

**By-Laws of  
Coventry Girls Softball League**

**Amended as of January 2022**



*Acknowledgements to Apponaug Girls Softball & RI Storm Softball for sharing their bylaws.*

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## **Article I : Mission Statement**

Coventry Girls Softball League provides opportunities for girls of differing abilities to play softball. We encourage the development of skills and foster a love of the game.

Our objective is to provide quality softball instruction while cultivating life skills such as confidence, leadership, and responsibility to prepare girls to be women of the Future.

## **Article II: Divisions**

The League shall consist of teams which are grouped by age in divisions which may be re-organized or expanded upon from time to time as deemed necessary by the Board of Directors. For purposes of determining to which division a player should be assigned, the player's age shall be considered to the age she attained on her last birthday prior to January 1st of the softball league year in question. Division guidelines shall be based on the following, unless otherwise revised by the Board:

INSTRUCTIONAL I DIVISION (6U)	AGES 4 to 6
INSTRUCTIONAL II DIVISION (8U)	AGES 7 and 8
INSTRUCTIONAL DIVISION (10U)	AGES 9 and 10
INSTRUCTIONAL DIVISION (12U)	AGES 11 and 12
Highschool DIVISION (18U)	AGES 13 to 18

## **Article III: Eligibility**

Age level and eligibility are determined by USA Softball and follow all USA softball requirements. Players are eligible to play up if their skill set and abilities are equally measured against the next age group.

## **Article IV: General Rules**

The playing rules governing the League shall be the rules set forth by USA Softball (formerly the Amateur Softball Association (ASA)) for "Fast Pitch" with the exceptions as noted in these By-Laws or as may be adopted by the Board from time to time as may be required.

The League expects that its coaches/managers adhere to the following USA Softball Coaching Standards:

1. Place athletes' emotional and physical well being as top priority.
2. Provide a safe practicing and playing environment for all players.
3. Provide a drug free and alcohol free environment for all players.
4. Treat fellow coaches, umpires, parents and League officials with courtesy and respect.
5. Be a positive role model to all players and fellow coaches.
6. Place players' development above his/her own personal coaching goals.

## **Article V: League Membership**

1. Any adult subscribing to the aims and purposes of this Organization, who is a head coach, assistant coach, scorekeeper or other helper of a recreation team may become a member.
2. Any individual person or player who is a member of this organization may have his/her membership revoked by a majority vote of the board.

## **Article VI: Board**

The administration of the League shall be under the direct control of the Board as hereinafter provided. Unless otherwise specified in these By-Laws all matters concerning policy and procedures shall be decided by majority vote of the Board. All officers of the League must be members in good standing in the League. All officers of the League shall be responsible for the success and day to day operations of the League and will work together with parents, sponsors, coaches and others. Members in good standing in the League may be nominated for more than one office, but generally may hold only one office at a time. The Board has discretion to allow Members in good standing to hold two offices at one time. Additionally the Board shall be responsible to hear all protests and grievances. All decisions shall be made by simple majority vote of the eligible Board members in attendance. All decisions by the Board shall be considered final and binding upon all parties.

## **Article VII: League Officers**

Officers of CGSL shall consist of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, League Commissioner, Recreation Director, Equipment Manager, Concession Director, Field Manager, Facilities Manager, Tournament Director, Website Director, Trustee I and Trustee II.

*Duties of the officers shall be:*

**PRESIDENT:** shall preside over all meetings and shall support all committees. They shall be the official spokesperson for the league and liaison between the league and any political, government and media agencies. They shall appoint any other elected or appointed official whenever a vacancy, either temporary or permanent occurs. The President shall be responsible to file the annual report with the State of Rhode Island prior to June 1 of each year. They shall also be responsible for any negotiations or extensions of any contracts.

**VICE-PRESIDENT:** shall perform, in the absence of the president, all duties usually designated to the president.

**SECRETARY:** shall keep the minutes of all general and Executive Board meetings and have custody of the records and minutes of the organization. They shall be responsible for circulating and tabulating attendance sheets for the monthly meetings. They shall inform the E-Board in the event that a member has missed 50% of the E-Board meetings and/or 3 consecutive meetings. They are responsible for handling the league mail and checking of the postal box held at the Coventry Post Office.

**TREASURER:** shall have the responsibility for the custody of all the funds of the organization, to include all All Star accounts and pay all the bills upon the approval of the president. They shall maintain a record of all receipts and expenditures and submit monthly and annual reports. All books shall be finalized, closed, and turned over to either trustee for auditing. The treasurer must be bonded and must pay the league insurance by October 1<sup>st</sup> and must file form 990 with the IRS no later than March 15th of the current year. The Treasurer is responsible for maintaining a current balance of each All Star account and will confirm such balances with each All Star Manager prior to the current month's general meeting.

**LEAGUE COMMISSIONER:** will be responsible for all League communication to include, but not limited to flyers and emails about upcoming events. They will also be responsible for working with the Town of Coventry to secure outside fields and will draft all permits for said use. The Commissioner will also be responsible for maintaining the Leagues insurance and work with the Recreation Director and Travel Managers to ensure all players are covered under the insurance. They will also make sure that a current insurance certificate is forwarded to the Town of Coventry and State of Rhode Island annually for their files.

**RECREATION DIRECTOR:** shall be responsible in the coordination of the recreation seasons to include player assessments as needed to ensure all teams are equal and compiling of managers for the upcoming season. The Recreation Director will be responsible for organizing playoffs. They are the first line of defense for any complaints or concerns that arise out of the recreation league and will work with the President and/or Vice President to ensure a quick resolution.

**EQUIPMENT MANAGER:** will be responsible for league equipment, ensuring it is in good condition, replenishing or re-ordering as needed, as well as the issuance and collection of league equipment. They will work with the treasurer in preparation of the equipment budget, getting bids, and purchasing. The Equipment Manager will coordinate the ordering of league uniforms for the recreation seasons as well as the All Star jerseys and Travel Program.

**CONCESSION DIRECTOR:** is responsible for maintaining the concession stand. They will be responsible for creating the menu and it's pricing, as well as ordering supplies and stock from board approved vendors. The Concession Director or appointed designee when unavailable, will also be responsible for opening and closing the stand on all days of play, including tournaments. The Concession Director assumes responsibility for creating schedules of paid and volunteer workers for the hours the concession stand is open and work with the tournament and recreation director. They will design a training guide to be placed in locations within the concession stand regarding food safety, preparing items, open/close of the concession stand. The Concession Director may create and oversee a Concessions Committee as they see fit.

**FACILITIES MAINTENANCE DIRECTOR:** is responsible for the general maintenance of the complex. They shall be responsible for obtaining three (3) quotes for any services to be done and bring the quotes before the executive board for vote and approval. They shall coordinate with outside vendors and the Treasurer for any monthly maintenance to be completed to include, but not limited to grass cutting, water system maintenance, trash removal and septic cleaning. The director maintains all structures on the site and ensures safety. The Facilities Maintenance Director is to ensure that the bathrooms are in good, clean and working order at all times and can create and oversee a committee as they see fit.

**FIELD MAINTENANCE DIRECTOR:** will work directly with Facilities Maintenance Director in the coordination of field maintenance. They will additionally be responsible in ensuring the fields are ready for all recreation games as well as travel fall ball/spring ball games by coordinating with the Recreation Director. They will also coordinate with the Tournament Director with respect to any preparation of the fields for tournaments and may form a committee to assist as seen fit.

**TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR:** will be responsible for coordinating All Star tournaments for the league. They will work directly with USA Softball in requesting dates for tournaments and create rules and flyers for said tournaments. The Tournament Director is to be present at all League hosted tournaments or will designate another EBoard member in his/her place and will work in conjunction with the Field Maintenance Director to coordinate all grounds crew for those days. They are to also coordinate all field rentals for other leagues and organizations (to be approved by the Eboard).

### **TRUSTEES**

Trustee 1 is responsible for acquiring all league sponsors for the upcoming year. They will also be responsible for the inventorying of previous sponsor signs and the ordering of new ones. The Trustee 1 shall oversee the presentation of the league financial records to a qualified auditor or firm in case of an audit and shall present all audit results to the body accordingly. Trustee 1 shall also coordinate with Facilities Maintenance Director in the placement of all sponsor signs on the fields prior to the spring season and ensure that all signage is removed from the fields at the close of the fall season.

Trustee 2 will assist Trustee 1 in the acquiring of league sponsors as well as coordinate all league sponsored events and fundraising. They shall be responsible in organizing opening day, to include creating the picture schedule.

**WEBSITE DIRECTOR:** will manage and maintain the League's website. They will coordinate all opening and closing of registrations as well as the collecting and reversing of funds paid through the website. The Website Director will work directly with the Recreation Director in order to ensure team information is correct as well as upload the current game schedule. They will also be responsible for ensuring that all important league dates are updated and also upload any additional flyers to the website. They may, from time to time, be asked to review the current website and to look for additional options that will benefit and bring current the league's technology.

### **Article VIII: Elections**

1. Two weeks before the annual meeting at which elections are held, the Secretary will solicit nominations, via email, for elected office from members of the organization. The names of those people who wish to run will be placed on a ballot for each office with sufficient space for additional nominations to be added at the election meeting.
2. Each EBoard voting member will cast one ballot in the election..
3. A plurality vote of the voting members of the organization shall elect each officer.

4. Each officer, as well as each Board position, is to be elected each year: the offices of President, Vice President, and Treasurer not to exceed three years in succession, unless approved by a 2/3 vote of members present at elections. After this approval their name is placed on the ballot.

### **Article IX: Term Lengths**

Officer terms shall run from November through October, each Board position, is to be elected each year: the offices of President, Vice President, and Treasurer not to exceed three years in succession, unless approved by a 2/3 vote of members present at elections. After this approval his/her name is placed on the ballot.

### **Article X: Good Standing**

Any person who has fulfilled the requirements for membership in CGSL and who neither has voluntarily withdrawn from membership nor has been expelled or suspended from membership after appropriate proceedings consistent with lawful provisions of the constitution and bylaws of CGSL.

### **Article XI: Removal and/or Resignation**

1. Any officer may be removed, either with or without cause, by the Executive board, at any time.
2. Any officer may resign at any time by giving written notice to the board of directors or to the president or secretary of the corporation. Any such resignation shall take effect at the date of receipt of such notice or at any later date specified therein, and, unless otherwise specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.
3. If any E-Board member has missed 50% of the E-Board meetings and/or 3 consecutive meetings, removal & resignation must be discussed.

### **Article XII: Vacancies**

1. Any vacancy caused by the death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or otherwise, of any officer shall be filled by the board of directors.
2. In the event of a vacancy in any office other than that of president, such vacancy may be filled temporarily by appointment by the president until such time as the board shall fill the vacancy.
3. Vacancies occurring in offices of officers appointed at the discretion of the board may or may not be filled as the board shall determine.

### **Article XIII: Meetings**

1. Board meetings should take place once a month with no less than 10 meetings per year.
2. Board meetings should include an agenda and a monthly financial statement.
3. Secretary notes from each meeting, agenda & financial statement should be archived for up to 3 years.

4. General meetings should be held no less than twice a year.

#### **Article XIV: Committees**

1. Each year the Board may vote & approve subcommittees to help support the board.
2. The President of the organization may appoint not fewer than two (2) members of the organization to serve on any or all the approved committees.
3. All standing committees shall work with the Board or designated assistants.
4. The President shall appoint additional committees as the President deems necessary
5. Subcommittees may resolve when their purpose has been achieved -- such as, but not limited to, researching purchases.

#### **Article XV: Amendments to Bylaws**

These By-Laws may be amended at any meeting of the organization, duly called, by a 2/3 vote of ballots cast, provided that any and all changes to be voted upon have been delivered, in writing, at the previous meeting.

#### **Article XVI: Sponsorship**

The Sponsorship fee shall be set annually by the Board. The Sponsorship fee may be adjusted by the Board for any reason deemed necessary. New sponsors can be approved by the President.

#### **Article XVII: Team Managers and Coaches**

1. Adult Membership is open to any person (18) years or older of good moral character, who is interested in promoting the game of softball and CGSL.
2. Individuals wishing to manage or coach (Either Recreation or Travel) must notify the President and/or make their wishes known to the Board if they are already members. It shall be mandatory for all managers and coaches to submit a criminal background check by the deadline date provided by the League.
3. All managers and coaches are eligible to coach in the following year unless determined otherwise by the Board. However, background checks will be done annually.
4. Managers may select up to five (5) coaches from among the parents/legal guardians of players on his/her team. Members of the League who do not have an active player in the League may also be a manager/coach subject to approval by the Board. Generally, Managers with their daughter on the team will be given priority to Manage vs. those Managers without their daughter on the team. Managers shall submit the names of his/her coaching staff to the Board.
5. The Board shall consider seniority, leadership ability and expertise when appointing managers and coaches for both Recreation and Travel teams. Anyone eighteen (18) years of age or younger who is awarded a coaching position must have a release form signed by a parent or legal guardian and witnessed by an adult member of the League.
6. All managers and coaches in the League are strongly encouraged to contribute time to at least one League function such as Opening Day, at least one fundraiser, the season-ending awards ceremony, the tournament or serve as an elected official of the League.

7. All managers and coaches are expected to maintain exemplary conduct while involved in League activities. They are expected to cooperate with the umpires and act in a civil manner. No yelling at umpires, coaches, parents and players.
8. Equipment must be cared for and turned in timely to the Equipment Manager.
9. The manager is responsible for running scheduled and organized practices.
10. The manager is responsible for holding a team meeting with players and parents to discuss expectations and League rules prior to the season's first game.
11. The manager is responsible to teach his/her players the fundamentals of softball, sportsmanship and fair play.
12. The manager is responsible for rescheduling any postponed or canceled games by reaching out to the Recreation Director.

## **Article XVIII: Reasons to Dismiss a Coach, Manager or Adult Participant**

In some cases, there may be reason to remove a manager/coach from their position. Situations will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Some issues would lead to immediate dismissal, while others may warrant a warning. These determinations, depending on severity and impact on the program will be determined by the EBoard.

1. Failure to follow USA Softball rules concerning negative conduct during games/tournaments that lead to the manager, coach and/or team being disqualified
2. Sexual, physical, and/or verbal abuse of any umpire, parent/spectator or player while conducting the duties of a coach in any capacity.
3. Inability to control players during a practice or games.
4. Failure to teach skills and strategies of softball relative to the age and classification A,B, C level of play.
5. Regular and consistent missing of games or tournaments.
6. Not scheduling or conducting a reasonable amount of practices.
7. Knowingly putting a player at risk in a game and/or practice.
8. Failure to report abuse or neglect. All managers and coaches are mandated reports and must report alleged abuse to the DCF hotline.

A formal complaint in writing made to the Vice President with a time period of one week to remedy the complaint. An immediate suspension occurs for the accusation of sexual or physical abuse pending an investigation of the complaint.

Coach is given the opportunity to state his/her side of the complaint in person to the Eboard. If a Board member's daughter is on the coach's team, then the EBoard member can only act as a witness and has no formal vote in the matter.

The EBoard may give a coach a time of probation during which he/she must work under the observation of another qualified head coach or another competent appointed person.

A top priority for CGSL is that each coach and player be treated with dignity and respect. This includes using positive reinforcement and working out issues in private conversations. Any player who feels she is not being treated appropriately should

discuss the issue with her coach. If for any reason the player is uncomfortable raising the issue with her coach, she should address her concerns to a member of the EBoard or parent/guardian.

The coach should strive to compliment in public and constructively criticize in private. Coaches must understand and consider each player's level of skill development, and refrain from labeling players as "starters", "bench players", "best player on the team", since such labels inhibit the growth of all players. For example, being labeled may cause above average players to take their skills for granted and diminish the drive to learn more while below average players may tend to give up. Coaches must also understand the impact of non-verbal communication. Patterns of actions are powerful forms of communication.

### **Article XIX: Registration**

All girls must register at the specified dates in order to be eligible to play. Registration dates will be published well in advance through school, various media announcements, signs in the community and word of mouth. Girls must be "eligible" as that term is defined in Article II. Signature of a parent or legal guardian is required upon registration and a birth certificate may be required. An on-line registration shall have the same effect as a paper registration. A registration fee shall be required which shall be determined by the Board. Registrations may be accepted at the discretion of the Recreation Director and the President after the draft, if deemed to be in the best interests of the League.

Partial or full registration award amounts may be granted to a player who has an extreme financial situation and cannot afford to pay the registration fee. A player wishing to be considered for a partial or full registration award must reach out to the Recreation Director. The Recreation Director will then collaborate with the President and requests will be considered on a case by case basis. An option to pay the registration fee in a prescribed number of monthly installment payments may be pursued before an award is granted.

### **Article XX: Player's Responsibilities**

Any player with conduct detrimental to the League may be suspended and or expelled following a review by the Board.

All players in the League are encouraged to participate in any fund raising activities the League deems necessary.

All players are responsible for their own equipment. CGSL is not responsible for broken, lost or stolen items.

### **Article XXI: Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

It is expected that good sportsmanship be shown on the field at all times by both players and coaches. Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their team and themselves at all times. Umpires may eject Managers/Coaches if necessary. Umpires, opposing coaches and parents have the right to file a grievance against any member of the League for unsportsmanlike conduct. Said

grievance shall be subject to review by the Board resulting in possible suspension. All grievances are to be in writing and are to be sent to the President of the League. All grievances are to be reviewed by the Board as soon as possible. The Board shall have the right to suspend any player, manager, coach or umpire for a period of time deemed appropriate by the Board.

Any Board member, manager, coach or anyone affiliated with the League with conduct deemed detrimental to the League may be subject to dismissal from all League functions for up to one (1) year at the discretion of the Board.

Any manager or coach who receives two (2) official reprimands shall be subject to expulsion from the League. A reprimand shall be a statement in writing citing the offense and a warning to cease and desist. The President and at least two (2) other members of the Board must agree to the expulsion. An expelled manager or coach may never be readmitted to the League.

Unsportsmanlike conduct rules apply both to recreational and travel coaches, managers, and players.

## **Article XXII: Recreational Division Rules**

In March of each year, the Recreation Director must present to the board updated rules for each recreation division. These rules must include policies on: drafts, personnel on the playing field, number of players, coaching of bases, participation in games (such as all players play a minimum of 2 innings defensively), run rule, lightning, substitutions, health and safety (such as fielder's masks and no jewelry), rain outs, tie games and special house rules (such as 6 pitches). The recreational division rules must be voted reviewed and voted on each year by the board.

## **Article XXIII: Equipment & Uniforms**

Equipment for each team shall consist of at least the following (this could vary by age division):

- 1 catcher's chest protector
- 1 catcher's helmet/mask
- 1 pair of catcher's shin guards
- 3 batting helmets (w/ facemasks)
- 1 First Aid Kit
- 1 set of bases (or access to bases)
- Various bats and balls
- 1 equipment bag
- 1 pitcher's mask

Uniforms will be issued to all players and should be worn by players in order to participate in League games. No metal cleats shall be allowed in recreation. Catchers are required to wear a catcher's helmet and all other protective gear during games and practice sessions. Catchers are not allowed to wear a batting helmet with a mask in lieu of a catcher's mask/helmet. All players are required to wear batting helmets when batting or running the bases during games and practice sessions. A pinch runner is required to wear a batting helmet. Managers are responsible for

returning equipment at the end of the season at the time and place designated by the Equipment Manager.

## **Article XXIV: Travel Program**

CGSL is home to RI Crush, a travel program ranging in ages 8 to 18. These teams operate under the umbrella of CGSL but manage their own tryouts, recruitment, fees and fundraising. Specific information regarding RI Crush travel teams and how they operate can be found in the Travel Program Handbook. This Handbook should be reviewed and updated yearly by the vice president and presented to the board for a vote.

## **Article XXV: Conflict of Interest Statement**

For purposes of this provision, the term "interest" shall include personal interest, interest as director, officer, member, stockholder, shareholder, partner, manager, trustee or beneficiary of any concern and having an immediate family member who holds such an interest in any concern. The term "concern" shall mean any corporation, association, trust, partnership, limited liability entity, firm, person or other entity other than the League.

No director or officer of the League shall be disqualified from holding any office in the League by reason of any interest in any concern. A director or officer of the League shall not be disqualified from dealing, either as vendor, purchaser or otherwise, or contracting or entering into any other transaction with the League or with any entity of which the League is an affiliate. No transaction of the League shall be voidable by reason of the fact that any director or officer of the League has an interest in the concern with which such transaction is entered into, provided:

1. The interest of such officer or director is fully disclosed to the Board.
2. Such transaction is duly approved by the Board as being in the best interests of the League.
3. Payments to the interested officer or director are reasonable and do not exceed fair market value.
4. No interested officer or director may vote or lobby on the matter or be counted in determining the existence of a quorum at the meeting at which such transaction may be authorized.

The minutes of meetings at which such notes are taken shall record such disclosure, abstention, and rationale for approval.

## **Article XXVI: Non Profit Provisions**

Notwithstanding any foregoing Articles, the provisions for the regulation of the internal affairs of the League, including provisions for the distribution of assets on dissolution or final liquidation, are: The League is or will be organized as a tax-exempt organization within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code, as amended (the "Code"), and is subject to the following limitations under this Article:

1. The League is not organized for profit and it shall not have any power to issue certificates of stock or to pay dividends.
2. Notwithstanding any other provisions of the League's Articles of Incorporation, the League is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and/or scientific purposes, including for such purposes of making distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code. Notwithstanding any other provisions of the League's Articles of Incorporation, the League shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by a corporation exempt from income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code or by a corporation contributions to which are deductible under Section I 70(c)(2) of the Code.
3. In the event of dissolution, termination, or final liquidation of the League, whether voluntary, involuntary, or by operation of law, and after payment of or making provision for all the League's debts and liabilities of every nature and description, the Board shall dispose of all remaining assets of the League exclusively for the lawful purposes of the League in such manner or to such other organizations as shall at the relevant time be permitted for organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a court of competent jurisdiction exclusively for the lawful purposes of the Corporation in such manner or to such other organizations as 20 shall at the relevant time be permitted for organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code.
4. No part of the net earnings of the League shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to its directors, officers, or other private persons, except that the League shall be authorized to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of its exempt purpose as set forth in these Bylaws. No substantial part of the activities of the League shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the League shall not participate or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) and political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.