



# 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. The 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).
- B. Report the results of the manager meetings back to their team.
- C. Collect and submit to the Commissioner: Team Rosters, Player Ratings, Sponsor Contributions, Team Fees, and Player Fees.
- D. Submit a lineup sheet to the umpire and opposing team manager before each game.
- E. Maintain team sportsmanship at all SPESA games and events.
- F. Carry copies of the current USA Softball Participant Manual Official Rules of Softball and Sioux Empire PSA-Softball Athletic Code to every game.
- G. Turn in their team's games' scores immediately following the gameplay each week during the regular season and playoffs. The regular season submitted scorebook score should be the official record of game attendance.
- H. Be responsible for 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 (4<sup>th</sup>) week of the regular season, unless otherwise informed.

- I. Sign the official Umpire scorecard immediately following the completion of each game. The signature of both team managers is required and the signed scorecard will be entered as the official final score of the game

## New Player Recruits

- A. Each year Sioux Empire PSA-Softball shall recruit free agents.
- 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 recruitment director 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 recruitment director, 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. The initial team roster will be determined by the Executive Committee in coordination with team managers from the online registration annually by the March managers meeting.
- C. 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, where then a paper form may be submitted until the third week of the regular season of play.
- D. A player may leave/change teams by: notifying the Executive Committee and the team that they are leaving before the first week of scheduled games. The recruitment director must be notified before the first game in which the transferring player is permitted to play for their new team; they will then notify the team managers of the teams involved if not already done so.

- E. 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 new player recruitment procedures.
- F. A team must have a minimum of seven (7) roster players to borrow two (2) players from another team to field a team for play.
- G. The two (2) borrowed players are only allowed to pitch or catch while on defense.
- H. After the 10-minute grace period, if both teams only have eight (8) players, a double forfeit will be called.
- I. Any team can request its roster from the commissioner.

## Player Ratings

- A. Sioux Empire PSA - Softball will hold an annual ratings clinic for new players to be rated according to NAGAAA ratings of that year. Once a player is rated, they will not have to attend a ratings clinic unless questions or rating criteria changes according to NAGAAA. 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 players skill level changing.
- B. Players will bring any of their personal equipment they have, some equipment can be provided if need be. Players will perform skills asked of them to the best of their ability. Players will attend skills clinics 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. 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 ratings committee each season. The same member may participate multiple years in a row. Members who volunteer for the ratings 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 Sioux Empire PSA - Softball commissioner. Ratings committee members may have to meet during season on a case by case basis, if a players skill level needs to be reevaluated.
- D. Information regarding NAGAAA member city ratings expectation can be found in the most up to date version of the NAGAAA Governing Manual

## 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 in accordance with 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 30<sup>th</sup> 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 (5<sup>th</sup>) 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 "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 (1<sup>st</sup>) 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 (1<sup>st</sup>) base without the batter going to the first (1<sup>st</sup>) 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- Most up to date version of the USA Softball Official Rules
  - a. Any player that is playing in the current game and not a substitute is eligible
- S. A player who throws a bat without malice shall receive a warning; a second (2<sup>nd</sup>) 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 (2<sup>nd</sup>) 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 that 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.

## Ground Rules

- A. Unless noted below, dead ball 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 SEPSA website and social media accounts

## Player Conduct

- A. Alcohol (NO GLASS) is allowed within the guidelines of the Sioux Falls Parks and Rec. Individuals that are intoxicated will be removed from gameplay. Players with multiple offenses may be removed from Sioux Empire PSA-Softball for the remainder of the season.
- B. Players who appear to be under the influence will be removed from gameplay immediately as they endanger themselves and others. Players with multiple offenses may be removed from Sioux Empire PSA-Softball for the remainder of the season.



- C. Violating the Sioux Empire PSA-Softball mission statement or demonstrating unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. Players in violation may face immediate removal from the game and 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 Assistant Commissioner (or the 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, 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 the Executive Committee 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 (1<sup>st</sup>) Playoff game may automatically be counted as a loss at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
- 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 (1<sup>st</sup>) place in the playoffs: Trophy presented to the manager, Medal given to registered players
- B. Second (2<sup>nd</sup>) place in the playoffs: Trophy presented to the manager, Medal given to registered players
- C. Third (3<sup>rd</sup>) 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 Executive Committee, 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.

- D. The written protest shall be filed with the SEPSA Secretary within three days of the game in protest. If the Secretary is on a team involved in the protest, the written protest shall be filed with any other SEPSA officer not involved in the protest. The SEPSA officer receiving the protest shall notify the opposing manager and allow them to comment on the protest.
- E. The Executive Committee shall render judgment on the protest within two weeks of its receipt. If a member of the Executive Committee is on a team directly affected by the protest, the Commissioner shall appoint a manager from another team to replace them.
- F. A copy of the judgment with a brief explanation shall be given to each manager involved in the protested game. This judgment shall also be read into the minutes of the next managers meeting. At this meeting, either team involved in the protest has the right to appeal the ruling to the Executive Committee.

## 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 June 15th of the 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 NAGAAA member city GSWS expectation can be found in the most up to date version of the NAGAAA Governing Manual.