

# **New Hampshire Softball Umpire Association Constitution**

## **Article I: Name**

The Name of the Association shall be the New Hampshire Softball Umpires Association (NHSUA).

## **Article II: Goals**

The goals of this Association, established in 1978 are:

- Promote the game of softball, its players, and umpires
- Achieve and maintain the highest standard of officiating
- Have available an adequate number of qualified umpires
- Enforce safeguards in accordance with NFHS rules
- Cooperate with the NHIAA in its effort to further the interest and ideals of softball
- Encourage the spirit of fair play and sportsmanship

## **Article III: Location**

The principal place of business of the Association shall be at a location designated by the Executive Board; however, the Association may conduct its business throughout New Hampshire and elsewhere.

## **Article IV: Membership Status**

Membership shall be open to all people of the age of eighteen (18) years or older who are of good morals and character. No person shall be denied membership solely on account of race, religion, national origin, or gender. A candidate for membership may only become a member by providing satisfactory proof of health and character and by successful completion of the Association's Apprentice Program.

Active Member: A person who has been duly accepted for membership and has complied with all the requirements of membership and is in good standing shall be considered an active member. Active working members are those members umpiring assigned games and who are required to pay the annual fee for dues to the Association. Active-nonworking members shall be those members who have chosen not to work games and who are required to pay a fee as dues to the Association.

Inactive Member: A member who is unavailable to work as a softball umpire during the high school season but desires to remain a member of the Association. An Inactive Member shall pay one half (1/2) of the annual fee as dues to the Association.

Apprentice: A candidate for membership who has registered for NHSUA's Apprentice Program. Apprentices are not eligible to officiate varsity games.

### **Qualifications and Duties of Members**

**Active Member:** A member who holds themselves out as being available for work as a softball umpire on a regular basis. This provision shall not be construed as limiting the right of any member to accept or reject any offer of work.

**Inactive Member:** An Inactive Member will have no responsibilities for meeting and clinic attendance but must pass the annual NFHS Rules test and is required to pay Inactive Membership dues. By doing so, the member will maintain all rights and privileges.

**Transfers:** The Executive Board may accept for membership any person who is a member of a board or association of umpires from another state recognized by the Executive Board provided such person provides satisfactory proof of membership therein and agrees to comply with all the provisions of these bylaws. Transfers will be evaluated by a member of the evaluation team as assigned by the Evaluation Chair. A rating will be provided in their first year.

**Member Certification:** Active members shall be certified to receive assignment of games for the high school season. Member certification shall be a function of the following criteria:

**Longevity-Rating -Status:** Members shall be considered 'in good standing' when they have met the following provisions: current year dues and fees are paid, certified attendance at a New Hampshire annual rules interpretation, pass the annual NFHS Rules test at 85% or better and participate in an evaluation when scheduled by the Evaluation Supervisor.

There shall be the following levels of membership:

**Provisional:** Having successfully passed the requirements of the Apprentice Program and recommended for advancement by the Apprentice Chairperson, a Provisional Member will maintain Active status, 'in good standing', for two (2) years. Members at this level of certification are not eligible for tournament assignments.

**Certified:** A Provisional Member may be considered for advancement to Certified level membership after the completion of their second year of membership provided that both years were of Active status. This candidate may be recommended for advancement by their Regional Assigner and approved by the Executive Board from a C rating to a B rating. Advancement beyond the B rating will be completed through the evaluation system. Tournament assignments may be awarded to members with ratings of 'B' or above.

## **Article V: Dues and Fees**

The following is a list of annual dues and fees approved by the Executive Board.

- Active members will pay an amount determined by the Executive Board.
- Inactive members will pay an amount equivalent to one half (1/2) of the amount determined by the Executive Board. When requesting active status, they must pay the balance of the annual dues.
- Executive Board members will not be required to pay dues.
- NHSUA dues are paid annually by June 30. Those not paying membership dues on time may be assessed a late fee as determined by the Executive Board.
- Apprentice candidates will pay an application fee set by the Executive Board.
- Every active member shall pay an annual insurance registration fee to the NHIAA.
- Only members registered with the NHIAA will be eligible to umpire NHIAA high school varsity softball games.
- Non-members shall pay a fee as determined by the Executive Board for access to the electronic assigning platform for game assignments.

## **Article VI: Duties**

All members of the Executive Board must be members in good standing. No Executive Board member shall incur any expense or financial obligation on behalf of the Association without the approval of the Executive Board. Any new appointments by the President will become effective June 30 of the appointment year or when the current appointee is unable to serve. It will be left to the discretion of the Executive Board to remove members from appointed positions. When a vote comes before executive board members, each executive board member will have no more than one vote. The Executive Board consists of the following positions: president, past president, vice president, secretary/treasurer, supervisor of umpires, assigner chair, regional assigners, web master, evaluation/mechanics supervisor, rules interpreter, apprentice chair, member at large.

### **President**

The President shall:

- be elected by the membership for a term of two (2) years
- be eligible to be elected to two (2) consecutive terms of office
- be the Chairperson of the Executive Board
- serve as the Chairperson of all business meetings of the Association
- prepare agenda items to ensure important and relevant matters are discussed
- create committees deemed necessary and define other duties of each committee so created as set forth in the by-laws
- have the authority to call a meeting of the membership
- appoint the Web Administrator, Assignor Chairperson and Apprentice Chair
- act as the spokesperson for the Association at public gathering or designate an alternate
- Any member who serves as President may only serve one time.

## **Vice President**

The Vice President shall:

- be elected by the membership.
- be well versed in the Association bylaws and serve as the resource when questions arise.
- serve as an alternate signature on Association payables.
- assist the President in ensuring that the Association's operation, activities, and programs are conducted in accordance with the procedures as set forth in the bylaws.
- report to the President and perform the duties of the President in his or her absence, death, inability, or refusal to act, or for any reason it is impractical for the President to act personally. When so acting they shall have the powers and be subject to all the restrictions of the President.
- assume duties as may be set forth in the bylaws.
- recommend to the Executive Board an outside person to review the Association finances.

## **Past President**

The Past President shall:

- serve as an ex-officio board member, providing guidance and mentoring as needed by the current President.
- attend board meetings to provide guidance and history to the Executive Board

## **Assignor Chair**

The Assignor Chair shall:

- be appointed by the Executive Board
- develop parameters on the electronic assigning platform to assist regional assigners.
- conduct a pre-season meeting with all regional assigners to review new and existing parameters.
- review and approve, for overall accuracy and fairness, all varsity level assignments prior to the first publication.
- review all regional schedules for assignment equality upon completion of the season.
- provide reports upon request by the Executive Board regarding assigning process and issues.
- make recommendations to the Executive Board for the removal of a regional assigner.
- make recommendations for new assigners to the Executive Board.
- provide a season end report on the number of games each official completed, and the number of games turned back for each official.

- receive a stipend as determined by the Executive Board

### **Evaluation/Mechanics Supervisor**

The Evaluation/Mechanics Supervisor shall:

- be appointed by the Executive Board
- develop criteria to be used in selecting evaluators.
- recruit and direct knowledgeable softball officials to be evaluators.
- determine which umpires have not been evaluated in the three (3) years prior to the current softball year for evaluation.
- develop and implement a protocol for evaluations.
- develop and implement a standard evaluation form.
- review all evaluation forms and discuss with the evaluators if appropriate.
- maintain an active system to record all evaluations completed for a three (3) year period.
- provide reports to the Executive Board on evaluation activities.
- identify deficiencies in umpire mechanics and rules knowledge to be addressed at yearly umpire clinics.
- provide copies of umpire evaluations to their regional assigner
- organize and coordinate two (2) and three (3) umpire mechanics clinics.
- receive a stipend as determined by the Executive Board.

### **Apprentice Chair**

The Apprentice Chair shall:

- be appointed by the Executive Board.
- recruit and train new members for the NHSUA and develop protocol and procedures for the purpose of training candidates or re-entering umpires.
- provide classroom and field instruction.
- administer written and field tests for the candidates or re-entering umpire.
- report to the Executive Board the names of the candidates who have successfully completed the Apprentice program.
- receive a stipend as determined by the Executive Board

### **Rules Interpreter**

The Rules Interpreter shall:

- be appointed by the Executive Board.
- possess a thorough knowledge of NFHS and NHIAA adopted rules, procedures and mechanics of softball.
- demonstrate the ability to teach the rules, procedures, and mechanics of softball.
- attend the national convention pertaining to rules, mechanics, and procedures of the NFHS. The expense attached to attending shall be borne by NHSUA.

- provide an interpretation for the membership of new rules and procedures at the annual meeting and all alternate meetings.
- possess an ability to conduct two (2) and three (3) umpire mechanics clinics and other timely topics.
- be reasonably available to the members to answer questions regarding rules and procedures.
- handle protests as requested by the NHIAA Softball Committee.
- receive a stipend as determined by the Executive Board.

### **Members at Large**

Members At Large:

- be elected by the membership for overlapping terms of three (3) years
- assist with any sub-committee work at the request of the President
- serve as a member of the Appeals Panel

### **Secretary/Treasurer**

The Secretary/Treasurer shall:

- be elected by the membership for a term of three (3) years.
- be the custodian/recorder of all records of the NHSUA
- be the custodian of all funds of the Association
- be responsible to pay the bills of the Association
- prepare an annual report, based on the fiscal year, on the financial condition of the Association for distribution to the membership
- keep a record of each membership meeting of the Association
- keep a record of Executive Board meeting of the Association
- present the financial records every three (3) years for an outside review for the Association and/or as a new Secretary/Treasurer is elected.
- inform the membership of the time, place, date and agenda of the Annual Meeting
- be responsible to provide a record of the Annual Meeting to the membership
- receive a stipend as determined by the Executive Board

### **Regional Assignor**

The Regional Assignor shall:

- be appointed by the Executive Board.
- Create initial assignments electronically utilizing the assigning platform chosen by the NHIAA/NHSUA.
- Make necessary adjustments to the electronic game assignments in a thoughtful manner and in compliance with pre-existing parameters developed by the Assigning Chair and Regional Assigners.

- Be regulated under the same equitable assigning standards.
- Assign all varsity games and endeavor to assign JV games when requested.
- Not assign apprentices to varsity games.

### **Supervisor of Umpires**

The Supervisor of Umpires shall:

- be elected by the membership and approved by the NHIAA.
- serve a two (2) year term.
- serve as a liaison to the NHIAA.
- supervise the performance of all contracts with organizations having agreements with the Association.
- be responsible for supervising the conduct of the members in the performance of such contracts and their grievances.
- ensure that the Apprentice Chair receives a written copy of the annual test for the apprentice class and that the test is posted electronically for all members to take within the time period set each year.
- administer and correct the annual NFHS rules test for all active and inactive members or may designate an Executive Board member to administer and correct the test.
- be required to make an annual report to the membership and the Executive Board.
- be responsible for recommending and monitoring assignments in tournaments sanctioned by the NHIAA ensuring that no member will be assigned consecutive state finals.
- receive a stipend as determined by the Executive Board

### **Web Administrator**

The Web Administrator shall:

- be an appointed member of the Executive Board
- serve as the liaison between the Association and the company charged with the development and editing of the NHSUA website
- periodically review to assure the website is current
- prompt and assist Executive Board members to update their areas of responsibilities
- monitor inbound links from related sites
- establish protocols for website updates
- receive a stipend as determined by the Executive Board

### **Article VII: Meetings**

The annual business meeting shall normally be held on the first Sunday in March. Mandatory NFHS rules interpretation meetings will be offered prior to the start of the current season. Special meetings shall be held at such time and place as the President may determine.

### **Article VIII: Responsibilities and Discipline**

**Membership:** an active member must attend an annual New Hampshire NFHS Rules Interpretation each year.

**Penalty:** may be suspended after the last New Hampshire NFHS Rules Interpretation with the ability to appeal.

**Dues:** must be paid one (1) year in advance by June 30 with a late fee of \$25.00. Penalty: If dues and late fees are not paid by August 31, the member may be suspended with the ability to appeal.

**Test:** All members, active or inactive, must take the annual NFHS Rules Test. Penalty: Risk loss of present schedule. Inactive members may be removed from membership.

**Tournament:** To be eligible for tournament games, active members must receive a minimum score of 85% and attend a three (3) man clinic when applicable for assignments. Any member that turns back a game after the final schedule has been completed may be charged a penalty fee of \$10.00 per game, per turnback. The Regional Assignor has the right to waive the penalty fee.

### **Article IX: Uniform**

It is mandatory for NHSUA umpiring crews to wear corresponding-colored shirts. When a jacket is worn by the plate umpire, the base umpire is required to match. If the plate umpire wears only a shirt, the base umpire has the option to wear a jacket for warmth.

NHSUA umpires shall wear:

- Navy blue umpire cap with the NH logo. \*
- Approved powder blue collared shirt (color stripe is light blue/white/navy) for regular season and tournament play.
- Approved dark blue collared shirt optional for regular season play only.
- Navy blue undershirt if an undershirt is worn.
- Heather grey pants
- Navy blue or black socks
- Association approved jacket which includes the navy blue jacket with white and powder blue shoulder stripes or Birdie style jacket.
- Black belt with unadorned belt buckle
- Black shoes, hard toe shoes behind the plate and soft toe shoes on the bases
- One or two heather grey or navy ball bag(s) bag color must match when wearing two.
- 25-year patch may be worn on the left sleeve of an umpire shirt
- American flag may be worn on the back of the shirt.



Additional Equipment must be worn and includes:

- Face mask with extended throat protector or hockey style helmet with NOCSAE approval
- Shin guards
- Chest Protector
- \*NH Logo hat and jacket are available only through NHSUA approved vendors
- Protective cup/pelvic protector is recommended

## **Article X: Appeal**

All appeals are required to be in writing to the President When an umpire is suspended, the Executive Board shall notify all concerned that such member can no longer umpire as a member of the Association. No member shall knowingly umpire with a suspended member.

### **Section A: Dues and Fees**

**Dues:** must be paid one (1) year in advance by June 30 with a late fee as determined by the Executive Board.

**Penalty:** If dues and late fees are not paid by August 31, the member will be suspended with the ability to appeal.

Annual dues are to be paid by June 30. Dues not paid by June 30 may be paid until August 31 with a late fee included. If not paid by August 31, the member is suspended and will have thirty (30) days to appeal. A two-third (2/3) vote of approval by the Executive Board is required to reinstate with only dues and late fee required.

If a member appeals after thirty (30) days (October 1) and before ninety (90) days (November 30) from the suspension date of September 30, a member may be re-instated by a two third (2/3) vote of approval by the Executive Board but must take a closed book written exam during the annual apprentice test and receive a minimum score of 85%.

Any member that does not appeal within ninety (90) days from September 30 will be required to attend the Apprentice Program and pass the written and field tests.

### **Section B: General Appeals**

- All other appeals may be directed to the Appeals Panel. The Appeals Panel will include the Vice President and three (3) Members at Large.

## **Article XI: Income and Funds**

All money, funds and income of the Association shall belong solely to the Association. Monies may be appropriated for stipends of officers or used for expenses incurred to carry out the business of the Association.

#### **Article XII: Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of the Association shall be from January 1 through December 31

#### **Article XIII: Amendments**

The by-laws may be amended by a two-third (2/3) vote of the Active Members present, either at an annual meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose.

Written notification of the proposed amendment must be mailed (postmarked) or emailed to all members not less than fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.

#### **Article XIV: Quorums**

Majority of members present at any meeting of the membership or Executive Board

Each Active Member of the Association shall have one vote. The vote of the majority present and voting shall prevail in all matters except those which normally require a two third (2/3) vote.

If by-law changes have been emailed or mailed to member fourteen days prior to the meeting the changes can be voted on by a majority of the members present.

#### **Article XV: Order of Business**

The Association will follow Roberts Rules of Order.

#### **Article XVI: Awards Program**

The Awards Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Board and comprised of five members of the NHSUA, including the Executive Board Vice President and representing not less than three regions. Members will be appointed to a two- or three-year term. The Awards Committee, who will meet annually to determine those who are eligible and will work with the Executive Board to order awards to be given at the annual meeting, will determine all awards.

Awards shall be given to members in good standing who meet the criteria for that award.

#### **Special Recognition Award:**

- Five, ten or fifteen years of service in good standing will receive a pin.
- Twenty years of service in good standing will receive an acrylic trophy.
- Twenty-five years of service in good standing will receive a New Hampshire State plaque.

- Thirty years of service in good standing will receive a plaque. (TBD)
- Thirty-five years of service in good standing will receive a clock.

In addition, there are two special categories:

### **Honorary Membership Award**

The following criteria shall be considered when selecting a member or Non-Member for nomination as an Honorary Member Award.

Member or Non-Member has served a minimum of twenty (20) years of active membership

A Maximum of three (3) people may be approved for Honorary Membership each year, but there is no requirement that any member must be approved each year. Upon retirement, an Honorary Member is entitled to all the privileges extended to the membership except the right to vote.

The Executive Board, by a 2/3 vote, shall approve induction into this elite category. Voting for Honorary Members shall be done at an Executive Board Meeting prior to the Annual Meeting of the full membership. New inductees shall be announced at the Annual Meeting and presented with a commemorative plaque.

### **Hall of Fame Award**

Hall-of-Fame Membership shall be the ultimate reward for a member and should be granted to individuals that uphold the highest values and levels of service set forth by this Association. The following criteria shall be considered when selecting a member or Non-Member for nomination for a Hall of Fame membership Award

- Member or Non-Member has served a minimum of twenty (20) years of active membership Member is a member is in good standing.
- Member or Non-Member is a role model and reflects a positive image on the Association Member or Non-Member is currently or was rated as a AA umpire and has not dropped below a B rating
- Member or Non-Member has umpired in a minimum of three (3) New Hampshire State Championship games
- Member or Non-Member has served at least one term as President, Interpreter, Supervisor, Secretary/Treasurer, Apprentice Chair, Rules Interpreter, Supervisor of Officials, At Large Member or Assignor.
- Member or Non-Member has served on NHSUA committees such as Awards Committee, By-Laws Committee, etc.
- Member or Non-Member has made charitable contributions to the sport of softball such as officiating Make a Wish tournaments, Special Olympics, NH Senior Games, Maine/NH Games, or work with youth softball such as clinics/umpiring/coaching/league director
- Member or Non-Member has current/ previous NHIAA involvement with softball or other sports
- Member or Non-Member is/was an AD/Principal (softball committee) or softball coach
- Member or Non-Member has received other awards such as the John Clark Award/ Women in Sports, etc.

- Member or Non-Member is nominated in writing to the Executive Board by a fellow member or past member

The Awards Committee shall nominate not more than three (3) people to the Executive Board for consideration each year but there is no requirement that any number must be approved each year. Nomination to the Executive Board must have a majority vote by the Nominating Committee. Members or past members can nominate a candidate that deserves to be honored but does not fulfill all the requirements because of certain circumstances.

The Executive Board, by 2/3 vote, shall approve induction in this elite membership. Voting for Hall-of Fame Members shall be done at an Executive Board meeting prior to the Annual Meeting of the full membership. New inductees shall be announced at the Annual Meeting and presented with a commemorative ring. Upon retirement, a Hall-of-Fame Member is entitled to all the privileges extended to the membership except the right to vote.

### **Article XVII: Stipends**

An annual stipend may be paid to the following: • Secretary/Treasurer \$600

- Apprentice Chairman \$400
- Assignor Chairman \$400
- Rules Interpreter \$200
- Supervisor of Umpires \$400
- Evaluation Supervisor \$200
- Web Master \$200

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