

THE ETHICS POLICY OF THE  
SOUTH FLORIDA AMATEUR ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

**SECTION ONE Purpose and Composition of Committee**

**1.01 Purpose of Ethics Policy:** Playing softball and being an SFAAA member is a privilege. As part of that privilege, each member should be responsible for their own ethical behavior and the display of good sportsmanship on or off the fields. To ensure that all members can participate in a competitive yet enjoyable environment, this policy identifies the behavior that has been defined as unacceptable and which may be reported and investigated as an ethics violation. This policy also defines the associated penalties should an offending member be found to be in violation.

**1.02 Composition of Committee**

- A. Composition: Members of the committee shall consist of:
  - 1) 1 Ethics committee chairperson appointed by the Commissioner
  - 2) 6 members appointed by the Ethics Committee Chairperson
- B. Approval of Composition: All selections of the Ethics Committee are subject to Board approval. Should the Board not approve a designated committee member, the Board shall have the authority to provide a replacement should the Committee Chairperson fail to produce a replacement member.
- C. At no time shall more than one (1) member of any particular team serve simultaneously on the committee. In the event that a person shall switch teams and create such a conflict, one of the committee members of said team shall resign. In the event that neither of the members shall resign of their own record, the ethics committee chairperson shall be the arbiter to prevent more than one (1) member of the same team from serving on the committee.

**SECTION TWO SFAAA Functions**

**2.01 SFAAA Functions and Committee Oversight:** An SFAAA function is defined as any of the following, but is not limited to participation or attendance in:

- A. SFAAA league games.
- B. SFAAA approved after game parties.
- C. SFAAA picnics or other social events.
- D. Team or SFAAA fundraisers.
- E. Team or SFAAA practices.
- F. World Series tournaments.
- G. Non-World Series tournaments.
- H. Anything directly pertaining to SFAAA Softball.

**SECTION THREE Ethics Violations**

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- 3.01 Unsportsmanlike Conduct:** Acts of unsportsmanlike conduct may include, but not be limited to:
- A. Unwarranted profanity or profane gestures in any language.
  - B. Unnecessary throwing of objects in anger or retaliation.
  - C. Demeaning or prejudicial comments, or derogatory slurs, directed at SFAAA members, umpires, park staff, or spectators.
  - D. Harassing or intimidating SFAAA members, umpires, park staff, or spectators.
  - E. Intentional acts to inflict harm upon on another player during the course of a game
- 3.02 Physical Fighting:** Defined as unwarranted physical contact, which includes but is not limited to pushing, shoving, or striking another SFAAA member, umpire, park staff, or spectator.
- 3.03 Failure to Return Team Funds or Team Property:** Upon leaving a team, SFAAA members are required to return the items listed below. Failure to do so may result in an automatic suspension from the Association until such time the items are returned.
- A. Team funds: Any monies belonging to the team that were acquired during a team fundraiser, as a gift or donation, or fees paid by the team members.
  - B. Team property: Team property shall include the items below, provided that such items are deemed to be team owned as defined under this subsection and in the bylaws. Team owned items shall be listed in a log containing the signature of each team member acknowledging receipt of the individual items and that they are owned by the team. .
    - 1. Uniforms: For the purpose of the SFAAA Ethics Policy, a team uniform shall consist of a jerseys, jackets, hats, shorts, belts, and pants. If an Association member is in possession of more than one uniform, all uniforms must be returned.
    - 2. Team scorebook.
    - 3. Team equipment such as bats, bat bags, softballs, training guides, or gloves.
    - 4. Any other items not returned including, but not limited to, socks, or shoes will not be subject to an automatic suspension unless a team can provide written documentation with the member's signature acknowledging that they were aware that such items were to be considered as team property.
- 3.04 Misappropriation of Funds or Theft of Property:** Defined as the misuse, embezzlement, or theft of team or SFAAA funds or property by any Association member in accordance with Florida law.
- 3.05 Submission of False Information or Incorrect/Invalid Documents:** defined as the submission of information or document(s) such as rosters, identification information or other documents or information that were intentionally incorrect or not valid.

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**SECTION FOUR Reporting Ethics Violations**

- 4.01 Reporting an Ethics Violation:** Any SFAAA member in good standing can report an ethics violation as defined in this Policy. Reported violations must be done concisely in writing or in an email format. All reports should include whom the complaint is filed against, the location, date and time of the incident, and details of the incident. No verbal report will be accepted. The violation can be reported to the Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner or the Ethics Committee Chairperson.
- 4.02 Timeframe to Report an Ethics Violation:** An Association member must report ethics violations within the following deadlines:
- A. Unsportsmanlike Conduct and Physical Fighting violations: Within 48 hours of the incident.
  - B. Failure to return team property violations: Within 30 calendar days of the member leaving the team
  - C. Failure to return team funds: Within 180 calendar days of the member leaving their team.
  - D. Misappropriation of funds or theft of property: No reporting deadline.
- 4.03 Ethics Incident Report (EIR):** The Ethics Committee Chairperson shall open an Ethics Incident Report within 48 hours of being notified of a reported Ethics Violation and also within that time frame, notify the SFAAA Board members that an EIR has been opened.
- 4.04 Ethics Committee:** The Ethics Committee shall make every effort to review the complaint after taking statements from the accuser and the accused member, and if determined to be a violation as defined by this policy, complete the investigation, including witness statements, in a timely manner not to exceed 21 calendar days. If circumstances prevent the committee from completing their review and sending their recommendation to the SFAAA Commissioner within that time, the Committee Chairperson will notify the involved parties and the SFAAA Commissioner prior to the expiration of the 21st calendar day and seek an extension from the Board.
- 4.05 Conflict of Interest:** It should be noted that no member of the Ethics Committee will be permitted to vote in any offense involving a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest may be present in situations such as, but is not limited to, the following:
- A. The person accused of the ethics violation on the ethics incident report
  - B. The affected player is on the same team
  - C. Romantic partner
  - D. Roommate

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- E. Coworker
  - F. In a dating relationship
  - G. Family member
  - H. Financial connection
  - I. Any other conflict of interest deemed relevant by the Board
- 4.06 Ethics Violation Ruling:** It is the responsibility of the Ethics Committee to check previous infractions to verify the appropriate level of the penalty (if any). The disciplinary action or dismissal of the violation determined by the Ethics Committee will be recorded on the Ethics Incident Report (EIR) and will be communicated to the SFAAA Board.
- 4.07 Final Resolution:** The SFAAA Board shall review any determination for action submitted by the Ethics Committee within 48 hours of receiving such determination. The Board may overturn the ruling from the Ethics Committee only if it finds that the Ethics Committee has failed to follow the proper procedures as defined by the SFAAA Ethics Policy. The SFAAA Commissioner will then notify all parties involved of the final ruling and any penalties levied within 48 hours of the board's determination.

**SECTION FIVE Penalties for Ethics Violations**

- 5.01 Recommended Penalties:** The following penalties for each Ethics Violation are merely the recommended penalties for each level of offense. Depending upon special or unusual circumstances regarding the reported Ethics Violation and any supporting evidence such as statements from umpires, members, and/or witnesses, the Ethics Committee may impose lesser or more severe penalties not to exceed the severity of penalties as defined in this Ethics Policy.
- A. First Offense: A warning.
  - B. Second Offense: One game suspension of their team's next scheduled game.
  - C. Third Offense: Five game suspension of their team's next five scheduled games and review member's eligibility to play in NAGAAA tournaments.
  - D. Fourth Offense: One calendar year suspension from the date of offense.
  - E. Fifth Offense: Potential lifetime expulsion from the SFAAA.
    - 1. In a 2/3 majority vote of affirmation by the manager council, as indicated in section 1.11 of the bylaws, a lifetime expulsion would be upheld.
    - 2. If the lifetime expulsion is not upheld by a 2/3 majority vote by the manager council, a two-year automatic suspension would be given for the violation from the date of occurrence.
  - F. Sixth Or Any Subsequent Offense: Potential lifetime expulsion from the SFAAA.

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1. In a 2/3 majority vote of affirmation by the manager council, as indicated in section 1.11 of the bylaws, a lifetime expulsion would be upheld.
2. If the lifetime expulsion is not upheld by a 2/3 majority vote by the manager council, a three-year automatic suspension would be given for the violation from the date of occurrence.

**5.02 Suspensions:** A suspension will carry over to the following season, if the current season ends before a member's game suspension is completed.

**5.03 Out-of-Town Tournaments:** Suspensions do not apply to out-of-town tournaments other than NAGAAA tournaments.

**5.04 NAGAAA Tournaments:** If found guilty of the Physical Fighting Ethics Violation at any time, the Ethics Committee will review and recommend to the Board if the member should be eligible for the next NAGAAA tournament following the violation.

**5.05 NAGAAA Suspension:** If an Association member is suspended for a minimum of one year by the SFAAA, the Association shall notify NAGAAA of the player's suspension