

New York State  
**SOFTBALL OFFICIALS**  
Organization, Inc.

**CONSTITUTION BY-LAWS &  
POLICIES**



# **CONSTITUTION**

## **Article I – Name**

The name of this organization shall be the New York State Softball Officials Organization, Inc., and is therein referred to as the “NYSSOO”.

## **Article II – Purpose**

It shall be the purpose of this organization:

- A. To promote the international game of softball by a uniform interpretation of the rules.
- B. To maintain the standards of sportsmanship and integrity of the officials and the players.
- C. To provide approved officials for the NEW YORK STATE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (NYSPHSAA) softball program.
- D. To provide annual registration of softball officials through the NYSPHSAA.
- E. E. To provide through local chapters continuing promotion and maintenance of quality officiating.
- F. To follow the 5-Point Program established by NYSPHSAA.
- G. To uphold the contract between NYSSOO & NYSPHSAA.
- H. To sponsor state-wide clinics and/or interpretation meetings in cooperation with NYSPHSAA.
- I. To promote and protect the welfare of the officials and players with such safeguards as to warrant the maximum of public confidence in the conduct of the game, both on and off the field of play and in all relations with the public at large.

## **Article III – Membership/Chapters**

The members of NYSSOO shall consist of the following local chapters of softball officials in New York State and any new groups of organized softball officials meeting provisions as outlined in this constitution.

### **Section I**

Dutchess County  
Hudson Valley  
Rockland

### **Section II**

Capital District  
Mohawk

### **Section III**

Utica  
Tri-County (Syracuse & Oswego)  
Jefferson-Lewis  
Finger Lakes

### **Section IV**

Binghamton  
Elmira  
Finger Lakes  
Schohanna

### **Section V**

Central Western  
Southern Tier  
Wayne County  
Genesee Valley  
Four Lakes

### **Section VI**

Southwestern  
Niagara Frontier

### **Section VII**

Northern Adirondack  
Southern Adirondack

### **Section VIII**

Nassau

### **Section IX**

Central Hudson Valley  
Kingston  
Dutchess County  
Sullivan County

### **Section X**

St. Lawrence

### **Section XI**

Suffolk

### **New York City**

New York City

- New chapters will be added to this list at the time of their acceptance.
- Dissolved chapters will be deleted upon their dissolution. [Feb. 2024]

- A. Each local chapter is reserved the right to establish its own Constitution & By Laws, provided such are in accordance with all the provisions set by the Constitution & By-Laws of NYSSOO.
- B. Any new organization group of softball officials in New York State may become a member of this organization subject to the following conditions: [Feb. 2019]
  - 1. Make an application to the organization President.
  - 2. Be approved & recommended by the Executive Committee after consultation with neighboring chapters.
  - 3. Receive a favorable vote of 2/3 the chapter representation present at a meeting of this organization.
  - 4. Upon receiving a favorable vote of 2/3, the chapter will be granted a 1-year probationary status.
- C. Any chapter not complying with the purposes of this organization, failing to pay dues and/or failing to submit the proper roster on time may be subject to probation or suspension upon a majority vote of the Executive Committee
- D. Any Chapter that works contests in violation of the contract between NYSSO & NYSPHSAA shall be subject to probation for one (1) year and denied representation in all post-season play for that period. Continued violations may result in suspension.
- E. All NYSSO chapters must submit written proof that said chapter is “actively” incorporated with the New York State Department of State - Division of Corporation. Failure to submit proof in accordance with this by-law shall result in the chapter no longer being in "good standing" with NYSSO. Effective February 5, 2012. (adopted 2/2011)

## **Article IV**

### **Section I: Officers**

- A. The Officers shall be: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Rules Interpreter/State Clinician.
- B. The Executive Committee will consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, four elected state representatives (2/2016), and the immediate past President (adopted 02/07/1993).

### **Section II: Nominations and Elections**

- A. Nominations of officers shall take place at the winter meeting.
- B. The Nominating Committee will be appointed by the President.
- C. Elections shall take place at the winter meeting and shall be by a majority vote of members present.
- D. The terms of office shall be as follows:
  - 1. President – elected to a four (4) year term.
  - 2. Vice-President – elected to a four (4) year term.
  - 3. Secretary – elected to a four (4) year term.
  - 4. Treasurer – elected to a four (4) year term.
  - 5. Rules Interpreter/Clinician – appointed to a four (4) year term.
  - 6. Four (4) state representatives shall be elected to a four (4) year term each. (2/2016)
- E. New officers shall assume their duties at that conclusion of the meeting in which they are elected. (2/2014)
- F. In the event of a vacancy occurring in an office, an election for that vacant office will be held at the next scheduled meeting; the President will fill the vacancy in the interim.

## **Article V - Representatives**

- A. Each Chapter shall elect or appoint one (1) representative to attend the state meeting of this organization; length of term to be determined by the local organization.
- B. Chapter shall notify the Secretary at least one month prior to the annual winter meeting as to the name and address of their President/Chairperson, NYSSO Representative, and Rules

Interpreter/Chief Clinician. They shall also notify the Secretary of the meeting dates with topics and locations and chapter information as requested by NYSSO. (2/2014)

## **Article VI – Meetings**

The NYSSOO Shall meet once a year (adopted 02/07/1988).

- A. Date and time of the meetings shall be established by the President.
- B. Location of meetings will be determined by the Executive Board. (2/2014)
- C. Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the Executive Committee or by petition of the representatives of at least seven (7) local chapters.
- D. Fifty percent (50%) of the chapters must be present to form a quorum to transact organization business.

## **Article VII – Voting Privileges**

- A. Each permanent chapter shall be entitled to one (1) vote.
- B. Each member of the Executive Committee, not acting as a chapter representative, shall not have a vote.

## **Article VIII – Parliamentary Authority**

Questions of procedure shall be decided according to Robert’s Rules of Order (Revised Edition).

## **Article IX – Amendments to Constitution & By-Laws**

- A. Written proposals for amendments to the Constitution must be presented at a business meeting of NYSSOO. Written notice must be verified email notification (2/2008) and/or mailed notification to each chapter no less than 20 days prior to the meeting in which it will be voted on. A 2/3 affirmative vote of the chapters present is necessary for a constitutional change.
- B. Procedures for a change in the By-Laws are to be the same as in Article IX, A. “Amendments to the Constitution...” – with the following exception: a majority vote of the organization is necessary for a change in the By-Laws.

# **BY-LAWS**

## **Article I – Duties of Officers:**

### **Section I – Duties of the President:**

- A. Preside at all meetings of NYSSOO.
- B. Act as the representative to the OFFICIALS COORDINATING FEDERATION.
- C. C. Appoint committees when necessary.
- D. Call meetings of the Executive Board.
- E. Authorize payment of bills as submitted by the Treasurer.
- F. Act as the representative to the NYS Softball Committee.

### **Section II – Duties of the Vice-President:**

- A. Preside at meetings in the absence of the President; and fulfill all other duties of the President, acting in his stead as required by necessity.
- B. Act as chairman of the Executive Board.

### **Section III – Duties of the Secretary:**

- A. Take attendance at all meetings.
- B. Record and distribute to all local chapters the minutes of all meetings.
- C. Maintain a directory of all chapter representatives for the current year.
- D. Notify members a minimum of two (2) weeks in advance of meeting dates

#### Section IV – Duties of the Treasurer:

- A. Provide at the annual business meeting a summary report of the financial activities for the prior fiscal year.
- B. Make sure payments are approved by the President.
- C. Notify chapters who are delinquent in their dues.
- D. Collect dues and rosters from local chapters.
- E. Submit two (2) copies of rosters to NYSPHSAA.

#### Section V – Duties of Rules Interpreter/State Clinician:

- A. Attend meetings concerning approved rules.
- B. Interpret the approved rules for member chapters.
- C. Provide for distribution of information concerning the approved rules to member Chapters.
- D. Be responsible for giving clinics within the state when requested by member chapters or where designated by the Executive Board.

#### **Article II – Duties of the Executive Committee**

- A. Have power and authority over the affairs of the organization in the interim between meetings.
- B. Approve or disapprove a local chapter's application for membership. C. Approve presidential appointments.
- C. Call special meetings when necessary.
- D. Appoint Rules Interpreter/State Clinician.
- E. Determine whether a chapter should be put on probation and/or suspended.

#### **Article III – Individual Members**

##### Section I - Membership

- A. Each local chapter of this organization shall certify its individual members under the following classifications as established as established by NYSSOO:
  - 1. New Umpire
  - 2. Returning Umpire
- B. Individual chapters may devise their own categorization / rating system for internal purposes. [Feb. 2024]
- C. To be an “approved” member of an affiliated chapter in any established classification, a member shall have met the requirements of the “Five Point Plan” as put forth by NYSPHSAA.

##### Section II – Dual Membership

- A. An individual official may maintain membership with two (2) or more chapters if he/she is able to comply with the established requirements of said chapters.
- B. A dual member's ‘home’ chapter is the chapter registering the member with NYSSOO and paying state dues to NYSSOO. [Feb. 2024]
- C. Disciplinary action or suspension of an individual member of NYSSOO shall be carried over to all chapters where he/she is affiliated.

##### Section IV – Transfer

- A. An individual member in good standing may transfer to another chapter upon approval of said board. Notice of transfer intent shall be sent on the transfer form to the secretary of the new chapter.
- B. A member of an out-of-state girls' softball officiating organization may transfer to a local NYSSOO chapter, providing his/her credentials have been approved by said local chapter.

## **Article IV – Examination/Renewal Procedures**

### **Section I – Written Examination**

- A. Members of NYSSOO must take and pass a written examination each year prior to the beginning of the season.
- B. The examination shall be conducted online in accordance with Executive Committee guidelines and standards.
- C. Members must receive a score of 76% to pass the examination. An individual member will have three opportunities to pass the examination. [Feb 2024]
- D. Individual chapters may require higher examination scores for advanced rating purposes.

### **Section II – Practical Examinations**

It shall be the responsibility of each local chapter to establish appropriate standards for renewing each individual member's rating.

### **Section III – Meetings/Clinics**

Local chapters will have a MINIMUM of 5 required meetings for all umpires covering interpretation, rules, mechanics, business & test (adopted 02/02/1997).

## **Article V – Uniforms & Emblem**

- A. All members of NYSSOO shall wear the approved uniform of this organization. Failure to do so shall result in appropriate disciplinary action.
  - 1. The official uniform shall consist of heather gray pants (adopted 2012), powder blue pullover shirt w/navy and white trim & no logo/emblem (adopted 02/04/2001), plain navy blue or heather gray ball bag (adopted 2/2012), plain navy-blue plate & base cap (sized), black (all) shoes, navy blue or black socks [Feb 2023], and black belt (non-ornate buckle). The official jacket shall be navy blue w/white, navy & powder blue shoulder inserts (stirrups) – w/no logo or emblem. (2/2014)
  - 2. Local Chapters have the option of determining an alternate uniform for regular season games, provided all umpires on the game match [Official “state” uniform is “default” uniform]. (adopted 02/04/2001)
  - 3. The umpires attending the NYSSO State School can wear either navy blue pants or heather gray pants. (2/2012) The current official jacket or the former logo jacket are both acceptable at the school. (2/2014)

## **Article VI – Membership [Feb. 2024]**

- A. New Umpire – A member who was not rostered with NYSSOO in the previous year.
- B. Returning Umpire – A member who was rostered with NYSSOO in the previous academic year.
- C. Members must meet all other requirements/obligations of the chapter.

## **Article VII – Reimbursements of Funds**

- A. Any person engaged in official NYSSOO business will be reimbursed for:
  - 1. mileage at the IRS rate or its equivalent;
  - 2. meals where applicable;
  - 3. lodging where applicable;
  - 4. postage, duplicating service, office supplies, and telephone bills that have been submitted/approved by the Executive Committee.
- B. If they are not representing their local chapters at NYSSOO meetings, all officers and Executive Committee members will be reimbursed for mileage to said meeting.
- C. The State Clinician will be paid a fee for conducting clinics. Said fee will be determined by the

Executive Committee.

### **Article VIII - Negotiations**

- A. Chapters are responsible for the negotiations of fees with their respective sections.
- B. Each section will set the format that must be followed.
- C. If contract terms cannot be reached, the chapters agree to abide by Steps 1, 2, and 3 of the Officials Agreement with NYSPHAA.

### **Article IX – Probation, Suspension/Removal of a Member Chapter:**

#### **Procedures and Appeal**

- A. A certified letter or acknowledged e-mail (2/2013) sent to the local chapter regarding the decision of the Executive Committee within ten (10) days of the Executive Committee meeting.
- B. If dissatisfied with the Executive Committee's decision, the chapter must respond to the Chairman of the Executive Committee within (10) days by certified mail or acknowledged e-mail (2/2013) requesting a hearing before the Executive Committee.
- C. A hearing must be set up within 45 days of the appeal. At the conclusion of the meeting, a certified letter or acknowledged e-mail (2/2013) will be mailed within seven (7) days to the chapter regarding the final Executive Committee decision.
- D. If the chapter is still not satisfied with this "final decision", it must, within 14 days of receiving it, send to the President via certified mail or acknowledged e-mail (2/2013) a request for a hearing to be scheduled by the NYSSOO Executive Committee [Feb. 2024].
- E. At the general meeting the appeal will be made to the total NYSSOO membership. A majority vote of the membership will be taken. Within seven (7) days of the meeting, the President will notify the chapter by certified mail or acknowledged e-mail (2/2013) of the decision of the NYSSOO.
- F. The NYSSOO reserves the right to the decision of the final appeal.

### **Article X – Order of Business**

- 1. Introductions
- 2. Attendance Approved: September 10, 1977
- 3. Meetings Amended: January 21, 1986
- 4. Treasurer's report February 8, 1987
- 5. Committee reports February 7, 1988
- 6. Chapter reports February 7, 1993
- 7. Old business February 2, 1997
- 8. New business February 4, 2001
- 9. Elections February 4, 2008
- 10. Next meeting February 5, 2012
- 11. Adjournment February 3, 2013

## **POLICIES**

**Assignments:** Local chapters must service all levels of competition (e.g. JV & Modified, as well as Varsity). [Jan. 1982]

**NYSPHSAA Policies:** We abide by the policies that apply to all sports officials' boards. [Nov. 1982]

**Incorporation:** NYSSOO incorporated. [1982]

**Honorarium:** \$1600 – President



- (2024) \$500 - Vice-President
- \$400 - Treasurer
- \$400 - Secretary
- \$300 - Rules Interpreter/Chief Clinician  
(+ \$100 & expenses per clinic)
- \$250 - Webmaster

#### Umpire School:

- Local chapters will be assessed for “no shows”. [1988]
- Selection/Notification: June 12 – local chapter representatives contacted by President; July 15 – candidates’ names submitted (unclaimed “slots” disseminated); Aug. 15 – acceptance/directions forwarded to candidates. [1992]
- All chapters allotted 3 “slots”, but only the first two are guaranteed the third one will be on a first come first serve basis after the July 15<sup>th</sup> deadline. [2009]

#### Late fees for late rosters/dues

- after June 15 = \$25 assessment;
- after July 15 = \$50 assessment;
- after Sept. 1 = board subject to being placed on probation and their officials ineligible for State Tournament. [Feb. 1988]
- Chapters failing to have their yearly information in a timely fashion as outlined in Article V-B. shall be fined \$25.00

#### Uniform addendum:

- If a visible shirt is worn beneath uniform, it must be plain navy blue; a navy blue turtleneck is acceptable [Feb. 2022]
- “Dazzle” powder blue pullover is not acceptable. [Feb. 2001]
- “Poly-cotton” powder blue pullover - is not acceptable. [Feb. 2002]
- “State” uniform is to be worn at Regionals & beyond. [Feb. 2002]
- “Pro-mesh” plain navy cap is acceptable. [Feb. 2004]
- Long Sleeve uniform shirt allowed (partners must match) [2006]

#### Post-Season Play

- “State” uniform is to be worn at regional play & beyond. (2/2012)

#### Liability Alert Forms

- Highly recommended for use by local chapters. [Feb. 1990] The new insurance company form will be submitted to both NYSSO designee and the insurance company. [Feb 2016]

#### Rules/Mechanics Interpretation

- The final/ultimate authority for NYS High School Softball is the NYSSOO Rules Interpreter (i.e. they may be different from USA National Staff – e.g. position for base umpire with a runner on third only, pitcher must have “ball inside the glove”, etc.) [Feb. 1993]

#### Local Clinics

- Umpires who have attended NYSSOO Umpire School should be involved with their local chapters in presenting proper techniques of umpiring [Feb. 1996]; and the local chapter’s chief clinician and/or rules interpreter should attend the annual state meeting. [Feb. 1998]

#### Territorial Rights

- Local Chapters shall retain the rights to the schools granted at the time of their acceptance into this



organization. New rights/transfer of existing rights will be decided through a process similar to that established for gaining membership (e.g. Article III, B-1, 2. [clarified – Feb. 1997/amended 2/2019]

- For tournaments, primary rights are granted to the chapter within whose recognized boundaries the tournament is being played – the chapter w/primary rights would have the option of allowing into the tournament officials from the other chapters who normally service the participating schools. [clarified – Feb. 2006]

#### Uniforms

- Local chapters should monitor their officials' uniforms, NYSSOO Clinicians and/or officers will alert chapter of uniform code violations by members at NYSSOO functions (e.g. regionals, and state tournament) The chapter will have 30 days to respond to the NYSSO President. [Feb. 1999]

#### Due Process in Local Constitution/Bylaws

- Each chapter must have due process in their Constitution and Bylaws. Due process must contain a final appeal directed to the Vice President of NYSSO and then heard by and decided on by the NYSSO Executive Board.
- By March 1, 2016 each board must provide proof that their Constitution and Bylaws contain due process with a final appeal to NYSSO Vice President. [Feb. 2015]

#### Virtual Meetings

- Chapters have the option to conduct their meetings/clinics/classes through a virtual format. [Feb 2021]