

2023 ECRSA Manual



ECRSA CONSTITUTION

The name of the league is the East Coast Rainbow Softball Association, hereinafter called the “League”. The purpose of the League is to operate as a non-profit organization and in particular to further the following objectives:

1. Provide and protect the opportunity for any individuals, including gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender persons and their supportive straight allies to play co-ed recreational slo-pitch softball in a friendly atmosphere, free of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, race, creed, gender and ability;
2. Foster, develop, promote and regulate the play of co-ed recreational slo-pitch softball and provide the proper safe-guards in accordance with the spirit of true sportsmanship; and
3. Undertake fundraising activities and other social events for the betterment of the community.

No member, group of members, or team has the right to use or register the name “East Coast Rainbow Softball Association” or “ECRSA” without the written consent of the full commission.

In the event of dissolution or winding up of the League, all of its remaining assets, after payment of liabilities, shall be distributed to one or more recognized charitable organizations serving the community of the Halifax Regional Municipality. This provision is unalterable.

ECRSA OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

1. MEMBERSHIP

The League shall consist of Members in the following categories who have paid the annual dues as decided by the Commission:

- a. Full Member, is entitled to participate as a regular player in league and play-off games.

Membership shall be valid from May 1st the current year to April 30th of the following year.

2. SPONSORS

The Sponsorship Committee shall solicit Team and League sponsors as approved by the commission

3. ANNUAL FEES

Annual fees afford the player entitlements of ECRSA.

- a. The annual fees for various categories of Membership and Sponsorship, shall be decided each year by the Commission and set out by the League. The annual fees of Membership, Sponsorship may not be used to subsidize tournament teams, however may provide seed funding for an annual tournament. Return of the seed money must be clearly reflected in a budget line item. These monies may only be used to benefit the entire membership of the league or be donated to the charity of choice.
- b. Annual membership dues must be paid before the commencement of the playing season
- c. At the discretion of the Commission, a member may request a sliding scale of payment based on income or personal circumstances.
- d. Any members whose dues are in, or should fall into arrears (returned cheques) shall have seven (7) business days to develop a strategy to manage the situation or forfeit their good standing and shall be removed from the membership roster, and may not play until they are re-instated in good standing.
- e. Annual dues are non-refundable.

4. VOTING RIGHTS

- a. Each full member in good standing shall be entitled to one vote.

5. ELIGIBILITY TO HOLD OFFICE

- a. Eligibility to hold office or serve as a Commissioner, except where otherwise specified in these Operational procedures, shall be limited to Voting Members of the League who are in good standing.
- b. During the term in office, Commission Members must be full regular members.

6. MEMBERSHIP TERMINATIONS

- a. Resignations – any member may terminate their connection with the League by sending their resignation, in writing/email to their Team Captain or a League Chair, and their name shall be removed from the membership roster
- b. Removal – any member whose name has been brought to the attention of the League Chair, in writing/email, on/for
 - i. charges of unsportsmanlike conduct, or
 - ii. conduct otherwise deemed to be unbecoming of a member of the League;may be removed from the league by the Commission.

6.1 Removal Process

- a. The Commission will seek representation from all parties concerned to after review the complaint. The member in question may have a representative of his or her choice present at the review. The Commission will hear both sides and make a decision based on statement of fact, context and circumstance.
 - i. Commission will notify the member(s) and team captain, in writing/email, of a decision to expel them from the league.
- b. The member will have 5 days to request a Special General Meeting for Member Appeal.
 - i. Requests received after the 5 day period will not be granted.

7. MEETINGS

- a. Meeting Types
 - i. Annual General Meeting
 - ii. General Meetings
 - iii. Special meetings
 - iv. Appeal
- b. 14 Days' notice shall be required for an Annual General Meeting, General Meetings, or Special Meetings.
- c. Appeal Meetings require reasonable notice
- d. The Commission shall determine the time and place of the Annual General Meeting, General Meetings, or Special Meetings
- e. An Annual General Meeting shall be held at the end of each season prior to the start of the new season.

- f. General Meetings
 - i. can be called by the Commission at any time.
 - ii. may be requested by the Members at any time.
- g. Special Meetings of the Membership
 - i. may be called by the Commission at any time.
 - ii. will be called by the Commission upon receipt of a petition signed by 10% of the Voting Members. A petition for a Special Meeting must include a Special Resolution to be voted on at the meeting
- h. A quorum at a General or Special Meeting shall be 10% of the total number of voting members.
- i. The accidental omission to give notice of a meeting to, or the non-receipt of a notice by any of the Members entitled to receive notice does not invalidate proceeding at the meeting.

8. THE COMMISSION

The Officers of the league shall constitute The Commission, and be titled Commission Members

- a. All commission members are voting members.
- b. All commission members are elected by ballot onto Commission by League membership at AGM. The Treasurer may be appointed by the existing Commission.
- c. Commission reserves the right to add and remove Commission members, through approved Commission motion, when determined in the best interest of Commission and/or League activities.
- d. Commission shall consist of no less than five and no more than fifteen members.
- e. Commission quorum is 50% of membership. No Commission or League decisions will be made without quorum.
- f. All approved commission documents (such as agendas, minutes, by-laws, responsibilities, etc.) will be made readily available and easily accessible to League membership through social media and the ECRSA website.
- g. Commission members, at the direction of the chair can create sub-committees within their portfolio.
- h. Commission Members shall assume office following the close of the Fall Annual General Meeting
- i. The position of Chair shall hold office for a period of one year. Chair-Elect will serve office for one year, and then assume the role of the Chair upon the beginning of the second year. The Chair may serve more than 1 term as long as the Chair-elect does not wish to progress to the Chair role.

- j. In the event that a Commission Member is unable to complete a term of office, or a Commission position vacancy is unoffered during the election period, the commission may appoint any eligible voting member of the League to hold office until the next Fall Annual General Meeting.
- k. Commission members are each expected to ensure that the league is a safe and inclusive environment to all members.
- l. The responsibilities of each position are meant that they are leading the coordination of those activities. All commission members are expected to assist each other as needed/requested.
- m.

Position	Responsible for leading the coordination of
Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Spokes-person (or delegates to others) for the league with respect to community events, enquiries etc. · Coordinates annual registration events, process and forms · Manages insurance process (commission and league if used) · Manages Annual Joint Stock application · Review and maintains Operations Manual (Operation procedures, regulations and Rules) · Acts as a “safer-space” liaison for the commission and league as a whole · Works with Commission to develop annual report for AGM
Chair Elect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Plans AGM, awards presentations (connects with team captains to ensures awards are selected) · Review SPN rules annually and communicates updates or changes to Commission/League membership as necessary. · Works with team captains and sponsors to ensure they are aware of schedule or schedule changes, handbook, rules or other issues. · Participates in agenda setting.
Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Sets, manages and makes recommendations about the budget and PayPal · Coordinates with bank to add/delete new signing members (Chair, Char-elect, Treasurer, and Secretary) · Provides regular financial updates to Commission/League · Manages Annual Joint Stock application · Develop and presents yearend balance sheet at AGM.
Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · maintains password and cloud storage accessibility · Monitors league inbox and responds to member requests accordingly

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Sets & distributes meeting agendas prior to meetings (with final input from Chair) · Create and distribute meeting minutes to Commission members · signing authority
Special Events Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Serves as point person between HRM, Pride, and other community groups. Builds relationships with the community to maximize visibility for ECRSA and LGBT sport. · Plans, promotes and publicizes WUYP · Manages WUYP registration. · Presents at least three charities to the commission eligible to be recipients of WUYP Charity Tournament funding and leads selection process, connects with the selected charity, coordinates charity related activities. · Develops and implements the ECRSA entry in the annual pride parade/festival. · Obtains permits for WUYP, Pride or Social events (Gaming, food, fire/police and pride entry). · Participates in the recruitment of individual event committee members.
Communications Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Manages website and league communications (WordPress, Facebook, Twitter) including scoring and schedule postings. · Ensures team results are collected and reported and on website. · Ensures adequate publication of league activities and works with Chair and Chair-Elect to maximize communication to the broader community and develop a communication strategy.
Logistics Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Annual and (as necessary) equipment inventory. · Develops the league <u>schedule</u> (regular, special events, tournament and post-season play) play (regular, post-season, and tournament play). · Performs light field maintenance and ensures fields are playable each week · Book fields and umpires for regular, post-season special event and tournament play, manages port-o-potty and annual inventory supplies. · <u>Equipment</u> (acquisition of new equipment, retirement or rotation of existing equipment, storage and transport, softball supply and field maintenance)
Sponsorship Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Leads the recruitment of team and league sponsors. · ensures sponsors are invited, recognized, and promoted accordingly at events and on social media

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · ensuring appropriate sponsor recognition during all league play and sponsor thank yous at year end · seeking out & fostering league sponsors & levels as projected in league budget
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9. DUTIES & POWERS OF THE COMMISSION MEMEBERS

- a. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the League and Commission.
- b. The Chair and Chair-Elect are entitled to vote at any League or Commission Meetings, however, they will vote last (Chair-Elect, then Chair). Where the Chair vote would create an even number of votes (potential tie), the Chair abstains.
- c. The Commission will decide the League playing schedule, decide procedures for the selection and management of teams and decide rules of play for the League.
- d. No Commission Member shall receive remuneration or other financial benefits for their services performed to the League, regardless of the type of service performed and must pay membership dues.

10. COMMISSION MEETINGS

- a. The Chair may call a meeting of the Commission at any time, with reasonable notice to all Commission Members.
- b. All resolutions moved at a meeting of the Commission require a majority vote of over 50% of the Commission members present to be passed.

11. TEAM CAPTAINS

- a. The number of Team Captains required for each season will be determined by the Commission
- b. Team Captains will be appointed by the Commission
- c. Team Captains are responsible for ensuring that they and their team members are familiar with, and abide by, the League Constitution, Operational procedures, league rules.
- d. In the event that a Team Captain is unable to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of the positions, the Commission may appoint any eligible Voting member of the League to the position of Team Captain.

12. REMOVAL FROM OFFICE/COMMISSION

- a. Any Commission Member or Team Captain whose name has been brought to the attention of the Commission, in writing/email, on charges of failure to abide by the League Constitution and Operational procedures, to adequately fulfill the duties and responsibilities of the position to which they were elected, conflict of interest, or conduct otherwise deemed to be unbecoming of a member of the League, may be removed from office by the Commission as set out in sections 6b (i-ii).
- b. Any Commission Member missing 3 consecutive Commission meetings will be removed from their position on the Commission but will remain a ECRSA member.

13. BORROWING POWERS

The League shall not exercise borrowing powers.

14. POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS

The League shall have no political affiliations.

15. CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

- a. Notice to propose a Special Resolution shall be deemed to be duly given if signed by a proposer and seconder, both of whom shall be Voting Members, and delivered to the Commission not less than 20 days prior to the Meeting, and the Commission has notified Voting Members (via mail/email) not less than 14 days before the General Meeting at which it will be dealt with.
- b. The Constitution of the League shall not be altered or added to except by a Special Resolution of the League passed by a majority of the Voting Members present at an Annual General, or Special Meeting.
 - i. Exception to this rule
 1. shall be updating the Section on the Rules of Order Section, to account for the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order,
 2. operational procedures and/or process may be changed by majority vote of the commission in the name of day-to-day operations of the league.
 3. changes in the composition of the commission to reflect the best interest of the league
 - a. Existing Commission roles can be merged or changed or made redundant/revived as determined by the commission members with the exception of the chair, chair-elect and treasurer position.

16. RULES OF ORDER

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (10th edition / www.robertsrules.com), where not inconsistent with these Operational procedures, shall be used, so far as applicable, at all meetings of the League.

ECRSA PROCESSES

FEES

In accordance with Section 3 of the Association Operational Procedures, the Commission has set the following annual fees:

MEMBERSHIP FEES

1. Full Member
 - a. Member of the League;
 - b. Entitled to one (1) vote during Annual General Meeting and Special General Meetings;
 - c. Eligible for regular league and play-off.
 - d. Fees
 - i. TBD each year

SPONSORSHIP FEES

1. Team Sponsor
 - a. TBD each year
 - b. Shall be in cash/cheque only, not in the form of in-kind
2. League Sponsor
 - a. TBD each year
 - b. Shall be in cash/cheque only, not in the form of in-kind
3. The Commission may determine other levels of sponsorship as required on fees based on in-kind donations, promotional value, etc.

SPONSOR BENEFITS

Team Sponsors

1. The name of the Team Sponsor will appear on its team jerseys, and on all game schedules, (electronic) communications, newsletters, and promotional materials.
2. Team Sponsor package:
 - a. Opportunity to add promotional materials to player packages;
 - b. Logo on website;
 - c. Two (2) complimentary tickets to the Annual General Meeting;
 - d. A commitment from the Commission to encourage members to patronize their business; and
 - e. Display of business posters/banners at tournaments and special events (PRIDE), and:
 - f. Other benefits as determined by the Commission.

League Sponsors

1. The names of League Sponsors will appear on all game schedules, (electronic) communications, newsletters, and promotional materials.
2. Each League Sponsor will receive:
 - a. Opportunity to add promotional materials to player packages;
 - b. Logo on website;
 - c. Two (2) complimentary tickets to the Annual General Meeting;
 - d. A commitment from the Commission to encourage members to patronize their business; and
 - e. Display of business posters/banners at tournaments and special events (PRIDE)

TEAM FORMATION AND MANAGEMENT

1. The ECRSA Commission accepts applications to serve as Captains for the upcoming season.
2. The Commission will determine the number of teams and the minimum number of players on each team based on the number of people registered prior to team formation.
3. Following the close of public registration (must be concluded by May 1st), a sub-committee containing members of the commission who are not also Team Members will be formed.
4. The subcommittee will form teams based on:
 - a. Skill rating of individual players creating as equal of an average skill level as possible for all teams.
 - b. Equal distribution of LGBTQ@+ community members.
 - c. Individual requests to play with another individual.
5. Team lists will be communicated to captains and players will be contacted with their team assignment and captains contact information.

Waiting List

1. Persons wishing to join the League as Full Members after the Team Formation must complete a registration form and submit this to the Membership Commissioner
2. Any person(s) placed on the Waiting List will be assigned to a team as soon as possible.
3. If necessary, a supplement Team-Formation Committee meetings may be held every two (2) weeks (during the regular season) or when the number of persons on the Waiting List is equal to, or more than the number of teams in the league.
4. Teams with the lowest number of players on the official team roster, at the time of the supplemental Team-Formation Committee meetings, will be prioritized first.

League Schedule

1. Where possible, the league schedule will be posted on the website with at least 4 weeks advance notice.
2. League games played on HRM fields are cancelled for weather related reasons in accordance to HRM policy. Games played on DND fields are not subject to HRM policies and as such the final determination of weather related cancellations is made by;
 - a. Commission member following an assessment of the field, or;
 - b. Umpire.

ECRSA LEAGUE RULES

The ECRSA rules document is a set of guidelines that indicates how games are to be played during ECRSA regular season and tournament play, as well as providing guidance on how administrative and disciplinary matters are to be dealt with. In an event where there is a matter not covered by these guidelines, the ECRSA shall defer, at the discretion of the supervising umpire, to SPN rules and regulations to determine the outcome of a play or disagreement.

This is a co-ed league; there are no gender specific rules.

Field of Play

1. ECRSA is responsible for providing a safety bag, mat, and two (2) bases.
2. If one of the base straps or spikes has been damaged and is not functional, the umpire and team captains shall confer and agree that there will be one play only at the base in question.
3. The home team is determined by league-issued schedule.
4. Each team member must wear league-provided team jerseys or, failing that, make effort to wear the same color as the rest of the team.

Bat Ruling

ECRSA generally endorses the ASA standard for softball bats (2004, 2008, and 2013), abides by the latest ASA banned bat listings, and also approves of the use of new thumbprint USSSA (u-trip) bats. However, the league recognizes the need to allow use of older bats which may not bear the ASA 2004 (or other date) stamp. The league also recognizes that, even on certified bats, an ASA stamp can (and eventually will) wear off. As such, teams are permitted to use ASA certified (stamped) bats and bats that are not stamped with the following understanding: if an umpire deems a bat to be doctored, damaged or otherwise suspect, at the request of a team captain or otherwise, the bat may be removed from play.

Special Lines

1. Commitment line will be twenty (20) feet from home plate. Once player crosses this line they may not return to third base. The safety line follows first base line to home plate to back stop, creating what is subsequently referred to as a safety zone.
2. A line may be placed two bat lengths (apx. 6 ft.) Behind the pitcher's rubber, measuring from the rubber, in a north-south direction. This is the maximum distance from home plate that a pitcher may begin his or her delivery.

Base Measurements

Unless otherwise dictated and agreed to based on field dimensions:

1. home to first 65 feet
2. home to second 91 feet 10 inches
3. home to third 65 feet

Gameplay

1. All games are to be seven innings in length.
2. All seven (7) inning games — max five (5) run rule per inning in effect until the seventh (7th) inning, which is an "open" inning. A 15-run mercy rule is in effect after five (5) complete innings.
3. There is a maximum 10-minute grace period within which a game must begin. Failure to do so will result in a forfeit for the team that is unable to start on time. This applies to all games throughout the year.
4. The league executive will strive to make a call on weather-related cancellations prior to the start of play on game day. If weather or daylight conditions change, (2) captains playing against each other reserve the right to decide if the game is to be played or not. Four (4) complete innings may constitute a completed game.
5. Maximum of ten (10) players on field; positionally, a team is required only to have a pitcher and a catcher.
6. The minimum number of players required to field a team is eight (8).
7. Home run rule: +2. One team may not hit more than two home runs total greater than the other team's total home runs. If a team hits a "third" home run ahead of the opposing team, it will result in the batter being called out. Runners do not advance.
8. No metal ball cleats allowed. Players caught using metal cleats will be automatically ejected from the game and, as that individual has been removed from the game and, thus, the batting order, each time that person is due to hit, it will be recorded as an out.
9. Infield fly rule is in effect at the discretion of the umpire.
10. If a pitched ball touches any part of the plate or the mat, it is a strike. The mat must be positioned flush to home plate.

11. If there are any incidents involving a player displaying or behaving with unsportsmanlike or otherwise inappropriate behaviour reported to the league executive in writing by a team captain or an umpire, that individual may be called before the league captains to discuss the situation and face any and all disciplinary measures deemed appropriate without notice.
12. The pitcher must make contact with the rubber during his or her delivery and must begin delivery from the rubber up to two bat-lengths or six feet in a north-south direction behind the pitching rubber.
13. Pitchers, catchers, other fielders and batters may choose whether or not they wear a mask/helmet while playing, however the ECRSA strongly encourages their use.
14. Sliding is permitted at all bases except home plate and first base. Any slides at home plate or first base will be an automatic out.
15. A player running home must run across the safety line indicated. Touching the plate or mat will result in an automatic out.
16. On a play at home plate:
 - a. the catcher must catch the ball and touch home plate, not the mat, to record an out.
 - b. if the catcher has part of their foot on the plate and the mat, the runner is out.
 - c. the catcher may only tag a runner to make an out at home outside of the "safety zone" between the commitment line and the safety line at home plate. Inside that zone, a tagged runner is safely awarded home plate.
17. If an injury occurs, the umpire in consultation with team captains will decide on a ruling. If an injury occurs and a player is removed from the lineup a team does not have to take an out when that player is due to hit.
18. A team captain may twice per game appeal a play when it is over. If this occurs, the umpire will call both team captains to discuss the play, and to decide a ruling.
19. There is no minimum number of innings that a player must play in the field in order to be eligible to play (as part of the batting order) during a game.
20. An overthrow that goes out of bounds from any location on the field shall result in base runners being awarded the base they are going to plus one additional base.
21. A player who is substituted for may not re-enter a game.
22. A runner can only be requested from first base. A base runner is not allowed to leave from home plate. The batter must be capable of reaching first base. At that time, after the play has stopped, they can request a runner. If the batter has been able to reach additional bases (second or third) they are expected to continue to run bases unless they have sustained an injury during that play which will be removing them from the game. Runners entering a game are to be last possible out in the line up.
23. In the event there is a question over a gameplay ruling that is not made clear in the ECRSA's house rules, the league shall default to the SPN ruling on the matter at the umpire's discretion.

Alcohol / Drugs

1. There is to be no alcohol or drugs consumed on the field of play. Off the field of play, if any player is reported to the ECRSA executive for consumption of or in possession of clearly marked alcohol/drugs that player will receive a warning for a first offence; for a second offence, the player will be referred to the league executive for a hearing and may be subject to discipline/suspension; the third such offence will result in the player being banned for the season.
2. Additionally, players are expected to abide by regulations set out by the landlords of the fields which the ECRSA uses. Any player reported violating these rules will be subject to the warning/meeting/banning process outlined above.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse, excessive foul language and/or verbal abuse, or behaviour deemed to be otherwise inappropriate that is reported by the umpire or a team captain to the league executive will result in a hearing with any player(s) involved for consideration of supplemental discipline.

Administrative

1. Players must be 19 years of age in order to play. Playing with an underage player results in the forfeit of any games in which the underage individual has played.
Note: players turning 19 during a season may be placed on a roster before turning 19 but are not eligible to play until they turn 19 years of age.
2. A team caught with an ineligible player will forfeit all games up to the point where the infraction was noted.

Regular Season Scoring/Standings Information

1. The following abbreviations will be used in standings:
GP = Games Played
W = Win
L = Loss
RF = Runs For
RA = Runs Against
P = Points
2. Regular Season Points:
Two (2) points will be awarded for a win.
One (1) point will be given for a tie game.
3. Teams ranked by:
 - a. Points
 - b. Head to Head
 - c. Plus/minus

League/Score Books

Each field/equipment bag will contain a league/score books. Each book contains a copy of the rules, league schedule, a roster of players and their emergency contacts, umpire payment tracking and scoring sheet. The book contains the game scoring sheets. At the end of each game, final scores are to be entered in the book and signed off by opposing captains/designates and verified by the umpire if necessary. Commission members will collect the scores on a weekly basis. The league/commission member who pays the umpire, signs the sheet, corresponding to the game to indicate this transaction been completed.

Tournament

Tournament format will be determined by the Commission year-to-year and shall be communicated to players by mid-season.