



**NOBSCOT VALLEY SOFTBALL
UMPIRE ASSOCIATION, INC.**



NVSUA

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES



of Massachusetts

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

The NVSUA Operational Procedures is a work in progress, as the game of softball is continually changing. It is recognized that this document requires continuous upgrade, and it is emphasized that all members are encouraged to review and contribute to maintaining this document as a viable instrument of this association. This document also serves as a guideline to the members of the association to be knowledgeable of its contents and to strive to abide by what is set forth therein, as a way to improve themselves as USA Softball umpires, and to improve the image of themselves, the association and USA Softball as a whole.

Operational Procedures can be modified, added to, or removed by action of the Executive Board based on a simple majority vote of the members of the Executive Board. Any such changes must be announced to the general membership within 30 days.

- Should members of NVSUA disagree with any change to the Operational Procedures, they may send an email notification of the disagreement to the Executive Board who will review the request and act upon it.
- Should the member(s) continue to disagree, they may obtain a request of at least 15% of the members to hold a meeting of all membership to discuss and vote on the change.
- In order to effect a change, the meeting must be attended by quorum (1/3 of the general membership) and the change must be voted by a simple majority of those present.

1 - MEMBERSHIP

All NVSUA Umpires

- Members are not employees of NVSUA, the Assignor, or any other assignor. They provide their services to officiate softball as independent contractors.
- All members shall work for the betterment of NVSUA.
- Entitled and insured to work USA Softball games assigned by any assignor approved by the Commissioner of the USA Softball of Massachusetts.
- May work any sanctioned USA Softball games.
- Entitled to work scholastic softball games, with the limitations that first and second -year officials are discouraged to work at the High School Varsity level, and umpires not yet 18 years of age should not work at a level higher than 8th-grade middle school.
- Have the right to wear the USA Softball uniform, display USA Softball on their hat, and to display the national USA Softball emblem on their uniform until USA Softball of Massachusetts states otherwise.
- When officiating any game of softball, umpires should be attired in the uniform currently prescribed by USA Softball of Massachusetts. It is important that when working with a partner, umpires be dressed similarly, including color and style.
- Should not (knowingly) work with any umpire who is not a certified umpire of USA Softball.
- Invited to attend the candidate classes at any time, at no charge, as a refresher. Second year umpires are strongly encouraged to attend the New Candidate classes at no charge.
- Active & Inactive Members retain the right to vote

- Any member not voting will be considered an abstention, and will not be counted towards the two-thirds requirement.
- Any members who feel that their rights have been violated, may write the Executive Board, detailing their grievances. The Executive Board will decide on such matters.

ACTIVE MEMBERS are required to remain in good standing. Members in Good Standing can be revoked by an action of Discipline Committee with confirmation by the Executive Board. The decision around member in good standing must be submitted, in writing, to the member in question.

Such status is determined by the following:

- **MEETINGS:**
 - Attend the annual Rules Interpretation Meeting
 - Attend the annual Business, Elections, and Bylaw changes Meeting
 - Attend Mechanics Meetings, if held in the year
 - Attend Training, if required by the Executive Board
 - Obtain an exception to meeting attendance in writing from the Executive Board and follow up within 30-days
- **DUES:**
 - Pay dues no later than the date determined by the Executive Board
 - \$45 for ACTIVE members
 - \$25 additional fee if dues are paid after the date determined by the Executive Board
 - \$0 for ACTIVE (First Year) members
 - \$0 for INACTIVE members
- **COMPLETE:**
 - Register with USA Softball
 - SafeSport, as part of USA Softball Registration
 - Pass USA Softball sponsored background check
 - National USA Softball Exam
- **ADDITIONAL:**
 - Required to have email capability for communication
 - Access to the Arbiter website for assignment purposes
 - Provide an email address, cellphone number, and a photo in the Arbiter system.

NEW UMPIRES (must also complete the following)

- Must take a training class, which is run by the USA Softball of Massachusetts Umpire in Chief training staff.
- Must take one or more field training sessions provided by NVSUA, as determined by the NVSUA Umpire in Chief.
- Will be assigned a mentor within NVSUA to observe and instruct, answer any questions that may arise, and generally assist the new member in their development as an umpire.
- It is NOT suggested that new umpires officiate High School level games
 - a. Members who wish to work HS Games should confer with the UIC/Asst UIC.

INACTIVE MEMBERS

- Members requesting inactive status must send an email to the Secretary prior to the dues deadline announcing their intention.
- Members can only be inactive for 1 year.

PREVIOUS MEMBERS (who have been away for more than 1 year)

- May be required to take the new member class, as determined the NVSUA Umpire in Chief and Assignor. Note that this is determined on a case by case basis.

HONORARY MEMBERS

- Any member who has retired from the NVSUA board or to any person that has demonstrated his/her support to the betterment of softball.
- This form of membership must be approved by a majority vote of the members present at a regular or special meeting.
- Honorary members shall carry no voting privileges and may not hold office, although honorary members are welcome to attend meetings and to speak on matters of interest to them.
- No dues are required based on this status.

2 - ANNUAL STIPENDS

Executive Board Officers & key non-officer positions, as described in the Constitution, will receive compensation for their time in the form of a stipend. Additionally, NVSUA will maintain a Directors and Officers liability insurance policy for all Officers & Directors.

OFFICERS

- President - \$75
- Vice-President - \$75
- Secretary - \$75
- Treasurer - \$75
 - (If combined, Secretary & Treasurer - \$150)
- Umpire in Chief - \$75
- Assistant Umpire in Chief - \$75
- Assignor - \$75
- Immediate Past President - \$75
- At-Large - \$75

DIRECTORS

- Registrar - \$75
- Webmaster - \$75

3 - UNIFORM

When officiating any game under the jurisdiction of USA Softball, umpires should be attired in the uniform currently prescribed by USA Softball.

- **REQUIRED UNIFORM** (which can be purchased at officialgear.com)
 - USA Softball Hat (unless using a hockey style mask when working the plate)
 - USA Softball Ball Bag (at least one when working the plate)

- No Ball Bag worn when working the bases
- USA Softball Shirt
 - Powder Blue, Navy Blue and Pink are acceptable
 - NOTE: USA Softball of Massachusetts does not prefer the white shirt
- USA Softball Jacket (Short or Long Sleeve)
- Gray Pants/Blue Pants
- All Black Shoes
- Black Socks
- Black Leather Belt
- **DRESSED IDENTICALLY:** It is required that when working with a partner, umpires be dressed identically, including color of shirt and pants. If an umpire is wearing a jacket, it is permissible for the other to be wearing a shirt.
- **COVERING ARMS:** If there is a reason for covering the arms, the only acceptable items are the long sleeve powder blue USA Softball shirt or the USA Softball jacket.
 - Do not wear a Long Sleeve Shirt under a Short Sleeve Umpire Shirt.

4 - COMMITTEES

NVSUA members in good standing are encouraged to serve on committees in order to assist in the management and betterment of NVSUA, USA Softball, and/or USA Softball of Massachusetts. The Executive Board retains the right to appoint members to head up or serve on any committee.

Current Committees are:

- Disciplinary
- Constitution & By-Laws/Operational Procedures
- Fundraising/Tournament/Scholarship
- USA Softball Medals/Recruiting/Membership

5 - ASSIGNMENTS

The Assignor and any sub-assignors do a lot of work behind the scenes to ensure all games are covered and all umpires are working as they are able. Therefore, it is important to follow a set of rules.

- Umpires must review and update their BLOCKS in Arbiter on a regular basis. Note that if an umpire is not blocked in Arbiter, they are presumed to be available and may be assigned a game. Repeatedly declining game assignments on dates that the umpire appears open in Arbiter will result in discipline committee action.
- Umpires must accept or decline games assigned in Arbiter within 48 hours of publication.
- Should an umpire need to turn back an accepted game assignment, it must be requested via email to the Assignor at least 24 hours prior to the game.
- Under no circumstances should an umpire transfer a game assignment to another umpire.

When inclement weather is anticipated for a league or youth recreation game, the umpire will follow one or more of the following procedures to determine if the game(s) has been canceled:

- A. Call the appropriate league/town representative listed on the reminder email
- B. Call the Assignor ONLY if no one from the league/town can be reached

- C. If all else fails, the umpire must report to the field.
- D. Checking for game status should be performed no earlier than 90 minutes prior to game time.

6 - MEMBER PRIVACY

The personal information given to NVSUA is used for softball only. This information will not be given out to an individual or organization for individual, organizational, or corporate gain. The personal information is distributed to USA Softball, and/or USA Softball of Massachusetts as required. Any other requests will be reviewed by the board for approval. If the board determines a vote of approval by the membership is needed for distribution of personal information other than for softball, the board will request a vote by a special meeting or email using valid email addresses.

The board expects the membership to follow the above guidelines as well. If a member uses the membership roster to contact an individual member or the entire membership for anything not pertaining to NVSUA softball or softball itself without written permission from the individual who was contacted or the board, such use will be subject to the following disciplinary action.

The offending member will be referred to the Discipline Committee for further action, pursuant to the NVSUA Discipline Procedures.

7 - SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

All Members are prohibited from posting anything on social media – direct or implied– that could be viewed as negative, critical, or derogatory with reference to the NVSUA, any member, or any league or group served by NVSUA, USA Softball, USA Softball of Massachusetts, or MIAA

Posting critical comments on officiating on a social media platform is prohibited by any member of the NVSUA. Much like professional sports, college sports, or MIAA, commenting on officiating via any media platform (print, electronic, social or otherwise) is not allowed.

The offending member will be referred to the Discipline Committee for further action, pursuant to the NVSUA Discipline Procedures.

8 - DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

1. Incident Reported to Executive Board member, most likely Assignor or UIC, but could be anyone
2. If needed, Executive Board member, in consultation with as many other members as available on short notice, can take emergency but temporary action
3. Incident referred to Discipline Committee
4. Discipline committee will meet at least once per month and as needed within 3 calendar days of the incident
 - a. NOTE: Meeting can be by phone or Zoom or in person (when COVID rules allow)
 - b. NOTE: Meeting does NOT require ALL members
5. Discipline committee sends separate emails to all parties involved asking for written description on incident, if needed (other witnesses included)

6. Discipline committee makes recommendation on action to be taken and sends to Executive Board within 7 calendar days of the incident
7. Executive Board meets (phone, Zoom, in person) with a representative(s) of the Discipline Committee to understand outcome within 3 calendar days of the notice from the committee
8. Executive Board votes to accept or modify action
9. Executive Board contacts umpire being acted upon to present findings within 24 hours of decision
 - a. NOTE: Should probably be UIC or Assignor depending on type of incident (in game, failure to arrive, etc.) DISCUSS
10. Once the umpire is notified of action, there are 3 possible next steps:
 - a. Umpire will be asked to respond and specify acceptance of action within 3 calendar days of the notification email – UMPIRE RESPONDS
 - b. Umpire does not respond at all, email will note that no response in 3 calendar days will be considered acceptance and will be final
 - c. Umpire may notify the Executive Board of appeal within 3 calendar days of email being sent with decision
11. Appeal will be before the Executive Board within 10 days of umpire notification of appeal
 - a. Can be held with available Executive Board members, All not required
 - b. Decision of Executive Board on appeal is FINAL

Potential Actions:

- Censure – umpire will have a written notice of the incident, why it is wrong, and a statement that it will not be accepted if it happens again.
- Censure with observation – umpire will additionally have an opportunity to be observed multiple times to verify that the action leading to the incident has been corrected (most applicable to on field items such as wrong uniform, mechanics, rule application, etc.)
- Probation – further incidents will have more serious consequences
- Suspension – Referred to USA Softball of Massachusetts Commissioner and Umpire in Chief for final determination; no further game assignments, existing game assignments removed, for a period of time
- Expulsion – Referred to USA Softball of Massachusetts Commissioner and Umpire in Chief for final determination; most severe (hope to never see this), umpire removed from NVSUA membership and notification sent to State UIC

REVISIONS

1/31/2022 – New Document

1/9/2022

- Create new document
- Section 6 Member Privacy copied by By-Laws
- Section 7 Social Media copied from By-Laws
- Section 8 Disciplinary Procedures created
- Created Section 5 from By-Law 2.5 - Assignments
- Added Section 4 Committees
- Created Section 3 from By-Law 2.3 - Uniforms
- Added preamble from By-Laws Caveat section
- Added Members section with expanded details
- Stipends section added from By-Laws
- Moved last section to top, preamble
- Aligned stipends