

Orono Fastpitch Softball Association (OSA) – Policies and Procedures

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This document is the set of policies and procedures used by the Orono Fastpitch Softball Association (OSA or Association) for the in-house instructional program (pre-K-3) and travel level (summer and fall) fastpitch softball program.

This document is considered a "living" document and the OSA welcomes any comments or suggestions. These policies are subject to annual review and may be changed if the OSA Board of Directors (Board) deems appropriate. Comments can be emailed to the OSA President. Contact information can be found on www.oronofastpitch.org.

DISCLAIMER

The OSA reserves the right to deviate from the policies and procedures in this document, if the Board determines it is in the best interest of the program.

GENERAL INFORMATION

PURPOSE

The purpose of the OSA is to provide opportunities for young girls in pre-K through high school to participate in recreational and competitive softball programs during the summer and fall seasons. The Association will focus on sportsmanship, fundamentals and teamwork, in order to build self-esteem, relationships and confidence, while having fun at all age groups and levels of skill.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Orono Softball Association and all involved with it realize the importance that sports plays in the lives of youth today. We believe that being a part of a team helps teach important life skills such as hard work, patience, perseverance, practice, commitment and accountability. A team sport also teaches and helps to develop the foundation of character building.

REFUNDS

All refund requests must be submitted to the respective Travel or In House Director. Contact information for these individuals are listed in the Board Info section of our website.

- Refunds requested before evaluations/tryouts will be refunded at 100% of the registration fee and the tryout fee (if applicable) minus the processing fees.
- A refund after registration/tryouts but before teams are formed will be refunded at 50% of the registration and tryout (if applicable) fees minus the Sports Engine processing fees.
- No refunds will be granted after the teams have been formed and announced.
- All funds paid towards uniforms will not be refunded.

- In cases of extenuating circumstances, refund requests will be granted solely at the discretion of OSA. Requests must be made in writing to the appropriate director.

OSA Refund Policy for Clinics

- Refunds requested 7 days prior to the initial clinic start date will be refunded at 100% of the registration fee minus the processing fees.
- No refunds will be granted for a clinic after the initial clinic start date.
- In cases of extenuating circumstances, refund request will be granted solely at the discretion of the OSA. Requests must be made in writing to the Director of Player Development. Contact information for this individual can be found in the Board Info section of our website.

PARENT MEETINGS AND SURVEYS

Parent informational meetings will be held prior to the start of each season with your team. As deemed appropriate, the Board may distribute end of year surveys, intended to gather feedback and to listen to concerns.

SCHOLARSHIP

Each year OSA designates funds in hopes that every girl who wants to play softball will be able to play regardless of her family's financial status. Scholarships are available to players who are unable to pay the full registration. Applicants for a partial or full scholarship may contact the President listed on the OSA website: www.oronofastpitch.org.

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising may be used to help raise additional funds that benefit pre-k and travel level programs. One or more fundraisers may be conducted during the year, which will involve the participation of all players and their families. Businesses may be solicited for contributions, and individual teams may fundraise for special events (for example, out-of-state tournament play).

EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

The equipment issued or required by this association will be determined by the Board in accordance with USA Softball rules. This equipment shall be purchased from the lowest bidder (taking into consideration local merchants) by the Equipment Director with the approval of the Board for amounts over \$500.00. The uniform adopted by this association shall be matching shirts of the designated team color and coordinating pants. If desired by the Board, a sponsor's name may be displayed on the shirt and/or visor. Each shirt must prominently display the number assigned to that player, meeting USA requirements. The uniform shall be provided to each participant, purchased by the parent and is to be worn in every game.

COACHES PACKET

Prior to the season's beginning, each coach will receive a packet that includes: OSA policies and procedures, OSA guidelines (rules and regulations), a score book and line up sheet, parent and player code of conduct and a list of equipment to be provided in the team's equipment bag. There will also be information for the team manager within the packet.

Coaches

- OSA strives to provide considerable resources in a “coach binder” to be distributed at the coaching clinic.
- We hope to see all coaches lead by example with great sportsmanship, positive attitude, encouragement and fairness.
- Whenever possible, for age groups D2 and older, the Head Coach, Assistant Coach and/or Manager may not be any relationship (married, siblings, etc). This does not apply to D1.
- The OSA Board will consider exceptions to this rule as needed.

Managers

- OSA will provide information at the beginning of each season to assist in team communication, team organization and other helpful tips.
- Whenever possible, for age groups D2 and older, the Head Coach, Assistant Coach and/or Manager may not be any relationship (married, siblings, etc). This does not apply to D1.
- The OSA Board will consider exceptions to this rule as needed.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

The Board shall decide all matters pertaining to the finances of the association, taking place in regard to a common treasury. No individual or team will be given an advantage over others. However, newer equipment will be given to travel/competitive teams first. Teams may choose to raise money for associated expenses incurred by the team with the option of having the Treasurer administer a disbursement with a given receipt.

INSURANCE

The OSA will obtain accident insurance policy, which shall cover each individual participant accepted in league play or practice sessions. Each player shall be required, prior to participating in any league play or practice session, pay a specified registration fee and return a completed application form to the OSA. No OSA facility will be available until the previously stated requirements have been fulfilled. Additionally, a group insurance will be purchased to cover the governing Board.

REGISTRATION FEES

Registration fees will be set each year and will be competitive with other like associations. Fees are subject to change.

ORONO FASTPITCH BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ORGANIZATION

- The name of the organization shall be the Orono Softball Association.
- The organization shall have a seal (logo), which shall be in the following form: yellow ball with fire. The words Orono Fastpitch or Orono Softball Association will be included with the seal.
- The organization may, by a vote of the membership body, change its name or logo.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A Board of Directors governs OSA.

MEETINGS OF THE BOARD

- The Board will meet once each month. Meetings will require a majority of the board to officially conduct business.
- The calendar for the Board meetings will be set no later than September for the upcoming year. Meeting dates will be distributed to all Board members and posted on the OSA website. Meetings are required at least once per month with the exception of December and July.
- Special meetings may be called by the President. The President will inform all Board members of the requested meeting within 48 hrs of the request. Board members may vote via phone or email. A majority vote must be secured for a special meeting to be held.
- A majority of Board members must be present at a meeting to constitute a quorum for the purpose of a business transaction.
- All actions carried out by the Board will be agreed upon by a majority vote of those present.
- The majority of the agenda items are open to the public. If there are any topics that are sensitive in nature, these will be noted on the agenda and closed to the public.
- All questions from the public must be submitted in writing to the President 7 days prior to the meeting. Public questions, comments will be allotted a limited time at the end of the meeting's agenda. Some material and/or questions may be addressed at the conclusion of the meeting.
- The Board will be responsible for application of or making exceptions to any state policy. The Board will facilitate any matters that cannot be resolved by individual parties.
- Robert's Rule of Order, revised, shall govern the OSA proceedings in regard to Board meetings, except for where conflicts with association policies and procedures exist.

FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the OSA shall run from January 1 to December 31.

COMPOSITION

The OSA Board of Directors shall be made up of eight to fourteen Board members. The positions below are the ideal composition of the Board, however, may not all be filled during a term.

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- In-House Director (pre-K-3)
- Travel Program Director (8U - 18U)
- Player Development Director
- Uniform/Apparel Director

- Field/Equipment (F/E) Director
- Umpire and Field Assignment (U/A) Director
- Fundraising and Community Development Director
- Website/Press (W/P) Director
- Member-at Large

DUTIES

Duties of the Board will include building the OSA program, fundraising, equipment needs and volunteer services. The OSA is a non-profit organization and the members will not benefit financially or materially for their Board involvement.

Specific duties of each Board position are summarized below:

President

- The President shall reside over all Board meetings.
- The President shall be the liaison between team parents and the Board.
- The President shall be the voice of the association when working with other organizations.
- The President is authorized to sign checks on behalf of the OSA.
- The President is responsible for negotiating insurance for the travel teams and the Board.
- The President shall only cast a vote in those cases needed to break a tie among other voting Board members.
- The President shall serve as an advisor to his/her successor the first year of said successor's term.
- Annually, the President will solicit Board input from the coaches and determine if a survey of participating families should be performed.
- The President is a two (2) year term. The President may take a second two (2) year term with a 75% Board vote or if there are no other individuals interested in the position.
- The President shall be responsible for notifying all Board members of all meetings at least 7 days in advance.
- The President will communicate with other local presidents when players from OSA are in search of a team or OSA is accepting extra players. The President will communicate with the families of all OSA players in the affected age group.

Vice President

- The Vice President shall reside over all meetings in the absence of the President.
- The VP shall work with the President to carry out the responsibilities of the President.
- The VP shall assist the President as the liaison between parents and the board.
- The VP shall serve as an advisor to his/her successor the first year of said successor's term.
- The VP will perform other duties as assigned by the board of Directors.
- The VP is a two (2) year term.

Secretary

- The Secretary shall keep and maintain a true, up-to-date record of all proceedings of the organization and meetings of the Board. The record of all proceedings shall be subject to the inspection and approval of the Board. The minutes are a permanent record of this organization.
- The Secretary shall post the record of proceedings of the meeting minutes onto the OSA website once approved.
- The record of proceedings shall be turned over to the Secretary's immediate successor in office.
- The Secretary shall maintain working Board members roster with phone numbers, emails and job descriptions.
- The Secretary shall serve as an advisor to his/her successor the six (6) months of said successor's term.
- The Secretary will perform other duties as assigned by the board of Directors.
- The Secretary is a two (2) year term.

Treasurer

- The Treasurer shall secure a bank account for the OSA, collect all moneys due and pay all bills incurred by the Association.
- The Treasurer shall provide a current financial statement at each meeting of the Board.
- The Treasurer shall maintain the association's funds and keep accurate records.
- The Treasurer shall make available a copy of the latest bank statement with an account balance at each meeting and provide the executive Board with copies of all bank statements, upon request.
- The Treasurer shall provide a preliminary budget that may be used as a guide for final approval after the Board makes any necessary changes.
- The Treasurer shall be responsible for the disbursements of Association funds and shall provide a financial report available to each Board member at each Board meeting and a full accounting at the expiration of his/her term in office. A correct amount of all receipts and disbursements must be kept at all times and complete up-to date report must be submitted at each monthly meeting.
- The Treasurer shall be the chief financial agent of the organization and shall exercise such authority and shall perform other duties as assigned by the Board. The Treasurer shall have custody of all funds, securities and legal instruments of the association and shall be responsible for their safekeeping.
- The Executive Board shall have the full right to examine accounts of the organization. The book of accounts shall be open to inspection at any time to any Board member.
- The Treasurer is authorized to sign checks on behalf of the OSA.
- The Treasurer is responsible to ensure the financial stability of the OSA.
- The Treasurer is responsible for the PO Box key and annual renewals at Long Lake Post Office (June of each year).
- The Treasurer is responsible for ensuring OSA maintains 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable status, including annual IRS financial reporting (online form 990-N) in February of each year.

- Any purchase over \$1,000 shall require Board approval. The treasurer will ensure such approval is received.
- The Treasurer shall serve as an advisor to his/her successor the first six (6) months of said successor's term.
- The Treasurer will perform other duties as assigned by the board of Directors.
- The Treasurer is a two (2) year term.

In-House/Travel Lite Director (Grades Pre-K – 3)

- The Travel-Lite Program Director shall coordinate and set up activities for grades pre-K-3 in-house development program.
- The Travel-Lite Program Director shall be in charge of player registration. He/she shall be responsible for fair and impersonal placement of all players. He/she shall present, at each Board meeting, a report on any disciplinary decisions made involving any player or manager. The The Travel-Lite Program Director shall maintain a master registration log indicating player's names, division, birthdates, and amount of registration fee.
- The Travel-Lite Program Director shall determine coaches for teams and ensure coaches complete program-defined certifications (background checks, etc.).
- The Travel-Lite Program Director will represent the association in outside/league meetings. If he/she cannot attend outside/league meetings – he/she will request an alternative Board member to attend the meeting.
- The Travel-Lite Program Director shall be responsible for coordinating and communicating with team coaches and/or managers for the in-house program.
- The Travel-Lite Program Director shall be responsible for providing Travel-Lite content to the Web Director.
- The Travel-Lite Program Director will place an advertisement in the Orono Community Ed and Rec Spring Catalog annually.
- The Travel-Lite Program Director will coordinate a Try Softball Day event with the Player Development Director to recruit new players.
- The Travel-Lite Program Director shall work with the Uniform Director to organize and administer the uniforms for the pre-K-3 softball program.
- The Travel-Lite Program Director shall maintain records of player injuries, accidents, any reports of unsafe conditions or equipment, and report all such occurrences to the Board.
- The Travel-Lite Program Director shall serve as an advisor to his/her successor the six (6) months of said successor's term.
- The Travel-Lite Program Director shall perform other duties as assigned by the Board of Directors
- The Travel-Lite Program Director is a two (2) year term.

Travel Program Director (8U-18U)

- The Travel Program Director will be responsible for player registration, coordinating player evaluations and try-outs, ensuring new players are added to teams appropriately and in a fair and impartial manner and issuing team rosters.
- The Travel Program Director is responsible for managing coach selection for teams and ensuring coaches complete program-defined certifications (background checks, etc.).

- The Travel Program Director is the liaison between the coaches and the Board.
- The Travel Program Director shall be responsible for distribution of all required education and information to the team coaches, assist new coaches and resolve any problems (if any) with all teams.
- The Travel Program Director shall maintain records of player injuries, accidents, any reports of unsafe conditions or equipment, and report all such occurrences to the Board.
- The Travel Program Director will represent the association to the outside/league meetings. If he/she cannot attend outside/league meetings – he/she will request an alternative Board member to attend any outside meeting. This includes but is not limited to the Big West meetings.
- The Travel Program Director shall be responsible for registering teams in the leagues, assisting coaches with sourcing tournaments and ensuring team coaches/managers have team rosters complete for tournaments.
- The Travel Program Director shall present, at each Board meeting, a report on any disciplinary decisions made involving any player, coach, manager or parent.
- The Travel Program Director shall act as a contact person for coaches and players throughout the season.
- The Travel Program Director shall serve as an advisor to his/her successor the first six (6) months of said successor's term.
- The Travel Program Director will perform other duties as assigned by the Board.
- The Travel Program Director is a two (2) year term.

Player Development Director

- The Player Development Director shall organize the teaching clinics for the Association for players during the off-season.
- The Player Development Director shall organize a coaches/manager's clinic for the association. Historically, this session occurs in April before practices begin.
- The Player Development Director shall organize pitching clinics to develop pitchers and catchers.
- The Player Development Director shall assist the Travel Director by acting as an additional contact person or coaches and players throughout the season.
- The Player Development Director shall serve as an advisor to his/her successor the first six (6) months of said successor's term.
- The Player Development Director will perform other duties as assigned by the Board.
- The Player Development Director is a two (2) year term.

Uniform/Apparel Director

- The U/A Director shall be responsible for all bids, branding and selecting jerseys, pants, socks, visors, helmets and any other possible apparel for teams.
- The U/A Director shall select appropriate additional apparel for purchase.
- The U/A Director shall organize and distribute travel team uniforms.
- The U/A Director shall coordinate with the Travel-Lite Program Director to organize and distribute K-3 team uniforms.
- The U/A Director shall serve as an advisor to his/her successor the first six (6) months of said successor's term.

- The U/A Director shall perform other duties as assigned by the Board.
- The U/A Director is a two (2) year term.

Field/Equipment (F/E) Director

- The F/E Director shall be responsible for all athletic equipment and supplies for the OSA.
- The F/E Director shall be responsible for distributing all equipment at the beginning of the season and collection of all equipment at the end of the season.
- The F/E Director is responsible for keeping a record of all equipment broken down by age group along with a general equipment list.
- The F/E Director is responsible for the shed key/lock, the condition and maintenance of the sheds and the security of the equipment stored there. F/E Director will work with the High School coaching staff with regard to storage, equipment and maintenance of the sheds used by the High School teams.
- The F/E Director will ensure all fields are mowed and maintained, and ensure a sufficient amount of chalk, chalkers, and bases are available and maintained.
- The F/E Director shall be responsible for distributing tools such as line chalkers, line guides, and rakes to the facilities.
- The F/E Director shall be responsible for maintaining pitching machines and field equipment.
- The F/E Director will be responsible for coordinating with the school and the Umpire and Field Assignment Director to make sure they are prepped for games. Typically, the Orono Schools prep fields on the school campus and F/E Director preps fields at Discovery Center and Rainbow Park.
- The F/E Director shall be responsible for all bids and purchasing required game equipment, umpire equipment, and maintaining inventory of all issued (and returned) equipment.
- The F/E Director shall submit a purchase order request for any purchases over \$500.00 for Board approval prior to purchase. This can be approved via e-mail to the Board.
- The F/E Director shall serve as an advisor to his/her successor for the first six (6) months of said successor's term.
- The F/E Director shall perform other duties as assigned by the Board.
- The F/E Director is a two (2) year term.

Umpire, Field, Gym Assignment (U/A) Director

- The U/FGA Director shall secure the services of certified umpires for league play with the assistance from the Big West League.
- The U/FGA Director shall schedule umpires for all regular season and make up games.
- The U/FGA Director shall maintain a master schedule of field usage and shall communicate any schedule changes to teams and umpires. The Director will work with the Orono school district and Orono Baseball Association regarding shared fields.
- The U/FGA Director shall facilitate and/or confirm payment of umpires at the end of the season.
- The U/FGA Director shall serve as an advisor to his/her successor the first six (6) months of said successor's term.

- The U/FGA Director shall perform other duties as assigned by the Board.
- The U/FGA Director is a two (2) year term.

Fundraising and Community Development Director

- The Fundraising and Community Development Director will be responsible for planning such events and programs necessary to further OSA mission, develop community and raise funds to meet association expenses.
- The Fundraising and Community Development Director shall coordinate and execute all fundraising activities.
- The Fundraising and Community Development Director shall create and present fundraising options to the Board.
- The Fundraising and Community Development Director shall be responsible for collection, recording, and transfer of monies to the Treasurer and will maintain tracking, inventory, and disbursement.
- The Fundraising and Community Development Director shall keep a detailed record of profit/loss for each fundraising activity and report such findings to the Board.
- The Fundraising and Community Development Director shall be responsible for sponsorship programs including: securing sponsors for teams, making banners for teams and working with Uniform/Apparel Director to coordinate sponsor logos on jerseys.
- The Fundraising and Community Development Director shall be responsible for thank you notes to all sponsors at the end of the season.
- The Fundraising and Community Development Director will perform other duties as assigned by the Board.
- The Fundraising and Community Development Director shall be responsible for bidding and negotiating contracts to get the best pricing on fundraising elements.
- The Fundraising and Community Development Director shall work in conjunction with the Treasurer, providing transfer of monies and sales records for monthly financial reports and filings.
- All money raised through fundraising will go toward the following expenditures: equipment, maintenance/repairs, clinic costs, and all other money shall be voted on by the Board before disbursement.
- The Fundraising and Community Development Director shall serve as an advisor to his/her successor the first six (6) months of said successor's term.
- The Fundraising and Community Development Director shall perform other duties as assigned by the Board.
- The Fundraising and Community Development Director is a two (2) year term.

Website/Press (W/P) Director:

- The W/P Director shall maintain the website: www.oronofastpitch.org.
- The W/P Director shall be responsible for electronic communications to the softball community.
- The W/P Director is responsible for providing team managers with website training and instructions.

- The W/P Director is responsible for working with Fundraising to provide appropriate marketing on the OSA website for sponsors.
- The W/P Director shall be responsible for providing team managers with information for submitting pictures to the local papers.
- The W/P Director shall be responsible for advertising in local papers regarding try outs, fundraisers, and/or other events the Board deems necessary.
- The W/P Director shall be responsible for initiating and managing online registrations.
- The W/P Director shall serve as an advisor to his/her successor the first six (6) months of said successor's term.
- The W/P Director shall perform other duties as assigned by the Board.
- The W/P Director is a two (2) year term.

At-Large Board Member (if needed)

- At-Large Board Member shall perform other duties as assigned by the Board.
- At-Large Board Member is a one (1) year term.

***All members shall be responsible for establishing and implementing standards of safety for all OSA activities.**

ORDER OF ORONO SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of the Minutes of the preceding meeting
3. Reports of Committees
4. Reports of Officers
5. Old and Unfinished Business
6. New Business
7. Adjournment

SUMMER TRAVEL SOFTBALL

PHILOSOPY

OSA offers travel softball for girls eligible for 8U and older. It requires a greater commitment, in that each participant is expected to attend all practices, league games and weekend tournaments during the summer season.

AGE DIVISIONS

The following age divisions are offered depending upon player participation levels:

- 8 and under
- 10 and under
- 12 and under
- 14 and under
- 16 and under

Age groups are formed according to age guidelines set by the USA Softball and tryouts and availability of coaches.

PROGRAM GOALS

The following are the program goals for traveling softball:

- Provide a high-quality experience for players and coaches.
- Strive to create positive self-esteem for every player.
- Strive to provide opportunities for personal growth and development of each player.
- Seek to maximize the potential of every player in the program.
- Strive to create an environment that is both fun and developmental for the players, families, coaches and community.
- Provide a program that is reputable and is admired by other fastpitch programs.
- Develop players and teams, which are able to compete at a national level.
- Seek to foster player participation for the full length of a player's youth sports career.
- Foster the importance of teamwork, community involvement, sportsmanship and success as part of a team.
- Increase the number of girls participating in competitive sports.
- Build community involvement and volunteer opportunities.

ELIGIBILITY

Players are eligible to participate in the OSA program subject to the following criteria:

- Resident of Orono school district or current/registered student of Orono schools
- Non-residents may be allowed to play in the travel program if the Board determines that:
 1. Additional players are needed at a particular age group OR
 2. To provide a team with needed pitching and/or catching OR
 3. To grandfather players who have played with OSA in previous year(s).
- Paid all applicable registration fees or applied for scholarship.
- Completed and returned all required forms, including any signed waivers and commitment forms required.
- Must meet age guidelines. This is determined by USA rules. Current rules are based on the age as of December 31st of the current calendar year (summer season) and for the fall season, it is the age as of the following December 31st (i.e. age for next summer season)

PLAYING UP

- Playing in another age group is not permitted except for circumstances approved by the governing Board.
- All players requesting to "play up" must still register and try out at their current age level (the youngest age group in which they qualify).
- To be considered for "playing up" to a higher age level, all of the following must apply:
 - a. . The OSA Travel Director must be notified by a parent or guardian of the request to play up prior to try-outs.
 - b. Players must try-out for both age levels and meet the following requirements.
 - Must finish ranked in the **top 5** in evaluation points/ranking of the higher age level tryout final totals.
- A position must be open at the higher level in order for a player to be moved up. A new team will not necessarily be created in order to accommodate players at the higher age level.

- After evaluations (tryouts), the Board will take all information into consideration and make a final decision.
- If players are needed at the next age level as a result of position play (i.e.: pitcher, catcher) or team size, the Board will identify player(s) to be invited to play up based on parent approval. Consideration will be made regarding impact to teams at the player's actual age level.

The Board can make exceptions to the above on a case-by-case basis. Any changes must be approved by majority vote of the Board members, excluding any Board member parent of the player.

TRAVEL SOFTBALL PLAYING TIME AND DEVELOPMENT

PLAYING TIME

In the travel league, there is no requirement that equal playing time will occur. Over the course of the season, coaches will ensure that each player gets ample playing time, but not necessarily at the player's or parent's desired position. As the season progresses, particularly at 12U Top Team and above, players will be positioned so that the team is competitive.

The younger the age group, there will be more stress on individual player development and equal playing time. The older the age group, there will be more stress on team development and placing the most competitive team on the field.

Once a team is selected, coaches must treat all of the players on the team as part of the team.

Playing time is at discretion of the head coach based on the following:

- The need to develop depth of talent at every position.
- Effort of the player in practices and game situations.
- Commitment of the player to improve her skills.
- Skill level of the players on the team.
- Unexcused absences at practices, games, tournaments and team meetings.

Playing time can also be impacted (but is not limited to) the following:

- Disciplinary action is being taken.
- The player has been suspended.
- The player is injured or sick.
- Games shortened due to time limit or inclement weather.

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

Player development and depth of talent and skills at each position is extremely important and is encouraged at every age level. As a result, every player needs to receive opportunities during practices and/or games to learn to perform in all game situations. However, not all players have the attributes or training required to play certain positions (for example, pitcher, catcher or shortstop). Therefore, not all players will be given the opportunity to play at her "favorite" position, or where their parent wants them to play.

Travel coaches will continue to develop the skills of every player on the team. Players should be given opportunities to play at positions where they will be successful and to build player confidence. The younger the age group, the more playing time should be arranged to enhance the development of skills for every player at more than one position.

Team development should consist of teaching teamwork and the concept of working together toward a common goal. Care must be taken to make certain that every player is a part of the team. Positive reinforcement is a necessity as new positions and skills are developed.

TRAVEL SOFTBALL SEASON INFORMATION

REGISTRATION

Registration for summer travel softball opens in February and is completed online at www.oronofastpitch.org. It is the player and parents' responsibility to seek out registration information. Watch for e-mails from the OSA or announcements posted online at www.oronofastpitch.org.

A registration deadline will be posted and may vary from year-to-year. Late registration after tryouts have taken place is not typically allowed. However, if numbers permit, players may be allowed to register after the deadline with approval by the Executive Committee of the Board..

Try Out and Registration fees will be set each year and will be competitive with other like associations. Fees are subject to change.

EXCEPTIONS:

14U and Older- At this level play becomes more competitive and players have the option of going to club. Due to this, OSA may not be able to consistently field a 14 U and older team each year based on number of players/positions needed. To better assess the likelihood of a spring team the following year, parents of older 12U players will be surveyed in the summer of the current season to see if they have interest in forming a 14U and older teams. Based on numbers, a tryout may be needed to field the most competitive team possible. Post tryouts, full registration for 14U-16U will be required.

SEASON

League games usually begin in early May and continue through the end of June or early July. League games are played on 1-3 weeknights per week, double-header style, except 8U. The first game begins at approximately 6:15 PM. Games will be played at sites throughout the Metro area – usually focused in the western suburbs. Locations will vary.

Post-season play includes a State Qualifying tournament (includes A, B and C brackets) typically held in late June (early July for 14U-16U) and State Tournament in mid-July (late July for 14U-16U). Based on the results of league play, state play or other tournaments, a team could potentially extend their season into late July by qualifying for a national tournament.

EXCEPTIONS:

14U and Older: if the team has a significant number of players on the high school team, early season games may be rescheduled, and league games and practices may be postponed until the school season is over.

Note: The OSA has no control over the dates scheduled

PRACTICES

Practices usually begin in April with a goal of practicing and developing skills and reinforcing fundamentals before the first game. (Pitchers and catchers will be expected to put in more time!).

Exception: teams with a significant number of players on the high school team will usually not practice much prior to their first game. After league play begins, a typical week will consist of one or two practices each week.

FEES & EXPENSES

Travel softball registration fees cover the following expenses:

- Umpires
- Insurance
- Equipment and first aid supplies
- Instructional and coaches' clinics
- League Fees
- Field maintenance and rental (due to Orono school district and local cities where softball parks are located)
- Season tournaments and gate fees

Additional expenses to players and their families may include:

- Team uniform (Jersey, pants, socks, belt)
- Glove, bat, helmet, cleats, sliding pad, compression shorts
- Additional tournament expenses (Pins, Gift Exchange, etc for National Tournament)
- Travel expenses to and from games
- Possible overnight expenses for out-of-town tournaments

Scholarships are available upon request.

TOURNAMENT FUNDING

The fees collected by OSA usually include a State Tournament and any related State Qualifier. For the summer season, each team is allocated a certain amount for tournament fees on additional weekends, generally 3-4 tournaments. Additional tournaments may be played at the players' expense. Additional tournament play must be agreed upon by coaches and parents.

Tournaments played outside the metro area may require an overnight stay at the player's expense. Any team that qualifies for a National Tournament and elects to participate will incur additional expenses, including travel for up to a week depending on location.

TEAM DETERMINATION

- Players are assigned to an age level (8U, 10U, etc.) based on birth year. There will normally be players from three school grades at any one age level.
- As numbers permit, one or more teams will be formed for each age group.
- The Board will determine the teams based on evaluations.
- The number of players participating at each level will determine team size. OSA intends to limit travel team size to 12 players but may add more players if deemed necessary by the Board in specific cases.
- If registration numbers reflect the formation of only one team at a level, the Board may vote to not require tryouts for that level.
- In the event there are more than two teams at an age level it is OSA's intent to form one top team and balancing the remaining teams.

Generally, the following will apply:

- 8U – Based on number of players, evaluations can be held and teams will be formed as equal as possible.
- 10U - the decision on level of play, “BLUE” (Top), “RED” (2nd) as well as the level the team will be registered with the league (A, B, C) will be evaluated each year by the Board. This decision can be related to numbers, general talent and/or pitchers and catchers.
- 12U and up - Assuming there are enough players to form 2 teams, there will be a “BLUE” (Top) team followed by a “RED” (2nd) team. The level the team will be registered with the league (A, B, C) will be evaluated each year by the Board.

Selection of players for the “BLUE” (Top) team will be determined by the criteria established under the team selection and tryout sections.

While not restricted to the “BLUE” (Top) teams, the “BLUE” (Top) teams are more likely to play a heavier schedule of tournaments, play tougher competition, practice more often and attend out of town tournaments.

TEAM SELECTION

The intent of OSA for its Travel program is to field the most competitive travel teams possible. In order to accomplish this, players must participate in a skill evaluation and selection process. Teams are selected based on the following:

- Selection from eligible players based on tryouts (see tryout criteria)
- Players desiring to “play up” if the guidelines are met
- Players from outside the eligibility area if needed to field a team (see eligibility)
- Coaches available

Team selection is the ultimate decision of the Board. A committee may be appointed to review tryouts and all other available information and select teams, subject to Board approval. This committee may include potential coaches at that age group but will always include at least one Board member and the Travel Director (without daughters at that age group) to ensure a fair process is followed in team selection.

TRAVEL SOFTBALL -TRYOUTS

GENERAL

This policy establishes guidelines for conducting tryouts within OSA travel softball.

Tryouts are used to select members of a single team at an age group, or to select a “BLUE” (Top) team and/or “RED” (2nd) team when multiple teams are offered at an age group.

- OSA will provide programs of instruction, recreational and competitive levels of softball. At all age groups, the focus is sportsmanship, fundamentals and fun.
- If there is an abundance of players or not enough to make a team, the Association will make every effort to place girls in other communities or programs.
- Prior to evaluations, the Board will review and update “Tryout Information and Policies” as listed on the website www.oronofastpitch.org.

ELIGIBILITY

Players are eligible to participate in OSA travel softball team tryouts provided they meet the eligibility guidelines of the program (see Eligibility).

PARTICIPATION

Tryout sessions will be scheduled based on facility and evaluator availability. Players must participate in the scheduled tryout session, unless the Board grants an excused absence. An excused absence from any of the scheduled sessions must be granted prior to the start of that session. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of the tryout session. Players who are absent from all tryouts without being excused will not be eligible for “Blue” (Top) teams.

MAKEUP TRYOUTS

Players who miss the scheduled tryout session due to an excused absence, may be granted an alternate tryout session (if available) or will be placed on a team based on other available information from prior play and at the discretion of the Board.

PLAYER EVALUATION

Players will be evaluated on the skills of pitching, catching, fielding, throwing, hitting and bunting. In addition, game situations may be created, and players will be evaluated on their game sense. Specific tryout criteria is developed and then posted on the OSA website in the “Player Evaluation Document”.

TRYOUT COMMITTEES

The Tryout Committees will be comprised of individuals who are known by OSA to possess the knowledge necessary to evaluate a player’s skill at a particular level. Committee members and assistants will not be related to any of the tryout participants involved in their assigned age level. Members of OSA will facilitate the tryouts. The evaluation scores and prior playing history will be the basis used to select players for a travel team.

TRYOUT PHILOSOPHY

The team selection process attempts to find a balance between evaluating players based on their current skills demonstrated in an impartial tryout process and evaluation of players on the skills

and game sense shown in prior playing history. The Board will have the final decision on team placement.

OSA may hold pitching and catching tryouts on the same night as general tryouts.

If a player wants to be considered as a pitcher or catcher, they must go through both the general evaluation tryouts **and** pitching/catching tryouts. (This is especially important for the “Top” teams.)

TRYOUT SELECTION 8U

- If enough players for two teams are interested, player evaluations can be held prior to team formation.

TRYOUT SELECTION 10U

With regard to the 10U “BLUE” (Top) team:

- Players with the top 5 evaluation scores are locked on the Top team
- The remaining players outside of the top 5, including pitchers and catchers, will be placed based on tryout scores, individual development and team needs.
- Coaches will complete an evaluation form at the end of each season to provide player insights for the future/next season.

TRYOUT SELECTION 12U

With regard to the 12U “BLUE” (Top) team:

- Players with the top 8 evaluation scores are locked on the Top team
- The top two pitchers and catchers are assigned to Top team
- A player who tries out for pitching or catching is required to tryout as a position player. If a player does not make the Top team as a pitcher or catcher, but does qualify as a position player, the player may elect where they would like to play. If they choose to play on the Top team, they will likely see significantly less pitching or catching time.
- The remaining players outside of the top 8 including pitchers and catchers will be placed by the Board based on tryout scores, prior year performance, team needs by position and prior year coach’s observations.
- Coaches will complete an evaluation form at the end of each season to provide player insights for the future/next season.

TRYOUT SELECTION 14U and Older

With regard to the 14U “BLUE” (Top) team

- 14U teams are formed immediately following the summer season (early August) for the following summer season.
- OSA will notify parents by early August if they have enough players to form a competitive 14U team.
- Based on numbers/team makeup a tryout might be held in August in an effort to form the most competitive well-rounded team possible at this level.

INSTRUCTIONAL IN-HOUSE PROGRAM / D1-D3 TRAVEL LITE SOFTBALL

- The instructional in-house program strives to provide a learning environment for the basic fundamentals of softball while also providing an enjoyable experience combining sportsmanship, teamwork and friendship.
- The in-house program is available to girls in grades pre-K-5. The teams are usually made up of 12 girls with every player to receive equal playing time and playing different positions.
- These teams play against other local west Metro teams. D1 (pre-K through first grade) play T-ball/coach pitch. D2 (second thru third graders) play machine pitch softball, D3 (fourth and fifth graders) play player pitch softball and also participate in a tournament at the end of the season.
- If enough players are registered, two teams of equal abilities will be formed for D3.
- Playing rules are established by the PWYSA and communicated by the Instructional In-house Program Director.

FALL TRAVEL SOFTBALL

GENERAL

Fall travel softball is a shorter season, focusing on team-building and improving skills for both beginners and experienced players. It is a great opportunity for players to advance their skills and learn the new rules, if they will be moving up a level next season. The season is especially beneficial for machine pitch players who will be moving to player-pitch for the next summer season and transition to higher skill levels.

FALL BALL TEAM FORMATION

There will be no tryouts for fall ball (8U, 10U, 12U). However, recognizing that team cohesiveness is important in developing players and teams, we will do our best to keep players from the spring season together.

We recognize that during the fall season, many girls will “age up”, to a new level (i.e. 10U to 12U). We will use position need, past player experience, player evaluations, and feedback from coaches to fill gaps left from older girls moving up. This means that there are no guarantees that a player will remain with their spring team.

The best efforts will be made to have an experienced pitcher and catcher and one developing pitcher and catcher on each team. To that end, OSA may host pitching and catching evaluations for girls moving from machine pitch to kid pitch.

In the event there are more than two teams at an age level it is OSA’s intent to form one top team and balancing the remaining teams.

REGISTRATION

Registration for the fall travel softball season is usually late July. Registration for fall ball is completed online on the OSA website www.oronofastpitch.org. It is the player and parents’ responsibility to seek out registration information. Watch for e-mails from the OSA or announcements posted online at www.oronofastpitch.org.

A registration deadline will be posted and it may be different each year. Late registration is not allowed. However, if numbers permit, players may be allowed to register after the deadline with Board approval.

SEASON

For age levels (8U, 10U, 12U, 14U and older), the season begins in the middle of August and runs through the end of September.

Teams participate in the Big West Fall Ball League. Two games per week are played on Sunday afternoons. Games may be played throughout the metro area. The season ends with a State Qualifier and potentially a State Tournament.

FEES AND EXPENSES

The player registration fee covers the cost of the Big West League fees, State Qualifier Tournament fees and State Tournament fees.

OTHER INFO

DISCIPLINE

- Disciplinary action will be taken against coaches and players for unsportsmanlike conduct, improper language, use of drugs, smoking and/or drinking. No smoking or drinking is allowed at practices, games or at any tournaments that OSA attends. Penalty can range from verbal warning, one-week suspension, or suspension from the OSA program. All governing Board decisions will be final.
- Big West's Coach Ejection Policy
 - The ejection rule as written below is how it will be applied. Coaches are responsible for their parent's behavior. There will be an online form for umpires to fill out the ejection report. Once the report is filled out the state office will handle contacting directors and umpires as quickly as possible.
 - First Offense- a verbal warning to the offending coach
 - Second Offense- An out will be assessed to the team but not to an individual player.
 - Third Offense- The coach will be ejected from the game and asked to leave the park.
 - An ejection results in a three (3) game or seven (7) day suspension, whichever is longer.
 - A second ejection results in a thirty (30) day suspension.
 - A third ejection results in a lifetime ban from coaching.

Orono Fastpitch Softball Association Player Code of Conduct

(One copy is to be signed and returned to the team manager. The other copy is for the family.)

The goals of the Orono Fastpitch Softball Association (OSA) are to instill the ideals of good sportsmanship, promote physical and mental development, encourage good character and citizenship and provide an overall positive learning experience for the girls. OSA is also committed to developing a sense of teamwork, loyalty, responsibility, and an attitude toward the sport that is both generous in victory and gracious in defeat. It requires a considerable commitment from everyone involved in the program to meet these goals. As part of this commitment, players and parents are asked to read and sign this pledge.

Player Commitment

- I will treat others with respect. This means no name-calling, no taunting, no swearing, and no offensive or vulgar gestures. Language that involves a person's gender, race, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or religion, will not be tolerated
- I am responsible for my actions and the consequences of my actions. This means I will play in control of my actions, emotions, and words. If I act inappropriately, I understand there will be consequences.
- I will not use or possess alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs. OSA has a zero tolerance policy regarding the use or possession of alcohol, tobacco and any illegal drug. OSA will take appropriate disciplinary action if a player violates this rule.
- Through my actions both on and off the field, I will represent my team, my sport, my program, and my community to the best of my ability. This means my behavior will be of the highest standards. I understand that if my conduct violates this Pledge, I may be suspended, dismissed from the team or ineligible to participate in OSA activities for a period of time to be determined by the OSA Board.
- I promise I will make softball my most important sports commitment during the softball season. If a softball game or practice conflicts with a game or practice or any other sport or non-academic activity, I will give softball my first priority (this includes birthday parties, sleepovers, summer camps, and other personal activities).
- I will be on time for practice and games. I will give 100% during practice as well as games. Practice is to learn, not socialize.
- I will support my teammates and coaches. I understand that jealousy, back stabbing, and gossip about my teammates and coaches is unacceptable. I will encourage good sportsmanship, and not speak negatively of fellow teammates, coaches, umpires, fans or other opponents.
- I understand that if I am competing on the highest-level team for my age group, I may not always receive equal playtime. I understand that I may not be able to play the positions I want. I understand that the coach will do what is in the best interest of each individual and our team. I understand my coach may reduce my game time for late appearances or unexcused absence from practice or games. I will accept my coaches' decisions as final. If I disagree with my coach, I will approach him or her privately with respect.
- I will be a positive role model for aspiring younger players and most importantly, I will have fun!

Signature of Player

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Date

Parent Commitment

- I pledge to get my child to practices, scrimmages, and games on time. It is hard for the coach to adjust to the additional player and being late may not provide adequate warm-up time, which can result in injury to my child. I will be on time to pick up my child from all practices, scrimmages and games. This shows my child that they are the highest priority and it shows respect for the coaches
- I will refrain from making negative comments or complaints about my child’s coach or assistant coach in presence of my child. I understand that this may plant a negative seed in my child’s mind which could result in negative behavior towards the coaches and may affect my child’s ability to be respectful, motivated and to enjoy their experience.
- I pledge to “Respect” the game. I understand the importance of setting a good example for my child. I will show respect for all involved in the game including coaches, players, opponents, opposing fans and officials. I understand that the officials make judgment calls to keep the players safe. I understand that officials may make mistakes. If I believe a “bad” call has been made against my team, I will not yell or speak negatively to the official. I will respect the game and be silent.
- I will refrain from yelling out instruction to my child or any other player. I understand that this is the coach’s job. I will limit my comments during the game to positive cheering or encouragement for my child and the other players for both teams.
- I understand that the objective is to win the game; however most importantly, I understand that winners are players who make the maximum effort, learn as they progress, improve with practice and don’t let mistakes or fear of making mistakes stop them from trying. I understand that mistakes will be made and that people learn from their mistakes. I understand that each child has different abilities and that it is inappropriate to compare players to one another, including my own child
- I understand that the coaches will do their best to move players around to different positions, however, the coach will have the final determination on which position a player will play. This is based on player ability, effort put forth by the player, and what is in the best interest of the team.
- I understand that if my daughter makes the highest-level team for her age level, playing time will not always be equal. I understand that my daughter may not play the position she wants. I will support the coach’s decision and if my daughter is upset or does not understand the coach’s decision, I will encourage her to approach the coach respectfully to discuss the situation.
- I understand that if I do not keep my pledge that I may be asked to remove myself from practice, scrimmage or game at which I am offending. I also understand that if I continue

to break any assortment of pledges that I may be banned from all OSA games, practices and scrimmages.

- I will volunteer my time to help with the many tasks required to run a successful team. I understand that there will be many opportunities to volunteer outside of individual team duties. Volunteering for all aspects including fundraising will only have a positive result for the team and the association. It may even result in the overall reduction of fees for the upcoming season.

The OSA Board has approved the following guidelines as acceptable levels of contract between adults and players involved in the program. Parents with questions or concerns about points covered in the Player's Commitment or the Parent's Commitment documents are encouraged to contact an OSA Board member. Grievances about the program that require Board attention should be directed to a Board member. The Board has a policy to address any such grievances as quickly as possible.

I have reviewed the policies and guidelines in this Commitment and intend to be an effective role model for my daughter and everyone involved in the OSA program.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date