



Annex H

Frequently Asked Questions

Eastern Ontario Umpire Association

Question

Is there an 'official' sanctioning body? If so, who or what organization sets the standards?

Answer

Softball Canada is the governing body for Fast Pitch and Slo-Pitch Softball in Canada. Softball Canada provides the national Rule Book, exam, and standard training materials. Softball Ontario is the provincial governing body that derives its authority from Softball Canada. Softball Ontario provides structure to the game of Softball in Ontario. The Eastern Ontario Umpire Association provides Fast Pitch and Slo-Pitch umpire services to leagues in the National Capital Region and surrounding area. It is affiliated with Softball Ontario and all of its umpires must register with Softball Ontario.

Question

How many umpires are in the EOUA?

Answer

In 2023 there were 42 umpires registered. The EOUA is always looking for additional umpires as it tends to have more games than umpires.

Question

For what kinds of leagues/games does the EOUA provide umpires?

Answer

The EOUA provides officiating services to both Fast Pitch and Slo-Pitch Softball Leagues in the National Capital Region and surrounding area. The majority of the leagues are adult, men, women and mixed, but the EOUA does provide services to some youth leagues. The calibre of play is mainly recreational but there are some competitive leagues.



Question

What is involved in becoming an umpire? How much time does it entail? Is there a lot to learn?

Answer

Softball Ontario Registration - All umpires who work with the EOUA must register each year with Softball Ontario. The Softball Ontario registration fee (in 2024; \$115 plus HST) covers both Fast Pitch and Slo-Pitch. By registering with Softball Ontario the umpire receives a Rule Book, exam (including marking of the exam and answer rule references), on field liability insurance, and the support of the Softball Ontario Provincial and Zone structure.

EOUA Membership Fee - The EOUA charges an annual administration fee that is used to cover the expenses of the association, such as, HorizonWebRef (the assigning tool), stationery, postage, bank fees, etc. This fee is currently set at \$40 per umpire.

Clinics - It is strongly recommended that new umpires take the one-day Softball Ontario Level I Clinic which the EOUA hosts each year. The clinic provides information regarding, rules, positioning, mechanics, etiquette and managing a game. The cost of \$90-\$100 varies from year-to-year. For a first year umpire, the Level I Clinic Fee also includes Registration. As an individual matures as an umpire, there are four different levels of clinics. Clinic Levels I and II focus mainly on rules, positioning and mechanics and then Levels III and IV focus mainly on game management.

Uniform/Equipment - We expect all EOUA officials to adhere to the Softball Canada dress code. As a minimum, a Softball Canada shirt and hat, navy pants/shorts and black footwear are a requirement. Additional equipment includes Ball Bag, Mask, and other protective equipment. The official supplier is Home Run Sports; check out their website at: <http://www.homerunsport.com>. The EOUA also has a selection of uniform components donated by retired umpires. These are available free of charge to new umpires. The selection will vary from time to time depending on availability. Contact the Assignor for information regarding used uniform components.

This may seem like a great deal of money, but game fees for a new umpire range from \$36 to \$83 per game depending on the level of ball and the location of the diamond. Many assignments are two games (occasionally three or four). There is work Sunday through Friday evenings, with occasional tournaments during the day on Saturday and Sunday. The umpire can determine how many and which nights they work. An umpire can work every day if you choose. A new umpire's investment can be recouped very quickly.



Question

How to I receive game assignments?

Answer

The EOUA uses HorizonWebRef (Horizon) to assign games. The Assignor will give you the information to become a Horizon user. You set your availability. Games are assigned to you, normally two weeks at a time. When you receive an assignment, you accept or decline it. If you decline a game in a time slot for which you were available, you must provide a reason for declining. The game assignment will provide you with the date, time, location, league, teams and partner. You can link Horizon to your electronic calendar so that your accepted games automatically show up in your calendar.

Question

How many games would be umpired in an average season?

Answer

That depends on the individual umpire. It is based on your availability, capability and whether you officiate both Slo-Pitch and Fast Pitch. You can work as many or as few nights a week as you wish. Some umpires work as few as 25 games per year whereas others may work greater than 150. It is the individual's choice how much they work. There is plenty of work for those who want it, with the understanding that the assignments are distributed to all available officials.

Question

Is there financial compensation for games? Are there allowances for travel or meals? Does the commitment require being away overnight?

Answer

The game fees range from \$36 to \$83 per game depending on the level of ball and the location of the diamond. An umpire may be assigned to one, two, three or possibly four games per night depending on the league schedule. An umpire can work as many nights per week as they are available.

All local leagues are within the National Capital Area. The variance in the fees take travel into consideration. Travel allowances are also paid for diamonds that are located at the more distant diamonds. There are opportunities for out of town overnight tournaments as an umpire gains experience.

Question



How do umpires get paid for games?

Answer

The Treasurer uses Horizon to calculate your pay. It will be transferred by electronic funds transfer (using the email address you have entered into Horizon) usually before the fifteenth of June, July and August for the previous month's games. The balance will be paid at the end of the season. You can calculate your pay for any period using the filters on the game assignment page in Horizon.

Question

What is the personal 'reward' or value of being an umpire?

Answer

This is a very personal question. Some work for the monetary remuneration, some for the sense of competition and accomplishment, most for a bit of both.

There is camaraderie among umpires. You can make good friends on and off the diamond. You can get the satisfaction that you have allowed two teams to compete fairly. You will learn how to manage challenging situations and how to deal with people in a respectful but firm manner.

If you ask any one of the existing or past umpires, the value it represents to them each of them will have a different appreciation and interpretation of the many rewards it has brought and continues to bring. It is forever a learning experience. It can be a personal goal to work the best game possible, always seeking to get better.

Question

Describe what it's like to umpire a game.

Answer

An umpire should arrive at the diamond no later than fifteen (15) minutes before game time; thirty (30) minutes is preferred. If you are working a Fast Pitch plate, you will need to time put on your protective gear. This allows you time to get prepared for the game, both mentally and physically as well as meet your partner if you are working a two-umpire system. Currently all our regular season Slo-Pitch and most Women's Fast Pitch leagues use the single umpire system. Most Men's Fast Pitch leagues use the two-umpire system.

Your vehicle is your "locker room" so be prepared to change into your uniform in the parking lot.

Some games are worked alone (normally Slo-Pitch games are worked alone). If you have a partner, then look for your partner and talk about the upcoming game(s). With most diamonds



there are parking areas that umpires usually use. Contact your partner during the day of the game to determine which uniform combination you will be wearing and where you will meet. Prepare yourself mentally for the game as you are getting changed. Walk to the diamond ten (10) minutes before game time and chat with the teams and inspect the bats and helmets. Five (5) minutes before game time call the coaches and captains to the plate for the pre-game meeting. Briefly go over any unique rules that apply to the league, establish who is the home team, get the game balls, review the Respect My Game principles and then "Play Ball". During the game, work with the catchers and batters to ensure everyone has a smooth game. Work hard to give the teams the best game that you can. It is a point of pride to try to deliver a "perfect" game every time you umpire.

Softball Ontario

Question

What do we mean by being “fully certified”?

Answer

Certification is made up of a clinic portion as well as on-field evaluation (OFE). An umpire must have both to be considered fully certified. For example, someone with a Level III clinic but an OFE of 2A is considered a fully certified Level II official. The exception is Level I – once you take a Level-I clinic, you are considered a fully certified Level I – no OFE is required.

Question

Can an umpire with a Level II Clinic and a 2B OFE take a Level-III clinic?

Answer

An umpire must be a fully certified Level II for two years before they are eligible to take the Level III clinic. Only the province of Ontario has the A and B system. An umpire is considered a fully certified Level II Umpire from the calendar year that they obtained their initial 2B OFE.



Question

The Level II clinic is split into FP and SP. In our zone we normally do a combined clinic due to distance and numbers. Can an umpire who registers for the combined clinic do both the FP clinic test and the SP clinic test at the one combined clinic? If no, how would an umpire write the “other” clinic test?

Answer

An Umpire must declare at the beginning of the clinic if they are a FP or a SP umpire taking the clinic. At the conclusion of the clinic, they are to write the test, receive the manual and Umpire Certificate that they declared at the beginning of the clinic. If they wish to become certified in the other game, they need to retake the clinic and declare the other game.

Question

There is a wait time between clinic levels. Are the dates that are considered the time lapse between clinics taken or the time elapsed between levels achieved (i.e., clinic plus OFE) and the next clinic. (e.g., an umpire took his Level II clinic in 2010, achieved his OFE 2B in 2011; can he take the Level-III clinic in 2012)?

Answer

No. In the example above, the umpire is not eligible to take the Level III clinic until 2013. In order to take the Level III clinic an umpire must be a full Level II umpire for two calendar years to be eligible to take the clinic (OFE and clinic level need to match).

In order to take the Level IV clinic an umpire must be a full Level-III umpire for two calendar years to be eligible to take the Level IV clinic (OFE and clinic level need to match).

There is one exception in as much as an umpire can take both the Level I and the Level II clinic in the same calendar year. However, the umpire would have to be a fully certified Level I (clinic plus OFE) for one year before being eligible to be evaluated at Level II.

Question

Who can grant a 3B and 3A OFE and at what type of tournament?

Answer

A Zone Umpire In Chief can grant a level 3B OFE to an umpire at U19 level play and above. This can be during regular league play, a tournament or a Provincial tournament.

Only the FP or SP Provincial Committee can grant a level 3A OFE.



Question

Can a Level I umpire who has taken the Level II clinic be granted a level 2A OFE immediately (i.e., skip the 2B OFE)? Same question for Level-III.

Answer

Remember that Ontario is the only Province or Territory that has the A and B system. If an Evaluator recommends that someone is worthy to move from a Level I to Level 2A, then the Evaluator has the ability to do so. The respective ZUIC must approve any recommendations for level increases up to Level 3A. However, for a level 3A, only the respective FP or SP Provincial Committee can make the upgrade to bypass level 3B.

Question

Where is all of this documented in Softball Ontario literature?

Answer

Go to <http://www.softballontario.ca>. Click as follows:

- for information respecting Clinic descriptions, under the Umpire tab, click on Clinics and scroll down to the horizontal listing of the clinic levels and click on the level that you are seeking,
- for information respecting the progression through the umpire Levels, under the Umpire tab click on Clinics and scroll down to Resources, click on the Fast Pitch Clinic Policy or Slo-Pitch Clinic Policy.

Question

What can I do if my question is not answered here?

Answer

You can contact the EOUA President at eoqa.president@gmail.com.