



STATELINER YOUTH
SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION

BYLAWS

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STATELINER YOUTH
SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION
“SYSA”
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Section I – General

1. Mission Statement

The goal of the Stateliner Youth Softball Association is to build and coordinate programs that will first off be fun for the girls, instruct, enrich, provide healthy competition, and prepare them to deal with situations that occur every day in other parts of their lives by developing character, leadership and other positive aspects of working as a team through learning the game of softball.

2. The executive committee shall consist of a President, Vice President, and Treasurer. A full term will consist of two (2) years. The executive committee will be responsible for the following:
 - Bylaws changes and enforcement not related to rules.
 - Overall league management set forth in this document
 - Final judgment of fines levied for league bylaw violations.
 - Final judgment on any rules violations or fines that cannot be decided within the competition committee.
 - Planning and organizing league meetings.
 - Coordinating with the travel team
 - Organizing any league wide events (i.e. All-Star game).
 - Approving the members for the competition committee.
3. There will be a competition committee that will consist of a single member from each organization as well as a representative for the umpires. The competition committee will be responsible for the following:
 - Rules changes and enforcement
 - Planning and organizing competition committee meetings
 - Ruling on protested games.
4. The competition committee will be responsible for electing a chair person from among the members. The chair person will be the representative for the competition committee to the executive board.
5. All organizations will receive a vote on executive issues that require league majority approval. Votes must be in person by the town representative or designated alternate.
6. The following organizations are currently members of SYSA:
 - Alpha
 - Bethlehem Township (currently defunct)
 - Delaware Valley Athletic Association
 - Greenwich Township
 - Lopatcong
 - Phillipsburg Recreation (currently defunct)
 - Pohatcong
 - SPSJ Saints

7. All towns must provide their own insurance and present this prior to the start of the season. SYSA assumes no liability for games or events. Players and participants who attend any game or event do so at their own risk.
8. Executive meetings will be open to the public and will be held at least monthly as needed.
9. Competition committee meetings will be held as needed throughout the year. There will be at least one meeting to discuss potential rule changes at the start of each season. All rule changes will be voted on by March 1st to be in effect and communicated to all towns prior to the start of the season.
10. Any organization representative may request to have a meeting with either the executive committee or rules committee.
11. Any team may request to have a meeting with the competition committee to resolve any rule disputes.
12. A majority consisting of half of the organizations and representatives must be present to conduct executive or competition committee meetings. Majority vote of the organizations present will rule.
13. Every association must have a representative present at each league meeting (executive and competition) or the association will be fined twenty-five {\$25.00} for each meeting not represented and/or missed. After one absence the association will be on probation. If the association does not attend two scheduled meetings in a row, the association will be put on notice of losing a position in the league. The Executive committee will meet and determine if the association will continue to be allowed to participate in the league. If a designated Town Rep will not be present and wants to send someone in their place the board is to be notified by emailing a member of the board as to who will be present to represent its respective town no later than 5:00 p.m. on the date of the set meeting.
14. Nominations and elections of the executive committee shall take place every two {2} years at the reorganization meeting or in the case of a resignation, at any meeting with a special election for the un- expired term of that position. The President and Treasurer will be voted in on even calendar years, and the Vice President will be voted in during odd calendar years.
15. The league will supply a partial list of approved umpires. For a complete list go to the Warren County USA Website.
16. If a team wishes to protest a game, there will be a twenty-five {\$ 25.00} fee for any protest requested by a coach involving a rule infraction and any other problems or disputes that arise during the season. If the protest involving a rule infraction or other problem or dispute is from one or more of the committee's organization, the committee person(s) will not have a vote on that particular issue and the President or Vice President will take the place of that vote. Protests must be filed per the ASA rules and will be handled by the appropriate committee (rules or executive). Written notice of the protest on the designated SYSA Protest Form must be received by the Secretary no later than 24 hours from the end of the protested game. Committee decisions on rules and protests cannot be appealed.
17. League fees are \$175 per team for all levels except Pony. Pony teams have no fee. A portion of the league fee will go toward registering the team with USA and balls for each team.
18. All new organizations must apply for membership by the February meeting and be approved at or before the March meeting.

19. The league must vote upon new organizations. There will be a two year probationary period. After the first year of probation approval must again be voted upon for regular membership in the league at the March meeting. The next year full membership may be granted or probationary status extended for a third year. Any new association applying for membership must have their own home field. A Two Hundred {\$200} dollar entry fee must be paid upon first approval.
20. Players that reside in or attend school in a Phillipsburg High School sending district or one of the member organizations of the league are eligible to play. If where they reside and where they currently go to school are represented by two different organizations, the player may choose which organization to play for. If they are the same and they are part of a member organization, the player must register with that organization first. Any player that is a parishioner of Saint Phillips and Saint James or Saint Mary's Roman Catholic Church are eligible to pay for SPSJ. Players may only move from one organization to another for the current year only under the following circumstances:
- If the organization they signed up for is unable to field a team at that level.
 - If there are issues between the player or their parent and the coach that may not be in the best interest of the team/organization or the player and there are no other teams at that level within the organization. The organization should provide written approval to the league for the one year waiver.
21. For a player to be able to switch organizations for more than one year, the primary organization must provide a waiver in writing that there is a conflict with the player or parent that would prevent them from playing for any coach/team within the organization. The issue needs to be documented and has to be prior to the start of the current season or prior to the request for a waiver by the parent from their primary organization. The parents can petition the league if they feel the sending organization is unfairly not granting a waiver. They should bring all documentation with them of any issue and request for a waiver.

22. The league will be responsible for re-assigning any registered players where a sending organization is unable to field a team. The board will decide where those players should register taking into consideration, but not limited to, the following factors:

- **Team strengths**
- **Player counts**
- **Proximity**

If a player chooses not to register for the assigned organization within a five (5) day period, they will be ineligible for that year.

23. If needed to make teams, players may be double rostered if they are eligible to play up to the next level. A 2nd grade player may play for Pony and Bidy, 4th grade player for Bidy and Midget, and a 6th grade player for Midget and Junior. Those teams need not be in the same organization if the players were moved to another organization with the permission of the league.
- Any player that is double rostered must follow the stated player rules for the level that they are age appropriate for. For example, a 6th grade player who is rostered at both the Midget and Junior Levels must follow the pitching rules for the Midget level – a maximum of 4 innings pitched per game.
 - Any 4th or 6th grader playing up at the next level may ONLY be allowed in order for the organization to be able to make a full team at the higher level.

24. Any team found to have a player illegally rostered on their team will be ineligible for the playoffs.
25. Players may only move to another team within the same organization once the season starts under the following circumstances:
 - If there are issues between the player or their parent and the coach that may not be in the best interest of the team/organization or to the child.
 - If they are moving from one level to the next (i.e. Bidy to Midget, Midget to Juniors)
26. All registered players and team counts must be finalized by all organizations and submitted to the league by March 1st. Any player that signs up on or after March 1st will be assigned by the league to a team. All rosters will be finalized by April 1st. SYSA must approve all exceptions to move between organizations or change teams during the season with the exception of a girl moving up a level.
27. When girls move from Pony to Bidy, Bidy to Midget and Midget to Junior, a draft is encouraged by the league for the girls moving from one level to the next. The draft is to ensure parity of teams within the league. It is prohibited to stack teams. The executive committee will be responsible for monitoring for stacked teams.
28. Girls participating in SYSA are eligible to try out for the travel teams associated with the league. Costs for the girls who make the team will be ~\$650 and includes off season training and tournaments. Players will be responsible to purchase their own uniform. There will be travel teams at 18U, 16U, 14U, 12U, 10U, and 8U dependent on player and coach availability.
29. Girls may participate in any league or non-league team during any part of our season without the approval of SYSA with the exception of high school teams. A team may not cancel or re-schedule a SYSA game due to a player's absence for the reason of other non-league games being played or scheduled without using of their team's one {1} Freebie. If any association is found to be involved in this type of issue, the team who cancelled/rescheduled the game will be assessed a forfeit.
30. Each team must have at least one {1} adult coach or supervisor {18 years or older} in attendance at all practices and games. All Coaches from all teams must wear the same color/design shirt that clearly identifies them as Coaches for league games or they will be fined twenty-five (\$25.00) dollars per coach per game.
31. There will be no smoking on any field or proximity of a field by coaches, spectators or anyone else before or during any SYSA game.
32. Any coach that pulls their team off the field in Protest thus ending a game prematurely must immediately fill out the official SYSA Protest Form, then they must notify, by email, the board secretary, within twenty-four hours {24 hours} of the played game. The protesting team must fill out in detail the SYSA Protest Form and a twenty-five {\$ 25.00} fee must be submitted to the Board in order for the protest to be reviewed. If the protest is found in your favor the fee will be returned to you. Any regular protest must follow the directions provided on SYSA Protest form.
33. The home team is responsible for having the playing field lined and ready to play with the double wide safety base and must provide two {2} new game balls for the game.
34. Every effort should be made to have the field ready 15 minutes prior to playing time.
35. Teams should make sure that both scorebooks agree and have the plate umpire sign each at the end of the game.

36. All team players are to remain on the bench during play. Players are not allowed to wander off the bench in between innings or during game time. Parents/siblings are not allowed in the bench area during game time unless there is emergency requiring their attention to their child.
37. Parents, siblings, coaches, or spectators are not allowed behind the backstop during game play.
38. All fines are due by the first day of the following month of which they are incurred, any fine not paid must be paid by one week prior to the all-star game, or your township could lose representation at the game on all levels. Any fine incurred the immediate week before the all-star game must be paid before the first all-star game begins. Fines still outstanding on August 1st will result in a board vote to determine if the Member Organizations will lose their voting privileges.
39. All scores are to be reported by 12 Midnight the following day of the scheduled game by the **WINNING TEAM**. Failure to report a score by the HOME team after the completion of the game by 12 Midnight the following day of the scheduled game will result in a \$25.00 fine to the HOME team responsible for reporting the score.
40. Each township is responsible for doing background checks on all coaches and assistants and must keep a record of such, on file and sign the coaches Code of Conduct form as verification. Any township that allows a coach to participate without a current background check will be fined twenty-five (\$25) per occurrence. No other personnel without a background check will be allowed in the team area.

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Section II – Unified Rules

1. USA Softball official playing rules (Fast Pitch) will be used to govern all games with the only exceptions as set forth herein. Updated rulebooks and scorebooks to be distributed at the league expense to each team. It is every coach's responsibility to know both USA Softball and League Rules.
2. An attempt will be made to schedule games on set days for each level. If there is a conflict for a particular team on that given weekday, the board should be notified prior to the start of the season. If there is a conflict for a particular game, it should be resolved prior to the start of the season and the game should be rescheduled for a date that is mutually agreed upon by both teams. Once the season starts, all games may only be changed due to weather or emergencies.
3. A game can be postponed by the home team due to field conditions prior to the start of the game, but every effort should be made to try and play the game if it can be done safely. If both teams are present at the field, the umpire will make the final assessment of the playing conditions and give direction to both teams.
4. All postponed/rainout games must be reported to the umpire scheduler immediately and rescheduled as per the rescheduling rules below. Rainout games must also be reported as a RAINOUT via email to sysapres16@gmail.com BEFORE 12 Midnight the following day of the scheduled game **BY THE HOME TEAM**. Failure to report will result in a twenty-five (\$ 25.00) fine incurred by the Home team. Rescheduled games not reported to the league BEFORE playing will be considered un-played and unrecognized, and subject to the above mentioned fine.
5. Rescheduling of games must be initiated by the home coach. They must provide 3 dates before the end of the season to the opposing coach. The three dates need to be reasonable for both teams (i.e. both teams do not have a game already, avoid organizational blackout dates, no holiday, etc). If the home coach does not send that email within 48 hours, the game will be considered forfeit by the home team. If the visiting coach is unable to accept any of those three dates, they must provide 3 alternate dates within 48 hours or the game will be forfeit by the visiting team. If at that point no date can be agreed upon, please present to the board the 6 dates and reasons one or both teams are unable to play and the league will decide if the game can be played or not and if either team will be forced to forfeit.
6. At least 3 days notice should be given to the league to provide an umpire. If less than 3 days, an umpire is not guaranteed but may be able to be provided.
7. Every effort will be made to play every scheduled game; however, if a game is not played it must be forfeited by the team that is unable to play. Any attempt to reschedule a game for any reason other than weather will be considered forfeit by the team requesting the change unless both teams are able to agree upon a new day and time for the game. Any game not played by the end of the regular season that is not considered a forfeit will be recorded as an unplayed game and neither team will receive a win or loss.
8. Games ending in a tie at end of regulation for Midget and Junior level must be played, as per USA Softball tie breaker rules, immediately following regulation game. Bidy level games can end in a tie. In the event it cannot be continued due to darkness, the game will be suspended. Suspended games should be rescheduled within 7 days and PLAYED as soon as possible and will be continued at the point of suspension. The score sheet should be signed by the umpire where the game was suspended. Games less than regulation are governed by USA Softball rules. The tied game must be reported to SYSA via the Google Smart Sheet (provided to all coaches before the 1st game of the season) by 12 Midnight the following day of the scheduled game by the HOME team or there will be a twenty-five dollar (\$ 25.00) fine incurred by the HOME team.

9. The Stateliner Youth Softball Association, in an attempt to follow ethics expected of their coaches, players and parents, will affirm the following at all SYSA games and events (Issues outside of SYSA events should be handled by the respective organization(s)): The coach is responsible for their player's and parent's behavior – **this includes social media positings**. If in fact there is an unruly player or parent the coach will be responsible to tell that player/parent to leave the game. If there is an unruly coach the umpire will ask the coach to leave the game, if the coach refuses to leave there will be a one hundred dollar (\$100.00) fine instituted towards the organization, and two things will happen.

- a. The game will be suspended.
- b. There will be a review of the ethics violation. The board will determine if the game will be forfeited or continued from its suspension point. Also, the board will then determine if the team will be eligible for any play-offs regardless of their standings.

All coaches are to instill sportsmanship and good character towards the league, umpires and towards their players – **this includes social media**. Any coach violating this principle will be suspended for the next game and incur a \$100 fine, paid out to the SYSA. In addition, the coach will not be allowed back to coach a team until the fine is paid. If there is a second violation, the Executive committee will ask the organization to remove the coach immediately. If in fact the organization or the coach does not comply, each game thereafter is an automatic twenty-five dollar (\$ 25.00) fine and elimination from any playoff format. Further participation of that organization in future years at all levels in the league will be in jeopardy and come before a vote of the Executive committee.

If there is a violation and the coach wishes to appeal, the appeal must be made within 24 hours of the violation to the president at syapres16@gmail.com, and reviewed by the Executive committee. The Executive committee will investigate the matter and determine the appropriate action. All decisions by the Executive committee will be final. If the violator exhibits any other conduct detrimental to the organization or the league during this time, an automatic fine of one-hundred dollars (\$100.00) and the immediate removal of the coach for the remainder of the season will be instituted.

10. Any person using vulgar language anywhere on the field, bench, stands **or social media** will be asked to leave the game by the umpire. (NO EXCEPTIONS).
11. Coaches and players may not act in any way that physically or verbally distracts another player. This includes but is not limited to any chanting, comments, or behavior by the players or coaches directed toward the opposing team. There shall be quiet on the field from the point where the pitcher brings her hands together until the pitch crosses the plate. After one warning, the offending player or coach shall be ejected from the game. Defensive coaches must remain in the team area.
12. All players must wear full batting helmets with earflaps, chin strap, and NOCSAE approved face mask when at bat and on base. If a helmet is deliberately removed while running the bases the player will be called out.
13. Hitting sticks may only be used before the start of the game. Hitting sticks are not allowed during game.
14. Any player warming up a pitcher at home plate must wear a mask. Penalty: The umpire will order no more "warm ups" pitches thrown in that inning. Only players and coaches may warm up pitchers.
15. Catchers must wear an approved helmet with earflaps. A mask with throat protector, chest protector and shin guards that cover the kneecaps are also required as required in the USA Softball guidelines.
16. Each field must be equipped with an USA Softball approved pitching plate - 24" long and 6" wide and a double wide safety first base.
17. The visiting team must be allowed to take the field at least 20 minutes prior to the game starting time.

18. A team is made up of ten {10} players at the Bidy and Midget Levels. A Junior Level team is made up of nine {9} players. A team may play with eight {8} players present at the Bidy and Midget, but, must take an out for the ninth {9th} player. A Junior Level team may play with eight {8} players per USA Softball rules. Less than eight {8} players at any time at the Bidy and Midget Levels, the team must take a forfeit or use their "FREEBIE".
19. A team may have a maximum roster of fifteen {15} players for all levels except Pony. Pony maximum roster is ten {10}. Minimum rosters size is ten {10} for Junior, eleven {11} for Midget and Bidy.
20. If an organization has more than one (1) team at any level a draft is required. The draft is to ensure parity of teams within the league.
21. All games (Bidy, Midget and Junior) are to be played with a running batting order. When using a running batting order, a player(s) may leave the game for any reason with no penalty given to that team. The roster will then be compressed.
22. If a player throws the bat they will be declared out. The ball is dead and the runners must return to the bases previously occupied.
23. Coaches may only make one (1) trip to the pitcher's mound per inning per pitcher. A second trip to the mound in the same inning requires the pitcher to be replaced.
24. Eligible players can move up a level to avoid a forfeit by that team, but are only allowed to move up a maximum of three (3) games. If a player plays up more than three (3) games she must remain at the upper level. Coaches are encouraged to use multiple players when doing so. Coaches are not allowed to use other players that are rostered on another team at the same level.
 - This is different than a player that is double rostered. A Player double rostered can play with either team as many times as they want.
 - Any player being pulled up for a 1 off situation or a permanent double roster must follow the playing rules for the level they are age appropriate for. Please see Rule 23 under Section 1 for more information on this issue.
25. Coaches are not allowed to use other players that are rostered on another team at the same level.
26. Any questionable fines may be brought to board and voted on by the board

Section III – Division Play

1. Pony standings will not be held.
2. Standings for all other levels will be determined by a points-based system. Each team will get a point for a loss, 2 points for a tie, and 3 points for a win. A team that is forced to forfeit will get 0 points while the other team will get 3. The teams will be ranked at the end of the season based on total points. Tie breaker rules will be as follows and will apply to all tied teams collectively:
 - Head to head
 - Most wins
 - Fewest runs allowed among tied opponent(s) in all games played all season long.
 - Random Draw
3. Each team will be allowed 1 game in the final week of the season that will not count as a forfeit if it is rained out. In that case, both teams will get 1 point with no change to the record.
4. Playoffs are for Bidy, Midget, and Junior levels. The top four {4} teams, as per the final season standings, will play in the playoffs. After that any additional teams may opt into the playoffs and teams will be seeded accordingly.
5. The days for playoff games will be communicated before the start of the season. It will be at least one full week. All playoff games will need to be completed within that time frame. There may be the need for some teams to play 2 games during those days.
6. The date of the championship game will be set and communicated prior to the start of the season. If a team makes it to the championship game and is unable to play on that day, the substitute team for the championship game will be determined as follows:
 - The team that lost in the semifinal round of the playoffs to the team that is unable to make it
 - The team that lost in the quarterfinal round (if applicable) of the playoffs to the team that is unable to make it
 - The next highest available seeded team from the regular season
7. Two umpires will be assigned (whenever possible) for all Division Playoff and Championship Games with both teams paying the fees.
8. All championship games will be hosted at the same site, preferably the Phillipsburg Athletic Complex. The league will decide the location at the start of the season.

Section IV – Umpire Rules

1. The umpire shall have the proper equipment to umpire the game. The umpire must wear an appropriate mask and dress appropriately in uniform (proper uniform would be light blue or dark blue USA Softball umpire shirt). {No exceptions}
2. ALL umpires must be at least high school age and pass the umpire test given by the league to insure a minimal knowledge of the game.
3. ALL umpires must have a copy of the USA Softball rulebook and a complete copy of the current league bylaws and rules. Umpires must have both with them at the game.
4. If there is a question about a call by the umpire during the game, the coach must call a time out to discuss the call. This must be done in an orderly manner. The Umpire's decision will then be final. Complaints not made in this fashion will be ignored and the umpire may eject the coach.
5. No official shall be paid until the game is "official" (4 ½ - 5 innings) Once the game is official the umpire must be paid the full fee. If the game is suspended or terminated before becoming official, the umpire will be paid ½ fee. When rescheduled, if the same umpire is available to return, he/she will be paid the other half fee. If they are NOT available and a new official is assigned, full fee must be paid.
6. If the umpire does not show up, it is up to the discretion of the coaches to reschedule the game but every effort should be made to play the scheduled game. Teams are encouraged to select one person from each organization to be plate and field umpire. If a coach wished not to play without an USA Softball umpire present, the game must be rescheduled. No fines or penalty will be imposed.
7. The fees for umpires will be \$65 per game, regardless of level of play. The home team is responsible for paying the umpire for all regular season games.
8. If a game is called due to weather, the association must inform the umpire scheduler the game is cancelled 1 ½ hours before the game time. Any abuse of this should be reported to the SYSA president at sysapres16@gmail.com. Also, if teams and umpire show up for a game BUT the game does not start due to weather, the umpire will be paid ½ fee for that game.
9. Any umpire issues or problems need to be reported to the SYSA president sysapres16@gmail.com, and the umpire scheduler.

Section V – All Star Game Rules

1. The Pony level does not participate in the All Star games. If possible, the league will look into having a “skills competition” for Pony aged players.
2. The Bidy All Star game will consist of six (6) innings.
3. The Midget All Star game will consist of seven {7} innings.
4. The Junior All Star game will consist of seven {7} innings.
5. All teams will send an equal number of players based on how many teams are in the league.
 - 4 teams – each team sends 6 players
 - 5 teams – each team sends 4 players, with The 2 head coaches choosing players from their team to fill out the roster
 - 6 teams – each team sends 4 players
 - 7 teams – each team sends 3 players, with The 2 head coaches choosing players from their team to fill out the roster
 - 8 teams – each team sends 3 players
 - 9+ teams – each team sends 2 players, with The 2 head coaches choosing players from their team to fill out the roster
6. The executive committee along with all organizations will split the players among the two teams.
7. All players present are in the batting order at all times. The coach must play all players equally.
8. The coaches from the respective division winners will be the All Star head coaches. They are strongly urged to invite all coaches from their division to serve in some capacity at practices and at the game.
9. One “Most Valuable Player” will be named by the umpires, score keeper and/or coaches at the All Star Game from team in each division {Bidy,Midget and Junior levels}.
10. Two umpires will be assigned for the Midget and Junior All Star Games, and the Bidy All Star game shall have one umpire assigned to it. All Umpires working the All Star Games will be paid for by the league.