



Helena
Girls
Softball
Association

OFFICIAL
Policies, Procedures, and Rules

February 4, 2013

Helena Girls Softball Association Policies, Procedures, and Rules

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Helena Girls Softball Association Policies, Procedures, and Rules

I. OBJECTIVE

Provide a safe environment for girls to develop age-appropriate skills and enjoy the game of fast pitch softball with spirit of sportsmanship and honor the game.

II. HISTORY

Helena Girls Softball Association (HGSA) was formed in 1990. An 18-and-under team called the Helena Sponsors was organized and played against several other Montana teams and competed in two tournaments. The next year, the 18-under team became the Bearcats, and hosted the first Helena Invitational Tournament at Batch Fields. Later that summer, Helena was the home of the 1991 ASA

Junior Olympic State Tournament. By then the league had expanded to four divisions: 18-U, 16-U, 14-U and 12-U. Some of the original founders and coaches of the Helena Girl’s Fastpitch League were Bob Vogel, John Hawe, Gary Dunn, Ray and Diane Eby, Jerry Smith, Frank Schneckloth, Bill Pocha, and Lee Rodgers, among others.

III. USE OF RULE BOOKS

In the event of rule differences, this booklet takes precedence over the current year ASA Official Rules of Softball. The rules matrix at the end of this booklet is provided for quick reference only and should not be used as your sole source of reference.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The current year ASA Official Rules of Softball have rules for slow pitch and fast pitch, adult and youth, etc. Make sure that you are using the appropriate section for girls youth fast pitch. Look for Junior Olympic (JO), fast pitch (FP), girls (G), and the correct age, 14-U, 12-U, 10-U.

In the event of questions, ask first the league President or a member of the Rules Committee for an explanation or interpretation. If the issue is not resolved, the league representative will go to the HGSA Board of Directors for a resolution.

IV. APPROVAL

ASA Rules allows alteration of the official rules to meet local objectives for “Non-Championship Play.” HGSA League play and City Tournament are not ASA championship play and these rules as amended apply.

These rules were approved by the HGSA board on February 4, 2013.

V. REGISTRATION

Registration is open to anyone in Kindergarten through 9th grade. Registration dates will be set by the Board and will be advertised through any of the following: radio, television, signage, posters, flyers, web sites, and mailings to previous player families. If permitted, off-site registrations will be conducted at area business establishments. Registration will remain open until deemed closed by the HGSA Board, but will not be closed

before the commencement of the regular season games. Teams must be formed by a cutoff date established by the HGSA President to ensure a game schedule can be created before the start of the season.

A. Registration Fees

A registration fee as set by The Board shall accompany each registration form before a player is permitted to participate.

B. Player Family Volunteer Hours

Family members may be asked to work volunteer hours in the league. Each team may also be asked to work at least one day to clean the fields during the season.

C. Player Grade Determination

At the time of registration, designees of The Board shall have the responsibility of determining player age and qualifications for each league by way of verification of date of birth. Copies of certified Birth Certificates/school transcript may be requested to verify age and/or grade level for a new player to the league or any returning player in question.

D. Player League Assignment

Registration is open to all girls in Kindergarten thru 9th grade. HGSA Leagues are divided by the grade the player is currently enrolled in at the time of registration, rather than age. The following is a list of HGSA league requirements:

1. Rookie League - Consists of Kindergarten, 1st, & 2nd grade players.
2. Minor League - Consists of 3rd & 4th grade players.
3. Major League - Consists of 5th & 6th grade players.
4. Senior League - Consists of 7th, 8th & 9th grade players.

Note: The Board may reassign a player to a different league based on the age of the player at the time of registration.

Example: A home schooled player may be registered as a 5th grader (Major League) based on current level of studies. However, other players of the same age would typically be 3rd or 4th graders. In this case the home schooled player would be placed in the Minor League.

E. Specific Requests Rule

1. Rookie Division: Players in the Rookie division will be placed on teams based by school as much as possible. Players in the Rookie league may also request teammates with whom to play with.
2. Minor Division: Players may request to be teamed with a “teammate” as described below, or they may request to play for their previous HGSA season coach or manager. It is not a guarantee that players will be placed with their teammate or with their previous coach, but the league will do their best to accommodate such requests keeping with the ultimate goal of providing an evenly competitive division of teams.
 - a. Teammate Request: Any player may select one other player as a teammate, provided that teammate selects them also, and that the pairing up of the two players will not have an effect on the competitive balance of the division teams.
3. Major and Senior Leagues: Our ultimate goal is to establish balanced teams throughout a division so that softball games will be competitive among teams in each division. This will be accomplished through a “draft”. Players new to the Major or Senior league must attend the draft. Returning players will automatically be placed on their prior season’s team unless they request to reenter the draft.

4. Staffing Request: To encourage parent volunteerism and to promote harmony on the team coaches may request to team up provided they bring no more than three (3) players onto a team. The Board will evaluate and approve any staffing requests to ensure that competitive balance is maintained.
 - a. Majors/Seniors: Any players that coaches bring are referred to as “freeze players”. Examples of this include two staff members - one with one player, and the other with two players (e.g. two sisters, or a daughter and her teammate).
5. Returning Players: Within the same division, players may return to the team they were on the previous year or they may opt to ask to move to a different team. If the player asks to switch teams they will follow the appropriate process for that division.

F. Playing Up/Down

The Board encourages players to register and play in their grade level division regardless athletic ability or experience. Occasionally, it may be necessary, in order to fill out teams and/or coaching positions, or athletic ability, to allow a small number of players to be moved up or down a division. A player may request to play up or down one division if they are within one grade level division they request to play in. The Board must be notified at the time of registration and a Request to Play Up/Down form must be turned in with the player's league registration.

1. Playing Up

Placement in an upper division requires that the following criteria be met:

- a. A player must be within one grade level of the upper division in which they request to play in.
- b. A player must have played a minimum of two (2) years in the HGSA league or provide proof that they have played competitively in JO tournaments for a minimum of two (2) years.
- c. Player must have the consent of the Board.
- d. Playing Up to Seniors from Majors is not allowed.

2. Playing Down

It may be necessary, due to safety or coaching considerations, to allow players lacking sufficient softball experience to be placed in a lower age division. Placement in a lower division requires that the following criteria be met:

- a. A player must be within one grade level of the lower division they request to play in.
- b. A player who plays down must not give the team playing for a competitive advantage over the rest of the division teams.
- c. Player must have consent of the Board

3. Provision for out-of-town Teams: It may be necessary to allow out of town teams to combine players from upper or lower divisions in order to fill a team with enough players.

The following criteria must be met:

- a. Team Manager/Coach must contact the Board and make request to create multidivision team.
- b. Division will be determined by the majority grade level of the players being registered for the team.
- c. Players must be within one grade level of division being assigned.
- d. Players playing up must have the athletic ability to play safely within the division assigned. The Board may remove a player from the team for safety concerns.

- e. Players playing down must not give the team a competitive advantage over the rest of the division teams. The Board may remove a player if deemed to give unfair competitive advantage.

G. Late Registration

The President, with the Board's concurrence, will place players that register after the team selection process, on teams based on the player's known abilities, personal development, team needs and equality of teams within the division. Any new player that has not been assessed cannot be drafted and will be randomly selected and placed on a team.

VI. TEAM SELECTIONS

Teams will consist of a minimum of 9 players. The number of teams will be determined by the League, taking into consideration the number of players registered for each division. The Rookie and Minor teams will be formed so as to ensure an equal number of players on each team. The Major and Senior teams will be formed by way of a draft process, conducted separately for each division, with the ultimate goal of providing an evenly competitive division of teams. Players new to the Major or Senior division must attend the draft. Returning players will automatically be placed on their prior season's team unless they request to reenter the draft.

A. Rookie and Minor Leagues

Teams will be formed by the League on a random basis taking into consideration schools, teammate requests and/or the previous year's team played on. (The main objective of these divisions is that the players have FUN and learn the basic fundamentals and rules of the game.)

B. Major and Senior Leagues

Prior to conducting the draft, players will be required to participate in a general skills session which will consist of throwing, hitting and fielding stations. After the general skills session, Pitchers and Catcher will also participate in either a pitching or catching session. These sessions will allow coaches/managers the opportunity to observe the skill level of the players.

Teams having no representative at the time of team drafts will be represented by the League or an individual who does not have a daughter playing, or personal interest in the division.

1. Pitchers: Because pitchers are essential to the game and have a tremendous impact on the competitiveness of a team, an even distribution of pitchers among teams in the division is critical. The League may choose to hold pre-season pitching evaluations if needed to help with the draft.
2. Manager/Coach Freeze Player: The coach and assistant coach are allowed a "Freeze" player (typically their daughter). The freeze player is automatically assigned to the coach's team and will be identified as a "Freeze" player. In the case that the Freeze player has a sibling in the same division, the sibling may be placed on the same team if so desired. If both the coach(s) and freeze player(s) return to the same division the following year, the coach(s) freeze player(s) will remain the same.
3. Draft Guidelines:
 - a. Attendance: Attendance of the team selection meeting will be restricted to managers and board members only. No children will be allowed.
 - b. Order - Post all team rosters from previous year and any new teams. Posters will list the returning players and any new freezes that might apply. Numbers will be drawn to determine

- the pick order. A Serpentine draft will be used. Example: First round will be First pick through Last Pick. Second round order will be Last pick to First pick.
- (i) The first and second round will be used to pick a pitcher and/or catcher. Teams with both a pitcher and catcher will not get a pick.
 - (ii) The third round all teams will be allowed make one pick starting at the first pick.
 - (iii) Teams with more players than other teams may be skipped in subsequent rounds to allow teams with fewer players to even up the number of players for all teams.
 - (iv) This pick order will continue until all teams are full.
- c. Pitchers/Catchers - Before any player is chosen, review the current players to ensure that each team has a minimum of one pitcher and one catcher that everyone agrees with. If the coach's freezes are pitchers or catchers, they will count as their minimum required players for these positions.
 - (i) If there are any teams that do not have a pitcher or catcher, they will have the opportunity to select a player or players to fill these positions during the first and second round.
 - (ii) Teams that have one pitcher and one catcher may not pick a pitcher or catcher until all teams have one pitcher and one catcher. Teams that need a pitcher and/or a catcher must make these picks in the first and second rounds.
 - d. Number of Players per team – Teams will have a minimum of 10 players and a maximum of 12 players per team.
 - e. Teams per Division – The number of teams per division will be determined by the number of registrations received prior to night of the draft and the number of available coaches.
 - f. Multiple Draftees - If there are players that must be drafted together, they will be added to the team and will count as one selection for that round, but each will go towards the minimum number of players for that team. For instance if the coach selects player number 3 that must be drafted with player number 9, both players will be added the team and will count as two picks. Both players will count towards the minimum number of nine. This will decrease the number of rounds that that coach will be involved in to get to the minimum number of players.
 - g. Ineligible Players - There may be players that have requested to not play for a particular coach, or have chosen to return to the draft. The number of that draftee will be found at the bottom of the particular coach's work sheet, so they know not to select that player. The draft administrators must track this in case a coach selects an ineligible player for his or her team.
 - h. Missing Draftees - If there are any players that were unable to attend the draft, they will be placed randomly on a team after the draft selection process has been completed. The next team that was in line to make a selection will receive that player and so on. Exception: If a missing draftee is a legitimate pitcher or catcher, they will be identified and teams may select those players in the first or second round. If not selected, they will be placed on a team randomly after the draft process has been completed.
 - i. Trading - After all players have been placed on a team, the coaches may make trades. Trading will be open for ten minutes. Once the draft is closed, no further trading will be permitted.
 - j. Late Registrations - If a player registers late and the season games have not started or we have not reached the maximum numbers of players for all teams (whichever comes first),

HGSA will place the player on the next team that is in line to have a player. The coach will be notified and given a copy of the player's registration form for their records.

- k. Adding Players by the Coach - This is not permitted. If you have someone interested in playing, please have the player submit a registration form. If they still qualify based on Late Registration rules, they will be placed on the next team eligible for a player. All players must have submitted a registration form to be eligible to practice and play games. If you have a player that has not submitted a registration form and fee, they are not covered by insurance and you are not in compliance with our insurance guidelines.
 - l. Roster Sheets - A copy of all player registration forms will be given to the appropriate coach. Please note any special medical information and their contact names and numbers. It is your responsibility to be able to have that information available if an emergency takes place during practices or games. Your roster sheet will have contact phone number, but will not include any medical notes from the parents. The rosters will be copied and given to each team member to help with communications for the entire team.
 - m. The draft process is complete when all eligible players have been assigned to a team.
4. Privacy: ALL information presented in the team selection meeting is to be treated with the utmost care and respect for every player in the league. Discussion of ANY player related issue outside of the team selection meeting must not be perceived as contrary to the mission statements of the HGSA.
 5. Notification of Players: All team rosters are subject to approval by the Board. Roster changes may be made if any clear and egregious imbalances occurred during the selection process. Under no circumstances shall Players be notified of their selection until the League has given approval and team rosters have been issued to the Managers. Upon notification of approval, Managers shall notify their Players within three (3) days.

VII. STAFF (Coaches/Assistant Coaches)

Each adult league member or volunteer age 18 or over that is interested in being a Coach or Assistant Coach must contact the Board and submit a signed Volunteer Coaches Application prior to March 1st of the current year. Coaches that are assigned to a team will be required to register as coach through ASA's REGISTERASA.COM and at a minimum will be required to submit a background check through ASA. Coaches may also opt to take the ACE certification course which offers an online Coach's Certification course as well as performing the background check. In addition, ASA registered coaches will be covered by ASA secondary insurance. Coaches may request HGSA to perform the background check through ASA in which case a background check form must be completed and submitted to the Board. Coaches who submit a receipt will be reimbursed for the cost of the background check or ACE certification.

Every opportunity to fulfill requests Coach will be made but are dependent upon the number of players registered in each division. If a situation exists wherein there are more volunteers than teams, assignment of staff will be made on a performance or experience decision by the Board. Prior year manager/coach evaluations will be used to determine eligibility.

Each team will be under the authority of an adult staff member during all team functions.

NOTE: A background check must be completed and results submitted to the League for each adult staff member prior to the commencement of pre-season practice. Should a staff member volunteer after the pre-season activities have commenced, he or she must submit their background check results to the League prior to any involvement in team activities involving the players.

A. Manager/Coach Responsibilities

1. To oversee the team members' safety and to ensure their experience is optimized. The Manager is to utilize the Division Representative and HGSA to enhance a player's experience;
 2. To teach basic softball fundamentals, while displaying patience and composure to the team;
 3. To provide a positive experience for all HGSA players and families;
 4. To agree to adhere to the HGSA division rules and regulations;
 5. For the actions of the players and spectators during games and practices;
 6. To attend any meetings, clinics and training programs conducted by the league;
 7. Be familiar with and enforce all safety rules;
 8. To provide a flow of league information to the parents/guardians of players through parent meetings, the first is to be prior to or in conjunction with the first pre-season practice;
 9. For all uniforms; equipment; and keys. Equipment and keys are to be turned into the league no later than one week following the official closing of the season;
 10. Home team will be responsible for reporting games scores to assigned league official and/or division rep at the end of the game.
 11. Field and equipment preparation and cleanliness;
- B. Assistant Manager Responsibilities
1. Assist the Manager/Coaches when asked;
 2. Ensure safety of the players while in the dugout and monitor the comings and goings of the players during the game, e.g.: restroom breaks by the players must be monitored for player safety;
 3. Act in the capacity of the parent/guardian's representative.

VIII. PRACTICE AND GAME GUIDELINES

NOTE: Due to insurance requirements, no player is allowed to attend the draft, practice or play until a players' signed registration form and fee is received by HGSA.

A. Practice Guidelines

1. No more than four (4) Games and/or Practices may be conducted in a calendar week during the seasons. This rule may be waived at each leagues' discretion.
2. No player shall be left unattended at the field/practice area; however, transportation of each player is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

B. Game Guidelines

1. Players will remain inside the playing field during the course of the game with the exception of warming up players and restroom breaks with the permission of the Manager/ Coach/ Chaperone.
2. Official Game: Two complete innings shall constitute an official game if stopped due to weather.
3. Weather: No games will be played if the temperature drops below 40 degrees. The temperature shall be reviewed one hour prior and up to game time to determine if the game is called due to inclement weather. The Softball Hotline will be updated and coaches must notify the players.
4. Time Limits: No new inning should be started after 1 hour 20 minutes of play - all games will end at 1 hour 30 minutes. If the inning is not completed when the time limit takes place, the official score will revert back to the previous complete inning. League games may end in a tie.
5. Early Departure of a Player: If a player departs the game early, the opposing team staff and umpire must be notified.
6. Numbers of Players: Teams are allowed to play with a minimum of eight players without a forfeit being declared. No 'out' is declared for the missing player when her turn at bat comes. Coaches may fill their team as follows:
 - a. Minor League – teams may use other registered league players as a substitute to fill a team up to nine players. The players must be Minor League players.
 - b. Major League – Teams may use other registered Major league players from any team, or may use Minor League players at coach, umpire and parent discretion, to fill a team up to nine players.
 - c. Senior League – Teams may use any other registered Senior League player from any team, or may use Major League players at coach, umpire and parent discretion, to fill a team up to nine players.
 - Pickup players must be placed at the end of the lineup, and may only play outfield positions unless the number of pickups requires infield positions to be also be filled.
 - A Pickup player may not pitch or catch without prior approval from league rep and/or league president.
8. Forfeit: The first game scheduled for the night will have a maximum 10-minute window before a forfeit will be declared if there are not enough players. The second game scheduled during the evening will not have a ten minute window, so if the team is short players at game time it will result in a forfeit. Game time for the second game is immediately following the end of the first scheduled game or original scheduled time, whichever is greater.
9. Batting Order: A team's batting order will consist of all players present at the game. Players arriving late may be added at the bottom of the batting lineup. Players having to leave before the game is over for any reason are removed from the lineup without penalty. (No out taken)
10. Substitution - Free substitution will be allowed, meaning that any defensive player, including the pitcher, may be removed and returned to any defensive position later in the game.

11. Minimum Play - All players must play an inning of defense before the third inning is completed. Coaches are encouraged to provide equal playing time for all players.
12. Stealing Home - Majors and Seniors will be allowed to steal home. Minors cannot steal home. Players are encouraged to slide at home when there is a play at the plate.
13. Crashing into a fielder with the ball. (Interference) - In an effort to prevent injury and protect the defensive player attempting to make a play on a runner, a runner must be called out when they remain on their feet and crash into any player who is holding the ball and waiting to apply a tag. To prevent the out ruling, the runner may slide, jump over the defender holding the ball, go around the defender or return to the previous base touched. If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender is ejected. A runner may slide into the fielder.
14. Drop Third Strike/Stealing:
 - a. Minors:
 - Advancing to first on a dropped third strike is not permitted.
 - Base runners are allowed to steal only one base at a time per pitch including an overthrow.
 - Base runners may advance as far as they can on over throws of batted balls. The ball is live.
 - b. Majors:
 - Advancing to first on a dropped third strike is not permitted.
 - Base running will follow all other USA Softball rules with unlimited advancing on overthrows.
 - c. Seniors may advance to first on a dropped third strike. Base running will follow ASA rules with unlimited advancing on overthrows.
15. Eligibility to Run - Runners may leave the base when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. Leaving early may result in the player being called out at the Umpire's discretion.
16. Runs Allowed - There is no run limit for the Senior League. The Major League shall play with a five run limit per inning, while the Minor League shall play with a four run limit per inning. In other words, any team may score no more than five/four runs in any half inning regardless of the number of outs, or the number of runners on base. A play in progress is allowed to be completed after the fifth/fourth run has scored; however, no runs in excess of run limit shall count in the game score. The half inning shall terminate upon the fifth/fourth crossing the plate.
17. Cleats - Only rubber cleats are allowed in Rookies, Minors and Majors while metal cleats are allowed in Seniors.
18. Jewelry - No jewelry may be worn during a game, except medical alert bracelets and must be securely taped. A team will receive one warning and upon the next infraction of jewelry being worn will result in an out if the team is batting or runners advancing one base if the team is on the field.
19. Attire - Players are encouraged to wear their shirts tucked into their pants. Hats & visors are optional during league games. Coaches should be advised that if worn by one player, they must be the same color and style in most tournament play. Plastic or metal items are not permitted as hair accessories.
20. Protective Gear/Equipment - The batter, the on-deck batter, players serving as base coaches, and all base runners must wear batting helmets with face guards, along with double earflaps. Catchers must

wear an approved helmet, mask, shin guards, and chest protector. Any player warming up a pitcher, anywhere in the area of the field must wear a catcher's mask. This is at practice or warm-up prior to a game. All equipment must be kept in or behind the dugout when not in use.

21. Teams will not be allowed to take infield before games. Warm ups must be done in the outfield and/or behind the outfield fences if possible.
- C. Termination of Games: See ASA Rule Book.
 - D. Staff Ejections: In the event a staff member is ejected from the game by an Umpire, the staff member will be required to leave the playing area. A special board meeting will be held within four days of the occurrence to determine if any disciplinary action will be administered. The staff member will be suspended from HGSA activities pending any board action and the Board will be notified.
 - E. Injuries: Any player injury sustained during any team activity must be reported to the Division Representative and the League along with all necessary paperwork.
 - F. Make-Up/Rescheduled Games: Staff will work together along with the HGSA President to re-schedule games. If a team cannot field players and both team staff members agree to reschedule the game and by the end of the season, the game cannot be played, the team requesting the rescheduled game will take the loss.
 - G. An Umpire's Failure to Appear: If an Umpire fails to appear before game time, staff from both teams may appoint a substitute to stand in. Unless equipped with the appropriate gear, substitutes must umpire from behind the pitcher's mound.

HGSA TEAM CODE OF CONDUCT

As the HGSA organization is dedicated to providing an environment for players, managers, coaches, and other staff and volunteers that is conducive to good sportsmanship, respect for each other, positive support, and the development of friendships in the spirit of competition, all participants are required to sign a Code of Conduct Pledge prior to the season. There are 2 versions of the pledge, one for coaches/managers and other adults who will be officially involved within the league, and one for the supporting parents. These forms are included as Appendices at the end of this manual.

SUBSTITUTION AND PLAYING TIME FOR MINORS, MAJORS, AND SENIORS

1. All players must play at least two (2) innings on defense within the first 4 innings.
2. No player may sit on the bench for a second inning until all players have sat on the bench for one inning. Example: On a 12-player team, ALL players will sit out one of the first four innings.
3. No player may sit on the bench for two innings in a row unless it is her choice because of illness or she has been removed for injury.
4. Note to Rules 1-3

The participation rules above may be waived for disciplinary reasons. This can take the form of reduced time in the field. However, the player must play at least one inning in the field in order to be in the batting order. In these cases, the Coach/Manager must notify the opposing team Coach/Manager and umpire prior to the start of the game. In addition, the Manager must provide the Board with a letter or an email of

explanation for the disciplinary action taken within 24 hours after the start of game time. Not conforming to this process will be considered a violation of the Code of Conduct, and those involved will be subject to the review process detailed there.

5. Minors Only - No player may play two defensive innings in a row in the outfield. An infield to outfield to bench or reverse rotation will meet this requirement. An outfield to bench to outfield rotation does not meet this rule. Exceptions for safety reasons must be approved.
6. Minors Only - Once the pitcher has completed her innings pitched, she will either be placed in the outfield or sit the bench the next defensive inning. Example: Player pitches one inning, she plays outfield or sits the bench the next inning. Player pitches first two innings, she plays outfield or sits the bench the third inning. Player pitches first and third inning, she plays outfield or sits the bench the second and fourth inning and must meet the requirements of the participation rule.
7. Unlimited re-entry is permitted to any position as long as rules above and rules affecting pitchers are followed.
8. Any player who arrives late to the game will be entered at the bottom of the batting order and take her normal turn at bat.
9. There is no penalty incurred by a player leaving the game early. The league will consider any attempt on the part of a coach/manager to use this rule interpretation to avoid batting a player in order to gain a competitive advantage to be among the most egregious of violations of the rules and principles of the league. Penalty: forfeit and suspension.

Helena Girls Softball Association 2015 Official League Rules

Rookie League (K – 2nd grade)

Softball is a fairly complex game and the minimum knowledge required to even play the game, much less master the skills, is significant. Rookie League simplifies the game significantly so the players can learn basic skills, such as catching and throwing, batting, and running bases.

Rookie League is completely developmental. That is, the entire purpose is to teach basic skills and give the players a positive experience. To that end, there is no scoring, no winners or losers, and everyone gets to play and bat every inning. It is important to keep these points in mind as they dictate the way coaching is done.

This section details major differences between Rookie League and other divisions. Of course, the essence of softball is maintained, but those rules resulting from the competitive nature of softball are eliminated.

The ASA Official Rules of Softball do not have a Rookie League division. The following rules will be used for this division.

- 1) **PLAYERS** - A Rookie League team must field a minimum of five and may place as many rostered players on the playing field as desired.
- 2) **SAFETY**
 - a) No jewelry may be worn during any practice or game. This includes, but is not limited to, earrings, bracelets, necklaces, or rings. Exception: Medical alert bracelets, medical alert necklaces, and non-removable silver baby bracelets are allowed to be worn, if covered. If a player is found wearing jewelry, her manager or coach will instruct her to remove it.

- b) Helmets that include face masks are mandatory for the defensive player standing beside the coach/pitcher and all batters and runners.

3) FIELD

- a) If possible, bases should be placed at 60 feet.

4) EQUIPMENT

- a) In addition to Official Softball bats, bats designated “T-Ball” may be used.
- b) The softball must be an optic yellow 11” Incrediball.
- c) Rubber-cleated shoes are not required, but are recommended.

5) REGULATION GAME

- a) The time limit is 1 hour 30 minutes.
- b) No game may last longer than three (3) innings.
- c) There will be no official scorekeeping. No runs are counted in Rookie League play.
- d) Mandatory pre-game coaches meeting to discuss field/game issues.

6) OFFENSE

- a) Both teams will bat the entire lineup the first inning, regardless of number of players or number of outs made by the defense. After the last player in the batting order has batted and the play is over, the half inning is complete.
- b) Second and Third innings: a team will bat until third out is made or until the last player in the batting order has batted and the play is over, the half inning is complete.
- c) The team at bat will have the option of a coach pitching three (3) balls to their own batters. If a ball is not put into play after three (3) pitches, the ball is placed on the tee and the batter has three (3) swings to put the ball into play.
- d) A batter starting from the tee will have six (6) swings to put the ball into play.
- e) If the batter does not put the ball into play after either option (c) or (d) above, the batter will return to the dugout. Regardless of the inning, the at bat will NOT be recorded as an out, and the next batter in the lineup will be up.
- f) Once a batter hits the ball she and any other runners on base can advance:
 - i) One base, if the ball stops in the infield.
 - ii) Any number of bases, if the ball goes to the outfield untouched, until the ball is returned to the infield.
 - iii) EXCEPTION: When the last batter in the lineup hits the ball the runners continue to run the bases and through home. During this time the defense can continue to try to make an out.
- g) On an overthrow play at first base, the batter-runner will not be allowed to advance.
- h) All other runners must stop at the base they are approaching if the ball is overthrown at first.
- i) There will be no stealing of bases. If attempted the runner will be returned to the previous base.
- j) Adult staff members can be placed as base coaches near first and third base, but must remain in foul territory and not interfere with play.
- k) An additional adult staff member may be positioned behind home plate to place the ball on the tee, retrieve foul balls, and coach the batter.

7) DEFENSE

- a) Players generally occupy those positions that are common to all softball. For the purposes of development, it is recommended that positions be filled in the following order, depending on the number of players present.
 - i) Infield (First, Second, Third, and Shortstop).
 - ii) Pitcher (This player does not pitch, but occupies the pitching position as a defensive player).
 - iii) Outfield (Left, Left Center, Right, Right Center). If desired, additional players may be placed in the outfield to get all players into the game.
 - iv) Catcher.
NOTE: There is no requirement that any particular position be filled. The team staff can place players as desired to achieve specific goals.
- b) Catchers are required to wear full catcher's gear (helmet/mask, chest protector, and shin guards).
- c) The defense may have staff members positioned on the field, generally placed behind the infield. They are allowed to coach even during a play, but must not interfere with the ball or the players.
- d) The defense can get the batter or runners "out" in any of the usual ways – force out, tag out, fly ball, etc. When a batter or runner is gotten out, she leaves the field and returns to the dugout.
- e) First inning only: There is no limit on the number of outs. (see Offense above)
- f) Second and Third inning: NO OUT will be recorded for batters who do not put the ball into play at the end of their at bat. (see Offense above)
- g) There is no in-field fly rule.

Helena Girls Softball Association 2016 Official League Rules

Minor League (3rd – 4th grade)

The ASA Official Rules of Softball do not have a Minor League division. The ASA Official Rules of Softball J.O. (Junior Olympic) Fastpitch rules for 10-Under Class B as modified by these rules will be used for Minor League division.

1) SAFETY

- a) No jewelry may be worn during any practice or game. This includes, but is not limited to, earrings, bracelets, necklaces, or rings. Exception: Medical alert bracelets, medical alert necklaces, and non-removable silver baby bracelets are allowed to be worn, if covered. If a player is found wearing jewelry, the umpire will instruct her to remove it.
- b) Facemasks are mandatory on all helmets.

2) FIELD AND EQUIPMENT

- a) The game ball will be an optic yellow 11"
- b) Pitching Distance will be 35 feet.
- c) Bases will be at 60 feet

3) REGULATION GAME

- a) No new inning may begin after 1 hour 20 minutes. Time begins at the conclusion of the home plate pre-game meeting and both teams should be ready to play. The game will be stopped at 1 hour 30 minutes after start and score revert to the last complete inning, unless the home team is ahead or has tied the game.
- b) Two (2) innings constitute an official game with seven (7) innings being a complete game. c) Games may end in a tie.
- d) One umpire will be scheduled to officiate a game.

4) OFFENSE

- a) All players in attendance will be listed on the batting order and it will remain the same through the game.
- b) The batter must have one foot in and one foot out of the batter's box when receiving signals from the coach's box.
- c) The batter is out on the third strike, even if the catcher drops it.

- d) Teams are allowed to play with a minimum of eight players without a forfeit being declared. No 'out' is declared for the missing player when her turn at bat comes.
- e) Bunting is allowed off of the player pitcher only.

5) RUN LIMIT

- a) Each team shall be limited to scoring four (4) runs in their half inning.
- b) No "continuation runs" shall count. A play in progress is allowed to be completed after the fourth run has scored; however, no runs in excess of four shall count in the game score. After the play in progress is completed, the defense will then retire, which will conclude the half inning.

6) DEFENSE

- a) There may be ten (10) defensive players in the field, and four of those players will be positioned behind the base line.
- b) A team must field a minimum of eight players. Fewer than eight players will constitute a forfeit. [This rule does not prohibit both managers from loaning or borrowing players to complete/start the game if mutually acceptable.] Coaches may fill their team as follows:

Minor League – teams may use other registered Minor League players as a substitute to fill a team up to nine players.

- Pickup players must be placed at the end of the lineup, and may only play outfield positions unless the number of pickups requires infield positions to be also be filled.
- A Pickup player may not pitch or catch without prior approval from league rep and/or league president.
- c) If a team is short players, the opposing team is not obligated to play short-handed. d) There is no infield fly rule.
- e) There will be only one defensive time out allowed per inning and a total of three per game.
- f) Unlimited defensive substitutions are allowed (subject to the rules on minimum playing time). The manager of the team taking the field will notify the home plate umpire and the opposing team manager of the players that will be sitting on the bench during the half inning.
- g) No player may play more than two defensive innings in a row in the outfield. An infield to outfield to bench or reverse rotation will meet this requirement. An outfield to bench to outfield rotation does not meet this rule. Exceptions: Player safety

7) WALKS

- a) There will be no walks. The player-pitcher will pitch four pitches. If the fourth pitch is a strike, the player-pitcher will continue to pitch until a ball is called. If on the fourth pitch or subsequent pitches, the player-pitcher throws a called ball, the designated adult-pitcher of the batting team will enter the game. At this time the strike count will remain the same and the adult-pitcher will continue to pitch until the batter either hits the ball in fair territory, strikes out, or the batter receives four pitches from the adult pitcher.
NOTE: Umpires will continue to call strikes.

- b) If the adult-pitcher throws four (4) pitches and the batter fails to hit in fair territory, the batter is out. If the batter fouls off the fourth or subsequent pitches, her at-bat continues. A batter cannot strike out on a foul ball, regardless of the number of pitches she receives.

8) ADULT PITCHERS

- a) The adult pitcher must pitch from the pitcher's plate/pitching circle. The player-pitcher stays in the circle while the adult is pitching, and must play no closer to the batter than the pitcher's plate until the pitch is released.
- b) The adult pitcher must make every reasonable effort to get out of the way of a batted ball and/or defensive players. If the adult pitcher is hit by a batted ball, the ball is dead, the batter is awarded first base, and all other runners advance if forced.
- c) The adult pitcher may not actively coach the batter or runners while on the field.

9) HIT BY PITCH

- a) Any batter hit by a pitch not hitting the ground first thrown by a player-pitcher (as opposed to an adult) will be awarded first base as long as the batter makes an effort to get out of the way. If the ball bounces off the ground before hitting the batter, a ball is called and the batter is not awarded first base. If the adult-pitcher hits a batter with a pitched ball, and the batter swings at the ball, the batter will be charged a "strike." If the batter does not swing, but is hit by the adult-pitcher, it is a "ball" and the batter is not awarded first base.

10) BASE RUNNER –Stealing Bases

- a) Stealing Home - Minors cannot steal home. Players are encouraged to slide at home when there is a play at the plate.
- b) Third Strike/Stealing - Minors: Advancing to first on a dropped third strike is not permitted in Minor League play. Minor base runners are allowed to steal only one base at a time per pitch including an overthrow of a NON-Batted Ball. Runners may advance in minors as far as they can on over throws of batted balls only. The ball is live.
- c) Base runners cannot steal while the adult pitcher is pitching.

11) PITCHING

- a) No pitcher may pitch more than 2 innings per game. One pitch in an inning constitutes an inning pitched.
- b) The strike zone is the space over home plate, plus any part of the ball that is between the top of the batters shoulders and the bottom of the knees as the batter assumes their natural batting stance.
- c) If the ball slips from the pitcher's hand during her delivery, a ball is declared on the batter and the ball is dead.

Helena Girls Softball Association 2015 Official League Rules

Major League (5th & 6th grades) and Senior League (7th, 8th, & 9th grades)

The ASA Official Rules of Softball rules for J.O. (Junior Olympic) Fastpitch, as modified by these rules, will be used for HGSA's Major and Senior leagues.

1) SAFETY

- a) No jewelry may be worn during any practice or game. This includes, but is not limited to, earrings, bracelets, necklaces, or rings. Exception: Medical alert bracelets, medical alert necklaces, and non-removable silver baby bracelets are allowed to be worn, if covered. If a player is found wearing jewelry, the umpire will instruct her to remove it.
- b) Only appropriate baseball/softball cleats may be worn to practices or games.
- c) Facemasks are mandatory on all helmets.
- d) Metal Cleats may be worn in Senior league

2) FIELD AND EQUIPMENT

- a) The game ball will be a 12-inch, optic yellow, raised seam ball. The ball need not be "ASA Certified".
- b) Pitching Distance
 - i) Seniors: Pitching distance will be at 43 feet. ii)
 - Majors: Pitching will be at 40 feet
- c) Bases will be at 60 feet

3) REGULATION GAME

- a) No new inning may begin after 1 hour 20 minutes. Time begins at the conclusion of the home plate pre-game meeting and both teams should be ready to play. The game will be stopped at 1 hour 30 minutes and score revert to the last complete inning, EXCEPTION: If the home team is ahead or has tied the game at the drop dead time, that score will stand regardless if the inning has been completed.
- b) During the regular season games, games may end in a tie.
- c) One plate umpire will be scheduled to officiate each game. Senior games will also have a base umpire scheduled.

4) OFFENSE

- a) All players in attendance are listed on the batting order, and it will remain the same through the game. (Note: In HGSA games there is no Designated Player or Flex.)
- b) The batter must have one foot in and one foot out of the batter's box when receiving signals from the coaches' box.
- c) If a team begins a game with only eight players, no outs are assessed for playing shorthanded.
- d) If a player must leave the game due to injury or other reasons she may be replaced on defense and, if she is unable to bat, her place in the batting order is skipped without penalty (no automatic out is assessed). A player who must miss a turn at bat or has been substituted for as an injured runner may not re-enter the game.

Policies,

5) RUN LIMIT a) Senior League: No Run limit

- b) Major League: Each team shall be limited to scoring five (5) runs in their at bat. Under this rule an inning is over when the defense makes the third out or the offense scores their fifth run.
- c) No “continuation runs” shall count. A play in progress is allowed to be completed after the fifth run has scored, however, runs in excess of five (5) shall not count in the game score.

6) DEFENSE

- a) There will be nine (9) defensive players in the field.
- b) A team must field a minimum of eight players. Having fewer than eight players constitutes a forfeit. [This rule does not prohibit both managers from loaning or borrowing players to complete/start the game if mutually acceptable.] Coaches may fill their team as follows:
 - Major League– Teams may use other registered Major league players from any team, or may use Minor league players at coach, umpire and parent discretion to fill a team up to nine players.
 - Senior League – Teams may use any other registered Senior league players from any team, or may use Major league players at coach, umpire and parent discretion to fill a team up to nine players.
 - Pickup players must be placed at the end of the lineup, and may only play outfield positions unless the number of pickups requires infield positions to be also be filled.
 - A Pickup player may not pitch or catch without prior approval from league rep and/or league president.
- c) If a team is short players, the opposing team is not obligated to play short-handed.
- d) Unlimited defensive substitutions are allowed (subject to the rules on minimum playing time).

7) BASE RUNNER

- a) Runners are encouraged to slide feet-first only.
- b) Courtesy runners are only permitted for pitcher and catchers.
- c) The last out or last player in the batting order may be used as a courtesy runner.
- d) In the case of a runner needing to leave the game due to an injury, the player on the bench in the closest previous position in the batting order shall assume running duties. The player removed from running due to injury may not re-enter the game.

8) PITCHING

- a) No pitcher may pitch more than three (3) innings for Majors or four (4) innings for Seniors of the first five (5) innings of a game. If a game goes 6 or more innings, all players are eligible to pitch after the fifth inning. One pitch in an inning constitutes a whole inning.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

2022

- Majors:
 - o Drop 3rd Strike Rule – As of 2022, The Batter may not advance to 1st base on a Dropped 3rd Strike. The result of dropped 3rd strike, either called or swinging, will result in the batter being out.
 - o Removing the rule that the pitcher must come out of the game, if during the inning, she strikes a batter twice with a pitch that is “in the air”. Pitches that contact the batter will follow standard USA Softball rules.
- Seniors:
 - o Removing the rule that the pitcher must come out of the game, if during the inning, she strikes a batter twice with a pitch that is “in the air”. Pitches that contact the batter will follow standard USA Softball rules.

2021

- All Divisions o Protective Facemasks are required by girls playing infield positions. Protective facemasks can be made of metal or of strong protective plastic and must cover the player from the forehead to chin and across the whole of the face, from temple to temple.
 - The league will assist any player who cannot afford a facemask because of this rule.

2015

- Rookies
- Minors
 - o 5)b) No “continuation runs” shall count. A play in progress is allowed to be completed after the fourth run has scored; however, no runs in excess of four shall count in the game score. After the play in progress is completed, the defense will then retire, which will conclude the half inning.
 - o 7)a) There will be no walks. The player-pitcher will pitch four pitches. If the fourth pitch is a strike, the player-pitcher will continue to pitch until a ball is called. If on the fourth pitch or subsequent pitches, the player-pitcher throws a called ball, the designated adult-pitcher of the batting team will enter the game. At this time the strike count will remain the same and the adult-pitcher will continue to pitch until the batter either hits the ball in fair territory, strikes out, or the batter receives four pitches from the adult pitcher. NOTE: Umpires will continue to call strikes.
 - o 7)b) If the adult-pitcher throws four (4) pitches and the batter fails to hit in fair territory, the batter is out. If the batter fouls off the fourth or subsequent pitches, her at-bat continues. A batter cannot strike out on a foul ball, regardless of the number of pitches she receives.
 - o 8)a) The adult pitcher must pitch from the pitcher’s plate/pitching circle. The player- pitcher stays in the circle while the adult is pitching, and must play no closer to the batter than the pitcher’s plate until the pitch is released.
 - o 10)b) Third Strike/Stealing - Minors: Advancing to first on a dropped third strike is not permitted in Minor League play. Minor base runners are allowed to steal only one base at a time

per pitch including an overthrow of a NON-Batted Ball. Runners may advance in minors as far as they can on over throws of batted balls only. The ball is live.

2013 HGSA GIRLS SOFTBALL RULES MATRIX

	Rookie	Minor	Major	Senior
FIELD & EQUIPMENT				
Ball size	11" soft	11" raised 60'	12" raised	12" raised 60'
Field dimensions	60'		60'	
Pitching distance	35'	35'	40'	43'
GAME MANAGEMENT				
T Ball	X			
Coach pitch after 4 called balls	X			
Infield / outfield rotation	1 in / 1 out		n/a	
Max innings pitched per game	2	n/a	3 of 5	n/a
# players batting	entire roster	2 of 4 entire roster	entire roster	4 of 5 entire roster
Min # players to play	8	8	8	8
Max # players on defense	10	10	9	9
GAME PLAY				
Strike zone - top	Top shoulder	Arm pits	Arm pits	Arm pits
Strike zone - bottom	Bottom knees	Top knees	Top knees	Top knees
Stealing	No	1 base/pitch ₁	Yes	Yes
Stealing home	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Run on dropped 3rd strike limit/for # innings	No	No	No	Yes
Runner leaving base	none	4 @ release	5 @ release	none @ release
Ball slips from pitchers hand hit by coach pitch	ball/dead	ball/dead	ball/live	ball/live
Infield fly rule		No		
Ball slips from pitchers hand hit by coach pitch	Ball	ball/dead		Yes
Infield fly rule	No	No	Yes	
Running on overthrow @ 1st	See text ² See text ³	No Yes 8' circle Correct 1st Feet first	Yes Yes 8' circle	Yes Yes 8' circle
Play stops	See text ² See text ³	Yes	Yes	Yes
Illegal pitch		8' circle	8' circle	8' circle

	Correct 1st	Correct 1st Feet first Yes	Call it Feet first	Call it Feet first
Sliding	No			
Tagging up after caught fly	No		Yes	Yes
REGULATION GAME				
REGULATION GAME Time limit (no new inning)	1h 20'	1h 20' 1h 30'	1h 20'	1h 20' 1h 30'
Time limit (drop dead) Mercy rule # innings for regulation game	1h 30'	1h 20' 1h 30' n/a	1h 30'	1h 20' 1h 30' n/a
Time limit (drop dead) Mercy rule # innings for regulation game	n/a		n/a	
min # innings for complete game	3	7	7	7
	2	2	2	2
# umpires scheduled per game	n/a	1	1	2

¹ (Minor Division) A runner on 3 may not steal home on a passed ball or a wild pitch. See Minor rules for detailed explanation. ² (Minor Division) An overthrow into either foul territory stops the play. See paragraph 10a in the Minor section. (page 18) ³ (Rookie Division) There are two cases for ending play, whether the ball is hit to the infield or outfield. See paragraph 6c in the Rookie section

For Quick Reference Only

The purpose of this matrix is to highlight differences between age groups. For complete rules, see text.

Appendix I

Coaching Staff Code of Conduct

Helena Girls Softball Association
Code of Conduct for Coaching Staff

I know, as a member of the coaching staff, that I'm held to a higher standard at all times on and off the field. I pledge to provide an environment for players, managers, coaches, and other staff and volunteers that is conducive to good sportsmanship, respect, positive support, and the development of friendships in the spirit of competition. I understand that any infraction of the rules or the Code of Conduct will place me in direct violation of this Code of Conduct and subject me to the consequences listed on page 2.

I understand that it is my responsibility to attempt to address any incidents at the time of its occurrence or ask for assistance from the umpire or league official. I also understand that any and all incidents must be reported to league board officials immediately and at any point in time, the umpire and league officials have every right to ask any parent, coach, manager or spectator to leave the park if they act in an unsportsmanlike manner.

In order to be a successful coach or manager I pledge to:

- Treat each player as an individual, remembering the emotional and physical development of each participant. I understand that players have different abilities and the true measure is not how they compare to others but how they are doing in comparison to their best selves.
- Do my best to provide a safe playing situation for all players. I will not only abstain from drugs, tobacco and alcohol at all games and other HGSA activities, I will ensure that the parents and their guests know that having drugs, tobacco and alcohol at any HGSA event is in direct violation of the Code of Conduct.
- Place the emotional and physical well being of my players ahead of a personal desire to win.
- Do my best to organize practices that are both fun and challenging for all players with the focus of teaching softball fundamentals and improving skills.
- Encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for and interactions with all players, coaches and umpires at every game or practice. I will "Honor the Game" and encourage respect from not only the players but from the parents and their guests. I understand that physical assault, vulgar, demeaning and/or obscene language or gestures to any staff, HGSA officials, umpires, players or parents is in direct violation of the Code of Conduct.
- Be knowledgeable of the rules of HGSA softball and should I have any questions about any particular rule, I will address those questions with a HGSA league representative and/or the umpire prior to the start of a game. If I question the interpretation of a rule made by the umpire during a game, I will address those concerns in a professional and respectful manner.
- Remember that I am a youth sports coach/manager and that the game is for the children, not the adults.

Consequences—any coaching staff in direct violation of this code of conduct will be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to, the following**:

Violation	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense
Verbal abuse, intimidation, rude, vulgar and demeaning language, obscene language or gestures, alcohol, drug and/or tobacco use.	~Asked to leave the event ~Verbal warning ~Written warning ~One game suspension ~Child(ren) may be asked to be removed from the event	~Suspended from HGSA events for the season ~Placement on probation ~Child(ren) may be barred from further participation of the season
Physical assault* of an official, coach, player, fellow parent or volunteer	~ Immediate suspension pending hearing review by Code of Conduct Committee	~Banned from HGSA permanently, including their child(ren)

**Depending on the severity of the infraction and the situation, the board has the authority to impose a greater penalty up to and including suspension or automatic removal from HGSA.

*The term “physical assault” includes, but is not limited to: hitting, slapping, pushing, spitting, kicking or physical contact in any way with any part of the body or the usage of any physical implement as a weapon.

Coach/Manager Signature

Print Name

Date

Thank You for Your Devotion and Support of our League & our Youth.

HELENA GIRLS SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION

Appendix II

Parents/Guardians Code of Conduct

Helena Girls Softball Association
Code of Conduct for Parents/Guardians

I know as a parent/guardian that I am a role model to my child. I pledge to provide an environment for players, manager, coaches, and other staff and volunteers that is conducive to good sportsmanship, respect, positive support, and the development of friendships in the spirit of competition. I understand that any infraction of the HGSA rules or the Code of Conduct will place me (and any of my guests) in direct violation and subject me to disciplinary action that could include, but not limited to the consequences listed on page 2.

I (and my guests) pledge to:

- Remember that children participate to have fun and that the game is for our youth, not for the adults.
- Inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my child or the safety of others.
- Be a positive role model for my child and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy for everyone involved in the league (players, coaches, officials, spectators) at all times during practices and games.
- Not engage in any kind of inappropriate conduct, nor allow my child to engage in such conduct as booing and taunting, refusing to shake hands, use profane language or inappropriate gestures and very importantly, to not engage in any physical altercations with anyone while attending any HGSA function.
- Learn and respect the rules of the game and policies of the league. I will teach my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence. I will ensure that my child treats other players, coaches, officials and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex or ability.
- Teach my child that doing one's best is more important than winning so that my child never feels defeated by the outcome of a game or their performance. I will praise my child for trying their best and for competing fairly. I will never ridicule or yell at my child or other participants for making a mistake or losing a game.
- Respect the officials and their authority during games. I will never question, discuss, or confront coaches/umpires on the game field. Instead, I will take time to speak with coaches/umpires at an agreed upon time and place.
- Provide a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and I will abstain from their use at all HGSA events.
- Refrain from coaching my child or other players during games and practices, unless I am one of the officials or coaches of the team.
- Understand that at any point in time, the umpire and league officials have every right to ask any parent, coach, manager or spectator to leave the park if they act in an unsportsmanlike manner.

Consequences—any parent/gaurdian in direct violation of this code of conduct will be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to, the following:

Violation	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense
Verbal abuse, intimidation, rude, vulgar and demeaning language, obscene language or gestures, alcohol, drug and/or tobacco use.	~Asked to leave the event ~Verbal an/or written warning ~Parental game suspension ~Child(ren) may be asked to be removed from the event	~Suspended from HGSA events for the season ~Child(ren) may be barred from further participation of the season

Physical assault* of an official, coach, player, fellow parent or volunteer	~Immediate suspension pending hearing review by Code of Conduct Committee	~Banned from HGSA permanently, including their child(ren)
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*The term "physical assault" includes, but is not limited to: hitting, slapping, pushing, spitting, kicking or physical contact in any way with any part of the body or the usage of any physical implement as a weapon.

** Refusal of disciplinary action and depending on the severity of the infraction or situation, the board has the authority to impose a greater penalty up to and including suspension or automatic removal from HGSA.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Print Name

Date

Thank You for Your Devotion and Support of our League & our Youth.

HELENA GIRLS SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION

Addendum to HGSA Policies and Procedures

HGSA CODE OF CONDUCT

I. Definitions:

As used in this addendum, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

CODE OF CONDUCT -- A written specification of the behavior of the parents, guardians, coaches and officials prepared by HGSA which must be consented to in writing by the coaching staff, parents and/or legal guardians of the minor participants of the HGSA.

CODE OF CONDUCT COMMITTEE -- Comprised of a duly elected Officers of HGSA.

HGSA YOUTH SPORTS EVENT -- Any competition, practice or instructional event sponsored by the HGSA.

II. Adherence to code of conduct:

Every member or participant of HGSA league shall be required to follow the code of conduct as set forth in this addendum.

III. Enforcement:

The officers of HGSA shall be charged with the enforcing of the code of conduct and is required to report back to the HGSA Board of Directors should any consequence of the code of conduct be imposed that may have involved a member or participant, may impact another member or participant of HGSA, or is severe enough to potentially result in a ban of all HGSA events.

The Code of Conduct Committee shall be charged with providing support and guidance to the individual members or participants of HGSA, ensuring that enforcement is consistent with the code of conduct and followings the procedures outlined in Sect. IX of this addendum.

IV. Availability of code of conduct:

The code of conduct will be made available to all coaching staff, parents and guardians of each child participating in HGSA.

VI. Prohibited acts; penalty for violations:

A. Any parent, guest, spectator, coaching staff, or official at any HGSA youth sports event who initiates a fight, scuffle, or any type of physical abuse or threats of abuse towards any player, coach, official, parent, or spectator shall be banned from attendance of any HGSA event for a period not exceeding 12 months from the date of the incident.

B. Any parent, guest, coaching staff, or official at any HGSA youth sports event who enters the field of play for the purpose of physically or verbally abusing or confronting coaches, players or officials shall be banned from attendance at all HGSA youth sports events for a period not exceeding 12 months from the date of the incident.

C. Any parent, guest, spectator, coaching staff, or official at any HGSA youth sports event who verbally abuses officials, players, or spectators, including the use of obscene or profane language or gestures, or racial, ethnic or sexual slurs, may be reprimanded from the date of the incident and shall be subject to discipline as provided by the applicable code of conduct.

D. Any parent, guest, spectator, coaching staff, or official at any HGSA youth sports event who throws or causes to be deposited any object on the field of play may be banned from attendance at all HGSA youth events for a period of 12 months from the date of incident and shall be subject to such discipline as provided by the applicable code of conduct.

VII. Authority to remove violators from premises:

Any parent, coaching staff or spectator at any HGSA youth sporting event shall be subject to the authority of the umpires, league officials, tournament directors or coaches. Such authority shall include the authorization to direct any person or persons involved in any incident, in violation of this addendum or applicable code of conduct, to immediately remove themselves from the premises.

VIII. Code of Conduct Committee:

- A. The Code of Conduct Committee shall meet as often as is necessary to conduct its business and for the purpose of enforcing this addendum and applicable code of conduct.
- B. In order to conduct business, hold hearings or change or adopt new codes of conduct, a quorum of the four Committee members must be present and will have all authority as set forth in this addendum.
- C. The Code of Conduct Committee may establish rules and procedures as it deems appropriate for the conduct of its business.

IX. Violation procedures, appeals and hearings:

- A. Upon determination that a parent, guest, spectator, coach or official at any youth sports event sponsored by HGSA has violated a provision of this addendum or the code of conduct, which may result in a ban from all HGSA events, the Code of Conduct Committee shall forward to such violator a notice via, regular and certified mail, identifying the date, location, nature of the violation and the period of the banning or other action to be taken in response to such violation, unless immediate action has been taken and the violator has been given verbal notice of the action being taken. The Code of Conduct Committee shall then forward to such violator a notice via regular and certified mail, identifying the date, location, nature of the violation and the period of the banning or other action to be taken.
- B. Any parent, official, coach or spectator at a HGSA youth sports event who believes that there has been a violation of this addendum or the code of conduct has been violated shall forward their name, address, phone number, date, location and nature of the violation to the Code of Conduct Committee via any board member of their individual HGSA league. The Committee will then investigate the incident and, upon determination by majority vote of the Committee, shall forward to such violator a notice, via regular and certified mail, indicating the date and location and nature of the violation and the period of banning or other action to be taken in response to such violation.
- C. Any person receiving such notice who wishes to contest shall appeal to the HGSA Code of Conduct Committee within seven (7) calendar days of the mailing of said notice by forwarding a copy of said notice with a written request for appeal, specifically setting forth the basis of such person's contest of the notice of violation, via personal delivery, fax or certified mail, to the HGSA Code of Conduct Committee, c/o Helena Girls Softball Association, P.O. Box 5021 – Helena, MT 59604.
- D. Upon receipt of such appeal the Code of Conduct Committee shall convene within seven (7) days, or immediately should this be necessary, and provide an opportunity for said person and any interested person or persons to appear and be heard with respect to the occurrence of any violation and action taken by the Code of Conduct Committee.
- E. The Code of Conduct Committee shall review statements, firsthand accounts and any other pertinent information or documentation relevant to the violation and, upon a majority vote of

members of the Committee present at such hearing, may sustain, overturn, or modify the notice of violation consistent with this addendum or the code of conduct.

- F. Any person, while appealing his/her violation of the code of conduct, will not be reinstated with full rights and authority until a determination and disposition of his/her appeal has been made.
- G. All notices of violation and banning or other actions taken shall remain in effect until overturned or modified by the Code of Conduct Committee.
- H. In the event any notice of violation is not appealed within seven (7) days of such notice, said notice of violation and action taken by the official or Code of Conduct Committee, including banning from HGSA youth sports events or other action taken, shall become final.