission Statement

- A. Sioux Empire Pride Sports Association-Softball (Sioux Empire PSA-Softball) is a non-profit adult community-based sports organization created to support the bonds of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered (LGBT) fellowship to play softball in a safe environment of friendly competition; free of discrimination based on age, race, creed, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or playing ability.
- B. Sioux Empire Pride Sports Association-Softball also fosters knowledge and training in softball to educate the community it serves as to the physical, social, psychological, and intellectual benefits of athletics.

League Structure

- A. The structure of Sioux Empire PSA-Softball shall be determined at the annual March team manager meeting.

Team Manager Responsibilities

- A. Represent their team at the manager meetings (They may designate a proxy in their absence). Manager/proxy attendance is required before and throughout the entirety of that current season. Teams that are unable to successfully send a delegate to attend will be assessed a \$25 fine that is due by the next manager meeting.
- B. Report the results of the manager meetings back to their team.
- C. Collect and submit to the Commissioner: team rosters and sponsor contributions.
- D. Assist softball leadership with the fair and accurate rating of their players to be completed annually. The completed form is to be submitted to the Commissioner no later than the fourth (4th) week of the regular season unless otherwise informed.
- E. Both team managers must fill out an umpire scorecard and hand it in before the start of each game.
- F. Maintain team sportsmanship at all SEPSA games and events.
- G. Carry copies of the current USA Softball Participant Manual Official Rules of Softball and Sioux Empire PSA-Softball Athletic Code to every game.
- H. At the end of each regular season game, the team manager is to confirm the score on the umpire scorecard is the correct score for that game before each manager signs the

card. The official score will come from the umpire scorecard. Disagreements regarding scores must be handled on the field before both managers sign the scorecard.

New Player Recruits

- A. Teams can recruit new players for their team or the league, but the responsibility of recruiting new softball players will also be held by the Recruitment Director. Anyone is able to register whether they have played previously or not as long as they are in good standing with the organization. Free agents will be assigned to teams as needed.
- B. New players that Sioux Empire PSA-Softball has recruited may join a team of their choosing, be placed on a team needing players to fill their roster or form a new team.
- C. Teams in Sioux Empire PSA-Softball needing players shall inform the softball commissioner of the desired number of players needed. The recruitment list will be provided to any Sioux Empire PSA-Softball manager requesting it.
- D. Teams requesting players will be able to try out players before the start of the season to ensure the team's needs are met. If it is found that the player is not a match for that team, the recruit may change teams at their own will. The notice **MUST** be given to the softball commissioner, and, if appropriate, a reason for releasing a player must also be provided.
- E. Teams may form with players of all abilities. Understanding that individual player ratings may disqualify players from joining their team in tournaments where ratings would disqualify the team.
- F. Player participation in Sioux Empire PSA-Softball is voluntary.

Team Rosters

- A. A team must consist of at least twelve (12) active players but not more than twenty (20) active players (there is no roster limit on non-players).
- B. Addition(s) to the roster may be submitted for each player by using the registration tab on the SEPSA website. Registration will be completed on the external website League Apps; this can be done until the roster deadline. Internal player(s) moves amongst teams and new players may be added up until the 3rd week of play. After the 3rd week of play, internal player move requests will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
- C. Any player in the current year's Sioux Empire PSA-Softball league is permitted to leave the team that drafted them only by notification to the commissioner through their third week of scheduled games. The commissioner is then responsible for determining which team the player may move to if the player does not already have a chosen team, following Sioux Empire PSA-Softball's new player recruitment procedures.

- D. A team must have a minimum of seven (7) rostered players to borrow up to two (2) players from any other SEPSA team to field a team for play during the regular season. The one (1) or two (2) borrowed players are only allowed to pitch or catch while on defense. Borrowing of players will not be allowed during the End Of Season Tournament.
- E. Teams may request a 10-minute grace period from the ump before the start of the game. The 10 minutes will be started once the game was originally scheduled to start. After the 10-minute grace period ends, if a team(s) only has eight (8) players, a forfeit will be called.
- F. Any team/player may request their IPS official rating from the commissioner in writing.

Player Ratings

- A. Sioux Empire PSA - Softball will hold an annual ratings clinic for new players to be rated according to IPS ratings of that year. Once a player is rated, they will not have to attend a rating clinic unless questions or rating criteria change according to IPS. Ratings clinics will be run by the ratings committee. Players will need to attend a clinic before the season begins unless there is a conflict with scheduling and that will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Player ratings will be updated annually unless the ratings committee/Sioux Empire PSA - Softball needs to change a rating before then due to a player's skill level changes.
- B. Players will bring any of their personal equipment they have, some equipment can be provided if need be. Players will perform the skills asked of them to the best of their ability. Players will attend one rating clinic before the first game of the season unless approved by Sioux Empire PSA - Softball commissioner beforehand. Players will remain in attendance until they have successfully participated in all skills clinic stations.
- C. The ratings committee will consist of a ratings chairperson and ratings committee members. Each active softball team should provide at least one member to participate on the rating committee each season. The same member may participate multiple years in a row. Members who volunteer for the rating committee must fulfill their obligation in full for the entirety of the season. After the ratings clinic is finished the ratings committee will meet to discuss and finalize ratings of all active players that season to present to the Sioux Empire PSA - Softball commissioner. Ratings committee members may have to meet during the season on a case-by-case basis if a player's skill level needs to be reevaluated.
- D. Information regarding IPS member city rating expectations can be found in the most up-to-date version of the IPS Governing Manual located on the IPS website.

Playing Rules

- A. Sioux Empire PSA-Softball in all its official events, shall adopt and conform to the USA Softball (ASA) Rules of Softball for Men's Slow-Pitch, latest edition, unless explicitly stated in this section or elsewhere in this athletic code. All games shall be conducted under the governing manual of this organization.
- B. Exceptions to USA Softball (ASA) Rules of Softball for Men's Slow-Pitch, latest edition, may be made to affect the entire Sioux Empire PSA-Softball by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Committee. A vote can be made at any meeting from September 30th through the last meeting before the beginning of the new season each year.
- C. An official game may be started with a minimum of eight (8) players per team. After a game begins, players may be added to the end of the lineup, up to the allotted ten (10); provided that the game has not reached the end of the first inning (six (6) outs). If a team has a minimum of nine (9) players, a late player may be added to the lineup sheet as an available substitute, provided that the umpire and the opposing team have been notified.
- D. Only umpires and Sioux Empire PSA-Softball managers or team players are permitted to be on the field during or between games.
- E. Unless noted on the schedule, no new inning shall start after 55 minutes. Time begins at the scheduled starting time for each game (or as soon after as the umpires are ready to start the game). If a game starts up to 10 minutes late due to the grace period allowed for a team to have enough players on hand to begin the game, the starting time of the game will be at the beginning of that grace period.
- F. Run Rule: If a team is twenty (20) runs ahead after three (3) innings, fifteen (15) runs ahead after four (4) innings, or ten (10) runs ahead after five (5) innings, the game will be stopped only if the opposing team agrees.
- G. A game in which at least five (5) innings have been completed will be considered a completed game. The score of a game that ends in a tie due to time limit, darkness, weather, or field conditions (with at least five (5) innings completed) will be considered final and recorded in the Standings as a tie game. A game that ends for any of the above reasons, except the time limit, before completing the fifth (5th) inning will be continued at a later date if a time slot is available, with priority being given to games that affect the standings (particularly the top positions). If the game is not completed, it will be considered not to have been played (the stats from an incomplete game should be disregarded). (Note: the definition of a completed inning includes the last inning of a game where the home team is ahead and the visiting team has completed its turn at bat.)
- H. Each game will have an umpiring crew of one (1) for the regular season and two (2) for the tournament championship game, and an "if necessary" game.

- I. A Sioux Empire PSA-Softball member who plays on a Sioux Empire PSA-Softball team and is also a USA Softball-sanctioned umpire will not be permitted to umpire a game.
- J. Matching or similar shirts with numbers on the back are highly encouraged but not required.
- K. Only USA-approved slow-pitch softball bats are allowed in Sioux Empire PSA-Softball games.
- L. Batters will start each at-bat with a 1-1 count.
- M. A pitch must achieve a maximum height between 6 and 12 feet to be legal.
- N. No base-stealing is allowed.
- O. The Safety First (1st) Base must be used at Sioux Empire PSA-Softball games.
- P. If a batter who gets a courtesy runner is walked, the courtesy runner will go to the first (1st) base without the batter going to the first (1st) base.
- Q. All players on the roster may bat and be used as subs in the lineup so long as it is noted on the lineup card presented to the opposing team and umpire before the start of the game.
- R. Courtesy Runner: See the most up-to-date version of the USA Softball Official Rules
 - a. Teams are allowed one courtesy runner per inning. Any eligible player on the official lineup including available substitutes may be used as a courtesy runner.
 - b. For eligible players under ADA, the designated runner must be the LAST out and will not count as the courtesy runner for the inning. If the last out is on base or coming to bat, the previous out can be used without penalty.
- S. A player who throws a bat without malice shall receive a warning; a second (2nd) occurrence will result in an automatic ejection from the game. If the bat is thrown violently, it will result in an automatic ejection. The second (2nd) incident of a bat thrown violently will result in the player being suspended for the rest of the season, including the playoffs.
- T. A base runner who causes dangerous physical contact (determined by the umpire) with a defensive player will be automatically ejected from the game. Sliding base-runner feet should be parallel to the ground, no higher than the defensive player's ankle.
- U. ADA GUIDELINES:
 - a. Approved ADA players must have an asterisk next to their name on the lineup. The manager must also verbally confirm the ADA player with the umpire at home plate before the start of each game.

- b. When a player has an ADA accommodation at the beginning of a game, they have the option of utilizing the designated runner for each at bat.
- c. The player with an ADA accommodation must identify the use of the designated runner at the end of that at-bat. The designated runner must be the last recorded out. If it is the first inning, and no outs have been recorded, the designated runner will be the last batter in the submitted lineup.

Ground Rules

- A. Unless noted below, deadball territory is delineated by a straight line out from the dugout fences.
- B. Dead ball territory may be changed for safety or other purposes only by consent of both teams before the start of the game or as instructed by the game's umpire.
- C. Balls that strike obstructions in fair territory (for example, cars or trees) should be considered in play. Balls trapped under or behind obstructions in the field of play should be ruled dead and an appropriate number of bases awarded by the umpire.
- D. Unless noted, a fair batted ball that clears a fence in flight is a home run.

Field Conditions

- A. The umpire will have the power to stop or postpone a game due to an unsafe field.
- B. Once a game is suspended or postponed, it cannot be continued or played unless rescheduled by the Sioux Empire PSA-Softball Commissioner.
- C. If the umpire deems the fields safe to play, but both managers feel unsafe, the game will be postponed.
- D. If the umpire suggests that the game be played on the grass as an infield, both managers must agree to play the game; otherwise, it will be postponed.
- E. Decisions concerning postponements due to weather conditions will be made by the Sioux Falls Parks Representative, Commissioner, and Assistant Commissioner no earlier than 24 hours before the scheduled game. Unless such circumstance is known prior to 24 hours.
- F. Any postponement, or cancellation of games will be communicated in the following priority manner:
 - a. Managers via text message

- b. Umpires via text message
- c. League via Email
- d. Updated on the SEPSA website and social media accounts

Player Conduct

- A. Violating the Sioux Empire PSA-Softball mission statement or demonstrating unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. Unsportsmanlike conduct may consist of: derogatory words, unwanted physical contact, outing or revealing personal information of another, disrespecting or degrading umpires or softball leadership, or any other offense outlined in the current SEPSA Grievance Procedure & Policy. Players in violation will be immediately removed from the game and upon the second offense by the same team/player they can be dismissed for the remainder of the Sioux Empire PSA-Softball season.

Substances

- A. The use of alcohol or smoking is not permitted within a dugout or on a field of play.
- B. Must be 21 years of age to purchase or consume alcohol.
- C. In all other City parks, no person shall consume any alcoholic beverages, except that the restriction shall not apply to malt beverages or wine as defined by SDCL 35-1-1, or where alcoholic beverages are licensed to be sold.
- D. Outside malt beverages may be brought into the complex. NO GLASS.
- E. For safety reasons, players who are or appear to be impaired due to the overuse of alcohol or drugs will be removed from the gameplay at the discretion of the Umpire, Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, and/or Public Safety Officer if called upon to do so.
 - a. Players with multiple offenses may be removed from Sioux Empire PSA-Softball for the remainder of the season.

Forfeits

- A. A team will forfeit a game if it fails to have eight (8) players ready to play after 10-minutes past the game starting time, nine before starting the second inning.
- B. The forfeiting team will be responsible for paying all of the umpire fees for the forfeited game.

- C. If a team notifies the softball commissioner (or the assistant commissioner in their absence) and the opposing team's manager by noon on Friday before the game in question, a forfeit shall be declared, and the requirement to pay the umpire fees will be waived. Once a forfeit has been declared, it cannot be reversed.
- D. A team will forfeit a game if an ineligible player (has not paid their Membership Fee, has not filled out their registration form, has not been rated prior to the start of the game, or has been suspended by the Sioux Empire PSA-Softball) plays for the team in that game.

Playoff Rules

- A. All playoff games are governed by Playing Rules (above) detailed with the following exceptions: The Championship and "if necessary" games shall be untimed.
- B. The format for the playoffs shall be a double-elimination tournament unless an alternate format is established by softball leadership and managers at a meeting before the start of the season to be in effect for that season only.
- C. A player shall be eligible to participate in the playoffs if they have attended at least half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of their team's regular-season games. The regular season submitted scorebook shall be the official record of game attendance.
- D. The higher-seeded team will be the home team for every playoff game, except the Championship Rematch Game ("if necessary"), for which a coin toss will determine the home team.
- E. If two (2) teams are tied at the end of the regular season (same win-loss percentage) their order of finish shall be determined by:
 - a. Face-to-face record.
 - b. Run-differential face-to-face.
 - c. Overall run-differential.
 - d. A coin flip
- F. If a team forfeits more than four (4) games during the regular season, their first (1st) Playoff game may automatically be counted as a loss at the discretion of the softball leadership.
- G. Suppose the final round of the playoffs is canceled due to weather. In that case, the playoff Champion and runner-up shall be determined by applying Rule E, Letter C and D (above) to the games played during the playoffs by the remaining Winner's Bracket teams. If only one team remains in the Winner's Bracket, that team will be declared the playoff Champion, and the team that lost the last Winner's Bracket game will be the runner-up.

- H. If all playoffs are canceled due to weather, the Champion and runner-up shall be determined by the final regular-season standings.

Awards

- A. First (1st) place in the playoffs: Trophy presented to the manager, Medal given to registered players
- B. Second (2nd) place in the playoffs: Trophy presented to the manager, Medal given to registered players
- C. Third (3rd) place in the playoffs: Trophy presented to the manager, Medal given to registered players
- D. Additional awards may be added at the discretion of the Executive Committee and or the Board of Directors

Protests

- A. Types include misinterpretation of a playing rule (must be made before the next pitch); Illegal substitution or re-entry (must be made while said player is in the game); or Ineligible player (can be made at any time).
- B. The protesting team manager shall immediately notify the plate umpire, a member of the softball leadership, and the opposing manager that the game is being played under protest. The plate umpire will then be required to sign and note the protesting team's scorebook, "protest."
- C. The protesting manager shall prepare a written protest. It shall contain the following: date, time, and place of the game; a copy of the signed score sheet of the game; the rule and section under which the protest is being made; and a brief description of the game situation at the time of the protest, including the names of the players involved.

Gay Softball World Series (GSWS)

- A. Sioux Empire PSA - Softball process
 - a. Until such time as a playoff is needed, those teams wishing to participate will inform the commissioner no later than the deadline created by softball leadership and managers before the start of each season relating to the deadline created by IPS of that current year.
 - b. If there are more teams requesting to participate in a division than are allowed to be sent by Sioux Empire PSA- Softball (SEPSA), a playoff will decide which teams will be allowed to go.

- B. Information regarding IPS member city GSWS expectations can be found in the most up-to-date version of the IPS Governing Manual located on the IPS website.