

# **Softball Manual**

## **Southern Nevada Officials Association**

## **Eligibility & Status**

Anyone 16 years and over are eligible to officiate high school softball. SNOA officials are independent contractors. Umpires new to SNOA will mainly work base umpire for the first year and will be evaluated as soon as possible to assess their abilities and assign a rating. First year umpires may still be assigned as the Plate Umpire in certain circumstances. All SNOA officials are covered by mandatory insurance offered through SNOA/NIAA. The cost is deducted from game fees. Further information may be obtained at [www.dissingerreed.com](http://www.dissingerreed.com)

## **Evaluations**

SNOA Softball requires that its registered members receive evaluations and those evaluations be kept on file for a period of two years.

## **Ratings**

The Softball Board along with the assignor, evaluator(s) and instructor(s) will meet at least once per year to assign a numerical rating to each individual active within SNOA Softball and who officiated the prior season. The assignor uses the Arbiter system along with these rankings to assign games. A temporary rating may be given to a new official prior to or during the season by the assignor. Factors which may determine a rating are: prior season performance-the official's ability to function at the assigned rating; evaluations, input from school officials, coaches and fellow officials, and disciplinary hearings.

Availability to travel to various out of town sites and flexibility to meet varying game times; Longevity- consideration given to members that have been of service to SNOA in prior years; Scheduling- effectively manage their availability on the Arbiter calendar including blocks, game declines, and game turn-backs. Other conditions that may be considered include- attendance and participation in meetings and training and loyalty to SNOA. Officials may request a review and reassessment of their rating to the Softball Board.

## **Compensation**

Compensation for all levels of softball for schools serviced by SNOA is set by the NIAA and contracted with the respective school districts. Game fees for tournaments and other institutions or leagues are negotiated independently. Travel pay for contracted school districts is also set by the NIAA and is subject to change. Compensation is paid biweekly through Arbiterpay. Deductions that will be made from each payment included but not limited to- SNOA administration fee, insurance, instructional kits (rule and case books, umpire mechanics manual), and fines. Further information concerning compensation can be found at [www.snoaofficials.com](http://www.snoaofficials.com), or [www.snoasoftball.com](http://www.snoasoftball.com).

## **Official's Uniform**

SNOA softball officials shall be properly dressed in clean and neat attire at all contests. The approved uniform components are:

Hats-Navy blue w/ the authorized NIAA logo. Hats must be fitted, blocked and clean.

Shirts- Must be clean and wrinkle free. All umpires on the crew must wear the same color shirt. NCAA Carolina Blue, short sleeves is the default uniform shirt.

The following colors of uniform shirts are authorized and may be worn at the discretion of the umpire crew. Long sleeved shirts of any authorized color are permitted.

- NCAA Midnight Navy Blue
- Major League Replica Pink W/ Black Side Panels
- Pink w/ black/white trim

T-shirts- T-shirts are optional and if worn under the uniform shirt must be clean. If a T-shirt is worn, white is the default color for all shirt colors except- navy blue T-shirt will be worn under navy blue uniform shirts. Long sleeve T-shirts may only be worn under long sleeve uniform shirts.

Pants- Charcoal Gray. Must be clean and pressed. May be pleated or plain front. Plate or combination pants on the plate, base or combination pants on the bases.

Belt- A black belt minimum 1 1/2" width must be worn

Socks- Navy Blue or black

Shoes- All Black plate and base shoes are preferred. Shoes with white markings are acceptable. Clean and polished.

Ball Bag- Plain navy or charcoal gray. When wearing two ball bags, both shall be the same color

Jackets- plain navy blue. Jackets may be worn at any time with any color shirt.

Protective equipment- Plate officials are required to wear an umpire mask and strongly encouraged to wear chest protectors, leg guards and protective cups.

All officials will have an indicator and plate brush while officiating a contest. Plate officials will also have a writing instrument.

### **Duties**

The assigned plate umpire is the crew chief for the contest and is expected to communicate with their partner(s), via email, phone, text message or in person at least **24 hours** prior to game time to verify the assignment, meeting location at the site as well as specific uniform requirements. For out-of-town games that communication should take place a minimum of **48 hours** prior to game time. The crew chief will verify the game schedule with host institution prior to departing the morning of or the day prior to the scheduled date and time.

Umpires shall meet at a designated location 30-45 minutes prior to the contest. Umpires are expected to enter and leave the playing confines together. The crew chief will notify the head coach of the home team that the officiating crew has arrived on site and verify who the onsite administrator is and that they are available. The crew chief will conduct a pre-game discussion with crew member(s) including but not limited to:

- Rotations-when to rotate
- Fly ball coverage
- Fair/Foul coverage
- Unsporting behavior of coaches or players
- Handling head coach's questions
- Illegal Pitch responsibilities
- Rule Changes and Points of Emphasis

The crew should report to the field no less than 10 minutes before scheduled game time. 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 outlined in the NFHS Umpire's Manual.

### **Mechanics**

Refer to the National Federation of High Schools Umpire Manual.

### **Ejections**

The crew chief will ensure that any ejections or incidents are reported to the assignor and commissioner as soon as possible after the game. The ejection/incident report can be filed through the [www.snoaofficials.com](http://www.snoaofficials.com) or [www.snoasoftball.com](http://www.snoasoftball.com) web sites.

### **Protests**

Per NIAA guidelines, a coach 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 play that is the subject of the protest is completed, but before the next pitch or before the umpires leave the field of play if it is the final play of the game. An umpire who is notified of a protest shall, if they are not the crew chief for the game, bring the protest to the attention of the crew chief. The crew 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 crew chief 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, the onsite administrator should be called to handle 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- including vapor producing devices or alcoholic beverages at ANY site is prohibited at any time. This includes school district property or any public or private location where officiating assignments may occur. SNOA umpires SHALL NOT consume any alcoholic product less than 12 hours prior to performing his/her duties.

## **Postseason selection process**

The evaluation and selection of officials for post season assignments will be done by a committee comprised of the softball board members, assignor, evaluator(s) and instructor(s). The general membership may choose to select a member in good standing to act as an observer during the selection process if they wish.

The following criteria will be considered when evaluating officials for post-season assignments:

- Must be a voting member in good standing with SNOA and have completed 2 consecutive years of service.
- Must attend a minimum of 4 meetings in the current year
- Must attend a minimum of 1 pre-season scrimmage game in the current year
- Must have taken and passed the current year NFHS softball exam with a minimum score of 90

Other items taken into consideration:

- Current season performance evaluations. (above average proficiency in NFHS rules and mechanics).
- Off-field conduct
- Previous postseason experience

## **Guidelines for Recommendation to STATE Championships**

In addition to the guidelines for selection for post-season assignments the following criteria may apply:

- Have been assigned a REGIONAL assignment in the current year.
- Have been assigned 2 years REGIONAL championship assignments, excluding the current year, within the last 5 years.
- Experience with 3 person mechanics

Officials who accept post season assignments are expected to be ready and available for ALL assigned games. That may include an "if necessary" game that may not be played. In that instance, the game fee will not be paid. If you are unable or unwilling to accept the possibility of an "if necessary" game, do not accept the series.

Officials who receive assignments to STATE Championships will be ineligible for selection to STATE Championships the following season. Officials selected for State Championship assignments will not be assigned to Regional Championship contests. (All umpires recommended for REGIONAL or STATE championships are approved by the Commissioner).

## Fines

As taken from SNOA Constitution- Article 6- Disciplinary action against members Section 1. Fines. The Association shall maintain a schedule of acts by officials which are subject to fine. This schedule shall be prepared by the All Sports Board and approved by majority vote of the membership at the Association Annual Meeting. Each individual sport, with the consent of its members and the All Sports Board, may add sport-specific fines to the schedule, which shall be published in the Officials Manual for that sport. Individual Sports Boards are responsible for enforcing the fine schedule, and may delegate that responsibility in whole or in part to their Assignor.

Official Responsibilities - Game Assignment/s	
Turn back game assignment after scheduled. <sup>1</sup>	Up to 25% of game fee
Turn back game assignment - "day of"	Up to 100% game fee + up to an additional game fee each occurrence
"No show" assignments - all sports and scorers and timers. <sup>2</sup>	100% game fee + up to an additional game fee each occurrence
Switching game assignments or accepting an SNOA assignment from other than the assigner, assigner designee or crew chief •	
Failure to wear the authorized uniform during game assignments	\$10.00 up to 100% of game fees or up to and including suspension
Failure to wear proper attire, defined as "business casual" during travel to and from assignments	
Failure to remove official uniform, wearing the official uniform in public places or publicly discussing officials, coaches or teams	
Not ready to perform assignment at appointed time, "late" <sup>5</sup>	
Reporting to perform assignment after the scheduled start time. <sup>6</sup>	50% of game fee up to 100% of game fee or up to and including
Assigner or "crew chief" Responsibilities - Game Assignments	
Failure to enter or make game assignments	Up to 100% game fee

1. The acceptance "Date" used in Arbiter for assignment purposes shall always be at least 48 hours prior to assignment date. Assigners may use excessive "Declines" in Arbiter and continued "Turn Backs" in making future assignments. It is also understood that accepting a higher level assignment (such as a College "fill-in") for that particular sport, shall be acceptable for turning back assignments, if the higher level assignment was made after accepting the SNOA assignments.
2. Emergencies, automobile accidents in route to assignment and death shall be acceptable excuses for failure to complete a game assignment. (The official shall contact the assigner as soon as possible so the assignment may be covered.)
3. Switching game assignments or positions is never advisable unless by the assigner. Some plausible cases of switching may include; Tournament games where court or fields are "Switched" because of family members participating.

However, the official shall first make every effort to contact the assigner. An official shall "Not" work an assignment if a family member is participating or attending that school.

4. If "Filling in" because of a "No Show" the official shall contact the assigner immediately following the game.
5. Appointed time varies from sport to sport however; the minimum acceptable time for any assignment shall be, 15 minutes. This is interpreted to mean; dressed, in place and ready to perform the assignment.
6. Start time is the posted assignment or game time.

### **Fine Administration**

Individual Sports Boards or their designees are responsible for enforcing the fine schedule. The following may be used as a guide by each Sport Board for Fine Administration.

1 <sup>st</sup> Offense	Typically, minor in nature. May or may not include the minimum fine
2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	Typically assessed the minimum fine but may be assessed the full fine subject to the decision of the sport board
3rd Offense	Typically, a full fine is required, which may include additional fines as determined by the extent of the violation up to and including suspension. (Suspension is subject to the decision of the sport board hearing.)
Continued violations	Mandatory sport board hearing: typically results in suspension but may include recommendation for expulsion.

### **Fine Appeals**

An Official may accept assessed fines and continue in Active Status unless suspended by the Sport Board. The appeal of all fines shall be administered as subject to Article Six of the SNOA Constitution.

#### **Section 6. Appeal of Individual Sports Board Action.**

Within 30 days of the imposition of a fine or suspension by an Individual Sports Board, the member may appeal to the Ethics Committee according to their published policies and procedures.

#### **Section 7. Appeal of Ethics Committee Action.**

Within 30 days of an action by the Ethics Committee, the member may appeal the decision by sending a letter to the Secretary or President of the Association which shall provide the opportunity for a hearing before the Board of Control. An expelled member may request reinstatement at any time through the same process, provided at least one year has elapsed since the most recent hearing on the matter.

#### **Section 8. Status of Officials After Suspension, Expulsion, and During Appeal.**

A fine, suspension, or expulsion is considered to be in effect during the appeal process, unless the President determines otherwise. Fines do not remove an official from Active status. Suspension by an Individual Sports Board removes an official from Active status only in that sport during the period of the suspension. Suspension or expulsion by the Ethics Committee removes an official from active status in all sports, and from the association as a whole.

## **Section 9. Procedural Requirements.**

Unless the official filing the appeal agrees otherwise, the hearing to resolve any appeal must take place no sooner than seven days after the receipt of the request for appeal, and no later than the date of the next regular instructional meeting of that sport after the seven day period. The official requesting the hearing may be present at the hearing, but not the deliberations, unless the Committee or Board agrees otherwise. The official may bring a representative with them, and may call witnesses in their defense, though the Committee or Board may limit the number. The Board, Committee or person originating the appealed act may be present at the hearing, but not the deliberations, unless the official is present as well. The Committee may set reasonable and identical limits on the length of presentation by all persons. Decisions must be rendered by the Board or Committee on the day of the hearing, and communicated to the official in writing.

## **Disciplinary Hearing**

From time to time, complaints may be registered with the Softball Board by coaches, players, parents or fellow umpires that may require a hearing. Any complaint must be submitted in writing to the softball board. If a hearing is required it will take place prior to or after the regularly scheduled SNOA Softball meeting unless expediency is required. The Board may contact the complainant, umpire crew, coaches or administrators to gather information regarding the complaint. 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.

## **Softball Board Duties**

Article 4, section 3 of the SNOA Constitution:

The membership of each sport shall elect its own governing Board, consisting of three representatives. Board members shall serve staggered three-year terms. Individual Sports Board shall select one of their members each year as the Chair 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. Supervise, and when necessary, appoint, and remove the Assignor, Instructor, Crew Chiefs or other personnel of the sport. At the end of each season, recommend compensation for each, limited to the funds available to the sport. When any of those offices is vacant, the Board shall notify the membership, and provide an opportunity for their application for the position. The Board shall notify the membership of the names of persons it intends to interview from the applicants, afford the applicants the opportunity to communicate with the membership, and allow time for the membership to provide input to the Board. The Board may reopen applications if no acceptable candidate emerges from the search. The Board shall immediately notify the President and Board of Control whenever it appoints or removes an Assignor or Instructor.
- 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. Each SNOA official is entitled to one formal written evaluation each year in each sport worked. A copy of the written evaluation will be given to the official, and kept by the SNOA for at least two years. Each Board, with the consent of its membership is empowered to create an Evaluation Committee to assist in this task.
- h. Maintain a list of active member meeting attendance and provide a copy to the Association Secretary at the end of the season.
- i. Convene as a board during the sport season and as requires throughout the year. The board shall meet at least Five (5) times a season or as directed by the sport chair. A majority of the elected board members may direct the Chair to call a meeting of the Sport Board. The Chair is responsible to ensure representation at all meetings. Failure to participate or attend meetings is defined as inaction.
- j. Participate in monthly All Sport Board (ASB) Meetings as called by the SNOA 1st Vice President. All Sport Board members are expected to attend all ASB meetings to insure their sport is adequately represented. If a board member has

a conflict in attending, the sport board shall caucus to ensure that the remaining members attend. The sport Chair is responsible to ensure that there is representation at all required meetings. If the sport is not represented at two consecutive meetings the sport's entire board will be required to appear before the Board of Control. Failure to participate or attend meetings is defined as inaction.