

**USA SOFTBALL  
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
JUNIOR OLYMPIC**



[usasoftballsocal.org](http://usasoftballsocal.org)

**2023  
RULES AND REGULATIONS**

## USA SOFTBALL OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

USA Softball of Southern California, hereafter referred to as USAS SoCal, is an affiliate member of USA Softball, the National Governing Body (NGB) of Softball in the United States of America. The responsibilities of USAS SoCal include the regulation of competition, the assurance of fairness, and affording equal opportunity for all who wish to participate in USA Softball within the boundaries of USAS SoCal.

USAS SoCal is a nongovernment, nonpolitical and nonprofit corporation staffed by experienced and knowledgeable volunteers dedicated to the advancement of softball at all levels of play. USAS SoCal accepts all persons that qualify as an amateur regardless of gender, sexual orientation, color of skin, creed, or nationality. Through the efforts of the Commissioner, the Junior Olympic Commissioner and the Junior Olympic (JO) Commissioner Staff, USAS SoCal has the largest and one of the best Junior Olympic Programs in the nation. This program exists to help advance the softball interests, skills, and desires of our youth softball players using several classifications of fast pitch play, with emphasis on fun and furnishing a positive, supportive environment. The program builds healthy, productive, and confident youths by means of a positive softball experience. USAS SoCal offers volunteer coaches and other adult volunteers an intensive and informative coaching education experience that is available through our Annual Coaching Clinics and the ACE Coach Education Program. The ACE (Aspire, Challenge, Encourage) Coach Education Program which is available online at the USA Softball National Office website.

Participants of our Junior Olympic Program receive the best overall softball experience possible as we offer the best trained umpires, outstanding administration/organization at the local level, excellent insurance coverage, programs for both recreation and competitive play, and much more.

USAS SoCal appreciates your participation in our Junior Olympic Program. USAS SoCal is extremely excited for the 2023 season and getting back on the field. We look forward to supporting and serving you in 2023 and future years.

Best regards,

Christina Drumm  
Commissioner

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DISCLAIMER

This copy of the USA Softball of Southern California 2020 Junior Olympic Rules and Regulations (Yellow Book) is effective January 1, 2020. USAS SoCal will, from time to time, make necessary changes as required to this publication; therefore, you are encouraged to regularly review the official copy of the Yellow Book which can be found online at the USAS SoCal website, [www.usasoftballsocal.com](http://www.usasoftballsocal.com). In the event a conflict in language between this printed version of the Yellow Book and the version online at our website, the official copy found at the USAS SoCal website controls. If incorrect information regarding this published Yellow Book is issued by voice, written, electronic or any other form of

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**Mission**

The mission of USA Softball of Southern California (USAS SoCal) is to foster, develop, promote, and regulate the sport of softball within the boundaries of Southern California through a standardized, quality program that is consistent with USA Softball.

**Junior Olympic Program**

The specific purpose of the USAS SoCal Junior Olympic (JO) Program is to:

Promote the game of amateur softball to all persons throughout Southern California regardless of race, color of skin, creed, gender, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, or ancestry.

Provide safeguards in accordance with the spirit of true sportsmanship.

Establish and publish standardized rules, regulations, and guidelines that all may follow.

Organize, promote, and conduct clinics and seminars for players, teams, leagues, umpires, and others regarding the proper skills of softball play and the rules of the game.

Schedule, promote and conduct well organized annual softball championship play as well as other tournaments.

Provide a standard and consistent avenue for USAS SoCal teams to qualify for participation in District, State, Region, Western, and National Championships.

Provide grants and other forms of assistance to promote the growth of softball.

Provide scholarships which present more young persons the opportunity for advanced education.

Assist international softball teams while in Southern California, when requested by the USA Softball National Office.

## USA Softball Preview

Teams affiliated with USA Softball of Southern California are a vital part of the National Governing Body of Softball of the United States. As such, the teams enjoy the following:

**Governing Body of Softball.** USA Softball is the National Governing Body (NGB) of Softball in the United States as approved by the U.S. Congress and accepted by the U.S. Olympic Committee (USOC) and the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC). As the NGB USA Softball is the only softball organization authorized to represent the United States of America in the sport of softball.

**Standard Eligibility and Playing Rules.** All USA Softball registered teams throughout our country are governed by the same eligibility and playing rules, thus ensuring fair competition in Championship Play. Player eligibility is governed by the USA Softball Code and Procedural Manual, which are further defined in this publication.

**Championship Certified Umpires.** USAS SoCal Championship Certified Umpires only are assigned to Championship Play. These umpires must attend annual rules and mechanics clinics, pass the annual rules exam, and pass an annual background check to become and remain eligible for assignment.

**Team Classification.** USAS SoCal has a classification code to help ensure that teams and players with dominant softball playing ability do not play in lower classifications. However, teams and players may request reclassification for eligibility to compete in a lower classification.

**Championship Play.** Championship Play may be scheduled for the following classifications: Gold, "A", "B" and "C" in the Age Classifications of 18 and Under, 16 and Under, 14 and Under, 12 and Under, 10 and Under, and 8 and Under.

**Junior Olympic Age Classification.** The age cutoff date is December 31 of each year. Please see the Junior Olympic Age Qualification Chart (Appendix E) on Page 50. (Note: Age cutoff date will change to September 1, beginning September 2023 – USA Code Change)

**18 and 16 and Under Gold.** These classifications include the most advanced Junior Olympic fast pitch players and teams. These players have the potential to participate in our National Teams Program, which includes two of our USA National Teams. Teams at this level may compete to qualify for advancement to the age appropriate 18 and/or 16 and Under Gold USA National Championship.

**"A" Classification (Travel).** This level of play is highly competitive with most players having consistent ability and pitchers can control a game. Qualifying teams at this level advance to the USA Softball "A" National Championship or to the Western USA Softball "A" National Championship in their respective Age Classification.

**"B" Classification/League All-Stars/Select.** This level of play is for recreation leagues. Only recreation league teams, league All-Star Teams or Select Teams are eligible to participate in these Championships. District Championships are scheduled to qualify a predetermined number of teams for advancement to the USAS SoCal "B" State Championships. Qualifying teams from the State Championships advance to the "B" Western USA Softball National Championship in their respective Age Classification.

**“C” Classification/League All-Stars.** This classification is for recreation leagues only and is explicitly for less competitive leagues. The “C” Classification has been established to afford meaningful competition for leagues and teams that are unable to compete in the “B” Classification because of the size of the league and/or the level of softball skills. Only league teams or league All-Star Teams are eligible to participate in these Championships. District Championships are scheduled to qualify a predetermined number of teams for advancement to either the USAS SoCal “C” State Championships or to the Pacific Coast Region of USA Softball (10) Championships. This classification does not advance beyond the State or Region Championships.

### USAS SoCal Standards of Conduct

Standards of Conduct are part of the USA Softball Code and Procedural Manual, as well as the USAS SoCal Rules and Regulations. All USA Softball members shall respect these standards. A manager, coach, player, or other volunteer affiliated with a team shall not violate any of the following:

- Unsportsmanlike conduct or any derogatory action on or off the field of play.
- Verbal or physical attack or threat upon an umpire or other USA Softball official.
- Destruction of property, abusive behavior, or violation of local, state, or federal law.
- Non-Payment of team incurred debt.
- All players shall be individually registered with USA Softball.
- All managers, coaches and team parents entering the field of play or dugout shall be individually registered with USA Softball and shall have passed a background check conducted through the USA Softball National Office and completed Safe Sport Certification. Proof of a current completed background check shall be displayed.
- Playing under an assumed name or falsifying an official USA Softball document.
- Writing a check to a USA Softball official, USA Softball team, individual or business that is returned unpaid by a bank for any reason.
- Commission of larceny perpetrated against a USA Official, team or individual.
- Use of any USA Softball logo or trademark without express permission.
- Commission of any act that is contrary to the objectives and purposes of USA Softball.
- Intentional forfeiture of a scheduled game in Championship Play.
- Competing with or against individuals or teams who are suspended from USA Softball play.
- Any other act of suspension as listed in the USA Softball Code and/or Procedural Manual.
- Team manager or coach shall not contact a USA Softball National Championship Tournament Director regarding “fill-in” berths.
- No player, coach or manager shall consume alcoholic beverages or smoke on the field of play, or inside/outside the dugout.

**Violation of any of the above items may result in a team and/or individual suspension, or other appropriate disciplinary action.**

**Parents' Code of Ethics**

**I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports by following this Parents' Code of Ethics Pledge.**

I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches and officials at every game, practice or other youth sports event.

I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my child ahead of a personal desire to win.

I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment. I will support coaches and officials working with my child in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.

I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free of drugs, tobacco and alcohol, and will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.

I will remember that the game is for youth – not for adults. I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child.

I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans and officials with respect regardless of race, gender, creed or ability.

I promise to help my child enjoy the youth sports experience by doing whatever I can, such as being a respectful fan, assisting with coaching and providing transportation.

I will require that my child's coach be trained in the responsibilities of being a youth sports coach and that the coach upholds the Coaches' Code of Ethics.

**Violation of any of the above items may result in suspension or other appropriate disciplinary action.**

***Appendix H is a copy of this code that can be signed by parents.***

Section A: "A" Classification Program (Travel)

**1 USAS SoCal Eligibility Rules**

- 1.1 Each Player shall be individually registered.
- 1.2 The age classifications contained in the USA Softball Code and this publication apply and shall be followed.
- 1.3 A player shall be listed on one team roster and participate with that team only during Championship Play of the current season. **EXCEPTION.** Pick-up Players and players who have been properly released from their previous team. (See USA Softball Code)
- 1.4 Proper player identification shall be produced when requested by a USAS SoCal Staff member or other proper authority. The identification shall include a current photo and appropriate signatures. If proper identification is not produced the player is ineligible.

**2 Volunteer Adult Management**

- 2.1 All sports organizations must have rules and regulations to ensure fair and equitable competition. The USA Softball Championship Program publishes regulations, known as the USA Code, which shall be followed by all USA Softball members. In addition to the USA Softball Code, USAS SoCal establishes and publishes local rules and regulations which supplement the USA Softball Code. The USAS SoCal Rules and Regulations, this publication, serves to protect our members in circumstances that may be specific to Southern California and defines further the USA Softball Code.
- 2.2 USAS SoCal is one of the best softball organizations in the nation due primarily to the dedication of our volunteer adults, the talent and determination of our players, and the rules and regulations established by USAS SoCal. Continued cooperation at adhering to these rules and regulations will ensure continued success going forward. To preserve our high standards, any infraction of the following agreements should be reported to the appropriate Age Classification Commissioner, the Junior Olympic Commissioner, or the Commissioner.
- 2.3 **Manager/Other Adults.** Managers and other Adult Volunteers shall adhere to the USAS SoCal Rules and Regulations, the USA Softball Code and the below listed guidelines. Additionally, it is imperative that managers and coaches understand that they are responsible for all actions of their team, including financial obligations. Each manager and Adult Volunteer shall agree to abide by the USA Softball Code, the Official Rules of Softball, and these rules and regulations, including but not limited to the following.
  - 2.3.1 A manager, other volunteer, or team parent (team staff) who enters the field of play or dugout shall be individually registered, background checked and Safe Sport Certified through the USA Softball system and shall have proof of such visibly displayed. (See Appendix D)
  - 2.3.2 The manager of a team participating in Championship Play shall be ACE Certified and have proof of such on their person.



- 2.3.3 Shall conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner always and act in accordance with the objectives and purposes of USA Softball.
- 2.3.4 Shall individually register each player on their team. A player's individual registration includes Accident and Liability Insurance.
- 2.3.5 Refrain from and discourage all team members from recruiting or enticing to change teams, including any player who is registered and participating in the USAS SoCal Junior Olympic Program "B" and/or "C" Classification (Recreation Leagues). This remains in effect until July 15 of the current year or when a team is no longer eligible for Championship Play, whichever occurs first.
- 2.3.6 Shall not compete with or against a suspended player, manager/coach, or team after having been notified of such suspension.
- 2.3.7 Shall not use or permit team personnel to use any USA Softball logo or trademark item without express permission from USAS SoCal.
- 2.3.8 Shall have control of all team personnel and fans while participating in any USA Softball event.
- 2.3.9 Shall request and receive permission from another team's manager prior to asking a player from that other team to be a Pick-Up Player on a team for an invitational tournament.
- 2.3.10 Shall notify the manager of a team that is no longer eligible to participate in Championship Play prior to asking a player from that team to be a Pick-Up Player.
- 2.3.11 Shall understand that all players of a team are released as soon as that team decides not to enter USA Softball Championship Play.
- 2.3.12 Shall inform all players on the team that they are automatically released from the team when:
- Decision is made not to enter USA Softball Championship Play.
  - Decision is made not to enter any remaining USA Softball Championship Play; for example, Regional National Qualifier, USA Western National Championship, or the USA Softball National Championship Finals.
  - Team is eliminated from further USA Softball Championship Play.
  - A player is released by a team with the written approval of the manager/coach and the player's parents/guardians when the player is under 18 years old.
- NOTE:** A team manager/coach shall notify the appropriate Age Classification Commissioner or the Junior Olympic Commissioner when any of the above occurs.
- 2.3.13 Shall refrain from attempting to recruit or entice a player of another team that is still competing in Championship Play to become a Pick-up Player for their team during Championship Play, for the Fall Season or for the following year's team. This applies to all levels of play including teams competing in USA Softball "B" and "C" Classification (Recreation League) All-Star Championship Play.

- 2.3.14 Shall advance to the next level of USA Softball Championship Play when the team qualifies. A team that qualifies is defined as a team that has earned a berth to the next level of Championship Play and accepts such berth.
  - 2.3.15 Shall not permit team personnel or fans to abuse team players, opposing teams, spectators, umpires and/or USA Softball Staff members.
  - 2.3.16 Managers who have a player participating simultaneously in a USA Softball "B" or "C" Classification Program (Recreation League) shall inform that player and the player's parents that participation with an "A" Classification Team (Travel) after **March 31** of the current year renders that player ineligible for selection to the league's All-Star Team.
  - 2.3.17 Shall not permit their team to compete in non-championship tournaments which award cash prizes to individual players.
  - 2.3.18 A team shall not forfeit a scheduled game in USA Softball Championship Play.
- NOTE:** Violation of any of the above items may result in a team and/or individual suspension, or other appropriate disciplinary action.

### 3 **Manager/Coach Commitment to the Players**

- 3.1 Will place the welfare of players above all else and will always maintain a professional relationship with each of them.
- 3.2 Will encourage players to always exhibit good sportsmanship.
- 3.3 Will always treat players with dignity and respect.
- 3.4 Shall understand that they are role models for the players and should therefore always strive to set a good example.
- 3.5 Will be truthful regarding situations when recruiting players for their teams.

### 4 **Manager/Coach Commitment to USA Softball, Umpires, and Other Coaches**

- 4.1 By their actions on and off the field of play, shall be a credit to their team and USA Softball.
- 4.2 Shall treat other coaches, umpires, and USA Softball Staff members in a professional and respectful manner on and off the field of play.

### 5 **Players**

- 5.1 Players should understand that participation in USA Softball Championship Play is permitted with one team only during the current season. If a player leaves that team without written permission from the coach, parent, and USAS SoCal, they become ineligible to compete with another USA Softball team, including as a Pick-up Player.
- 5.2 A player who leaves a team for just cause without a release may appeal their non-release to the Junior Olympic Commissioner. Per the USA Softball Code, such an appeal shall not be considered once the player's team enters USA Championship Play.
- 5.3 All players are automatically released from their team when the team is no longer participating in USA Softball Championship Play after July 15, or the player is no longer Age Qualified. Each player shall agree to abide by the USA Softball Code and these regulations,

which are available from the team manager or through membership in the USAS SoCal Players' Association, including but not limited to the following:

- 5.3.1 A player shall not be guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct or any other act that is contrary to the objectives and purposes of USA Softball.
- 5.3.2 A player shall refrain from recruiting or enticing any player who is listed on a roster of another USA Softball team to leave that team to play for another USA Softball team.
- 5.3.3 A player shall respect and accept a manager's decision and/or changes concerning positions and playing time in any game or tournament.
- 5.3.4 A player shall return all team uniform items and equipment in good condition, except for normal wear, to the manager within 15 days of being released from the team. Failure to return such items could result in the player becoming ineligible for participation in USA Softball until all items are returned or the manager is reimbursed the cost.
- 5.3.5 A player should understand that they have until July 1 or the start of USA Championship Play, whichever occurs first, to be released from a travel team to be eligible to compete in USA Softball Championship Play with another USA Softball team during the current season.

**EXCEPTION:** A player who receives a release in writing signed by both the manager/coach and parents.

- 5.3.6 A player should understand that unless agreed to in writing, time and money given to a team is of their own free will and becomes the property of the team. The manager/coach should provide each player and parent/guardian with a preseason budget and a final itemized and accurate financial statement at end of USA Championship Play.

## 6 Team Management Guidelines

### 6.1 Player added or released from team:

- 6.1.1 A player may be added to or released from a team roster until **July 1** of the current season or when the team first enters USA Softball Championship Play, whichever occurs first.

**EXCEPTION:** A player who receives a release in writing signed by both the manager/coach and the player's parents.

### 6.1.2 Prior to entering USA Softball Championship Play:

- 6.1.2.1 To add a player prior to the roster change deadline or before entering USA Softball Championship Play, the team adds the player to their roster on RegisterUSASoftball.

6.1.2.2 To release a player the team manager/coach contacts their Age Classification Commissioner prior to the roster change deadline or before entering Championship Play, whichever occurs first.

6.1.3 After entering USA Softball Championship Play: To add a player the Pick-Up Player rule applies.

6.2 **Championship Roster.** The Championship Roster must be submitted to the Age Classification Commissioner. The team roster is frozen as soon as the team participates in their first USA Softball Championship Play.

6.3 **Returning Team.** A team must meet the returning team requirements listed in the USA Softball Code to be classified as a returning team. An eligible returning team must provide the Official Tournament Entry Request Form and a completed roster to their Age Classification Commissioner for verification and signature before **July 1** of the current season.

**NOTE:** Completed roster is defined as an invoice has been created, approved and payment has been received by USAS SoCal.

6.4 **Pick-Up Player.** A Pick-Up Player is a player who has not participated with that team during the current season. A Pick-Up Player may be a player selected from a team that is no longer eligible for USA Softball Championship Play, a player who has obtained a written release signed by the manager/coach, parent and USAS SoCal, or a player who registered with USA Softball at least seven (7) days prior to the start of the National Championship Final. A maximum of three (3) players may be Pick-Up Players on a team, as follows:

6.4.1 A Pick-Up Player shall sign an official Pick-Up Player Form that must also be signed by the team manager and the Commissioner or their designee. When the player is 17 years old or younger, their parent/guardian must also sign the form.

6.4.2 A Pick-Up Player must be registered with USA Softball during the current season. Players must be registered seven (7) days prior to the start of the National Championship Final.

6.4.3 A Junior Olympic player whose team has qualified for a USA Softball National Championship Final is eligible to be a Pick-Up Player ONLY if released in writing through the Player Release Form signed by both the manager/coach and a parent/guardian.

6.4.4 A player who has competed in any Junior Olympic National Championship Final is an eligible Pick-Up Player in a higher-level National Championship Final.

**EXAMPLE:** A player who participates in the Western National Championship Final can then become a Pick-Up Player at the age appropriate USA Softball National Championship Final.

6.4.5 A Pick-Up Player may not be replaced on a Championship Roster after participating with a team.

6.4.6 Team personnel should refrain from recruiting or enticing any player and/or parent to change teams until July 15 or when the team is no longer eligible for USA Softball Championship Play.

**NOTE:** A Pick-Up Player is not allowed to participate in a USA Softball National Qualifier.

**"A" Classification (Travel) Championship Play Guidelines**

**Administration.** The USAS SoCal Commissioner shall determine playing sites, dates, deadlines, and entry fees. The Age Classification Commissioners shall conduct the USAS SoCal Junior Olympic Championships for their respective Age Classifications, unless otherwise authorized.

**Entry Fee.** A USA Softball Championship Entry Fee may be paid by check or money order but must be received by the published deadline. A **\$35.00 Returned Check Fee** shall be charged for each check returned unpaid by the bank for any reason. When this occurs, only a money order, cashier's check or cash shall be accepted as payment of the returned check plus the \$35.00 Returned Check Fee. These fees must be paid prior to a team re-entering USA Softball Championship Play.

**Entry Fee Refund.** A refund of the entire Championship Entry Fee shall be provided to a team only when a refund is requested by the team manager prior to the entry deadline or if the team qualifies for the USA Softball National Championship Final and accepts the berth. A team that disbands after the Championship Entry Deadline may request a partial refund, however a team that simply elects not to participate shall forfeit their entire Entry Fee.

**Advancing in USA Softball Championship Play.** A team that participates in the USAS SoCal "A" Championship automatically qualifies for the Western USA Softball National Championship Final. The team Championship Entry Form and Entry Fee are due to the Age Classification Commissioner within 72 hours of the completion of the USAS SoCal "A" Championship. Should the Championship Entry Form and Entry Fee not be received by the deadline, all players on that team are released and become eligible to be Pick-Up Players.

**Championship Director.** The USAS SoCal Championship Director and other USAS SoCal Staff members are responsible for enforcing all USA Softball and USAS SoCal Rules and Regulations. They may remove any manager, coach, player, team and/or spectator from the Championship for a violation of the USA Softball Code and/or the USAS SoCal Rules and Regulations. A decision regarding suspension from USA Softball is the sole responsibility of the USAS SoCal Staff.

**Championship Play Umpires.** All umpires assigned to USA Softball Championship Play have attended a USAS SoCal Annual Rules Clinic, an Annual Mechanics Clinic, and have passed the current USA Softball Umpire Rules Exam. Additionally, most umpires have attended a weekend National Umpire School and/or a 5-day National Umpire Camp for fast pitch, slow pitch, or both. The Championship Umpire-in-Chief is responsible for umpire game assignments, playing rules protests, and any other activity deemed necessary by the Championship Director. Game umpires, the UIC and/or the Championship Director may remove from the game, out of sight and sound, any manager, coach, player and/or spectator for abusive language, physically charging, bumping, shoving, striking, or threatening to strike an umpire, manager, coach, or player.

**"A" Classification (Travel) Championship Rules**

The current USA Softball Code and Official Rules of Softball shall apply, augmented by the following clarifications and exceptions.

- Championship Play shall be double elimination, unless otherwise authorized by the USAS SoCal Commissioner.
- A team that already has a berth to a USA Softball National Championship Final may enter Championship Play only after forfeiting their existing berth. **EXCEPTION:** 18U "A" and 16U "A" teams that have accepted a berth to their respective Age Classification USA Softball National Championship Final may enter Gold Qualifiers in their respective Age Classification without relinquishing their "A" berth.
- All teams must check-in with the appropriate Championship Director at least one (1) hour prior to the team's first scheduled game.
- The team manager is responsible for checking with the Championship Staff to verify schedule and field locations. Changes may occur any time.
- USAS SoCal Official Line-up Cards ONLY shall be used.
- Home team for each game shall be determined by coin toss at the umpires and coaches pregame Plate Meeting.
- Softballs shall be provided by USAS SoCal and will be the ONLY softballs used.
- The team listed at the Top Bracket shall occupy the 3<sup>rd</sup> Base dugout, unless a team is playing back-to-back games at the same field in which case that team may remain in the dugout used during the previous game.
- When an Official Scorekeeper is not assigned, the home team shall be designated as the Official Scorekeeper.
- No batting or infield practice is permitted in fair territory of the game field.
- In case of a disputed umpire decision on the field, the team manager ONLY may consult with the game umpires. Other coaches and players shall remain away from the discussion.
- The team manager shall always have full control of their coaching staff and their players, both on and off the field. The team manager is also responsible for the actions of all team followers at the Championship.
- Artificial noisemakers, regardless of type, are NOT permitted at USA Softball Junior Olympic Championships.
- The use of tobacco products on the field or inside/outside the dugout by any team personnel is prohibited.
- The use or possession of alcoholic beverages in any form on the field or inside/outside the dugout by any team personnel is prohibited.

**"A" Classification (Travel) Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q. What is a National Qualifier?**

A. Each of the USA Softball 10 Regions is authorized to host one National Qualifier (NQ) per Age Classification. Any team in each Age Classification may enter NQ with the winning team advancing to the USA Softball National Championship Final of the appropriate Age Classification.

**Q. How does a team qualify for the USA Softball Western National Championship Final?**

A. A team must play in the current year USAS SoCal Championship (State) in its Age Classification. If the team does not qualify to advance to the Regional NQ or for the USA Softball National Championship Final the team is automatically qualified to play in the USA Softball Western National Championship Final.

**Q. Does a team need a Travel Permit to enter a NQ outside of Southern California?**

A. No, however the team must have an Official Championship Entry Form signed by the USAS SoCal Commissioner or their designee. The form is available from the Age Classification Commissioner.

**Q. Can a manager, coach, player, or parent of one team communicate with a player who is committed to another team?**

A. Personal communications amongst friends is acceptable and encouraged, however the recruitment and/or enticement of a player or parent on another team is inappropriate and certainly unsportsmanlike behavior. This should not take place.

**Q. Is there a list of USA Softball Travel Teams in an Age Classification?**

A. Yes, each USA Softball team manager has a team listing in their membership packet or the Age Classification Commissioner can be contacted for the most current listing.

**Q. What is a Junior Olympic "B" and/or "C" All-Star Championship?**

A. The Junior Olympic "B" and "C" Classifications are recreation level competition, less competitive than the "A" and Gold levels. The "B" and "C" Leagues Select All-Star Teams also compete in "B" and "C" All-Star Championship Play. The recreation program comprises the largest portion of the USAS SoCal Junior Olympic Program and is therefore primarily responsible for the many berths to USA Softball National Championships that USAS SoCal presently has.

**Q. What is the Players' Association?**

A. The Players' Association is the USAS SoCal entity that used to advise players and their parents. The Players' Association also welcomes feedback/suggestions from players and parents on how to improve the USAS SoCal Junior Olympic Program. Additionally, the Players' Association annually awards several college scholarships to worthy USAS SoCal Junior Olympic players.



Section B: "B" Classification Program (Recreation)

- 1 **Purpose.** To provide a "B" Classification Program (Recreation) and Championship Play for leagues registered with USAS SoCal.

- 1.1 **Recreation League Teams.** These teams, in Age Classifications 6U through 18U, shall represent a recreation league. A recreation league is defined as follows:

- 1.1.1 An organized league that is associated with a recognized neighborhood or community.
- 1.1.2 Participation is open to any interested youth.
- 1.1.3 Tryouts or demonstration of skills is not required for participation.
- 1.1.4 A draft, draw or other District Commissioner approved method is used to ensure equitable distribution of talent amongst all the league teams.
- 1.1.5 All teams must be approved by the league Board of Directors.
- 1.1.6 All league teams will be classified "B" on January 1 of each year.

**NOTE:** Leagues that split their Age Classifications based on skill level must have a minimum of ten (10) teams in the division with at least six (6) teams in the upper classification, regardless of the method used to create the split Age Classification, including but not limited to player evaluations, league assignments and/or parent requests. Split classification shall not be used in Age Classification below 8U. ***All players in a league with split classifications are eligible for All-Star selection.***

- 1.2 **"B" 16U and 18U Teams.** These teams may be formed in any area within the boundaries of USAS SoCal, whether league play is offered in their respective Age Classification or not.

**NOTE:** High School district boundaries shall not be used to determine eligibility.

- 1.3 The Championship Season (e.g., All-Stars) will begin no earlier than **May 7<sup>th</sup>** and will end after the National Championships. Every team participating in Championship Play must acknowledge and be prepared to accept a berth, if earned, to the next higher level. Refusal to accept a berth can result in the loss of eligibility for All-Star participation the following year.
- 1.4 Each team Adult Staff member, e.g. manager/coach/team parent and all Board of Directors members, shall be individually registered, have proof that a **background check** has been conducted and **Safe Sport Certified** through the RegisterUSASoftball system. USAS Registration period is September to September. Background Checks and SafeSport must be completed prior to taking the field. (see Appendix D). Additionally, all Board of Director members and at least two (2) adults on each team shall be concussion certified (see Appendix G).

Note: No invitational All-Star tournaments shall be held before May 12th.

## 2 Eligibility Policy and Procedures

### 2.1 Recreation League All-Star Eligibility

Note: The spring season is January 1 through the end of national championship play.

- 2.1.1 Each 6U through 18U player participating in recreation league play shall be individually registered with USAS SoCal. Players participating in Fall shall be registered by **October 1**, and any players not already registered during the Fall season shall be registered before **April 1** of the current Spring season.
- 2.1.2 Each All-Star manager shall be ACE certified, Concussion and Safe Sport certified, and must show proof of such. USAS Staff shall provide the identification means.
- 2.1.3 All members of the All-Star coaching staff shall be Background Checked and Safe Sport certified and must show proof of such. At least two (2) coaches shall be Concussion certified.
- 2.1.4 A team shall **ONLY** play against other teams and leagues that are USA Softball registered.
- 2.1.5 Recreation league teams or Select Teams that play in USA Softball or non-USA Softball travel events, including but not limited to travel ball friendlies, are not eligible for "B" or "C" classification.
- 2.1.6 Once a league has drafted their recreation or Select teams, they may not play in any travel ball related events. Doing so will result in loss of B or C classification.

## 2.2 League Team Eligibility

- 2.2.1 Team roster may include up to 20 players.
- 2.2.2 A team may be a single league team, an All-Star Team, or a Select Team as certified by the league Board of Directors.
  - 2.2.2.1 Leagues may not nominate, choose or tryout before May 1<sup>st</sup> Practice and or playing together prior to May 7<sup>th</sup> is not permitted.  
Note: No invitational All-Star tournaments shall be held before May 12th.
  - 2.2.2.2 If the league chooses a single league team or most players are from a single team, this team must meet the requirements 2.1 above.
- 2.2.3 A team shall not have more than four (4) players who played with a travel type team after January 1<sup>st</sup> of the current season. **NOTE:** This applies to All-Star Teams only and is limited to four (4) travel ball players per team.
- 2.2.4 Leagues may not choose All-Star managers before **April 24<sup>th</sup>** of the current season.
- 2.2.5 Teams participating in recreation tournaments between January 1 and May 1 of the current season must be composed of the original drafted league team. No pickup players or Select Teams are allowed.
- 2.2.6 The Championship Season (e.g., All-Star) shall commence no earlier than May 7<sup>th</sup> and ends immediately after the National Championships. Every team participating in Championship Play must acknowledge and be prepared to accept a berth, if earned, to the next higher level. Failure to accept a berth will result in Sanctions to the League.

- 2.2.7 All Player Clinics held after March 31st of the current year must have approval of the District Commissioner and must be open to all players.

**NOTE:** Travel Type Team is defined as any team that is not part of the player's approved Recreation League Team or League Select Team.

### 2.3 Player Eligibility

- 2.3.1 A player must play a minimum 75 percent of the current season's league games. **EXCEPTION:** High School students who are age eligible to return to the 14U Age Classification may return to the league in which they played during the previous year. The 14U All-Star Team shall not include more than four (4) players who attended High School. A player returning to the 14U Age Classification must have been registered with the league before **May 15** of the current season. Returning High School players must be approved by the league Board of Directors. **NOTE:** A player may appeal the 75 percent minimum rule to their respective District Commissioner in cases of documented injury.
- 2.3.2 A player who played in a higher Age Classification during the current season is eligible to play in their proper Age Classification in Championship Play.
- 2.3.3 A player who played on a High School team or other recreation league team after **March 31** of the current season is eligible to play if all other eligibility rules are met.
- 2.3.4 A player playing in more than one USA Softball recreation league must declare in writing by **31 March** to both the League Player Agent and the All-Star Administrator in which league they wish to be eligible for All-Star selection. The league is required to provide a copy of the player's declaration to their respective District Commissioner.
- 2.3.5 A player who participated on a team other than a team in their recreation league after **March 31st** of the current season is **NOT** eligible. For example, a player shall not participate on any **non-USA Softball team**, All-Star Team, or travel type team after **March 31st**.
- 2.3.6 A league that has more than one post-season team within an Age Classification may elevate a player within the same league from the second All-Star Team to the **first** All-Star Team with the approval of the respective District Commissioner. When a player is moved that player is locked on the team to which they were moved until the team is eliminated from Championship Play.
- 2.3.7 A player shall not participate with more than one team in USA Softball Championship Play during the same season. **EXCEPTION:** Pick-Up Player.
- 2.3.8 A player participating in Championship Play shall have USAS SoCal authorized photo identification. USAS shall determine the type of acceptable photo identification.

**NOTE:** "Participate", above, is defined as a player or team taking part in a tryout, practice, practice game, scheduled game, friendly or tournament.

2.4 League "Pick-Up Players" (See USA Softball Code)

- 2.4.1 A "B" Classification All-Star Pick-Up Player shall meet all player eligibility requirements in this section.
- 2.4.2 A player can be a Pick-Up Player only once per season.
- 2.4.3 A "B" All-Star Player whose team is no longer eligible for Championship Play is eligible to be a Pick-Up Player per the USA Softball Code.
- 2.4.4 A Pick-Up Player must have played on a USAS SoCal registered "B" or "C" Team during the current season.
- 2.4.5 Pick-Up Players are not permitted at District Championships. Roster addition prior to the District Championship is permitted only in case of injury or another unexpected situation and must be approved by the District Commissioner.
- 2.4.6 A Pick-Up Player, after District Championships but before the USAS SoCal All-Star Championships (State), may be picked up only from their own league. After the USAS SoCal Championships (State), a Pick-Up Player may be picked up from within the appropriate Age Classification from anywhere in Southern California.
- 2.4.7 Pick-Up Players must be approved by the league Board of Directors.

2.5 Interleague All-Star Teams. Leagues that combine to participate in interleague play may choose a combined All-Star Team providing all the above and below listed requirements are met.

- 2.5.1 A league that combines with another league must have approval of their District Commissioner.
- 2.5.2 More than two (2) leagues may combine to form an All-Star Team.
- 2.5.3 No player from either league interested in participating on the combined All-Star Team shall be denied the opportunity. **EXCEPTION:** A player who declines to participate in Championship Play.
- 2.5.4 An All-Star Team formed by combined "B" Leagues shall be classified "B". All other combined All-Star Teams shall be classified by the District Commissioner.
- 2.5.5 Combined teams must be approved by the Board of Directors of each league that combines.
- 2.5.6 Leagues may combine to form a second All-Star Team when approved by their District Commissioner.

2.6 The Select Program was established to provide an additional opportunity for players who wish to improve their softball skills beyond the regular league season but who have not yet reached the Junior Olympic "A" Classification skill level. This program is for 8U through 14U players who wish to improve their softball skills and thereby benefit themselves as well as their league. The Select Program will be in effect January 1st through April 2nd of the current season.

2.6.1 Select Player Eligibility

- 2.6.1.1 Select players must be individually registered with a recreation league, as required in paragraphs 1.1 and 2.1 above.
- 2.6.1.2 Select players must be drafted onto an active recreation league team roster in the current season.
- 2.6.1.3 Select players must play in a minimum of 75 percent of the leagues scheduled games during the current season.

2.6.2 Select Team Eligibility

- 2.6.2.1 Select teams may be established in the 8U, 10U, 12U and 14U Age Classifications ONLY.
- 2.6.2.2 The team roster may include up to 20 players.
- 2.6.2.3 Participation is limited to one day per week.  
**NOTE: USAS SoCal Select events in January may occur over two (2) days since leagues normally have not started league play.**
- 2.6.2.4 Select team participation may not interfere with any regular season participation.
- 2.6.2.5 Select teams may not have more than four (4) players who have participated on a travel type team after **January 1st** of the current season.
- 2.6.2.6 Select teams shall be comprised of players from a single Recreation League.
- 2.6.2.7 Select teams and all activities must be approved by the league board of directors.
- 2.6.2.8 A Select Team or player that participates in a USA Softball "A", Gold or any non-USA Softball travel type qualifying event shall NOT be eligible for participation in "B" or "C" Classification Championship Play.

2.6.3 Recreation Leagues may not host their own Select Tournaments.

- 2.6.3.1 Select Teams may not participate in Select Team friendlies that conflict with their District Select Tournament, unless it is full.
- 2.6.3.2 The District Commissioner shall approve all Select Team friendlies.

**Note:** Select teams participating in non-approved Select friendlies may adversely affect their league's All-Star eligibility.

- 2.6.4 Select teams registered for a Select Tournament may not withdraw after the tournament deadline without the concurrence of both the Tournament Director and their respective District Commissioner. Teams that withdraw and participate in another venue will not be refunded or will be responsible for the full entry fee, and may adversely affect their league's All-Star eligibility.

2.7 "B" Classification 16U and 18U Teams. These Age Classifications provide competition and Championship Play for players and teams that have not yet reached the Junior Olympic "A" Classification skill level. This program is devoted to High School age players who wish to improve their softball skills and thereby benefit their league, their high school as well as themselves.

2.7.1 Classification 16U and 18U Team Eligibility

- 2.7.1.1 A team shall register before **June 1** with a minimum of five (5) players who are individually registered with USAS SoCal. A minimum of eight (8) players shall be individually registered before **July 1**. Every player on the roster shall be individually registered before the start of Championship Play.
  - 2.7.1.2 A team roster may include 20 players, including Pick-Up Players.
  - 2.7.1.3 A team shall be comprised of players who meet all the 16U and 18U "B" eligibility requirements.
  - 2.7.1.4 A team may be single league team, or an All-Star Team as chosen and approved by the league.
  - 2.7.1.5 A team shall not have any players who participated on a **travel type team** after March 31st.
  - 2.7.1.6 A team represented by more than five (5) high school players requires approval of the USAS SoCal Junior Olympic (JO) Commissioner.
  - 2.7.1.7 A team may participate in "A" and/or "B" Classification *invitational tournaments* after **May 1** but risks being reclassified. If reclassified, a team may appeal the reclassification to the USAS SoCal Junior Olympic (JO) Commissioner.
  - 2.7.1.8 A team that participates in a USA Softball "A" or Gold qualifying event shall not be eligible to participate in "B" Classification Championship Play.
  - 2.7.1.9 A team participating in USA Softball Championship Play shall abide by all USA Softball codes pertaining to Championship Play and the policies outlined on the back of the Official "B" Championship Roster.
  - 2.7.1.10 A player who pitched at the high school varsity level may pitch in these classifications unless they are classified above the "B" Classification by their respective District Commissioner. The decision of a District Commissioner may be appealed to the USAS SoCal Junior Olympic (JO) Commissioner.
- 2.7.2 16U and 18U Player Eligibility
- 2.7.2.1 Player age eligibility is in accordance with the USA Softball Code.
  - 2.7.2.2 A Player shall not be on two (2) Championship Rosters during the same season. For example, a player may not be on a USA Softball "B" 16U/18U Classification Team and a USA Softball "A" Classification Team during the same season.
  - 2.7.2.3 A player is eligible to become a Pick-Up Player for a USA Softball "A" Classification (Travel) Team only after their current team is eliminated from Championship Play.
- 2.7.3 16U and 18U Pick-Up Players (see USA Softball Code)
- 2.7.3.1 A "B" Classification Pick-Up Player shall meet all the player eligibility requirements in this section.
  - 2.7.3.2 A player shall be a Pick-Up Player only once per season.

- 2.7.3.3 A "B" Classification Player whose team is eliminated from Championship Play is eligible to be a Pick-Up Player for either an "A" or "B" Classification Team in the same or higher Age Classification.
- 2.7.3.4 A Pick-Up Player must be registered with USA Softball during the current season. Players must be registered at least seven (7) days before the start of the National Championship Final.
- 2.7.3.5 All Pick-Up Player requirements contained in the USA Softball Code apply.

2.7.4 Rural or Remote Location Team Eligibility. Contact the "B" 16U/18U Age Classification Commissioner for team eligibility policy.

**3 Championship Play Procedures.** The All-Star Championship Play procedures are:

3.1 USAS SoCal is divided into seven (7) districts which are used for qualifying teams for the USAS SoCal "B" Classification All-Star Championship (State).

- |                                |                          |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Central District               | North San Diego District |
| Eastern District               | South San Diego District |
| Los Angeles/South Bay District | Western District         |
| Northern District              |                          |

- 3.2 Each District Commissioner shall conduct a District Championship. Each USAS SoCal League within a District may enter a minimum of one (1) team per Age Classification. The District Commissioner is authorized to add entries based on registrations.
- 3.3 District Championships should be hosted by a league in the District and will be sanctioned by USAS SoCal. USAS SoCal Staff shall administer all District Championships.
- 3.4 District Championships shall be conducted on the dates published.
- 3.5 Teams must provide a signed championship roster printed from RegisterUSA Softball.
- 3.6 The first, second, and third place teams in Age Classifications 8U, 10U, 12U and 14U in each District Championship shall advance to the USAS SoCal "B" Classification All-Star Championships (State). Additional berths shall be awarded based on participation.
- 3.7 The "B" Classification USAS SoCal All-Star Championships top 12 finishers in the 10U, 12U, 14U, 16U and 18U Age Classifications shall advance to the "B" Classification USA Softball Western National Championship Finals. Additional berths may be awarded based on availability. The top 8U finishers shall advance to the Regional Tournament.  
**NOTE:** A team that qualifies but fails to advance is subject to suspension the following year. "Qualified" is defined as a team that has earned a berth to the next level of Championship Play.
- 3.8 All USAS SoCal registered "B" 16U and 18U Teams are eligible for the USAS SoCal "B" Classification All-Star Championships (State).

**Section C: "C" Classification Program (Recreation)**

1. **Purpose.** To provide a "C" Classification Program (Recreation) and Championship Play for leagues registered with USAS SoCal with the express intent to provide those leagues the opportunity to ultimately compete at the "B" Classification level.

- 1.1 **Recreation League Teams.** These teams, in Age Classifications 6U through 18U, shall represent a recreation league. A recreation league is defined as follows:

- 1.1.1 An organized league that is associated with a recognized neighborhood or community.
- 1.1.2 Participation is open to any interested youth.
- 1.1.3 Tryouts or demonstration of skills is not required for participation.
- 1.1.4 A draft, a draw or another method approved District Commissioner is used to ensure equitable distribution of talent amongst all the league teams.
- 1.1.5 All teams must be approved by the league Board of Directors.

- 1.2 A league that qualifies two (2) or more teams for the "C" USAS SoCal Championships (State), excluding the 14U Age Classification, may not be eligible for "C" Classification the following year.

- 1.3 "C" Classification of Leagues. A league may request to be reclassified "C" by submitting a "C" Eligibility Request Form to their respective District Commissioner before March 15th the current year. The commissioner shall notify the leagues with their decision no later than April 1st.

At a minimum, evaluation criteria used to evaluate the request shall include the skill level, league play and history of tournament play, including Championship Play. The District Commissioner shall notify the League President of their decision as soon as practical. Based on performance, a "C" Classification team may be reclassified at any time by their District Commissioner. The reclassification may be appealed to the USAS SoCal Junior Olympic (JO) Commissioner in writing within 10 days of the notification. **NOTE:** Leagues and Teams are classified based on their performance relative to their District.

- 1.4 A league that divides Age Classifications into split classifications based on skill or player "impact" is not eligible for "C" Classification.
- 1.5 Teams in the 16U and 18U Age Classifications, see "B" Classification information in Section B above.
- 1.6 A league that has been reclassified "B" **must send at least two (2) teams in the 8U, 10U or 12U Age Classifications to the "B" District Championships** before applying for reclassification to the "C" Classification.  
**NOTE:** Leagues may appeal to the USAS SoCal Junior Olympic (JO) Commissioner for reclassification to "C" Classification.

- 2 **Eligibility Policy and Procedures**

- 2.1 Recreation League All-Star Eligibility



- 2.1.1 Each 6U through 18U player participating in recreation league play shall be individually registered with USAS SoCal. Players participating in Fall shall be registered by **October 1**, and any players not already registered during the Fall season shall be registered before **April 1** of the current Spring season.
- 2.1.2 Each team Adult Staff member, e.g. manager/coach/team parent and all Board of Directors members, shall be individually registered, have proof that a background check has been conducted and Safe Sport Certified through the RegisterUSASoftball system. USAS Registration period is September to September. Background Checks and SafeSport must be completed prior to taking the field. (see Appendix D). Additionally, all Board of Director members and at least two (2) adults on each team shall be concussion certified (see Appendix G).
- 2.1.3 Each All-Star manager shall be ACE certified, Concussion and Safe Sport certified, and must show proof of such. USAS Staff shall provide the identification means.
- 2.1.4 All members of the All-Star coaching staff shall be Safe Sport certified and must show proof of such. At least two (2) members shall be Concussion certified.
- 2.1.5 A league shall use only the Age Classifications approved by the USA Softball Code and USAS SoCal. The approved Age Classifications are 8U, 10U, 12U, 14U, 16U and 18U.
- 2.1.6 Pick-Up player is not permitted at District Championships. Roster addition prior to the District Championship is permitted only in case of injury or another unexpected situation. Must be approved by the District Commissioner.

## 2.2 League Team Eligibility

- 2.2.1 Team roster may include up to 20 players.
- 2.2.2 A team may be a single league team, or an All-Star Team selected and approved by the league Board of Directors.
  - 2.2.2.1 If the league chooses an All-Star Team, the All-Star Team may not nominate, choose or tryout before May 1. Practice and/or playing together before **May 7<sup>th</sup>** is not permitted.
 

**Note: No invitational All-Star tournaments shall be held before May 12th**
  - 2.2.2.2 If the league picks a single league team or most of the players are from a single team, this team must meet the requirements of 2.1 above.
- 2.2.3 A team shall not have more than four (4) players who participated on a **travel type team** after March 31st of the current season.
- 2.2.4 A team that participates in a USA Softball "A" Gold or **any non-USA Travel Ball type event** is not eligible for participation in "C" Classification Championship Play.
- 2.2.5 Leagues may not choose All-Star managers before **April 24th** of the current season.
- 2.2.6 The Championship Season (e.g., All-Star) shall commence no earlier than **May 7th** and ends immediately after the National Championships. . Every team participating in Championship Play must acknowledge and be prepared to accept a berth, if

earned, to the next higher level. Failure to accept a berth will result in Sanctions to the League

- 2.2.7 All Player Clinics held after **March 31<sup>st</sup>** of the current year must have approval of the District Commissioner and must be open to all players.

**NOTE:** A Travel Type Team is defined as any team that is not a part of the player's Recreation League or League Select Team.

### 2.3 Player Eligibility

- 2.3.1 A player must play a minimum 75 percent of the current season's league games. **EXCEPTION:** High school students who are age eligible to return to the 14U Age Classification may return to the league in which they played during the previous year providing the league has less than 30 14U eligible players. The 14U All-Star Team shall not include more than four (4) players who attended high school. A player returning to the 14U Age Classification must be registered with the league before **May 15<sup>th</sup>** of the current season. Returning high school player must be approved by the league Board of Directors.  
**NOTE:** A player may appeal the 75 percent minimum playing rule in cases of documented injury or illness to their respective District Commissioner.
- 2.3.2 A player who played in a higher Age Classification during the current season is eligible to play in their appropriate Age Classification in Championship Play.
- 2.3.3 A player who played on a high school team or other recreation league team after **March 31<sup>st</sup>** of the current season is eligible to play if all other eligibility requirements are met. A player participating in more than one (1) USAS SoCal recreation league must declare by **March 31<sup>st</sup>** in writing to both the League Player Agent and the All-Star Administrator of the league they wish to be eligible for All-Star selection. The league is required to provide a copy of the player's declaration to their respective District Commissioner.
- 2.3.4 A player who participated on a team other than a team in their recreation league after **March 31<sup>st</sup>** of the current season is NOT eligible, per paragraph 2.2.3 above. For example, a player shall not participate on any **non-USA Softball team**, All-Star Team, or travel type team after March 31<sup>st</sup>.
- 2.3.5 A league that has more than one post-season team within an Age Classification may elevate a player within the same league from the second All-Star Team to the **first** All-Star Team with the approval of the respective District Commissioner. When a player is moved that player is locked on the team to which they were moved until the team is eliminated from Championship Play.
- 2.3.6 A player shall not participate with more than one (1) team in USA Softball Championship Play during the same season, except as a Pick-Up Player.
- 2.3.7 A player participating in Championship Play shall have USAS SoCal authorized photo identification.

**NOTE:** "Participate" is defined as a player or team taking part in a tryout, practice, practice game, scheduled game, friendly or tournament.

2.4 League "Pick-Up Players"

- 2.4.1 A "C" Classification All-Star Pick-Up Player shall meet all player eligibility requirements in this section.
- 2.4.2 A player may be a Pick-Up Player only once per season.
- 2.4.3 A "C" Classification All-Star Player whose team is eliminated from Championship Play is eligible to be a Pick-Up Player, per USA Softball Code.
- 2.4.4 A Pick-Up Player must have played on a USAS SoCal registered "C" team during the current season.
- 2.4.5 A Pick-Up Player, after District Championships but before the USAS SoCal All-Star Championships (State) may be a Pick-Up Player from their own league only. After the USAS SoCal All-Star Championships (State) teams may Pick-Up eligible "C" Classified players from within their District.
- 2.4.6 Pick-Up Players must be approved by the league Board of Directors.

2.5 Interleague All-Star Teams. Leagues that combine to participate in interleague play may pick a combined All-Star Team, providing all the above and below listed eligibility requirements are met.

- 2.5.1 Any league that combines with another league must have approval of their District Commissioner.
- 2.5.2 More than two (2) leagues may combine to form an All-Star Team.
- 2.5.3 No player from either league interested to participate on the combined All-Star Team shall be denied the opportunity.  
**EXCEPTION:** A player who declines to participate in Championship Play.
- 2.5.4 All "C" Leagues combined All-Star teams shall be classified by the District Commissioner.
- 2.5.5 Combined teams must be approved by the Board of Directors of each league that combines.
- 2.5.6 Leagues may combine to form a second All-Star Team when approved by their District Commissioner.

3 **Championship Play Procedures.** The All-Star Championship Play procedures are as follows:

3.1 USAS SoCal is divided into seven (7) Districts for qualifying teams for the USAS SoCal "C" Classification All-Star Championships (State).

- |                                |                            |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Central District               | North San Diego District   |
| Eastern District               | South San Diego District   |
| Los Angeles/South Bay District | Western San Diego District |
| Northern District              |                            |

- 3.2 Each District Commissioner may conduct a "C" District Championship. Each USAS SoCal "C" League may enter a minimum of one (1) team per Age Classification. The District Commissioner may add entries based on the registrations.
- 3.3 A District Championship should be hosted by a league in the District and shall be sanctioned by USAS SoCal. USAS SoCal Junior Olympic (JO) Program staff shall administer each District Championship.
- 3.4 District Championships shall be conducted on the dates published.
- 3.5 Teams must provide a signed championship roster printed from RegisterUSA Softball.
- 3.6 The first, second, and third place teams in Age Classifications 8U, 10U, 12U and 14U in each District Championship shall advance to the USAS SoCal "C" Classification All-Star Championship (State). Additional berths will be awarded based on participation.
- 3.7 The USAS SoCal "C" Classification All-Star Championship top 12 finishers in the 8U,10U and 12U Age Classifications shall advance to the "C" Regional Tournament. Additional berths may be awarded based on availability. The top (6) finishers in the 14U Age Classification shall advance to the 14U B Western Nationals.

**NOTE:** When USAS SoCal is the host of the "B" Western National Championship, the top six (6) teams from the "C" State Championship shall be awarded berths to the "B" Western National Championship. **For 2023, the top (6) 10U teams will go to the B Western Nationals in Camarillo.**

**"B" and "C" Classifications (Recreation) Championship Play Eligibility Responsibilities**

1. **District Commissioner.** Responsible for verifying the classification and eligibility of each team from their District participating in Championship Play.
  
2. **League President or Chief Softball Administrator**
  - 2.1 Responsible for verifying the league's players/teams' eligibility.
  - 2.2 Shall notify the District Commissioner of any possible infraction.
  
3. **Team Manager**
  - 3.1 Responsible for verifying their team and player eligibility.
  - 3.2 Be prepared to provide proof of age and photo identification for each player on the team roster at every Championship.
  - 3.3 If found to be in violation of USA Softball policy may be suspended from USA Softball.
  - 3.4 Team shall abide by all rules and regulations of the USA Code and USAS SoCal.
  - 3.5 Must sign the Official Championship Roster confirming the eligibility of their players.

**2023 "B" and "C" Classification (Recreation) Championship Play**

**"B" Classification (Recreation) All-Star Championship Play**

June 23-25	All-Star District Championships (8U, 10U, 12U, 14U, 16U and 18U)
July 7-9 Lancaster, CA	All-Star USAS SoCal Championships (8U, 10U, 12U, 14U, 16U and 18U)
July 14-16 San Diego, CA	All-Star USA Softball of Pacific Coast Region Championships (8U) California State Games
26-30 July Camarillo, CA	Western B Nationals (10U)
24-30 July Medford, OR	Western B Nationals (12U, 14U, 16U, 18U)

**"C" Classification (Recreation) All-Star Championship Play**

June 16-18	All-Star District Championships (8U, 10U, 12U and 14U)
June 30- July 2 Lancaster, CA	All-Star USAS SoCal Championships (8U, 10U, 12U and 14U)
July 14-16 San Diego, CA	USA Softball Pacific Coast Region Championship, California State Games (8U, 10U, and 12U)

The above listed USA Softball Championship Play is open to all eligible teams from USAS SoCal.

2023 Calendar for "B" and "C" Classifications (Recreation)

- March 31      **Registration Deadline.** Each player participating in league play shall be individually registered with USAS SoCal **before April 1** of the current season to be eligible for Championship Play.
- Player Eligibility Declared.** For information see League/Player Eligibility in Sections B and C above.
- 01 April      **"C" Classification League Designation.** A league or team requesting "C" Classification designation shall submit a "C" Eligibility Request Form to their respective District Commissioner **before March 15** of the current season. The form is available at the USAS SoCal website.
- 02 April      **All Select teams must disband.**
- April 24      **All-Star Manager Selection may occur.**
- May 1          **All-Star Selection.** All-Star team selection may begin.
- May 12        All-Star Tournament Play may begin.
- May 31        **Championship Play Entry Deadline.** Championship Play Entry Form and entry fee must be received by the respective District Commissioner **before June 1** of the current season to participate in Championship Play. The Registration Form is available at the USAS SoCal website.
- "B" 16U/18U Team Registration Deadline.** Team shall be USA Softball "B" registered **before June 1** of current season to participate in Championship Play. The Registration Form is available at the USAS SoCal website.
- June 23-25    **"B" Classification (Recreation) All-Star District Championships.** Championship Roster is due before the team's first game in Championship Play. Roster and proof of age for players listed may be submitted at the District Draw or at the Championship site. Roster shall be fully completed with signatures of the Team Manager, players and parents/guardians when required.
- June 16-18    **"C" Classification (Recreation) All-Star District Championships.** Championship Roster is due before the team's first game in Championship Play. Roster and proof of age for players listed may be submitted at the District Draw or at the Championship site. Roster

shall be fully completed with signatures of the Team Manager, players and parents/guardians when required.

**“B” Classification (Recreation) Team Advances to All-Star USAS SoCal Championships (State)**

June            **Advancing to “B” Classification All-Star USAS SoCal Championships (State).** A team that qualifies for the “B” All-Star USAS SoCal Championships (State) must provide payment of the “B” All-Star USAS SoCal Championships Entry Fee before leaving the District Championship site.

**“B” Classification (Recreation) All-Star USAS SoCal Championships.** Teams shall check-in not later than one (1) hour before their scheduled first game. Proof of age, authorized photo identification and Pick-Up Player forms, when applicable, shall be provided at check-in.

**“B” Classification (Recreation) All-Star Teams Advancing to “B” Classification Western USA Softball National Finals**

July            **USA Softball Western National Championship.** Payment of Entry Fee must be received not later than this date. The Championship Entry Form and Entry Fee should be provided to the USAS SoCal “B” All-Star Championship (State) Director at the “B” All-Star Championship (State) site.

July            **USA Softball Western National Championship.** Team shall check-in at the place and time designated in the provided National Championship documents. All applicable documentation must be provided at check-in.

**Pick-Up Players.** A maximum of three (3) Pick-Up Players from a league may be added to the Championship Roster after the District Championships. A Pick-Up Player shall meet all eligibility Requirements contained in this publication. Pick-Up Player Forms will be in the packets that each team receives upon qualifying for the USAS SoCal Championships (State) and the USA Softball Western National Championship Finals.



"B" and "C" Classification (Recreation) Frequently Asked Questions

- Q. **Regarding eligibility, there are USAS SoCal rules, USA Softball Pacific Coast Region rules and the USA Softball Code. Which has priority?**
- A. Eligibility rules begin with the USA Softball Code. However, the USA Softball Code is sometimes general and for that reason the Pacific Coast Region expands some rules to clarify their application to the region. In turn, USAS SoCal further expands on those rules to better fit our situation. The USAS SoCal expanded rules may not conflict with the USA Softball Pacific Coast Region rules and the region rules may not conflict with the USA Softball Code.
- Q. **May a player participate with a travel team and then participate on an All-Star Team?**
- A. A player may participate with a travel team and remain eligible for All-Star Team selection if that player stops participating with the travel team before **March 31<sup>st</sup>** of the current year. Before **March 31<sup>st</sup>** the player must decide whether to continue playing with the travel team or participate in a recreation league to become eligible for All-Star selection.
- Q. **How does USAS SoCal define "participate" or "participation"?**
- A. A player taking part in a tryout, practice, practice game, game, or tournament.
- Q. **What happens to a player who drops from a travel team before March 31<sup>st</sup> and is then not selected for an All-Star Team?**
- A. The player may re-join the original travel team or join another travel team.
- Q. **May a player participating in two (2) leagues be selected to an All-Star Team?**
- A. Yes, but only in one (1) league. The player must, by **March 31<sup>st</sup>** of the current year, declare in which league they wish to be considered for All-Star selection.
- Q. **May a 10 years old player who participated with a 12U Team during league play be selected for a 10U Team?**
- A. Yes, providing the player meets all other eligibility requirements.
- Q. **May a 10 years old player who participated with a 12U Travel Team be selected for a 10U All-Star Team?**
- A. Yes, providing the player has not participated with the travel team after **March 31<sup>st</sup>** of the current year and they meet all other eligibility requirements.
- Q. **May a league team enter USA Softball Championship Play without approval of the league?**
- A. No.
- Q. **Do these eligibility rules apply to all All-Star Teams and at invitational tournaments?**
- A. No, these eligibility rules apply only to All-Star Teams entering USA Softball Championship Play. Other tournaments sanctioned by USAS SoCal and some invitational tournaments often use USAS SoCal eligibility rules. Check with the Tournament Director.

**Q. What is Championship Play?**

A. Competition where the winner and often additional teams advance to a higher level of Championship Play. The different levels of Championship Play are in the USA Softball Code, or ask a USAS SoCal Staff member.

**Q. What are "A", "B" and "C" Classifications of play?**

A. The "A" Classification consists of independent travel teams and organizations that may participate in USA Softball "A" and Gold Classification Championship Play only. Independent recreation leagues are designated "B" or "C" Classification and may participate in "B" and "C" Championship Play only. Primarily, but not entirely, the skill level of the players determines the classification.

**Q. Why is a player not permitted to play both "A" and "B" or "C" Classifications?**

A. This is not permitted because the "A" Classification is intended for players who have as their primary goal the development of competitive softball skills, with much emphasis on competition, while the "B" and "C" Classifications are for players who are registered with a league primarily for recreation purposes. The "B" and "C" Classification players' primary goal is to have fun. USA Softball provides programs for everyone, it is up to the individual or their parents to choose the program best suited for them.

**Q. What is the "C" League automatic reclassification?**

A. A league that qualifies two (2) or more teams for the "C" USAS SoCal Championships (State), excluding the 14U Age Classification, may not be eligible for "C" Classification the following year. A league may request to be reclassified "C" by submitting a "C" Eligibility Request Form to their respective District Commissioner before March 15th the current year.

**Note: Reclassification may occur at any time at the discretion of the District Commissioner.**

**Q. May a league that has been reclassified "B" reapply for "C" Classification?**

A. A league that has been reclassified "B" may submit a "C" Eligibility Request Form. However, a league that has been reclassified "B" **must send at least two (2) teams in the 8U, 10U or 12U Age Classifications to the "B" District Championships** before applying for reclassification to the "C" Classification. (See Question/Answer above for further clarifications.)

**Q. Can the USAS SoCal eligibility rules be changed?**

A. Yes, they are reviewed annually and often changed. However, be mindful, the USAS SoCal rules may not conflict with either the USA Softball Pacific Coast Region rules or the USA Softball Code. Everyone is encouraged to submit proposed changes in writing, to their respective District Commissioner.

**Q. May Select Teams participate in Select events without the approval of their league?**

A. No. Select tournaments are managed by the District Commissioner. Select friendlies require District Commissioner approval and may not take place on the same weekend as their District Select Tournament. Exceptions may be allowed on a case by case basis if the tournament is full.

**APPENDIX A**

**Tournament Sanctioning Policy**

**Purpose.** The following policy was developed and adopted by USAS SoCal to establish sanctioning procedures for softball tournaments. Sanctioning a tournament protects USAS SoCal leagues and teams under the USAS SoCal Rules and Regulations. All Recreation League invitational tournaments shall be sanctioned by USAS SoCal.

**Benefits.** The sanctioning of a tournament by USAS SoCal affords the following benefits:

- Access to USA Softball Insurance Programs offered by RPS-Bollinger Insurance Company.
- Access to USA Softball registered umpires who have passed a background checked.
- Ability to use the USAS SoCal name in promoting the tournament or event.
- USAS SoCal assistance in enforcing standards of conduct by tournament participants.
- USAS SoCal assistance in recovering bad debts of participants.

**Objectives.** This sanctioning policy is in effect to fulfill the following:

- Provide a method of processing requests for those parties interested in hosting USAS SoCal sanctioned tournaments.
- Enhance the USAS SoCal recreation tournament program.
- Develop a method for monitoring tournaments sanctioned by USAS SoCal.
- Ensure that tournament sanctioning requirements are fulfilled by the host.
- Develop more tournament opportunities for USAS SoCal registered teams.

**Authorization.** The USAS SoCal Commissioner and their designees have the authority to issue sanctioning for any adult and youth tournament that is deemed to meet the objectives of USAS SoCal. The Commissioner and their designees have the responsibility to ensure that the requirements for sanctioning a tournament or other event are met by the host and that the event host fulfills all responsibilities associated with the event.

**Process.** An event host that wishes to sanction a tournament with USAS SoCal shall submit a Sanction Request Form to the Commissioner or their designee. The request shall be reviewed and if the event is deemed to meet the objectives of USAS SoCal a sanction shall be awarded. A copy of the Sanction Request Form can be found at the USAS SoCal website, or a copy may be obtained from any USAS SoCal Junior Olympic (JO) Program Staff member.

**Requirements.** An individual hosting a USAS SoCal sanctioned tournament shall declare, before the start of the tournament, and fulfill thereafter, the following:

- Obtain and maintain at least a \$1M General Liability Insurance Policy for the event. Said policy shall include USAS SoCal as additionally insured.
- All paid umpires shall be registered and in good standing with USAS SoCal.
- All participating teams shall be registered and in good standing with USAS SoCal.
- All participating teams shall submit their team rosters printed on the approved form from RegisterUSA.

**APPENDIX B**  
**Complaint Procedure**

USAS SoCal is not intent on policing teams, managers, coaches and/or players. However, when allegations of violations of the USA Softball Code and/or the USAS SoCal Rules and Regulations are filed, in writing, a USAS SoCal official shall conduct an examination of the reported violations to determine if there is basis to schedule a suspension hearing.

The procedure for filing a written complaint is as follows:

1. A USAS SoCal Complaint Form shall be filed. The form is available in the USAS SoCal website. The form may also be obtained by contacting any member of the USAS SoCal Junior Olympic (JO) Staff. At a minimum, the complaint must contain the following information:
  - A. Name and address of all parties.
  - B. The Code Article or Rule/Regulation allegedly violated.
  - C. All supporting information, evidence and/or documents related to the complaint.
2. A money order or cashier's check in the amount of \$75.00 made payable to USAS SoCal must accompany the complaint. The \$75.00 is non-refundable and may be waived only by the USAS SoCal Commissioner.
3. Evidence substantiating the alleged violation must be listed in the complaint form and included. Examples of such evidence are witness statements, documentation, photos, etc. Witnesses to the alleged violation must be named with their addresses and phone numbers listed. Witnesses for or against the accused may testify at a hearing, limited to four (4) per side. Written statements, with appropriate signatures, from witnesses unable to attend the hearing are acceptable.
4. Receipt of the complaint shall be acknowledged by a USAS SoCal Staff member via the USPS or email within 14 days. If determined that sufficient basis exists for a hearing, the hearing shall be scheduled within a reasonable time, but not later than 60 days from receipt of the complaint providing all required information has been submitted.

**APPENDIX C**  
**Suspension Hearing**

A hearing shall be scheduled when the examination of a written complaint received by USAS SoCal determines that sufficient evidence of an alleged violation of the USA Softball Code and/or USAS SoCal Rules and Regulations may be valid. Violations of specific Articles of the USA Softball Code require minimum suspension time periods. The penalty for other violations is the discretion of the hearing panel or the USAS SoCal Commissioner. All testimony shall be considered to establish the validity of or to disprove the complaint, and then, if appropriate, impose an appropriate penalty.

Testimony at a hearing may indicate that although guilty, a person deserves leniency because of mitigating circumstances, while in other cases the testimony may show that a harsher penalty is in order. While conducting a hearing, the hearing panel shall consider all information available, including the past record of the accused, previous complaints, and the testimony of witnesses at the hearing.

1. When a hearing date is scheduled, all parties shall be notified in writing.
2. Each party, complainant and accused, may request one (1) postponement only. When a postponement is requested and granted, a new hearing date will be scheduled, and all parties shall be notified in writing.
3. Four (4) persons for the accused and four (4) persons for the complainant may testify.
4. If the accused fails to appear at the hearing without notification, the hearing shall proceed with the hearing panel taking appropriate action.
5. If the complainant fails to appear at the hearing without notification, the complaint may be dismissed.
6. USAS SoCal may conduct any necessary inquiry into allegations brought against a USA Softball team, manager, coach, player, or umpire to prove or disprove the allegations. The inquiry may be conducted before, during or after the hearing.
7. Any member of the USAS SoCal Staff who witnesses or has irrefutable evidence of a violation of the USA Softball Code at a Championship may immediately remove a team, manager, coach, player and/or umpire from further competition in that Championship. A suspension hearing may be conducted at the Championship to determine if further action is necessary. The suspension hearing, if held, will be conducted per Article 305.D of the USA Softball Code.
8. A team, manager, coach, player and/or umpire suspended by USAS SoCal forfeits all rights and privileges afforded to a member of USA Softball. The forfeiture of said rights and privileges shall include, but not be limited to:
  - A. Representing themselves as an eligible USA Softball team, manager, coach, player, or umpire to anyone affiliated with USA Softball.
  - B. Practicing, managing, coaching, umpiring, or participating at any time with anyone affiliated with USA Softball.
  - C. Recruiting for a USA Softball team.
  - D. Competing with or against any USA Softball team.
  - E. Suspended individuals shall not be on a field, keep score, be in or around the dugout, relay verbal advice or instruction or signal to a team from any location.

9. When a complaint is upheld and results in suspension, the individual has the right to appeal as outlined in the USA Softball Code.

**Non-compliance Penalty.** A minimum of 12 months added to the original penalty.

**APPENDIX D**

**Background Check Minimum Criteria for Known Offenses**

USA Softball and USAS SoCal reserve the right to screen any volunteer, contractor and/or employee who has access to children in USA Softball programs. The screening may consist of (1) a Staff and Volunteer Application Form, (2) an interview, (3) consent to reference and fingerprint for a background check report, and/or (4) approval by staff and/or committee members.

Please note that the 50 states of the United States adopt different laws and categorize the offenses differently. The USA Softball list of offenses below is not intended to be an exhaustive list of offenses but a list of commonly used terms to define the offenses. Other convictions, accusations, charges, or facts should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

If a background check is performed and any of the following convictions are revealed, USA Softball, its National Background Check Committee, and USAS SoCal shall undertake a review of such individual's application to determine whether or not such a person should be permitted to participate in USA Softball programs:

- \*\*Murder
- \*\*Rape
- \*\*Sexual Assault
- \*\*False Imprisonment
- \*\*Armed Robbery
- \*\*Indecent Solicitation of a child
- \*\*Aggravated Sexual Abuse/Assault of a child
- \*\*Child Abuse
- \*\*Child Molestation
- \*\*Sexual Conduct with a minor
- \*\*Sexual Abuse of a child
- \*\*Online Solicitation of a minor

- 
- Abandon/Endanger a child
  - Arson
  - Assault
  - Bad Checks/Insufficient Funds
  - Bookmaking
  - Breach of Computer Security
  - Breaking and Entering
  - Burglary
  - Coercion
  - Conspiracy
  - Credit Card abuse
  - Crimes against elderly

- Disorderly Conduct
- Domestic Violence in the presence of a minor
- Domestic Violence/Abuse
- Drug Dealing
- Drug Possession
- Drug Trafficking
- DUI/DWI (3 in last seven (7) years)
- Escape from Penitentiary
- Evading Arrest
- Firearms/Weapons charges
- Forgery
- Furnishing Alcohol to a minor
- Identity Theft
- Indecency with a child
- Money Laundering
- Petty Theft
- Prostitution
- Public Intoxication (2 in last five (5) years)
- Shoplifting
- Theft/Robbery/Larceny
- Violation of a Protective Order

If a background check is performed and reveals a conviction of any of the above offenses, then the application shall be reviewed by a member of the National Background Check Committee (or such person's designee) for a determination of eligibility. A denial of eligibility may be appealed by the applicant to the entire National Background Check Committee.

In addition, if the background check reveals that the applicant is listed on a sex offender registry, then the applicant shall be ineligible for participation in USA Softball programs.



**APPENDIX E**  
**Appeal Process:**

USA Softball recognizes that no policy can encompass every situation, so USA Softball has formed its National Background Check Committee to evaluate applications and decide appeals variance requests on a case-by-case basis in certain situations where good cause exists.

An applicant may appeal a denial of eligibility to the entire National Background Check Committee, so long as the appeal is timely filed within fourteen (14) days of the date stated on the denial correspondence. The appeal process shall provide the applicant with an opportunity to present their side of the story. An appeal may advise the Committee of incorrect information appearing in a background check report, a mistaken identity with another individual, or extenuating circumstances as to why the person should be permitted to participate despite a conviction of one of the above listed offenses.

Any person whose application for participation in USA Softball's program has been denied may appeal the denial within (14) days to the USA Softball's National Background Committee by filing their appeal with the USAS SoCal Commissioner. All appeals shall be in writing and sent first to the USAS SoCal Commissioner. The written appeal submission must contain a statement of the specific grounds why the prior determination should be reversed and must be accompanied by all evidence supporting the request for reversal. With the written appeal submission, the person filing the appeal may also file any other information or evidence in support of the appeal. The USAS SoCal Commissioner will review the information and make a recommendation to the National Background Check Committee in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The National Background Check Committee shall review the appeal and decide whether the applicant's appeal should be granted or denied.

Subject to the **Mandatory Ineligibility** requirements below, in extenuating circumstances and for good cause shown, USA Softball's National Background Check Committee shall have the authority to, but not be required to, grant an appeal to permit an individual to participate in USA Softball's program even though that person has been convicted of one of the above non-mandatory offenses (or its equivalent).

**Mandatory Ineligibility for Certain Felony Offenses.** Any of the following shall constitute an applicant's mandatory ineligibility from participation in USA Softball programs: (a) an applicant's current listing on any sex offender registry, and/or (b) any felony conviction(s) occurring within the prior 15 years for any offense(s) marked with an "\*\*\*". For all such applications, the National Background Check Committee may consider appeals based on incorrectly reported information and/or mistaken identity, but the Committee shall not have the authority to grant an appeal for extenuating circumstances or good cause shown in instances where the applicant is listed on a sex offender registry or has been convicted within the last 15 years of a felony of the type marked with "\*\*\*" above.

Revised 9/2017

# USA SOFTBALL OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

## Appendix F 2023 Junior Olympic Age Classification Chart

Use the chart below to determine Junior Olympic Age Classification for the 2023 Season.

Age Group	18U	16U	14U	12U	10U	8U
<b>Birth Year</b>						
<b>2004</b>	Eligible					
<b>2005</b>	Eligible					
<b>2006</b>	Eligible	Eligible				
<b>2007</b>	Eligible	Eligible				
<b>2008</b>	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible			
<b>2009</b>	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible			
<b>2010</b>	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible		
<b>2011</b>	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible		
<b>2012</b>	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	
<b>2013</b>	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	
<b>2014-2017</b>	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible	Eligible

**Appendix G**  
**Concussion Protocol Guidelines**

To: USA Softball of Southern California Leagues and Teams

**Assembly Bill No. 2007, Youth Athletics:** Youth Sports Organizations: Concussions or other Head Injuries.

Prior to January 1, 2017, law required a school district, charter school or private school, that offered an athletic program to immediately remove an athlete from an athletic activity for the remainder of the day if the athlete was suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury, and prohibited the athlete from returning to the athletic activity until the athlete was evaluated by a licensed health care provider, trained in the management of concussions, and acting within the scope of their practice, and the athlete received written clearance from the licensed health care provider to return to the athletic activity. The law also required, on a yearly basis, that a concussion and head injury information sheet be signed and returned by the athlete and the athlete's parent/guardian before the athlete's initiating practice or competition.

On September 23, 2016, The Governor signed into law Assembly Bill 2007, which, on January 1, 2017, applied the above-mentioned provisions to athletes participating in youth sports organizations. The youth organizations are defined to include organizations, businesses, nonprofit entities, or local governmental agencies that sponsor or conduct amateur sports competitions, training, camps, or clubs in which persons 17 years of age and younger participate in any of the 27 designated sports. One of the designated sports is Softball. Therefore, youth softball organizations are now required to notify the parents or guardians of athletes 17 years of age or younger who have been removed from athletic activities due to suspected concussions, as specified in the following pages. The law requires youth softball organizations to offer concussion and head injury education, or related educational materials, or both, to each coach and administrator on a yearly basis, as prescribed in the following pages. The law further requires each coach and administrator to successfully complete the concussion and head injury education at least once annually either online or in person. Additionally, the law requires youth softball organizations to identify procedures for ensuring compliance with the law's requirements for providing concussion and head injury education and a concussion and head injury information sheet. The law further requires youth softball organizations to identify procedures to ensure compliance with the athlete removal provisions and the return-to-play protocol, as specified. This law applies to all persons participating in youth softball, regardless of age. Youth softball organizations may adopt and enforce rules intended to provide a higher standard or safety for athletes than the standard established by this law.

To assist the youth softball leagues and teams affiliated with USA Softball of Southern California comply with AB 2007, information, materials, and online links can be found in the following pages as listed below.

- Youth Sports and Concussions (Assembly Bill 2007)
- Concussion Information Sheet, or
- Parent and Athlete Concussion Policy Statement Sheet
- Graded Concussion Symptom Checklist
- Acute Concussion Notification Form for Parents/Guardians
- Concussion Return-to-Play (RTP) Protocol
- Concussion Certification for Coaches and Administrators
- Physician Letter to League/Team (Concussion)

Please contact our Junior Olympic Commissioner or any other member of our Junior Olympic Staff should you require assistance or more information.

Youth Sports and Concussions (Assembly Bill 2007)

Since 2012, per Assembly Bill 25, all schools with sports programs have been required to immediately remove an athlete from an athletic activity for the remainder of the day if the athlete is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury, and prohibits the athlete from returning to the athletic activity until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care provider, trained in the management of concussions, and acting within the scope of his or her practice, and the athlete receives written clearance from the licensed health care provider to return to the athletic activity. This law also requires, on a yearly basis, a concussion, and head injury information sheet to be signed and returned by the athlete and athlete's parent or guardian before the athlete's re-initiating practice or competition.

*A new law went into effect on January 1, 2017. Assembly Bill 2007 now applies these same regulations to athletes participating in youth sports organizations. Softball is one of the 27 youth sports now required to:*

- **Remove an athlete** who may have a concussion during a practice or game to be removed from the activity for the remainder of the day.
- Any athlete removed for this reason must receive a **written clearance note** from a medical doctor trained in the management of concussion before returning to practice, and after **completion of the Return to Learn and Return to Play Protocols**.
- Before an athlete can start the season and begin practice in a sport, a **concussion information sheet** must be signed and returned to the league by the parent/guardian.
- Provide all **coaches and administrators** with training on **concussions**, and document completion and understanding of this training.

However, AB 2007 has not yet provided specific educational material, tools, information sheets or protocols for youth sports organizations. Until such material is provided, USA Softball of Southern California used the material currently available by the California Interscholastic Federation to all schools as part of AB 25, which fulfills all areas of this new law, to put together the information contained in the following pages dealing with concussions.

In addition to the information provided as stated above, please visit the links below for a free information available on concussions.

<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/Training/index.html>

<http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/parents.html>

<http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/athletes.html>

<http://nfhslearn.com/courses/61064/concussion-in-sports>

## Concussion Information Sheet

### Why am I getting this information Sheet?

You are getting this information sheet about concussions because of California state law AB 2007 (effective January 1, 2017), which applies to 27 youth sports organizations, including softball:

1. The law requires an athlete who may have a concussion during a practice or game to be removed from the activity for the remainder of the day.
2. Any athlete removed for this reason must receive a written note from a medical doctor trained in the management of concussion before returning to practice.
3. Before an athlete can start the season and begin practice in the sport of softball, a concussion information sheet must be signed by the athlete and parent/guardian and returned to their league/team.

All coaches are required to receive training about concussions annually.

### What is a concussion and how would I recognize one?

A concussion is a kind of brain injury. It can be caused by a bump or hit to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force that shakes the head. Concussions can appear in any sport and can look differently in each sport.

Most concussions get better with rest and over 90% of athletes fully recover. However, all concussions should be considered serious. If not recognized and managed the right way, they may result in problems including brain damage and even death.

Most concussions occur without being knocked out. Signs and symptoms of concussions (see following page) may show up right after the injury or can take hours to appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion or if you notice some symptoms and signs, seek medical evaluation from a medical doctor trained in the evaluation and management of concussion. If your child is vomiting, has a severe headache, or is having difficulty staying awake or answering simple questions, call 911 to take him/her immediately to the emergency department of your local hospital.

On the USA Softball of Southern California website is a Graded Concussion Symptom Checklist. If your child fills out this checklist after having had a concussion, it helps the doctor, trainer or coach understand how he/she is feeling and hopefully shows improvement. We ask that you have your child fill out the checklist at the start of the season even before a concussion has occurred to document if some symptoms such as headaches might be a part of his/her everyday life. This is called a "baseline" to understand what symptoms are normal and common for your child. Keep a copy for your records, and turn in the original to your league/team. If a concussion occurs, the child should fill out this checklist daily. This Graded Symptom Checklist provides a list of symptoms to compare over time to make sure the athlete is recovering from the concussion.

### What can happen if my child keeps playing with concussion symptoms or returns too soon after getting a concussion?

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. There is NO same day return to play for a youth with a suspected concussion. Youth athletes may take more time to recover from concussion and are more prone to long-term serious problems from a concussion.

Even though a traditional brain scan (e.g., MRI or CT) may be "normal", the brain has still been injured. Animal and human research studies show that a second blow before the brain has recovered can result in serious damage to the

brain. If your athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one, this can lead to prolonged recovery (weeks to months), or even to severe brain swelling (Second Impact Syndrome) with devastating consequences.

There is an increasing concern that head impact exposure and recurrent concussions may contribute to long-term neurological problems. One goal of this concussion program is to prevent a too early return to play so that serious brain damage can be prevented.

**Signs observed by teammates, parents and coaches include:**

- Looks dizzy
- Looks spaced out
- Confused about plays
- Forgets plays
- Is unsure of game, score or opponent
- Moves clumsily or awkwardly
- Answers questions slowly
- Slurred speech
- Shows a change in personality or way of acting
- Can't recall events before or after the injury
- Seizures or has a fit
- Any change in typical behavior or personality
- Passes out

**Symptoms may include one or more of the following:**

- Headaches
- "Pressure in head"
- Nausea or throws up
- Neck pain
- Has trouble standing or walking
- Blurred, double or fuzzy vision
- Bothered by light or noise
- Feeling sluggish or slowed down
- Feeling foggy or groggy
- Drowsiness
- Change in sleep patterns
- Loss of memory
- "Don't feel right"
- Tired or low energy
- Sadness
- Nervousness or feeling on edge
- Irritability
- More emotional
- Confused
- Concentration or memory problems
- Repeating the same question/comment

**What is Return to Play (RTP) determined?**

Following a concussion, athletes may have difficulties with short and long-term memory, concentration, and organization. They will require rest while recovering from injury (e.g., avoid reading, texting, video games, loud movies), and may even need to stay home for a few days. As the athlete returns to normal they may benefit from a reduced schedule, depending on how they feel. If recovery from the concussion is taking longer than expected, they may also benefit by a more reduced activity and may require further assessment by a medical doctor trained in the management of concussion. If the athlete is in school at time of the concussion, the California Interscholastic Federation Return to Learn guidelines should be completed and return to complete school before beginning any sports or physical activities, unless your doctor makes other recommendations. Go to the CIF website (cifstate.org) for more information on Return to Learn.

Concussion symptoms should be completely gone before returning to competition. A RTP progression involves a gradual, step-wise increase in physical effort, sports-specific activities, and the risk for contact. If symptoms occur with activity, the progression should be stopped. If there are no symptoms the next day, exercise can be restarted at the previous stage.

RTP after concussion should occur only with medical clearance from a medical doctor trained in the evaluation and management of concussions, and a step-wise progression program monitored by an athletic trainer, coach, or other authorized person. (As a guide, California state law AB2127, effective 1/1/15, which deals with schools, states that return to play (e.g., full competition) must be no sooner than 7 days after the concussion diagnosis has been made by a physician.)

**Final thoughts for Parents/Guardians:**

It is well known that athletes will often not talk about signs of concussions, which is why this information sheet is so important for review with them. Teach your child to tell the coaching staff if he/she experiences such symptoms, or if he/she suspects that a teammate has had a concussion. You should also feel comfortable talking to the coaches or trainer about possible concussion signs and symptoms that you may be seeing in your child.

**References:**

- American Medical Society for Sports Medicine position statement: concussion in sport (2013)
- Consensus statement on concussions in sport: the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Concussions in Sport held in Zurich, November 2012
- <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/youth.html>

## Concussion Information Sheet

League/Team:

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You are receiving this information sheet about concussions because of California State Law AB 2007 (effective January 1, 2017):

1. The law requires an athlete who may have a concussion during a practice or game to be removed from the activity for the remainder of the day.
2. Any athlete removed for this reason must receive a written note from a medical doctor trained in the management of concussion before returning to practice.
3. Before an athlete can start the season and begin practice in a sport, a concussion information sheet must be signed and returned to the league/team by the athlete and the parent/guardian.

Every year all coaches are required to receive training about concussions.

For current and up-to-date information on concussions you can visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/youth.html>

I acknowledge that I have received and read the USA Softball of Southern California Concussion Information Sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Athlete Name (Printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Athlete Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Legal Guardian (Printed)



## Graded Concussion Symptom Checklist

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Hours of Sleep: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Diagnosis: \_\_\_\_\_

- Grade the 22 symptoms with a score of 0 through 6.
  - Note that these symptoms may not all be related to a concussion.
- You can fill this out at the beginning of the season as a baseline (after a good night's sleep)
- If you suffer a suspected concussion, use this checklist to record your symptoms daily.
  - Be consistent and try to grade either at the beginning or end of each day.
- There is no scale to compare your total score to; the checklist helps you follow your symptoms on a day-to-day basis.
  - If your total scores are not decreasing, see your physician right away.
- Show your baseline (if available) and daily checklists to your physician.

Baseline Score

Post-Concussion Score

	None Severe	Mild			Moderate		
Headache	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
"Pressure in Head"	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Neck Pain	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Nausea or Vomiting	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Dizziness	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Blurred Vision	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Balance Problems	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitivity to light	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sensitivity to noise	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feeling slowed down	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feeling like "in a fog"	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
"Don't feel right"	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Difficulty Concentrating	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Difficulty Remembering	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Fatigue or low energy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Confusion	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Drowsiness	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Trouble falling asleep	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
More emotional than usual	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Irritability	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sadness	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Nervous or Anxious	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Total Sum of Each Column</b>	0						
column totals)	<b>Total Symptom Score (Sum of all</b>						

Athlete's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ League/Team: \_\_\_\_\_

D.O.B. \_\_\_\_\_ Physician (MD/DO) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Acute Concussion Notification Form for Parents/Guardians

- Your child has symptoms consistent with a concussion. At the time of evaluation, there was no sign of any serious complications.
- He/she will need monitoring for a further period by a responsible adult, and should not be left alone over the next 12-14 hours.

**Call 911 and go to the nearest Hospital Emergency Department for the following:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| ○ Headache that worsens                       | ○ Can't recognize people or places          |
| ○ Seizure (uncontrolled jerking of arms/legs) | ○ Looks very drowsy/Can't be awakened       |
| ○ Weakness or numbness of arms/legs           | ○ Increased confusion and/or irritability   |
| ○ Repeated vomiting                           | ○ Unusual behavior                          |
| ○ Loss of consciousness                       | ○ Slurred speech                            |
| ○ Lack of balance/unsteadiness on feet        | ○ Drainage of blood/fluid from ears or nose |
| ○ Changes in vision (double, blurry vision)   | ○ Loss of bowel and/or bladder control      |

**Recommendations:**

- AVOID medications like ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) or aspirin for the next 48 hours due to the potential of increased bleeding risk in the brain.
- Acetaminophen (Tylenol) can be tried but often won't take away a concussion headache. DO NOT give narcotic pain medication like codeine.
- Check for normal breathing every few hours while sleeping but DO NOT wake your child up unless you are concerned. If he/she can't be aroused, call 911 immediately.
- Make an appointment to see a physician within 72 hours. Inform your child's coaches about the injury. Keep your child at home if symptoms are severe or worsen through normal activity.
- Track your child's symptoms using the Graded Concussion Symptoms Checklist. Bring these checklists to your physician.
- No activities like other sports and no physical exertion until your child is evaluated and cleared by a physician (MD/DO) trained in the diagnosis and management of concussions.
- Refer to the other concussion materials/protocols provided and available online.

## Concussions Return to Play (RTP) Protocol

California State Law AB 2117, which applies to the California Interscholastic Federation, states that to return to play (i.e., Competition) cannot be sooner than 7 days after evaluation by a physician (MD/DO) who has made the diagnosis of concussion, and **ONLY** after completing a Graduated Return to Play Protocol. Since the State of California, in implementing AB 2007 (Concussion Law), has including softball organizations outside of the CIF, the following protocol should be followed before an athlete returns to full competition after suffering a concussion.

**Instructions:**

- This is an example of a graduated return to play protocol that **MUST** be completed before you can return to full competition.
  - A certified athletic trainer (AT), physician, or identified concussion monitor (e.g., coach) must initial each stage after you successfully pass it.
  - You should be back to normal activities before beginning Stage II, unless otherwise instructed by your physician.
- After Stage I, you cannot progress more than one stage per day (or longer if instructed by your physician).
- If symptoms return at any stage in the progression, **IMMEDIATELY STOP** any physical activity and follow up with your AT, other identified monitor, or your physician. In general, if you are symptoms-free the next day, return to the previous stage where symptoms had not occurred.
- Seek further medical attention if you cannot pass a stage after 3 attempts due to concussion symptoms, or if you feel uncomfortable an anytime during the progression.

<b>You must have written physician (MD/DO) clearance to begin and progress through the following Stages as outlined below, or as otherwise directed by your physician. Minimum of 6 days to pass Stage I and II.</b>				
Date & Initials	Stage	Activity	Exercise Example	Objective of the Stage
	<b>I</b>	No physical activity for at least 2 full symptoms-free days	No activities requiring exertion (weight Lifting, jogging)	Recovery and elimination of symptoms
	<b>II-A</b>	Light aerobic activity	10-15 minutes (min) of walking or stationary biking. <b>Must be performed under direct supervision by designated individual</b>	Increase heart rate to no more than 50% of perceived maximum (max) exertion (e.g., <100 beats per min (bpm)) <b>Monitor for symptom return</b>
	<b>II-B</b>	Moderate aerobic activity (Light resistance training)	20-30 min jogging or stationary biking <b>Body weight exercises (squads, push-ups), max 1 set of 10, no more than 10 min total</b>	Increase heart rate to 50-75% max exertion (e.g., 100-150 bpm) <b>Monitor for symptom return</b>
	<b>II-C</b>	Strenuous aerobic activity (Moderate resistance activity)	30-45 min running or stationary biking <b>Weight lifting ≤ 50% of max weight</b>	Increase heart rate to > 75% max exertion <b>Monitor for symptom return</b>
	<b>II-D</b>	Non-contact training with drills (No restrictions for weightlifting)	Non-contact drills, sport activities (cutting, jumping, sprinting)	Add total body movement <b>Monitor for symptom return</b>
<b>Prior to beginning Stage III, make sure that written physician (MD/DO) clearance for return to play, after successful completion of Stages I and II, has been given to your league/team concussion monitor.</b>				
	<b>III</b>	Limited practice	Controlled practice drills allowed	Increase training drills <b>Restore confidence, assess readiness for return to play</b>
		Full unrestricted practice	Return to normal training <b>Return to normal unrestricted training</b>	Monitor for symptom return
<b>MANDATORY: You must complete at least ONE unrestricted practice before return to competition.</b>				
	<b>IV</b>	Return to Play (competition)	Normal game play (competitive event)	Return to full sports activity without restrictions

Athlete's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Concussion Diagnosis: \_\_\_\_\_

**Concussion Certification for Coaches**

California law, per Assembly Bill 2007 (effective January 1, 2017), mandates that all coaches receive training on concussions. The training requirement may be fulfilled through the free, online course through the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS).

**NFHS Learning Center: Concussion in Sports**

<http://nfhslearn.com/courses/61064/concussion-in-sports>

Complete this 20-minute online class for FREE from the NFHS.

Coaches should download and print their certificate at the completion of the course.

Coaches shall remove from practice or game competition any athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury and remain out of practice or play for the rest of the day.

Coaches shall not allow an athlete who has been removed from practice or play because of a suspected concussion/brain injury to return to practice or play until the athlete has received written clearance from a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of brain injuries.

**Additional Resources**

CDC – Heads up: Concussion in High Schools Sports

<http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/highschoolsports/index.html>

**Physician Letter to League/Team (Concussion)**

To Whom It May Concern:

Patient's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Concussion Diagnosis by MD/DO: \_\_\_\_\_

**Injury Status**

- Has been diagnosed by a MD/DO with a concussion and is currently under our care. Medical follow-up evaluation is scheduled for (date): \_\_\_\_\_
- Was evaluated and did not have a concussion injury. There are no limitations on softball physical activity.

**Physical Activity Status (Please mark all that apply)**

- This athlete is not to participate in physical activity of any kind.
- This athlete is not to participate in physical activities except for untimed, voluntary walking.
- This athlete may begin a graduated return to play progression (see Concussion Return to Play Protocol Form).
- This athlete has medical clearance for unrestricted athletic participation (Has successfully completed the Concussion Return to Play protocol).

Physician's (MD/DO) Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Examination Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician's Stamp and Contact Information:

Appendix H



## Parents' Code of Ethics

**I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports by following this Parents' Code of Ethics Pledge.**

I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game, practice or other youth sports event.

I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my child ahead of a personal desire to win.

I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment. I will support coaches and officials working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.

I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.

I will remember that the game is for youth – not for adults.  
I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child.

I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans, and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or ability.

I promise to help my child enjoy the youth sports experience by doing whatever I can, and such as being a respectful fan, assisting with coaching, or providing transportation.

I will require that my child's coach be trained in the responsibilities of being a youth sports coach and that the coach upholds the Coaches' Code of Ethics.

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Parent's Signature

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Parent's Signature

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Date