

New York State  
SOFTBALL OFFICIALS  
Organization, Inc.

# CONSTITUTION

CONSTITUTION, BY-LAWS & POLICIES

NEW YORK STATE SOFTBALL OFFICIALS, INC.

CONSTITUTION

Article I – Name

The name of this organization shall be the New York State Softball Officials Organization, Inc., and is therein referred to as the “NYSSOO”.

Article II – Purpose

It shall be the purpose of this organization:

- A. To promote the international game of softball by a uniform interpretation of the rules.
- B. To maintain the standards of sportsmanship and integrity of the officials and the players.
- C. To provide approved officials for the NEW YORK STATE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (NYSPHSAA) softball program.
- D. To provide annual registration of softball officials through the NYSPHSAA.
- E. To provide through local chapters continuing promotion and maintenance of quality officiating.
- F. To follow the 5-Point Program established by NYSPHSAA.
- G. To uphold the contract between NYSSOO & NYSPHSAA.
- H. To sponsor state-wide clinics and/or interpretation meetings in cooperation with NYSPHSAA.
- I. To promote and protect the welfare of the officials and players with such safeguards as to warrant the maximum of public confidence in the conduct of the game, both on and off the field of play and in all relations with the public at large.

Article III – Membership/ /Chapters

The members of NYSSOO shall consist of the following local chapters of softball officials in New York State and any new groups of organized softball officials meeting provisions as outlined in this constitution.

Section I

Dutchess County  
Hudson Valley  
Rockland

Section VI

Western New York  
Southwestern  
Niagara Frontier

Section II  
Capital District  
Mohawk

Section VII  
Northern Adirondack  
Southern Adirondack

Section III  
Utica  
Tri-County (Syracuse & Oswego)  
Jefferson-Lewis  
Finger Lakes

Section VIII  
Nassau

Section IX  
Central Hudson Valley  
Sullivan County  
Kingston

Section IV  
Binghamton  
Endicott  
Elmira  
Finger Lakes  
Schohanna

Section X  
St. Lawrence

Section V  
Central Western  
Southern Tier  
Wayne County  
Genesee Valley  
Four Lakes

Section XI  
Suffolk

New York City  
New York City

New chapter will be added to this list at the time of their acceptance.

- A. Each local chapter is reserved the right to establish its own Constitution & By-Laws, provided such are in accordance with all the provisions set by the Constitution & By-Laws of NYSSOO.
- B. Any new organization group of softball officials in New York State may become a member of this organization subject to the following conditions:
  1. Make application to the organization President.
  2. Be approved & recommended by the Executive Committee.
  3. Be approved by all local chapters whose territory bounds that of the “NEW” board seeking approval.
  4. Receive a favorable vote of 2/3 the chapter representation present at a meeting of this organization.

5. Upon receiving a favorable vote of 2/3, the chapter will be granted a 1-year probationary status.
- C. Any chapter not complying with the purposes of this organization, failing to pay dues and/or failing to submit the proper roster on time may be subject to probation or suspension upon a majority vote of the Executive Committee.
- D. Any Chapter that works contests in violation of the contract between NYSSO & NYSPHSAA shall be subject to probation for one (1) year and denied representation in all post-season play for that period. Continued violations may result in suspension.

#### Article IV – Section I: Officers

- A. The Officers shall be: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Rules Interpreter/State Clinician.
- B. The Executive Committee will consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, three elected state representatives, **and the immediate past-President** (adopted 02/07/1993).

#### Section II: Nominations and Elections

- A. Nominations of officers shall take place at the winter meeting.
- B. The Nominating Committee will be appointed by the President.
- C. Elections shall take place at the winter meeting, and shall be by a majority vote of members present.
- D. The terms of office shall be as follows:
  - President – elected to a four (4) year term.
  - Vice-President – elected to a four (4) year term.
  - Secretary – elected to a four (4) year term.
  - Treasurer – elected to a four (4) year term.
  - Rules Interpreter/Clinician – appointed to a four (4) year term. Three state representatives shall be elected to a 3-year term each.
- E. New officers shall assume their duties at that conclusion of the last meeting of the school-year in which they are elected.
- F. In the event of a vacancy occurring in an office, an election for that vacant office will be held at the next scheduled meeting; the President will fill the vacancy in the interim.

## Article V - Representatives

Each Chapter shall elect or appoint one (1) representative to attend the state meeting of this organization; length of term to be determined by the local organization.

Chapter shall notify the Secretary at the winter meeting as to the name and address of their representative for the following year.

## Article VI – Meetings

The **NYSSOO** Shall meet **at least once a year** (adopted 02/07/1988).

- A. Date & time of the meetings shall be established by the President.
- B. Location of meetings will be determined by the Executive Committee.
- C. Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the Executive Committee or by petition of the representatives of at least seven (7) local chapters.
- D. 50% of the chapters must be present to form a quorum to transact organization business.

## Article VII – Voting Privileges

- A. Each permanent chapter shall be entitled to one (1) vote.
- B. Each member of the Executive Committee, not acting as a chapter representative, shall not have a vote.

## Article VIII – Parliamentary Authority

Questions of procedure shall be decided according to Robert's Rules of Order (Revised Edition).

## Article IX – Amendments to Constitution & By-Laws

- A. Written proposal for amendments to the Constitution must be presented at a business meeting of **NYSSOO**. Written notice must be verified e-mail notification and/or mailed notification [updated, Feb. 2008] to each chapter no less than 20 days prior to the meeting in which it will be voted on. A 2/3 affirmative vote of the chapters present is necessary for a constitutional change.

- B. Procedures for a change in the By-Laws are to be the same as in Article IX, A. “Amendments to the Constitution...” – with the following exception: a majority vote of the organization is necessary for a change in the By-Laws.

## BY-LAWS

### Article I – Duties of Officers:

#### Section I – Duties of the President:

- A. Preside at all meetings of **NYSSOO**.
- B. Act as the representative to the **OFFICIALS COORDINATING FEDREATION**.
- C. Appoint committees when necessary.
- D. Call meetings of the Executive Board.
- E. Authorize payment of bills as submitted by the Treasurer.
- F. Act as the representative to the NYS Softball Committee.

#### Section II – Duties of the Vice-President:

- A. Preside at meetings in the absence of the President; and fulfill all other duties of the President, acting in his stead as required by necessity.
- B. Act as chairman of the Executive Board.

#### Section III – Duties of the Secretary:

- A. Take attendance at all meetings.
- B. Record and distribute to all local chapters the minutes of all meetings.
- C. Maintain a directory of all chapter representatives for the current year.
- D. Notify members a minimum of two (2) weeks in advance of meeting dates.

#### Section IV – Duties of the Treasurer:

- A. Provide at the annual business meeting a summary report of the financial activities for the prior fiscal year.
- B. Make sure payments are approved by the President.

- C. Notify chapters who are delinquent in their dues.
- D. Collect dues **and** rosters from local chapters.
- E. Submit two (2) copies of rosters to **NYSPHSAA**.

Section V – Duties of Rules Interpreter/State Clinician:

- A. Attend meetings concerning approved rules.
- B. Interpret the approved rules for member chapters.
- C. Provide for distribution of information concerning the approved rules to member Chapters.
- D. Be responsible for giving clinics within the state when requested by member chapters or where designated by the Executive Board.

Article II – Duties of the Executive Committee

- A. Have power and authority over the affairs of the organization in the interim between meetings.
- B. Approve or disapprove a local chapter's application for membership.
- C. Approve presidential appointments.
- D. Call special meetings when necessary.
- E. Appoint Rules Interpreter/State Clinician.
- F. Determine whether a chapter should be put on probation and/or suspended.

Article III – Individual Members

Section I - Membership

- A. Each local chapter of this organization shall certify its individual members under the following classifications as established as established by **NYSSOO**:
  - 1. Active
  - 2. Associate
  - 3. Apprentice

- B. To be an “approved” member of an affiliated chapter in any established classification, a member shall have met the requirements of the “Five Point Plan”, as put forth by **NYSPHSAA**.

## Section II – Dual Membership

- A. An individual official may maintain membership with two (2) or more chapters if he/she is able to comply with the established requirements of said chapters.
- B. A dual member’s “home” or “parent” chapter is the local chapter where he/she is currently tested and rated.
- C. Disciplinary action or suspension of an individual member of **NYSSOO** shall be carried over to all chapters where he/she is affiliated.

## Section IV – Transfer

- A. An individual member in good standing may transfer to another chapter upon approval of said board. Notice of transfer intent shall be sent on the transfer form to the secretary of the new chapter.
- B. A member of an out-of-state girl’s softball officiating organization may transfer to a local **NYSSOO** chapter, providing his/her credentials have been approved by said local chapter.

## Article IV – Examination/Renewal Procedures

### Section I – Written Examination

- A. All individual members take the **NYSSOO** written examination yearly, prior to the beginning of the season.
- B. The **NYSSOO** examination is a closed book exam under appropriate chapter supervision.
- C. A maximum of one (1) hour shall be allowed.
- D. An individual must obtain a passing grade of 84% to remain and/or qualify for Active rating.
- E. Local chapters shall send all examination answer sheets to Vice-President by May 1 of that year. Copies of the written examination (i.e. question sheets) may be used at the discretion of the local chapter after all members have been tested.

## Section II – Practical Examinations

It shall be the responsibility of each local chapter to establish appropriate standards for renewing each individual member's rating.

## Section III – Meetings/Clinics

Local chapters will have a MINIMUM of 5 required meetings for all umpires covering interpretation, rules, mechanics, business & test (adopted 02/02/1997).

## Article V – Uniforms & Emblem

- A. All members of **NYSSOO** shall wear the approved uniform of this organization. Failure to do so shall result in appropriate disciplinary action.
1. The official uniform shall consist of navy blue pants, powder blue pullover shirt w/navy and white trim & no logo/emblem (adopted 02/04/2001), **official** navy blue jacket, **official sweater** (adopted 02/07/1988), plain navy blue ball bag, plain navy blue plate & base cap (sized), black (all) shoes, navy blue socks, and black belt (non-ornate buckle).
  2. Local Chapters have the option of determining an alternate uniform for regular season games, provided all umpires on the game match [Official "state" uniform is "default" uniform]. (adopted 02/04/2001)

## Article VI – Membership

- A. Apprentice member shall be that person who has 0-2 years experience, and:
1. has passed the written examination with at least 64%;
  2. has met all other requirements/obligations of the chapter.
- B. Associate member shall be that person who has:
1. a minimum of two (2) years experience, and;
  2. passed the written examination with at least 74%;
  3. met all other requirements/obligation of the chapter.
- C. Active members shall be that person who has:
1. completed a minimum of four (4) years of service;

2. passed the written examination with at least 84%;
3. met all other requirements/obligations of the chapter, or;
4. duly transferred from another recognized softball chapter where Active status has been properly attained.

#### Article VII – Reimbursements of Funds

- A. Any person engaged in official NYSSOO business will be reimbursed for:
  1. mileage at the IRS rate or its equivalent;
  2. meals where applicable;
  3. lodging where applicable;
  4. postage, duplicating service, office supplies, and telephone bills that have been submitted/approved by the Executive Committee.
- B. If they are not representing their local chapters at NYSSOO meetings, all officers and Executive Committee members will be reimbursed for mileage to said meeting.
- C. The State Clinician will be paid a fee for conducting clinics. Said fee will be determined by the Executive Committee.

#### Article VIII - Negotiations

- A. Chapters are responsible for the negotiations of fees with their respective sections.
- B. Each section will set the format that must be followed.
- C. If contract terms cannot be reached, the chapters agree to abide by Steps 1, 2, and 3 of the Officials Agreement with **NYSPHAA**.

#### Article IX – Probation, suspension/Removal of a Member Chapter:

##### Procedures and Appeal

- A. A certified letter sent to the local chapter regarding the decision of the Executive Committee within ten (10) days of the Executive Committee meeting.

- B. If dissatisfied with the Executive Committee’s decision, the chapter must respond to the Chairman of the Executive Committee within (10) days by certified mail requesting a hearing before the Executive Committee.
- C. A hearing must be set up within 45 days of the appeal. At the conclusion of the meeting, a certified letter will be mailed within seven(7) days to the chapter regarding the final Executive Committee decision.
- D. If the chapter is still not satisfied with this “final decision”, it must, within 14 days of receiving it, send to the President via certified mail a request for a hearing at the next regularly scheduled **NYSSOO** business meeting.
- E. At the general meeting the appeal will be made to the total **NYSSOO** membership. A majority vote of the membership will be taken. Within seven (7) days of the meeting, the President will notify the chapter by certified mail of the decision of the **NYSSOO**.
- F. The **NYSSOO** reserves the right to the decision of the final appeal.

Article X – Order of Business

1. Introductions		
2. Attendance	Approved:	September 10,1977
3. Meetings	Amended:	January 21, 1986
4. Treasurer’s report		February 8, 1987
5. Committee reports		February 7, 1988
6. Chapter reports		February 7, 1993
7. Old business		February 2, 1997
8. New business		February 4, 2001
9. Elections		
10. Next meeting		
11. Adjournment		

**Policies** [Dates of Promulgation]

Assignments: Local chapters must service all levels of competition (e.g. JV & Modified, as well as Varsity). [Jan. 1982]

NYSPHSAA Policies: We abide by the policies that apply to all sports officials’ boards. [Nov. 1982]

Incorporation: **NYSSOO** incorporated. [1982]

Honorarium: \$500.00 yearly to President. [Feb. 1987]

Updated [Feb. 2007]:           \$1500 – President  
  350 - Vice-President  
  300 - Treasurer  
  300 - Secretary  
  200 - Rules Interpreter/Chief Clinician  
  (+ \$100 & expenses per clinic)

Umpire School: Boards registering 50 or fewer = 1 “slot”; larger groups = 2 “slots”.  
Local chapters will be assessed for “no shows”. [1988]

Selection/Notification: June 12 – local chapter representatives contacted by President;  
July 15 – candidates names submitted (unclaimed “slots” disseminated); Aug. 15 –  
acceptance/directions forwarded to candidates. [1992]  
All chapters allotted 2 “slots” for “initial draw”. [1994]  
All chapters allotted 3 “slots” for “initial draw”. [2002]

Late fees: For late rosters/dues – after June 15 = \$25 assessment; after July 15 = \$50  
assessment; after Sept. 1 = board subject to being placed on probation and their  
officials ineligible for State Tournament. [Feb. 1988]

Uniform addendum: If a visible shirt is worn beneath uniform, it must be plain white  
(white turtleneck is acceptable). [Feb. 1989]  
-Made approved **NYSSOO** pullover jacket optional (umpire crews may “mix/match”  
w/button jacket). [Feb. 1996]  
-“Dazzle” powder blue pullover is not acceptable. [Feb. 2001]  
-“Poly-cotton” powder blue pullover - is not acceptable. [Feb. 2002]  
-“State” uniform is to be worn at Sectional play & beyond. [Feb. 2002]  
-“Pro-mesh” plain navy cap is acceptable. [Feb. 2004]  
-Long Sleeve uniform shirt allowed (partners must match) [2006]

Liability Alert Forms: Highly recommended for use by local chapters. [Feb. 1990]

Rules/Mechanics Interpretation: The final/ultimate authority for NYS High School  
Softball is the NYSSOO Rules Interpreter (i.e. they may be different from ASA  
National Staff – e.g. position for base umpire with a runner on third only, pitcher  
must have “ball inside the glove”, etc.) [Feb. 1993]

Test Answer Sheets: Along with “tally sheets” must be returned yearly to Vice-President  
(by certified or registered mail [Feb. 1997]); chapters not complying will have the  
following year’s test administered by NYSSOO Executive Board (at chapter’s  
expense). [Feb. 1994]

Local Clinics: Umpires who have attended NYSSOO Umpire School should be involved  
with their local chapters in presenting proper techniques of umpiring [Feb. 1996]; and  
the local chapter’s chief clinician and/or rules interpreter should attend the annual  
state meeting. [Feb. 1998]

Territorial Rights: Local Chapters shall retain the rights to the schools granted at the time of their acceptance into this organization. New rights/transfer of existing rights will be decided through a process similar to that established for gaining membership (e.g. Article III, B-1, 2, 4. [clarified – Feb. 1997] For tournaments, primary rights are granted to the chapter within whose recognized boundaries the tournament is being played – the chapter w/primary rights would have the option of allowing into the tournament officials from the other chapters who normally service the participating schools. [clarified – Feb. 2006]

Uniforms: Local chapters should monitor their officials' uniforms, NYSSOO Clinicians and/or officers will alert chapter of uniform code violations by members at NYSSOO functions (e.g. sectionals, regionals, state tournament, umpire school, etc.). The chapter will have 30 days to respond to the NYSSOO President. [Feb. 1999]

