

GNOA Softball Sports Operating Procedures

Membership

Obtaining membership

Membership is comprised of any official that is registered with the FHSAA and has a primary or secondary membership with the GREATER NAPLES OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION. Any and all rules pertaining to being an official as established by the FHSAA officials' Guidebook apply for membership to GNOA Softball Division.

Members in good standing

Members in good standing are those that meet all financial, training and conduct requirements.

Secondary membership

Secondary members are subject to all procedures and standards established in this document. Secondary members are non-voting members. Secondary members cannot be committee members. Secondary members are held to the same conduct standards as primary members.

Member pay

Members will be paid in accordance to GNOA board policies.

Recruiting New Members

The GNOA and each Sporting Division within the GNOA shall emphasize the recruitment and training of new members. Efforts to obtain new members may include, but not be limited to, forgiving dues to members who bring in a new member, setting aside portions of the budget to advertise locally to obtain new members, and designating a committee to determine other appropriate methods of community outreach to attract new members. It is vital to recruit new umpires each year.

Personal conduct

Meeting conduct

The GNOA softball board members run all meetings. All discussions will be civil and expedient. Degrading, yelling, or disrupting proceedings will not be tolerated.

Tobacco, alcohol, and illegal substances

All tobacco, alcohol, and illegal substances are prohibited during GNOA sanctioned events.

Code of ethics

GNOA operates under the code of ethics as established by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). These ethics can be found in Officials manuals as well as the NFHS website. These ethics include:

- Officials at interscholastic athletic events are participants in the educational development of high school students. As such, they **MUST** exercise a high level of self-discipline, independence, and responsible. The purpose of this code is to establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for all officials.
- Officials shall master both the rules of the game and mechanics necessary to enforce the rules, and shall exercise authority in an impartial, firm, and controlled manner.
- Officials shall work with each other and their state associations in a constructive and cooperative manner.
- Officials shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession in all interactions with student athletes, coaches, athletic directors, colleagues, and the public.
- Officials shall prepare themselves physically and mentally, shall dress neatly and appropriately, and shall comport themselves in a manner consistent with the high standards of the profession.
- Officials shall be punctual and professional in the fulfillment of all contractual commitments.
- Officials shall remain mindful that their conduct influences the respect that the student athletes, coaches, and the public hold for the profession.
- Officials shall, while enforcing the rules of play, be aware of the chance of injury that competition poses to student athletes. Where appropriate, they shall inform game management of conditions or situations that appear unreasonably hazardous.
- Officials shall take reasonable steps to educate themselves in the recognition of emergency conditions that might arise during competition
- Officials shall maintain an ethical approach while participating in forums, chat rooms, and all forms of social media.
- GNOA softball members should strive to honor the game of softball and the profession of umpiring by being mindful of the impact of our words and actions on and off the field.
- GNOA softball members should be willing to take any assignment on days when your schedules permits games.
- GNOA softball members should be willing to work with other members of GNOA.

Members that do not comply with this personal conduct section may be subject to disciplinary proceedings as defined by the grievance procedures and/or have non-compliance noted on umpire evaluation form.

Arrival at games

The crew chief should initiate contact with partner at least 24 hours prior to game start time to confirm who has the dish, dress, meeting place, and parking. Both umpires should bring plate gear to game.

Umpires should attempt to arrive 45 minutes prior to game start time dressed in game attire. If this is impossible, a suitable place to change should be used.

All game officials should comply with the following dress code for traveling to playoff games:

- dress or collared shirt tucked in pants
- dress pants with belt
- dress shoes
- female umpires should dress business casual

On field uniforms

Umpires should wear uniforms that comply with FHSAA uniform and GNOA requirements. This includes:

- Pants- Light Heather gray, base pants for bases & plate pants for behind the plate.
- Shoes and socks- Solid black in color – Plate shoes shall have a hard shell or steel reinforced toe and a steel or reinforced tongue. Black socks will be worn- no ankle or short socks.
- Hat- Navy blue cap with FHSAA acronym embroidered in FHSAA blue on the front and vertical logo embroidered on the back.
- Shirt- Major League style powder blue pullover or Major League style navy pullover shirt with the FHSAA insignia on the left chest or pocket.
- Undershirts will be either white or navy. Long sleeved undershirts shall NOT be exposed. In either case, ALL umpires must be dressed the same.
- Jewelry- Officials are prohibited from wearing jewelry while officiating a contest. The only exceptions to this policy are a wedding band, game timing device and a medical alert bracelet which, if worn, must be taped to the body with clear tape so that it remains visible.
- Home plate umpires (must) wear all necessary protective equipment. (Mask – Throat Protector – Chest Protector – Shin Guards).

Wear our uniform with pride. See that your shoes are shined, shirts and pants fit properly and are clean. We need to hold each other accountable for the way we look-present ourselves on the field. Umpires should check each other before entering game sites to make sure shirts are tucked in, belt loops are not missed, shoes are tied, no jewelry worn, hat worn properly, etc. Uniforms should be worn properly until umpires get to vehicles to leave grounds.

Media and social media

GNOA softball umpires should not speak to the media concerning any officiating question or concern without the prior consent of the GNOA softball board. In any event, all members should use discretion when speaking to the media or social media. Any comments made on social media that can be derived as a detriment to the advancement of GNOA softball can be used against the member in disciplinary hearings.

Communication channels

All members are expected to follow the communication channel for complaints or grievances. Members SHALL handle issues internally by communicating with the softball president, board member, grievance committee, and then the governing board of GNOA. Members shall not communicate directly with school administration, FHSAA, etc.

Communication to coaches, athletic directors, and school personnel regarding rules decisions and on field happenings will be made by an appointed GNOA softball member. This member will be appointed by the softball board to be the liaison between the umpires and the schools-coaches regarding rules interpretations, game happenings, and game procedures. Umpires should contact our GNOA "School liaison" with any rules, game procedure, etc. so he/she can contact the school. Do not take it upon yourself to contact coaches or school personnel.

Meeting structure and operation

- Agenda: The president or secretary shall establish agendas prior to all meetings. Agendas will be sent to all members at least the day prior to meeting date. Members who wish to have items added to the meeting agenda should email the softball board at least 48 hours before meeting. The president or secretary may add agenda items or save items for the end of the meeting. The president reserves the right to not add agenda items if those items do not affect the general membership.
- Voting: Members may vote on business at all membership meetings, so long as they are personally present and they are registered with GNOA as their primary membership for softball. Fifteen percent (15%) of the membership shall constitute a quorum for purposes of this section.
- Attendance: The secretary shall take notes during meetings. Attendance sheet will be handed out at the beginning & end of the meeting. Sixty percent attendance of all meetings required.
- Members are encouraged to dress and act accordingly at all meetings, as the meetings are usually held on school property.

Committees and participation

On or before 1st meeting each year, the softball board shall select the members of each of the required committees. Committees include: evaluation, assignment, recommendations, and training. The committees shall be made up of 3-5 primary members. No individual may serve on 2 committees unless it becomes necessary. The board shall replace any member who changes their primary membership or loses their status of good standing.

Evaluation

The evaluation committee is responsible for setting up the process and selecting those individuals who will assist with the evaluation of member officials. The evaluation

committee shall meet at least once prior to the season to select the form and content of the evaluations. Committee will share the form with membership. Committee shall be organized in efforts to evaluate all umpires at least one time during the season. A priority will be placed on evaluating new umpires so good habits are formed.

All evaluations shall be signed by evaluator. Evaluator shall perform his or her duty impartially and to the best of his or her ability.

The head of the Evaluation committee shall make sure the evaluations are made available to the recommendation committee. A file will be kept for each umpire.

Umpires should respect the evaluation process and evaluators. The evaluation process is a part of our education and is part of the process of GNOA softball becoming a better organization.

Grievance

GNOA BOARD

Recommendation

The recommendation committee is responsible for reviewing the evaluations of each member official during the regular season. Committee shall be guided by the following criteria when making their determinations:

- All grey book requirements for eligibility.
- Evaluations
- The committee should CONSIDER the makeup of the prior year's crew, and if possible, not keep the same officials on the first playoff crew in consecutive years.
- Committee shall also consider the experience level of the officials, testing, and rank.
- To be eligible to be nominated for state games, umpires must attend no less than 50% of preseason training sessions established by training committee. Any appeals to this may be made to baseball board.

The number of crews is limited to FHSAA requirements. Umpires recommended must be able to fulfill commitment to umpire regional and state games dates. Towards the end of the regular softball season, the recommendation committee will send in list (voted on by members) to state for final crew(s) recommended.

Training

The training committee is responsible for establishing a training schedule for the year and requirements for those training sessions for the membership. Training sessions will be

posted to the membership prior to first meeting. Training sessions will be posted on the main hub of arbiter. The training committee is also responsible for reviewing attendance during training sessions.

The softball board, with a recommendation from the VP-Training coordinator, may select umpires who have received positive evaluations to serve as "Mentors" to work with inexperienced umpires who need refinement in their calling of the game. Mentors should spend time with umpires before and after games discussing ways of improving skills as an umpire. The VP-Training coordinator should communicate with the assigner to alert him/her to pair up mentor and "Student" whenever possible.

The training committee may conduct mini-clinics at any point of the season to improve skills of some/all umpires.

Assignment

The assignment committee is responsible for reviewing assignments, verify they are fair and reasonable. Committee is also responsible for compliance to FHSAA requirements in assignments.

All assignments shall fall under the authority of the assigner. The assigner shall follow the mandates and duties as set forth in the GNOA by-laws, which include but are not limited to following with all regulations of FHSAA (Grey book) concerning assignments and any other directives of the GNOA board or contracts entered by GNOA.

The assigner shall receive and review any and all evaluations submitted by evaluations committee for current and prior year, for consideration in making game assignments.

Working with assignment committee

The assignor shall call his committee together for an initial meeting once he/she is ready to start assigning games. Committee shall oversee all assignments to check for compliance with grey book as well as school scratches or game blocks.

The assignor shall work with the committee and softball board on how far in advance the schedule should be assigned.

Any substitutions or changes to the schedule, which may be required to be made after assignments are published, due to turn-backs or any other reason, may be made by the assigner without submission to the assignment committee. It should be understood that such flexibility is needed by the assigner to assure all games are covered in sufficient time.

Sub-Varsity assignments

JV games are important for the growth and development of GNOA officials. All officials should be willing to accept JV assignments.

Member's responsibilities to assigner

- Be diligent in placing blocks in schedule on arbiter on days where it is impossible for you to work (or times you cannot work).

- Accept games on days where you said you can work (By not placing blocks) ---DO NOT allow games to go unanswered on your schedule.
- Check computer daily to accept games so assigner can do his/her job more efficiently.
- Be mindful that assignments are made based upon grey book requirements, ability, blocks or non-blocks, scratches, time of game, # of games on certain days, etc.
- Respect that all games need leaders. Understand that you may be that leader.
- Understand that the assigner and the assignment committee make assignments together.
- Be mindful that complaining about assignments is unprofessional. Be tactful.
- Be mindful that accepting games on days when you are available and performing at a high level is the quickest way to get more games.
- Call the assignor immediately if you cannot make an assignment due to an emergency.
- Be the umpire who will work with anyone anytime at any place...

Softball Officers

Board elections

All board membership is subject to GNOA By-laws. The size of such Board shall be determined based upon the number of officials that were primary members of the Sporting Division during the preceding fiscal year. For sports with less than 25 primary officials, the Board of Directors shall consist of Three (3) Board Members; and for sports with 25 or more primary officials, the Board of Directors shall consist of consisting of not less than Five (5) Board Members: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Assignment Secretary, which officers may also be Board Members. Boards of three shall consist of a President, Secretary and Assignment Secretary.

After June 30, 2016, all Divisional Sports Board positions shall be elected by the Divisional Sports membership for one (1) year terms. To be eligible for election, a member must have completed at least two (2) consecutive years of membership in a Sporting Division for which he/she is seeking election and, all nominees must be approved by the GNOA Board. Within five (5) days of nomination, the Divisional Sports Secretary must provide the slate of nominees to the GNOA Board for review. The GNOA Board must notify the Sporting Division of their decision concerning each nominee within thirty (30) days of receipt of the nominees. If necessary to fill a slate of nominees, the Sporting Division may submit additional nominees to the GNOA Board for review.

- President: The President of the Divisional Sport will preside over all Divisional Sport meetings of the general membership and the Divisional Sport's Board meetings. This individual will carry out all the other usual duties of this Office and may suspend members temporarily

when events warrant such action pending 10 a GNOA Board review. For Sporting Divisions with three member boards, the President shall also be responsible for the duties of the Vice President as described below.

- Vice President: The Vice President, in the absence of the President, is vested with the powers and duties of the President. This individual shall perform all other duties as may from time to time be assigned by the President of the Divisional Sports Board. Also, the Vice President will act as President should said President vacate his/her position. The Vice President of each Divisional Sports Board shall also be the officer in charge of the Sporting Division's Training Committee, and shall oversee the training of all members of the Sporting Division.
- Secretary: The Secretary shall keep a chronological record of the general membership for that Divisional Sport and the minutes of the meetings for that Divisional Sports Board. This individual shall, submit the record of the previous meetings to the general membership or for that Divisional Sports Board, for approval as the official minutes of that Divisional Sport. This individual shall prepare and distribute all notices as required by the Divisional Sports President or Board and shall also be responsible for collecting all reports of the committees of the Sporting Division and transmitting those reports to the GNOA Board. For Sporting Divisions with three member boards, the Secretary shall also be responsible for the duties of the Treasurer as described below.
- Treasurer: The Treasurer will prepare the annual budget for the Sporting Division, which must be submitted to the Divisional Sports Board for approval. Unless such actions are to be handled by the GNOA Board, as determined by the GNOA Board, the Treasurer shall maintain the Divisional Sports bank accounts, collect and deposit the revenue and pay the expenses. The Treasurer shall make a report to each general membership meeting of the financial reports provided by the Treasurer of the GNOA. He/she will prepare any information deemed necessary by the GNOA Treasurer of the Board for the Sporting Division, to allow proper tax and financial reporting. The Treasurer is not responsible for invoicing schools or collecting payment, as those duties are delegated to the GNOA Treasurer.
- Assignment Secretary: The Assignment Secretary must comply with any and all FHSAA regulations or other governing bodies including directives of the GNOA Board, when making assignments. Members deemed not to be in good standing with the GNOA, FHSAA, or other governing bodies are specifically prohibited from receiving game assignments. The Assignment Secretary shall also comply with any and all terms or provisions in any contract entered by the GNOA for the provision of officials for sporting contests.
- Vacant Board of Director Positions: Each Divisional Sports Board will appoint a current member to any vacant Board position. The appointment which is made will be to fulfill the current term of the office