

7.02 Provincial Play

a) All Softball Alberta standards and rules must be followed as per [Appendix G, Softball Alberta Handbook \(page 32, 33\)](#).

Category	Level	Categories eligible for pickups	
U19	C	U19 C, D	U17 B & Lower
	D	U19 D	U17 B & Lower
U17	B	U17 B, C, D	U15 A & Lower
	C	U17 C, D	U15 B & Lower
U15	D	U17 D	U15 AB & Lower
	B	U15 B, C, D	U13 A & Lower
	C	U15 C, D	U13 B & Lower
	D	U15 D	U13 B & Lower
U13	A	U13 A, B, C, D	U11
	B	U13 B, C, D	U11
	C	U13 C, D	U11
	D	U13 D	U11
U11	-	U11 & Lower	-

8.0 Coaching Requirements

LMSA strives to provide both recreational and competitive levels of playing opportunities to players. The aim of coach development is to enhance the knowledge, skills, and competencies of softball coaches within LMSA. To achieve this goal, we require volunteers to coach these teams and recognize that trained coaches provide a better experience for players. This policy will outline the way in which LMSA will select coaches for teams, the expectations of selected coaches as well as how they will be evaluated.

8.01 Coach Selection

a) Application Process

- An individual interested in coaching an LMSA team must complete and submit the LMSA Coach Application form expressing their interest in coaching. This form can be found on the LMSA website: [Selects Coach Application \(google.com\)](#).

- ii. Applications for teams evaluating in the fall will normally be submitted before the fall evaluations.
- iii. LMSA may approach individuals to submit a coaching application where the need exists for coaches or where the individual has a background that would be an asset for our players.
- iv. LMSA reserves the right to accept coach applications after any deadlines identified to find a suitable coach for a team.
- v. The LMSA Board has the discretion to accept or refuse an application to coach.
- vi. Non-parent coaches will be assigned prior to parent coaches, as Parent coaches will be assigned based on player evaluation and placement.

b) Selection Process

- i. The Coach and Player Development Directors, with LMSA Executive support as required, will review accepted Head Coach applications and consider the following:
 - a. Whether any formal training through the National Coaching Certification Program has been completed and what certifications the volunteer already has.
 - b. Coaching and player experience in the sport of softball.
 - c. Previous coaching history in sport.
 - d. Previous coach evaluation feedback where the individuals have previously coached for LMSA. This would also include any formal complaints received and any grievances that have occurred.
 - e. Where the volunteer is a parent volunteer wishing to coach their player's team, the level at which that player is evaluated.
 - f. The number of applications received and the number of teams needing coaches.
- ii. The Coach Selection Committee (composed of the Coach and Player Development Directors, one executive level board member and in some cases a third board member) may invite the candidates to participate in a formal interview depending on the situation and applications received.
- iii. Where a formal interview process is taking place, all candidates will be asked a consistent set of standardized questions to gather comparable information.
- iv. Where only one coach has applied for a team or where there is only one qualified candidate, The Coach and Player Development Directors may conduct an informal interview with the candidate to gather any additional information required. If the Directors feel the team should be awarded to the candidate, this recommendation will be brought to the Coach Selection Committee for final approval.
- v. The Coach Selection Committee has the authority to award the Head Coach position for a team. Communication to the successful candidate will occur by the Coach and Player Development Directors.
- vi. Care will be taken to avoid an overt conflict of interest in terms of Selection Committee members for any situations as needed.
- vii. Assistant Coaches will be selected and recruited by the head coach, however the LMSA Board reserves the right to refuse any assistant coach selections.

8.02 Coach Expectations

a) Training and Certification

- i. Coaches must abide by Softball Alberta requirements for training/certification based on the team level being coached and events attending (i.e., provincials, post provincials).
- ii. The following are the minimum certification requirements set out by Softball Alberta and LMSA for Head Coaches and should be achieved prior to the start of the season:

Category	Level	Certification	Requirement
U9		CS, MED	Trained
U11	A	CS, MED	Certified
	B/C/D	CS, MED	Trained
U13	A/B/C/D	CS, MED	Certified
U15	A	CS, CI*, MED	Certified
	B/C/D	CS, MED	Trained
U17	A/AW	CI, MED	Certified
	B	CS, CI*, MED	Trained
	C/D	CS, MED	Trained
U19	A	CI, MED	Certified
	B	CS, CI*, MED	Trained
	C/D	CS, MED	Trained

Legend:

CS - Community Softball (Level 1); CI - Competition Introduction (Level 2 equivalent); MED - Making Ethical Decisions (Online Evaluation)

*If coaching a team in a category that leads to post provincial play, the coach must be CI certified including MED.

- iii. All LMSA Head and Assistant Coaches are encouraged to take NCCP's Community Softball coaching clinic. Upon completion of the clinic LMSA will provide a reimbursement of the registration fees associated with attending this clinic.
- iv. Upon completion of the 'Competition - Introduction' coaching clinic, where that level of certification is required, or where the LMSA board determines that such certification is of benefit to the Association and on field evaluation, LMSA will reimburse each team's head coach for any applicable fees.
- v. All Head and Assistant coaches will be required to obtain a Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) at the start of the season. Same will be used to screen all volunteers eligible for assignment. Each VSC needs to be renewed every two years.

- vi. As per Softball Alberta, it is required that all affiliated **MINOR** softball coaches, assistant coaches, and managers (U19 and lower) complete or have completed the online Respect in Sport Certification for “Activity Leaders”. This course is to be completed by June 1.

8.03 Team

- a) Coaches will schedule a team meeting at the start of the season and communicate their coaching philosophy and expectations of parents and players for the season during this meeting.
- b) Coaches will discuss roles and expectations of any Assistant Coaches including:
 - i. Expectations of commitment levels.
 - ii. Expectations of tasks.
 - iii. Expectations regarding input into game lineups, player play time etc.
 - iv. Assistant Coaches are to understand that the expectations may vary from one Head Coach to another. These conversations will ensure the Assistant Coach is provided with a clear understanding of what to expect and can choose to step out at the beginning of the season should the expectations not be acceptable to the Assistant Coach. This will proactively mitigate potential conflict that could occur.
- c) Coaches are responsible for making the board aware of any conduct issues that occur (coach or parent or player) during the season. Issues should be brought forward in a timely manner.

8.04 Establishing Coaching Standards and Conduct

- a) Coaches will develop and implement coaching standards that align with LMSA and Softball Alberta’s guidelines, and the Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model (see Appendix 2)
- b) Coaches must demonstrate patience with players and recognize players have different strengths and will learn at different speeds. Interactions with players will always maintain appropriate boundaries and always be respectful.
- c) Coaches are expected to encourage, promote and demonstrate sportsmanlike conduct. This includes treating all players and coaches of other teams with respect.
- d) Coaches are required to treat all umpires with respect and dignity. Coaches will avoid confrontational behavior and speak respectfully with umpires using appropriate methods of appeal during games.
- e) Coaches will monitor the behavior of their team and fans and take necessary measures to ensure proper conduct.
- f) Coaches must be drug and alcohol-free during team practices and games and will not use tobacco products in the dugout or on the playing field.
- g) All coaches are expected to conduct themselves in line with the LMSA Coach Code of Conduct (see section 16.0) in addition to adhering to all expectations outlined in this policy.
- h) Where the LMSA Executive receives a complaint regarding a head coach or assistant coach’s behavior and it is determined by the Board to be in contradiction of LMSA’s Code of Conduct for coaches and/or this policy, the coach may face disciplinary action. Discipline may include a verbal warning, suspension for a predetermined amount of time, or complete suspension from coaching for LMSA.

- i) Previous complaints received, and severity of the complaint(s) will be considered when determining disciplinary actions to be taken.

8.05 Coach Evaluation

- a) Collection of Feedback
 - i. LMSA sends out a yearly coach feedback form to collect input from players/parents regarding their players coaching experiences from the year.
 - ii. Feedback is reviewed by the Coach Director & President and will be used in subsequent years in the coach selection process.
 - iii. Coach feedback will be shared with the receiving coach where deemed necessary by the board (e.g. in the case of consistent negative feedback), and in a timely fashion.
 - iv. Feedback will be used as an opportunity for growth and development wherever possible.
 - v. Feedback may be incorporated into a Coach Development Plan to ensure it remains responsive to the evolving needs of softball coaches within LMSA.

8.06 Non-Parent Coach Fees

- a) Teams are responsible for developing and maintaining a budget that accounts for the costs associated with a non-parent coach.
 - i. Budget requirements may vary based on the level of play. Teams are encouraged to consult the LMSA Executive for guidance and support in establishing an appropriate budget.
- b) Mileage
 - i. Coaches may receive \$0.50/km, paid one way, for any travel outside of Zone 4. Calculated mileage will originate from either the city of Lacombe or the coach's home, whichever is less.
 - ii. If air travel is more practical or economical than driving, reimbursement will be based on the lowest-cost travel method (e.g. Mileage up to equivalent airfare), as approved by the LMSA Board.
 - iii. Coaches must submit a mileage log for reimbursement.
 - iv. Anything outside of these parameters can be discussed as a team; team is to seek Board approval for same.
- c) Meals
 - i. Coaches may receive \$20/meal and are to submit receipt(s) for reimbursement.
 - ii. Team meals where the coach is fed will not be reimbursed.
- d) Accommodations
 - i. Coaches must submit receipt(s) for reimbursement.
 - ii. Hotels that offer breakfast are to be prioritized.

8.07 Collaboration and Networking

- a) The LMSA may facilitate opportunities for coaches to collaborate and network with their peers within Lacombe, Alberta, and nationally. For example, LMSA will host an annual coaching clinic bringing in guest coaches to support our current coaching staff for the season.

- b) LMSA may organize coaching symposiums, roundtable discussions, and coaching forums where coaches can share experiences, exchange ideas, and learn from each other. This fosters an environment of growth and support at all levels.
- c) LMSA aims to develop a Junior Coach/Mentor program to encourage a love of coaching in older players as well as foster positive mentorships for young athletes within the Lacombe Minor Softball Association.

8.08 Recognition and Incentives

- a) LMSA will recognize and reward coaches who demonstrate exceptional commitment, innovation, and impact in their coaching practices.
- b) LMSA aims to establish awards to honour coaches who have made significant contributions to the development of softball in Lacombe.

By implementing this comprehensive Coach Development Plan, LMSA aims to create a pool of highly skilled, knowledgeable, and dedicated coaches who can maximize the potential of players and contribute to the overall growth and success of softball in Lacombe and Zone 4.

9.0 Team Management

Each team within LMSA must designate both a Team Manager and Team Treasurer as soon as the team is formed. These are volunteer roles essential to the successful organization and operation of each team.

9.01 Some responsibilities of the team manager include:

- a) Booking Tournaments.
- b) Scheduling and keeping parents and athletes up to date on game dates, times, & locations.
- c) Keeping copies of Medical Forms.
- d) Attend manager meetings.
- e) Consult the Matrix or Selects Director with any team management questions.
- f) Coordinate and assist with filling parent volunteer positions where applicable.
 - i. Examples include, but are not limited to: Scorekeepers, Game Changer, Parent Liaison, Social Media, Photographer/Team pictures, Sponsorship, Organizing the hotels, Food, Fan Apparel, Fundraising or other team activities.

10.0 Fundraising and Team Finances

10.01 Association fundraising is mandatory for all players U9 and above. This will encompass **ALL** teams under the LMSA.

10.02 When Team Fundraising, you are representing the Lacombe Minor Softball Association within the community. Please remember this and always represent LMSA in a positive and professional manner.

10.03 Maximum fundraising for a season is \$3500 for our C/D Matrix Levels. Maximum fundraising for our A/B Selects Teams will be discretionary based on their season plan