

**2022 Niagara Girls Minor Softball Association Constitution**

ARTICLE 1: NAME

1. The name of the organization shall be the Niagara Girls' Minor Softball Association
2. The “Thundercat name and logo is the property of the NGMSA and cannot be used or reproduced in any form without the written approval of the NGMSA Executive.

ARTICLE 2: OBJECTIVES

* 1. The objectives of the Association shall be:
	2. To foster and improve amateur softball in Niagara Falls and surrounding districts in accordance with the standards set down by the Provincial Women's Softball Association.
	3. To affiliate and be governed by the constitution of the P.W.S.A.
	4. To institute and regulate competition in softball among its members and arrange such games as will best serve the interest of softball.
	5. To offer each player equal opportunity to learn and play the game and develop in the spirit of fair play, sportsmanship and ethical standards.
	6. To organize and develop minor girls' softball competition in the City of Niagara Falls.
	7. To consist of both House and Rep teams as required to facilitate the needs of its membership.

ARTICLE 3: MEMBERSHIP

1. The membership shall consist of young ladies, coaches and managers conforming to the constitution and by-laws of the Association, P.W.S.A. Any person present at any NGMSA event that fails to abide by the constitution, by laws, rules and regulations or acts in a manner detrimental to the NGMSA may be suspended or expelled. If the President feels justified, he/she may indefinitely suspend any person or team for just cause. The suspended individual or team has the right to ask for a hearing before a review committee to be held within 15 days of the request. The President will appoint 3 committee members from the present Executive to complete the hearing and provide recommendations to Executive at the next scheduled meeting. Executive will have the final say on all disciplinary decisions.
2. Membership terminates:
3. When registration fees are not paid prior to first game of season.
4. Upon suspension from the League
5. Upon a player’s resignation from their team,
6. Upon dissolution of the Association
7. Termination of membership for items b, c, d will not entitle the member to a refund of fees.

ARTICLE 4: ELECTED AND APPOINTED EXECUTIVE

1. The elected officers of the League shall be: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer and three additional Executive positions.
2. The appointed committee members of the League shall consist of but not be limited to: Five (5) Convenors (Learn to Play, Mite, Intermediate, Junior, Senior and Travelling Teams), Registrar, Equipment Manager, Field Scheduler, Fundraising, Marketing, Media, Sponsors, Uniforms, Umpire Liaison, Banquet, Teddy Bear and Photographs. The Past President shall automatically become a part of the next year’s executive and will assist the President for a one year term
3. President and Treasurer shall be voted on in odd years and, Vice President, and Secretary shall be voted on in even years with each position carrying a two year term.
4. No person shall be elected as an Executive member unless he/she has served the current year as a registered coach or an officer of the N.G.M.S.A.
5. Appointed committee members shall be appointed by the elected executive and given voting power at the meetings during their term of office.

ARTICLE 5: EXECUTIVE FUNCTION

1. The executive shall control the affairs of the Association and shall have the power to fill any vacancies which may occur in its membership and to create new positions as may be required to conduct the business of the Association. Appointments of these positions can be filled with a majority vote of the Executive.

ARTICLE 6: MEETINGS

1. The Annual Meeting will be held as soon as possible after the completion of the playing season but not later than November 30 of the current year. The Secretary shall give notice of this meeting to all executive and team representatives. The meeting will also be open to all interested in attending.
2. General Meetings will be held from September to May.
3. The order of business for the Annual Meeting shall be:
	1. Minutes of the last General meeting.
	2. President's report
	3. Correspondence
	4. Treasurer's report
	5. Amendments
	6. General business
	7. Adjournment
	8. Election of officers

ARTICLE 7: VOTING POWER

1. No individual will carry more than one (1) vote at any meeting.
2. In the event of a tie, the President shall be entitled to a second tie-breaking vote. <<Replaces: “At every general membership or executive meeting the Chairperson will only vote in case of a tie”>>
	1. Registered coaches will have voting power (maximum two (2) votes per team), providing that the registered coaches have attended at least fifty (50) percent of the scheduled General Meetings. Registered coaches will be those approved by the executive. Changes in coaching staff during the course of the year must be registered with the League secretary by the convenor not later than the playoffs.
	2. The selection of coaches should be put in writing so each coach knows how and where to apply and what selection process is used to arrive at choice of coaches. This should apply to both House League and Travel Teams
3. All parent members will have voting power at the General Meeting providing that parent has attended at least 50% of the scheduled monthly meetings and their daughter is a registered player in N.G.M.S.A.
4. Voting by “proxy” will only be allowed if circumstances warrant and the technology is available ( e.g. Conference call, face time, social media) to confirm the voter’s presence in real time.
5. Interested parties having been involved in the League and attending meetings may have one (1) vote and must have attended fifty percent (50%) of the meetings.
6. Appointed committee members will have voting power at the annual election provided they have attended at least 50 percent of general meetings.

ARTICLE 8: AMENDMENTS, NOMINATIONS, ELECTIONS

1. Amendments to the constitution shall be made only at the Annual Meeting.
2. Notice of proposed amendments must be submitted, in writing, to the League Secretary at least two (2) weeks before the Annual Meeting. Copies of the proposed amendments shall be provided to each voting delegate prior to the start of the Annual Meeting.
3. Amendments to the Constitution may be made by a 2/3 majority of the established voters present at the Annual Meeting.
4. Amendments to any By-Law may be made by the executive at any executive meeting by a simple majority vote.
5. Each Executive Position will carry a 2 year term to be voted on in alternate years as follows: Secretary and Vice President, President and Treasurer. Nominations will be made from the floor at the Annual General Meeting, but nominations for Executive positions should be forwarded to the Secretary at least 30 days prior to the Annual General Meeting. A quorum for all general, special and annual meetings shall consist of the general membership present and shall have at least four (4) of the following executives in attendance: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer. Officers shall be elected by a 2/3 majority of the voting members present.
6. Newly elected/appointed members of the Executive will assume responsibility for their positions effective 30 days after election. This will give out-going Executive members an opportunity to complete any projects that are in-progress and will ensure a smooth transition to the new Executive members.
7. No house league rule will be changed or altered unless thoroughly discussed at a meeting with at least 2/3 of the elected and appointed executive in attendance and then voted on. A 2/3 majority is required to pass the proposed change.

ARTICLE 9: PLAYING RULES

1. Playing rules shall be those recorded in the P.W.S.A. rule book except where amended by N.G.M.S.A. house league rules.

ARTICLE 10: BY-LAW 1: REGISTRATION AND CLASSIFICATION OF PLAYERS

1. All players must be registered with the respective Division Convenors before playing.
2. All players in the League must provide a birth certificate or similar proof of age when registering as well as a valid health card.
3. No person may play on or coach different teams in the same division.
4. Any potential player for any team in any division of the N.G.M.S.A. must have a fully completed registration form on file before attending any practices, and all registration fees must be paid to the League before any player participates in any game.
5. Should a registered player "quit" the team to which she was assigned, she may not be "picked up" by any other team in the N.G.M.S.A. Should that player wish to continue to play in the League, she must submit, in writing, a formal request of her intentions and ask for approval from the Executive, who will determine the disposition.
	1. House League players who sign P.W.S.A. contracts and Niagara Regional Ladies Softball Association contracts will be allowed to play in Travel Team games. They can be drawn from House League on approval from the House League coach, convenor, parents and player. House League has first call. Players will be allowed to attend practices and games and only play when the Travelling (rep) Team roster for a specific game drops below 12 players.
	2. Travelling Team players who sign P.W.S.A. contracts may be called up to play in a higher division on travel (rep) teams. This can only be done if the team roster for a specific game drops below ten (10) players. Permission must be obtained from players, parents, both coaches and Travelling Convenor.
	3. No player may play for two teams - i.e. Travel Team and House League
	EXCEPTION: As an additional signed player under rule 6-A so as to avoid forfeiture of a specific game, on condition that it does not interfere with the player's own league game or practice. When there is no NDRLSA division for that team. For Select players to be eligible to play Select, they must be registered for a House League team.
	4. A Registered player may be allowed to play in 2 divisions and on 2 different teams if necessary , to prevent a team from folding do to insufficient players.
	5. Once a player is assigned to a house league team, they cannot be removed from this house league team to play with travelling (rep) teams, unless agreed upon by both coaches, player, convenors and parents.
	EFFECT: Failure to comply with rule 6 A, B, C and D will result in a three (3) game suspension of the coach. If coach cannot reach any of the parents, convenors or other coach, he/she must have the permission of one other elected executive member.
	6. Players are considered “out of town” players if they are non-residents of Niagara Falls and were not registered with NGMSA the previous season.
	7. Rep teams can sign a maximum of 5 “out of town players”. (Non-residents of Niagara Falls). Anything above 5 must be brought to the Executive for approval.
6. a) Players that try out for Travel/ Select teams must do so in their respective age groups unless their age group is unavailable at which point they may try out for the next ~~available~~ higher age group. Exceptions must be approved by Executive.
b) Players who have played in a higher age group for travel due to unavailability of their age group in the previous year may continue to try out for the age group they played with the year before.

c) If the Executive and Select coaches of the higher age group deem that a player is exceptional, that player may try out for the Travel/ Select team above their age group.

1. Travel Rep teams must apply to the League Executive for permission to participate in any league other than the NGMSA <<Replaces: Niagara District Ladies Softball League>>
2. Selection of house league team members shall be completed under the supervision and direction of the executive membership of the NGMSA and may include coaches and / or convenors.
3. A proposed travel/select team must submit the names of a minimum of 11 players, 2 coaches who have committed to the team in writing prior to the deadline set by the Executive in any given year before a team will be approved to commence.
BY-LAW 2: PLAYOFFS OR TOURNAMENTS
4. The executive shall arrange a suitable season schedule including tournaments and playoffs in all divisions.
5. In the first game of playoffs, the "home" team will be the one with the highest division standing. Thereafter, the "home" team will be decided by a coin toss prior to the game.
6. Rules for playoffs and tournaments shall be determined by the Executive and Convenors of each Division <<Replaces: coaches of that particular division.>>

BY-LAW 3: EXECUTIVE DUTIES

1. The PRESIDENT shall preside at all meetings of the League and perform all duties that are common to the office of the President.
2. The VICE-PRESIDENT will assist the President in all executive duties and shall assume the duties of the President in the absence of the President.
	1. In a case (other than a regular executive meeting) where an immediate decision is required and a full executive is not available, the President and Vice-President and two (2) other executive members can make the decision.
	2. Any such decision to be reported to a full executive at the next monthly meeting.
	3. Past President automatically becomes a member of the current executive and will serve in such capacity as requested by the executive for a one year term.
3. The SECRETARY shall keep an accurate record of all proceedings of the League, a complete record of the names and addresses of all members, conduct all correspondence and give notice of all meetings
4. The TREASURER shall keep an accurate record of monies received, deposit same in a chartered bank and pay all bills, (including collection of money and disbursements for "rep" division). The Treasurer will prepare all financial statements for the Annual Meeting and assist in the preparation of a League budget for the upcoming season.
5. DIVISION CONVENORS shall be responsible for the organization, operation and re- scheduling of their respective divisions. They are responsible to maintain discipline of players as set down by the P.W.S.A. and the C.A.S.A. Convenors will report to the President any disciplinary problems in their divisions and inform all managers and coaches of the solution.
6. All umpires are invested with the authority to handle the game and render decisions within the guidelines of the N.G.M.S.A, the constitution and rule book of the P.W.S.A. and the C.A.S.A. rule book.
7. TRAVELLING (REP) TEAM CONVENOR shall be responsible for the organization and operation of all travelling teams. This convenor is also responsible to maintain discipline of the players and coaches in line with the P.W.S.A. and the C.A.S.A. regulations. Any disciplinary problems will be reported to the President or a Vice-President and the Convenor will advise players, managers and coaches of the solutions to these problems.
8. A coach in an executive position will have no executive power when dealing with matters concerning his/her division.

BY-LAW 4: PROTESTS AND COMPLAINTS

1. Protests will be permitted for Travel games only. Intent to submit a protest during games must be advised at the time of the infraction and before the next pitch. Protests must then be submitted in writing to the NGMSA with a copy sent to the opposing coach within 48 hours after the game. Each protest must be accompanied by a fee of $20.00
2. The decision shall be made by the Umpire-in-Chief and a committee of two (2) minimum, from the executive and shall be final
3. The executive will dispense fees as follows: Protest upheld - fee returned -- Protest disallowed - fee retained
4. The Umpire-in-Chief will determine whether or not a protest is acceptable according to P.W.S.A., By-Law 5, Sections 1 through 7.

BY-LAW 5: COMPLAINTS

1. Complaints regarding league organization, function, operations, personnel, etc. shall be made in writing to the President.
2. Complaints regarding umpires shall be made in writing to the NGMSA Executive

BY-LAW 6: Harassment Policy

1. The NGMSA is committed to maintaining a harassment free environment for its members and all participants and spectators of all Association events. All participants and spectators of NGMSA events shall refrain from comments and behaviors that are disrespectful, offensive, abusive, racist or sexist. This includes but is not limited to:
	1. Physical or verbal abuse or abuse through Social Media or the harassment of an umpire, league official, coaches, players or spectators.
	2. Inappropriate language or behavior or abuse of any equipment, structure or property
	3. The NGMSA defines Harassment as improper behavior by any person towards another which a person knows or ought to know would be unwelcome. This behavior includes comments, conduct or gestures which are insulting, intimidating, humiliating, hurtful, malicious, degrading, or otherwise offensive to an individual or which creates an uncomfortable environment.
	4. All cases of harassment are to be directed to the NGMSA Executive. A committee will be appointed to review all harassment complaints. The appointed committee will report their findings and recommendations to the Executive for final disposition.
	5. Any persons using profane language at any NGMSA event may be ejected from the event. Further disciplinary action including suspension will be at the discretion of the League Executive
	6. A copy of the NGMSA’s full harassment Policy can be found on the League’s website.

