BYLAWS OF THE GREATER ALTOONA GIRLS SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION (GAGSA)

September 2026

Article I. Association

Section 1.01 **NAME.** The name of organization shall be THE GREATER ALTOONA GIRLS SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION, hereafter referred to as the Association.

Section 1.02 **LOCATION.** All girls, regardless of their place of residence or school affiliation, are eligible to play in the league and tournament softball programs. Any girl who wishes to participate in the tournament program will be considered "in-district" if currently enrolled / attending / will be attending a school in the Southeast Polk School District during the year(s) which align with the current tournament softball season. Players who live in the Southeast Polk School District boundaries but attend other educational institutions, to include public, private, virtual, and homeschool programs, will also be considered "in-district" players. Refer to sections 11.04 for additional policies related to player eligibility and placement for players in the tournament softball program.

The registered office of the Association is located at Sam Wise Youth Complex, Altoona, P.O. Box 131, Altoona, IA 50009.

Section 1.03 **PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE.** The business, purpose, and objective of the Association shall not be for profit but shall be as follows:

- To provide a recreational softball association for girls aged 5 through 16, following the Rules and Regulations of the current governing body.
  To provide a competitive option via the tournament program for girls ages 6 through 15, following the Rules and Regulations of the current governing body.
- To provide a high level of sportsmanship among participants, parents, coaches, and spectators.
- To develop physical and good moral character.
- To provide facilities and equipment necessary for the safe operation of said Association.
- To provide an opportunity for each girl to participate regardless of race, religion, or physical or mental abilities.
- To establish and maintain rules and regulations providing equal fairness to all participants.

Section 1.04 **MISSION STATEMENT**

- Empowering young minds through the game of softball, our organization is dedicated to fostering teamwork, leadership, and personal growth. We strive to create a supportive and inclusive environment where youth can develop both athletically and personally. Through the values of sportsmanship, dedication, and community, we aim to instill a lifelong love for the game while nurturing the character and potential of each player on and off the field. Together, we build a foundation for success and resilience that extends beyond the diamond.

Article II. MEMBERSHIP

Section 2.01 **GENERAL MEMBERSHIP.** All Executive Officers, General Board members, coaches, players and parents/guardians of players are all considered members of the Association. Active participation in meetings and Association discussions is encouraged. Members are bound by these bylaws and by the playing rules of the Association, and are expected to conduct their actions accordingly in all matters pertaining to the Association.

Section 2.02 **VOTING.** Any adult (18 and older) who is an Association member shall have one (1) vote in the election process for positions of Executive Board

Section 2.03 **TERMINATION.** Violation of the bylaws or the rules of the Association may result in disciplinary action as decided by a majority vote of a quorum of the Executive Officers at any regular or special Association meeting. Repeated violation of good sportsmanship or Association rule violations or GAGSA By-Laws or misconduct on the part of a member will result in discipline, including, but not limited to suspension or dismissal from the Association.

Section 2.04 **REPLACEMENT.** Replacement of any head coach or assistant coach must be approved by a majority vote of a quorum of the Executive Officers.

Section 2.05 **COMMITTEES**. Committees shall be appointed by the Association President and/or Executive Officers as required to conduct business of the Association. Committees can consist of any Association Member, Executive, and General Board Members, however, each committee must contain at least one Executive Officer or General Board Member.

Section 2.06 **AMENDMENTS**. These bylaws shall be adopted or amended by a majority vote of a quorum of the Executive Officers of the Association at any regular or special meeting. The Association President shall maintain a history of the amendments to the bylaws in the President's notebook.

Article III. EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AND GENERAL BOARD MEMBERS

Section 3.01 **BOARD MEMBERS.** Board membership should not exceed 16 voting members. Any changes to this limitation shall require a majority vote by the currently seated General Board. The positions of office for this Association shall include:

Association President
Association Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
*Assistant Treasurer
League Director
*****Assistant League Director(s) [Max of 3]
Tournement Director
*****Assistant Tournement Directos [Max of 2
Complex Scheduler & Umpire
Representative
Equipment Manager
*****Assistant Equipment Manager
Fields Director
*****Assistant Fields Managers [Max of 2]
Projects Manager
*****Assistant Projects Manager
Sponsorship/Grants Manager
Website/Social Manager
Volunteer Coordinator
Coach & Player Development Coordinator

*** non-voting positions**

Section 3.02 **TERM.** The term of office shall be one (1) year (September 1st through August 31st). It is not a requirement to have a daughter playing in an association program to be an Executive Officer or member of the Board.

Section 3.03 **EXECUTIVE BOARD.** The Executive Officers of this Association shall be elected by ballot vote. The positions of the Executive Office shall include Association President, Association Vice-President, Fields Director, League Director, Tournament Director, Secretary, and Treasurer. Any interested party can be placed on the ballot by declaring their interest in serving on the Executive Board.

The purpose of the Executive Board is to set direction for the organization. The entire Board (voting members) must vote on all recommendations/proposals before they can be approved (majority vote is required). Regular and recurring normal operating transactions do not require approval of the Board.

Executive Board members shall disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest that could affect, or appear to affect, the interests of the organization. Such conflicts may include, but are not limited to, affiliations with other youth softball organizations, employment by or financial relationships with a current vendor, or any other relationship that could influence decision-making on behalf of the organization. The existence of a conflict of interest shall not automatically disqualify an individual from serving in an Executive Board position. However, the Executive Board may implement additional safeguards, including disclosure requirements, recusal from discussions or voting, or other measures deemed necessary to protect the integrity and best interests of the organization.

Section 3.04 **GENERAL BOARD**: It shall be the duty of the Executive Officers to appoint qualified people for other positions as necessary for the operation of the Association. The General Board positions consists of the remaining offices as outlined in Section 3.01. Each General Board member must be approved by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

Section 3.05 The duties of the Officers shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(a) **Association President.**
(i) Serve as the chief officer of the Executive Board
(ii)Coordinate committees and the Executive Board members
(iii) Ensure Board decisions are carried out and/or completed
(iv) Chair external functions, appoint special committees, and appoint members to standing committees with the help of the chairman of the standing committee
(v) Coordinate corporate filings with Secretary
(vi) Represent the Association at outside meetings
(vii) Direct and oversee Association Board meetings.
(viii) Obtain Association and Governing Body insurance coverage
(ix) Negotiate and sign all Association contracts
(x) Assists with Registration
(xi) Assists with Coaches Draft & Draw
(xii) Conduct closing ceremonies
(xiii) Serve as liaison to the City Parks Board
(xiv) Oversee concessions operations

(b) **Association Vice-President.**
(i) Serve as Chief Officer of the Executive Board when the Association President is absent or unavailable.
(ii) Chair Meetings in the absence of the President
(iii) Assume Leadership of the Executive Board if the President leaves the association or is removed.
(iv) Assist or lead special projects or committees as needed.
(vi) Act as a liaison to League Presidents and contact person for any specific League related issues.

(c) **Secretary.**
(i) Shall take notes and prepare the minutes of each meeting
(ii) Carry out official correspondence as directed
(iii) Preside over the Executive Board meeting in the absence of the President and Vice-President
(iv) Coordinate corporate filings with President
(v) Assists with Closing Day Ceremonies
(v) Work in conjunction with the President on proposed bylaw changes or amendments, and assure that the Association bylaws are upheld, followed, and updated as needed.
(vi) Assist Website Manger with updating information on website.

(d) **Treasurer.**

(i) Receive all monies or other property paid or donated to the Association
(ii) Disburse funds of the Association as directed by the Board
(iii) Maintain books of account for league and tournament expenses
(iv) Prepare monthly expenditure and budget reports
(v) Reconcile all Association bank accounts
(vi) Maintain all applicable licenses (Board of Health, State licenses etc.)
(vi) Maintain source documentation of payments and receipts
(vii) Track obligations by the Association approved budget line items
(viii) Collect all mail from the Association post office box
(ix) Arrange seasonal phone and internet service as necessary
(x) Prepare and file state and federal income tax returns in coordination with an accountant as selected by the Board.

(e) **Assistant Treasurer**

(i) Assist Treasurer with duties in Section 3.05(d)

(f) **League Director.**

(i) Coordinate league registration
(ii) Organize the Coaches' Draft/Draw
(iii) Prepare the master schedules for practices and games.
(iv) Maintain/Update Coaches Handbook.
(v) Collect uniform information from coaches after registration and order uniforms from suitable vendor
(vi) Coordinate league pictures
(vii) Arrange for the purchase of league trophies and awards
(vii) Coordinate and order all league supplies that are needed for the season in cooperation with the Equipment Manager.

(g) **Assistant League Director.**

(i) Assist League Director with duties in Section 3.05(f)

(h) **Tournament Director.**

The tournament director is responsible to oversee and guide the tournament program. These duties include the following:
(i) Coordinate tryouts, and help with the selection of the teams as directed by the Executive Board and the high school coaching staff
(ii) Organize the selection process of the tournament coaches as directed by the Executive Board and the high school coaching staff.
(iii) Help guide the tournament coaches throughout the year and the tournament season
(iv) Coordinate the selecting and ordering of tournament team uniforms
(v) Coordinate all tournaments that are hosted at GAGSA complex sponsored by the tournament program.
(vi) Coordinate and order all tournament supplies that are needed for the season in cooperation with the Equipment Manager. This will include but not limited to, coach's shirts, score books, balls, playing equipment and all other items necessary for the season.
(vii) Facilitate all parent information meetings in cooperation with the high school coaching staff.
(viii) Maintain budgets of all tournament teams and assist with payments or reimbursements.
(ix) Maintain and enforce all tournament guidelines as outlined in Article XI.

(i) **Assistant Tournament Director(s):**

(i) Assist Tournament Director with duties in Section 3.05(h)

(j) **Equipment Manager.**
(i) Make necessary equipment purchases
(ii) Keep accurate inventory records of all Association equipment and supplies
(iii) Disburse equipment to and collect equipment from coaches
(iv) Monitor locks and combinations on Association buildings and reset annually after new members are inducted.

(k) **Assistant Equipment Manager(s).**
(i) Assist Equipment Manager with duties in Section 3.05(j)

(l) **Fields Director.**
(i) Prepare and maintain all diamonds, pitching areas, batting cages, warm-up areas, etc.
(ii) Obtain all bids for Seasonal Mowing and Field care with Mowing/lawn care contractor, and present to Board for approval.
(iii) Obtain necessary assistance to keep fields maintained.
(iv) Coordinate with lawn care/mowing contractor to assure requirements are met for upkeep of fields.
(v) Ensure that their assigned fields are maintained and in game-ready condition including but not limited to: Dragging, raking, filling holes and low spots, weeding infield, etc. This should be in cooperation with any individual contracted by the Board.
(vi) Communicate field conditions as they change to League Presidents, Scheduler, and Website Manager.
(vii) Order all necessary field supplies including chalk, field dry, bases, etc.
(viii) Responsible for upkeep of batting cages, scheduled maintenance of machinery and equipment (including but not limited to mowers, drag tractors and attachments)

(m) **Assistant Fields Manager(s).**
(i) Assist Fields Director with duties in Section 3.05(l)

(n) **Complex Scheduler**
(i) Create tournament practice schedule, with the guidance of tournament directors, and assure it is posted and updated weekly during the season
(ii) Coordinate field schedule
(iii) Assist league director in scheduling of league games and practices
(iv) Ensure league rules for practice scheduling by coaches are being followed
(v) Coordinate with league and tournament director for any reschedules

(o) **Umpire Representative.**
(i) Secure the services of current Governing Body certified umpires for league play
(ii) Schedule umpires for all regular and make-up games
(iii) Coordinate with league presidents to obtain umpires for rescheduled games

(p) **Sponsorship Manager(s).**
(i) Solicit fundraising proposals and coordinate presentations to the Board as necessary.
(ii) Coordinate and supervise all fundraising activities through the utilization of Board members, coaches and team parents.
(iii) Coordinate and solicit area businesses for sponsorship (i.e. banners and website advertisement.) and coordinate presentations to the Board as necessary.
(iv) Design the sponsorship banners and coordinated with Treasurer to purchase banners.
(v) Work with Fields Director to put up and take down sponsor banners.

(q) **Projects Manager.**

(i) Responsible for coordination and completion of all Board approved projects in a timely manner, including but not limited to:

- Upkeep and repair of scoreboards
- Winterization and upkeep of concession stand
- Order and cancel portable toilets each season

(ii) Responsible for miscellaneous structural and safety repairs to complex buildings, fences, etc.
(iii) Responsible for obtaining bids and permits for any proposed project when needed.
(iv) Work with and assist Equipment Manager where needed with regard to equipment needs and repair.
(v) Assist the Association President as liaison to the City Parks Director

(r) **Assistant Projects Managers(s).**

(i) Assist Project Manager with duties in Section 3.05(q)

(s) **Concessions Manager.**

(i) Maintain all applicable licenses with Treasurer (Board of Health, State licenses etc.)
(ii) Supervise and coordinate ALL concessions duties and schedules with the volunteer coordinator and assign areas of responsibility to ensure smooth operation. Schedule includes opening/closing the concession stand and making the concession deposit
(iii) Schedule and provide for the upkeep and maintenance of the concession stand
(iv) Administer, with guidelines from the Board, in a financially sound manner, all Association concessions and sales activities
(v) Order and stock all concession provisions for league AND Tournament events.
(vi) Coordinate open/close cleaning and winterization of concession stand with the Project Manager**.**

(t)

Communications Manager

(i) Maintain the Association Website (www.gagsa.org)
(ii) Facilitate changes/updates/notices as presented by Members and/or Board
(iii) Manage association social media accounts
(iv) Implement marketing and communication for tournament and league programs
(v) Actively promote tournament and league programs across social media platforms

(u) **Grants Coordinator**

(i) Seek out and research any applicable grants to offset costs of maintaining Association.
(ii) Coordinate and prepare all grant applications and follow up as needed.
(iii) Communicate regularly with Board as to progress and outcome of grant applications.

(v) **Volunteer Coordinators**

(i) Ensure that a schedule is created to properly staff concession stand and field crew for all league and tournament events
(ii) Maintain a schedule that best matches the needs of the facility.
(iii) Notify volunteers of upcoming shifts and fill any open positions

(w) **Coach & Player Development Coordinator**

(i) Work with League and Tournament coaches to identify areas where additional player and coach development is needed.

(ii) Coordinate with the League Director and Tournament Director to organize player and coaching clinics for League and Tournament participants.
(iii) Assist coaches with resources to support player development, including practice plans, drills, clinic opportunities, and other instructional materials.
(iv) Coordinate with Southeast Polk High School softball coaches, outside trainers, and other qualified instructors to provide development opportunities for GAGSA players and coaches.
(v) Help promote player development both in-season and offseason, including physical skills, softball knowledge, confidence, teamwork, and mental approach.
(vi) Assist with pitching and catching development opportunities throughout the Association.
(vii) Perform other development-related duties as directed by the Board.

Section 3.06 **ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS.** The members of the Executive Board shall be elected annually (in August). Election shall be by electronic ballot. A majority of the votes cast shall elect. Any Member age 18 or older may vote on the election of officers. The members of the General Board must be approved by a majority vote of the Executive Board in August.

Section 3.07 **GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION.** Residents of the Southeast Polk Community School District will represent a minimum 80% of the executive board.

Section 3.08 **VACANCIES**. Vacancies occurring in elected offices before the expiration of that term shall be appointed by the Association President with the approval of a majority vote of a quorum of the General Board. Any vacancies left after the annual election shall be appointed in the same manner.

Section 3.09 **REMOVAL OF BOARD MEMBER.** A Board member shall be removed from office for good cause by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

Section 3.10 **MEETINGS**

NOTICE.
At least seven (7) days in advance of each Board meeting, notice of the meeting shall be given to the members in such a form as authorized by the Board. Regular meeting will be designated by the Executive Board and will be open to all interested persons.

SPECIAL MEETINGS.
The Association President or a member of the Executive Board at their discretion may call special meetings. Upon written request of at least ten (10) Association members, the President shall call a specific meeting to consider a specific request. No more than one special meeting shall be called in any given month, however multiple requests can be considered in one special meeting.

Section 3.11 **TRANSACTION OF BUSINESS.** A majority of Voting Board members must be present at a meeting to constitute a quorum for the purpose of transacting business. Any member may submit an absentee Proxy by notifying the Association President of the same prior to the meeting. Meetings pertaining to the constitution and by-laws must have majority vote of a quorum of the Board in attendance. All meetings will be conducted according to Roberts Rules of Order.

Article IV. FINANCES

Section 4.01 **REGISTRATION FEES.** Registration fees will be determined by the General Board in a meeting before each year's League registration. Fees will be determined no later than November for the following year. Fees for tournament teams will be determined by the Tournament Committee in a meeting in June or July before tryouts are conducted. Any change in tournament fees must be approved by the Executive Board.

Section 4.02 **EQUALITY/APPROVALS.** The General Board shall decide all matters pertaining to the finances. No individual team, league or tournament, shall have an advantage over any other team in regard to expenditures. Any non-budgeted expense must be approved by the General Board.

Section 4.03 **AUTHORIZATION.** The Treasurer and President have the authority to issue checks without the approval of the Board to pay bills for the Association, that he/she has the authority to pay. All bills except Field Crew and Concessions costs will be paid from association checking account.

The following Executive Board Members are authorized to sign on the general operating account:

- Association President
- Treasurer

The following Board members are authorized to sign on the Concessions account:

- Treasurer
- Concessions Manager
- Association President

Association funds in excess of the immediate need should be kept in an Association savings account. Any Board Member that has been given a budget is authorized to carry-out the expenditures as directed by their budget. The Board Member must be in consultation in the Treasurer as it relates to these expenditures.

Section 4.04 **FEDERAL AND STATE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**. The Treasurer and President shall be responsible for annually filing all required Federal and State information returns and all corporate documentation.

Section 4.05 **AUDIT.** After the completion of fiscal year activities and no less than bi-annually, the Association President and Treasurer may need to arrange for a public accountant to audit the financial records of the Association. This may also be requested by any member of the Executive Board. The Executive Board will act upon comments and recommendations resulting from this review in a timely manner**.**

Section 4.06 **FISCAL YEAR.** The fiscal year for the Association shall be from September 1 to August 31.

(i.) Approved funds must be spent prior to end of fiscal year

(ii.) Projects/Spending approved in the prior fiscal year must be resubmitted in the current fiscal year

Section 4.07 **CONFLICT OF INTEREST.** The Association may not knowingly enter into an agreement to purchase goods or services from any source that may constitute a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest is defined as purchases from any business or organization where a member of the Board may receive some direct financial benefit. Exceptions may be granted at a Board meeting by a majority vote of the General Board.

Section 4.08 **BUDGET.** The Association will operate on a budget that is approved by majority vote of a quorum of the complete Board membership. Budget must be approved no later than October 31. The following Officers must provide their proposed budgets to the Treasurer by the end of September: League Director, Tournament Director, Concessions Manager, Fields Director, Equipment Manager and Project Manager.

Article V. REGISTRATION.

Section 5.01 **REGISTRATION FEES.** In order for a girl to participate in the Association league and tournament play, she must have paid a registration fee as set by the Board on or before all dates as established by the Board unless an exception is granted by the majority of the General Board Reasonable accommodations shall be made for families that may be tardy.

Section 5.02 **FORMS.** In order for a player to participate in Association league and tournament play, the player must have completed a registration form and the player's parent/guardian must have completed and submitted the approved Liability Waiver form and Code of Conduct form.

Section 5.03 **LATE REGISTRATION.** Any girl who fails to register before the deadline may be placed on a waiting list to be accepted on a team when and if an opening occurs. The League Director, shall monitor the placement of players on teams until the maximum is reached. Players will be placed on teams in order of the team's status at the draft/draw.

Section 5.04 **REFUNDS.** There shall be no refund of fees for a player who has been assigned to a team via the draft/draw. In the event of extenuating circumstances or family relocation outside the boundaries of The Association, a majority vote of a quorum of the Executive Board MAY grant a partial refund, but this may only occur up to the time the first game is played. After league play begins, NO REFUNDS WILL BE ISSUED

Section 5.05 **SCHOLARSHIPS.** Relief from registration fees can be requested via a written request documenting financial hardship that is presented to the Executive Board for review.

Article VI. LOCAL RULES AND POLICIES.

Section 6.01 **RULES AND REGULATIONS**. All rules and regulations will be based on current USSSA Governing Body and local rules. The League Presidents may present a change in rules to the Board for approval, and if approved the rule amendment must be made available to all Members and umpires.

Section 6.02 **AGE DIVISIONS.**
Age divisions will be in accordance with the USSSA Governing Body.

Parents and/or guardians may request that their child play up in the next league due to their skill level and softball abilities. Requests must be made at the time of registration. The Executive Board reserves the right to deny a request due to general safety concerns
Player movement to a different league after the Draft/Draw is at the discretion of the Executive Board after presentation of exigent circumstances.

Section 6.03 **COACHES HANDBOOK.** Rules governing play in each league division are set forth in the Coaches Handbook.

Section 6.04 **TEAMS PER LEAGUE.** The number of teams per league shall be determined by the League Director prior to the Draft/Draw.

Section 6.05 **PLAYERS PER TEAM.** The maximum number of players per team shall be established by the League Director.

Section 6.06 **SCHEDULE.** The Executive Board will determine, prior to the start of the season, the number of games to be played in each league division and when they will be played.

Section 6.07 **UMPIRES.** All umpires should be familiar with the local rules and revisions as provided by the Umpire Representative/Scheduler. Games will not be postponed because there are no umpires, Association volunteers will be utilized.

Section 6.08 **CODE OF CONDUCT.** All registrants will be required to accept the GAGSA Code of Conduct on behalf of their player and spectators upon registration. All players, guardians, and spectators are required to adhere to the Code of Conduct.

Section 6.09 **SAFESPORT**. **The association will follow the SafeSport guideline**s and process **set forth by** The U.S. Center for SafeSport.

- SafeSport Act or, more formally, "The Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and SafeSport Authorization Act of 2017" (S. 534). The overriding goal of this federal legislation, which was signed into law on Feb. 14, 2018, is the protection of young athletes.
- The SafeSport Act requires amateur athletics governing bodies to report their awareness of any case of abuse immediately to local or federal law enforcement or to a child-welfare agency designated by the U.S. Justice Department.
- Though GAGSA is not a governing body, the implications of the SafeSport Act extend to our organizations and its members.
- **Under SafeSport reporting requirements** association executive board members, coaches, as well as association members in a position of authority, must report incidents of (a) sexual misconduct, (b) misconduct that is reasonably related to the underlying allegation of sexual misconduct, or (c) retaliation related to an allegation of sexual misconduct. A report must be made within 24 hours of learning about the alleged misconduct. The report should be made via the webpage www.uscenterforsafesport.org. Individuals filing a report should not investigate or attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of allegations involving sexual misconduct.

It is highly encouraged for all individuals in positions of authority within the association, including board members and coaches complete SafeSport training. This training is designed to help these individuals understand their responsibilities in maintaining a safe environment, recognizing signs of abuse, and taking appropriate actions when necessary.

Article VII. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Section 7.01 **FILING.** Charges must be filed in writing, signed by the complainant and presented to the League Director within 24 hours of the alleged violations. A complainant is defined as a player, parent, coach, umpire, board member, or member of the league.

Section 7.02 **PROCESSING.** The charges will be referred to by the League Director within 24 hours of receipt, to the Executive Board. The Executive Board will review the charges, evaluate the issue and reach a decision within 72 hours of receipt of the charges. If additional information is needed, the executive board may contact the involved parties. A minimum of two executive board members will be present for all discussions. If the issue involves a discipline issue, then by a majority vote may discipline the player or coach or dismiss the charge. Expulsion will be final.

Section 7.03 **CONFLICTS.** No Executive Board member involved with the player or team involved will have a vote in the final decision. Involvement is defined as being related to the coach or assistant coach(s) or team members of the party concerned.

Article VIII. LEAGUE COACHES

Section 8.01 **SELECTION.** While all coaching positions in the Association are volunteer-oriented, the Association reserves the right to select or reject coaches. Persons requesting a coaching position may be required to provide clearances/authorizations for background checks as requested by the Association. In the event there are more coaching position requests than available positions, the League Director will make the final selection. Only approved team staff will be permitted to interact with players and other team staff. This interaction includes all team activities. Only the approved team head coach will be permitted to interact with the umpire.

Section 8.02 **PERFORMANCE.** The Association provides a recreational sports activity for the players, and while competition is a healthy thing overly aggressive behavior is intolerable. We must provide a positive character-building experience for all players.

COACHES SHOULD:

- Honor the game by encouraging teamwork and good sportsmanship.
- Show respect for the players, opponents, fans and officials.
- Use positive motivation and recognition to support all players.
- Place the emotional and physical well-being of the players ahead of a personal desire to win.
- Treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for the same age group.
- Do one's best to provide a safe playing situation for the players.
- Coaches will represent the association in a way that does not cause harm or damage the reputation of the association.
- Coaches will not use social media or other forms of electronic communication in a way that may be harmful or damaging to the reputation of the association.
- Lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all players.
- Provide a sports environment that is free of drugs, tobacco and alcohol, and refrain from their use at the youth complex.
- Be knowledgeable of local rules and teach them to the players.
- Use those coaching techniques appropriate for each of the skills taught to the players.
- Remember that one is a youth sports coach, and that the game is for children and not adults.
- Ensure only team staff approved by the association are assisting with team events including practices and games. Non-Team staff will be limited to the areas outside of the dugout and field.
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Article IX. DRAFT/DRAW & LEAGUE TEAM SELECTION.

Section 9.01 **DRAFT.** League divisions shall conduct team selection by a draft of all eligible players who have registered by the draft date and who are listed on the draft list as provided by the League Director.

Section 9.03 **PARTICIPATING COACHES.** At the time of the draft, no more than two (2) persons will represent each team. Each team can only have one Assistant Coach until after the draft has been completed and teams have been formed. After teams have been formed, 6U & 8U teams will be limited to 1 head coach, 2 assistant coaches, 1 team parent. 10U, 12U, 14U, 16U teams will be limited to 1 head coach, 1 assistant coach, 1 team parent.

Section 9.04 **TEAMS.** There will be no returning teams. New teams will be drafted every year from current registrants.

Section 9.05 **PROTECTED PLAYERS.** The daughter(s) of the coach and one (1) assistant coach shall be protected. In the event the coach or assistant coach does not have a daughter playing, they may elect to protect 1 extended family member as if she were a daughter. This player MUST BE related to that coach.

Section 9.06 **ANNOUNCED PLAYERS.** All players who participated on an Association tournament team shall be announced to all coaches within the league prior to the commencement of the draft to ensure that all coaches are aware of skill levels of these players. All players who have known pitching and/or catching experience shall be announced to all coaches within the league prior to the commencement of the draft to ensure that all coaches are aware of abilities of these players.

Section 9.07 **SISTERS.** All sisters in the same league will be placed on the same team unless specifically requested otherwise by the parent/guardian at registration.

Section 9.08 **DRAFT/DRAWORDER.** The teams shall draw numbers to determine draft/draw order. The draft/draw order will begin from first to last, last to first, first to last, etc. until all players are selected.

Section 9.09 **LATE REGISTRANTS.** Late registrants that have been placed on a waiting list shall be placed on the next team, as determined by draft/draw order that does not have the maximum number of players.

Section 9.10 **TEAM SELECTION (FALL LEAGUE).** The league director will assign teams for the fall league season. This will include selection of coaches, assistant coaches, and players.

Article X. EQUIPMENT.

Section 10.01 **PLAYER EQUIPMENT.** When not in use during the regular practice and playing season, the playing equipment will be stored in the upper shed at the complex. Inventory, maintenance and disbursement of equipment is the responsibility of the Equipment Manager. The Association will provide balls, catching equipment, and score books for each team to share. Each player will receive a team jersey.

Section 10.02 **DISTRIBUTION/COLLECTION.** The Equipment Manager shall determine dates to distribute and collect the equipment to league coaches. Coaches, or their suitable representative, shall attend equipment handout to ensure proper transfer of equipment.

Section 10.03 **MAINTENANCE.** All equipment will be handled, used and stored in an appropriate manner. Any mistreatment of equipment by an Association member may result in disciplinary action being taken by the Association.

Section 10.04 **INVENTORY.** The Equipment Manager is to keep a record of all playing and field maintenance equipment owned by the Association.

Article XI. TOURNAMENT TEAMS.

Section 11.01 **PURPOSE.** The tournament program is designed to offer players the opportunity to experience softball on a more competitive level against teams across the state and Midwest region throughout the season.

Section 11.02 **COMMITMENT.** Participation in the tournament team program requires commitment to the part of the coaches, players and parents. The Tournament Director, high school coaching staff, and coaches shall discuss this commitment for practices, games and tournaments with the parents at the Parents' Meeting. The tournament season runs September 1 thru July 31, Coaches will, with the feedback of parents participate in fall tournaments.

Section 11.03 **QUITTING A TEAM.** Any player that leaves a team once they are selected for reasons other than injury, illness or relocation will not receive a refund of their fees.

Section 11.04 **ELIGIBILITY.** Any girl is eligible to participate in the SEP Rams Softball Club tournament programs. For the purposes of player eligibility and team selection: Any player who meets the criteria of section 1.02 will be considered an "in-district" player. Any player who previously participated in the tournament softball programs provided by the association will be considered an "in-district" player, so long as their participation has remained continuous and without interruption.

Any player who is an immediate family member of player that meetings the criteria of section 1.02 or 11.04 may be considered an "in-district" player at the discretion of the SEP Rams Softball Club Tournament Selection Committee. Any player that does not meet the criterion of sections 1.02 or 11.04 will be considered an "out of district player". The preceding does not apply to the Select Program introduced in section 11.08.

Players entering 9th grade or above are not eligible to participate in the program and should not register for or attend tryouts, even if they otherwise meet the program's age-eligibility requirements.

The Association, at their discretion, will allow for self-formed high school teams to be registered under the GAGSA organization. These teams must be made up of high school aged players (9^{th}-12^{th}) with a minimum of 63% of the players being from the SEP district. These teams will be independent of the SEP RAMS Softball Club program and will adopt a team name that is unique from the SEP RAMS Softball Club team naming. (example: RAMS 16U Coach Name). The teams will be self-formed and self-managed. Coaches and players must be in good standing with the association to be considered for inclusion. Teams will play under the GAGSA organization for the purposes of team administration.

Section 11.05 **AGE DIVISIONS.** The Association shall field at least one (1) team in the 8U, 9U, 10U, 11U, 12U, 13U and 14Uage divisions provided there is enough interest to field quality teams. When there is enough interest to field multiple teams in an age division, the Association will field additional teams in order to promote the development of the players and the betterment of the program. The Association may, at its discretion, move players to higher or lower age divisions if the evaluation or program numbers call for it.

TRYOUTS. Tryout and assessment format will be determined by the GAGSA tournament committee. All tryouts will be closed to the public. Try-out dates will be made available to the public no later than February 1. High school coaching staff and select college and high school players will be completing the player evaluations during the tryouts.

The following will be contemplated in the evaluation of tryouts:

Hitting	Infield	Outfield	Running
Mechanics	Form	Catch	Timed Speed
Power	Accuracy	Angle	
Contact	Strength	Accuracy	
Bunting	Reaction	Strength	
	Angle	Reaction	

Players will not be allowed to try out for multiple age groups but should register for the highest age division in which they desire to compete. The player will be assigned to the team/age division that is best for our program based on skills, coach evaluations, and available stats.

Section 11.06 **SELECTION OF TEAMS.** Players that are considered "in-district" as outlined in sections 1.02 and 11.04 will be given priority over out-of-district players when being considered for placement at the same level of play (A, B, or C), provided that:

- The player has been evaluated for placement at that level (see 11.05 & 11.06)
- The Tournament Selection Committee determines that the placement does not present a safety concern
- The Tournament Selection Committee determines that the player possesses the skills necessary to compete on a tournament team.

Out-of-district players may be placed on a team at the discretion of the SEP Rams Softball Club Tournament Selection Committee.

The tryout scores, coaching evaluations, and in-season stats from the previous season, if available, will be used to determine a player's classification (A, B, C). The tournament selection committee will use players' age, classification, and desired age division to determine team placement. It is imperative that a program of our caliber has skilled pitchers and catchers throughout each of its teams. For 10U-14U, our preferred outcome is that each team has 3 Pitchers and 2 Catchers. Each player will be rated on both overall ability and pitcher/catcher ability. If a situation arises where a player's general rank is significantly higher than their pitcher/catcher rank, we will have a discussion with that family about the recommended outcome and their preference. While it will ultimately be the head coach's decision on positions played throughout the season, a player who does not declare and try out as a pitcher/catcher should not expect to play these positions. In other words, players expecting to pitch and catch during the tournament season need to "tryout" to pitch or catch. Teams will be selected by the SEP Rams Softball Club tournament selection committee comprised of the high school coaching staff and the Association's Executive Board. The selection meeting shall take place as soon as possible following the last tryout.

Section 11.07 **SELECTION OF COACHES.** The SEP Rams Softball Club tournament selection committee will be responsible for the placement of all tournament program head, assistant coaches, and staff. Head coaches will be announced contingent upon the successful completion of the USSSA background check. All assistant coaches, practice coaches, and other staff must be approved by the SEP Rams Softball club selection committee and Tournament Director contingent upon the successful completion of the GAGSA-issued background check. Only approved team staff will be permitted to interact with players and other team staff. This interaction includes all team activities. Only the approved team head coach will be permitted to interact with the umpire and tournament site directors.

Section 11.08 **SELECT PROGRAM.** The Association may, at its discretion, field Select tournament teams to participate in the association tournament program. Select teams will follow the guidelines set forth in the accompanying Select Program Handbook. Select team player eligibility, tryouts, and team selection may be independent of the policies outlined in Sections 11.04, 11.05, and 11.06 of the association bylaws.

Section 11.09 **DISPUTES.** Any dispute regarding the formation of teams or any other Association tournament team policy that may arise during the playing season or off-season shall be to the Tournament Director for resolution. The Tournament Director shall be as transparent as possible when responding to disputes without compromising the integrity of specific tryout scores of other participants, statistics of other participants, or sharing coach's evaluations of participants.
The Tournament Director may request disciplinary action, including but not limited to removal of

a coach or player from a tournament team to the Executive Board.
Appeal of the Tournament Director's decision can be made to the Executive Board. The decision of the Executive Board shall be final.

Section 11.10 **COST.** Cost will be determined yearly by the Tournament Committee in June or July. There will be a tournament participation fee along with a non-refundable tryout fee. The tournament participation fee includes the cost of the uniform for each player and entry fees in an amount as determined by the Board. There may be additional costs as determined by individual teams (i.e.: winter practice facility, winter/spring leagues, additional tournaments, matching equipment, etc.). These costs are responsibility of the team and will be covered by parents, fundraisers or sponsorships; the Association is not responsible for any of these additional costs.

Section 11.11 **FUNDRAISING AND DONATIONS.**
Individual teams that conduct fundraising activities or receive donations may apply those funds directly toward current team expenses. GAGSA will not retain any portion of the net proceeds.
Prior to conducting any fundraising activity or accepting donations, the team's coach must submit a fundraising request using the form provided by GAGSA. Requests will be reviewed by a committee consisting of the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Tournament Director, and Assistant Tournament Directors to ensure compliance with GAGSA policies and guidelines.

If a fundraising organization, sponsor, or donor requests that funds be distributed directly to GAGSA via ACH, check, cash, or other payment methods, GAGSA will receive, record, and maintain those funds within the team's budget. Funds will be administered in accordance with the approved fundraising request.
Team funds will generally be distributed through reimbursement of actual team expenses. Reimbursement requests must be accompanied by an itemized receipt or invoice documenting the expense. Whenever practical, team expenses should be paid directly by GAGSA rather than reimbursed.
Any team fundraising or donation funds remaining undistributed as of August 10 of the current season may be evenly allocated as account credits to the GAGSA accounts of players currently rostered on that team or redirected to other teams/players/programs within the GAGSA organization at the donor's request.

Prohibited activities include:

- Team apparel sales
- Soliciting donations from current or prospective GAGSA sponsors
- Gambling, raffles, or games

Section 11.12 **EQUIPMENT.** The Association shall provide equipment for each tournament team that is determined as necessary for the development and support of the participants. All equipment provided to tournament coaches shall be returned at the end of each season. The association will not be responsible for lost or damaged equipment which has been purchased by a coach for use over the course of the season.

Section 11.13 **TOURNAMENT TEAM SCHEDULING.** Association league play shall take precedence over tournament team scheduling prior to end of League season to ensure that league play can be completed in a timely manner.

Section 11.14 **GUEST PLAYER USE.** Substitute players may be used by teams as the need arises. Coaches have discretion in finding a substitute no matter the school district of the player based on their needs, however in-district qualified substitutes are encouraged. If a permanent substitute is needed to fill a roster for any team, an out-of-district player may be used with permission from the SEP Rams Softball Club tournament selection committee.

Section 11.15 **COACH CONDUCT.** While the Board does not wish to interfere with a coach's ability to

coach his/her players the way they feel is necessary and prudent, all coaches within the tournament program are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner, and in a way that reflects positively upon our program.

In addition to the expectations outlined in Section 8.02, the following apply:

- Coaches shall not use profanity toward players, umpires, fans, or opposing players, coaches and fans while on the field of play at any time. Profanity toward players at any time will not be tolerated.
- Opposing players and coaches should be treated in a respectful manner at all times. This includes no heckling, derogatory comments, or "trash" talking about or toward an opposing player or coach. We understand that there may be times when an opposing team instigates an incident. We ask our coaches, parents, and players to restrain themselves and not fall to a substandard course of behavior in retaliation. Be the bigger person.
- Coaches will represent the association in a way that does not cause harm or damage the reputation of the association.
- Coaches will not use social media or other forms of electronic communication in a way that may be harmful or damaging to the reputation of the association.
- Coaches will ensure only team staff approved by the association are assisting with team events including practices and games. Non-Team staff will be limited to areas outside of the dugout and field.
- All players on the team shall be treated in a respectful manner.
- All coaches are expected to follow proper protocol when seeking to do something which is considered outside of program policy, such as picking up extra players. Coaches are expected to follow the direction and wishes of the Tournament Director and the Board at all times.
- Illegal activity by a coach involving a minor of any kind will not be tolerated. Other illegal activities engaged upon by a coach will be reviewed and assessed by the Board.
- Coaches will be allowed to coach in a manner they feel is appropriate and with little interference from the Board or Tournament Director, as long as the above guidelines are followed. There are incidents that occur during the course of a season involving the coach which some people may feel are inappropriate while others see no problem. Should the actions of a coach cause concern and those concerns are brought to the Tournament Director , the Tournament Director will assess the situation and discuss with the coach in question.
- Our goal is not to restrict coaches from being a coach, but to be there as a support for all in our program and ensure the program remains in good standing with the community.
- In all of the above circumstances, the conduct of the coach will be reviewed by the Board, and disciplinary action, including dismissal of coaching duties may result.
- All coaches will be required to complete a background check and agree to the GAGSA code of conduct.

Section 11.16 **ADDL CODES OF CONDUCT.** By participating in the Tournament Program, all participants, guardians, and spectators are responsible for adhering to the Codes of Conduct of the sanctioning bodies and tournament organizing bodies where the members are participating. The Association will be held responsible for upholding any judgements issued by the sanctioning bodies and tournament organizing bodies for violations of their Codes of Conduct.