



ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

Preamble

NDSA recognises the importance of providing a safe and enjoyable environment for all those who participate in softball.

NDSA does not tolerate abuse in any of its forms, and has developed this policy to clearly outline the processes and penalties to be applied.

This policy is to be read and applied, where applicable, in conjunction with the NDSA and Softball NSW Codes of Conduct/Ethics, Member Protection Policy and NDSA Constitution and Administration Rules.

Objective

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Remove personal abuse and unsportsmanlike behaviour from all aspects surrounding the game of softball
- Protect all participants from exposure to such behaviour
- Provide a consistent application of processes and penalties for breaches to the Codes of conduct/Ethics.

Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to:

- Administrators of softball in District Association and Club level, be they employed or volunteer
- Players in activities and events held by or under the auspices of Softball NSW and member District Associations or Clubs
- Coaches of teams and players in activities and events held by or under the auspices of Softball NSW and member District Associations or Clubs
- Umpires of games in activities and events held by or under the auspices of Softball NSW and member District Associations or Clubs
- Managers of teams participating in activities and events held by or under the auspices of Softball NSW and member District Associations or Clubs
- Scorers of teams participating in activities and events held by or under the auspices of Softball NSW and member District Associations or Clubs
- Registered participants when involved as a spectator of games in activities and events held by or under the auspices of Softball NSW and member District Associations or Clubs
- Spectators of games in activities and events held by or under the auspices of Softball NSW and member District Associations or Clubs

Definitions

“Match”	A match is defined as an officially organised softball game that is part of a schedule, roster or draw regardless of competition level that the player would normally or had normally participated in.
“Official”	Is any person appointed to an official position of Softball NSW its Affiliated or Member District Association or their registered Clubs.
“Registered Participant”	Is any person registered with Softball NSW through their club, District Association of Softball NSW.
“Spectator”	A person observing a game of softball or its associated activities including training, from a position in the immediate vicinity (defined as within ear shot) of those activities.

Policy

A registered participant in organised softball within NSW or any spectator will not indulge in any unsportsmanlike behaviour towards another participant or spectator involved in a recognised Softball activity including organised training and will adhere to the relevant Code of Conduct/Ethics And Member Protection Policy.

Unsportsmanlike behaviour will include, but not limited to:

- Verbal abuse and threats
- Physical abuse and/or insults
- Discrimination
- Harassment
- Making derogatory statements or gestures
- Cheating
- Visible dissention of a decision of an umpire or official in an unsportsmanlike manner
- Equipment Abuse

(NOTE: Unsportsmanlike behaviour applies to both the instigation of and response to any incident)

Categories of Offence & Penalty

Unsportsmanlike behaviour has been broken up into a number of categories of violation to determine the most appropriate penalty to be applied for breaches to this policy. These penalties may change at the discretion of the Board. Applicable penalties (match suspensions) for each category of offence are also shown.

These categories are:

Category of Violation	Incident	Penalties		
		1 st Offence	2 nd Offence	3 rd Offence
P1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of audible * foul language Disputing judgement of decision of an umpire Minor Equipment Abuse Display of inappropriate behaviour Frivolous complaints (first incident) 	Warning to 2 match	1 match to 3 match	2 match to 3 match
P2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rough play, barging, pushing, etc. Displays of inappropriate aggressive behaviour Disparaging or insulting remarks and/or use of foul language directed toward another player/official/umpire Answering back an umpire Failing to carry out a lawful direction of an umpire 	1 match to 3 match	2 match to 4 match	3 match to 6 match
P3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answering back an umpire on multiple occasions Abusing an umpire or official Abusing another player Deliberately barging with force Displays of excessive aggressive behaviour Frivolous complaint (second and further incidents) Major Equipment abuse 	2 match to 4 match	4 match to 6 match	6 match to 8 match
P4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fighting after being provoked Provoking a fight but no further involvement 	3 match to 5 match	6 match to 8 match	12 match to 15 match
P5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provocation and/or involvement in physical violence Threatening an umpire, official, player or spectator 	6 match to 15 match	Full Year	Full Year or refer Tribunal
P6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physically attacking an umpire, official, player or spectator 	1 year	1 – 2 years	2 years or refer Tribunal
P7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Melee* 	\$1000 fine per club involved	\$2000 fine per club involved	\$5000 fine per club & refer to tribunal
P8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other as determined by SNSW Board/Staff 			

- Note 1: Melee involves multiply players per team involved in the incident
- Note 2: Any suspension applies to the next match/s which the offender would otherwise normally have participated in (i.e. grade registered in) regardless of level of competition including representative
- Note 3: Note special provisions apply in relation to offences involving trainee and club appointed (non-accredited) umpires and junior and/or trainee officials (eg coaches, scorers)
- Note 4: 'Audible' means able to be **clearly** heard by spectators

Process and Handling:

1 On Field (The Game) Incidents

Team Members (Players and Officials): The incident is to be reported to the UIC on the day of the incident. A written incident report is to be submitted to the NDSA board within 48hrs of the incident.

Other Official or Umpire: The incident it to be reported to the UIC on the day of the incident. A written incident report is to be submitted to the NDSA Board within 48hrs of the incident.

Special Circumstances – Junior/Trainee/Junior Club Appointed (Non-accredited) Umpire

And Junior Trainee and Junior Officials (Coaches, Scorers, etc.)

NDSA does not tolerate abuse of trainees and junior club appointed (non-accredited) umpires, nor junior and/or trainee officials participating in softball in any capacity. For incidents of abuse involving a junior, trainee umpires and officials, the penalties prescribed above are doubled and the first offence for P1 is a minimum of 1 subsequent match.

2 Off Field (Non Game) Incidents

Registered Participant: Any person witnessing or aggrieved by any unsportsmanlike acts or alleged breaches of codes of conduct/ethics by any registered participant shall report the incident to:

A The NDSA Executive Officer for incidents at the local level and/or

B SNSW General Manager (including incidents relating to SNSW personnel including representative team/squad members) and/or

C SNSW Representative for incidents at a State Championship or SNSW conducted events.

Such report should be lodged immediately in person or in writing to the relevant authority. On receipt of the report an enquiry will be undertaken by a person appointed by the NDSA Board, SNSW General Manager or at a SNSW Event, undertaken personally by the SNSW Representative. A report is to be provided by the relevant authority and the offending party together with any recommendations and/or penalties to be applied.

Parents and Spectators: Any person witnessing or aggrieved by any unsportsmanlike acts or alleged breaches to the codes of conducts/ethics, by any spectator may report the incident to the NDSA official on duty immediately upon witnessing the incident.

3 Harassment/Discrimination Incidents

A person who is aggrieved by the actions of another person in terms of harassment or discrimination shall lodge a complaint as per the procedures set out in the SNSW Member Protection Policy.

Disputing an Umpire's Decision

Disputing an umpire's decision is not permitted in any circumstances. Questions on interpretation should be quickly resolved or a protest entered. Protracted haggling about interpretation is also not permitted.

Special Penalty – Trainee and Junior Club Appointed (non-accredited) Umpires

If a team member disputes the decision of a Trainee or Junior Club Appointed Umpire, a Category P2 penalty is applied.

Querying an Application of the Rules

If a team coach believes a decision regarding an application of a rule is incorrect, he/she may lodge an 'intent to Protest' in accordance with Rule 11 of the ASF Rule Book and/or the NDSA relevant Competition Rule.

If an umpire is of the opinion that he/she may have made an error, they may seek assistance from the other umpire/s on the game and if necessary, reverse the previous decision.

The process to lodge an 'Intent to Protest' is as follows:

The Coach must request "time" and approach the Plate Umpire for formal notification. The Plate Umpire must grant 'time' at an appropriate time in play and follow the procedures as set out in the ASF Rule 11 or the NDSA Competition Rule. Another umpire and/or opposition team official must be in attendance to witness the notification of 'Intent to Protest'.

Trainee Umpire – Mentoring

A trainee umpire must have an accredited umpire or UICI (mentor), in attendance at a match either on or off the field to provide the necessary support to enable them to learn and develop without the pressure of being 'left alone' to deal with situations out of their level of experience.

The 'mentor' umpire/official may enter the field of play to assist and/or apply a correct rule/process in the best interests of the game and the trainee umpire. This should only be done in circumstances where the trainee umpire is 'out of their depth' and in danger of being overwhelmed by the situation. The trainee umpire may seek advice from the 'mentor' at any time during a match.

Acknowledge and Acceptance

Where a person is reported for an offence under the parameters contained within this document, he/she may desire to accept automatic penalty (as prescribed within the penalties) without a hearing or appeal. The person must acknowledge written acceptance of the incident and the resulting penalty. The NDSA Board must receive this notification no later than 24 hours following advice of the Commissioner's decision regarding the offence and accompanying penalty.

Appeal

Appeals against penalties must be lodged with NDSA within 24 hours of receiving the penalty. A person will remain suspended until the appeal against such finding has been adjudicated upon.

Serving of Penalties

Penalties apply to the next match/s which the offender would otherwise normally have participated in regardless of level of competition. This includes when a person is duel registered within one

association, plays in more than one association (home association and permit association/s) and included NSW/District Association representation.

Transfer of Penalties

Any penalty invoked by NSW or a member of NDSA is transferable to another. Where a player clears, transfers or permits to another State or District Association, a check must be completed on existing penalties during the clearance/transfer/permit NOT served at one association will be deemed to apply to the next association and the person under suspension must not be permitted to participate until the full suspension has been served.

Penalty: An additional eight (8) match suspension, \$500 fine to the suspended member, \$500 fine to the Club plus forfeit of the game/s points, which knowingly permits a person to participate whilst under suspension.

Register of Suspension/Penalties

NDSA must maintain a register of penalties or suspensions which is to detail person's full name and address, the category of offence, penalty invoked, the date invoked and the date the penalty will be served out.

A person's record will be cleared after the following time has been served:

Suspension from 0 – 4 matches	5 years from completion of last penalty served
Suspension from 6 - 12 matches	5 years from completion of last penalty served
Suspension for 1 year and above	7 years from completion of last penalty served

If a person re-offends after his/her record has been cleared, it will be reactivated from the time the new penalty is applied.

Note: A person's file on the register will remain active for all time.

Unfair Action

Where an official or umpire has, in the opinion of the coach, team, club official, not adjudicated or administered fairly than a complaint may be lodged with NDSA Executive Officer for investigation and, if necessary, further action.

Frivolous or Malicious Complaints

Upon investigation of a complaint, should the person conducting the complaint find that it is frivolous, a warning will be given in the first instance. If a complaint is deemed to be malicious the person making the complaint shall be brought to appear before the NDSA Tribunal or Board.

