

MGSA Youth Recreational Softball SOP

Organization: Muscatine Girls Softball Association (MGSA)

Program: Youth Recreational Softball (Ages 6–18)

Version: 1.0

Purpose

This Standard Operating Procedure provides clear, consistent direction for managing scenarios that arise during MGSA practices, games, and events.

The goal is to ensure player safety, fairness, consistency, and enjoyment while maintaining the integrity and philosophy of the Muscatine Girls Softball Association.

Scope

This SOP applies to all MGSA divisions (Starter, Bantam, Junior, and Senior), covering players ages 6–18, as well as all coaches, umpires, volunteers, and spectators participating in league-sanctioned activities.

MGSA Philosophy & Responsibilities

- Philosophy
 - Promote player development, confidence, and love of the game.
 - Focus on fun, teamwork, and sportsmanship over competition.
 - Ensure a safe, positive, and inclusive environment for all.

Roles & Responsibilities

Roles

Responsibilities

| Roles | Responsibilities |
|--------------------|---|
| MGSA Board Members | Oversee league operations, ensure compliance with policies, and resolve disputes. |

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| Coaches | Teach fundamentals, model sportsmanship, ensure safety, and communicate clearly with families. |
| Umpires | Apply official MGSA rules impartially, manage on-field disputes, and make final rulings. |
| Parents/Guardians | Support players, respect officials and coaches, and model good behavior. |
| Players | Show respect, play fairly, and follow directions from coaches and umpires. |

General Safety Procedures

- Weather & Field Conditions
 - Stop play immediately if lightning occurs.
 - Wait 30 minutes after the last lightning before resuming.
 - The MGSA Board or field coordinator will determine if fields are playable. MGSA Board Members will act as field marshals to determine if diamonds are playable. (Rule 8.2 through 8.2.4.1)
- Heat Policy
 - Parents may withhold players during excessive heat; safety always comes first.
 - Heat Index Guidelines: 100-109: Use caution, monitor athletes, allow for water breaks, shorten game duration by 15 minutes.
 - 110 or above games will be suspended and rescheduled. Parents' reserve the choice to send their child to play.
- Injuries
 - Stop playing immediately for any injury. (Blood Rule)
 - Provide first aid and contact the player's guardian if necessary.
 - Complete an MGSA incident report for any injury requiring medical attention.
 - Suspected concussions → players must be removed and cleared by a medical professional before returning.
- Equipment & Uniforms
 - All players must wear MGSA-approved uniforms, helmets, and safety gear. (Long black pants and tall black socks(Rule 8.11 through 8.11.1.2.)
 - Broken or unsafe equipment must be removed immediately. Contact Equipment Manager.
 - Coaches should keep spare helmets and gloves for emergencies. (Coaches must be accountable for the League Equipment provided)

Game Management — “What Ifs” Scenarios

| Scenario | Procedures |
|--|---|
| What if a team doesn't have enough players? | Teams may borrow players from the same division to meet the minimum number, following MGSA substitution policy. Rule 8.16.1 through 8.16.4. |
| What if the umpire doesn't show up? | Coaches contact the MGSA Board. The umpire must have a background check done through the MGSA. No exceptions. The League will provide an alternate. |
| What if a game runs out of time? | Follow MGSA time limits. No new inning begins after the limit expires. Finish the inning unless there is a 15 run lead after the 3 innings and /or a 10 run lead after 5 innings. Rule 8.7.1 through 8.8.2 |
| What if a player arrives late? | Add the player to the bottom of the lineup and rotate into the field safely(Rule 8.26). They must play one inning of defense before batting. This is per USSA rules. |
| What if teams dispute a call? | The head coach may request clarification from the umpire calmly. Home Plate Umpire decisions are final. Coaches can only challenge an umpire's interpretation of a rule. |
| What if there's lightning or rain during play? | Home Plate Umpire will pause the game when it is deemed unsafe for field conditions. Depending on time left in the game, it will go based on Rule 8.2 through 8.3 |

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| What if a game has a scheduling conflict? | Coaches must notify the MGSA scheduler for reschedules and then contact players/parents after discussion with the scheduler. For games to be rescheduled due to missing players, they must be discussed 24 hours in advance if not, the game will be forfeited reference to Rule 8.2.4. Please see your division for specific requirements. |

Conduct & Behavior — “What Ifs”

| Scenario | Response |
|---|--|
| What if a parent or spectator is disruptive? | The coach or field marshal issues a warning. Continued misconduct results in removal from the facility and possible league disciplinary action. See Zero Tolerance Policy. |
| What if a coach or player acts unsportsmanlike? | Umpire or league official issues a warning or ejection. The MGSA Board reviews serious offenses. See Zero Tolerance Policy. |
| What if coaches disagree on a rule? | Rules in question should try to be discussed prior or after a game when applicable. If there is a dispute of a rule during a game, quickly discuss with home plate umpire will have the final say. See Zero Tolerance Policy. |
| What if bullying or exclusion occurs? | Coaches must intervene immediately, report to parents and the MGSA Board, and take corrective steps to restore team unity. See Zero Tolerance Policy. |

Practice Management

| Scenario | Procedure |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Coach can't attend practice | Coaches contact the MGSA Board. Coaches must have a background check completed through the MGSA. No exceptions. The League will provide an alternate. Rule 7.2 |
| Unsafe or wet fields | Contact MGSA or City Parks & Rec for field status. MGSA board members will act as field marshalls if the situation were to arise. Rule 8.2 through 8.2.4.1. |
| Player behavior issues | Address calmly and privately. Reinforce safety and teamwork. Persistent issues report to parents, after attempts of player behavior has been done to parents, if there is no change in players behavior, report to a MGSA board member. See Zero Tolerance Policy. |
| Equipment shortage | Modify drills using safe, creative alternatives (e.g., soft toss, base running drills). |
| Parent or visitor interference | Politely remind all visitors of MGSA's safety and conduct policies. No personnel shall be in the dugout without a background check through the MGSA. See Zero Tolerance Policy and Rule 7.1.1 through 7.1.3. |

Emergency Procedures

- Medical Emergencies
 - Call 911 first, then notify the league president. Coaches must keep emergency contacts readily available.

- Evacuation
 - For lightning, fire, or severe weather, players and spectators move to vehicles or designated shelters immediately.
- Missing Child
 - Notify all adults, secure the area, and contact authorities if not located within five minutes.
- Serious Injury/Incident
 - Complete and submit an MGSA Incident Report to the league within 24 hours.

Communication Protocol

- MGSA will communicate cancellations or emergencies via text, email, and/or social media.
- Coaches must notify parents of schedule changes at least 24 hours in advance when possible.
- All disputes, incidents, and conduct concerns must be reported to the MGSA Board within 24 hours.
- Official MGSA announcements and documents are available on muscatinegirlsoftball.com.

Review & Updates

- This SOP will be reviewed annually before the start of the season by the MGSA Board.
- Any revisions must be approved and redistributed to all coaches and volunteers.

Acknowledgment

MGSA Board President: _____ Date: _____

Coach/Volunteer Signature: _____ Date: _____