

Lacombe Minor Softball Association

Policies & Procedures



Mission Statement

Our mission at Lacombe Minor Softball is to foster the development of softball players and coaches at all levels, providing them with the resources and support needed to grow and achieve their full potential.

We believe that softball provides a unique opportunity for personal growth, teamwork, and leadership, and we are committed to creating an inclusive and supportive environment that allows every player to thrive.

Through our softball programs, we aim to inspire a lifelong love of the game, while also preparing our athletes for success on and off the field.

We are committed to providing high-quality coaching and resources, as well as offering opportunities for players to participate at any level of softball that will help them grow and develop as athletes and individuals.

Table of Contents

1. [Financial Assistance](#)
2. [Registration and Cancellation](#)
3. [Player Import and Release](#)
4. [Evaluation and Team Selection Process](#)
5. [Team Roster Size](#)
6. [Play Up Policy](#)
7. [Athlete Affiliation](#)
8. [Coaching Requirements](#)
9. [Team Management](#)
10. [Fundraising and Team Finances](#)
11. [Equipment Policy](#)
12. [Umpire Funding](#)
13. [Play Down, Provincial and Post-Provincial Funding](#)
14. [Conflict Resolution and Discipline](#)
15. [Safety and Injury](#)
16. [Code of Conduct](#)

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Needs Assessment for Coaches

Appendix 2 - Long-Term Athlete Development Model

Appendix 3 - Selects Metric Evaluation

SELECTS
- FASTBALL -

MATRIX
- SOFTBALL -

1.0 Financial Assistance

Lacombe Minor Softball Association (LMSA) encourages keeping girls active and participating in organized sport. However, it is recognized that the cost of participation can be a potential barrier for some. With that in mind, LMSA is pleased to work together with JumpStart, KidSport Lacombe and Lacombe County to provide all children with the opportunity to play organized sports by removing financial barriers. Please see the following websites for more details:

- <https://kidsportcanada.ca/alberta/lacombe/apply-for-a-grant/>
- [Home | Jumpstart \(canadiantire.ca\)](#)

For more information, reach out to the president at president@lacombeinorsoftball.ca. Upon request, payment plans may be set up through our registrar.

2.0 Registration and Cancellation

2.01 Registration Opening

Registration for all divisions will start on January 1 of the current year.

2.02 Registration Deadlines

- a) The final registration deadline for U11-U19 division will be February 15.
- b) Registration for U7-U9 divisions will remain open until May 1, provided payment is received by May 1, with NO late fee applied.
- c) A hard closure for all divisions (with exception of U7-U9) will occur on March 15, after which no new registrations will be accepted unless space is available.
- d) Any player registering after March 15 will be placed on a team only if space allows and at the discretion of the LMSA Board and Head Coach.
- e) No player will be permitted on the field until registration fees have been paid in full.

- 2.03 A waitlist will be created once the optimum number of players per division has been reached. Players on the waitlist will be contacted if space becomes available prior to the start of the season.

2.04 Payment and Late Fees

- a) All registration fees must be paid in full by February 15 of the current season.
- b) Registrations completed between February 16 and March 15 will be subject to a \$50 late fee.
- c) Late fees do not apply to jersey deposits.
- d) Payment Methods and NSF Fees - LMSA accepts online payment through the RAMP registration system, as well as other approved electronic methods determined by the Registrar and Treasurer.
 - i) Cash or cheque payments are not preferred but may be accepted in exceptional circumstances with prior approval from the LMSA Registrar or Treasurer.
 - ii) All payments must be completed by the stated deadlines for the athlete to be considered registered and eligible to participate.

- iii) In the event of a returned or non-sufficient funds (NSF) payment, the registrant will be responsible for a \$25 NSF fee in addition to the original amount owing.
- iv) Any outstanding balances, including NSF or late fees, must be resolved before athlete is permitted to participate in any team practices, games, or LMSA-sanctioned events.
- v) LMSA reserves the right to remove players from the roster if payment obligations remain unmet after reasonable attempts to collect have been made.

2.05 All refund requests must be made in writing to the LMSA president at: president@lacombejuniorsoftball.ca. The request must include the athlete's name, division, and reason for withdrawal.

- a) Refund Schedule:
 - i. On or before March 15: Full refund minus a \$25 administrative fee.
 - ii. March 16-April 15: 50% refund minus a \$25 administrative fee.
 - iii. On/After May 1: No refund will be issued.
- b) Refunds may take up to fourteen (14) days for review and processing.

2.06 Refunds will be considered for the following reasons:

- a) Relocation - A permanent move or job transfer outside of LMSA's registration boundaries.
- b) Medical reasons - Supported by a physician's note or medical documentation.
- c) Other extenuating circumstances - To be reviewed by the LMSA Executive on a case-by-case basis.

2.07 Board Discretion

The LMSA Board reserves the right to make exceptions to registration deadlines, team placements, or refunds in exceptional circumstances to ensure fairness and maintain program integrity.

3.0 Player Import and Release

Lacombe Minor Softball Association is committed to developing players in the Lacombe and surrounding community. The goal of LMSA is to provide both recreational and competitive opportunities to accommodate the playing needs of all players. LMSA strives to run competitive teams at the A/B level that can successfully compete provincially and considers athletes who cannot find an A or B competitive program in their community. This policy outlines the way in which LMSA will accept and release players with a goal to find a balance between community player development and opportunities, and team competitiveness.

3.01 Import Players

- a) Definition
 - i. A Player is considered an Import Player if they meet any of the following conditions:
 - a. They reside outside of the City of Lacombe in a community with an active and equivalent level (e.g., U13A/B) Softball Program.

- b. They reside outside of Zone 4.
- ii. A player is NOT considered an Import Player with LMSA if they meet any of the following conditions:
 - a. Is a resident of the City of Lacombe.
 - b. They reside in a Zone 4 community without an active and equivalent level (e.g., U13A/B) Softball Program (and regardless of what the closest local association with one is).
- iii. A player who lives equal distance between associations but has previously played for the other association, thus requiring a release from that association will not be considered an import in the application of this policy.

b) Criteria

- i. Every Import player must be in compliance with the Softball Alberta Player Transfer Policy and any other relevant Softball Alberta policy.
- ii. Coaches may select a maximum of 40% of their players as import players except where approval by the board has been granted for exceptional circumstances.
- iii. Import Players are responsible for completing the relevant year's Softball Alberta Player Transfer form (available at [TRANSFERS - Softball Alberta](#)) and obtaining the required signatures from the releasing organization and providing this to the President of LMSA.

c) Application

- i. The LMSA Board may consider increasing the number of imported players allowed on a team if the team is unable to reach the necessary numbers to make a viable team at a certain age/skill level.
- ii. The LMSA Board may upon specific request exempt pitchers and/or catchers from the 40% cap based on need for an appropriate skill level for a team.
- iii. The LMSA Registrar will maintain a list of all import players on each team and ensure compliance with the 40% maximum and any exceptions made.
- iv. The LMSA Registrar will track player transfer forms and ensure the required process with Softball Alberta is followed.
- v. A player waiting on release from their association will be refunded LMSA registration fees (excluding any other training or team fees) should a release not be granted.
- vi. Any player wishing to appeal their designation as an import player may request a meeting with the LMSA Board.
- vii. Special requests will be reviewed on an individual basis by the LMSA Board.

3.02 Player Release

a) Requests and Application

- i. A release is not required for players in age categories U17 and up.
- ii. The Board will not provide pre-approval for transfer requests. Players in U15 and under seeking release from LMSA must submit a Softball Alberta transfer form to the LMSA President once the form becomes available. Requests may not be reviewed or considered until the first Sunday of March in the year of the requested release, except as outlined in section 3.02(b)(v) or other applicable exceptions.

- iii. The request must include a rationale explaining why the release should be granted.
 - iv. As per Softball Alberta policy, player transfers are valid only for the year of issue. Players must reapply annually for continued release.
- b) Assessment and Approval
- i. The Board will determine on a case-by-case basis whether a release will be granted. Decisions are final; appeals must be directed to Softball Alberta and follow their established guidelines.
 - ii. The following factors will guide the Board's assessment:
 - a. Whether the player has received an offer from another association for the same age category but at a higher level (e.g. Offered 'B' with LMSA but 'A' elsewhere).
 - b. Whether or not there is a viable team within LMSA for the player to join.
 - c. Whether the player's release would negatively impact the viability of a remaining LMSA team.
 - iii. As per the Softball Alberta Player Transfer Policy, any transfer form received will be acknowledged within seven (7) calendar days. Application reviews may begin on the first Sunday of March in the year of the requested release, except as noted in section 3.02(b)(v) or other exceptions. All transfer requests must be submitted to the Softball Alberta Office by the provincial deadline for minor teams.
 - iv. A player who has been granted a release but later wishes to return to LMSA in the same season may do so only if it benefits LMSA. The Board will determine eligibility, and no current players will be displaced to accommodate the return.
 - v. A player offered a position on an LMSA team who instead accepts a spot on a team of the same level with another association may request a release once the Softball Alberta form becomes available by submitting it to president@lacombeminorsoftball.ca. LMSA will review and respond within seven (7) days of receipt. If the release is granted, the player will not be eligible to return to LMSA that season. This also applies to any player who departs without submitting a formal release request.
- c) Exceptions
- i. Any exceptions to this policy require unanimous Board approval. Exception requests must be submitted to: president@lacombeminorsoftball.ca

4.0 Evaluation and Team Selection Process

The Lacombe Minor Softball Association (LMSA) is committed to evaluating player skills in a consistent and impartial manner to form teams at all levels that emphasize development, opportunity, sportsmanship, and a love of the game. This policy outlines the standard process for player evaluations and team selection, as well as the approach for addressing common situations that may arise. Any circumstance not specifically covered within this policy will be reviewed by the Board to ensure a fair and equitable outcome.

4.01 General

LMSA teams will be formed—and the number of teams determined—based on the number of eligible registrants, player skill and talent, competitiveness, and the commitment level of players and families within each division. Further details are outlined in the Team Roster Policy (Section 5.0) and apply to all levels of play.

The level of competition for each team will be recommended by the Head Coach and requires final approval from the LMSA Executive. The intent is to align each team with the level of league and provincial play that provides players with the most positive and developmentally appropriate season experience.

- a) The following is a summary of the tiering classifications:
 - i. "A" - This is the highest level of competition available in Softball Alberta. These teams require a higher level of commitment from the players, parents and coaches. It is the expectation that all "A" level teams will participate in the Alberta Provincial Championships and may advance to Western or National championships.
 - ii. "B" - This is an intermediate level of competition. A high level of commitment is required at this level from players, parents, and coaches. It is encouraged that all "B" level teams will participate in Play Downs (when necessary) and Alberta Provincial Championships. They may then advance to Western or National championships.
 - iii. "C/D" - This is a competitive/recreational level unless otherwise discussed with the LMSA Board and Head Coach. These teams will participate in the Central Alberta Softball League and are encouraged to attend "C" or "D" Play Downs (when necessary) and Alberta Provincial Championships.

4.02 Eligibility

Players eligible to be selected for LSMA teams must meet the following criteria:

- a) Must follow the current Import Policy [section 3.01 a) i, ii, iii] or must follow Softball Alberta Zone Transfer Policy and any other relevant Softball Alberta policy.
- b) Have paid all applicable fees - past and current.
- c) Have filled out all required forms, including registration and/or waivers.

4.03 Player Evaluation Process - "A" or "B" Competitive Program

Player evaluations for "A" or "B" Competitive Program teams (normally U13/U15/U17/U19) may be held in late summer and/or early fall as these teams are required to practice and participate in the winter player development programs provided by LMSA.

4.04 Player Evaluation Process - "C" or "D" Competitive/Recreational Program

Once registration is open, player evaluations will be scheduled for the beginning of each season based on the registrations received.

4.05 Talent Identification and Evaluations

a) Evaluation Metrics

All eligible players will be evaluated using the Selects Evaluation Metrics (see

Appendix 3). These metrics are approved by the LMSA Board and reviewed annually to ensure they reflect current, evidence-based assessment practices and align with the Association's goals of fairness, transparency, and player development.

b) Evaluation Attendance Requirements

Players at all levels (A, B, C, and D) are encouraged to participate in the evaluation process.

- i. A/B Level: Players must attend a minimum of one (1) evaluation session to be eligible for team selection.
- ii. C/D Level: Players are encouraged to attend at least one (1) evaluation session, typically held in the late winter, to assist with balanced team formation and appropriate placement.
- iii. Pitchers and Catchers: All pitchers and catchers are required to attend an additional evaluation session specific to their position, in addition to general sessions.

c) Evaluated Game Play (A/B Level)

At the discretion of the Evaluations Director and coaching staff, selected players may be invited to participate in an evaluated game play session. This additional assessment provides a final opportunity to demonstrate game-specific skills and may significantly influence final placement decisions.

d) Excused Absences

- i. Players may proactively request an excused absence from evaluations by submitting a written request to the Evaluations Director prior to the start of scheduled sessions. The Evaluations Director, in consultation with the LMSA Board, will review the request and may request supporting documentation before granting or denying the exemption.
- ii. Players who are unable to participate in scheduled evaluations due to injury may request consideration through the Evaluations Director prior to the start of evaluations. The Head Coach of the applicable team may, at their discretion and with approval of the LMSA Executive, assess the player at a later date or use prior evaluation data and past team performance to inform placement. Players already selected to a team will not be displaced. Team roster size limits and the Import Player Policy continue to apply.

e) Non-Attendance

Players who do not attend any evaluation sessions for their age category—and who do not have an approved excused absence—will automatically be placed on a D-level team, as determined by the LMSA Board and current year's coaching staff. Previous evaluation results and level of play may be considered when determining placement.

f) Confidentiality of Evaluation Scores

Evaluation results will remain confidential. However, players and/or parents may request to review individual scores through the Evaluations Director (see Section 4.07 d).

4.06 Evaluations and Scoring

- a) All players will be assessed based on their overall softball skills, abilities, and performance using the Selects Evaluation metrics. For A/B level evaluations,

additional game-situation simulations may be included to assess player decision-making and game sense.

- b) In cases where players receive comparable evaluation scores, parental and family commitment to the sport, league, program, and team may be considered as a contributing factor in final placement decisions.
- c) Players who elect to be evaluated as pitchers and/or catchers will receive separate positional scores in addition to their general evaluation scores.
- d) All evaluation data, including both general and positional scores, will be compiled and maintained by the LMSA Evaluations Director. These results will be reviewed collaboratively by the Evaluations Director, Directors of Player and Coach Development, and two (2) additional board members with no direct conflict of interest. This group will support the selection process for both parent and non-parent coaches and team placement decisions at specific levels.

4.07 Evaluators

- a) Evaluators must be an individual who has extensive experience as a player and/or as a coach in competitive softball.
- b) Evaluators must be objective and cannot have any familial or personal ties to the level they are evaluating.
- c) Evaluators must provide fair and consistent evaluations of players within the group.
- d) Evaluators recognize the sensitive nature of the player evaluations and will not discuss the player evaluations with any other individuals other than those directly involved in player evaluations. Evaluation scores will be confidential; however, players and parents may request to see their scores through the Evaluations Director upon formal request. Requests will be sent to the President of LMSA via email, president@lacombeinorsoftball.ca.
- e) Evaluators will provide their completed scoresheets to the Evaluations Director who will compile the results.

4.08 Evaluation Assistants

- a) Will ensure a proper warm-up is done at the beginning of each evaluation session.
- b) Demonstrate and ensure that players understand each drill.
- c) Be conscious of time management.
- d) Ensure proper equipment is being used.
- e) Encourage the players to perform to the best of their ability.
- f) Will not share any of their personal insight with players, parents, or other observers during the evaluation process.
- g) Must remain objective and cannot have any familial or personal ties to the level they are assisting with.

4.09 Team Selection

- a) Team selection at the A/B levels will be based on the current Selects Evaluation Metrics, previously demonstrated playing skills, game sense, and input from the Head Coach (if applicable). A final selection session will be held to confirm rosters.
- b) The Evaluations Director will coordinate player selection meetings with the Head Coach (for A or B level), the Player and Coach Development Directors, and two (2)

board members who have no direct conflict of interest. This group will form the Team Selection Committee. Separate tryouts and selection meetings will be held for A and B level teams within each applicable age category. C and D level selections will occur following the February evaluations.

- c) During selection meetings, the Team Selection Committee will review evaluation and scoring data provided by the Evaluations Director. All participants must sign an LMSA Confidentiality Agreement prior to receiving any player information.
 - i. The top five (5) evaluated players are considered “must picks”.
 - ii. The Head Coach, with support from the Team Selection Committee, will select the remaining roster from the next 13 top ranked players.
 - iii. Any request to deviate from these parameters must include a written rationale and be approved by the LMSA Executive.
- d) Where ties exist in player evaluation scores, the Head Coach, with input from the Team Selection Committee, will make the final decision regarding roster placement.
- e) For C/D levels where multiple teams exist, the Evaluations Director and Team Selection Committee will form teams to achieve balanced skill distribution.
 - i. For example, the top evaluated players will be assigned to the ‘C’ team.
 - ii. Remaining players will be divided as evenly as possible among the subsequent D teams (eg. If there are three U17 teams, the top group qualifies for the C team and the remaining two (2) teams are designated equal D teams). Alternatively, separating the teams by birth year may be considered.

4.10 Team Placement

- a) Players selected to an A or B team will receive an offer from the Head Coach, including a clear deadline for acceptance.
 - i. Players not selected for A/B will be notified and will be encouraged to participate in the next evaluation cycle in February. These players are also encourage to attend winter Player Development programs organized by LMSA.
- b) All Players selected for a C/D level team may be notified by the Head Coach and given a timeline in which to respond (where applicable). Where individual notifications are not used, team lists will be posted on the LMSA website.
- c) If a player evaluated as a pitcher or catcher ranks higher as a position player, the Head Coach will discuss options with the player and parent(s)/guardian(s):
 - i. Accept a spot on a higher-level team as a position player with limited (or no) pitching/catching time; or
 - ii. Accept a spot on a lower-level team to further develop pitching/catching skills.
- d) Best efforts will be made to ensure that all registered players will be placed on a team. This may include partnering with neighbouring communities or programs to ensure team viability.
- e) If a placement must change due to a player/family’s inability or unwillingness to meet team commitments, the Head Coach will inform the Evaluations Director and/or LMSA President so reassignment or other remedies can be considered.
- f) Requests for specific placement on C/D teams must be submitted at registration and prior to evaluations. Send rationale by email to: president@lacombeminorsoftball.ca
- g) When the team formation process is complete, the list of teams will be posted on the Lacombe Minor Softball Association web page as well as social media outlets.

4.12 Resolving or Addressing Concerns:

It is important to note that the Lacombe Minor Softball Association, inclusive of its evaluators, coaches and volunteers spend a considerable amount of time and effort into making the evaluation and selection process as professional and unbiased as possible. Often problems are the result of a misunderstanding or failure to identify expectations. We expect that coaches, players and parents can be reasonable and considerate in approaching any potential concern or conflict and work with the understanding that no one intends any ill will.

- a) With respect to the evaluation process the following should be noted:
 - i. Any decision made by or with support from the President of LMSA is final.
 - ii. Individuals should strive to support the evaluation process to allow for balanced and competitive teams that will enjoy a successful ball season.
 - iii. Issues with the evaluation and team selection process should be presented with suggestions for improvement to the Evaluations Director and/or an executive level board member via written email.
 - iv. If further clarification is required, a discussion can be scheduled with the Team Selection Committee.
 - v. As the evaluation and team selection process is a Policy within the Lacombe Minor Softball Association, any changes must be reviewed and approved by the LMSA Executive. The objective of the evaluation process is to ensure that all players are correctly placed on the appropriate team. Special circumstances, which fall outside the normal process, can be brought forward to the LMSA Executive for their review.

5.0 Team Roster Size

LMSA believes that rosters beyond, or below, a certain number are not in the best interest of overall/long term player development. Therefore, the LMSA recommends that team roster sizes be kept to a reasonable size allowing enough flexibility to be able to accommodate occasional missing players and balancing that against having too many players sitting on the bench. The following objectives have been implemented to guide this policy.

5.01 U7 and U9 teams:

- a) Teams will be formed, based on a best effort, with an ideal size of 9 players. The association will not operate a team with less than 7 players on the roster. Team rosters will not have more than 10 players unless approved by the LMSA Executive.

5.02 U11, U13 (C/D), U15 (C/D), U17 (C/D), and U19 (C/D) teams:

- a) Teams will be formed, based on a best effort, with an ideal size of 12 players. The association will not operate a team with less than 10 players on the roster. Team rosters will not have more than 13 players unless approved by the LMSA Executive.

5.03 U13(A/B), U15 (A/B), U17(A/B), U19 (A/B) teams

- a) Teams will be formed based on formal, organized evaluations and scores, with a minimum of 11 players and maximum at the coach's discretion with appropriate consideration of the players and overall team. The evaluation for these teams will be

held in the fall each year to allow fall/winter development. For age groups U13, U15 and U17, it is recommended to have no more than 14 players while U19 is based solely on coaches' discretion with LMSA Board consultation.

- 5.04** Exceptions: Upon a specific request, the maximum roster size may be increased upon approval from the LMSA Executive. Each request will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

6.0 Play Up Policy

- 6.01** Lacombe Minor Softball Association believes that most players develop better in their age-appropriate category. We do recognize that highly talented players do exist and may want to provide themselves with an opportunity to play in the next age category within the association.
- Any players who are interested in trying out for an older age category are invited to do so.
 - Athletes can only evaluate to play up if they are in the second year of their current age category.
 - For an athlete to play up on an older age category team, they **MUST** evaluate in the top five (5) overall of the age category they wish to play in
 - To balance teams, any athlete that wants to play out of their age category needs to evaluate in both age categories to ensure they can safely play with older athletes.
 - There are no guarantees that an athlete will be granted a spot on a team for an age category above where they belong.
 - All requests need to be submitted to the Board of Directors. Each request will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

7.0 Athlete Affiliation

7.01 Non-Provincial Play

- At the beginning of each softball season, higher division coaches may approach lower division coaches within the Lacombe Minor Softball Association looking for players to affiliate. Affiliates are restricted to one division below.
- Teams whose rosters are small will look for back up players in case of injuries or sickness that could befall some of their players.
- The coaches and LMSA board should confer on possible choices and then the parents should be consulted as to their interest in being an affiliate player.
- The process and times of possible affiliation should be explained to both parents and players so there is no misunderstanding.
- The lower tier or division coach of an affiliated athlete must agree to let the affiliated athlete play in the higher division. Only if and when there is a conflict in a tournament or regular league game play, the lower division coach can decline the request for the athlete to play for the higher division team.
- When an affiliated athlete's name is on the official score sheet and lineup card, they are considered to have played in the game. This participation shall be noted on the official score sheet and lineup card with an "AP" beside their name.

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
	D	U17 D	U15 AB & Lower
U15	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

and consultation of the LMSA Board. We strongly encourage that at least one (1) team fundraising initiative is taking place.

- 10.04 Team sponsorship funds are to be used towards tournament entry fees, team events, rental facilities for practicing, apparel, and anything else the team deems necessary.
- 10.05 Any fundraiser that requires an AGLC license (e.g., 50/50, raffle draw, liquor basket) needs approval from the LMSA Board. AGLC Licensing funds are limited and regulated therefore a formal request must be submitted via email to fundraising@lacombebminorssoftball.ca.
- The teams are required to submit a Team Fundraising Request Form to LMSA for review and approval. This form is available on the website.
 - The completed form must be submitted to the LMSA Fundraising & Sponsorship Director at least two weeks prior to the planned fundraiser.
 - Teams are not permitted to proceed with any fundraiser involving gaming activities (raffles, 50/50 draws, etc.) until LMSA approval has been granted and, where applicable, an AGLC license has been issued.
- 10.06 If a team would like to fundraise more than the allotted above-mentioned maximums, a request must be formally submitted to the LMSA for approval via email to fundraising@lacombebminorssoftball.ca.
- 10.07 Team Cash Calls and Slush Funds
- To support team operations and tournament participation, each team may collect funds from families in the form of cash calls or slush funds. These funds must be handled responsibly and in accordance with LMSA financial policies.
- Slush funds enable teams to register for tournaments and cover necessary expenses in advance of the season starting.
 - All fees must be submitted to the Team Treasurer before a player is permitted to participate in games. This should be clearly communicated at the first team/parent meeting.
 - The following minimum slush fund amounts are recommended to ensure adequate coverage of early-season costs:
 - U9 - \$100 per player
 - U11 - \$200 per player
 - U13 and above - \$250 per player
 - A/B Selects teams may request no more than \$500 per family initially.
 - Teams may either require less, or they may require a second cash call depending on their season length, number of tournaments, and success in fundraising or sponsorship.
 - If any deviation from these limits is required, prior approval must be obtained from the LMSA Board.
- 10.08 All proceeds from fundraisers must be deposited into a team bank account and recorded as part of the team financials. Each team will appoint a team treasurer, and this will be a volunteer position. Banks will open a team account with some paperwork

from Lacombe Minor Softball Association. Contact the Treasurer for support in opening your team account.

- 10.09 At no time should a team's financial balance be in the negative.
- 10.10 The team must supply a draft budget for the upcoming season by the time that they hold their parent meeting. This is to allow the coach and manager and/or treasurer to work through their plans so that the level of the financial commitment can be communicated to the parents early in the season. The LMSA Treasurer can provide a spreadsheet for each team to allow an easy breakdown and management upon request.
- 10.11 Teams must provide a financial statement detailing all income and expenses at the end of season. The final version of the closing financial statements is due to LMSA by Sept 1st. The statements must show that the team account has been brought down to zero. The statements must include a list of all expenses (cheques) and income for the entire year as well as a bank statement(s) showing all activity on the team bank account(s) and a final balance of zero.
- 10.12 Lacombe Minor Softball Association is a non-profit organization and as such will keep fees and fundraising set to rates that allow us to maintain services without incurring financial loss.
- 10.13 Community Service
- a) LMSA strongly encourages each team in the U11 division and above to participate in at least three (3) hours of community service during the year/season. These activities encourage community connection, promote teamwork, leadership, and recognize the support LMSA receives from local sponsors and partners.
 - b) Community service activities are supported through corporate sponsorship funds of approximately \$200-\$250 per team. Activities may include:
 - i. Volunteering at local events (e.g. Community clean-up, festival/parade, or charity event)
 - ii. Assisting with LMSA-hosted events (e.g. Tournaments or clinics), or
 - iii. Supporting other community or school initiatives.
 - c) Teams are encouraged to share a short summary or photo of their community service activity with the LMSA Communications Director. LMSA may highlight these contributions through social media or year-end recognition.
 - d) The LMSA Executive, in collaboration with the Fundraising and Sponsorship Director, will oversee this initiative and ensure sponsorship funds are distributed fairly among participating teams.
- 10.14 Volunteer Policy
- LMSA relies on volunteers to ensure successful operation of programs, tournaments, and events such as the annual Lacombe Mudbath Tournament. This policy outlines expectations for member volunteer participation and how it connects to refundable deposits and team obligations.

- a) Each family registered with LMSA is expected to volunteer during the season, particularly for association-hosted events.
 - b) Volunteer opportunities may include (but are not limited to):
 - i) Working shifts during the Lacombe Mudbath Tournament (Matrix only);
 - ii) Assisting at evaluations or team events;
 - iii) Supporting fundraising activities or community programs;
 - iv) Fulfilling team duties (eg. Manager, treasurer, social events committee, parent liaison, etc).
 - c) For Matrix families who do not fulfill their volunteer requirement for the Lacombe Mudbath Tournament will forfeit their jersey deposit refund, as outlined in Section 11.02 (a)(ii)(a), unless otherwise approved by the LMSA Executive. Exemptions may be considered for exceptional circumstances (e.g., illness, family emergency) with written approval from the LMSA Executive.
 - d) LMSA recognizes that volunteers are the foundation of the Association's success. Members who go above and beyond in their volunteer service may be acknowledged through LMSA social media or year-end recognition.
- 10.15 All excess Matrix funds at the end of the season must be completed in the following order:
- a) Used to pay for any outstanding bills that are the responsibility of the team.
 - b) Divided up evenly and given back to the families to a maximum of what was asked for a cash call.
 - c) Presented to the association to be donated back to the association.
- 10.16 All excess Selects funds at the end of the season must be completed in the following order:
- a) Used to pay for any outstanding bills that are the responsibility of the team.
 - b) Divided up evenly and given back to the families to a maximum previously agreed upon amount that is not greater than the total of the cash call from the season.
 - c) To be kept in the Selects revolving account up to a maximum of \$2000.

11.0 Equipment Policy

11.01 Coaches

- a) Head Coaches will receive a package of equipment at the beginning of each season. Responsibility for this equipment remains the Head Coach's for the duration of the season. A held deposit is required upon receipt of the equipment.
- b) If any equipment is damaged or lost, please let the association know as soon as possible, so that it can be replaced in a timely manner.
- c) If there is something required above the initial package of equipment, please submit a formal request to Lacombe Minor Softball Association via email at equipmng@lacombebeminorsoftball.ca.
- d) If any equipment is purchased with fundraising funds by the association, it becomes the property of Lacombe Minor Softball Association at the conclusion of the season. Equipment shall not be removed from LMSA storage facilities without permission from the Equipment Director.

- e) Any questions can be directed at our Equipment Director.

11.02 Matrix Players

- a) All players must be dressed in the following for games:
 - i. Black ball pants and a team designated colored belt.
 - ii. Matrix Jersey(s) will be provided to each player at the beginning of the season.
 - a. A \$75 deposit will be applied to your fees at the beginning of each season. When the jersey is returned in good condition, you will receive a refund of the deposit.
 - iii. All players must have their own ball glove and protective support including a Jill (when required as per Softball Alberta), CSA helmet with dual ear flaps, ~~working chin strap~~, and attached face mask, as well as an infield mask as per Softball Alberta policy.
 - iv. Proper running shoes or softball cleats as per Softball Alberta requirements. Crocs, clogs, boots, sandals, slip on shoes or bare feet are not permitted.
 - v. All pitchers must wear an approved fielding mask for all levels.
 - vi. All infield players must wear an approved fielding mask at U11 and above.

11.03 Selects Players

- a) All Selects uniform requirements will be issued each season by the Selects Director. The following will be required but not limited to:
 - i. Team designated ball pants and jerseys, coloured belts, coloured socks, practice jersey, hoodie, coloured visors, helmet, and ball bag.
 - ii. All players must have their own ball glove, Jill (protective support), and infield mask as per Softball Alberta policy.
 - iii. Proper softball cleats as per Softball Alberta requirements.
 - iv. All pitchers must wear an approved fielding mask for all levels.
 - v. All infield players must wear an approved fielding mask at U11 and above.

12.0 Umpire Funding

- 12.01** The LMSA supports the development of local umpires as umpires are essential to the game of softball. The LMSA believes that there should be no financial barriers for any athlete who wants to grow as a player and individual within this aspect of the sport. Upon email request to the President, LMSA will cover the cost of the umpire clinic for any registered athlete within our association, along with a receipt. The minimum requirements for this funding to occur are to work a minimum of three (3) games for the LMSA.

13.0 Play Down, Provincial and Post-Provincial Funding

- 13.01** The LMSA recognizes that there are teams within the association that have goals of post seasonal play and would like to assist any teams endeavor to do so financially. Upon any Matrix/Selects team's eligibility of play downs, provincials and/or post provincial play, the LMSA will:

- a) Pay all applicable fees to Softball Alberta as required prior to play downs and/or provincials.
- b) Pay all applicable post provincial bond fees.

13.02 In the case that gate fees are required by the hosting association for play downs and provincials, it becomes the responsibility of the attending team to use their own team funds. Any and all requests for LMSA to pay fees for play downs, provincials and post provincial play must be sent via email to treasurer@lacombeinorsoftball.ca and will be considered on a case-by-case basis in collaboration with the President of LMSA.

14.0 Conflict Resolution and Discipline

14.01 The LMSA realizes that conflicts can take place throughout the season. How these conflicts are dealt with is critical for all parties involved. For this reason, LMSA has adopted the following process in hopes of diffusing conflicts as swiftly as possible within the association. Absolutely no phone calls to the board of directors will be accepted.

- a) Incident occurs.
- b) Must wait 24 hours to file a complaint.
- c) Document the incident or issue in writing. Verbal complaints will not be acknowledged.
- d) Be sure to clearly state the situation in as much detail as possible.
- e) Submit a written complaint to your team's parent liaison.
- f) The team's parent liaison will endeavor to resolve conflict at team level. This would include discussion with the parties involved.
- g) If a solution agreeable to both parties is not possible, the incident is then forwarded to the Vice President of LMSA.
- h) The Vice President will review the written submissions of the incident. They may call a meeting of all parties involved and the parent liaison to find a resolution acceptable to both parties at this level.
- i) If a resolution is not possible at this level, they will forward the complaint to the LMSA President for further review.
- j) The LMSA Board may review and act on the situation as they see best fit for all parties involved.

14.02 EXCEPTIONS: A LMSA board member must recuse themselves if they have any conflict of interest with the parties involved. Every situation and resolution will be decided on a case-by-case basis and will consider the severity and number of offenses previously occurred. The LMSA Executive reserves the right to implement any solutions they see fit and are final with no right to appeal.

15.0 Safety and Injury

15.01 LMSA Athlete Medical Forms must be present at all practices, games, tournaments, and other team functions.

- a) LMSA will provide each team with a first aid kit.

- b) LMSA is committed to preventing injuries due to the game of softball by:
 - i. Adhering to the appropriate safety equipment required for the athletes set out by Softball Alberta.
 - ii. Warming up properly prior to each practice/game.
 - iii. Concentrating on age-appropriate pitching/pitch counts.
 - iv. Developing skills that are age appropriate.
 - v. Returning to play only when a healthcare professional grants clearance.
- c) Concussion guidelines and protocol can be found at:
<https://www.parachutecanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Return-to-Sport-Strategy.pdf>

16.0 Code of Conduct

16.01 Coaches

- a) You, as a coach, can have a major effect on the development of an athlete of any age. The experiences our athletes have on and off the softball field will last for a lifetime, and we hope it instills the love of the game.
- b) LMSA works to ensure the coach/athlete relationship and the educational setting is always a positive experience so that each athlete's learning curve can be maximized to its fullest.
- c) To enjoy the season and to allow others to do the same, LMSA asks that coaches and assistant coaches please follow these guidelines:
 - i. I will be a role model for each athlete that I coach by using praise, positive encouragement, displaying control, professionalism, and respect for my team, LMSA, and Zone 4.
 - ii. I will be familiar with and coach under Softball Alberta rules.
 - iii. I will encourage sportsmanship, and be courteous and respectful to all athletes, parents/guardians, coaches, officials, umpires, and other fans of the game.
 - iv. I will be reasonable when scheduling practices and other activities, remembering that the athletes on my team have other interests and obligations.
 - v. I will ensure all players on my team receive equal skill development, support, and fair playing time.
 - vi. I will teach the athletes on my team to play fairly and to respect the rules, the officials, their opponents, and their teammates.
 - vii. I will always show concern towards sick and injured athletes and will request the advice of medical professionals as to whether they are ready to play again.
 - viii. I will not ridicule or yell at the players on my team for making mistakes or performing poorly. I will remember that children play to have fun and must be encouraged to have confidence in themselves.
 - ix. I will make sure that the equipment and facilities are safe and match the ages and abilities of the players on my team.
 - x. I will obtain proper training and continue to upgrade my coaching skills, so I am able to develop the athletes' skills and understanding of the game of softball.

- xi. I will demand a sports environment for my athletes that is free from drugs (including cannabis), tobacco, vaping, and alcohol and I will refrain from their use at all sports events.
- xii. I also agree that if I fail to abide by the aforementioned rules and guidelines, I will be subject to disciplinary action that could include, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. Verbal warning by official, Head Coaches, and/or head of league organization.
 - b. Written warning.
 - c. Coaching game suspension with written documentation of the incident kept on file by the organization(s) involved.
 - d. Coaching season suspension.

16.02 Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

- a) Our parents and fans represent the Lacombe Minor Softball Association when our teams play and practice. The actions of one of us can affect the image of all of us. Remember, we are all dealing with amateur athletics that are for enjoyment and fun. This encourages us to promote respect and fair play for all players, parents, fans, volunteers, coaches, officials and umpires.
- b) To enjoy the season and to allow others to do the same, Lacombe Minor Softball Association asks that parents and their guests please follow these guidelines:
 - i. I will remember that children participate to have fun and play by the rules. The game is for youth, not adults. Therefore, I will promote the emotional and physical well-being of my child ahead of any desires I have for my child to win.
 - ii. I will treat my team with respect and have my player(s) and all their equipment arrive at games and practices on time.
 - iii. I will participate and adhere to the Fundraising policy.
 - iv. I will report to the coach of any physical disability/injury that may affect my child or the safety of others.
 - v. I will provide my child with positivity and support every chance I get, no matter what the outcome of the game may be and/or their performance. It is ok to make mistakes.
 - vi. I will be a positive role model, encourage sportsmanship, and be courteous and respectful to all athletes, coaches, officials, umpires and other spectators.
 - vii. I will demand that my child treat other athletes, coaches, officials, umpires and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex or ability.
 - viii. I will never ridicule, yell, engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct or use inappropriate language at my child, other athlete, coach, official or umpire.
 - ix. I am expected to use social media platforms in a respectful and responsible manner, avoiding posts or comments that could reflect poorly on myself, the team, the coaches, or the Lacombe Minor Softball Association. Negative, offensive, or inappropriate content will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action.
 - x. I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs (including cannabis), tobacco, vaping, and alcohol and I will refrain from their use at all sports events.
 - xi. I will learn the rules of the game and the policies of the league.

- xii. I will refrain from coaching my child or other players from the sidelines/stands.
- xiii. I also agree that if I fail to abide by the aforementioned rules and guidelines, I will be subject to disciplinary action that could include, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. Verbal warning by official, Head Coaches, and/or head of league organization.
 - b. Written warning.
 - c. Parental game suspension with written documentation of the incident kept on file by the organization(s) involved.
 - d. Parental season suspension.

16.03 Athletes

- a) As an athlete, represent the LMSA when your team plays and practices. The actions of one of us can affect the image of all of us. Remember, we are all here for enjoyment and fun.
- b) To enjoy the season and to allow others to do the same, Lacombe Minor Softball Association asks that athletes please follow these guidelines:
 - i. I will give 100 % of my effort, positive attitude, and sportsmanship on and off the field.
 - ii. I will respect, honor and be a positive contributor to the Lacombe Minor Softball Association.
 - iii. I will treat my team with respect and arrive to games and practices on time with all my equipment.
 - iv. I will respect, listen to and follow the direction and rules set out by my manager and coaches.
 - v. I will respect my team members and other athletes.
 - vi. I will never ridicule, yell, engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct or use inappropriate language at other athletes, coaches, officials, or umpires.
 - vii. I will maintain an environment that is free from drugs (including cannabis), tobacco, vaping, and alcohol and I will not be under the influence of these substances and will refrain from their use at all sports events.
 - viii. Be proud to be an athlete for LMSA and have FUN doing it!
 - ix. I am expected to use social media platforms in a respectful and responsible manner, avoiding posts or comments that could reflect poorly on myself, my teammates, coaches, or the Lacombe Minor Softball Association. Negative, offensive, or inappropriate content will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action.
 - x. I also agree that if I fail to abide by these rules and guidelines, I will be subject to disciplinary action that could include, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. Verbal warning by official, Head Coaches, and/or head of league organization.
 - b. Written warning.
 - c. A game suspension with written documentation of the incident kept on file by the organization(s) involved.
 - d. A season suspension.

Appendix 1: Needs Assessment for Coaches

The Lacombe Minor Softball Association (LMSA) is committed to providing a positive and engaging environment for youth athletes to develop their softball skills. In order to maintain and enhance the quality of coaching within our association, it is important to conduct a needs assessment to identify areas where our coaches may require additional support or resources. The following assessment aims to gather information regarding the needs and preferences of our coaches, with the goal of improving their effectiveness and satisfaction in their coaching roles.

The objective of this needs assessment is to identify the areas in which LMSA coaches require additional support, training, or resources to enhance their coaching abilities. By understanding these needs, the association can develop targeted strategies and initiatives to address them effectively.

Assessment Questions:

1. Current Coaching Experience:
 - a. How many years of coaching experience do you have?
 - b. Have you previously coached softball or other sports? If yes, please specify.
 - c. What age groups have you coached in the past?
2. Areas of Expertise:
 - a. What specific softball skills or techniques do you feel most confident coaching?
 - b. Are there any areas of coaching where you feel you need improvement or additional training?
3. Training and Professional Development:
 - a. Have you participated in any coaching clinics or workshops in the past? If yes, please provide details.
 - b. What types of training or professional development opportunities would you like to see offered by the association?
 - c. How frequently would you prefer training sessions to be conducted?
4. Resources and Support:
 - a. What coaching resources do you currently utilize (e.g., books, online materials, drills)?
 - b. What additional coaching resources or tools would you find helpful?
 - c. How can the association better support coaches in their roles?
5. Communication and Feedback:

- a. How would you rate the effectiveness of communication between the association and coaches?
- b. Are there any specific communication channels or methods you prefer for receiving updates, resources, or information?
- 6. Coach-Player Relationship:
 - a. How do you establish and maintain a positive and supportive relationship with your players?
 - b. Are there any challenges you face in building rapport with your players? If yes, please explain.
- 7. Coach Evaluation and Feedback:
 - a. How do you currently receive feedback on your coaching performance?
 - b. Would you find it valuable to have regular evaluations or assessments of your coaching effectiveness? If yes, how often?
- 8. Suggestions and Comments: Is there anything else you would like to share or suggest regarding coaching in the Lacombe Minor Softball Association?

By conducting this needs assessment, the Lacombe Minor Softball Association aims to gather valuable insights from coaches to better understand their needs, strengths, and areas for improvement. The results of this assessment will guide the association in developing tailored training programs, resources, and support systems to enhance coaching effectiveness and satisfaction.

Appendix 2: Long-Term Athlete Development Model

The objective of the Long-Term Athlete Development Model for softball in Lacombe is to provide a comprehensive training plan for players of all ages and skill levels. This program aims to develop fundamental softball skills, improve physical fitness, enhance game strategy and knowledge, and foster a love for the sport.

Program Structure:

1. Skill Development:
 - a. Basic Fundamentals:
 - Throwing: Proper grip, arm motion, accuracy, and velocity.
 - Fielding: Ground balls, fly balls, and infield/outfield positioning.
 - Hitting: Bat grip, stance, swing mechanics, bunting, and situational hitting.
 - Base Running: Techniques for stealing, leading, and sliding.
 - b. Advanced Techniques:
 - Pitching: Mechanics, different pitch grips, speed, accuracy, and strategy.
 - Catching: Stance, receiving, blocking, throwing, and game-calling.
 - Position-Specific Skills: In-depth training for specific positions (e.g., shortstop, outfielder, etc.).
2. Strength and Conditioning:
 - Agility: Footwork drills, ladder drills, and cone drills.
 - Speed: Sprint training, base running techniques, and reaction time exercises.
 - Strength: Age-appropriate strength training exercises, emphasizing core strength and explosive power.
 - Flexibility: Stretching routines to improve range of motion and prevent injuries.
3. Game Strategy and Knowledge:
 - Rules and Regulations: Understanding softball rules and how to apply them.
 - Situational Awareness: Teaching players to analyze game situations and make informed decisions.
 - Offensive Strategies: Hitting approach, base running strategies, and small ball tactics.
 - Defensive Strategies: Positioning, cut-offs, double plays, and defensive communication.
4. Mental Skills Training:
 - Concentration and Focus: Techniques to improve mental focus during games and practices.

- Visualization: Imagining successful performance to build confidence and mental rehearsal.
- Goal Setting: Setting both short-term and long-term goals to track progress and maintain motivation.
- Resilience and Sportsmanship: Teaching players to handle failures, adapt to setbacks, and maintain a positive attitude.

5. Game Experience:

- Scrimmages: Organizing intrasquad scrimmages to provide real game-like situations.
- Tournaments: Encouraging participation in local and regional tournaments to gain exposure to different competition levels.
- Video Analysis: Reviewing game footage to identify areas of improvement and reinforce learning points.

6. Coaching and Mentorship:

- Qualified Coaches: Ensuring the program is led by experienced and certified softball coaches.
- Guest Clinicians: Inviting guest coaches, former players, and experts to conduct specialized clinics.
- Leadership Development: Encouraging older or more experienced players to mentor and guide younger or less-experienced players.

7. Parent Involvement:

- Education: Conducting informational sessions for parents on various aspects of the sport, including rules, equipment, and player safety.
- Supportive Environment: Encouraging parents to provide positive reinforcement and support their child's participation in the program.
- Volunteer Opportunities: Offering parents opportunities to assist with program activities or events.

Note: The program can be tailored based on the age group, skill level, and available resources. It is crucial to create a safe and inclusive environment that promotes the enjoyment of the sport while emphasizing personal growth, teamwork, and sportsmanship.

Appendix 3: Selects Metric Evaluation

Metric	Details
Home To First	• Player begins at home plate • Timer starts upon player's first move • Timer stops upon player touching first base
Second to Home	• Player begins at second base • Timer starts upon player's first move • Timer stops upon player touching home plate
Exit Velocity	• Velocity of ball batted off of tee • Recorded with radar gun • Player hits 4 balls with top velocity recorded
Throwing Velocity	• Velocity of ball thrown from stretch (like a baseball pitcher) • Recorded with radar gun • Player throws 4 balls with top velocity recorded
Pro Agility (5-10-5)	• Three cones/lines marked out in straight line, 5 yards away from each other • Player straddles the center line. Timer starts upon players first move • Player runs to first outside line touching on or past the line • Player runs to opposite line touching on or past the line • Player sprints back across the center line • Timer stops at first step on or beyond the center line • Players can run up to three times with top score recorded
Pitching Metrics	• To be recorded with radar for appropriate ages (U13 and up) • Key metrics: ○ Pitch Accuracy ○ Velocity ○ Pitch Selection
Catching Metrics	• Home to second 'pop' time ○ Catcher behind home plate is thrown a pitch ○ Timer starts as ball contacts catcher's glove ○ Timer stops as ball contacts receivers' glove at second base