



# WHERE OLYMPIC JOURNEYS BEGIN



## A LETTER FROM THE CEO



On behalf of USA Softball, I would like to encourage you to join thousands of individuals across the globe by getting involved in our great sport. It is because of the athletes, coaches, umpires, managers and spectators who support the game of softball that our organization works to continue its historic mission of developing, administering and promoting the sport across the United States.

USA Softball takes great pride in being the National Governing Body of Softball in the United States and is recognized by the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee for our commitment to the well-being of the members in our organization. This reputation for providing the best-of-the-best in all aspects of the game is built on a foundation of 80+ years in sanctioning the sport of softball – a foundation that we will continue to build upon as we move into the new season and beyond.

As the leader in the sport of softball, our commitment to athlete safety is unmatched. Simply put – USA Softball will not tolerate ANY abuse whether it is physical, mental, emotional or sexual. That is why for over 10 years, USA Softball has required background checks for all adults on the field of play in our Youth/Junior Olympic (JO) program. USA Softball, together with the USOPC and the U.S. Center for SafeSport, has developed and implemented policies designed to protect our members from various types of misconduct and abuse.

Our network of state and metro associations enforce this commitment throughout the grassroots ranks of our organization and our success is a direct reflection of the investment that our various association personnel have put into their local programming. Because of volunteers out in the field and their efforts conducting thousands of events throughout the year, we know that the future is bright for USA Softball.

After watching our Women's National Team return to the Olympic Program for the first time since 2008 while earning a silver medal finish at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, I am optimistic that a glimmer of hope and determination was sparked for all youth athletes who are dreaming of reaching new heights on the field.

What makes USA Softball so unique is that we provide opportunities for people to stay involved in the game they love at a variety of levels. From ages 8-80, USA Softball offers fast pitch, slow pitch, modified pitch and 16-Inch slow pitch softball at both the recreational and competitive level. For those who aspire to represent their country, USA Softball is the pipeline from the grassroots to the National Team level, and we could very easily be watching future National Team members at our local tournaments and National Championships that take place across the country each year.

While we are happy with the success and participants we garner today, we look forward to growing on those accomplishments in years to come. We hope that you take your passion and determination for the sport to the next level by joining USA Softball. Whether you're competing to win a USA Softball National Championship, get the call to umpire the final game of a Championship, or just simply play the game to the best of your abilities, we hope that you achieve these goals and more. Once again, thank you for choosing to play Softball...the Game America Plays!®

Sincerely,

Craig A. Cress





## THE NATIONAL GOVERNING BODY OF SOFTBALL



### WHO IS USA SOFTBALL?

- USA Softball (USAS) is the National Governing Body (NGB) of Softball in the United States. A National Governing Body (NGB) is an organization that governs and administers a sport on a national basis. For any sport which is included on the program of the Olympic Games, the Paralympic Games or the Pan American Games, the corporation is authorized to be recognized as an NGB.
- Since 1933, USAS has become one of the nation's largest and fastest growing sports organizations. Growing from a few hundred teams to over 120,000 teams today, USA Softball represents a membership of more than 1 million across the United States.



### MISSION

**To develop, administer and promote the sport of softball to provide opportunities for participation and the best possible experience for those involved.**



### VISION

**USA Softball will be the standard of excellence in softball.**

### USA SOFTBALL MEMBERS

USA Softball is made up of a Board of Directors as well as...

- |                             |                           |                              |   |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| <b>1</b> Council Members    | <b>4</b> JO Commissioners | <b>7</b> Grassroots Programs | <b>10</b> Leagues & Tournament Administrators |
| <b>2</b> Local Associations | <b>5</b> National Teams   | <b>8</b> Coaches             | <b>11</b> Fans                                |
| <b>3</b> Commissioners      | <b>6</b> Umpires          | <b>9</b> Parents             |   |

### AS THE NGB...



USAS fulfills a range of critical leadership roles for the sport, including:

The primary pipeline to USA Softball National Teams.

Developing, selecting and leading USA Softball National Teams at Olympic Games, World Championships, Pan American Games, and other international events each year.

Establishing grassroots programs to help develop the future of the sport such as Junior Olympics, High Performance Program, National Championships and more.

Establishing adult programs, fast pitch, slow pitch, coed and modified pitch.

Establishing and enforcing rules and regulations of our sport.

Committed to the safety of our youth by mandating the U.S. Center for Safesport courses to anyone involved with those under 18.

Sanctioning events in all 50 states.

Promoting programs and competitions for women, men, girls and boys of all ages.

Providing insurance to sanctioned events, teams and individuals that register with USA Softball.

Providing the ACE (Aspire, Challenge, Encourage) Coach Education Program.

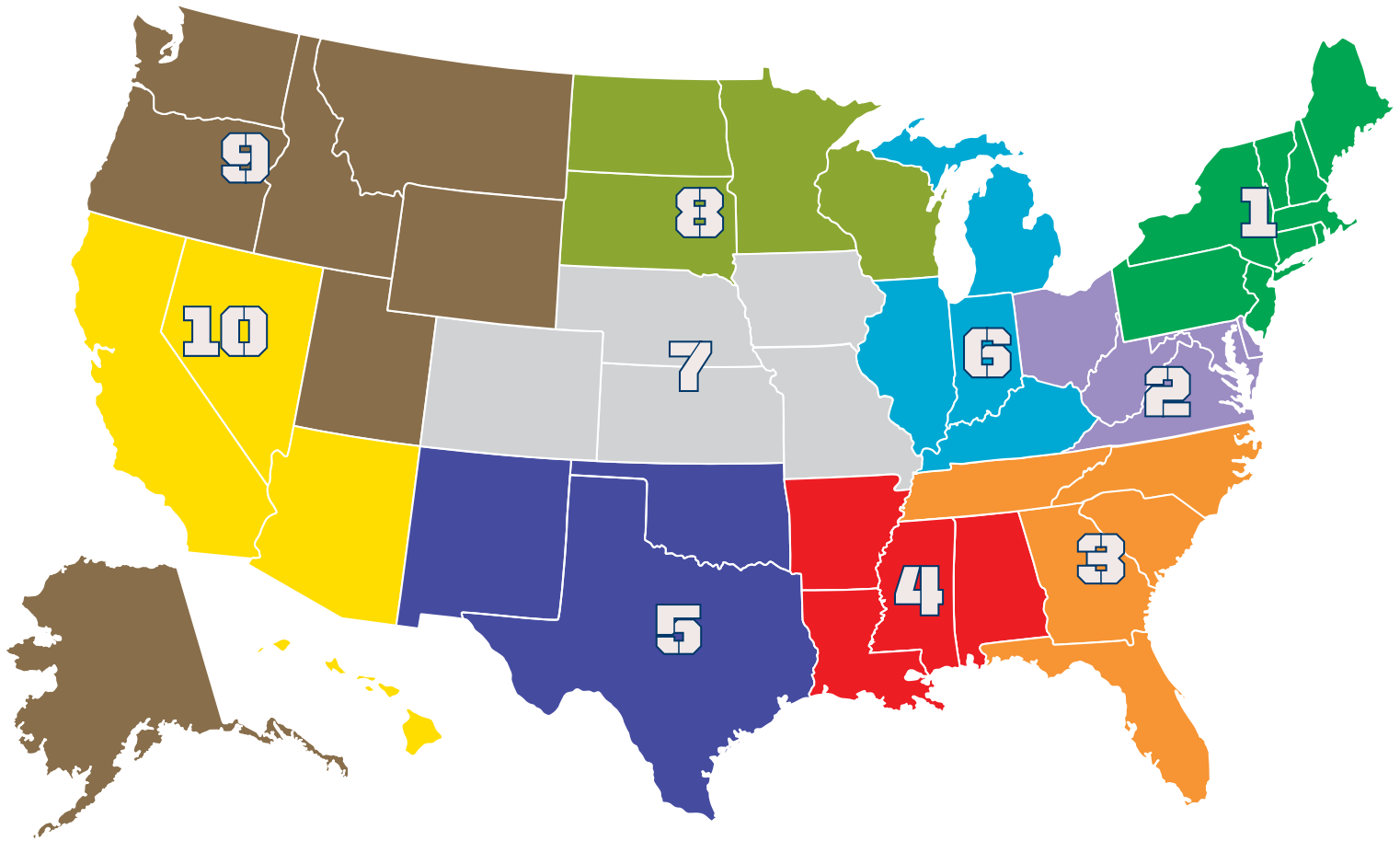
Providing educational opportunities for umpires across the nation, such as National Umpire Schools and Umpire-In-Chief (UIC) Clinics.



THE NATIONAL GOVERNING BODY OF SOFTBALL



## USA SOFTBALL REGIONS



### REGION 1

Connecticut  
Maine  
Massachusetts  
New Hampshire  
New Jersey  
New York  
New York City  
Pennsylvania  
Rhode Island  
Vermont

### REGION 2

Central Virginia  
Maryland - DC - DE  
Ohio  
Piedmont Virginia  
West Virginia

### REGION 3

Florida  
Georgia  
Tennessee  
The Carolinas

### REGION 4

Alabama  
Arkansas  
Louisiana  
Mississippi

### REGION 5

Dallas/Fort Worth  
Houston  
New Mexico  
Oklahoma  
Texas

### REGION 6

Chicago  
Detroit  
Illinois  
Indiana  
Kentucky  
Michigan

### REGION 7

Colorado  
Iowa  
Kansas  
Kansas City  
Missouri  
Nebraska  
St. Louis

### REGION 8

Minneapolis  
Minnesota  
North Dakota  
South Dakota  
Wisconsin

### REGION 9

Alaska  
Idaho  
Montana  
Oregon  
Portland  
Seattle  
Utah  
Washington  
Wyoming

### REGION 10

Arizona  
Central California  
Hawaii  
Nevada  
Northern California  
Sacramento  
San Francisco  
Southern California



## REGISTER WITH USA SOFTBALL



### WHY REGISTER WITH USA SOFTBALL?

- Registering with USA Softball affords you support from a local, regional and national level. USA Softball is here to support your youth program in all aspects of operations.
- Registering with the NGB of Softball in the United States is your first step to the best softball experience. Your registration with USA Softball includes a comprehensive insurance plan as well as additional plans you can purchase to further protect your organization. The USA Softball insurance is unmatched by any other provider of coverage in the youth softball world and is provided as a part of your membership with USA Softball.



- To participate in the USA Softball program, leagues and competitive teams are required to register all participants in their program annually. All leagues and/or teams should complete their registration prior to the start of practices and games for the protection of the players, coaches and volunteers.
- All registration should be completed through:  
[www.registerusasoftball.com](http://www.registerusasoftball.com)
- Guides to registration can be obtained through your local USA Softball Commissioner or JO Commissioner.



### MEMBER BENEFITS

As the National Governing Body of Softball, USA Softball is a nonprofit organization that provides millions of players, fans, coaches, administrators, umpires and parents with benefits upon registering to play USA Softball. While each association and member-league offers unique opportunities upon registering, certain benefits exist for everyone just by being part of the program.

### ALL MEMBERS

- Eligible to participate in USA Softball sanctioned events
- Receive a digital copy of the Official Rules of Softball, which provides a set standard of playing rules for consistency and fair play for all those involved
- Receive a digital copy of USA Softball's Official Scorebook
- Subscription to and opportunity to be featured in the Balls & Strikes Online Publication, the Official Publication of USA Softball
- Top-of-the-line insurance coverage through RPS Bollinger Insurance to provide peace of mind for all who are involved in the sport
- The opportunity to use USA Softball's Member Logo, which designates you as a member of the National Governing Body of Softball in the United States
- Hotel discounts
- Travel discounts through USA Softball partners
- Membership in the ONLY organization that supports the USA Softball National Team programs and sends Team USA to international events such as World Championships, Pan American Games and the pinnacle sporting event for the sport of softball – The Olympic Games
- Comprehensive dedication to the integrity of the game, including:
  - Industry-leading equipment testing and certification standards
  - Comprehensive background checks on coaches, umpires and personnel who surround our game
  - SafeSport, which provides services to sport entities on abuse prevention techniques, policies and programs
  - Annual Safety Awareness Guides, which provides information to youth and adult players and umpires on topics such as first aid, lightning safety and travel policies

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## REGISTER WITH USA SOFTBALL



### YOUTH ATHLETE

- Recreation and competitive opportunities for boys and girls in both fast pitch and slow pitch
- A positive and nurturing environment to help aspiring athletes in their development and preparation for college and life
- Accident insurance coverage through RPS Bollinger on all individual registrations while teams have the opportunity to purchase Team insurance and name field owners as additional insureds
- Opportunity to play in State/Metro/Regional Championships/National Championships
- Qualifiers and National Championship Finals
- Opportunity to be selected for:
  - 12-Under All-American Games
  - Junior Men's and Junior Women's National Teams
  - All-Star or All-League teams



### ADULT ATHLETES

- Recreation and competitive opportunities for men, women and coed in fast pitch, modified pitch, slow pitch and 16"
- Opportunity to play in State/Metro/Regional Championships/National Championships
- Qualifiers and National Championship Finals
- Accident insurance coverage through RPS Bollinger on all individual registrations while adult teams have liability insurance and the opportunity to purchase accident insurance
- Up-to-date player database, which details individual player classifications to level the playing field in tournament and recreation play
- Opportunity to be selected for:
  - Men's, Women's and Futures Slow Pitch National Teams
  - Men's and Women's Fast Pitch National Teams
  - All-American and All-Tournament Teams at National Championship Finals

### UMPIRES

- Receive the Official USA Softball Umpire Manual, which is published online annually
- Top-of-the-line insurance options, including liability, excess accident medical expense and insurance coverage when officiating scholastic and collegiate softball events
- Provides the best-of-the-best umpire training and mechanics education
- The opportunity to attend both Local and National Umpire Schools
- Assignments to local, metro, state, Regional and National Championship Finals
- The opportunity to join the USA Softball Umpire Awards Program
- The ability to certify with the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC), which provides opportunities to be selected to umpire at World Championships, Pan American Games, select international events and even the Olympic Games
- The opportunity to umpire in the international exchange program with countries like Canada and Australia
- The opportunity to umpire in joint events hosted by MLB, Armed Forces and USA Softball
- Step-by-step clinics to get you started
- Provide evaluations on how to advance to higher level events
- Consistent training each year to help you grow as an umpire





## REGISTER WITH USA SOFTBALL



### LEAGUE ADMINISTRATORS & TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS

- Opportunity for discounted softball equipment, such as balls, through state/metro association partnerships
- Opportunity to use USA Softball registered umpires
- Opportunity to purchase optional insurance coverages through RPS Bollinger, including Directors & Officers Liability, Crime and Equipment Insurance
- Adult Team Tournament Directors have ease of mind knowing that their registered teams have liability insurance that is included with their team registration. Tournament Directors may purchase Tournament Accident insurance for additional protection
- Youth Team Tournament Directors have the opportunity to purchase liability and accident insurance for their sanctioned tournaments
- Ability to host local USA Softball tournaments and bid on USA Softball National Championships
- Support from the state/metro association staff for league administration
- Access to lineup cards, bat stickers, brackets and more for league and tournament play
- Opportunity to participate with the MLB PLAY BALL and Pitch, Hit and Run initiatives



### CITY/COUNTY GOVERNMENTS

- Two million dollars worth of Liability Insurance
- Opportunity to bid on National Championship and Territorial Finals at USA Softball Annual Council Meetings

### PARENTS OF YOUTH ATHLETES

- Peace of mind, knowing your youth athlete is a part of the ONLY softball organization that:
  - Requires background checks and SafeSport training for coaches, umpires and Tournament Directors in youth Championship Play. In addition, each state/metro association may have additional requirements for non-Championship Play
  - Requires state/metro associations to meet state/federal laws regarding concussion protocols
  - Provides the best-of-the-best in coaching education to ensure that coaches understand their duties as a coach of a youth softball team
  - Provides top-of-the-line insurance coverage to provide assistance if the need arises
  - Provides both parent and coach Code of Ethics so that members understand their role in fostering a positive and nurturing environment for youth athletes
  - Equips officials with the best education and training materials, making USA Softball officials the best trained and proficient in the sport of softball
- Educational resources covering topics relating to youth sports such as: recruitment, nutrition, leadership, anti-bullying and more

### COACHES

- Ability to name field owners as Additional Insureds for organizations and purchase team insurance for additional coverage
- Education through the ACE (Aspire, Challenge, Encourage) Coach Education Program
- Discounted one-year membership to the National Fastpitch Coaches Association (NFCA) with completion of the ACE Coach Education Program
- Exclusive access to ACE Coach-specific resources and National Coaching School opportunities
- Access to online educational resources relating to athlete health and wellness
- Access to the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Coaching
- Softball course and training modules to foster a positive sports environment



## SAFESPORT

To achieve the USA Softball mission and vision, we have programs in place to help protect athletes on and off the field as well as prepare coaches to be the best that they can be!



U.S. CENTER FOR  
**SAFESPORT**  
CHAMPION RESPECT. END ABUSE.

**CLICK HERE FOR MORE  
INFORMATION ON SAFESPORT**

# KEEPING YOUNG ATHLETES SAFE

## SAFESPORT

As the National Governing Body of Softball in the United States, USA Softball (USAS) joins with the U.S. Center for SafeSport (the Center) in its commitment to building a sports community where participants can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of emotional, physical, and sexual misconduct.

The Center's authority derives from the bylaws of the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee and from The Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017 that was passed by the United States Congress. Such bylaws mandate that the USOPC eliminates abuse and recognizes the Center's jurisdiction and authority to fulfill this mission.

The U.S. Center for SafeSport seeks to create a healthy, supportive environment for all participants. Through education, resources, and training, the Center helps members of the sports community recognize, reduce, and respond to misconduct in sport.

## MAAPP

USA Softball is invested in keeping young athletes free of abuse and has adopted the [Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies \(MAAPP\)](#). The MAAPP limits one-on-one adult/minor interactions and sets standards for training and sport settings that prevent abuse and misconduct.

### The MAAPP includes:

- 1** An Education and Training Policy that requires SafeSport Training for certain adults in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement.
- 2** Required Prevention Policies with seven key guidelines limiting one-on-one interactions between certain adults and Minor Athletes. Required in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement and recommended for any leagues and sport entities.
- 3** Recommended Prevention Policies, though not required, for all sport organizations within and beyond the Movement







## BACKGROUND CHECKS // ACE



To achieve the USA Softball mission and vision, we have programs in place to help protect athletes on and off the field as well as prepare coaches to be the best that they can be!

### BACKGROUND CHECKS

USA Softball annually conducts more than 70,000 criminal background checks of its participants. Members who are background checked include adult non-players in youth play, umpires, scorekeepers, staff, and other volunteers. Background checks conducted by USA Softball are for the sole purpose of determining eligibility for USA Softball sanctioned events. Such background checks are not used for employment screening and are required for all umpires and coaches over the age of 18 participating in JO events.

Participants who process an independent background check, normally paid by credit card on RegisterUSASoftball.com, receive an I.D. card from USA Softball stating that they've passed the background check. Other participants may receive notice of background check clearance through the form of an ACE I.D. card or on their individual team registration card.



### ACE

USA Softball provides educational information to more than 25,000 coaches each year. The ACE (Aspire, Challenge, Encourage) Coaching Program is a coaching education program developed and designed to provide softball coaches of all levels – from beginning coaches to experienced veterans – an opportunity to be educated as a coach with a national softball organization.

As the National Governing Body of Softball in the United States, it is USA Softball's responsibility to ensure that our coaches achieve a certain level of understanding of what their duties are as a coach of a youth softball team. The ACE Education videos and training materials serve as practical guides to the everyday situations you will encounter as a youth softball coach. The lessons are taught by former and current coaches and athletes, including members of the USA Softball Olympic team! After obtaining your ACE education, you will be well prepared to coach a youth softball team.

The guiding principles behind the ACE Coaching Education Program are:

#### A ASPIRE

to achieve a comprehensive level of knowledge for the game.

#### C CHALLENGE

your understanding and knowledge through continued education and growth.

#### E ENCOURAGE

yourself and others to be prepared and knowledgeable as a coach in order to provide your athletes an environment in which they can achieve success.

Additionally, ACE coaches received \$2,000,000/\$5,000,000 liability insurance coverage from the time it's complete through the rest of the season!

Here is a quick run-through of the ACE Coach Education Program and how one would become educated and achieve the highest level of ACE Education.

The first step to complete for any coach who is attempting to become educated is to log in to RegisterUSASoftball.com. If you are an existing coach who is coming to the site to complete another level of education, your profile should be located, and you'll continue from the position that you left off. For example, if you completed ACE Level 1 last year, ACE Level 2 will be available for purchase and completion. Coaches can get their member ID number from an ID card produced through RegisterUSASoftball.com or contacting the local USA Softball Association.





**HOW TO PARTICIPATE**



# HOW TO PLAY IN USA SOFTBALL TOURNAMENTS



**1**

**FIND A LIST OF TOURNAMENTS ON  
[WWW.TOURNAMENTUSASOFTBALL.COM](http://WWW.TOURNAMENTUSASOFTBALL.COM)**



**2**

**SELECT THE ASSOCIATION  
YOU ARE LOOKING TO PLAY IN**



**3**

**YOU WILL FIND A LIST OF “UPCOMING  
EVENTS”, SELECT THE EVENT YOU  
ARE LOOKING TO PLAY IN**



**4**

**REGISTER YOUR TEAM TO PLAY**



If you are not able to find the tournament you want to play in on [www.tournamentusasoftball.com](http://www.tournamentusasoftball.com) please contact your local USA Softball Commissioner or JO Commissioner for more information.



**HIGH PERFORMANCE PROGRAM**



# HIGH PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

Through the HPP, athletes around the country will have the chance to make a USA Softball National Team at multiple age groups. Working first at the regional level, the HPP can identify the best talent through evaluation, placement, and re-evaluation each year for advancement consideration -- working to discover the **future Women's National Team athletes.**

**Regional Identifier**



**Regional Invitational Event**



**National Selection Event**



## EVALUATORS

The evaluators for the Regional Identifier and Region Invitational Event will be current & former Women's National Team members.

## REGIONS

The HPP includes **10 regions across the U.S.** with athletes ages 13u, 14u, 15u, 16u, 17u & 18u eligible to participate.

[HPP.USASOFTBALL.COM](http://HPP.USASOFTBALL.COM)



## RULES, CODE, BYLAWS & BUDGETING



### HOW RULES, CODE AND BYLAWS ARE SUBMITTED AND VOTED ON

- Bylaws can only be changed by Board of Directors.
- Procedural Code can be submitted and voted on by Council Members.
- The window to submit Procedural Code/Rule changes is within two months before the Annual Council Meeting via the Governance Website ([governance.softball.org](http://governance.softball.org)).
- Each submittal must have the way the item is currently written, how you propose it to read and why the change should be made.
- Once the Governance Site closes, all members can go in and submit their preliminary vote.
- Once the preliminary vote deadline hits, the National Office prints the proposed changes with preliminary vote totals in the Annual Council Book.
- Every Committee/Panel/Forum meets throughout Council and discusses the changes that affect them (i.e. Playing Rules & Legislative) ... at this time, the authors have the ability to amend or withdraw their proposal.
- Once the individual meetings are all completed, the final vote goes to the Final Session where all Council Members are together. All proposals that were approved in their respective meetings pass through unless a member of the Council places a "HOLD". All "HOLDS" are discussed at the end. All proposals that were denied during their respective meeting never make it to the Final Session.
- Once the Chair is finished reading through the changes, everything that was accepted by Committees/Panels/Forums officially passes through as an official change to the Procedural Code/Playing Rules.
- Any items that were placed on a "HOLD" are reviewed on the floor with the entire Council. Discussion takes place and the Author has the ability to amend or withdraw their item. Once finalized, the Council Votes to either Accept, Reject or Abstain.



### TIPS TO HELP BUDGET & GUIDE YOUR LEAGUE/TOURNAMENT FINANCIALLY

- 1 Secure date & complex based on the type of event you're running (adult, JO, fast pitch, slow pitch).
- 2 To determine entry fee, work the budget backwards. See attached document on expenses to consider.
- 3 When determining revenue, consider the type of event and where it makes sense to pull revenue. For example, charge a higher team fee and not a gate fee. Does charging for parking make sense? Work the budget so your event is in the surplus. Our events are family friendly and not meant to break the bank.
- 4 Advertise tournaments via TournamentUSA (TUSA), personal website, Facebook groups, news releases, email blasts, etc.
- 5 Finish planning remainder of event including ordering awards, softballs, sorting out merchandise, and scheduling staff.
- 6 Collect all final information & entry fees from teams. Build a schedule and post no later than one week in advance.

USA Softball Event Activity Budget	
Item	Amount
<b>REVENUE</b>	
Team Fee	
Gate Fee	
Concessions	
Merchandise	
Other	
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Referee	
Umpire	
Field	
Softballs	
Awards	
Staff	
Travel	
Food	
Other	





## USA SOFTBALL UMPIRES



## Why Become a USA Softball Umpire?

### Benefits of being a USA Softball Umpire

- Make extra money, can be as much as 50.00/hr
- Minimal Expense once you have started
- Become a member of the USA Softball Umpire family and meet people from all across the world
- Travel
  - Within your state
  - State-to-state
  - Internationally
- Unlimited potential & growth with the chance to stay involved in the game



### Insurance

- Best Liability Insurance available
- One-stop-shop
  - Covers all USA Softball sanctioned events
  - Covers you in all scholastic events, NFHS, NCAA, etc.

### Being a member of the National Governing Body of Softball in the United States

- Gold Standard of Umpires
- Chance to umpire at the International Level
- Chance to umpire at the Olympic level



## Why use USA Softball Umpires at your leagues/tournaments?

As a registered USA Softball Umpire, you will be eligible to umpire at any level.



### A safe environment

- USAS requires all umpires to be Background Checked
- USAS enforces the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee Guidelines by requiring all umpires to be Safesport certified
- Equipment Certification and Testing done annually
  - All equipment used on USA Softball must be tested and approved by a certified laboratory
  - All bats are reviewed before every championship for a certification mark and any possible problems with the bat per USA Softball Rules





USA SOFTBALL BRANDING



# USA SOFTBALL™

The USA Softball logo is one of our greatest branding tools as it represents our organization to the softball community, sports industry, sponsors, and the public. To maintain its integrity and the equity that we have established with this mark, it is important to position it in a proper manner as outlined in the [USA Softball Official Style Guide](#).

Careful application of these brand identity guidelines will effectively differentiate, protect, and strengthen the USA Softball brand. The USA Softball Official Style Guide outlines the appropriate uses of the USA Softball logo in a variety of applications. Your commitment and support will contribute to the long-term, overall growth and development of the USA Softball brand.

To find licensed vendors please visit [USA Softball Licensed Vendors](#).

To apply as a licensed vendor to use the USA Softball marks, please contact [marketing@usasoftball.com](mailto:marketing@usasoftball.com)

## INCORRECT PRIMARY LOGO USAGE



DO NOT adjust the width or the height or skew the logo.

DO NOT reverse or change colors in any way other than noted within this guide.



INCORRECT

One color options on a solid color must be in white and have accompanying stroke.

## INCORRECT SECONDARY LOGO USAGE

Applies to both stacked and horizontal logos.



Do not adjust the width or the height of logo. Do not skew logo.

Do not reverse or change colors in any way



INCORRECT

One color options on a solid color must be in white.



## MARKETING GUIDANCE



# THE ULTIMATE *Marketing* TOOLKIT



## PROMOTE

To recruit leagues and teams to play USA Softball, here are some tips:

- Build strong relationships
- Create promotional fliers using a digital program such as Canva
  - Include important information and create a clean, eye-catching design
- Run local campaigns or advertisements

Work with local media to see what free or discounted promotional opportunities may be available.



## PARTNERSHIPS

As a USA Softball member you have access to the national sponsors. If a company is partnered with USAS, and you would like to work with them, please request a rep contact by reaching out to the National Office.

Click [here](#) to find a list of Sponsors/Partners



## FUNDRAISING TIPS

1. Identify your fundraising purpose and create your fundraising pitch
  - This could include staffing, scholarships, upgrades, etc.
  - Galas, Special Events, etc.
2. Create a donor platform & ways for supporters to donate
  - Recognize the key areas that people can consider donating towards and create various categories for distinctions and recognition
3. Keep your donors in the loop and make them feel they are in the know on everything USA Softball
  - Send personal Thank You letters
  - Create social media campaigns recognizing important businesses and personal donors



## DIGITAL MARKETING



### KEY

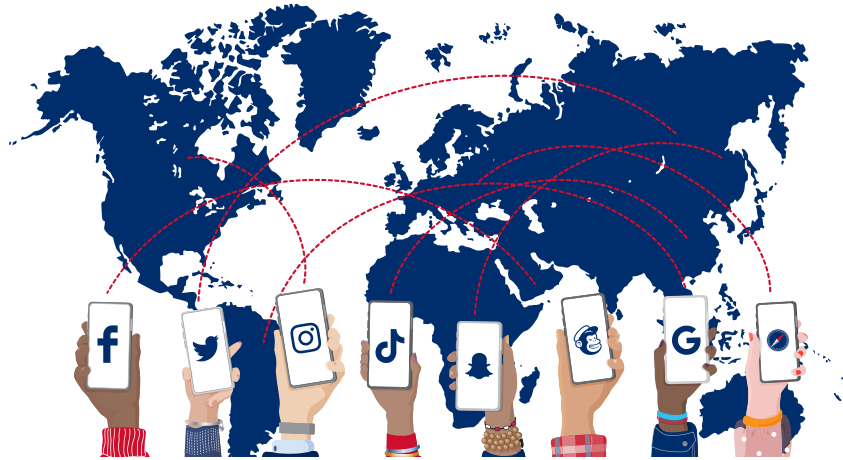
Establish a following with your members!

### GOALS

- Inform
- Bring Awareness
- Entertain
- Educate
- Tell a Story



## COMMUNICATION IS KEY



### ***DIRECTLY COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR MEMBERS***

Create an easy line of communication with your coaches, parents, athletes, umpires, etc.

- Create email distribution lists to notify members of any relevant information happening in your area and/or within USA Softball
- Consistently communicate through bi-weekly newsletters and/or quarterly recaps
- Actively update your website with the most relevant information/content



### ***SOCIAL MEDIA***

Work with your local association and the USA Softball National Office to cross promote on social media accounts

- Utilize visual content (photos, videos, etc.) - *The less words the better*
- Make a goal to post 3-5 times a week
- Share exciting and fun moments to celebrate now and remember in the future
- Connect with parents, players, coaches and umpires to collect content to share
- Tag your local association and @USASoftball
- Share posts from @USASoftball to help members stay informed on a national level



### ***EVENT SPECIFIC TIPS***

**BEFORE:** Promoting event details, previewing teams = **WHY** should teams participate? **Get people excited!**

**DURING:** Talking with teams, umpires, etc. about their experience and posting highlights/recaps on social media and website. **Show off your event!**

**AFTER:** Showing how beneficial it was, how much fun participants had, previewing the **NEXT** tournament, etc. **Recap your event!**







## DEVELOPMENT TOOLS & TIPS



### EDUCATION

AMATEUR RESOURCE CENTER

ACE COACH EDUCATION PROGRAM



### PLAY BALL

Play Ball is MLB's signature youth event designed to introduce bat/ball sports at a grassroots level. Hosting a Play Ball event is a great way to engage the broader community and spark some interest in the game. We have a Play Ball activation guide that can be distributed to you upon request.

This website is the hub of information about all the MLB Baseball & Softball Development initiatives (signature Play Ball events, Development events with USA Softball, RBI, etc.).

**Potential USA Softball Association activations:** Play Ball event to kick off league registration period with an event hosted the weekend prior to registration commencement to spark interest (option to add opportunity for early registration on site at the event); community engagement in connection with existing tournaments. Opportunities for Play Ball grants through the boys & girls club supported by MLB.

MORE INFO

### MLB/USA SOFTBALL ELITE DEVELOPMENT EVENTS

Elite development programs geared towards high school athletes in underserved and underrepresented communities and run-in conjunction with the USA Softball National Office.

Training camps are free of cost for athletes to attend and include a mix of intense on-field training combined with off-field educational sessions focused on topics such as recruiting, nutrition, and baseball/softball career opportunities.

Coaching staff includes current and former USA Softball National team members.

More information on these programs is available under the "Player Development" dropdown at [www.playball.org](http://www.playball.org)

**Potential USA Softball Association activations:** USA Softball Associations have opportunities to nominate athletes to attend these unique events.

### PITCH, HIT & RUN

This is a competition-based grassroots program for youth baseball and softball players. Organizations (including colleges/universities) can sign up to host a local competition. Final rounds for athletes who advance that far are held as part of MLB All-Star Week.

**Potential USA Softball Association activations:** Host competition event as part of a tournament—enhances opportunities for those participating in the tournament and brings members of the community out to participate that may not otherwise be involved.

MORE INFO



### SOFTBALL BREAKTHROUGH SERIES

The Softball Breakthrough Series is designed to promote softball as a viable collegiate option for youth from underrepresented and underserved communities. The event is completely cost-free for participants, who are selected by invitation only. The program focuses on developing players on and off the field through seminars, mentorship, gameplay, scout evaluations, video coverage and the highest level of instruction.

In all, 60 participants are selected from all over the country through league nominations. Selected athletes will have the opportunity to work with U.S. Olympians, former National Team members and coaches for three days of on- and off-field instructions and scrimmages.





## VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT



# How to Use Registration to Recruit New Volunteers

A strong volunteer base is at the center of every successful program. From coaches to Board members, every volunteer plays a part in providing a great experience.

### Step 1: Identify Volunteer Positions



The Board determines how many positions need to be filled in advance of the season. When identifying positions, be sure to define the role, responsibilities, and time commitments of that position. This will help potential volunteers know what to expect and help the league measure the success of the individual filling that position.

### Step 2: Find Sources to Recruit Volunteers



Most volunteers within your league will be parents of participants; however, there are other areas to which your league can look for volunteers such as service organizations, local businesses, leadership programs, high schools, and colleges.

### Step 3: Prepare To Reach Out To Potential Volunteers



When asking someone to volunteer their time, there are several factors you will want to keep in mind. This includes clearly defining volunteer roles and positions. Be prepared to promote to individuals why they should volunteer with your league and talk about the opportunity to support the children in your community, which is different from player registration promotion.

### Step 4: Recruiting Volunteers



There are numerous opportunities to reach out to volunteers, including registration, tryouts, or other in-person opportunities. Make sure your in-person events are conducted in a positive, welcoming environment that family members want to be a part of. When conducting an event, talk with parents about positions that need to be filled. When conducting an online registration, make sure there is an opportunity for parents to sign up to help out in a volunteer capacity.

### Step 5: Volunteer Recognition



An important part of keeping volunteers engaged and motivated is recognizing their efforts throughout the year. Whether your league holds a Volunteer Recognition Ceremony or creates special pins and other tokens of appreciation, consider creating opportunities to recognize and thank your volunteers. Showing appreciation for volunteers is crucial to a league's longevity.