

CONDUCT / DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES

I. INTRODUCTION

The Kirkwood Athletic Association (KAA) is home to some of the finest competition in the Greater St. Louis area in the field of Girls Junior Olympic Fastpitch Softball as well as youth baseball and KAA is committed to insuring an exceptional atmosphere for its participants and spectators, the majority of who are impressionable youth. The responsibility to protect that commitment is vested with the adult leadership.

This policy is not intended to alter the character of the games. Rather it is intended to discourage the inappropriate, spontaneous outbursts that lead to abuse, both physical and verbal.

These guidelines are intended for use in baseball and softball operations without discrimination.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this comprehensive policy is to define the actions to be taken when it becomes necessary to order the removal of players, coaches and spectators from games for rule violations and unsportsmanlike conduct and to provide a mechanism to insure accountability for actions deemed inappropriate. A number of contingencies have been taken into consideration.

The policy:

1. Reinforces the authority of the Board of Directors of the KAA to appoint an Incident Review Panel to hear matters of violations of this policy, make recommendations regarding them and implement those recommendations.
2. Establishes a range of disciplinary action to be taken for infractions that warrant requital.

III. TERMINOLOGY DEFINED

Board - the Board of Directors of the Kirkwood Athletic Association (KAA).

Calendar year - January 1 through December 31 of the same numbered year.

Coaches - those persons whose function it is to instruct and train the players and direct the team strategy.

Disreputable conduct - Any conduct which brings discredit to the reputation, good order and welfare of the Kirkwood Athletic Association, its members and its mission to provide a wholesome atmosphere for youth recreational activity. In this instance an explicit accounting will need to be entered into the “Summary of Incident” area on the Conduct Policy Documentation Form.

Disqualification - in Amateur Softball Association (ASA) rules, a “disqualified” player is one who is removed from a game for a procedural violation. While this is frequently referred to as “ejection” it is not and should not be treated as such for purposes of this policy. If a disqualified player is later “ejected” for participating in the game after disqualification, that matter would not be considered as ejection as it relates to this procedure. A disqualified player can serve as a coach after disqualification. In the event they subsequently violate a rule allowing for ejection, i.e. unsportsmanlike conduct, they will be dealt with in the manner prescribed.

Disqualification for alcoholic beverage and tobacco products consumption in game and warm-up areas is dealt with in the manner prescribed in those sub-sections of this policy.

Ejection - the removal of a player or coach from the game by the umpire, generally for an act of injurious or unsportsmanlike conduct. Ejections are over and above any future disciplinary actions as the result of an incident. Ejection from a game is viewed as corrective action needed at that time to defuse an incident.

A player or coach who has been ejected from the game is restricted to the bench area unless the act is determined to be flagrant. If the act is flagrant, the player or coach must leave the grounds. Ejections are typically the result of either of two types of violations:

1. *Unsportsmanlike conduct* by a player or coach to a degree that the penalty is determined by the umpire to be ejection. Examples of conduct, which could be construed by an umpire to be unsportsmanlike, include but are not limited to:
 - a. Unbecoming / disruptive conduct.
 - b. Disorderly, abusive, profane or inappropriate language.
 - c. Improper physical contact by a player or coach with:
 1. An official
 2. Another player (whether opponent or teammate)
 3. Another coach (whether opponent or teammate)
 4. A spectator

- d. Unreasonable and continuous disputing of an umpire's ruling whether judgmental or involving the application of a rule.
2. *Violation of a playing rule* by a player or coach and for which ejection is the predetermined penalty. **There will be no review or convening of an Incident Review Panel for ejections stemming from rule violations not resulting in or a consequence of unsportsmanlike conduct.**

Ejections will subject the violator to immediate suspensions contingent on the facts of the case.

Guest Team - A "guest team" can fall into one of two categories:

1. Is registered within the KAA program but is at the facility competing in a tournament or other contest sponsored outside the governing scope of the KAA. (Metros, Regionals, Nationals, High School, USSSA, etc.)
2. A team not registered within the KAA but is at the facility either in a KAA sponsored tournament or for other reason.

Official - an umpire or other person in a position of authority, to include Board Members, who are empowered to act and make decisions within their purview on behalf of the KAA.

Participant - any player, coach or official.

Physical Contact - For the purposes of this policy "physical contact" is described as any unsolicited, intimidating or otherwise improper physical contact however slight between individuals, to include coaches and umpires, outside of that which can reasonably be expected from sportsmanlike competition. It does not include contact between two players during routine play of the game. **Example:** An aggressive slide or the failure to do so, or two players who collide during the playing of the game would not constitute improper physical contact. **However**, if the incident is flagrant and unquestionably meant to instigate an altercation or is the result of an ongoing dispute, it **could** be construed as a violation under this policy.

In situations involving physical contact violations, those matters will need to be expeditiously brought to the attention of the President of the Board **and** the Disciplinary Committee Chairperson and in no case beyond the following day. In the event of the absence of the Board President, the next person in the directorate line of succession will be contacted. In the absence of the Disciplinary Committee Chairperson, guidance from the President of the Board will prevail.

Players - those persons who are actively participating in the fundamental execution of the game.

Profane language – Any language that, in the opinion of the game official, is offensive. The officials are the sole interpreters of its inappropriateness. No other opinions are welcomed.

Season - There are two playing seasons:

1. Spring/Summer
2. Fall

Spectators - are not considered participants of the game and are there merely to observe, encourage and support the team of their choice. All persons at the facility who are not classified as participants will be considered “spectators” for purposes of this policy.

Suspension - Suspension is the temporary removal of a person from participation.

IV. CONCEPT OF POLICY

The KAA provides league and tournament competition for teams registered within the Association. At times there are tournaments and competitions wherein KAA teams as well as teams not registered within the KAA are invited to play at the park facility. The procedures to deal with improper conduct situations involving visiting (guest) teams and the KAA teams are herein defined.

Additionally, the evaluation of incidents and the administration of discipline during a short duration tournament demand a manner of review distinct from that of league play. Similarly this policy will address that issue. There are situations during which the KAA facility is used to accommodate a tournament or series of games and for which KAA only provides its fields but uses none of its officials. While the likelihood for an incident falling under that scenario is remote, it is nonetheless provided for.

Umpire Responsibilities

In view of the fact a more comprehensive accountability system is levied on participants and spectators, it will be incumbent upon the umpires to insure fair and equitable treatment of all participants.

V. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

The Disciplinary Committee will be presided by a Disciplinary Committee Chairperson. They will insure that all procedures are followed in the administration of discipline for matters falling within the purview of the committee. Because all members of the KAA Board of Directors are volunteers, matters brought to the attention of the Disciplinary Committee will be acted upon in a prudent, reasonable and timely manner however no predetermined time limits will be established for deliberation or determination.

The Disciplinary Committee Chairperson will:

- a. Determine whether or not to form an Incident Review Panel to evaluate the merits of an occurrence.
- b. Have the authority to make determinations of discipline for Unsportsmanlike Conduct violations not exceeding 2 games suspension without the formation of an Incident Review Panel. These matters will be determined in consultation with the President of the Board.
- c. Will convene an Incident Review Panel for all matters stemming from an Improper Physical Contact violation unless mitigating factors are fairly obvious.

1. Kirkwood Registered Teams

Incident Review Panel

To deal with infractions within the KAA family of teams, an *Incident Review Panel* will be formed to examine matters referred to it by the Disciplinary Committee Chairperson. Not all matters brought to the attention of the Disciplinary Committee Chairperson will require a review by the Incident Review Panel. The decision whether or not to form an Incident Review Panel will be by the Disciplinary Committee Chairperson. The Panel will serve at the pleasure of the President of the Board. It will comprise members of the Board as follows:

Baseball issues:

1. Disciplinary Committee Chairperson.
2. The Baseball Supervisor.
3. A member of the Board from the baseball division.
4. KAA umpire-in-chief.

Softball issues:

1. Disciplinary Committee Chairperson.
2. The Softball Supervisor.
3. A member of the Board from the softball division.
4. KAA umpire-in-chief.

If extenuating circumstances are present, the President of the Board of Directors may substitute another Board member for any of the Incident Review Panel members as deemed appropriate. A simple majority of votes is needed to resolve an issue. No “abstention” or “undecided” votes will be permitted.

Under no circumstances will any member of an Incident Review Panel hear an issue brought before it that presents a personal conflict with any person sharing involvement in the incident. It is incumbent on the person first realizing the conflict to bring it to the attention of the President of the Board or the Disciplinary Committee Chairperson.

Disciplinary Hearings

Within a reasonable period of time following an incident requiring review by the Incident Review Panel, they will be appointed and convene to determine the course of action regarding the issue brought before it. Results of all hearings will be forwarded to the President of the Board.

Adjudication

The Incident Review Panel will adjudicate the issue and a written determination will be sent to the violator's last known address of record. An alternate method of notification can be used on a case-by-case basis.

Implementation

In no case will the execution of the ruling be delayed without the express approval of the President of the Board. In case of inclement weather or other factors causing a suspension to be modified (rain-outs, schedule changes, etc.) those modifications will be made and the violator notified in a manner consistent with the efficient execution of this process. Games rained out or otherwise postponed will not be credited to a suspension. Any games forfeited **to** a team that has a player, coach or manager serving a suspension will constitute credit to a suspension. Any games forfeited **by** a team, which has a player, coach, or manager serving a suspension will not constitute credit to that suspension.

Request for Hearing Review

Any request for a hearing review must be in writing and sent to the attention of the President of the Board of Directors at the office of the Kirkwood Athletic Association. Reviews will be at the pleasure of the President of the Board.

Alternative Methods of Discipline

From time to time alternative methods of discipline may be submitted by the Incident Review Panel to the President of the Board for consideration.

Multiple Violations

There could be instances wherein an incident results in more than one violation requiring ejection or matter brought before the Board. In those cases the penalties will run "consecutive" meaning that the number of games of suspension will be combined to present a total. In these cases it might be more prudent to consolidate the charges if a Provisional or Permanent Removal are options. In that case the more stringent penalty would be invoked.

2. Guest Teams

Disciplinary mandates require expeditious implementation and uniformity. At the same time it will be necessary to deal with "guest team" situations in a distinct but consistent manner. In cases needing immediate review and action by an Incident Review Panel and

the violator's participation is of short duration (out-of-town team playing in a KAA-sponsored weekend tournament) the Tournament Director will direct that the Umpire-In-Chief of the sport being played and two Board Members review the matter and offer an immediate resolution consistent with the discipline ranges of this policy.

VI. DISCIPLINARY CATEGORIES

Because not all incidents will be identical, whether by resultant injury or by the nature of the aggravating circumstances, ranges of discipline have been established to take those instances into account. It is expected that the adult leadership (managers/coaches) of teams should be held to a higher standard than their players. For that reason disciplinary judgments are more severe for those individuals.

Attached to this document is a schedule of disciplinary ranges for each of two realms of misconduct; *Unsportsmanlike Conduct* and *Improper Physical Contact*.

In determining the range of disciplinary action, all facts, including but not limited to the following, will be considered:

1. The details of the incident
2. The age of the officials if applicable
3. The severity of any injury
4. Provocation by one party of another
5. Defense of oneself
6. Inflammation of onlookers

Disciplinary action is premised on occurrences within a 365-day period beginning with the date of the first reported offense and will continue from one calendar year into another. The number of occurrences determining the severity of disciplinary action will be predicated on the date of the last offense. Offenses occurring outside that realm (more than three instances within a 365-day period) will be remedied by a determination of the Incident Review Panel on a case-by-case basis.

In the order of severity the following are the determinations that will typically be reached when resolving each incident:

Excused - The facts presented indicate that the incident did occur but there is a logical basis for it. The Conduct Policy Documentation Form will be noted and placed in the file. No further action taken.

Filed - If the incident was relatively minor and no other circumstances exist requiring a more rigid penalty, the matter and findings will be **filed**. No further action needed.

Letter of Reprimand – If the incident is of a fairly significant or recurring nature, the violator will be furnished with written notification that the matter was reviewed and future infractions will be dealt with in a more severe manner. Letters will be mailed to the last known address of record. In cases where the Incident Review Panel rules that a Letter of Reprimand will deal with the infraction, those matters will not require a review by the Board President. A copy of any letter regarding an incident involving a player will be sent to the manager of that team.

Suspension - If the incident is of a significant and/or recurring nature, the violator (individual or team) may be suspended. During the period of the suspension managers, coaches and players suspended will not be allowed on the premises of the park on the dates their team is scheduled for play. (See “NOTE” below) Violating an order of suspension will result in the forfeiture of all games participated in by the violating individual and the immediate and permanent removal of that individual from the KAA program.

Suspensions will range from one game to 15 games depending on the infraction. Prior to execution, recommendations for suspension will be subject to review by the President of the Board at his/her discretion. Suspensions handed down at the conclusion of a season will be carried into the start of the following season whether that season is in the Fall or the Spring. Suspensions of beyond fifteen games duration will be within the Provisional Removal category.

NOTE: If a team is scheduled to play games beyond the suspension number on the suspension date, i.e. playing a doubleheader or in a multi-game tournament and the suspension is for only one game, the manager, coach or player suspended will be allowed onto the premises but not sooner than the conclusion of the game(s) satisfying the suspension period.

Provisional Removal From the KAA Program - If the incident is serious or so unreasonably recurrent that a more stringent penalty needs to be assessed, the violator (individual or team) will be provisionally removed from the program. The period of time will range from 16 games to not less than twelve consecutive months. It will mandate an automatic review and concurrence by the President of the Board.

Permanent Removal From the KAA Program - Permanent removal will occur when the incident was so abhorrent or disreputable that the only prudent determination is to terminate the violator (individual or team) from the program. The most severe form of discipline, it will mandate an automatic review and concurrence by the President of the Board.

Violators (individual or team) receiving a Permanent Removal determination can petition the Board of Directors for reinstatement consideration at the conclusion of the calendar year in which the incident occurs. A letter requesting reinstatement and postmarked after December 31 of that year must be mailed to the KAA. The correspondence must indicate good cause why the previous determination of the Incident Review Panel and the approval of the Board President should be reconsidered and set aside.

VII. UNIQUE SITUATIONS

Alcoholic beverage consumption - An Official of the KAA when confronted by a manager, coach or player who, in the opinion of that official, has consumed an alcoholic beverage and in the opinion of the official it MAY be a factor in the dispute, can refuse to discuss the issue with them and insist that they remove themselves from the field of play without having to eject them. If the matter escalates and it becomes necessary for an ejection, then that course of action should be taken.

If a manager, coach, or other team assistant is observed consuming any alcoholic beverages in any team area during their team's game, that individual will be "disqualified" by the umpire from further involvement in that game. This is not considered an ejection but will prohibit the individual involved from further participation in the game. They will not be allowed in the dugout, warm-up area or on the field of play for the remainder of that game. They will be restricted to the spectator area. "Team area" is defined as practice and warm-up areas, dugouts and the field of play. Failure to honor this disqualification will result in ejection after which the procedures of this policy will then be enforced.

ASA Umpires - During softball league play and in some softball tournaments sponsored by the KAA, umpires are acquired by KAA through the local ASA office. In those instances the officials are considered as KAA personnel and a KAA Incident Review Panel will review all infractions during these contests. A report of disciplinary findings will be forwarded to the local office of the ASA to be used at their discretion.

Banned Individuals - From time to time it will be necessary to advise certain individuals that, for a variety of reasons, they are no longer welcome at the KAA facility and their presence equates to "trespassing." If any of these individuals are subsequently encountered on the KAA property, they will be instructed to leave the park **immediately**. The matter is not subject to negotiation. If they refuse, the Board Member on Duty will be contacted and reinforce the decision that they leave. If they again refuse, the proper law enforcement authorities will be summoned. **Under no circumstance will any official of the KAA initiate a physical confrontation with one of these individuals for the sole purpose of having them leave the premises.** Persons banned from the facility may petition the Board of Directors in writing to reconsider the order of preclusion. Until the order is rescinded, they are considered as prohibited from entry onto the facility.

Complaint Procedure - Only signed letters of complaint from persons outside of the Board of Directors regarding a manager, coach, player or official will be considered by the Board.

Forfeiture of the game - If any participant or spectator physically attacks an umpire, or if there is any improper physical contact with an umpire that, in the

opinion of the official, is intentional or was avoidable, the game will be immediately forfeited and the Board Member on Duty will be advised.

Incidents at the Conclusion of a Game - In cases involving the improper conduct of managers, players and coaches at the conclusion of a game where no ejections occur but a review is warranted, a report of those incidents will be made and the matter brought before an Incident Review Panel.

Incidents Involving Non-Affiliated (Guest) Teams - There will be situations during which teams will be playing at the KAA facility and have no direct KAA affiliation, and for which a governing body exists outside of the KAA. (Amateur Softball Association [ASA] Metro, Regional or National Championship Tournaments; Missouri State High School Activities Association [MSHSAA] playoffs, etc.) In these instances the game's officials should bring disciplinary matters to the attention of that governing body. Any remedial action will be at the pleasure of that governing body.

If a KAA-registered team or individual is participating in a tournament that assigns them "guest team" status and that team or individual is involved in a questionable matter as outlined in this policy, the matter can be evaluated by a KAA Incident Review Panel. In this instance the time frame for disciplinary review can be waived but in no case longer than 30 days.

Medical Assistance - Life safety is always a primary consideration. It will be the responsibility of the Board Member on Duty or in their absence the Official in charge to insure that if any medical assistance is needed by any combatants or injured persons, whether as a result of the course of play or as the result of an assault, the proper authorities are contacted and that request is made in a timely manner.

Profane Language - Profane language will not be tolerated to any degree. The use of profane language directed at an official will be handled the same as an Unsportsmanlike Conduct incident.

The use of profane language directed at individuals other than officials will be handled as follows:

If the language is directed by a team member (manager, coach, player) at another team member or to a member of the opposing team, each team will normally be issued a "team warning" that all future incidents by either team will result in the awarding of an "out" against

the offending team. If the incident is so egregious that an immediate ejection is warranted, then that will be done. The other team will be issued a warning at the same time.

If the offending team is on defense at the time of the incident, the outs will be assessed as soon as they come to bat. Only one out may be assessed per play with a maximum of two per time-at-bat. If circumstances exist which would allow for more than this number, consideration should be given to more severe forms of action. These outs will be assessed as “team outs” and not charged to a particular batter. There will be no one skipped in the batting order to accomplish this.

The determination of whether the language is offensive is exclusively that of the officials. This is a KAA “house rule” and will be used during league play and in tournaments sponsored and sanctioned by KAA. Other competition at the KAA facility that may choose to do so is welcome to use this policy at their discretion.

Refusal / failure of manager/coach/player to provide required information to an official

If it becomes necessary for an official to solicit information from a manager, coach or player regarding an incident that may require a report to the Board of Directors, and if that participant refuses to provide that information in a civil manner, it will be cause for remedial action by an Incident Review Panel.

Unruly Spectator - Spectators are not subject to ejection but if their conduct is deemed to be of a nature that demands their removal from the vicinity of a game, the following procedure for that task should be observed:

- A. If the spectator’s team allegiance can be determined and the manager/coach is agreeable:
 - 1. The umpire will request the manager/coach to handle the situation.
 - 2. If the spectator refuses to comply, the Umpire in Chief and/or the Board Member on Duty will be summoned to the location and reiterate the request for the spectator to alter their behavior or leave the premises.
 - 3. If all attempts at a peaceful resolution of the matter fail and they refuse to leave, law enforcement assistance will be requested.

- B. If the spectator’s team allegiance can be determined and the manager/coach refuses to assist:
 - 1. The manager/coach will be ejected.
 - 2. The umpire will order the spectator to leave the vicinity of the field.
 - 3. If the spectator refuses to comply, the Umpire in Chief and/or the Board Member on Duty will be summoned to the location and reiterate the request for the spectator to alter their behavior.
 - 4. If all attempts at a peaceful resolution of the matter fail and they refuse to leave, law enforcement assistance will be requested.

C. If the spectators team allegiance cannot be determined:

1. The umpire will order the spectator to leave the vicinity of the field.
2. If the spectator refuses to comply, the Umpire in Chief and/or the Board Member on Duty will be summoned to the location and reiterate the request for the spectator to alter their behavior.
3. If all attempts at a peaceful resolution of the matter fail and they refuse to leave, law enforcement assistance will be requested.

In the event a coach puts forth a good faith effort and the spectator refuses to cooperate, the coach will not be responsible for that spectator's behavior and the aforementioned procedure regarding unruly spectators will be followed.

Any spectator who has any physical contact as defined in this policy, with another spectator, an official or a game participant, will be subject to criminal prosecution. The On Duty Board Member will be contacted for assistance. If the incident is significant enough to necessitate a report, the Umpire in Chief or the Board Member on Duty will prepare one. Information to be documented should include who the spectator was and the team of allegiance. If warranted, consideration will be given to permanently ban that individual from the facility.

Tobacco product consumption - If a manager, coach, or other team assistant is observed using any tobacco product in any team area during their team's game, that individual will be "disqualified" by the umpire from further involvement in that game. This is not considered an ejection but will prohibit the individual involved from further participation in the game. They will not be allowed in the dugout, warm-up area or on the field of play for the remainder of that game. They will be restricted to the spectator area. "Team area" is defined as practice and warm-up areas, dugouts and the field of play. Failure to honor this disqualification will result in ejection after which the procedures of this policy will then be enforced.

Warnings – Warnings by an umpire, unless mandated by rule, are not required prior to the implementation of disciplinary measures. If warnings are given, whether as individuals or as a team, no future warnings in that contest should be anticipated.

VIII. INCIDENT DOCUMENTATION

In order to provide the necessary data to insure a consistent policy, a system of documentation regarding those individuals (managers, players, coaches and officials) involved in these incidents is in place. The Conduct Policy Documentation Form will be used to record information immediately following an incident. The information needs to be accurately recorded in order to insure an

expeditious and effective process of policy. Information will be retained for two calendar years following the final determination date.

IX. DISCIPLINARY RANGES

1. Improper Physical Contact

<i>Violation</i>	<i>First Offense</i>	<i>Second Offense</i>	<i>Third Offense</i>
By Coach w/Team Member	7 game suspension to Provisional Removal From Program	Provisional Removal From Program to Permanent Removal From Program	Permanent Removal From Program
By Coach w/Opponent	10 game suspension to Permanent Removal From Program	Permanent Removal From Program	N/A
By Coach w/Umpire	15 game suspension to Permanent Removal From Program	Permanent Removal From Program	N/A
By Coach w/Spectator	10 game suspension to Permanent Removal From Program	Permanent Removal From Program	N/A
By Player w/Team Member	5 game suspension to Provisional Removal From Program	Provisional Removal From Program to Permanent Removal From Program	Permanent Removal From Program
By Player w/Opponent	7 game suspension to Permanent Removal From Program	Permanent Removal From Program	N/A
By Player w/Umpire	10 game suspension to Permanent Removal From Program	Permanent Removal From Program	N/A
By Player w/Spectator	5 game suspension to Permanent Removal From Program	Permanent Removal From Program	N/A

The above punishments are over and above any ejection from a game as the result of the improper behavior.

2. Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Violation	<u>First Offense</u>	<u>Second Offense</u>	<u>Third Offense</u>
Ejection Manager/ coach/ player	Letter of Reprimand to 1 game suspension	2 game suspension	5 game suspension
Failure of manager/coach to exercise managerial control over players and/or spectators	Letter of Reprimand to 1 game suspension	3 game suspension	7 game suspension
Manager or coach encouraging injurious conduct by team members	5 game suspension to Provisional Removal From Program	Provisional Removal From Program to Permanent Removal From Program	Permanent Removal From Program
Refusal / failure of manager/coach/player to provide required information to an official	1 game suspension	3 game suspension	5 game suspension
Violation of an order of suspension	Permanent Removal From Program	N/A	N/A
Disreputable Conduct (specify)	1 game suspension to Permanent Removal From Program	3 game suspension to Permanent Removal From Program	7 game suspension to Permanent Removal From Program

The above punishments are over and above any ejection from a game as the result of the improper behavior.

X. CONCLUSION

This policy is exclusively for the Kirkwood Athletic Association and intended to cover a wide variety of instances of objectionable or questionable behavior. Amendments to the

policy are at the direction of the Board of Directors of the KAA. Matters above and beyond this policy will be handled at the pleasure of the President of the Board.

XI. ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A	Conduct Policy Documentation Form
Attachment B	Disciplinary Committee Recommendation