

Kaizen Policies and Standards

KAIZEN: /'kaɪ,zɛn/
kaizen (plural kaizens)

1. Practice of continuous improvement in performance and productivity
2. Continuous improvement in a general way



Approved by Kaizen Softball President: Bill Copeland

Approval Date: November 25th, 2024

1 Introduction

Kaizen Softball is a competitive girls fastpitch softball organization based in Calgary, Alberta - Canada. We provide year-round opportunities for both indoor and outdoor training and games. Blackout periods will be determined on an annual basis as it is important to Kaizen Softball that athletes have rest periods in between seasons.

Our Mission Statement:

Kaizen Softball provides an environment that nurtures continuous improvement, teamwork, skill development, sportsmanship, and fun for athletes in the extended Calgary area who have the skills and desire to compete at the highest competitive levels available to Alberta athletes.

Purpose:

This document outlines the expectations of coaches, parents and athletes required by all Kaizen members. The Kaizen organization reserves the right to amend these guidelines at any time. Any changes will be communicated in an appropriate manner. Board members will perform their duties as set forth in the current bylaws and will be bound by a confidentiality agreement.

Please ensure that all Kaizen members read, sign, and understand the following document. We look forward to a fun and competitive season!

2 Policy Summary

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3 Definitions

The following definitions have meaning in this document:

All Star Girls Fastpitch Association - The official name of Kaizen Softball or Kaizen, which has Bylaws in the Province of Alberta and is governed by Softball Alberta. For the purpose of this document, the terms Kaizen or Kaizen Softball may be used.

Kaizen Executive - As defined in Kaizen's Bylaws, (All-Star Girls Fastpitch Association) the Kaizen Executive consists of the following: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Registrar, Secretary and Casino Coordinator.

Kaizen Board - As defined in Kaizen's Bylaws (All-Star Girls Fastpitch Association), the Kaizen Board consists of the Kaizen Executive and Directors.

Player or Athlete - Any individual that has been assigned to a Kaizen team for the purpose of representing Kaizen and playing softball. For the purpose of this document, the terms 'player' and 'athlete' can be used interchangeably.

Coach or Assistant Coach - A leader of the team that has been assigned and approved by the Kaizen Board, based on specific criteria, to nurture, develop and support players. For the purpose of this document, the terms 'coach' and 'assistant coach' can be used interchangeably.

Regular Members - a parent or legal guardian of a player who is officially registered on an approved team's roster; a player who is 18 and is officially registered on an approved team's roster.

Athlete Member - a minor player who is officially registered on an approved team's roster.

Associate Member - a person who is committed to supporting the development of softball in Calgary and has been nominated by either a Regular Member or an Associate Member and will include non-parent coaches.

4 Coaching Policies, Conduct and Responsibilities

Selection of Coaches:

The holder of the Coach Development portfolio, in consultation with the Coach Selection Committee and the Kaizen Board, will put forth recommendations to the Kaizen Board for all coach selections.

The Kaizen Board will meet prior to the ID Camp to discuss potential coaches, based on the recommendations provided by the Coach Selection Committee. The Kaizen Board will approve all coach selections.

If the Kaizen Board determines that a vote needs to be conducted in order to determine the final roster of coaches, any coaches that are on the Kaizen Board will excuse themselves from the vote. The vote will take place with at least 2/3rds of the entire Kaizen Board in attendance. At that time, a motion will be put forward to conduct a vote and the vote will be determined to be passed with a simple majority of Kaizen Board members in attendance.

In the event that a head coach or an assistant coach is not identified prior to the ID Camp, the same process as discussed above will occur for any additional coach or assistant coach prior to the start of the season

Following approval from the Kaizen Board, the Coach Selection Committee They will meet annually with the coaches prior to the start of the season and/or ID camps to set Kaizen expectations of coaches. At all times, the composition of the coaching staff is at the discretion of the Kaizen Board (refer to conflict resolution policy).

Assessment of Coach Applications

The holder of the Coach Development portfolio will compile all coach applications and sort the selections by the following:

- Age Group and Division requested
- Coach role requested

The compiled list of coaches will then be ranked by the following criteria:

- Total years of experience coaching
- Coach education (NCCP Level, additional courses)
- Coaching experience at level (provincial, regional, national)
- Coaching philosophy
- Previous Kaizen Coaching experience

Additionally, the following will be considered in the selection process of all coaches for Kaizen Softball:

- Gender - as a female sport organization we prioritize having multiple female coaches on all teams
- Fit for Kaizen brand - demonstrates behavior that aligns with our expectations, focused on continuous improvement while maintaining a competitive mindset
- Overall sport IQ - previous playing experience and level, additional strategy or knowledge building courses or experience
- Team mentality - demonstrates willingness to work with other Kaizen coaches in a cooperative and positive way
- Annual Survey Results from previous years

Assessment and Recommendation of Assistant Coaches:

As an elite softball program, the coaching staff are pivotal to our athlete's development and ultimately our ability to compete at the highest levels. To ensure that our coaching teams are well balanced, the assistant coaches will also be ranked by the above stated criteria.

Once the Head Coaches for the teams are selected, the Assistant Coach options for each team, subject to approval of the Kaizen Board and following the above Kaizen Board approval process, will be presented to the Head Coach along with the recommendations from the Coach Selection Committee. The Head Coach has the autonomy to select their team of assistant coaches, all final coach selections are subject to approval by the board.

Coach Certification Requirements:

- Coaches will be certified by the Coaching Association of Canada through the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP).
- U13 requires 2 coaches with NCCP Community Sport. Should a U13 team qualify for post-provincial play, NCCP Competition - Introduction will be required from both coaches.
- U15, U17 and U19 requires 2 coaches with NCCP Competition – Introduction.
- All coaches must have a minimum of NCCP Community Sport or be in the process of obtaining it and Make Ethical Decisions online evaluation (MED).
- NCCP Certification Clinics are available through Softball Alberta if needed.
- All certifications must be submitted to the Director leading the Coach Development portfolio prior to the start of the season.

Kaizen will reimburse 50% of coaching training expenses in year one of a coach's commitment and the remaining 50% of the coach training expenses in year two of a coach's commitment. Coaches are asked to pay their coaching training expenses upfront.

Coaches do need to understand that each coach is responsible for continuous education. Each coach requires points in a five -year term to maintain their NCCP coaching status.

Coaching Police Checks:

- Police checks need to be applied for and submitted to the Registrar prior to the start of the season.
- Police checks will be updated every three years.
- If a coach incurs a cost to obtain a police check, Kaizen Softball will reimburse the cost.
- The holder of the Coach Development portfolio will update registered security checks annually.

Coaching Composition:

- Maximum of four coaches can sit on the bench.
- Minimum of one female and one male coach. Exceptions will need to be assessed and approved by the holder of the Coach Development portfolio and the Kaizen Board.

Coach Philosophy:

It is very rewarding, challenging, and time-consuming to be a member of an elite competitive softball team. Our coaches will prioritize a safe, inclusive environment that encourages each athlete to be their best self, both on the softball diamond and off. Our coaches are committed to working hard to help each individual athlete succeed by developing fundamental skills and to maximize each athlete's potential. The expectation is that our athletes are committed to our coaches to achieve these goals.

The demands on athletes will be rigorous; the success of each athlete is contingent upon individual desire and effort. All athletes will be given equal opportunity for training and development during practices. However, coaches will have the full authority to determine playing time and positions during games. Effort, skill, team play, work ethic, practice habits, attitude, and performance will determine playing time.

We believe that there are many benefits from being a member of our Kaizen organization. These include continuous learning and improvement, and the friendships formed along the way. Success is earned through commitment, hard work, and team play.

Coach Conduct and Responsibilities:

As an elite softball program, our coaches are the core of our athlete's development. As an organization we ensure that our coaches are the highest quality, most knowledgeable and aligned with our own coaching philosophy. Coaches will be responsible for the following:

- Following, promoting, enforcing and signing the Kaizen Softball Policies and Standards.
- Ensuring required NCCP certification is achieved prior to season start for new coaches and held in good standing by all coaches.
- Conducting oneself in a manner that demonstrates good sportsmanship and is a positive role model for athletes as well as the softball community.
- Acting as an ambassador for Kaizen Softball, ensuring the organization is represented as a leading elite softball program. This includes behavior on and off the diamond, in

communication with athletes, parents, Kaizen softball members and the softball community at large.

- Fostering a positive and inclusive environment for all athletes at the team level as well as when working with and competing against other Kaizen teams.
- Ensure the athlete's safety and welfare comes first.
- Working with the evaluation committee, selecting athletes based on skill level and assigning them appropriate roles on the team.
- Understanding each athlete's effort, knowledge of the game, abilities, and attitude.
- Work to develop all athletes' skills throughout the season.
- Determine team and game rosters. Playing time is determined by an athlete's ability, skills, work ethic, attitude, and adherence to team rules.
- Developing game strategies and making decisions regarding the team.
- Commit to our organization's brand of Continuous Improvement by prioritizing self learning and development.
- Determine equipment requirements and care for/delegate responsibility for Kaizen property in their team's possession.
- Prepare an annual team plan and submit to the holder of the Coach Development portfolio by the date requested.
- Meet with athletes at least 3 times per season: pre-training season, pre-outdoor season, and pre-provincial championships.
- Meet with parents and the athlete at least once per year.
- Meet on an individual basis with the athlete at any time during the season as necessary. Coaches must always follow the "rule of two" when meeting, conversing & texting with athletes. When following the Rule of Two, all interactions and communications with participants are in open, observable, and justifiable settings, and two responsible adults, whether a coach, parent, staff or screened volunteer are present. There may be exceptions in emergency situations.
- Advise the Kaizen Board of the start of season Parent Meeting date and location and the Kaizen Board will ensure they have representation at the meeting. Parent meetings will not occur until after rosters are approved after the Kaizen ID camps and will not take place without a board member present.

Annual Coaches Plan Requirements:

- A coaching plan for the entire year
- Balance of practices and games
- Master plan forms will be provided to each coach to fill in

Annual plans must be submitted by the date specified by the Board Member in charge of the Coach Development portfolio for approval.

The holder of the Coach Development portfolio will schedule evaluations to determine if coaches are following their annual plans, adhering to Kaizen policies and procedures, and meeting team goals.

Evaluation schedules are as follows:

- Pre-season (approximately November)
- Mid-season (approximately May or June)

- End of season (approximately July/August)

5 Athlete Conduct, Responsibilities and Expectations

Participation on a Kaizen team is a privilege, not a right. It is expected that each athlete reads, understands, and promotes the Kaizen Softball Policies and Standards. This is your team. Your experience as a team and as an individual athlete will depend on the effort you put into it.

Athlete Conduct and Responsibilities:

Athletes will be responsible for the following:

- Give 100% effort and do your best at all practices, games, and training sessions.
- Always strive to improve your skills.
- Conduct yourself in a manner that will bring honor to you, the team, and the organization.
- Support the team's goals.
- Set personal goals and work to achieve them.
- Maintain a positive attitude at all times.
- Be receptive to coaching.
- Be inclusive of all teammates, bullying will NOT be tolerated.
- Be respectful and support all teammates, coaches, officials, organization volunteers and parents.
- Be respectful of all Kaizen property, practice locations, and game venues.
- Always practice good sportsmanship and represent Kaizen Softball appropriately.
- No throwing of equipment or other violent displays.
- Be on time for all practices and games.
- Hustle during drills in practice and on-and-off the field in games.
- Attend practices and games fully dressed and fully prepared with necessary items.
- Be responsible for all uniforms and equipment.
- Report all injuries to a coach immediately.
- Work on improving individual skills and physical conditioning outside of team practices.
- No foul or inappropriate language.
- Cheer and support the team even when watching the game and keep yourself ready to contribute to the team's success during the game.
- Follow the dress code policy. It is recommended that all jewelry is removed.
- Refrain from the use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs and not be under the influence of such substances at practices, games, fundraising or team events.
- No visiting with friends or family during games or practices.

- Participate in fundraising activities as directed by the team and/or Kaizen Softball.
- Maintain school grades commensurate with abilities.
- Help with team equipment set up, take down and repairs.
- Adhere to the Kaizen social media policy.
- Communicate with the Coach any intentions of accepting opportunities to be included on another team's roster for tournaments.

6 Parent Conduct Responsibilities and Expectations

Parents are very important to the success of Kaizen Softball. Parents can be the biggest support or the biggest obstacle for an athlete. Parents need to support their athlete by allowing them to experience their frustrations, failures, and successes on and off the field. Kaizen Softball always has the best interest of your athlete in mind.

Parent Conduct and Responsibilities:

Parents of Kaizen Athletes will be responsible for the following:

- Coaching from the stands is not permitted.
- Negative and/or disruptive actions are cause for removal from the team.
- Provide positive support at all games and practices.
- Support their athletes and keep them focused on their goals and assist them with outside skill work.
- Communicate athlete injuries immediately.
- Never criticize our athletes, organization volunteers, opposing team's athletes, coaches, or umpires publicly.
- Respect officials – to question, boo or heckle umpires is forbidden.
- Use appropriate and positive language. Vulgar, foul, or otherwise inappropriate language will not be tolerated.
- Stay off the field and out of the dugout during practices or games.
- Be respectful to coaches at practice, games and at home. It is very important that a positive atmosphere (attitude towards the coaches) is fostered at home.
- Obey the 24-hour rule. If parents have complaints, please wait 24 hours after the incident before discussing with coaches. Please arrange to meet privately off the field.
- Recognize that there will be zero tolerance for coach or athlete abuse. Athletes can be released from the team if parents are disruptive.
- Ensure that your athlete arrives on time for all practices and games.
- Cheerlead for our team and not against the opponents.
- Keep comments to a positive nature.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship and serve as positive role models.

- Tell my athlete it is okay to make mistakes.
- Tell my athletes that I am proud of them regardless of the outcome of the game.
- Support the coaches as they push the athletes to excel.
- Participate in fundraising activities as directed by the team and/or Kaizen Softball.
- Understand that addressing playing time with coaches is not allowed.

7 Tournament Travel Policy

Teams to ensure that they carry the appropriate insurance and travel permits to participate in out-of-province tournaments.

8 Roster Policy

Standard Process:

Kaizen Softball will host ID camp(s) (tryouts) prior to the new season. The Kaizen Board will compile the results from the ID camps. Names, results, and contact information will be passed on to coaches to initiate tryouts or to offer positions. Positions cannot be offered to athletes prior to receiving these ID camp summaries. Coaches will determine which athletes are offered the positions on the team. All athletes will be contacted by the coach or Kaizen Board designate with an update on their recruitment status.

If a team does not have a minimum of nine athletes on the roster, the Kaizen Board will assess and determine the viability of the team.

Exceptions and Additional Circumstances:

- If athletes contact Kaizen Softball directly outside the specified ID Camp dates, the coach may offer them a tryout opportunity subject to Kaizen Board approval.
- If a coach/team has recruited an athlete outside of the standard process, this athlete may not play or be rostered with the team until such approval has been granted by the Kaizen Board.
- Athletes can approach the Kaizen Board and request the opportunity to play on a different team.
- **Graduating Player Status**
 - Player must apply to the Kaizen Board to request a tryout with the older age group; must clearly state reasoning and the Kaizen Board does not have to grant the requested tryout. The Kaizen Board will discuss the request and approve or deny all requests.
 - Player must be in her graduating year.
 - Player must attend ID Camps; player must be evaluated by an impartial party.
 - Player must rank above the bottom quartile of the team selected.

- Kaizen Board of Directors will have the final decision on the athlete's placement; If there is a conflict of interest, parents of athletes currently serving on the Kaizen Board must remove themselves from voting.
- **Exceptional Player Status**
 - Player must apply to the Kaizen Board to request a tryout with the older age group; must clearly state reasoning and the Kaizen Board does not have to grant the requested tryout. The Kaizen Board will discuss the request and approve or deny all requests.
 - Player must attend ID Camps; player must be evaluated by an impartial party
 - Player must rank in the top quartile within the team selected (top 3-4)
 - Kaizen Board of Directors will have final decision on the athlete's placement; parents of athletes on teams being impacted are not entitled to Kaizen board voting
- At the end of the season an email will come from the Director of Player Development or VP to the Kaizen players that played at U19 or above, to evaluate expressed interest in playing for Kaizen in the following season. The athlete will reply no less than one week prior to ID camps to confirm interest. Players attending post-secondary school may be given exemptions from attending ID camps.

In all exceptions noted, the Kaizen Board will endeavor to prevent the regression of athletes if placed on different teams and will consider both the athlete's interests and those of the Kaizen organization.

The Kaizen Board remains impartial in circumstances relating to athletes of Kaizen Board members. Parents of athletes on teams being impacted must remove themselves from Kaizen Board voting on that issue. If coaches cannot agree between teams, then the Kaizen Board will assist with the final decision making.

9 Athlete Transfer Policy

Program:

Kaizen Softball is a competitive girls' fastpitch softball organization based in Calgary, Alberta - Canada. Our season runs from November through to the end of August and includes both indoor and outdoor training and games.

It is our goal to provide an environment that nurtures continuous improvement, teamwork, skill development, sportsmanship and fun for girls in Calgary and the extended surrounding area who have the skills and desire to play at a competitive 'A' level.

Player Import:

Kaizen Softball will adhere to the [Softball Alberta Player Transfer Policy](#). All players, U15 and under, who wish to register on a team outside their own local association **must** apply each year for a Player Transfer. The Player Transfer will be accepted by Softball Alberta subject to the release of the player from their home association only.

Player Transfers are for a one-year term, expiring on August 31 of the current year. Players return to their Home Association upon expiration of the Player Transfer.

Application Process and Deadlines:

As per Softball Alberta, the application process is as follows:

1. Player, Parent/Guardian fills out “Player” portion of Transfer form
2. Player, Parent/Guardian forwards Player Transfer form to RECEIVING Association President or designate.
3. RECEIVING Association President, or designate, shall initiate communication with Releasing Association President, or designate, regarding the requested player transfer*
4. Releasing Association must respond to the request within 7 days approving or denying the request for transfer**

* All communication and documentation must be between the Receiving and Releasing Associations ** Each Minor Association may have specific submission dates, or deadline dates. Please check with your Home association prior to submittal. The 7 day response timeline will then be in effect with these dates.



10 Financial Compensation for Teams Policy

All teams are eligible to receive financial reimbursements from Kaizen Softball. Funding will be communicated to the teams at the start of the season, but will include compensation for items such as equipment, tournament fees and other board approved expenses.

Payment schedules from the Kaizen organization will be communicated to teams at the start of the season.

Post Provincial Funding: Each team that qualifies for and attends Westerns and/or Nationals will be awarded a financial compensation as determined by the Kaizen Board. All post Provincial funding is subject to Kaizen Board funds being available and provided that all required post Provincial documentation is submitted to the Kaizen Board Treasurer(s).

Provincial Fees: The possibility for reimbursement of a team's Provincial Tournament registration fee will be determined on an annual basis by the Kaizen Board.

11 Travel Expense Policy/Additional Payment Guidelines

Scope:

Kaizen Softball is an amateur sport organization that relies on volunteers at all levels. Our program encourages all our members to provide the services that the club needs to operate. This includes all roles that are required to successfully run our teams. Examples of these positions include but are not limited to: Coaches / Assistant Coaches, Managers, Treasurers, Travel Coordinators, Equipment Coordinators, Social Media and Fundraising lead. As such, Kaizen Softball does not allow financial remuneration to be extended to any such role on our teams.

In the event that a team requires a non-parent to be a member of the coaching staff, Kaizen Softball recommends that all reasonable tangible Coach travel expenses should be reimbursed, up to a maximum of two coaches. Additional non-parent coach expenses are to be paid from the team budget. Any expenses must be for tangible costs incurred during the season and receipts must be provided to the Kaizen Treasurer. All expenses must include receipts.

The Kaizen Board feels that these critical volunteers should not be "out of pocket" with respect to necessary travel-related expenses.

Reimbursement amounts are to be estimated based on the team's season plan and approved by the Board prior to being included in the budget. Post Provincial non-parent coach tangible travel reimbursements are paid through the team budget.

Additional Guidelines (funds allocated to Kaizen Softball Teams):

- As per AGLC Guidelines, Casino Funds / Proceeds are not to be spent for compensation/remuneration of any kind for Coaches, Managers, etc.
- Donated/Sponsorship Funds or Federal or Provincial Grants are not to be pooled with general raised funds and are to be strictly used for their intended/approved purpose such as: clothing, equipment, banners, and hotel rooms. Donated funds will be accounted for and managed on a separate financial statement.
- Kaizen Softball is a non-profit organization, and its teams should act in kind as stewards of Kaizen Softball. Therefore, no compensation should be sought out for benefit or gain.

12 Team Management Policy

Team Treasurer

All teams will have a Treasurer who will be responsible for the record keeping of the team's books. These books will need to be reviewed annually by the Kaizen Treasurer(s).

Expectations will be set on an annual basis by the organization's Treasurer and conveyed at the pre-season Treasurer's meeting. Each team will hold a bank account in the team's name and all funds will be managed by the team Treasurer. A minimum of two signing authorities for the team account is mandatory. All team payments must be paid with a team cheque that includes two approved signatures or an e-transfer requiring two authorized signors. Bank card transactions and cash transactions are not to be done.

As part of the "Team's Annual Plan", a budget will be drafted and presented to all team members' parents for approval. Approval of the budget by parents must be documented by signing a copy of the budget or a budget approval form. The budget will outline fees required (including fundraising, Kaizen allowances, parent cash calls, sponsorships, etc.) and all anticipated expenses. The budget will subsequently be submitted for approval by the Kaizen Board Treasurer(s) at the onset of the season.

Any fees paid directly to Kaizen Softball will remain the property of Kaizen Softball and excess funds will be allocated by the Kaizen Board the following year.

Team Manager

All teams will have a Manager who will coordinate off-field administration. The Team Manager's responsibilities include the following:

- Booking tournaments, exceptions include League Fees, Canada Cup, Provincials and Post Provincials which will be arranged through the Kaizen Board or designate.
- Organizing fundraising activities, and any activities that coaches need support with.

- Keep copies of and ensure all parents sign and follow the Kaizen Policy and Standards and Parent Acceptance.
- Ensure all athletes and coaches register in RAMP in January and sign a copy of the Athletes/Coach Acceptance.
- Maintain copies of athletes' birth certificates.
- Maintain copies of AB Health Care numbers.
- Maintain emergency contact information for all athletes and coaches.
- Maintain pre-existing medical conditions and allergies.
- Maintain an injury log.
- Create emergency plans for each location that a team practices or plays at and will include a listing of the closest hospital(s) with directions supplemented by a map.
- All documents maintained by the Team Manager will be provided to the Kaizen Board at the end of the season, or during the season, at the request of the Kaizen Board.
- All documents held by the Team Manager will be destroyed or deleted at the end of the season. The Team Manager will confirm with the Registrar this process has been completed.

It is strongly encouraged that these activities are further divided amongst parent volunteers with the exception of maintaining personal documents (ie birth certificates, AB Health Care numbers etc.).

13 Fundraising Policy

Our board-organized "club" fundraising events are designed to cover team and organization expenses. All Kaizen members are expected to participate in club fundraising events without exception. All teams will be required to provide the proportionate number of volunteers to work at various Kaizen club fundraising activities.

Any AGLC Fundraising activities held at the team level must be approved by the Kaizen Executive (this includes raffles, 50/50s, draft pools, wine survivor, basket draws and squares boards). Requests for raffle licenses should be submitted a minimum of 1 week prior to beginning sales or advertising.

14 Inventory Policy

The Kaizen Board will maintain a master inventory list. At the conclusion of the season, all inventory will be returned to the Kaizen storage unit at the Webber Academy Athletic Park or other secured facility approved by the Kaizen Board, to update the inventory list. All teams must supply a designated volunteer to assist in the equipment return process.

All inventory purchased directly by Kaizen, or by individual teams using team funds, remains the sole property of Kaizen and will be signed out annually. The Kaizen Board has full discretion to recall inventory and realign resources as required.

15 Branding and Sponsorship Policy

The Kaizen Board needs to approve all sponsors to ensure appropriate sponsorship.

No corporate logos will be placed on uniforms or clothing that is to be worn during game play unless the Kaizen Board Executive has approved. Logos can be on team banners, websites, social media accounts and clothing that will not be worn on the diamond.

All Kaizen teams will purchase and use a standard Kaizen banner as dictated by the Kaizen Board that can have sponsorships included. Teams will prominently and proudly display the organization's banner at all games and tournaments. Additional team banners may be made at the discretion of the team provided the intent is to supplement and not replace the organization's banner. \$500 is the minimum donation to have corporate logos on team banners. All sponsors can be named on the website.

The Kaizen logo must not be changed or altered in any way. It must not be distorted, skewed, or disproportionately scaled in any way. This includes font, style, and color.

16 Uniform Policy

All athletes will wear matching uniforms at all games without exception. The following are mandatory policy requirements.

On Diamond Athlete's Uniform (During and Between Games)

- Full Kaizen uniform
- Team helmets - black matte with Kaizen "K" center front
- Socks on, jersey tucked in, belt on
- No ripped pants or uniforms
- Kaizen approved outerwear ONLY
- No hair in face
- Hair accessories must be black, green, white, silver or optic (clear)
- All accessories (such as sliders) must be black and or white (based on colour of pant)
- Predominately black and/or white cleats ONLY
- Any visible undergarments must be black or white ONLY
- Black, white or Kaizen approved green undershirts ONLY - All players matching
- Black, white or Kaizen approved green pants ONLY - All players matching
- Socks and belt combinations must match

- Black Jerseys (3rd jersey) are to be worn in tournament play at the discretion of the team coaches and managers

On Diamond While Viewing

- Upper body Kaizen apparel MUST be worn

Tournament and Kaizen Banquet Dress Code

- Business casual dress
- No ripped denim
- No short shorts
- No athletic pants
- No bare midriffs

Practice Uniform

- Kaizen branded practice shirts (Approved by Kaizen Board)
- Black or White ball pants or black shorts (at Coaches discretion)
- No hair in face
- Undergarments and midriff must be fully covered
- Dressed to always be able to slide
- No alterations to Kaizen apparel

Coach Uniform – all practices and games

- Kaizen logoed upper body apparel (no tank tops)
- Black pants or shorts
- Kaizen logoed hat
- Athletic shoes
- No denim

If an athlete, coach, or team does not follow uniform policy:

- 1st Offense – Verbal warning
- 2nd Offense – Written warning
- 3rd Offense – Suspension – game or practice
- 4th Offense – Suspension pending Kaizen Board meeting

In the event of a duplicate player number on the same team, the player that has been with Kaizen for longer, then the player whose birth year and month is earlier, will have first right of refusal to keep their number.

17 Conflict Resolution Policy

In the event that a parent feels they have an issue that has not been addressed by either the coach or team manager, the parent can then escalate their issue with the Kaizen Board's Parent Liaison.

In the event a serious conflict should arise, brought to, and deemed so by the Kaizen Board of Directors, a special meeting will take place with a Disciplinary Committee that is composed of 5 members of the Kaizen Board of Directors. Any Kaizen Board member that is involved in such conflict, regardless of whether they are part of the Disciplinary Committee or not, must excuse themselves from any discussions or decisions or votes in relation to such conflict. The Kaizen Board will make every effort to be impartial when dealing with any conflict whatsoever. Individuals involved may be requested to provide information to be reviewed at this meeting or may be requested to participate in meetings or conversations to ensure a resolution is met.

Once a decision by the Kaizen Board has been made, the decision is final. All parties will be notified in writing of the Kaizen Board's final decision.

Confidentiality agreements will be signed at the beginning of the season by all Kaizen Board members, coaches/assistant coaches, managers, individuals responsible for maintaining injury logs and treasurers.

Removal of Coaches:

The Kaizen Board will assess any removal of coaches on a case-by-case basis. The Kaizen Board has full discretion to access outside counsel in an effort to gather all the facts and make an informed decision. The decision of the Kaizen Board will be final with no recourse for appeal and all parties will be notified in writing by the Kaizen board of their final decision

Removal of Athletes:

In the instance that a coach would like to remove an athlete who holds a roster position, the coach will first need to make a request to the Kaizen Executive indicating reasons for the termination. The Coach should provide as much detailed information as possible such as: Upon receiving the request, the Kaizen Board members will first meet with the coach(s) and then will meet with the athlete and family. The Kaizen Board will then determine if the athlete will be removed from the team. The Kaizen Board will advise the athlete if they have been terminated from the team.

18 Social Media Policy

Kaizen recognizes how critically important it is to maintain the brand and reputation of the organization. It is vital to the ongoing success and future of the association. One of the ways in which we can ensure the stability and longevity of the association is through social media.

Purpose of Social Media:

1. Emerging online collaboration platforms are fundamentally changing the way we engage with each other. Kaizen Softball recognizes that there is a value in online social media tools for connecting with members, friends, supporters, fans, and volunteers.
2. The purpose of this policy is to serve as a guide of how Kaizen Softball Members and Affiliated Members should conduct themselves while using social media platforms.

Kaizen recognizes that social media can be time consuming and overwhelming. As such, Kaizen has chosen to primarily engage with Instagram and Facebook only. Every year, the Kaizen Board will re-evaluate the platforms that Kaizen engages with and will make changes, as necessary.

Definitions:

The following terms have the meaning in this policy:

“Social Media” – are online platforms for social interaction, networking, and relationships that include the various online technology tools that enable people to communicate easily via the internet to share information and resources. Social media can include text, audio, video, images, podcasts, and other multimedia communications. Examples of social media platforms are: internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, micro blogging, wikis, social networks and podcasts. Social media network websites include sites like Tik Tok, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, YouTube etc.

Kaizen Softball Member – a member is any person who is: a currently registered Kaizen Softball athlete, the parent or guardian of a currently registered Kaizen Softball athlete, a coach of a registered team, Kaizen Board members.

Team Social Media Manager

All teams require a Social Media Manager that will be responsible for their team’s social media accounts.

Social Media Manager Responsibilities:

The responsibilities of the Social Media Manager include:

- Maintaining any passwords or login information. If passwords or login information is forgotten, the Social Media Manager will contact the Kaizen Board Member responsible for social media.
- Passwords and login information must not be changed or altered in any way whatsoever.
- Responsibilities of the Social Media Manager, including posting, cannot be forwarded or passed on to anyone else (including athletes) without approval by the Kaizen Board.
- Posts may be removed at any time by the Kaizen Board member responsible for social media.
- Engage regularly on social media accounts approved by the Kaizen Board
- Use only Kaizen approved black, green, white colours in all posts and be consistent with the look/feel of well-established Kaizen brands. Specific pantone colours will be provided.
- Agree to repost on team social media accounts within 48 hours any Kaizen announcements or posts from the main Kaizen social media platforms (@calgarykaizensoftball).
- Do not alter or change Kaizen logos in any way whatsoever.
- Be aware of any member of the Kaizen community that does not want to appear on social media and respect those requirements. A list of players that have not agreed to Kaizen's media release will be provided to the Social Media Manager at the start of the season.
- Do not follow any personal athlete accounts when representing the team.

Social Media Guidelines:

1. **Protect your own privacy.** Members should recognize that they are personally responsible for the content they publish on social media sites. Be mindful of posting information that they would not want the public to see; what you publish is public and will be for a long time, so consider the content carefully and be cautious about disclosing personal details.
2. **Be Honest.** Do not blog anonymously, using pseudonyms or false names. We believe in transparency and honesty. Use your real name and, where relevant, identify your role with Kaizen Softball when discussing Kaizen Softball related matters. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue, or misleading. If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out; but you must make it clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of Kaizen Softball.

3. **Be mindful of your status.** Members must use common sense in disclosing information about Kaizen Softball and others; and adhere to all applicable policies, namely code of conduct, conflict of interest and confidentiality.
4. **Respect your audience.** The public in general and our members reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. Language on social networking sites is very casual; don't use comments, content or images that are disparaging, discriminatory, harassing, and libelous or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in a normal workplace. Show proper consideration for others' privacy and for topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory.
5. **Try to add value.** Provide worthwhile information and perspective. If you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly. If you modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If you are accused of posting something improper, deal with it quickly – best to remove it immediately. If you see misrepresentations made about Kaizen Softball or its affiliates, you may point that out; but do so with respect and with the facts. Make sure what you are saying is factually correct.
6. **Use your best judgment.** Remember that there are always consequences to what you publish. If you are about to publish something that makes you even the slightest bit uncomfortable, review the suggestions above and think about why that is.

Instagram /Facebook Guidelines:

- Each Social Media Manager should aim to post a minimum of 1-2 pictures throughout each game weekend and 1 picture per game on weeknight games (if applicable).
- Include the following in the post:
 - Tag of account of team playing
 - Tag of league that's playing (i.e.: @gplsoftball, #cwfa)
 - #Name of tournament (i.e.: #emeraldsmash, #electriccityheat)
 - Tag of Association putting on the Event (i.e.: #kelownafastball)
 - #calgarykaizensoftball
 - #yyc

The Social Media Manager will be supplied with a complete list of acceptable hashtags by the Board Member in charge of the Social Media Portfolio to reduce the risk of broadcasting posts to unintended recipients. This promotes the organization and demonstrates what the athletes are doing. Social Media is the way of marketing that hits the younger demographics, and all of our athletes are in-tune with it.

All social media accounts are the property of Kaizen Softball (All-Girls Fastpitch Association) and should follow respectful use of social media while maintaining and monitoring a level of respect.

The Social Media Team Manager should regularly review posts and followers and remove unacceptable comments and block followers that appear inappropriate.

In the event of a negative engagement online, the Social Media Manager will de-escalate the situation as quickly as possible and no longer engage online. The Social Media Manager will inform the Kaizen Social Media Board member as soon as possible.

Changes to the team Instagram account password are not permitted. In the event that a change of password cannot be avoided, the new password must be forwarded to the Board Member in charge of the Social Media Portfolio immediately.

Social Media posts should not include:

- Individual photos of athletes unless in the case of a birthday, a significant accomplishment (ie homerun, double play, triple play etc.) or an award
- Tags to personal athletes Social Media accounts
- Hashtags not appearing on the list provided Regulations.
- Coaches and team officials are restricted from having minor-aged athletes as “friends” on any social media networks in the absence of family approval. Exceptions are family.
- Kaizen Softball has a zero-tolerance policy for bullying whether in person or online and may result in expulsion from the Kaizen Softball program.

Consequences:

Unacceptable content or harassment or bullying of any player, coach, member, parent or Board member by any individual through social media or otherwise will not be tolerated. In such circumstances, the Kaizen Board will be notified and take disciplinary actions, in accordance with Kaizen Softball’s Bylaws, Policies and Guidelines, Code of Conduct and Harassment Policies. Any Kaizen Board ruling will be final with no right of appeal.

19 Abuse and Harassment Policy

The Kaizen Softball Executive and Kaizen Board of Directors are dedicated to providing a competitive, fun, safe and abuse free sporting experience to the athletes that make up all Kaizen Softball teams. They also extend this commitment to all coaches, team representatives, league personnel and umpires. Unacceptable behaviour towards any Kaizen Softball member who is trying to fulfill their duties or any athlete on or off the playing field will not be tolerated. Any such behaviour from an individual or their family members will not be tolerated, and the offenders can be expelled from the organization without recourse or refund.

Definition:

Unacceptable Behavior

Unacceptable behavior is considered to be (but not limited to):

- physical aggression and/or harassment
- verbal abuse and/or harassment
- slander

Unacceptable behavior directed toward any coach, athlete, organization volunteer, certified or volunteer umpire, league representative, or Kaizen Softball member will not be tolerated.

It is the responsibility of any team representative, parent, coach, athlete or official to report any incident of abuse or harassment to the Kaizen Softball President where this information will be passed along to a Disciplinary Committee, which is composed of 5 members of the Kaizen Board of Directors. It is not the responsibility of any parent, coach, athlete or official to take matters into their own hands. Once the incident has been reported to Kaizen Softball and the Disciplinary Committee is formed, the Conflict Resolution Process will begin.

20 Injury Policy

If an athlete has been injured, coaching staff have a responsibility to keep that athlete from participating. In addition, athletes with ongoing pain need to seek professional medical advice and/or begin undergoing treatment before being allowed to participate. A doctor's note will be required to return to play in either situation.

Each team will be required to maintain an injury log. The log will include the following:

1. Injury
2. Actions taken
3. Has the injury been present for 14 days?
4. Has a doctor's note been received clearing the athlete to play?
5. Head injuries result in being automatically removed from play by the coach until a doctor's note is received.
6. Chronic pain will require a doctor's note to enable the athlete to continue to play.

Injury logs will be kept confidential and those individuals responsible for the injury log will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

21 Kaizen Fee Policy

All athletes will be charged a registration fee that will be payable in three or four installments (approximately August (deposit), November, January, March)

Fees approved for 2024-2025 are as follows:

1. U13 \$2,100
2. U15 \$2,300
3. U17 \$2,300
4. U19 \$2,300
5. U23 and Alumni pending review

If an athlete joins Kaizen after the winter training session due to post-secondary school (April 1st), the registration fees will be set at \$1,000. If an athlete joins Kaizen mid-season, registration fees will be prorated based on date.

All payments will be paid directly to the Kaizen Treasurer by the deadlines set out above via e-transfer to treasurer@kaizensoftball.com or through another online payment method as directed by the Kaizen Board.

Fees are reviewed and approved by the board on an annual basis and are non-negotiable.

22 Kaizen Financial Assistance Policy

Kaizen provides financial assistance for families who may be challenged to meet the financial commitments of participating in the Kaizen program.

Assistance is available to families meeting our criteria. Once Kaizen's budgeted assistance amount for each season has been utilized, no further funds are made available.

Award Amount

For athletes to qualify for assistance, the team must have submitted their budget including fee amounts to Kaizen with approval of their parent group.

The maximum amount of financial assistance will be 100% of the family's team fees for the season, as outlined in their team's budget. Families may be awarded less based on the number of applicants, the family's need for assistance, and any other factors as determined by the Kaizen Executive which may impact the overall allotment of funds to applicant families.

As part of the application process families must indicate the percentage of the team funds that they are applying to receive; to ensure fair allocation of funds families are encouraged to apply for only the amount they require.

Application Process

Families applying for assistance must submit a letter to the Kaizen President, outlining the following:

Athlete and family information, including:

- Years involved in the Kaizen program
- Years playing softball
- Number of athletes in the program
- Athlete's residence address(es)
- Reason for requesting assistance
- Description of why family requires assistance
- Financial information (if required)

Any commitments being made to Kaizen

- Additional volunteer time (either for their team or Kaizen)
- Volunteering for Kaizen Board duties
- Coaching / coach assistance

Award Process

In an effort to minimize the sensitive nature of this issue, the president of the Kaizen Board will assemble the Kaizen Executive to review the submitted information and decide the outcome within 10 calendar days of the request. All applications will be evaluated and assessed together versus the available budget. If applications are received after the deadline, applications will be assessed on a first-come first-served basis if any budget amount exists.

The Kaizen Executive will assess the request and decide what percentage of the requested amount the family will receive (0-100%) of registration fees. The committee may contact the family for additional clarification on the request, or to request additional documentation to make their decision.

If any member of the Kaizen Executive Board, which forms the decision-making committee, is a member of a team which has an athlete requesting financial assistance, the Kaizen Executive Board member will excuse themselves from any discussion and voting. Kaizen will disclose to no other individuals any information regarding a family's application; all personal or financial documentation will be destroyed upon final decision regarding the application.

Disbursement Process

Upon the decision that a family will receive the funds, Kaizen will request that the family formally accept the financial assistance and will sign a Commitment to Kaizen indicating that the athlete will remain on their team's roster for the entire season (barring release by their coach, or extraneous circumstances such as the family moving, etc.). Should the family not adhere to this commitment, Kaizen reserves the right to request the family to return some or all of the entire awarded amount to Kaizen.



Appendix A

Athlete Acceptance

As an ***athlete*** with Kaizen Softball, I _____, have read and agree to abide by the Kaizen Softball Policies and Standards.

I understand that violations of this policy could result in reduced playing time, suspension, or removal from the Kaizen Softball Program.

Signature: _____

Date: _____



Appendix B

Parent Acceptance

As a **parent(s)** of an athlete with Kaizen Softball, I/we _____,
_____, _____,
_____ have read and agree to abide by the Kaizen Softball Policies
and Standards.

I understand that violations of this policy could result in suspension or removal of my
athlete or myself from the Kaizen Softball Program.

Please read and provide the following response:

NO, I do not give my consent and I request that my child's name, photo, video,
interview, and other media not be used, released, or published in any Kaizen
Softball website, partner/sponsor related websites, or social media sites, or
otherwise mentioned in the Kaizen Softball Policy. I understand this means my
child will not be featured in any media or on any publication whatsoever within, or
under the control of Kaizen Softball.

YES, I give my consent that my child's full name, photo, video, interview, and
other media can be used, released, or published in any Kaizen Softball website,
partner/sponsor related websites, or social media sites, or otherwise mentioned in
the Kaizen Softball Policy. I understand this means my child can be featured in any
media or on any publication whatsoever within, or under the control of Kaizen
Softball.

Signature: _____

Signature: _____

Signature: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____



Appendix C

Coach and Assistant Coach Acceptance

Calgary Kaizen Softball Coach Agreement

Coaching Philosophy:

It is very rewarding, challenging, and time-consuming to be a member of an elite competitive softball team. Our coaches will prioritize a safe, inclusive environment that encourages each athlete to be their best self, both on the softball diamond and off. Our coaches are committed to work hard to help each individual athlete succeed by developing fundamental skills and to maximize each athlete's potential. The expectation is that our athletes are committed to our coaches to achieve these goals.

The demands on athletes will be rigorous, but the success of each athlete is contingent upon individual desire and effort. All athletes will be given equal opportunity for training and development during practices. However, coaches will have the full authority to determine playing time and positions during games. Effort, skill, team play, work ethic, practice habits, attitude, and performance will determine playing time.

We believe that there are many benefits from being a member of our Kaizen organization. These include continuous learning and improvement and the friendships formed along the way. Success is earned through commitment, hard work, and team play.

Coach Responsibilities:

As an elite softball program, our coaches are the core of our athlete's development. As an organization we ensure that our coaches are the highest quality, most knowledgeable and aligned with our own coaching philosophy. Coaches will be responsible for the following:

- Following, promoting, enforcing, and signing the Kaizen Softball Policies and Standards.
- Ensuring required NCCP certification is in progress or achieved prior to season start for new coaches and held in good standing by all coaches.

- Conducting themselves in a manner that demonstrates good sportsmanship, positive behaviour at all times, and a role model for athletes and the softball community.
- Acting as an ambassador for Kaizen, ensuring the organization is represented as a leading elite softball program. This includes behavior on and off the diamond, in communication with athletes, parents, Kaizen softball members and the softball community at large.
- Fostering a positive and inclusive environment for all athletes at the team level as well as when working with and competing against other Kaizen teams.
- Ensure the athlete's safety and welfare comes first.
- Working with the evaluation committee, selecting athletes based on skill level and assigning them appropriate roles on the team.
- Understanding each athlete's effort, knowledge of the game, abilities, and attitude.
- Work to develop all athlete's skills throughout the season.
- Determine team and game rosters. Playing time is determined by an athlete's ability, skills, work ethic, attitude, and adherence to team rules.
- Developing game strategies and making decisions regarding the team.
- Commit to our organization's brand of Continuous Improvement by prioritizing self learning and development.
- Determine equipment requirements and care for/delegate responsibility for Kaizen property in their team's possession.
- Prepare an annual team plan and submit to the holder of the Coach Development portfolio by the date requested.
- Meet with athletes at least 3 times per season: pre-training season, pre-outdoor season, and pre-provincial championships.
- Meet with parents and the athlete at least once per year.
- Meet on an individual basis at any time during the season as necessary.
- Advise the Kaizen Board of the Parent Meeting date and location and the Kaizen Board will ensure they have representation at the meeting. Parent meetings will not occur until after rosters are approved after the Kaizen ID camps and will not take place without a board member present.

As a ***coach/assistant coach*** for Kaizen Softball, I _____, have read and agree to abide by the Kaizen Softball Policies and Standards.

I understand that violations of this policy could result in suspension or removal of myself as a Coach with the Kaizen Softball Program.

Signature: _____

Date: _____