

## Club Licensing Policy

Revised May 15<sup>th</sup>/2025 (Safe Sport amendment in 4.1)

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### 1. Definitions

Term	Definition
Association	Organized community entity that offers multiple levels of programming by age, skill level, or inclusive groups.
Independent Team	Organized community entity that offers programming to one group of athletes (single team).
League	Governing entity that oversees an organized league outside of Baseball Nova Scotia or Association governed leagues.
Club	An organized entity that may include Associations, Independent Teams, Leagues, or Associate Members.
Event	Sanctioned events organized by Baseball Nova Scotia or its members.
Member	Includes players, teams, umpires, leagues, associations and individuals who have met the criteria for membership as defined in the By-Laws.
Licensed Club	A club recognized by Baseball Nova Scotia as the official program provider for a specified area.
Associate Members	A recognized group that does not fall within BNS membership but collaborates with Baseball Nova Scotia to offer baseball programming in the province. (i.e – NSSF, University, Over 45 League)
Club Level	Prospective clubs must identify as an Association, Independent Team, League, or Associate Club.

## **2. Statement on Club Licensing Policy**

The Club Licensing Policy is designed to guide member associations toward the best principles for organizational development both on and off the field. An effective program will have numerous benefits for member associations and Baseball Nova Scotia as a whole.

A Club Licensing Policy will provide protection to current member associations in good standing with the PSO, while also allowing for an annual reporting process. The licensing system would require each club to apply for membership each year by submitting basic information, as well as an update on the programming being offered within the Club. Through this reporting, gaps will be identified, and strategies can be developed to address them.

## **3. Benefits to Clubs**

- Approved clubs will receive recognition as the official BNS licensed baseball program in their designated geographic area.
- Only Licensed Clubs will have access to BNS membership privileges as outlined in the Baseball Nova Scotia Handbook.
- New clubs will not be permitted to become licensed if a Licensed Club exists in that geographic area and is offering similar programming.
- The program would assist associations in developing a succession/transition plan when there's leadership turnover.
- Assist associations in assessing their current status and comparing it to best practices in amateur sport.
- Templates for policies and procedures would become more readily available for associations addressing current gaps.
- As SafeSport requirements becomes mandatory at the club level, the Licensing process will streamline support efforts.
- Create synergy between associations and BNS.
- Allow Baseball Nova Scotia to have a more accurate and official inventory of programming being run by member associations.
- Assist association leaders in understanding roles as Board members.
- Provide additional clarity on BNS supports and services (insurance, grassroots programming, etc.)
- Better systems in addressing umpire gaps and creating strategies for recruitment and retention.

#### **4. Requirements**

4.1 All Licensed Clubs or prospective Licensed Clubs are required to provide information in the following areas:

- a) Club Level
  - Association
  - Independent Team
  - League
  - Associate Member
- b) Club Name
- c) Catchment Area
- d) President Name and Contact
- e) Registrar Name and Contact
- f) Website
- g) Program Information
  - Competitive Skill Classifications (AAA, AA, A)
  - Recreational Programming (Rally Cap, Challenger, Girls, Recreational, etc.)
- h) Governance Information
  - AGM Information (Date and Location)
  - Is financial information provided to members?
  - Are all participants registered (or going to be for the upcoming season) with Baseball Nova Scotia?
- i) Safe Sport
  - The Club hereby agrees to abide by all policies outlined in the Baseball Nova Scotia Safe Sport Policy Suite.

4.2 Prospective clubs must identify their Club Level, as an Association, Independent Team, League, or Associate Member, per the Definitions outlined in section 1.

4.3 Clubs that answer 'No' to any questions in sections h) and i) will be contacted and may be offered the opportunity to address gaps within a negotiated timeline. Club Licenses may still be granted with provisions.

4.4 Licensed Clubs (with the exception of Associate Members) are to register all participants (athletes, coaches, umpires, Board) as Baseball Nova Scotia members by the date outlined in the annual Calendar of Events.

4.5 Clubs are eligible to apply as an Associate Member if they're offering a program or league that is not deemed to be in direct competition with an existing Licensed Association, Independent Team, or League. Associate Members may be approved with provisions and limited services.

Examples include entities such as school sport (high school and university leagues).

- 4.6 Independent Teams are eligible to apply if the team does not conflict with a Licensed Association's programming.
- 4.7 Baseball Nova Scotia will not approve applications for a Club License if the application includes a catchment area where an existing Licensed Club offers.
- 4.8 An existing Licensed Club may offer permission to new Clubs to operate within their catchment area. Permission (with or without clauses) must be communicated to the BNS office.
- 4.9 Prospective Clubs applications that have been denied area may submit an appeal to the BNS office by following the procedure outlined in section 8.

## **5. Registration**

- 5.1 Licensed Clubs must register annually to maintain their status with Baseball Nova Scotia.
- 5.2 A registration link will be provided to Licensed Club Presidents.
- 5.3 Supporting documentation is not required to be uploaded, but Baseball Nova Scotia reserves the right to request additional information from time to time.
- 5.4 Baseball Nova Scotia may do random audits to ensure that information provided is accurate.
- 5.5 Information can be modified or updated at any time by contacting the BNS office.
- 5.6 Once the Club is registered, Licensed Clubs can then complete BNS Membership registration.

## **6. Timelines**

- 6.1 Licensed Clubs must abide by the timelines outlined in this Policy.
- 6.2 Should there be extenuating circumstances preventing a Club from meeting the outlined timelines, the Club President or a representative should reach out to the Executive Director.
- 6.3 Club Licensing Registration will open on January 1<sup>st</sup> annually.
- 6.4 The deadline to register for or renew the Club License is March 31<sup>st</sup>.
- 6.5 Licensed Clubs will be recognized from April 1<sup>st</sup> to the following March 31<sup>st</sup>, barring any penalties or sanctions imposed by Baseball Nova Scotia.

6.6 Clubs can still apply for Licensing past the March 31<sup>st</sup> deadline but will not be in good standing until the application is approved.

## **7. Penalties**

7.1 Penalties or sanctions may be levied to Licensed Clubs that fail to abide by the terms laid out in the Club Licensing Policy.

7.2 Infractions may include (but are not limited to):

- Falsified information in registration
- Failure to adhere to timelines outlined in section 6.
- Failure to adhere to minimum requirements of the Club Licensing Policy
- Failure to offer programming as described in registration.
- Impartial BNS membership registration (registering some participants, and not others)
- Offences that violate Safe Sport requirements
- Lack of oversight and proper governance of the Club.

7.3 Baseball Nova Scotia will make reasonable efforts to assist Licensed Clubs in achieving minimum requirements prior to levying penalties or sanctions.

## **8. Appeals**

8.1 A club may Appeal the decision to deny it's Club Licensed status.

8.2 A \$200 bond must be sent to the BNS office prior to any appeal being heard.

8.3 Appeals must be submitted prior to April 15<sup>th</sup> of the calendar year.

8.4 Appeal must include written rationale for initiating the appeal, along with supporting documents.

8.5 An Appeals Committee (3 people) shall be struck by the President to review the document. The committee shall not include the President or BNS office staff.

8.6 The Appeals Committee shall review the appeal and conduct any follow up communications should it be deemed necessary.

8.7 The Appeals Committee shall have the authority to accept or deny the appeal request. Provisions may be applied to any decision.

8.8 The Appeals Committee decision will be final, although the group is eligible to apply again the following calendar year should the appeal be denied.