



A guide for new umpires and parents

Disclaimer: **Please note that all content is subject to the guidance, direction and requirements of Alberta Health Services and the Government of Alberta over which we have no control. Therefore the program is subject to changes, cancellation and suspensions as directed by the appropriate health agencies.**

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Welcome to the Central Alberta Softball Umpires Association!

The Central Alberta Softball Umpires Association (CASUA) is a member of the Alberta Softball Umpires Association (ASUA), which oversees Softball Canada certification for the province of Alberta.

CASUA oversees the umpire program in Central Alberta (Zone 4) and the northern section of Zone 2. For more information, tools, tips, and resources related to umpiring, check out the following websites:

CASUA: www.casua.ca

ASUA: www.asua.ca

Softball Canada: www.softball.ca

Softball Canada Umpires: <https://softball.ca/programs/umpires>

Why should I become a Softball Umpire?

- Many new umpires get started because it is a great part-time summer job. During the week, games are in the evening, and you can also work weekend tournaments.
- For current or former softball players, umpiring allows you to stay involved and give something back to the game. Not only that, but you also get the “best seat in the house” to see all the action.
- You are part of an exclusive group within the softball community. CASUA is the largest umpire association in Alberta with many members who have umpired at events across Canada.
- Since umpires are on the diamond for the entire game umpiring is good exercise. And during a tournament, you could officiate three or more games a day.
- Softball teaches life skills that are important on and off the diamond, including:
 - Self-confidence
 - Teamwork
 - Cooperation
 - Decision-making – you make the call.
 - Dealing with confrontation
 - Public speaking skills
 - Fair play and impartiality



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What do I need to start umpiring?

You are never too young or old to umpire. Umpires vary in age from 12 years old to over 80. You will be matched with the right level of ball, and mentorship will help you have an enjoyable season. What we ask of you is:

- A love of the game of softball
- Hustle - physical and mental alertness
- Willingness to learn gain experience.
- Register as a Softball Canada umpire, and attend the pre-season clinic.

Umpire Development Program

CASUA works with local Minor Softball Associations and Softball Alberta representatives across central Alberta to identify potential umpires; register and train them at the annual clinic; and, throughout the season, work with our new umpires to develop their knowledge and mechanics and encourage them to return next season.

CASUA works with Minor Associations to ensure coaches, parents and players understand the role of the umpire, and that they interact with umpires in appropriate manners. We have a zero-tolerance policy for abuse. We realize our umpires are learning and improving, just like the players, and that everyone will make mistakes. Our goal is to take a mistake and turn it into a learning opportunity.

Getting Started – Attending our Umpire Clinic.

Attendance at and successful completion of the Softball Canada Umpire Level One Clinic, and full registration in CASUA, are required to umpire minor softball. Clinics are usually held in April (exact date and location to be confirmed by January each year) in Red Deer and Castor, along with other locations if there is interest from a local softball association.

Clinic Fees and Registration are \$125 for new officials. Some minor softball associations reimburse the umpire clinic and registration fees at the end of the season subject to the umpires working a specified number of games and their annual tournament. It is the umpire's responsibility to confirm the specifics of this policy with your local minor softball association.



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Registration

When you join CASUA, you become part of the larger umpire community in Alberta and Canada. At the clinic, you will fill out a registration form that registers you with Softball Alberta.

The clinic fee covers your registration, and includes:

- Softball Canada rulebook (new book issued in even-numbered years)
- Softball Canada insurance (for details, see the CASUA website)
- Softball Canada annual online umpire exam
- Softball Canada and Softball Alberta publications

Once registered with CASUA, you are also a member of the Alberta Softball Umpires Association (ASUA), Softball Alberta and Softball Canada. You can umpire at sanctioned tournaments in Alberta, including provincial championships and qualifiers, and eventually at Canadian championships.

Mentorship

CASUA works to ensure that new umpires are successful and enjoy themselves. This involves senior umpires being assigned to work with, assist and evaluate new umpires and to offer suggestions to help in their development. Mentorship also occurs at tournaments where a senior umpire serves as the Umpire in Chief. For more information on mentorship contact:

Recruitment and Retention Coordinator

- Chris Harper
- Email: chris@casua.ca
- Phone: 403-396-9502

Minor Umpire Mentor Coordinator

- Pat O'Callaghan
- Email: website@casua.ca
- Phone: 403-314-0231



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Education

Umpiring consists of rules knowledge, mechanics, and development. No new umpire is expected to know all the rules or understand all the mechanics when she/he starts. The mix of skills and knowledge only develops by studying, working games, and learning from other umpires and game experiences.

We work with CASUA umpires at tournaments and games teaching the one and two-umpire system to help develop the skills and knowledge required to umpire a game. Most coaches in our Zone help and support young umpires as you work games and learn at the same time.

We post a variety of education and learning tools on the CASUA website under the Knowledge tab. In addition, the CASUA website includes links to:

- New rules and rule interpretations
- Videos to help with mechanics development.
- Softball Alberta and Softball Canada for more information on being an umpire.
- Items such as scholarship funds for those minor umpires going on to post-secondary education.



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Umpire Clothing & Equipment

As an umpire, you must dress appropriately and have the proper safety equipment to help ensure your safety on the diamond.

Clothing

As a new/young umpire, we want you to look like an umpire. While you are encouraged to wear official Softball Canada-crested umpire clothing, we know it can be expensive. As a new umpire, here are the minimum standards expected (most items can be purchased at local stores):

- Shirt – powder blue golf shirt (with collar); large enough to fit over the chest protector when working the plate.
- Pants – navy blue with belt loops; wide legs to allow room to cover your shin pads when working the plate.
- Hat – navy blue or black; short enough brim to allow you to remove your mask over your hat.
- Belt – to hold up a ball bag.
- Shoes – black, and in good condition

As you continue as an umpire, you will be expected to purchase official Softball Canada Umpire clothing. Official Softball Canada crested clothing can be purchased online at [Home Run/Kahunaverse Sports](#).

Equipment

It is important for an umpire to have access to the required protective equipment. Some Minor Associations provide equipment for their umpires (please check with your association). Older umpires may have equipment they are looking to sell or give away. Equipment is available at most sporting goods stores.

Uniform:

- Mask – with throat protection (\$30)
- Chest Protector – under the shirt (\$40)
- Jock/Jill Strap (\$15)
- Shin Pads – worn under the pants (\$35)

Safety Equipment:

- Shoes – steel toes are recommended when working the plate.
- Ball Bag (plate umpire only) – navy blue or black (\$20) (if you know someone who sews, they could make you one.)
- Indicator (\$4)
- Whisk (\$4)



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Games and Fees

New umpires have most games scheduled at local diamonds featuring teams in their home Minor Association. Wherever possible, the CASUA assignor limits travel for new umpires. The regular season starts as early as the first week of May and runs until the end of June. Regular season games usually last about 1.5 hours.

- Our assignor can be reached at assignor@rdsua.ca.
- Assigning of games: Games are assigned through the Arbiter online scheduling platform. Each umpire receives an email notification of assigned games that have been assigned and must accept or decline the assignment.
 - Details about how Arbiter works, and what will be expected of each umpire will be explained at the annual clinic.
- Game fees: Umpires take home \$30 per game.
- Umpire payments: Umpires are NOT paid on the day of the game. Records are kept by the Assignor, and cheque is issued
 - for minor umpires in June (for games worked in May) and July (for the rest of the season).
 - Those working adult games are usually paid once in September when all league fees have been collected from the associations we work for.
 - Each umpire is to monitor his/her schedule in Arbiter system and if there are errors contact the Assignor immediately.

Processes and procedures for handling game cancellations and other assignment/ payment questions are outlined in detail in the CASUA's Policies and Procedures on the CASUA website.

Tournaments

Tournaments run almost every weekend in May and June hosted in communities across the zone. Umpires can work as many as 8-10 games a tournament (Friday evening through Sunday) and get paid at the completion of their final game. The schedule of tournaments is posted on the CASUA website. Tournament game schedules are established by the Umpire in Chief for the tournament. The UIC will contact each umpire to confirm scheduling. Game fees, travel reimbursement, and meal allowance or access to the snack bar (no candy, chips, chocolate bars) are all negotiated and communicated to the umpires prior to the tournament.

Communication

For our youth umpires, CASUA makes all reasonable attempts to ensure that written communications to a minor umpire are also emailed to the umpire's designated parent(s)/ guardian. We want parents to be engaged in the umpire development program and look for your feedback.