

Provincial Women's Softball Association Policy on Participation in Non-Sanctioned Softball

Introduction

1. The P.W.S.A.'s Board of Directors is responsible to its member clubs and associations. The Board has the authority to take all action as it may deem necessary in the best interests of the organization.
2. The P.W.S.A. is aware that there are groups looking to expand their non-sanctioned softball operations beyond "out of season" operations and into year-round operations that would directly compete with the P.W.S.A.'s sanctioned activities.
3. The P.W.S.A. has had no issue with non-sanctioned operators providing programming out of season provided such programming does not interfere with P.W.S.A.-sanctioned sanctioned softball activities.
4. However, with the expansion into year-round activities, the P.W.S.A. has an obligation to protect its member associations and clubs with respect to any operators who may choose to opt out of the P.W.S.A.'s rules and procedures to the detriment of the P.W.S.A.'s member associations and clubs.
5. The P.W.S.A. is fully within its rights to enact policies, rules, and procedures to protect its member clubs and associations.

A Commitment to Community-Based Softball

6. The P.W.S.A. and Softball Ontario share a commitment to community-based softball.
7. Other non-sanctioned operators have a different vision. That's fine. Those who choose to opt out of P.W.S.A.-sanctioned softball have every right to do so. The P.W.S.A. is not denying anybody the right to choose whichever path they believe is best for them.

8. However, those who pursue and participate in that different vision are making a choice.

9. The P.W.S.A.'s position, supported by Softball Ontario, is clear. You can't participate in or be a part of something that is harming the P.W.S.A. and its member clubs and associations, and support that other system, and then at the same time expect to be eligible to participate in P.W.S.A.-sanctioned events.

Non-Sanctioned Organizations as “Not in Good Standing”

10. Accordingly, the P.W.S.A.'s Board of Directors shall have the power and the discretion to designate any such non-sanctioned organization as being “not in good standing” with the P.W.S.A. for such purposes.

11. This designation of “not in good standing” is not to be confused with the concept of a member of an organization not being in good standing under the organization's bylaws. Instead, this designation refers to a specific designation made by the P.W.S.A.'s Board of Directors with respect to a non-sanctioned organization and the consequences of participation in its softball activities.

Impact on Eligibility

12. Individuals (whether athletes, coaches, umpires, and volunteers, or others) who are determined by P.W.S.A. to have participated in softball activities at any time, whether in season or out of season, operated by or associated with a non-sanctioned organization that has been designated as “not in good standing” with the P.W.S.A., will not be eligible to participate in P.W.S.A.-sanctioned softball activities.

13. The period of ineligibility shall be one (1) year from the most recent date of any such participation.

Procedure

14. The P.W.S.A.'s Eligibility Committee, a committee of three (3) Directors appointed by the Board, shall have the authority and the discretion to designate a non-sanctioned organization as being “not in good standing” with the P.W.S.A. for these purposes.

15. The Eligibility Committee shall have broad discretion to make any such determination. Specifically, the Eligibility Committee shall be entitled to assess and

determine whether two or more groups are working directly, either directly or indirectly, to attempt to structure operations to evade the spirit of this policy.

16. The Eligibility Committee is expressly empowered to exercise its discretion where it believes that the spirit of the policy against in-season non-sanctioned softball activities is being violated through either direct or indirect collusion or cooperation between technical arms'-length parties.

17. The Eligibility Committee shall inform any individual believed to have improperly participated in non-sanctioned softball in writing (email is acceptable) of such allegation and shall give such individual the right to provide a written explanation and defence prior to making any decision with respect to eligibility.

18. Decisions of the Eligibility Committee may be appealed to the full Board. In the event of an appeal, the Board will determine whether the appeal is to be determined through an in person hearing or by means of written submissions.

19. Appeal decisions issued by the Board shall be final with there being no further right of appeal.

20. This policy and the specific procedure set out herein shall take precedence over any other policy or procedure relating to eligibility, sanctions, process, and appeals.

21. Notwithstanding the above, nothing in this policy prevents or restricts the P.W.S.A.'s Board of Directors from exercising its broad discretion to take whatever action it determines is required in the circumstances and in the best interests of the organization.

Conclusion

22. Community softball is the approved development path for participation in Team Ontario.

23. Significant resources are dedicated at the local community level across Ontario at all ages and levels to provide a place for children and youth to play the sport that they love.

24. The P.W.S.A. requires that its members and participants, including volunteers and coaches, adhere to appropriate codes of conduct, rules, and procedures, and that standard are met to ensure a safe and respectful sport environment.

25. The P.W.S.A. takes its responsibility to ensure that its participants operate within a proper safe sport environment very seriously.

26. Our softball community is strongest when working together. We understand that parents want what they think is best for their children. However, the P.W.S.A. has an obligation to protect all of its participants while growing the game of softball for all participants.

Policy Name: P.W.S.A. Non-Sanctioned Participation

Ratification Date: September 19, 2026

Review Date: September 2029