



**Arlington Girls Softball Association**  
**Sage Program**  
**Tournament/Travel Teams**



**1. Mission:**

The SAGE Program will provide motivated and talented fastpitch softball players the opportunity to achieve a higher level of play as individuals and as members of a team.

**2. Tournament/Travel Program:**

The SAGE Program is an extension of the Arlington Girls Softball Association regular or "House" league program. Team(s) will be formed each August/September to begin an eleven (11) month developmental program that will involve competitive league and tournament/travel play. The Program will strive to provide opportunities for play at all age groups: from the 10 and Under to the 18 and Under level. The scope of the Program will depend upon both interest and capacity of the Association to host such teams. Unless otherwise stated in this charter, the rules and by-laws of the Arlington Girls Softball Association apply, as amended and approved by the Executive Board.

**2.1 Tournament Program Administration:**

The SAGE Program's administration will be composed of the SAGE Commissioner, the Tournament Team Business Manager and the coaches of the participating teams. The SAGE Commissioner will be elected as part of the annual AGSA Executive Board elections.

**2.2 The SAGE Commissioner:**

The position of SAGE Tournament Team Commissioner will be an elected member to the AGSA Executive Board. The SAGE Commissioner will be the overall manager of the SAGE Program having the same administrative authority as other AGSA League Commissioners. The SAGE Commissioner will appoint a Tournament Business Manager (TBM) for the Program. The SAGE Commissioner has responsibility for recruiting coaches, coordinating team tryouts and tournament schedules, presenting the tournament schedule to the AGSA Executive Board, and reporting to the AGSA Executive Board on progress of the Program. The SAGE Commissioner should not be a current Head Coach of a tournament/travel team.

**2.3 The Tournament Business Manager (TBM):**

The Tournament Business Manager (TBM), appointed by the SAGE Commissioner, will work with each team's Team Coach/Manager to develop team budgets, secure team insurance and insure that all players have completed all requirements to participate on the tournament/travel teams. The TBM will report to the SAGE Commissioner. The AGSA Treasurer will provide guidance as required to support the work of the TBM.

### **3. Tournament Year and Reporting Requirements:**

#### **3.1 Tournament Year**

It is expected that the individual tournament/travel teams will be formed in August/September. Ideally, the teams will be formed in August and play a tournament schedule beginning in September and continuing through July/early August of the following year.

#### **3.2 Team Budget**

Each team will prepare a budget for the upcoming season (Fall or Spring/Summer) along with a schedule of planned tournaments, doubleheaders, scrimmages or other team events and present to the Sage Commissioner at least one week prior to the dates listed below in 3.3 .

#### **3.3 AGSA Executive Board Approval**

The SAGE Commissioner will prepare and present to the AGSA Executive Board a plan for the tournament year with a schedule of events for the Spring/Summer by no later than March 15<sup>th</sup> and for the Fall/Winter by September 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **4. Tournament Team Coaching Staff:**

#### **4.1 Selection Procedure**

The Arlington Girls Softball Association is committed to providing the highest quality coaching support possible for the SAGE Program Teams. Coaches at this level will be subject to annual evaluation through an anonymous survey of players and their parents., The SAGE Commissioner will recruit the team coaches in accordance with the following procedures approved by the AGSA Executive Board:

#### **4.2 Process**

SAGE coaches will be selected by the AGSA Executive Board, based on nominations submitted by the SAGE Program Coach Selection Committee. Committee members shall include the SAGE Commissioner as elected by the Executive Board, two parent/adult members of AGSA as appointed by the Board as at-large committee members (who need not be Executive Board members), the House League Commissioner for the corresponding age group, and, as ex officio member, the AGSA Executive Board President. Thus the composition of the Selection Committee will vary slightly (by one member, the age-appropriate House League Commissioner) for each SAGE age group. In cases where no age-appropriate House League exists, the commissioner for the age group closest to that of the SAGE team will be empanelled.

No member of the Coach Selection Committee may be a candidate for the SAGE head coaching position on which they are selecting.

The committee will advertise for coaching candidates defining a clear cut off date for application. Coaching candidates will be asked to provide a coaching resume, a statement of their coaching philosophy, and softball related references to the Selection Committee.

The criteria for head coach selection will include, but not be limited to: previous SAGE experience; years of coaching; level of coaching; level of success; their ongoing education (attendance at coaching clinics); the ability to communicate their policies and philosophy; ability to motivate; and their ability to develop a team/parent consensus for success.

The Selection Committee will present a list of recommendations for head coach positions for the several SAGE teams, one per team, to the Executive Board for approval. In cases where an Executive Board member is him/herself a candidate for a SAGE team's head coach position, or where a blood or by-marriage relative of that member is a candidate, that Executive Board member must excuse him/herself from voting on that SAGE team's head coach due to having a conflict of interest. A two-thirds vote of a quorum of the Executive Board is required to approve a head coach for a SAGE team. If the Executive Board does not approve the Selection Committee's recommendation, the nomination shall be returned to the Coach Selection Committee. A nominee, once rejected by the Executive Board, shall no longer be eligible for consideration for the rejected position for that playing season. Upon receipt of a rejected nomination, the Coach Selection Committee shall reopen consideration of candidates, including new candidates, and shall make a new recommendation to the Executive Board.

Once head coaching selections have been made and announced, each head coach must provide the committee with a list of prospective assistant coaches for committee approval. The Coach Selection Committee may recommend candidates for assistants.

Ideally, each SAGE Team should have a Head Coach, and 2-3 Assistant Coaches. Each team will also appoint a Team Manager to handle the many logistical, uniform, and equipment requirements of the team.

## **5. Program Relationship with House League:**

### **5.1 Sage Players and AGSA House Teams**

All Sage Players, not playing High School ball, are strongly encouraged to play on an AGSA house league team. It is expected that House Coaches and Sage Coaches will work together with the spirit of equal compromise in an effort to allow the player to participate in both programs without undue demands on their school work and other activities. Exceptions are made on an individual basis by the affected House League Commissioner and the Sage Commissioner. AGSA believes that participating in both programs is beneficial in giving players sufficient practice time and game experience to develop and refine their skills, especially at the younger age levels. The Sage players represent the next level for all AGSA players and as such are the role models for the other House League players. Their presence elevates the play of House League teams and sets the standard for skill level. Sage players are expected to lead by example, encourage other players in a positive manner and be the standard bearer for the Sage program. The SAGE Program will work closely with the House program to insure that scheduling conflicts are minimized.

## 6. Program Relationship with High School Softball Programs:

AGSA will work closely with the High School programs, to insure that scheduling conflicts are minimized and that the primacy of the High School program is maintained. The SAGE Program will complement not compete with Arlington High School Athletics.

## 7. Player, Parent/Guardian and Coach Responsibilities:

7.1 All players, parents/guardians of players and coaches participating in the SAGE Program are subject to the AGSA Code of Conduct.

### 7.2 Player Contract

All players, parents/guardians of players, and coaches in the SAGE Program must also sign a **Player/Parent/Coach Contract** that stipulates the commitment to be made by the players, parents/guardians and coaches. This contract will clearly and simply address recruitment, playing time, fees, coaching philosophy and the program schedule, which will include a plan for practices, tournaments, and other league play during the eleven months of team play. This contract will fully define what is expected and required of team members, parent/guardians and coaches. The purpose of this written agreement is to ensure that there is a clear understanding of how the team will function during the upcoming year of play. The agreement will require the signature of the player, the parent/guardian and the respective head coach.

### 7.3 Sample Contract

A suggested example of a **Player/Parent/Coach Contract** can be found in Appendix A, **Player Eligibility**

### 7.4 Player Recruitment

Recruitment for the present year's Fall and following year's Spring and Summer team play will be done prior to August if a head coach for a team has been selected before August but no later than August of the year preceding the year of play of the SAGE Team, unless circumstances require the AGSA Executive Board to declare a delay.

### 7.5 Sage Residency Requirement

The tournament/travel teams are primarily intended to improve the level of play of players from Arlington. Therefore, by definition, at least two-thirds of the tournament/travel team roster for age group s **16 and under** must consist of Arlington players and no more than one-third of the players on the tournament/travel team roster may be non-Arlington players. An Arlington player is a player who meets at least one of the following criteria:

- Is an Arlington County resident
- Has played one or more seasons under the AGSA House League Program.
- Attends school in Arlington County

This restriction is lifted for **18U** travel teams due solely to the efficacy of forming a competitive , High School age travel team within the demographic structure of Arlington County without including the neighboring communities such as Mclean, Falls Church, Alexandria, Vienna and even DC. The requirement for **18U** is to have at least one-third Arlington players on the team.

## **8. Age Requirements:**

Player eligibility will be determined by their age as of January 1<sup>st</sup> of the playing year. Players will be eligible for the following teams; 10 and Under, 12 and Under; 14 and Under; 16 and Under; and 18 and Under. There is no exception to the maximum age per team. However, players may and are encouraged to try out for older teams. However, it should be noted that the older the team, the more experience and skill that is expected of the player, and the greater the likelihood that the player may not make the older team. Trying out and not making an older team, does not guarantee a player a position on a younger team. Since tryouts occur at the same time, there is the likelihood, that rosters may become filled and finalized. Once rosters are submitted to the SAGE COMMISSIONER, coaches will only be allowed to seek replacement players from other AGSA Tournament Teams with (1) the approval of the, SAGE Commissioner (2) the consent of that player's current team Head Coach and (3) the consent of the player's parent or guardian.

## **9. Team Selection Process:**

### 9.1 Tryouts

Competitive tryouts shall be conducted in August or earlier for all tournament teams to insure all players have a fair and equitable chance to demonstrate their playing capabilities. All 'age eligible' registered players of Arlington Girls Softball Association may try out for a team. A public announcement of the tryouts will be done via newspapers, direct mailings and other advertising media, such as the AGSA Web site, to alert players of the tryout dates, times and locations.

### 9.2 Team Selection

A team of players will be selected as the 'core' team. The Head Coach also may identify a number of alternate players who will be allowed to practice with the team and attend tournaments as substitute players for injured or otherwise unavailable primary players.

A tournament travel team coach will determine the method of evaluation and the individuals doing the evaluations. An important component of the evaluation process will be consideration of the player's availability for the tournament practice and game schedule.

### 9.3 Finalizing Team Rosters

Once evaluation has been completed, the respective Head Coach(es) will submit a completed roster to the SAGE Commissioner or his/her designee and the AGSA Registrar.

## 10. Playing Time:

The coach through his/her assessment of game situations, player skills, and player development will determine game playing time. There is no guarantee, stated or implied, of playing time or particular playing position. The coach shall make every effort to provide sufficient opportunity for players to gain field and particular position play.

## 11. Team Fees:

### 11.1 Fee Allocation

Each SAGE Program team is expected to operate on a break-even basis. Each team will be responsible for paying all of its playing costs, including tournament fees, uniform costs, equipment costs, insurance, coach salaries/stipends, rental of practice facilities, and any other miscellaneous items.

### 11.2 Fee Assessment

Each team will raise the necessary funds to cover playing costs through a combination of player assessments, team sponsor donations, and/or team fundraising activities. As always, AGSA will provide financial assistance to the extent determined appropriate by the Board.

### 11.3 Establishing a Season Team Operating Budget

Before a team budget can be prepared, the Coach must first establish the schedule of tournaments and their entry fees for the season. This would also include any Fairfax County doubleheader games which also require game fees. If coaches are to be given stipends, then the amount be determined and added to the season budget. Any fee based clinics attended by the team or paid instructors brought in to work with the team need to also be accounted for in the budget. Below is an example spreadsheet that the Coach or Team Manager would submit to the Sage Commissioner which establishes a Team Operating Budget and the individual player assessments.

This example assumes 12 players on the roster, with one scholarship player.

Item	Description	Dates	Est. Cost (\$)
Tournaments	Fall Classic-Olney, MD	Sept 1-2	400
	Potomac River Clash- Sterling, VA	Sept 8-9	350
	Breast Cancer Awareness-Sterling, VA	Oct 6-7	425
	Rock 'n Rumble-Elkridge, MD	Oct 13-14	400
	USSSA Qualifier- Salisbury, MD	Oct 20-21	450
	Halloween Classic- Sterling, VA	Oct 27-28	425
Fairfax League	Doubleheaders (\$60/date)	9/16, 9/23, 11/4	180
Insurance	USSSA	Fall Season	150
Registration Fee	ASA	NA for Fall	0
Coach Stipends	Two (2) Assistants	Fall season	400
Professional Instructors	Pitching lessons @ \$50 ea. week	5 weeks	250
	Hitting Lessons @ \$50 ea. week	5 weeks	250
Paid Team Clinic	5 Star Athletics Clinic	Aug. 29	300
Equipment	Nets, team bat, heavy balls	Fall Season	300

Miscellaneous	Line-up cards, rosin, coach shirts, etc	Fall season	200
Scholarships*	50% discount -1 family	Fall season	350
<b>*Cost of scholarship is shared 50/50 between Team and Sage Scholarship Fund</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4830</b>
Fundraising	Carwash, Dine out		+500
Sponsors	District Taco, Cowboy Cafe		+500
		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1000</b>
<b>Additional Individual Expenses- Note: this assumes player needs new uniform, bag and helmet</b>			
Uniforms*	Pants, jersey, socks,etc	\$125-150 estimated	
Sage Bags	Regular size or wheeled version	\$50 reg size-\$125 wheeled catchers bag	
Sage Batting Helmet	Customized, Fitted helmet	\$50	
		<b>Total Individual Expense</b>	<b>~\$200</b>
Team Assessment= (\$4830 expenses) – (\$1000 fundraising/sponsors) ÷( 11 non-scholarship players ) = <b>\$348</b>			
Estimated cost to each family for the Fall season = \$348 + \$200= <b>\$548</b>			

## 12. Practice:

### 12.1 Field Allocations

Practice slots (field, day, time) are coordinated through the Sage Commissioner. All requests will be submitted to the Sage Commissioner prior to the start of the season and then integrated into the House League schedule before submission to the County for field permits. In general, younger teams (10U-12U) will be granted the early 6:00-8:00 time slots on weekdays, while older Sage teams (14U-18U) will have the 8:00-10:00 slots on weekdays. Weekend slots will also be available upon request, knowing that House League games have priority for fields.

### 12.2 Batting Cages

A team that has been assigned a field will have priority over the batting cage designated for that particular field. The exception to that policy is Greenbrier #1 field (Yorktown Varsity Field). There are two (2) batting cages at that field and two pitching machines that remain in the cages throughout the season. One of these batting cages must be shared with any AGSA softball team (Sage or House) practicing on Field #2 , the Yorktown JV field.

## APPENDIX



### 2012-FALL SEASON

#### SAGE

#### Sample Player/Parent/Coach Contract



**HEAD COACH:**  
**ASSISTANT COACH:**  
**TEAM MANAGER:**

**Team Mission:** The Sage travel team will provide motivated and talented fastpitch softball players the opportunity to achieve a higher level of play as individuals and as members of a team. The Sage program demands an elevated degree of dedication and commitment on the part of the players, parents, and coaches.

#### **Commitment:**

- Each player will attend every practice, game, and tournament.
- Families will plan vacations and other obligations around tournaments, which we schedule well in advance.
- Sage does not guarantee equal playing time. The Sage program philosophy gives some playing time to everyone. Each player must earn playing time.

**ELIGIBILITY:** Girls born **on or after January 1, 1990** will be eligible for the Fall 2007 **and** entire 2008 season.

**PRACTICES:** All practices are mandatory unless specifically stated otherwise by the head coach. Every player is expected to arrive on time, meaning 10 minutes before the stated practice time, in order to have cleats on, gloves in hand, and be ready to run and stretch at the practice start time. Excused absences must be approved in advance by the head coach. Practice is not just important to the individual player, but is important to the development of the entire team, as new plays or signals may be introduced during practice sessions. It is for this reason that absence from a practice will directly result in reduced playing time for that individual. Chronic absence from practice could result in dismissal from the team.

#### **PRACTICE SCHEDULE:**

- 1x per week with additional Sunday morning practices on weekends when there is no tournament
- Possible additional practice time for pitchers and catchers (TBD)

#### **Fall Tournament Schedule**

September 29-30 – Fear the Fastpitch Tournament, Glen Burnie, MD  
October 6-7 - Fall Showcase Tournament, Glen Burnie, MD  
October 13-14 - USSSA Showcase Tournament, Allentown, PA  
November 3-4 - East Coast Showcase Tournament, Sterling, VA

**Players, Parents, and Coaches Expectations and Conduct:** All Sage players, parents and coaches are bound by the Code of Conduct that applies to all who participate in AGSA-sponsored activities.

The Sage travel teams represent girls' fastpitch softball programs in general, and specifically the youth of Arlington County. We take this responsibility very seriously. We want players, parents, and coaches to enjoy their experience with Sage. However, we insist that certain etiquette be maintained while in the company of the team:

#### **A player:**

- will demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times.
- will arrive on time and prepared for games, tournaments, and practices.
- will wear the official team uniform; no jewelry is allowed.
- will not argue with officials or dispute calls. This is the responsibility of the coaches alone.

- will keep their focus on the game when not on the field. Spirited bench players almost always infect their teammates with optimism and extra energy.
- will not eat or use cell phone during games or practices, unless approved by the head coach.
- will not leave the bench area during a game unless approved by the head coach.
- will not cheer in any way to belittle the opposing team or individual players.
- will not use foul language under any circumstance.

**Parents:**

- will demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times.
- will not belittle the umpires, opposing team or individual players.
- will insist that their daughter try to work out issues directly with the coaches before enlisting parents' direct assistance. Learning to deal with authority figures is one of the supreme benefits of participation in organized sports.
- will honor the 24-hour rule - If parents have a concern that requires them to speak directly with a coach, parents are expected to wait at least 24 hours after the triggering event. Cooler heads (on the part of the parents and coaches) are inevitably more productive.

**Coaches:**

- will demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times.
- will arrive on time and prepared for games, tournaments, and practices.
- will conduct themselves in a respectable manner (ie. no foul language, belittling comments, or shouting) when disputing official calls.
- will not use foul language under any circumstance.
- will honor the 24-hour rule - If coaches have a concern that requires them to speak directly with a parent, coaches are expected to wait at least 24 hours after the triggering event. Cooler heads (on the part of the parents and coaches) are inevitably more productive.
- will adhere to a positive coaching philosophy – to develop the girls not only as softball players, but as young women as well. In this light, coaches will do their best to turn less than desirable situations into learning experiences.

Cost: Fee schedule is attached.

New players will be assessed an additional fee for uniform and equipment.

Signatures of commitment:

\_\_\_\_\_

Player

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent

\_\_\_\_\_

Head Coach

