

South Florida Amateur Athletic Association



Softball Code

Revised January 21, 2026

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Section One:

General

- 1.1 **Purpose:** The South Florida Amateur Athletic Association (SFAAA) Softball Code shall provide the operational procedures for all league games.
- 1.2 **Governing Rules:** All SFAAA league games will be played under the SFAAA Softball Code with reference to the current year's USA Softball Code or any conduct rules of any park where SFAAA games are played for game rules not covered in the SFAAA Softball Code.
- 1.3 **Qualifying Season:** The Association will hold annually a season which shall be designated as the Qualifying Season. Said Qualifying Season shall meet the requirements as established in the International Pride Softball Governing Manual.

Section Two:

League Structure

- 2.1 **Formation:** The Association consists of an open division of amateur softball players which has no restriction on the sex or gender of the participant. Participants must be 18 years of age.
- 2.2 **Divisions:**
 - a. Teams may compete in the following divisions based on their iPride Player and Team Ratings:
 1. "A" Division:
 - i. No team rating cap
 - ii. No open division team with a cumulative roster rating lower than 170 is allowed to play in the A Division.
 2. "B" Division:
 - i. All teams rated 170 or lower
 - ii. No players rated over 18
 3. "C" Division:
 - i. All teams rated 130 or lower
 - ii. No players rated over 14
 4. "D" Division:
 - i. All teams rated 95 or lower
 - ii. No players rated over 10
 - iii. Any player who receives Question Five (Q5) of the Player Ratings Guidelines is ineligible to play in the D Division.

5. "E" Division:
 - i. All teams rated 60 or lower
 - ii. No players rated over 6
 - iii. Any player who receives Question 3 (Q3) or Question 5 (Q5) of the Player Ratings Guidelines is ineligible to play in the E Division.
6. Legends C Division:
 - i. All teams rated 130 or lower
 - ii. No players rated over 14
 - iii. No player under 50 years of age. If a player is set to turn 50 years old during the calendar year, he or she shall be considered eligible to play in the Legends C Division.
7. Legends D Division:
 - i. All teams rated 95 or lower
 - ii. No players rated over 10
 - iii. Any player who receives Question 5 (Q5) of the Player Ratings Guidelines is ineligible to play in the Legends D Division.
 - iv. No player under 50 years of age. If a player is set to turn 50 years old during the calendar year, he or she shall be considered eligible to play in the Legends D Division.
- b. During non-qualifying seasons, the Board may group the A & B Division teams and refer to them as the Upper Division.
- c. SFAAA will immediately adopt any changes to all playing rules, ratings and division qualifications as determined by iPride unless the Board determines not to adopt or delay the adoption of any such change.

Section Three: *Team Rosters*

- 3.1 **Team Rosters:** A team roster must consist of at least ten (10) active players and no more than eighteen (18) active players in a qualifying season or non-qualifying season. The Upper Division may have up to twenty (20) active players. Each roster is limited to no more than two (2) non-players. No active player may appear as an active player on more than one roster at the same time during any season.
 - a. Team Eligibility: For qualifying seasons, teams must comply with the GSWS "No Repeat" policy as outlined in Softball Code section 13.3. A team's roster may not include more than three (3) players from teams currently subject to the "No Repeat" rule.
- 3.2 **Submittal:** The initial team roster of at least ten (10) players must be submitted prior to the team registration deadline. Any changes to the initial team roster and player registration fees must be submitted no later than the Wednesday prior to the first day of league play.

3.3 Player Additions:

- a. Players may be added to a team's roster after the initial submission, provided the addition is submitted by 11:59 PM on the Wednesday prior to the first week of league games, or by 11:59 PM on the Thursday prior to any subsequent week of play. Any player added after the applicable weekly deadline will not be eligible for that week's games.
- b. In qualifying seasons, no player may be added after a team has played sixty percent (60%) of its scheduled regular-season games. The 60% threshold shall be rounded up to the next whole number. Exception: If a team's active roster falls below ten (10) players, a player may be added after the 60% mark solely to maintain team viability.
- c. If a player is added after a team has played more than fifty percent (50%) of its scheduled games, the player fee amount shall be reduced to the non-player fee.
- d. Any player added to a roster must have a verified iPride rating before participating in a game. A rating issued by another iPride-affiliated league within the past twelve (12) months may be accepted. If a player without a verified rating participates in a game, that game will result in a forfeit by the team, and the team may face further disciplinary action by the Association.

3.4 Player Transfers:

- a. A player may request a transfer to another team by notifying both the Director of Competition and their current team manager. This notice must be sent via email before the start of the team's fifth scheduled game. A transfer request is considered initiated once both parties have been properly notified.
- b. To complete a transfer, the receiving team's manager must acknowledge the transfer by adding the player to their roster using standard roster procedures. To be eligible for games on any given Sunday, the roster change must be submitted by 11:59 PM on the preceding Thursday, in accordance with Section 3.3.
- c. After a team's fifth scheduled game has begun, any transfer requires approval by a majority vote of the Managers Council for that division.
- d. A player may transfer no more than once per season.
- e. A player who was designated as a protected player or selected in the New Player Draft may only transfer if their current manager gives consent and the Managers Council for that division approves the transfer by a majority vote.
- f. All Managers Council votes related to transfers shall be conducted in a verifiable format designated by the Board, submitted by the deadline established by the Board, and have their results communicated to all managers in the affected division before the next scheduled week of play.

- 3.5 **Injured Players:** A team may replace an injured player with a new player, provided the injured player will not return for the remainder of the season. The Board may require a written statement from the injured player confirming non-return. The replacement player shall be required to pay the applicable player fee and meet all playoff eligibility requirements.

- 3.6 **Replacement Players:** A team may replace a player on its roster with a new player if the original player will no longer return during the season due to injury or relocation. A player who has relocated may request a refund but must provide proof of relocation. Replacement players shall be required to pay the applicable player fee and meet all playoff eligibility requirements. A replacement player shall occupy one of the eighteen (18) active roster positions for the duration of the season.
- 3.7 **New Teams:** A team shall be considered a new team if its opening-day roster contains five (5) or fewer players from that team's roster from the previous season.
- 3.8 **Non-LGBT Players:** Teams are limited to three non-LGBT players on a team's roster.
- 3.9 **Sexual Orientation Identity Changes:**
- A player may not change their sexual orientation designation after completing a season registration. Changes to a player's designation may only be made during registration for the following season.
 - A new player's sexual orientation identity at registration must match the designation provided on their recruitment signup form for their initial season of play. The player may not change this identity until the next season's registration.
 - A player may change their designation from Non-LGBT to LGBT or LGBT to Non-LGBT only once during their entire SFAAA registration history.
 - Extenuating circumstances for technical difficulties may be appealed to the Board in writing and must include supporting evidence of the technical difficulty. Such appeals and supporting evidence must be submitted within 48 hours of the player's registration.

Section Four: *New Players*

- 4.1 **New Player:** Each season, the Association shall conduct a recruitment drive to recruit new players. Players who attend a skills assessment session shall be drafted by SFAAA teams based on their skill level.
- 4.2 **Draft:** The Association shall conduct an initial draft prior to the start of each season to allow teams to add players to their roster who participated in a skills assessment session.
- To be eligible to select a player in the draft, the team manager must be in attendance. A team manager may designate a proxy to attend by notifying the Assistant Commissioner by written communication or email no later than twenty-four (24) hours prior to the draft.
 - Draft Order:** The draft will begin with the E Division, followed by D Division, and continue in division order. The team with the lowest prior season standings in each division drafts first, followed by the next-lowest, until all teams have drafted. For the Fall Season draft, any team that earned a GSWS bid through a playoff format during the prior Qualifying Season shall draft immediately ahead of teams that received automatic bids.

1. New teams or teams moving up a division may be granted the first selection at the discretion of the Board.
 2. If multiple new teams exist, draft order among those teams shall be determined by random draw conducted by the Board.
 3. No team may draft a player rated for a lower division unless all teams in that lower division have reached their roster maximum or declined further selections.
- c. Legends Division Draft: Legends C and Legends D teams shall be included in the C and D Division drafts, respectively, based on final winning percentages. If three (3) or more teams exist in a Legends Division, a separate Legends draft shall be conducted for players who registered with a preference to play in that division.
1. Legends draft order shall follow the same procedure as the regular draft.
 2. Registration shall allow players aged fifty (50) or older to indicate a preference for the Legends Division or the open division.
 3. The Legends Division draft shall occur prior to the Regular Division draft. Players not selected in the Legends draft shall remain eligible for selection in the Regular Division draft.
- d. Subsequent Drafts: The Association may conduct additional drafts after the initial draft. Draft order shall continue from the point at which the previous draft concluded.
- e. If after the start of the season, a team is considered to no longer have 10 active players, the team will be permitted to have the first selection of the next draft in that season. If there is more than one team who has less than 10 active players, the order of selection will be by random selection as determined by the Board.
- 4.3 **Drafted Players:** Once a player has participated in a draft, the player may not be added to any team except through the draft procedures set forth in this section. A drafted player may not play for any team other than the drafting team during that season without the consent of the drafting team's manager and the approval of the Managers Council for the division to which the player would be assigned.
- a. Exception: If a player is drafted into a higher-rated division, or if a player who indicated a preference for a Legends Division is drafted into a non-Legends Division, the player shall be informed of the differing division assignment. The player may refuse the assignment by notifying the Assistant Commissioner in writing. Upon refusal, the player shall be entered into a special draft for the player's preferred division.
- 4.4 **Protected Players:**
- a. In order to qualify as a protected player, the following criteria must be met:
 1. A player who has not previously been a member of the Association or a player who has not been an active member for a period of two qualifying seasons and is required to be rated by the Association.

2. The team manager must notify the Recruitment Director by 11:59 p.m. of the day prior to the player being rated.
 3. The player must confirm on their registration form, prior to being rated, that they desire to be a member of the protecting team.
 4. The player must qualify to play in the division of the protecting team.
- b. Protected players will not be entered into a draft, nor will the player be eligible for selection by any other team in accordance with section 4.3.
 - c. A protected player who does not have an initial rating and who does not qualify to play in the division of the protecting team will immediately be subject to the draft rules under section 4.2.
 - d. At any time up until the start of the draft of which a protected player would otherwise be eligible for, the protecting team may elect to withdraw its protection of the player. Should this occur, the player will enter the draft.
 - e. Three teams that play in different divisions may co-protect the same player to a ratings session if all managers agree.
- 4.5 **Disciplinary Action:** Managers or coaches of any team attempting to circumvent the draft are subject to disciplinary action by the Board and/or the Ethics Committee.

Section Five:

Ratings

- 5.1 **Initial Ratings:** Players will start with their most recent rating from their most recent season (from SFAAA or from their most recent iPride league). Players without an iPride rating or who have not played within the past two (2) SFAAA Qualifying Seasons must obtain a new rating from the Ratings Committee.
- a. Such players must attend a Recruitment event to be rated by the Ratings Committee to play.
 - b. Any player obtaining a new rating may not be considered for any question removals during their first season of play.
- 5.2 **Voluntary Ratings Increases:** A manager may voluntarily increase a player's rating at any time during the season.
- a. The question(s) to which the rating increase applies to must be clearly indicated, and written consent from the player must be included, either attached to the submission or sent separately via email to the Ratings Chair at the time of filing. Submissions without player consent will be rejected by the Ratings Chair.
 - b. Once submitted, a voluntary rating increase cannot be reversed or withdrawn.
 - c. There is no limit to the number of questions for which a manager may request a voluntary increase during the season.

- d. All approved increases will be reported to the Board.
- e. Any request to lower a rating must follow the established rating review process.
- f. Such voluntary increases must be made via the Rating Review Request Form on the SFAAA website.

5.3 **Ratings Confirmation:** The SFAAA Commissioner will confirm all player ratings, whether they are new/current/former SFAAA members or players transferring from other iPride associations. Rosters with the latest ratings will be made available to the manager. The rating in the SFAAA database will be used unless the manager proves that the database is incorrect. The manager has until 5:00 pm on the Thursday before Opening Day to address inconsistent ratings.

5.4 **iPride Ratings Questions Changes:** If iPride changes any ratings questions taking effect for the Spring Season, the Board shall hold a special Managers Council Meeting, to review the ratings questions before opening day. A manager who does not attend the ratings meeting shall not be allowed to submit ratings requests for any member of the league, other than their own players.

5.5 **Rosters Distribution:** Ratings rosters will be distributed to each manager in each division for review prior to Opening Day. Any amended rosters will be distributed prior to each week of play, as changes dictate, and will include any approved changes and any submitted voluntary increases. Ratings will be made available to all league members at the discretion of the Board, via email requests to the Commissioner.

- a. Distribution includes making rosters available to managers on the SFAAA website.

5.6 **Ratings Reviews:** Ratings review requests may be submitted by any of the following parties, utilizing the website form (when activated by the Board).

- a. A player wishing to have their own rating changed,
- b. A manager requesting a change to the rating of one of their own players.
- c. The Ratings Chair or a current Board Member,
 - 1. A member of the Ratings Committee may initiate a review of any player participating in a game they are scheduled to observe.
- d. A manager may request a review of a player not on the manager's team.
 - 1. Each manager may submit up to two (2) rating questions per non-team player at no cost.
 - 2. A fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25) shall be paid for each additional rating question submitted.
 - i. If the review results in a rating change, the fee shall be refunded.
 - ii. If the review is denied and no rating change occurs, the fee shall be forfeited.
 - 3. Each manager may submit no more than ten (10) total rating review requests per season for players not on the manager's team.
- e. No ratings review request may be submitted later than forty-eight (48) hours after the final game of the midpoint week of the season.
- f. The Board will activate the Ratings Review Request Form on the SFAAA website one (1) week before the start of each season.

5.7 **Ratings Decrease Requests:** A manager requesting a decrease to the rating of one of their players must include a clear notation of which question(s) are being requested for decrease, a written

statement of consent from the player, and specific evidence that supports the request. Player consent must be attached to the manager's filing or emailed directly to the Ratings Chair at the time of the submission. If any of these requirements, particularly player consent, are missing, the Ratings Chair will reject the request.

- a. A team can collectively submit up to ten (10) questions to be lowered during the season. Questions submitted by Board Members or the Ratings Chair, do not count towards the ten (10) question limit.
- b. A decrease request may only be filed once per season, per player, per question.
 - i. For decrease requests involving Questions 1 – 5, the request must include a copy of the team's complete scorebooks for both the current season and the previous season as supporting evidence. Failure to submit complete scorebooks will result in a rejection of the decrease request by the Ratings Chair.
 - ii. For requests involving Questions 6 through 9, managers must reference *Section 5.18: Current Player Batting Averages* of the Softball Code for applicable criteria.

5.8 **Ratings Review Submissions:** To submit a rating review, the submitter shall complete the submission form on the SFAAA website. Items submitted by the Ratings Chair, or a Board Member shall follow the same process. The Ratings Chair has the authority to reject incomplete forms, which will be sent back to the submitting party to address any issues. Submitters will then have seventy-two (72) hours from the time of rejection to resubmit, and only one (1) resubmittal will be allowed per question.

5.9 **Ratings Committee Confidentiality:** Members of the committee may not discuss any specific rating determination with anyone outside of the Ratings Committee, until after the ratings question is disposed of by the Committee or after an appeal is concluded.

5.10 **Ratings Committee:** The Ratings Committee shall meet as determined by the Chair. A meeting with fifty percent (50%) of members eligible to vote on a matter are present shall be considered a quorum. Committee decisions shall be emailed by the Chair to the Board Secretary, Commissioner, and Assistant Commissioner within three (3) days of the meeting. The Secretary will then transmit the results to the Managers Council and the Board within five (5) days of receipt.

- a. The Chair shall ensure that reviews are completed and voted on not later than the Thursday before the playoffs of the regular season.
- b. If the Ratings Chair determines that a question that might be added to a player would make them no longer eligible for the division they are currently playing in, the Chair may schedule two (2) members of the Ratings Committee to evaluate all questions of the player: without any notification outside of the Committee; before it is brought to a vote of the Committee. The Chair may ask for the manager to turn in copies of their books for the current and previous season to determine the player's batting average.

1. This does not apply to any automatic division disqualifiers, currently Question Three (Q3) for "E" Division and Question Five (Q5) for "D" Division.

- c. For consideration of a change to an established rating, a minimum of five (5) evaluations shall be required.

5.11 Ratings Changes Notifications:

- a. Any player whose rating changes during the season shall be notified by the Secretary within eight (8) days of the Ratings Committee's decision.
- b. If the rating change makes a player ineligible for their current division, the player's information must be provided to the Secretary and Recruitment Director prior to any league-wide notification.
- c. Once officially notified by the Ratings Committee Chair or a Board Member, the player may join any team in a division they are now eligible for, provided that:
 - 1. The team meets roster requirements outlined in Softball Code 3.1.
 - 2. The team's manager approves the addition.
- d. The restriction on adding players after sixty (60%) of the season, outlined in Softball Code 3.3.A, does not apply to these situations, as Ratings Committee decisions may be rendered after that point in the season.
- e. Player transfer restrictions in Softball Code 3.4 are waived when a player's rating change results in them moving up to a higher division.

5.12 Voluntary Increase Deadline / GSWS Meeting: Voluntary increases may be submitted after the submission deadline and up to the requirements for the GSWS Ratings Meeting, or the Tuesday before the playoffs (Fall season).

- a. All teams participating in the GSWS shall submit their GSWS roster to the Ratings Chair, Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, and the Director of Competition at a date to be determined each GSWS qualifying season.
- b. The Board will schedule a GSWS meeting no later than fourteen (14) days before the GSWS rosters are required to be finalized in the iPride system.
- c. All GSWS managers should be cognizant of their teams rating cap prior to submitting their rosters.

5.13 New Player Batting Averages:

- a. Requirement: Managers must submit the modified batting averages for all new players on their roster at the conclusion of playoffs in the player's first season. This establishes a baseline average for assigning hitting questions (Q6–Q9) to the player's rating.
- b. Notification and Submission Process: After the playoffs conclude, the Secretary will email all managers a list of new players requiring a batting average submission and provide instructions for submitting averages, including acceptable methods with a two-week deadline for submission.
- c. Non-Compliance: If a manager fails to submit the averages within the initial two-week period, the Secretary will send a reminder to the manager providing one (1) additional week to comply.
- d. Penalties for Continued Non-Compliance: If the manager still fails to submit the required information, a ten dollar (\$10) fine per new player will be assessed and the manager will be

considered not in “Good Standing” with the league until all required batting averages are submitted and all fines are paid.

- e. The Commissioner may request managers to turn in modified batting averages for all players before the spring season. The supporting copies of the game day books may be requested if needed.

5.14 **Weeknight Play:** Ratings changes will not be considered during weeknight play other than the Upper Division.

- a. Any rating review requests must be submitted to the Ratings Chair at least one (1) week prior to the start of the Under the Lights season. The submission must include a clear rationale. All questions with the exception of Q6-Q9 can be reviewed. The Ratings Chair will determine whether the request meets the criteria to proceed.
- b. Upon approval and review, the Ratings Chair is responsible for entering the review request when the submission link is open. Once submitted, the Ratings Committee will review the request and issue a determination.

5.15 **Ratings Review Appeal Requests:** A player, or their manager, may appeal a Ratings Committee decision that altered the player’s rating to the Board by emailing the Commissioner and the Secretary within five (5) days of receiving the decision notification. The appeals meeting shall be held within seven (7) days of the appeal’s receipt unless a different date is mutually agreed upon. The manager and player must be given at least forty-eight (48) hours’ notice of the appeals meeting unless they agree to shorter notice.

5.16 **GSWS Protests:** If the GSWS Protest Committee changes a player’s rating question and corresponding skill, it will be submitted to the SFAAA Board and will remain marked as “Yes” for the following two (2) GSWS Qualifying seasons. No player will be able to appeal that question or skill (e.g., running 5.0 seconds) during the next two (2) GSWS qualifying seasons.

5.17 **Appeal Meetings:** Appeal meetings shall be conducted as follows:

- a. The Ratings Chair must submit all materials related to the appeal to the Board in advance of the meeting.
- b. The Ratings Chair or their designee shall present the specifics of the rating change to the Board, including any evidence provided during the Ratings Committee Meeting.
- c. The appealing player or manager may present evidence supporting their appeal of the rating change.
- d. The Board will deliberate and determine whether to uphold or overturn the rating change.
- e. A simple majority of Board Members present and voting is required to overturn the Ratings Committee’s decision.
- f. Board Members must recuse themselves from discussion and voting if the appeal concerns a member of their own team.
- g. The Assistant Commissioner shall abstain from voting on the appeal, due to their role on the Ratings Committee.
- h. The Board’s ruling will be communicated to all involved parties following the meeting.
- i. The Board’s ruling on all appeals is final.

- 5.18 **Current Player Batting Average:** Current player batting average changes may be submitted following the conclusion of the current season (after playoffs are completed) when the Ratings Review Request Link is opened.
- a. Any requests related to Questions Six through Nine (Q6-Q9) must include copies of the team's complete and legible scorebooks for both the current and previous seasons as supporting evidence. Failure to provide accurate and complete scorebooks will result in automatic denial.
 - b. The Ratings Chair and Assistant Commissioner will review submitted scorebooks, with all reviews to be completed within four (4) weeks of the end of the season.
 - c. Approved submissions will be processed in accordance with code 5.11.

Section Six: *Manager Responsibilities*

- 6.1 **Team Manager Responsibilities:** The following are responsibilities afforded to the manager of a team participating in the League play of the SFAAA. The manager or their designee shall:
- a. Represent their team at Managers Council Meetings. Managers may designate a representative from their team to attend a meeting provided they turn in a written proxy as described in the SFAAA Bylaws;
 - b. Report the results of the Managers Council Meetings back to their team;
 - c. Collect and submit to the Board a player roster, sponsor and player fees, insurance waivers and all documents as prescribed by the Board for the upcoming season;
 - d. Submit a fully completed lineup card to the opposing team's manager before each game;
 - e. Turn in team game results and lineup cards to the Director of Competition or as designated by the Board;
 - f. Ensure that their team conducts itself in a level of good sportsmanship;
 - g. Inform the Board of any changes of managers on their team;
 - h. Notify team sponsors of after game parties;
 - i. Communicate to the Board the bye weeks requested by the team for that season.
 - j. Distribute and maintain all equipment, uniforms, and marketing materials if the aforementioned are sponsor or team owned.
- 6.2 **Manager Compliance:** Should a manager fail to uphold their responsibilities as established in 6.1, appropriate corrective action may be taken by the Board.

Section Seven: *Uniforms*

- 7.1 **Ownership:** Uniforms which are purchased by a sponsor or a team shall remain the property of the sponsor or team unless other arrangements have been made and documented between the sponsor and the team member(s).
- 7.2 **Player Responsibility:** If property is deemed as belonging to a sponsor or team, each player is responsible for the return of their uniform to the team manager at the close of the playing season or at such time as the player discontinues, for whatever reason, their participation with that team. In the event that a player does not return their uniform in satisfactory condition, normal wear and tear expected, that player shall be ineligible for league play until the uniform is returned or other restitution is made to the satisfaction of the team or its sponsor. Requests for return of uniform(s) must be made in writing prior to the next playing season.
- 7.3 **Uniform Numbers:** Teams are not required to have like-colored uniforms; however, an Arabic whole number (0-99) of contrasting color, at least six (6) inches high, must be worn and visible on the back of all jerseys. No players on the same team may wear identical numbers (0 and 00 or 3 and 03 are examples of identical numbers). Players without numbers will not be permitted to play.

Section Eight: *Forfeits*

- 8.1 **Team Forfeits:** A team will have forfeited a game if:
- a. It fails to submit all documentation, player fees and sponsor fees prior to the start of a season, or;
 - b. It fails to have nine (9) players on the field after five (5) minutes past the game's starting time, or;
 - c. It fails to continue to field at least nine (9) players at any point of the game, or;
 - d. it fields an ineligible player after the first pitch of the game has been delivered, or;
 - e. the Board deems it necessary due to a failure of compliance with SFAAA Bylaws, Softball Code, or any violation of the Ethics Code.
- 8.2 **Forfeiture Penalties:**
- a. The forfeiting team shall receive a loss in the standings by a score of 0-10. A double forfeit shall be scored as 0-0 and considered a loss for both teams.
 - b. There shall be no financial penalty for any team's first two (2) forfeited games. A \$50 penalty shall be assessed for a third forfeiture. A \$100 penalty shall be assessed for a fourth and final forfeiture. This includes playoff games in either fall or spring season. Teams that opt out of playoffs prior to brackets being created are exempt.

- c. A forfeit submitted to the Board via email at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the team's scheduled game time, will not be upheld if the game is postponed due to inclement weather. In such cases, the team will be permitted to participate in the rescheduled game(s).
- d. All forfeiture fines need to be paid by the forfeiting team's manager before that team's next scheduled game. Extenuating circumstances can be appealed to the Board for special consideration.

8.3 **Team Expulsion:** A team that forfeits four (4) games will no longer be eligible to participate in any SFAAA games for that season, including the postseason.

- a. All games and statistics recorded by that team shall remain in the standings. All games scheduled for the rest of that season shall be counted as 0-10 losses for the ineligible team, and 10-0 victories for their scheduled opposing team.
- b. Eligible players from a team that is no longer eligible to play in the SFAAA shall retain all privileges as a member of the SFAAA.
- c. A special draft shall be administered by the Assistant Commissioner and/or Board in a timely manner, allowing all teams within the expelled team's division to draft eligible players from that team. The draft shall be conducted in reverse order of the newly defined current standings. If any player remains undrafted after all teams in the division have had the opportunity to participate, and with the consent of the player, the special draft shall continue with the next highest division, also in reverse order of the current standings.
- d. If the final forfeit occurs after half of the regular season is complete, players will be eligible for a draft to play in the remainder of the season (including postseason). Players who opt out of the draft or are not drafted for any reason shall be eligible for a prorated refund.
- e. All games already played by the newly suspended players will be counted toward any playoff or Gay Softball World Series requirement.

Section Nine: *Game Rules*

9.1 **Game Regulations**

- a. **Game Length:** An SFAAA game shall last seven (7) innings or no more than a time limit set by the Board at the beginning of each season.
 - 1. The League shall purchase and maintain a set of eight (8) audible timers to be utilized by umpires in order to maintain the consistency of the time allotment per game.
 - 2. Any injury which stops play shall require a stoppage of the timer with said stoppage communicated to both managers.

- b. Official Game: In the event of a rain-out or any unforeseen circumstance, a game shall be considered an official game after five (5) innings of play or four and one half (4½) if the home team leads.
- c. Rainouts/Inclement Weather: If any game, including a playoff game, is called due to rain or inclement weather before the game becomes official, the game will be rescheduled and played in its entirety. The rainout/cancelled game shall not count toward any playoff or Gay Softball World Series requirement.
- d. Tie games: If the score is tied after seven (7) innings or after the time limit has expired, the game will be played using the Kansas City tiebreaker format. Under the Kansas City tiebreaker format, each team, in their respective half of each subsequent inning, shall place on second base the player on their team who made the last recorded out. The team shall proceed by batting the next batter in the lineup at the prior inning's end and so forth until three (3) outs are recorded. Each batter will start with a full count with no courtesy foul. This procedure is repeated in each subsequent inning until one team has outscored the other at the end of a completed inning.
- e. Run Rule: A game shall cease and the score recorded as the final score if a team leads by ten (10) or more runs after five (5) innings or four and one half (4½) innings if the home team leads, 15 or more runs after four (4) innings or three and one half (3½) innings if the home team leads or by 20 or more runs after three (3) innings or two and one half (2½) if the home team leads.
- f. Changes to Code: Any changes to section 9 of the Softball Code must be reported in writing or by email to the Umpire-in-Chief or their designee before the next games are played.

9.2 Management of Team Lineup:

- a. Requirement: A team must start the game and maintain at least nine (9) rostered players on the field or a forfeit will be declared. A 10th player may be added before the first pitch of the fifth inning. The 10th player will be inserted as the last batter on the lineup card.
- b. Extra Hitters: Only at the start of a game may a team add an 11th and 12th player to the lineup and designate them as extra hitters. At any time during a game, the extra hitter(s) may enter and play defensively, switching the defensive player to the extra hitter slot. Both players shall remain in the same batting order for the entire game.
- c. Ejected Players: If a player is ejected or leaves the game for any reason and no substitute is available, the team may continue to play with at least nine (9) players but will receive an out in the position of the ejected or vacated player.
- d. Injured Players: If a player is injured during the game and no substitute is available, the team will receive an out in the batting order position of the injured player.
- e. Uniform Numbers: Players need to wear the same uniform number as stated on the lineup card. A player brought to the attention of the umpire to be wearing a different number than on the lineup card will be recorded as an out and the lineup will move on to the next batter. The only exception to this rule would be due to a health safety concern that would require the player not to use the initial jersey listed on the lineup card and communicated to the umpire and opposing team's manager at the time of the incident.

- f. Pick-up Players in Non-Qualifying Seasons: To avoid a forfeit for failure to maintain at least nine (9) rostered players on the field in any game during a non-qualifying season, a team may add up to two (2) registered players from another team's active roster provided that:
1. The team has nine (9) or fewer players available to play from its own roster.
 2. The combined total number of available rostered players and pick-up players does not exceed ten (10).
 3. Pick-up players must be rated appropriately for the team's division.
 4. Pick-up players may not cause the team to exceed the ratings cap for their division.
 5. The total number of non-LGBT players, including both unavailable rostered players and non-LGBT pick-up players may not exceed three (3).
 6. Pick-up players may only play in the following defensive positions: Pitcher, Catcher, or Right Field.
 7. Pick-up players must bat at the bottom of the lineup and be identified with an asterisk on the lineup card.
 8. Pick-up players are not permitted in any playoff game.
 9. If a manager believes an opposing team has violated any of these provisions, they must notify the Board in writing within twenty-four (24) hours of the game's completion. The notice must identify the specific provision(s) allegedly violated and include any supporting evidence. If the Board determines the complaint is valid, the violating team shall forfeit the game and the manager shall be suspended for their next scheduled game. The Board's decision is final.

9.3 Bats

- a. All bats that are USA Softball-approved and that do not appear on the latest USA Softball Non-Approved List may be used during an SFAAA game. Altered or titanium bats shall be deemed as illegal bats and will be ejected from the game and result in the player using the bat to be called out.
- b. All bats must be inspected by the Assistant Commissioner/Board Member before the start of each SFAAA year. Each bat that passes the inspection will receive a sticker so all managers, players and Mills Pond umpires may attest to its legality. For a bat to be considered legal it must:
 1. Clearly display the USA Softball approved stamp.
 2. Not have any cracks.
 3. Have the end cap intact.
 4. Be free of any dents.
 5. Have a wrapped handle that is of non-slick tape.
 6. Have been tested for sound to ensure that bat is not cracked or worn out. This will also detect if the bat has been altered.

- c. The Assistant Commissioner/Board member has the right to deem any bat illegal if any bat does not meet one of the above criteria.
- d. Any player who is caught using an illegal bat may be suspended from all SFAAA games for the remainder of the season. If the same player is caught a second time, that player will be suspended for life from any SFAAA sponsored games.
- e. The manager of the player being suspended may be put on probation for the balance of the season. If the same manager has any other players caught with an illegal bat, they may be suspended for the balance of the season.
- f. Any managers or players that are suspended for any bat infractions will have to meet with the SFAAA Board and state why they should be reinstated.

9.4 **Metal Cleats:** Metal-tipped cleats are not permitted during SFAAA play.

9.5 **Pitcher's Count:** Batters will start with a one-one (1-1) count and will be allowed one (1) courtesy foul.

9.6 **Pitching Arc:** A pitch shall be considered a legal pitch if, from the ground, it equals or exceeds six (6) feet and does not exceed twelve (12) feet in the duration of its flight from the pitcher's hand to home plate.

9.7 **Courtesy Runners:** Each team shall be allowed one (1) courtesy runner per inning.

- a. Any eligible players that may participate on offense or defense and are on the official line-up including available substitutes may be used as a courtesy runner. If the courtesy runner is due up to bat while on base, the player who the courtesy runner is running for will be called out. The courtesy runner will be removed from the base and take their turn at bat if there are less than three (3) outs.
- b. A player may be a courtesy runner only once per inning. If the same player replaces a runner a second time in the same inning, an out will be recorded.
- c. Each team shall be allowed two (2) courtesy runners per inning in a game in which both teams are members of the Legends C or Legends D Division. (iPride 10.03.P)

9.8 **Reentry Rule:** Any player may be substituted and reentered once during a game. The substituted player may in turn reenter for the original player. However, upon second reentry, the substituting player must remain in the game unless substituted, in turn, by a different bench player as submitted on the lineup card as a substitute. A player that is substituted for can only re-enter the game for the player that replaced them and must assume the same batting position in the lineup.

9.9 **Home Run Rule:** A team may be allowed the following number of home runs hit over the fence:

- a. "A" Division: Five (5) home runs Any home run hit after the limit will be considered an inning ending out.
- b. "B" Division: Three (3) home runs. Any home run hit after the limit will be considered an inning ending out.
- c. "C" Division: One (1) home run. Any home run hit after the limit will be considered an inning ending out.

- d. "D" Division: No home runs allowed. Any home run hit will result in an inning-ending out.
- e. "E" Division: No home runs allowed. Any home run hit will result in an inning-ending out.
- f. Legends Division C: One (1) home run. Any home run hit after the limit will be considered an inning ending out.
- g. Legends Division D: No home runs allowed. Any home run hit will result in an inning-ending out.
- h. Any interdivisional games shall utilize the homerun rule of the lower division. However, any additional over the fence home run, up to the Upper Division limit will count as one (1) out. Any over the fence homerun over the Upper Division's limit, will be an inning ending out.

9.10 Ejections:

- a. Ejections made for umpire abuse, fighting, or unsportsmanlike conduct are, at a minimum, for the remainder of that game and a one-game suspension of the next scheduled game to be played by their team. Players during their suspension may not step on the field or be in the dugout of their team.
- b. A second suspension in the same season will result in an automatic two (2) game suspension.
- c. Further action, not enumerated above, may be taken by the SFAAA Ethics Committee for any infraction.

9.11 Player Inclusion Policy (PIP):

- a. Disability shall be defined as "the inability to do any substantial gainful activity by reason of any medically determinable physical or mental impairment which can be expected to result in death, or which has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than (twelve) 12 months."
- b. Requests for rule modification accommodations must be submitted to the Board and include accompanying medical documentation and a signed iPride PIP Physical Form. The Board will review all requests and provide a determination to the player.
- c. Rule modification accommodations are valid until the next qualifying season unless the Board states otherwise.
- d. For instances where a PIP runner is approved as the rule modification accommodation, the player with the accommodation must reach first base, and the following conditions shall apply:
 - 1. The PIP runner can only be requested at the next dead ball. Once the next ball is pitched, the PIP runner is no longer allowed for that at bat.
 - 2. The PIP runner must be requested before any courtesy runner or substitutes to be valid.
 - 3. The PIP runner cannot be replaced by a courtesy runner or substitute.
 - 4. The PIP runner shall be the last recorded out. If the last recorded out also received a PIP runner, the previous recorded out shall be used. If the PIP runner is injured and cannot complete the game, they shall be replaced by the previous recorded out.
 - 5. If the PIP runner is due at bat while on base, the previous recorded out can replace the PIP runner without penalty.
- e. Managers must clearly indicate PIP on the line-up card next to the player's name for the rule modification to be permitted in that game.

Section Ten

League Divisional Standings

- 10.1 **League Divisional Standings:** Current league standing will be posted on the Association's website, (<http://www.sfaasoftball.com>). It is the manager's responsibility to check the correctness of the standings and notify the Board of any errors.
- 10.2 **Final Divisional Standings:** At the end of the regular season, the final standings of each division shall be determined by win-loss percentages of all teams in that division.
- 10.3 **Tie-Breakers:** Ties in the final divisional standings will be settled by the following tiebreaking system:
- a. Head-to-head win-loss record. If more than two (2) teams are tied, the tiebreaker will be the overall win-loss record versus the teams that are tied for that position in the standings. If still tied...
 - b. Head-to-head run differential. If more than (two) 2 teams are tied, the tiebreaker will be the overall run differential versus the teams that are tied for that position in the standings. If still tied...
 - c. Total runs against.
 - d. Total runs scored.
 - e. Win-loss record versus best common opponent.
 - f. Run differential versus best common opponent.
- 10.4 **Interdivisional Games:** The results of any games played outside of a division (i.e., Open D vs. Legends D, or Open C vs. Open B) shall not count towards either team's divisional record.

Section Eleven:

Playoffs

- 11.1 **Eligible Players:**
- a. To participate in the playoffs for a qualifying season, a player's name must appear on a lineup card for at least one half (1/2) of that season's possible games for their current division, the corresponding Legends Division, or a Lower Division. There is no minimum participation requirement for non-qualifying seasons.
 - b. A player's name may appear on a lineup card if that player has:
 1. taken the field or batted at any point in the game's progress, or
 2. has been at the game's field for more than two (2) innings of the respective game.
 - c. Exceptions to this stipulation may be appealed to the Board.
- 11.2 **Double Elimination:** All SFAAA playoffs in a qualifying season shall be conducted using a double elimination format.

- 11.3 **Home Team:** The higher seeded team will be the home team in all tournament games. The home team for the Championship Game will be the team emerging from the Winner Bracket. The "If Game" home team will be determined by coin toss.
- 11.4 **Championship Games:** A 70-minute time limit will be in effect for the championship game(s).
- 11.5 **Legends Division and Playoffs:** If a Legends team is playing in the World Series in the Legends Division, they must declare their intention to the Board of playing in the Legends Division before the start of the qualifying season. Failure to notify with the intention to play in the World Series as a Legends team, the team will forfeit the right of the Board to pay registration fees for the World Series. If they choose to participate in the playoffs and do not qualify for their division, they will not receive the World Series fees from SFAAA. This rule shall not apply if Legends C or Legends D has a division in play.

Section Twelve:

Protests

- 12.1 **Game Playing Protests:** The current official USA Softball rulebook shall be utilized for all protests regarding the application of rules of play. Game playing protests must be filed according to USA Softball rules and made through the umpire prior to the last out of the game.
- 12.2 **Eligibility of Players Protests:** Should a manager question the eligibility of a player, they must fill out a protest incident report and provide it to a member of the Board with protest fee if applicable. Protests must be made prior to the end of the game.
- 12.3 **Resolution:** The Board shall resolve all disputes and protests arising out of any Association sanctioned softball game within seventy-two (72) hours after a dispute or protest has been served to the Board.

Section Thirteen:

International Pride Softball (iPride)

- 13.1 **Gay Softball World Series Bids:** GSWS bids will be awarded based upon the allotments as stated in the current International Pride Softball Governing Manual. In regard to C, D and E Divisions, the division with the most qualifying teams will get the maximum number of bids allowed per division. Remaining bids shall then be allocated by number of qualifying teams per division, with divisions that have more teams receiving more bids than divisions that have fewer teams. If two (2) or more divisions have the same number of qualifying teams, a vote of the managers council will be conducted prior to the start of the qualifying season to allocate bids. Bids within each division will be awarded as follows:
- If one (1) bid is awarded to a division, the recipient of said bid would be the first-place winner of the playoffs during the Gay Softball World Series qualifying season.

- b. If two (2) bids are awarded to a division, the recipients of said bids will be the first-place team of the regular season and the winner of the playoffs during the Gay Softball World Series qualifying season.
 - c. If three (3) bids are awarded to a division, the recipients of said bids will be the first- and second-place team of the regular season and the winner of the playoffs during the Gay Softball World Series qualifying season.
- 13.2 **Notification of Intent:** Teams receiving bids must notify the Board whether they will accept or decline the bid no later than one month prior to the due date for registered teams as established by iPride or one week after the SFAAA playoffs, whichever day is the latter of the two (2) dates.
- a. In the event a team declines the iPride Gay Softball World Series bid, the bid, regardless how it has been awarded, shall be designated to the next highest placing team in that division's regular season who may then accept the bid. If the next highest-placing team declines the bid, it will be offered to each successive placing team until one accepts.
 - b. If no team within a division accepts the iPride Gay Softball World Series bid, the Board may award the bid to another team in another division subject to the rules under iPride.
- 13.3 **Gay Softball World Series Champions:** No team awarded first, second, third or fourth place in the B, C, D or E Division of the GSWS shall be eligible to compete in the same or lower division at the following two (2) year's GSWS. For the Legends D Division, no team awarded first or second place of the GSWS shall be eligible to compete in the same or lower division at the following two (2) year's GSWS. For the purpose of this rule, an ineligible returning team shall be defined as consisting of four (4) or more players from the prior year GSWS roster of a team awarded first, second, third or fourth for B, C, D & E and first or second for the Legends D Division.
- 13.4 **iPride Fines:** Any player or team that is fined and/or suspended by iPride may include but not limited to poor sportsmanship or misconduct, shall be responsible for paying the respective fine to iPride. In the event a team or player is fined for ratings, it will be the responsibility of the SFAAA to pay said fine unless the fine takes the team above the division's ratings cap. In that instance, the team becomes responsible for payment of the fine.
- a. Failure to pay the fine directly to SFAAA will result in an automatic suspension of the player or team as determined by the SFAAA Board.
 - b. The Board will notify by email the players and managers affected by any iPride fines and/or suspensions.
- 13.5 **iPride Travel Tournaments:** Teams traveling under the SFAAA banner to travel tournaments using the iPride ratings system are required to turn in their rosters to the Assistant Commissioner no later than seven (7) days prior to the tournament roster deadline so the league can verify ratings before the team attends the tournament.

ADDENDUM A:

Under The Lights Program

1. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of the Under the Lights (UTL) Program is to offer a weeknight play of slow pitch softball in a safe, inclusive LGBTQ+ environment. Through a player draft process, the program also allows players an opportunity to meet and play on teams that have been randomly selected, instead of forming a team. This program also provides the opportunity for new players to join the SFAAA Softball League.
2. **FORMAT:**
 - A. There will be two (2) divisions: the Lower Division consisting of players rated nine (9) and below; and the Upper Division consisting of players rated ten (10) and above. A player rated nine (9) or below may choose to play in the Upper Division.
 - B. The season will consist of five (5) weeks of gameplay with no playoffs.
 - C. One Recruitment Session will be held prior to the start of the season. Ratings assigned to new players at this session by the SFAAA Ratings Committee will serve as the player's official SFAAA rating for future seasons.
 - D. A player who receives a new rating from SFAAA immediately prior to the start of the UTL season must play in a qualifying or non-qualifying season within one (1) year for that rating to remain valid.
 - E. A player who receives a new rating from the SFAAA Softball League immediately prior to the start of the UTL season shall be entered into the New Player Draft if they choose to participate in a qualifying or non-qualifying season within one (1) year. This is subject to all draft rules as outlined in the Softball Code. The only exception is if the player is protected by a manager for the immediate next season by 11:59 p.m. on the day prior to attending the Recruitment Session. To validate the protection and exempt the player from the draft, the protecting manager must be the registered manager of the team at the time team registration closes.
3. **GAME DATES & SCHEDULE:** Game dates and schedule will be provided by the Program Director prior to the start of the season.
4. **RULES OF PLAY:**
 - A. We will follow all regular SFAAA rules of play, as outlined in the Softball Code, except when an exception is outlined in the UTL Program rules.
 - B. 55-minute game time limit.
 - C. Exception: Games may end in a tie. If tied after 7 innings or time has expired, one Kansas City inning (1 pitch) will be played. If there is no winner after the Kansas City inning, a tie will be declared.
 - D. Exception: Home Run Rule per game: Upper-1, Lower-0. Any additional home runs hit will be inning-ending outs.
 - E. Courtesy Runner Rule: One per inning. Batter must make it to first base, then courtesy runner can take base.

- F. Exception: The safety net will be utilized at the pitcher's mound. Any batted ball that hits the safety net will result in a foul ball the first time in an at bat and an automatic out the second time in a same at bat.
- G. Pick Up Players: A team may use pick up player(s) (rated within the division) if the team doesn't have 10 players. Pick up players may only play Pitcher, Catcher or Right Field (1st Base if 4 loaner players are needed). An exception will be made if a team has 10 players but no Pitcher. In that case a pick-up Pitcher may be added. All pick up players must be added to the bottom of the lineup and must be identified with an asterisk on the lineup card. Forfeits will not apply to teams utilizing pick up players.

5. TEAM FORMATION:

- A. Teams will be drafted by a committee, which will include the participating managers and Board members.
- B. Each drafted team will be placed in a hat and managers will draw which team they will manage.
- C. On a case-by-case basis, players may be moved from one team to another due to manager/player conflict at the Program Director's discretion.

6. TEAM FEES, PLAYER FEES, & MISC.:

- A. The team fee will be determined prior to the start of player registration and will be paid by sponsors provided through SFAAA efforts.
- B. The player fee and registration deadlines will be determined prior to the start of player registration. All players must be registered and player fee paid prior to participating in any game.
- C. Team jerseys will be provided by SFAAA through sponsorships
- D. In order to be eligible to play, players must wear the league issued jersey (without any modifications) outside of any other garment while playing or stepping onto the field. Players will keep their jersey at the end of the season.

DEFINITIONS:

Active players: any member of a team who participates on the field of play and is included on the lineup card of any game.

Altered bat: a bat that has been modified in any way from the manufacturer's original specifications or design.

Amateur: a softball player who engages in the sport solely for pleasure and/or the physical, mental, or social benefits.

Association: the entire paying membership of the South Florida Amateur Athletic Association (SFAAA)

Board: the composite of the SFAAA Board of Directors as enumerated in the Bylaws

Board member: a member, either elected or appointed, to the SFAAA Board of Directors.

Conflicts of interest: A conflict of interest may be present in situations such as, but is not limited to, the following:

- The affected player is on the same team
- Romantic partner
- Roommate
- Co-worker
- In a dating relationship
- Family member
- Financial connection
- Any other conflict of interest deemed relevant by the Board

Courtesy runner: a non-substituted player who appears on the game's lineup card who shall be able to take the place of any player who has reached base safely.

Drafted player: any person who, at the new player draft or any subsequent draft, which is selected by a team.

Eligible player: any person who is over 18 and is in good standing with the Association and iPride.

Gay: includes gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT or LGBT) individuals.

Gay Softball World Series (GSWS): a tournament hosted annually by the International Pride Softball (iPride).

Non-LGBT: means not gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender.

Instruments of Governance (IoG): the document that includes the SFAAA's Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Softball Code, Ethics, and Appendices.

International Pride Softball (iPride): the organization responsible for hosting the Gay Softball World Series (GSWS) and from which this Association's rating system is derived.

Manager: the person designated by a team to fulfill those roles and complete those responsibilities as enumerated in the **Softball Code**.

Non-qualifying season: a playing season in which the results do not award bid(s) for the right to compete in the iPride Gay Softball World Series.

Non-player: any person whose name appears on an active roster but does not appear on a lineup card throughout the course of a season. Non players may include but are not limited to scorekeepers, coaches, managers, or anyone designated by their team as serving an active role on the team. Non-players are limited to two per roster.

Protected player: any player who is eligible to attend the SFAAA draft or any other skills assessment session and is designated by the player and team manager that the player wishes to be a member of a specific team. A protected player will not be eligible to be drafted by any other team other than the team which protected the player (see Section 4.04).

Qualifying season: a playing season in which the results of the season play award bid(s) for the right to compete in the iPride Gay Softball World Series. In a qualifying season, the Association shall schedule at least six (6) games as stipulated in the International Pride Softball Governing Manual.

Replacement players: any person who has taken the place of a player who has relocated or qualified as an injured player on the team's roster. In doing so, the person replaced shall no longer be considered eligible to appear on a team's lineup for any lineup submitted after the replacement procedure has been finalized by the Board.

Sponsor: any person, organization, business, or other entity who shall be designated by the team as having provided support to its ability to participate in a softball season.

Uniform: as defined in the SFAAA Ethics Policy, a uniform shall be constituted of a maximum of two (2) shirts, two (2) pants and/or shorts and two (2) hats.

Unsportsmanlike conduct: action that is detrimental or unbecoming to the purposes and objectives of the SFAAA, its teams or its membership.