

LETHBRIDGE MINOR
SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION

HOME OF

Lethbridge Minor Softball

and

“LETHBRIDGE HEAT”

OFFICAL HANDBOOK

2024 VERSION

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1. REGISTRATION, PROVINCIAL AND LEAGUE DATES

Lethbridge Minor Softball Association shall enforce the player registration deadline as set annually by the Executive. All Player registrations must be accompanied by the required documentation and must be presented to the Lethbridge Minor Softball Association office on the yearly assigned registration date fully completed.

All players listed on the Player Registration Form must play a minimum of three games during league play before they can qualify to play in City Playoffs. Deadline for adding players to a roster is June 1. Exception: requests will be considered through written correspondence only.

Registration	Jan 15 – Mar 31
Round 1 Play	Apr 30 – May 16
Round 2 Play	May 21 – Jun 15
Provincial Play Team Registration	June 1
Provincial Roster Deadline due to Softball Alberta Office	June 15
City Championships	
U11	Jun 15
U13	Jun 15
U15	Jun 15
U17	Jun 15
U19	Jun 15

2. AGE

CATEGORIES FEES AND

EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

<u>YEAR OF BIRTH</u>	<u>DIVISION</u>	<u>FEES</u>	<u>NIGHTS/TIME</u>	<u>EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS</u>
2020-2021*	U4 Blastball*	\$70.00	6:00-6:45 Tuesdays Only	Running Shoes, Glove preferred but not mandatory. PARENT INVOLVEMENT MANDATORY
2019	U5 T-Ball**	\$75.00	6:00-7:00 Tuesdays Only	Glove, Caged Helmet, Running Shoes. PARENT INVOLVEMENT REQUIRED
2017-2018	U7**	\$130.00	6:30-7:30 Mon/Wed Nights	Glove, Caged Helmet, Running Shoes. PARENT INVOLVEMENT REQUIRED
2015-2016	U9**	\$130.00	6:30-7:30 Mon/Wed Nights	Glove, Caged Helmet, Running Shoes. Some games may take place out of Lethbridge; such as Milk River, Foremost, Coaldale, Taber or Vauxhall
2013-2014	U11**	\$130.00	6:30-8:00 Mon/Wed Nights	Glove, Caged Helmet, Cleats(recommended) or Running Shoes. Some games may take place out of Lethbridge; such as Milk River, Foremost, Coaldale, Taber or Vauxhall
2011-2012	U13	\$150.00	6:30-8:00 Tue/Thur Nights	Glove, Caged Helmet, Cleats(recommended). Some games may take place out of Lethbridge; such as

				Milk River, Foremost, Coaldale, Taber or Vauxhall
2009-2010	U15	\$150.00	6:30-8:00 Mon/Wed Nights	Glove, Caged Helmet, Cleats(recommended). Some games may take place out of Lethbridge; such as Milk River, Foremost, Coaldale, Taber or Vauxhall
2005-2008	U17-U23	\$130.00	6:30-8:00 Tue/Thur Nights	Glove, Caged Helmet, Cleats(recommended)

3. EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

President	Tyler Fallwell
Vice President	
Treasurer	
Secretary	
Registrar and Media Coordinator	
Equipment and Uniform Coordinator	
Director of Umpires	
Sponsorship and Grant Coordinator	
Timbits Division Director	
U11 Division Director	
U13 Division Director	
U15 Division Director	TBD
U17 Division Director	TBD
U19 Division Director	TBD

3.1. ROTATIONAL ELECTION OF EXECUTIVES

The Annual General Meeting will elect the Officers of Lethbridge Minor Softball Association: Vice-President, Secretary and Registrar for two-year terms in even numbered years.

In the event of a position becoming vacant, the Board may appoint a Board member to that position.

3.2. RESPONSIBILITIES & DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

President

- Whenever possible chair all meetings of the Association.
- Co-sign all cheques written on behalf of, and on the account of the Association and shall co-sign, along with the Secretary, any documentation approved by the Executive required to be signed in regard to the Association.
- Ensure that the objectives and activities of the Association are carried out by the Executive.
- Prepare the agenda for the Executive meetings and the annual general meeting.

Vice President

- Assist the President with his/her duties, and shall, in the event of the inability of the President to perform his/her duties, take the place of the President in his/her absence.

Treasurer

- Be responsible for receiving, depositing, and disbursing all funds on behalf of the Association in accordance with the directions of the Executive.
- Co-sign, along with the President, all cheques on behalf of the Association.
- Keep a record of all financial transactions on behalf of the Association.
- Process all refunds necessary.
- Prepare the annual budget of the Association.
- Submit the required Society Annual Return to Alberta Consumer and Corporate Affairs within the specified time frame and preparation of financial statement.

Secretary

- Keep minutes of all Executive meetings and send out copies to each Executive member prior to the next Executive meeting. Keep minutes of the annual general meeting.
- Assist the President in all outgoing correspondence.
- Draft and mail any mass mailings requested by the Executive.

Division Directors

Act as the liaison between the Executive and the coaches.

- Assist new coaches by suggesting ideas for practice drills, game plays, etc.
- Problem solves when a concern arises as per policies.
- Inform all coaches of annual coach's clinics.
- Create team rosters.
- Draw up house league schedule, and forward to coaches to distribute (both paper and email – so they can give both to teams)
- Any diamond Maintenance – for association and city records.
 - Recruit coaches and assistants. Once coaches are assigned (for applicable decisions): Organize a coach meeting, where they can acquire their team equipment and team folder.
 - Create team folders for each coach – inclusive of player information, division rules, safety, policies, and procedures. REMIND coaches to keep this folder with them at all association functions and turn in at season end with their equipment.
 - For applicable divisions, organize tournaments with coaches.
 - Forward list of coaches and assistants to Treasurer requesting fee reimbursement, as per policies.
 - For applicable divisions - Coordinate with the uniform coordinator, the issuing of house league uniforms and record sheets for the directors and coaches.
 - For Applicable divisions - Order T-shirts & hats needed from place of business appointed by association.

- For applicable divisions – Organize year end – possibly creating windup committees from members from each division teams.
- For applicable divisions – Cancel games and practices due to poor weather or schedule conflicts – cancellations must be forwarded to coaches’ minimum 1 hour prior to game/practice start. Cancellations due to poor weather once the teams are at the diamond, is per coaching discretion.
- For applicable divisions – Be the liaison between the directors of the town teams playing in your division and the coaches and association.

Equipment & Uniform Coordinator

- **Equipment:**
 - Ensure that all equipment bags complete with equipment, are in order, clean and ready for pick up by the division directors or coaches.
 - Each equipment bag should have a sheet containing an equipment list that coaches are responsible for.
 - Check with the diamond scheduler as to which diamonds will be used each season.
 - Have equipment available for assessments and season start coach meeting.
 - Any new or replacement equipment deemed necessary to purchase provide list to Executive for approval.
 - Arrange collection of equipment at the end of the season.
 - After the season has ended, periodically check the lock up facility to ensure no damage has occurred.
- **Uniforms**
 - Maintain records of on hand uniforms.
 - Inspect and replace uniform tops and pants as needed.
 - Coordinate with the division directors, the issuing of house league uniforms and record sheets for the directors and coaches.
 - Coordinate the uniform requirements for the provincial teams.
 - Where applicable on completion of the regular season, coordinate with the division directors, the return of the house league uniforms.
 - Issue uniforms/record sheets to the provincial coordinator.
 - Coordinate the return of provincial uniforms upon completion of the provincial tournaments.
 - After all the uniforms have been returned, assess the need for replacement and decide with suppliers to have the shortages or replacement uniforms ordered.
 - Launder the uniforms at year end.

Sponsorship & Grant Coordinator

- Solicit annual sponsors for house league divisions and follow up on the receipt of funds.
- Update the sponsorship letter on a yearly basis.
- Collect sponsorship and give to treasurer.

- Collect a sponsorship logo JPEG and forward to website personnel to have included on our association website.
- Research grants available by the city and province and write up the grant letter to be approved by the executive.

Registrar & Media Coordinator

- Registrar:
 - Make and distribute flyers to all the schools - update existing poster with new in person dates or any changes in pricing, years of birth. Email to school boards for approval and distribute.
 - Schedule helpers to work shifts to cover all registration times and dates. Send schedule via email to executive members to fill work spots.
 - Set up registration table and displays - have enough registration forms, receipt books and kid sport & Jumpstart information. Bring display, shirt samples, and any equipment to be displayed.
 - Arrange copying and pick up of registration forms.
 - Give all funds to Treasurer from in-person registration.
 - Each registration form at actual registration dates is marked with the receipt # and then payment option i.e., Paid Cheque #002, by workers at booth.
 - Any registrations that are collected in person will be then entered into our online registration portal.
 - Relay information on withdraws from registration to Treasurer for refunds, if applicable. Let applicable division directors know.
- Media:
 - Be the liaison between LMSA and all forms of Media (Website, Facebook, Twitter, radio, TV, newspaper); developing positive working relationships with each where applicable.
 - Before season start approach executive with possible advertising options and prices.
 - Book and create if necessary, advertising for registration, for AGM, for any camps, assessments or clinics offered by LMSA or for any positions required filling.
 - Website maintenance and control of information on the website, Facebook, and Twitter.

4. FINANCE

An interim financial statement shall be prepared for presentation along with the audited financial statement to the membership at the Annual General Meeting.

The interim financial statement is to include the period from the fiscal year end (December 31st) to the Annual General Meeting.

5. UMPIRES

All games, including City Playoffs, must be played as scheduled even though a LMSUA umpire is not present. In the event a certified LMSUA umpire is unavailable the Home team supplies the parent volunteer home plate umpire.

The following equipment will be mandatory when umpiring an LMSA game: Mask, chest protector, indicator, umpire t-shirt and will be provided by LMSA to each umpire. Shin guards and groin protection will be mandatory for any umpire under 18 years of age and will be the responsibility of the umpire to purchase.

Umpires will be given a booklet to keep track of the games that they have umped (date/diamond/team names/score/Home and visiting coach signatures). They will submit these books to the treasurer via email. Payment will be arranged biweekly via e-transfer or monthly via cheque.

6. DIVISION OVERVIEW & GUIDELINES

LMSA is committed to the overall success of all our players, parents, coaches, and administration and supports and follows the Long-Term Player Development Program (LTPD). This program presents a framework for optimal athlete development with reference to growth, maturation, and development, appropriate training, and suitable competition exposure. It provides a clear pathway for the development of athletes that is easily understood by all stakeholders. The first and most important goal of the program is to make Softball FUN for kids. And what better way to do that than to provide the coach with all the tools they will need to run a successful program. The following outlines these pathways for each division.

There is an established Code of Ethics and adherence to fair play attitudes and behaviours: - respect for self, teammates, coaches, opponents, officials, rules, and the sport - non-violence - non-harassment.

Players apply positive individual values as well such as: - respect for the truth - integrity - moral decision making in the heat of competition - healthy living - considerate behaviour - seeking new information and opportunities to learn - responsibility/accountability – no excuses or laying of blame - committing to continuous improvement - mental toughness/determination - committing to a particular course of action - time management of academic, sport, and social aspects of life.

Along with applying positive team concept, taking pride in - teamwork - playing safely - work ethic, dedication, effort, and commitment to hard work - expressing gratitude, thanking coaches, officials, and volunteers - accepting and fulfilling role on team - humility, dealing graciously with defeat and victory - tolerance - inclusiveness - accepting and embracing discipline for the benefit of the team.

6.1. Timbits (U4 & U5) & U7 & U9

Overview and Objective:

These programs were designed to address the specific needs of 3–9-year-olds.

The first and most important goal of the program is to make Softball **FUN** for kids. What a better way to do that than to provide the coach with all the tools they will need to run a successful program.

This program differs from sports like mini soccer where only the aggressive children touch the ball. In these programs, the players are broken down into small groups where they can get the required repetitions to make improvements in skill development and feel that sense of accomplishment that increases their self-confidence.

Research has shown that out of a possible of 10 reasons for youth to participate in sport the top 4 are: To have fun, to improve skills, to stay in shape, To do something I am good at. Children ranked “challenge of competition” as #8 and “to win” #10.

These programs provides 3–9-year-olds with maximum opportunity to practice the progressions necessary to successfully take part in the adult game of softball with a reasonable amount of skill. Traditionally this age group consists of the coaches being parents with little or no coaching experience which is why this program is designed to make it easy to implement for the volunteer coach.

Focus & Goals:

The focus at this stage is primarily to enjoy and play. The goals at this stage are to achieve overall development by participating in a variety of activities that encourage fundamental movement skills and encourage the love of being physically active. It also develops strength using fun games to develop physical capacities and to introduce simple rules and ethics of sport and simple tactics.

Psychological Development:

This stage is to develop the use of imagination to develop visualization skills. It introduces concepts of team building and social skills. To encourage confidence and positive self-esteem and to design activities that help players to feel competent and comfortable participating in a variety of fun and challenging sports and activities.

Encourage personal growth and development through teachable moments and acknowledge players doing something well. Introduce fair play attitudes and behaviours such as respect for self and others. Encourage the development of positive individual values: honesty, kindness, responsibility, and disciplined behaviour. Introduce concepts of team play and fair play with social interaction, positive attitude, good effort, confidence, and attentiveness. This “Sportsmanship” can also include encouragement of teammates, cheering and congratulating teammates on plays.

Physical Development:

This stage of development is to focus on learning fundamental movement skills such as running, jumping, throwing, and catching movements that involve body parts such as feet, legs, trunk, head, arms, and hands. They form the foundation for all sports and should be introduced through fun games to teach general physical conditioning, speed, agility, and quickness. We introduce fundamental softball skills when fundamental movement skills are mastered. We use modified games to reinforce fundamental movement skills learned in practice. We use warm-ups as additional skill development sessions, and we focus on fun and participation.

Technical Development:

Introduce and develop the fundamental movement skills such as running, jumping, throwing, and catching by using fun games and activities that incorporate these movements. Examples of these activities are listed on the website.

Begin to introduce the fundamental softball skills identified below into practice plans before the start of the games and to continue to review or expand over the course of the rest of the season. Techniques and examples on how to teach these skills are provided on the website along with examples of lesson plans.

- Receiving, Throwing, Fielding, Hitting

Season Structure:

LMSA provides 15-17 practices and games for the season depending on weather conditions.

LMSA provides 15-17 practices and modified games for the season depending on weather conditions. Games are to be modified with a rotation of players through all positions.

The coach or division rep. will prepare acceptable lesson plans for their practice or game plans for game days. The following is an example of a lesson plan for this stage:

- Warm up stretches – 2 min - Quick stretching of legs, arms, shoulders, jumping jacks.
- Warm up game – 5 min - This incorporates movement and is designed to replicate the movements you would need to play softball.
- Skill Technique 1 – 10-20 min – Show proper skill technique.
- Main Activity 1 - 5 min – To incorporate the skill just taught.
- Skill Technique 2 – 10-20 min – Show proper skill technique.
- Main Activity 2 – 5 min - To incorporate the skill just taught.
- Cool down game – 5 min – To end on a fun note.

Helpful Notes:

A detailed example of a lesson plan is available on the website.

Sometimes you will run over the time you have allotted to yourself. If so, just make a note to add it to the next session. Do not worry if you do not have time for a cool down game.

Try to incorporate the player's favorite activities more often to make sure they are having fun. If you have trouble modifying the activities let me know and I can help you.

It is also important that you end the night as a group. You can ask a couple questions about what they learned today. E.g., Can you all show me how to properly grip a ball? What was their favorite part of learning today or what activity they liked best? End with a 1-2-3 Cheer using the team's name.

Establish positive behaviour. It is essential that you establish a set of behaviors that you would like your players to abide by throughout the season. When instilled in the players at the beginning of the season, these behaviours will allow you to run much more efficient and fun sessions. Ensure you clearly communicate your expectations to the players and parents, as well as keep expectations consistent

throughout the sessions. The coach must monitor the player's behaviour and follow through on any consequences decided upon at the beginning of the season. Most of the time a simple sit out away from the activity is sufficient.

Examples:

- After the coach's explanation, wait for the "GO" signal from the coach before starting the activity.
- Use the word "freeze" to stop an activity.
- Listening and not talking while the coach or another player is speaking.
- Establish responsibilities for the players to set-up and put away equipment.
- Insist that players place and do not throw the equipment when putting it away.
- Cheering and communicating with teammates during drills and games should be encouraged by the coach and instilled into the athletes at a very young age.
- Ensure equal playing time for all players. The children should be given opportunities to play all positions including pitcher.
- The focus is on individual and team development through giving one's best effort and improving skills vs. the outcome of the game.
- Teach and encourage the players to always being "engaged" and in "ball mode".
- Such as sitting with the team when batting and not with parents.
- Running and hustling on and off the field.
- Paying attention on the field (this can be hard for small kids so the coach will need to probably constantly be reminding players to "pay attention").

Strategic Thinking Goals:

At this age we focus primarily on movement development, but beginner strategy can be taught.

Defensive Strategy at this stage the focus is basically trying to get to the ball using the movements taught. If the player can get to the ball the next step is to encourage placement of throw by teaching them what to do with the ball once they get it.

Introducing the ways to get an out, touching a base on a force play, and tagging a player when not a force play, catching a pop fly.

Examples:

- When a new batter at bat. Go over ready position and what play will be made when the ball is hit.
- We have a player on 1st, so where can we throw to get an out? Answer can be 1st or 2nd.
- We have a runner on 1st and 3rd, so where can we throw to get an out? Answer can be 1st or 2nd.
- We have a runner on 2nd, so where can we throw to get and out? Answer can be 1st.

Offensive Strategy at this stage the focus is to just make a connection with the ball and run the bases properly.

- Knowing how to run to 1st (run through base), to 2nd & 3rd (cannot run through base), to home (run through plate).
- Listening to your 1st and 3rd coach/parent coach so that base running skills are reinforced.
-

6.2. U11

Overview and Objective:

To develop overall sports skills and softball-specific skills. This is the time to develop and refine all fundamental movement skills, and to learn overall sport skills. This is the most important stage for the development of fundamental softball-specific skills as it is a period of accelerated learning of coordination and fine motor control.

Children are now developmentally ready to acquire the general sports skills that are the cornerstones of all athletic development. The emphasis is on teaching fundamental softball skills and tactics as well as other abilities such as how to achieve optimum balance, flexibility, posture, strength, and power.

“The Learning to Train” stage of development is critical as players pass through a significant window of trainability for sport-specific skill development. If this training opportunity is not optimized, it will compromise the ability of the player to reach his or her full potential in later years, regardless of future training programs.” – Charles Cardinal, Sport Canada LTAD Expert.

Focus & Goals:

The focus of this age is to “**Learn to Train**” by focusing on fun, participation, and learning softball specific skills. We encourage all players with various skill levels play together in a stimulating learning environment which is organized, active, game-like, and includes a variety of activities. This is also a stage where we can introduce an appropriate Achievement Award Program.

Psychological Development:

At this stage of development, the introduction of goal setting and guided decision making on the field is possible. Use imagination to develop visualization skills on the field. This is a stage where we provide team building activities and introduce self-control expectations.

Encourage personal growth and development through teachable moments and acknowledge players doing something well. Continue developing fair play attitudes and behaviours such as respect for self, teammates, coaches, opponents, officials, rules, and sport. Continue developing positive individual values: honesty, kindness, responsibility, integrity, trustworthiness, fairness, self-discipline, and self-esteem. Continue developing the team concept of teamwork, work ethic (giving best effort), dealing graciously with defeat and victory and playing safely. This “Sportsmanship” can also include encouragement of teammates, cheering and congratulating teammates on plays.

Physical Development:

Using fun games to develop the children’s strength, power, speed, agility, flexibility, and quickness. Encourage daily participation in numerous sports or activities and participation in 2-3 complimentary sports over the year.

Technical Development:

In the pre-season we develop the fundamental softball skills identified below into practice plans before the start of games and to continue to review or expand over the course of the rest of the season. Techniques and examples on how to teach these skills are provided on the website along with examples of lesson plans.

- Receiving, Throwing, Fielding & Positions on field, Hitting, Base Running, Sliding, Pitching, Catching, Relays.

Leading off a base when the ball leaves the pitchers hand is introduced in the pre-season but only in mid-season will we introduce the skill of stealing. Players can “steal” or run to the next base once the ball has left the pitcher’s hand. You can only steal a base if no one else on your team is on the next base. Players can not steal home at this level. This is where the base coaching/parent support is needed. Players need to pay attention to who is on base as well as watch/listen to what your base coach tells you to do.

Season Structure:

Because this stage is a key window of opportunity for skill development it is extremely important to provide players with sufficient time and repetitions to practice and master fundamental softball skills. During this stage, 70% of the time a child is participating in softball should be devoted to practice and only 30% of the time to competing in a game.

LMSA provides 15-17 practices and games for the season depending on weather conditions. As the season progresses for U-10 more skills will be introduced.

Coaches should design drills in practice to simulate game situations to ensure fun and appropriate challenges. The focus of games should be to utilize the skills learned in practice in a competitive situation. The focus is not on winning the game. Daily participation in physical activity and/or organized sport is encouraged.

Provide well-structured programs with appropriate skill progressions, high levels of activity, and learning opportunities for all in a well-planned, positive environment. Ensure equal playing time for all players. The children should be given opportunities to play all positions including pitcher.

The focus is on individual and team development through giving one’s best effort and improving skills vs. the outcome of the game.

Avoid league standings or statistics that emphasize wins/losses and focus rather on the process. Hold Achievement or Skills Days, Jamborees, Festivals.

Strategic Thinking Goals:

At this age we focus primarily on skill development and beginner strategy.

Defensive Strategy: at this stage, the player is focused on proper movement to the ball. If the player can get to the ball the next step is to encourage placement of throw by teaching them what to do with the ball once they get it. The players should be able to start to understand the “Plays” that can be made when the coach asks the question: Where is the play?

Example: When a new batter at bat. Coach asks what play will be made when the ball is hit.

- We have a player on 1st, so where can we throw to get an out? Answer can be 1st or 2nd.
- We have a runner on 1st and 3rd, so where can we throw to get an out? Answer can be 1st or 2nd.
- We have a runner on 2nd, so where can we throw to get and out? Answer can be 1st.

Other ideas include: Reinforcing the ways to get an out, touching a base on a force plays, and tagging a player when not a force play, what to do when a pop fly is caught.

Introduction of the defensive strategy of “covering”. Each position has specific covering duties, and these can be introduced and reinforced during practices and games.

Mid-season stealing is introduced so plays can change with every pitch and the defensive players must be able to recognize these changes to make the right play.

Offensive Strategy: at this stage, the player is focused on connection to ball and running the bases properly.

- Knowing how to run to 1st (run through base), to 2nd & 3rd (cannot run through base), to home (run through plate).
- Understanding what “no force” base running is. (Does not have to advance on a hit ball if no player is behind them on the bases.)
- Understanding what to do when a pop fly occurs. Tagging up if applicable or staying on base if the ball has been caught.
- Mid-Season stealing is introduced. Knowing when to steal and listening to your base coaches.
- Understanding the strike zone and what pitches to swing at.

6.3. U13

Overview and Objective:

To continue to develop overall sports skills and softball-specific skills. This is the time to develop and refine all fundamental movement skills, and to learn overall sport skills. This is the most important stage for the development of fundamental softball-specific skills as it is a period of accelerated learning of coordination and fine motor control.

The “**Learning to Train**” stage is signaled by the onset of Peak Height Velocity. This stage develops all fundamental movement skills and fundamental softball skills along with introducing exercises or routines, or wheeling up gradients, to aid in strength development to further develop stamina through games and relays. This stage further develops flexibility through exercises to develop speed by using specific activities that focus on agility, quickness, and change of direction especially during the warmup. This stage introduces general mental skills to aid with structured competition.

We apply a ratio of 70% training to 30% competition and competition-specific training. These percentages vary according to individual specific needs. Players undertaking this type of preparation will be better equipped for competition in both the short-term and long-term than those who focus solely on winning.

Focus & Goals:

This stage still focuses on fun, participation, and learning. Players are divided into teams based on skill levels if possible. Player autonomy is introduced, and players play 3 to 4 positions in softball. The focus is on the process of individual and team development rather than on the competitive outcome. Practices are well organized, varied, game-like, and active and an appropriate Achievement Award Program is in place.

Psychological Development:

Introduce visualization skills and develop the demands of autonomous decision-making during practice. Introduce elements of goal setting, team cohesion and emotional control for player development and the attitude of sportsmanship.

Encourage personal growth and development through teachable moments and acknowledge players doing something well. Continue developing fair play attitudes and behaviours such as respect for self, teammates, coaches, opponents, officials, rules, and sport. Continue developing positive individual values: honesty, kindness, responsibility, integrity, trustworthiness, fairness, self-discipline, and self-esteem. Continue developing the team concept of teamwork, work ethic (giving best effort), dealing graciously with defeat and victory and playing safely. This "Sportsmanship" can also include encouragement of teammates, cheering and congratulating teammates on plays.

Physical Development:

Develop general physical conditioning, speed, agility, and quickness with games and play activities. Develop strength and power through own body weight exercises, develop flexibility and monitor PHV (peak height velocity) especially for females.

Technical Development:

In the pre-season we continue to develop fundamental softball skills identified below into practice plans before the start of games and to continue to review or expand over the course of the rest of the season. Techniques and examples on how to teach these skills are provided on the website along with examples of lesson plans.

- Receiving, Throwing, Fielding & Positions on field, Hitting, Bunting, Base Running, Sliding, , Pitching, Catching, Rundowns, Relays.

Season Structure:

Because this stage is a key window of opportunity for skill development it is extremely important to provide players with sufficient time and repetitions to practice and master fundamental softball skills. During this stage, 70% of the time a child is participating in softball should be devoted to practice and only 30% of the time to competing in a game. Minimum can be 60% practices to 40% games.

LMSA provides 15-17 practices and games for the season depending on weather conditions.

Ensure pitcher development and avoid pitcher overuse along with trying to avoid dominance by one team. Provide the opportunity for more players to get into play.

Record league standings but emphasize the process rather than the win/loss record. Ensure that tournament and provincial championship formats maximize the number of games for each team based on circumstances such as time and facilities.

Players should play 3 to 4 positions throughout games and the season. Ensure fair and reasonable playing time and develop at least 5 pitchers per team. Encourage daily participation in numerous sports or recreation activities.

Strategic Thinking Goals:

At this age we focus on improving our skill development and players are starting to engage in unassisted strategy recognition.

Defensive Strategy: at this stage, the player is focused on proper movement and positioning to the ball. In the first 1-10 practices the players should be able to understand basic defensive plays such as ground outs, force plays, relay plays, cut-offs, covering, getting the lead runner and pop fly or line drive catches. The players should understand game rules.

The next practices (approximately ½ through the season) the players should be able to execute a wider variety of fundamental skills and game tactics at a greater intensity level. They should have an understanding of the defensive plays of 1st and 3rd, infield in (bunting scenarios), bases loaded, cut-offs/relays, pickoffs and steals.

Offensive Strategy:

- Understanding what “no force” base running is. (Does not have to advance on a hit ball if no player is behind them on the bases.)
- Understanding what to do when a pop fly occurs. Tagging up if applicable or staying on base if ball has been caught.
- Knowing when to lead off and steal bases. Watching the base coaches and not hesitating when they give direction.
- Knowing when to slide.
- Understanding the strike zone and what pitches to swing at.
- Understanding of game rules.
- Batters should be aware if they have a teammate on 3rd that could steal home. They must move back out of the box to allow for the runner to steal home without any interference.

6.4. U15

Overview and Objective:

This stage is the “**Training to Train**” stage. In this stage, players can be separated into community or competitive softball programs based on their skill level. The development of technical skills revolves around consolidating fundamental softball skills — fielding, throwing, pitching, hitting, and base running, including sliding — and introducing advanced skills and tactics. Position-specific skills are developed but with players are still learning at least 2 to 3 positions.

This stage develops general mental skills and introduces softball-specific mental skills that allows the player to be able to learn to cope with the mental and physical challenges of competition. During

competitions, teams play to win and do their best, but the major focus is on learning softball skills and tactics and successfully applying them in competitions rather than on wins and losses. Players should be introduced to ancillary capacities that enhance their performance. Players are encouraged to participate in 1 to 2 complementary sports throughout the year to develop all their athletic abilities.

Training to Train is the most important stage for athletic preparation in terms of building the player's "engine". This is a major fitness development stage for speed, strength, and stamina.

Focus & Goals:

This stage still focuses on fun, participation, and learning and players are divided based on skill levels if possible. Player autonomy is developed and plays 2 to 3 positions in softball. The focus is on individual and team development rather than on a competitive outcome. Multiple sport participation is encouraged, and enrichment programs are available and open to all. An appropriate Achievement Award Program should be in place.

Psychological Development:

This stage develops visualization skills, and autonomous decision-making during games. It also develops goal setting, team cohesion, and emotional control.

This stage introduces game plans, pre-game, and game routines along with an introduction to stress management, coping strategies and attentional control.

Encourage personal growth and development through teachable moments, acknowledge players doing something well, and formalize teaching with examples or discussions. Establish a Code of Ethics and continue to develop fair play attitudes and behaviours such as respect for self, teammates, coaches, opponents, officials, rules, and the sport as well as non-violence. Continue to develop positive individual values such as respect for the truth, moral reasoning, including recognition of right and wrong, considerate behaviour, responsibility/accountability – no excuses or laying blame, mental toughness and determination and integrity.

Continue to develop positive team concept, taking pride in teamwork, work ethic, including dedication, effort, and commitment to hard, productive work, humility, dealing graciously with defeat and victory, playing safe, tolerance, inclusiveness, expressing gratitude, thanking coaches, officials, and volunteers, and accepting and fulfilling role on team.

Physical Development:

Introduce general physical conditioning, general strength and power training, general speed, agility, flexibility, and quickness.

Technical Development:

In the pre-season we continue to reinforce fundamental softball skills identified below into practice plans before the start of games and to continue to review or expand over the course of the rest of the season. Techniques and examples on how to teach these skills are provided on the website along with examples of lesson plans.

- Receiving, Throwing, Fielding & Positions on field, Hitting, Bunting, Fake Bunt/ Slap Hit, Base Running, Sliding, Pitching, Catching, Rundowns, Relays.

Season Structure:

During this stage, 70% of the time a child is participating in softball should be devoted to practice and only 30% of the time to competing in a game. Minimum can be 60% practices to 40% games.

LMSA provides 15-17 practices and games for the season depending on weather conditions.

Limit the number of innings pitched along with trying to avoid dominance by one team. Provide the opportunity for more players to get into play.

Record league standings but not individual statistics. Ensure that tournament and provincial championship formats maximize the number of games for each team based on circumstances such as time and facilities.

Players should play 2 to 3 positions throughout games and the season. Ensure fair and reasonable playing time and encourage daily participation in numerous sports or recreation activities.

Strategic Thinking Goals:

At this age we focus on improving individual fundamental softball skills and greater knowledge of individual tactics at several positions.

Defensive Strategy:

At this stage, the player is focused on proper movement and positioning to the ball. In the first of the season practices the players should be able to understand defensive principles such as location, adjustment, jurisdiction and coverage as well as improved knowledge and application of team tactics and strategies. The players should understand game rules.

From mid-season on practices the players should be able to execute a wider variety of fundamental skills and game tactics at a greater intensity level. They should understand the defensive plays such as of 1st and 3rd, infield in (bunting scenarios), bases loaded, cut-offs/relays, pick-offs steals, pass ball, delayed double steal, intentional walks, runner on 3rd with less than 2 outs, and winning run in the bottom of the 7th.

Offensive Strategy:

To take advantage of offensive situations that corresponds with the defensive strategy list.

6.5. U17 and HIGHER

Overview and Objective:

This stage is the “**Training to Compete**” stage. Everything that has been learned in the earlier stages comes to fruition in the Training to Compete stage where the emphasis is learning to execute when it counts. To increase the likelihood of future success, players must first test their technical, tactical, physical, and mental competencies in different circumstances and conditions. Players will start to specialize in softball and 1 position in this stage but still play 2 to 3 different positions. Training becomes year-round with an increase in intensity and volume and becomes highly individualized but within the

team setting. Players continue to develop and refine their softball-specific technical skills and physical conditioning, testing themselves in a variety of competitive situations and learning to taper and peak for important competitions.

There can still be a division between community and competitive play. During this stage, players begin to learn how to self-coach by becoming more independent, responsible, and accountable in making decisions that affect their training and playing performances. Players, in collaboration with coaches, will also start to reflect post-training and post-competition to find ways to enhance future performances. Players begin to identify the factors that contribute to their Ideal Performance State (ISP) and work towards achieving this state for every competition.

Moving through this stage, players start to make choices and decide what they want to do in terms of their future participation in softball. Players may continue the competitive pathway or choose to play community softball with the possibility of returning to the competitive stream at a later date. All players are learning to achieve balance between their sport participation and other aspects of their lives such as school, jobs, family, and relationships. They must be highly organized to meet these life demands and the increased demands of their training and competition schedules.

Focus & Goals:

For Community Softball the focus is still on Fun (socially motivated) with a balance between participation and competition. Player autonomy is developed, and players play softball and 1 to 2 other sports and play 2 to 3 positions in softball. Fundamental skills are reinforced in practice using game simulations, but emphasis shifts to performing skills well during games.

For Competitive Softball, the focus is on skill development and is reinforced under competitive conditions. Player autonomy is developed, and players specialize in softball and 1 position but play 1 to 2 other positions. The focus on softball-specific and position-specific training and testing is increased. The importance of modelling high performance players is emphasized, and individualized instruction and preparation addresses each player's individual needs, strengths, and weaknesses.

Psychological Development:

In this stage the player refines autonomous decision-making skills and develops team cohesion and emotional control. Game plans are made along with set pre-game and game routines. Players refine visualization skills, autonomous decision-making skills, goal setting and stress management and coping strategies. This stage encourages personal growth and development through teachable moments, acknowledge players doing something well, and formalize teaching with examples or discussions. There is an established Code of Ethics and adherence to fair play attitudes and behaviours: - respect for self, teammates, coaches, opponents, officials, rules, and the sport - non-violence - non-harassment.

Players apply positive individual values as well such as: - respect for the truth - integrity - moral decision making in the heat of competition - healthy living - considerate behaviour - seeking new information and opportunities to learn - responsibility/accountability – no excuses or laying of blame - committing to continuous improvement - mental toughness/determination - committing to a particular course of action - time management of academic, sport, and social aspects of life.

Along with applying positive team concept, taking pride in - teamwork - playing safely - work ethic, dedication, effort, and commitment to hard work - expressing gratitude, thanking coaches, officials, and volunteers - accepting and fulfilling role on team - humility, dealing graciously with defeat and victory - tolerance - inclusiveness - accepting and embracing discipline for the benefit of the team. I like these aspects and it has been added to the start to re-emphasize or something or it becomes our poster.

Physical Development:

Develop general physical conditioning, introducing softball-specific strength and power training. Players maintain flexibility and practice injury prevention along with softball-specific physical conditioning. There is an introduction of softball-specific strength and power and softball-specific speed, agility, and quickness.

Technical Development:

In the pre-season we continue to reinforce fundamental softball skills identified below into practice plans before the start of games and to continue to review or expand over the course of the rest of the season. Techniques and examples on how to teach these skills are provided on the website along with examples of lesson plans.

- Receiving, Throwing, Fielding & Positions on field, Hitting, Bunting, Fake Bunt/ Slap Hit, Base Running, Sliding, Pitching, Catching, Rundowns, Relays, Pickoffs, Delayed double steal, Intentional Walks.

Season Structure:

During this stage, 60% of the time a child is participating in softball should be devoted to practice and only 40% of the time to competing in a game.

LMSA provides 15-17 practices and games for the season depending on weather conditions.

No modifications required, follow rules as per Softball Canada official rulebook. League standings are recorded, and individual statistics may be recorded as well. Tournament and provincial championship formats maximize the number of games for each team based on circumstances such as time and facilities. Playing softball and 1 to 2 other sports is encouraged along with playing 2 to 3 positions in softball. Ensure fair and reasonable playing time and develop at least 3 pitchers per team. Also encourage daily participation in numerous sports or recreation activities.

Strategic Thinking Goals:

At this age we focus on improving and then implanting individual fundamental softball skills and a greater knowledge of individual and team tactics at several positions but with specialization at 1 position. This stage is also when we see the ability to execute a wider variety of advanced skills and tactics at a greater intensity level. We also focus on the ability to cope with the mental and physical challenges of competition and the ability to reflect and evaluate personal growth of softball skills and knowledge at the completion of the season.

Defensive Strategy:

In the first of the season practices the players should be able to understand defensive principles such as location, adjustment, jurisdiction and coverage as well as improved knowledge and application of team tactics and strategies. The players should understand game rules.

From mid-season on the practices the players should be able to execute a wider variety of fundamental skills and game tactics at a greater intensity level. They should have an understanding of the defensive plays such as of 1st and 3rd, infield in (bunting scenarios), bases loaded, cut-offs/relays, pick-offs steals, pass ball, delayed double steal, intentional walks, runner on 3rd with less than 2 outs, and winning run in the bottom of the 7th.

Offensive Strategy:

To take advantage of offensive situations that corresponds with the defensive strategy list.

6.6. SAFETY

- Note any player's medical condition. Example, if they need an epi pen. Players of this age should know any conditions they have and what they need to do in case a situation arrives.
- Maintain the equipment given at the beginning of the season and report any equipment that becomes unsafe, damaged, or lost.
- Check the field prior to each session to ensure the field is clear of any garbage or debris including that there are no holes in the field or fences that are broken.
- Ensure players use proper safety gear including batting helmets, proper catching equipment, proper undergarment equipment such as jills for girls and cups for boys.
- Work with players from the beginning of the season to instill safety awareness while on the field. (i.e., do not throw unless your partner is looking, and always check around you before you swing the bat)
- Participating and being aware of what you are always doing especially when on the field during practices and games.
- Ensure a proper warm-up with proper stretching techniques.
- To prevent injury, make sure the players execute proper skill mechanics.
- Always reinforce and review with the players to check their surroundings before swinging a bat. Educate the player to never walk up behind someone holding a bat without letting them know you are there.
- When on a school field that does not have a dugout, the coach should outline (use cones if needed) where the players stand when not on the field. They should be behind the line of the backstop.
- When on a school field or on a softball field the "on deck batter" should be placed away from the rest of the players and in foul territory. Introduce this concept that the on-deck batter should be in the designated batter area and encourage this player to get and return the bat to the dugout when the batter has run to first base. Always be watchful for where the player, bat and the ball are to avoid getting hurt.
- If on a softball field with fence lines and dugouts, players should not be out of the dugout unless they are batting or on deck in which case a helmet is to be always on.
- Catchers should wear proper catching equipment when behind the plate to have some protection from any foul balls.
- Catchers should be removing the bat from the batter's box by placing it off to the side out of the way. This may take some reminders.

- Batters should be aware if they have a teammate on 3rd that could steal home. They must move back out of the box to allow for the runner to steal home without any interference.
- Players should be wearing proper clothing. Athletic or sport pants, NO JEANS or loose clothing. Cleats are encouraged or proper running shoes should be worn. Long hair should be tied back, loose hair can get in the way of seeing a ball coming.
- Concussion awareness. Concussion pamphlets and protocol is on the website and should be read and understood prior to the start of the season. A copy of the summary will be placed into the first aid kits.

7. LEAGUE PLAYING RULES:

Lethbridge Minor Softball Association follows the current Softball Canada (CASA) Rules 1 through 12, except where noted otherwise in the Softball Alberta Operating Rules and in the Lethbridge Minor Softball operating rules. Home team takes the third base dugout, visiting team takes the first base dugout.

7.1. RESPONSIBILITIES TO PLAYERS – FAIR PLAY

All coaches shall exercise and promote the principles of Fair Play. Fair Play shall be defined as all coaches taking reasonable measures to ensure players receive proportionally equal access to instruction, support and playing time on the field during the season regardless of skill.

7.2. RUN AHEAD RULE (FORMALLY MERCY RULE)

Lethbridge Minor Softball will follow the Softball Canada Run Ahead Rule 5.6 Run Ahead rule shall result in the conclusion of the game if:

7.2.1 **RUN AHEAD RULES:** - A Run Ahead Rule shall result in the conclusion of the game when there is a difference of:

- a) 15 or more runs after 2½ or 3 complete innings of play.
- b) 10 or more runs after 3 ½ or 4 complete innings of play.
- c) 7 or more runs after 4½, 5, 5½ or 6 complete innings of play.

Complete innings must be played unless the team second at bat scores the required number of runs while at bat. When the team first at bat reaches the required number of runs in the top half of the inning, the team second at bat must have their opportunity to bat in the bottom half of the inning.

Category	Division	Round	Runs / Inning Limit	Open Inning
U11	All	All rounds	5	None
U11	All	Playoffs	5	None
U13	All	All rounds	5	None
U13	All	Playoffs	5	Final Inning
U15	All	All rounds	7	None
U15	All	Playoffs	7	Final Inning
U17-19	All	All rounds	7	None
U17-19	All	Playoffs	7	Final inning

7.3. RUN PER INNING / OPEN INNING RULE

7.4. BASELINES AND PITCHING DISTANCES

Category	Ball	Pitching Distance		Diamond Layout	
		Boys (in feet)	Girls (in feet)	Base- Lines	
U4	10"			30' (9.14 M)	
U5	10"			30' (9.14 M)	
U7	10"	30' (9.14 m)	30' (9.14 m)	45' (13.7 m)	
U9	11"	30' (9.14 m)	30' (9.14 m)	45' (13.7 m)	
U11	11"	35' (10.67 m)	35' (10.67 m)	45' (13.7 m)	
U13	11"	38' (11.58 m)	38' (11.58 m)	55' (16.7 m)	
U15	12"	42' (12.8 m)	40' (12.2 m)	60' (18.3 m)	
U17	12"	46' (14.0 m)	43' (13.1 m)	60' (18.3 m)	
U19	12"	46' (14.0 m)	43' (13.1 m)	60' (18.3 m)	

* Per Softball Alberta Operating Rules

Note: Teams playing up a category will use the pitching distances and baselines of the higher category. U13 teams that move up to U15 will be required to use the 12" ball. Exceptions may be made on a yearly basis by the coaches and/or division directors.

7.5. THROWING OF BAT

Any batter who throws his/her bat after any swing may be given a warning on his/her first infraction and can automatically be declared OUT on his/her next occurrence. If the batter is called out for interference, the ball becomes a DEAD BALL, and all runners must return to the base they occupied before the infraction. On a batter's THIRD occurrence in the game, the batter will also be removed from the game.

7.6. DROPPED THIRD STRIKE (SOFTBALL CANADA RULE 8.2A)

This rule will not apply to the U11 and U13 categories.

- Can occur on either a called 3rd strike or a swinging 3rd strike.
- The batter runner may advance if there are less than 2 outs and first is NOT occupied.
- Cannot occur when there is a baserunner on first base at the time the pitch is released and there are less than two outs.
- The batter runner may run if 2 out and 1st is occupied.
- The umpire will verbalize the strike 3 call but not that the ball is dropped.
- The batter may be tagged out or thrown out at first.
- The batter is out if they leave the field of play.
- The batter is out if they break their established base-path.
- Occurs when the catcher does not legally catch the thrown pitch.

Note: a pitch hitting the ground and then caught by the catcher is not a legally caught ball.

- the batter is out.
- if the ball stays alive (e.g., not a passed or trapped ball) any baserunners may steal at the risk of being put out.
- the umpire does not verbalize that the ball has been dropped.
- it is up to the catcher to realize that the dropped 3rd strike rule is not in effect and decide whether to try and throw out any baserunner who may be stealing.
- in an obvious situation, where in the umpire's judgement, the batter knows they are out because first base was occupied but continues to run the bases to distract the defence the batter may be called for interference; the umpire will kill the play; since the batter is already out the base-runner closest to home will be called out; any other runners will be returned to their original bases.

Note: if the bases are loaded the catcher can touch home plate for a third out force.

7.7. CHARGED CONFERENCE (SOFTBALL CANADA 5.9)

The Charged Conference Rule limiting conferences between coaches, manger, or other team representatives and pitchers, batters or runners does not apply to the U11 and U13.

There shall be only three charged defensive conferences, in a seven-inning game, between the manager, or the team representative from the dugout, with the pitcher or with any other defensive player.

See Softball Canada rulebook for further clarifications Exception: U15 will have 5 conferences in a 7-inning game.

7.8. PITCHING SPECIFIC RULES

Pitchers may pitch a maximum of:

- U11 three (3) innings per game
- U13 categories four (4) innings pergame.
- U15 categories four (4) innings per game. (Per LMSA operating rules)

Should a pitcher throw one (1) pitch (excluding warm-up pitches), this is classified as a complete inning pitched. In the event of extra innings, the pitching rule is not in effect. The penalty for pitcher(s) exceeding the limit of innings pitched is that the coach is ejected; player(s) is removed from pitching position.

At the time of the appeal, the non-offending team shall have the option of:

1. Allowing all plays to stand
2. Or revert to the spot in the game when the violation occurred.

7.9. INFIELD FLY (SOFTBALL CANADA 1.52)

This rule will not apply to the U11 and U13 categories.

- a. Is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive or a bunt)?
 1. When first and second, or first, second, and third bases are occupied with less than two out.
 2. That can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort.
 3. If two are out the infield fly rule does not apply, runners can advance at their own risk.
- b. The pitcher, catcher, and any outfielder that positions himself in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule.

NOTE:

1. When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the umpire shall immediately declare, "INFIELD FLY, IF FAIR THE BATTER IS OUT," for the benefit of the runners
2. The ball is alive, and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught, or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same is on any fly ball
3. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul
4. If a declared infield fly can fall untouched on the ground, and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball
5. If a declared infield fly falls untouched to the ground outside the baseline, and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an infield fly rule.

7.10. BATTING OUT OF ORDER (SOFTBALL CANADA 7.2)

If the error is determined while incorrect batter is at bat:

- a. The correct batter may legally take his place and assume the ball and strike count of the incorrect batter.
- b. Any runs scored or bases ran while the incorrect batter is at bat shall be legal.

If the error is determined after the incorrect batter has completed their turn at bat and before the next pitch (legal or illegal pitch)

- The player who should have batted is out.
- Any advance or score made because of the improper batter becoming a batter- runner shall be nullified.
- Any out that is made prior to discovering the error remains an out.
- The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat.
- If the next player was the incorrect batter who was called out, go to the next person in the line up.
- If the batter declared out under these circumstances is the third out, the correct batter in the next inning shall be the player who would have come to bat had the players been put out by ordinary play.
- If the third out is made on a runner prior to the discovery of the infraction an appeal may still be made to reinstate the correct batting order. This appeal if made, does not result in an additional out

If the error is discovered after the first legal or illegal pitch to the next batter:

- The turn at bat of the incorrect batter is legal.
- All runs scored and bases run are legal.
- The next batter in order shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter.

- No one is called out for failure to bat.
- Players who have not batted and who have not been called out have lost their turn at bat until reached again in the regular order.

No runner shall be removed from the base he/she is occupying to bat in his proper order:

- He/she merely misses his turn at bat with no penalty.
- The batter following him in the batting order becomes the legal batter.

EXCEPTION: The batter-runner who has been taken off the base by the umpire as in Section 2b above.

- When the third out in an inning is made before the batter has completed the turn at bat, that batter shall be the first batter in the next inning, and the ball and strike count shall be cancelled.

NOTE: This is an appeal play.

The appeal can only be made by player, coach or manager, NOT the scorekeeper.

7.11. SUBSTITUTION PROCEDURES

Number of Players

- The required number of players to start or continue a game is eight (8) players.
- There is no automatic out for the ninth batting position.
- When a team cannot field eight (8) players, the game is forfeited. When a game is forfeited, there will be no rescheduling of the game. The team who forfeits will take a loss and their opponent will take the win.

There are 2 options to comply with Fair Play Rules.

Universal Substitution - Is the rotation of players into the field such that all players participate in every game.

- Defensive rotation is defined such that no player shall sit more than one inning, until all players have had an inning on the bench.
- Players are designated with the order in which they will have their bench inning on the line-up card/score sheet.
- Batting order – all players presents are listed on the score sheet and bat in the order listed. Players arriving late are added to the end of the batting order and will have their designated bench order inning assigned or arranged, as necessary.
- Player Coding Adjustment – Bench inning designation may be changed to allow for substitution in the event of an injury, ejection, discipline, pitcher substitution. In the event of player ejection or removal, the player is removed from the batting order and may not re-enter.

Player Rotation

“ABC” Rotation is the rotation of players into the field such that all players participate in every game. A, B, or C designation is not related to skill level.

- Players must be designated as “A”, “B”, or “C” on the Line-Up Card/Score Sheet

- Players designated “A” play defensively all innings.
- Players designated “B” and “C” alternate defensive innings.
- Designation of “A”, “B”, and “C” should vary from game to game.

# of Players at Game	Code “A”	Code “B”	Code “C”
9	9	0	0
10	8	1	1
11	7	2	2
12	6	3	3
13	5	4	4
14	4	5	5
15	3	6	6

- Batting order - all players present are listed onto the score sheet and bat in the order listed. Players arriving late are added to the end of the batting order and are designated as “C” players. The addition of a player requires a move of an “A” player to a “B” player.
- Player Coding Adjustments – designation of “A”, “B”, or “C” may be changed to allow for substitution in the event of injury, ejection, discipline, pitcher substitution. In the event of player ejection or removal, the player is removed from the batting order and may not re-enter.

Notes: ABC is for rotational purposes only; it does not classify the player’s caliber.

Note: One of the above two substitution rules applies; each team can choose their own substitution rule to play by. The choice is on a game-by-game basis.

Effect: If the above substitution rules are not followed the game will be forfeited by the offending team

7.12. INJURY

ABC and Universal Substitution – An injured player has until the end of the following inning to resume their place in the batting order. If the player is removed from the game, they should be designated as “IJ” on the score sheet. If the player cannot return to the game, all players batting moves up one spot. If the player was injured while on base, the player furthest away from the top of the order that half inning replaces the injured player offensively. If the player cannot return remove the injured player from the lineup. If they can return, they return to their original spot in the order.

7.13. REPLACEMENT PLAYER REQUIRED FOR BLOOD RULE

Lethbridge Minor Softball will follow Softball Canada Rule 4, section 10. In the event of any player bleeding during the game that cannot be stopped in a reasonable time, that player must be withdrawn from the game with no penalty. The withdrawn player shall not return to the game until all bleeding ceases, the area cleaned and covered and, if necessary, the player’s uniform covered. The withdrawn player can then return to the game if safe.

8. U4 BLASTBALL SPECIFIC RULES

Playing Field:

- Playing field will consist of 1st base loaded with a horn, home plate where batter will hit from a “Tee” and all defensive players will line up at least 30 feet away from home plate.
- Field Set-Up - Like a regular ball diamond, from the Tee pace off 30 feet to the right and position your Blast Base. This establishes your fair/foul line to the right.
- To the left of the Tee and perpendicular to your Blast Base line, pace off an equal distance and position your Cone. This establishes your fair/foul line to the left.
- Now pace off 10 feet directly in front of the Tee and lay out your Line Marker running between the (hypothetical) first and third base lines. This becomes the fair/foul line for play. If a ball is hit inside of that line it is foul and should be re-teed for another try. If it goes beyond the line, either in the air or on a roll it is considered in play.

Equipment:

- GLOVES ARE OPTIONAL BUT ARE NOT NEEDED. The game ball is foam rubber and will be safe for kids to play without gloves, however we understand kids wanting to have their gloves with them. Parents are responsible for their children’s belongings and marking each equipment piece with child name is recommended.
- While batting helmets are not needed because the Blastball is not being pitched or thrown to make the out, for optimum safety helmets are recommended.

Games:

- Games shall last 30 minutes, with the first 25 minutes (of 60 mins) being dedicated to skill building, review and warm ups.
- No score or win/loss records will be kept.
- Home team will be determined by the schedule and each home team will be in the field first with the away team batting first. Home team will be responsible for setting up the bases.

Rules:

- Each Blast-Ball team must have (2) coaches/adults on the field of play at all times.
- --> Batting team: 2 adults will be 1) at first base 2) at the tee
- --> Defensive team: 2 adults will be 1) on the field 2) to the side of the tee for defensive players to throw the ball back to home.
- No player shall play catcher. Coaches will serve as umpires, calling play ball and determining safe, foul, etc.
- When ball is fielded, the defensive player can throw the Blast Ball back to another player, or an adult positioned near home plate (safely away from the Tee).
- When on defense, all players will play a defensive position at least 30 feet from home plate.
- ADDITIONAL ADULTS ARE ENCOURAGED!!

Batting:

- Each batter will receive a maximum of 6 swings in which to hit a fair ball. A fair ball is any ball between the foul lines and past the 10-foot fair ball arc in front of home plate. - Each team will bat its entire roster in each inning one complete time, which will constitute a half inning of play. Each turn at bat the batting order will be reversed. (Example: if a player bats last in the 1st inning he/she will bat first in the next inning).
- When at bat, the object is to hit a fair ball, reach the base and sound the horn before the defensive team fields the ball, holds it above their head and yells “Blast”. If the batter reaches the Base (the only base used) before a defensive player either catches the Blast Ball in the air (an automatic out) or fields it and yells

"BLAST ", he scores a run. If the ball is caught or fielded and "BLAST" is yelled before the runner gets to the Blast Base, then the runner does not score a run. It's just that simple!

- Each batter will return to the dugout after running to 1st base.

9. **U5 T-BALL SPECIFIC RULES**

Playing Field:

- Field Set-Up - Like a regular ball diamond, from the Tee pace off 30 feet to first base. Bases are 30 feet apart. This will establish your fair/foul lines. Anything hit outside of the diamond is foul.
- Fielding positions are as follows:
- The Pitcher: The pitcher does not pitch the ball but is tasked with fielding the diamond area in which most balls are hit
- The Catcher: This role, unlike their baseball equivalent is to place the ball on the tee, catch the ball and to tag runners running for home base.
- Bases: First Base, Second Base and Third Base positions field in and around their base area and attempt to run out players running for their base.
- Others: If playing with larger numbers, other fielders are placed around the playing area and are tasked with fielding the ball, catching and trying to run players out.

Equipment:

- Players should wear suitable training shoes.
- When batting, each player is required to wear a batting helmet with a face mask.
- The bats used should be between 25 and 26 inches long and the balls are special 10inch Tee-Ball ones, very similar to baseballs but made to be softer to help minimize the risk of injuries.
- Gloves are to be worn when on defence.
- Parents are responsible for their children's belongings and marking each equipment piece with child name is recommended.

Games:

- Games shall last 30 minutes, with the first 25 minutes (of 60 mins) being dedicated to skill building, review and warmups.
- No score or win/loss records will be kept.
- Home team will be determined by the schedule and each home team will be in the field first with the away team batting first. Home team will be responsible for setting up the bases.

Rules:

- Tee-Ball is played by two teams of between five and seven players, but can be played with more if the team sizes are equal.
- All players bat. The hitting order will rotate each inning enabling each player to have the chance to lead off an innings.
- The players should also rotate each inning when playing defence positions.
- Each team should have coaches/adults on the field of play at all times.
- --> Batting team: 3 adults – 1 at first base 1 at the tee and 1 at 3rd base
- --> Defensive team: 3 adults – 2 on the field and 1 to the side of the tee for defensive players to throw the ball back to home.
- An innings is complete when each player on the team that is batting has had a turn to bat.

Batting:

- When batting, the ball shall not be pitched but shall be placed on a tee from which the batter shall hit it.
- The batter (aka hitter) is entitled to have as many swings as they need to hit the ball.
- A runner may only advance to the base they were going for.
- A player is declared as being out when:
 - The ball is hit and then caught without hitting the ground.
 - A player who has the ball stands on the base before the runner makes it to the base.
 - A fielder with the glove or hand that is holding the ball tags a runner between the bases.

10. U7 SPECIFIC RULES

Playing Field:

- Fielding positions are as follows:
- The Pitcher: The pitcher does not pitch the ball but is tasked with fielding the diamond area in which most balls are hit
- The Catcher: Must wear their batting helmet, fields the balls missed by the batter thrown from the coach and to tag runners running for home base.
- Bases: First Base, Second Base and Third Base positions field in and around their base area and attempt to run out players running for their base.
- Others: If playing with larger numbers, other fielders such as short stop and outfield are placed around the playing area and are tasked with fielding the ball, catching and trying to run players out.
- Field Set-Up - Bases are 45 feet apart. Pitching mound is placed at 30 feet.

Equipment:

- Players should wear suitable training shoes.
- When batting, each player is required to wear a batting helmet with a face mask.
- The bats used should be between 25 and 26 inches long and the balls are special 10 inch softie balls to help minimize the risk of injuries.
- Gloves are to be worn when on defence.
- Parents are responsible for their children's belongings and marking each equipment piece with child name is recommended.

Games:

- 6:30 start time, warm up and short practice for 10-15 min. Game to start around 6:45 end at 7:30pm.
- Home team will be determined by the schedule and each home team will be in the field first with the away team batting first. Home team will be responsible for setting up the bases.

Rules:

- All players bat. The hitting order will rotate each inning enabling each player to have the chance to lead off an innings.
- The players should also rotate each inning when playing defence positions.
- Each team should have coaches/adults on the field of play at all times.
- --> Batting team: 3 adults – 1 at first base 1 at the tee and 1 at 3rd base

- --> Defensive team: 3 adults – 2 on the field and 1 to the side of the tee for defensive players to throw the ball back to home.
- Coach Pitcher – 4 pitches will be tossed by the coach. If they have not hit after 4 pitches a tee is set up to hit off of. No walks or strike outs.
- No intentional bunting.
- Batter is to only advance 1 base at a time, even if the ball is hit into the outfield.
- No advancement on an overthrow.
- No lead offs or stealing.
- Sliding is allowed.
- A player is declared as being out when:
 - The ball is hit and then caught without hitting the ground.
 - A player who has the ball stands on the base before the runner makes it to the base.
 - A fielder with the glove or hand that is holding the ball tags a runner between the bases.
- Score and standings will not be kept as the emphasis is on player and team skill development not on winning.

11. U9 SPECIFIC RULES

Playing Field:

- The field distance will be twenty-five (25) feet behind each base. Pylons to be placed at the Twenty-five (25) foot mark in the field.
- A home run is a ball that touches the ground past the home run line.
- Field Set-Up - Bases are 45 feet apart. Pitching mound is placed at 30 feet.
- Maximum number of players allowed on the playing field is (9).

Equipment:

- Players should wear suitable running shoes or cleats.
- When batting, each player is required to wear a batting helmet with a face mask.
- 11-inch softie balls to help minimize the risk of injuries.
- Gloves are to be worn when on defence.
- Catcher must wear all catching gear.
- Parents are responsible for their children’s belongings and marking each equipment piece with child name is recommended.

Games:

- 6:30 start time, warm up and short practice for 10-15 min. Game to start around 6:45 end at 7:30pm.
- Home team will be determined by the schedule and each home team will be in the field first with the away team batting first. Home team will be responsible for setting up the bases.
- Pitchers should start in the “K” position with emphasis on proper technique

Rules:

- 1-2 parent helpers are allowed on the playing field to help out the kids
- Fly ball caught past the home run line is an out.
- Offensive team will have coach or parent as an umpire and will determine if the ball is hit over homerun line.
- No base stealing
- Batters will not be permitted to bunt.

- Scoresheet will only be kept to keep track of outs. Standings will not be kept as the emphasis is on player and team skill development not on winning.
- Inning will be complete if 3 outs are achieved or everyone in the lineup has had a turn at batting.
- No walk rule will be in effect (See below)

Note: Adjustments can be made at the discretion of the Executive Members

No Walks rule: To add even more excitement Lethbridge Minor Softball implemented the “No Walk Rule”. Combined with the home run line, the U-10 division should end up being the most exciting division to both play and to watch!

Example: Batter # 1 (B1) is at the plate. The game is played normally up until the batter receives a 4th ball, which would normally result in a walk. This is where the game changes. After the 4th ball, the batter will have a count against him/her. It will either be 4 balls, 0 strikes (4-0), 4-1 or 4-2. The coach, or designated pitcher for the offensive team (B1’s coach or selected parent), will now come in to pitch to his/her own batter. The number of pitches that the batter will receive from the coach/parent is dependent upon the number of strikes that the pitcher had achieved against that batter prior to throwing the 4th “ball”. All batters continue using the same rules.

If the count was 4-0, and the batter did not have a strike, the coach parent may throw up to 3 pitches.

If the count was 4-1, and the batter had 1 strike against him/her, the coach parent may throw up to 2 pitches.

If the count was 4-2, and the batter had 2 strikes against him/her, the coach parent may throw only 1 pitch.

Pitches (pitch) from the coach or parent are the only opportunity that the batter will get to hit the ball and get on base. There is no opportunity to walk. Every pitch will be considered a called strike. If the batter has 2 or 3 pitches to work with, he/she may leave the pitch and wait for a potentially better pitch. The coach/parent will pitch from the pitching rubber (normal distance) and may pitch orthodox (underhand toss) or regular fastpitch.

If the batter uses up all his/her strikes without hitting the ball, he/she is out. Once again, every pitch is considered a called strike no matter where the pitch is thrown. The batter does not have to swing to strike out, nor does the pitch have to be in the strike zone.

On the third strike only, if the batter hits a foul ball, he/she will be granted an additional pitch, unless of course the foul ball is caught! This will be the same as regular rules regarding a third strike foul ball.

The defensive pitcher will remain on the field-to-field balls hit into play.

Should a ball be hit into play by the batter and this ball comes in contact with or is touched by the parent/coach, whether intentional or accidental, as determined by the umpire, the play will be called dead. If there is any interference on the play in regard to the coach/parent acting as the pitcher, as determined by the umpire, the play will be called dead. In both cases, the batter will be ruled out and the runners will return to their original base prior to the hit ball. The implementation of this section will have many major benefits.

1 – No walks means that every run will have come off a hit ball!

2 – More hits mean more defensive plays for the infield!

3 – Less pressure on parent umpires regarding calling balls and strikes.

4 – Wider variety of pitchers may be used. Every player that wants to pitch can try without having to worry about walking in 5 runs.

5 – Lower scoring games. There will an increased number of strikeouts and hopefully defensive outs, which should result in less 5 run innings.

6 – Innings will be quicker which should result in more innings played per game.

7 – The home run line will become a major factor and the home run will be an exciting play for all players and fans to look forward to.

12. **U11 SPECIFIC RULES**

Playing Field:

- The field distance will be twenty-five (25) feet behind each base. Pylons to be placed at the Twenty-five (25) foot mark in the field.
- A home run is a ball that touches the ground past the home run line.
- Field Set-Up - Bases are 45 feet apart. Pitching mound is placed at 35 feet.
- Maximum number of players allowed on the playing field is (9).

Equipment:

- Players should wear suitable running shoes or cleats.
- When batting, each player is required to wear a batting helmet with a face mask.
- 11-inch softie balls to help minimize the risk of injuries.
- Gloves are to be worn when on defence.
- Catcher must wear all catching gear.
- Parents are responsible for their children's belongings and marking each equipment piece with child name is recommended.

Games:

- 6:30 start time, warm up 10-15 min, game to start around 6:45 and end at 8:00pm.
- Home team will be determined by the schedule and each home team will be in the field first with the away team batting first. Home team will be responsible for setting up the bases.

Rules:

- No parent helpers are permitted in the playing field except the coach who comes into pitch and those designated as base umpires up to a maximum of two (2).
- Fly ball caught past the home run line is an out.
- Base umpires will determine if a ground ball lands past the homerun line.
- No base stealing allowed in Round 1 Play. Round 2 will permit base stealing. No stealing HOME for all rounds. No stealing when the coach is pitching.
- Batters will not be permitted to bunt.
- Pitchers can only pitch 3 innings per game
- Score sheet will be kept, innings to end once 3 outs reached or maximum of 5 runs scored.
- No walk rule will be in effect (See below)

Note: Adjustments can be made at the discretion of the Executive Members

No Walks rule: To add even more excitement Lethbridge Minor Softball implemented the “No Walk Rule”. Combined with the home run line, the U-10 division should end up being the most exciting division to both play and to watch!

Example: Batter # 1 (B1) is at the plate. The game is played normally up until the batter receives a 4th ball, which would normally result in a walk. This is where the game changes. After the 4th ball, the batter will have a count against him/her. It will either be 4 balls, 0 strikes (4-0), 4-1 or 4-2. The coach, or designated pitcher for the offensive team (B1’s coach or selected parent), will now come in to pitch to his/her own batter. The number of pitches that the batter will receive from the coach/parent is dependent upon the number of strikes that the pitcher had achieved against that batter prior to throwing the 4th “ball”. All batters continue using the same rules.

If the count was 4-0, and the batter did not have a strike, the coach parent may throw up to 3 pitches.

If the count was 4-1, and the batter had 1 strike against him/her, the coach parent may throw up to 2 pitches.

If the count was 4-2, and the batter had 2 strikes against him/her, the coach parent may throw only 1 pitch.

Pitches (pitch) from the coach or parent are the only opportunity that the batter will get to hit the ball and get on base. There is no opportunity to walk. Every pitch will be considered a called strike. If the batter has 2 or 3 pitches to work with, he/she may leave the pitch and wait for a potentially better pitch. The coach/parent will pitch from the pitching rubber (normal distance) and may pitch orthodox (underhand toss) or regular fastpitch.

If the batter uses up all his/her strikes without hitting the ball, he/she is out. Once again, every pitch is considered a called strike no matter where the pitch is thrown. The batter does not have to swing to strike out, nor does the pitch have to be in the strike zone.

On the third strike only, if the batter hits a foul ball, he/she will be granted an additional pitch, unless of course the foul ball is caught! This will be the same as regular rules regarding a third strike foul ball.

The defensive pitcher will remain on the field-to-field balls hit into play.

Should a ball be hit into play by the batter and this ball comes in contact with or is touched by the parent/coach, whether intentional or accidental, as determined by the umpire, the play will be called dead. If there is any interference on the play in regard to the coach/parent acting as the pitcher, as determined by the umpire, the play will be called dead. In both cases, the batter will be ruled out and the runners will return to their original base prior to the hit ball.

The implementation of this section will have many major benefits.

1 – No walks means that every run will have come off a hit ball!

2 – More hits mean more defensive plays for the infield!

3 – Less pressure on parent umpires regarding calling balls and strikes.

4 – Wider variety of pitchers may be used. Every player that wants to pitch can try without having to worry about walking in 5 runs.

5 – Lower scoring games. There will an increased number of strikeouts and hopefully defensive outs, which should result in less 5 run innings.

6 – Innings will be quicker which should result in more innings played per game.

7 – The home run line will become a major factor and the home run will be an exciting play for all players and fans to look forward to.

Discipline - Notwithstanding player coding adjustments for ejection or removal, the coach may for good cause, keep a player from any game or remove a player from a game for disciplinary purposes. When a player is kept out of or removed from a game, under this section the player will be designated “D” on the score sheet and may not bat or enter the field. Good cause includes insubordination, uncooperativeness, and unsportsmanlike conduct or similar behavior.

Coaches should use discretion to sit a player for the first inning or a portion thereof, in the event a player has developed a habit of missing practices within a set reasonable limit or arriving late for games. The requirements to sit a player should be documented and if repeated occurrences are considered necessary, the reasons should be reported to league administrators.

Coaches should have the discretion to sit a player for an inning for objectionable conduct of the player (example: swearing).

All coaches wishing to implement “team rules” should submit those rules to their District for approval. Team Rules should be reasonable and respect the varying needs of all players.

13. U13 & U15 SPECIFIC RULES

U13	Round 1	Round 2
Pitching	No walk rule with coach pitch assisting. (see U11 no walk rule)	Full Pitching rules in effect- NO coach assisting.
Stealing	No stealing home allowed	Stealing home allowed
U15	Round 1	Round 2
Pitching	In the event of different age groups playing each other; the pitching distance will be at the discretion of the Division Directors in consultation with Coaches	

14. AMENDMENTS TO OPERATING RULES

The Operating Rules of Lethbridge Minor Softball Association can be changed as recommended by the Board of Governors.

15. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

A player may not miss their own league games to play for another team or league,

A player being picked up must be from an equal or lower category registered with a Lethbridge Minor Softball team.

Teams playing in city Playoffs must do so with only their Lethbridge Minor Softball Rostered & Registered Players.

16. COACHES

There shall be no more than two coaches for the team at bat to direct the players of their team in running the bases. They must remain within the coach's box, one coach stationed near first base and the other near third base. Helmets are mandatory for minors coaching in these positions.

Exceptions: LTP may have a coach assist in batting along with bases coaches. U9/U11 may have a 3rd coach who does the coach pitching portion and not take away from one of the bases coaches.

Each team shall have in their dugout a responsible person not in uniform to look after and take responsibility for the team during the game. The appointed Head Coach shall keep in mind that one of the positions on a Girls' Team must be female (Assistant Coach, Manager or Trainer) when the Head Coach is not a female.

Each team shall have in their dugout a responsible person not in uniform to look after and take responsibility for the team during the game. The appointed Head Coach shall keep in mind that one of the positions on a Boys' Team must be male (Assistant Coach, Manager or Trainer) when the Head Coach is not a male.

No smoking, alcohol or illicit drugs are permitted by any coaching staff while at practices or games or any Lethbridge Minor Softball activity.

All coaches and assistant coaches of teams in Lethbridge Minor Softball Association are required to participate in a mandatory one-time Coach Orientation. It is also encouraged but not mandatory for league coaches to attend an NCCP Community Sport On-Going (Level 1 Softball) certification.

Coaches shall be always responsible for their conduct and that of their parents and players. They must endeavor to prevent disorderly conduct before, during and after the game, on or off the field.

Coaches will endeavor to prevent disorderly conduct, bullying and vandalism in any form. Failure to comply with this supervision may result in the suspension of the Head Coach for at least one game. Any adult found in complicit with any undesirable activity will be suspended for a period of at least one year.

17. GAME PROCEDURES AND CANCELLATIONS

Scheduled Start Time:

The Division Director will schedule the start times for single or double header games. Games can be cancelled by the Division Director when deemed that the weather conditions are unsafe.

A Regulation game:

Shall consist of seven innings (Softball Canada Rule 5.3). The umpire is empowered to call a game at any time because of darkness and/or weather conditions that may put players at risk. A game called by the umpire shall be regulation provided any one of the following conditions is met:

- five (5) or more completed innings have been played,
- the team second at bat has scored more runs than the other team has scored in four and one-half (4½).
- the time limit allotted for the game has expired and the current inning is completed. If the team second at bat has scored more runs than the other team, the team second at bat does not take its bat.
- Run Ahead Rule (Mercy rule) has been applied.

Note: Games that are less than 4 ½ innings that have not reached or exceeded the time limit shall be rescheduled if possible and replayed from the beginning.

Note: The game is over and complete when the winning run is scored.

League Game Time Limits – no new inning to start after the allotted time limit has passed. The Open inning is considered the final inning and the game is over. The game start time is recorded on the home team score sheet, as determined by the umpire. Mercy Rules is in effect. If the open inning has been played, the game is over even if there is still time remaining. Only 1 open inning will be played. No Open Innings for double headers.

Category	Game Length
U4 Blastball / U5 T-ball	30 minutes
U7	45 minutes
U9	45 minutes
U11	1 hour & 15 minutes
U13 and up	1 hour & 30 minutes
Double Header	1 hour & 30 minutes

Note: A league game that is tied at the end of seven innings or time limit shall be declared a regulation tie game.

Note: Adjustments to length of game can be made at the discretion of the Executive Director or Coaches to accommodate schedule changes or weather circumstances.

Game Cancellations:

The Divisional Director is responsible for rescheduling a rained-out game. Disputes shall be resolved by the Executive Director, Category Chair and the Commissioner or League Director. The Executive Director or League Director will have the authority to schedule double headers & reschedule rainout games cancelled by the league due to weather conditions.

If weather conditions prevent a regular scheduled league game, Lethbridge Minor Softball will do their best to reschedule. It will be the responsibility of the teams to make sure they can field a team. The regular forfeit rule will apply for all make up games. If neither team can field a team, the game will result in a tie. If for any reason, Lethbridge Minor Softball is not able to reschedule a makeup game, the game will result in a tie.

Game Locations:

It will be the responsibility of Lethbridge Minor Softball coaches or managers to have their team at the scheduled game locations.

All games, including City Playoffs, must be played as scheduled even though a LMSUA umpire is not present. If there is no certified LMSUA umpire the Home team supplies a parent volunteer home plate umpire.

18. LEAGUE PROCEDURES (REGULAR SEASON & PLAYOFFS)

- Final League Standings
 - 2 Points for a win
 - 1 Points for a tie
 - 0 Point for a loss
 - 0 Point for a forfeit
- Ranking: the final standings in league play shall be established using:
 - Win/Loss records; if still tied, then
 - Winners of games between tied teams; if still tied, then
 - Difference of Plus or Minus total runs scored, in games between tied teams (only full innings are used).
- Tie Breaking: the above criteria shall be used except for the last playoff position or where subject tied teams have not played one another, then:
 - If two (2) teams are tied, they will play a sudden death playoff game.
 - If three (3) teams are tied, a bye shall go to the team ranked highest who will play the winner of a game between the other two.
 - If four (4) teams are tied, then ranking shall be used to determine pairing for the two semi- final games.
 - All other positions will be settled with a coin toss.
- **League City Playoffs**
 - All teams in each category will be entered into City Playoffs.
 - League City & Divisional Playoffs are a Double Knockout Tournament to be started on a date set annually by the Board. City Playoffs will be formatted on an annual basis based upon schedule for Provincials. Double Headers may be played at each category if required.
 - The Divisional Director will coordinate the Playoffs for their respective Divisions.
 - Home team will be decided by ranking.

Note: The double knockout format may be revised to a single knockout for any reason deemed necessary when required.

- The Run Ahead Rule and Run/inning Rule are the same as during League Play.
- Teams involved in a game tied at the end of seven innings or a completed inning at time limit shall complete the game using a variation of Softball Canada Rule 5.7, Tiebreaker on the subsequent innings. Starting with the top of the next inning and each half inning thereafter, the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat, with the player which is scheduled to bat last in that respective half-inning being placed on second base. The player who is running can be substituted in accordance with the substitution rules.
- If weather conditions prevent a playoff final game from being completed, Lethbridge Minor Softball will set a date and time for a makeup game to enable the playoff round to be completed within a two-week time

frame. Weather conditions, ONLY, preventing the playoff game will result in co-winners.

- Lethbridge Minor Softball can adjust or reschedule games, dates and times for any reason deemed necessary when required.

19. ZONE PLAYOFFS, PROVINCIALS AND TOURNAMENTS

Note: The Zone Playoffs are not part of the League Play or City Playoff structure. If required, Zone Playoffs leading to Provincial Playoffs will be conducted according to the Softball Alberta guidelines.

Any coach interested in taking a team to provincials must inform their Division Director and LMSA Board of Directors verbally by May 15th as the Provincial entry form needs to be completed and sent to the Division Director for sign off which then will be sent to Softball Alberta by the June 1st Deadline.

Zone Play-downs (if applicable)

- Zone Play-down fee of \$100.00 payable to Lethbridge Minor Softball by June 1.
- Coaches must submit their NCCP Certification papers at the time of Provincial Registration.
- The Zone Play-down fee will be used to offset Zone Play-down expenses for the applicable category. Unused portion of fee plus any applicable Softball Alberta hosting grant money, to the maximum of Zone Play-down fee, will be returned by Lethbridge Minor Softball teams after the latter of receipt of Softball Alberta hosting grant money or attendance at the Provincial Playoffs.
- All players registered to a Lethbridge Minor Softball team will attend Provincials with their registered team if the team is attending.

Exception:

LMSA has formed a separate team(s) for a category.

LMSA must give all players registered in that category the opportunity to tryout.

- Teams entering Provincials are expected to enter a playoff category which corresponds to their demonstrated team capabilities. If it is brought to Lethbridge Minor Softball's attention that a team in our program has entered a category which creates unfair competition, then the situation will be investigated and the results forwarded to Softball Alberta.

Provincial Playoff

- Provincial Playoff dates and locations are as per Softball Alberta guidelines. www.softballalberta.ca
- Teams attending Provincial Playoffs will receive an information package from the Softball Alberta office prior to attending. Teams are encouraged to collect "traders" (pins, etc. to exchange with other competing teams).

Tournaments

Lethbridge Minor Softball teams are encouraged to attend Softball Alberta/Softball Canada sanctioned tournaments. Sanctioned tournaments are verified by requesting the sanction number. Sponsors of tournaments

MUST obtain tournament sanctions from the Softball Alberta office. Player Insurance provided through team registration is only valid when tournaments are sanctioned by the Softball Alberta or Softball Canada affiliated members. Any team travelling Out-of-Province must have a Travel Permit through the Softball Alberta office.

Any coaches wanting to enter a tournament will need to inform their Divisional Director and then have the tournament approved by the Board of Directors. City and Zone playoffs have precedence over tournaments.

20. PROTESTS

Lethbridge Minor Softball Association protests **MUST** be accompanied by a **certified cheque** payable to Lethbridge Minor Softball Association or cash for the sum of \$50.00. If the protest is lost, the team lodging the protest shall forfeit to the Lethbridge Minor Softball Association their protest fee.

All protests must be correctly submitted on a Lethbridge Minor Softball Protest Form accompanied by the score sheet of the game in question. Protest Forms must be received by the appropriate Divisional Director within 48 hours of the game.

Protest shall not be received or considered if they are based solely on a decision involving the accuracy of judgement of the part of the official or if such decision has no bearing on the outcome of said game.

Umpires and/or League Officials will in all cases note and record on the score sheet the incident and conditions affecting the protest at the time the official protest is lodged.

Any ruling of a Protest Committee shall affect only the game protested and no succeeding games in the series or league play.

Upon receipt of a protest, the Divisional Director shall immediately notify his or her League Director who shall in turn notify the Board of Directors for further action.

The Protest Committee shall use best efforts to judge each protest within two (2) days from the time the protest is received by the Category Chairperson.

During City Championships, the protest shall be judged before the next scheduled playoff game; in a time-constraint situation, a quorum of three members shall form the protest committee. The Divisional Director shall notify the Board immediately if a protest is filed during a playoff game to immediately gather the quorum to judge the protest.

The Divisional Director shall be responsible to immediately notify verbally the coaches and managers involved in submitting the protest, with confirmation to follow in writing to the coaches and/or managers involved, of the result of the protest.

21. DISCIPLINE AND SUSPENSION

Individuals and or teams who choose to ignore the operating rules or policies set forth by Lethbridge Minor Softball Association members will be considered to be in contempt. Team officials who willfully and intentionally

violate the above operating rule will be brought forward to a Disciplinary Hearing. This may lead up to and include suspensions.

Effect: for violating Operating Rules, Playing Rules or Policies shall be subject to LMSA's Discipline and Complaints Policy.

Players or individuals in any official capacity with a team shall not make disparaging, insulting, or obscene remarks prior, during or after a game, to or about opposing players, officials, or spectators. The penalty for violation by a player, coach or manager is removal of the offender from the game and grounds. On the first offense, player, coach, or manager may be warned, but on the second offense they are promptly removed from the game. The offender shall leave the grounds for the remainder of the game. Failure to do so will warrant a forfeiture of the game.

Effect: Umpires should note violation on the back of score sheet. Ejection from a game for any reason will result in the offender being suspended for at least the next scheduled game. This ruling will apply to all league and playoff games. Duration of the suspension shall be determined by the LMSA Board. Playing a suspended player in any game will result in forfeiture of the game in question.

If during the course of a game, the conduct of the supporting fans of either team becomes objectionable, the umpire may suspend play for a suitable interval while an attempt is made to rectify the situation. If, after a suspension of play, there is no improvement in the situation, the umpire may, at his or her discretion, suspend the game, play to resume later at the point at which it was suspended.

Effect: If the game is suspended to a later date, play will resume at a time and place specified by the Division Coordinator or the Commissioner. On this occasion, should the supporting fans of the same team persist in the conduct which led to suspension; the game will be declared forfeit to the non-offending team.

Any player removed from the game for fighting will automatically be suspended for three (3) league games - i.e., the next three games his/her team involved in. A second such incident will result in automatic suspension for the rest of the season. Coaches and/or players involved in such unsportsmanlike conduct shall be dealt with by the LMSA Board.

Any coach who fails to meet the principles of Fair Play Rule or Substitution rules shall be reviewed by LMSA Board of Directors. If a coach is perceived to be misusing the rules, such reports shall be made to the League Office in writing. Umpires on the field will not be expected to intervene during a game.

Effect: Where the LMSA Board finds that a team and or its coach has been found in violation of this Rule, the minimum penalty for first offence will be forfeiture of the games played in question and a suspension of the responsible coach in violation.

Suspensions may be issued for:

- Improper conduct on or off the playing field,
- Coach's recruiting and playing unaffiliated players.
- Having received money for his or her services while carrying out any duties or activities on behalf of the Lethbridge Minor Softball Association,
- Knowing and continuing violation of the operating rules of Lethbridge Minor Softball Association

Upon a suspension, the President will immediately file a report containing all pertinent information required for cause of suspension and send to all board members for their reference.

Suspensions will be effective until judged upon by the LMSA Board which will be within seven (7) days from the date the suspension was issued.

The LMSA Board will use best efforts to meet within 7 days from the date that the suspension was issued, or the date that the incident report was received.

Notification procedure of the ruling from the LMSA Board to the member(s) shall be a verbal notification and written notice.

A suspended individual will remain ineligible to participate in Lethbridge Minor Softball Association throughout the duration of the suspension.

22. PARENTAL CONCERNS

If a parent or guardian has a concern about a matter directly related to their child's team, coaches of players the proper channel to present their concern is as follows:

1. Approach the child's coach **BEFORE or AFTER a practice or game.**
 - a. Questioning a coach during a practice or game is to be avoided.
2. Approach the Director of the division involved.
3. Approach the President and provide a written account of concern.
4. Approach the Executive at an Executive meeting. It is understood, however, that concerns may be brought directly to the President or Vice President. If a parent has a concern with the Association, they should express their concern to the President in writing as well as in person. If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved, the parent may request to attend an Executive meeting to express their concern.

23. CODES OF CONDUCT

23.1. PARENTAL CODE OF CONDUCT

If children are to grow and develop in their sport or physical activity, and environment of positive communication and respect must exist. Parents should observe the following Code of Conduct with their child athletes.

- I will remember that my child plays sport for his or her enjoyment, not for mine.
- I will encourage my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
- I will encourage my child to respect the rights of other players, coaches, fans & officials.
- I will teach my child that doing one's best is as important as winning, so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of a game/event.
- I will make my child feel like a winner every time by offering praise for competing fairly and trying hard.
- I will never ridicule or yell at my child for making a mistake or losing a competition.
- I will remember that children learn best by example. I will applaud good players' performances by both my child's team and their opponents.
- I will never question the official's judgment or honesty in public.
- I will support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from children's sporting activities.
- I will respect and show appreciation for the trained volunteer coaches who give their time to provide sport activities for my child, understanding that I have a responsibility to be part of my child's development.
- I will refrain from coaching my child or other players during games and practices unless I am one of the official coaches of the team.
- I will educate & encourage my child to treat other players, coaches, officials, & spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex, or ability.
- I will demand an environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and I will refrain from their use at all sporting events.
- I will have respect for all the facilities and equipment used in the sport.

23.2. PLAYERS CODE OF CONDUCT

- I will not have unrealistic expectations. I will remember that we are not professionals and cannot be judged by professional standards.
- I will respect the official's decisions and communicate with them in an appropriate manner, and I will encourage my team mates to do the same.
- I will encourage my team mates to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
- I will exhibit good sportsmanship.
- I will never ridicule or yell at my teammates, opponents, coaches or officials for making a mistake.
- I will applaud players' performances on both teams.
- I will never question the official's judgment or honesty in public.
- I will support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from sporting activities.
- I will not consume alcohol or smoke on, or near the vicinity of the players' benches.
- I will not use bad language, nor will I harass opponents, coaches, officials, or spectators.
- I will be knowledgeable of the rules and regulations.
- I will respect the rights of other players, coaches, fans & officials.
- I will be responsible for my own behavior.
- I will have respect for all the facilities and equipment used in the sport.

23.3. COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

If players are to grow and develop in their sport or physical activity, and environment of positive communication and respect must exist. Coaches should observe the following Code of Conduct.

- I will remember that all the players are playing for their enjoyment, not for mine.
- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my players ahead of a personal desire or external pressure to win.
- I will do my best to provide a safe playing environment for all players.
- I will not have unrealistic expectations. I will remember that the amateur athletes are not professionals and cannot be judged by professional standards.
- I will respect the official's decisions and communicate with them in an appropriate manner, and I will encourage my players to do the same.

- I will encourage all players to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
- I will teach my players good sportsmanship.
- I will never ridicule or yell at the players, coaches, or officials for making a mistake.
- I will applaud good players' performances on both teams.
- I will never question the official's judgment or honesty in public.
- I will support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from sporting activities.
- I will not consume alcohol or smoke on, or near the vicinity of the players' benches.
- I will not use bad language, nor will I harass athletes, coaches, officials, or other spectators.
- I will be knowledgeable of the league rules and regulations and teach these rules to the players on my team.
- I will encourage my players to respect the rights of other players, coaches, fans & officials.
- I will be responsible for my own behavior and the behavior of my team members, their parents & fans.
- I will have respect for all the facilities and equipment used in the sport.

24. POLICIES

24.1. COACHES CLINIC REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

The Association will cover the cost of the NCCP Introductory Course, for those wanting to coach for the year. After the individual has been assigned a team, they will be reimbursed for the cost of the clinic. If the clinic is only held outside of the City of Lethbridge, the Executive will consider reimbursement on a case-by-case basis.

24.2. HELMET POLICY

The association sees player safety as of paramount importance. This importance requires helmets to fit properly on the players head along with a Softball Alberta approved face guard. There is also a health factor in this regarding the transfer of lice or other conditions that can be transferred between players.

It is with this standard that we NOW require players of all ages to provide THEIR own helmets (face guard included) and will be part of the mandatory equipment needed to play.

24.3. PRIVACY AND PROTECTION POLICY

Lethbridge Minor Softball recognizes that, through the player registration and provincial registration process, it has been given access to confidential information for each player and family. Lethbridge Minor Softball takes great effort to ensure that this information is kept private.

Application of Policy:

- All registration information is kept secure with the Registrar.
- The Registrar will only supply portions of this information to other board members or coaches who require this information to complete their assigned roles.
- Once any individual has left Lethbridge Minor Softball, their confidential information will be destroyed.
- Parents/Guardians are required to contact the registrar whether they have any concerns with respect to privacy or security issues.
- The registration form includes a parent/player release that must be signed at the time of registration.

24.4. REFUND POLICY

All registration cancellations will be given a full refund if received by April 15th. Cancellations after April 15th will result in a refund minus \$20.00 for merchandise already purchased for the recipient.

24.5. WEATHER POLICY

The Weather Network Channel or website (www.theweathernetwork.com) will be used as the guide for Lethbridge Minor Softball.

Rain outs or cold weather will be determined by either the city or the coaches. If there is rain/snow then we will send an e-mail, post on the Website, Facebook, and Twitter to inform you of the cancellation.

Ultimately the city determines whether we can play on the diamond. The city has a Rain out Hotline [403-320-4974](tel:403-320-4974) is updated at 2pm every day to inform us of this.

If the weather is bad in the afternoon and the city has cancelled play but then it gets nice in the evening, we are unable to go on the field still. BUT if the weather is nice in the afternoon and then it gets bad in the evening the coaches make the decision to cancel or not. Because this happens more then we like it is important that you check your email, the Website, Facebook, or Twitter on those “weather days” to ensure you get the right information.

Temperatures - Practices and/or games may be cancelled by Lethbridge Minor Softball when the weather is below +10 or above +35 degrees Celsius (including wind chills and Feels like).

Air Quality - Any air quality statement of 7 or higher the association will have the authority to cancel practices/games. https://weather.gc.ca/airquality/pages/provincial_summary/ab_e.html

LMSA will have the authority to cancel practices/games at any time if they feel weather conditions are unsafe.

GENERAL SAFETY TIPS

- “If you can see it, flee it; If you can hear it, clear it.”
- The 30/30 rule (rule 1 and 2) says to shut down when lightning is 10 km’s away. Use a “flash to bang” (lightning to thunder) count of five seconds equals 1.2 km’s. Keep an eye on the sky. Note when skies darken, or gusty winds develop. Have a place of shelter in mind, and a plan to get there.

- **Rule 1:** When you can count less than 30 seconds between the lightning strike and the thunder, the storm is less than 10 km away. There is an 80% chance the next strike will happen within that 10 km. It is time to take cover. But, often, it is hard to remember to count off seconds, or how many, and keep tally of the score too, and pay attention to the game, and watch the sky, and so on. Too confusing! So, here is the trick. Sound can carry great distances when the atmosphere is stable and quiet, like early mornings. But sound does not travel nearly as far during a stormy afternoon. Essentially, if you can hear the thunder, you are in the strike zone. Take cover!
- **Rule 2:** Wait 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder before resuming your activity. Naturally, watch for broken tree limbs, fallen power lines or flooding that may have been caused by the storm.
- Move to a safe location: A large permanent building or vehicle is best. Unsafe places are near metal or water; under trees; on hills, near electrical/electronic equipment.
- Lightning likes power lines, metal, electrical conductors, high places, prominent or tall objects. It looks for the easiest or shortest path to the ground.
- Safe places are homes and buildings. Close windows and doors then stay away from them. Lightning can go through both. It can strike through walls too, so stay away from outside walls if you can. Most cars and trucks are safe too. The metal body shields the interior (the tires have no affect). If you are caught in the open, try a valley or ravine. Get low. If you are in a wooded area, hide near a small tree or shrub.
- If no shelter is available, crouch down, feet close together with head tucked down. Do not lie flat. If you are in a group, spread out, so that individuals are several meters apart.
- Do not be the tallest object around. Stay away from the tallest objects too. Do not carry softball bats, or an umbrella. Do not wear metal cleats. Do not go under a tree or by a metal fence. Do not take cover in a stand-alone shed.
- More Canadians are killed or injured by lightning than by any other summertime weather event, and most of those affected are involved in a sporting event of some kind. Remember that even a small-for-his-age-nine-year-old is very tall when he is standing alone in centre field.

24.6. ATTENDANCE AT EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS POLICY

LMSA welcomes the general public to attend meetings. Meeting dates will be posted on the website for the general public interested in attending. Members of the general public may request to be added to the agenda by sending the request via the website and include a brief summary of presentation request. Requests are to be submitted 2 weeks prior to the meeting. Your request will be confirmed by e-mail indicating if accepted or declined.

- LMSA meetings are open to the public except for matters which may be deemed to be confidential, as provided in Board by-laws and policies. Confidential matters are addressed by the LMSA Board in closed session to protect the confidentiality and safety of those involved in such matters.
- Guests (i.e., non-Board members) are welcome to attend Open Session segments of LMSA meetings, as noted on the agenda. Guests will exit the meeting immediately upon completion of the Open Session of the meeting or at the request of the Chair.

- Guests attending LMSA board meetings do not have speaking privileges unless they have been advised of such privileges in advance of the meeting (e.g., invited presenters, completed request to present) or, at the meeting in response to due process, provided with speaking privileges.
- Interference with the progress of a meeting by a Guest will not be permitted and any Guest who attempts to impede the business of the meeting will be instructed by the meeting Chair to leave. In such circumstances, the Guest will exit the meeting immediately.

24.7. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

If LMSA engages in Social Media via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or any new form of social media, the sites must be monitored and updated by a LMSA executive member only. This policy will be presented at the time of registration and must be accepted by the person registering the player before registration will be able to be completed.

This policy will also need to be signed by any player registered in U15 and up. The policy will be distributed via email to the players registration contact prior to the start of the season and will need to be signed and returned before the start of the first practice.

Should a LMSA individual team or division team start a formal LMSA social media page/group, etc., it must be for the sole purpose of communication and must be approved by the board before it is set up for use.

Should a social media site become neglected or not used, it must be either closed, deactivated or all content removed to blank.

A member who believes that the Social Media use by another member is inappropriate or may violate LMSA's should report the matter to LMSA in the manner outlined by the LMSA Discipline & Complaints Policy.

Conduct and Behaviour that will NOT be tolerated and subject the LMSA Discipline & Complaints Policy:

- a) Posting a disrespectful, hateful, insulting, harming or otherwise negative comment on a personal blog, in a Facebook post or note, or as a Tweet on Twitter, Instagram or any other social media account that is directed at any other member, team or group within the LMSA or at other persons connected to LMSA.
- b) Posting a disrespectful, hateful, insulting, harming or otherwise negative comment on a personal blog, in a Facebook post or note, or as a Tweet on Twitter, Instagram or any other social media account that is directed at any other member organization that is part of Softball Alberta, Softball Canada, Little League Alberta, Little League Canada or any other Softball Association.
- c) Creating or contributing to a Facebook group, webpage, blog, or online forum devoted solely or in part to promoting negative or disparaging remarks or commentary about LMSA, Softball Alberta, Softball Canada, Little League Alberta, Little League Canada or any other Softball Association or its reputation.
- d) Posting a picture, altered picture, or video on Facebook, Tumblr, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, or other social medium that is harmful, disrespectful, insulting, or otherwise offensive, and that is directed at Members or at other persons connected with LMSA, Softball Alberta, Softball Canada, Little League Alberta, Little League Canada, or any other Softball Association.
- e) Any instance of cyber-bullying or cyber-harassment between one Member and another Member (including a teammate, coach, opponent, volunteer, or official), where incidents of cyber-bullying

and cyber-harassment can include but are not limited to the following conduct on any social medium, via text-message, or via email: regular insults, negative comments, vexatious behaviour, pranks or jokes, threats, posing as another person, spreading rumours or lies, or other harmful behaviour.

f) Any instance of bringing the game of softball or LMSA into disrepute.

g) Removing content from Social Media after it has been posted (either publicly or privately) does not excuse the Member from being subject to the LMSA Discipline & Complaints Policy

Definitions:

A) "Social media" – The catch-all term that is applied broadly to computer-mediated communication media such as blogs, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Tumblr, and Twitter, etc.

b) "Member"- All individuals registered or associated with LMSA, including but not limited to, players, coaches, officials, volunteers, directors, board members, team managers, team captains, administrators, and parents/guardians of registered players.

24.8. DISCIPLINE AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

Definitions

1. The following terms have these meanings in this Policy:

a) "Case Manager" – The person or organization appointed by LMSA to oversee management and administration of complaints.

b) "Complainant" – The party alleging an infraction.

c) "Days" – Days including weekends and holidays.

d) "In writing"- A letter, fax or email sent directly to the Association.

e) "Member"- All categories of membership defined in the LMSA Bylaws, as well as all individuals employed by or engaged in activities with LMSA, including but not limited to, athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, directors, officers, team managers, team captains, medical and paramedical personnel, administrators, and employees.

f) "Respondent" – The alleged infracting party.

Preamble

2. LMSA is committed to providing a sport environment which is athlete-centered, and which is characterized by open and clear communication, honesty, fairness, and mutual respect.

3. Membership in LMSA brings with it many benefits and privileges. At the same time, members are expected to fulfill certain responsibilities and obligations, including but not limited to, complying with the Code of Conduct, policies, rules, and regulations of LMSA.

4. The LMSA Code of Conduct (Appendix A) identifies the standard of behaviour which is expected of members of LMSA. Members who fail to meet this standard will be subject to the disciplinary sanctions identified within this policy.

Application

5. This Policy applies to all Members as defined in the Definitions.

6. It applies to discipline matters which may occur during the course of all LMSA business, activities, and events, including but not limited to, tournaments, training camps, exhibitions, meetings and travel associated with these activities.

7. Discipline matters arising within the business, activities or events of provincial/territorial softball associations, teams, or affiliated organizations of LMSA shall be dealt with using the discipline policies and mechanisms of such organizations.

8. This Policy also applies to Individuals' conduct outside of LMSA's business, activities, and events when such conduct adversely affects relationships within LMSA (its work and/or sport environment) or is detrimental to the image and reputation of LMSA. The jurisdiction of this Policy will be determined by LMSA at its sole discretion.

9. This Policy does not prevent an appropriate person having authority from taking immediate, informal, or corrective action. Further sanctions may be applied in accordance with the procedures set out in this Policy.

Reporting a Complaint

10. Any Member may report to LMSA's Board of Directors any complaint of an infraction by a Member. Such a complaint must be signed and in writing and must be filed within fourteen (14) days of the alleged incident. Anonymous complaints may be accepted upon the sole discretion of the Case Manager.

11. A Complainant wishing to file a complaint beyond the fourteen (14) days must provide a written statement giving reasons for an exemption to this limitation. The decision to accept, or not accept, the notice of complaint outside the fourteen (14) day period will be at the sole discretion of the Case Manager. This decision may not be appealed.

12. At LMSA's discretion, LMSA may act as the complainant and initiate the complaint process under the terms of this Policy. In such cases, LMSA will identify an individual to represent LMSA.

Case Manager

13. Upon receipt of a complaint, LMSA will assign a Case Manager to oversee management and administration of complaints submitted in accordance with this Policy and such appointment is not appealable.

14. The Case Manager has a responsibility to:

- a) Determine whether the complaint is frivolous or vexatious and within the jurisdiction of this Policy.
- b) Propose the use of mediation.
- c) Appoint a Panel, if necessary, in accordance with this Policy.
- d) Determine the format of the hearing, in cooperation with the Panel.
- e) Coordinate all administrative aspects of the complaint.
- f) Provide administrative assistance and logistical support to the Panel as required; and

- g) Provide any other service or support that may be necessary to ensure a fair and timely proceeding.

Disciplinary Procedures

15. If the Case Manager determines the complaint is:

- a) Frivolous or outside the jurisdiction of this Policy, the complaint will be dismissed immediately.

- b) Not frivolous and within the jurisdiction of this Policy, the Case Manager will notify the Parties the complaint is accepted and the applicable next steps.

16. The Case Manager's decision to accept or dismiss the complaint may not be appealed.

17. The Case Manager will establish and adhere to timeframes that ensure procedural fairness and that the matter is heard in a timely fashion.

18. After notifying the Parties that the complaint has been accepted, the Case Manager will first, propose mediation with the objective of resolving the dispute. If the dispute is not resolved or the parties refuse mediation, the Case Manager will appoint a Discipline Panel, which shall consist of a single Adjudicator, to hear the complaint. In extraordinary circumstances, and at the discretion of the Case Manager, a Panel of three persons may be appointed to hear the complaint. In this event, the Case Manager will appoint one of the Panel's members to serve as the Chair.

19. The Case Manager, in cooperation with the Discipline Panel, will then decide the format under which the complaint will be heard. This decision may not be appealed. The format of the hearing may involve direct communications with the Parties, an oral in-person hearing, an oral hearing by telephone or other telecommunications, a hearing based on a review of documentary evidence submitted in advance of the hearing, or a combination of these methods. The hearing will be governed by the procedures that the Case Manager and the Discipline Panel deem appropriate in the circumstances, provided that:

- a) The Parties will be given appropriate notice of the day, time, and place of the hearing, in the case of an oral in-person hearing, an oral hearing by telephone or other telecommunications

- b) Copies of any written documents which the parties wish to have the Panel consider will be provided to all Parties, through the Case Manager, in advance of the hearing and/or decision rendered

- c) The Parties may be accompanied by a representative, advisor, or legal counsel at their own expense

- d) The Discipline Panel may request that any other individual participate and give evidence at the hearing

- e) The Discipline Panel may allow as evidence at the hearing any oral evidence and document or thing relevant to the subject matter of the complaint, but may exclude such evidence that is unduly repetitious and shall place such weight on the evidence as it deems appropriate

- f) The decision will be by a majority vote of the Discipline Panel

20. If a decision affects a 3rd party to the extent that the 3rd party would have recourse to a complaint or an appeal in their own right, that 3rd party will become a party and apart of the complaint procedure to the complaint in question and will be bound by the decision.

21. The preceding provisions may be modified, or added to, as required by the provisions of any other pertinent LMSA policy, such as those dealing with harassment, doping, personnel, or event-specific matters.

22. Where the Respondent acknowledges the facts of the incident, he or she may waive the hearing, in which case the Panel will determine the appropriate disciplinary sanction. The Panel may hold a hearing for the purpose of determining an appropriate sanction.

23. If the Respondent chooses not to participate in the hearing, the hearing will proceed in any event.

24. In fulfilling its duties, the Panel may obtain independent advice.

Decision

25. After hearing and/or reviewing the matter, the Panel will determine whether an infraction has occurred and if so, what appropriate sanction will be imposed. The Panel's written decision, with reasons, will be distributed to all parties, the Case Manager and LMSA within thirty (30) days of the conclusion of the hearing. The decision will be considered a matter of public record unless decided otherwise by the Panel. In extraordinary circumstances, the Discipline Panel may first issue a verbal or summary decision soon after the hearing's conclusion, with the full written decision to be issued thereafter.

Sanctions

26. The Discipline Panel may apply the following disciplinary sanctions singly or in combination.

- a) Written reprimand to be placed in individual's file.
- b) Hand-delivered written apology.
- c) Forfeiture of certain games.
- d) Suspension from certain LMSA events which may include suspension from the current competition or from future teams or competitions.
- e) Payment of a financial fine, amount to be determined by the Disciplinary Panel.
- f) Suspension of LMSA funding or, with the consent of Sport Canada, Sport Canada funding.
- g) Suspension from certain LMSA activities (i.e., competing, coaching, or officiating) for a designated period of time.
- h) Suspension from all LMSA activities for a designated period of time.
- i) Expulsion from LMSA.
- j) Withholding of prize money or awards.
- k) Payment of the cost of repairs for property damage.
- l) Service or other contribution to LMSA.
- m) Other sanctions as may be considered appropriate for the offense.

27. The preceding sanctions may be modified, or added to, as required by the provisions of any other pertinent LMSA policy, such as those dealing with harassment, doping, personnel, or event-specific matters.

28. Unless the Discipline Panel decides otherwise, any disciplinary sanctions shall commence immediately. Failure to comply with a sanction as determined by the Panel will result in automatic suspension of membership in LMSA until such time as compliance occurs.

29. A written record will be maintained by LMSA at their head office for infractions that result in a sanction.

30. In applying sanctions, the Disciplinary Panel may have regard to the following aggravating or mitigating circumstances:

- a) The nature and severity of the offense,
- b) Whether the incident is a first offense or has occurred repeatedly,
- c) The individual's acknowledgment of responsibility,
- d) The individual's extent of remorse,
- e) The age, maturity, or experience of the individual, and
- f) The individual's prospects for rehabilitation.

31. Notwithstanding the procedures set out in this policy, any member who is convicted of a criminal offense may face automatic suspension from LMSA for a period of time corresponding to the length of the criminal sentence imposed by the Court and may face further disciplinary action by LMSA in accordance with this policy.

Serious Infractions

32. LMSA may determine that an alleged incident is of such seriousness as to warrant suspension of the Respondent pending a hearing and a decision of the Panel and/or completion of the criminal process.

Confidentiality

33. The discipline and complaints process are confidential involving only the Parties, the Case Manager and the Panel. Once initiated and until a decision is released, none of the Parties will disclose confidential information relating to the discipline or complaint to any person not involved in the proceedings.

Appeals

34. Except where otherwise provided, an appeal of any disciplinary matter will be done according to the Appeals Policy of LMSA.

APPENDIX A

LMSA CODE OF CONDUCT

Definitions

1. The following terms have these meanings in this Code:

- a) "Association" – LMSA
- b) "Individuals" – All categories of membership defined in the LMSA Bylaws, as well as to all individuals engaged in activities with or employed by LMSA, including, but not limited to, athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, directors, officers, team managers, team captains, medical and paramedical personnel, administrators, and employees (including contract personnel).
- c) "Workplace" - Any place where business or work-related activities are conducted. Workplaces include but are not limited to, the Association's office, work-related social functions, work

assignments outside the Association's offices, work-related travel, and work-related conferences or training sessions.

Purpose

2. The purpose of this Code is to ensure a safe and positive environment (within the Association's programs, activities, and events) by making Individuals aware that there is an expectation, at all times, of appropriate behaviour consistent with the Association's core values. The Association supports equal opportunity, prohibits discriminatory practices, and is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and fairness.

Application of this Policy

3. This policy applies to Individuals relating to conduct that that may arise during the course of LMSA's business, activities and events, including but not limited to, office environment, competitions, practices, tournaments, training camps, travel, and any meetings.
4. This policy applies to conduct that may occur outside of LMSA's business and events when such conduct adversely affects relationships within LMSA and its work and sport environment and is detrimental to the image and reputation of LMSA.
5. An Individual who violates this Code may be subject to sanctions pursuant to the Association's Discipline and Complaints Policy. In addition to facing possible sanction pursuant to the Association's Discipline and Complaints Policy, an Individual who violates this Code during a competition may be ejected from the competition or the playing area, the official may delay the competition until the Individual complies with the ejection, and the Individual may be subject to any additional discipline.
6. An employee of the Association found to have engaged in acts of violence or harassment against any other employee, worker, contractor, member, customer, supplier, client or other third-party during business hours, or at any Association event, will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Responsibilities

7. Individuals have a responsibility to:
 - a) Maintain and enhance the dignity and self-esteem of the Association members and other individuals by:
 - i. Demonstrating respect to individuals regardless of body type, physical characteristics, athletic ability, age, ancestry, colour, race, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed, disability, family status, marital status, gender identity, gender expression, sex, and sexual orientation
 - ii. Focusing comments or criticism appropriately and avoiding public criticism of athletes, coaches, officials, organizers, volunteers, employees, or members
 - iii. Consistently demonstrating the spirit of sportsmanship, sport leadership, and ethical conduct
 - iv. Acting, when appropriate, to correct or prevent practices that are unjustly discriminatory

v. Consistently treating individuals fairly and reasonably

vi. Ensuring adherence to the rules of the sport and the spirit of those rules

b) Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes harassment, where harassment is defined as comment or conduct directed towards an individual or group, which is offensive, abusive, racist, sexist, degrading, or malicious. Types of behaviour that constitute harassment include, but are not limited to:

i. Written or verbal abuse, threats, or outbursts

ii. Persistent unwelcome remarks, jokes, comments, innuendo, or taunts

iii. Leering or other suggestive or obscene gestures

iv. Condescending or patronizing behaviour, which is intended to undermine self-esteem, diminish performance or adversely affect working conditions

v. Practical jokes which endanger a person's safety, or negatively affect performance

vi. Any form of hazing

vii. Unwanted physical contact including, but not limited to, touching, petting, pinching, or kissing

viii. Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, requests, or invitations

ix. Physical or sexual assault

x. Behaviours such as those described above that are not directed towards a specific individual or group but have the same effect of creating a negative or hostile environment

xi. Retaliation or threats of retaliation against an individual who reports harassment to the Association.

c) Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes workplace harassment, where workplace harassment is defined as vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace – a comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. Workplace harassment should not be confused with legitimate, reasonable management actions that are part of the normal work function, including measures to correct performance deficiencies, such as placing someone on a performance improvement plan, or imposing discipline for workplace infractions. Types of behaviour that constitute workplace harassment include, but are not limited to:

i. Bullying

ii. Repeated offensive or intimidating phone calls or emails

iii. Inappropriate sexual touching, advances, suggestions, or requests

iv. Displaying or circulating offensive pictures, photographs, or materials in printed or electronic form

v. Psychological abuse

vi. Personal harassment

vii. Discrimination

viii. Intimidating words or conduct (offensive jokes or innuendos)

ix. Words or actions which are known or should reasonably be known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, or demeaning.

d) Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes workplace violence, where workplace violence is defined as the exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker; an attempt to exercise physical force against

a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker; or a statement or behaviour that it is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker. Types of behaviour that constitute workplace harassment include, but are not limited to:

- i. Verbal threats to attack a worker
- ii. Sending to or leaving threatening notes or emails for a worker
- iii. Making threatening physical gestures to a worker
- iv. Wielding a weapon in a workplace
- v. Hitting, pinching or unwanted touching of a worker which is not accidental
- vi. Throwing an object at a worker
- vii. Blocking normal movement or physical interference of a worker, with or without the use of equipment
- viii. Sexual violence against a worker
- ix. Any attempt to engage in the type of conduct outlined above.

e) Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes sexual harassment, where sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual comments and sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, or conduct of a sexual nature. Types of behaviour that constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- i. Sexist jokes
- ii. Display of sexually offensive material
- iii. Sexually degrading words used to describe a person
- iv. Inquiries or comments about a person's sex life
- v. Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions
- vi. Persistent unwanted contact

f) Abstain from the non-medical use of drugs or the use of performance-enhancing drugs or methods. More specifically, the Association adopts and adheres to the Canadian Anti-Doping Program. Any infraction under this Program shall be considered an infraction of this Code and may be subject to further disciplinary action, and possible sanction, pursuant to the Association's Discipline and Complaints Policy. The Association will respect any penalty enacted pursuant to a breach of the Canadian Anti-Doping Program, whether imposed by the Association or any other sport Association.

g) Refrain from associating with any person for the purpose of coaching, training, competition, instruction, administration, management, athletic development, or supervision of the sport, who has incurred an anti-doping rule violation and is serving a sanction involving a period of ineligibility imposed pursuant to the Canadian Anti-Doping Program and/or the World Anti-Doping Code and recognized by the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES)

h) Refrain from the use of power or authority in an attempt to coerce another person to engage in inappropriate activities

i) Refrain from consuming tobacco products, or recreational drugs while participating in the Association's programs, activities, competitions, or events

j) In the case of adults, avoid consuming alcohol in competitions and situations where minors are present and take reasonable steps to manage the responsible consumption of alcohol in adult-oriented social situations associated with the Association's events

k) Respect the property of others and not wilfully cause damage

l) Promote the sport in the most constructive and positive manner possible

- m) Adhere to all federal, provincial, municipal and host country laws
- n) Comply, at all times, with the Association's bylaws, policies, procedures, and rules and regulations, as adopted and amended from time to time

Board/Committee Members and Staff

8. In addition to section 7 (above), the Association's Directors, Committee Members, and Staff will have additional responsibilities to:

- a) Function primarily as a member of the board and/or committee(s) of the Association, not as a member of any other particular member or constituency
- b) Act with honesty and integrity and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the nature and responsibilities of the Association's business and the maintenance of Individuals' confidence
- c) Ensure that the Association's financial affairs are conducted in a responsible and transparent manner with due regard for all fiduciary responsibilities
- d) Conduct themselves openly, professionally, lawfully and in good faith in the best interests of the Association
- e) Be independent and impartial and not be influenced by self-interest, outside pressure, expectation of reward, or fear of criticism
- f) Behave with decorum appropriate to both circumstance and position and be fair, equitable, considerate, and honest in all dealings with others
- g) Keep informed about the Association's activities, the provincial sport community, and general trends in the sectors in which they operate
- h) Exercise the degree of care, diligence, and skill required in the performance of their duties pursuant to the laws under which the Association is incorporated
- i) Respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature
- j) Ensure that all Individuals are given sufficient opportunity to express opinions, and that all opinions are given due consideration and weight
- k) Respect the decisions of the majority and resign if unable to do so
- l) Commit the time to attend meetings and be diligent in preparation for, and participation in, discussions at such meetings
- m) Have a thorough knowledge and understanding of all the Association governance documents
- n) Conform to the bylaws and policies approved by the Association, in particular this Code of Conduct and Ethics as well as the Conflict-of-Interest Policy

Coaches

9. In addition to section 7 (above), coaches have many additional responsibilities. The coach-athlete relationship is a privileged one and plays a critical role in the personal, sport, and athletic development of the athlete. Coaches must understand and respect the inherent power imbalance that exists in this relationship and must be extremely careful not to abuse it, consciously or unconsciously. Coaches will:

- a) Ensure a safe environment by selecting activities and establishing controls that are suitable for the age, experience, ability, and fitness level of the involved athletes
- b) Prepare athletes systematically and progressively, using appropriate time frames and monitoring physical and psychological adjustments while refraining from using training methods or techniques that may harm athletes

- c) Avoid compromising the present and future health of athletes by communicating and cooperating with sport medicine professionals in the diagnosis, treatment, and management of athletes' medical and psychological treatments
- d) Support the coaching staff of a training camp, provincial team, or national team; should an athlete qualify for participation with one of these programs
- e) Provide athletes (and the parents/guardians of minor athletes) with the information necessary to be involved in the decisions that affect the athlete
- f) Act in the best interest of the athlete's development as a whole person
- g) Respect other coaches
- h) Meet the highest standards of credentials, integrity, and suitability, including but not limited to such considerations established by the Association's Screening Policy
- i) Report any ongoing criminal investigation, conviction, or existing bail conditions, including those for violence, child pornography, or possession, use, or sale of any illegal substance
- j) Under no circumstances provide, promote, or condone the use of drugs (other than properly prescribed medications) or performance-enhancing substances and, in the case of minors, alcohol and/or tobacco
- k) Respect athletes playing with other teams and, in dealings with them, not encroach upon topics or actions which are deemed to be within the realm of 'coaching', unless after first receiving approval from the coaches who are responsible for the athletes
- l) Not engage in a sexual relationship with an athlete under 18 years old, or an intimate or sexual relationship with an athlete over the age of 18 if the coach is in a position of power, trust, or authority over the athlete
- m) Recognize the power inherent in the position of coach and respect and promote the rights of all participants in sport. This is accomplished by establishing and following procedures for confidentiality (right to privacy), informed participation, and fair and reasonable treatment. Coaches have a special responsibility to respect and promote the rights of participants who are in a vulnerable or dependent position and less able to protect their own rights.
- n) Dress professionally, neatly, and inoffensively
- o) Use inoffensive language, considering the audience being addressed

Athletes

10. In addition to section 7 (above), athletes will have additional responsibilities to:
- a) Report any medical problems in a timely fashion, when such problems may limit their ability to travel, practice, or compete; or in the case of carded athletes, interfere with the athlete's ability to fulfill requirements under the Athlete Assistance Program
 - b) Participate and appear on-time and prepared to participate to their best abilities in all competitions, practices, training sessions, tryouts, tournaments, and events
 - c) Properly represent themselves and not attempt to participate in a competition for which they are not eligible by reason of age, classification, or other reason
 - d) Adhere to the Association's rules and requirements regarding clothing and equipment
 - e) Never ridicule a participant for a poor performance or practice
 - f) Act in a sportsmanlike manner and not display appearances of violence, foul language, or gestures to other athletes, officials, coaches, or spectators
 - g) Dress to represent the sport and themselves well and with professionalism

h) Act in accordance with the Association's policies and procedures and, when applicable, additional rules as outlined by coaches or managers

Officials

11. In addition to section 7 (above), officials will have additional responsibilities to:

- a) Maintain and update their knowledge of the rules and rule changes
- b) Work within the boundaries of their position's description while supporting the work of other officials
- c) Act as an ambassador of the Association by agreeing to enforce and abide by national and provincial rules and regulations
- d) Take ownership of actions and decisions made while officiating
- e) Respect the rights, dignity, and worth of all individuals
- f) Not publicly criticize other officials or any club or association
- g) Assist with the development of less-experienced officials and minor officials
- h) Conduct themselves openly, impartially, professionally, lawfully, and in good faith in the best interests of the Association, athletes, coaches, other officials, and parents
- i) Be fair, equitable, considerate, independent, honest, and impartial in all dealings with others
- j) Respect the confidentiality required by issues of a sensitive nature, which may include ejections, defaults, forfeits, discipline processes, appeals, and specific information or data about Individuals
- k) Honor all assignments unless unable to do so by virtue of illness or personal emergency, and in these cases inform the assignor or association at the earliest possible time
- l) When writing reports, set out the true facts and not attempt to justify any decisions
- m) Dress in proper attire for officiating