



ACTION BULLETIN

Bulletin #: A-2025-032

Date: May 5, 2025

To: Member Associations

CC: Board of Director
District Coordinators and UICs
PUIC
Staff

From: Laura MacMillan, Programs and Championship Director

Subject: Updated Guidance – Volunteer Umpires

This bulletin serves as an **update** to [A-2025-030](#) communicated on **April 15, 2025** regarding the use of volunteer umpires. Softball BC continues to address the ongoing shortage of certified umpires, a challenge impacting games across multiple age categories. To support our associations and minimize game cancellations, we are updating our guidance regarding the use of volunteer umpires in the event that a scheduled umpire does not arrive for their assignment.

For U11 Rep and above

A certified umpire is required for all games (including exhibition) above U11C. If a scheduled certified umpire does not show up, the game may proceed with a volunteer umpire under the following conditions:

1. Eligibility of the Volunteer Umpire

The individual must be:

- A registered coach,
- A registered non-participating player, or
- A knowledgeable volunteer deemed capable of ensuring player safety and enforcing the rules of the game.

The volunteer umpire must be agreed upon by both head coaches prior to the start of the game.



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2. Protective Equipment and Positioning

For safety reasons, the volunteer umpire must:

- Wear full protective gear, including shin guards, chest protector, and an umpire's mask with a throat protector (or a catcher's mask with integrated throat protection).
 - Note: Helmets with cages or infielder face masks do **not** meet the required safety standard.
- Stand behind home plate to call pitches.
 - Calling balls and strikes from any other position on the field is not permitted.
- Be **16 years of age or older**.
- Bownets are not permitted in lieu of proper protective gear.

For U11C and below

If a certified umpire is unavailable, the game may proceed with a volunteer umpire, provided they wear full protective gear, including shin guards, a chest protector, and an umpire mask with a throat protector (or a catcher's mask). An infielder face mask or a helmet with a cage does not meet the required safety standards. The volunteer umpire must position themselves behind the plate to call pitches and cannot call balls and strikes from anywhere else on the field. The volunteer umpire must be 16 years of age or older. If no volunteer is available, the game must be cancelled.

This updated protocol was developed in consultation with the Provincial Umpire-in-Chief to balance player safety, fairness, and the desire to keep games on the field.

Interested in Umpiring?

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a certified umpire, please contact your [District Umpire-in-Chief](#). Training and support are available, and new officials are always welcome.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding as we work together to provide positive and safe experiences for all participants.