



America's Finest City Softball League Code of Conduct

As voluntary participants in the AFCSL, all participants agree to conduct themselves responsibly and consistent with good sportsmanship. Participant conduct is reflective of the integrity and spirit of the AFCSL and its participants and is expected to be maintained at all AFCSL sponsored and affiliated meetings, events, tournaments and play. The Code of Conduct applies to all off the field conduct at any complex reserved by the AFCSL for league or tournament play. The AFCSL Board Officers have the authority to impose penalties against players/teams/managers and other participants for any Code of Conduct violation. Participants may face a continuum of sanctions for Code of Conduct violations to include but not limited to: warnings, disqualification, game ejections, short term or long term suspensions, and or termination/expulsion from league activities as deemed proper by the Umpire in Charge (UIC), the Hearing Officer (Assistant Commissioner or designee), and/or the Board Officers. All sanctions shall be reasonable and proportional to the circumstances. While a range of sanctions is available to the Board, the appropriate sanction(s) will be determined by a thorough investigation and discussion of the facts related to the alleged Code of Conduct violation. The Board may elect to apply a progressive approach to sanctions, starting with less restrictive sanctions and moving to more significant sanctions for players who have a history of Code of Conduct violations or for players who violate multiple portions of the Code of Conduct in a condensed period of time; however, the Board has the authority to issue higher level sanctions in a circumstance where there have been flagrant and/or egregious Code of Conduct violations including expulsions for a single incident or for incidents which include physical and/or verbal aggression, intimidation, or conduct which creates a hostile, unwelcoming, or discriminatory environment which is in direct violation of the mission of AFCSL which is to create a safe, affirming space to play. The AFCSL Board of Officers has the authority to impose penalties and/or appropriate action on players/participants and/or teams in violation of the Code of Conduct. Authority may also be exercised to use discretion and act on unsportsmanlike violations not explicitly stated in this Code.

The Code of Conduct is in effect:

1. At the fields of play during game days or practices, whether as a participant or spectator;
2. While participating in any AFCSL event;
3. When posting on social media sites (such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, etc.) controlled and managed by AFCSL, iPride, ASANA, or other associated organizations/leagues or when a player associates their post directly with AFCSL without express authorization.
4. Whenever a member is participating in any iPride or ASANA event.
5. Whenever a member is participating in any event of other organizations/leagues associated with iPride or ASANA, including tournaments.



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Code of Conduct Investigation Process:

- A Code of Conduct investigation will commence when a formal, written Code of Conduct complaint has been submitted to any AFCSL Board Member. Written complaints may be submitted via email, text, or letter. AFCSL Board Members will not accept Code of Conduct complaints referenced in verbal conversations, and the AFCSL Board Member will direct anyone having a verbal conversation to submit the complaint in writing. The written complaint will include the following information:
 - Date and time of incident
 - Location of incident
 - Teams/Players involved including name of player(s) alleged to engaged in Code of Conduct Violations and any witnesses who can provide supporting information.
 - A description of the incident including any conduct suspected to be in violation of the AFCSL Code of Conduct including a specific reference to which portion(s) of the Code of Conduct are alleged to have been violated. Complainants must be as specific as possible and avoid generalizations.
 - Any proposed resolutions/desired outcomes
- Upon receipt of the formal, written Code of Conduct complaint, the complaint will be sent to the AFCSL Assistant Commissioner within 48 hours of receipt.
- The team or individual named in the alleged Code of Conduct violation will be notified in writing of the within a reasonable time following the violation. The AFCSL Hearing Officer shall attempt to ensure that written notification occurs within (5) working days of the incident; however, failure to notify within five (5) days does not bar the AFCSL from acting on the violation.
- The AFCSL Assistant Commissioner will review the complaint and identify a minimum of three AFCSL Board members to conduct the Code of Conduct Investigation. In most circumstances, the Assistant Commissioner will act as the official hearing officer; however, the Assistant Commissioner may select a designee if they are unavailable or recuse themselves due to an actual or perceived conflict of interest.
- The Code of Conduct Committee members will all receive and review the complaint and make an initial determination about whether the complaint meets the standard for further investigation based on whether the alleged conduct represents a potential violation of one or more of the sections of the Code of Conduct.



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- Should the complaint not meet the standard for investigation, the Code of Conduct Committee may choose to contact the complainant to obtain further clarifying information or may elect not to proceed with the investigation. Should this occur, the complainant will be informed of the Committee's decision not to proceed with the investigation.
- The Code of Conduct investigation will be conducted expeditiously and thoroughly and will include interviews of the complainant, those alleged of Code of Conduct violations, and any witnesses. The Code of Conduct Committee will make every effort to complete the investigation and issue recommendations prior to the next play date if additional play dates are scheduled.
- Violations will be heard by either the Hearing Officer, or if the Hearing Officer is not available, by a League Co-Commissioner. A hearing may be either in person, virtual, or in writing. A participant who has been charged with a violation may request, in writing, an "in person" hearing. This is to expedite the hearing of violations. For violations that involve a sanction of less than a one-year suspension or longer, or expulsion, the ruling is final.
- Once the recommendation is determined, the Assistant Commissioner (or designee) will contact the complainant and any player alleged to have violated the Code of Conduct to explain recommendations, if any, and to let them know the final disposition of the investigation.
- Violations for which the penalty recommended by the Hearing Officer is expulsion from league activities or suspension for one (1) year or longer shall be reviewed by the Board of Officers. The participant affected may submit a written appeal of the findings of the Code of Conduct Hearing Committee. The Board of Officers may affirm the findings of the Code of Conduct Committee or amend the findings. If the Board of Officers amends the findings of the Code of Conduct Committee, it must issue its own findings regarding the alleged violation(s). The decision of the Board of Officers is will be final whether affirming or amending the findings of the Code of Conduct Committee.
- All decisions of the Code of Conduct Committee are final and may not be appealed.
- Any recommendation of the Code of Conduct Committee which includes a suspension or expulsion will be presented to the AFCSL Executive Board for their approval which must include a majority vote of the AFCSL Executive Board Members.
- After a hearing or review, a written decision will be issued in a reasonable time, if possible, within five (5) working days of the hearing; however, failure to issue a decision in that time shall not bar the Board of Officers from acting on the violation. The final recommendations of the Code of Conduct hearing will be communicated to the individual alleged and the individual submitting the Code of Conduct concern to ensure transparency.



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- Team Managers will be notified of changes in the Code of Conduct. It is the responsibility of Team Managers to notify their players of changes. As a voluntary participant of the AFCSL, by signing this document, you attest that you have read, understand and agree to the terms of the AFCSL Code of Conduct and agree to conduct yourself in a responsible manner consistent with good sportsmanship as required to represent the AFCSL. This includes all league sponsored or affiliated meetings, events, tournaments and play. In addition, the Code of Conduct covers "off the field" behavior at any league complex while play is occurring.

Potential Sanctions:

Actions related to the following violations are within the discretion of the game official(s), Hearing Officer (Asst. Commissioner or designee), Umpire in Charge (UIC), and/or AFCSL Board Officers:

1. Participants may not threaten or flagrantly disrespect the umpire or umpire's decisions. The team manager is solely responsible for maintaining control of players while on the field and spectators associated with the team.
2. Participants may not threaten, posture towards, or disrespect players, coaches, managers or spectators.
3. Unnecessary physical contact with other players or rough tactics on the field is prohibited.
4. Use of profanity or other degrading/obscene language in any manner is prohibited.
5. Use of alcohol or intoxicating substances before or during a game or practice is prohibited.
6. Throwing any objects for any reason that could be dangerous is prohibited.
7. Failure to comply with the rules and regulations for any playing area used by the AFCSL.
8. Participants must not make derogatory statements or remarks based on gender identity, gender expression, sex, race, age, religion, color, creed, disability, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, marital status.
9. Participants must not partake in harassment or bullying.
10. Participants shall not use profane, obscene, or vulgar language directed at or towards any player, official, or umpire, on or off the playing field at any time.
11. Participants shall not disparage, verbally or in writing, the personal character of umpires, officials, coaches, board members, or other participants in the league.

Note: Due to their elevated and visible positions, AFCSL umpires, managers, coaches, and Board members may be held to a higher standard, and punishment may be more severe.

Any player who is ejected by an umpire, Umpire in Charge (UIC) and/or Board Officer **is automatically suspended from their team's next scheduled game**. The Board Officers and the UIC have the authority to use discretion and act on unsportsmanlike conduct, not expressly listed here depending on the circumstances.



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The following violations may result in minimum of one (1) year disqualification or suspension of eligibility and forfeiture of monies paid or due the player or team. These violations may include up to a permanent ban from the league.

1. Tournament misconduct or unsportsmanlike conduct at a tournament
2. Commission of fraud (such as playing under an assumed name, falsifying a roster, misrepresenting identity by knowingly and intentionally switching numbers or jerseys, attempting to play in any iPride event while under suspension/expulsion))
3. Receiving professional consideration (such as money or cash prizes)
4. Competing with a suspended or ineligible player
5. **Zero tolerance** for verbal or physical abuse or violence of any kind, including threatening/intimidating behavior, toward players or staff (including umpires).