



North Shore Fastpitch Association Coaches & Managers Handbook

300 - 111 Lonsdale Ave.
North Vancouver, BC V7M 2E7

<http://nsfastpitch.ca>

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Note: This document and any associated policies, procedures, rules, guidelines, or information are subject to change without notice. The current version of the NSGFA Handbook is maintained on our website at <http://nsqfa.ca/handbook>.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to North Shore Fastpitch Association (NSFA) softball for youth, ages 5 to 19¹. Thank you for volunteering to help coach or manage a team. Please take time to familiarize yourself with the contents of this handbook. While not expected to read and memorize the entire Handbook, you should be familiar with the topics covered herein so it's known where to look when required. We encourage you to read the relevant sections and reference the Handbook as needed.

Once you have been assigned your team rosters, contact all players by March 31. Rosters are made available in TeamSnap to registered coaches and managers. Registration instructions for coaches and managers are disseminated by Division Coordinators via head coaches. Schedules for U7 through U13 house teams are made available via TeamSnap shortly before the season commences. Schedules for U15C through U23C teams and for Rep teams are distributed directly to the head coach via Interlock Scheduler(s) and must be entered into TeamSnap by the coach or manager.

This handbook does not supersede the authority of the NSFA Board, Softball BC, or any other applicable rules, regulations, or governing bodies. **Parents, players, and coaches are strongly cautioned to read Section 10 "Complaints" before bringing a concern to the NSGFA Board or Softball BC.** In the event a particular section, sentence, or clause within this document is deemed by a relevant authority to be incorrect, not applicable, or unenforceable in a particular circumstance, that specific part of the document shall be considered severed from the document in that particular circumstance only.

Rep teams are also subject to the Rep Program Guidelines established by the NSFA Board and Rep Committee and published at: <https://www.nsfastpitch.ca/rep/>.

All members are expected to adhere to Softball Canada Code of Conduct and Ethics, which can be found at: <https://softball.ca/safesport>.

2. PARKS AND FACILITIES

McCartney Creek Park is the NSFA's home field. This jewel of a park is recognized by other associations as one of the more beautiful parks in the Lower Mainland. Special care and attention are needed to ensure that the NSFA maintains continued use of this facility.

The North Vancouver Recreation Commission has allocated additional playing time on the McCartney Park diamonds to our Association. With increasing demand on all playing fields, especially grass, it is imperative that we fully use McCartney Park. As usual, we will be using McCartney virtually every day of the week, including Saturdays and Sundays. Weekend use of McCartney will normally be on a rotational basis to allow as many of the age levels as possible to play on the grass fields.

Coaches with games scheduled at McCartney Park should meet with their teams prior to the start of the season to identify any games that need to be rescheduled due to significant conflicts (i.e. band concerts, school plays, field trips, graduations). If any conflicts are identified, please contact the **Scheduler** (scheduler@nsfastpitch.ca) as soon as possible so the fields can be reassigned to other teams. If the Scheduler is not given adequate notice, there won't be enough time to schedule another game and that particular diamond will sit empty.

¹ NSGFA also supports selected Senior Fastpitch Women's teams on a case-by-case basis. Typically, these teams are comprised primarily of former minor players/teams from our Association.

The North Vancouver Recreation Commission closely monitors field usage. We have guaranteed the Commission we need each and every field we have asked for. **The Association cannot stress strongly enough the importance of using McCartney Park and Lynn Valley Park on each and every date it is booked.** Non-use of the park could result in our grass fields being allocated to other groups and sports. In addition to McCartney Park, we have use of two diamonds (“Northeast” and “Southwest”) at Lynn Valley Park and two diamonds (“North” and “South”) at Loutet Park. These diamonds must be maintained by the community groups using them. We require the support of every team to maintain these fields and make sure equipment is not left out to be stolen or vandalized and fields are kept in appropriate playing condition. This includes locking dugouts and containers at McCartney/Lynn Valley after every game and practice. Use of the golf cart or gator is only by coach or responsible parent, and minors are not permitted to operate these vehicles under any circumstances. We have purchased complete sets of magnetic bases, anchors, and plates for all eight diamonds at McCartney (four diamonds), Lynn Valley (two diamonds), and Loutet (two diamonds).

Field set-up includes raking and lining the infield, and placing the bases and pitching plate. The bases, plates and chalk liner, along with measuring tape and tools, are stored in the containers at McCartney, Lynn Valley and Loutet Parks. Field clean-up includes returning bases and pitching plate to containers, along with any equipment used, replacement of plugs at bases (if present), and locking the container. Note that some (younger) age divisions are provided with their own sets of bases for use in practices/games. It is the responsibility of each and every team to keep this equipment in good working order and inform the Equipment Manager of any items in disrepair.

To reduce the risk of injury, the bases have the smallest magnetic plates available so they dislodge with an age-appropriate level of force. Nevertheless, there have been occasional injuries when a base apparently did not dislodge under certain conditions. It is necessary for coaches to ensure all magnetic bases are tested before a game to ensure they dislodge with what the coach determines is the suitable force of a player sliding into the base. We have found that applying a small layer of sand over the top of a base’s magnetic anchor plate before laying the base down enables it to dislodge easier.

3. MCCARTNEY CONCESSION

The NSFA operates a concession at McCartney Park. In addition to providing food and snacks to players, parents and spectators, the concession generates funds for the Association that help to purchase equipment and uniforms and help to keep registration fees as low as possible.

3(a) TEAM CONCESSION DUTY

Each team is required to provide two (2) volunteers per shift at the concession, assigned according to the schedule provided and maintained by the Concession Coordinator.

Whenever possible we try to match the concession volunteer schedule with your team’s McCartney game schedule. Each team is usually scheduled two (2) to four (4) concession times during the season depending on which division the team is in and how often the team plays at McCartney. The concession schedules will be distributed once game schedules are finalized and may be updated as the game schedule changes.

Concession shifts are usually four (4) hours in duration, but may be split into a maximum of two (2) two-hour shifts performed by four (4) volunteers. All concession volunteers must be 16 years or older and at least one

should be an adult. If your game has been cancelled (even if due to weather), your team is still responsible for supplying concession volunteers for your assigned shifts.

CONCESSION DUTY IS MANADATORY. EACH TEAM MUST PROVIDE VOLUNTEERS FOR THEIR CONCESSION SHIFTS.

A reminder email will be sent by the Concession Coordinator to the team manager (or head coach if no manager has been identified) a week before your team’s assigned concession shift. You will be asked to provide names and phone numbers of the individuals from your team who are scheduled to volunteer at the concession. It is part of the team’s concession duty to respond to such inquiries promptly and at least 48 hours prior to the start of the relevant concession shift. A performance bond (see section 5(a)) is required from each team, in part to ensure concession duties are fulfilled.

3(b) PENALTIES FOR MISSING CONCESSION DUTY

The team must pay to NSFA \$100 per shift for each missing volunteer (two per shift) or if the team fails to respond to a concession duty confirmation email (from the Concession Coordinator) on a timely basis as noted above. Your performance bond may be cashed and teams may be prohibited from participating in North Shore tournaments (including District play-downs) and may not be eligible for team funding etc. if it has failed to fulfill its concession duties and/or compensate the league as required.

3(c) PAID CONCESSION WORKERS

If your team prefers to pay someone to perform its concession duty, the team must make such arrangements itself. In all cases, the team is solely responsible for ensuring its concession duty is fulfilled in a timely and responsible manner and for paying its hired concession workers. NSFA is not responsible for hiring or paying anyone to fulfill a team’s concession duty and shall have no liability to anyone hired to perform team concession duty. The Concession Operator may help teams to arrange for paid concession workers on a limited and case-by-case basis; however, such arrangements are solely between the team and the Concession Operator, and at the sole discretion of the Concession Operator.

3(d) CONCESSION CONTACTS

Role	Email	Contact	Phone
Concession Coordinator	volunteers@nsfastpitch.ca		
Concession Operator	concession@nsfastpitch.ca		

4. CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECKS

Softball BC and the NSFA require all coaches, managers, umpires, and certain volunteers to provide a current Criminal Records Check (CRC) for contact with vulnerable youths. **This is mandatory.** Individuals can apply for Criminal Records Review Program (CRRP) Checks online through the Government of British Columbia website. Please email compliance@nsfastpitch.ca to request web link and access code to enter the eCRC online service.

Organizations that utilize the eCRC online service are not required to keep copies of the consent forms as this will be done electronically by the CRRP.

All coaches, managers, and umpires, age 18 and older, shall obtain a certified CRC and a vulnerable sector check prior to participation in any game/practice. The CRC and vulnerable sector check will be valid for duration of three years.

PLEASE NOTE: A CRC contains your sensitive personal information. Online CRC services may be used at your own risk.

5. PERFORMANCE BOND CHEQUES

5(a) BOND CHEQUES REQUIRED FROM ALL TEAMS

Prior to receiving uniforms and equipment, each house team is required to post up to two performance bonds in the form of cheques payable to the NSFA and post-dated to April 30, 2024:

1. House teams U13 and up: one \$200 cheque for concession and umpires, one \$200 cheque for uniforms and equipment
2. U7, U9, and U11 house teams: one \$200 cheque for uniforms and equipment

This is to ensure teams honour concession duty and game cancellation responsibilities and return uniforms and/or equipment as required. Cheques will be returned or destroyed after the season ends, provided the team has:

- Completed its concession duty commitments (or paid required fees),
- Returned its uniforms as required (or paid required fees for missing items), and
- Returned its equipment (or made alternate arrangements with the equipment manager).

Cheques are deposited if any of the above conditions are not met and alternate arrangements that are reasonable and acceptable to the association are not made on a timely basis.

5(b) ADDITIONAL INTERLOCK BOND CHEQUES (U15, U17, U19, REP TEAMS)

All teams participating in the Interlock schedule (i.e., U15C, U17C, U19C, and Rep Teams) are required to provide two (2) x \$100 cheques payable to NSFA and dated to April 1, 2024. The NSFA has submitted corresponding bond cheques to the Lower Mainland Softball Committee (LMSC) on behalf of our teams.

Bond cheques are to guarantee your team (i) will honor its commitment to the Interlock schedule and rules and (ii) will attend (with a viable roster) and participate in every scheduled game, unless alternate arrangements are made on a timely basis and in accordance with established LMSC rules/protocols.

6. LEAGUE DIVISIONS

Classification is based on birth year or age as of January 1 of the current year.

U7: players born in 2018 and 2019

U9: players born in 2016 and 2017

U11: players born in 2014 and 2015

U13: players born in 2012 and 2013

U15: players born in 2010 and 2011

U17: players born in 2008 and 2009

U19: players born in 2006 and 2007

U23: players born between 2001 and 2005

6(a) PLAYING OUTSIDE OF AGE GROUP (PLAYING UP / DOWN)

Any request to play outside a player's age group must be in writing to the Board prior to the start of the season. **Requests are granted on an exceptional basis only, at the Board's sole discretion, and not subject to appeal. Registration fees will be adjusted to that of the division level that the player is placed for that season.**

PLAYING UP

We strongly discourage playing up in higher division outside the player's age group. Players seeking a higher level of competition are encouraged to try out for our Rep Program. Subject to Board approval, a player may be allowed to play up in specific rare circumstances—for example, if (a) a parent has coached for at least one year prior to the current season, (b) continues to be a coach of an existing team, and (c) there is an older sibling on the team. Players aren't permitted to play up more than one division. In exceptional circumstances, a player from the U19 division may be allowed to play up on a Junior Women's team (e.g., if there's no U19 teams with room in the District), which also requires Softball BC approval.

PLAYING DOWN

House League players may request to play within either their own age group or their school year, but only with respect to playing down one division. However, such players will be ineligible (without exception) to participate in District Playdowns or Provincial Championships if they are playing in a division below their age group.

7. REGISTRATION AND SOFTBALL BC LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP FEE

All players, coaches (including assistants), and managers must be officially registered to participate in NSFA and Softball BC organized games and practices, including tournaments. Anyone not properly registered with the NSFA will not be included on the team's official Softball BC's roster. Such individuals are uninsured and usually prohibited from participating in BC Provincial (or Regional) Championships, District Playdowns, the NSFA Year-End Tournament, etc.

All registration is via the NSFA website. Players register at www.nsfastpitch.ca/register/ while coaches, managers, etc. receive registration instructions from their Division Coordinator (typically sent to head coaches to pass on to their selected assistant coaches and managers). These are the only authorized methods to register with NSFA. The rosters are automatically scanned and any unauthorized profiles removed without notice.

All players must be members of Softball BC. Any players who do not provide a valid Softball BC number will be unable to complete their registration. The NSFA will pay the \$10 fee for up to three registered coaches per NSFA team, and for umpires who work at least 10 NSFA games during the season.

8. ANNUAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For the most up-to-date calendar of events, please see the website at www.nsfastpitch.ca. Missed your equipment or uniform pick-up? Contact the Equipment or Uniform Manager (see Section 9 “Contact Information”).

9. NSGFA EXECUTIVE & CONTACT INFORMATION

The table below reflects contact information as of date of publishing. For current contact information, please see www.nsfastpitch.ca/executive/

9(a) BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Position	Name	Phone	Email
President			president@nsfastpitch.ca
Secretary	Rozlyn Lord		secretary@nsfastpitch.ca
Treasurer	Sarah Kilmartin		treasurer@nsfastpitch.ca
Registrar	Kelly Evans		registrar@nsfastpitch.ca
Senior House Coordinator			vpsenior@nsfastpitch.ca
Junior House Coordinator	Tara Chavner		vpjunior@nsfastpitch.ca
Director-At-Large	Tarynne Summers		director1@nsfastpitch.ca
Director-At-Large	James Lawson		director2@nsfastpitch.ca
Director-At-Large	Lindsay Young		director3@nsfastpitch.ca
Director-At-Large	Houtan Maleki		director4@nsfastpitch.ca

9(b) EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Position	Name	Phone	Email
Head Coach			headcoach@nsfastpitch.ca
Scheduler			scheduler@nsfastpitch.ca
Umpire-In-Chief (UIC)	Sammi Bradford Niemi	778-837-3434	uic@nsfastpitch.ca
Umpire Scheduler	Sammi Bradford Niemi	778-837-3434	umpires@nsfastpitch.ca
Field Manager			fields@nsfastpitch.ca
Equipment Manager	Lindsay Young		equipment@nsfastpitch.ca
Uniform Manager	Michelle McWilliams		uniforms@nsfastpitch.ca
Pitching Machines			batting@nsfastpitch.ca
Concession Coordinator			volunteers@nsfastpitch.ca
Concession Operator			concession@nsfastpitch.ca

Marketing & Communications	Suzanne Schmidt		marketing@nsfastpitch.ca
Sponsorships/Promotions			marketing@nsfastpitch.ca
Photo Coordinator			marketing@nsfastpitch.ca
Tournament Coordinator	Tarynne Summers		tournaments@nsfastpitch.ca
Scholarship Committee			scholarships@nsfastpitch.ca
Compliance (CRCs)			compliance@nsfastpitch.ca
Administration	Blaine Kylo		admin@nsfastpitch.ca
Website Coordinator	Emily Misola		
SBC District 4 Coordinator	Houtan Maleki		district4@nsfastpitch.ca
Pitching Coach	Izzy Dino		pitching@nsfastpitch.ca

9(c) DIVISIONAL COORDINATORS

Divisional coordinators change annually. For updated contact information, refer to the [NSFA website](#).

9(d) VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The NSFA is run almost entirely by volunteers. The Board is always seeking additional volunteers to help with a variety of roles, ranging from small one-off jobs to larger ongoing roles, depending on interest, availability, and aptitude. In addition to current vacancies, we experience some turnover every year as players grow up and leave the Association, and there are always extra jobs and additional support needed.

If you know of someone who may be a good fit to assist with any of the roles outline on the previous pages, or to help out with smaller one-off jobs or extra help, please contact any of our Board members.

10. COMPLAINTS

Sometimes, despite our best efforts, things don't go as smoothly as we would like. Our Association is staffed 100% by volunteers, many of whom dedicate an extensive amount of their personal time to the NSFA and to softball in general, and yet sometimes things don't work out as planned.

Although there are both a provincial (Softball BC) and a national (Softball Canada) governing body for our sport, it is important to understand that **neither of these governing organizations will involve themselves in the local rules or internal operations of a specific association.**

If you feel you have a complaint, the appropriate levels to appeal to are as follows:

- Your Coach
- Division Coordinator
- NSFA Board
- District 4 Coordinator
- Softball BC

You **MUST** follow this process exactly and in the correct order:

1. **Your Coach:** If you have a concern with the team, you should try to discuss with your head coach first.
2. **Division Coordinator:** If you cannot resolve the matter with your head coach, you may contact your Division Coordinator, who will either try to solve the problem (potentially involving other members of the executive if and as appropriate) or take your issue to the Board.
3. **NSFA Board:** Only in very rare circumstances should you bring your issue directly to the Board (members), which will invariably refer you to your Divisional Coordinator first.
4. **District 4 Coordinator:** If the issue is a Softball BC related matter, you may contact the Softball BC District 4 Coordinator, who acts as your representative to Softball BC. However, please note that local association rules and operations generally are not appealable to Softball BC.
5. **Softball BC:** Only in very extreme situations should you approach Softball BC directly. However, bear in mind Softball BC does not get involved in local association operation or rules. Furthermore, and most importantly, if you contact Softball BC directly and a decision is made, that decision is final and cannot be appealed. Thus, we highly recommend working through the District 4 Coordinator, following the above process.

11. INJURY PREVENTION PROGRAM

Helping players to prevent injuries is one of the most important responsibilities of a coach. No program of prevention is perfect; injuries will happen, often without warning. The key is to establish an overall Injury Prevention Program. Following are some suggestions for such a program:

- Ensure players develop their flexibility, endurance, and strength.
- Take care of minor injuries quickly so they don't become major ones.
- Carry a first aid kit and take a first aid course so you can properly care for minor injuries.
- Don't let injured players return to activity too soon.
- Learn how to recognize the symptoms of a concussion; concussed players should not play until they have been examined and cleared by a medical professional.
- Check equipment to see that it is in good repair and fits properly.
- Anticipate problems in the practice or competitive environment. For example, check out the playing field before the practice or game begins to ensure no safety hazards exist.
- **Have all infield players wear protective mouth guards or face masks.**

11(a) FIRST AID KITS

Coaches should provide their own team with first aid supplies for all games and practices; these are not supplied by the Association. First aid kits are available at a number of department stores, drug stores, St John's Medical, or teams may build their own to treat minor scrapes and bruises.

11(b) EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

The purpose of an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) is to get professional care to the injured participant as quickly as possible. Unless you have received specialized training in advanced first aid techniques, leave such care to professionals.

It is strongly recommended that you develop an EAP before the season begins. Such a plan consists of information on the location of the nearest telephones, directions to the playing field and the names of two people: the charge person and the call person.

ROLE OF THE CHARGE PERSON

The CHARGE PERSON should have specific training in the care of injuries. If no one else can assume this role, it becomes the responsibility of the coach. Responsibilities of the charge person are:

- Take control and assess the situation upon contact with the injured player.
- Instruct all players/bystanders to leave the injured player alone.
- Ensure that the player is not moved.
- Leave the player's equipment in place.
- Assess the injury and determine whether further assistance is required.
- Decide how to move the player if an ambulance is not needed.
- Notify the call person if an ambulance is needed and briefly describe the injury.
- Observe the player carefully for any change in condition and reassure them until professional help arrives.

ROLE OF THE CALL PERSON

- Have access to, or ownership of, a cellular phone or know the location of all the telephones that could be used for placing emergency calls (particularly important in remote field locations).
- Know the directions and the best access route to the facility by street name.
- Provide the ambulance dispatcher with all necessary information including:
 - description of nature of emergency
 - exact location of the injured player
 - street address of field and best access route to the location
 - telephone number of the phone from which the call is being placed
 - assign someone to stay by the phone
- Report to the charge person that the ambulance has been called and the estimated time of arrival.
- Go to the main access entrance and wait for the emergency vehicle.

11(c) NSFA PARK ADDRESSES

Take note of these addresses in case you need to call for an ambulance or emergency services:

Park Name	Address
McCartney Creek Park	1575 Larkhall Crescent, North Vancouver, BC, V7H 2Z1
Loutet Softball Park	1700 Rufus Avenue, North Vancouver, BC, V7L 4J2
Lynn Valley Park	3220 Mountain Hwy, North Vancouver, BC, V7K 3E5

12. PRE-SEASON COACHES & MANAGERS MEETINGS

The Association holds pre-season meetings for all coaches and managers to hand out material and communicate important information regarding key processes, significant rule changes, coordinate distribution of uniforms and

equipment, answer questions, etc. Each session is tailored to the relevant group, and every team is expected to send at least one coach (preferably the head coach) and the manager to the relevant meeting.

Please see the website for the most up-to-date information the on schedule for pre-season meetings.

It is important that coaches in particular (ideally the head coach, or at least one coach per team) and the manager make every effort to attend their briefing in order to be up to speed on important updates, and to minimize issues that frequently come up during the season.

13. NSFA HOUSE PLAYING RULES

13(a) SOFTBALL CANADA OFFICIAL RULE BOOK TO GOVERN

1. Ground rules will be discussed and agreed upon by the umpires and both coaches at the home plate conference before the game starts.
2. The Softball Canada Fast Pitch Rules will govern play unless superseded by specific Softball BC rules, or by the NSFA rules listed herein.

13(b) UMPIRES

3. The plate umpire shall be supplied by the home team (unless provided by NSFA).
4. The base umpire shall be supplied by the visiting team (unless provided by NSFA).
5. The plate umpire's decisions are final regarding condition of fields, weather and team readiness as of official game time.

13(c) GAMES: REGULAR SEASON SCHEDULE

6. All games will start at the time, date, and place indicated on the schedule. Unless there is prior agreement by both coaches and the plate umpire, play will continue through a maximum of seven (7) innings with no new inning to start after one hour and forty-five minutes after the ACTUAL start of the game. The umpire's decision on the start time will be the official time.
7. If a game is tied at the suspension of play due to darkness or other reasons, the game will be officially declared a tie.
8. Reasons for cancelling a game are limited to weather conditions, school functions or conflicting tournaments, unless there is agreement between coaches BEFORE the scheduled game date.
9. Any player arriving after the lineup has been turned in shall be added to the bottom of lineup.
10. Wet grounds: The home team coach will examine the playing field ideally 1.5 hours before, and minimum one hour before, game time and notify the opposing coach if the grounds are unplayable.
11. All canceled games are to be played as soon as possible before completion of the regular season schedule or forfeited. If an agreeable date cannot be reached between coaches, the Scheduler will reschedule the game, and failure of either team to appear will result in a forfeit for that team.
12. Any team not abiding by the two (2) inning rule for each player shall lose the game by default (see rule particulars for each level for full description of this rule). Sickness or injury during the game is the only exception to the two (2) inning rule.
13. This is a no protest league; all umpire decisions will be final.
14. Only the scorekeeper(s) for each team will be allowed behind the backstop. It is each team's responsibility to enforce this rule.

13(d) PLAYERS

15. Players not listed on a Softball BC Team Registration Form (or equivalent electronic database) are not registered to play, and therefore are not covered by insurance and not permitted to play.
16. Players who have not registered and paid with the NSFA are not permitted to play on NSFA teams and may not be registered with Softball BC and therefore may not be covered by insurance. Teams are not permitted to add players to or remove players from their roster without pre-approval from the relevant NSFA official. Exception: Call-ups of registered players assigned to a team in a younger division need not be authorized by an NSFA official.
17. All players who attend a game will be listed on the score sheet and the names given to the opposing team.
18. Each player must be registered and paid with the NSFA and placed (by an authorized NSFA official) on the team roster at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the player's first game. Exception: Call-ups of registered players assigned to a team in a younger division need not be authorized by an NSFA official.
19. Coaches who have just cause may sit out a player for one complete game with the prior consent of the Division Coordinator (this is intended for cases of attendance and/or discipline problems).
20. NO SMOKING will be allowed by players, coaches, or umpires on the playing field or in the dugout. Under no circumstances is ALCOHOL permitted on or around the playing fields. This applies to players, coaches, umpires, and spectators.
21. Helmets are to be worn with the chin strap SECURELY FASTENED under the chin from dugout to dugout. They will not be removed until the player has left the field. When running bases, no player will throw off their helmet. Note: If noticed by the umpire, the player may be ejected from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct.

NOTE: As of 2019 all players younger than the U19 age group are required to have a cage on their batting helmet. This is mandatory and players will not be able to bat without it.

22. Catchers must wear a facemask, helmet, chest protector and shin guards that have been approved by the Association. A player, coach or parent catcher must wear a facemask even when warming up a pitcher on the field or in practice on the sidelines. Coaches are to enforce this rule with all players, coaches and assistant. Umpires will enforce this rule to the extent of coach ejection.
23. NSFA strongly recommends all infield players wear either a protective mouth guard or face mask. Coaches and parents are requested to support the use of this valuable piece of personal safety equipment.

NOTE: As of 2019 all pitchers younger than the U15 age group are required to wear a mask while pitching. This is mandatory and pitchers will not be able to pitch without it.

24. All players must wear running shoes or approved cleats (recommended). Players from U7 to U13 are permitted to wear molded (i.e., rubber or plastic) cleats. Players from U15 and up are permitted to wear molded or metal cleats.
25. All equipment will be the responsibility of the coaches. It will be their responsibility to see it is kept in good condition and returned at the time and place indicated. Equipment is to be used only for its intended purpose (e.g., bats are not to be used to nail base spikes in the ground).

26. Softball BC states that all minor (U7 – U20) catchers must wear pelvic protection (“Jill straps”) at all times. Failure to comply may result in the immediate removal of the player from the position.

13(e) FIELDS

27. Please be aware of the garbage that can accumulate during a game. Both teams are expected to ensure that field, dug-out, and spectator areas are cleaned of debris. Most fields have a garbage barrel adjacent and it will just take a few moments if everyone contributes to this task.

13(f) INJURIES

28. In order to comply with insurance company regulations, all significant accidents must be reported within forty-eight (48) hours of the accident by completing and submitting an Accident Report (available at <https://softball.bc.ca/resources/forms-templates/>) to your NSFA Division Coordinator and the District 4 Coordinator (see Section 9 “Contact Information”).
29. Please use discretion when reporting accidents. Generally, it is not necessary to report minor accidents not requiring a doctor; however, care must be taken (especially with head injuries, for example) and parents notified when minors are involved.
30. Parents must be contacted immediately should it be necessary to take a child to a doctor or an emergency ward.
31. Obtain written statements from the umpire and a witness from each team (preferably adult spectators) and ensure they include their name and contact information.
32. Insurance claim forms are available from Softball BC and should be provided to parents of any player requiring professional medical treatment.

13(g) U7 AND U9 DIVISIONS

Utilizes the Softball Canada **Learn-to-Play** program.

Learn to Play is a revolutionary way of introducing the sport of Softball to children. Activities are included which foster the involvement of ALL players, including players with high and low skill levels. The child will experience excitement, enjoyment and success. Activities and lead-up games are patterned after informal playground games that promise an hour of **FUN** and **LOTS OF ACTION**. Participants will go home at the end of the day happy and tired while improving their fitness level.

The **Learn to Play** Softball Best Practices are available, [click here](#) to see our favourites! These Best Practices are currently being submitted by Minor Softball Associations, Provincial/Territorial Associations and Coaches. This process allows everyone involved in **Learn to Play** access to valuable information that saves them time and effort necessary to continually recreate the wheel. If you would like to share your Best Practices, please send your ideas to cburton@softball.ca.

U11 Division

Standard divisional rules apply in addition to the following special rules for regular season games:

The home team will supply a parent who will umpire the game and be responsible for calling balls and strikes.

First half of the season: Player pitching to opposing team until the batter receives a 4th ball, which would normally result in a walk. This is where the game changes. After the 4th ball, the batter will have a count against them. It will either be 4 balls (0 strikes 4-0), 4-1 or 4-2. The hitter's coach or designate from offensive team, will now come in and pitch to their own batter and carry out the count. Now a 5th ball will be a walk and 3rd strike is still an out.

Last half of season: Player pitch – normal count. After 3 strikes, batter out. After 4 balls, batter walks.

(Refer to Softball BC Special Operating Rules 2024, Article 7.)

1. Five (5) innings shall constitute a game, or a time limit of one hour and forty-five minutes (1¾ hours), whichever occurs first. With agreement of both coaches, no inning shall start after 8:00 pm on a scheduled 6:30 pm start; otherwise no inning shall start after one hour thirty minutes (1½ hours) from the actual starting time.
2. All players who attend the game must be listed on the score sheet; and no player may sit on the sidelines for more than one (1) consecutive innings and, in a 5-inning game, for a maximum of two (2) innings.
3. There shall be unlimited substitution of players in the field whenever time has been requested and given.
4. Each team member shall bat as listed on the score sheet whether playing defensively or not.
5. A maximum of nine (9) players are to be used on the field, with the outfielders positioned at least 20 feet behind the baseline; however, if both teams (coaches) agree, a fourth outfielder may be added for a total of ten (10) players on the field. A team may play with fewer than nine (9) players (suggested minimum is 6 players) at the defensive coach's discretion.
6. Runs shall be limited to: maximum of four (4) runs per half inning for all innings of the game. There is no 'Mercy Rule' for league games.
7. A pitcher shall be limited to pitch for a maximum of two (2) innings per game. ONE PITCH IS COUNTED AS AN INNING. **There will be a new pitcher for each inning. All players on the team must be given and encouraged to take the opportunity to pitch.**
8. The conference rule for pitchers is waived.
9. The infield fly rule is NOT in effect.
10. The batter is out on a dropped third strike.
11. Catchers must wear full catchers' gears during practice, warm-up, and the game. Any person (including parents) warming up a pitcher before or during a game, or during practice MUST wear at least a protective mask.
12. Pitching distance thirty (35) feet; baselines forty-five (45) feet; home to 2nd, sixty-three feet eight inches (63' 8").
13. Pitchers must wear a protective mask
14. Eleven (11) inch softballs are used (NOT SOFTIES).
15. STEALING: Stealing is permitted in all games and only as follows: Base runners may leave their base (at the risk of being put out) and attempt to advance (steal) on a pitch, only after the ball has left the pitcher's hand. A runner may advance (steal) only one (1) base from the base they occupied at the time of the pitch, regardless of how

many over-throws occur. Once the catcher throws the ball to the pitcher, the runner cannot steal a base (even on overthrows to the pitcher) and must return to the last base occupied. Stealing home is NOT permitted. **Note:** On a hit ball all runners may advance as many bases as they wish until either they are put out, or the ball has been returned to the pitcher in the pitcher's circle.

13(h) U13 DIVISION

1. A legal game shall consist of at least five (5) innings or one hour and forty-five minutes (1¾ hours).
2. With agreement of both coaches, no inning shall start after one hour forty-five minutes (1¾ hours) from the actual starting time.
3. All players who attend the game must be listed on the score sheet.
4. No player may sit on the sidelines for more than two (2) consecutive innings and a maximum of three (3) innings in the game.
5. There shall be unlimited substitution of players in the field at any time that time has been requested and given.
6. Each team member shall bat as listed on the score sheet whether playing defensively or not.
7. Runs shall be limited to five (5) runs per inning.
8. There is no 'Runs-ahead Rule' for league games.
9. A pitcher shall be limited to pitch for a maximum of three (3) innings per game. ONE PITCH IS TAKEN AS AN INNING.
10. The conference rule for pitchers is **waived**.
11. The infield fly rule is **in effect**.
12. The batter is out on a dropped third strike, but the ball is alive.
13. Leading off: Runners may leave the base (at their peril) when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. Runners must take a base once the ball is returned to the pitcher in the pitching circle.
14. Base Stealing: Runners may steal all bases (including home) at their peril.
15. Catchers must wear full catchers' gear during practice, warm-up, and the game. Any adult warming up any pitcher before or during a game or practice **MUST** wear at least a protective mask.
16. Pitching distance is thirty-eight (38) feet. Baselines are fifty-five (55) feet. Home to second is seventy-seven feet, nine and one quarter inches (77', 9 1/4").
17. Pitchers must wear a pitching mask.
18. Eleven (11) inch softballs shall be used (not softies).

13(i) U15 DIVISION

Interlock rules apply. Please consult the Interlock organizers.

13(j) U17 DIVISION

Interlock rules apply. Please consult the Interlock organizers.

13(k) U19 DIVISION

Interlock rules apply. Please consult the Interlock organizers.

13(l) U23

Interlock rules apply. Please consult the Interlock organizers.

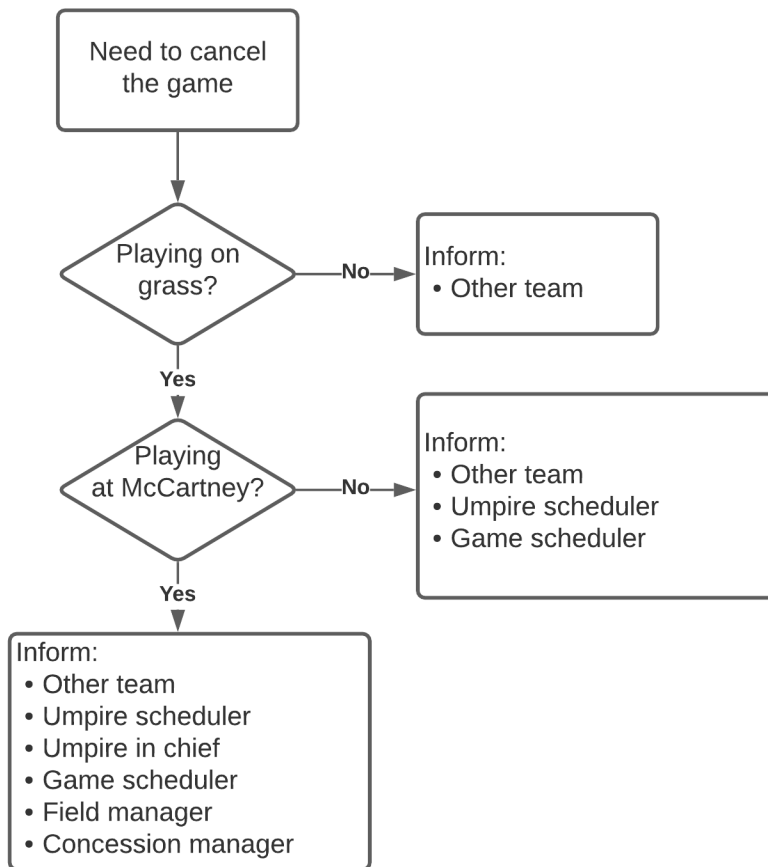
13(m) REP LEAGUE (ALL DIVISIONS)

Interlock rules apply. Please consult the Interlock organizers.

14. GAME CANCELLATION PROCEDURE

This procedure is to be followed regardless of the circumstances requiring cancellation. All relevant individuals must be notified on a timely basis even if it's pouring rain, snowing, etc. Note: **umpires must be notified of a cancellation before 5pm** to avoid cancellation fees—please allow time for the Umpire Scheduler / UIC to contact the umpire. U17, U19, and Stars teams are also required to follow the Interlock cancellation procedure.

NSGFA game cancellation procedure



Role	Contact	Phone/SMS	email
Umpire scheduler	Sammi Bradford Niemi	778-837-3434	umpires@nsfastpitch.ca
Umpire-in-chief	Sammi Bradford Niemi	778-837-3434	uic@nsfastpitch.ca
Game scheduler			scheduler@nsfastpitch.ca
Field manager			fields@nsfastpitch.ca
Concession manager			concession@nsfastpitch.ca

15. ANNUAL TOURNAMENTS

Please see [NSFA website](#) for tournament dates.

15(a) ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT: U11 TEAMS

This one or two-day fun tournament is open to all U11 teams in the region. For location, details and registration information, visit [Softball BC](#).

15(b) YEAR-END JAMBOREE – U7 & U9 TEAMS

The NSFA may run a jamboree for U7 and U9 teams as their year-end wind-up.

15(c) REGIONAL TOURNAMENT

For location and details, visit [Softball BC](#).

15(d) DISTRICT 4 PLAYDOWN TOURNAMENT

The tournament is open to all eligible U13 B², U15 B/C, U17 B/C, and U19 B/C teams in our district. Winners in each division/category advance to the relevant BC Provincial Championship Tournament (see [Softball BC](#) for Provincial Championship dates and locations).

ENTRY FORMS AND SUBMISSION DEADLINE (OPENING DAY)

Teams wishing to enter the District 4 Playdown Tournament are required to submit a properly completed “*District 4 Playdown Tournament Form of Intent*” to the Softball BC District 4 Coordinator on Opening Day. The required form is available for download at <https://www.nsfastpitch.ca/resources>.

TOURNAMENT FORMAT AND RULES

The tournament is overseen by the Softball BC District 4 Coordinator (Tournament Director) and follows a double-knock-out format including the final game, subject to weather and ruling of the Tournament Director.

Official Softball BC rules apply. Please consult Section 12 of the *Softball BC Handbook (Special Operating Rules)*.

Summary of additional rules:

1. Pitcher shall be **allowed** five (5) warm up pitches in the first inning and three (3) pitches thereafter between innings. A new pitcher shall be allowed five (5) warm up pitches initially.
2. No infield practice and no practice balls allowed on the field between innings.
3. Helmets must be worn, done up from dugout to dugout, including the on-deck batter.
4. Players must wear FULL UNIFORMS and NO JEWELRY.
5. Fields to be lined by both coaches.
6. The official time will be kept by the umpire.
7. Protests are allowed for this tournament and the protest process will be followed in accordance with the Softball BC Handbook.
8. Cell phones are not permitted on the field of play, dugouts or players’ benches.

² Note: all U13C teams are eligible to enter the U13C Regional Championship Tournament so there’s no U13C playdown.

9. No persons except the designated scorekeeper(s) for each team are allowed behind the backstops.

15(e) BC PROVINCIAL & REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENTS

For updated information visit [Softball BC](#).

16. OUT OF PROVINCE TRAVEL (*PERMIT REQUIRED*)

Permits are required and must be issued by Softball BC for all teams travelling out of province for tournaments:

- [Travel permit request form](#)

17. UMPIRES

The Umpire Scheduler is responsible for scheduling umpires for all games. Whenever possible, umpires will be provided for all scheduled U13, U15, U17, U19, Women, and Rep games. If an umpire isn't assigned to your game, please refer to the procedures in the 'Playing Rules' section of this Handbook.

The coach of the home team will sign the umpires' logbook immediately following the game. This is necessary for the umpires to get paid, so please make sure to sign their book. If an umpire was assigned to your game but does not attend the game, the coach of the home team should notify the umpire scheduler.

The coach of the home team is responsible to ensure that notification of any game cancellation is given to the Umpire Scheduler well in advance of games to allow umpires to be advised or rescheduled as necessary. The latest possible time to cancel a same day game is 5:00 p.m. for a 6:30 p.m. start.

This is a "No Protest" League for all games except the District Playdowns. All umpire decisions are final. Any game incidents or concerns with umpires should be reported directly to the UIC.

Coaches are responsible for the actions of team parents/fans and may be ejected or otherwise disciplined for said actions. Only the umpire may eject a player or coach/manager from a game. Any player or coach/manager ejected from a game will receive an automatic one (1) game suspension which will apply to the next game being played by that team. Umpires have been advised to report such incidents to the UIC for review by a Disciplinary Committee consisting of the UIC, President, and the District 4 Coordinator. Suspensions will be enforced.

18. UNIFORMS

Uniforms are handed out and bonds are collected (see Section 5) at the pre-season Coaches and Managers briefing (Section 12). Each coach/manager will be given a form on which they are to record the jersey number provided to each player plus any extra jersey numbers.

All house teams are expected to wear the jerseys, shorts (if provided), and hats supplied by the NSFA for all league games and tournaments, including Provincials. Teams may purchase and wear their own shorts or pants provided a common look is maintained.

The uniforms for each team within each age group (size) are a unique color and are part of set containing only a limited number of that specific colour. The cost of replacing such uniforms is much higher than other sports in

which the uniforms are identical across all teams and all divisions. For this reason, a uniform deposit is included in the bond each team must provide before receiving their uniforms (see Section 5).

Unless your team has advanced to Provincials, all uniforms must be returned on or before the final day of the Year-End Tournament. The uniforms MUST be washed and dried. Details as to when and where to return your uniforms will be provided by your Divisional Coordinator prior to the Year-End Tournament. When the uniforms are returned at the end of the season, a member of the NSFA Executive will check the uniforms against the form submitted earlier in the season. If the returned uniforms/paperwork are in good order, and all other team commitments have been met (see Section 5), the NSFA Executive will release the team's bond cheque to the coach or manager.

Note: Learn-To-Play (U7 and U9) teams and players do not need to return their uniforms/t-shirts and therefore do not need to provide uniform deposits.

18(a) UNIFORM PICKUP

Each team is required to hand in their uniform deposit/bond cheque (no exceptions) before receiving their uniforms (see below). Deposit cheques will be collected and uniform sets allocated initially at the Coaches and Managers meetings (Section 12). Uniforms will be available for pickup on the same day as equipment pickup. Details will be discussed at the Coaches and Managers Meetings.

18(b) PLAYER UNIFORM DEPOSITS

It is strongly recommended that coaches/managers collect a \$75 deposit (\$100 for rep teams) from each player before handing out the uniforms. Individual uniform deposits may be collected in the form of a cheque payable to the NSFA and post-dated to June 30 of the following year. This deposit can be returned to the player (or the cheque destroyed) when they return their complete uniform (jersey and shorts/pants).

18(c) HATS AND SOCKS

NSFA provides hats (caps or visors) to all players and socks to all U11 and older players. These hats and socks are kept by the players at the end of the season.

18(d) HELMETS AND MOUTH GUARDS

Softball helmets are required for all batters and baserunners and must be worn continuously from the time they leave the dugout to enter the field of play until they return to the dugout. Chinstraps are required and must be worn properly at all times. The Association typically does not supply helmets. Parents need to supply an appropriate helmet for their daughter. **As of 2019, all players younger than the U19 age group are required to have a cage on their batting helmet.**

Although not required, NSGFA also strongly recommends the use of mouthguards.

19. EQUIPMENT

Please see the [NSFA website](#) for dates and locations of equipment pick up.

19(a) TEAM EQUIPMENT BAG PICKUP

Equipment pick-up is at the equipment garage located at: 3154 Fairmont Road, NORTH VANCOUVER (see Appendix A map).

19(b) FIELD WHITING AND LINING EQUIPMENT

Equipment replacement is a major cost to operate our Association. Due care is required to keep this cost to a minimum. Every year several field liners and base plugs go missing due to carelessness on the part of coaches, managers, or field liners. Please ensure field lining equipment is returned and locked in the allocated sheds, and whiting is not left out in the rain during a game. Your assistance in reducing this needless expenditure is greatly appreciated.

Location
Lynn Valley Park N (green container, back door)
Lynn Valley Park SW (small green container)
Loutet (grey container, keys in green container)
McCartney Park (put out by field manager, extra in concession building)
Sentinel High School (green box)

IMPORTANT

- Do not leave whiting out in the rain during a game – place it in the dugout or the container.
- Do not leave empty bags in sheds.
- Do not leave whiting in the liners (it cakes up and jams the mechanism).
- All sheds/boxes MUST BE LOCKED at all times.
- Liners must be returned to their proper locations (as noted above) following each game.

19(c) BASES, PLATES AND SPIKES

All equipment bags are provided with a large twelve inch (12”) long spike. These are not for nailing down bases and plates (or pitching rubbers). Please use the spike to make a hole in the ground and then place the spike that is attached to the base bag in the hole. Please use a hammer (**not** a bat) to hammer in spikes. By following this simple procedure, the life of our bats and bag straps is considerably increased. If the large spike is lost or missing in your bag, please help us out by buying a (inexpensive) replacement from a lumber yard.

19(d) HOME PLATE

For safety reasons, please ensure home plate is buried flush with the ground to ensure players don't trip over the edge when running or sliding home.

Coaches are reminded that “blocking the plate” is not permissible unless the player has the ball in her possession and, due to risk of injury, should not be encouraged in the Junior Divisions (U7 to U13).

19(e) POST-GAME CLEANUP

Please remember to replace the base plugs and cover them lightly after the game. Filling in holes at home plate and dragging the field after the game also helps to maintain the field and prevent rain damage. Don't forget to put lining equipment and bases away. Please also check the dugouts to ensure they are clean of rubbish, and no items are left behind.

19(f) PITCHING MACHINES

The Association has both electric and battery-operated pitching machines which are available for general use, allowing flexibility with the times and locations. These machines are available "first come, first serve" and are available at both Lynn Valley and Loutet Park. **DO NOT** remove pitching machines from the park where they are located. If you are using a battery-operated pitching machine, please try and recharge the batter for the next user.

The special balls used in the pitching machines are expensive. Please take care to ensure you return the same number of balls you were issued and use only the supplied pitching machine balls as other balls will damage the pitching machine.

Please advise the Equipment Manager (equipment@nsfastpitch.ca) of any required pitching machine equipment repairs or missing balls.

20. TEAM PHOTOGRAPHS

WHEN AND WHERE: Opening Day at McCartney Park

If the weather is good photos will be taken on the grass, otherwise they will be taken in a tent at the designated time scheduled for your team. Please ensure that players, assistant coaches, and managers are aware of this date and time so the pictures are complete. Times for photographs will be posted on the website by early April.

Photographs will be distributed by Divisional Coordinators to coaches/managers or made available for pick-up at McCartney Park.

21. TEAM FUNDING & TOURNAMENT REIMBURSEMENT

MINOR HOUSE TEAMS

NSFA will reimburse each house team (U11 to U23) up to \$300 annually for one tournament fee. (If it is a SBBC tournament, U11 Celebration of Softball or Provincials, the Association will reimburse the full amount.) Teams may submit one (1) funding request per season using the form available at <https://www.nsfastpitch.ca/resources/>. The submission deadline is the later of (a) July 31, and (b) two weeks after the team's final tournament of the season.

REP TEAMS

NSFA will reimburse each rep team (U11 to U23) up to \$300 annually for one tournament fee. (If it is a SBBC tournament, or Provincials, the Association will reimburse the full amount.) Teams may submit one (1) funding request per season using the form available at <https://www.nsfastpitch.ca/resources/>. The submission deadline is the later of (a) July 31, and (b) two weeks after the team's final tournament of the season

NSFA will reimburse rep teams a portion of the annual ball toss fundraiser funds raised by their team per the table below. (This funding is to support expenses such as additional tournament entry fees, equipment purchases and other allowable expenses for Rep B teams. Uniform and clothing purchases are not considered eligible expenses for reimbursement.) To receive funding, rep teams must raise at least \$500 in the annual ball toss fundraiser, participate in NSFA Opening Day Activities, and play in at least two (2) tournaments outside the North Shore.

Funds Raised by Rep Team for Annual Ball Toss Fundraiser	Portion Reimbursed to Rep Team
<u>\$0 UP TO \$499</u>	<u>0%</u>
<u>\$500 UP TO \$999</u>	<u>50% OF FUNDS RAISED</u>
<u>\$1000 UP TO \$1999</u>	<u>\$500 + 75% OF FUNDS RAISED ABOVE \$1000</u>
<u>\$2000 AND ABOVE</u>	<u>\$1250 + 100% OF FUNDS RAISED ABOVE \$2000</u>

22. TRAVEL SUBSIDY FOR PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

NSFA does not subsidize the cost to travel for NSFA minor teams to compete in BC Provincial Championships, nor for NSFA umpires to participate as officials in Provincial Championships.

OTHER TRAVEL GRANTS

Softball BC offers the “Minor Only Fund Travel Program Grant” for partial funding to assist with travel costs to Softball BC Provincial Championships. More information can be found at: <http://softball.bc.ca>

ViaSport BC and BC Ferries offers travel vouchers for sports teams travelling to the island. More information can be found at: www.viasport.ca/grant/bc-ferries-sport-experience-program

23. SPONSORSHIPS

Team fundraising guidelines are as follows:

- All corporate sponsorship must be approved by the NSFA Board. Only league authorized raffles will be permitted. Compliance with relevant gaming regulations is required.
- Teams will be permitted to fund raise in the community without the permission of the Board for bottle drives, car washes, etc. If in doubt, check with a VP.
- Teams that have sponsors approved by the Board may be provided banners for display at all games. This would be in place of team uniform crests.

24. SAFETY PROTOCOLS

North Shore Fastpitch takes the safety of our players and volunteers seriously and will establish, communicate, and enforce established protocols for all Association activities.

NSFA is required to follow any guidelines provided by Softball BC as well as those of the Province of British Columbia and the District of North Vancouver.

NSFA will ensure that all members are informed as to current protocols and practices, and all members will be expected to ensure their understanding and compliance. Any observed failure or refusal to comply will result in forfeiture of that person's or team's sanction to participate.

Additional information is available on the [NSFA website](#) and from [Softball BC](#).

Appendix A: EQUIPMENT STORAGE LOCATION

Address: 3154 Fairmont Road, North Vancouver.

Please do not disturb the residents of the house attached to the equipment garage and please be respectful of all residents in the neighborhood.

