

# T.A.A.F. SOFTBALL - 2023



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**PLEASE READ ALL RULES –THERE ARE IMPORTANT ARTICLES PERTAINING TO AGE DETERMINATION DATES, REGISTRATION DEADLINE DATES AND FEES.**

The following rules and regulations apply to all sports and all participants must meet these requirements. Unless a rule specifically names an exception for one of the divisions (member city, independent, affiliate, etc.), the following Sports General Regulations pertain to all teams and participants. See the specific sports sections for any special regulations that may exist.

**ARTICLE 1      RETURNING TEAMS**

1.1 All T.A.A.F. team champions (except youth basketball) shall be eligible to return to state tournament as defending champions provided they have not been reclassified and have the following minimum returning players:

SOFTBALL SLOW PITCH	10 PLAYERS
SOFTBALL FAST PITCH	9 PLAYERS
FLAG FOOTBALL	6 PLAYERS
BASKETBALL	4 PLAYERS
VOLLEYBALL	4 PLAYERS

**ARTICLE 17      SOFTBALL GENERAL RULES**

17.1 The official ball provided by the host city for local and state T.A.A.F. championship tournaments will be the officially marked T.A.A.F. ball. The ball must be factory stamped with the T.A.A.F. logo. T.A.A.F. logo softballs are available from the state office.

17.2 Rules governing all play will be those approved by the National or State governing body chosen by the host city with T.A.A.F. exceptions as approved by the Executive Committee.

17.3 No metal spikes will be allowed at any time in any slow pitch softball.

17.4 Teams shall be prepared for day and night play in state tournaments.

17.5 Drawings may be made beforehand to facilitate advantageous handling of newspaper releases and to assist in building up interest in the tournament.

.01 The date, time, playing rules to be followed and site of the tournament draw shall be published in the Tournament Information Sheet released to each member city.

.02 The draw shall be preceded by seeding the teams based on the order of finish at the previous year's T.A.A.F. state tournament.

17.6 The host city shall have the privilege of entering a host team when hosting the state tournament.

17.7 STATE TOURNAMENT DATES

**.01 All Adult Slow Pitch softball tournaments shall be designated State Invitational and may be scheduled at the discretion of the Host City.**

.02 State tournament host cities must notify, via packet or flyer containing pertinent dates, fees and other event information, all T.A.A.F. member cities, Regional Directors, Executive Board members and the T.A.A.F. State Office by the following deadlines:

Fall Season (Flag Football, Fall Softball, etc.)  
Deadline: September Annual Meeting

Winter/Spring Season (basketball, volleyball, gymnastics, etc.)  
Deadline: January - Winter Executive Board Meeting

Summer Season Sports (softball)  
Deadline Girls' Fast Pitch: January-Winter Executive Board Meeting  
Deadline Adult Softball: April – Spring Executive Board Meeting

17.8 The state tournament directors shall accept as many teams as their host facilities allow.

17.9 The affiliate division may have up to a sixty four (64) team bracket.

17.10 OFFICIAL GAME:

- .01 The tournaments will be double elimination, 3-game guarantee, or 4-game guarantee.
- .02 All state tournament games shall consist of seven (7) innings unless time limit and run ahead rules are in effect.
- .03 All games must be completed. In the event of rain or any other cause, which interrupts a game, the game must be resumed at the exact point where it was stopped.

EXCEPTION: In the event the tournament cannot be completed as scheduled, the Tournament Committee will ascertain the procedure necessary to determine the final standings.

17.11 RUN AHEAD AND TIME LIMIT RULES:

**.01 A time limit rule may be used in state tournaments as follows:**

DIVISIONS	TIME LIMIT
Adult Fast Pitch	1 hour 30 minutes
Adult Slow Pitch	55 minutes
Youth Fast Pitch	1 hour 20 minutes
Youth Slow Pitch	55 minutes

- .02 The run ahead rule used in State tournaments shall be that of the National or State governing body under which the tournament is being played
- .03 If a game is tied at the end of regulation play and goes into extra innings, the ball and strike count for each batter that comes to the plate will be the same as that used during regulation play; i.e. "one pitch" will not be used in extra innings.

17.12 UNIFORMS: All teams competing in state tournament play must play by the uniform requirements of the National or State Governing Body under which the tournament is being played.

17.13 DRAFTING PLAYERS: In the Adult and Youth age teams playing for the state championship may draft three (3) players.

- .01 The drafted players must be from a T.A.A.F. registered team,
- .02 The drafted players (Youth Divisions) must not have participated in championship play in another age division.
- .03 The drafted players (Youth Divisions) must be from the same city where the drafting team competed and qualified to advance to the state tournament.

17.14 In all adult softball classifications a player (man or woman) may play with any team as long as he/she resides within the boundaries of the state of Texas.

17.17 The host city shall state in their bid which National organization's playing rules will be followed for the softball state tournament(s) they are hosting.

- 17.18 If the team has not previously qualified, the winner of each T.A.A.F. state softball tournament shall receive a berth to an ASA Regional tournament, subject to approval by the team's ASA commissioner.
- 17.17 If available, an at-large berth to an ASA National Tournament will be awarded providing ASA Region 7 does not hold a regional tournament in that division and class. This berth is subject to approval by the team's ASA commissioner.
- 17.18 The Girls' Fast Pitch State Tournaments will be divided by age groups and divisions.

## **ARTICLE 18 WOMEN'S FAST PITCH**

- 18.1 A maximum of eighteen (18) players, including a playing manager and any drafted players, will be permitted on a team roster.
- 18.2 WOMEN'S FAST PITCH ONLY: The state tournament shall be an invitational tournament and any team properly registered may enter.
- .01 Each member city may send their teams directly to the state tournament. Regional tournament competition will NOT be held in this division.
  - .02 All teams must be registered and must have submitted their roster to the state commissioner's office by the June 17 deadline.
- 18.3 The National Governing Body (NGB) will determine foreign players' eligibility for Softball. To be eligible in T.A.A.F. softball:
- .01 A copy of any document required to be on file with the NGB for softball must also be filed with the T.A.A.F. state office.
  - .02 The same deadline date for filing with the NGB will also apply for T.A.A.F.

## **ARTICLE 19 MEN'S SLOW PITCH**

- 19.1 A maximum of twenty (20) players, including a playing manager and any drafted players will be permitted on a team roster.
- 19.2 CLASSIFICATION: Adult Slow Pitch shall have two (2) Classifications: Class D and Class E. The state tournament shall be an invitational tournament and any team properly registered may enter. A team shall be classified by the region or local athletic director according to the guidelines established by the National or State governing body under which that team plays.
- 19.3 HOME RUNS: Teams in each classification are restricted to the number of home runs allowed by the National or State organization's playing rules under which the tournament is being played.

## **ARTICLE 20 WOMEN'S SLOW PITCH**

- 20.1 A maximum of twenty (20) players, including a playing manager and any drafted players will be permitted on a team roster.
- 20.2 Adult Women's Slow Pitch shall one (1) Classification: Class C/D. The state tournament shall be an invitational tournament and any team properly registered may enter. A team shall be classified by the region or local athletic director according to the guidelines established by the National or State governing body under which that team plays.

## **ARTICLE 21 MEN'S INDUSTRIAL SLOW PITCH**

### 21.1 Eligible Teams

- .01 All players must be full time or part time employees of one company, of one city or county government, or of one military installation.
- .02 Players who do not meet the resident rule, including residents of Border States and Mexico may participate for their industrial team if they were current employees as stated above.
- .03 A player may play on his industrial team as well as any other non-industrial team, providing he meets the eligibility requirements to participate on his industrial team.
- .04 An industrial division team is restricted to hitting a total of six (6) unobstructed home runs in a game. The batter is ruled out for any excess of six (6) home runs per game.

21.2 The state tournament shall be an invitational tournament and any team properly registered may enter.

## **ARTICLE 22 CO-REC SOFTBALL**

- 22.1 A maximum of twenty (20) players, including a playing manager and any drafted players will be permitted on a team roster.
- 22.2 A twelve (12) and eleven (11) inch ball will be used. Men will hit the 12" ball and the women will hit the 11" ball.
- 22.3 The official diamond shall consist of sixty-five (65) foot base distance, fifty-foot (50) pitching distance and minimum 275-foot fence distance.
- 22.4 No metal spikes will be allowed at any time.
- 22.5 Rules regarding batting order, extra hitters or additional hitters, and defensive positioning will be determined by the National or State governing body under which the tournament is being played.
- 22.6 Co-Rec shall have one (1) Classification: Co-Rec. The state tournament shall be an invitational tournament and any team properly registered may enter. Three home runs will be allowed per game. Each additional home run will be ruled an out.

## **ARTICLE 23 GIRLS' - FAST AND SLOW**

23.1 Age classification division and age dates of eligibility will specifically align with Junior Olympic Softball Age Qualification as listed in current ASA Official Guide and Rule Book.

Exception: Gold Division (18 & Under Girls' FP Only).

- .01 Teams can have players residing from anywhere within the state.
- 23.2 A maximum of twenty (20) players in Slow Pitch and eighteen (18) in Fast Pitch; including a playing manager and any drafted players will be permitted on a team roster.
- 23.3 Girls' Fast Pitch will be divided into classifications as listed in the current year's National ASA Code and defined as such.
- 23.4 All Girl's Fast Pitch Division: Rules will be in accordance with the National ASA Playing Rules (including age classifications) as published in the current ASA Official Guide.

23.5 No Girls' division player shall be eligible who, during the current season, has participated in or is participating in a Women's Adult Softball League in the same sport division (fast or slow pitch). (EXAMPLE: An 18 & Under Girls' Fast Pitch player playing in a Women's Fast Pitch League).

Exception:

.01 If an individual TEAM does not have a league to enter in their appropriate age division, the TEAM will be allowed to play in an adult league providing it is the only available place for them to play.

.02 Prior to any local, regional and state deadlines, this team is required to register in the appropriate T.A.A.F. division (Adult or Girls') where they plan to participate during the championship tournaments.

23.6 The state tournament will be double elimination unless the chairman of the tournament and the commissioner agree to another type of tournament.

23.7 YOUTH TEAMS: All teams playing for the state championship may draft only three (3) additional players.

23.8 Girls' Church Slow Pitch Division, 18 and Under will have the same rules as Girls' Slow Pitch, but with church qualifications.

## **ARTICLE 24 MEN'S CHURCH SLOW PITCH**

24.1 The regular playing roster shall not exceed twenty (20) players, including a playing manager and any drafted players.

24.2 Men's Church Slow Pitch shall have one (1) classification: Men's Church. The state tournament shall be an invitational tournament and any team properly registered may enter. Home run rules will be determined by the National or State governing body under which the state tournament is being played.

# T.A.A.F. Manual of Procedures

## ARTICLE 2 GENERAL PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

No player shall be eligible to play in any T.A.A.F. sport unless the player meets all of the following rules:

- 2.1 Must be an amateur in said sport and shall receive no pay to play for any team. An amateur is defined as “one who engages in sport for pleasure and for the physical, mental or social benefits, which he or she derives from that sport and to whom the sport is nothing more than an avocation.”
- 2.2 Any player who has played professional sports shall be ineligible to participate in that sport for one (1) year after his last day as a member of a professional team. This rule shall not conflict with the AABC rules in baseball.

Note: The protesting individual(s) bear the entire burden of proof regarding a player’s participation as a member of a professional team. The T.A.A.F. state commissioner has the final authority to accept or reject the protesting individual(s) proof.

- 2.3 Meets all team qualifications in MOP Article 4.
- 2.4 Does not play under an assumed name.
- 2.5 In order to compete in any T.A.A.F. play, a foreign player must reside in the state of Texas continuously for a minimum period of one (1) year prior to being eligible to play.

Exception: Men’s and women’s fast pitch foreign softball players’ eligibility will be determined by the national governing body of softball. To be eligible to participate in T.A.A.F. softball, a copy of any document required to be on file by the NGB for softball must also be filed with the T.A.A.F. state office. The same filing deadline applies for the NGB and T.A.A.F.

- 2.6 An adult player may play on more than one team within a region, but must choose one team as his/her own prior to T.A.A.F. championship play.
  - .01 No player may be on more than one roster, in a T.A.A.F. division, during T.A.A.F. championship play (region and state tournaments).
  - .02 A player must be on the sports roster by the deadline state in the participant guide.
- 2.7 A player forced to transfer from one region to another by his employer may participate in the new region providing the player has been employed by the firm for at least one (1) full year prior to the transfer and the player remains employed by the same firm.
- 2.8 Individual sport participants must reside in the state of Texas.
- 2.9 The team or individual attempting to qualify for state competition must attempt to qualify through the regional qualifier of the region in which they are registered. No participant in an individual sport or a team in team sports may attempt to qualify through more than one city, region or affiliate. Should any team or individual be discovered in violation of this rule, he/she/they shall be disqualified from that sport for that year.
- 2.10 Any region competition must take place within the established boundaries of the assigned region. If it becomes necessary to host a region competition outside of the designated boundary, prior written consent is required by the region in which the event is being held.
- 2.11 Player identification:



- .01 A player must be prepared, at all times, to provide proof of identification. A driver's license or comparable identification, which includes a current photograph and signature, is acceptable.
  - .02 A player must be prepared, at all times, to provide proof of age when participating in T.A.A.F. sports categorized by age classifications or divisions. A driver's license or copy of a birth certificate from the Bureau of Vital Statistics is acceptable.
  - .03 A player failing to provide appropriate proof of age or identifications, when requested by a meet director, tournament director or state commissioner, may be declared ineligible and the team/player subject to disqualification.
- 2.12 All teams must wear like colored, non-duplicated numbered jerseys for regional and state tournaments.
- 2.13 All participants in adult team sports must have attained the age of sixteen (18) prior to the registration date for teams in that sport, unless specific sport regulations provide otherwise.
- 2.14 Age determination for youth sports

Sport	Age Determining Date
Basketball (Boy's & Girl's Winter)	September 1 of current school year
Basketball (Boy's & Girl's Summer)	September 1 of current calendar year
Boxing	Based on age as of the Games of Texas
Cheerleading	September 1 of current year
Flag Football – youth	September 1 of current year
Golf – youth	September 1 of current year
Gymnastics	January 1 of the year of competition
Inline Hockey	September 1 of current year
Kickball – Youth	September 1 of the current school year
Softball – Youth	December 31 of current year
Swimming – Summer	June 1 of current year
Swimming – Winter	Age as of the Winter Games of Texas swim meet
Tennis	Age as of Games of Texas dates
Track and Field	Based on year the athlete was born
Volleyball – Youth	September 1 of current school year

**ARTICLE 3 YOUTH SPORTS COACHING REQUIREMENTS**

- 3.1 All coaches that are participating in regional and state competitions representing TAAF member cities, affiliates, or unattached teams and athletes must be approved through a criminal background check process.
- 3.2 Coaches can be approved through three options:
  - 3.2.01 Approved through the TAAF state office background check process
  - 3.2.02 Approved by completing and passing a background check through a TAAF approved third party organization that performs background checks
  - 3.2.03 Approved by the TAAF member organization by signing the "TAAF coaches background check affidavit" confirming that checks were completed at the local level
- 3.3 All coaches must be approved prior to registering for any regional or state competition
- 3.4 Coaches representing swim or track must be approved by June 30<sup>th</sup> or two weeks prior to competition whichever comes first
- 3.5 TAAF approved coaching status is valid for 1 year. Coaches can re-certify following the process outlined above
- 3.6 TAAF gymnastic coaches should follow the coaching background rules outlined in the gymnastics sports rules

## ARTICLE 4 TEAM SPORT REQUIREMENTS

### 4.1 Team Sports

#### .01 Deadline for T.A.A.F. Registration:

Sport	Deadline
Basketball - Adult	One Business Day after the State Tournament Entry Deadline
Basketball - Winter - Youth/High School	January 15
Flag Football - 8 on 8	November 1
Flag Football - 4 on 4	March 1
Flag Football - Youth	November 1
Hockey - In-line	Register at State Tournament
Kickball	Register at State Tournament
Soccer	Register at State Tournament
Softball - Spring/Summer - Adult/Youth	June 1
Softball - Fall	Register at State Tournament
Volleyball - Adult	Register at State Tournament
Volleyball - Sand	Register at State Tournament
Volleyball - Youth	April 15

### 4.2 Team Fees:

#### .01 Member Cities and Affiliate Members will pay the following registration fees to T.A.A.F.:

- All Sport Fee: \$15 per team if all teams within that given sport are registered. (Example: Youth Basketball, Adult Flag Football.)
- Unattached Sports Team Fee: \$25 per team if not all teams within a given sport are registered, those teams are considered unattached and will not be eligible for the lowest level of play in that sport if multiple levels of play are offered.

\*Region registration fees may be added to the state team registration fees up to \$2.00 per team

#### .02 REGION MEMBERSHIP FEES:

- a. Regions that charge a fee in excess of the state fee may not exceed that fee by more than \$2.00 / team.
- b. Regional membership fees may not exceed \$25.00
- c. Any fee proposal exceeding the above limits must be approved by the executive board.
- d. Any region charging a regional fee must provide the T.A.A.F. State Office proof that they have a federal tax identification number by January 2nd of the current year.
- e. Regional fee schedule must be submitted to the T.A.A.F. State Office seven (7) days prior to the January 2005 board meeting and at the annual meeting in 2006 and thereafter.

#### .03 Insurance may be purchased for an additional fee. Contact the T.A.A.F. state office for fees and enrollment information.

.04 A late fee of five dollars (\$5.00) per team may be charged to any registration after the deadline date.

4.3 Unattached Teams (adult and youth sports only):  
The fee for an unattached team are fifty (\$50) per year. This fee allows the unattached team to participate in the highest division of adult and youth team sports

.01 Teams playing in a T.A.A.F. league cannot register as an unattached team.

4.4 Registration Requirements

.01 Member Cities/Affiliate Members/Unattached Teams must furnish the following to the T.A.A.F. State Office by the registration deadline date:

f. One (1) copy of the league registration form, including division codes

g. One (1) copy of the team registration form

h. All registration fees

An .02 Team registrations must be certified by the city where they compete, if a Member City. Affiliate Member will mail their registrations directly to the T.A.A.F. State Office.

4.5 Team Roster Requirements

complete .01 To advance in T.A.A.F. championship play, each team will be required to submit a team roster as follows:

a. It must be written or typed on an approved T.A.A.F. team roster form. Exception: Softball rosters may be submitted on the official roster from the national organizations whose rules are governing the state tournament (i.e. ASA, USSSA)

b. Each individual listed on the roster must sign it in ink.

.02 Member Cities and Affiliate Members are required to submit team rosters for those teams advancing to championship play.

minimum of .03 It is recommended that all youth teams advancing to a state tournament have a one (1) T.A.A.F. approved national certified coach, to be listed on the team roster.

4.6 Returning Teams

.01 All T.A.A.F. team champions (except youth basketball) shall be eligible to return to the state tournament as defending champions, provided they have not been reclassified and have the following minimum returning players:

SOFTBALL SLOW PITCH	10 PLAYERS
SOFTBALL FAST PITCH	9 PLAYERS
FLAG FOOTBALL	6 PLAYERS
BASKETBALL	4 PLAYERS
VOLLEYBALL	4 PLAYERS

4.7 Region/State Tournament Participation

. 01 Sport Penalty

- a. Gymnastics only: Failure to register a gymnast with T.A.A.F. prior to competition will result in a fine of \$100 assessed to the gym for each unregistered gymnast
  - b. Gymnastics only: Failure to have a gymnast ranked by the January 1 deadline will result in a late fee of \$25.
- .02 In order to be eligible to compete for state honors, each team must have:
- a. Registered with T.A.A.F. by the deadline date.
  - b. Fulfilled all roster requirements as specified by the Member City, or, if an Affiliate or Unattached Team, by the Regional Director.
- .03 To enter a regional tournament, the local T.A.A.F. Member City representative must certify the roster. The roster must be submitted to the regional tournament director (adult men's basketball and flag football only) prior to the deadline established by the region.
- .04 To enter a state tournament, the regional director must certify the roster, including if from another organization (i.e. ASA, USSSA). Note: this is NOT the regional tournament director. The roster must be submitted to the state tournament director prior to the state deadline.
- a. Affiliate and Unattached teams need to check with the T.A.A.F. state office for their requirements.
- .05 Each Member City will have the right to advance any team that has registered with T.A.A.F. in all team sports except the following sports/classifications:
- a. Men's 8 on 8 Flag Football
  - b. Youth Flag Football
  - c. Winter Youth Basketball
- .06 The state tournament director may or may not limit the number of teams that are accepted in the state tournament. The state tournament director must accept a minimum of 20 teams in each division of youth and adult basketball and youth or adult volleyball. The state tournament director must accept a minimum of 32 teams in each division of adult or youth flag football and adult or youth softball.
- a. In the Men's and Youth Flag Football State Tournaments and Girls Fast Pitch Softball Tournaments each Member City member will have the right to advance one (1) T.A.A.F. registered team to participate in the T.A.A.F. State Championship Tournament. The state tournament host city will have the authority to accept additional teams, if team registrations for the state tournament from the "automatic berths" do not fill the tournament.
  - b. The teams in the Winter Youth State Basketball Tournament must qualify through regional tournament. The Winter Boys and Girls State Basketball Commissioners will set the number of teams that qualify for the Winter Youth State Basketball Tournament. The State Commissioners and State Tournament Directors will determine the total number of teams accepted in the Boys and Girls Winter State Basketball Tournaments.
- .07 In a regional or state T.A.A.F. tournament, any team that fails to show up may be suspended from T.A.A.F. play for one year unless the team notifies their regional director and the state tournament director of their intent to be a no show. This notification must be made prior to the start of the tournament. This rule applies to every participant; all team members and all coaches, on the official team roster.