



SOUTH FLORIDA AMATEUR ATHLETICS ASSOCIATION
Fort Lauderdale, FL

ETHICS POLICY

INSTRUMENTS OF GOVERNANCE
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REVISED

THE ETHICS POLICY OF THE
SOUTH FLORIDA AMATEUR ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

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SECTION ONE

Purpose

1.01 Purpose of Ethics Policy: Playing softball and attending SFAAA functions as a SFAAA member is a privilege. As part of that privilege, each member should be responsible for his/her own ethical behavior and the display of good sportsmanship. To ensure that all members can attend any SFAAA Function in a competitive yet enjoyable environment, this policy identifies the behavior that has been defined as unacceptable and which may be reported and investigated as an ethics violation. This policy also defines the associated penalties should an offending member be found to be in violation.

SECTION TWO

SFAAA Functions

2.01 SFAAA Functions: An SFAAA Function is defined as any of the following, but is not limited to participation or attendance in:

- A. SFAAA league games.
- B. SFAAA approved after game parties.
- C. SFAAA picnics or other social events.
- D. Team or SFAAA fundraisers.
- E. World Series tournaments whenever a member is representing the SFAAA.
- F. Non World Series tournaments whenever a member is representing the SFAAA.

2.02 Spectators: While the Association appreciates non-playing members enjoying the game play, the spectators will be held to a standard of conduct consistent with good sportsmanship. If inappropriate behavior of fighting or verbal abuse hinders game play, the umpire can give verbal warning to the manager of the team in which the spectator is supporting. If the conduct continues, the spectator will be asked to leave the park.

SECTION THREE

Ethics Violations

3.01 Unsportsmanlike Conduct: Acts of unsportsmanlike conduct shall include, but not be limited to:

- A. Unwarranted profanity or profane gestures.
- B. Unnecessary throwing of objects in anger or retaliation.

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- C. Unsolicited demeaning or prejudicial comments, or derogatory slurs, directed at SFAAA members, umpires, park staff, Board member, or spectator.
- D. Harassing or intimidating SFAAA Board members.
- E. Harassing, intimidating, or arguing with umpires or park staff.
- F. Harassing or intimidating SFAAA members by Board members.

3.02 Physical Fighting: Defined as unsolicited physical contact, which includes but is not limited to pushing, shoving, or striking another SFAAA member, umpire, park staff, Board member, or spectator. If found guilty of Physical Fighting, an SFAAA member will be suspended for a minimum of five games.

3.03 Failure to return team debts or team property: Upon leaving a team, SFAAA members are required to return the items listed below. Failure to do so will result in an automatic suspension from the Association until such time the items are returned.

- A. Team debts: Any monies belonging to the team that were acquired during a team fundraiser, as a gift or donation, or fees paid by the team members.
- B. Team property: Team property shall include the items below, provided that such items were purchased with team funds.
 - 1. Uniforms: For the purpose of the SFAAA Ethics Policy, a team uniform shall consist of a team's jersey, hat, shorts, and pants. If an Association member is in possession of more than one uniform, all uniforms must be returned.
 - 2. Team scorebook.
 - 3. Team equipment such as bats, softballs, training guides, or gloves.
 - 4. Any other items not returned including, but not limited to, bat bags, jackets, belts, socks, or shoes will not be subject to an automatic suspension unless a team can provide written documentation with the member's signature acknowledging that he or she was aware that such items were to be considered as team property.

3.04 Misappropriation of Funds: Defined as the misuse, embezzlement, or theft of team or SFAAA funds by any Association or Board member.

SECTION FOUR

Reporting Ethics Violations

4.01 Reporting an Ethics Violation: Any SFAAA member in good standing can report an Ethics Violation as defined in this Policy. Reported violations must be done in writing or email format. No verbal report will be accepted. The violation should address the type of Ethics Violation and the supporting facts that are available at the time the violation is reported. The violation can be reported to any active SFAAA Board member or the Ethics Committee Chairperson.

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- 4.02 Timeframe to report an Ethics Violation:** When practical, an Association member shall report Ethics Violations within the following deadlines:
- A. Unsportsmanlike and Physical Fighting violations: Within 48 hour after becoming aware of the incident.
 - B. Team debts or team property violations: Within 180 calendar days of the member leaving their team.
 - C. Misappropriation of Funds: No reporting deadline.
- 4.03 Ethics Incident Report (EIR):** The Ethics Committee Chairperson shall open an Ethics Incident Report within 48 hours of being notified of a reported Ethics Violation and also within that time frame, notify the SFAAA Board members that an EIR has been opened.
- 4.04 Ethics Committee:** The Ethics Committee shall make every effort to review the incident after taking a statement from the accused member and if determined to be a violation as defined by this policy, complete the investigation in a timely manner, not to exceed ten calendar days. If circumstances such as NAGAAA or ASANA issues prevent the committee from completing their review within that time, the Committee Chairperson will notify the involved parties and the SFAAA Board Chairperson within 24 hours.
- 4.05 Conflict of Interest:** It should be noted that no member of the Ethics Committee will be permitted to vote in any offense involving themselves or their team.
- 4.06 Ethics Violation Ruling:** It is the responsibility of the Ethics Committee to check previous infractions to verify the appropriate level of the penalty (if any). The disciplinary action or dismissal of the violation determined by the Ethics Committee will be recorded on the Ethics Incident Report (EIR) and will be communicated to the SFAAA Board as a recommendation for action.
- 4.07 Final Resolution:** The SFAAA Board shall review any recommendation for action submitted by the Ethics Committee and make a final ruling within 48 hours of receiving such recommendation. The Board may overturn the ruling from the Ethics Committee only if it finds that the Ethics Committee has failed to follow the proper procedures as defined by the SFAAA Ethics Policy. The SFAAA Chairperson will then notify all parties involved of the final ruling and any penalties levied.

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SECTION FIVE

Penalties for Ethics Violations

5.01 *Recommended Penalties:* The following penalties for each Ethics Violation are merely the recommended penalties for each level of offense. Depending upon special or unusual circumstances regarding the reported Ethics Violation and any supporting evidence such as statements from umpires, members, and/or witnesses, the Ethics Committee may impose lesser or more severe penalties not to exceed the severity of penalties as defined in this Ethics Policy.

- A. First Offense: Verbal/Written warning.
- B. Second Offense: One game suspension of their team's next scheduled game.
- C. Third Offense: Five game suspension of their team's next five scheduled games and review member's eligibility to play in the World Series. The Ethics Committee will make the determination if suspension should carry over to the following season, if the current season ends before a member's game suspension is completed.
- D. Fourth Offense: One calendar year suspension from the date of offense.
- E. Fifth Offense: Lifetime expulsion from the SFAAA.

5.02 *Suspensions:* The Ethics Committee will make the determination if a suspension should carry over to the following season, if the current season ends before a member's game suspension is completed.

5.03 *Out-of-Town Tournaments:* Suspensions do not apply to out-of-town tournaments other than the World Series.

5.04 *World Series:* If found guilty of the Physical Fighting Ethics Violation, the Ethics Committee will review and recommend to the Board if the member should be eligible for the World Series.

5.05 *NAGAAA and ASANA:* If an Association member is suspended for a minimum of one year by the SFAAA, the Association may request that said member also be suspended from NAGAAA or ASANA.