

# **BYLAWS OF MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF SOFTBALL OFFICIALS, INC.**

## **ARTICLE I. NAME**

Section 1.1. The name of this organization shall be the **Maryland Association of Softball Officials, Inc.** (hereinafter referred to as "MASO").

## **ARTICLE II. OBJECTIVES**

Section 2.1. The objectives of MASO are to deliver the highest quality softball officiating services in Maryland and the surrounding areas, covering all levels of competition from youth to collegiate play. To achieve this, MASO is committed to:

- A. Ensuring fair and consistent officiating in high school softball games.
- B. Providing comprehensive training, education, and evaluation for its members.
- C. Upholding professionalism, integrity, and sportsmanship among officials.
- D. Collaborating with local and state athletic associations to maintain compliance with established rules and guidelines.

## **ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP**

Section 3.1. Eligibility.

Membership shall be open to any individual who meets the following criteria:

- A. Is at least 18 years of age.
- B. Completes the Association's vetting process and required background checks.
- C. Maintains current registration by paying dues and annual fees as determined by the Executive Board and MPSSAA.
- D. Completes the annual rules clinic and passes the NFHS exam for softball officiating.
- E. Remains in good standing with the MPSSAA governing body for high school athletics or other recognized softball umpiring organizations.

Section 3.2. Forfeiture. The Executive Board may revoke an individual's membership for any of the following:

- A. Engaging in activities detrimental to the integrity of girls' and women's sports.
- B. Proven incompetence in officiating.
- C. Failure to maintain professional conduct in an educational environment, including inappropriate language, drug use, or alcohol misuse.
- D. Neglecting member responsibilities, such as attending and officiating assigned clinics and games.
- E. Violating MASO rules and regulations, including but not limited to:
  - 1. Failing to wear the proper uniform.
  - 2. Accepting officiating assignments from unauthorized sources.
  - 3. Accepting game fees not approved by MASO's Executive Board.

4. Failing to pay the required membership dues.
5. Missing mandatory meetings without an approved excuse from the Chair or Chair-Elect.

Section 3.3. Classes of Membership:

- A. **Active Member:** Fully certified umpires eligible to accept and officiate games with primary allegiance to MASO. To maintain an active status, members must:
  1. Meet MASO and MPSSAA membership eligibility requirements and remain current on all dues. Including successfully passing a background check and maintaining the validation card.
  2. Attend at least two (2) MASO meetings per year, with excused absences granted only by the Chair or Chair-Elect.
  3. Maintain voting privileges, provided all the above requirements are met.
- B. **Allied Member:** Fully certified umpires eligible to officiate games but with primary allegiance to another officiating board. To maintain allied status, members must hold a valid MASO and MPSSAA membership and remain current on all dues.
- C. **Lifetime Membership:** An honorary classification awarded by the Executive Board to individuals who have served MASO or its previous affiliates. Lifetime members are exempt from paying dues and are ineligible to serve as active members of the Executive Board.

Section 3.4. Dues.

Annual membership dues shall be set by the Executive Board and must be paid by the designated due date to remain in good standing. Members who fail to pay by the deadline will incur a late fee.

Section 3.5. Conduct and Discipline.

Members are expected to uphold professionalism and integrity. Any violations of conduct are subject to review by the Standards and Ethics Committee and may result in suspension or expulsion by the Executive Board.

## ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS

Section 4.1. Composition.

- A. The officers of MASO shall consist of the following positions:
  1. President
  2. Vice President
  3. Secretary
  4. Treasurer
  5. Chair
  6. Chair-Elect
  7. Assigner

#### 8. Executive Director

- A. Collectively, these officers shall be identified as the Executive Board.
- B. The President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Chair, and Chair-Elect shall be elected by the general membership and be voting members of the Executive Board.
- C. The President shall vote only in the event of a tie. The Chair-Elect shall only vote in the absence of the Chair.
- D. The Executive Director and Assigner shall be non-voting members of the Executive Board.

#### Section 4.2. Elections and Terms.

The method of selection and terms of office shall be as follows:

- A. The President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall each serve a two (2) year term.
- B. The President and Secretary shall be elected in odd-numbered years at the last scheduled spring meeting.
- C. The Vice President and Treasurer shall be elected in even-numbered years at the last scheduled spring meeting.
- D. The Executive Director shall be appointed by the President for a three (3) year term, subject to approval by the majority vote of the Executive Board.
- E. The Chair shall assume the duties of the position for a two-year term following completion of the Chair-Elect term and shall serve concurrently with the newly appointed Chair-Elect.
- F. The Chair-Elect shall be elected by the general membership for a two-year term and, upon completion, shall move into the position of Chair for two consecutive years.
- G. The Assigner shall be appointed by the Executive Board on an annual basis.

#### Section 4.3. Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy in the office of:

- A. President: The Vice President shall fill the vacancy for the remainder of the unexpired term.
- B. Executive Director: The President shall appoint an individual to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term, subject to approval by a majority vote of the Executive Board.
- C. Chair: The Chair-Elect shall assume the role for the remainder of the term, thereby vacating the office of Chair-Elect.
- D. Chair-Elect: If this office becomes vacant, the President shall appoint a replacement to serve the unexpired term, subject to approval by a majority vote of the Executive Board.
- E. Any Other Officer: The President shall appoint an individual to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term, subject to approval by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

#### Section 4.4. Duties of the Executive Board.

The Executive Board shall:

- A. Meet five times per year, with three meetings held during the season and two during the off-season, and additional meetings as necessary.
- B. Implement the rules and regulations approved by the general membership and take official action in emergencies between Executive Board meetings and general membership meetings.
- C. Act upon the vote of a simple majority of members present at meetings.
- D. Develop and present an annual budget for approval by the general membership, to be completed by the last general membership meeting of the season.
- E. Act on recommendations and provide guidance to all organizational committees.
- F. Establish a schedule for membership dues, including late fees, and determine the date on which fees are payable.
- G. Discuss and recommend game fees to the Executive Director.
- H. Conduct interviews for the position of Assigner.
- I. Determine whether to accept new members from other organizations based on information gathered during the vetting process.
- J. Appoint a Rules Interpreter(s) and conduct an annual review of the position.
- K. Review and ratify, as appropriate, actions taken by the President on an emergency basis.

#### Section 4.5. Responsibilities of Officers.

##### A. President

- 1. The President shall:
  - a. Call and preside over all Executive Board meetings.
  - b. Cast the deciding vote to break a tie in all Executive Board matters requiring a vote, based on the members present at the meeting.
  - c. Serve as an ex-officio member of all committees as necessary at the request of the Executive Director.
  - d. Act as the official representative of MASO, unless otherwise specified in these Bylaws.
  - e. Assemble a Standards and Ethics Committee as necessary.
  - f. Make rulings on matters of Association policy.
  - g. Attend preseason coaches' meetings.
  - h. Provide the initial agenda for review at least 48 hours prior to any Board meeting.
  - i. Chair the Appeals Board.
  - j. Meet with MASO's Executive Director and league representatives when issues arise.
  - k. Secure locations for all meetings.
  - l. Act on behalf of MASO in emergency situations.
  - m. Perform other duties as outlined in the MASO Bylaws.

##### B. Vice President

- 1. The Vice President shall:
  - a. Assume the duties of the President in their absence.
  - b. Possess voting rights in all matters presented to the Executive Board.

- c. Serve as Parliamentarian.
  - d. Work with the Instructor to secure locations for all training sessions.
  - e. Chair the Standards and Ethics Committee, if established.
  - f. Serve as an ex-officio member of all committees as necessary at the request of the Executive Director.
  - g. Vet and issue recommendations to the Executive Board for potential new members from other softball organizations.
  - h. Perform other duties as outlined in the MASO Bylaws.
- C. Secretary
- 1. The Secretary shall:
    - a. Record and maintain the minutes of Executive Board meetings.
    - b. Possess voting rights in all matters presented to the Executive Board.
    - c. Communicate meeting notices to Executive Board members.
    - d. Receive and distribute resumes of nominees to voting members prior to elections.
    - e. Arrange for the distribution and tabulation of votes.
    - f. Serve as an ex-officio member of all committees as necessary at the request of the Executive Director.
    - g. Perform other duties as outlined in the MASO Bylaws.
- D. Treasurer
- 1. The Treasurer shall:
    - a. Manage the receipt and disbursement of all funds in accordance with the Executive Board's direction.
    - b. Maintain accurate records of all financial transactions of the Association.
    - c. Prepare and submit monthly and quarterly financial statements of all MASO financial activities to the Executive Board.
    - d. Maintain financial records of MASO membership for MASO and MPSSAA dues.
    - e. Provide timely dues reports to the MASO assigner(s).
    - f. Collaborate with the Executive Director to develop the annual budget.
    - g. Perform other duties as outlined in the MASO Bylaws.
- E. Chair
- 1. The Chair shall:
    - a. Plan and oversee annual activities for the general membership to ensure officials are properly trained and certified.
    - b. Possess voting rights in all matters presented to the Executive Board.
    - c. Provide general membership meeting dates to the President to facilitate securing locations.
    - d. Maintain an updated roster of active members.
    - e. Represent the general membership on the Executive Board.
    - f. Serve as an ex-officio member of all committees as necessary at the request of the Executive Director.

- g. Organize and notify members of meeting dates and preside over general membership meetings.
  - h. Recommend candidate(s) for Instructor to the Executive Board for approval; the appointed Instructor will manage the training program.
  - i. Serve as a mediator between the Assigner and officials and between the Association and officials regarding professionalism.
  - j. Assist with record-keeping by tracking meeting attendance, test scores, and dues payments; members unable to attend meetings must notify the Chair in advance.
  - k. Serve as the liaison between the Executive Board and officials.
  - l. Enlist the Rules Interpreter to address rules-related questions.
  - m. Cast the official Membership Committee vote at Executive Board meetings.
  - n. Attend pre-season coaches' meetings.
- F. Chair-Elect
- 1. The Chair-Elect shall:
    - a. Assist the Chair in fulfilling their duties.
    - b. Possess voting rights in all matters presented to the Executive Board in the absence of the Chair.
    - c. Organize, chair, and establish a Playday Committee.
    - d. Secure a location for Playday and arrange for a trainer.
    - e. Arrange and coordinate field assignments and officials for Playday.
    - f. Serve as an ex-officio member of all committees as necessary at the request of the Executive Director.
    - g. Record minutes for each general membership meeting and distribute copies to all officials.
    - h. Attend Executive Board meetings.
    - i. Act on behalf of the Chair in their absence.
    - j. Assume the role and responsibilities of the Chair upon the completion of their term on June 1.
- G. Assigner
- 1. The Assigner shall:
    - a. Be appointed by the MASO Executive Board for a one-year term, which includes one sport season. Continuation in the role for subsequent seasons requires approval by a simple majority vote of the current Executive Board.
    - b. Serve in an advisory but non-voting capacity regarding any matters presented to the Executive Board.
    - c. Operate as an independent contractor and not an employee of MASO.
    - d. Conduct all duties in a professional and business-like manner while upholding the philosophy and Bylaws of MASO.
    - e. Maintain regular Monday–Friday office hours to be available for calls from athletic directors and officials.
    - f. Ensure timely communication with schools and officials regarding all scheduling information and notifications.

- g. Maintain records of all assignments for both officials and school billing purposes.
- h. Be paid directly by schools for all initial assigning fees and game assignments.
- i. Be responsible for all expenses related to the operation of their office.
- j. Obtain schedules from schools on the "current service list" before the start of each sport season.
- k. Collect availability information from officials prior to the sport season.
- l. Assign officials to middle school, high school, and college contests upon request, ensuring that:
  - i. Only officials who have submitted the MASO registration form, paid all current dues, and fulfilled any pre-season requirements may receive assignments.
  - ii. Provide the highest quality officiating services to all schools, regardless of location or level of competition.
  - iii. Support the growth and development of officiating staff throughout the season.
  - iv. Consider special requests or critical concerns from officials or schools when making assignments.
  - v. Use non-MASO officials when necessary, making contacts through established assigners.
  - vi. Determine assignments based on officials' professionalism and ability to officiate in an educational environment.
  - vii. Attend a sampling of games throughout the season to assess game needs and evaluate officials.
  - viii. Report any questions, concerns, or game-related issues to the Chair within 24 hours.
  - ix. Refer requests for officiating services from new schools to the Executive Director.
  - x. Seek input and approval from the Executive Board regarding postseason assignments. To be eligible for postseason assignments, a minimum score of 85 on the state examination is required. For consideration for State Semi-Final or Final assignments, a minimum score of 95 on the state examination must be achieved.
  - xi. Discuss officiating service concerns or issues with the Executive Board.
  - xii. Attend preseason coaches' meetings.

#### H. Executive Director

1. The Executive Director shall:
  - a. Serve as the operational liaison between the Executive Board and the general organization, and serve as an ex-officio member of all committees as necessary at the request of the general membership.
  - b. Be a non-voting member of the Executive Board.

- c. Receive membership registration forms and forward membership dues to the Treasurer.
- d. Provide the Executive Board and Assigner with a spreadsheet containing:
  - i. Member names and email addresses.
  - ii. Arbiter status and primary board affiliation.
  - iii. MPSSAA and MASO registration fees paid.
  - iv. MPSSAA rules clinic attendance and exam scores.
  - v. Valid fingerprinting and background check status.
  - vi. Independent contractor form completion.
- e. Prepare financial statements in collaboration with the Treasurer.
- f. Prepare legal statements regarding MASO activities.
- g. Represent the Executive Board on matters related to game fees.
- h. Review requests from new schools seeking MASO services and make recommendations to the Executive Board for final decisions.
- i. In collaboration with the President, represent the Board on issues involving game management, policies, and procedures affecting officiating services.
- j. Lead the recruitment of new officials.
- k. Facilitate the marketing of MASO's officiating services.
- l. Provide guidance, direction, and general support to:
  - i. Chair
  - ii. Instructor(s)
  - iii. Rules Interpreter(s)
  - iv. Assigner(s)
- m. Receive a monetary stipend as determined by the Executive Board.
- n. Ensure the timely submission of completed MPSSAA registration forms to the MPSSAA office.
- o. Perform other duties as outlined in the MASO Bylaws or as assigned by the Executive Board.

## **ARTICLE V. COMMITTEES**

### Section 5.1. Authority.

- A. The President shall have the authority to establish ad hoc committees as deemed necessary to fulfill the mission of MASO.
- B. Leadership of any ad hoc committee shall be open to any MASO member in good standing.

## **ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS**

### Section 6.1. Requirements.

- A. A quorum for any general or special meeting shall consist of twenty-five percent (25%) of active and allied members, in addition to any Executive Board members present.

- B. A quorum for an Executive Board meeting shall consist of a majority vote of all members in attendance.

Section 6.2. Voting Requirements.

- A. Unless otherwise specified, the passage of any motion shall require a simple majority of those present and voting.

Section 6.3. Nominations and Election of Officers.

A. Regular Elections.

- 1. The regular election of officers shall take place at the final spring meeting.

B. Nominations.

- 1. Nominations may be made from the floor during the meeting or submitted via email for any elective office.
- 2. Email nominations must be received by the Secretary no later than one (1) week after floor nominations.

C. Voting and Election Process.

- 1. Officers shall be elected by a simple majority vote, in accordance with these Bylaws.
- 2. If no candidate receives a majority of votes, a runoff election will be held immediately between the two candidates with the highest number of votes.
- 3. If only one candidate stands for an office, that candidate shall be declared elected by acclamation.

D. Voting Method.

- 1. If multiple candidates are running for an office, voting shall be conducted by written ballot during the meeting.
- 2. Members unable to attend may submit absentee votes via email, which must be received by the Secretary before paper ballots are cast.

E. Term Start Date.

- 1. Elected officers shall assume their duties on June 1st of the election year.

## **ARTICLE VII. BUDGET AND FEES**

Section 7.1. Fiscal Year.

The fiscal year of MASO shall run from **June 1 through May 31**.

Section 7.2. Reimbursement of Expenses

Officers and other authorized MASO representatives shall receive reimbursement for approved expenses in accordance with policies established and communicated by the Executive Board.

Section 7.3. Compensation.

The Executive Director and hired MASO staff shall be compensated through salary, stipend, or hourly wage as determined by the Executive Board.

Section 7.4. Budget Development.

- A. A draft budget for the upcoming fiscal year shall be developed by the Executive Director and presented to the Executive Board.
- B. The draft shall specify:
  - 1. The dues payable by each class of membership.
  - 2. The nature and amount of compensation for the Executive Director and any employees or contractors of MASO.

Section 7.5. Budget Approval.

- A. The Executive Board shall review, amend as necessary, and approve the draft budget.
- B. Once approved, the budget shall be made available to the general membership for a vote via email or at a membership meeting.
- C. Approval requires a simple majority of those members voting.

Section 7.6. Approved Fees.

Only fees approved by the Executive Board shall be accepted by officials working under the MASO umbrella.

Section 7.7. Fee Proposals.

The Executive Board shall discuss and recommend fee proposals to the Executive Director.

Section 7.8. Representations of Fee Matters.

The Executive Director shall represent the Executive Board on all matters related to game fees.

## **ARTICLE VIII. AMENDMENTS**

Section 8.1. Amendment Process.

These Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of those present and voting at any regular meeting of MASO, or, if the vote is conducted by mail or email, by a majority of those members submitting completed return ballots to the designated Executive Board member by the specified voting deadline. For an email-only vote to be considered official, at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the voting membership must participate.

## **ARTICLE IV. DISSOLUTION**

In the event of dissolution and after settling all outstanding obligations, any remaining assets shall be donated to another officiating association that operates as a charitable organization.