

STATE VFW BASEBALL TOURNAMENT CHECKLIST

- **If your community and/or association is interested in hosting one of the VFW State Tournaments please provide a "bid" package (via online registration) to the VFW Chairman by November 15th.** The following minimum information is required for the Baseball Advisory Committee to fairly evaluate the bids:
 - a. Community
 - b. Point of Contact and contact information
 - c. Which age division and most likely class
 - d. Proposed facility details (need the ability to conduct night games); must meet minimum dimensions listed in the 2026 rules and 2026 State Tournament Checklist
 - e. Local/nearest VFW post support or Veterans Service Organization (VSO)
 - f. Level of community and/or association support
 - g. EMS support, distance/time for ambulance response
 - h. Local media support (radio, internet access at facilities, etc.)
 - i. Last time the community hosted a VFW Baseball State/Region Tournament, Division and Class
 - j. Acknowledgement that you have read the 2026 State Tournament Checklist and the 2026 rules
 - k. General description of lodging available
 - l. Any details you feel are critical for us to know (**facility photos**, etc.)

- The following information will be provided to the SD VFW Baseball Director of Information Technology (David Grantham: david@granthamfamily.net) by February 15th for posting to website:
 - a. Host Tournament Director's phone and email address
 - b. Assistant's phone and email address
 - c. Local hotel/lodging/camping information for posting (website link?) Recommend blocking rooms with your available lodging early. Please reserve one room for VFW Baseball. We'll let you know as soon as possible if the room will be required
 - d. Other recreational activities available (website, Community or Association Face Book Link)
 - e. Facility information
 - f. Pictures and maps
 - g. Any information you wish you, as a parent or coach, had as soon as you could get it

- **The United States Flag must fly at all games.**

- Color Guard will present the "Colors" during the opening ceremony and before the Championship Game.

- The National Anthem will be played/performed during the opening ceremony and before the Championship Game. The Pledge of Allegiance will be said after player introductions at all the other games, unless the National Anthem is played/sung, with the Code of Conduct.

- Opening Ceremony (**All teams are required to participate in opening ceremonial functions**):
 - a. **All teams are required to participate in opening ceremonial functions.**
See Rules 4.16 and 4.29 for appropriate uniforms. Teams not participating in the opening ceremony may be **penalized** by directed forfeiture of their next, immediate game at the discretion of the Department of SD VFW Baseball Chairman
 - b. For Varsity, JV and 7-9th Grade Tournaments the Opening Ceremony will be Friday between games 2 and 3, between 3:30 - 4:30 PM or will be determined by the Tournament Host Committee and approved by either the VFW Baseball Chairman or Director of Baseball Operations. The day/time should be at a time minimizing the wait time for teams
 - c. For 8U, 10U and 12U State Tournaments the Opening Ceremony, day and time, will be determined by the Tournament Host Committee and approved by either the VFW Baseball Chairman or Director of Baseball Operations. The day/time should be at a time minimizing the wait time for teams
 - d. The following items are required to be included in the opening ceremony:
 - i. Introduction of teams with on field line-up (see attached diagram for recommended layout)
 - ii. VFW, Legion, National Guard and/or Active Unit Color Guard to present the Colors (Color Guard(s) post the Colors)
 - iii. National Anthem (singer, band, recorded) (Color Guard(s) retire the Colors)
 - iv. Presentation of Region Champion or best 2-of-3 winner plaques
 - v. Speeches/remarks by national, state or local leaders, honorary first pitches (make sure you have the catcher/gloves ready before the team introductions), senior ranking VFW Member present or Director of Baseball Operations or SD VFW Baseball Representative
 - vi. Other items as initiated by the host tournament committee to make this a special event for participants (i.e., the results of the skills challenge competition)
 - vii. VFW Code of Sportsmanship (led by senior ranking VFW Member present or Director of Baseball Operations or SD VFW Baseball Representative) before games in all age divisions
 - viii. Play BALL!

- **Pandemic or other Opening Ceremony (All teams are required to participate in opening ceremonial functions):**
 - a. Ceremonies were all teams are participating: Minimize spectator mingling as much as possible (keep in team groups)
 - b. Face masks are **highly encouraged** due to the larger number of people present
 - c. **All teams are encouraged to participate in opening ceremonial functions.**
 - d. For Varsity, JV and 7-9th Grade State Tournaments the Opening Ceremony will be Friday between games 2 and 3 at approximately **4:30 PM** or will be determined by the Tournament Host Committee and approved by either the VFW Baseball Chairman or Director of Baseball Operations. The day/time should be at a time minimizing the wait time for teams
 - e. For 8U, 10U and 12U State Tournaments the Opening Ceremony day and time will be determined by the Tournament Host Committee and approved by either the VFW Baseball Chairman or Director of Baseball Operations. The day/time should be at a time minimizing the wait time for teams
 - f. The following items are required to be included in the opening ceremony:
 - i. Introduction of teams (not individuals) with on field spacing. **Teams should be spaced more than 6 feet apart using entire field/space to maximize and meet recommended physical (social) distancing of 6 feet...have fun with this! Teams members can be scattered throughout the facility.**
 - ii. VFW, Legion, National Guard and/or Active Unit Color Guard to present the Colors (Color Guard(s) post the Colors)
 - iii. National Anthem (singer, band, recorded)
 - iv. Color Guard Retire the Colors
 - v. Presentation of Region Champion or best 2-of-3 winner plaques
 - vi. Speeches/remarks by national, state or local leaders, honorary first pitches (make sure you have the catcher/gloves ready before the team introductions), senior ranking VFW Member present or Director of Baseball Operations (PA system helps due to physical distancing)
 - vii. Other items as initiated by the host tournament committee to make this a special event for participants (i.e., the results of the skills challenge competition)
 - viii. VFW Code of Sportsmanship (led by senior ranking VFW Member present or Director of Baseball Operations or SD VFW Baseball Representative) before games in all age divisions
 - ix. Play BALL!

- A Tournament official announcer for all sessions will introduce the players for each bracket game. (He will introduce all players along baselines and then the National Anthem will play if not opening ceremony day or previously completed. Where there is multiple games on multiple fields there may be changes in tournament criteria.)
- The Pledge of Allegiance and the Sportsmanship Code will be led by the senior ranking VFW Member present, the Director or Assistant Director of Baseball Operations or Home Plate Umpire before each game (**in all age divisions**) after the team introductions when the National Anthem is not performed.
- The official scorekeeper for the tournament will be provided by the Tournament Host Committee, i.e. a scorekeeper and “gamechanger” statistician for each session.
- GameChanger App and pitch count requirements are defined in VFW Rules.
- Field care will be provided before each session, with freshen-up maintenance between games.
- Gate keeper and ticket takers will be provided by the Host Committee. Gate fees will **not exceed \$10 per day/per adult**. Teams are allowed 3 coaches maximum to be recognized as non-paying guests for the state tournament weekend or region game week. If the host decides to charge youth 12 and under, the fee will not exceed half the admission of an adult. Individual veterans/active duty/national guard members are free.
- Baseballs (Official SD VFW Baseballs available for purchase from the SD VFW Baseball Chairman, approved Wilson/Diamond baseballs, must be new or like new), umpires and groundskeepers will be furnished and paid by the Tournament Host Committee or by the coordinator/host team for region competitions.
- See SD VFW Baseball Rule 4.12 for Umpire requirements (Questions call SD VFW Baseball Director or Assistant Director of Baseball Operations) All umpires for regional and state tournaments must be registered, except as noted for 8U. Umpires should be registered or certified in SD. Umpires should be in appropriate SD uniform with SD VFW Baseball patches (SD VFW Baseball patches are available for free to SD Baseball Umpire Association members from the SD VFW Baseball Chairman) for all regional and state tournament games.
- All games will have 2 umpires with the exception on championship day which may have 3 umpires. VFW management recommends the host committee utilize an umpire crew of three for the final day of the State Tournament. The size of the umpire crew rule is excluded for 8U, 10U and 12U tournaments. SD VFW Baseball recommends

Tournament Hosts who utilize youth to assist the registered/certified umpire during the state tournament weekend provide them a “uniform” to ensure a professional appearance. The Uniform could be as simple as slacks, “dress” shorts (no cutoffs or jeans) and a t-shirt with their tournament logo and Umpire on the back. SD VFW Baseball highly recommends a chief umpire be hired, be on site and utilized during state tournament weekends

- ❑ Baseball umpires and officials are to be on duty at least 10 minutes before each game starts and present at home plate during team introductions and VFW Code of Sportsmanship.
- ❑ All VFW Baseball State Tournament games are to be governed by official NFHS Baseball Rules except as modified by SDHSBA, SDHSAA or SD VFW Baseball Rules.
- ❑ Host Committee will provide a team-housing chairman who will assist all teams with accommodations and also act as a liaison in case of team damage.
- ❑ Host Committee will also ensure **one** hotel/motel room is reserved the tournament weekend **for the VFW Baseball Program representative**. VFW Baseball will let the Host Committee know as soon as possible if the room will not be required.
- ❑ Emergency Medical care must be available, telephone to emergency services or EMT on duty with beeper for medical needs or beeper on grounds connected to emergency services.
- ❑ Concession stand facility will be available for all fans and players with all proceeds going to the host team or as arranged by the host tournament committee. The concession stand will follow local pandemic guidance as required.
- ❑ Host team will be responsible for contacting local and statewide TV, radio and newspapers with tournament results. (See attached media guide for suggestions). In addition, an individual should be assigned to take pictures and either send them to the Baseball Chairman or coordinate with him for cloud storage sharing. **Highly** recommend a GameChanger Video, FaceBook Live, YouTube Link or other video production be provided for social media distribution to allow the broadcast to reach those family/fans unable to attend the state tournament
- ❑ Department of South Dakota VFW Officers, Baseball Chairman, Director of Baseball Operations, Assistant Director of Baseball Operations and Region Coordinators, who wish to attend a State Tournament at their own expense, are entitled to a Tournament Pass at Tournament Headquarters.

- The tournament book or program should include the names of VFW State Officers, SD VFW Baseball Advisory Committee as posted on the website. Also, the program and sportswear will be required to use the following wording; “South Dakota VFW Baseball Tournament” and logo must be approved by the SD VFW Baseball Executive Committee with final approval by the SD VFW Baseball Chairman.

- Game times for tournament games: determined by the VFW Baseball State Chairman and/or the SD VFW Baseball Executive Committee and the host team. For eight team tournaments **recommended** times are 11:00 AM, 1:30 pm, 4:30 pm and 7:00 PM on Friday. Saturday times are 11:00 AM, 1:30 PM, 4:00 PM and 6:30 PM or **20-30 minutes after completion of the previous game if a rolling schedule is required.** On Sunday the games are at 11:00 AM, 1:30 PM and 4:00 PM or **20-30 minutes after completion of previous game if a rolling schedule is required.** Host team should contact SD VFW Baseball Chairman to get time changes at least a week prior to the start of their tournament. Weather or other factors may drive real-time decisions during tournament weekend. Work closely with the SD VFW Baseball Official on site as well as the Director or Assistant Director of Baseball Operations to determine the best course of action which may include early/late starts or using a rolling schedule. If you want an earlier start, you must get permission from the SD VFW Chairman, Director of Baseball Operations or Assistant Director of Baseball Operations. Pool tournaments usually start earlier in the day, determined by the number of fields and number of teams in the tournament.

- Host Tournament Committee will provide a facility and leadership for a coaches/team meeting in the morning before the afternoon tournament kick-off. All rules, regulations and check of team member’s date of birth, and team rosters will be checked at this time. The umpire-in-chief, all other umpires, tournament announcer, tournament scorekeeper, tournament grounds keeper, tournament chairman and team coaches should be present.

- Items that should be discussed or completed at the coaches meeting:
 - a. Verify Date of Birth for each player (accomplished by SD VFW Baseball Representative at State Tournaments and by the Region Coordinator at Regions).
 - b. Check team roster to see player was registered for the season.
 - c. Regional and State Tournaments Rules as required
 - d. If not determined by SD VFW Baseball, tournament officials and team coaches should decide the method of how home and guest teams for each game will be determined by the VFW Baseball Rules.

- e. In addition, a discussion on the use of “GameChanger App” should be conducted.
 - f. Verification of official pitch count every half inning and sign for game conclusion pitch count with the official keeping pitch count stats.
 - g. Host Tournament Committee should establish a “text” team recall system or use “gamechanger” app to notify all teams and media of changes.
- Trophies shall be furnished for state tournaments by the Department of South Dakota Veterans of Foreign Wars Baseball.
- a. Trophies for all state tournaments with eight team format shall be awarded to the winner, runner-up, third and fifth place winners. Individual medals will also be presented to the members of all the teams that qualify for the tournament.
 - b. Trophies for all state tournaments with a pool play format shall be awarded to the winner, runner-up and third place winner and in some tournaments, there may be a 4th place trophy. Individual medals will be presented to members of the top four teams.
 - c. Sportsmanship Team Plaque will be presented in the memory of Louie Thury by the South Dakota Baseball Umpire Association for the Varsity Division Tournaments.
 - d. Sportsmanship Team Plaque will be presented in memory of William Radigan by the Department of South Dakota Veterans of Foreign Wars for the JV and 7-9th Grade Division Tournaments.
 - e. Sportsmanship Team Plaque will be presented in the memory of Benton Howe by the Department of South Dakota Veterans of Foreign Wars for the 12U Division Tournaments
 - f. Sportsmanship Team Plaque will be presented by the Department of South Dakota Veterans of Foreign Wars for the 10U Division Tournaments
 - g. Sportsmanship Team Plaque will be presented in Honor of Vern Lind by the Department of South Dakota Veterans of Foreign Wars for the 8U Division Tournaments
 - h. These awards are the only awards presented at SD VFW Baseball State Tournaments.
- Host Committee should read and be familiar with **all** VFW Baseball rules. Chain of command; Umpire responsible for the play/situation, Chief Umpire, Tournament Director; if appeal required reference Rule 2.5.3 for the email requirements.

- It is the responsibility of the designated Department SD VFW Baseball Representative and/or the Host Tournament Committee to take a picture of the teams on Championship Sunday and email/text to the SD VFW Baseball Chairman.

- Host tournament teams will pay an appropriate fee (see Rule 4.20) to the State VFW Headquarters for hosting a State VFW Tournament. Fee shall be paid to the Department of SD VFW Headquarters (VFW Baseball) within 30 days after the tournament is completed.

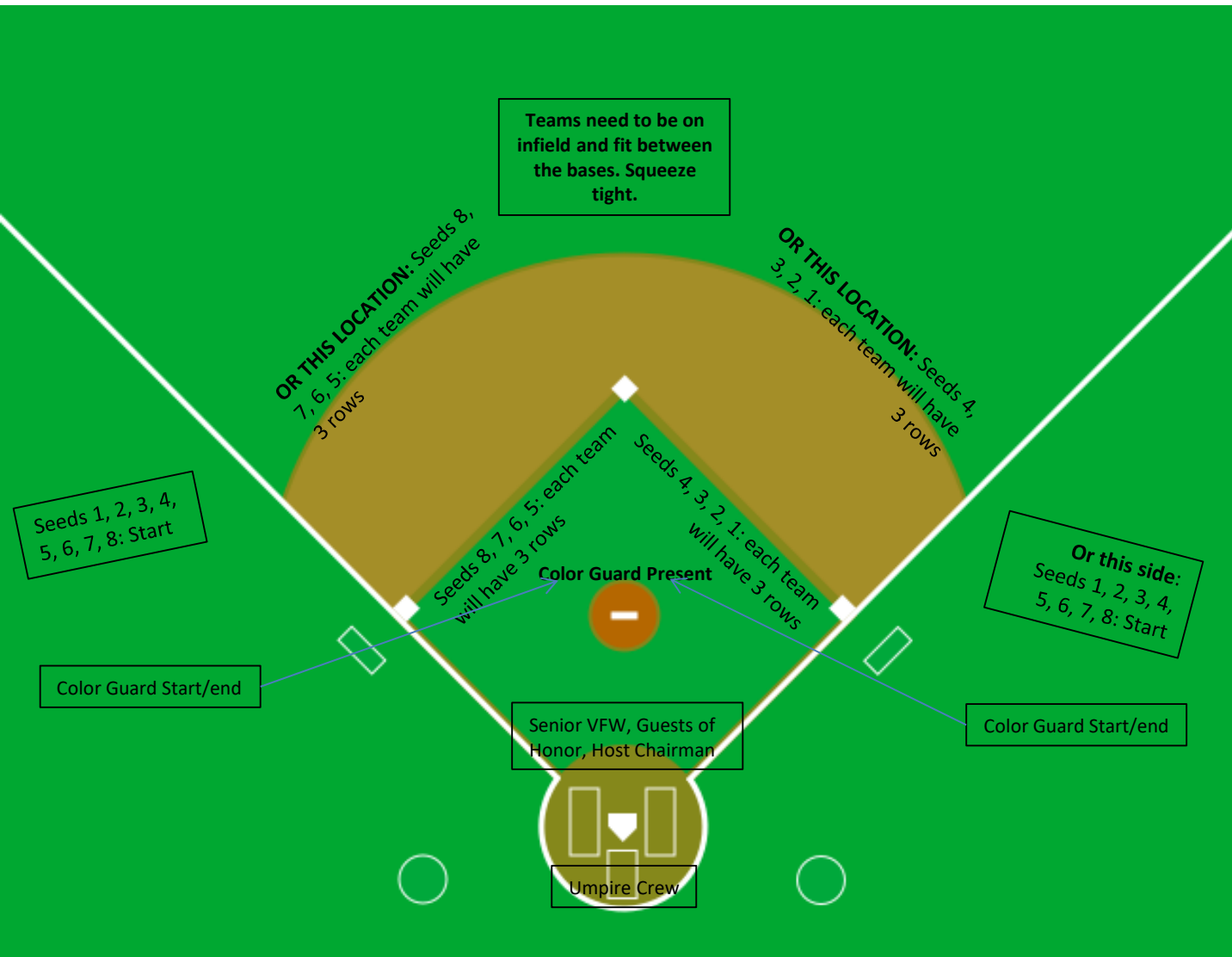
South Dakota VFW Baseball Code of Sportsmanship

(It is recommended that this Code is recited by both teams before a game during the season. At regional and state tournaments, it is a **requirement**.)

I will

- **Keep the rules.**
- **Keep faith with my teammates.**
- **Keep my temper.**
- **Keep myself fit.**
- **Keep a stout heart in defeat.**
- **Keep pride under control in victory.**
- **Keep a sound soul, a clean mind, and a healthy body.**

Opening Ceremony Diagram Recommendation 8-Team Tournaments



Opening Ceremony Diagram Recommendation More than 8-Teams

