

BYLAWS – USA Softball Connecticut, INC

ARTICLE 1 – GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 1.01 NAME** – The name of the association shall be: USA Softball Connecticut, INC, hereinafter referred to as the USASCT. Business ID 0196079
- 1.02 ORGANIZATION** – The USASCT is a non-profit organization incorporated in 1986 as Connecticut ASA. Organization was re-branded to USA Softball of Connecticut in January 2016. USASCT shall be a non-profit corporation incorporated and licensed pursuant to the laws of the State of Connecticut.
- MISSION** – The missions of USASCT are the same as the National Governing body of USA Softball: to develop, direct, promote and grow the sport of softball in Connecticut to ensure maximum participation, optimal performance and educational excellence.
- 1.03 OBJECTIVES** - The objectives of the USASCT shall be to promote amateur softball for all persons, to provide organized play under standard rules for all amateur teams, to provide standards of eligibility for all players, and to provide tournaments leading to championships. To encourage softball to be conducted in accordance with the spirit of true sportsmanship free from bullying, hazing, harassment (including sexual harassment), emotional misconduct, physical misconduct, and sexual misconduct (including child sexual abuse) and establish principles for ethical behavior and matters relating to conflict of interest as provided by USAS's Board and National Council.
- 1.05.1 COORDINATION OF ACTIVITY** – USASCT shall coordinate its work with any and all civil, service, and religious organizations within the State of Connecticut. No activity of this association shall supersede the BYLAWS of USA Softball, or the laws of the State of Connecticut.
- 1.05.2 AFFILIATION** – The State Commissioner shall pay all dues required to affiliate the USASCT with USA Softball, hereinafter referred to as the USAS. The Official Playing Rules, USAS By Laws, Code and Procedural Manual are hereby made part of the Bylaws of the USASCT.
- 1.05.3 DEFINITIONS** – Whenever used in the USASCT Bylaws, unless otherwise specifically mentioned, and the definitions in the USAS Bylaws will be accepted.

ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

- 2.01 – TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP** – Teams, Umpires, USASCT Officials, and Life Members.
- 2.02 – COMPETING MEMBERS** – All players automatically acquire membership in the association when their team pays its annual registration fee in accordance with the established eligibility rules. All adult players or parents of their children should sign and be listed on a waiver/roster form yearly.

2.03 – TEAMS – Any team or organization that is interested in the activities of the USASCT and who pays annual dues shall acquire membership in the association and shall receive the official publications of the USAS as printed, such as Rule Book, Score Book and Team ID card. All Teams shall abide by the USASCT By-Laws and the USAS By Laws.

2.04 – UMPIRES – All umpires registered with the USASCT will acquire membership in the association and shall receive the official umpire related publications of the USAS as often as printed. All Umpires shall abide by the USASCT By-Laws and the USAS By Laws.

2.05 – USASCT OFFICIALS – All Officials of this organization shall acquire membership in this association and shall receive the official publications of the USAS as often as printed. All Officials shall abide by the USASCT By-Laws and the USAS By Laws.

2.06 – LIFE MEMBERS – The Board of Directors shall have the power to select a position of Life Member to persons for outstanding service. These members shall be entitled the privilege of attending meetings, and shall receive the official publications of the USAS as often as printed.

2.07 – DUES – Dues shall be established by the Board of Directors. Team Dues and information shall be sent to the Commissioner or his designee. Umpires Dues and information shall be sent to the UIC or his designee. Dues must be paid at the filing date as designated by the Board of Directors. Further, the Board may establish such rules and procedures for when membership fees are due and payable, the manner and method of payment of fees, the collection of delinquent fees and the proration or refund of fees, as the Board shall deem necessary or appropriate.

ARTICLE III – OFFICERS/OFFICIALS

3.01 – BOARD OF DIRECTORS – The Board of Directors shall consist of the State Commissioner, JO Commissioner, President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, State Umpire-in-Chief, State Tournament Director and such additional members as the Board shall determine. In addition, the Board performs the following specific functions, among others:

- A. adopts and amends Bylaws as needed;
- B. must, at the next board meeting, consider any proposed amendments to the Bylaws that a member submits;
- C. make the final decision on any interpretation of Bylaw by a majority vote of the Council;
- D. implements procedures to orient new Board directors, to educate all directors on the business and governance affairs of USASCT, and to evaluate Board performance;
- E. selects, compensates, evaluates and may terminate the State Commissioner and plans for management succession;

- F. reviews and approves USASCT's strategic plan and the annual operating plans, budget,
- G. sets policy and provides guidance and strategic direction to management on significant issues facing USASCT;
- H. sets goals and determines the future direction of USASCT;
- J. oversees the financial reporting process, communications with stakeholders, and USASCT's legal and regulatory compliance program;
- K. oversees effective corporate governance;
- L. approves capital structure, financial strategies, borrowing commitments, and long-range financial planning;
- M. shall establish membership requirements and fees in accordance with section 5.4 of the USASCT Bylaws;
- N. reviews and approves financial statements, annual reports, financial and control policies, and, upon the recommendation of the Nomination and Governance Committee, selects independent auditors;
- O. monitors to determine whether USASCT's assets are being properly protected;
- P. ensures that USASCT has proper and adequate insurance to protect from risk;
- Q. reviews and takes actions concerning membership, the recognition of District Associations, and the designation of Sections.

Terms of Board of Directors

The Board members shall be elected to a 2 year term at the Annual Meeting. There are no term limits.

3.02 – STATE COMMISSIONER –The State Commissioner shall be elected by a majority vote of the Board of Directors for recommendation to the USAS Council for final approval. See USAS By Laws for duties and responsibilities. Their duties shall include, but not be limited to: serve as ex-officio member of all committees; be responsible for the enforcement of the rules and regulations of the USASCT and the USAS; award and supervise all tournaments in the State of Connecticut; supervise the collection of dues and registrations; appoint the Deputy State Commissioner, State Junior Olympic Commissioner, State UIC, Player Rep, District Commissioner, State Tournament Director and any such other aides as may be required by the USASCT Board of Directors. Commissioners shall assist the District Association with sanctioning of events, disciplinary matters and the collection of the applicable membership fee for each registered member and assist in the remittance of amounts to USAS, as determined by the USAS Board.

3.03 – PRESIDENT – The president shall preside over all meetings, appoint committees, serve as ex-officio member of all committees, and perform other duties as assigned by the Board of Directors. The President will also be the person designated to succeed the Commissioner in the case of his demise.

3.04 –VICE PRESIDENTS – Vice presidents shall perform all duties usually performed by such an officer, and other duties as assigned by the Board of Directors.

3.05 – TREASURER – The Treasurer shall perform all duties usually performed by such an officer, and other duties as assigned by the Board of Directors.

3.06 – SECRETARY – The Secretary shall perform all duties usually performed by such an officer, and other duties as assigned by the Board of Directors.

3.07 – PLAYER REP – The Player Rep. will be appointed by the State Commissioner. They shall represent the views of the players, and shall perform other duties as assigned by the State Commissioner.

3.08 - JUNIOR OLYMPIC COMMISSIONER – The Junior Olympic Commissioner shall be responsible for the development and functions of the Junior Olympic Program, and shall perform other duties as assigned by the State Commissioner.

3.09 –UMPIRE-IN-CHIEF – The Umpire-in-Chief shall be responsible for the umpire activities in the State. He shall initiate programs of recruitment and training of umpires, appoint umpires for Championship tournaments, and perform other such duties as assigned by the State Commissioner. The State UIC shall appoint Deputy UIC's with the approval of the State Commissioner

3.10 – DEPUTY UMPIRE-IN-CHIEF – The State UIC shall appoint Deputy UIC's with the approval of the State Commissioner. They shall perform duties as assigned by the State UIC and State Commissioner.

3.11 – State Adult Tournament Director – Facilitates adult state-wide tournaments as directed by the State Commissioner.

3.12 – DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS – Adult District Commissioners shall be appointed by the State Commissioner.

The duties of the District Commissioner are those assigned by the Board of Directors and the State Commissioner and shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. To be responsible for the collection of all fees and the distribution of all team materials, and for all monies owed to the USASCT. Team registration fees must be remitted to the State Commissioner.
2. Insuring all unused registration materials are returned to the State Commissioner, and/or are properly accounted for.
3. Awarding and supervising all tournaments held in their area.
4. District Commissioners are responsible to see that advancing teams' rosters and affidavits are in order and are forwarded to the appropriate person as needed.

3.12 –COUNCIL – The Council shall consist of the Board of Directors, the District Commissioners, Deputy UIC's, and Player Representatives. The Council shall elect the officers and directors of the corporation from the slate recommended by the Nominating and Governance Committee at the Annual Meeting to serve for two (2) years or until their successors are elected.

3.13 – COMMITTEES – Committees shall be appointed as needed by the President or State Commissioner. These committees shall convene at the call of the Committee Chairman.

3.14 – ETHICS – Those who serve USASCT are volunteers, and are held to a high standard of conduct. As guardians of the USAS standards, they assume an obligation to subordinate individual interest to those of the organization.

(A) Guidelines. While no set of guidelines can guarantee acceptable behavior, those who serve the USASCT must do so without personal gain, without any institutional loss or embarrassment, and behave in such a way that the organization’s trust and public confidence are enhanced.

The following shall be used as a guide.

1. The business of the USASCT is to be conducted in observance of the spirit and letter of Federal, State, and Local laws.
2. USASCT properties, services, authority and influence are not to be used for personal benefit.
3. All who participate in USASCT administration and management shall disclose the nature and extent of an actual or potential conflict of interest.
4. All are expected to exhibit honesty, loyalty, candor and professional competence in their relationships with the members of the USASCT and our clients.

3.15 - SUSPENSION AND REMOVAL – Appointed Officials may be suspended or removed from office for just cause by the State Commissioner. Elected Officials may be suspended or removed from office for just cause by the Board of Directors. A member shall have the right to fair notice and a hearing prior to termination. Such action shall require a two-thirds majority of those members present at the meeting of the Board of Directors. Vacancies in elected offices shall be filled by the Board of Directors, with two-thirds majority of those members present at the meeting of the Board.

3.16 Conflict of Interest – No Council member shall hold a position of authority in a competing organization.

ARTICLE IV – FINANCES

4.01 – FUNDS – All funds are to be banked in an account in the name of the USASCT. Authorized withdrawals are to be made by the Treasurer or the State Commissioner. Second Signature shall be on all accounts. Those records shall be available thirty (30) days prior to the Annual meeting.

4.02 Budget - A yearly Budget shall be presented at the Annual Meeting. USASCT shall have a budget and the financial capability to ensure its operational well-being and to execute its service to USAS and the softball community. USASCT shall pay yearly association, membership and other fees to USAS, as determined from time to time by the USAS Board.

4.03 Registration- USASCT shall be responsible for the registration of Athlete members, Coach members, Umpire members, Scorekeeper members, Junior Olympic (JO) Commissioner members, and Team members. USASCT members are required to meet registration requirements to remain in good standing, as determined by the USAS Board.

ARTICLE V – MEETINGS

5.01 – ANNUAL MEETING – The USASCT shall hold an Annual Meeting.

5.02 – BOARD OF DIRECTORS’ MEETINGS – The Board shall meet at the discretion of the State Commissioner, the President, or of the members of the Board but shall meet as needed. Directors of the Board shall be expected to attend in person all regularly scheduled Board meetings, though for exigent circumstances a director may participate in a meeting by telephone or Zoom.

A director’s position on the Board shall be declared vacant upon the director’s resignation, removal, incapacity, disability or death. Any director shall resign at any time by giving written notice to the President.

Any vacancy occurring in the Board shall be filled by an appointee of the State Commissioner for up to 1 year after which the vacancy shall be filled as set forth for the election of that director. A director elected to fill a vacancy shall be elected for the unexpired term of such director’s predecessor in office.

5.03 – SPECIAL MEETINGS – A meeting of the Council may be called at any time by the State Commissioner or President.

5.04 – NOTICE OF MEETINGS - The President shall send to each member of the Board written notice of each meeting of the Board or Council at least seven (7) days prior to such meeting.

5.05 – QUORUM – In order for a quorum to be declared at any meeting, a simple majority shall be present.

5.06 – PROXY – All requests for proxy must be made to the State Commissioner prior to the meeting in question. A proxy must be a current member of the USASCT in good standing.

5.07 - Transacting Business by Mail, Electronic Mail, Telephone or Facsimile.

The Board shall have the power to transact its business by mail, electronic-mail, telephone, zoom or facsimile, if in the judgment of the President case requires such action.

5.08 – AGENDA

Board and Council agenda shall be placed on USASCT’s website and available to USASCT members no later than seven (7) days prior to the meeting date. The Agenda shall include but is not limited to:

- I. Call to Order
- II. Attendance
- III. Secretaries Report

- IV. Treasurer's Report
- V. President's Report
- VI. State Commissioner's Report
- VII. State UIC Report
- VIII. State JO Commissioners Report
- IX. State Tournament Director's Report
- X. District Commissioners Report
- XI. Player Representatives Report
- XII. Old Business
- XIII. New Business
- XIV. Open Discussion/Questions
- XV. Adjournment

5.09 - Minutes of Meetings.

The minutes of all meetings of the Board and Council shall be published on USASCT's website. Every reasonable effort will be made to post the minutes within thirty (30) days after completion of the meeting. Meeting archived minutes shall also be posted and available to USASCT website.

5.10 - Compensation.

Directors of the Board shall receive compensation for their services as directors as set for in the Budget and approved by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VI – ELIGIBILITY

6.01 Local Associations shall have jurisdiction over and shall hear and decide matters that occur within the Local Association's geographic boundary, that occur at a competition/tournament sponsored by the Local Association, or which pertain to the Local Association's members or participants. Those matters may include:

- A. commission of acts that are contrary to the objectives and purposes of the Local Association or of USA Softball;
- B. violation of state or local laws;
- C. failure to pay fees or indebtedness due to the USASCT;
- D. destruction of property;
- E. unsportsmanlike conduct;
- F. engaging in physical violence, such as an attack on an umpire, competition/tournament official or participant immediately preceding, during or immediately following a game or arising out of USASCT activities;
- G. commission of fraud, such as playing under an assumed name, falsifying an affidavit or roster or giving false information to competition/tournament officials;
- H. participation in a competition/tournament when not meeting eligibility requirements;
- I. knowingly competing with or against individuals or teams which are suspended from USASCT activities;

- J. forfeiture of a game in championship play;
- K. violation of USA Softball substance abuse policies and procedures;
- L. bullying, hazing, emotional misconduct, physical misconduct, harassment, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, child sexual abuse including social and electronic media.
- M. interference with any hearing process of USAS or any Local Association; and,
- N. misconduct that reasonably calls into question the member or participant's suitability to participate in the applicable activity.

6.02 Tournament Protest Committees shall hear and decide matters that arise during the course of a tournament. Those matters may include:

- A. issues pertaining to the running of the tournament;
- B. eligibility determinations for participation in the tournament;
- C. official protests as allowed under USA Softball rules;
- D. field-of-play procedural or rule interpretations

Discipline imposed by a Tournament Protest Committee shall not limit or bar any further discipline under these Bylaws or any other applicable rules.

6.03 Agreement to be Bound.

Any member of USAS and/or any member of an applicable USASCT, by reason of such membership, agrees to be subject to these complaint procedures and agrees to be bound by any decision rendered pursuant to these complaint procedures, including its mandatory arbitration provisions.

6.04 Resolution Prior to Bringing Complaint.

Prior to the filing of a complaint, USASCT or the Tournament Protest Committee may, as appropriate, offer the respondent a proposal to resolve the matter. The respondent may accept or reject such proposal. If rejected, the respondent shall be entitled to a hearing on the merits.

6.05 Manner of Filing.

The complainant shall file the complaint with the State Commissioner or the Tournament Protest Committee, as applicable. The complaint shall set forth in clear and concise language, preferably in numbered paragraphs: (i) the alleged violation, grievance, denial or threat to deny, and (ii) the remedy requested. The complainant shall sign the complaint, with the exception for reports of athlete safety violations, those can be filed anonymously.

6.06 Filing Fee.

A complaint filed by an individual or an organization shall be accompanied with a filing fee as determined by the State Commissioner or the Tournament Protest Committee, as applicable. Complaints involving reports of athlete safety violations do not require a filing fee. The complainant may request that the filing fee be reduced or waived for reasons of significant financial hardship. If such request is made, the State Commissioner or the Tournament Protest Committee, as applicable, shall determine whether or not to reduce or waive the filing fee. If a

USASCT, Tournament Protest Committee brings a complaint, it is not required to pay a filing fee.

6.07 Administration.

The Commissioner of USASCT or the Tournament Protest Committee, as applicable, shall generally administer and oversee all complaints filed under this Section. The Commissioner and the Tournament Protest Committee, as applicable, shall be responsible to ensure that all complaints are heard in a timely, fair and impartial manner. Respondents shall be afforded basic due process protections, which includes respondent(s) in a grievance proceeding are provided a notice of the charges and the requested remedy. The Commissioner and the Tournament Protest Committee, as applicable, may promulgate procedures in addition to those set forth in these Bylaws for the effective administration of complaints filed with them. The Commissioner or chair of the Tournament Protest Committee, as applicable, shall also appoint a chair of the hearing panel from the three disinterested individuals selected. Tournament Protest Committee members may be appointed to and serve on the hearing panel.

6.08 Complaints Involving Selection to Participate in a Competition.

Where a complaint is filed involving selection of an individual or team to participate in a competition, or the participation of an individual or team in a competition, the complainant shall include with the complaint a list of all other individuals or teams, together with their contact information, that may be adversely affected by a decision rendered on the complaint. The adverse party to the complaint shall also submit a list of individuals or teams, together with their contact information, that may be adversely affected by a decision rendered on the complaint. The hearing panel shall determine those individuals or teams who must receive notice of the complaint. USASCT or Tournament Protest Committee shall then be responsible for providing appropriate notice to these individuals or teams. Any individual or team so notified shall have the option to participate in the proceeding as a party. If an individual or team is notified of the complaint, then that individual or team shall be bound by the decision of the hearing panel even though the individual or team chose not to participate as a party.

6.09 Decision and Minimum Penalties.

A decision shall be determined by a majority of the hearing panel. The hearing panel's decision shall be in writing and distributed to the parties.

If so determined by a hearing panel, the following acts or offenses shall require a minimum of loss of eligibility, as follows:

- A. Commission of fraud – one (1) year minimum.
- B. Competing knowingly with or against suspended players – one (1) year minimum.
- C. Competing on a team that is discovered to have within its possession or control an altered bat two (2) year minimum.
- D. Player found in possession of an altered bat - five (5) year minimum.
- E. Team discovered to have within its possession or control of an altered bat – two (2) year minimum.
- F. Bullying, hazing, harassment (including sexual harassment), emotional misconduct – two (2) year minimum

- G. Physical misconduct/Physical violence – five (5) year minimum
- H. Sexual misconduct or sexual harassment (including child abuse or child endangerment) – ten (10) year minimum

Article VII SANCTIONING EVENTS

7.01 Prompt Review of Request.

USASCT shall promptly review every request submitted by an amateur sports organization or person for a sanction and make a determination on such request,

7.02 Standard for Review.

If USASCT, as a result of its review: (i) does not determine by clear and convincing evidence that holding or sponsoring amateur athletic competition would be detrimental to the best interest of softball and its athletes and (ii) confirms that the amateur sports organization or person meets the requirements for obtaining a sanction as set forth in these Bylaws, then USASCT shall grant the sanction requested by the amateur sports organization or person.

ARTICLE VIII – WEBSITE AND PUBLICATIONS

8.01 USASCT shall maintain a website for the dissemination of information to its members. **USASCT** shall publish on its website (i) its Bylaws, (ii) its rules, and regulations **USASCT** shall publish on its website a mailing address and an e-mail address for communications directly with **USASCT**.

ARTICLE IX – HALL OF FAME COMMITTEES

9.02 Hall of Fame Committees. These committees shall consist of members appointed by the President and State Commissioner.

ARTICLE X NOMINATION AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE.

10.01 The Nominating and Governance Committee shall be appointed by the State Commissioner and President.

- A. The Nominating and Governance Committees shall have the following responsibilities:
 - Nominate individuals to the Board of Directors and Council for the elected positions (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer).
 - Members of this Committee cannot currently hold these offices.
 - Perform a yearly audit.

Any matter that comes before the Board of Directors that is not covered by these By-Laws shall be covered by the USAS By Laws.

Approved December 5, 2020