

New South Softball League



Constitution

And

By-Laws



CONSTITUTION and BY-LAWS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Constitutional Article 1:	Mission Statement	4
Constitutional Article 2:	Organization	5
Constitutional Article 3:	Definition of LGBTQ	6
Constitutional Article 4:	Objectives	7
Constitutional Article 5:	Duration	8
Constitutional Article 6:	Organizational Structure	9
Constitutional Article 7:	Procedures	10
BY-LAWS SECTION 1:	MEMBERSHIP	11
BY-LAWS SECTION 2:	TEAM ROSTERS	13
BY-LAWS SECTION 3:	ADMINISTRATION	14
BY-LAWS SECTION 4:	GENERAL COUNCIL	20
BY-LAWS SECTION 5:	MEETINGS	21
BY-LAWS SECTION 6:	ELEGIBILITY	22
BY-LAWS SECTION 7:	PENALTIES/CONDUCT	26
BY-LAWS SECTION 8:	PLAYER/TEAM RATINGS	27
BY-LAWS SECTION 9:	SCHEDULE AND REGULATION GAME	27
BY-LAWS SECTION 10:	OFFICIATING	28
BY-LAWS SECTION 11:	PROTEST GUIDELINES	29
BY-LAWS SECTION 12:	DESIGNATED TEAM REP. FOR PROTEST	30
BY-LAWS APPENDIX 1:	NSSL RULE OF PLAY	31
BY-LAWS APPENDIX 2:	NSSL GRIVEANCE GUIDELINES	32
BY-LAWS APPENDIX 3:	NAGAAA RATINGS GUIDELINES	35

New South Softball League **CONSTITUTION**

Article 1:

Mission Statement

To provide and protect the opportunity for individuals who support the bonds of LGBTQ fellowship and equality to play softball in an atmosphere of friendly competition, free of discrimination on the basis of age, race, creed, religion, sex, national origin, or ability.

New South Softball League
CONSTITUTION

Article 2:

Organization

The name of our organization shall be deemed and known as the New South Softball League, hereinafter, referred to as The League, and or NSSL.

The New South Softball League or NSSL shall govern itself as a non-profit organization under the laws of the state of Alabama.

New South Softball League

CONSTITUTION

Article 3:

Definition of LGBTQ(IA)

The definition of LGBTQ(IA) that the New South Softball League recognizes is as follows:

- L- Lesbian
- G- Gay
- B- Bisexual
- T- Transgender
- Q- Questioning/Queer

For a more detailed explanation of these terms we strongly encourage you to visit <https://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/educated/glossary>

New South Softball League
CONSTITUTION

Article 4:

Objectives

To continue and maintain active membership in the North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance (NAGAAA).

To Promote and encourage participation within the LGBTQIA and Allies Community in league sanctioned play including an annual invitational tournament locally, and or traveling to other sanctioned tournaments throughout the United States.

To always uphold the utmost respect and show equality for our league, its players, Allies, and supporters.

New South Softball League
CONSTITUTION

Article 5:

Duration

The period and duration of the NSSL League is indefinite or can be defined as Spring and Fall seasons.

New South Softball League

CONSTITUTION

Article 6:

Organizational Structure

Executive Board

The Executive Board will be comprised of the Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, Treasurer, Secretary, Public Relations Director, Statistician/By-Laws Director and Tournament Director. No person on the Executive Board will be allowed to act as a voting team representative in addition to his/her voting privileges as a Board Member. The Executive Board shall serve in accordance with the terms and responsibilities as set forth in the New South Softball League's By-Laws.

General Council

The General Council shall consist of the entire Executive Board and one (1) representative from each active member team. Participating teams are defined in the NSSL By-Laws. The General Council shall serve in accordance with the terms and responsibilities as set forth in the New South Softball League's By-Laws.

New South Softball League

CONSTITUTION

Article 7:

Procedures

Notification

Amendments to the Constitution/By-Laws may be proposed by any member of the League at large. Such proposed amendments must be presented in writing to the Executive Board via email to NSSLexecboard@gmail.com and or at any of the League General Council meetings.

Presentation

Any proposed changes presented to the Executive Board may be approved or rejected by a majority vote from the Executive Board and General Council. If any proposed change is approved, they will be set forth in the next General Council meeting.

Ratification of Amendments

Ratification of an amendment or By-Law to the Constitution will require a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote by the General Council.

Ratification of Constitution

This Constitution/bylaw shall be accepted and or approved when a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the current General Council of the NSSL vote affirm the acceptance of these articles. Once the Constitution/bylaws are ratified (or agreed upon), they will indefinitely stay in effect until the Executive Board and or General Council votes to change.

New South Softball League

BY-LAWS

SECTION 1: MEMBERSHIP

1.1 Team or Individual Membership: Any “Membership” shall be yearly and open to all individuals eighteen (18) years of age or older and shall commence upon payment of yearly dues and signing a registration form/waiver of Liability.

1.2 Team Membership

1.2.1 A team is considered to have a membership when their yearly membership fee has been paid. Said team will receive a voting right at that time, but still may not be considered Active until rosters and waivers have been submitted (see Section 1.2.3)

1.2.2 Any and all teams are required to have at least 10 active players on their roster up to a Maximum of 20 players.

1.2.3. A Team will be considered Active when yearly team fees have been paid, roster has been submitted, waivers have been submitted by all players.

1.2.4 Teams participating in NSSL League regular season play and NAGAAA Gay Softball World Series play must abide by the appropriate ratio of gay to non-gay players. Gay-includes gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GBLTQIA OR LGBTQIA) individuals.

- A) At no time during regular season league play will a team have less than 50% + 1 LGBT participation in the official lineup**
- B) A player must sign a form at the beginning of the season indicating whether the player is LGBTQ or non-LGBTQ.**

1.3 Active/Non-Player Members:

Active Player – any player actively engaged as a player on the roster of a member team that has paid Membership fees.

Non-Player – any person not considered an active player is a non-field player (i.e., manager, coach, or team representative). Non-players are not required to pay a Membership fee yearly but are considered part of the League. They must however sign a waiver of Liability to enter any field locations set forth by the NSSL.

1.4 Waiver: Each active player and non-player must sign a yearly registration form to enter the league, with the understanding that his/her signature waives any claims against the NSSL, its officers, or its sponsors resulting from his/her part as a league member. This must be completed before participating in League play.

1.5 League Sponsor: Any individual(s), business(es), or organization(s) that gives a monetary donation and or good/services to the NSSL for the betterment of the League and or its members.

1.6 Team Expulsion: The Executive Board reserves the right to suggest cancelling a team's membership at any time for violating any of the by-laws set forth in this document. If such a determination is made, a 2/3 majority vote is required, and the expulsion is handed down, the violating team shall not be entitled to any refunds of any league fees, including but not limited to Membership Fees, Player Fees and Southern Shootout Entry Fees.

1.7 Membership Fees: Membership fees are paid at the start of the new league year and are solely intended to allow the paying team to attend league meetings and to secure one (1) vote on any General Council voting matters and elections during that year. Once the league year has started, no refunds for Membership Fees shall be refunded unless it can be documented that the team did not attend any league function after payment of the fee. Functions are defined as season games and or board meetings.

1.8 Player Fee Refunds: Any player fees paid will be subject to refund in the event that some or all of the league's regular season games are cancelled. If any games are played, the amount of the refund will be pro-rated based on the percentage of games the team has played. If a player desires a refund under any other scenario, the player must submit a written (email is acceptable) request to the Executive Board. The request will be voted on at the earliest possible convenience, and any refunds approved shall be paid within 14 days of the voting decision.



SECTION 2: TEAM ROSTERS

- 2.1 Team rosters may list no more than twenty (20) active players and two (2) non-players.
- 2.2 Opening day rosters must include the following information: full legal name, month, day of birth, and player ratings in accordance with the most current NAGAAA ratings guidelines.
- 2.3 Opening day which will be announced by the Executive Board, all team rosters must be submitted to the League Secretary **seven (7) days before** playing the first regular season game.
 - 2.3.1 This roster must be submitted, with appropriate player fees to the League or designee, at least seven (7) days prior to opening day of the season by 5:00 pm.
 - 2.3.2 Games will be counted as a forfeit until player and team fees are paid in full.
- 2.4 The NSSL Secretary will provide copies in person and by email of all team rosters to all coaches and/or managers at the beginning of the first regular season game. The secretary will also provide post-season rosters to all coaches and/or managers by the same means. This will be done after the entries have been made into the NAGAAA system.
- 2.5 If a new player is added to the team roster, the player must:
 - A) pay the player fee
 - B) sign the league waiver
- 2.6 If a new player is added to the team roster, the coach and/or manager must:
 - A) submit an updated roster to the League secretary
 - B) submit the player fee and league waiver form to the League secretary and/or any member of the Executive Board.
- 2.7 A post-season roster must be submitted to the League Secretary or designee no later than 7 days after the regular spring season ends. Rosters should include full legal name, month, day and year of birth, signature of player and player rating. This action will provide the Executive Board ample time to submit into the NAGAAA system.
- 2.8 The post-season roster will include designation of eligible players for NSSL post-season and NAGAAA for the Gay Softball World Series (GSWS) play.

SECTION 3: ADMINISTRATION

3.1 The Executive Board

3.1.1 The day-to-day operations of the League shall be carried out by the Executive Board.

3.1.2 The Executive Board shall consist of the Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, Treasurer, Secretary, Public Relations Director, Statistician/By-Laws Director and Tournament Director.

3.2 Duties of the Executive Board

Shall have the responsibility to oversee all NSSL business and implement all aspects of NSSL policies and procedures. The Executive Board may entertain changes and/or additions to the NSSL By-Laws and recommend to the Constitution and By-Laws Committee any changes for approval. The Executive Board shall assure League continuity through compliance with NAGAAA IOG (where appropriate) and ASA/USSA Rules and Regulations.

3.3 Election of the Executive Board

- A) The Executive Board will be elected to two (2) year terms with a transition period to occur no later than November 1. Elected officers will officially assume the position to which they were elected on January 1st, unless the incumbent officer wishes to vacate their position at any time after the election of the new officer. In this situation, the incoming officer will assume the position as of the day the incumbent vacates the position. The terms will be staggered with elections to the office of Commissioner, Secretary, and Public Relations Director, held in even numbered years and elections to the offices of Assistant Commissioner, Treasurer, and Statistician/By-Laws Director in odd numbered years in which the second year of a term ends.
1. No more than three members of any one team shall be eligible to serve on the Executive Board at the same time. In order for three members of one team to hold elected positions, one of these positions must be League Commissioner, so as to limit the number of officer votes to two except in cases of a tie.
 2. The only difference to this election process will be the election of the Tournament Director. The Tournament Director position will run in 2-year terms, being elected on odd years (same as Assistant Commissioner). However, the election will be held 45 days after the tournament was held.
- B) The General Council shall convene a general business meeting no later than the first Monday following Labor Day. At this meeting, the General Council shall open for nominations for the position(s) up for election. Nominations will be open until the General Council votes on the position no later than November 1.
- C) In the event that an Executive Board position becomes vacant, immediate notification will be sent out via email or in person meeting, accepting nominations. The position will be filled at the next scheduled league meeting. In the event that the commissioner's position becomes vacant, the Assistant Commissioner will assume the position of Commissioner until an election is held.

- D) The General Council shall have the power to remove any member of the Executive Board of the NSSL by a 2/3 affirmative vote for reasons of conduct not in the best interest of the league, and for failure, refusals, or inability to perform the official duties of the office.

3.4 Duties of the Commissioner:

- A. Attend and govern all Board of Director, General Council meetings and all League Functions/Fundraisers.
- B. Oversee and execute the overall general operation of the League.
- C. Direct policies and enforce all the rules of the League and perform quarterly reviews of the Executive Board.
- D. Initiate appropriate audits of league and tournament records quarterly.
- E. Delegate additional responsibilities to league officers, coaches and members
- F. Retains one vote concerning General Elections and “motions on the floor” deadlocked in a tie.
- G. Communicate regularly with the NSSL Executive Board, General Council, Coaches and Managers.
- H. Act as a liaison between the NSSL, Birmingham Amateur Softball Association, ASA/USSA, Park Officials or Field Operators.
- I. Authority to appoint certain positions as authorized:
- i. Govern Interim Executive Board positions until elections are held as authorized in
 - ii. Govern Committee Chairs unless otherwise provided by another section of the By-Laws
- J. Performs other duties as delegated by the Board
- K. Send post season rosters to NAGAAA by selected cut off time.
- L. Schedule Coach’s Clinic before start of regular season around March 1st.
- M. Hold and govern Executive Board Meetings Monthly in addition to General Council Meetings.

3.5 Duties of the Assistant Commissioner:

- A. Attend all Board of Director, General Council meetings and all League Functions/Fundraisers
- B. Conduct meetings in the absence of the Commissioner
- C. Oversee Grievance Process and Protest Process. Organize any Grievance and/or Protest Committee.
- D. Cooperate with Field Operators in securing all umpires for league play

- E. Investigate protest filed during League play with umpires.
- F. Report to Executive Board and General Council results of investigations of any protest/grievances filed
- G. Provide written documentation to the League concerning all fundraising activities
- H. Retain one vote concerning motions “on the floor”
- I. Authority to delegate responsibilities to coaches and members in relation to fundraising (marketing and public relations)
- J. Provide a complete schedule of all NSSL games to League coaches and/or team managers.
- K. In the event a game is postponed (i.e. rain delay), the game will be rescheduled by the Assistant Commissioner.
- L. Perform other duties as assigned by The Commissioner.
- M. Attend Coach’s Cline before start of regular season around March 1st.

3.6 Duties of Secretary

- A. Attend all Board of Director, General Council meetings and all League Functions/Fundraisers
- B. Preserve and maintain records taken at NSSL meetings
- C. Provide copies of the minutes to the Executive Board, General Council Members and additional teams members within 10 business days of last scheduled meeting.
- D. Maintain correspondence with all active Team Representatives
- E. Monitor NSSL rosters
- F. Confirm deadlines and information to all coaches and/or team managers.
- G. Provide copies of all NSSL rosters to League coaches and/or team managers
Prior to the start of regular season play
- H. Retain one vote concerning motions “on the floor”
- I. Maintain updated League email directory
- J. Responsible for getting signed team roster and rating guideline sheet from each team’s coach, manager, or representative at the beginning and end of the regular season
- K. Perform other duties as assigned by the Commissioner.
- L. Attend Coach’s Clinic before start of regular season around March 1st.

3.7 Duties of Treasurer

- A. Attend all Board of Director, General Council meetings and all League Functions/Fundraisers
- B. Preserve and maintain all ongoing financial records of League business
- C. Pay all League debts from League account and maintain receipts.
- D. Provide an up-to-date detailed treasurer's report at each NSSL meeting
- E. Retain one vote concerning motions "on the floor"
- F. Responsible for collecting all monies from fund raisers (within 7 days) or unless delegated to another Board Member – on a case by case basis
- G. Develop budget for League by January General Council Meeting
- H. Perform other duties as assigned by the Commissioner
- I. Funding of NSSL teams to tournaments other than NAGAAA GSWS **is not** the responsibility of the NSSL
- J. Pay any monies due to NAGAAA incurred by the league, i.e. NAGAAA dues, fines etc., within deadlines provided by NAGAAA.
- K. An expense report, including receipts, must be completed before reimbursement can be provided to any individual conducting official NSSL business. Note: this policy does not cover per diem advances to league officers representing the NSSL at official NAGAAA functions.
- L. In order to conduct business on behalf of the league, each NSSL officer shall be allocated an annual budget. Officers may spend, on official league business, up to this amount without prior approval by the Executive Board and/or General Council. Receipts for all expenses from the officer's budget must be submitted to the Treasurer no later than the next regularly scheduled General Council meeting following the date the expense was incurred. Any expenses which would exceed the annual budget must be submitted to the General Council for approval, the annual budget for officers is as follows;
 - Commissioner: \$300
 - Assistant Commissioner: \$250
 - Treasurer: \$250
 - Public Relations Director: \$250
 - Secretary: \$100
 - By-Laws and Statistician Director: \$100
 - Tournament Director \$100

Note: these funds shall be included in the annual monies designated to be returned to the league account prior to any team disbursements.

M. Attend Coach's Clinic before start of regular season around March 1st.

3.8 Duties of Public Relations Director

- A. Attend all Board of Director, General Council meetings and all League Functions/Fundraisers
- B. Create media informing the community of the NSSL
- C. Maintain NSSL website and all social media pages and perform assigned duties by Commissioner
- D. Assist with league logos, posters, flyers, and marketing materials concerning League activities
- E. Work with Assistant Commissioner for media promotions for fundraisers.
- F. Any other duties that the Executive Board agree upon
- G. Organize recruiting events
- H. Retain one vote concerning motions "on the floor"
- I. Attend Coach's Clinic before start of regular season around March 1st.

3.9 Duties of Statistician & By-Laws Director

- A. Attend all Executive Board and General Council meetings and all League Functions/Fundraisers
- B. Collect all weekly scorecards from winning teams
- C. Maintain all league statistics, including but not limited to: Won-Loss records and games played.
- D. Publish weekly updates to the NSSL website reflecting the results of the previous week's games and updated standings for each division.
- E. Publish updates to the league website upon completion of the Southern Shootout to reflect trophies awarded for each division.
- F. Publish list of players ineligible for World Series participation at 25%, 50%, 75% and 100% of schedule games completion.
- G. Responsible for maintaining online NSSL Instruments of Governance documents, including dates of most recent updates.

- H. Responsible for ensuring versions of outdated documents are preserved in the league office.
- I. Responsible for coordinating reviews of by-laws on annual basis and providing recommendations for amendments to the league Executive Board and/or General Council.
- J. Any other duties as assigned by the league Executive Board.
- K. Retain one vote concerning motions “on the floor.”
- L. Attend Coach’s Clinic before start of regular season around March 1st.

4.0 Duties of Tournament Director

- A. Attend all Board of Director, General Council meetings and all League Functions/Fundraisers
- B. Direct all Southern Shootout Softball Tournament activities
- C. Monitor all advertisements related to Southern Shootout.
- D. Preserve and maintain all records of tournament matter
- E. After Tournament play, submit all records to the NSSL Secretary
- F. Secure a Southern Shootout Tournament Committee
- G. Prepare and present Proposed Budget by December’s General Council Meeting
- H. Present Tournament Rules by February General Council Meeting
- I. Retain one vote concerning motions “on the floor.”
- J. Attend Coach’s Clinic before start of regular season around March 1st

SECTION 4: THE GENERAL COUNCIL

The General Council shall consist of the Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, Treasurer, Secretary, Public Relations Director, Statistician/By-Laws Director, Southern Shootout Tournament Director and one (1) representative from each team.

A proxy may be used in the event of an absent team representative provided proxy notification is transmitted hard copy/electronically to any member of the Executive Board prior to the start of the meeting.



SECTION 5: MEETINGS

5.1 Monthly Meeting

Meetings will be held monthly with time and dated agreed upon by The General Council and announced by the Commissioner.

5.2 Meeting Location

The location of the NSSL Monthly Meeting, as well as additional meetings, shall be determined by the Executive Board and communicated to the General Council as soon as possible.

5.3 Notice of Meeting

Shall be distributed directly to each team coach/manager representative in advance of the regularly scheduled meeting.

5.4 Additional Meetings

Special meetings of the Executive Board or General Council may be called and convened by the Commissioner and/or officers of the Executive Board at any time:

5.4.1 Upon petition in writing by one-third of all Coaches/Team Managers, the Executive Board may call a meeting of the General Council.

5.5 Official Meeting Requirements

Any Board of Director, General Council, or Coaches/Manager's meeting shall require a quorum to establish sufficient authority for any issue to be decided by voting at meetings.

5.6 Quorums

Executive Board and General Council meetings must establish a quorum of at least 50 percent attendance of Executive Board and 50 percent of team delegates.

5.7 Robert's Rules of Order

This instrument will be used as a guideline to govern the conduct of all Board of Director and General Council meetings.

SECTION 6: ELIGIBILITY

6.1 Regular Season Player Eligibility

Definition: Regular Season play will include all NSSL regular scheduled season games. This does not include tournaments or the NAGAAA World Series.

6.1.1 The league is open to all players 18 years of age and above, regardless of race or sex.

A) If a player plays in 2 or more NAGAAA city leagues, the player must declare their home league prior to start of the NSSL season.

6.1.2 All players must pay a player fee, complete a liability waiver form seven (7) days in advance of participating the upcoming season. After the season has officially started 7-day time frame does not apply. Players can be added before game time.

A) If a player has not paid the player fee, then the player will be ineligible to play.

B) If a player uses a check as payment for the player fee and the check is returned by the bank for any reason, the player will be ineligible until the player fee and return check fee as charged by the bank (with certified funds or cash) is paid.

C) All players must sign a waiver of liability to the NSSL and/or hosting Park and Recreational organization that releases these organizations from responsibility from potential injury. Failure to sign this form will result in the player being ineligible and forfeiture of games by the player's team.

D) A player must sign the official team roster by the deadline date(s) as set forth by the NSSL Executive Board. Additions to the roster may be submitted together with player fee(s), waiver form at any time for NEW members of the league.

6.1.3 Players may change teams once during the NSSL regular season upon receiving signed written or electronic consent of the coach of the player's team and the team the player wishes to join. If the coach of the player's team refuses to sign the written consent form, the player may petition the Executive Board for permission to change teams.

A) Player requests to change teams more than once during the course of a season must be approved by the Executive Board

B) Approval of petitions to change teams going before the Executive Board will require a simple majority of 50%

C) The player in question must be added to the new team's roster prior to being allowed to participate in a game for the new team, so as to allow the recalculation of the team's overall rating

D) In order to facilitate the recalculation of the new team's overall rating, under no circumstances will a player be allowed to change teams immediately preceding the start of a regularly scheduled game, during the course of an in-progress game or between games on a date in which the team is scheduled to play multiple games.

6.2 Post Season Player Eligibility

Definition: Post Season Play includes the NAGAAA World Series.

- 6.2.1 Any player ineligible for Regular Season play is also ineligible for Post Season play.
- 6.2.2 All players must meet NAGAAA Eligibility requirements for Post Season play (**IOG Section 7 NAGAAA Softball Code**). To be eligible for post season play, a player must have played as an eligible player in at least 50% of regular season games. Wins, losses, and forfeits count as games but rainouts or other postponements do not count. If a player is forced to move up a division, then the games played in both divisions count as part of the 50% rule.
 - A) Participation is defined as a player included on their team's game lineup card and present in (or within close vicinity) of their team's bench or dugout and dressed out to play.
- 6.2.3 Teams participating in the NAGAAA Gay Softball World Series will abide by **Section IOG 7.05 NAGAAA Softball Code** of the NAGAAA Guidelines. (Section IOG 7.05 NAGAAA Softball Code reads – Non-LGBT players – A maximum of three (3) Non-LGBT players are permitted on a GSWS roster.)
- 6.2.4 Any team playing in the GSWS must play in the same division that you were in within the League. Any player otherwise meeting all the other eligibility criteria may participate in the GSWS in any division supported by the players rating.

6.3 Loss of Player Eligibility from the NSSL

- 6.3.1 A player will lose eligibility if the player fails to pay the player fee, or if payment is returned for any reason.
- 6.3.2 A player ejected from a game for fighting, baiting, or flagrant acts during regular season league play, will result in the suspension of the ejected player(s). Duration of the suspension will be determined by the Executive Board. Player's fee will not be refunded.
- 6.3.3. If a player is ejected for a non-flagrant, non-fighting infraction, the player will be suspended for one game. If the player is ejected for two non-flagrant, non-fighting infractions, the player becomes ineligible to play for the remainder of the NSSL regular season and any post-season play. Player fees will not be refunded.
- 6.3.4 Any player found not acting in the best interest of the NSSL while participating in any NSSL function, tournaments, including but not limited to NAGAAA cities, the GSWS, and NAGAAA cup, could result in suspension. Duration of the suspension will be determined by the Executive Board.
- 6.3.5 Any player found not acting in the best interest of the NSSL while participating in any NSSL function, tournament, including but not limited to NAGAAA Cup, could

result in suspension. Duration of the suspension will be determined by the Executive Board.

6.3.6 Ejected player(s) and/or suspended players have the right of an appeal hearing, which must be requested, in writing/electronic, within 24 hours of the ejection with the NSSL Executive Board.

6.3.7 Appeal procedures of suspensions – any due process hearing properly requested by ejected player(s) must be delivered to any member of the Executive Board within 24 hours after the ejection occurred. If suspension has been appealed by the ejected player, the Executive Board will be required to call a special meeting before the ejected player(s) next game to decide if charges still stand. A two-thirds vote by the Executive Board will determine the outcome of the appeal.

6.4 Team Eligibility

6.4.1 A team is eligible to play in the NSSL regular season if the following general requirements are met:

- A) All players have paid their player's fees, signed a waiver form, and are eligible
- B) The team has at least eight (8) active players to take the field. If a team chooses to play with 8 players, the 9th player is an automatic out.
- C) All Teams fees are paid two weeks prior to the start of regular season league play.
- D) If a team uses a check as payment for the player fee or teams fees and the check is returned by the bank for any reason, the player will be ineligible until the player fee and return check fee (with certified funds or cash) are paid.

6.4.2 NAGAAA Gay Softball World Series Play - If a team wins the right to represent the NSSL in the NAGAAA GSWS, the following applies:

- A) Until such time as the number of NSSL teams exceeds 20, the League shall only pay the entry fee for one team per division and a Master's Team to the GSWS. GSWS funds allotted by the NSSL will only be distributed to the teams whose entry fee is paid for by the NSSL.
- B) May pick up four eligible players from other NSSL teams as defined in **IOG Section 5.0.1.b.1A (Softball Code)** (Teams entered in the GSWS must compete with the same roster that they submitted during the regular season with the following exceptions: (A) a team may add up to four (4) additional players, replacing players or filling empty slots on their regular season roster)
- C) Must meet all eligibility requirements, regardless of classification, set forth by the NSSL and NAGAAA.

6.4.3 If a team is fined by NAGAAA at the GSWS, the following applies:

- A) The NSSL will pay all fees owed to NAGAAA
- B) The Team, Coach, and player penalized, will not be eligible for league play until all NAGAAA fines have been reimbursed to the NSSL.



SECTION 7: PENALTIES/CONDUCT

Penalties Regarding Eligibility of Players and Teams

- 7.1 Any team that cannot meet the requirement for the minimal number of eligible players ten (10) at game time will forfeit the game. If a second game is to be played, the team is eligible to play that game if the team has the required number of eligible players for that game. If it is agreed upon by both coaches that there will not be enough players for the next game, then they may call it as a forfeit by notifying the umpires at any time (hence, there is no need to wait until game time if both coaches agree to call a forfeit).

All teams participating in the NSSL will be required to put up a forfeiture bond of \$90.00 in the event of a game forfeiture by your team. Each game forfeited will result in a \$30.00 assessment of the team's forfeiture bond to be retained by the League. If any team that forfeits an excess of 3 games will have a \$30.00 fee for each additional game deducted from their year-end distribution. Any unused funds will be returned to the respective teams at the end of the season.

- 7.2 If a team is ruled to have an ineligible player for any of the rules above, the game(s) this player played in as an ineligible player will be forfeited and marked as loss(es) on the schedule.
- 7.3 If a team loses a player for reasons of (1) ineligibility, or (2) ejection by an umpire, that team must have an eligible replacement player available. If there is no eligible replacement player available, the game results in a forfeit.



SECTION 8: PLAYER/TEAM RATINGS

Definition: The Player Rating System is a system used by NAGAAA and the NSSL to rate its players, and therefore its teams, for purposes of determining levels and caliber of play.

The Player Rating System will be determined by NAGAAA. This will be the only system used by the coaches of the NSSL for determining a team's rating for post-season play.

The NSSL Player Rating System will abide by seasonal guidelines in The Instruments of Governance of the North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance. (NAGAAA)

SECTION 9: SCHEDULE AND REGULATION GAME

- 9.1 For League play, the time limit for all regular season games will be 55 minutes unless otherwise set forth by the NSSL Executive Board.
- 9.2 Championship game will observe the one-hour time limit rule. Any championship game will have no time limit. In the event of a tie at the end of regulation, international tiebreaker rules will be in effect.
- 9.3 The Mercy Rule: For league play, a 20-run rule will be observed after 3 innings, 15-runs after 4 innings, or 10 runs after 5 innings. Should a team be ahead by any of the aforementioned scenarios, the game shall be called and be considered a complete game. Each mercy rule will be observed by all divisions (A, B, C, D and E) unless otherwise set forth by the NSSL Executive Board. There will be **NO** run rule for post-season championship games regardless of team divisions.
- 9.4 If at the end of the regular season, two teams are tied for first place, the following steps will be taken to break the tie:
 1. best record in head to head competition
 2. one game playoff set by the NSSL Executive Board
- 9.5 Ground rules shall be provided every year by the NSSL General Council prior to opening day.
- 9.6 Over the fence home run rules will be enforced in each game according to the lowest rated division team playing. Any over the fence home run in excess of the limits listed below will be considered an inning ending out.
 - 9.6.1 Each A Division team will be allowed 4 progressed to 6 over the fence home runs per game.

- 9.6.2 Each B Division team will be allowed 2 over the fence home runs per game.
- 9.6.3 Each C Division team will be allowed 1 over the fence home run per game.
- 9.6.4 Each D Division team will be allowed 0 over the fence home run per game.
- 9.6.5 Each E Division team will be allowed 0 over the fence home runs per game.

SECTION 10: OFFICIATING

- 10.1 During the regular season, the league shall provide accredited ASA/USSA umpires for each game.



SECTION 11: PROTEST GUIDELINES

11.1 All Protests will be directed by the NSSL Protest Committee

11.2 The NSSL Protest Committee will be comprised of five (5) coaches/designated team representatives, the league commissioner and/or assistant commissioner (if his/her team is not involved in the protest) and the home plate umpire from the game resulting in the protest. The selection of the five (5) designated reps asked to rule on a specific protest will be performed by the presiding member of the board, so long as the presiding member is not affiliated with either team involved in the protest. In order of succession, the presiding member will be the Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, Treasurer and Secretary.

11.3 The protesting team must pay a fee of \$100 to the home plate umpire by calling time out before the last out of the game and not taking more than five (5) minutes to give the umpire the money.

11.3. A) Protests may only be filed by a coach, assistant coach, or team manager.

11.4 Then, no longer than fifteen (15) minutes after that game is over, the protesting team must present to the NSSL Protest Committee a list of the player(s) being protested and the number of the question(s) they are protesting.

11.5 An additional \$25 fee will be assessed for each question for each player being protested.

11.6 All protests must follow the NAGAAA protest rules regarding player ratings.

11.7 The protesting team must identify the specific questions the player being protested can or cannot complete following the NAGAAA 28 Rating Question Guidelines.

11.8 The protesting team must have some form of back up for each protest (scorebook, etc.).

11.9 The Executive board reserves the right to submit any protests as they see fit.

11.10 If all protest questions are upheld, the \$100 protest fee will be returned.

11.11 In the event that a protest includes multiple protested ratings questions, the ruling of the protest committee to uphold at least one (1) question will constitute a valid protest and the \$100 fee will be returned.

11.12 If all protested questions are denied, the \$100 protest fee is forfeited.

SECTION 12: DESIGNATED TEAM REPRESENTATIVE FOR PROTEST

A designated team representative (hereafter referred to as “DTR”) will be either a coach, manager or scorekeeper for the eligible team.



Appendix 1: NSSL Rules of Play

The City of Birmingham Park and Recreation Board is now the responsible party for George Ward Park. Any questions, comments or concerns for the Park or fields will need to be taken through them.

All divisions will follow ASA/USSA rules and as modified below:

Pitch Height: 6 to 12 feet for all divisions.

Official Softball: Yellow 52/300 ASA/USSA Ball

Game Time: No new inning will start after 55 minutes. In the event of a tie after the 55- minute time period has expired; the game shall proceed as provided in the section of these rules entitled "Tie Breaker."

Mercy rule: Observed in all divisions

- 20 run rule will be observed after 3 innings, or
- 15 runs after 4 innings, or
- 10 runs after 5 innings

Should a team be ahead by any of the aforementioned scenarios, the game shall be called and be considered a complete game.

Stealing: Stealing is not allowed in any division

Home Runs: Over the fence home run rules will be enforced in each game according to the lowest rated division team playing. Any over the fence home run in excess of the limits listed below will be considered an inning ending out. The over the fence home run rules are:

- Open B: 2 over the fence home runs unless playing C Division (1 home run)
- Open C: 1 over the fence home run unless playing D Division (0 home runs)
- Open D: 0 home runs allowed
- Open E: 0 home runs allowed

Courtesy Runners: one (1) courtesy runner per inning per team, including extra innings, and can be anyone on line-up including subs.

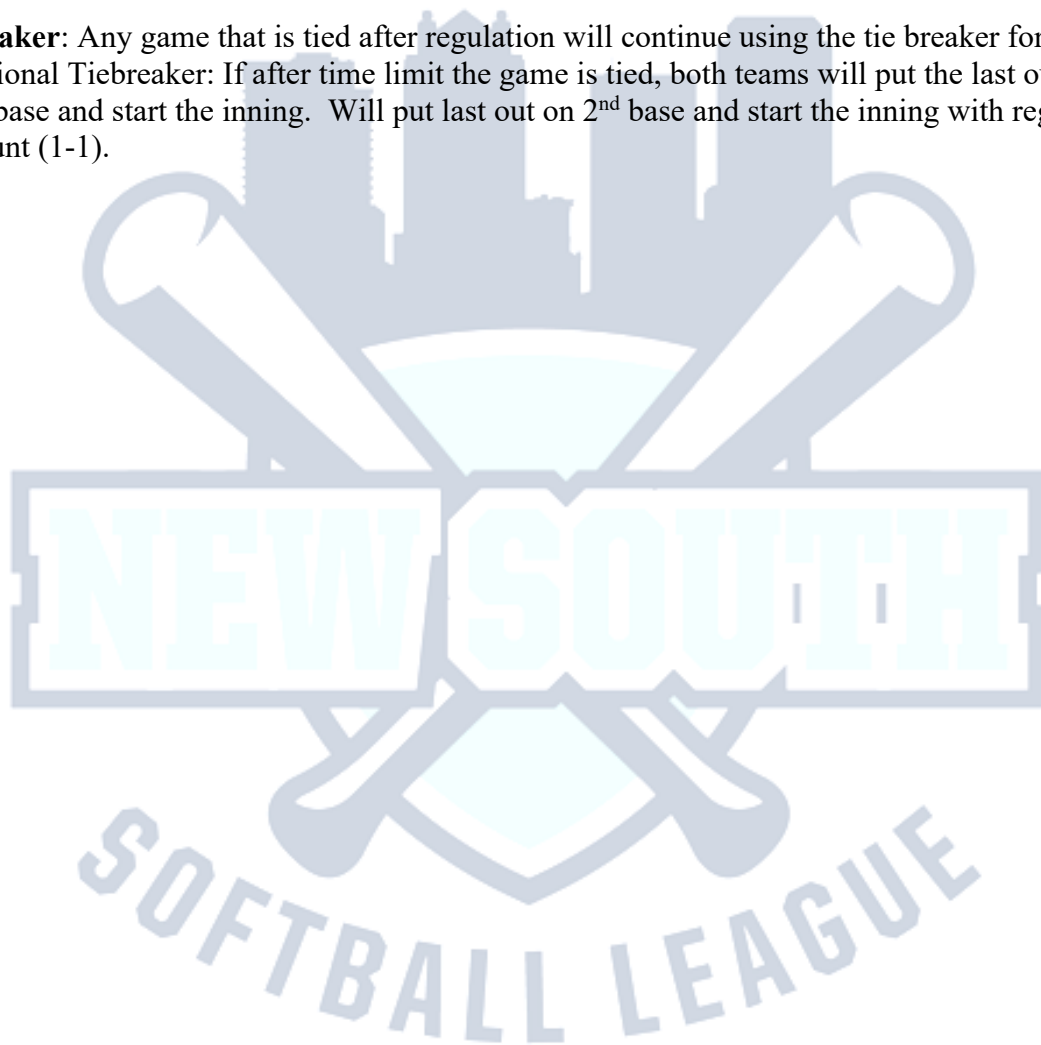
Pitch Count: All batters will begin with a 1-1 count and be allowed one extra foul ball.

Short Handed Rule: Any team that cannot meet the requirement for the minimal number of eligible players eight (8) at game time will forfeit the game. If a second game is to be played, the team is eligible to play that game if the team has the required number of eligible players for that

game. If it is agreed upon by both coaches that there will not be enough players for the next game, then they may call it as a forfeit by notifying the umpires at any time (hence, there is no need to wait until game time if both coaches agree to call a forfeit). **If a team chooses to play with eight (8) players, the 9th player is an automatic out.**

Forfeit Time: Game time will be considered forfeit time. There will be no grace periods given to any teams.

Tie Breaker: Any game that is tied after regulation will continue using the tie breaker format. International Tiebreaker: If after time limit the game is tied, both teams will put the last out on second base and start the inning. Will put last out on 2nd base and start the inning with regular pick count (1-1).



Appendix 2: NSSL Grievance Guidelines

This document is intended to formalize the process for filing a grievance against a player, team or league official. The grievance process is not intended to replace, enhance or otherwise supplement the official NSSL Protest process, which shall be used specifically to address issues concerning player ratings, game-specific scoring errors and rules interpretations.

Grievance Process

- 1.1. The party wishing to file a grievance will notify the Assistant Commissioner, in writing, of the nature of the complaint.
- 1.2. Assistant Commissioner will determine if grievance which falls outside of the areas covered under the official NSSL Protest guidelines. If it is determined that the incident falls under the guidelines of the Protest process, the Assistant Commissioner will instruct the appropriate party to file an official protest, and will inform the NSSL board of the guidance provided to the initiating party.
- 1.3. Assistant Commissioner will ask for evidence, as necessary and appropriate, to substantiate the basis for the grievance filing. Evidence may include, but is not limited to; witnesses, lineup cards, scorebooks, etc.
- 1.4. Assistant Commissioner will call for a special meeting of the NSSL Grievance Committee to be held no more than three (3) calendar days from the date the grievance was received. The Grievance Committee shall consist of:
 - League Commissioner
 - League Assistant Commissioner
 - League Treasurer
 - League Secretary
 - League Public Relations Director
 - League Statistician & By-Laws Director
 - Tournament Director
- 1.5. The Assistant Commissioner will inform the party filing the grievance of the date & time of the special meeting. The filing party will be required to attend the meeting in order to discuss the circumstances surrounding the incident(s) and to present and discuss the evidence supporting the grievance.
- 1.6. Attendance at the special meeting shall be required of a minimum of five (5) of the appointed members of the Grievance Committee. Committee members may elect to attend via conference call if physical attendance is not possible.
- 1.7. Upon completion of the evidentiary portion of the special meeting, the filing party will be dismissed, and the committee shall undertake discussion concerning the nature of the incident(s) and the appropriateness and applicability of disciplinary action. Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to:

- Notice of Warning
 - Single or Multiple Game Suspension
 - Removal from League Office and/or Team Administrative Position
 - Expulsion from NSSL
- 1.8. The League Secretary shall document the proceedings of the special meeting, including the individual votes of each committee member on any proposed disciplinary action.
 - 1.9. Approval of any decision to invoke disciplinary action will require a simple majority (50%) of the Grievance Committee.
 - 1.10. Assistant Commissioner will notify the filing party of the decision of the Grievance Committee within 24 hours.
 - 1.11. Assistant Commissioner will provide notification to the parties subject to the grievance (e.g. coach, player, etc.) within 48 hours of the following:
 - that a grievance was filed
 - the party that filed the grievance
 - the nature of the grievance
 - the evidence that was provided to support the grievance
 - the decision of the Grievance Committee
 - The governance surrounding any appeal of the Grievance Committee decision

2. Appeal Process

- 2.1. The party subject to the grievance shall notify the Assistant Commissioner, in writing, within 24 hours of the intent to file an appeal.
- 2.2. Assistant Commissioner will ask for evidence, as necessary and appropriate, to substantiate the basis for the appeal.
- 2.3. Assistant Commissioner will call for a special meeting of the NSSL Grievance Committee (as defined in section 1.4) to be held no more than three (3) calendar days from the date the appeal was received.
- 2.4. The Assistant Commissioner will inform the party filing the appeal of the date & time of the special meeting. The appealing party will be required to attend the meeting in order to discuss the circumstances surrounding the incident(s) and to present and discuss the evidence supporting the grievance. Failure of the parties to appear at the meeting, without advance notice, will be considered as relinquishment of the right to an appeal and acceptance of the decision of the Grievance Committee.
- 2.5. During such time as falls between the notification of the Grievance Committee decision and the special meeting, the parties subject to the grievance shall be considered members in good standing and therefore eligible to participate in any and all league functions, including regularly scheduled games.

- 2.6. Attendance at the special meeting shall be required of a minimum of five (5) of the appointed members of the Grievance Committee. Committee members may elect to attend via conference call if physical attendance is not possible.
- 2.7. Upon completion of the evidentiary portion of the special meeting, the appealing party will be dismissed and the committee shall undertake discussion concerning the appeal.
- 2.8. The League Secretary shall document the proceedings of the special meeting, including the individual votes of each committee member on the appeal motion.
- 2.9. Assistant Commissioner will notify the appealing party of the decision of the Grievance Committee within 24 hours of the appeal hearing.
- 2.10. Assistant Commissioner will provide notification to the parties filing the grievance within 48 hours of the appeal hearing if the initial decision of the Grievance Committee was overturned on appeal. (Note: if the original decision is upheld, there is no requirement to notify the filing party that an appeal was filed.)

If the decision of the Grievance Committee calls for suspension from the NSSL, the Assistant Commissioner will inform the league General Council within 24 hours of the hearing. This notification is intended solely to prevent the member/player from attempting to participate in the affected games.

If the decision of the Grievance Committee calls for expulsion from the NSSL, the Assistant Commissioner will inform the league General Council within 24 hours of the hearing. This notification is intended solely to prevent the unintended offer to the dismissed member to join another team or to rejoin the league in the future.

If a member is expelled from the NSSL, in order to rejoin the league the member will be required to come before the league general council and request re-admission. Approval to readmit the member to the league will require a 2/3 vote from the general council and is not subject to appeal.

Appendix 3: NAGAAA Ratings Guidelines



