



SOFTBALL

**DIVISION I UMPIRE
POSTSEASON
MANUAL**

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SECTION 1 • INTRODUCTION

This manual outlines the responsibilities of an official participating in an NCAA championship. It is essential that each official become familiar with the information and policies included in this manual.

SECTION 2 • NCAA MISSION

The NCAA

The NCAA is a membership organization composed mainly of four-year higher education institutions and collections of institutions known as conferences. Representatives from the NCAA membership – that is, individuals from member institutions and conferences – are responsible for regulation of the Association including oversight of the championships officiating programs.

NCAA Championships Core Statement

The Championships and Alliances staff strives to govern competition in a fair, safe, equitable and sportsmanlike manner so that the experience of the student-athlete is paramount. This is attained by:

Ensuring student-athletes' optimal experience.

Executing championship events reflecting appropriate quality and values to/for stakeholders – student-athletes, administrators, member institutions, coaches, fans, broadcast partners, corporate champions/partners and sport committees.

Coordinating all aspects of championships in an efficient, effective manner through common operating policies and practices, and using internal and external resources.

Integrating championships with broadcast and corporate relationships in a manner that maintains rich tradition and decorum of such events.

Assuring effective management of the business aspects of the operation.

Enhancing the assets of the NCAA and their value by collaborating with internal and external expertise to achieve heightened exposure (e.g. youth clinics, community programs, fan events, banquets, anniversaries, etc.).

NCAA National Office Staff

Each program will identify national office staffing needs as well as specific roles and responsibilities. This may include but is not limited to:

NCAA Championships Staff. Responsible for the management and oversight of the sport officiating program and works directly with the national coordinator and collaborates with the playing rules staff and national coordinator regarding rules interpretations;

- Oversees the development and implementation of nominations, selection and assigning of officials for NCAA postseason competition
- Oversees the education and training platforms including the ArbiterSports website

NCAA Playing Rules Administration Staff. Responsible for the oversight of the playing rules committee and works directly with the secretary-rules editor and in collaboration with the national coordinator and championship staff as it relates to postseason competition and officiating mechanics;

- Assists the championships staff and national coordinator in developing educational materials and accurate rules interpretations

Note: In some sports there may be one person supporting both of these roles.

SECTION 3 • NCAA OFFICIATING PROGRAM

NCAA National Office Staff

The NCAA officiating program will provide the technical expertise, management and developmental framework to deliver the most highly prepared officials for NCAA postseason competition. The program will include recruitment, training, evaluating and assigning officials to meet the expectations of the membership and support the competitive experience of the student-athletes.

NCAA Officiating Program Mission

The NCAA officiating program shall be developed, implemented and administered in an effort to achieve excellence and national consistency in officiating mechanics, philosophy and rules interpretations. The program also should educate officials, coaches and athletics administrators regarding new rules, rule changes and interpretations.

NCAA Officiating Program Organizational Structure

Management of the program and operating guidelines will be the responsibility of the NCAA championships staff and oversight authority lies with the Division I Softball Committee or their designated representative(s).

The secretary-rules editor and respective rules committee will report to the NCAA playing rules administration staff and will be responsible for new rules, rule changes and interpretations. In addition, the secretary-rules editor will assist the national coordinator and NCAA championships staff with the education of officials, coaches and administrators through education materials, clinics, videos and websites.

NCAA Officiating Program Vision

The NCAA Softball Umpire Program is committed to improving the overall quality of officiating in college softball. The program will insure softball competitions are conducted with integrity; provide a fair, equitable and consistent playing field for student-athletes, coaches, umpires and fans; and prepare umpires to conduct contests with consistent application and interpretation of the rules and in a manner that meets or exceeds the expectations of the membership, participants and spectators.

SECTION 4 • OPERATING GUIDELINES AND PRINCIPLES

Professional Expectations/Guidelines

Accountability--All officials will be held accountable to the respective championships officiating program and to the game. Expectations are that officials will officiate the competition by the rules as interpreted by the rules committee and those who do not perform to these expectations shall not be assigned to the championship. It is the responsibility of each official, coordinator and conference to effectively monitor and address officiating ethics throughout the regular season. Breach of these principles must be acted upon immediately to maintain the integrity of officiating.

Professional Demeanor--Officials shall treat their officiating partners, coaches and players with respect and support before, during and after the contest. One must have an appreciation for diversity in skill, gender and ethnicity and shall not criticize partners, coaches or players in a public forum. Officials shall refrain from making disparaging statements or committing acts of prejudice. That includes making comments based upon economics, race, creed, color, age, gender, sexual orientation, physical handicap, country or national origin.

Character--NCAA officials are expected to exhibit and uphold the standards of integrity of the officiating profession. The image of an official demands honesty and a sense of high ethical standards. NCAA officials should make every decision based on the circumstances and facts presented, regardless of past history with a particular player or team. No officials should ever threaten a player, coach or team with future retaliation.

Fraternization--NCAA officials should avoid casual, unnecessary conversations with players, coaches, team personnel or fans during the progress of a game and during the championship. Officials should remove themselves from compromising or suspect situations that present even the appearance of such fraternization.

Speaking Agent Policy--The NCAA expects that, unless expressly authorized by the NCAA, officiating program staff and officials will not speak (or represent themselves as speaking) on behalf of the Association or respond to NCAA-related media inquiries while holding their respective positions with the NCAA.

Articles/Writings--Unless expressly authorized by the NCAA, officiating program staff and officials will not write or publicize articles or other such writings, or engage in similar activity, while holding their respective position with the NCAA, that could be considered (whether stated as such or not) as representing the positions or views of the NCAA, or that espouses ideas adverse to the NCAA or its mission or that portrays the NCAA in a bad light.

Public Comments--Officiating program staff and officials are prohibited from making unprofessional, inappropriate public comments regarding the championship, committee, coaches and student-athletes and comments that are inconsistent with the values of the NCAA before, during or after the championship.

Officials should not converse with anyone about working as an official. Whether talking directly to a person or not, be aware of the possibility of being overheard and misinterpreted. There should be no socializing with the host institution or participating teams. Whenever possible, officials should enter and exit the facility together. If confronted by a coach, player or fan, do not engage in a discussion; simply excuse yourself and leave.

Officials should also be extremely careful of any remarks made while traveling, in and around the facility and in any social situation. Again, officials are representing the NCAA at all times and their actions must be above reproach.

Drug and Alcohol Use--The NCAA expects all officials to adhere to the NCAA's policies related to drug and alcohol use. Furthermore, officials must conduct themselves in a manner befitting intercollegiate athletics including every effort to be healthy and fit for officiating. Failure to do so may result in termination of the officiating assignment.

Sports Wagering/Gambling--The NCAA opposes all forms of legal and illegal sports wagering on college sports. NCAA rules prohibit student-athletes, officials and athletics department, conference office and NCAA national office employees from wagering on intercollegiate, amateur and professional sports in which the Association conducts championships. This includes the Football Bowl Subdivision and emerging sports for women.

Tobacco use-- The NCAA expects that all officials to adhere to the NCAA's policies related to tobacco, including smokeless tobacco products. The use of tobacco products by officials at the site of competition (e.g., officials' locker room, playing field/court, other areas of the facility, etc.), as well as during other championship activities such as pretournament meetings, is prohibited.

Affiliation/Conflict of Interest

Officials are expected to perform their duties with neutrality, integrity, respect and professionalism.

Affiliation

- Officials shall not have an affiliation with any parties in the contest. Without equivocation, game decisions must be free from personal bias.
- The NCAA expects all officials to divulge any and all affiliations with member institutions and conferences (and others as requested) when asked to be considered to work postseason contests.
- Affiliation information will be requested during registration on the respective NCAA sport-specific officiating website.

Conflict of Interest

- Officials must recognize that anything that may lead to a conflict of interest, either real or perceived, must be avoided. Any privileges, employment or personal relationships with an institution, team or conference that can compromise the perceived impartiality of officiating must be avoided.
- Officials are expected to adhere to the NCAA Conflict of Interest policy (Appendix A).

Code of Conduct. As the interest in collegiate athletics continues to grow in media coverage and fan interest, the scrutiny of officiating increases. The official's charge is to act in an ethical and responsible manner at all times. The integrity of officiating rests in the integrity and conduct of its officials.

- Officials are expected to adhere to the NCAA Code of Conduct (Appendix B).

SECTION 5 • GENERAL CHAMPIONSHIP INFORMATION

Air Travel

Preliminary Rounds. Umpires who receive an assignment and live more than 400 miles from the tournament site need to contact Short's Travel at 866/655-9215. Umpires should identify themselves as NCAA championship umpires and book a coach-class ticket (an electronic ticket will be issued). Upon receipt, tickets should be checked for accuracy. The Crew Chief/Umpire-in Chief shall notify the tournament director the arrival times and flight numbers of the crew. In some cases, depending on the host site, the tournament director may suggest flying into a nearby hub airport and driving to the site in an effort to be fiscally responsible, as well as to provide the best opportunity to return the same day as the final competition. Umpires are required to fly round-trip to and from the same airport unless previously approved by the national coordinator. All umpires must be in the host city the night before competition begins. The Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief must arrive in time to attend the pre-tournament meeting.

Women's College World Series. Upon receiving a WCWS assignment, umpires will also be notified of their travel status (drive or fly) and make plans accordingly. If the distance from Oklahoma City is more than 400 miles (fly status), the umpire will contact Short's Travel at (866)655-9215 and make arrangements for a coach-class ticket. Umpires will identify themselves as NCAA Division I softball umpires and book a coach-class ticket (an electronic ticket will be issued).

Ground Transportation

Preliminary Rounds. Umpires (including UIC) residing within 400 miles of the assigned preliminary round site must drive and will be reimbursed for mileage (excluding local transportation) at the rate of 53 cents per mile (maximum of 800 round-trip miles). If umpires live more than 400 miles from the site and choose to drive, they will be reimbursed at 53 cents per mile (maximum of 800 round-trip miles) or the cost of a coach-class ticket, whichever is less.

Women's College World Series. Umpires residing within 400 miles of the championship site must drive and will be reimbursed for mileage (excluding local transportation) at the rate of 53 cents per mile (maximum of 800 round-trip miles). If an umpire lives more than 400 miles from the site and chooses to drive, the umpire will be reimbursed at 53 cents per mile (maximum of 800 round-trip miles) or the cost of a coach-class ticket, whichever is less. Umpires must be in Oklahoma City by 6 p.m. Wednesday, May 28. The scheduled start time of the championship game on June 4 is late, so umpires shall schedule departures on Thursday, June 5.

Rental Cars

Preliminary Rounds. . During the tournament, the Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief will be responsible for arranging and coordinating all transportation needs. Any **necessary car rental reservations will be made through Short's Travel.** Guests attending the tournament shall arrange their own transportation separately and not impose upon members of the crew. No umpire shall drive an automobile after consuming alcohol.

Women's College World Series. The umpiring crew will have two courtesy vehicles for the entire tournament. Upon arrival at the airport in Oklahoma City, umpires should proceed to the baggage claim area where they will be met by either the Umpire-in-Chief or his/her designee and taken to the hotel.

Local Ground Transportation

Preliminary Rounds. All umpires must coordinate their transportation plans to and from the facility with the Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief. Umpires should notify the Crew Chief/Umpire in Chief if they have arranged their own transportation. All umpires scheduled to work (including the alternate) must be at the facility at least one hour, thirty minutes before the scheduled start time.

Women's College World Series Umpires. Parking for courtesy cars will be in the lot directly adjacent to the umpire room at the stadium. If you plan to use your own car, please notify the Umpire-in-Chief so that an additional parking pass can be requested.

Lodging

The host institution will make a hotel reservation for each member of the officiating crew. Rooms should be tentatively reserved for each umpire that is not from the immediate area beginning the night prior to the start of competition and checking out the final day of competition requiring their participation (if games times are schedule late, umpires may stay until the next day). The NCAA will notify the tournament director the day after selections and the day after the preliminary rounds which umpires will be assigned to the next round and site. The Crew Chief/Umpire in Chief will notify each umpire of the lodging arrangements and the time and location of the umpires' pretournament meeting. Expenses (room and tax only) will be direct billed to the host. All incidentals and personal charges are the responsibility of the umpire and must be paid upon checkout. If an umpire has guests attending the tournament, they may stay with the umpire or they may make other arrangements. Umpires shall not ask the host institution or the hotel for extra rooms at no charge or to upgrade rooms.

Fees and Expenses

Fees. Payment will be made through RefPay. For regionals, each umpire will receive \$1050 in game fees, regardless of how many games are worked. Crew Chiefs/Umpire in Chiefs will be paid a flat fee of \$150 and the same per diem and expenses as the assigned umpires. For super regionals, each umpire will receive \$800 in game fees, regardless of how many games are worked. Standby umpires will be paid a flat fee of \$150 and the same per diem and expenses as the assigned umpires. If the standby umpire works any part of any game, the standby umpire will receive the tournament fee instead of the standby flat fee. At the Women's College World Series umpire fees are \$3,000.

Expenses. Umpires, Crew Chiefs/ Umpire-in-Chiefs and standby umpires will receive a \$45 per diem allowance for meals and incidentals for each day of the championship, beginning with the day of arrival and ending with the day of departure. The NCAA does not reimburse umpires for local transportation, tolls, airport parking, laundry or any other incidental expenses; however, the NCAA will pay for airline baggage expenses up to two bags. Umpires should upload baggage fee receipts to the RefPay system for reimbursement. Umpires should be prepared to cover all expenses during the tournament.

Note: Umpires shall review payments and upload baggage receipts within 48 hours of the final competition of each round. NCAA staff will review the fees and travel expenses 48 hours after each round (regional or super regional) and approve payments.

Injury or Illness

The alternate/stand-by umpire will take the position on the field of any base umpire who becomes ill or injured during a game. If the plate umpire becomes ill or injured, the alternate will work first base and the first base umpire will take over behind the plate. No umpire, unless ill or injured, or without the consent of the Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief shall leave the tournament before the conclusion of the championship game. The Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief should contact the National Coordinator if any member of the crew is unable to work the remainder of the tournament. The National Coordinator will decide if a replacement is necessary and select replacements.

Meetings

Pretournament Meeting.

Preliminary Rounds. The tournament director and host institution will arrange a meeting of the coaches and administrators from each team, the NCAA tournament representatives, the Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief and other game management personnel the evening before the tournament begins. The Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief is required to attend.

Women's College World Series. At the Women's College World Series, the pretournament meeting will be held the Tuesday evening prior to the first practice and the National Coordinator will represent the umpiring crew at this meeting.

Umpires Meeting.

Preliminary Rounds. Prior to the start of the tournament round, the Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief will conduct a meeting with the entire crew. It is preferred that the meeting be held the morning of the first game day; however, it is possible to conduct the meeting the evening prior. The Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief will conduct a thorough review of the mechanics system that is to be utilized during the tournament. Standards for mechanics, positioning and philosophy can be found in the NCAA Umpires Manual. The Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief also will discuss umpires' behavior; set a time for a facility walk through with the tournament director; announce the game assignments; and answer any questions from the crew.

Women's College World Series. A mandatory crew meeting will be held at 8 p.m. Wednesday, May 28, at the Courtyard by Marriott. Game assignments for the first four games of the tournament will be announced at this meeting as well as a review of three-person mechanics, policies and procedures to be used during the championship. The entire crew will also meet at 9 a.m. Thursday, May 29 at the Hall of Fame Stadium to walk the field and discuss ground rules.

Tickets

Preliminary Rounds. Tickets for guests of umpires assigned to the tournaments must be arranged for and purchased from the host institution. Umpires should not ask for or expect tickets for guests at no charge.

Women’s College World Series. Tickets for guests of umpires assigned to work the championship can be purchased in advance through the Oklahoma City All Sports Association by calling 405/236-5000. Umpires will receive a credential for admittance to the competition facility. Guests must have a ticket for each session.

Personal Appearance

It is important for umpires to dress professionally at all times including traveling to and from the site, the facility and during their off games. It is acceptable to wear dress shorts (no cutoffs or jeans), polo shirts, dress non-collared shirts and warm-up suits; however, denim jeans and T-shirts are not allowed. You may not wear any university, conference or NCAA logo item at any time. Remember that you are representing the NCAA from the time you leave your home until the time you return.

Social Events

Per NCAA policy, umpires may not attend the pre-tournament banquet or social event involving participating coaches or teams before any round of the championship.

Gifts

Host institutions may not give any member of the officiating crew any gift or memento. **Umpires should never ask for gifts or souvenirs from anyone involved in the tournament.**

Guests

It is acceptable for umpires to bring guests to the championship as long as the umpire’s responsibilities remain the single priority and focus for him/herself and the crew. Umpires shall not ask for free tickets, hotel rooms or any other special requests. Umpires should be reminded that while it is acceptable to have guests, their duties and responsibilities as a tournament umpire must come first.

SECTION 6 • ON-SITE INFORMATION

Game Balls

Worth is the official softball of the NCAA. No other softball should be used for warm-ups and or competition. Game balls will be handled by the host institution and delivered to the Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief before the tournament. In some cases, the umpires will be responsible for rubbing up balls before each game. At the Women’s College World Series, game balls will be handled by the NCAA and Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief. Game balls will be located directly behind home plate.

Locker Rooms

The host institution will provide the umpires with a secure locker room to be used for the duration of the tournament. This locker room is for the exclusive use of the umpires. **No visitors will be allowed at any time (including umpires not**

assigned to work the championship). The Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief must make sure that this is enforced and will coordinate the handling of the locker room keys to ensure security.

Only those umpires assigned to a particular game; designated representative(s) of the Division I Softball Committee, the NCAA championship manager and the tournament manager (as needed) shall be permitted in the umpires' locker room before, during or after a game. A designated representative of the Division I Softball Committee will serve as a liaison to the umpires throughout the tournament. The Division I Softball Committee may approve others to enter the locker room on an as needed basis but it should never be a member of a participating team or umpires not assigned to work the championship.

It is recommended that valuables not be left in the locker room at any time. Umpires are guests of the host institution and shall always be respectful of the facilities by keeping the locker room in good order and considerate of all members of the crew. **No tobacco products or alcohol are allowed in the locker room at any time.**

Host institutions often assign one or more individuals to assist the officiating crew during the tournament. Umpires are expected to treat these people with the utmost respect and if a problem should arise regarding the attendant, the Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief will be responsible for handling the situation with the appropriate tournament administrator.

Press Box

The press box and any VIP club/hospitality areas are off limits to all umpires at all times. Food and drinks will be provided by the host and brought to the umpire's locker room or designated area.

Media/Press Statements

At certain times during the event, a pool reporter, selected by the tournament media coordinator, may be escorted to the umpires' locker room by the tournament director to receive a rule interpretation. All interpretations will be made by the Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief.

Please keep in mind the other speaking agent information:

Speaking Agent Policy--The NCAA expects that unless expressly authorized by the NCAA, officiating program staff and umpires will not speak (or represent themselves as speaking) on behalf of the Association or respond to NCAA-related media inquiries while holding their respective position with the NCAA.

Articles/Writings--Unless expressly authorized by the NCAA, officiating program staff and umpires will not write or publicize articles or other such writings, or engage in similar activity, while holding their respective positions with the NCAA, that could be considered (whether stated as such or not) as representing the position or views of the NCAA, or that espouses ideas adverse to the NCAA or its mission or that portrays the NCAA in a bad light.

Public Comments --Officiating program staff and officials are prohibited from making unprofessional, inappropriate public comments regarding the championship, committee, coaches and student-athletes and comments that are inconsistent with the values of the NCAA before, during or after the championship.

Security

The host institution must provide adequate security as umpires enter and exit the playing field/court. The Crew Chief/Umpire in Chief should discuss this with the tournament director or NCAA committee representative before the tournament begins. It is recommended that at least one security officer accompany game umpires to and from the playing field and their locker room.

SECTION 7 • GAME SITUATIONS

Handling Situations

NCAA umpires must walk a fine line between keeping the game under control and not exacerbating situations with overaggressive or arrogant actions. Although every situation is unique, the officiating program strives for uniformity in dealing with situations on the field with the following general guidelines:

- Umpires should remain calm, professional, tactful, firm, in control, fair and impartial. They cannot be perceived as overly aggressive, confrontational, hotheaded, short-tempered, timid, intimidated or nervous. Umpires must never display impatience or a condescending attitude.
- Umpires are expected to understand their role as a steady, calming influence on the game. Umpires must be able to sort out complex and important situations and cannot hesitate to make the correct call, even if it is unpopular.
- Umpires should never ignore occurrences on the field that require their attention to maintain order and control. When difficult situations arise, it is essential that umpires stay above the emotional fray and never lower themselves to the excitable level of a particular player or coach. Umpires must be clear and decisive, while not overly aggressive or overbearing. They are expected to become more assertive if the situation calls for such, but must control their temper at all times. All in all, umpires must calm volatile situations while keeping control and managing them.
- Umpires are required to listen to head coaches if discussions are reasonable and non-emotional. Umpires should be firm and authoritative in conversations with players or coaches but should never initiate an argument. Umpires must not create unnecessary friction by ignoring reasonable inquiries. At the same time, NCAA umpires must command respect during difficult situations and never tolerate personal abuse.
- Umpires must avoid sarcastic remarks or profanity and not insist on the last word. The NCAA will not tolerate umpires' language, which, if used by a player or coach towards an umpire, would result in disciplinary action.
- Umpires must not charge a coach or follow him/her if the argument is over and the coach is walking away. Umpires cannot look for trouble or invite arguments. If a situation can defuse itself, umpires must allow it to happen. Umpires must not be perceived as having escalated a situation.
- Umpires must not initiate contact with a player or coach. Initiating contact, including "bumping" and physical finger pointing, will subject umpires to discipline.

- Umpires must never be resentful or hold grudges. Decisions must be made individually regardless of past history with a particular player, coach or school. Umpires should never attempt to retaliate or disadvantage a player or coach with whom he/she has had previous issues.

Philosophy

It is the philosophy of the NCAA that umpires always seek to get the call right. The definition of philosophy in Webster's dictionary is "a system of principles for conducting an activity." A philosophy, as used in the field of officiating, would be the "principles followed by an umpire to make judgments/decisions on actions that occur in a game." In order for umpires to make consistent judgments, it is necessary for a philosophy to guide them in their application of the rules. The rules, of the game are necessary, but how those rules are applied to the game requires judgment. Judgment will be more consistently applied if a philosophy, or system of principles, is available to assist umpires in conducting the game.

Each crew should discuss their pregame the philosophy of officiating prior to taking the field every game. Make warranted adjustments during the game when provided the opportunity to discuss those adjustments with your partners. Each umpire in a crew cannot officiate to their own individual philosophy. The crew must be on the same page to give the players the most consistent game possible. Attention to that aspect of the game will enhance performance as an umpire and give players and coaches the best principles to make the proper judgment in the game.

Ejections

Umpires are entrusted with the authority to remove any participant from a game. This responsibility should never be taken lightly. The NCAA recognizes that every situation is unique and that an umpire's discretion is essential to proper game management. Notwithstanding unique or extraordinary circumstances, players and coaches look to umpires for uniformity in applying standards to determine grounds for ejection. The following general guidelines should be considered when deciding whether to eject a player or coach from a game:

- Use of profanity specifically directed at an umpire or vulgar personal insults, including accusations of bias, or cheating.
- Deliberate physical contact with an umpire.
- Refusal to stop arguing, and further delaying the game after the umpire has provided a player or coach adequate opportunity to make his or her point. The umpire should warn the student-athlete or coach that he/she has been heard and should return to his or her position or the dugout or he/she will be ejected.
- Arguing rules after being warned.
- Use of gestures (e.g., jumping up and down, sliding on the ground, or violently waving arms) while arguing with an umpire and making such gestures toward an umpire.
- Throwing uniform items, equipment or other items from the sidelines or while arguing.

- If an ejection does occur, the umpire must complete the NCAA Incident Report form and fax the report to the softball secretary-rules editor as soon as possible but no later than 72 hours after the completion of the game. [Note: In many cases teams will be playing more than one game in a day and consecutive days so if an ejection occurs, it is imperative to report the incident as soon as possible.]

Protests

Any protest by the coach of a competing team must be made at the time of the action or incident that caused the protest and before the next pitch. If the game ends (legal contest) in a protestable situation, the offended team has one minute to voice its protest intentions. All protests must be made to the plate umpire. An umpire shall not allow a protest that involves only a judgment decision. The games committee must rule upon all protests immediately. The committee shall confer with the umpires before making its decision, and the chair shall make a written report to the softball secretary-rules editor.

SECTION 8 • SPECIFIC CHAMPIONSHIP INFORMATION

Assignments/Rotations

Regionals. All assignments are made by the Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief in consultation with the NCAA representative. Assignments for at least the first day will be announced at the pre-tournament umpire's meeting. Umpires are not guaranteed a specific number of games (plate or bases) during the tournament. An alternate umpire must be at the stadium at all times. Generally, the umpire who just worked the plate will be the alternate; however, this may change if there are other circumstances to consider. Umpires are required to be in the locker room at least one hour before each game that they are assigned to work.

Super Regional. The standby umpires will be on-site and participate in the same manner as the three assigned umpires, except that standby umpires will work only in the event of an emergency (i.e., umpire injury, illness or family emergency) that takes an assigned umpire out of the tournament. Standby umpires shall attend and participate in all meetings and pregame and postgame discussions. Once the tournament has commenced, if a standby umpire works, the standby umpire will complete the tournament in place of the removed umpire (i.e., an injured or removed umpire will not re-enter the tournament). However, if an assigned umpire is late arriving to the tournament through no fault of his or her own, and the standby umpire has substituted for the assigned umpire, the originally assigned umpire will resume working the regular tournament schedule with the game following their arrival.

Women's College World Series. The National Coordinator in consultation with the Division I Softball Committee will make all assignments. Assignments for the first four games of the tournament will be made at the pre-tournament umpires meeting. After the first four games, assignments will be made daily and will be posted in the locker room. Due to numerous factors, the rotation will, most likely, not remain the same for the entire tournament. Umpires are not guaranteed a specific number of games (plate or bases) during the tournament. The rotation for the first four games will be as follows: Plate / Third Base / First Base. An alternate umpire must be at the stadium at all times. Generally, the umpire who just worked the plate will be the alternate.

Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief

Once notified of the site and crew, the Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief should first contact the tournament host/director to confirm the pre-tournament meeting time and umpire hotel. She/he should then start the process of notifying the other members of the crew. If all members of the crew have not been contacted by Tuesday, May 13, the Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief should contact the National Coordinator. The Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief should confirm the hotel arrangements and then notify the national coordinator with the following telephone numbers.

- Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief's cell phone
- Locker room (if available)
- Press box
- Hotel (phone and fax)

Aside from their leadership responsibilities on the field, Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief is responsible for the conduct of the umpires off the field as well. The Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief must file a written report of any incident of misconduct, unprofessional behavior, or violation of these guidelines with the National Coordinator immediately after the tournament. Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chiefs will be held responsible, and possibly disciplined, for any incident that is not reported.

Uniforms/Equipment

NCAA umpires should take pride in their appearance. Uniforms and hats shall be kept clean, pressed and in first-class condition. Uniforms will be worn only in the dressing room and on the field. Umpires may not sit in the stands or enter public areas of the stadium while in uniform.

Each umpire is responsible for his/her own equipment and uniform. The NCAA will provide one sized NCAA 6-stitch hat and two patches for each umpire. Please be sure to fax the regional hat order form to Honig's and the NCAA office immediately upon receipt to provide them with your hat size, and to order any additional items. The hats and patches for the entire crew will be sent to the tournament director and provided to you upon arrival. The standard uniform options are as follows:

- Short sleeve light blue polo-style shirt with navy and white tipping on collar and sleeve cuff. Shiny or dazzle cloth versions are not acceptable. NCAA patches are to be worn on the left chest.
- A white or navy blue undershirt may be worn underneath the light blue shirt.
- A plain navy jacket or a navy jacket with white and light blue piping. All jackets must contain a cuffed navy collar, sleeve and waist. Patches are to be worn on the left chest. (Jackets may not be tucked inside the trousers.) Crew must match.
- A navy undershirt, mock turtleneck or turtleneck may be worn underneath a jacket; however, the jacket may not be removed during the game.
- Navy, non-pleated slacks.
- Navy ball bag.
- Black or navy socks.
- Black shoes (white stripes and patent leather are NOT permitted).
- Black belt (patent leather is NOT permitted).
- Black colored mask with black or tan pads and black throat protector only.
- The hockey style face mask/helmet may be worn for safety reasons. If worn, a hat MUST be worn underneath the helmet.
- Black or navy gloves.

- Navy NCAA sized hat (white, one color letters only).
- Sunglasses (with black frames and smoke gray or darker lenses) may be worn.

No other variations are allowed and no conference or association patches are allowed. No uniform numbers will be worn in championship play. All base umpires will dress in the same uniform top; the plate umpire may dress in the uniform top of his/her choice. It is not acceptable to wear a short sleeve shirt with a long sleeve shirt underneath. Visible jewelry is limited to small discreet stud earrings, tight-to-the-ear loops, wedding bands and medical alert bracelets. Watches and bracelets of any kind are not to be worn on the field during NCAA championship play, nor is anything that dangles, sparkles or draw attention to the umpire. Necklaces must be tucked inside the uniform shirt at all times.

Inclement Weather

The Crew Chief/Umpire-in-Chief will work with the plate umpire, the NCAA representative and the ground crew in determining when the game should be halted and/or resumed due to inclement weather.

Alcohol

No alcoholic beverages of any type are permitted in the umpire locker room during **at any time**. After an umpire has completed his/her assignments for the day (including serving as an alternate), drinking alcoholic beverages is allowed. However, a few guidelines should be adhered to:

- Do not drink at the stadium.
- If assigned to a team hotel, do not drink in any public places at the hotel.
- Find a reputable establishment that is not frequented by the media, coaches or players.
- If you are in an establishment when members of the media, coaches or players arrive, you should finish your drinks and leave.
- Do not, under any circumstances, drive an automobile after having consumed alcohol.
- Do not bring undue attention to yourselves by announcing to people who you are and why you are in town.
- We are all adults and should know these things but past experience mandates such policies. Umpires are very visible and therefore recognizable to the media, coaches, players and fans. The NCAA Softball Umpire Program staff wants every umpire to have fun and enjoy the experience of working championship play; however, we must be aware of the perception that can be created by inappropriate behavior off the field. If you are not able to adhere to these policies for the entire tournament, we will be forced to replace you.

Gambling/Sports Wagering

The NCAA opposes all forms of legal and illegal sports wagering. Sports wagering has the potential to undermine the integrity of sports contests and jeopardize the welfare of student-athletes and the intercollegiate athletics community. Sports wagering demeans the competition and competitors alike by sending a message that is contrary to the purposes and meaning of "sport." Sports competition should be appreciated for the inherent benefits related to participation of student-athletes, coaches and institutions in fair contests, not the amount wagered on the outcome of the competition.

For these reasons, the NCAA membership has adopted specific rules prohibiting athletics department staff members and student-athletes from engaging in gambling activities as they relate to intercollegiate or professional sporting events. Please note the following basic guidelines that college softball umpires should adhere to:

- Do not ever bet on a game—with anyone. Many different tactics will be used by gamblers to encourage your involvement.
- Do not associate with known or suspected bettors.
- Do not offer any opinions about any game to anyone—before or after the game.
- Do not put yourself in a compromising position through any personal misconduct.
- Do not accept favors or gifts from suspected or known bettors.
- Do not furnish any information about a game, players, coaches or umpires to anyone except when following your conference’s procedures.
- Do not hesitate to discuss any suspicious person(s) with your supervisor, who will notify investigative authorities. If necessary, a confidential investigation can be conducted. Always inform your supervisor and law enforcement officials any time an individual suggests (even apparently in fun) that you accept money to affect the outcome of a game.

Gambling not only is a big business—it is dangerous. Your cooperation in the fight to combat it not only will protect intercollegiate competition from its harmful influences, but also will place one of your most important aspects—your personal integrity—above reproach.

The NCAA Softball Umpire Program and the NCAA are very concerned about the perception of its umpires and gambling. Any local area casino, racetrack or other establishment where any form of wagering occurs is strictly off limits at all times during the championship. No exceptions or allowances will be given in this area and offenders will be immediately removed from the crew.

SECTION 9 • CONTACT INFORMATION

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National Collegiate Athletic Association
Executive Committee
CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY
Conflict of Interest Statement

The NCAA is a voluntary Association comprised of colleges, universities, conferences and other organizations, and governed through a membership-led committee structure. Within the governance structure, committee members must carefully balance their responsibilities to their respective institutions and/or conferences with the obligation to advance the interests of the Association, the division, or the sport, and ultimately enhance the student-athlete experience. While the fiduciary obligations of committee members to their own institution, their conference, and to the Association ordinarily are not in conflict, it is recognized that as a representative membership organization, committee members' fiduciary obligations are first to their institution, second to their conference, and third to the Association. NCAA committee service involves important ethical and moral obligations. Committee integrity is critical to the decision-making process and includes trust, confidentiality and honesty in all issues and aspects of service and representation. NCAA committee members shall disclose any conflict or potential conflict between their respective personal, professional, institutional, conference, or business interests and the interests of the Association that may affect or otherwise threaten such integrity, in any and all actions taken by them on behalf of the Association, for committee evaluation under this Statement.

In addition to any fiduciary obligation to their institution and conference, committee members also have a fiduciary duty to the Association not to use knowledge or information obtained solely due to service on that committee to the disadvantage of the Association during the term of committee service. Further, a Committee member shall not participate in the committee's discussion or vote on any action that might bring direct or indirect personal financial benefit to the member or any organization (other than the member's institution or conference) in which the member is financially interested.

A committee member should also not participate in a discussion or vote for which the member's institution or conference is to be accorded a special benefit beyond benefits shared with other institutions or conferences or is to receive a penalty or disqualification. A violation of either of the above rules by a member of the committee shall not invalidate the action taken by the committee if, following disclosure of the conflict of interest, the committee authorizes, ratifies or approves the action by a vote sufficient for the purpose, without counting the vote of the committee member with the conflict of interest, and the appropriate oversight body approves the action. A committee member is responsible for advising the chair of any actual or potential conflicts of interest or obligations which he/she may have hereunder, and should recuse him/herself from participating in proceedings, as may be warranted by this policy. Abuse of one's position as a member of a committee may result in dismissal from that position. Where such abuse appears evident, a committee member will be notified by the committee chair and will have the opportunity to present a rebuttal or details of the situation. (August 2008 Executive Committee minutes).

Speaking Agent Policy

The president of the Association and the chair of the Executive Committee are the only individuals authorized to speak on behalf of the Association except as outlined below. An individual representing a member institution or conference who speaks or opines on an Association issue only has the authority to express the view of that individual or the member institution or conference unless the individual has been designated by the Executive Committee of the Association as a speaking agent of the Association on that issue. Committee chairs are hereby designated as speaking agents of their committees regarding issues within their committees' jurisdiction on which there is consensus, except that positions of advocacy on behalf of the committee or the Association to be communicated in writing or orally to persons or entities external to the Association must have prior approval by the NCAA Executive Committee or the president of the Association. The president of the Association is hereby granted authority to designate additional speaking agents of the Association. (April 2001 Executive Committee minutes)

CODE OF CONDUCT

As the interest in collegiate athletics continues to grow in media coverage and fan interest, the scrutiny of officiating increases. The official's charge is to act in an ethical and responsible manner at all times. The integrity of officiating rests in the integrity and conduct of its officials.

- Officials shall bear a great responsibility for engendering public confidence in the sport.
- Officials shall be free of obligation to any interest other than the impartial and fair judging of softball competitions.
- Officials shall hold and maintain the basic tenets of officiating which include history, integrity, neutrality, respect, sensitivity, professionalism, discretion, and tactfulness. Officials shall master both rules of the game and mechanics necessary to enforce the rules, and shall exercise authority in an impartial, firm, and controlled manner.
- Officials shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession in all interactions with student-athletes, coaches, school administrators, colleagues, and the public.
- Officials shall display and execute superior communication skills, both verbal and non-verbal.
- Officials shall recognize that anything that may lead to a conflict of interest, either real or apparent, must be avoided. Gifts, favors, special treatment, privileges, employment or a personal relationship with a school or team that can compromise the perceived impartiality of officiating must be avoided.
- Officials shall prepare themselves both physically and mentally; shall dress neatly and appropriately to, during, and from a contest; and shall comport themselves in a manner consistent with the high standards of the profession.
- Officials shall not be party to actions designed to unfairly limit or restrain access to officials, officiating assignments, or to association membership. That includes selection for positions of leadership based upon economic factors, race, creed, color, age, sex, sexual orientation, physical handicap, country, or national origin.
- Officials shall be punctual and professional in the fulfillment of all contractual obligations.
- Officials shall work with each other and their governing bodies in a constructive and cooperative manner.
- Officials shall resist every temptation and outside pressure to use one's position as an official to benefit oneself.
- Officials shall never participate in any form of illegal gambling on sports contests, may never gamble on any sporting event in which they have either a direct or indirect involvement, and may never gamble on events involving collegiate athletics.
- Officials shall not make false or misleading statements regarding their qualifications, rating, credentials, experience, training or competence. Officials shall accept responsibility for all actions taken.
- Officials shall accept responsibility for all actions.

Officials shall strive to uphold the officiating code of conduct, not out of fear of penalty, but rather of personal character and conviction. This conduct is the foundation of personal pride and respect for self and the game.

---Excerpts taken from the Officiating Development Alliance/National Association of Sports Officials Code of Ethics