

# The Softball Code of the South Florida Amateur Athletic Association

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## Section One

### *General*

- 1.1 **Purpose:** The South Florida Amateur Athletic Association (SFAAA) Softball Code shall provide the operational procedures for all league games.
- 1.2 **Governing Rules:** All SFAAA league games will be played under the SFAAA Softball Code with reference to the current year’s ASA Code or any conduct rules of any park where SFAAA games are played for game rules not covered in the SFAAA Softball Code.
- 1.3 **Qualifying Season:** The Association will hold annually a season which shall be designated as the qualifying season. Said qualifying season shall meet the requirements as established in the NAGAAA Instruments of Governance (IOG).

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## Section Two

### *League Structure*

2.1 **Formation:** The Association consists of an Open Division of amateur softball players which has no restriction on the sex or gender of the participant. Participants must be 18 years of age.

2.2 **Divisions:**

a. Teams may compete in the following divisions based on their NAGAAA Player and Team Ratings:

i. "A" Division:

1. All teams rated 270 or lower.
2. No Open division team on a roster with a cumulative rating lower than 170 is allowed to play in the A Division.

ii. "B" Division:

1. All teams rated 180 or lower.
2. No players rated over 20 are allowed.

iii. "C" Division:

1. All teams rated 140 or lower.
2. No players rated over 15 are allowed.

iv. "D" Division:

1. All teams rated 110 or lower.
2. No players rated over 12.
3. Any player who receives Question 5 of the Player Ratings Guidelines is ineligible to play in the D. Division.

v. "E" Division:

1. All teams rated 75 or lower.
2. No players rated over 8.
3. Any player who receives Questions 3 or 5 of the Player Ratings Guidelines is ineligible to play in the E Division.

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## vi. Legends C Division:

1. All teams rated 140 or lower.
2. No players rated over 15 allowed.
3. No player under 50 years of age. If a player is set to turn 50 years old during the calendar year, he or she shall be considered eligible to play in the Legends C Division.

## vii. Legends D Division:

1. All teams rated 110 or lower.
2. No players rated over 12 allowed.
3. Any player who receives Question 5 of the Player Ratings Guidelines is ineligible to play in the Legends D Division.
4. No player under 50 years of age. If a player is set to turn 50 years old during the calendar year, he or she shall be considered eligible to play in the Legends D Division.

b. During non-qualifying season, the Board may group the A & B division teams and refer to them as the Upper Division.

c. SFAAA will immediately adopt any changes to all playing rules, ratings and division qualifications as determined by NAGAAA unless the Board determines not to adopt or delay the adoption of any such change.

## Section Three

### *Team Rosters*

3.1 **Team Rosters:** A team roster must consist of at least 10 active players but no more than 18 active players in a qualifying season and non-qualifying season; except, the upper division may have up to 20 active players. There is a roster limit of two non-players. No active player may appear as an active player on two or more rosters at the same time in any given season.

3.2 **Submittal:** The initial team roster of at least 10 players must be submitted when a team registers for said season of play. The official team roster and player fees must be submitted to the Board prior to the start of said team's first game of league play.

3.3 **Player Additions:** If a player is added to a roster after the team has played more than half of their scheduled games, the player fee shall be reduced to equal that of the non-player.

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- a. In qualifying seasons, a player may not be added to a team's roster after 60 percent of the team's regular season games have been played. The 60 percent calculation is to be rounded up to the next whole number. However, should a team's active roster fall below 10 players, a player may be added in an attempt to preserve the viability of that team.
  - b. In non-qualifying seasons, a player may be added at any point during the season. However, a player must still play in the required number of games in order to be eligible for the postseason playoffs.
  - c. In either season, should a non-LGBT player be added to a roster, their name should be forwarded to a League official to ensure compliance with the gay non- LGBT rule as established in this softball code.
  - d. All new players to the Association who shall not have a current NAGAAA rating must be rated prior to playing in a league game. In the event that a player who has already been rated by another league according to the NAGAAA rating system seeks to be added to a roster through whatever means, the player's rating, if having been done within a year of their request addition, shall be considered a valid rating.
  - e. Any games played by a player whose rating has not been verified or been determined by SFAAA may result in the forfeiture of those games and further disciplinary action by the League.
  - f. Players added after the initial roster must be submitted on an amended roster no later than 5pm on the Thursday prior to the next scheduled games. Failure to do so will render any added players ineligible to play that week
- 3.4 **Player Transfers:** A player may, upon notification to the Board and to the team that they are leaving, change teams no later than the start of the team's third scheduled game. After the start of the team's third game, any player roster changes must be approved by a majority vote of all members of the managers council in that division. No players may transfer more than once in any given season.
- a. Players who were denoted as protected players or players drafted in the new player draft may transfer only with the consent of the manager of the team which drafted them and the approval of a majority vote of the managers council in that division.
  - b. A team manager may submit the vote via written ballot or by email that originates from the email address that is on file with the Association.
  - c. The Board shall communicate via electronic mail the results of the vote to the managers of the affected division prior to the next week of play.

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- 3.5 **Injured Players:** A team can replace an injured player with another player on the roster provided the player will no longer return for the rest of the season. A statement from the player may be required. The new player will still be required to pay the appropriate player fee and meet playoff eligibility requirements.
- 3.6 **Replacement Players:** Teams may replace players on a roster with new players if a player will no longer return during that season either by injury or relocation. A player that has moved may request a refund but must provide proof of moving. Replacement players will still be required to pay the appropriate player fee and meet playoff eligibility requirements. The replacement player shall take one of the 18 spots on the active player roster for the duration of the season.
- 3.7 **New Teams:** A team shall be considered a new team if its opening day roster contains 5 or fewer players from the previous season's roster.
- 3.8 **Non-LGBT Players:** Teams are limited to three non-LGBT players on a team's roster.

### Section Four

#### *New Players*

- 4.1 **New Player:** Each season, the Association shall hold a recruitment drive to recruit new players. The new players that attend a skills assessment session shall be drafted by the SFAAA teams based upon their skill set.
- 4.2 **Draft:** The Association will conduct an initial draft prior to the start of each season in order to allow teams to add players to their roster who participated in a skills assessment session.
- a. In order for a team to be eligible to select a player in the draft, the team manager must be in attendance. The team manager may designate a proxy to attend in his/her place by notifying the Assistant Commissioner through written or email communication no later than 24 hours prior to the draft.
  - b. **Draft Order:** The draft will begin with the E Division and upon each team making a selection, move to the D Division, and continue in division order. The first eligible team to draft a player in each league division shall be the team finishing lowest in the standings in the prior season with the next to last finisher drafting next and so on until all teams have had a chance to draft. New teams or teams moving up a division shall be considered for having the first pick of the draft at the discretion of the Board. If there are multiple new teams, the order of selection of the new teams will be by

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random selection as determined by the Board. For the purposes of draft order, Legends C and Legends D division teams will be inserted into the C and D divisions, respectively, based on final winning percentages of all games played.

- c. Subsequent draft – The Association may conduct additional drafts subsequent to the initial draft. The order of the draft will continue where the most recent draft concluded during that season.
- d. If after the start of the season, a team is considered to no longer have 10 active players, the team will be permitted to have the first selection of the next draft in that season. If there is more than one team who has less than 10 active players, the order of selection will be by random selection as determined by the Board.

**4.3 Drafted Players:** Once a player has participated in the draft, they will not be allowed to be picked up by any team except under the aforementioned draft procedures. Any player drafted will not be allowed to play with any team other than the one that drafted them for that respective season without the consent of the manager of the drafting team and the approval of the Managers' Council for the division to which the player will go.

- a. Except If a player is drafted to a higher-rated division, or player has indicated interest in a Legends division but is drafted in a non-Legends division, the player will be informed of the differing division selection. The player may then refuse to play with the team that drafted him/her by notifying the Assistant Commissioner in writing. Upon this refusal, the player will be entered into a special draft for the Legends division.

### **4.4 Protected Players:**

- a. In order to qualify as a protected player, the following criteria must be met:
  - i. A player who has not previously been a member of the Association or a player who has not been an active member for a period of two qualifying seasons and is required to be rated by the Association.
  - ii. The team manager must notify the Recruitment Director by 11:59 p.m. of the day prior to the player being rated.
  - iii. The player must confirm on their registration form, prior to being rated, that they desire to be a member of the protecting team.
  - iv. The player must qualify to play in the division of the protecting team.
- b. Protected players will not be entered into a draft nor will the player be eligible for selection by any other team in accordance with 4.03.



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- c. A protected player who does not have an initial rating and who does not qualify to play in the division of the protecting team will immediately be subject to the draft rules under 4.02.
- d. At any time up until the start of the draft of which a protected player would otherwise be eligible for, the protecting team may elect to withdraw its protection of the player. Should this occur, the player will enter the draft.
- e. Two teams that play in different divisions may co-protect the same player to a ratings session if both managers agree.

4.5 **Disciplinary Action:** Managers or coaches of any team attempting to circumvent the draft are subject to disciplinary action by the Board and/or the Ethics Committee.

### Section Five

#### *Ratings*

5.1 **Initial Ratings:** Players will start with their most recent rating from their most recent season (from SFAAA or from their most recent NAGAAA league). Players without a NAGAAA rating or who have not played within the past 2 SFAAA GSWS qualifying seasons must obtain a new rating from the Ratings Committee.

- a. Such players must attend be rated by the Ratings Committee to play.
- b. Any player obtaining a new rating may not be considered for any question removals during their first season of play.

5.2 **Voluntary Ratings Increases:** Managers may voluntarily increase a player's rating at any time during the season, provided any increase is notated and the impacted player has submitted their consent via email to the Ratings Chair and the Assistant Commissioner. Once submitted, a voluntary increase may not be withdrawn. There is no limit to the number of questions that a team can ask to have voluntarily increased within a season.

Increases will be reported to the Board and can only be lowered by going through the established ratings review process.

- a. Such voluntary increases must be made through the website ratings review form.

5.3 **Ratings Confirmation:** The SFAAA Commissioner will confirm all player ratings, whether they are new/current/former SFAAA members or players transferring from other NAGAAA associations. Rosters with the latest ratings will be made available to the Manager. The

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rating in the SFAAA database will be used unless the Manager proves that the database is incorrect. The Manager has until 5:00 pm on the Thursday before Opening Day to address inconsistent ratings.

- 5.4 **NAGAAA Ratings Questions Changes:** If NAGAAA changes any ratings questions taking effect for the Spring Season, the Board shall hold a special Managers Council Meeting, to review the ratings questions before opening day. A Manager who does not attend the ratings meeting shall not be allowed to submit ratings requests for any member of the league, other than their own players.
- 5.5 **Rosters Distribution:** Ratings rosters will be distributed to each Manager in each division for review prior to Opening Day. Any amended rosters will be distributed prior to each week of play, as changes dictate, and will include any approved changes and any submitted voluntary increases. Ratings will be made available to all league members at the discretion of the Board, via email request to the Commissioner.
- a. Distribution includes making rosters available to managers on the SFAAA website.
- 5.6 **Ratings Reviews:** Ratings review requests may be submitted by any of the following parties, utilizing the website form (When activated by the Board).
- a. A player wishing to have their own rating changed,
  - b. A Manager wishing to have their player's rating changed,
  - c. The Ratings Chair(s) or a current Board Member,
    - i. A Member of the Ratings Committee may review any player that is playing in a game they are scheduled to watch or review.
  - d. A Manager may request a review of a player not on their team.
    - i. Such Manager shall pay a fee of \$50 for each question.
    - ii. Handling of the fee for each question submitted:
      - 1 If a question for review is upheld, the fee for that question is returned.
      - 2 If a question for review is denied, the fee for that question is forfeited.
    - iii. Each manager may submit no more that 10 total reviews in this manner.
  - e. No ratings review request may be submitted later than 48 hours after the last game of the midpoint of the season.

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- 5.7 **Ratings Decrease Requests:** A manager requesting to lower a specific question for a member on their team, must have the player's consent. The specific evidence supporting the request must be emailed to the Ratings Chair and the Assistant Commissioner, along with the player's consent.
- a. A team can collectively submit up to ten (10) questions to be lowered during the season. Questions submitted by Board Members, or the Ratings Chair do not count towards the ten (10) question limit.
  - b. Decrease requests may only be filed once per season per player per question.
    - i. Any decrease requests for questions 1-9 must be accompanied by a copy of the team's most current and complete scorebooks for the season and the previous season, as supporting evidence. Failure to submit complete scorebooks will result in a rejection of the decrease request by the Ratings Chair.
- 5.8 **Ratings Review Submissions:** To submit a rating review, the submitter shall complete the online submission form. Items submitted by the Ratings Chair, or a Board Member, shall follow the same process. The Ratings Chair has the authority to reject incomplete forms, which will be sent back to the submitting party to address any issues. Submitters will then have 72 hours from the time of rejection to resubmit, and only one resubmittal will be allowed per question.
- 5.9 **Ratings Committee Confidentiality:** Members of the committee may not discuss any specific rating determination to anyone outside of the Ratings Committee, until after the ratings question is disposed of by the Committee or after an appeal is concluded.
- 5.10 **Ratings Committee:** The Ratings Committee shall meet as determined by the Chair and the Assistant Commissioner. A meeting with 50 percent of members eligible to vote on a matter are present, shall be considered a quorum. Committee decisions shall be emailed by the Chair to the Board Secretary, Commissioner, and Assistant Commissioner within 3 – days of the meeting. The Secretary will then transmit the results to the Managers' Council and the Board within 5 days of receipt.
- a. The Chair shall ensure that reviews are completed and voted on not later than the Thursday before the last 2 weeks of the regular season.
  - b. If the Ratings Chair determines that a question that might be added to a player would make them no longer eligible for the Division they are currently playing in, the Chair shall schedule two members of the Rating Committee to evaluate all questions of the player: without any notification outside of the Committee; before it is brought to a vote of the Committee. The Chair may ask for the

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Manager to turn in copies of their books for the current and previous season to determine the players batting average.

- i. This does not apply to any automatic Division disqualifiers, currently Question 3 for E Division and Question 5 for D Division.

**5.11 Ratings Changes Notifications:** Any player whose rating has changed during the season will be notified by the Board Secretary. If this change results in that player no longer being eligible for their current division, their information must be forwarded to the Secretary and Recruitment Director prior to the league-wide notification. Once this player has received their official notification by the Ratings Committee Chairperson or Board Member, that player may join any team in a division they are now eligible for so long as that team meets roster requirements outlined in Softball Code 3.1 and approval of said team's manager. The section regarding additions of players to rosters after 60% of the season outlined in Softball Code 3.3.A does not apply to these situations since decisions rendered by the Ratings Committee may conclude past that timeline. Player transfer requirements in Softball Code 3.4 are waived when this change results in the player being moved up a division.

**5.12 Voluntary Increase Deadline / GSWS Meeting:** Voluntary increases may be submitted after the submission deadline and up to the requirements for the GSWS Ratings Meeting, or the Tuesday before the playoffs (Fall season).

- a. All teams participating in the GSWS shall submit their GSWS roster to the Ratings Chair, Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, and the Director of Competition at a date to be determined each GSWS qualifying season.
- b. The Board of Directors will schedule a GSWS meeting no later than 14 days before the GSWS rosters are required to be finalized in the NAGAAA system.
- c. All GSWS Managers should be cognizant of their teams rating cap prior to submitting their rosters.

**5.13 New Player Batting Averages:** It is mandatory that managers turn in the modified batting averages of all new players on their roster at the end of that player's first season of play in SFAAA (including playoffs) so that a baseline modified batting average can be used to properly assign hitting questions Q6-9. If a manager fails to turn in their new player(s) averages for the season within two weeks after the end of that season (The League last day of playoffs), the manager must pay a \$10 fine per player and the player(s) will automatically get an average question.

- a. This applies to both the Spring and Fall Seasons.

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- b. Any average question added under this section may not be modified until after the next season.
  - i. This may only be superseded by Code Section 5.13.b.
- c. The Commissioner may request Managers to turn in modified batting averages for all players before the spring season if there are any changes to batting average questions.
  - i. The supporting copies of the game day books may be requested if needed.

5.14 **Weeknight Play:** Ratings changes will not be considered during weeknight play other than the Upper Division.

5.15 **Ratings Review Appeal Requests:** The Player or the Manager may file an appeal against a Ratings Committee decision that alters a player rating to the Board by sending an email to the Commissioner and the Secretary, within 5 days of receiving the decision notification. The appeals meeting shall be held within 7 days of the receipt of the appeal, unless another mutually agreed upon date is selected. The Manager and player must be given 48 hours' notice of the appeals meeting, except if it's a mutually agreed upon date.

5.16 **GSWS Protests:** If the GSWS Protest Committee changes a player's rating question and corresponding skill, it will be submitted to the SFAAA Board and will remain marked as "Yes" for the following two (2) GSWS Qualifying seasons. No player will be able to appeal that question or skill (e.g., running 5.0 seconds) during the next two (2) GSWS qualifying seasons.

5.17 **Appeal Meetings:** During an appeal, the Ratings Chair shall submit all materials related to the appeal to the Board Members prior to the meeting. The Ratings Chair or their designee shall make a presentation to the Board Members on the specifics for the rating change, including any evidence presented at the Ratings Committee Meeting. The appealing player or manager may present evidence to substantiate their reasoning for the appeal of the players rating change. The Board will deliberate and decide to uphold the change in the rating question or to overturn; a simple majority of those present and voting is required to overturn the Ratings Committee. No Board Member may participate in the deliberation discussions or vote when the appeal concerns a member of their team, nor shall the Assistant Commissioner vote in the appeal. The ruling of the Board will be provided to all parties involved following the meeting. The ruling of the Board to on all appeals will be final.

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## Section Six

### *Manager Responsibilities*

**6.1 Team Manager Responsibilities:** The following are responsibilities afforded to the manager of a team participating in the League play of the SFAAA. The manager or their designee shall be responsible for:

- a. representing their team at Managers Council Meetings. Managers may designate a representative from their team to attend a meeting provided they turn in a written proxy as described in the SFAAA Bylaws;
- b. reporting the results of the Managers Council Meetings back to their team;
- c. collecting and submitting to the Board a player roster, sponsor and player fees, insurance waivers and all documents as prescribed by the Board for the upcoming season;
- d. submitting a fully completed lineup card to the opposing team's manager before each game;
- e. turning in team game results and lineup cards to the Director of Competition or as designated by the Board;
- f. maintaining that their team conducts itself in a level of good sportsmanship;
- g. informing the Board of any changes of managers on their team;
- h. notifying team sponsors of after game parties;
- i. communicating to the Board the bye weeks requested by the team for that season.
- j. distributing and maintaining all equipment, uniforms and marketing materials if the aforementioned are sponsor or team owned.

**6.2 Manager Compliance:** Should a manager fail to uphold their responsibilities as established in 6.1, appropriate corrective action may be taken by the Board.

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## Section Seven

### *Uniforms*

- 7.1 **Ownership:** Uniforms which are purchased by a sponsor or a team shall remain the property of the sponsor or team unless other arrangements have been made and documented between the sponsor and the team member(s).
- 7.2 **Player Responsibility:** If property is deemed as belonging to a sponsor or team, each player is responsible for the return of their uniform to the team manager at the close of the playing season or at such time as the player discontinues, for whatever reason, their participation with that team. In the event that a player does not return their uniform in satisfactory condition, normal wear and tear expected, that player shall be ineligible for league play until the uniform is returned or other restitution is made to the satisfaction of the team or its sponsor. Requests for return of uniform(s) must be made in writing prior to the next playing season.
- 7.3 **Uniform Numbers:** Teams are not required to have like-colored uniforms; however, an Arabic whole number (0-99) of contrasting color, at least 6 inches high, must be worn and visible on the back of all jerseys. No players on the same team may wear identical numbers (0 and 00 or 3 and 03 are examples of identical numbers). Players without numbers will not be permitted to play.

## Section Eight

### *Forfeits*

- 8.1 **Team Forfeits:** A team will have forfeited a game if it:
- a. fails to submit all documentation, player fees and sponsor fees prior to the start of a season, or;
  - b. fails to have nine players on the field after 5 minutes past the game's starting time, or;
  - c. fails to continue to field at least nine players at any point of the game, or;
  - d. fields an ineligible player after the first pitch of the game has been delivered, or;
  - e. if the Board deems it necessary due to a failure of compliance with SFAAA Bylaws, Softball Code or any violation of the Ethics Code.

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## 8.2 Forfeiture Penalties:

- a. The forfeiting team shall receive a loss in the standings by a score of 0-10. A double forfeit shall be scored as 0-0 and considered a loss for both teams.
- b. There shall be no financial penalty for any team's first two forfeited games. A \$25 penalty shall be assessed for a third forfeiture. A \$50 penalty shall be assessed for a fourth and final forfeiture. This includes playoff games in either fall or spring season. Teams that opt out of playoffs prior to brackets being created are exempt.
- c. All forfeiture fines need to be paid by the forfeiting team prior to the conclusion of the current season or that team will not be allowed to register for the following season. The forfeiting team may appeal to the Board for special consideration due to extenuating circumstances.

## 8.3 Team Expulsion: A team that forfeits four games will no longer be eligible to participate in any SFAAA games for that season, including the postseason.

- a. All games and statistics recorded by that team shall remain in the standings. All games scheduled the rest of that season shall be counted as 0-10 losses for the ineligible team, and 10-0 victories for their scheduled opposing team.
- b. Eligible players from a team that is no longer eligible to play in the SFAAA shall retain all privileges as a member of the SFAAA.
- c. A special draft shall be administered by the Assistant Commissioner/Board in a timely fashion by which all teams within the suspended team's division are able to draft eligible players from that suspended team. The draft shall be conducted in reverse order of the newly defined current standings.
- d. If the final forfeit occurs after half of the regular season is complete, players will be eligible for a draft to play in the remainder of the season (including postseason). Players who opt out of the draft or are not drafted for any reason shall be eligible for a prorated refund.
- e. All games already played by the newly suspended players will be counted toward any playoff or Gay Softball World Series requirement.



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## Section Nine

### *Game Rules*

#### **9.1 Game Regulations:**

- a. **Game Length:** An SFAAA game shall last seven innings or no more than a time limit set by the Board at the beginning of each season.
  - i. The League shall purchase and maintain a set of 8 audible timers to be utilized by umpires in order to maintain the consistency of the time allotment per game.
  - ii. Any injury which stops play shall require a stoppage of the timer with said stoppage communicated to both managers.
- b. **Official Game:** In the event of a rain-out or any unforeseen circumstance, a game shall be considered an official game after five (5) innings of play or four and one half (4½) if the home team leads.
- c. **Rainouts/Inclement Weather:** If any game, including a playoff game, is called due to rain or inclement weather before the game becomes official, the game will be rescheduled and played in its entirety. The rainout/cancelled game shall not count toward any playoff or Gay Softball World Series requirement.
- d. **Tie games:** If the score is tied after seven innings or after the time limit has expired, the game will be played using the Kansas City tiebreaker format. Under the Kansas City tiebreaker format, each team, in their respective half of each subsequent inning, shall place on second base the player on their team who made the last recorded out. The team shall proceed by batting the next batter in the lineup at the prior inning's end and so forth until three outs are recorded. Each batter will start with a full count with no courtesy foul. This procedure is repeated in each subsequent inning until one team has outscored the other at the end of a completed inning.
- e. **Run Rule:** A game shall cease and the score recorded as the final score if a team leads by 10 or more runs after five (5) innings or four and one half (4½) innings if the home team leads, 15 or more runs after four (4) innings or four and one half (3½) innings if the home team leads or by 20 or more runs after three (3) innings or two and one half (2½) if the home team leads.
- f. **Changes to Code:** Any changes to Section 9 of the Softball Code must be reported in writing or by email to the Umpire-in-Chief or his/her designee before the next games are played.

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## 9.2 Management of Team Lineup:

- a. Requirement: A team must start the game and maintain at least nine rostered players on the field or a forfeit will be declared. A 10th player may be added before the first pitch of the fifth inning. The 10th player will be inserted as the last batter on the lineup card.
- b. Extra Hitters: Only at the start of a game may a team may add an 11th and 12th player to the lineup and designate them as extra hitters. At any time during a game, the extra hitter(s) may enter and play defensively switching the defensive player to the extra hitter slot. Both players shall remain in the same batting order for the entire game.
- c. Ejected Players: If a player is ejected or leaves the game for any reason and no substitute is available, the team may continue to play with at least nine players but will receive an out in the position of the ejected or vacated player.
- d. Injured Players: If a player is injured during the game and no substitute is available, the team will receive an out in the batting order position of the injured player.
- e. Uniform Numbers: Players need to wear the same uniform number as stated on the lineup card. A player brought to the attention of the umpire to be wearing a different number than on the lineup card will be recorded as an out and the lineup will move on to the next batter. The only exception to this rule would be due to a health safety concern that would require the player to not use the initial jersey listed on the lineup card and communicated to the umpire and opposing team's manager at the time of the incident.

## 9.3 Bats:

- a. All bats that are ASA approved and that do not appear on the latest ASA non-approved list may be used during an SFAAA game. Altered or titanium bats shall be deemed as illegal bats and will be ejected from the game and result in the player using the bat to be called out. Refer to Appendix B for a list of ASA non-approved bats.
- b. All bats must be inspected by the Assistant Commissioner/Board Member before the start of each SFAAA year. Each bat that passes the inspection will receive a sticker so all managers, players and Mills Pond umpires may attest to attest to its legality. For a bat to be considered legal it must:

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- i. clearly display the ASA and USA approved stamp.
  - ii. not have any cracks.
  - iii. have the end cap in tack.
  - iv. be free of any dents.
  - v. will have a wrapped handle that is of non-slick tape.
  - vi. be tested for sound to ensure that bat is not cracked or worn out. This will also detect if the bat has been altered.
- c. The Assistant Commissioner/Board member has the right to deem any bat illegal if any bat does not meet one of the above criteria
- d. Any player who is caught using an illegal bat may be suspended from all SFAAA games for the remainder of the season. If the same player is caught a second time, that player will be suspended for life from any SFAAA sponsored games.
- e. The manager of the player being suspended may be put on probation for the balance of the season. If the same manager has any other players caught with an illegal bat, they may be suspended for the balance of the season.
- f. Any managers or players that are suspended for any bat infractions will have to meet with the SFAAA Board and state why they should be reinstated.
- 9.4 **Metal Cleats:** Metal-tipped cleats are not permitted during SFAAA play.
- 9.5 **Pitcher's Count:** Batters will start with a one-one count and will be allowed one courtesy foul.
- 9.6 **Pitching Arc:** A pitch shall be considered a legal pitch if, from the ground, it equals or exceeds six (6) feet and does not exceed twelve (12) feet in the duration of its flight from the pitcher's hand to home plate.
- 9.7 **Courtesy Runners:** Each team shall be allowed one courtesy runner per inning.
- a. Any eligible players that may participate on offense or defense and are on the official line-up including available substitutes may be used as a courtesy runner.
  - b. If the courtesy runner is due up to bat while on base, the player who the courtesy runner is running for will be called out. The courtesy runner will be removed from the base and take their turn at bat, if there are less than 3 outs.

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- c. A player may be a courtesy runner only once per inning. If the same player replaces a runner a second time in the same inning, an out will be recorded.
  - d. Each team shall be allowed two courtesy runners per inning in a game in which both teams are members of the Legends C or Legends D Division. (NAGAAA 10.03.P)
- 9.8 **Reentry Rule:** Any player may be substituted and reentered once during a game. The substituted player may in turn reenter for the original player. However, upon second reentry, the substituting player must remain in the game unless substituted, in turn, by a different bench player as submitted on the lineup card as a substitute. A player that is substituted for can only re-enter the game for the player that replaced them and must assume the same batting position in the lineup.
- 9.9 **Home run Rule:** A team may be allowed the following number of home runs hit over the fence:
- a. "A" Division: Five (5) home runs Any home run hit after the limit will be considered an inning ending out.
  - b. "B" Division: Three (3) home runs. Any home run hit after the limit will be considered an inning ending out.
  - c. "C" Division: One (1) home run. Any home run hit after the limit will be considered an inning ending out.
  - d. "D" Division: No home runs allowed. Any home run hit will result in an inning- ending out.
  - e. "E" Division: No home runs allowed. Any home run hit will result in an inning- ending out.
  - f. Legends Division C: One (1) home run. Any home run hit after the limit will be considered an inning ending out.
  - g. Legends Division D: No home runs allowed. Any home run hit will result in an inning- ending out.
  - h. Any interdivisional games shall utilize the homerun rule of the lower division. However, any additional over the fence home run, up to the upper division limit will count as one (1) out. Any over the fence homerun over the upper division's limit, will be an inning ending out.

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## 9.10 Ejections:

- a. Ejections made for umpire abuse, fighting, or unsportsmanlike conduct are, at a minimum, for the remainder of that game and a one-game suspension of the next scheduled game to be played by their team. Players during their suspension may not step on the field or be in the dugout of their team.
- b. A second suspension in the same season will result in an automatic two (2) game suspension.
- c. Further action, not enumerated above, may be taken by the SFAAA Ethics Committee for any infraction.

## 9.11 ADA:

- a. Requests for ADA rule modification accommodations, with accompanying medical documentation, must be submitted to the Board. The Board will review all such requests and return a determination to the player.
- b. ADA rule modification accommodations are valid until the next qualifying season, unless the Board states otherwise.
- c. For instances where an ADA runner is approved as the ADA rule modification, that runner must be the player that made the last out in that, or the previous, inning. In the event that player also receives an ADA rule modification for running, the previous out will be used. If the ADA runner is due to bat while on base, the previous out can replace that ADA runner with no penalty.
- d. Managers must clearly indicate ADA on the line-up card next to the player's name for the rule modification to be permitted in that game.

## Section Ten

### *League Divisional Standings*

- 10.1 **League Divisional Standings:** Current league standing will be posted on the Association's website, [www.sfaaasoftball.com](http://www.sfaaasoftball.com). It is the manager's responsibility to check the correctness of the standings and notify the Board on any errors.
- 10.2 **Final Divisional Standings:** At the end of the regular season, the final standings of each division shall be determined by win-loss percentages of all teams in that division.

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10.3 **Tie-Breakers:** Ties in the final divisional standings will be settled by the following tiebreaking system:

- a. Head to head win-loss record. If more than 2 teams are tied, the tie-breaker will be the overall win-loss record versus the teams that are tied for that position in the standings. If still tied...
- b. Head to head run differential. If more than 2 teams are tied, the tie-breaker will be the overall run differential versus the teams that are tied for that position in the standings. If still tied...
- c. Total runs against.
- d. Total runs scored.
- e. Win-loss record versus best common opponent.
- f. Run differential versus best common opponent.

10.4 **Interdivisional Games:** The results of any games played outside of a division (i.e. Open D vs. Legends D, or Open C vs. Open B) shall not count towards either team's divisional record.

### Section Eleven

#### *Playoffs*

11.1 **Eligible Players:**

- a. To participate in the playoffs for a qualifying season, a player's name must appear on a lineup card for at least one half of that season's possible games for their division. There is no minimum participation requirement for non-qualifying seasons.
- b. A player's name may appear on a lineup card if that player has:
  - i. taken the field or batted at any point in the game's progress, or;
  - ii. has been at the game's field for more than two innings of the respective game.
- c. Exceptions to this stipulation may be appealed to the Board.

11.2 **Double Elimination:** All SFAAA playoffs will use a double elimination format.

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- 11.3 **Home Team:** The higher seeded team will be the home team in all tournament games. The home team for the Championship Game will be the team emerging from the Winner Bracket. The "If Game" home team will be determined by coin toss.
- 11.4 **Championship Games:** There will be no time limit during the championship game(s).
- 11.5 **Legends Division and Playoffs:** If a Legends team is playing in the World Series in the Legends Division, they must declare their intention to the Board of playing in the Legends Division before the start of the qualifying season. Failure to notify with the intention to play in the World Series as a Legends team, the team will forfeit the right of the board to pay registration fees for the World Series. If they choose to participate in the playoffs and do not qualify for their division, they will not receive the World Series fees from SFAAA. This rule shall not apply if Legends C or Legends D has a division in play.

### Section Twelve

#### *Protests*

- 12.1 **Game Playing Protests:** The current official ASA rule book shall be utilized for all protests regarding the application of rules of play. Game playing protests must be filed according to ASA rules and made through the umpire prior to the last out of the game.
- 12.2 **Eligibility of Players Protests:** Should a manager question the eligibility of a player, they must fill out a protest incident report and provide it to a member of the Board with protest fee if applicable. Protests must be made prior to the end of the game.
- 12.3 **Resolution:** The Board shall resolve all disputes and protests arising out of any Association sanctioned softball game within 72 hours after a dispute or protest has been served to the Board.

### Section Thirteen

#### *NAGAAA*

- 13.1 **Gay Softball World Series Bids:** GSWS bids will be awarded based upon the allotments as stated in the current NAGAAA Governing Manual. In regard to C, D and E Divisions, the division with the most qualifying teams will get the maximum number of bids allowed per division. Remaining bids shall then be allocated by number of qualifying teams per division, with divisions that have more teams receiving more bids than divisions that have fewer teams. If two or more divisions have the same number of qualifying teams, a

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vote of the managers council will be conducted prior to the start of the qualifying season to allocate bids. Bids within each division will be awarded as follows:

- a. If one bid is awarded to a division, the recipient of said bid would be the first place winner of the playoffs during the NAGAAA Gay Softball World Series qualifying season.
- b. If two bids are awarded to a division, the recipients of said bids will be the first-place team of the regular season and the winner of the playoffs during the Gay Softball World Series qualifying season.
- c. If three bids are awarded to a division, the recipients of said bids will be the first- and second-place team of the regular season and the winner of the playoffs during the Gay Softball World Series qualifying season.
- d. If four bids are awarded to a division, the recipients of said bids will be the first, second and third place teams of the regular season and the winner of the playoffs during the Gay Softball World Series qualifying season.
- e. In the event NAGAAA awards extra World Series bids to SFAAA beyond its natural allotment, the division with the most teams should be awarded the bid.
- f. In the event a NAGAAA awards a second extra World Series bid to SFAAA beyond its natural allotment, the division with the second-most teams should be awarded the bid. The bid should then follow the rules of 13.1 (C) and be awarded to the secondplace team of the regular season.

**13.2 Notification of Intent:** Teams receiving bids must notify the Board whether they will accept or decline the bid no later than one month prior to the due date for registered teams as established by NAGAAA or one week after the SFAAA playoffs, whichever day is the latter of the two dates.

- a. In the event a team declines the NAGAAA Gay Softball World Series bid, the bid, regardless how it has been awarded, shall be designated to the next highest placing team in that division's regular season who may then accept the bid. Should the next highest placing team also not accept the bid, the awarded bid will be made to each successive placing team until the bid is accepted.
- b. In the event that no team within a division accepts the NAGAAA Gay Softball World Series bid, the Board may award the bid to another team in another division subject to the rules under NAGAAA.

**13.3 Gay Softball World Series Champions:** No team awarded first, second, third or fourth place in the B, C, D or E division of the GSWS shall be eligible to compete in the same or lower division at the following two (2) year's GSWS. For the Legends D division, no team awarded first or second place of the GSWS shall be eligible to compete in the same or lower division at the following two (2) year's GSWS. For the purpose of this rule, an



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ineligible returning team shall be defined as consisting of four (4) or more players from the prior year GSWS roster of a team awarded first, second, third or fourth for B, C, D & E and first or second for the Legends D division.

- 13.4 **NAGAAA Fines:** Any player or team that is fined and/or suspended by NAGAAA may include but not limited to poor sportsmanship or misconduct, shall be responsible for paying the respective fine to NAGAAA. In the event a team or player is fined for ratings, it will be the responsibility of the SFAAA to pay said fine unless the fine takes the team above the division's ratings cap. In that instance, the team becomes responsible for payment of the fine.
- a. Failure to pay the fine directly to SFAAA will result in an automatic suspension of the player or team as determined by the SFAAA Board.
  - b. The Board will notify by email the players and managers affected by any NAGAAA fines and/or suspensions.

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## DEFINITIONS:

Active players: any member of a team who participates on the field of play and is included on the lineup card of any game.

Altered bat:

a bat that has been modified in any way from the manufacturer's original specifications or design.

Amateur:

a softball player who engages in the sport solely for pleasure and/or the physical, mental or social benefits.

Association:

the entire paying membership of the South Florida Amateur Athletic Association (SFAAA)

Board:

the composite of the SFAAA Board of Directors as enumerated in the Bylaws

Board member:

a member, either elected or appointed, to the SFAAA Board of Directors.

Conflicts of interest: A conflict of interest may be present in situations such as, but is not limited to, the following:

- The affected player is on the same team
- Romantic partner
- Roommate
- Co-worker
- In a dating relationship
- Family member
- Financial connection
- Any other conflict of interest deemed relevant by the Board

Courtesy runner: a non-substituted player who appears on the game's lineup card who shall be able to take the place of any player who has reached base safely.

Drafted player: any person who, at the new player draft or any subsequent draft, that is selected by a team

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Eligible player: any person who is over 18 and is in good standing with the Association and NAGAAA.

Gay: includes gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT or LGBT) individuals.

Gay Softball World Series (GSWS): a tournament hosted annually by the North American Amateur Athletic Alliance (NAGAAA).

Non-LGBT: means not gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender.

Instruments of Governance (IoG): the document that includes the SFAAA's Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Softball Code, Ethics, and Appendices.

Manager: the person designated by a team to fulfill those roles and complete those responsibilities as enumerated in the Softball Code.

North American Amateur Athletic Alliance (NAGAAA): the organization responsible for hosting the Gay Softball World Series (GSWS) and from which this Association's rating system is derived.

Non-qualifying season: a playing season in which the results do not award bid(s) for the right to compete in the NAGAAA Gay Softball World Series.

Non-player: any person whose name appears on an active roster but does not appear on a lineup card throughout the course of a season. Non players may include but are not limited to scorekeepers, coaches, managers, or anyone designated by their team as serving an active role on the team. Non-players are limited to three per roster.

Protected player:

Any player who is eligible to attend the SFAAA draft or any other skills assessment session and is designated by the player and team manager that the player wishes to be a member of a specific team. A protected player will not be eligible to be drafted by any other team other than the team which protected the player (see Section 4.04).

Qualifying season: a playing season in which the results of the season play award bid(s) for the right to compete in the NAGAAA Gay Softball World Series. In a qualifying season, the Association shall schedule at least six (6) games as stipulated in the NAGAAA Instruments of Governance.

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### **Replacement players:**

any person who has taken the place of a player who has relocated or qualified as an injured player on the team's roster. In doing so, the person replaced shall no longer be considered eligible to appear on team's lineup for any lineup submitted after the replacement procedure has been finalized by the Board.

**Sponsor:** any person, organization, business or other entity who shall be designated by the team as having provided support to its ability to participate in a softball season.

### **Uniform:**

as defined in the SFAAA Ethics Policy, a uniform shall be constituted of a maximum of two (2) shirts, two (2) pants and/or shorts and two (2) hats.

**Unsportsmanlike conduct:** action that is detrimental or unbecoming to the purposes and objectives of the SFAAAA, its teams or its membership.