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# DIVISION ONE SOFTBALL OPERATING MANUAL

Revised April 10, 2026

## Board of Directors

While all Division One softball games should be played with the intent to win, the responsibility of the Board of Directors is to ensure to the best of its ability that the members of Division One softball (i) have a positive, fun, athletic, and social experience, and (ii) compete and play in an organized, competitive and safe environment. It is an essential principle of Division One that all games and activities be conducted in a constructive and sportsmanlike manner and that all members are treated with respect and dignity.

The Division One Softball Board of Directors will consist of residents of The Villages having a valid Villages resident ID card.

Board member term limits are three years in duration. A term is defined as January 1 through December 31.

The Board is to be comprised of seven members.

The Board is directed by a set of officers consisting of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

The purpose of the Board is to perform the following activities:

- Define the rules by which the D1 league operates.
- Interpret, apply and settle any disputes regarding the rules.
- Collaborate with The Villages Recreation Department as necessary to ensure smooth operation of the league.
- Conduct a seasonal draft for the formation of new teams.
- Assign and coordinate umpires and scorekeepers for the operation of the games.
- Maintain a financial accounting of funds contributed to the league.
- Convene committees to define and conduct operational activities of the games (for example, player substitutions, integration of evaluation players, etc.).
- Document the decisions and activities taken by the Board.

## Operating Manual

The Operating Manual defines the roles and responsibilities of the Board and provides a framework for league governance.

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Any provision of the Operating Manual may be altered, amended, or repealed and new provisions may be adopted by the affirmative vote of a majority of the full Board.

## Removal of a Board Member

If a Board member is found to have intentionally broken any rule in the Operating Manual and/or is formally disciplined by The Villages Recreation Department, the Board, by majority vote excluding the offending Board member, may convene a special committee whose sole responsibility will be to determine if removal of that Board member is in the best interests of the league membership.

This committee will be overseen by the President (or Vice-President if the offender is the President) and will include one additional Board member, one manager that is not a current Board member and two active roster players that are not current Board members. Other than the committee chair, these committee members will be selected by majority vote of the Board, excluding the offending Board member.

Once convened, the committee has seven calendar days to determine if the offending Board member should be removed. The committee must interview the offending Board member and may interview other league members as necessary to determine if removal of the Board member is warranted.

*By agreeing to serve as a Board member it is implied that all Board members will abide by the decisions and actions of this committee.*

## Board Elections

To ensure continuity, Board terms will be staggered such that two Board member terms are concurrent, then two terms are concurrent and finally the last three terms are concurrent.

- In year 1, two Board positions are to be filled.
- In year 2, two Board positions are to be filled.
- In year 3, three Board positions are to be filled.
- The above process is repeated.

A Board member can run for re-election and serve consecutive terms. If a Board member's term is expiring and they wish to run for re-election they will automatically be added to the slate of candidates for the next election.

Board members need not be active Division One participants.

## Election Process

1. The election process will be overseen by the current Vice-President.
2. The Vice-President will oversee a Nominating Committee comprised of two Board members (including the Vice-President), one manager that is not a current Board member (or desired nominee) and two active roster players that are not current Board members (or desired nominees). The

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Vice-President determines the duration of the Nominating Period. However, the Nominating Period cannot start prior to July 1 and must end no later than August 31 and must be open for a minimum of 14 consecutive days. During this Nominating Period, anyone who has been an active participant (defined as having been a full-time rostered player during any part of a season) in the current calendar year may submit a nomination. All nominations must be submitted in writing to the Nominating Committee.

3. After the close of the Nominating Period, and other than those members of the Nominating Committee, existing Board members shall not influence or overrule candidate nominations from the Nominating Committee.

4. The Nominating Committee will confirm all candidates' interest, eligibility and experience to serve as a Board member.

- The Nominating Committee's primary responsibility is to the league membership to ensure the nominees presented to the league for consideration will be good representatives of all league members and will serve as fair and unbiased supporters of the best interests of league members.
- Nominees **must be** in Good Standing with the league. Good Standing means the nominee has not been formally disciplined by The Villages Recreation Department or suspended from Division One Softball for any reason within the past two calendar years. A Verbal Warning by The Villages Recreation Department (as a result of an Incident Report) is considered as having been formally disciplined.
- Nominees must have volunteer experience supporting league operation prior to being nominated (manager, umpire, etc.).
- The Nominating Committee has the authority to solicit and/or identify additional candidates for any reason, so long as those efforts are consistent with the Nominating Committee's primary responsibility.
- The Nominating Committee will have a minimum of one face-to-face meeting prior to finalizing the slate of candidates. The Nominating Committee should finalize the slate of candidates by no later than September 8 and will inform the Board in writing of the final slate of candidates.

5. All candidates identified by the Nominating Committee will be presented to the rostered players for the current season for election to the Board.

6. Elections for expiring Board positions will be held during the period of September 15 to October 15. The period during which votes can be cast may start no sooner than September 15 and must end no later than October 15. It is preferred, but not required, that league members have a minimum of 14 calendar days to submit their vote. Ballots that do not fully comply with all ballot instructions shall be discarded (incomplete ballot, vote for too many candidates, ballot received beyond the deadline, etc.). If a league member votes more than once, the most recent vote will take precedence. If a league member votes more than once and one or more of those ballots are undated, all undated ballots will be considered older than any dated ballot(s). Electronic and/or paper ballots are acceptable, but it is not required that both be made available.

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Board officer positions and their roles are as noted in the Division One Softball Operating Manual. Officer terms are one year in duration and that term runs from January 1 through December 31. Each year the newly elected Board will elect (by majority) the officer positions. This officer election will be overseen by the current Board President and will be held after the Board elections are complete and before December 1. Outgoing Board officers are encouraged to work with the new officers as soon as the officer elections are complete to facilitate a smooth transition. Officers may run for consecutive terms and there is no limit to the number of consecutive terms an individual may serve.

In the event a Board member resigns or leaves the Board for any reason, the Vice-President shall oversee a special election following the identical rules as for a normal election with the only exception being the Nominating Committee will assume all responsibility for soliciting nominations. The Vice-President shall complete this process within 60 days of learning of a Board opening. If a Board member is nominated/elected to replace an existing Board member, the newly elected Board member will complete the original Board member's term, however long that may be.

Any Board member that resigns is strongly encouraged to remain on the Board and fulfill their duties to Division One Softball to the best of their abilities until a new Board member has been elected to complete their term.

In the event the resignation is the current Board President and that individual is unwilling or unable to complete their term, the Vice-President will assume the role of President and complete the current term. In the event multiple officer positions become vacant, the hierarchy is President → Vice-President → Secretary → Treasurer.

In the event of any unexpected officer openings (other than the President) created for any reason during the current term, the President shall appoint existing Board members to fill any opening(s) to complete the current terms.

## **Board Meetings**

Board meetings are held as needed and are called by the President. These meetings are open to the public, but only Board members are allowed to vote on any issue brought before the Board. Closed meetings for Board members only may also be called by the President as needed. The time and place of Board meetings open to all attendees will be publicly announced four days prior to such meetings.

Copies of meeting minutes will be made available to league members upon request.

## **Board Officers**

### **President**

- Presides at all Board of Directors meetings.
- Calls meetings when needed between regular meetings of the Board.
- Appoints membership to committees as necessary and provides general oversight of the business affairs of the Board.

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- Designated as one of the signing officers on the checking account and may be authorized to sign or countersign checks, correspondence, applications, reports, contracts or other documents on behalf of the Board.

## **Vice President**

- In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall preside and discharge all the duties and exercise all of the powers of the President.
- Reviews the current list of Board members whose terms of membership are about to expire. Leads a nominating committee in finding capable and interested people to take on the responsibilities as a Board member.
- Oversees the election process for new Board members as described in the Division One Softball Operating Manual.
- Acquires and maintains contact information for all players wishing to participate in the draft for a given season. The contact information includes all data contained in The Villages draft form.

## **Secretary**

- Provides written notice of both regular and special meetings to all Board members at least four days before the meeting date. An agenda of the business to be considered should be included.
- Determines whether attendees at a Board meeting constitute a quorum (not to be less than four members).
- Records and transcribes minutes of the Board meetings, carries on correspondence, issues notices of all meetings and preserves its records.
- Maintains custody of all official documents of the Board.
- Gives all books, papers and other property in their possession or control to the Secretary's successor or the President.

## **Treasurer**

- Keeps financial accounts in the name of the Board.
- Keeps exact record of receipts and disbursements and issues receipts for monies received.
- Receives all income and donations and disburses all debts and obligations.
- Payments which exceed \$100 must be approved by the President.
- Prepares a report summary of the financial operations of the previous month.

## **League Rules**

The league operates according to SSUSA rules unless a Division One rule exists that supersedes the SSUSA rule(s).

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Any provision of the Division One rules may be altered, amended, or repealed and new rules may be adopted by the affirmative vote of a majority of the full Board.

## **Player Fees**

Based on the annual budget prepared by the Treasurer, fees may be determined and assessed to cover expenses of the league operation (website, championship awards, player recognition awards, etc.). League participation is not dependent on a player making payment. All assessed league fees are voluntary and league members are encouraged to support the operation of the league.

## **Committees**

The Board will convene volunteer committees as needed to assist in the operation of the league. Committee Chairs are elected through a majority vote of the Board and are not limited to any defined term but can be removed at any time by a majority vote of the Board. A Board member can participate on a volunteer committee (including serving as Committee Chair) in addition to their Board responsibilities. A committee may consist of any number of volunteers (including a single volunteer). Other than approval by the Board, there are no specific requirements for committee membership.

While the Board can convene any number of committees, the following committees with the primary responsibilities for each are integral to the league operation.

### **Umpire Committee**

- Responsible for identifying, scheduling and overseeing umpires.
- Prepare a contact list of volunteers from the draft sheet for the next season.
- Prepare a preliminary schedule which avoids bye dates, distributes assignments equally across all teams and makes use of non-playing volunteers for early games.
- Send a preliminary schedule to volunteers for their review, comment and concurrence.
- Send a weekly reminder to the specific volunteers for that week.
- Update Umpire Committee SOP annually.

### **Scorekeeper Committee**

- Responsible for identifying, scheduling and overseeing scorekeepers.
- Prepare a contact list of volunteers from the draft sheet for the current season.
- Prepare a schedule of volunteers for scorekeeping for each game.
- Communicate schedule to all volunteers and update as necessary throughout the season.
- Send a weekly reminder to the specific volunteers for that week.
- Update Scorekeeper Committee SOP annually.

### **Substitute Committee**

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- Prepare a contact list of substitutes from the draft sheet for the next season.
  - Propose a substitute process for each upcoming season to the Board for review/approval prior to the draft for that season.
  - Oversee and administer the player and substitute rating process once approved by the Board.
  - Manage the use of substitutes to comply with current Division One rules.
  - Ensure Priority Subs are utilized per Division One Rules.
  - Track the use of subs to ensure compliance with Division One rules and communicate sub utilization to the Board as part of the regular Board updates.
  - Update Substitute Committee SOP annually.

### **Evaluations Committee**

- Ensure Division One has an evaluations representative for Day 1, Day 2 and Day 3 at The Villages evaluation sessions.
- Act as Division One representative to the evaluation coordinator/chair overseeing The Villages evaluation process.
- Ensure participants coming out of evaluations and rated D1 are made visible to all current season managers and given a Priority Sub rating.
- Update Evaluations Committee SOP annually.

### **Communications Committee**

- Prepare a contact list each season from the draft sheet of all players that have signed up.
- Send special notices as directed by the Board.
- Update Communications Committee SOP annually.

### **Manager Advisory Committee**

- Assist the Board in the manager selection process.
- Be point of contact for managers.
- Convene pre-draft managers meeting.
- Communicate information to managers at the direction of the Board.
- Prepare manager evaluation form for rostered players to complete via email/online survey and provide results to the Board.
- Provide the Evaluations Committee Chair the names of any players required to be re-evaluated.
- Update Manager Advisory Committee SOP annually.