



SNOA Softball Manual

Eligibility

Anyone 18 years and over who has completed high school may sign-up to officiate high school softball. Assignments are a privilege and not a right, thus, they will be earned. Umpires new to SNOA will be evaluated ASAP to insure they receive games, if available, commensurate with their abilities. All softball members will have insurance while performing his/her umpiring duties. Although you may have individual health insurance that may cover you should an accident occur, for Nevada officials to receive a lower rate, the NIAA requires 100% participation. At present, the cost is \$12.00 per year and covers you for any SNOA assigned game. Further information can be obtained at www.bollingernfhs.com. Umpires accepting out-of-town games as the driver will have minimum auto insurance as prescribed by the State of Nevada.

Evaluations

SNOA Softball requires that its registered members receive evaluations and those evaluations must be kept on file for a period of two years. At the present time, we are using the evaluation system that is available on www.arbitersports.com. SNOA Softball expects its umpires to officiate every game as if they are being evaluated.

Ratings

The Softball Board along with the assignor and Softball instructor will meet at least once per year to assign a rating to each individual active within SNOA Softball. Factors which may determine a rating are evaluations, input from school officials and coaches, fellow officials, and disciplinary hearings. Written evaluations will not be the sole determining factor for your rating. Although every attempt will be made to keep the process as objective as possible, a member in goodstanding may appeal his rating to the Softball Board either in person or in writing. This appeal will be addressed prior to, or after, a scheduled meeting within 30 days of the appeal. Per SNOA By-Laws, if a member in good standing is still dissatisfied, that official may appeal to the SNOA Board of Ethics.

Compensation

Compensation for all levels of games is set by the NIAA and contracted for with the Clark County School District and member schools of the NIAA. Travel pay is also set by the NIAA and is subject to change. The general policy has been that compensation earned will be the first Sunday of the month. The cutoff date is the last Saturday of the prior month. All SNOA compensation will be distributed through Refpay. No exceptions. Deductions that will be made from the check are, but not limited to, SNOA administration fee (assignor's fee), health insurance (mandatory), sign-up kits (rule and case books, umpire mechanics manual), and SNOA business meeting/dinner. Further information concerning compensation can be found at www.snoaofficials.com.

Disciplinary Hearing

From time to time, complaints may be registered with the Softball Board or assignor by coaches, players, parents or fellow umpires that may require a hearing. These hearing will take place prior to or after the regularly scheduled SNOA Softball meeting unless expediency is required.

It should be stated here that the Board may contact the umpire's partner as to determine what occurred and determine if there were factors that may have led up to the incident. SNOA and the Softball Board expect umpires called before the board to answer any and all questions truthfully that relate to the incident in question. Failure to do so may, in itself, lead to disciplinary action.

Results of these hearings and ensuing actions will be put in writing and forwarded to the SNOA Secretary. The resulting action of the Softball Board may be appealed to the SNOA Ethics Committee.

Fines

A list of fines will be determined by the SNOA Board of Control and incorporated in the softball manual. Until then, fines will be determined by the assignor and approved by the Softball Board.

Official's Uniform

SNOA umpires are expected to officiate game(s) in uniforms that are cleaned and pressed. Shoes shall be clean and neat in appearance.

Hats-Navy w/ the SNOA logo that is available for 2013, (sub-varsity will be allowed a one year transition period for the addition of the logo). Fitted hats only.

Shirts-Powder Blue w/ Navy/White trim. The adoption of additional colored shirts that are now authorized are commonly available through sports officiating vendors. These additional colors are optional and at the discretion of the umpire. If another color besides the Powder Blue shirt is worn by game umpires, all umpires working that game must wear the same color shirt. If in doubt, the original powder blue shirt is the "default" uniform to wear.

The additional colors include the following:

Navy Blue w/ Red/ White/Blue Trim

Black w/ White Pinstripe Trim

Red w/ Red/White/Blue, Trim

Crème w/ Black Pinstripe Trim

White w/ Red/White/Blue Trim

Polo Blue w/ Black/White Trim

Pink w/ Black/White Trim

Pants- Medium Heather Gray

Shoes-Plate shoes and base turf shoes of black color.

Ball Bag- Navy; Black; or Gray (No Logo) When wearing two ball bags, both shall be the same color

Jackets/Wind Breakers-Navy blue

Required safety equipment for softball umpires is listed in the NFHS Rule Book.

Mechanics

Please refer to the National Federation High School Umpire Manual. Any adaptations of said manual will be presented at the SNOA softball meetings and clinics both prior to and during the softball season.

Duties

Umpires will be expected to communicate with their partners, via email or phone, a minimum of 24 hours prior to game time. For out-of-town games that communication should take place a minimum of 48 hours prior to game time. Umpires shall meet at a designated location 30-45 minutes prior to the contest. Softball umpires are expected to enter and leave the playing confines together. On the field, softball umpires are expected to enforce the rules in an equitable and impartial manner. Adhere to the code of ethics for softball umpires listed in the NFHS Umpire's Manual. Insure that ejection/incident reports are communicated to the assignor and commissioner immediately. The ejection/incident report can be filed through the SNOA OFFICIALS.com web site. Failure to do so may lead to loss of games and/or playoff assignments.

Pregame Topics

- Bat and Helmet checks
- Rotations-when to rotate and when not to
- Fly ball coverage
- Fair/Foul coverage
- Dugout Decorum-coaches/players in the dugout
- Equipment
- Handling head coach's questions
- Illegal Pitch responsibilities
- Rule Changes and Points of Emphasis

These are suggested areas to cover, but pre-game should not be limited to the above listed topics.

Protests

Per NIAA guidelines, a coach of a team that participates in a softball game as a sanctioned sport may protest the game by notifying an umpire for the game of that fact. The protest must be submitted to the umpire: At the time the (a) play that is the subject of the protest is completed, but before the next pitch after that play; or if the play that (b) is the subject of the protest is the final play of the game, before the umpire leaves the field of play. An umpire who is notified of a protest shall, if he is not the umpire-in-chief for the game, bring the protest to the attention of the umpire-in-chief. If a protest is brought to the attention of the umpire-in-chief, the umpire-in-chief shall immediately inform the coach of the opposing team and the official scorekeeper of the game that the game is played under protest.

The UIC shall record the specific action and rule in question at the time of the play and forward, in writing, to the assignor at the end of the contest.

Fraternization

All umpires shall avoid excessive casual and unnecessary conversations with players, coaches and fans during the progress of the game. Should a fan become unruly and hamper the umpire's ability to execute his duties, a school administrator shall be called to deal with the situation.

No SNOA umpire shall officiate a contest where a family member is a participant or the umpire has a business or personal affiliation with the team or school.

Alcohol/Tobacco

The use of all tobacco products at the school site is prohibited.

No alcoholic products or its consumption shall be permitted on school grounds.

No SNOA umpire shall consume any alcoholic product less than 12 hours prior to performing his/her duties.

Playoff Qualifications

Must be a member in good-standing with SNOA.

Must be a voting member in softball.

Must have worked a minimum 12 varsity level games for SNOA.

Must have attended a minimum of 5 meetings. A maximum of two clinics can be substituted for meetings.

Score of 80% or better on the NFHS Softball exam.

Must be approved by the SNOA President and Commissioner.

Assignor Guidelines

Rating-a yearly meeting is held to assign a numerical rating to officials who have umpired the prior season. The Arbiter system uses these rankings to assign certain games. A temporary rating may be given to a new official prior to or during the season by the assignor.

Performance-the ability to officiate at the rating assigned prior to the season.

Availability-the ability to travel to various sites and flexibility to meet varying game times.

Longevity-consideration should be given to umpires that have been of service to SNOA in prior years.

Scheduling-the management of the Arbiter calendar including day/weekly blocks, game declines, and game turn-backs.

Loyalty-priority should be given to umpires who operate in the best interest of SNOA both in softball and sports assigned by the organization.

The above listed factors are guidelines. Other situations may arise which might be included in assigning of games during the softball season such as meeting attendance and willingness to improve.

Softball Board Duties

Softball Board Duties are spelled out in the SNOA Constitution and are listed below:

The membership of each sport shall elect its own governing Board, consisting of three representatives for every sport with 150 members or fewer, or five representatives, for each sport with more than 150 members. Board members shall serve staggered three year terms. Individual Sports Board shall select one of their members each year as the Chair, who shall be the sole person authorized to represent the Board in communication to the members of the sport, and who shall vote only in the case of ties.

The Board shall:

- a. Maintain an Officials Manual for its sport, detailing all relevant policies and procedures including those covering local rule variations, assigning, discipline, and evaluation and rating of officials. The portions of this Manual related to discipline and evaluation shall be approved by both the All Sports Board, and a majority vote of the membership of the sport present at the final meeting of the sport prior to the first regular season contest to be officiated. A subsequent vote of the members shall only be necessary to change the manual, or when no vote has been taken for three seasons. The Manual, and any proposed changes, will be made available to the members in a convenient manner at the first pre-season meeting of the sport, and will be posted on the Association web site once approved.
- b. Annually prepare the list of officials eligible to officiate playoff assignments, and recommend such assignments to the Commissioner, with the advice of the Assignor. Where reasonable, the Board shall not nominate the same official to work state finals in two consecutive years, excepting auxiliary assignments such as scoring and linesmen. The Individual Sports Board shall prepare annually a listing of all regional and state playoff games and the names of the officials who worked each game. It is recommended that this list be created in bracket format. The list will be made available in an easily accessible manner to the members of that sport.
- c. Annually recommend to the president either the retention or removal of the Assignor and Instructor for the sport. When either office is vacant, the Board shall notify the membership, and provide an opportunity for their application for the position. The Board shall interview all applicants, and recommend three qualified members to the president. If fewer than three members apply, or the Board deems fewer than three to be qualified, fewer than three may be nominated by the Board.
- d. Work to expand the opportunities of members to officiate outside of high school sports (recreation leagues, youth sports, collegiate, etc.), in coordination with the Board of Control.
- e. When more than one person is responsible for instruction, require that a meeting of all officials participating in instruction be held prior to the first instructional meeting, and that a written plan of instruction be provided to each participating official.
- f. Perform additional duties as described within the By-laws, or requested by the Board of Control or Ethics Committee.
- g. Once developed and approved, the Board will cause evaluation and rating of officials to occur. A copy of the written evaluation will be given to the official, and kept by the SNOA for at least two years.

Excerpts from NIAA Handbook

NAC 386.839 Standards of conduct: Sports officials. (NRS 386.430) Each sports official for a sanctioned sport shall:

1. Maintain confidence and control in carrying out his assignment;
2. Study and understand the rules of the game, contest or meet for which he is a sports official and the actions required to carry out those rules;
3. Cooperate with the Association and any other sports official who is assigned to a game, contest or meet;
4. Not use his position as a sports official to benefit himself or any school, team or pupil;
5. Not promote the interests of any person or group other than the pupils participating in the game, contest or meet to which he is assigned;
6. Carry out his duties as a sports official, including wearing the appropriate clothing or uniform and maintaining a proper appearance for the game, contest or meet;
7. Officiate each game, contest or meet to which he is assigned, regardless of any inconvenience or financial loss incurred by him; and
8. Not use any tobacco or alcoholic beverages or any controlled substance, unless in accordance with a lawfully issued prescription for the controlled substance, on or near the playing area for a game, contest or meet on the day of the game.

MEMBERSHIP

1. Each Official shall be required to take and pass the prescribed examinations with a score of not less than 70% before being registered.
2. Each Official must be covered by a liability insurance policy with a minimum of \$1,000,000 protection.
3. Transfers from other state associations must have completed a current examination prior to being registered
4. Each Officials Association or Chapter may establish such other requirements for membership, as it deems necessary or appropriate.

LOSS OF MEMBERSHIP

1. The affiliated Officials Associations' governing board with the Regional Commissioners' approval shall be the authority in determining loss of membership and/or suspension from the state Approved Official Roster.
 2. Some of the reasons for loss of membership may include:
 - A. Failure to remain in good standing by nonpayment of dues prior to the start of the sport season.
 - B. Failure to attend the prescribed meetings.
 - C. Unprofessional or unethical conduct on or off the field.
 - D. Open criticism of other officials, coaches, players or administrators except in the prescribed manner at Association, Chapter or NIAA Board of Control meetings.
 - E. Use of intoxicating beverages or illegal substances within twelve (12) hours prior to the officiating assignment.
 - F. Withdrawal from officiating and/or failure to meet scheduled assignments without a valid reason.
 - G. Officiating a contest in which he/she is an employee of a participating school or relative of a participating athlete or coach, which will, at minimum, impose a suspension for the remainder of the year.
- Any loss of membership may be appealed to the Executive Director of the NIAA for review.